THEME IN CONVERSATIONAL DISCOURSE:

PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED BY SPEAKERS OF

BLACK SOUTH AFRICAN ENGLISH,

WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO THE ROLE OF

PROSODY IN CONVERSATIONAL SYNCHRONY.

THESIS

submitted in fulfilment of

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DANIELA GENNRICH-de LISLE

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CONTENTS

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LIST OF TABLES

NOTES ON THE CONVENTIONS USED IN THE TRANSCRIPTION OF THE DATA IN APPENDIX III AND IN CHAPTERS 2,3 AND 5.

1 a. All the turns in one conversation are numbered consecutively.

b. The speaker is indicated by an initial followed by a colon (e.g., A:)

c. Each new turn begins on a new line.

2 Overlapping of turns is marked as follows:

a. A single square bracket is placed at the point of overlap, and the overlapping talk is placed directly beneath the talk it overlaps. For example:

```
A:  he's not    [ here

B:              [ where's he gone
```

b. Where two speakers begin speaking simultaneously, a single square bracket is placed at the front of the two utterances, which are serially transcribed. For example:

```
A:  [ he's here

B:  [ where's he gone
```

c. If the utterance which interrupted the first utterance is continued, this is transcribed on the same line. For example:

```
A:  see if    [ he's here

B:             [ where's he gonehas he gone home
```

d. If the first utterance is interrupted, but continues, the continued utterance is transcribed beneath the utterance which interrupted it. For example:

```
A:  see if    [ he's

B:             [ where's he gone

A:  at work today
```

3 Latching of turns, where no interval exists between the end of a prior and the start of a next utterance, is indicated by "==" at the end of the prior and at the beginning of the next turn. This may be used in case 2 (c) above, if the interrupted utterance is discontinued immediately:

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A:  see if he's here ==

B:  == where's he gone
```

4   A time lapse between utterances within a turn, or between two turns, is marked by three full stops, "...", and the rough time lapse in seconds is indicated in brackets, for example:

   A: where's he gone ...(3 secs) home

A very short time lapse is merely indicated by three full stops.

5   a.   Where uncertainty exists about the words spoken, they are put into parentheses:

   A: he's gone (home) to work

   b.   Where part of an utterance is not understandable, and has not therefore been transcribed, "(unintelligible)" is written in parentheses.

   c.   Where a speaker employs Xhosa instead of English, that utterance, or part thereof, is translated into English within square brackets, and is fronted with the word "Xhosa" followed by a colon as follows: "[Xhosa: the second essay]"

6   Where features of a verbalisation, or other relevant behaviours, warrant description, these are given within double brackets thus: "((points to student record cards))";   "((reading))".

7   a.   Explosive aspiration is indicated by an "h" without parentheses, and the type of explosive aspiration is given in double parentheses, for example: "h ((laughs))" for voiced laughter; h ((coughs)).

   b.   Audible breathing is indicated by "(h)", and, where identifiable, its type is given in double parentheses, for example: "(h) ((laugh))" for voiceless laughter.

8   Low volume of talk is marked by a preceding degree sign:
   A: i'm going ° home °just °now

9   Where a stretch of intervening conversation has not been transcribed, the topic of that stretch is summarised in single square brackets, e.g.: "[Criticism of C's essay by A]".

10   A prolonged syllable is marked by a colon placed after it, e.g.: "oh:"; "fo:r".

11   A cut off of a prior word or sound is indicated by a short dash, e.g.: "i suppo- i think".

12   Tone unit divisions are shown by double vertical lines:" || ".

13   Stressed syllables are indicated by capital letters.

14   Focal stress (on the prominent syllable within each tone unit) is marked by capital letters plus underlining.

15   Pitch level distinctions are indicated by transcribing the syllable(s) at each pitch turning point either on (for mid key), above (for high key) or below (for low key) the normal typing line.

16 The direction of the <u>tone movement</u> on a prominent syllable is marked after the double vertical line indicating the beginning of a new tone unit by a subscript "p"/"p+" (proclaiming tone), or "r"/"r+" (referring tone), for example:

"‖ $_{p+}$ where are ...".

17 Where a close <u>phonetic transcription</u> has been necessary, it is given in ipa notation.

18 <u>Downdrifting</u> is usually not marked, but where it is, each downward stretch is preceded by an arrow pointing downwards, "↓", and each upward stretrch is preceded by an arrow pointing upwards, "↑". The steps are also marked by each stretch being represented on a different level.

FINAL NOTE

The transcriptions have been made in <u>ordinary English spelling</u>. IPA notation has been avoided as far as possible, because of the degree of specialisation required for readers to comprehend it (since this would restrict readership).

<u>Prosodic transcriptions</u> are only shown where they are needed; otherwise transcription is verbatim, in lower case type.

<u>No punctuation or capitalisation</u> is used, since this would impose an often unwarranted, and possibly inaccurate, interpretation on utterances. Both punctuation and capitalisation would also interfere with the prosodic transcription conventions (e.g., the first person pronoun <u>I</u> could be misrepresented as a stressed syllable).

ABSTRACT

This study is an investigation of instances of conversational failure in interaction as evidenced by speakers of Black South African English (BSAE), with a particular focus on the role of prosody in conversational (a)synchrony. The data analysed consist of six conversations, one SAE–SAE (South African English) encounter, four BSAE–SAE encounters and one BSAE–BSAE encounter. After a theoretical framework is set up, the analysis is conducted by means of two triangulation research processes based on Ethnomethodology. The analysis consists of an investigation into selected extracts which participants and informants alike perceived as 'stressful'. An attempt is made to isolate the sources of each instance of pragmatic failure. Prosodic features are found to be important in establishing and maintaining theme and conversational synchrony. But other factors are also involved. The analysis reveals two major sources of asynchrony: deviance in the use of (in order of importance) prosodic, lexical and syntactic cues to discourse functions; and a mismatch in the application of socio–cultural principles guiding conversational behaviour. The study leads into a brief outline of aims, objectives and guidelines for a possible course in conversational competence at a tertiary level, and concludes with suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

During the past five years, the intake of black students into white English universities in South Africa has increased considerably. As a result, students from different backgrounds and language groups, who were previously separated both educationally and socially by South African law, discover that they have to learn to communicate as if they were foreigners. The problems are most acute for black students who enter a predominantly white western culture which speaks a different language from theirs and has different social, communicative and educational expectations, which are not anticipated by their schooling.

Insufficient preparation of black students for tertiary education is deeply rooted in the system of Bantu Education[1] from which they have emerged. The problem is not merely linguistic, but socio-linguistic and historico-political in nature. Competence in English requires more than what is learnt from "decontextualised textbook grammar exercises so common in the classroom" (Young 1978). Moreover, the language requirements in an academic setting are different from those required for a friendly chat in the street. (For instance, the ability to negotiate meaning and to support one's own opinions in pursuit of theme is a necessary part of an academic discussion.)

Although it is true that the only real solution would be found in the desegregation of primary and secondary education systems in South Africa, the fact remains that at present many black students who are enrolled at white English universities find that their primary and secondary education has been inadequate for the demands of this type of educational setting. This research is aimed at considering the conversational problems experienced by these students.

This thesis has arisen from observations made of students interacting with one another and with academic staff. A recurrent phenomenon I have observed is that frequently students and lecturers alike find conversational encounters 'stressful', without being able to say why. One South African English (SAE) speaking student when questioned about her dissatisfaction with a particular discussion with a Black South Afican English (BSAE) speaking student, merely responded with "I don't know, we just never seem to get anywhere. I think X just never listens to me".

* * *

At this stage it is necessary to define some terms that are of central importance in this thesis. The term Black South African English (BSAE) is employed here in the same way as Lanham (1984) uses it. It refers to the English spoken by

> ... a large number of Black South Africans, who during the past thirty years have acquired the foundations of English entirely by being taught it by non-mother-tongue English-speakers in school. Their problems in communicating with mother-tongue English-speakers are evinced by extensive efforts now being made in commerce and industry, and in colleges and universities, to overcome their communicative weaknesses. In saying this, we acknowledge that there are many black South Africans outside this category who have close to mother-tongue control of English prosody. (Lanham 1984, p.218)

The term South African English (SAE) is used to refer to those South Africans who have English as a mother-tongue.

Conversation is a type of interaction, which is defined by Chamber's Twentieth Century Dictionary as "mutual action". Thus conversation is a process of mutual action. That is to say, two (or more) independent people who are goal-directed and may have divergent interests freely alternate in speaking (a type of action) in order to produce, as the outcome of their interaction, a conversation (Levinson 1981). By conversation is meant a negotiated process, of constructing meaning and an overall theme, to which all participants contribute.

Thus the main characteristic of a conversation is that it is goal-directed. It has a theme which is mutually constructed by the participants, whose contributions are usually in line with their overall goal (according to their particular conversational strategy). The theme may or may not be well defined. In contrast to formal written language, or the language used in specific institutional settings, such as debates, church services, or a traditional classroom, the theme of a conversation is not decided in advance. That is to say, theme in conversation is locally organised: each new initiation raises a new topic which must be negotiated each time.

If a person is involved in a conversation, s/he is presumed to have some motivation for doing so (even if the motivation is just to get out of the conversation again). The communicative aim of each interactant in fact provides the basic driving force behind any interaction, and each participant follows a particular "conversational strategy" (Gumperz 1982), or strategic direction, in order to achieve his/her aim.

In a conversation, participants are mainly restricted to the use of <u>language</u> in order to fulfill their aim. (There are, of course, other ways, for example, gesture, facial expression or any other bodily action, which interact with language, but these are not within the scope of this discussion.) In order to use a language, the participants must obey certain rules of grammar (syntax, semantics, and phonology). These rules are <u>constitutive</u> because they <u>prescribe</u> the way well-formed sentences must be structured. But people seldom utter sentences in isolation (except perhaps in some language classrooms!). Participants must also consider rules of discourse, or text grammar, which are not prescriptive or constitutive, but are merely <u>descriptive</u>, in that they describe observable behaviour, and <u>regulative</u>, in that they regulate behaviour but may be flouted for specific purposes.

A conversation may be deemed <u>synchronous</u> if the participants understand one another's full intent and respond to each other appropriately (negotiating meaning at each point), in such a way that the theme is collaboratively constructed and the aims of participants achieved. On the other hand, where miscommunication obstructs negotiation and theme construction, an <u>asynchronous</u> conversation results. A conversation may be perceived as <u>stressful</u>, either because it is asynchronous as a result of language problems, or because social or cultural factors create the stress.

For the purposes of this research, the term "<u>conversation</u>" will be used as a superordinate term, referring to any goal-directed verbal interaction the theme of which is not yet specified in advance, but is constructed through negotiation. Specific types of conversations will be considered. An important distinction to be made here is that between a "<u>discussion</u>", an "<u>interview</u>", and a "<u>chat</u>". A discussion has a well-defined theme and well-defined topics, while a chat does not. An interview is a special type of discussion in which there exists an unequal status relationship between interviewer and interviewee. An interview consists of attempts by the interviewer to ascertain the interviewee's ideas about a certain issue by means of questioning as well as discussion. However, the dividing line between the two is not always clear since it is characteristic of conversation to oscillate between different levels of formality and coherence of topic and, while role and status may initially be taken as 'given' by the participants, these relationships may be exploited or ignored, depending on the purposes of the participants at different points during the interaction. The types of conversation analysed in this research are interview and discussion.

The primary focus of this study is on the role of prosody in conversation. The term prosody refers to the following aspects of the sound system: stress (loudness); intonation, which consists of pitch level and pitch movement; and rhythm, which is created by tone unit grouping and the recurrence of prominent syllables. Prosody is concentrated on, not because it is regarded as the only source of conversational problems, but rather because prosodic features function entirely differently in African languages and SAE. It is hypothesised that these differences may contribute significantly to the degree of communicative success or failure attained in conversation. Very little work has been done in this area, and prosody with its discourse functions is not integrated into any language teaching programme in South Africa at this stage.

* * *

Lanham (1984) has conducted a study of the effects of BSAE reading intonation on comprehensibility (i.e. the understanding of contextualised discourse). His study reveals that differences in the nature and functions of prosodic features of BSAE and SAE and the different kinds of expectations associated with them, do indeed have a negative effect on comprehensibility. The present study hopes to complement his study by investigating the role of prosody in BSAE conversation, and to consider its contribution to comprehensibility. It also considers the interrelationship between prosody and other important differences in features of language use which may play a role in obstructing theme construction in a conversation. Participants in a conversation have to take the pragmatic functions of the language they use into account: they must incorporate relevant information derived from the extra-linguistic context, interrelate information units within the discourse (e.g., in propositional development, recognising topic at several levels), and understand speakers' intentions in producing an utterance. A failure to succeed in any of these functions constitutes a failure to understand one another fully. Thomas (1982) has defined this as pragmatic failure: "the inability to understand what is meant by what is said".

As outlined by Chick (1984), English conversational difficulties experienced by BSAE speakers have far-reaching consequences in South Africa. A negative cycle of socially created discrimination in South Africa has arisen out of the dominant ideology of racial segregation and white supremacy in the following way. Blacks have to learn to communicate effectively within the language and culture of the dominant white group in order to improve their socio-economic positions. However, the fact that their education is

severely disadvantaged by being separate and inferior prevents them from developing successful communication techniques in English. If a person exhibits conversation incompetence when applying for a job or taking an oral examination for example, s/he can be misinterpreted as having a lack of respect or intelligence. Consequently, such a person may forfeit an important social or educational opportunity. A repetition of this negative role of miscommunication may result in negative stereotyping which may further deteriorate across generations. Finally, such stereotyping may provide a justification for discrimination, which maintains the social and educational barriers presently existing in South Africa. This in turn leads to further misunderstanding of the communication conventions of other groups, and the negative cycle begins again.

It is hoped that this study will complement Chick's (1984) study of what he terms "the interactional accomplishment of discrimination in South Africa" by examining in more depth the features of language form (and prosody in particular) that could be responsible for the communication difficulties experienced by BSAE speakers in English conversation.

Although this study only examines the situation of BSAE speaking students within the context of white English-speaking universities, conversational difficulties are obviously not peculiar to black students, and neither are they limited to students in an English-speaking academic environment. This study focuses primarily on the cross-cultural and cross-lingual difficulties experienced by black students at white English universities because the number of social and environmental variables affecting conversational behaviour is reduced. Further research conducted in other environments (such as a factory floor, or a primary school), and among different types of participants, would extend the present understanding of BSAE conversational difficulties.

The present study analyses instances of conversational asynchrony evidenced in six different conversations, in order to propose some hypotheses as to the causes of communicative failure in conversations in the cross-cultural context. Before such an analysis can be conducted, an overall framework for the analysis of conversational interaction between members of a common culture and/or language group is set up (chapters 2 and 3). To the best of my knowledge, no suitable overall framework of conversational interaction has thus far been attempted. In consequence, a major part of this thesis is devoted to establishing such a framework within which the analysis could take place. The research method adopted, which is based on

Ethnomethodology (Saville-Troike 1982), is outlined in chapter four. The data are analysed in chapter five, and after conclusions are drawn from the analysis, some considerations for the teaching of conversational competence in an English university context in South Africa are discussed in chapter six. Transcriptions of the conversations analysed are given in Appendix III (on pp.146-191). It is recommended that they are scanned before chapters two to six are read, so that an overall picture of the nature of the conversations is gained from the start. The transcription conventions used in Appendix III and in the extracts cited in chapters 2,3 and 5 are set out on pages (viii) to (x).

CHAPTER 2: TOWARDS A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: PRELIMINARIES

This chapter will clarify the basic concepts which form a foundation for the framework, outlined in chapter 3, within which the sources of asynchrony in conversation are analysed in chapter 5. I use as a starting point a brief criticism of speech act theory and some basic tenets of models of dialogue based on speech act theory (mainly those which fall under the school of discourse analysis, e.g., Labov and Fanshel [1977]; Sinclair and Coulthard [1975]; Edmondson [1981]). I then go on to define the units of analysis employed in this research as well as the rather ill-defined notion of "context". Finally the process of conversation is outlined, and the basic principle of problem-solving in conversation is explained. This prepares the way for the next chapter, which is an explanation of my proposed model for analysis. It is not original and its general validity is as yet unexplored. It is an attempt to consolidate (for the purposes of this research project only) the many differing approaches to aspects of conversational analysis, in order to build up a consistent vocabulary for a conceptual framework within which the analysis of the data will be made. My purpose in this chapter is not to enter into a theoretical dialectic about the inadequacies of speech act theory or to defend the adequacy of my proposed framework, but to begin to clarify the metalanguage used in chapter 5.

Where possible, examples are used to clarify a point. These are either extracts from my own formally collected data, my own observations made during casual conversations or from data gathered in other studies. In cases where examples derived from introspection have been used they will be marked "(Constructed)".

2.1 INADEQUACIES OF SPEECH ACT MODELS OF DIALOGUE

According to speech act theory, an utterance not only has a meaning, but also a force (Austin 1962; Searle 1976). That is to say, when a speaker produces an utterance, s/he is not merely concerned with its referential function, but is actually performing a particular action by means of his/her utterance.

While I agree with this fundamental notion of speech act theory, there are three aspects of this theory that I believe are inadequate. Firstly, all of conversation is seen as as exchange of speech acts. Secondly, performative verbs, covert or overt, are seen as the sole means by which different speech acts can be represented. Thirdly, the notion "context" is seen as a

static factor influencing interaction and is only applied as a remedial measure. Each of these inadequacies is discussed below, and then a more adequate alternative is proposed.[1]

2.1.1 All of conversation is seen as an exchange of speech acts

Austin (1962) postulates three types of speech acts which are simultaneously performed: the locutionary act, illocutionary act, and perlocutionary act. The term "locutionary act" simply refers to the production of an utterance which has a clear sense and reference, Hence, any meaningful utterance constitutes a locutionary act.   An "illocutionary act" may be defined as what is done by what is said, for example "the making of a statement, offer, promise etc. in uttering a sentence" (Austin 1962).   The term "perlocutionary act" is associated with the effect which a speaker wishes to have on his/her audience.   This is highly context-dependent.

Initially Austin (ibid.) took into consideration the interactional nature of communication, by mentioning that one can measure both perlocutionary and illocutionary acts in terms of their consequences.   The term "uptake" was introduced which related to the fact that addressees exhibit their understanding of an act by their particular response.   Unfortunately the notion of uptake was neglected later and hence not fully integrated into the theory (Franck 1980).   The lack of due consideration for the interactive and context-bound nature of communication is evidenced by the fact that the data cited by Austin as well as other speech act theorists is mostly constructed, and even where 'real' conversation is cited, it is frequently extracted from its context.   Further, it is analysed without regard for the perceptions of the participants involved.   As a consequence of the neglect of the notion of perlocutionary acts, the term 'speech act' has come to be used interchangeably with the term 'illocutionary act'.

To see conversation as only consisting of the exchange of illocutionary acts is extremely limiting, since other intentions, apart from those directly conveyed as the illocutionary force of an utterance, come into play during a conversation.   Four other kinds of intention can be isolated: the perlocutionary intention, and additional intentions related to the organisational, propositional and interpersonal development of a conversation. While illocutionary and perlocutionary intentions (forces) relate to speaker intentions on the micro level, additional intentions are associated with the macrostructure of the conversational discourse as a whole.

The <u>perlocutionary effect</u> of an utterance is of far greater importance as a factor influencing interpersonal and thematic synchrony in a conversation than has thus far been acknowledged by speech act models of dialogue. For instance, in interview 3, turn 138:

(1)   A: i mean would you prefer me still to look through the other questions or d'you think we should just move on

A's illocutionary force is that of a query, since she is inquiring of C and K whether or not they would like her to look through other essays of theirs. However, she admitted in an interview that her perlocutionary intention was for C and K to accept a move to something else without her having to look through their other essays. She did not signal this intention directly, but gave them a choice so as not to impose on them (which is part of a socio-culturally accepted principle of politeness). The perlocutionary intent of her utterance is an important factor. A repeats her question three times in the hope that C and K will change their minds, or at least realise that she does not want to check the other essays in their exam scripts, and withdraw their request. Her perlocutionary intent influences the direction of the conversation as follows: this is already the second time that she has asked about this point (she first asks about it in turn 132 on page 165 of Appendix III) and later she even asks it a third time (in turn 142 on page 166). To ignore her perlocutionary intent in all three of these occurrences would be to fail to account adequately for the flow of this part of the conversation.

Speakers often have to signal a specific aspect of the <u>organisation</u> of a conversation in which they are engaged. This is frequently achieved by means of 'metacommunicative function markers' (Stubbs 1983), which are lexical markers signalling to a hearer what activity is being engaged in, or how the speaker intends a specific move to fit into the overall organisation of a particular conversation. An example of this is found in interview 1, where A, in an attempt to bring the conversation back to continue the discussion of a point raised earlier in turn 115 (see pp. 150–151 of Appendix III), uses the metacommunicative function marker "anyway" in turn 138:

(2)   115 A: well em how about ... (2 secs) if for your next essay

        116 D: mhm

        ....

        ....

138 A: oh well <u>anyway</u> let's just think first of all on the idea

Intentions relating to <u>thematic progression</u> are also marked in particular ways. For example, topic setting devices are frequently used to signal the intention of starting a new topic, or indicating a change of topic, or warning a hearer that a digression follows. Such metacommunicative function markers as "by the way", "for example", "what I wanted to say was", are some examples. An utterance like:

(3)   I'm going to be the devil's advocate now
        (Constructed)

may be taken as a warning to the speaker's addressees that s/he will take a particular stance on the issue at hand, and will thus select and present his/her propositions in a specific way. It is not a statement of illocutionary intention, but rather of intention with regard to propositional and overall thematic development.

Although illocutionary and perlocutionary force are themselves interpersonal in nature, there are other intentions related to <u>interpersonal development</u> which are also signalled in the language form. Markers of social status and relative distance include terms of address, relative formality of style, and prosodic cues such as the avoidance of tones which are usually only employed by participants of higher status.

All this is not to deny that speech acts are part of the analysis of conversation, since they are clearly present. However, this section has shown that it is important for the analyst not to decide in abstract what units of behaviour carry major speech acts. Further, the inadequacy of merely considering illocutionary intentions to the exclusion of perlocutionary effect and intentions relating to the organisational, propositional and interpersonal development of a conversation, has been emphasised. (The nature of the intentions discussed in this section will be investigated further during the course of this and the next chapter (and particularly in section 3.3 of chapter 3.)

2.1.2 Speech acts are signalled primarily by performative verbs

The second main inadequacy of speech act theory is that speech acts are said to be signalled primarily by performative verbs, either overt or covert, and hence to be explainable in terms of them. It is of course true that when a performative verb is present in an utterance it may represent the illocutionary force of that utterance. For example,

(4)   I promise I'll come
         (Constructed)

clearly constitutes a promise.

Speech act theory makes a further claim: that even when no performative verb exists, it is possible to postulate an implicit performative. That is to say, one can either insert a performative verb which will clarify what action is being performed (i.e. what the illocutionary force is), or one can leave it implicit. Compare example 4 with:

(5)   I will come
         (Constructed)

which can also constitute a promise in a certain context.

There are, however, cases in which the presence or absence of a performative verb can significantly change its force. Compare, for instance,

(6)   (a) What's the time?
         and
         (b) I'm asking you what the time is
         (Constructed)

While the illocutionary force of both (a) and (b) may be said to be a query, the perlocutionary force may be quite different. The desired effect of (a) might be to obtain information about the time of day, while that of (b) might be to attract the addressee's attention (to the speaker's previous attempt to elicit a response) by means of re-proffering the question, because s/he has previously failed to respond. Moreover, example 6 above, could in a certain context, constitute a threat, while remaining a query.

This question of performative verbs will not be entered into in depth here, but the main point is that the setting up of abstract rules about the nature

and function of speech acts is not an adequate means by which an analyst can discover what is happening in a conversation. If we are to gain a more complete picture of conversation as interaction, by way of speaker intentions, the units of behaviour which carry major speech acts (using the term speech act in its broadest sense to mean any utterance with a clear intention) cannot be defined by performative verbs alone, and can in any case not be decided upon in vacuo. Rather, these units can only be defined according to their function in context.

2.1.3 Context is seen as the static backdrop to an interaction

The third weakness of speech act models of dialogue relates to the understanding and application of the notion "context". A major failure resulting from the limitations of the analyst's perspective is that context is seen as being static. This is because an analyst only attempts to make sense of a conversation after it has already taken place.

Context is only invoked by speech act theorists when a remedial measure is necessary to clarify a complication, such as when an ambiguity or misunderstanding has arisen. Context has been characterised as the social and linguistic setting of an utterance. This definition has obviously grown out of the preconceived rigid frame of speech act theory: it is a static view which, it is claimed, is generalisable to account for all situations. However, although some aspects of context, such as the age and sex of the participants, are given, context is not static nor taken as given by the participants in a conversation. Instead, along with theme, it is constructed by a process of negotiation between the participants involved in a conversation. According to speech act theory, the illocutionary force of an utterance is associated primarily with conventional procedure and is considered determinate. Perlocutionary force, on the other hand, is said to be highly context-bound. The following example illustrates that both seem to be context-bound:

(7)   Shoot her!
        (Levinson 1983, p.236)

As Levinson points out:

> ... one may say of this utterance that, in appropriate circumstances, it had the illocutionary force of, variously, ordering, urging, advising the addressee to shoot her; but the perlocutionary effect of persuading, forcing, or frightening the addressee into shooting her (Levinson 1983, pp.236-7) (emphasis mine).

The notion "context" is not very easy to define, and yet it is an important concept for this study. An attempt to arrive at a working definition of context is made in section 2.3 below.

2.1.4 Taking the indeterminacy of language use into account.

It emerges from the above discussion that the three weaknesses of speech act theory are related to one central problem: that this theory, and the models which are based upon it, are wholly dependent on the analyst's perspective of a conversation.

By limiting interpretation to the analyst's judgement as to what is happening, the whole study of conversations is biased. The analyst's perspective is surely secondary to the perspectives of the participants, since many aspects of the context of a conversation are only interpretable by the participants within a local context. Interaction involves a process of the interlocking of the goals of different individuals in such a way as to generate sequences of highly co-ordinated and interdependent acts (Levinson 1983). It is crucial, therefore, for interactants to be able somehow to reconstruct the hierarchy of goals of the other participants in a conversation, which can only really be done by participants themselves. Even then the participants themselves cannot be absolutely certain about speaker intention or about the adequacy of their own response. Each step is a risk and is a part of the complex process of discovering the other's aims and strategies on the one hand, and communicating one's own on the other, in a process of synchronous negotiation.

Nevertheless, participants must naturally follow some commonly accepted procedure of inference in order to achieve synchronous negotiation. In all interaction two basic assumptions are held by the participants: firstly, that the speaker has certain intentions or goals in mind (be they illocutionary, perlocutionary, or related to the overall development), and, secondly, that s/he expects the hearer to understand the force of his/her utterance by understanding the pragmatic implications of the semantic content. That is to say, a speaker expects a hearer to be able to infer information which has not been explicitly supplied, but has been implied by means of explicitly supplied information as well as other explicit cues to the speaker's intention.

The process of making inferences about the other's full "communicative intent" (Leech 1983) (which includes his/her propositional meaning, intentions

and also how each utterance fits into the fulfillment of his/her overall aim), and responding appropriately, is guided by certain controlling principles which have been socio-culturally established and should to a large extent be shared by the participants in a conversation.

Grice's (1981) Co-operative Principle and his related theory of implicature play a major role in the interpretative process. Grice claims that usually a speaker means more by an utterance than the semantic content of the linguistic form uttered. The question he tries to answer in his theory is how a hearer recognises a speaker's full intent. His answer involves the kinds of inference called "implicatures" (Grice 1981).

Conversational implicatures are not based on semantic inferences (as is semantic content) but rather on both the semantic content of what is said and some specific assumptions about the co-operative nature of ordinary verbal interaction, which are shared by participants in a successful conversation.

Grice postulates four basic maxims which guide the way an interaction is conducted. These four maxims, which make up what he calls the "Co-operative Principle" (CP), are adapted from Grice by Leech (1983, p.8) as follows:

QUANTITY: Give the right amount of information: i.e.
1. Make your contribution as informative as is required.
2. Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

QUALITY: Try to make your contribution one that is true: i.e.
1. Do not say what you believe to be false.
2. Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

RELATION: Be relevant.

MANNER: Be perspicuous: i.e.
1. Avoid obscurity of expression.
2. Avoid ambiguity.
3. Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity).
4. Be orderly.

Let us consider an example to illustrate one of these maxims, the maxim of quantity:

(8)   The flag is white.

        (Levinson 1983, p.106)

Since no further information is given here about other colours in the flag, the statement implies that the flag in question has no other colours, and is thus completely white. If it turns out that there are other colours on this flag, the speaker of (8) can rightly be said to have made a misleading statement.

Implicatures come in when one of the above maxims is clearly flouted. For instance, if example (8) were uttered in a situation where the hearer knew that the flag did contain other colours apart from white, s/he would realise that the maxim of quantity had been violated. S/he would then hypothesise what the speaker might be implying by breaking this maxim, because frequently a speaker disobeys one maxim in order to obey a "higher principle" (Leech 1983). In this case, the speaker may not know what other colours are on the flag, but at least knows it includes white. S/he may be violating the quantity maxim so as to avoid telling an untruth, and hence break the quality maxim.

<div align="center">* * *</div>

In this section, it was shown that a speech act approach to the analysis of dialogue is inadequate, mainly because it makes no attempt to account for the dynamic and strategic nature of conversational interaction. This thesis proposes a framework which does try to take the nature of conversation into account. The remainder of this chapter provides the theoretical foundations of my framework for the description of conversation.

2.2 UNITS FOR ANALYSIS

The purpose of this section is to define the basic units of analysis employed throughout this thesis. The units of analysis are mainly those of the "turn" (Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson 1974), the "move" (Sinclair and Coulthard 1975) and the "exchange" (ibid.). An exchange consists of at least two turns, which themselves consist of at least one move each. These three terms can perhaps best be illustrated by means of an extended example.

(9)   (The scene is immediately outside a magistrate's court.)

        1   Paul: Geoff

        2   Geoff: Hello, Paul

3   Paul: I thought I'd catch you before you went into court
             have you a moment

4   Geoff: Sure.   The magistrate is always late

5   Paul: You remember that case where a woman sued her
             husband for theft – stealing her jewels

6   Geoff: Think I do.   Yes, I represented her husband

7   Paul: Good.   Now here's something interesting.   The man's
             name was Smith

8   Geoff: Yes, that's right

9   Paul: In the paper this morning there's a Smith arrested at
             Jan Smuts who was caught ══

     Geoff: ══ mhm ══

9   Paul: ══ by a customs man with a diamond in his shoe

10   Geoff: How many Smiths are there in the world

11   Paul: Wait a minute.   When he was asked where the
             diamonds came from he said ══

12   Geoff: ══ What are you doing during lunch.

13   Paul: Nothing in particular

14   Geoff: I'm sorry, but I think this could take some time, and I
             must go to court.   How about meeting over lunch to
             discuss this

15   Paul: Okay.   See you at the cafeteria at 1 o'clock

16   Geoff: Yes. That would be nice.   Okay.

(Adapted from Lanham 1984: personal communication)

The category turn denotes the opportunity for a participant in a conversation to assume the role of speaker at a particular point. It also refers to what is actually said or done during the time for which the speaker role is continuously held by an individual participant. In example (9) each new turn is numbered as such. There are 16 turns in the extract cited. Turns are clearly marked off as such in that a speaker starts to speak usually employing a high voice pitch, and ends his/her turn by lowering his/her pitch significantly, or by selecting the next speaker overtly. In turn 3 Paul overtly selects Geoff as the next speaker by asking him a direct question.

A move may be defined as the smallest significant element by which a conversation is developed. It is characterised by having a value in terms of

the interpersonal, thematic or organisational development of a conversation. That is to say, it exhibits some intention, in the broadest sense (outlined in 2.2.1 above). In example (9), every move exhibits some illocutionary intention. For instance, in turn 4 Geoff is accepting Paul's invitation to enter into a conversation with him.

But a move is not always identical to a turn, as it is in turns 3 and 4 above. In turn 7, for instance, two very different moves are made. When Paul says "good", he is merely acknowledging that Geoff has understood what he is talking about, and has given him (Paul) the go-ahead. He is signalling an organisational intention: to accept the previous utterance. In the second part of turn 7, when he says "Now here's something interesting" he is signalling a propositional intention. In fact, he is drawing Geoff's attention to an important point he is about to make, so this move functions as a topic-focusing device. In the final move in turn 7, Paul actually moves the topic forward by giving the name of the man arrested. This move clearly exhibits the illocutionary force of providing information.

Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) classify moves into three different types: opening, answering and follow-up. Paul's first move in turn 7 constitutes an answering move since it responds to Geoff's previous move. Paul's second move in turn 7 is an opening move in that it prepares Geoff for what Paul is about to tell him, and his third move is a following-up move since it is developing the topic as introduced by himself in the previous move. An opening move may sometimes be purely a contact-making phatic utterance such as occurs in turns 1 and 2 of example (9).

In some cases, a move need not strictly constitute a turn at all. Geoff's "mhm" which overlaps momentarily with part of Paul's move in turn 9, is of organisational significance since it is providing feedback to Paul that he is being heard and understood, although it does not strictly constitute a turn.

An exchange consists of an interchange of at least two turns, which may themselves each consist of any number of moves. An exchange is recognised as such by its adherence to a single topic. There should be a thematic progression through an exchange. As soon as a shift in topic occurs, a new exchange has begun. In example (9) turns 1 – 11 constitute an exchange. When Geoff interrupts Paul, in turn 12, to make a lunch date during which to talk about the case Paul has raised, it seems as though a new exchange has begun, but this is not the case. This is an 'insertion sequence' (Levinson 1983). It constitutes a tangent from the central topic,

but is still related to it. Consider if in turn 14 Geoff were to ask Paul to a party that night instead of to lunch in order to discuss the case Paul had raised. This would constitute a new exchange, since there would be no topical coherence.

The different types of move do not necessarily each occur within a single turn. In turn 5 of example (9), Paul uses an opening move which has an intention related to thematic development, in that he is clarifying the topic which he wishes to talk about. In turn 6, there are two moves. The first move: "Think I do. Yes" constitutes an answering move, with an organisational intention, in that it is a response to the previous utterance. Its illocutionary force may be that of agreeing. The final move in turn 6: "I represented her husband" is clearly a follow-up move with the thematic intention of carrying the topic forward. At the same time, it has the illocutionary force of giving information, clarifying Geoff's own role in the case in question.

The term utterance as it is employed here does not refer to a unit of analysis, but it is used as a general term, referring to any uttering of a sentence or sentence-fragment in an actual context. It differs from a sentence in that a sentence is an abstract grammatical entity, while an utterance is the actual production of language in context.

The data in Appendix III has been numbered, in the same way as example (9), according to turns, and reference to it in this text will be to the relevant turns, and to moves within those turns.

In the following section the notion of context is defined in such a way as to fit into the proposed framework.

2.3 A WORKING DEFINITION OF CONTEXT

Context is a difficult notion to define, and the complexities of it seem to be generally avoided in the literature. I can do no more than give a broad characterisation of it.

Geoffrey Leech (1983) gives a very general account of context, when he says it consists of "any background knowledge assumed to be shared by the speaker and the hearer and which contributes to the hearer's interpretation of what the speaker means by a given utterance." The problem with this definition is that it is doubtful whether all background knowledge can be assumed shared by the speaker and the hearer; there are some aspects of an

individual's background and personality which can never be shared between a speaker and a nearer (even in the most intimate relationship) and which may nevertheless be important influencing factors in the hearer's interpretation of the speaker, as well as the speaker's intention(s) in producing an utterance. A lack of a shared understanding of a specific context can in fact cause a breakdown in the communication process, and could, if not repaired adequately, create more far-reaching difficulties for the participants concerned. The consequences can be particularly serious in cross-cultural situations.

In trying to move away from the analyst's intuitive viewpoint, it is perhaps more feasible to try and discover how context is experienced by participants themselves. Franck (1979) isolates two components of the context as perceived by participants. Firstly, there is the independently given context which is present in the minds of the participants. It is presupposed without any explicit reference being made to it. Aspects of the local conversational context might be included here (e.g., previous utterances which are responded to but seldom explicitly referred to). This is an important part of context, because the sequential location of an utterance (that is to say, the place of an utterance relative to the other utterances in a conversation) is often an important factor in the interpreting process. Other 'unchangeable' aspects of the context, such as the physical environment, and the sex, age and status of the participants may be included in this, although status may be negotiable in certain circumstances, or may be deliberately ignored. The second component of context perceived by a participant includes those aspects of context which become relevant and are taken into account because of implicit or explicit indicators to them in the utterances themselves. These may include assumptions about the background knowledge and about the social norms of the other. Social status may also become part of this second group once it has been brought into the discourse where it becomes negotiable. The relevance of these aspects of context can only be tested after the utterance is made, since utterances are interpretable only within their local context. Thus it is not possible to specify in advance exactly what aspects of the environment may be regarded as relevant by the participants in any given situation.

Context is, therefore, not a pre-existing, stable environment which is quite independent of an utterance. Like the theme, it is continually under construction. Context cannot be pre-existing, because an important part of its definition is that it exists in the minds of the participants and it is

their understanding of different aspects of the situation, and the previous interaction, which give it its relevance. That is why it has to be created by negotiation.

Chick (1984) cites Erickson and Schultz (1981) as claiming that the above-mentioned creation of contexts involves not only assessing what activity is being engaged in, but also what kind of relationship exists between participants (and hence what their respective rights and obligations are). It also involves assessing when the context begins to change. That is to say, participants are not always able to decide exactly at which moment the context has changed, but rather they sense that there is some change in the context and begin to infer certain expectations about what is occurring. After setting up a particular hypothesis about this, participants seek to validate their anticipations by using interpretative procedures with regard to what has occurred before (retrospectively) and what is expected to follow (prospectively). For instance, it frequently occurs in the lecturer/student interviews cited in Appendix III that the lecturer, A, switches from her role of teacher (in which she criticises aspects of a student's exam answers) to a less formal role of counsellor or even friend. A specific example of this is seen in interview 1 (on p.149 of Appendix III). After A has spent some time ascertaining D's motivation for coming to see her, she then assumes the role of counsellor in turn 101, after which a fairly long exchange follows about D's problems with her mother. Then, in turn 111, A again assumes her role as lecturer, as she begins to criticise D's scripts. D must continually be aware of these changes in the context, and theme, and adapt her own role at the same time (from student to counsellee and then back to student).

A participant's understanding of the context of the conversation in which s/he is involved is greatly influenced by his/her communicative competence. There appear to be three main components of communicative competence: linguistic competence (which may be achieved by a mastery of the grammatical structure of a language), discourse (textual) competence, and socio-cultural, or socio-pragmatic competence (which together make up a speaker's pragmatic competence: competence in language use in interaction in a particular context).

The relationship between discourse competence and socio-cultural competence has an important bearing on the participants' interpretations of the socio-pragmatic principles. In this sense the degree of synchrony in conversation may to some extent be related to the degree of similarity of

the socio-cultural environments of the participants. Thus a participant's understanding of the context is greatly influenced by his/her knowledge of the socio-pragmatic principles of communication. Different culture and language groups appear to interpret these principles differently. This research concentrates primarily on conversations between participants who are not of similar socio-cultural environments and who thus may have different interpretations of the rhetorical principles which guide the manner in which they conduct a conversation. Hence, possible differences in understanding of these principles may be the source of a great deal of the conversational problems experienced.

It will be seen later that the various socio-pragmatic principles of communication and their maxims may contradict one another in a specific situation, and whereas one maxim may be regarded by a particular socio-cultural group as being the most important, and needing to be adhered to at the cost of all the others, in another group a different maxim may take precedence. An anecdotal example of this may suffice here. A white first language SAE speaker has lost her way in her car, and stops to ask a black second language English speaker for direction to the place for which she is looking. After having received elaborate directions, and having been told that it is not very far away at all – just over the hill – she continues on her way. She finds to her dismay that, although she has followed the instructions exactly, she is nowhere near her destination, and that she is even more confused than she was previously. She is irritated and angry with the pedestrian who had helped her, and feels she has been cheated by a dishonest person who obviously had lied to her. The maxim of quality (the truth maxim) of the Co-operative Principle has been violated and this SAE speaker has been offended by it. The pedestrian, on the other hand, although not sure of the way herself, feels obliged to give a positive answer to the driver, since she regards it as extremely impolite to refuse to help someone in need. In this case, the politeness principle (that is to say, the principle that requires one not to inconvenience another person in any way) has taken priority over the maxim of quality. The consequences of such an encounter may be more far-reaching than merely resulting in a frustrated driver. If she were to stop and ask another speaker of Black South African English (BSAE), who was constrained by the Politeness Principle in a similar way to the first pedestrian, the same thing might occur. A repetition of such incidents feeds a stereotyped view such as that all black South Africans are dishonest. Such stereotyping can lead to serious broader social problems, particularly if the prejudiced person happens

to be in a gate-keeping position in society (determining job-allocation and social position), as a white upper middle class person in South Africa frequently is.

In order to summarise this attempt to define context, let us briefly consider van Dijk's (1977) understanding of context. It was mentioned above that a great many features of a situation are not relevant for the successful production or interpretation of an utterance, and a participant selects the relevant ones. Van Dijk (ibid.) regards context as an abstraction, both theoretically and cognitively, from the actual physical-biological situation. According to van Dijk's model, the first and most important step in the interpretation process is an analysis of the given context. Briefly, such an analysis involves five phases: (outlined by Keppler 1984)

(1) The identification of the general social context (e.g., level of formality).

(2) The identification of the specific social context (e.g., a student-lecturer interview, a casual meeting in the street).

(3) The identification of the relevant factors in the given context (e.g., social status, role, distance).

(4) The identification of conventions (social norms) pertaining to the context (e.g., ways of showing respect to a person of higher status).

(5) The identification of the overall ongoing action (the entire discourse preceding the utterance being interpreted).

A hearer's situated interpretation is thus guided and constrained by the increasingly specific knowledge frames activated by each of the above five phases of context-analysis, which the hearer matches against the contextualisation cues given in the relevant utterance (such as gesture, facial expression, prosodic features, lexical markers and syntactic form).

Conversational asynchrony can arise out of differences in the knowledge frames activated by each of the above five phases of context-analysis. If the speaker and hearer share a common socio-cultural background, these differences are probably minimal, and by means of negotiation and clarification, can be overcome. However, if participants do not share a common socio-cultural background, these differences in the perception of context can create major communicational difficulties.

The following section provides an overview of conversational interaction. It is not an attempt to reflect the actual occurrence of conversation in time and space, but is merely a tool with which to clarify some of the concepts touched on thus far, and to integrate them into the framework which follows.

2.4 THE PROCESS OF CONVERSATIONAL INTERACTION

There are three general stages in the interactive process:

I   the initial encounter with participants' motivations and awareness of context

II   the verbal interaction itself; and

III   the outcome (be it satisfactory or unsatisfactory).

I   Participants first encounter one another in a situation, before they begin to converse. Each participant has an aim which motivates and influences his/her conversational strategy (or plan of action).

II   This motivation leads to the interaction itself. Contrary to traditional understanding, conversational interaction is not spontaneous and unstructured (as, e.g., Chomsky [1976] claimed), but in fact exhibits a high degree of organisation. There is evidence of two distinct levels of organisation: that of the formal patterning of the language used; and that of the discourse structure. The former involves the realisation of language structure and the paradigmatic and syntagmatic choices made among particular linguistic entities. The latter involves the underlying structure of a discourse as a whole, and includes the negotiated development of the theme of the discourse, the interpersonal relationship and the context, and the organisational aspects of the discourse as it unfolds. There is also evidence of socio-cultural principles which constrain communicative behaviour, both on the level of interpersonal co-operation, and on the level of textual structure (such as the CP discussed in section 2.1.4).

Participants make inferences about a speaker's intention(s), attitude(s) and understanding of the context from the contextualisation cues provided in each utterance. It is not possible to set up an inventory

of these cues and their meanings, as they bear no one-to-one relation to any specific meaning or intention. Each interpretation (or construction) is made within its local context, and participants must bear their own and the other's relevant aim(s) and strategies in mind. For instance, the word "okay" appears twice in example (9) on page 15 above: once in turn 15, where it signals the illocutionary force of agreement, and again in turn 16, where it signals the organisational intention of terminating the conversation. The confidence participants have in each other's interpretative ability seems to derive from the knowledge that all participants are observing particular principles of "good communicative behaviour", which are derived socially and culturally, and hence shared by members of a common socio-cultural background. These principles are termed socio-pragmatic principles. (The CP has already been touched on in section 2.1.4 above, and section 3.4 explains these principles further.)

III   The <u>outcome</u> of this very complex network of contextualisation cues and negotiated discourse structure, constrained and guided by socio-pragmatic principles, is a <u>conversation</u>. It has a structure and contains a central theme, and may or may not ultimately achieve the overall aims of the participants (either wholly or partly, since, through the negotiation process participants with clashing aims would need to make certain compromises).

We are involved here with conversation as a <u>problem-solving</u> activity. The problem is one of communicating through language. The tools available for arriving at a solution are the language form, discourse conventions influencing the language form, and socio-pragmatic principles which guide the communicative behaviour.

2.5. INTERACTION AS A PROBLEM-SOLVING ACTIVITY

Leech (1983) outlines the problem-solving activity of conversation as follows. From the <u>speaker's point of view</u>, the problem is one of <u>planning</u>. It is a question of how to achieve one's overall aim or goal. In order to do this the speaker must achieve some change in the psychological state of the hearer so that the hearer's response(s) may contribute to the attainment of the speaker's goal. The way the speaker goes about doing this is dependent on the conversational strategy s/he has chosen. Leech (p.36) cites the following example: if the speaker is cold, and wishes to warm up, s/he may

request the hearer to turn the heater on.   This could be viewed in terms of a means-end analysis[2] as follows:

Figure (i):   Initial state 1 .... ⟨3⟩ Final state
(s. is cold)   (s. warms up)

Action A   Action B
(s. asks h. to switch   (h. switches the
the heater on)   heater on)

2⟩

Intermediate state
(h. knows that s. wants h.
to switch the heater on)
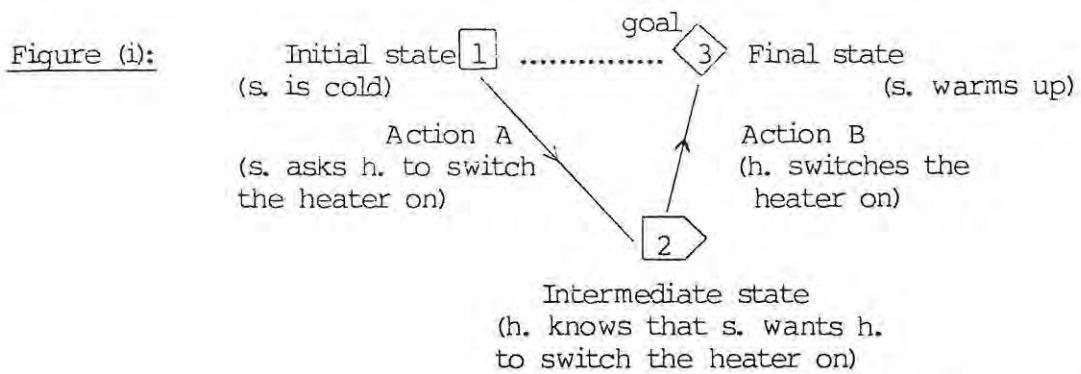
This problem-solving activity is not a drawn out, carefully reflected, process, but a rapid and highly automatised one.   Naturally the process can become a great deal more complicated, depending on how much the speaker says explicitly and how much is left implied which the hearer is required to infer.   An example of such a case might be:

Figure (ii):   Initial state 1   goal
(s. is cold)   .... ⟨4⟩ Final state
(s. warms up)

Action A   Action C
(s. tells h. that s.   (h. switches the
is cold)   heater on)

2⟩————————→ 3⟩

Intermediate state   Action B   Intermediate state
(h. knows that s. is   (s. tells h.   h. understands that
cold)   to switch on   s. wants the
the heater)   heater on)
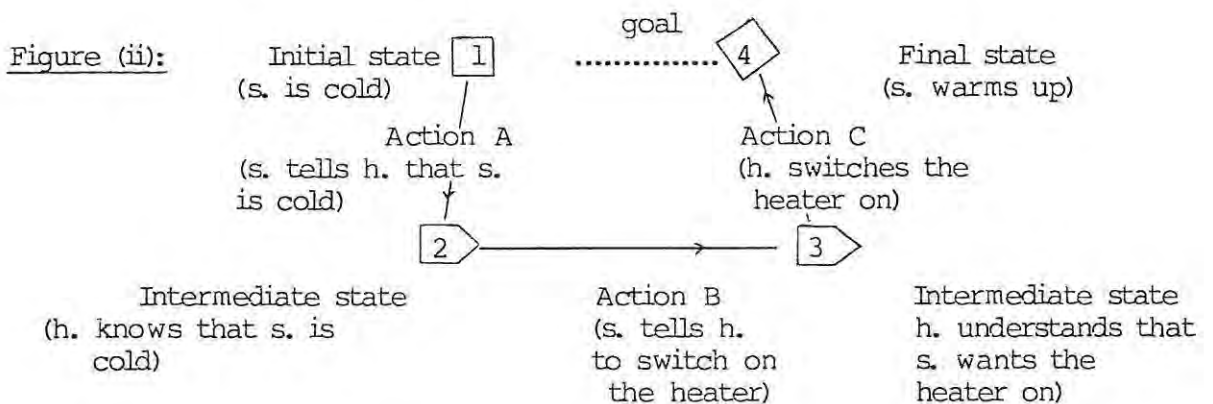
This model is actually _recursive_, since at any appropriate point, the hearer could assume a turn at talk in order to inquire something of the original speaker.   In the above example, before action B takes place, the hearer may inquire of the original speaker whether s/he wants the heater on.   The structure of this insertion sequence can be represented thus:

Figure (iii):

Other goals

Initial state
(s. wants to
know if h.
wants the
heater on)

goal

Final state
(Feeds into intermediate
state 3 in original
sequence
-s. [original h.]
knows that h. [orig. s.]
wants the heater on)

Action A
(s. asks h. if h. wants
the heater on)

Action B
(h. tells s. that
h. wants the heater on)
FURTHER
RECURSION

Intermediate state
(h. knows that s. wants to
know if h. wants the heater on)
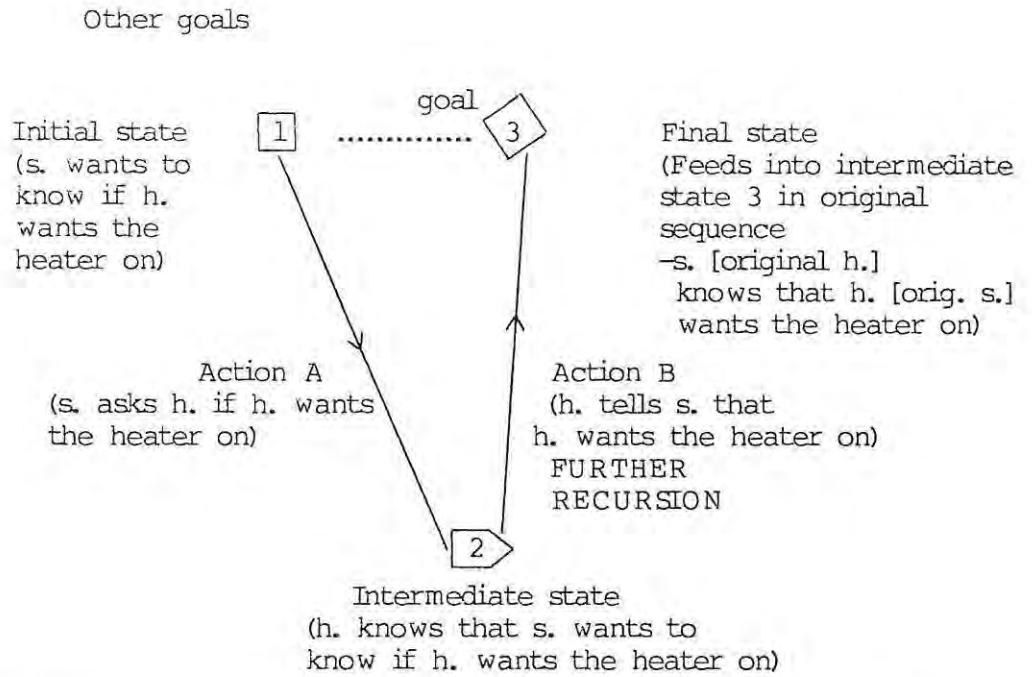
From the hearer's point of view, the process is an heuristic one. The
hearer must try to identify the pragmatic force of an utterance by forming
an hypothesis about it and then checking it against contextual evidence.
(That is to say s/he must answer not only the question "what does the
utterance mean?", but also "what does the speaker mean by this
utterance?".) Inferences are made from both the semantic content of the
speaker's utterance and the relevant aspects of the context. (This process
of hypothesis-formation is guided by the assumption that the speaker is
obeying the socio-pragmatic principles.)

1. Problem ——┬— 2. Hypothesis —— 3. Check —— 4. Interpret
  └ Inferencing   Test succeeds
                                                (default
                                                interpretation)
                      Test Fails
(Leech ibid., p.41)
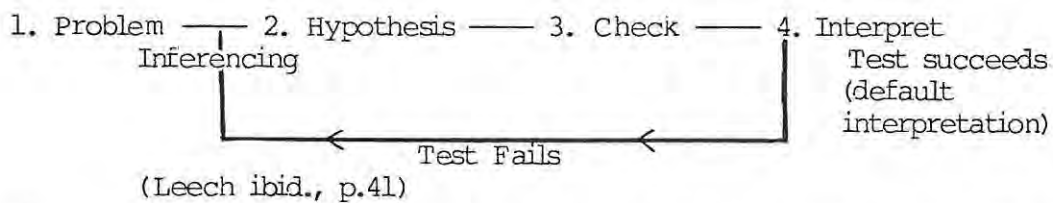
If an interpretation is straightforward and the test succeeds, the
interpretation is accepted in default of any evidence to the contrary. If
the test fails, the process of hypothesis-formation and testing begins again.
(Incidentally, this is the approach an analyst should adopt as well, using as
a check the interpretation of the hearer as well as interpretations obtained
from outsiders to the interaction.)

According to this approach to the communication process, there is no need
for specific illocutionary rules in order to understand individual speech acts.
Instead, the speech acts and other intentions can be worked out by means

of inferences guided and constrained by socio-pragmatic principles of communicative behaviour. If the default interpretation fails (if a conversational maxim is flouted) a hearer looks for a likely interpretation by means of a set of implicatures (in the Gricean sense of implied meaning to be inferred from explicitly stated information). As Leech (1983, p.34) puts it, it is a case of "genuine human intelligence assessing alternate probabilities based on contextual evidence".

<p style="text-align: center">* * *</p>

In this chapter I have outlined <u>conversation as an interactional activity</u> which involves moment-by-moment decisions by participants engaged in a process of negotiation about the thematic significance and context of each utterance as it comes into play, while they are engaged in a co-operative process of constructing both the theme of a conversation and the context in which they are interacting. The following chapter consists of an explication of my proposed framework for analysis. It is not original, and its general validity is as yet unexplored. It is merely an attempt to consolidate (for the purposes of this research project) the many differing approaches to conversational analysis.

CHAPTER 3: THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: A PROPOSAL

Before launching into the heart of this discussion it might be helpful to summarise what it is that I am investigating.

The two main aims of this chapter, are:

(i)   to discover how, and by what devices (contextualisation cues), conversational inferences are made, and

(ii)   to identify some of the underlying principles which guide each participant's "situated interpretation" (Gumperz and Herasimchuk 1975) of every utterance produced during a conversation.

These aims are derived from my view of conversation as interactive communicative behaviour, guided by fundamental pragmatic principles so that interlocutors are able to understand each other.

In order for a conversation to be successful, a theme must be co-operatively established and sustained until an appropriate moment, when a change of theme must be clearly indicated. Participants must co-operate in this process. That is to say, while the participants in a conversation must have their own intentions in a particular interaction, they must also continually make inferences from the cues given in the language of each other's utterances as to each other's meaning and intention, so as to be able to respond appropriately (and possibly adapt their own aim or strategy of conversational interaction). In order to do this, they must take account of the background assumptions and knowledge which form their own interpretative frame, as well as those which the other(s), are bringing to the conversation. Further they must consider the situational context and discourse history, and also the influence they would like their utterance to have on the future discourse.

It is hoped that in the process of moving towards achieving the two above-mentioned aims a framework can be set up within which an adequate analysis of the data will be possible. This analysis will lead to hypotheses about the nature of the conversational asynchrony revealed in the relevant data.

3.1 THE OVERALL ORGANISATION OF A CONVERSATIONAL INTERACTION

As was mentioned in section 2.4, there appear to be two distinct levels of organisation within an interaction: that of the formal patterning of the language used, and that of the discourse structure. The former involves the physical representation of the paradigmatic and syntagmatic choices made within linguistic systems. The latter involves the underlying discourse structure of a conversational interaction as a whole. It includes controlling principles underlying the patterning of conversational exchanges and the maintenance of theme, interrelating of parts of the discourse and establishing interpersonal relationship(s) (all of which operate in a way which takes the context into account). In order to introduce the various aspects of the overall organisation of conversational interaction, a diagrammatic overview is provided overleaf (Table I).

First the formal patterning (3.2) and then the discourse structure (3.3) are considered. The nature of the socio-pragmatic principles mentioned in 2.4, and the way in which they constrain the manner in which a conversational interaction develops within a specific context are investigated in 3.4.

TABLE I: The overall organisation of a conversational interaction

Formal Patterning
(Realisation of the discourse structure through language)

Physical representation of Contextualisation Cues	
Non-Verbal Acts	Verbal Acts
a. Gesture b. Facial Expression c. Bodily action	Utterances produced in obedience to grammatical rules on the levels of: a. Semantics b. Lexis c. Syntax d. Segmental Phonology e. Prosody

Discourse (Text) Structure
(Underlying Component Principles of an interaction)

Organisational Development	Propositional Development	Interpersonal Development
a. Sequencing rules and overall organisation	a. Information structure	a. Social goals
b. Turn-taking mechanisms	b. Topical coherence	b. Illocutionary goals (Illocutionary force and perlocutionary effect)

3.2 FORMAL PATTERNING

The formal patterning of an interaction consists of the actual physical representation of behaviour used in order to communicate. While it must be acknowledged that nonverbal behavioural acts are vital components of an interaction as a whole, these are beyond the scope of this study,[1] although they will be touched on where relevant and feasible. What is included here are the linguistic systems of semantics, syntax, segmental phonology and prosody. (Nevertheless, where relevant and feasible, the significance of non-linguistic phenomena will be touched on.)

It is at the level of formal patterning that cues as to component parts of a discourse are found. There are three overall divisions of discourse structure, related to organisational, propositional and interpersonal development. Propositional development is the major focus of this study, but only insofar as it is related, through the organisational and interpersonal development, to the overall construction of a synchronous conversation. Propositional development can be studied at two levels: at the micro level, which involves understanding the interrelationships between propositions in the localised context, and at the level of macrotheme, which involves the construction of a running hypothesis as to the overall theme of a conversation at the same time as understanding propositional relationships. The macrotheme can be constructed by a process of establishing the conceptual hierarchy of topics making up the propositional content of a message from the linear representation of the language used in the formal patterning of a conversation. In order to do this, participants have to be aware of, firstly, the relative 'newness' of information, and secondly, the relative importance of an item of information at a particular point in the discourse. Cues as to the status of items of information in regard to 'newness' and in regard to importance are given within the formal patterning of a conversation.

The cues interlocutors provide for one another are termed "contextualisation cues" (Gumperz 1982). Gumperz defines contextualisation cues as marked usages (behavioural items) at various levels in the language used, including the syntactic, lexical, prosodic, paralinguistic levels, and the overall discourse structure and sequencing. These cues function to guide negotiation by signalling how participants understand what they are doing together, how the semantic content of a particular utterance is to be taken up, and how each utterance relates to the central theme as it is being co-operatively established. The adequacy of the contextualisation cues given in

the formal patterning determine the degree of comprehensibility of a message (i.e. how easy it is to understand).

All of the linguistic systems enter into utterances in a dual role: firstly they are there to realise the propositional content of an utterance, and secondly they provide the necessary contextualisation cues which serve as signals as to the relationship of a specific utterance to the immediately surrounding utterances and the overall discourse structure of an interaction. This is associated with comprehensibility. Comprehensibility, in turn, is related firstly to semantics (the propositional content of an utterance), and secondly to pragmatics (the interrelationships between propositions and the communicative value [Widdowson 1978] of propositions, or the relationship between an utterance and the context in which it occurs). However, not all the linguistic systems are equally involved in pragmatic meaning, as will be seen later in this section.

Comprehensibility in conversation often depends on the ability to handle redundancy in a language. It is for this reason that frequently many of the linguistic systems converge in order to clarify relationships between propositions, and between propositions and their broader contexts. Consider the following example, taken from interview 1 (D and A are both native speakers of SAE):

(1)   122 D: ... i've actually got a psycho (essay) that em our we

          were supposed to hand in today but our tutor gave us

          an ⌈ extr little extra ==

       123 A:== ⌊ mm⌈ who is your

       124 D: ⌊ so i haven't ... gavin ivey

       125 A: °good °old °gavin

       126 D: h ((laughs)) an' he said to us don't hurry don't hurry

          you know⌈ take your time

       127 A: ⌊ || p d'you know $\underline{WHY}$ || p 'cause he's got

          T W O essays of his $\underline{OWN}$ to write hh ((laughs)) ||

From the propositional content of the first part of turn 122, coupled with the collocational expectancy set up by the phrase "gave us an", A can predict that the next word would be "extension" or another word with a similar meaning. Further, in terms of morpho-phonology, the use of the

determiner "an" rather than "a" sets up the expectation that the following word will begin with a vowel. The semantics of the word "but" also prepares A for the fact that the expectations set up in what D has just said (that she was supposed to have handed her essay in that day) are to be contradicted. A thus uses her knowledge of the meaning of the logical connector "but" plus the beginning of the phrase "gave us an" to predict what will come up, and to respond to it before D has even completed her turn. In the same way, in turn 124, D answers A's question without A having ever completed it by adding the word "tutor" in turn 123. Again, an understanding of what has been talked about up to this point, together with just the first part of the question is enough for A to predict what will come up, and then respond to it correctly.

This tendency for participants to interrupt one another appears to be related to the degree of predictability associated with information to come. Once a hearer has heard enough to be able to predict what will follow, and, if the prediction is correct, an interruption does not affect conversational synchrony. But if interruptions occur before a speaker feels s/he has said what s/he had wished to communicate, this is regarded as an impolite or inconsiderate interruption, by someone who has not even heard what the speaker had to say. Both A and D indicated in a questionnaire that they did not feel they had been rudely interrupted in either turns 122 and 123, or turns 123 and 124.

The manner in which the contexualisation cues converge to facilitate comprehension can be most obviously seen in this example in turn 127. A puts a special emphasis on the reason why D's tutor so readily gave her an extension for her essay, by both a syntactic signal, preposing her reason with a rhetorical question, and a prosodic signal, assigning focal stress to the words "WHY" and "OWN". "WHY" is also given high pitch, in order to set up the imminent contrast between the tutor's own essay, which was overdue, and D's essay, which is also overdue.

A's syntactic cues also obey the Textual (Processibility) Principle that speakers should structure their utterances in such a way as to facilitate their hearer's understanding by clarifying both the relationship of their utterances to the context as well as indicating the degree of prominence of certain parts of their utterances. A starts her turn by clarifying in advance that she will give a reason for the generosity shown by D's tutor. Moreover, by asking this rhetorical question, A highlights the reason she gives by drawing particular attention to it.

Specific aspects of the rule systems of formal patterning and their functions as contextualisation cues are discussed below. The role of prosody in signalling discourse structure is examined in more depth than that of lexical semantics, syntax and phonology. This is firstly, because this research aims to focus particularly on the role of prosody in establishing conversational synchrony, and secondly, because it is my contention that prosodic features actually play a more important role in conversational synchrony than other linguistic systems, which is evidenced by the fact that errors on this level appear to create the more serious communication difficulties. While some aspects of lexical semantics are also important contextualisation cues, this is well known, while the role of prosody has been largely overlooked in studies on error and error gravity in English.

3.2.1 Semantics and the lexicon

Semantics essentially involves the study of propositional meaning. The understanding of propositional content is seldom a problem[2], since context usually helps participants work out propositional meaning or disambiguate potential ambiguities. The misunderstanding of the semantic content of a proposition usually has its origin in misuse related to other rule systems, as will be illustrated in the discussion under phonology below.

Nevertheless, several lexical items do have important functions as contextualisation cues, particularly lexical cohesion devices such as logical connection, ellipsis and demonstrative reference. The logical connector "but", as used in turn 122 of example (1) above, is one such item. Logical connectors characteristically have no inherent propositional content, but merely serve to indicate the relationship of the following part of an utterance to that part which preceded the connector. This was the case with the word "but" in turn 122 above, where it served to indicate that the second part of the utterance would contradict the expectations set up by the first part (in that, although there was a deadline for the completion of a particular essay, this was in fact extended). Ellipsis is a common cohesion device in spoken English which refers to the omission of lexical items from an utterance. Only such items as are replaceable may be omitted. Hence, a speaker may only omit items of information that s/he is certain are part of the shared background knowledge of all the participants. This is most obvious in answers to questions, for example (interview 1):

(2)   5   A: ok where are you living in grahamstown

        6   D: adamson house

c.f.   6(a)   D: i am living in adamson house in grahamstown

where D did not need to repeat the whole sentence, as in turn 6(a).   Other examples of the use of lexical items as contextualisation cues will be mentioned below, such as deixis, filled pauses, contact makers, lexical substitution, and markers of turn boundaries.

One important area of semantics which has implications for the process of the co-operative construction of theme and context in conversation is in answers to yes/no questions.   Consider the following example:

(3)   1.   A: Haven't you brought your scripts

         2(a)   B: No. (I haven't).   [SAE response]

c.f.   2(b)   B: Yes. (I haven't).   [BSAE response]

         (Constructed)

In turn 2(a), the propositional meaning comments directly on the truth of the real-world event identified in A's question (turn 1).   In 2(b) the response is a comment on the truth of A's proposition (in other words: "you are right in what you say, I have not brought my exam scripts").   The ways participants may understand the meanings of the two responses has important consequences for the propositional development of a conversation. (Turn 2[a] exhibits the acceptable response in SAE, and 2[b], which is typical of a BSAE response, is a result of the transference of African mother tongue conventions into English.)

3.2.2 Syntax

Errors of sentence grammar are frequently not significant in the maintenance of conversational synchrony, especially in conversations between one first language (L1) and one second language (L2) speaker (since L1 speakers often make allowances for problems exhibited by L2 speakers). However, there are some aspects of syntax which are important, particularly with regard to information structure, relative prominence of units of information and establishing the relationships between propositions.

Information structure relates to the relative 'givenness' and 'newness' of the information presented in an utterance.   Given information is information that has either appeared in previous propositions or is assumed to be part of shared background knowledge.   New information, on the other hand, refers to an item of information introduced for the first time.   An item of information may be regarded as salient either if it is new (in the above

sense), or if it is an item of given information which, by being brought back into a conversation, is focused, thus giving it a specific relationship to the other propositions. In English, salience can be indicated by sentence structure. New or focused information is usually situated rightmost, while given information occurs leftmost. However, this order is sometimes violated in order to give prominence to a particular element for a specific purpose. This is achieved by certain foregrounding transformations which take an item of information out of its predictable position (leftmost for given information and rightmost for new information). For instance it is frequently fronted as in the case of fronting transformations. Other means of syntactically signalling a salient item of information include the clefting transformation, for example:

(4)   It is me who is to blame
        (Constructed)

topicalisation, for example:

(5)   Journalism: it's my favourite subject
        (Constructed)

and passivisation, which may also function to downplay certain information. This is the case in the following example, which is an extract from an SABC radio newscast:

(5)   "The Kannemeyer Commission of Inquiry was told yesterday that the
        police had every right to act the way they did in Langa"
        (from Radio Today, 2nd May 1985)

In this extract the person responsible for the statement to the commission is not named. It was in fact the Deputy Commissioner of the South African Police Force. Transformational ellipsis is another syntactic device which is related to information structure and relative salience of information (and hence affects the co-operative process of theme and context construction). Both syntactic and lexical ellipsis occur frequently in conversation.

There are further syntactic rules which have implications for the overall structure of an interaction, and for success in communication. The use of the articles "the" and "a", for instance, is a case in point. Use of the definite article "the" often implies that the noun which it precedes is an item of given information, or at least is assumed to be so. For example,

let us return to example (9) in chapter 2, the encounter between Paul and Geoff outside the magistrate's court

(7)   5   Paul: You remember that case where a woman sued her husband for theft – stealing her jewels

        6   Geoff: Think I do. Yes, I represented her husband

        7   Paul: Good. Now here's something interesting. The man's name was Smith

In turn 7, Paul can use the definite article "the" to refer to the man in question, because he has already been referred to in the previous discourse.

Notice here also two examples of the use of lexical cohesion rules in creating the physical unity of structured discourse. Lexical substitution has taken place in turn 7, where Paul uses the word "man" to refer to the previously-mentioned "husband". Secondly, the demonstrative "that" is employed in turn 5. It is deictic in this case as it is referring to a particular case which is known to both Geoff and Paul, and is thus identifying it as an item of shared knowledge in order for it to be discussed here. Pronominalisation and the use of demonstrative reference also function in order to establish the cohesion of the discourse structure of a conversation.

3.2.3 Phonology

Consider the following example taken from a recording of an informal conversation between A, a native SAE speaker who is the lecturer in all the interviews in my data, and Kh, one of her students, who is a BSAE speaker. The conversation has been about A and Kh's various siblings and how they related to them.

(8)   A: || r are you NICE || p to your SISter ||

        Kh: || p JA: h ((laughs)) ||

        A: || r BOTH MY brothers || p are BULL ies ||

        Kh: || p POLice || p WHERE are your BROthers in the POLice ||

Example (8) is an instance of communication breakdown resulting from misinterpretation at the lexical level. The word "bullies" was understood as "police". This lexical misinterpretation, in turn, was a result of Kh's insensitivity to phonological stress assignment in English which is assigned

by rule to the leftmost syllable in the word "bullies" but to the final syllable in the word "police". Kh's misunderstanding of A might have been compounded by the fact that speakers of African languages tend to hear the English [b] as [p].

Example (8) illustrates two points: firstly, the interrelationship between lexical and phonological cues, and secondly, the importance of phonology as a cue. A mishearing on the level of the sound system led Kh to misunderstand A's propositional meaning, which led to serious thematic asynchrony in the conversation. However, errors on the segmental phonological level are not often serious obstacles to communication, unless the phonological error results directly in a lexical misinterpretation, as it did above. Moreover, lexical misinterpretations are frequently not problematic because the meaning of a particular word may easily be worked out from the context in which it appears. The reason why phonology and the lexicon played a role in the miscommunication illustrated in example (8) above, was that Kh could not establish A's meaning from the context (which merely consisted of a digression from a conversation about study problems to talk about sibling relationships). As mentioned above, this instance of misinterpretation did constitute an important communication breakdown. It created thematic asynchrony (in that the topic of sibling relationships was cut short, and a new one introduced) which had to be repaired later. It also severely hampered the interpersonal development of the interaction, since the possibility of A's apparent involvement with the police could have caused Kh to distrust her. (This is a particularly thorny subject in South Africa, where many blacks in particular have extremely negative attitudes towards the police and anyone associated with the police.) This moment of serious miscommunication in fact almost led to a severe breakdown in the relationship between the lecturer and student concerned which was still in its tentative beginning stages.

3.2.4 Prosody

There is evidence of two types of stress in the English sound system. Firstly there is that which is assigned by phonological rule and functions to clarify lexical meaning and syntactic relations, termed 'accent' here (illustrated in [8] above). Secondly, there is the type of stress which is selected during the encoding process and is communicatively significant in that it is part of the moment by moment decision-making process as to the propositional, organisational and interpersonal development within the discourse structure of a conversation, referred to as 'prominence' here.

While both types of stress are part of the prosody of a language, only the latter has a pragmatic function and is involved in the structuring of discourse. The term prosody is used in this thesis to refer to those aspects of the sound system which have a discourse function.

An important function of prominence is to set up a contrast. In example (8) above the prominence of the word "my" serves to set up a contrast between Kh's relationship with his sister (which is 'nice') and the relationship of A's brothers to A (which is not very 'nice'). Prominence can fall on words in any category, and it overrides accent. The only restriction is that its use be communicatively meaningful, and particularly that it contribute to topical coherence. While prominence is an important prosodic feature, it is only one of several. Prosody is comprised of loudness, tone, pitch and length, all of which interact to provide cues to discourse structure.

The major prosodic features will be explicated now in terms of the frame of analysis formulated by Brazil, Coulthard and Johns (1980). (The major points are outlined in Appendix II.) This framework has been found to be the most relevant for this research firstly because it attempts to take the communicative significance of intonation cues into account, and secondly because it assigns general meanings to the cues, from which their localised meanings can be derived at specific points in the discourse development of a conversation. Due to the fact that the analytical framework of Brazil et al. has grown out of a speech act model of discourse, it is primarily concerned with propositional development, topical coherence and macrotheme. Nevertheless, the general meanings assigned to prosodic features, defined primarily in terms of topical coherence, can be successfully applied to aspects of organisational and interpersonal development (particularly since these features are exploitable by speakers for particular organisational, propositional and interpersonal purposes).

Brazil et al. (ibid., p.x) themselves consider the description of intonation to be one aspect of the description of interaction, and claim that prosodic choices carry information associated with:

(1) the structure of the interaction   ⎤   (related to
                                       >   organisational
                                       ⎦   development)

(2) the relationships between individual utterances   ⎤   (related
(3) the discourse function of individual utterances | to propo-
(4) the interactional 'givenness' or 'newness'   >   sitional
     of information   ⎦   development

(5) the state of convergence or divergence of the   ⎤   (related to
     participants (and by implication role and   >   interpersonal
     status as well)   ⎦   development)

Spoken English can be seen to be divisible into phonological units, which are termed tone units (or tone groups). A tone unit can be analysed into three segments, the proclitic, tonic and enclitic segments. Only the tonic segment is obligatory and it is here that all intonational meaning is carried. (The components of a tone unit and their significances are diagrammatically represented in Appendix II.) The communicatively significant aspects of the tonic segment are briefly outlined below.

A tonic segment may have one, two or (rarely) three prominent syllables, the first being the onset and the last (or last two) the tonic. Prominent syllables have two major functions. First, they delimit the tonic segment (and hence contribute to the delimitation of tone units which is sometimes problematic because it is not always easy to distinguish the end of the enclitic segment of one tone unit and the proclitic segment of the next). Second, they serve to focus on information-bearing elements in a similar manner as some syntactic transformations do in written language (e.g. foregrounding transformations). As illustrated above, focus is an important function in that it establishes propositional development. The communicative purpose of placing prominence on a particular word or syllable is frequently to set up a contrast with another item, for three possible reasons: in order to correct a miscommunication (where some misunderstanding has arisen and needs to be repaired); or to mark an element's status in relation to propositional development in terms of its status as new or given (shared) information; or to emphasise an element, not in terms of the difference between new and shared information, but rather in terms of the relative weight, or communicative salience, a speaker wants to attribute to a particular element in his/her utterance. (Enkvist [1983] terms these three functions corrective focus, marked information focus and emphatic focus.)

The prominence falling on "my" in example (8) is an instance of marked focus since it establishes the propositional relationship between the utterances in play and those preceding it. Marked focus invokes a set of items relevant to the context that has been termed a "presuppositional set". In the case of A's turn in example (8) the presuppositional set consists of any possessive adjectives (including those in the preceding utterances: "your"; "your sister's") and the use of marked focus selects a certain member of that set, thereby contrasting it with the other items. In this way, the propositional relationship of this utterance to the immediately preceding utterances is established, and thus the topic is carried forward.

Other prosodic features attached to prominent syllables are pitch movement (or tone) and pitch level. Pitch movement, or tone, which is assigned to the last prominent syllable of a tone unit, is related to the distinction between shared and new information. Shared information is signalled by a referring tone (upward movement), while new information is cued by a 'proclaiming' tone (downward movement). By using proclaiming tone on an item of given information a speaker may bring it back into the discourse and mark it as salient. A 'neutral' tone, in which there is no pitch movement, serves to indicate continuity in propositional flow.

Pitch levels are recogniseable as contrasts in the relative frequency of a speaker's voice during a stretch of speech. Brazil (1981) isolates three major pitch levels in English: mid, which is taken as the norm, high and low, both of which are seen as deviations from the norm. Pitch level is marked at the turning point of the pitch movement of a prominent syllable. If two prominent syllables exist within a tone unit, a speaker may choose pitch level twice in a single tonic segment, but they carry quite different communicative meanings. Each choice of pitch level has a particular local significance, which is related to the organisational, propositional and interpersonal expectations speakers and hearers have about ongoing discourse. Since there appears to be a natural tendency in spoken English for the pitch to become lower as the stretch of talk proceeds, it is important to note that pitch levels are recogniseable only in relation to the pitch levels of the previous tone unit.

The pitch level of the onset syllable determines the key of the tonic segment and this choice applies to the whole tone group. Mid key signals that the relevant item merely adds to, extends or expands on previous information ('additive'). Low key is used to express something as being equivalent to, or a paraphrase of, the preceding proposition, or as merely

being parenthetical ('equative'). <u>High key</u> has a contrastive function, in that it signals that the prominent element is in contrast with either preceding or predicted information ('contrastive'). Referring back to example (8) above, the prominent word "my" is uttered in high key, which acts retrospectively to contrast A's brothers with Kh as brother to his sister.

The pitch level of the <u>tonic</u> syllable is associated with a different, but equally meaningful system called <u>termination</u>. Termination has a prospective function in that its significance extends across tone unit boundaries. Pitch level contrasts may signal topic shift. Both turns and topic shifts within turns are frequently demarcated by a pitch level contrast, ending on low termination and beginning the next on high key. Another function of termination is to demarcate <u>pitch sequences</u>. As previously discussed, tone units function primarily as a mechanism for organising propositions in speech. Brazil et al (ibid.) postulate that the pitch sequence has a similar function. A pitch sequence may consist of one or more tone units and is delimited by instances of low termination. The pitch sequence which follows usually begins on high or mid key, depending on the propositional relationship indicated between the two pitch sequences. Terminal pitch is also related to an important interactional function, <u>pitch concord</u>. Pitch concord is associated with the degree of congruence between the choice of termination in the last tone unit of a move or a turn, and the key (marked on the onset syllable) of the following one. This is not a random occurrence. The meanings of the initial key choices which were discussed earlier still stand, and it seems that a speaker may constrain the type of response which a move will receive by his/her use of terminal pitch. Further reference to example (8) might illuminate this phenomenon. A part of it is extracted below:

(9a)   A: || _r are you <u>NICE</u> || _p to your <u>SISter</u> ||
c.f.:

(9b)   A: || _r are you <u>NICE</u> || _p to your <u>SISter</u> ||

(9c)   A: || _r are you <u>NICE</u> || _p to your <u>S̄ISter</u> ||

In (9a) (which is the way A actually said it), A chooses a low termination, which does not constrain Kh, and he has the freedom to choose any key, and hence to answer in the affirmative, in the negative or not at all. If A had chosen mid termination, as in (9b), a degree of pressure would have

been placed on Kh to respond with initial mid key ('additive'), and thereby to agree that he is nice to his sister. A choice of high termination, as in (9c), would anticipate a high initial key which would constrain Kh to deny A's proposition. The notion of pitch concord goes some way in explaining why frequently a move which is declarative in structure, is understood to be questioning in function. This is particularly common if it is marked with a metacommunicative function marker which cues that a move is in fact attempting to elicit information from the hearer. Consider the following possibilities of asking the same question as in (9) a, b and c above (notice also the use of the proclaiming tone in the first tone group, as opposed to the referring tone used in the overt questions in [9] a, b and c):

(9d)   A: || p so you are NICE || p to your SISter ||

(9e)   A: || p so you are NICE || p to your SISter ||

(9f)   A: || p so you are NICE || p to your SISter ||

The meaning of 9(d) parallels that of 9(a) in leaving the choice of response open to Kh. 9(e) and (f) signal constraints on Kh's response similar to those of 9(b) and (c) respectively,

All the abovementioned factors are exploitable by speakers in order to fulfill their particular purposes. It is this flexibility which makes Brazil's model of intonation credible, since a model that is to have any descriptive value must be able to account for the variable and creative nature of spoken language as it relates to any context a speaker may find him/herself in. That is to say, prosodic cues may contribute at specific points not merely to the propositional development of an interaction (which is the primary focus of the general meanings proposed by Brazil et al.), but also to aspects of the interactional and organisational developments. A hearer's understanding is guided in the inferencing process by reference to the socio-pragmatic rhetorical principles (the Co-operative Principle, Politeness Principle, etc.) The relationship between the exploitation of prosodic cues and the rhetorical principles will be explored in section 3.4 below.

* * *

This brief examination of some aspects of formal patterning is of necessity incomplete. The following discussion will reveal some of the ways in which the linguistic systems which make up the formal patterning of a conversation intersect to signal aspects of the discourse structure.

3.3. DISCOURSE STRUCTURE

Conversation is a highly-organised activity. A conversational discourse, like a formal, written discourse, consists of "an assembly of [utterances] conveying propositions which together establish a central theme" (Gennrich 1982). However, since the central theme of a formal discourse is pre-planned by its writer/speaker, whereas it is negotiated step-by-step by the paricipants in a conversation, the nature of this organisation is somewhat different. Thus, as Edmondson (1981) has pointed out, it is fallacious to attempt to extend the tools for text analysis (v. Dijk 1972 and 1977) to the analysis of spoken conversation, because all participants contribute to the outcome of conversational interaction.[3]

It was claimed in section 2.2 that while certain important participant intentions are accounted for by speech act theory (illocutionary – the intended conventional force of an utterance, and perlocutionary – the intended effect of an utterance on a hearer), there are other types of participant intentions which are not accounted for (organisational, propositional and interpersonal). The present model attempts to remedy that by proposing three general areas or divisions of discourse structure: organisational development, propositional development, and interpersonal development in terms of which participant intentions may be understood. In a sense, propositional development is central in any conversation, since the main purpose of a conversational interaction is surely to communicate certain information, which has to be understood by participants in order for the interaction to have been successful. The other two divisions are important insofar as they facilitate communication. In turn, the relationships which develop during interactions are also influenced by the degree of communicative success achieved during a conversation. While illocutionary intentions are associated with the way a particular utterance is to be taken up (e.g., "I will do that tonight" constitutes a promise), intentions on the other levels (perlocutionary, organisational, propositional and interpersonal) are associated more closely with moment by moment negotiation. All intentions may be signalled on all levels of formal patterning. In fact, it is an understanding of context and aspects of discourse structure which may cue that the following example is not a promise, but a threat (depending on sequential location, and the status relationship between participants, for instance):

(10)   I will come to your party tonight
        (Constructed)

This point will become increasingly clear as the various component principles of discourse structure are investigated. The three areas of development are interrelated and mutually dependent, which makes for difficulty in isolating them for study.

Let us recapitulate on what has already been said in section 3.1. Aspects of the discourse structure are signalled by contextualisation cues given in the formal patterning of the utterances themselves. Participants rely on these signals in order to interpret the other's meaning and intentions. A speaker's pragmatic force may be signalled overtly by one or (more probably) an assembly of these contextualisation cues, but a great deal of the speaker's intention is often left implied. A hearer must then use what the speaker has uttered explicitly in order to interpret the implied meaning. In this s/he is guided by socio-pragmatic principles of communication. This is done against the background of the mutually constructed context. The socio-pragmatic component is not strictly part of the structure of an interaction, but it consists of socio-cultural principles of "good communicative behaviour" imposed on discourse structure to guide and constrain the behaviour of participants.

Each of the three components of discourse structure (organisational development, propositional development and interpersonal development) will now be considered in turn. (A tabular overview of all three is provided in Appendix I on p.143.)

3.3.1 Organisational development

All conversations have an organisational structure. There must therefore be rules of which participants are aware and which they adhere to. Two rule systems (or "mechanisms", according to Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson [1974]) are outlined very briefly here: sequencing rules, and the turn-taking mechanism.

3.3.1.1 Sequencing rules and overall organisation

Whereas in speech act models of dialogue attempts have been made to specify sequencing rules in advance,[4] this is not the case here. It would appear that sequencing is not so much in obedience to some static, pre-defined rules, but there are conventions to be followed which guide the co-operative construction of the overall organisation of an interaction by putting constraints on the sequencing of utterances.

One of the most powerful over-riding conventions is "topical coherence" (Levinson 1979). (Topical coherence will be investigated further in section 3.3.2 below.) Topical coherence is not defined by similarity of reference, but is, rather, constructed collaboratively by participants across turns. So, for instance, a question may not be responded to with an answer, as might be expected after a question, but with another question, which may, nonetheless, be a perfectly legitimate response since the topical connection is clear. Consider the following example:

(11) X: Are you going to the party tonight?

       Y: Do you really expect me to go when I've got so much work to do?

       X: Okay.

       (Constructed)

where Y has recently complained to X that her workload is too much for her to cope with. Here Y's question provides an adequate response to X's question.[5]

Speech act models of dialogue base their analysis of sequencing on "adjacency pair organisation" (Goffman 1976; Coulthard 1977), taking adjacency pair as the fundamental unit of conversational organisation. Adjacency pairs are characterised by being: (i) adjacent; (ii) produced by different speakers; (iii) ordered as first pair part and second pair part; and (iv) typed according to the expectations which the first pair part sets up for the second (Schegloff and Sacks 1973). However, as can be seen above, the expectations (e.g., a question anticipates an answer) are not always met, and yet the response concerned can be considered quite relevant and interpretable by participants. This phenomenon can be explained with reference to Grice's (1981) Co-operative Principle and his theory of implicature, which were described in chapter 2 (section 2.1.4). By considering the maxim of relation, X can assume that Y's response is relevant to her question. Although propositionally the relevance of Y's response is not apparent, in terms of the shared socio-cultural experience coupled with their previous discussion about Y's workload, the relevance is clear to them both, and Y's response can be understood by X. Example (11) illustrates that it is not possible to set up a definitive rule system of sequencing which is narrowly defined by adjacency pairs. A consideration of the Co-operative Principle at the relevant point(s) in the conversation, while taking the context into account, is really the primary means of

establishing topical coherence and 'correct' sequencing (which is in any case determined mainly by topical expectations rather than those relating to form or speech act).

Goffman's rationale for adjacency pairs is that a speaker needs to know that what s/he has said has been received, and the hearer needs to show that the speaker's message has been received correctly. While being quite valid, his characterisation of adjacency pairs is extremely limited. Levinson (1983) points out that there are many kinds of other more complex sequential organisations than those attributed to the above characterisation of the adjacency pair. The main criticism I have of the notion of adjacency pairs is that strict adjacency is too limiting a condition, since frequently one finds pairs, or several pairs, embedded within another pair. Levinson (1983, p.304) terms these "insertion sequences". Consider, for instance, the various levels of embedded insertion sequences in interview 1 between turn 115 (on p.150 of Appendix III), where the original suggestion (how D's problem with essay writing skills could be tackled by A and D together) is only initiated, which is carried but not developed through various insertion sequences (including an external interruption), to turn 138 (on p.151 of Appendix III), where the suggestion is re-initiated; and then between turn 138 and D's eventual (rather indecisive) response ("mm") in turn 155 (on p. 152 of Appendix III). By the same token, a speaker may check whether the hearer already knows what s/he intends telling him/her in order to avoid breaking the quantity maxim (whereby one should say only enough to be informative). Levinson calls this a "pre-sequence". In interview 5, turns 90-95 (p.173 of Appendix III), Kh interrupts himself to check whether A has seen his June examination results yet, so as to avoid violating the quantity maxim by providing A with information she knows already. Only then does he go on to explain that he had failed some of his courses because of problems he was experiencing with them.

In response to this kind of data, Levinson proposes replacing the strict criterion of adjacency with the notion of "conditional relevance" (ibid., p.306). According to this criterion, adjacency pairs need not be adjacent at all. Conditional relevance entails a first pair part setting up certain topic-related expectations about a relevant second. If such a second pair part is absent, and especially if some other first pair part appears in its place, then that other first pair part must be considered relevant, and either providing a relevant response or introducing an insertion sequence which will not preclude the later reappearance of the response.

Some sequences may consist of many more than just two turns and hence move beyond the requirement that adjacency pairs must be adjacent. A repair sequence, for example (Schegloff, Jefferson and Sacks 1977; Shimanoff and Brunak 1977), may extend across up to four turns, as in the following extract from interview 5, turns 5-8:

(12)

			Comments
5	A:	oh, so you hadn't prepared for them	Potential Trouble source
6	Kh:	er no no I mean preparein in which way you mean time allocation or ... what	Repair initiation by other (does so by asking question and providing alternatives)
7	A:	no i mean was it ja was it that you hadn't prepared for it you didn't have any knowledge or was it that you didn't have any time	Self-correction: A clarifies her intention
8	Kh:	er time you see it was a matter of time ...	Outcome: Kh can now answer A's question

where the relevant second pair part, which is a response to A's question in turn 5, only comes in turn 8, after Kh has ascertained exactly what A is asking him.

The question of the kinds of second pair parts that are relevant and possible is another issue which Levinson (ibid.) addresses. As was shown in example (5) above, it is not possible to pre-determine what kind of utterance must follow a specific first pair part. Nevertheless, as Levinson points out, there does seem to be a ranking of pair parts in terms of preferred alternatives. This "preference organisation" (ibid., p.307) is regulated to some extent by the socio-pragmatic principles, particularly the Politeness Principle (Brown and Levinson 1978), according to which participants should respect each other's needs and dignity as above their own, resulting in "face-saving" strategies (ibid.) which are related to retaining or saving one's own or another's dignity.

Those second pair parts which are not preferred alternatives because they cause offence are termed "dispreferred seconds", and are usually marked by structural complexity, probably due to a speaker's need to qualify or account for the use of a dispreferred utterance. They also usually occur after some significant delay, and are frequently cued by a preface which 'warns' the hearer of their dispreferred status. For example, in an

interview about the extract from the particular conversation held in interview 1, D's response to the question below, is potentially threatening to A, the interviewer and the co-participant in interview 1. This constitutes a dispreferred second, which is appropriately marked by the particle 'actually', and at the end, D's need to qualify her statement is evidenced by the way she tries to reduce the strength of what she has just said, by inserting "probably" and adding "if I remember correctly".

(13)   Qu.10: A: all in all, were you satisfied with the outcome of this conversation

        Ans.:   D: actually, i think it was probably pointless i felt very uncomfortable em as if i was being analysed and i wasn't too keen to continue going ... if i remember correctly

(Note that A and D are the only native speaker participants in the data.)

Because of the problems associated with working from the analyst's viewpoint in analysing conversations, sequencing will only be discussed in terms of the expectations set up by a turn or by a move within a turn from the viewpoint of the participants at that time within a particular conversation, in terms of the negotiation processes regarding both context and theme. (All participants were interviewed after their participation in the conversations used as data in this research.)

While sequencing is primarily locally organised, it is nevertheless linked to the overall organisation of a conversation as a whole. The notion of overall organisation is comparable to the notion of macrostructure in van Dijk's (1977) text analysis, and refers to the fact that conversations have recogniseable overall structures with well-bounded beginnings and endings. Not only are there local organisations in conversation, such as sequencing and turn-taking, but overall organisation controls all the exchanges occurring in a specific conversation.

The overall organisation evidenced in the data is generally recogniseable in each interview. In some cases the opening sequence is not clearly separated from the main body, but this seems to be primarily as a result of problems with the recording process.[6] By way of example, the organisational components of interview 1 may be summarised as follows.

(14)
OPENING SECTION ——————————   Establishing basic relationship
(turns 1-46)   (A obtaining personal and
(p.147)   academic details from D)

MAIN BODY ————————————— First and subsequent topic slots
(turns 47-212)   (insertion sequences ignored
(pp.147-153)   here)
                               (1) D's Attitude to exams:T.47-78
                               (2) How D came to ASP:T.79-100
                               (3) Relationship with D's mother
                                   as obstacle to work:T.101 ff.
                                   (not transcribed)
                               (4) Minor criticisms of exam and
                                   other essays:T.101-110 (not
                                   transcribed)
                               (5) Overall criticism of work:
                                   T.111-113(a)
                               (6) Suggestions for work on
                                   problem areas:T.113(b)- 173
                               (7) Plans for next meeting (what
                                   to bring; time of meeting):
                                   T.174-212

PRE-CLOSING SECTION ——————— A and D issue signals giving each
(turns 213-215)   other the option to close
(p.153)

CLOSING SECTION ——————————— Goodbyes (not recorded: end of
                              tape)

In understanding an utterance, a hearer must consider its "sequential location" (ibid., p.313) within the overall organisation of a conversation. In interview 1, for example, the word "okay" has quite a different pragmatic force, depending on where it is placed. In turn 47 (on p. 147 of Appendix III), it functions as a marker of change of topic (A closes off the opening section in which she obtained personal details from D, and introduces the first topic slot by asking D if she thought the exam was a fair one), while in turn 213 (on p.153 of Appendix III) it is an indicator that the close of this conversation is imminent, which D understands as such, and to which she adds her own signal in turn 214 showing her agreement to close the conversation: "so that's that for the week".

Contextualisation cues to sequential location are primarily lexical and prosodic. The word "okay" is an example of a class of lexical items which Stubbs (1983) calls "metacommunicative function markers". The use of such lexical markers which act as indicators of organisational development is extremely prevalent in English conversation. The purpose of these markers is to clarify to the hearer exactly where and how a specific move fits into the overall organisation of a particular conversation, and more specifically, how a particular proposition fits into the development of the theme.

Cohesion devices such as pronominalisation, lexical substitution and particularly ellipsis are also indicators of the sequential location of a

particular utterance. These devices function in very similar ways in conversation to cohesion devices in formal texts. Both pronominalisation and ellipsis are related to the fact that all utterances are interpreted in their local context. An example of pronominalisation occurs in the following example, taken from interview 1:

(14) 66 D: oh you sound like my mother (h) ((laughs)) my mother's
              always telling me that

      67 A: oh re-   ⌈ h ((laughs))
      68 D: ⌊ ja she always whatever whenever work
              comes up she tells me that so h ((laughs))

The pronoun "she" in turn 68 only makes sense in that it refers back to "my mother" in turn 66. In English conversation ellipsis is particularly common, since the context is wholly available to the participants while they are talking. A written text, on the one hand, does not obtain continual feedback regarding aspects of the context, and since a speaker has fewer clues available regarding a particular hearer's state of knowledge etc., more information must be given. On the other hand, in a conversation, participants have sufficient understanding of the amount of shared knowledge between the speaker and his/her hearers so that s/he can provide less information than in a written text. The CP maxim of quantity comes into play here. In fact, failure to use an elliptical form where the context allows for it, may lead the hearer in a conversation to infer that the speaker is actually trying to communicate more than the superficial answer to the question concerned. For instance, in the following extract from interview 1 (turns 1-2 on p.147 of Appendix III), the alternative response 2(a) might be understood as indicating a defensive attitude towards A, since it is breaking the quantity maxim by saying more than is needed.

(15) 1   A: can i just take your details ... (2 secs) um ... (6 secs)
               have you got any other names

      2   D: no

c.f. 2(a) D: no i have not got any other names

If D answered as in 2(a), A would have to consider D's reason for breaking the quantity maxim. Particularly in this context, where (in turn 1[a]) A has in a sense asked permission to impose upon D, a full sentence might well be understood to affirm: "no you may not take my details". The use of a full sentence can thus function to emphasise a speaker's reluctance to comply with the previous speaker.

The role of prosody in the signalling of sequential ordering and overall organisation is also important in English conversation. In the extract below, for instance, A is trying to ascertain the cause of D's bad performance in the exams, but is not sure as to what it is. She is introducing a new possibility, which is indicated by assigning the proclaiming tone to the tonic syllable.

(16)   59   A: ‖ p were you very UPTIGHT in the ex$_{ams}$ ‖

Pitch concord functions to guide the relationship of a particular second to a first pair part, such as indicating agreement or disagreement, and hence also the preferred status of a particular response. It is pitch concord that permits D to understand A's move in turn 63 below as a question, although it is in question form. Further, the fact that it terminates in mid key is taken by D to require an agreement, which is what D gives in turn 64.

(17)   61   A: ja ... (3 secs) em how did you do in the other your other
               subjects during the year essay-wise and all that

        62   D: em i think i did pretty well in english psychology ja
               actually i think i've done pretty well in essays and things

        63   A: ‖ p but you did BADly in exAMS ‖

        64   D: ‖ p JA ‖ p so i guess its OBviously   ‖ ... (1 sec)
               ‖ p TENsion and all that kind of thing   ‖

Preference organisation is also related to pauses. Pauses may not necessarily be accidental but, in terms of the principle of expectations set up by a first pair part, may communicate adequately the meaning a speaker wants to convey to a hearer. A pause may therefore be regarded as a relevant second pair part, particularly if it is linked to some non-verbal response (such as a "dirty look" when a question asked is regarded as rude).

3.3.1.2 Turn-taking

Schegloff, Jefferson and Sacks (1974) noticed that in conversation the process of turn-taking is not arbitrary or chaotic, as would have been consistent with the contemporary views of conversaton. They observed, instead, that there was very little overlap in turns at talk, that participants only interrupted a turn at certain points, and that usually, even if a participant wanted to initiate repair of a particular trouble source early on in the speaker's turn, s/he waited until it seemed that the speaker was

ready to relinquish his/her turn. They then proceeded to examine the process of turn-taking and to set up a preliminary model of this highly-structured mechanism. According to this model, turn-taking is locally managed, administered by participants themselves, and interactionally controlled. Schegloff et al. maintain that the rules of turn-taking must be mutually understood and obeyed by all participants for the mechanism to be successful. There are two main components of this rule: the turn constitutional component, and the turn allocational component.

The turn constitutional component: Turns consist of various unit-types: sentential, clausal, phrasal and lexical. I would add that a turn may consist also of a pause, a facial expression, a gesture or a physical action. The first possible completion point of such a unit constitutes the initial "transition-relevance place" (TRP) (ibid.). A first possible completion point can occur only when the main topic of that unit has been clarified. It is only at a TRP that a transfer of speakership may occur. If at a TRP neither of the above selection procedures takes place, the present speaker may continue to speak until the next TRP, where the selection procedure is repeated.

Turn allocational techniques: There are two main types of turn-allocational techniques: other-selection, and self-selection. Other-selection occurs when a next speaker is selected by the present speaker. Self-selection occurs when the present speaker does not select a specific next speaker, and it is open for any of the participants to select themselves as next speaker.

Speakers use several devices in order to either relinquish their turn at talk, or to retain it. In order to indicate a TRP, lexical markers such as "hey", "not so" and "agreed" may be employed. Syntactically, an overt question or tag question, particularly in conjunction with "other-selection" (ibid.) is common. Prosodically, low terminal pitch usually indicates the potential end of a speaker's turn, while high or mid terminal pitch take it a step further in that they set up expectations as to the type of response that should follow (high terminal pitch expecting, or allowing for, a contradiction, and mid terminal pitch expecting agreement). (Compare turns 11 and 58 of interview 2 on, respectively, pp.154 and 157 of Appendix III). Pauses frequently indicate a TRP, since a speaker appears to be waiting for some response. In turn 92 of interview 2 (on p.158 of Appendix III), A appears to have signalled a TRP by using low terminal pitch, as well as a pause.

In order to retain a turn, a speaker may avoid pausing while composing the next part of his/her turn so that other participants do not select themselves as the next speaker. This may be achieved by various pause fillers, or "lubricative verbalisations" (Edmondson 1981), either lexical or non-lexical, such as non-lexical hesitation signals ('um', 'er' etc.), lexical hesitation signals ('and', 'so', 'now' etc.) or contact makers ('you know', 'I mean' etc.). (See interview 2, turns 9 and 18 on p.154 of Appendix III). It may also be achieved by prosodic means, such as avoiding low terminal key (except where a parenthetical remark is cued by the whole utterance being said in low key), and by ensuring adequate pitch concord between utterances, particularly where a "hiatus point" (Lanham 1984) occurs (e.g. where an afterthought disrupts the flow of a speaker's message).

The turn-taking mechanism appears also to take account of possible difficulties that may arise with turn-taking. The two major problems which arise are firstly uncomfortable pauses, and secondly, overlap. If a next speaker fails to speak, the resultant pause is usually taken as nevertheless being a response which has a particular meaning (for instance a speaker may be indicating disapproval or perhaps a feeling of being personally insulted, by apparently refusing to speak about a certain topic). Pauses can only be resolved if someone speaks. This is where pause fillers play a part. By using pause fillers, a speaker avoids the risk of being misinterpreted, while at the same time allowing him/herself a few moments to consider his/her response. The resolution system for overlaps involves a competitive allocation system, whereby speakers upgrade their loudness and slow their tempo by lengthening vowel sounds. There comes a point either immediately or after one of the simultaneous speakers has 'won' the allocation competition where one of the speakers withdraws. (In cases where participants are of different social standing, it is usually the less dominant speaker that makes way for the other.) The other speaker then either repeats the part of what s/he had said that was obscured by the overlap or continues. The length of overlap is usually limited, and order is regained very quickly.

* * *

To sum up this section on organisational development, it is important to note that the organisational development of a conversation is co-operatively achieved. Signals as to its state of development in a particular utterance, in terms of its sequential location on the one hand, and in terms of the rules of turn-taking on the other, are cued in the formal patterning of all

the utterances produced by the participants in a conversation, particularly on the levels of syntax, lexis and prosody.

The organisational development of a conversation is not constructed in isolation, but as an integral part of the interactional process participants are engaged in while mutually constructing a context and a central theme in order to achieve the desired aims of the participants in a particular conversation. The organisational development of a conversation hence occurs simultaneously with propositional and interpersonal development.

3.3.2 Propositional development

An understanding of the propositional development of a conversation makes it possible for participants to interrelate propositions within discourse in order to construct its macrotheme. All organisational aspects of a conversation facilitate the step-by-step negotiation of the propositional content of individual utterances thereby enabling participants to construct its macrotheme. Hence, organisational development and interpersonal development go hand in hand with propositional development in developing discourse structure. For an illustration of this let us return to example (9), the brief encounter between Paul and Geoff outside a magistrate's court.

(18)   5.   Paul: You remember that case where a woman sued her husband for theft – stealing her jewels

        6.   Geoff: Think I do. Yes, I represented her husband

        7.   Paul: Good. Now here's something interesting. The man's name was Smith

Turn 7 consists of three moves. Paul's first two moves merely contribute to organisational development, in preparation for his third move which develops the topic. The first move merely acknowledges Paul's satisfaction with Geoff's response (in turn 6) to his earlier question (in turn 5). The second move prepares Geoff for Paul's third move, by pointing to it in order to establish its thematic importance. The third move then develops the topic which was introduced in turn 5.

It was mentioned in 3.3.1.1 above that sequencing is primarily dependent on topical coherence. It is not so much the type of second pair part that should agree with the type of first pair part it is to complement, but rather it is the topical relevance which must be observable. Topical relevance can only be understood if the topical relationship between propositions is discernible. An important point is that, while language is emitted in a

<u>linear</u> fashion, the structure of an actual message appears to be <u>hierarchical.</u> Therefore, language users must clarify the relationships existing between propositions in order to facilitate the processing of a message by revealing the hierarchy of topics. Otherwise, nothing but a string of isolated propositions results, and participants have no way of ensuring that their next contribution is in fact topically relevant. Propositional development, therefore, involves both <u>extracting hierarchy</u> from the linear sequence of propositions and <u>identifying topic</u> at different levels (Lanham 1984). The former is discussed below under 3.3.2.1 (<u>information structure</u>), and the latter under 3.3.2.2 (<u>topical coherence and topic slots</u>) with a particular focus on the process of initiation, development and shift of topic.

3.3.2.1 Information structure

On a small scale, topical coherence is achieved by recognising the relative 'givenness' and 'newness' of information. Hence, this aspect of discourse structure has been termed "<u>information structure</u>" (v. Dijk 1981), as outlined earlier (in section 3.2.2).

Information structure is <u>cued</u> by prosodic phonology in terms of end-focus; by lexical semantics in terms of end-scope; and by syntax in terms of end-weight. <u>End-focus</u> involves the decision as to which part of a tone-unit is to be signalled as salient by means of focal stress assignment. The syntactic structure of an utterance helps to establish information structure, since the principle of <u>end-weight</u> involves the ordering of constituents such that those with a light information load precede those with a heavier information load (e.g., transformations such as the rule of extraposition, where the more salient information is displaced to the right). Focus and syntactically achieved end-weight can co-occur in a particular sentence. For instance, in the following example:

(19) $\|$ p JOHN is <u>MY</u> name $\|$

c.f. $\|$ p my NAME is <u>JOHN</u>$\|$

(Constructed)

the pronoun "my" is focused by means of prominence, and "John" is emphasised by means of a foregrounding transformation.

3.3.2.2 Topical coherence and topic slots

The macrotheme of a conversation is seldom present linguistically and participants together construct it co-operatively. This is done by reciprocally signalling the hierarchical structuring of topic. Topical coherence imposes certain topical constraints on every next utterance. The relevance of a particular utterance to previous utterances must therefore be established either by overt signalling or by implication.

Topical constraints are related to sequencing in the following way. The first topic slot sets the initial direction of the conversation by placing topical constraints on the next move (frequently this is reserved for the dominant participant). It is only when a clear indication of a change of topic is given, (by, for example, misplacement markers or metacommunicative function markers) that a change of topic is permissible. Even then a new topic must conform to the central theme as it has been collaboratively developed up to that point. The process of the initiation, development and shift of topic is negotiated by participants across and within turns. Topical coherence is dependent on the recognition of topic at various levels. At the beginning of an exchange, the first move in a speaker's turn may function as a topic-setting sentence and needs to be recognised as such. A sub-topic within an exchange also requires recognition. The development of topic between one proposition and the next must be clarified by establishing the illocutionary link.

Contextualisation cues which aid topic recognition are in particular lexical and prosodic signals. Lexical cues include "metacommunicative function markers" (Stubbs 1983) and certain lexical cohesion devices. Metacommunicative function markers are words or phrases which have no propositional content in themselves, but serve to clarify the organisational, propositional or illocutionary links between utterances. Examples include: "for example", "that is to say", "therefore". Sometimes propositional or illocutionary links stretching beyond adjacent moves need to be cued, for example, "what I was trying to say was ...". Other metacommunicative function markers signal topic initiation or topic shift. The marker "anyway" in example (20) below (taken from interview 1 on p.151) is a cue of topic shift in this case:

(20)   138 A: oh well anyway let's just think first of all on the idea ...

The word "anyway" signals that A wishes to move away from the topic under discussion (which was about when D's next essay was due) back to the

idea she first mentioned in turn 115 (which was related to the question of following through the process of D's preparation of her next essay step by step). Lexical markers of topic initiation, development or shift include "okay" (which may function to initiate, develop or terminate a topic); "what I'm trying to say is"; "I've come to tell you that"; "to get back to your point"; "this is a bit off the topic, but ...". A marker such as "by the way" serves to suspend topical relevance temporarily in order to return to it later. Metacommunicative function markers may also serve to mark a proposition as important (e.g., "an important point is ...", "another interesting thing is...").

Lexical cohesion devices maintain topical links by ellipsis, pronominalisation, demonstrative reference, or lexical substitution. Deictic signals also aid the understanding of theme development because they establish contextual parameters of time and place. These include use of tense and the reference of adverbial expressions. An example is found in turn 5 of example (9) in chapter 2:

(21)   5.   Paul: You remember that case where a woman sued her husband
                     for theft - stealing her jewels

Here Paul uses demonstrative reference in "that" to refer to a case located in past time which is known to both himself and Geoff.

Prosody also plays a role in the establishment and maintenance of theme. The distinction between the "proclaiming" and "referring tone" (Brazil et al. 1980), serves to indicate whether a particular item is being used to move the process of theme construction forward, or merely to provide the backdrop for the introduction of such a "communicatively salient" (Lewis 1980) item. Communicative salience is also signalled through focal stress. Topic lines are sustained, and a theme collaboratively developed, by means of "pitch concord". The following extract illustrates prosodic cues to topic. A has just finished obtaining personal details from D, and now turns to discussing the exam itself.

(22)   47   A: || p okay ... (1 sec) °thanks ... (1 sec) ||

               || o $\underline{U M}$ ... (3 secs) || p did you THINK

               this was a $\underline{FAIR}$ ex$_{am}$||

        48   D: || p $\underline{YES}$ || i THOUGHT ... ||

A closes off the previous topic by ending in low key, (and also speaking very softly). The new topic is signalled by high key on "um". (The pauses

occurring before and after the word "um" reinforce topic shift). The words "think" and "fair" have been focused by means of prominence, and the word "fair" is assigned focal stress, because A's purpose in asking this question is to extract D's opinion ("think") about the fairness of the exam ("fair"). The use of the proclaiming tone indicates that new information is introduced here. A ends her turn on low key, which indicates that this is where D may take her turn.

3.3.3 Interpersonal development

The last of the three levels of discourse structure to be discussed is that of interpersonal development – the development of the relationship(s) between participants. This will be investigated below in terms of firstly, the social goals, and secondly, the illocutionary goals of participants (Leech 1983). According to Leech, social goals are related to the rhetorical force of an utterance: the meaning it conveys regarding the speaker's adherence to rhetorical principles, or socio-pragmatic constraints, imposed by social factors. Illocutionary goals are related to illocutionary force: the way in which a speaker intends a hearer to understand his/her utterance in terms of the conventional understanding associated with it.

3.3.3.1 Social goals

Participants continually make inferences about each other's identities and backgrounds, and, in turn, give the other participant(s) clues as to their own identities and backgrounds. Some of the variables involved are given and unchangeable, while others are a matter of choice, and are negotiable. The former may, however, become negotiable, since they are exploitable in some circumstances. The negotiation process on this level is profoundly influenced by the interpersonal rhetoric (c.f.3.4).

The less flexible variables of social identity are related to the social goals of participants and hence constrain the interpersonal development of a conversation. They are part of the category status, which includes, in particular, age, sex and, in South Africa, race. It is important to note, however, that age, sex and race in themselves are not indicators of status. Rather, it is the attitudes a particular society has towards them that make them relevant markers of status.

The language cues employed to signal relative status may be exploited by a speaker in order to set him/herself up in a particular status relationship to others in order to achieve a particular goal (e.g., to intimidate a

co-participant). On the other hand, a speaker with high social status may exploit language cues in order to establish a relationship of greater equality with other participants (accomodation). Social distance (the state of divergence or convergence) between participants is also negotiable in this manner. For instance, a speaker may employ a referring tone on items of information which are not shared knowledge to imply that s/he is in an intimate relationship with his/her hearer.

Social role is more flexible than status and social distance, but it is closely related to them as it is frequently a person's social role that gains him/her status in the eyes of society.

While the physical environment in which a conversation takes place is not in itself interpersonal, the participants' attitudes to it are to be negotiated interpersonally. The physical environment, then, is only relevant in terms of its influence on the nature of the background assumptions held by each participant. These are continually being adapted in accordance with discoveries made by interactants about each other. The relative formality required in different social environments is an important aspect of this. For instance, a person of higher socio-economic status may not regard an hotel with a two-star rating as a formal setting, while a person of a lower socio-economic status may.

Related to negotiation about the environment is negotiation about each other's state of knowledge. This is included here under interpersonal development because the degree of common knowledge shared by participants is negotiated in relation to the level of trust and/or interest participants have in each other. Both the level of formality and the register required in different situations present formidable problems, particularly for many BSAE speakers, in that they relate to the amount of shared knowledge participants may assume.

It is because the interpersonal relationship between participants is negotiable that this section has been entitled Social goals. The social goals which motivate and constrain the manner in which participants converse are not static or proveable. They are merely social parameters which can be exploited (particularly by dominant participants) without breaking any constitutive rules. The important point is that a thorough understanding of these is necessary before they can be exploited and understood.

Now, to turn to the <u>contextualisation cues</u>. <u>Syntactic</u> signals relate to the degree of structural complexity employed. In formal situations, for instance, more complex structures are usually employed. This is particularly noticeable when an interaction is taking place within a specific institutional setting, such as a law court or a board meeting, where particular syntactic structures are favoured. Social solidarity is cued by increased use of syntactic or lexical ellipsis. By using ellipsis, a participant reduces the items of information explicitly stated on the assumption that they are part of shared knowledge.

<u>Lexically</u>, the complexity of vocabulary used and the use of technical jargon or slang (signalling in-group solidarity) play a part. Elements of deixis serve to signal a speaker's knowledge about the setting. In the case of terms of address, the speaker's attitude to the relative status, distance and sometimes role of his/her interlocutors or of people referred to is signalled (e.g., "that man over there" as opposed to "the gentleman over there").

A speaker may use particular <u>prosodic cues</u> to signal his/her understanding of his/her role relationship with the other(s) involved. The presence or absence of pitch concord demonstrates the degree of freedom a speaker allows a hearer in responding. It is mainly dominant participants who constrain freedom of response. Tone may also be exploited for a particular purpose. Brazil, Coulthard and Johns (1980) have isolated two basic tone variants, the referring tone (referring to clearly present, common information) and the proclaiming tone (referring to an important re-introduced item, or to an entirely new item). In addition, there are two further variants, the referring + (r+) and proclaiming + (p+) tones which are only exploitable by dominant participants who, by virtue of their social status which makes them more powerful interactants, have greater freedom in making linguistic choices. An illustration of the use of a + tone is found in example (23) below:

(23) $\|_{r+}$ do you ^{R}Eally WANT that $\|$
         (Constructed)

where the speaker does not believe what the hearer previously claimed, and simultaneously asserts his/her dominance. (Notice also the use of the contrastive high key to imply contradiction). Use of the r+ or p+ tones may either reflect a speaker's dominance or alternatively assert it when it is not yet established. An important factor in most of my data is that A is in fact a lecturer, while all the other participants are students. It is extremely rare to find any of the students employing any of the + tones,

and when they do, there seems to be little exploitative purpose behind it. (A seldom uses + tones, but when she does she is clearly the dominant participant.)

3.3.3.2 Illocutionary goals (illocutionary force and perlocutionary effect)

The illocutionary intentions participants have are necessarily influenced by who they perceive the other interactants to be. Illocutionary goals include those intentions which have to do with how the content of what is spoken about is to be received by the hearer, as well as the attitude that is conveyed. The intended effect of what is said on the hearer is the perlocutionary force. This perlocutionary force in turn guides the hearer in formulating a response to the speaker's earlier move (i.e. the hearer's illocutionary goal when s/he next assumes the speaker role). The following example may serve to illustrate the relationship between illocutionary and perlocutionary force.

(24)   Give him a good hiding!   (Constructed)

Depending on the context, this utterance may have the illocutionary force of either ordering, urging or advising an addressee to beat the person in question. The perlocutionary force, on the other hand, might involve an intention to either persuade, force or frighten the addressee into beating him, or perhaps to frighten the boy in question.

In this sense, a speaker may simultaneously convey both an illocutionary and a perlocutionary intention. This can be found particularly in interview 4, from turn 56, where A is simultaneously inquiring of M the reasons for his having failed to attend tutorials and reprimanding him for this, intending to make M remorseful:

(25)   56   A: em ... (1 sec) why did you stop coming last term
                    ... (3 secs)

(An extremely asynchronous interaction follows, probably largely as a result of the sensitivity of the threat to M's face).

In all interactions two basic assumptions are held by the participants: that the speaker has some illocutionary intention(s) in mind, and secondly that the speaker expects the hearer to identify the illocutionary force of the utterance by means of the cues provided in it.

Guided by the assumption that the speaker is obeying the Co-operative Principles of conversation, a hearer can infer a speaker's illocutionary

force by recourse to lexical or prosodic cues, against the background of the mutually constructed context. <u>Lexically</u> illocutionary force may be cued by means of illocutionary verbs. <u>Prosodic</u> cues to illocutionary force can be illustrated by the following examples, both of which are answers to the question "where's the typewriter?":

(26)   (a) $||$ $_p$ in the $\underline{CUP}$board $||$

       (b) $||$ $_{r+}$ in the $\underline{CUP}$board $||$

       (Brazil 1980, p.57)

Example 26(a) is informative in that, by using the proclaiming tone, the speaker signals that s/he assumes the hearer does not know the answer to the question, and is informing him/her of the typewriter's whereabouts. The speaker in 26(b) makes use of the referring + tone to convey the illocutionary force of a scolding ('why don't you ever remember?'), by making reference to what s/he considers to be an area of shared knowledge (Leech 1983).

Sometimes a speaker may choose to flout one of the maxims of the Co-operative Principle in order to cue his/her illocutionary force. For instance, if in a situation where one participant (F) asks another (G) for his/her opinion of a third person, G replies "nice weather we're having today", which flouts the relevance maxim, G's illocutionary force might be a warning of the third person's presence behind F. Such cases where participants have to infer a speaker's illocutionary force because of a flouted maxim have been accounted for by Grice (1981) in terms of the kinds of inference he calls "implicatures".

Conversational implicatures are based not on semantic inferences (as is semantic content) but rather on both the content of what is said and some specific assumptions about the co-operative nature of ordinary verbal interaction. Grice postulates four basic maxims which guide the way an interaction is conducted (these are outlined in 2.1.4). I would like to propose that there are more constraining factors than Grice's four which make up his Co-operative Principle. Along with Leech (1983) I would like to postulate a rhetorical component in order to provide some explanation for the direction which interpretation and implicatures take. This is the subject of the next section, and will thus not be developed at this point.

The process of interpretation that a hearer goes through is not straight-forward, particularly since frequently there is a <u>clash</u> between the various

pragmatic principles, and one takes precedence over the other(s) in response to context. This is where the notion of preference organisation (discussed in 3.3.1.1 above) is relevant, since participants may be constrained to violate one of the rhetorical principles in order to obey another which is preferred at a particular point.

Moreover, implicatures are not definitive, but are probabilistic, as a consequence of the indeterminate nature of language use. This fundamental indeterminacy of language use is essential for successful negotiation, since, if the pragmatic meaning of all utterances were totally clear all of the time, the human communication process would be almost as limited as that of birds or frogs.

The heuristic process of inferencing consists of three stages. Consider the following example (Leech 1983, p.30):

(27)   A: When is Aunt Rose's birthday?

        B: It's sometime in April.

Leech outlines the three stages of inference involved in the interpretation of B's response as follows: (i) rejection of face-value, since it is inconsistent with the co-operative maxim of Quantity (B does not give sufficient information, i.e., the exact date); (ii) search for a new interpretation consistent with the Co-operative Principle (CP) (that B is not in fact quite sure of the exact date and is obeying the Quality maxim in that a lie is being avoided); and (iii) find a new interpretation, and check its consistency with the CP (e.g., that B is not sure of the exact date and hesitates to break the Quality (truth) maxim, and so opts for vagueness instead). If it is not consistent, the first stage is returned to and the process of hypothesis-making and testing begins again. (This heuristic process is diagrammatically represented in section 2.5. above.)

* * *

Thus far, the first of the two major aims of this chapter has been dealt with. I have investigated some of the devices used by participants to make conversational inferences. I now turn to some of the underlying principles which guide the situated interpretation a participant makes at any one point in a conversation.[8]

3.4 SOCIO-PRAGMATIC CONSTRAINTS ON CONVERSATIONAL INTERACTION

The approach throughout this thesis is to regard conversation as goal-directed and evaluative behaviour: a speaker is seen as trying to achieve particular aims in conversation within the constraints imposed by socio-culturally defined principles and maxims of "good communicative behaviour". It is the purpose of this section to consider the nature and functions of these principles.

Leech (1983) examines these principles under the rubric of "rhetoric". Rhetoric refers to the effective use of language: how a speaker goes about using language in order to produce a certain effect in the mind of the hearer.[9] In this study, I will be using rhetoric in the same way as Leech does: to refer to a set of principles whose functions in conversational interaction appear to be related.

It is important to note that the rhetorical principles and maxims are merely descriptive of the values and conventions operating in society. Further, it seems that while the basic principles are universal, the way they are interpreted and/or applied, may vary greatly from culture to culture, from language to language. Lakoff (1977), for instance, tells of her experiences in Russia, where the discrepancy between the Russian and the English views of politeness and honesty created enormous problems for her while teaching at a school. For her, in contrast to the Russians, honesty took precedence over politeness. This illustrates the differences in the importance of maxims across cultures, and in the choices made when these maxims clash. This takes us back to the notion of preferreds and dispreferreds (see 3.3.1.1): what may be a preferred second in one culture may be dispreferred in another. This means that a hearer's interpretative process is guided by inferences about the rhetorical principles to which the speaker is adhering. Two rhetorics are postulated as imposing constraints on conversational behaviour: the Interpersonal and the Textual. Leech outlines these two rhetorics in a hierarchical diagrammatic form, moving through four levels: from the rhetoric itself, through various component principles to their maxims and submaxims. The way in which he sketches out an overview of the two rhetorics is outlined in table II on page 67 below.

In this section I shall endeavour to outline briefly Leech's (1983) proposal for these two rhetorics. I shall not take issue with it, nor will I enter into

an in-depth explication of it. I will merely outline his basic precepts and examine the manner in which the principles he postulates constrain the behaviour of participants in a conversation.

TABLE II: Socio-cultural pragmatic constraints on verbal behaviour

RHETORICAL PRINCIPLES		
	Maxim of:	Sub-Maxims

Co-operative Principle (CP)
- Quantity
- Quality
- Relation
- Manner ....

Politeness Principle (PP)
- Tact
- Generosity
- Approbation
- Modesty ....

INTER-PERSONAL RHETORIC

Irony Principle (IP) ....

Interest Principle (Int. P) ....

Principle	Maxim

Processibility
- End-focus
- End-weight
- End-scope

Clarity
- Transparency
- Ambiguity

TEXTUAL RHETORIC

Economy
- Reduction
- ....

Expressivity
- ....
- ....

(Adapted from Leech 1983, p.16)

3.4.1 The interpersonal rhetoric

Leech outlines four rhetorical principles: the Co-operative Principle (CP), the Politeness Principle (PP), the Irony Principle (IP) and the Interest Principle (Int. P). I shall first give an overview of the CP, and then describe the other rhetorical principles, concentrating specifically on the functions of all the principles in the interpretative procedure.

3.4.1.1 The Co-operative Principle

The CP is adapted from Grice's (1981) CP[10], and appears to be the primary regulating principle. It regulates the behaviour of participants so that what they say is in line with their illocutionary goal and contributes to the overall goal to which the conversation is heading.

Although the four maxims of the CP as adapted from Grice by Leech (1983) have already been cited in chapter 2, it is necessary to list them again:

QUANTITY: Give the right amount of information: i.e.
1. Make your contribution as informative as is required.
2. Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

QUALITY: Try to make your contribution one that is true: i.e.
1. Do not say what you believe to be false.
2. Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

RELATION: Be relevant.

MANNER: Be perspicuous: i.e.
1. Avoid obscurity of expression.
2. Avoid ambiguity.
3. Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity).
4. Be orderly.

The above constraints are not constitutive rules. Rather, they exhibit certain characteristics which are very important for their regulative function:

(a)   Maxims do not apply in the same way in different contexts.

(b)   They apply in variable degrees (again, depending on context), rather than in an all-or-nothing way.

(c)   They can conflict with one another.

(d)   They can be contravened without renouncing the activity which they control. (Even if one tells a lie, one is still speaking!)

The four maxims continually <u>affect</u> one another, and often work in <u>competition</u>.   For instance, the maxims of <u>quantity</u> and <u>quality</u> are frequently in competition, because together they regulate the behaviour of interactants such that they say as much as, but no more than, is necessary in order to be truthful.   Leech (p.85) cites the following example:

(28)   Jill ate some of the biscuits.

Here the implication is that Jill did not eat all of the biscuits, but the speaker is not certain how many she ate. In fact, it could be that she has eaten all of them, but the speaker is not prepared to commit him/herself. Since s/he is not sure, and therefore wants to avoid the risk of breaking the maxim of quality, the maxim of quantity is flouted.   (Example [27] above also demonstrates this interaction between these two maxims, where B also flouts the maxim of quantity in order to obey the maxim of quality.)

The use of indefinite and definite articles is related to the relevance maxim. The use of the indefinite <u>a</u> is employed where the referent is not assumed to be part of the shared contextual knowledge of participants, use of the definite <u>the</u>, on the other hand, implies that, according to Leech (ibid., p.90): "there is some X that can be uniquely identified as the same X by the speaker and the hearer". Hence, it is assumed to be already present in the contextual knowledge shared by the speaker and the hearer, and the speaker does not present it as new information for special attention by the hearer.   The decision to use either one or the other article is naturally influenced by a decision regarding appropriateness to situation, so the reference of X will vary greatly according to the situation at hand.

Articles, as well as other determiners, may be employed for a specific <u>interpersonal function</u> as well.   For instance, a speaker may employ the definite article although s/he knows the hearer has no knowledge of the referent s/he is introducing in order to indicate a move towards greater social solidarity.   The speaker thus assumes the hearer to have more knowledge of the speaker's world than the hearer actually has, thereby breaking the quantity maxim. The possessive pronouns in English function in a similar way.   An example of this is <u>my</u>, in the following extract from interview 3, turn 123:

(29)   123 A: ... you know i can't hear properly anymore with <u>my</u> cold

in which the implication is firstly, that A is having trouble hearing, and secondly, that A has a cold. She assumes the second implication to be part of the shared contextual knowledge which causes a reduction in the social distance between her, and C and K. (This attempt at increasing the feeling of solidarity is also demonstrated by A's use of the contact-maintaining phrase "you know".)

Another function of the definite article is to imply a bridging assumption between two propositions. Leech (p.92) quotes the following illustration:

(30)   A: In the end, we got through the back door
        B: Did you have to break the lock?

in which the use of the definite article in "the lock" implies that it is the back door which is referred to. This derives from the bridging assumption (an item of general knowledge) that doors generally have locks, and the inference that that particular door had a lock. It is because of this bridging assumption that B is accepted as not in fact violating the maxim of quantity. Such uses of definiteness, whereby an item of unshared knowledge is assumed to be shared knowledge, can only succeed if the hearer is able to make the relevant inferences because s/he has a sufficient foundation on which to build. If there is absolutely no intersection between the worlds of the speaker and the hearer, a breakdown in communication results and the interaction becomes asynchronous and stressful. (False assumptions made about shared worlds is a major problem in cross-cultural interaction, as will become apparent in chapter 5 through the analysis of the data.)

The maxim of relevance is not an easy notion to characterise. Leech (ibid.) quotes Smith and Wilson (1979, p.77) as defining relevance as follows:

> A remark P is relevant to another remark Q if P and Q together with background knowledge, yield new information not deriveable from either P or Q, together with background knowledge alone.

Hence, an utterance is relevant if it can be interpreted as contributing to the conversational goal(s) of the speaker and/or the hearer. This maxim interacts in an important way with the Politeness Principle in the interpretation of utterances which are apparently irrelevant. This point will be taken up shortly.

The maxim of manner often works together with the maxim of quality, or at least their inverse maxims do. Cases where, for one reason or another, a

speaker is not keen to tell the whole truth, a lack of clarity can actually be intentional. Where a maxim of the Co-operative Principle is flouted, a hearer makes inferences as to which of the other maxims is being obeyed as the 'higher' principle, in an attempt to understand the speaker's full intent. This also is a means of giving precedence to the Politeness Principle.

3.4.1.2 The Politeness Principle

The PP has an important higher regulative role, in that it serves to maintain social equilibrium and friendly relations. This is an important function, particularly where interlocutors do not know each other very well and they are involved in the collaborative activity of defining (and/or developing) their relationship. So it frequently occurs that where one of the maxims of the CP is flouted, it can be explained in terms of the supercedence of one of the maxims of the PP, in a situation where politeness may be more important than co-operation. Leech quotes the following example:

(31)   Parent: Someone's eaten the icing off the cake.
        Child: It wasn't me.

where the parent actually breaks the maxim of quality by not letting on that s/he suspects the child and also the maxim of quantity by not stating as much as is necessary. Nevertheless, the child picks up the implication and responds to the implied accusation.

Whereas Searle would attempt to account for (31) by recourse to the notion of indirect speech acts, Leech does so by introducing the PP, which interacts with the CP in such a way as to permit the hearer to understand the speaker's implication under particular circumstances by recognising the speaker's pragmatic force.[11]

At this point, a brief characterisation of the maxims of the PP is in order. Then the above-mentioned competition between the CP and the PP and its functions will be more easily explicated.

Leech lists the maxims of the PP as follows (p.132):

(I)   TACT MAXIM - (in impositives and commissives)
        (a) Minimise cost to other [(b) Maximise benefit to other]

(II)   GENEROSITY MAXIM - (in impositives and commissives)
        (a) Minimise benefit to self [(b) maximise cost to self]

(III)   APPROBATION MAXIM - (in expressives and assertives)

(a) Minimise dispraise of other [(b) Maximise praise of other]

(IV)   MODESTY MAXIM - (in expressives and assertives)

(a) Minimise praise of self [(b) Maximise dispraise of self]

(V)   AGREEMENT MAXIM - (in assertives)

(a) Minimise disagreement between self and other

[(b) Maximise agreement between self and other]

(VI)   SYMPATHY MAXIM - (in assertives)

(a) Minimise antipathy between self and other

[(b) Maximise sympathy between self and other]

Not all of these maxims are of equal importance. The first appears to impose a more powerful constraint than the second, and the third than the fourth, which seems to indicate that politeness is focused more strongly on other than on self.

Leech's notion of tact is evaluated in terms of a cost/benefit scale. Lakoff (1977) also suggests that the Politeness Principle can be interpreted in this way, when she refers to Goffman's (1964) notion of 'free goods'. In economic terms, free goods are those which are free for trade, while non-free goods are not. In the same sense, different societies, (and different types of people) regard certain topics as free, and others not. For instance, in South African English society prices of newly-acquired possessions, and salaries, are not to be talked about, while in the Xhosa-speaking community of the Eastern Cape these are regarded as free goods.[12] So, where a topic is not regarded as free goods, an imposition is indicated if it is talked about. In such cases, a greater indirectness is called for, particularly so as to leave open the option for the hearer to avoid the topic altogether.

Brown and Levinson (1978) also attempt to explain the apparent relationship between propositional and interpersonal development in terms of politeness. They postulate three factors that determine which politeness strategy will be chosen: power, distance and the extent of the weightiness of the threat to the hearer's face. Different cultural and/or political systems rate these factors differently, which results in variable politeness ethics. For instance, in British society, where social distance is greatly valued, the politeness

system used is one of deference, while in a society such as that of the Xhosa speaking people of the Eastern Cape, where the emphasis is on social closeness, an overall solidarity politeness system exists (except when speaking with English persons of higher authority). It would appear that the rationale behind the Politeness Principle revolves around "face-saving" (Brown and Levinson 1978). There seems to be a paradox here, in that all people (universally) need on the one hand freedom of action as well as freedom from imposition, and on the other the approval of others. These two needs are often difficult to reconcile. Sometimes it is necessary to risk the other's face in order to save one's own, or vice versa. The desire to balance the two out provides the motivation for face-saving behaviour, and hence adherence to the politeness principle, often at the expense of the Co-operative Principle.

Brown and Levinson (ibid.) outline five politeness strategies, the first two of which are tactics of solidarity politeness (moving towards greater equality) and the last three of deference politeness (indicating an unequal relationship, whereby the speaker sets him/herself up as the inferior). Use of the former type is usually restricted to the dominant participant, while the latter is usually employed by the less dominant one. These five strategies may be outlined as follows (adapted from Chick 1984, p.16).
A speaker may:

> (1)   Use no special politeness strategy, e.g.: "Give me a hand".

> (2)   Use an item of positive politeness, with an attempt at redressive action, which saves the face of both parties, e.g. "give me a hand, pal".

> (3)   Use an item of negative politeness, whereby the speaker loses face at the expense of saving the hearer's face, e.g. "I'm terrribly sorry to bother you, but ...".

> (4)   Phrase an utterance in such a way that, if necessary, it could be interpreted as not implying an imposition at all, e.g. "This task is really more than one person can handle", or by using modals denoting ability rather than preference, e.g. "can you come in to work tomorrow" rather than "would you like to come in to work tomorrow?". (Pre-requests and pre-invitations also have this function.)

> (5)   Avoid saying what s/he had intended to, simply because it is too risky at a particular point. (This relates to Leech's maxims of agreement and sympathy.)

It is interesting to note that in interviews 1 to 5, A, a lecturer, mainly employs the first two strategies, while the students confine themselves to the use of deference politeness strategies. This is especially noticeable in

the different uses of the repair mechanisms. Three examples from the data serve to illustrate politeness strategies.

In interview 1, A begins by a threatened imposition. In order to prepare D for this, and also to allow her to refuse if necessary, A introduces her request with a pre-request

(32)   1   A: || p can i just TA KE your DEtails ... (2 secs) ||

This is consistent with Lakoff's (1977) second principle, in that it allows D her options. It can be seen particularly by the long pause A leaves, which D could have used to take up a turn in which she could have refused. However, it is in the nature of the unequal relationship between lecturer and student, that D would be rather unlikely to refuse A's request! Hence this pre-request might be interpretable as being a mere formality, serving primarily as a topic-setting device. Moreover, in terms of pitch concord, A uses mid termination here which might be further evidence of this. In fact, it would appear as if A's relationship to the students is somewhat ambiguous, as will be shown in chapter 4.

An example of Brown and Levinson's (1978) fifth type of politeness strategy can be seen in the following example:

(33)   35   A: what were your results

         36   D: for june

         37   A: for all of them

         38   D: em ... ja journ i think i got twenty two percent

This is also an example of a type of repair. In turn 37 it appears that A has misunderstood D's question. While it was an attempt to check whether A wanted to know D's June exam results, A understood D to be ascertaining whether she had merely wanted to know her results for Journalism (as opposed to her other subjects). D chooses not to initiate other-repair by repeating her question in turn 36, but rather guesses that A wants to know her June exam results, and responds accordingly. This is probably the least risky of repair techniques, but it does mean that the speaker who chooses it must deny his/her needs at that point. Hence, this is usually employed by the subordinate participant.

Another example of the fifth politeness strategy, which often seems to be used to avoid breaking conversational synchrony, is illustrated below (extract from an informal recording):

(34)   1   A: i re-wrote everything i wrote yesterday

        2   B: did you

        3   A: $\|$ p mm ... and i was SO <u>PROUD</u> of myself $\|$ =

        4   A: = good ... john is feeling rather proud of himself too at the moment now that he's finished his manual on poetry scansion

        5   A: yes he's done an incredible amount of work on that

In turn 3, A is referring to how proud she had been of her first draft which she had ended up having to re-write. (She uses mid key instead of high key which would have indicated her surprise at how well she had done). B misinterprets her as saying that she was proud of the resultant work. A, in turn 5 chooses not to initiate repair and obtain the sympathy she was hoping for, but continues along the topic B introduced in turn 4. (A is a good deal younger than B, and hence is not the dominant participant.)[13]

* * *

To summarise briefly at this point, we have thus far considered the nature of some of the functions of the CP, and of the PP. The CP consists of four maxims whose primary function is to regulate the communicative process by ensuring that participants take their co-participants into account, and formulate their messages in a disciplined and considerate manner. The PP, on the other hand, serves to establish and maintain social equilibrium and friendly relations. Six maxims are postulated here. The maxims of both the CP and the PP are frequently in conflict with one another. It is by recourse to their socio-cultural understanding of the relative importance of the maxims that participants are able to infer one another's meaning, and build on that. Let us examine this relationship between the CP and the PP more closely.

3.4.1.3 The interrelationship of the Co-operative and Politeness Principles

The relationship between the CP and the PP is reflected in the interpersonal component of the discourse structure in the interrelationship between illocutionary and social goals. It seems that often social goals take precedence (as does the PP frequently), probably because a good relationship is essential if participants are going to communicate successfully. A necessary precondition to communication, as mentioned in 2.3, is the mutual expectation that all participants will co-operate in the

negotiation process and will make an effort to understand each other and to be understandable to each other. If a bad rapport exists between participants, a conversation can become very stressful indeed.

It is because of the risks involved if social rapport is bad, that it is important for second language learners to develop some understanding of the way in which the rhetorical maxims are interpreted in the culture whose language they are learning. A misunderstanding on this level, as discussed in chapter 1, can lead to negative stereotyping with possible unfortunate results.

Let us return now to the examples mentioned in the discussion of the Co-operative Principle.

The interrelationship between the maxim of relation and the PP is exhibited in such cases where, for instance, a question about a third party is responded to with a totally irrelevant remark in order to avoid involvement in such a topic. In other cases, the use of determiners (such as articles and possessive pronouns) in obedience to the relevance maxim may be flouted for a specific politeness function. For instance, a speaker may employ the definite article although s/he knows the hearer has no knowledge of the referent s/he is introducing. This is done in order to indicate a move towards greater social solidarity (by assuming the hearer to have more knowledge of the speaker's world than the hearer actually has). An example of this function is found in example (29) above (where the possessive pronoun served to imply social solidarity).

A conflict between the clarity maxim and the Politeness Principle is illustrated in the example below, taken from interview 3, turns 132 - 143, on pages 165-166 of Appendix III.

(35)　　132　A:　em is it || p oKAY || that i only looked at the one question i kind of felt ... it's depressing to do postmortems all the time you know let's rather move forward

　　　　133　C:　h ((laughs))

　　　　134　K:　h ((laughs))

　　　　135　C:　|| p WE:LL || i think i was ready for all your suggestions so

```
136   A:   mm ═

137   C:   ═ja

138   A:   i mean would you prefer me still to look through the
           other questions or do you think we should just move on

139   C:   er ... (1 sec.) especially the south african one

140   A:   mhm:

141   C:   ja ...   ⎡ with

142   A:            ⎣ would you like me to look at it

143   C:   ja with the er misses michael first

144   A:   mhm
```

A asks whether C and K are satisfied that she has only looked at one of each of their essays, and C, the only one who responds at all during this extract, breaks the maxim of clarity twice, in turns 135 and 139 in order to avoid putting pressure on A to do something which, it seems clear to him from turn 2, she is not very keen to do. He only answers A's question clearly and directly in turns 141 and 143 (but even there he tries to account for his apparent imposition on A). An interesting dynamic is at work here, because it seems that A is not interpreting C's use of the "hinting stategy", as Leech calls it (p.97). In a subsequent questionnaire, A admitted that she did not want to go through any more of these students' essays, and was really hoping that C would retreat if she did not pick up his pragmatic force (requesting her to go through one of his other essays). A thus breaks the quantity maxim by asking the same question three times in spite of receiving an answer each time. This is a good example of the way language is manipulated to negotiate the meanings participants are trying to communicate and to adapt their intentions in order to fulfill their individual goals. K could in fact be seen as employing the fifth politeness strategy, by avoiding responding to A at all, and only admitting later (in turn 149), when C has already convinced A, that he would like A to look at another of his exam essays.

3.4.1.4 The Irony Principle

The Irony Principle (IP) is really dependent on the interrelationship between the CP and the PP. Either a breach of quality or quantity can occur, in order to be overtly polite. At the same time, this breach can be specifically used in order to communicate a point in a strong manner. An example of this may be:

(36)   That's all I ever wanted!
        (Leech 1983)

where (if said after hearing of some undesirable happening) the maxim of quality is clearly flouted by the speaker to express his/her displeasure. Irony is related to sarcasm. But sarcasm differs from irony in that it is usually employed to injure someone directly. Whereas irony usually includes the speaker in the criticism, sarcasm is alienating, in that it isolates the person who is the object of the criticism from the speaker. Consider, for example:

(37)   Your mother's visit is all I ever needed!
        (Constructed)

where the offspring of the mother in question is to be injured.

Banter is another type of ironical behaviour. A speaker may violate both the CP and the PP in order to show solidarity with the hearer. It is, in a sense, an offensive way of being polite by expressing solidarity. Consider as an illustration the following example, where both the maxim of quality is being broken (because T's essay was actually very good), and A is being obviously impolite to T by apparently threatening T's face.

(38)   A: this is a rubbish essay, hey
        T: huh

Such uses of banter are characteristic of the English language, but are apparently infrequent in African languages unless the participants are very familiar. It is significant that T did not understand A's implication here, and appears to be so confused by A's remark that he asks her to repeat it ("huh"), in case he misunderstood it, an example of a very common type of repair tactic.

3.4.1.5 The Interest Principle

Leech (ibid.) has very little to say about the Interest Principle (Int.P). It relates to the way people sometimes exaggerate in order to hold the interest of an audience. As is the Irony Principle, the Interest Principle seems also to be dependent on the relationship between the CP and the PP. In order to avoid losing face if what s/he has to tell is not considered interesting by the hearer(s), a speaker may violate the maxim of quality. A speaker frequently uses hyperbole in such a case. For example:

(39) ... and there were hundreds of people there.
(Constructed)

* * *

The Interpersonal Rhetoric, then, attempts to account for the synchrony of conversation between members of a single culture[14] by postulating the above-mentioned socio-culturally defined principles which constrain communicative behaviour.[15]

3.4.2 The Textual Rhetoric

Not only do constraints exist on the way people relate in interaction, but also on the way a text is structured. The Textual Rhetoric interacts with the Interpersonal Rhetoric, since a text must be structured according to particular norms, which are common to both the speaker and the hearer, in order for a message to be understood.

The Textual Rhetoric consists of four main principles, according to Leech (ibid.), which place particular constraints on the encoding process itself. During the interpretative process, the hearer automatically assumes that these principles, like those of Interpersonal Rhetoric, are being obeyed by the speaker, and this guides the hearer in the problem-solving process of reconstructing the speaker's pragmatic force. These principles are (Leech, ibid., p.64):

(1) "Construct your text that it is humanly processible in ongoing time".

(2) "Be clear".

(3) "Make your text quick and easy to interpret".

(4) "Be expressive".

Each of these principles will be considered in turn.

3.4.2.1 The Processibility Principle

The _rationale_ behind this principle is that, while speakers are restricted by language to present their text in a linear manner within ongoing time, a message is stored psychologically in a hierarchical pattern, with the various aspects related in a logical way to one another.

In order to make his/her utterance comprehensible a speaker has to make the following _choices_ in the encoding process:

(a) how to segment his/her message into units;

(b) how to assign degrees of prominence or subordination to the various parts of the message; and

(c) how to order the parts of the message.

These three decisions are interrelated, and influence choices of sequencing, information structure and topical coherence. Their importance stems from the limitations of processing experienced by human memory. (Prosody plays a role here, as outlined in 3.2.4.)

3.4.2.2 The Clarity Principle

This principle contains _two maxims:_

(a) TRANSPARENCY MAXIM, which rules that a direct and transparent relationship should be retained between the message and the encoded text; and

(b) AMBIGUITY MAXIM, which mitigates against ambiguity in a text.

The two maxims are _closely related_, since ambiguity results in a lack of transparency. Although it is true (as stated before) that semantic ambiguity is usually resolved by context, this is not always the case, and, even if it is, the decoding process is then often delayed. Hence, this principle, in the same way as the economy principle, is closely related to the Processibility Principle. The ambiguity maxim is often flouted in English (intentionally or unintentionally) producing humorous results, as in the following example, taken from Leech (ibid., p.66):

(40)   If the baby won't drink the milk, it should be boiled.

(Notice that this ambiguity could be resolved by recourse to the prosodic feature of focal stress.)

3.4.2.3 The Economy Principle

According to this principle, a text should be <u>reduced</u> as much as possible, as long as the understanding of it is not impaired. An abbreviated text often simplifies the structure, which aids clarity and also processibility. The most obvious example of obedience to this principle can be found in the frequent use of syntactic ellipsis and phonological elisions or assimilations in conversation, where the dynamic nature of the mutually constructed context permits this without risk of ambiguity. A misuse of pronominalisation, which has an elliptical function, is illustrated in example (40) above.

This principle is <u>related</u> to the CP maxim of quantity. A speaker has to make certain inferences as to how much of the message which has been omitted for the sake of economy is recoverable. It is important that the omitted part of a message is recoverable, since, if it is not, a conflict with the Clarity Principle arises, and there is a great danger of asynchrony in a conversation, which may result in a communication breakdown if repair is not initiated by one of the interactants. (Asynchrony due to conflicting apprehensions of how much of a message is recoverable appears to be important in encounters between speakers of BSAE and SAE in South Africa, as will be seen in chapter 5.)

3.4.2.4 The Expressivity Principle

Leech postulates this principle in an attempt to account for the <u>expressive and aesthetic aspects of communication</u>, since conversation is not merely a coldly efficient passing of information from one participant to another. He does not attempt to outline any possible maxims, although he suggests that an iconicity maxim should be included, which states that a speaker should try to make aspects of his/her text imitate the message (which is illustrated most obviously in onomatopoeic expressions).

This principle frequently <u>contradicts</u> one or more of the other principles, for a specific aesthetic or expressive purpose. Leech cites the following example (p.68) in which the Economy Principle is violated for an expressive purpose:

(41)   John Brown was guilty of the crime, and John Brown would have to pay for it.

Such instances of expressive repetition are quite common in literature. Poetry may be another example of the application of the expressivity principle. Frequently a poem violates the Clarity Principle and renders the

decoding process more complicated, for a specific expressive and/or aesthetic effect. The application of this principle appears to differ quite markedly from culture to culture, as can be seen from even a cursory glance at the difference between the African Oral Tradition as compared to Western Literature.

3.5 SUMMARY

In this and the previous chapter I have outlined a theory which tries to account for the fact that conversational interaction between members of a common culture is rule-governed, friendly, synchronous and more or less successful in terms of whether it meets the aims of the various participants.

In order to sum up, I would like first to reiterate the two main aims I stated at the beginning of chapter 3, and then to consider how they have been achieved.

My two main aims have been:

(i) to discover how, and by what devices (contextualisation cues), conversational inferences are made, and

(ii) to identify some of the underlying principles which guide each participant's situated interpretation of every utterance produced during a conversation.

In chapter 2 I provided the conceptual foundations of a framework, which I then went on to propose in chapter 3. In chapter 2 the basic interactive and problem-solving nature of conversation was discussed, and some implications of that considered. In the first part of chapter 3 (3.1-3.3) the nature and functions of the devices by which conversational inferences are made were investigated. It was found that a conversational interaction is organised on two distinct levels: that of the formal patterning of the physical representation of an interaction, and that of the underlying discourse structure, which consists of controlling principles which guide the unfolding of the interaction. The component principles of discourse structure are divided into three major interrelated areas, associated with the organisational, propositional and interactional development of an interaction. Aspects of the developing discourse structure are signalled in the formal patterning by means of assemblies of contextualisation cues, which are lexical, syntactic, phonological and prosodic in nature. In 3.4 the constraining principles which guide the unfolding of a conversational

interaction were outlined in an attempt to explain the relationship between the linguistic form of an utterance and/or a whole text and a participant's situated interpretation thereof. Successful communication is dependent on utterances being considerate, polite and comprehensible. The manner in which the various inference principles work together in order to guide both speaker and hearer in their co-operative process of constructing the context and the theme of their conversation, by constraining them to make their utterances comprehensible, polite and considerate, was discussed in the final section of this chapter.

Conversational stress may arise from difficulties with any aspect of the interactional structure: a lack of understanding of the nature of the contextualisation cues present in the language form, cross-cultural dissimilarity of discourse conventions, or cultural variance in the application or understanding of the socio-pragmatic principles of communicative behaviour, or possibly a combination of a number of these.

It is the subject of this research to investigate data derived from actual conversations, of various degrees of stressfulness, in order to make some hypotheses about the nature of the difficulties experienced by speakers of BSAE in conversation, and to consider whether it is possible, ethical and feasible to integrate the teaching of the structure of conversational interaction into language programmes.

The role of prosody in the interactive process of conversation was touched on at various points in this chapter. It is my hypothesis that an understanding of the nature and function of this aspect of the English language which creates a great deal more of the conversational difficulties experienced by speakers of BSAE than has previously been accredited to it. I hope to demonstrate this in my analysis of the data in Chapter 5. But before I can go on to my analysis, the research method employed in this study must be outlined. This is the subject of the following chapter.

CHAPTER 4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 RATIONALE FOR THE USE OF ETHNOMETHODOLOGICAL RESEARCH

As stated in the introduction, the overall aim of this research is to discover why speakers of BSAE frequently experience difficulties in conversational interaction in English. The research methodology employed for this purpose is not based on a positivistic scientific approach, which attempts to make generalisations from specifics deemed to have been explored objectively. Rather, an interpretive methodology has been employed. The focus is on the experiences of individuals involved in conversations. By probing into the accounts of participants, a formulation of each person's experience in a particular exchange is gained, so that an understanding of his/her usage of the English language and prosody in particular can be reached.

The research methodology is based on Ethnomethodology. According to Saville-Troike (1982), the term was coined by Garfinkel in 1967. Garfinkel believed that the format required for the description of communication is dynamic rather than static, and that ethnomethodology and interaction analysis are

> ... concerned primarily with discovering underlying processes which speakers of a language use to produce and interpret communicative experiences, including the unstated assumptions which are shared cultural knowledge and understandings (Saville-Troike 1982, p.130).

As mentioned in chapter 1, this study may go some way in explaining the process of negative stereotyping which seems to result from repeated asynchrony in conversations with people of a different socio-cultural group. Saville-Troike goes on to say that in order to describe and analyse these underlying processes, an analyst must discover those aspects of speech which serve as a metalanguage for transmitting information not only about propositional content, but also about the understanding participants have of what is occurring during an interaction. It is for this reason that the research methodology employed involves a process of triangulation (Cohen and Manion 1980).

With this background in mind, the research methodology employed in this study is outlined in the next section and this is followed by an outline of the various stages of the research process.

4.2 RESEARCH METHODS EMPLOYED

The methodology of this research project relies on triangulation techniques (Cohen and Manion 1980) of two kinds. Firstly, investigator triangulation (ibid.) has been employed, in that the conversations have not been studied purely from the researcher's standpoint, but also from the standpoints of the participants and outside observers. Secondly, methodology triangulation (ibid.) has been employed. In order to avoid bias, more than one method has been used. Since I, as the researcher, am part of one of the cultures under study (the white South African English community), many of the initial observations were derived from introspection (ibid.). However, introspection is not sufficient grounds for drawing conclusions about the nature of the cross-cultural conversational interaction studied in this research. Consequently, data were collected in the form of audio recordings of natural conversation which were later transcribed and analysed. I, as researcher, also took part in five of the six conversations. Participant observation (ibid.) was thus employed in conversations 1 to 5, and non-participant observation (ibid.) for conversation 6 in which the researcher was not a participant. (Throughout this study, reference is made to myself in the role of researcher as 'the researcher', and to myself as the lecturer in conversations 1 to 5 as 'the lecturer' or 'A'.) Information supplementing the researcher's analysis was obtained both from the participants involved in the different conversations, and from outside observers, who are members of either the White South African English or the Black South African communities. The information was obtained first by use of questionnaires of a special kind, and secondly by follow-up interviews.

4.3 TYPES OF DATA AND DATA COLLECTION

The primary data source is the audio-recordings of natural conversation. In keeping with the purpose of this study to propose a set of aims and objectives and suggestions for methods and materials for the teaching of prosody to BSAE speaking students in an English university context, all the data were gathered within a university context. Thirteen conversations were audio-recorded. This was part of the participant observation (interviews 1 to 5) and non-participant observation (conversation 6) methods of research. Six conversations were considered adequate for this study and those parts analysed in detail were transcribed verbatim (Appendix III).

The first five conversations consist of informal interviews between a student and the researcher as lecturer, a first language SAE speaker. One of the

five student-lecturer interviews (interview 1) is between two first language speakers of SAE. The other four are each between the lecturer and BSAE speaking students. Except for interview 4 in which there are two students, interviews 1 to 5 are between the lecturer and one student. All five interviews took place in the lecturer's office, across her desk. She had the relevant student's exam scripts in front of her. These had been given her by each student on a previous occasion when this particular appointment had been made. The purpose of these interviews was for the students and the lecturer to discuss her criticisms of their exam work, and for them to make plans for improving the students' writing skills. The interviews were not specially set up to provide data, but were a normal part of the lecturer's daily contact with students.

Although in interviews 1 to 5 an unequal status relationship exists between A and the students, this was not as great as might be expected. Firstly, A is a woman, and all the students interviewed, except the woman in interview 1, are men[1]. Secondly, A is approximately the same age as all the students in the data. Thirdly, she is in a rather ambiguous position, since she is both a lecturer and a fellow-student and occasionally meets her students socially at student functions.

Indeed, several advantages were gained from the researcher's participation in the conversations. Firstly it avoided the problem of observer's paradox, the tendency for the interactions being studied to be affected by a non-participant observer. Secondly, her presence made later transcription and analysis easier in that it helped in overcoming one of the major limitations of audio-recordings, namely that non-verbal signals (e.g., facial expression, gesture, behavioural actions) are not recorded (for instance, in interview 3, the pauses occurring in turn 104 had no communicative intent, but merely provided time for A to find C and K's record cards). Thirdly, the fact that the researcher had participated in the discussions facilitated the transcription process since she could rely on her memory of the discussions to circumvent the problems of comprehensibility occasioned by the different (to SAE) and sometimes arbitrary distribution of stressed syllables and pitch assignment in BSAE speech. By contrast, the transcription process of the sixth conversation, in which A had not taken part, was so difficult that each of the participants had to be called in to interpret what was being said or done at particularly difficult points.

The sixth conversation is a discussion in a lecture hall between three BSAE speaking students (two of whom were participants in two of the five

interviews with the lecturer). The lecturer was out of earshot. The group of three students had a worksheet in front of them which required them to read two exam essays, and then evaluate and compare them according to specific questions given. (The worksheets are attached before the sixth conversation in Appendix III). Again, this discussion was not specifically set up to aid data collection, but a recording was made of one of the groups discussing the worksheet which the first year journalism class at Rhodes University had been assigned during a writing skills workshop.

A point to note about all the conversations is that they were not transcribed in their totality (although the topical development within the omitted sections is outlined briefly in the transcript). There are three main reasons for this. First of all, each interview consisted of various exchanges, some of which were purely 'teacher talk', in that A took on the teacher role to explain or query a particular grammatical or logical problem. Because of the special nature of teacher talk (and particularly its hierarchical implications) only the less formal exchanges where a more equal status relationship exists are suitable for this research, and only those have been transcribed. Secondly, each conversation was forty-five minutes long, and a full transcription would therefore be too lengthy. Thirdly, a concern for ethics in research required that certain of the exchanges which dealt with personal aspects of the students' lives be omitted (this is particularly the case in interview 1, where a relatively long exchange about D's family problems is not transcribed).

As part of the first research method of the methodology triangulation, the researcher transcribed and analysed the recordings obtained by participant observation and non-participant observation. Through a further process of introspection, interchanges in the conversations which she perceived as 'trouble spots' were selected. Questionnaires and interview schedules were drawn up which aimed to elicit the points of view of the participants concerned, as well as the points of view of selected outside informants as to how they understood the selected extracts, and what their attitudes were to them. The techniques of the elicitation of the points of view of participants and of outsiders differed slightly, and these are discussed separately below.

4.3.1 Elicitation of participants' viewpoints

It was mentioned earlier that A, who is one of the participants in interviews 1 to 5, is also the researcher. Although this participation was necessary for reasons already given, it is also potentially a source of bias. Steps were taken to minimise this. For instance, secondary data were obtained by means of participant questionnaires and focused interviews (Cohen and Manion 1980) in which participants were asked to explain their purposes, meanings, and attitudes to other participants at various points in the relevant conversations. A answered a similar questionnaire to those answered by the other participants before they were asked their opinions, so as to avoid her being influenced by their responses.

The questionnaires and interviews constituted two further research methods used in the methodology triangulation process. They functioned as a guide to the analysis of the primary data by providing the second point in the investigator triangle (the observations made by the participants to complement the analyst's observations). Each of the students involved in a conversation was asked to spend approximately one hour in an interview with the researcher. At the outset the interviewer clarified the purpose of the research, and obtained written permission from each respondent to use as data the conversation in which s/he had participated, and a written undertaking to answer questions on the conversation as honestly as possible (see sample letter on p.196). During the hour, the respondents first listened to the relevant extracts from the conversation in which they were involved while at the same time reading a verbatim transcript. Then they were requested to answer a questionnaire, which was followed up by a focused interview. Each student received a different questionnaire which contained questions relating directly to that student's participation in the relevant conversation. (A sample questionnaire is given in Appendix IV, p.192.)

The questions were designed to elicit the aims, purposes, meanings and attitudes participants had at the selected points in the discourse. (The aims and objectives of the participant questionnaires are listed in Appendix IV, p.192.) The earlier questions were broad (e.g., "What had you hoped to get out of this conversation?"; "What do you think this conversation was about, overall?"), and later ones more specific (e.g., "How did you feel towards A at this point?"; "What do you think Z was trying to say in turn ___?"). The items in the questionnaires were primarily open-ended, which meant that, while the questions provided a frame of reference, they placed a

minimum of restraint on the way in which participants expressed their answers. While this could have led to vagueness, the follow-up interviews ensured that questions were adequately answered. Frequently, the questionnaire items were indirect, so that, instead of inquiring directly whether another participant was rude, for instance, a respondent was rather asked how s/he felt towards that participant during that turn. This indirect questioning was used so that respondents, not confronted by a direct question, could be more honest. The need for honesty and clarity was in addition emphasised in the questionnaire. Where necessary, the relevant sections of the recording were played through again, to give respondents time to remember how they felt and what they thought.

It was decided that written participant questionnaires would be used first in order not to rely on a spoken interview. The reason why a spoken interview was regarded as insufficient was because there are many problems associated with interviewing (as outlined in Cohen and Manion [1980] and Saville-Troike [1982]), which are specifically related to the fact that a research interview is a type of conversation. Problems of reliability and validity would have arisen if conversation had been used to elicit participants' viewpoints of a previously recorded conversation!

Nevertheless the disadvantages of a questionnaire method were considered, particularly the limitations imposed by the written medium in a second language situation. A follow-up interview, designed merely to clarify certain items and to allow for deeper probing into the respondents' answers, took place shortly after the questionnaire had been completed. Each interview was a focused interview in that, while it attempted to follow the principle of not being directed, by allowing a respondent to answer freely and openly, a certain degree of interviewer control was retained. The interviewer asked a few questions which were limited to the 'filling out' of selected answers of the respondent.

The participant interviews were all conducted by the researcher. The reason for this was that in her role as lecturer, she had already established relationships with the students. If another person had entered into conversation with the subjects, new dynamics could have come into play (e.g., a trust relationship would have had to be re-established), skewing the results by influencing the respondents' openness and honesty. There was a possibility that at certain points (especially where they were asked to explain how they felt towards A) respondents might refrain from being honest. This is another reason why respondents were asked to respond in

writing first, where they did not need to face A directly. The fact that on occasion a respondent admitted to having negative feelings towards A, and towards the interview in general, illustrates that respondents were attempting to be honest, and so demonstrates the validity of this questioning strategy.

4.3.2 Elicitation of outsiders' viewpoints

The third point in the investigator triangle was the elicitation of the viewpoints of selected outsiders to provide secondary data. Three white first language SAE speakers and four black second language speakers were selected as respondents. As far as was possible, respondents were matched. All the interviewees were first year undergraduate students at Rhodes University (as were all the student participants in the data), except for one, a BSAE speaker, who was an honours student.

The viewpoints of the outsiders were elicited by spoken interviews. The interviews were not conducted by the researcher, but by two interviewers, one of whom was a first language SAE speaker and the other a BSAE speaker whose first language was Xhosa. The problem of investigating conversation by means of conversation, which is problematic when the viewpoints of participants are sought, was not regarded as an issue here. Since conversation between first language speakers was not the major object of study, the interview with the SAE speakers created no difficulties. Conversational problems of the BSAE speakers were avoided by allowing them to respond in either Xhosa or English. Both interviewers were briefed by the researcher who explained the objectives of every question in the schedule.

Whereas participants were interviewed individually about the conversation(s) in which they had taken part, the outsiders were interviewed in groups of two or three. Interviewees were assured at the outset that the way in which they answered would serve only to help the researcher to understand the extracts of the conversations under discussion. All three of the SAE speakers were interviewed together, while the BSAE speakers were interviewed in pairs (each pair only answering half of the total number of questions)[2]. The outsiders were required to listen to selected extracts from five of the conversations, the background and previous discourse being clarified where necessary. Each interviewee was required to commit him/herself to a clear answer. Their answers and discussion were recorded on audio tape.

During each interview, the interviewer played each extract and then asked the relevant questions. Every interviewee had in front of him/her a list of the questions, so that each question could be read and heard simultaneously. This was particularly necessary in the more closed-type items, in which interviewees were asked to select the most probable answer to a question. Once again, the pattern of the questioning was to begin with very general items. The first few items attempted to yield respondents' perceptions about what participants might have intended in specific places, how they felt, whether they were successful in communicating what they seemed to have intended, and what they did 'wrong'. Subsequent questions tried to elicit from respondents how they made their judgements, by asking them to relate their judgements more closely to what they had actually heard. The purpose here was to test the analyst's hypotheses about firstly, immediate communicative intentions, such as the illocutionary force of particular utterances, secondly about the way hearers interpret speakers' moves, and thirdly, about the use and understanding of prosodic contextualisation cues in relationship to other cues at specific points where a suspected miscommunication had occurred. Information pertaining to these hypotheses was often elicited by means of a series of focused questions. For instance, after respondents stated that speaker A was making a suggestion in turn 47 of interview 5, a series of questions followed:

(a) What is it about the way A speaks in turn 47 that makes you think that she is making a suggestion?

(b) Can you repeat it in the way she said it?

(c) How else could she have said it?

(d) How did Kh interpret it?

(e) Is it possible that Kh could have been right in thinking it was a question/statement/command?

(f) How would turn 47 have been said if it were a suggestion/question/statement/command?

(g) How can you tell that Kh interpreted it that way?

(h) Would you have answered in that last pause in turn 47?

(i) Do you think A wanted Kh to respond here?

At the end, more general questions were asked. These related to cultural attitudes and constraints on the manner in which one behaves in certain circumstances. For example, respondents were asked if they felt students behaved well in the extracts, whether they themselves would do the same,

or how they would behave if differently. In particular, students were asked what their attitudes were to the ambiguous student- student/lecturer relationship, the lecturer's age and her sex. The aims and objectives of the questionnaires and follow-up interviews are listed in Appendix IV on p.198.

4.3.3 Systematisation of results

After each interview, the relevant answers were transcribed and the BSAE and SAE respondents' answers to each question were grouped together. These answers were subsequently used to guide the analysis of the extracts and the drawing of conclusions. They are referred to at each relevant point in chapter 5. Copies of the questionnaires and the interview schedule are to be found in Appendix IV on p.198.[3]

In the following chapter selected extracts from the data are analysed.

CHAPTER 5: THE ANALYSIS OF COMMUNICATIVE FAILURE IN BLACK
SOUTH AFRICAN ENGLISH CONVERSATION.

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the data (given in Appendix III) are analysed. At the
outset, the different functions of prosodic features in English and Southern
Bantu languages[1] are examined. Then, the prosody and prosodic functions
of BSAE are outlined. This prepares the way for the data analysis. The
investigation of selected instances of communicative asynchrony is loosely
categorised under the following broad headings: organisational development,
propositional development, and interpersonal development, (which correspond
to the three major divisions of discourse structure discussed in chapter 3),
and a fourth which considers the interaction between propositional
development, interpersonal development and the socio-pragmatic principles.

5.2 THE FUNCTIONS OF PROSODY IN ENGLISH

An explication of the model of the functions of prosody in English, as
proposed by Brazil et al. (1980), has already been given in section 3.2.4.
Intonation choices do not only carry information about propositional
development, but also about (ibid., p.x):

— the structure of an interaction (organisational development)

— the interactional 'givenness' and 'newness' of information, and
the relationships between individual utterances; and

— the illocutionary and perlocutionary force of individual
utterances, and the attitudes of participants to each other,
themselves, what they are talking about, and their
environment.

An illustration of the exploitation of prosodic cues is found in interview 3,
turn 43. A, the lecturer, has just been asking whether C and K had
planned their essays in the exam under discussion. C responds by saying
that he only tried to plan for one question, and goes on to explain that he
felt no need for planning any of the other questions, for various reasons.
A reacts as follows:

(1)   43   A: $\parallel$ p there was NO need for planning $\parallel$

She assigns focal stress to the word "no", thereby marking it as
informationally salient. She uses a proclaiming tone here, which typically
marks an item of new information. She also employs mid key, which has an

additive function, signalling that a new item of information is expanding on
previous information. By means of assigning focal stress, a proclaiming tone
and mid key on the word "no" she is bringing back to the discourse for re-
consideration one of C's previous propositions in turn 42 ("well i don't think
there was a need for planning") and hence is challenging that proposition.
Although she appears to be breaking the quantity maxim of the CP, which
states that a contribution should be as informative as required, but not
more informative than is required, by implication she is establishing a
challenge to C's proposition which she is repeating. In order to understand
what she is trying to say, C and K need to understand what A implies by
reiterating given information as if it were a relevant piece of new
information (in terms of the prosodic features of its utterance). A stated
(in the questionnaire about her aims and perceptions of the conversation
with C and K) that she had hoped to challenge C into thinking through his
position more carefully. Thus, A used the proclaiming tone and additive mid
key, to convey a challenge by assigning them to what is obviously "given"
information.

5.3 PROSODY AND DISCOURSE FUNCTIONS IN AFRICAN LANGUAGES

The seven southern Bantu languages which are spoken in South Africa are
all tone languages. Apart from the "downdrift phenomenon" (Lanham 1984),
prosody (5.3.1 below) has no discourse functions at all. Instead discourse
functions are signalled syntactically and lexically (5.3.2 below).[2]

5.3.1 Prosody in southern Bantu languages

The Bantu languages of Southern Africa have a syllable-timed rhythm, as
opposed to the stress-timed rhythm of English. The spoken language appears
not to be divisible into tone units, but rather into phonologic phrases, which
are subject to the "downdrift phenomenon" (Lanham 1984)[3]. "Downdrifting"
is a term which describes the progressive lowering of the fundamental
frequency of both high tones and low tones in succession. A downdrift
stretch normally terminates at the boundary of a phonologic-phrase and is
marked by penultimate vowel length. These downdrifting stretches, or
phonologic phrases, usually correspond with syntactically self-contained
strings. These may be short phrases or longer clauses. It is therefore
syntax which constrains the manner in which the linear propositional flow is
"parcelled-up" into information units (which are conceptually perceived
hierarchically, as discussed in section 3.3.2). Low pitch endings and high-
pitch beginnings to downdrifting stretches seem to signal propositional

completeness at different levels. At a point of major topic shift (at a new oral paragraph) the low-high interval is probably widest. In particular, the low pitch over the terminal stretch is extra low. While this is apparently similar to the "low-high" boundary signal in English, it is actually quite different. This is because the downdrift phenomenon involves every syllable in a progressive descent, while the English boundary phenomenon is restricted to focused syllables within the tonic segment of the tone unit (syllables outside the tonic segment have no significant pitch).

Those other features of prosody which in English have a discourse function, that is, focal stress and tone on the prominent syllable (as described by Brazil et al. [1980]), are assigned differently in southern Bantu languages, for instance a distinction between a high or low <u>tone</u> level serves to differentiate word meanings (e.g. íthàngà [pumpkin] vs. íthàngá [thigh]). As tone languages, Bantu languages have an underlying lexical tone on syllables (high vs. low), but but this lexical tone is subject to phonological rules of tonal change. To the English ear, <u>stress</u> distinctions are not easily distinguishable, and if perceived are lexically assigned. Vowel reduction in <u>unstressed (weak-stressed) syllables</u> in English has no equivalent in the southern Bantu languages. While the rhythm certainly is not an entirely monotonous pounding across equally stressed syllables, those syllables that are reduced are such by virtue of vowel loss, and English unstressed syllables with the vowel quality of [ə] or [I] have no counterpart in southern Bantu languages.

5.3.2 Discourse function cues in southern Bantu languages

Apart from the downdrift phenomenon, which tends to signal propositional completeness, <u>prosody</u> appears to play no other part in signalling discourse functions. Lanham (1984) outlines <u>syntactic</u> cues to discourse functions as follows:

> Syntactic means of establishing focus involves fronting (topicalising) transformations, the placing of the focused constituent in copulative (predictive) form, the use of self standing absolute (emphatic) pronouns and the choice of the so-called "long" tense form in present and perfect tenses where a choice between the "long" and "short" forms is syntactically permissible. (In this case the verb is focused.) (p.221).

<u>Lexical</u> cues are employed frequently. Illocutionary force is signalled overtly by lexical markers. For instance, where English uses contrastive high key to reject, Xhosa can employ only the phrases "I don't believe that ..." or "I don't know that ..." (Lanham, ibid.).

5.4. PROSODY IN BLACK SOUTH AFRICAN ENGLISH

Lanham (ibid.) has suggested that BSAE "as an approximative system (the L2 grammar as proposed by Nemser 1971) ... attempts to incorporate a perception of stress-level differences into its rules or patterns" (p.221).[4] He claims this as being true at least for the pre-coded speech in his data. For the most part, my data supports his findings, but in cases where difficulty in formulation is evident, a speaker can lapse back into a regular syllable-timed rhythm similar to that of African languages. My data further supports Lanham in his claim that distinctions between prominent syllables and the surrounding syllables which are at a lower level of stress are discernible to the English ear, but in BSAE few syllables ever drop to the level of SAE weak-stressed syllables, which can make stress distinctions difficult to discern.   Lanham (ibid.) outlines two basic characteristics of BSAE in the reading of pre-coded English, that differ from SAE:

(a)   There is only one clearly discernible stress level below that of prominence, and prominent syllables occur more frequently than in SAE.

(b)   BSAE maintains a constant rate of syllable utterance (tempo), as opposed to SAE where there is variation of tempo between different tone units according to the number of non-prominent syllables to be accommodated.

While (a) appears to be wholly acceptable as an observation for BSAE rhythm in spontaneous conversational discourse, (b) is less clearly so. Vowel loss occurs more frequently in conversational discourse than in the reading of pre-coded discourse, which renders the tempo less regular than in reading. Moreover my data of spontaneous conversational BSAE exhibits an overriding tendency to break up the stream of speech into stretches with frequent hiatus points. This makes comprehensibility still more difficult.

The downdrift phenomenon that clearly plays a role in the "parcelling up" of information units in the southern Bantu languages, is carried over into BSAE.   It seems that as the fundamental frequency of pitch is lowered, there is a simultaneous tendency to decrease in loudness. For this reason too, stress distinctions are difficult to discern, since a prominent syllable, for instance in the terminal stretch of a downdrifting stretch, may actually be approximately equivalent in loudness to a less prominent syllable at a higher level of the downdrifting stretch.

The above factors <u>compound</u> in such a way as to severely hamper comprehensibility of BSAE conversational contributions. Many examples of this phenomenon are found in my data, but a single one will suffice here. It is taken from interview 2, turns 31-33:

(2)   31   T: || p   but i THINK <u>MAY</u>be|| ↓|| p   SO ME of the

PEOple are com<u>PLAIN</u>ing || ↓|| p   about that

<u>SEC</u>tion ||

   32   A: || p   [<u>JA</u> || p <u>MAY</u>be||

   33   T: ↓

          ↓ || p [by <u>MIC</u>Hael first || î || o   be<u>CAUSE</u> he

<u>AL</u>ways || p <u>GIVES</u> us || o er ||

↓
|| p <u>REF</u>erences and so on ||

Example (2) clearly exhibits the frequency of prominence, and the shortness of the tone units. The downdrifting phenomenon is also shown. Lanham (1984) points out that low terminal pitch is rare in BSAE. Instead, the syllables in the terminal stretch of a downdrifting stretch are assigned low pitch, and this is confusing to the SAE speaker's ear, in that this end of a downdrifting stretch can be mistaken as low <u>terminal pitch</u> (which in SAE applies only to prominent syllables). A in example (2) takes this to indicate a TRP, and proceeds to take a turn in turn 32.[5]

Within each phonological phrase of a downdrifting stretch, the <u>pitch levels</u> in BSAE seem to be almost totally unchanging, and there is a tendency towards "an unrelieved progression of mid key" (Lanham 1984). From the conversational data, it appears that high key is seldom, if ever, employed in BSAE speech, even at a point of topic initiation or topic shift. In <u>pitch movement,</u> a rising pitch (referring tone) occurs extremely infrequently, and usually only in direct questions.

<u>Prominence</u> appears not to have a discourse function at all, and rather follows a rule-system which depends on word class distinctions. In my data, a very similar pattern emerged as that in Lanham's data of pre-coded speech:

> (a) Relative semantic weight of lexical words attracts prominence so that relatively uncommon nouns, adjectives, verbs and adverbs will seldom pass without prominence.

(b) Prominence is attracted automatically to certain intensifiers (this term is interpreted broadly) and to markers of negation. These commonly include: very, many, even, never, every, not, most, don't, only.

(c) In the inability to vary the rate of utterance and speed up to a distant word scheduled for focus, there is a pressure to place prominence unselectively in stretches lacking words in the category of (a) and (b) above. This pressure is accentuated by the comparative shortness (in the reading style) of the average tone unit.

(d) The location of primary word accent is echoic (i.e. recalled from a memory of the uttering of the word by models, either SAE or [BSAE]). Not infrequently the memory is accurate, but quite often the speaker misplaces the primary accent – or he stresses two or more syllables about equally (Lanham 1984, p.222).

Lanham goes on to support his claims by giving evidence from his data, specifically that there is a lack of stress on any pronouns (even where a contrastive relationship is set up), and that prepositions receive no prominence. My data, however, reveals that where some difficulty is experienced by a speaker with sentence construction and the articulation of his/her thoughts, (a) to (d) fall away to a large extent, and prominence is assigned arbitrarily. An example of this occurs in turn 47 of interview 2:

(3)   47   T: .... || p i JUST had TO PUT mySELF || p under

PRESSure || ...

It is my hypothesis that all the abovementioned differences between the nature and functions of prosodic features in SAE and BSAE contribute significantly to conversational asynchrony as experienced by participants in both cross-lingual conversations (BSAE and SAE), and in conversations in English between speakers of BSAE. The following section demonstrates that prosodic deviance plays an important role in creating severe communicative breakdown, or at least in making conversations extremely stressful by causing great difficulty in processing utterances in conversation. A further complication arises which I believe often has unfortunate consequences. It would appear that the SAE and BSAE cultural groups tend to understand and/or apply certain of the socio-pragmatic principles differently and hence draw different conclusions about a speaker's intent. Particularly in cases where repair is absent, a conversation can become extremely asynchronous,

stressful and dissatisfying for all participants. If asynchrony occurs repeatedly, it can lead to stereotyping and the formation of cultural prejudices.

5.5 ANALYSIS OF ASYNCHRONY IN THE DATA

This analysis consists of an examination of instances in the data where a misuse, a misunderstanding or an omission of a relevant contextualisation cue leads to communicative difficulties. Evidence provided by the informants, and by the participants themselves, has facilitated the identification of possible sources and consequences.

Sinclair and Brazil (1982) have observed that "the most sensitive analysis will fail to recapture all of the feelings of the original". Hence, no attempt is made to do so. Rather, only selected points of miscommunication are considered here. This study focuses primarily on how the misuse or misunderstanding of prosodic cues effects propositional development (including theme construction). Problems also occur with respect to the organisational development or interpersonal development, and a small number of selected examples of this are examined. The focus is not exclusively on prosodic cues. Frequently, other instances of miscueing or misunderstanding of cues are relevant and are also considered. Conversational difficulties arising out of major differences in the understanding and/or application of the socio-pragmatic principles which guide conversational behaviour are also investigated.

The analysis of miscommunication which follows is roughly divided according to the three major divisions of discourse structure outlined in chapter 3. The relationship of the socio-pragmatic principles to each point of miscommunication is discussed in 5.5.3.

5.5.1 Organisational development

Although the turn-taking mechanism is seldom severely disrupted, two disturbing features arise in the data. Firstly, there is evidence of a large number of extended pauses in the conversations recorded. Selected examples are to be found in: interviews 2 (turns 13, and 58-59, on pp.154 and 157 of Appendix III), 3 (turn 85, p.163), 4 (turns 66-67, p.167), and 5 (turns 123-124, p.174), and conversation 6 (turns 27, 46, 55, pp.185, 186). The informants were asked about the significance of the pauses in interview 3 turn 85 (on p. 163), and conversation 6 turn 55 (on p.186). All the SAE speakers felt they were awkward because the speaker did not receive an

immediate response as expected. The BSAE speakers usually considered the pauses to be necessary as they provided the participants with time to formulate their utterances. This meant that frequently a pause was not taken as a TRP signal, but rather as a moment for a speaker to think. In English, a pause may often have some deeper significance (by, for example, signalling a dispreferred second pair part, or expressing disapproval or apprehension), and if it is to have no significance, it is often filled (e.g., "um", "you know" etc.). This appears not to be the case for speakers of African languages. This difference in perception of pauses may bear an important relationship to the application of the quantity maxim and what is implied when too little is said. A mentioned in all her questionnnaires that she found points at which she was waiting for a response from one of the students 'awkward', while frequently her students claimed that they did not perceive that they should have said something (e.g., interview 5, turns 123-124, p.174; interview 3, turn 85, p.163). However, it is significant that in conversation 6, turn 55 (p.186), T frequently paused, in the hope (he claimed afterwards) that one of the other two participants might say something.

The _second_ feature in the data which affected turn-taking is the downdrifting phenomenon. This is illustrated most clearly in interview 2, turns 31 to 33 (on p.155 of Appendix III), and was discussed on page 97 above. Another example is found in turns 35-37 of that interview (p.155-156 of Appendix III). The terminal part of the downdrifting stretch in both turns 31 and 35 are heard by A as instances of low key, which are indicators of a TRP. She mistakenly regards this as a sufficient cue to take her turn in turns 32 and 36. All informants considered this to be an inappropriate time to come in.[6]

Problems associated with sequencing will be addressed under propositional development below, since sequencing is closely related to topical coherence, but a few points are noted here.

In both interviews 1 and 2, insertion sequences occur. These are clearly marked in interview 1 and cause no disruption in the overall organisation (see turns 49-56 of interview 1 on pp.147-148). On the other hand, in interview 2 they are not always clear. Consider, for instance, the extract below:

(4)   11   A: um ... (5 secs) ((picks up exam scripts)) and these did you
                  think these were fair exams ... (3 secs)

....

14   T: well i ... (h h) it's hard to say i don't know really i haven't thought about

....

18   A: i mean you know were you happy with it some people came in here furious at the exam

19   T: you mean some people were furious

....

23   T: oh ... (3 secs) well i: i don't know maybe ... (2 secs) i prepared myself for what i thought would come out

....

31   T: but i think maybe some of the people are complaining about that section

....

35   T: but now the problem is that most o- i mean the way he lectures really it's not ... most of us feel that he's not doing you know- it in an interesting [way] where we'll be

....

53   T: so these are the- some of the things you know that happens

In turn 35, T goes on to a new topic (a criticism of one particular lecturer) and does not make clear its relevance to the overall propositional development. In turn 53 he tries to explain it, but it fails to clarify the connection. A then brings him, in turn 58, back to her original question (about his opinion of the exam), and only then does he respond to that directly.

Conversation 6 shows very little evidence of sequencing. This is because there is a conspicuous absence of lexical or prosodic markers of propositional links. Consider for instance turns 1-19 (on pp. 184-185 of Appendix III). Here no indications of propositional links are given at all. In turn 17 below, T seems to be making an attempt to clarify what they should be doing, but he fails to complete his proposition, and does not clarify whether he is referring to the overall purpose of the workshop, or merely the specific purpose of the first question on the worksheet, which he read out in turn 2:

(5)   17   T: || mm ...(4 secs) || p i say WHAT we must dis<u>CUSS</u>

is || p the <u>STRUc</u>ture || p to see <u>WHE</u>ther ||

|| ° the mark ||

It is also significant that he uses mid <u>key</u>. The fact that he is changing the topic by going back to explain what is expected of the group is not marked prosodically by high key at all. It is presented as if it were merely adding another point to the contributions made previously.

The absence of propositional, and particularly illocutionary links throughout this conversation results in a string of isolated propositions, whose relevance and contribution to the <u>overall theme</u> are unclear. Of the informants, only one (an SAE speaker) claimed to understand what turns 1–19 were about, and none could identify a macrotheme of the conversation as a whole (even after they had read the complete transcript).

One final observation about sequencing is evidenced in interview 4. In turns 118, 120 and 122 (on p.169 of Appendix III), M is trying to present his argument against A's proposal in turns 110, 112 and 113. He structures his argument in a narrative form, and makes his point by means of an extended example. That this approach failed is shown by A's statement in her participant questionnaire that she did not know what M was trying to say until turn 122. The overriding literary mode in African languages has historically been <u>oral narrative.</u> In a western academic context BSAE speakers are required to argue in a syllogistic and logical manner that appears to be alien to them, as is evidenced in BSAE speaking students' problems with written assignments (Gennrich 1982).[7] A logical discussion requires an abundance of cues to propositional and organisational development, whereas the links in a narrative structure are often self-evident. Many black students fail to employ sufficient cues both in written and spoken discourse, possibly in consequence of the different overall argument structure. That is to say, it appears that the <u>maxim of processibility</u> of the textual rhetoric is interpreted differently in the Black South African culture to the South African English culture, which results in a different overall discourse structure.

Moreover, the students in my data fail to give sufficient background knowledge, assuming much of what they speak about to be shared. This may be related to what appears to be a collectivist ethic in the black South African community, possibly the result of, <u>inter alia</u>, high illiteracy and low mobility, as opposed to the individualistic ideals of the western South African English society. This latter point is of greater significance than is shown above when seen in the light of the co-operative <u>maxim of quantity</u>, demonstrated in section 5.5.2.

5.5.2 Propositional development

Successful communication is dependent on adequate signalling of topic initiation, development and shift. Topical coherence must be maintained to ensure the sequential relevance of each proposition to those that preceded it. As mentioned in 5.5.1 above, sequential relevance is cued both lexically and prosodically. Topical coherence may be signalled lexically, prosodically and syntactically by means of information structure, and syntactically by foregrounding transformations which clarify the relative salience of information. Syntactic cues are less common than lexical or prosodic ones in conversational English, and thus the latter two are emphasised here.

The breakdown in propositional development by the misuse of a lexical cue to the logical structure of an argument within a single speaker's turn is illustrated by interview 5, turn 2:

(6)   1   A: how did you find the exam kh— did you think it was fair

       2   Kh: $\|$ $_o$ e:r $\|$ $_p$ it WAS fair ...(4 secs) (h) ((laughs)) $\|$

            ((laughs)) $\|$ $_p$ for THOSE who had prePARED for

            it er $\|$ $_p$ BUT $\|$ $_p$ i i DIDn't FIND $\|$ $_p$ it

            VERy DIFFicult $\|$ $_o$ see ...(2 secs) $\|$ $_o$ °except $\|$

The logical connector "but" usually signals that the following proposition will be contrary to expectations. But in turn 2 above, this is not the case, since Kh states that he did not find it very difficult. In this case, the expected SAE continuation after "but" might be:

(6a)   ... $\|$ $_p$ but $\underline{\text{I}}$ hadn't $\|$ $_p$ prePARed for it $\|$ $_p$ so i FOUND
        it quite DIFficult $\|$

This would clarify that Kh, as opposed to other people who had prepared for it, had not prepared for it and so found it quite difficult. It seems that there is also a missing proposition in turn 2 relating to whether Kh had prepared or not, which cannot be ascertained from the shared knowledge. Moreover, a prosodic miscue compounds the problem here. The word "I" should have been assigned focal stress and contrastive high key to indicate the contrast being set up between the "I" and the "those". The actual continuation in turn 2 confused all the informants who listened to it. When asked what Kh meant, they all decided on the option given in (6a) above. Kh himself, however, claimed in his questionnaire that he actually

A claimed to be unsure of Kh's meaning, and that she had decided not to initiate repair at this point in the hope that Kh's meaning would be clarified later (which it was, in turn 8).

A's difficulty in understanding Kh's meaning in turn 2 was in fact compounded in turn 4, which was possibly what led her to asking for clarification in turn 5.

(7)   3   A: why did you get seventy percent for two and thirty five and then twenty five

         4   Kh: h ((laughs)) || p i i <u>WROTE</u> the: || p e:r PROF's

                     SEC<u>tion</u> || p with<u>IN</u> || p TWENty <u>MIN</u>utes ||

                     || p i'm <u>SURE</u> ||

                     || p s- <u>TIME</u> beat me see || p i didn't <u>HAVE</u> ||

                     || p any <u>OP</u>tion || p DIDN'T <u>WANT</u>|| o you know ||

                     || p to LEAVE them unatt<u>END</u>ed or ... (2 secs) ||

                     || o ⌈ they <u>JUST</u> ||

     5   A: ⌊ || p oh so you HADn't pre<u>PARED</u> for them ||

Kh's pronunciation of the phrase in turn 4 can be transcribed <u>phonetically</u> as: [tǝm bɪt mi]. It is isolated as the major culprit of this miscommunication. Transcribed <u>prosodically</u>, the SAE version of the incriminating phrase might have been:

(7a) || p <u>TIME</u> <u>BEAT</u> me ||

Kh is breaking SAE rules of segmental phonology as well as prosody here. In terms of <u>phonology</u>, his pronunciation of the <u>vowels</u> in "time" and "beat" is deviant. He has failed to pronounce the dipthong in "time" clearly. Secondly, he has pronounced the vowel sound in "beat" as a short vowel [ɪ] where the lexical item is spelt phonologically with a long vowel [ɪ:]. This latter deviance is a common problem of transference from African languages. The southern Bantu languages do not distinguish between long and short vowel sounds. In terms of <u>prosody</u> Kh has misplaced <u>focal stress</u>. Although both "time" and "beat" carry an equal information load in this phrase, Kh has omitted to assign focal stress to "beat". This combination of phonological and prosodic deviance has rendered this phrase incomprehensible. Although a repair sequence in the following discourse clarifies Kh's intent, the flow of processing the speech has been seriously

disrupted. The informants were asked to listen to the recording of this extract without having a transcript in front of them. All of them were confused and asked for a replay. One of the three SAE speakers appeared to be quite irritable and insisted he could hear only a few isolated words such as "prof". After they had been given three options as to what Kh could have been saying (see p. 201 of Appendix IV), the other two SAE speakers decided he must be talking about time. Asked what clues they had used for this, they cited aspects from the surrounding context: "within twenty minutes", "i had no option" and "i didn't want you know to leave them unattended". None of them actually heard the word "time", or understood that phrase. One of the two BSAE speakers who heard this extract could make no comment at all because he claimed he could understand nothing, and the other claimed he had heard something about time. (It was at this point that this informant pointed out that Kh contradicted himself between turn 2 [about lack of preparation] and turn 8 [lack of time]).[8]

A point of miscommunication arises in interview 5 which results from a combination of a misuse of the definite article "the" which functions in its capacity of demonstrative reference as a lexical cohesion device, and incorrect syntactically-signalled information structure (the end-weight maxim). A and Kh have been discussing the possibility of working on Kh's reading skills, using one of his books. Kh had previously mentioned a novel he was reading. A then suggested Kh select a reading which was "not too long" (turn 59). Kh's response is:

(8)   59   Kh: mm i dunno i'll i'll think about it if to find out if i've anything that's not too long ja that that is what i was about to say 'cos length i mean it seems t- the whole book is very long

An SAE rendering of Kh's final argument in turn 59 might be:

(8a)   it seems that it would take very long to read through a whole book

The combination of the use of the definite article "the" and the placement of the noun phrase "the book" in leftmost (given information) position leads A to believe Kh has a specific book in mind, which may correspond to the book mentioned earlier (according to A's questionnaire response). A then asks Kh which book he is talking about (turn 63). All the SAE and one of the BSAE informants who were asked how they thought Kh would respond, expected that Kh would tell her the name of the book. (The other BSAE informant was not certain how the conversation would continue.) As it turns out, Kh clarifies in turn 64 that he had no specific book in mind at all.

* * *

The following extract from interview 5 illustrates communicative problems of
<u>two</u> kinds.   Both are the results of <u>prosodic</u> deviance.   In turns 95–100, Kh
and A have been talking about the consequences of failing mid–year exams.
Kh claimed in turn 99 that he had thought that he could afford not to
prepare for the philosophy exam, since he had known that the mark did not
count towards his overall final mark.

(9)   100   A: mm except the impression does

      101   Kh: || p ja im<u>PRESS</u>ion || p <u>NO</u>ther thing ||

              || p <u>WHAT</u> made me || p <u>FAIL</u> now can ||

              || p again make me <u>FAIL</u> the ||

              || p <u>END</u> of the °year [h ((laughs)) ||

      102   A: [|| which <u>IS</u> ||

      103   Kh: || r heh ...(2 secs) || no i mean i can't say i

              fail because it doesn't count cos =

      104   A: = oh i see ja

The <u>first</u> communicative   problem   has   more   severe   consequences   for
propositional development than the second.   In turn 101 Kh signals
<u>topic shift</u> by his use of <u>high key</u> on "what" as well as his use of the
<u>lexical metacommunicative function marker</u> "another thing".   Moreover, the
<u>focal stress</u> on "what" signals that it is relevant for topic development.   A
apparently believed Kh to have something specific in mind which made him
fail now and she expected him to elaborate on it (since she asks him to
specify in turn 102).   Kh, in turn 103, clarifies that he had nothing specific
in mind at all.   Among the SAE informants, there was disagreement about
whether Kh was talking about something specific or making a general
statement (options [iii] and [iv] respectively in the interview questionnaire
on page 202 of Appendix IV).   Two decided on the former and one on the
latter.   One of the two BSAE speakers who were asked about this extract
settled on (iv), while the other claimed Kh was "saying that he should not
get the impression that he will pass in November" (option (ii)).   There was
also no agreement amongst informants as to whether a new topic is initiated
in turn 101 or not.   Again, among the SAE speakers two decided it was a
new topic and one decided not.   The two BSAE speakers were also divided
on this question.   A understood Kh to be signalling a topic shift, and she

expected him to develop his new topic. As it turns out, Kh was referring back to his turn in 99 (p.174 of Appendix II), and adding a further comment to it. Fortunately, Kh initiates repair, and shows evidence of being involved in the negotiation of meaning between himself and A. This is one of the reasons why the majority of the extracts analysed in this section are from the Kh interview. Where repair is initiated a trouble spot is easily identified, it being obvious because the participants have perceived it. Not one of the other BSAE speakers successfully initiates or follows through a repair sequence which rectifies a point of miscommunication. For this reason, it is often extremely difficult to pinpoint where miscommunication originates in many of the other conversations in the data. This is a particularly severe problem in conversation 6, as will be seen shortly.

The second problem illustrated in example (9) is also associated with the prominence assigned to "what". This combines with the unexpected breaks in tone units throughout turn 101 to create hiatus points, interrupting syntactic content. Hiatus points should be resolved by the maintenance of mid key across the hiatus (high key signals a contrast to the previous section). An SAE rendering of turn 101, which would signal the meaning Kh claims, in turn 103, to have had, may be:

(9a) $\|$ p a$\overline{\text{NOTH}}$er thing $\|$ p WHAT made

       me FAIL NOW $\|$ p can make me fail aGAIN $\|$

     $\|$ p at the END of the YEAR $\|$

In this case an obvious break in the communication of the propositional development occurred as is evidenced in turns 102-103. But the consequences are not always as severe as this. As mentioned in chapter 3, a competent speaker will, upon coming across an utterance the communicative value of which s/he fails to recognise, begin to make inferences as to what it conveys.

Furthermore, the frequent instances where prominence is assigned to a word which is not informing, coupled with the absence of prominence on salient items of information, often compounds the difficulties which hiatus points create for a listener in processing the information.

In a cross-lingual situation, a first language speaker who has extensive contact with second language speakers, often makes additional inferences about the BSAE speaker's meaning, making allowances in terms of a familiarity with BSAE deviance in discourse structuring. In this way,

potential asynchrony is avoided. However, such an SAE speaker nevertheless experiences as stressful points at which extra inferencing work had to be done, possibly because valuable decoding time is used up. This is especially apparent in interview 2, where T frequently assigns promi-nence and makes tone unit divisions arbitrarily, as well as failing to bridge hiatus points. Notice particularly the infrequency of neutral tones to signal hiatus points, and the absence of pitch concord across tone unit boundaries in the following extracts.

(10)   35   T: ... || o most of US || p FEEL that ||

                    || p he's NOT doing || p you know IT ||

                    || o in an || p interesting (way) WHERE ||

                    || p °we'll BE ||

        36   A: || p oh REAlly || =

        37   T: = || p I will || p enJOY it you know ||

                    || p beCAUSE || ...

(Hiatus points occur between "it ... in", "an ... interesting", "where ... we'll", and prominence is assigned to words carrying little information, e.g., "us", "it", "where", "be".)

(11)   39   T: || p so he's got THAT thing of ||

                    || p WHEN he want to ASK a QUEStion ||

                    || p ASK || p he ACTually ||

(Hiatus points occur between "of ... when", "he ... want", "question ... ask". Note also that high key is assigned to "when he", which is neither informing nor in contrast to a previous proposition, nor at a point of topic shift.)

Other examples of hiatus points from interview 2 include turns 45 ("don't ... read"); 47 ("attempt ... any"); 49 ("really ... read that thing"; "said ... he ... also"; "students ... didn't"). Examples of extensive reformulation occur in interview 2, turn 65 (on p.158 of Appendix III), interview 4 (especially M's constant repetition of "yes" and "that's right"), all through conversation 6, and in turn 11 of interview 3, the latter of which is extracted below:

(12)   11   C: ja i did ... em ... (1 sec.) actually i wasn't too sure of my especially i thought i would erm ... (2 secs) i thought i would come back and sort of waffle on this one

This phenomenon seems to be a result of a BSAE speaker's struggles to articulate his/her thoughts, where s/he makes use of frequent 'false starts'

and syntactic reformulations.

Another interesting deviant use of prosody (which also did not result in serious miscommunication, because A could work out what C meant) is illustrated in interview 3, turn 39. After A had asked C and K whether they had planned their exam essays before writing them, C responds as follows:

(13)   39   C: $\parallel$ p me i DIDn't $\parallel$

In African languages the reference of a pronominal prefix is marked as informationally salient by repeating the reference in an absolute pronoun. Example (13) is an instance of the transference of this mother tongue rule. Furthermore, the assignment of focal stress on the word "didn't" is an example of the way prominence is attracted automatically to markers of negation, regardless of discourse function. In SAE, "I" would have received primary focus and high key in order to signal that C is contrasting himself to K, since he cannot talk for K.

* * *

It was mentioned at the beginning of this section that conversation 6, turns 1-19, shows a conspicuous absence of lexical or prosodic markers of propositional coherence and illocutionary links. A string of isolated, disconnected propositions results. In fact, throughout conversation 6 there is very little evidence of any negotiation between the three participants about what they are doing together. Four features of conversation 6 are outline below to support this claim.

In the first place there appears to be a constant confusion as to which of the two essays is being criticised (see turns 2-15, 21-31, 40, 46 and 47, and 85-95 on pp.184-188 of Appendix III). None of the participants ever initiates repair about this uncertainty by, for example, numbering the essays. There is no evidence that they are really negotiating their respective meanings. Instead the participants are merely throwing out suggestions as to which essay should be talked about.

Secondly, the participants seldom supply sufficient information. From the start, T, who is apparently leading the discussion, fails to clarify exactly what the group has been required to do.[9] In turn 2 he fails to employ deixis to signal that he is initiating topic (i.e. that he is reading the first question aloud, so that they can answer it together, with reference to each

of the essays given). Instead, he merely begins reading the question, and Z and K are expected to know what T is doing and why.

T is the only participant in conversation 6 who initiates topic shift. He usually does so by merely beginning to read the next question on the worksheet (e.g. turns 2, 19, 67). He gives no indication as to his next move, either by means of deictic signals, metacommunicative function markers or the prosodic signals of high key. He usually begins reading in mid key (with one exception, in turn 136, where a lexical cue "so second question" is given, but in mid key). The BSAE informants were unsure as to whether T was signalling topic shifts, but all the SAE speakers recognised each of these points. The SAE speakers recognised topic shift only because they detected T's reading intonation, and realised that at points where he is reading off the worksheet, he is reading a new question, and hence starting a new topic. (The major cue to T's reading was the absence of syntactic reformulations. As one SAE informant put it, it is "the only time he is not stopping and starting all the time, and when he reads a whole sentence through".)

Both Z and K indicated in their questionnaires later that throughout turns 1-19 they did not know what was required of them. K said he was still looking at the essays, and did not know where T was reading from, and Z claimed that she did not know what question they were supposed to answer. All the outside respondents were unanimous that neither Z nor K knew what was required of them. Two of the SAE speakers also added that T seemed just as confused as K and Z. T, however, when asked about this in his questionnaire, indicated that he had indeed known what was required of the group. (A had outlined in depth the aims of and instructions for the workshop to the whole class before the students broke up into groups.) T also added that during the early part of the discussion (turns 1-19) he had become aware that Z and K had no idea what was required of them, and that he had tried to explain it to them again (in turns 17-19). But he does not say enough to give K and Z a clear picture of what is happening. Consequently, he breaks the CP maxim of quantity. Z and K are also guilty of this, but it is particularly serious when T does so, because he is being looked to for guidance in this discussion. One example of T's inability to be sufficiently informative is found in turns 151-153. K indicates that he does not understand what "those things" are which T refers to in turn 150. T's answer ("points né") was considered inadequate by K himself and also by all of the informants:

(14)   150   T: ja then can we leave those things then those=

           151   K: =what were they

           152   T: points né in the second essay ...(1 sec) so we identified the afrikaans press

           153   K: || o the AfrikAANS PRE:SS ||

K's response in turn 153 is a typical response of a person who is confused: it is a mere echoic repetition of the last few words of the preceding utterance. Other BSAE students in this data also illustrate this phenomenon (e.g. in interview 2, turns 12 and 19 on p.154). Further evidence of K's confusion can already be found in turn 133 where he actually admits that he does not understand: "in fact i don't know what in the second one".

Another example of T's violation of the maxim of quantity can be seen in turns 72-73.

(15)   72   K: what are the concepts

        73   T: i don't know how to answer but at least what we can see here is the afrikaans language press né ... (1 sec.) so that a person who's reading co- one of the things you assume that the examiner doesn't know much doesn't know

Not only does T supply K with an inadequate response by only mentioning one of the "concepts", but he also goes on to an entirely new point without establishing the topical coherence between the two utterances. The lexical marker of the illocutionary link (supporting his previous point by explaining the purpose of doing what was mentioned) does not link back logically to "the afrikaans press né", which leads one to conclude that an important proposition is missing. A breaking of the quantity maxim in this way further leads to a violation of the relevance maxim, since the relevance of the last part of the utterance is unclear. In keeping with their inability to negotiate, neither Z nor K ask T to clarify the topical connection between his two points in turn 73. T himself makes an unsuccessful attempt to develop his point in turn 75:

(16)   74   Z: mm

        75   T: he knows né but now we must at least def- define concepts in a certain way like maybe the second essay

and actually contradicts himself instead.

Z and K seldom supply sufficient information. They rarely construct whole propositions, and they usually take very short turns. When their turns are

longer, these are divided into short tone units, often consisting of syntactic reformulations or disjointed phrases. As a result, the C P maxim of quantity is not only violated by T but also by Z and K. This may explain the lack of negotiation: if the students do not understand each other then they cannot argue about each others' points. This is the case in turn 114, where Z demonstrates her formulation problem by recurrent repetition, reformulation and breaking into Xhosa.

(17)   114   Z: no it's just that in in the essay [Xhosa: her essay and
                   even the scheme she wrote] shows that he she or he
                   wasn't sure of what was potting or he was that not ...
                   (1 sec.) didn't really know it didn't really know the
                   depths of the whole thing see

It is also interesting that none of the three participants ever admits that they have been confused right from the start, and only K ever reveals his confusion at local points. There is evidence of a great deal of peer pressure among BSAE students at an English university and perhaps to admit lack of understanding may be too face-threatening.

The third indication in conversation 6 of a lack of inter-participant negotiation is related to topic development and mutual theme construction. An example is found in turns 65 to 67. The group is presently addressing question 1(a) on the worksheet: "Does the student know what s/he is writing about? (Does s/he answer the question?)" This is still the same topic which was introduced in turn 2, reintroduced in turn 19, and adequately explained in turn 36.

(18)   65   T: oh so didn't answer the question adequately

                   || p could you say THAT ONE || p ANSwered

                   it || p MAYbe|| p ADequately ||

        66   Z: || p ja || o to a certain exTENT || ... (1 sec.)

        67   T: ((reads)) || p does HE || p or SHE deFINE||

                   || p RElevant || p CONcepts ACCurately||

When Z was asked in her questionnaire whether she considered the topic closed at turn 66, or whether she expected T or K to ask her to elaborate, she opted for the former, as did T and K themselves. The informants were asked how they expected T or K to respond to Z in turn 67 (the extract was only played up to the end of turn 66). The SAE speakers all expected T or K to ask Z to elaborate on what she meant in turn 66, while the BSAE speakers expected they might agree or disagree with her. Again,

the SAE perception of the maxim of quantity is broken, because Z fails to give sufficient information to make her point clear. (She also employs a level tone and ends on mid termination which usually marks a potential continuation.) This incident may be another example of the different applications of the maxim of quantity, but it seems more likely that it is an indicator of the uncritical approach to learning inculcated through the South African Bantu Education system (from which all the BSAE subjects and informants have emerged). More will be said about this later in this section and in chapter 6.

The fourth and final illustration of the lack of negotiation in conversation 6 occurs in turns 107–126 (on pp 189–190 of Appendix III). In turn 108, T asks Z to explain why she refers to the writer of one of the essays as "she".

(19) 107 Z: she was fumbling h ((laughs))

108 T: || p HOW do you KNOW that || p it's SHE ||

109 Z: i mean ... (3 secs)

···········

114 Z: no it's just that in in the essay [Xhosa: her essay and even the scheme she wrote] shows that he she or he wasn't sure of what was potting or he was that not ... (1 sec.) didn't really know it didn't

really know the depths of the whole thing ⌈ see
115 T: │ mm
116 K: ⌊ mm

Z misses the point, in turns 114 and 117, by clarifying why she had claimed that she "fumbled". T attempts, at turn 123, to reproffer his original question, but Z merely shakes it off in turn 124, and fails to answer his question at all. The subject is then 'dropped' and T moves to a new topic. All the informants saw Z as failing to answer T's question in this extract, which naturally affected propositional development. When asked whether they thought the participants were satisfied with the outcome of the conversation, all the informants saw T as being frustrated, Z as being satisfied (smug) and K as totally confused and disinterested. They all agreed that very little was achieved by the participants. When asked why this was the case, one of the BSAE speakers claimed that T, Z and K had obviously only worked through the worksheet because it was required of them, and not because they were interested. This same BSAE informant

mentioned that he had frequently done the same in his first two years at university. The other BSAE informant was not able to commit herself to a reason for the failure of the discussion. The SAE speakers considered T, Z and K to be rather lazy and disinterested (and K in particular). The participants themselves, on the other hand, all claimed to have experienced the discussion as stressful in varying degrees. T felt very strongly that he had been glad when it was over, while the other two were less definite in describing their response to the situation. They both responded in cliches which revealed more about their perception of the Politeness Principle in an educational context than it did about their true feelings. Z, for instance, claimed that: "it gave me a green light on how to handle essay question, and to give relevant answers to the question". One may surmise that the quality maxim was violated in favour of the PP.

Instances of asynchrony in the data, which apparently arise directly out of the socio-pragmatic component, but which have important consequences for propositional development and interpersonal development, are discussed in the following section. This will be followed by three illustrations of problems associated with the interpersonal development. Finally, in the concluding section of this chapter, there is a summary of the basic types and sources of communicative failure arising from this discussion.

5.5.3 Propositional development and interpersonal development as affected by socio-pragmatic differences

In this section four major differences in the understanding and/or application of the socio-pragmatic principles and their consequences for propositional and interpersonal development are considered.[10]

The first difference is clearly illustrated in interview 2, turns 3-7. T had previously handed to A both of his exam scripts, and a class essay for which he had obtained 78%. He had also performed relatively well in the exams and wanted A's criticism.

(20)   3   A: || r   SO(h) || p this is a RUBbish ESSay ||
              || r+ HEY ||

        4   T: || o huh ||

        5   A: || p this is a RUBbish ESSay || r+ HEY ||

        6   T: || r (h) WHY ||

7 A: ‖ p <u>NO</u> ‖ p i'm ^{ONly} JOKing ‖

As mentioned in chapter 3, the Irony Principle is dependent on the interrelationship between the Co-operative Principle and the Politeness Principle. It was also mentioned in chapters 2 and 3 that a hearer's <u>inferencing procedure</u> involves three major stages: firstly, checking the surface interpretation, then, if it breaks one of the socio-pragmatic principles, rejecting the face value, and thirdly, inferring a deeper meaning, in terms of which a 'higher' principle is being obeyed at the cost of the flouted principle. In this case, the <u>quality maxim</u> is clearly broken, since A's remark in turns 3 and 5 is contrary to the real world situation (T's essay obtained 78%). The face value, that A is commenting truthfully on T's essay, must be rejected. Finally, an SAE speaker may conclude that A is using <u>irony</u> to make a joke. The 3 SAE informants did in fact come to this conclusion. One of them added that it was perhaps an attempt to create a more friendly atmosphere. This is in fact a characteristic of this type of irony, known as <u>banter</u>, which violates not only the CP, but also the PP (by superficially insulting the hearer). As mentioned in chapter 3, this is a solidarity politeness tactic. T, however, does not understand it as such. None of the SAE informants had objections to A's remark. On the other hand, three out of the four BSAE informants asked to comment on this extract stated that they would have been as stunned as they perceived T to be in this situation. They claimed that such a statement would be regarded as an insult in an African language. The fourth BSAE informant, however, explained that in an intimate relationship he would take no offense, although he might be taken aback if a lecturer said it. One may conclude that the maxim of banter within the IP appears to take a different form in African languages compared with SAE.

This asynchronous moment had consequences both for the interpersonal and the propositional development in this conversation. A had to clarify her meaning before the topic could be developed. But this was only a momentary setback. More serious was the interpersonal difficulty that arose, since neither A's illocutionary force, a compliment, nor her perlocutionary force, to create a friendly atmosphere, were understood, and her remark was taken as a threat to T's face. This incident may well have been part of the reason why the following instance (example [21]) of asynchrony became more serious than it perhaps needed to.

This leads us to the <u>second</u> major difference in the understanding of the socio-pragmatic principles, which is most clearly illustrated in turns 11-14:

(21) 11 A: um ...(5 secs) ((picks up exam scripts)) and these
              did you think these were fair exams ...(3 secs)

      12 T: fair exams

      13 A: ja in terms of the questions they asked and stuff
              ... (2 secs) were you happy with them ...(5 secs)

      14 T: well i ...(h) ((laughs)) it's hard to say i don't know really
              i haven't thought about

An exchange, which both A and T considered stressful, continues until turn
60, where the topic is changed completely, and the pressure for T to
criticise his exams is taken off him. T admitted in his questionnaire that
he was taken aback by A's question, since he had never before considered
criticising the quality of an exam paper, and that he was further put out
when he had heard that other students had been "furious" with the exam (in
turn 18). Whereas all the BSAE informants voiced similar sentiments to T's,
all of the SAE informants claimed to have at some stage criticised an exam
paper, either at school or at university. It is interesting to note that all
the students in interviews 1 to 5 were asked the question (as appears in
turn 11), and all of the BSAE students apart from T considered their exams
unquesitonably fair (and where they had failed they blamed themselves) (e.g.
interview 3, turns 74–82 on p.163 of Appendix III; 4, turns 1–2, p. 167; 5,
turns 1–2, p.170). The SAE student in interview 1, on the other hand,
responded by saying "I remember thinking they were nice questions" (turn 48
on p.147 of Appendix III), indicating that she had in fact had a critical
openness to the exams.

An explanation for the BSAE students' unwillingness to criticise an exam
paper may be found in the Politeness Principle and the notion of 'free
goods' introduced in 3.4. However, it may also be a consequence of the
South African Bantu Education system, through which uncritical obedience
and submissiveness are taught as important indicators of polite respect for
authority. In terms of the PP, and particularly the approbation maxim, one
should "minimise dispraise of the other". On the other hand, one should,
according to the CP quality maxim, be truthful. Whether one dares to
question an educational authority or not seems to depend on which of the
two maxims is regarded as the 'higher' principle. In BSAE it appears to be
the PP, while in SAE (where the educational authority structure is not so
rigid) the CP may override the PP.

The same application of the PP might have played a part in interview 4
(turns 56–112, pp.167–169), which is extremely stressful because A is

attempting to elicit criticism of her teaching from M by pressing him to admit why he had failed to attend any classes during the previous term. M avoids making any direct response, by frequently interspersing A's remarks and questions with interpolations such as "that's right", "yes yes yes" and "mhm mhm mhm".

Interview 3 exhibits a similar phenomenon (see turns 70-73 below). C breaks the quality maxim as well as the quantity maxim to avoid criticising A's suggested study techniques. His response is vague (he uses the word "interesting", which was deemed unsuitable by all the informants), and is preceded by the qualifier "well", said with a referring tone.[11] (He admitted later that he had not made extensive use of this technique.)

(22)   70   A: ja have you were you using it for your other essays though

        71   C: ja

        72   K: yes

        73   C: || r WELL || p it WAS INTeresting to ||
                  || p MAKE USE of this (unintelligible) ||

Finally, this reticence to challenge an educational authority may have been the underlying cause for the degree of asynchrony in conversation 6. One of the BSAE informants pointed out that perhaps one reason for the failure of this discussion was that the students had no desire to do the work set for them, but did not dare to challenge the lecturer. This is borne out by the fact that although the whole class was given the option of leaving (and approximately one half of the SAE students did), none of the BSAE students left. However, in the participant questionnaire, none of them admitted to having a negative attitude towards the workshop activity.

A third major socio-pragmatic difference may have played a significant part in the exchange in interview 5 in which Kh and A attempt to find Kh's additional essay in A's office (see turns 136-150 on p.175 of Appendix III). Turn 136 is the only point during the entire conversation at which Kh initiates topic shift. But he supplies no cues to this (either lexical or prosodic - he asks his question without lexical 'warning' and employs mid [additive] key). Neither does he supply any deictic signals which locate his proposition in time:

(23)   136   Kh: || p DIDn't you SEE my || p er Journ ESSay ||

$\|$ p the SECond ESSay $\|$ p DIDn't i BRING it $\|$

He breaks the Quantity Principle here. (This may again be related to the hypothesised African collectivist social view, and the resultant different understanding of what constitutes sufficient information, mentioned in 5.5.2.) He does so again (turn 148) by not explaining the topic of his essay adequately, and a third time by not clarifying that he had definitely brought A his essay (turn 144). The third instance, at least, can be seen as an instance of the overruling of the quantity maxim by the Politeness Principle in that Kh is reluctant to impose on A (by demanding his essay back, for instance). Moreover, he seems to be breaking the quality maxim in that he conveys doubt as to whether he really did bring his essay (although, as he claimed in his questionnaire, he was actually quite certain). Later, in turn 148, he actually appears to contradict himself by breaking the PP that he has been so carefully upholding (according to SAE informants) by insisting that "you gonna find it here". This kind of apparently arbitrary behaviour is an example of what leads some SAE speakers to classify BSAE speakers as 'socially incompetent'.

Whereas BSAE students regarded Kh's behaviour here as perfectly normal and adequately polite, the SAE informants considered Kh to be "a bit too polite" at first and not sufficiently assertive, and "a bit rude" in turn 148 where he insists that A has his essay. (One of the SAE informants claimed that he may have avoided this outburst if he had been both polite and assertive at the same time, by perhaps employing a pre-sequence such as "I'm sorry to worry you, but I'm sure ...".) All the informants experienced this exchange as stressful, and usually blamed the difficulty on the combination of A's negligence and Kh's inability to politely but firmly clarify his standpoint from the start. The interpersonal development is affected here, since the relationship between A and Kh is adversely affected. A has lost face, and therefore Kh's view of her as the authority is affected. At this point A further has to admit that she has not even read his essay, which leads us to the next point.

The fourth and final socio-pragmatic factor to be mentioned is illustrated in turns 151-160 of this same interview 5 on pages 175-176 of Appendix III. Kh, who had obviously wanted A to check through the 'lost' essay, now backs down (in turn 158) in the face of A's apparent unwillingness to do so (indicated in turn 157 by her use of contrastive high key on "like" in "would you like me to" and the use of phrases such as "worth it" and "get anything out of it").

(24)   157   A: || p JA || p would you $\overline{\text{LIKE}}$ me to || p d'you

THINK it'll be WORTH it || p d'you think i'll

get anything OUT of it ||

      158   Kh: er no leave it you can't get anything there ...
(1 sec.) no

Note that A also uses mid termination, which signals the intention to constrain Kh's response to one of agreeing with her sentiment (pitch concord).

Kh's behaviour here is an instance of a negative politeness strategy (altering one's own intentions to suit those of [usually] the dominant participant and possibly also as a strategy to save A's face). The BSAE informants considered Kh's behaviour here to be entirely appropriate, while two of the three SAE informants insisted that he should have been honest. Again Kh breaks the quality maxim in the face of the PP.[12] Once again, the interpersonal development is affected since the relationship between A and Kh is adversely affected. However, when Kh was asked in his questionnaire about his attitude to A, he claimed merely to be disappointed, and he added that A must have had a good reason for her unwillingness to check through his extra essay. Kh could once again be said to illustrate a reticence to criticise an educational authority.

5.5.4 Interpersonal development

Three examples of miscommunication relating to interpersonal development are discussed here. They are all instances of the misuse or misunderstanding of cues to illocutionary force.

The first example involves the misuse of prosodic cues to illocutionary force. In answer to A's query about his use of a plan for exam essays, C admits, in turn 42 of interview 3, that he only used it once, and he goes on to cite various essays in his exam script where he regarded planning to be redundant. At one particular point he uses the referring (r+) tone, which indicates that an item of information is taken for granted, since it is an obvious part of the shared knowledge of the participants:

(25)   42   C: .... || p HERE it was a case of || o em ||

|| p sort of NAMing °special °terms °so ...(3 secs) ||

|| p WHICH WAS a matter of|| p just STATing of

> what i felt || o er: || p well i don't <u>THIN K</u>
>
> there was || r+ NEED for <u>PLAN</u>ning || ...

43   A: || p there was <u>NO</u> need for planning ||

A stated in her questionnaire that she had been disturbed by C's apparent belief that everyone would agree with his claim, which led to her challenge of this in turn 43.

All the informants saw C as believing that there was no question that a plan was unnecessary in this case. When questioned further about the evidence they perceived in the manner in which he said it, the SAE speakers mentioned "it was his tone of voice", while the BSAE speakers merely said "it was the way he said it". C stated in his interview that he was not sure about his claim at all, but was merely trying to excuse himself. In this example, then, the importance of <u>tone movement</u> as a cue to illocutionary force is illustrated. If A had not perceived C to have been so sure of himself, the discourse that follows might have taken an entirely different direction.

The <u>second</u> instance of misunderstanding of illocutionary force arises at this point. It was explained (in 5.2 on p.93) that turn 43 above is an example of a speaker's exploitation of <u>prosodic key</u> to fulfill a particular purpose. Although it is giving information on the surface, it is actually a challenge. A employs additive mid key here, but is merely repeating C's point, thus not adding any new information at all. The face value of her utterance must be rejected in order for her illocutionary force (rejection and challenge of his point) to be understood. C, however, understands it as a statement of fact, as can be seen from his response:

(26)   44   C: really

           45   A: i'm asking

           46   C: well there was

A then repairs the misunderstanding by clarifying her illocutionary force (in turn 45), which C then appears to have understood (turn 46). The SAE informants all understood turn 43 as a challenging question, while the BSAE informants both regarded it as a straightfoward question. C acknowledged in his questionnaire that he had been "bewildered" by turn 43, and had only realised his mistaken interpretation in turn 45. This misinterpretation of the illocutionary force arises out of a lack of <u>understanding of prosodic cues to illocutionary force</u> in English.

The <u>third</u> point of conversational difficulty relating to illocutionary force arises out of Kh's failure to pick up A's <u>lexical cues to illocutionary force</u>. The following extract takes place after A has given Kh a critical overview of his exams, and a meeting time has been decided (interview 5, turns 33-46, p.171-172).

(27)   47   A: well ... (4 secs) so how about ... (3 secs) starting ... (1 sec.) em ... (3 secs) by looking at ... (3 secs) some of the things you're reading ... (1 sec.) to just kind of take it apart and see how it is actually structured and how that person in that chapter or article develops their argument ... (2 secs) does that make sense

        48   Kh: ja ... you see surely i i can't prescribe what we we have to st- start with see

        49   A: i'm just making a suggestion ==

        50   Kh: == oh ye er things like or or what d'you mean er books or

A signals that turn 47 has the illocutionary force of a suggestion by means of the lexical marker "how about" and further indicates her openness to Kh's view by her final question "does that make sense". All the SAE informants, when played only turn 47, recognised A's illocutionary force by these two lexical markers. One of them also pointed to A's frequent pausing, which he felt may be giving Kh an opportunity to contribute as well. One of the two BSAE informants also recognised A's illocutionary force by the same cues as the SAE informants, but the other one saw A as pretending to be asking Kh, but really telling him. (This informant has very little faith in the goodwill of whites generally!) After the informants had heard turns 48-50, they all claimed that Kh had misunderstood A's intention, and the last-mentioned BSAE speaker acknowledged that he himself had misinterpreted A.

5.6 SUMMARY

In this chapter, selected illustrations of conversational miscommunication have been investigated in an attempt to explain the sources of the resultant conversational asynchrony. It was found that a misuse or misunderstanding of lexical and prosodic cues to aspects of organisational, propositional and interpersonal development play a major role in creating asynchrony. Differences in the interpretations of the socio-pragmatic principles in SAE and African languages further contribute to asynchrony. It was shown that especially where more than one contextualisation cue has been misused or

misunderstood, participants failed to communicate successfully. In the following chapter the types and sources of conversational asynchrony are summarised, and conclusions are drawn regarding the degrees of seriousness of the various sources.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION

6.1 CONCLUSIONS

This research has identified sources of asynchrony arising in BSAE-SAE conversation, in an attempt to ascertain to what extent deviance in prosodic cues employed in establishing theme in conversation contributes to conversational asynchrony.   A summary of the types and sources of conversational asynchrony which arose in the data is given in table III overleaf.   It was discovered that deviant use of prosodic contextualisation cues in BSAE was indeed an important source of asynchrony in the data. Deviance in syntactic and lexical contextualisation cues was also a contributing factor, but neither syntactic nor lexical errors were as serious as prosodic ones.   Phonological deviance was not important, unless coupled with other deviant cues.

The following instances of prosodic deviance proved to be the most serious. Focal stress is incorrectly assigned to words of low information value, while informationally salient words, which are vital for propositional development, are not assigned focal stress.   Tone level and contour cannot be interpreted in terms of discourse functions, and the referring tone is conspicuously absent.   Hence, the status of an item of information with regard to its 'givennes' or 'newness' is unclear.   Pitch levels which may be interpreted as key have no discourse function.   High key in particular is rare, resulting in a failure to signal topic shift or to set up contrastive relationships between propositions.   Syntactic hiatus points are not repaired by pitch concord, which obstructs decoding.   A failure to employ or recognise pauses as markers of TRP's creates asynchrony in the turn-taking mechanism of conversation.   Finally, none of the above prosodic features is exploited in such a way as to communicate illocutionary or other interpersonal intentions.

Syntactic sources of asynchrony discovered in the data involve a small number of problems with information structure and syntactic transformations, which create difficulty in ascertaining relative information salience.

Lexical cues creating asynchrony include primarily deviance in the use of, or failure to use, metacommunicative function markers and lexical cohesion devices.   A misuse of these particular types of lexical items contributes to asynchrony, because they serve to clarify relationships between propositions and between a proposition and the collaboratively constructed context and theme.

Two further important points with regard to deviant contextualisation cues must be noted. Firstly, almost every extract that was analysed revealed that, while a single miscue in just one of the linguistic systems is not significant (since it can be resolved by extra inferencing), where more than one cue is misused, the danger of a breakdown in communication is correspondingly greater (e.g., extract [6] on p.103, and [9] on p.106 of chapter 5). Secondly, not all instances of deviance create communicational breakdown. Many can be resolved by making further inferences. But a hearer in such a situation is forced to use up valuable decoding time, which may render his/her interpretation process stressful.

In addition to contextualisation cues, and prosodic cues in particular, an important source of asynchrony in BSAE-SAE conversation was found to be differences in the application of the socio-pragmatic principles which guide and constrain conversational interaction. The following four principles were singled out in the analysis. First, the Principles of Processibility and Clarity of the Textual Rhetoric play a role in that it is hypothesised that there are different predominating discourse types in SAE and BSAE. In African languages and BSAE it appears that the most prevalent discourse type is the narrative, and in an SAE academic environment it is logically structured discussion. Fewer cues are necessary to make a narrative text processible and clear as compared with a discussion. This is because a narrative usually is a progression of self-evidently related events, while discussion requires a complex process of theme construction. It is therefore proposed that the predominantly narrative discourse of BSAE renders its speakers unable to provide the necessary cues which facilitate processibility and clarity for a discussion. Secondly, the Co-operative Principle is relevant, particularly with regard to the understanding of the quantity maxim. This is associated with the question of how much background knowledge is assumed to be shared. The BSAE speakers in the data frequently make massive assumptions about shared knowledge, and hence fail to provide adequate information. Flouting the quantity maxim in this way leads, further, to a violation of the Processibility and Clarity Principles. Thirdly, the Irony Principle is relevant, in that it appears that irony is expressed in different ways (in some cases at least) in African languages and SAE. Finally, the Politeness Principle plays a part in conversational asynchrony. The degree of preference granted to politeness over other rhetorical principles seems to differ in the two language groups (e.g., the maxims of the Politeness Principle may override the quantity and quality maxims of the Co-operative Principle). Further, the interpretation of the

Politeness Principle in relation to perceptions of role and status relations may differ. For instance, the degree of politeness shown in the black South African community to an educational authority, and a white authority in particular, may be related to the social structure of the black culture, the relationship of blacks to whites in South Africa, and/or the nature of the system of Bantu Education in this country.

It is necessary now to discuss a point which emerges from the preceding chapters, regarding stressfulness caused by threat to face in the conversations analysed. All the interviews (1-5) were deemed stressful by participants and informants alike. This phenomenon may be explained in terms of the Politeness Principle as follows. In all cases except one, the situation was potentially face-threatening to the student, since each of the students had exposed his/her bad exam results and may, consequently, have been defensive. A had to be tactful and yet also critical. Chick (1984) also attributed the conversational stress he observed in his data to the face-threatening nature of the encounters. He found that the only interview, out of three he studied, which was not asynchronous was one in which the student had succeeded in her exam, whereas the students in the other two interviews had failed. Both the SAE-SAE interview and the BSAE-SAE interview in his data were asynchronous, since in both cases the students' face was threatened due to their bad performance in the exam under discussion. However, the situation in the data under study here does not support Chick's hypothesis. While the SAE student in my data failed her exams, it was in fact one of the BSAE students (T in interview 2) who had been very successful. But both conversations were experienced as stressful. The source of the stress is, nevertheless, different. In interview 1 the stress is apparently a result of the threat to D's face (D's exam results were considerably lower than those of the BSAE students). In interview 2 the stress has been shown to arise out of language difficulties which result in conversational asynchrony. The analysis of the data has further revealed a high incidence of asynchrony in the other conversations involving BSAE speakers. This leads one to conclude that, while face-saving strategies probably did play a role, deviant contextualisation cues and other cross-lingual factors may in fact have had a more important function in inhibiting the establishment and maintenance of conversational synchrony than face-saving strategies.

Conversation 6 sheds more light on the sources of conversational stress. Neither face-saving strategies nor cross-cultural factors played a role in this

case, since only BSAE students took part. In spite of this, conversation 6 was considered by all the informants (including the BSAE speakers) to be the most stressful and asynchronous. There is very little evidence of negotiation, topical coherence or theme construction. The asynchrony in this conversation appears to be related to different applications of the Processibility Principle. It is probably a consequence of the BSAE speakers' lack of familiarity with the negotiation required in academic discourse. Because this conversation was more stressful and asynchronous than interviews 2 to 5, one can conclude that a competent SAE speaker facilitates an academic discussion, by bringing BSAE speakers back to the topic. Further, without the repair initiated by such an SAE speaker, the asynchrony in the conversation deteriorates as the theme becomes increasingly confused.

The limitations of this study must be noted. Firstly, the conclusions drawn here can be no more than tentative, since it is not possible to generalise from such a restricted body of data as this. In the second place, all the conversations studied occurred in a university context, which places special language demands on students. These limitations suggest areas in which further research is needed, and these will be noted in the concluding section of this thesis. The following section outlines proposals for teaching conversational competence in English South African universities.

6.2 TEACHING CONVERSATIONAL COMPETENCE IN A SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITY CONTEXT: SUGGESTIONS FOR A FIRST YEAR UNDERGRADUATE COURSE

6.2.1 Underlying principles

There are four important principles that should underlie any course in conversational competence in a South African university environment. Firstly, the work that students are required to do must be seen to be relevant. Greater relevance increases motivation, and motivation has been shown to be a major factor determining success in language learning (Boyle 1984). Hence, it would be ideal if students could take a preparatory language course concurrent with one first year course. Unfortunately, most English universities in South Africa do not have any pre-university facilities where students with language difficulties could do a preparatory year or three months.[1] As a result, many students enter university unprepared, and yet are forced to cope with four full academic courses in their first year. For this reason, a conventional course in English for Academic purposes

would have to be taught either within specific subject departments, or through an extra-curricular study skills course (such as the Academic Skills Programme at Rhodes University, or the Linguistic Support Programme at the University of Cape Town). In any event, the necessary linguistic skills should be taught within the context of a particular discipline in which the relevant students are involved.

The second principle that should underlie such a course in South African universities is that the needs of the students catered for by such a course must be considered. At an English university in South Africa a student requires both receptive and productive skills in the following contexts: formal lectures (mainly receptive), seminars (both receptive and productive), tutorials (both), conversations with lecturers and tutors (both) and conversations with fellow students (both). Such a course should not be regarded as an attempt to acculturalise BSAE-speaking students to the white SAE cultural norms. As Brumfit (1980) has cogently stated:

> We need to devise a methodology which will enable the learner to use the language, not passively in relation to situations which are imposed by motivations and ideologies which are not his own, but actively as a product of his own needs .... The model of teaching which tells the foreigner to adopt our system is both untruthful ... and unhelpful, because it implies that he cannot communicate without adopting our position unnegotiably (p.105, emphasis mine).

Instead, as Thomas (1982) suggests, one should attempt to make learners aware of cross-cultural expectations and the problems arising out of that. Pragmatic functions and context analysis should be talked about explicitly in order to increase the learners' metapragmatic ability. The most productive approach to this might be a contrastive one, where comparable situations in African languages and SAE are discussed and compared. The presence of SAE-speaking students learning together with the BSAE students about each others' expectations is recommended. SAE speakers also have difficulties adjusting to the academic demands of a university, and SAE students surely also need to understand BSAE norms if BSAE and SAE speakers are to understand each other in tutorials, seminars, or any other aspect of university life. A language course for students would also need to be complemented by a parallel course specifically for lecturers and tutors, which would help them to understand the cross-cultural difficulties experienced by BSAE speaking students, and to make the necessary adaptions to their own conversational behaviour.[2]

The <u>third</u> underlying principle of a course in conversational competence is that the various pragmatic problem sources identified in the analysis of the data should not be taught separately. Rather, an <u>integrated approach</u> should be used, and it is important that students understand the interrelationships between the various problem sources. Nevertheless, there may be points at which a specific type of problem needs to be focused on (but not to the exclusion of the relationship of that one point to other relevant points). For instance, differences in argument structure between a narrative and a discussion may warrant special attention.

In the <u>fourth</u> place, a course in conversational competence should not be restricted to what people <u>say</u>, but should consider what people <u>mean</u> in particular contexts. Thomas (1982) makes an important distinction between two major types of pragmatic failure: <u>pragma-linguistic failure</u> and <u>socio-pragmatic failure</u>. These are associated with different types of information conveyed by pragmatics. <u>Pragma-linguistic competence</u> includes understanding the attitude conveyed by a speaker towards <u>information</u> (relative newness or givenness of information, information salience), which is often conveyed in a highly conventionalised manner. It is thus not difficult to teach and has been quite successfully integrated into English second-langauge grammars recently (with the exception of prosodic cues of such discourse functions). <u>Socio-pragmatic competence</u> includes understanding the attitude conveyed by a speaker towards his/her <u>hearer(s)</u> (the illocutionary and perlocutionary intentions of a speaker, intended deference, perceptions of relative power, social distance and role, rights and duties). This is more difficult to teach, because it involves the students' systems of belief at the same time as their knowledge of the language form. It is incorrect to be prescriptive in this latter area. The major purpose in teaching on the level of socio-pragmatic awareness is to heighten and refine students' metapragmatic awareness, so that they may <u>choose</u> how they wish to express themselves, in the full knowledge of how they will be understood by their interlocutors.

In keeping with the above-mentioned principles, proposals regarding <u>aims</u> and <u>objectives</u>, and <u>methods and materials</u> for a possible course in conversational competence at university are outlined below.

6.2.1   Proposed aims and objectives

Aim:

> The overall aim of this course in conversational competence is to increase learners' metapragmatic ability.   The purpose is that learners might be able to critically evaluate what their interlocutors are saying, and respond in a competent manner, in full awareness of the effect their utterances will have on their interlocutors, so that learners may fulfill their particular chosen purpose in any conversation.

Objectives:

> The objectives are roughly divided according to the two major pragmatic problem areas (although they are not to be taught in isolation from one another).

(1) Mismatches in socio-pragmatic expectations derived from differences in the understanding and/or application of socio-cultural principles of rhetoric

A. The Textual Rhetoric: differences in argument structure

Students should be able to:

(a)   recognise the difference between a narration and a discussion;

(b)   understand the tight argument structure of a discussion, which consists of various topics or arguments associated with a central macrotheme, and presented in a specific logical way.
> (i) This should first of all be recognised and understood in a single short monologue and later in a full lecture; and
> (ii) The understanding derived in (i) should be applied to dialogues, first shorter casual conversations (where the argument structure is not necessarily tight), and then to longer seminars and tutorial groups;

(c)   take part in a discussion group, taking care to negotiate the thematic progression with the other participants every step of the way.

B. The Interpersonal Rhetoric

Students should (in a non-judgmental manner) be able to:

(a) examine their <u>own systems of beliefs</u> which underlie their conversational techniques and strategies (in the case of BSAE speaking students the southern Bantu languages and BSAE, and SAE in the case of SAE speaking students);

(b) <u>compare</u> their own systems of beliefs to those of the language they are learning (in this case SAE or alternatively BSAE);

(c) <u>isolate cross-cultural problems</u>, and consider ways of dealing with them.

(3) Misuse, misunderstanding or failure to use contextualisation cues

Contextualisation cues should not be taught in isolation, since they are only meaningful in terms of the context in which they are used. Rather, lexical cues and intonation practice should be associated with language functions.

Students should be able to:

(a) understand and make use of <u>lexical signals</u> of discourse functions, and particularly:
   (i) metacommunicative function markers (of topic initiation, development, and shift, and sequential location);
   (ii) cohesion devices (pronominalisation, use of articles, demonstrative reference, deixis and lexical substitution);
   (iii) markers of propositional and illocutionary links;

(b) understand and make correct use of <u>prosodic signals</u> of discourse functions. Students should be able to:
   (i) <u>recognise points of difference</u> in the nature and function of prosodic features between SAE and BSAE in terms of Brazil's (1980) model of stress and intonation;
   (ii) <u>recognise the discourse functions</u> cued by the various features (receptive skill), both on the overt signalling level of propositional devlopment and on the more covert level of the exploitation of the features for interpersonal purposes;

(iii) <u>use</u> and <u>exploit</u> the various prosodic features correctly, in order to communicate their intent at any point in a conversation (either directly or by means of conversational implicatures).

6.2.3   Guidelines for the selection and design of methods and materials

The most creative environment for learning conversational competence would naturally be in <u>small groups</u>. Hence, the majority of the teaching should take place in a small discussion group situation, preferably one which consists of a mixture of BSAE and SAE speakers (so that they can learn from each other). However, those students that exhibit major difficulties and need more intensive guidance or even language drills should be worked with either individually or in pairs, in addition to their group attendance.

The primary learning approach should be <u>inductive</u>, with an emphasis on <u>problem-solving activities</u>. Further, the atmosphere should be sufficiently relaxed to allow students to discuss openly their <u>cultural and personal beliefs</u> which influence the way they involve themselves in English conversation. <u>Students</u> should be allowed to decide for themselves what type of situation they would like to learn about first, since they are the most able to discern their immediate needs, but in any event <u>receptive skills</u> should be concentrated on before students are required to develop their <u>productive skills</u> (since it is vital that they recognise and understand, for instance, cues to illocutionary force before they attempt to produce them).

All exercises are to be <u>topically related</u> to the subject matter of one of the university courses common to all the students attending one group. Attention should be paid to the use of conversational interaction in the various <u>situations</u> in which students will be involved: everyday student-student or student-lecturer/tutor conversation, formal lectures, seminars and tutorial groups.

<u>Input materials</u> should be taken from the university environment. <u>Audio or video recordings</u> of lectures, tutorial groups and dialogues are very useful. They are easy to stop if students are to try to predict a next move, and/or to replay to check on students' suggestions. They provide input which is immediately relevant for the situation in which students find themselves. An interesting exercise is to screen a short dialogue and turn the sound off after a few minutes, asking students to guess what each participant is saying at each point. Such an exercise helps students to move away from

concentrating on every word to developing their interpretative and predictive skills using contextual evidence. Simultaneous transcripts may also be useful.

Teachers interested in designing a course in conversational competence (with a particular focus on the integration of prosodic cues) may find helpful the following <u>suggested criteria</u> for deciding if their own or selected textbook materials are adequate.

(1)   Is the approach inductive (or deductive), and are the exercises based on problem-solving activities?

(2)   Are all the skills required for conversational competence adequately integrated?

(3)   At the same time, is the focus on one or other skill sufficiently clear that students will recognise its importance at a particular point?

(4)   Is the teaching of prosodic features naturally integrated into the teaching of overall conversational competence?

(5)   Does the material provide practice in ear-training as well as productive skills?

(6)   Are the exercises meaningful, and relevant to the students' experience?

(7)   Are the instructions on worksheets clear, so that students know exactly what is required of them?

(8)   Are the questions on worksheets sufficiently clear, and adequately graded to stimulate interesting discussion?

(9)   Is there appropriate guidance to language production where necessary?

(10)   Do the tapes provide adequate (not necessarily perfect) models of spoken English?

(11) Is the material imposing any value judgements, or is it leaving the critical choices to the learners themselves?

6.3 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Conversational competence is basic to all language ability. Both the socio-pragmatic knowledge frames which guide and constrain conversational behaviour and the pragmatic uses of prosody appear to be subconsciously applied by first language speakers. They are also often language-specific. Hence, all language courses ought to integrate conversational competence at a very early stage, by means of introducing activities which require meaningful learner interaction from the start. Research into possible techniques for this is necessary. Further research into the language needs of younger learners is also important, as is an investigation of means of teaching conversational competence to learners who are as yet not sufficiently developed cognitively to benefit from explicit self-evaluative, comparative discussions about interpretation of context and speech intentions.

More research is needed in the area of BSAE-SAE cross-cultural problems as revealed in conversation, particularly in the area of non-verbal communication. More conversational data needs to be analysed in order to gain a deeper insight into differences in discourse structure and the verbal and nonverbal cues to it, as well as into the different perceptions of the socio-pragmatic principles guiding conversation in the two culture and language groups.

Further research is also necessary in the field of educating the 'gatekeepers' of the South African society as to the conversational difficulties experienced by BSAE speakers in English, so that they may be made aware of the causes of what may be perceived of in terms of value judgements.

Finally, any micro-analysis of human behaviour must bear in mind that a study of human interaction on a small scale is intricately bound up with the larger structural circumstances in which human beings find themselves. In the South African context the negative cycle of broader social discrimination is closely linked to the negative cycle of discrimination which has its roots in the seemingly unimportant everyday conversational encounters of individuals who for various personal and socio-historical reasons have difficulty understanding each other. As Saville-Troike (1982) notes:

We must not ignore the broader context within which the actions we observe are situated. We must constantly seek for both the antecedents and the contingencies which give meaning to the scenes we witness. At the same time, we must continually test our perceptions and understandings against those of the participants if our "objective" account of the communicative competence is to adequately reflect the experienced reality of their subjective world (p.167).

NOTES

Notes: Chapter 1

1   The Bantu Education system was introduced in 1954 by the Bantu Education Act. In terms of this Act, a separate Education Department was set up, and a separate and inferior education for all Africans was instituted.

Notes: Chapter 2

1   New terms are introduced here, a number of which are not yet fully defined. These terms will be more adequately defined in section 2.3.

2   This proposal, and the examples used, are both based on Leech (1983).

Notes: Chapter 3

1   This is in a sense an unfortunate omission, since frequently utterances (or silences) are more easily interpreted (or sometimes even interpretable at all) in relationship to the speaker's facial expression, gesture or action. For instance, in interview 2, turns 3 and 5, A makes an understatement as a joke (according to her own statement of intention) when she says to T:"this is a rubbish essay hey". T does not understand this, and is quite put out. Since I have no visual record of this interchange, the role that facial expression (e.g. a smile, a glint in the eyes) plays here, in conjunction with the words used, syntactic structure and prosodic features, is not accounted for. Perhaps it was partly the facial expression which led to T's confusion, if he did not understand the role of a smile in signalling irony, which might have helped to disambiguate A's meaning.

2   This is borne out by research done by Shimanoff and Brunak (1977) in which they found that repairs on this level, which they termed "standard correctness", were very rare, while there was a frequent occurrence of repairs which related to the communicative demands made on participants by the theme and context as it was being collaboratively constructed, and hence usually related to the development of the content of the message, saving face (politeness) and sequencing.

    This latter point is very interesting. Shimanoff and Brunak suggest that the investigation of repairs in real conversation may be an important way to investigate communicative principles underlying communication, since the initiation of repair can be defined as "an attempt to pre-empt, eliminate and/or 'fix' the trouble source" (Schegloff, Jefferson and Sacks, 1976). So from the results of Shimanoff and Brunak's research one can conclude that participants perceive items which are primarily found at levels higher than those obeying rules of grammar to be relevant inhibitors of communication.

3   Much research has been done on the interactive nature of the reading of a text, but this is beyond the scope of the present discussion.

4   For example, Sinclair and Coulthard's (1975) "IRF" (Initiation, Response, Feedback) sequence, Edmondson's (1981) "proffer, (re-run, prompt, etc.) satisfy" sequence, neither of which have turned out to be analytically very revealing.

5   Of course X's interpretation of Y's pragmatic force will be greatly influenced by non-verbal contextualisation cues, such as intonation, focus and even facial expression.

6   Subjects had to be asked permission before the recording was begun, which usually occurred after the greetings had been exchanged.

7   Syntax does play a role in topical coherence, as discussed under information structure above.   But there is also a very interesting complementary relationship between prosody and syntax.   Christina Lehman (1977), in her article entitled "Stress and Sentence Position: Ways of Indicating Discourse Prominence" talks about the interrelationship of stress and sentence structure with particular reference to relativisation.   She claims that in English speech, a relative clause is used to mark the prominence of the head noun phrase (NP) to which it is attached.   Some element in the relative clause is stressed in order to indicate that the immediate sequel to the relative clause is completed.   Frequently, not only an element of the relative clause is given primary stress, but also the head NP itself.   When this occurs, it is usually because the head NP is important for the development of the topic, or perhaps because it is to be contrasted with a forthcoming aspect of the next topic.

In turn 64 of interview (2), which is given below, focal stress is used both on the word functions, which is part of the relative clause (which is non-restrictive in this case), and on the head NP, grammar book, itself.   The grammar book is important to the topic development in that it is via this instrument that the teaching on 'little grammar points', (which A suggested earlier and which was discussed at length by A and T [not transcribed]) is to take place.   Hence the head NP is important to moving the topic forward, as it were.

(64) A: $\|_o$ just to go THROUGH $\|$ ... (2 secs) $\|_o$ e:r $\|$
     i've got a VERY good GRAMmar book which$\|_p$ talks
     about ... the FUNCTions of these things $\|$ ...

It seems that T understood it as a support of the main topic under discussion, since his response in T 65 is to the original suggestion about working on grammar points, and he continues to develop this topic further, giving additional reasons as to why this would be necessary for him.   He employs the cohesion devices of pronominalisation (using it to refer to the approach suggested by A in T 62) and ellipsis (not repeating A's suggestion in T 62).

8   I owe most of this section to Geoffrey Leech (1983).

9   Franck (1980) also proposes this kind of return to the notion of rhetoric, but does not provide any kind of informative examination of it.

10   Grice tries to account for propositional meaning only, while Leech investigates meaning in a broader sense, in which he is including social and psychological influences on a participant's interpretation of meaning.

11   He does this in an attempt to supplement the limitations of a speech act approach to dialogue by taking the interactive nature of conversation into account. He uses the example of a promise, which, he claims, cannot be considered a completed act unless the promise has been accepted.

12 I can make no further generalisations about the Black culture of South Africa, since I have only questioned Xhosa-speakers in the Eastern Cape on this matter.

13 It can be seen here how important the indetermination of language use is, in order to allow a hearer his/her options, and to permit participants to negotiate topics of conversation without committing themselves too openly, so that the relationship between them can develop in a way which is as unthreatening as possible, in order to avoid asynchrony.

14 The word "culture" is not being used here in the sense of race-group, but rather, in the sense that Jenny Thomas (1983) employs it, to denote commonality of language or cultural background (and includes sub-cultures).

15 Leech is making no claims as to the universality of the principles of Interpersonal Rhetoric, but it does appear to me as though the basic abstract principles hold, while their interpretation and application differ from culture to culture.

Notes: Chapter 4

1 In South Africa generally, but particularly in the African community in South Africa, women are regarded as being of inferior status. However, a somewhat ambiguous status relationship exists in South Africa between black men (who are considered superior on the grounds of their sex) and white women (who are considered superior on the ground of their race).

2 The intention was to obtain a double check on the BSAE responses. However, each interview, which covered only one half of the total number of questions, took a great deal longer than the SAE interview, which covered all the questions. Unfortunately, none of the participants in the BSAE interviews was able to continue at another time. Hence, two of the respondents answered only the first part (up to section C question 5) and the other two the second part of the interview schedule.

3 Unfortunately, great difficulty was encountered in the information elicitation process in the BSAE interviews. As a result of severe conversational problems experienced in the discussions (which had to be carefully directed), by both the interviewer (a third year Media Studies student at Rhodes) and the interviewees, very little information was elicited from most respondents. This was in spite of the fact that the students frequently spoke Xhosa. Only the Honours student provided any real depth of insight, unfortunately. However, this problem in itself constitutes a valid piece of data for this research. The discussions, particularly in the interview without the honours student, suffered from very similar difficulties as conversation 6 of the primary data. These two interviews therefore support the conclusions drawn in chapter 5.

Notes: Chapter 5

1 The term "Bantu Languages" is used as a technical term here, and refers to all the languages spoken by black Africans in South Africa, Southern Mocambique and parts of Zimbabwe (Shona).

2 This section is based almost entirely on Lanham (1984).

3 Unfortunately, no full analysis of intonation in the Southern Bantu languages is available at this stage.

4 Lanham is referring to Nemser,W. 1971. Approximative systems of foreign language learners. IRAL 9/2.

5 In fact, prosodic transcription of BSAE has proved somewhat difficult, and the instances of downdrifting have not been marked in the transcription of the data in Appendix III or in the extracts cited from it. Nevertheless, where downdrifting creates a major communicative breakdown, it is discussed.

6 An interesting point was raised about the extract in turns 35-37. One of the SAE speakers added that perhaps A felt she had to say something in turn 36, since it seemed that T was "mumbling without direction" and she had to encourage him to make himself clear. This is an important indication of the kinds of 'allowances' SAE speakers appear to make for BSAE speakers, in order to retain conversational synchrony. It is this kind of evidence that has led me to conclude that many more instances of communicative stress in this data occur than can be detectable, since SAE speakers can, and often do, merely make extra inferences about a BSAE speaker's intent thereby making allowances for his/her language difficulties. This is particularly so in this study, since A is accustomed to working with students with language problems.

7 In my honours dissertation (Rhodes University, 1982) I propose that one of the major problems of the black university student writing in English is the inability to present a logical argument. Instead, students employ a narrative structure, which results in a circular argument. This is often compounded by a failure to provide sufficient information, so that such pieces of work are rendered almost totally incomprehensible.

8 This particular informant exhibits a high degree of competence in English conversation, and is an Honours student at Rhodes University. He, in fact, spent time attempting to work out what Kh could have meant at this point, since he felt that Kh must have been making an implicature of some kind. He finally decided that Kh might have prepared for the two questions he did well in, and used most of his time for them, so that, by the time he turned to the two questions he had not prepared for, he had almost run out of time.

9 It is interesting to note that T was an important black student leader at Rhodes University at the time of this workshop. Therefore, in terms of his role on campus, he was awarded high status and was thus the dominant participant in this conversation. In his questionnaire, on the other hand, T claimed to be extremely frustrated throughout this whole converstion, because he felt that Z and K were not contributing in any significant way and were expecting him to take on the leadership role, and do all the work. Perhaps the major problem in this conversation was that none of the participants was prepared to take responsibility for the discussion (which all participants in the conversation normally do have to do).

10 An important type of miscommunication, which arose in the data but did not create any difficulties there (in interview 3, turns 117-118, on p.117 of Appendix III) is associated with the interpretation of YES/NO questions. An example of this follows. (It is an extract from an informal conversation between A and MV, the student participant in

interview 4. The previous discussion had revolved around dating and sex in African versus white SAE cultures):

1   A: so sex isn't so closely tied to marriage in the black culture as it is in the white culture, is it

2   M: yes

3   A: no but i thought maybe one reason why there are more unmarried women with children in the Black community=

4   M: = yes

5   A: no but i thought that sex is often okay in the black culture out of marriage i mean not within the church but among people outside of it

6   M: yes but they do it still we can't stop them

7   A: oh ja

The misunderstanding that arises here may be a consequence of a differential application of the quality maxim of the CP. In turn 2, M's answer to A's question could be asserting the truth of either (i) the truth value of her proposition in turn 1, or (ii) M's perception of what is true in the real world. In the case of (i) M's answer to the question may be more fully

2a   M: yes, you are right, sex isn't so closely tied to marriage
...

whereas in the case of (ii), his reply may be:

2b   M: yes, sex is as closely tied to marriage ...

which would imply that he is contradicting A.

In SAE, a response to a YES/NO question can only be in terms of reference to the real-world event identified by the question. However, in BSAE, such a response is usually to the truth of the proposition as given in the question.

As a result, A understood M as contradicting her proposition, while M considered that he was actually agreeing with it. Consequently a breakdown in the propositional development occurred, which was only remedied in turn 6.

11 Jan Svartvik (1983) postulates two major functions of 'well' in conversation: the framing function (e.g. as an indicator of the start of a new sub-topic or as a self-editing marker), and the qualifying function (indicating that one's response to a preceding question will modify one or more of the assumptions which have formed the basis of the discourse up to that point. They seem to be associated with the proclaiming tone (framing) and referring tone (qualifying) respectively.

12 Note that A gives evidence in interview 3 that she in fact is open to persuasion. In fact, she claimed in her questionnaire that she was merely trying to reduce her large bulk of marking by only checking through one of each student's essays thoroughly, but she was open to checking through more essays less thoroughly.

Notes: Chapter 6

1   An important reason for this is that several socio-political problems arise. Most students requiring such a pre-university school in South Africa would be black students (since their inferior language education greatly disadvantages them). Consequently, this kind of exercise might be regarded either as a patronising effort to 'raise' their standards to western standards, or alternatively, as a waste of university time and money on 'hopeless cases'.

2   This is important, since in any cross-cultural context, all participants should learn to understand each other. Particularly in South Africa conversational problems have for too long been overlooked or misinterpreted by members of the politically dominant group in terms of more superficial diagnoses such as lack of intelligence, unco-operativeness or impoliteness on the part of BSAE speakers.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

Diagrammatic overview of the discourse structure of conversational interaction

ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT		PROPOSITIONAL DEVELOPMENT		INTERACTIONAL DEVELOPMENT	
Sequencing Rules and Overall Organisation	Turn-Taking Mechanisms	Information Structure	Topical Coherence	Social Goals	Illocutionary Goals (Illocutionary force and perlocutionary effect)
-Sequential location -Paired utterances and conditional relevance (preference organisation) -Pre-sequences and insertion sequences -Opening section, main body, closing section	i) Indicating TRP's; next speaker allocation ii) Turn-holding devices iii) Feedback-seeking devices (while not relinquishing turn)	(Dependent on lexical semantics and the syntactic means of distributing information within the sentences) -Degrees of givenness and newness of information (or 'to be taken for granted' vs. given special attention) rules: end-focus; end-weight; end-scope.	Constructed collaboratively. -Macrotheme and hierarchy of topics, sub-topics and supporting points -Each topic: initiation, development and shift -Illocutionary linking	Negotiating about participants' backgrounds (and degree of conformity to Rhetorical principles) -Status -Distance -Social situation and environment -State of knowledge	Relationship between what the speaker intends and the actual effect on the hearer -Conversational implicatures -Preference Organisation

C O N T E X T U A L I S A T I O N   C U E S

				Explicit Feedback-seeking devices	Other Cues	No one-to-one form-function relationship
LEXICAL						
Metacommunicative function markers (frequency depends on density of propositional content); Cohesion Devices (Ellipsis, Pronominalisation, Lexical substitution, Logical connectors)	TRP function markers; Hesitation signals; Contact makers	Logical connectors/ Text markers	Metacommunicative function markers (esp. of salience and illocutionary link); Cohesion devices (lexical substitution, deixis)	TRP markers (esp. other-selection); Filled pauses; Contact makers; Deixis	Vocabulary (jargon, formal); Deixis (terms of address)	Metacommunicative function markers; Performative verbs
PROSODIC						
Pitch concord; Focal stress; Tone; Pausing	Pitch concord; Terminal key; Pausing	Focus; Marked tone; Pitch contrast	Tone unit boundaries; Pitch concord; Focal stress; Tone movement (proclaiming/referring)	Tone (r+, p+); High key; Laughter; Pausing	Pitch concord (expectations of next speaker)	Pitch concord; Tone movement; Focal stress; Pausing
SYNTACTIC						
	Questions (overt, tag, rhetorical)	Transformations (relativisation, foregrounding)		Questions (rhetorical, tag, direct); Jargon (idiom)	Sentence complexity; Degrees of ellipsis	Sentence types; Transformations (esp. in order to account for dispreferreds)

APPENDIX II

THE STRUCTURING OF STRESS AND INTONATION
(based on D. Brazil et al. 1980, taken and adapted from Lanham 1984)

The Tone Unit

```
                              Focus
                      _____ /    \ _____
                     /                     \
              | Prominent          Prominent |
              | syllable           syllable  |
              |                              |
  High        |                              |
              | QUEEN                        |
  Mid  || it's the                of HEARTS | on the table ||
              |                              |
  Low         |                              |

              <onset>             <tonic>

        <——————————————tone unit——————————————>
```
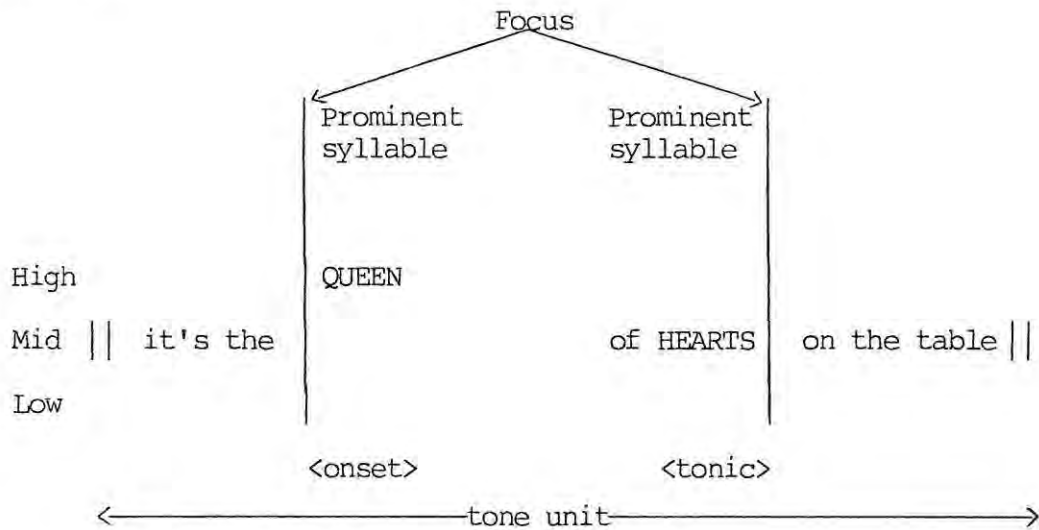
Notes: Queen and Hearts are equally "informing.
        Onset bears key; tonic bears termination.
        Key and Termination conflate if there is only one prominent
        syllable.
        There is no significant tone movement on the onset.

Tone Movement — on the tonic

Referring tone	$\overset{\nearrow}{\vee}$ r	Common ground/shared knowledge linguistically established in the text.
	$\overset{\nearrow}{\wedge}$ r+	Shared knowledge extralinguistically established, e.g., present in an area of common experience.
Proclaiming tone	$\wedge$ or $\searrow$ p or p+	Unknown; outside common ground; new information not yet shared with the hearer.
Neutral tone	$\overset{\longrightarrow}{o}$	Continuity

Key and Termination

Key, on first prominent syllable (the onset)

High	Contrastive	In contrast with propositional content which precedes, or with an aspect of shared knowledge, the focused item is unexpected, surprising, unpredictable (e.g., at a point of topic shift). ('X not Y')
Mid	Additive	Additional to; extending or expanding on what goes before; implicit. ('X + Y')
Low	Equative	Equivalent to, or paraphrase of, propositional content which precedes; stating the obvious; parenthetical. ('X = Y')

Condensed extract from Brazil et al. 1980:65

```
high                            (a)           and LOST
mid   ||  p  he GAMbled         (b) ||  p  and LOST  ||
low                             (c)           and LOST
```

The low key in (c) emphasises the expectation that gambling is synonymous with losing, i.e. there is an equivalence between the two tone units. (a) assumes a context in which the expectation was that the gambler would win, hence his losing is surprising. (b) emphasises that the person concerned performed both actions and there are no situational expectations about winning or losing.

Termination, on last prominent syllable (the tonic)
        - within a turn in conversation

High	(Not significant for present discussion)
Mid	Incomplete, more to follow.
Low	Propositionally complete; potentially terminating - not essential for information flow to continue.

Termination and Pitch Concord
        - between turns in conversation

	Prospective constraint on next speaker's first move
High	Expects contradiction.
Mid	Expects confirmation or agreement.
Low	No constraining expectations.

APPENDIX III

Background to the Conversations used in this Data Corpus

The first five conversations are all student-staff interiews which took place in July 1984, after the students had returned from their mid-year vacation. The students concerned had all made this appointment at a previous meeting, and had brought the lecturer (who was a member of the Academic Skills Programme at Rhodes University, and who is an SAE speaker) their June exam scripts for her to criticise so that further work on their study problems could be decided upon. The students in interviews 1, 3, 4 and 5 had all failed the particular exam under discussion. The student in interview 2 was the only one who had passed. (He hoped to obtain a first class pass in the end of year examinations.) The interviews all took place in the lecturer's study, across her desk. A relationship between the lecturer and each of the students had already been established in all the interviews except the first (which is also the only one with an SAE speaking student).

The sixth conversation is a discussion between three BSAE speaking students. They are in a Journalism lecture in October 1984, and have been asked by the ASP lecturer (who was involved in interviews 1 to 5) to evaluate and compare two June examination essays as part of an examination skills workshop. Their discussion was to be guided by a worksheet which consisted of various questions which address the criteria of a 'good' examination essay. (The worksheet plus the two essays are attached.) The lecturer spent ten minutes explaining the rationale for the workshop, and giving elaborate instructions to the class. T then read through both essays aloud before the group launched into the discussion.

Interview 1 (SAE-SAE)

1   A: || p   can i just TAKE your <u>DE</u>tails ||

        ... (2 secs) um ... (6 secs) have you got any other names

2   D: no

3   A: dee ay ar ar wy el

4   D: yea

5   A: okay where are you living in grahamstown

6   D: adamson house

[T.7-34: A obtains academic background and other necessary details from D.]

35   A: okay it's terrible i always feel like i'm a doctor er ... (2secs)
         what were your results

36   D: for june

37   A: for all of them

38   D: em ... ja journ i think i got twenty two percent

39   A: ja:

40   D: psycho: thirty one

41   A: did you lose your dee pee or was was it thirty or thirty three
         that you

42   D: i think thirty was =

43   A: = oh

44   D: i think i just made it

45   A: ja:

46   D: english i got thirty eight and drama forty seven

47   A: || p °okay ... (1 sec) °thanks ... (1 sec) ||

        || o <u>U M</u> ... (3 secs) || p did you <u>THINK</u> this was

        a <u>FAIR</u> ex_{am}||

48   D: || p <u>YES</u> || i THOUGHT ... ||

        well i can't remember exactly the questions and that but i
        remember thinking they were nice questions

49   A: mm ... em i found it very difficult to go through without the
        questions in front of me

50   D: oh dear

51 A: er ==

52 D: == cause i don't think i brought them

53 A: no

54 D: cause i brought a lot of my er journ stuff but i didn't bring the exams em so no

55 A: ja em i kind of just looked and didn't look for whether you'd answered the question or not because i couldn't

56 D: ⌈ you know
⌊ yea

57 A: but i just looked at other things ...(1 sec) anyway em ... (5 secs) so this was the exam that you had your migraine

58 D: yea ... (4 secs)

59 A: ‖ p were you very upTIGHT in the ex$_{AMS}$ ‖

60 D: i can't really re- you know i think it was a lot of strain and everything but ... can't remember the exact circumstance or anything

61 A: ja ...(3 secs) em how did you do in the other your other subjects during the year essay-wise and all that

62 D: em i think i did pretty well in english psychology ja actually i think i've done pretty well in essays and things

63 A: ‖ p but you did BADly in exAMS ‖

64 D: ‖ p JA ‖ p so i guess its OBviously ‖ ... (1 sec)

     ‖ p TENsion and all that kind of thing ‖

65 A: ja ... (1 sec) could also be your exam skills how you go about it

66 D: oh you sound like my mother (h) ((laughs)) my mother's always telling me that

67 A: oh re- ⌈ h ((laughs))

68 D: ⌊ ja she always whatever whenever work comes up she

     tells me that so h ((laughs))

69 A: h ((laughs)) ja em ... (2 secs) it's interesting so it wasn't that you were unprepared or anything

70 D: i don't think so

71 A: mm

72 D: i dunno

73   A: were you shocked at your results had you expected to do better

74   D: em ... i was shocked but at the marks you know the thing is i
don't think i ... (1 sec) really expected to do better in english and
drama but ... i know i think for the well journ obviously

                   ⌈ can't really say

75   A: ⌊ ja

76   D: but ... i don't know i was pretty shocked at the marks

77   A: ja

78   D: but otherwise i dunno

[T.79-98: A tries to ascertain how D came to ASP: whether she was sent by
the Dean of Arts, came of her own accord, was sent by her mother, heard
from other students or attended before.]

99   A: ja

100   D: but now you know no-one's actually sent me my mom just

        thought it would be a good idea   ⌈ so

101   A: ⌊ ja are you quite close

        to your mom

102   D: e:m in some areas h ((laughs))

103   A: a totally irrelevant question

104   D: ja ... when it comes to work ... blow ups all the time

105   A: ⌈ oh dear

106   D: ⌊ very much so and that's a lot of ... that's one of the reasons
i'm pleased to be away ... from home

107   A: does she put quite a lot of pressure on you

108   D: mm

109   A: it's the ideal recipe for failure is if you have a mom breathing
down your neck

110   D: i know h ((laughs)) ...° she freaks me because i actually the well
it's a a lot of people have em worked that out it's the pressure

[Discussion of problem with her mother]

[Going through exam script and some other essays. Criticisms.]

111   A: ja it seems that while you've got all sorts of ideas and everything
you don't actually sort of put them together in a unified way to
sort of le- like in a little parcel and say

```
                        there it is ⌐ you know
112  D:                            ⌊ mm
```

113 A: there's a kind of a focus on all sorts of little points ... but not on er your whole argument what are you actually doing with all these facts what are you trying to prove em and there's an important ... principle behind that which is that you've got to have a coherent argument you've gotta have some kind of argument together that you can em push across and your whole essay has got to revolve around that otherwise em no matter how much content you've got if you haven't got that then it just falls flat ... em ... (3 secs) what do you propose we do about this what do you think ... (3 secs) we should do have you got any ideas

114 D: i dunno what can we do

115 A: well em how about ... (2 secs) if for your next essay

116 D: mhm

117 A: em ... (3 secs) when is your essay due of any subject

118 D: oh any subject

119 A: except psycho one that's on

120 D: friday

```
121  A:  ja it's just ⌐ too soon
122  D:              ⌊ next friday is english ... i've actually got a
```

psycho (essay) that em our we were supposed to hand in today but our tutor gave us
```
          an ⌐ extr little extra ══
123  A:  ══ ⌊ mm ⌐ who is your
124  D:         ⌊ so i haven't ... gavin ivey
```

125 A: °good °old °gavin

126 D: h ((laughs)) an' he said to us don't hurry don't hurry

```
         you know ⌐ take your time
127  A:           ⌊ ‖ p d'you know WHY ‖ p 'cause he's got
```

TWO essays of his OWN to write hh ((laughs)) ‖

[Knock:Interruption]

128 A: em what was i talking about

```
129  D: ⌐ essay
130  A: ⌊ oh ja if you bring em your every i mean perhaps where d'you
         know when your next journ essay's due
```

131　D:　it's the seventh of september the last day of term

132　A:　have you got any others that are a little bit earlier but not as early as your psycho

133　D:　i've got the english for next friday

134　A:　mm

135　D:　and i've got ... i've got a list where've i got a list ... em i've got english novels essay

136　A:　i'm not very good at helping people with literature essays

137　D:　oh

138　A:　oh well anyway let's just think first of all on the idea em ... (1 sec.) if you ... (3 secs) we can got through the theoretical the sort of my nine steps in the essay writing process jorl

139 . D:　mhm

140　A:　and then if ... (1 sec.) when when you start working on your next essay

141　D:　mm

142　A:　we could work on that literature i just wouldn't be as sort of

143　D:　h ((laughs))

144　A:　comprehending in it as i would be in other subjects em although did literature i mean it that ⌈ i

145　D:　⌊ probably be a lot

better than i would

146　A:　em

147　D:　i've actually i've got three essays for the seventh of september

148　A:　have you oh well we could just start working on the journ one

149　D:　ja i've got the journ one and i've got an english one

150　A:　mhm

151　D:　and i've got a drama one

152　A:　mm

153　D:　so

154　A:　mm anyway and then when we've been through those nine steps step by step with what you're doing with your essay we could even work on all three you know at different times how is

this stage working in this essay ⌈ and so on

155 D: ⌊ mm

156 A: it might be worth our while doing some work on reading how you actually read for the exams ag for essays

157 D: mhm ... (3 secs)

158 A: em a kind of way of reading which is quite efficient so it doesn't take you as long and isn't so painful em ... (2 secs) so we actually you know maybe we just meet once a week now

159 D: mhm ==

160 A: == working on say your reading for your essays or your reading for your lectures whatever em and then as we get closer to the time to do we could even start analysing your questions now if you've already got your questions

161 D: for the journ

162 A: ja

163 D: i don't think we haven't

164 A: ja and the other two

165 D: em i've got for this english ((D shows list of essay topics))

166 A: so we could you know we could actually sort of meet regularly at least until the end of term ⌈ just

167 D: ⌊ mhm:

168 A: try to do some background on the basic skills of reading and writing

169 D: yea we've also got a project fo:r oh that's next term though

170 A: ja but we must start thinking about that

171 D: mm

[A called away]

172 A: okay we could you know we could start on that

173 D: mhm ·

174 A: em

175 D: so next week i'll bring all my the topics that i have

176 A: ja and we'll start analysing them and then you know starting with some of those pr- first steps in your writing process

177 D: mm so for next week d'you just want me to bring the top- the topics or anything else

178 A: no just bring your topics and any ideas you've had about what reading you started with and so on

179 D: mhm

180 A: if you've started any

181 D: yea

182 A: okay do you want to keep it at this time

183 D: i think this time is or let me see what else i've got because this time could probably be the best

184 A: mm

185 D: e:m

186 A: unless you're free a bit earlier no let's just leave it cause these other guys should have been here today they'll prob'ly arrive next week

187 D: is this time alright for you

188 A: ja oh except it won't be next week

189 D: so for next week d'you want to make it a different time

190 A: ja could we

[T.191-212: A and D decide, after much deliberation, on the time of their next meeting.]

213 A: okay

214 D: so that's that for the week

215 A: ja

[End of tape.]

[Closing section: farewells.]

Interview 2 (SAE-BSAE)

1   T: hullo

2   A: morning ...

[interchange with other student, who then leaves]

3   A: || r $^{SO(h)}$ || p this is a RUBbish ESSay || r+ HEY ||

4   T: || o huh ||

5   A: || p this is a RUBbish ESSay || r+ HEY ||

6   T: || r (h) WHY ||

7   A: || p NO || p i'm ^{ONly} JOKing ||

8   T: h ((laughs))

9   A: h ((laughs)) no it was very good i enjoyed it very much ... um its introduction was very good as i've said ((reads)) very good introduction good definition narrowing down of the question saying exactly where the essay will go ... it was nice and just all the way through your paragraph structure is very good ... as well it was very interesting very educational for me

10 T: thanks

11 A: um ... (5 secs) ((picks up Politics and Journalism exam scripts)) and these did you think these were fair exams ...   (3 secs)

12 T: fair exams

13 A: ja in terms of the questions they asked and stuff ...   (2 secs) were you happy with them ... (5 secs)

14 T: well i ... (h) ((laughs)) it's hard to say i don't know really i haven't thought about

15 A: you haven't thought about

16 T: er- no

17 A: you just wrote them ... (3 secs)

18 A: i mean there wasn't- i gather that you: you- because you did quite well i mean this was the sort of thing you were preparing for is that right i mean you know were you happy with it some people came in here furious at the exam

19 T: you mean some people were furious

20 A: ja

21 T: why

22 A: i dunno this they claim that it wasn't fair or the questions were too difficult o:r some of the topics they didn't expect

23   T: oh ... (3 secs) well i: i don't know maybe ... (2 secs) i prepared myself for what i thought would come out

            ... ||o but i DIDn't prepARE for ||p question

            BEE SIX for instance ||

24   A: ||p+ and THAT'S the one||p you got the BEST MARK

            ⌈ for ||

25   T: ⌊ ja

26   A: ((to the script)) what was bee six about ((looks through paper)) which one's bee six the study of political
            ⌈ institutions

27   T: ⌊ ja

28   A: really it was a very good essay

29   T: well i just used my previous knowledge there   ⌈ that's all

30   A: ⌊ mm

31   T: ||p but i THINK MAYbe|| ! ||p SOME of the

            PEOple are comPLAINing || ! ||p about that

            SECtion ||

32   A: ||p   ⌈ JA ||p MAYbe||

33   T: ↓

         ↓ ||p ⌊ by MICHael first || ⌃ || o beCAUSE he

         ALways ||p GIVES us || o er || ↓ ||p REFerences

         and so on ||

34   A: ja

35   T: ||p but now the PROblem is that ||p MOST o-||

         ||p i mean the WAY he lectures really ||

         ||o it's NOT ... ||o most of US ||p FEEL that ||

         ||p he's NOT doing ||p you know IT ||

         ||o in an ||p interesting (way) WHERE ||

         ||p °we'll BE ||

36   A: || p oh <u>REA</u>lly || =

37   T: = || p <u>I</u> will || p en<u>JOY</u> it _{you know} ||

           || p be<u>CAUSE</u>|| o you know || p stu<u>DENTS</u>

           are <u>NOT</u> ... || p don't like to be <u>ASKED</u> in class ||

38   A: ja

39   T: || p so he's got <u>THAT</u> thing of ||

           || p <u>WHEN</u> he want to|| p ASK a <u>QUES</u>_{tion} ||

           || p <u>ASK</u> || p he <u>ACT</u>ually ||

           start by asking your name also so he's sort of intimidating students you know

40   A: ja but i'm sure that's not his intention d'you think that's his intention

41   T: no i don't think so but i mean the effect ... ultimately =

42   A: = ja =

43   T: = is is not what he intended

44   A: ja =

45   T: now the other thing that ... (2 secs) maybe people don't read some of the things you know that he actually recommends for
           us

46   A: ja

47   T: || p i'm i'm <u>ONE</u> of those also ||

           || p i JUST had TO <u>PUT</u> my<u>SELF</u> || p under

           <u>PRESS</u>ure || to read some of these things and for that matter

           i read legislatures ... (2 secs) and the- i was just vague that is why i couldn't attempt any question on that

48   A: mm

49   T: || p and then i DID this <u>QUES</u>_{tion} || o ... (2 secs)

           and <u>THEN</u> ... (2 secs) || p i <u>THINK MAY</u>be the- ||

           || p MOST of the stu<u>DENTS</u> didn't <u>RE</u>_{ally} read °that thing ||

           || p 'cos he <u>SAID</u> || p he <u>AL</u>so SAID <u>THAT</u> ||

‖ p it is <u>CLEAR</u> that ‖ p <u>MOST</u> of the students ‖

‖ p didn't read <u>SOME</u> of the ‖

‖ p ⌈ BOOKS   that he RECOM<u>MEN</u>Ded °you °know ‖

50 A: ⌊ mm

51 T: ‖ p so <u>THIS</u> week ‖ p <u>LAST</u> week <u>WHEN</u> we- ‖

        ‖ p in our FIRST <u>LEC</u>ture ‖ p i think on

        <u>MON</u>day ‖ p he REcommended (h) EIGHT <u>BOOKS</u> ‖

52 A: h ((laughs))

53 T: for the- very reason so these are the- some of the things

        you know ⌈ that happens

54 A: ⌊ ja ja ⌈ °so

55 T: ⌊ so i think partly thats e- that was the

        problem

56 A: mm

57 T: ja ... (1 sec.) but from there i don't think really

        ⌈ it was   ... unfair

58 A: ⌊ mm   mm so you were quite happy ... (3 secs)

59 T: well i don't see anything ⌈ wrong you see ja

60 A: ⌊ ja no that's fine ja

61 A: um ((clears throat)) let's just go ... (3 secs) one thing

        that came up was as i wrote here you don't really need to

        write out the whole question ....

[Then discussion about rough work – that it must all be done at the beginning, or one question at a time. Following this is a discussion of the very good structure of the essays. Finally discussion of problems of grammar with tenses and determiners.]

62 A: i don't know if you would find it worth just doing ... (2 secs) um maybe we could just spend one session on it ... (1 sec.) er 'cause it comes up again and again and again not only the and a but a couple of other points ⌈ where it comes up

63 T: ⌊ mm ...

64 A: just to go through ... (2 secs) e:r i've got a very good grammar book which talks about the functions of these things and exactly where and when these things are used and so on ... (2 secs) 'cause it's very very difficult

65   T: ja well i think it would be okay because i could also i can also
          actually foresee a problem when we are doing newswriting

66   A: ja

67   T: because last week i thought about it =

68   A: = ja=

69   T: = and i thought maybe i was going to tell (you) in fact this is
          one of the first things that i came here

70   A: ja

71   T: about you said no (h) sometimes i ... (1 sec.) find problems when
          i'm doing this

72   A: ja

73   T: so i'm sure that ... (1 sec.) if you are going- in fact we
          have just started with the course ⌈ newswriting

74   A: ⌊ ja you said so ja

75   T: so i think it would be ... (1 sec.) very good to do that

76   A: ja okay let me just see what else there was ....

[Discussion of redundancy and incorrect use of vocabulary; T.77-82 start
deciding on a time for the next meeting.]

83   A: or we could meet at ten thirty again next week ... (6 secs) same
          time ... (25 secs)

84   T: maybe wednesday ten thirty

85   A: mm that's when Kh—'s coming

86   T: wednesday

87   A: oh no wednesday is C— and ⌈ K—

88   T: ⌊ oh

89   A: what about friday e- eleven tenty five i mean monday twelve
          twenty five oh you've got (h) politics ... (7 secs) or do you want
          to just come monday ten thirty

90   T: ja let's make it monday ten thirty

[T.91-95: still undecided; to and fro' about possible times to meet;
eventually a decision is made.]

96   A: okay um ... (8 secs) so you happy about just going through the
          grammar points just ... (3 secs) one or two sessions i don't think
          we'll need more than that ... (2 secs) is that okay

97   T: ja it's okay ... (8 secs)

98   A: okay ... (4 secs) but it was well written

99   T: ja i don't know i think now i must get more than ... (2 secs)

100   A: ja you can push yourself higher ....

[General talk about achieving one's highest potential, and then about why one should attend ASP, the failure rate in June exams, T's problems in Economics, work in the vacation and where to stay.]

101   T: okay bye

102   A: okay T—— we'll see you next monday

103   T: yes

104   A: next monday twelve twenty what was it

105   T: you said ten thirty

106   A: ten thirty okay

107   T: okay bye

108   A: okay bye T——

Interview 3 (SAE-BSAE-BSAE)

[Greetings: not recorded.]

1   A: well i only looked through one of your questions ... (1 sec.) em
          the one that you'd both done

(unintelligible)

2   A: h ((clears throat))

3   K: which one

4   A: i did your philosophy question ==

5   K: == oh

6   C: (unintelligible)

7   A: cause that was both your lowest mark

8   K: yes

9   C: ⌈ ja

     A: ⌊ what happened why did you both write three questions only
          ... (2 secs)

10   K: you also

11   C: ja i did ... em ... (1 sec.) actually i wasn't too sure of my
          especially i thought i would erm ... (2 secs) i thought i would
          come back to sort of waffle on this one

((general laughter))

12   C: but now ... there wasn't time at all there was just no time and
          erm ... couldn't come back to it and ... i had not done enough
          reading on hobbes ==

13   A: == so it was just a problem of time

14   C: ja otherwise i would have at least come back and you know
          sort of howed   ⌈ but the ne

15   A: ⌊ and you

16   K: em ... really i can't tell you °about because i was sure about at
          least four questions i did this (unintelligible) i don't know really
          what happened

18   A: a question of time

19   K: ja

20   A: you forgot

21   K: just forgot and really i was sure of this question i should have
          got at least forty five percent really

22   A: cos you both considering that you only did three out of four questions you didn't do too badly h ((laughs))

23   K: mm

24   A: especially your one question that you got sixty nine

25   K: south african

26   A: ja ... (5 secs)

27   C: it's a matter of time ... (1 sec.)

28   K: $\|$ p and anOTHER PROblem $\|$ the fact we were too much under pressure we didn't prepare any time for the exams (h)

29   A: there's no swotweek

30   C: mm at least h ((laughs)) ... we might have one

31   A: ja it would make a ⎡ difference

32   C: ja

33   K: ⎣ ja

34   A: $\|$ r um ... (3 secs) $\|$ p but you DID prep$\overline{\text{ARE}}$ adequatel$_\text{y}$ $\|$

35   C: for mm i- a sort of a ⎡ plan

36   A: ⎣ mm

37   C: to for this

38   A: mm

39   C: $\|$ o E:M ... (1 sec.) $\|$ p me i DIDn't $\|$

40   K: $\|$ p i TRIED fo:r $\|$ the the first one philosophy ques ⎡ tion

41   A: ⎣ mm ... (3 secs)

42   C: ((going through exam answer book))

          $\|$ p i only tried $\overline{\text{THERE}}$ on the last one $\|$ p the south AFrican pol $\|$ p em ... (2 secs) this is the ONLY one $\|$

          $\|$ p HERE it was a case of $\|$ o em $\|$

          $\|$ p sort of NAMing °special °terms °so ... (3 secs) $\|$

          $\|$ p WHICH WAS a matter of$\|$ p just STATing of

what i felt || _o er: || _p well i don't <u>THINK</u>

there was || _{r+} NEED for <u>PLAN</u>ning ||

|| _o <u>AND</u> || _p HERE ||

|| _p i was a BIT ⌈ <u>SHA</u>ky ||

43   A: ⌊ || _p there was <u>NO</u> need for planning ||

44   C: really

45   A: i'm asking

46   C: well ⌈ there was

47   K: ⌊ there h ((laughs))

48   C: there was a need there was a need

49   K: the only thing i did i just (unintelligible) the main points the main points

50   A: where

51   K: °question °paper

52   A: mm i didn't see it on here ... (3 secs) ((looks through papers)) em no brainstorm no plan was i right this seems to be off the top of your head

53   C: h ((laughs))

((all laugh))

54   C: ja mm i don't know i think i must have been somewhat confused (unintelligible)

55   A: mm

56   C: ja

57   A: mm

58   C: ⌈ must have been

59   A: ⌊ cos you don't you don't show any depth of knowledge ⹀

60   C: ⹀ ja

61   A: whereas you do ... (1 sec) but then your grammar is a problem

62   K: ja especially in the south african

[A goes through criticisms of both essays.]

63   A: em it strikes me that you didn't apply the things that we learnt or that we talked about i don't know if you learnt

64 C & K: h ((laughter))

65 C: maybe ... (2 secs) it's caused by panic you know newly learnt a:h methods normally disapp(h)ear when you are faced with the real situation e:r i think it's it's the real a:h problem

66 A: mm

67 C: ja because this is actually an a newly learnt thing

68 A: mm

69 C: ja which was ⌈ (unintelligible)

70 A: ⌊ ja have you were you using it for your other

    essays °though

71 C: ja

72 K: yes

73 C: well it was interesting to make use of this (unintelligible)

[Continuation of criticism of their essays; discussion of the importance of brainstorming at the beginning of an exam.]

74 A: em ... did you feel it was a fair exam

75 K: it was

76 C: mm ja oh ja it was it actually e:m it actually showed it indicated where one one one is you know ==

77 A: == mm

78 C: i actually knew he: ha: how much i've got

79 A: mm

80 C: ja how much i (h) knew ⌈ ja

81 A: ⌊ mm

82 C: and em again the question of panicking

[Further discussion of the importance of brainstorming in advance.]

83 A: both of you in your conclusion you said what you thought but all the stuff that you presented beforehand just looked like a summary of some of the aspects of plato's republic and you weren't actually building up the argument stage by stage referring all the time these are the weaknesses and the strengths etcetera etcetera so that's a very very important thing ==

84 C & K: == ja

85 A: em ... (2 secs)

86 C: mmf it's a terrible thing h ((laughs)) mm

87 A: how about getting more practice on the essays that you write during term ... (3 secs) we could be very very much more particular and more you know i could be more critical ... it might be worth just even for one or two essays for us to follow ... it through stage by stage you bring me your brainstorm

88 C: yes

89 A: em and then your plan to talk about ...

[Outline of plan of attack.]

90 A: so that we can actually see stage by stage what's happening even if we just do it for one essay em because it strikes me that em what's happening is that you've got all the ideas of how to structure it etcetera in theory and you know that it's good and you try and do it but because it's a new study habit and because it's a new way of going about it as you say =

91 K: = yes =

92 A: em it's sometimes difficult to see how it actually works when you're sitting down and you're writing

93 C: ja °i'd °like °that

94 A: which would mean that for the next essay whatever it is you'd have to spend a helluva lot more energy on it for that time

[Explaining the extent of commitment necessary; C has to drop one subject, which A thinks is a good thing. T.95-105: move on to talking about C and K's grammar problems.]

104 A: i wanted to ask you also about your new addresses ((A finds C and K's record cards))

105 A: em where are you now C——

106 C: er oakdene house

107 A: what's the phone number there

108 C: two double o five

109 A: two double eight five

110 C: || p TWO double $\underline{\text{O}}$ ...|| p °five ||

111 A: || p $\underline{\text{O}}$ ||

112 C: yes

113 A: h ((laughs)) okay em K——

114 K: piet retief h ((laughs))

115 C: lots ((referring to the student record cards))

116 K: phone number oh i'm not yet h ((laughs))

117 A: you haven't been there for long ⌈ enough

118 K: ⌊ yes ⌈

119 A: ⌊ is that it doesn't

really matter

120 K: °oh i think two o six eight

121 A: ‖ r two EIGHT SIX EIGHT ‖

122 K: ‖ p °no ... TWO seven six EIGHT ‖

123 A: °two seven six eight you know i can't hear properly anymore

with my cold

124 K: ⌈ sorry

125 C: ⌊ oh ja i know

[Talk about the bad weather, and how many people are getting colds.]

126 A: okay em so we meet at half past eleven next week

127 K: (unintelligible) ‖ p is it HALF eLEven ... (1 sec.) ha ‖ =

128 C: = half past

129 K: ⌈ ten

130 C: ⌊ ten

131 A: half past ten okay

[Preparation for the next week - going through A's criticisms of their exams.]

132 A: em is it ‖ r oKAY ‖ that i only looked at the one

question i kind of felt ... it's depressing to do postmortems all the
time you know let's rather move forward

133 C: h ((laughs))

134 K: h ((laughs))

135 C: ‖ p WE:LL ‖ i think i was ready for all your suggestions so

136 A: mm =

137 C: = ja

138 A: i mean would you prefer me still to look through the other
questions or do you think we should just move on

139 C: er ... (1 sec.) especially the south african one

140 A: mhm

141 C: ja ...   ⌈ with

142 A: ⌊ would you like me to look at it

143 C: ja with the er misses michael first

144 A: mhm:

145 K: see i ⸗

146 A: ⸗ that the one on legislatures

147 C: ja er i was actually i felt there is more source i was just working from the notes

[Interruption — next student.]

148 A: ‖ p o‾K‾A‾Y‖ let me just have a look at your south african

    one and ⌈ then

149 K: ⌊ ja

150 A: just we talk about it just briefly ...

151 C: ja

152 K: ja

[Talk about another student's diligence.]

153 A: ‖ p o‾K‾A‾Y‖ so we'll see you next week half past

154 C: ja sure sure

155 K: sure

156 A: half past

157 K: ten

158 A: ten ‖ p oKAY‖ (h) ((laughs))

159 K: bye

160 C: bye

161 A: bye

Interview 4 (SAE-BSAE)

[Greetings: not recorded.]

1   A: okay mister em gee gee what did you think of this exam did you think it was fair

2   M   yes it w- was pretty fair t'was not a: difficult exam

[Turns 3-55: a long discussion follows in which A tries to ascertain whether M and the rest of his class would like extra Latin classes which the ASP could offer.]

56   A: em ... (1 sec.) why did you stop coming last term ... (3 secs)

57   M   last term

58   A: mm

59   M: i didn't stop maybe i was just busy preparing for the exams ... (2 secs) ⌈ and that i've stopped

60   A: ⌊ mm just trying to remember when you last came

... (5 secs) you last came ... (4 secs) the end of march

                ⌈ actually

61   M: ⌊ is it

62   A: mm i mean i'm just asking i'm not accusing you i'm just asking ⌈ if you felt that what we were doing wasn't relevant

63   M: ⌊ yes yes yes yes that's right

64   A: or were you just sort of did you just get snowed under with all your other work

65   M: mhm

66   A: or what happened ... (7 secs)

67   M: h ((laughs)) well there is nothing e:r that i can say which caused me to stop coming here

68   A: you just sort of ... left it

69   M: no i think i i can't say there is a reason ⌈ for not coming here

70   A: ⌊ mm

71   M: mm another thing that didn't know that i must always come here maybe you're busy with other people so 't least well er when i have that problem then i decide to come and

72   A: ⌈ see you
            ⌊ mm (h)

73   M: unless you can tell me you're prepared to meet me
            ⌈ regularly

74   A: ⌊ oh i said that right at the beginning

75   M: is it

76   A: said we meet every friday

77   M: every friday

78   A: ja i kept it open all until

79   M: oh yes is it

80   A: ja

81   M: ⌈ hm i'm sorry that i

82   A: ⌊ was hoping that you'd eventually

83   M: h ((laughs))

84   A: h ((laughs))

85   M: ah ah ⌈ i'm sorry that i missed

86   A: ⌊ no it's okay i

87   M: that opportunity

88   A: h ((laughs)) no it's okay i just wanted to know if there was something that that we did that you thought might have been a waste of time or

89   M: no no no no not at all

90   A: ja em ... (2 secs) i kind of noticed that a lot of my students just stopped coming

91   M: mhm

92   A: and i kept on sort of sitting here waiting for them and they didn't ⌈ come

93   M: ⌊ h ((laughs)) ＝

94   A: ＝ and i didn't know if it was ... because they were lazy or because they were too busy or because they were dissatisfied with what we were doing ＝

95   M: ＝ mhm ＝

96   A: ＝ or because they thought they could manage without

97   M: mhm:

98   A: em ((clears throat)) i know a lot of students stopped coming always when there's a pressure situations er situation students stop coming

99   M: mhm

100   A: em and i always think that's crazy because the more pressure you're under the more help you need so that you should actually be here

101   M: mhm h ((laughs))

102   A: and not sort of flapping about you know

103   M: i see

104   A: em ... (7 secs)

105   M: don't you think that maybe students have er no ... (2 secs) e:r main issues there to discuss with you at the particular time

106   A: mm ... ja maybe that's what it is but what ... (2 secs) it was fine you know i thought students aren't coming they're obviously coping but the exam results showed that they weren't

107   M: mhm:

108   A: maybe they thought they were maybe that's what was wrong

109   M: mhm

110   em what i'm trying to say ... (5 secs) em ... (4 secs) is that i think tha- for us to do anything really useful and to really get our teeth into what's going on and and how to really go about

111   M: mhm

112   A: writing good essays and using the knowledge that you've got and showing that you've got it as em is if we meet regularly and just plod through some basic grammar things em and also go through the essay stage by stage

[A explains the stages of the essay writing process and how they work, and suggests meeting regularly with M to work on one of his essays.]

118   M: °mhm don't you think that would demand an e- enormous amount of time cos if say for instance i've got an essay a:n er history essay which is due next thursday

119   A: mhm

120   M: now i've started reading we:ll maybe this weekend e:r maybe saturday i will e:r start my introduction or my brainstorm and all that

121   A: mhm:

122   M: now then the: since my appointment with you is only at a:

123   A: no we'd have to meet just about every day

[Discussion of plan and time for next meeting.   Closing section.]

Interview 5 (SAE-BSAE)

1   A: how did you find the exam Kh— did you think it was fair

2   Kh: || ₒ e:r || ₚ it _WAS_ fair ...(4 secs)

(h) ((laughs)) || ₚ for THOSE who had pre_PARED_ for

it er || ₚ _BUT_ || ₚ i i DIDn't _FIND_ || ₚ it

VERy _DIFF_icult || ₒ see ...(2 secs) ||

[|| °ₒ except ||

3   A: [why did you get seventy percent for two and thirty five and
       then twenty five

4   Kh: h ((laughs)) || ₚ i i _WROTE_ the: || ₚ e:r PROF's

_SEC_tion || ₚ with_IN_ || ₚ TWENty _MIN_utes ||

|| ₚ i'm _SURE_ ||

|| ₚ s- _TIME_ beat me so || ₚ i didn't _HAVE_ ||

|| any _OP_tion || i _DIDN'T WANT_|| ₒ °you know ||

|| ₚ to LEAVE them unatt_END_ed or ... (2 secs) ||

|| ₒ [they _JUST_ (unintelligible) ||

5   A: [|| ₚ oh so you HADn't pre_PARED_ for them ||

6   Kh: er no no i mean i prepare in in which way you mean time
       allocation or ... what

7   A: no i mean was it ja was it that you hadn't prepared for it you
       didn't have any knowledge or was it that you didn't have any time

8   Kh: er time you see it was a matter of time ... (1 sec.) see ... (2
       secs)

9   A: naughty

10   Kh: h ((laughs)) i'm not naughty [h ((laughs))

11   A: [ja h ((laughs))

12   Kh: h ((laughs)) the thing is i- i thought erm this section for what's it
       mr b- doctor prof ==

13   A: == mhm

14   Kh: no no first ja i thought it was difficult so thought it was better
       to start with it before i exhausted my power (hh) laughs see so to
       find that i did better in it and also well in er south african
       politics e- but philosophy ... brought me down (h)

15   A: i presume ... you didn't come to the exam skills lecture

16   Kh: ja i did co- i did come h ((laughs))

17   A: ⌈ did you

18   Kh: ⌊ (h) ((laughs)) ja

19   A: what was the most important thing that out of that for you

20   Kh: er ... we were advised to allo- divide our time equally see ＝

21   A: ＝ ⌈ mm

22   Kh: ⌊ for °questions that that is thing i didn't do

23   A: mm

24   Kh: ja

25   A: it's the most important thing

26   Kh: mm

27   A: for exam skills

28   Kh: and p- prof er suggested that i i come to the ai es pee for h
      ((laughs)) for advice and in in in in in the script which i burnt
      (h) ((laughs))

29   A: (h) h ((laughs)) you burnt your script

30   Kh: ja i- if i don't do well er feel so discouraged er i feel i don't
      want like to see the the the script anymore so i just
      set a match h ((laughs)) ⌈ so

31   A: ⌊ er you're amazing

32   Kh: mm

33   A: well ... u:m ((turning pages)) e- erm the first thing that struck
      me ...

[Criticism of the paper written.]

33a   A: so i don't know what you think ... (4 secs)

33b   Kh: about ... (2 secs)

33c   A: what to do whether you want to come more often or whether you
      want to run away quickly

[Kh explaining why he had stopped coming before.]

34   A: em ((clears throat)) ... (3 secs) it might be an idea when you have
      your next essay due ... if we go through it stage by stage
      together

[Explains the whole process of working on an essay stage by stage.]

35   A: but ... do you want to do that

36   Kh: ja i i want to do that i mean it's to my own good my ja t-
for my own good ⌈ so

37   A: ⌊ mm

38   Kh: mm

39   A: mm ... (1 sec.) ja ... (3 secs) er ... (10 secs) do you want to meet
regularly every week ═

40a Kh: ═ ja think fridays ja the this time

40b A: ⌈ okay

41   Kh: ⌊ mm

42   A: okay ... (5 secs) ((clears throat)) ... (4 secs) can we meet
at half past eleven ⌈ on a friday

43   Kh: ⌊ mm half past eleven ... (2 secs) see

          ... (3 secs) no there is er j- journ journalism

44   A: oh ═

45   Kh: ═ ja eleven twenty five to twelve ten

46   A: okay

[Chatting about a book which Kh is busy reading.]

47   A: well ...(4 secs) so how about ...(3 secs) starting ...(1 sec.) em
...(3secs) by looking at ...(3 secs) some of the things you're
reading ...(1sec.) to just kind of take it apart and see how it is
actually structured and how that person in that chapter or article
develops their argument ...(2 secs) does that make sense

48   Kh: ja ... you see surely i i can't prescribe what we we have to st-
start with see

49   A: i'm just making a suggestion ═

50   Kh: ═ oh ye er things like or or what d'you mean er books or ═

51   A: ═ something that you're reading already

52   Kh: oh

[Plan of action for next few tutorials – what reading to choose.]

53   A: okay ... just to see- cos it's- it might be worth looking at ... (1½
secs) em ... (2 secs) the way other people do it to
see how it actually could work for your own wri ⌈ ting

54   Kh: ⌊ mm ═

56   A: ═ cos reading and writing are basically the same thing except
that you read the one and you write the one but it's the same
medium

57 Kh: ja i'd like to ... (3 secs) °do °that

58 A: mm em ... (2 secs) what e- what are you busy reading that you
        think we could usefully use something that's not too long

59 Kh: mm i dunno i'll i'll think about it if to find out if i've anything
        that's not too long ja that that is what i was about to say 'cos
        length i mean it seems t- the whole book is very long

61 A: but we could divide it usefully into sections

62 Kh: e:r

63 A: what's the book called

64 Kh: no don't know i'm only reading this book now but i i've read
        some books before ⌈ so

65 A: │ oh

66 Kh: ⌊ ja

67 A: what are you what are your rea- what's on your reading lists for
        you're starting to do em journ starting to do newswriting aren't
        you

[Decide on a reading to start working on, and then decide to start a group
including other people from Kh's class. Continue discussion of how to go
about reading and then of who else to ask to join.]

87 A: so will you speak to them

88 Kh: ja

89 A: can you think of anybody else Ph—— do you know Ph——

[Discussion of Kh and Ph's relationship.]

90 A: 'cos she's em i think she's having problems as well

91 Kh: ja the same with me an' e now i'm saying e ye you didn't
        recording my june j- june exams ... er

92 A: i didn't

93 Kh: on my card

94 A: yes i did

95 Kh: h ((laughs)) cos i'm having problems i failed er philosophy and
        legal theory

96 A: ja i know

97 Kh: ja er but ... see if i'm writing and i come to realise that three
        hours it's rather too long for the paper

98 A: ja

99 Kh: i know i'm not there's nothing i'm writing h ((laughs)) see
      definitely there philosophy h ((laughs)) 'cos i hadn't prepared for it
      and e:r knowing that it doesn't count you see the
      june exams doesn't count at all ⌈ you write (unintelligible)

100 A: ⌊ mm except the impression
                                          does

101 Kh: ‖ p ja im<u>PRESS</u>ion ‖ p <u>NO</u>ther thing ‖
      ‖ p <u>WHAT</u> made me‖ p <u>FAIL</u> now can ‖
      ‖ p again make me <u>FAIL</u> the ‖
      ‖ p <u>END</u> of the year ⌈ h ((laughs)) ‖

102 A: ⌊ ‖ which <u>IS</u> ‖

103 Kh: ‖ r heh ...(2 secs) ‖ no i mean i can't say i
      fail because it doesn't count cos ═

104 A: ═ oh i see ⌈ ja

105 Kh: ⌊ ja

[T.106-114: Discuss why Kh had not prepared for his philosophy exam –legal
theory was too demanding, so he had no time to learn for philosophy.]

116 A: ja d'you think it's worth battling on with four don't you think it
      might be worth just being honest about it and just dropping it and
      ═

117 Kh: ═ e:r

118 A: picking it up later

119 Kh: ja ja well i don't i don't want to drop it

120 A: ja

121 Kh: mm don't want to drop it surely i'm taking chances you know h
      ((laughs)) 'cos there is a probability that i can pass it

122 A: think so

123 Kh: ja ... (3 secs)

124 A: e:m are you enjoying it though

125 Kh: e:r ═

126 A: ═ 'spose you're not into it enough to know

127 Kh: no ... i'm not enjoying it very much ... as i thought would

128 A: ja cos at the beginning of the year you thought you would

```
        ┌ enjoy it
129  Kh: │
        └ ja but i

130  A:   why aren't you enjoying it
```

[Reasons for not enjoying Philosophy as compared to Politics, and general discussion about doing the wrong subjects.]

131 A: em so see you at half past eleven on friday

132 Kh: || p mm HALF PAST eLEven NO: || er there there's journ

133 A: half past ten

134 Kh: half past ten ja

135 A: okay

136 Kh: || p DIDn't you SEE my || p er Journ ESSay ||

       || p the SECond ESSay || p DIDn't i BRING it ||

137 A: no you'd vanished by then

138 Kh: it vanished

139 A: you had vanished

140 Kh: i'd vanished no i i think i i maybe when did i come here was
        it on tuesday or ┌

141 A: └ oh you mean ┌ last

142 Kh: └ monday last week ja

143 A: ja no ┌ °no °you °didn't °bring °it

144 Kh: └ that's what i'm asking i thought maybe i brought my
        second journalism essay

145 A: no you didn't bring it

146 Kh: didn't bring it

147 A: no is it lost

148 Kh: censorship or censorship ja you gonna find it here h ((laughs))

149 A: really ┌ °let's °just °look °through

150 Kh: └ please check what was it about censorship and the
        south african state something like that

151 A: you know who else might want to come is no K—— 's not ja he's
        doing journalism

152 Kh: ⌈ there it is

153 A: ⌊ oh shit i'm sorry

154 Kh: o:kay

155 A: i haven't read it do you want me to read it

156 Kh: a:h do- don't worry for ne- next week

157 A: ‖ p JA ‖ p would you LIKE me to ‖ p d'you

THINK it'll be WORTH it ‖ p d'you think i'll

get anything OUT of ⌈ it ‖

158 Kh: ⌊ er no leave it you can't get anything

there ... (1 sec.) ⌈ no (unintelligible)

159 A: ⌊ i'm sorry i'm really sorry

160 Kh: okay

[Talk of including K in the reading group.]

166 Kh: thank you °very °much

167 A: okay so we'll see you n- same time next week

168 Kh: next week ja

169 A: em and if you want to bring A——— and T——— mm

170 Kh: ja w- i'll talk abou- er with them now i'll see them in journalism
er

171 A: okay can make ⌈ a plan

172 Kh: ⌊ bye

173 A: okay byebye

174 Kh: bye

WORKSHOP : EVALUATION OF EXAM ESSAYS

Instructions:

Read each of the two essays given to you.
Then discuss the evaluation questions with your groups.
(Write the answers in the spaces below.)

1.   Does the student know what s/he is writing about?
     (Does s/he answer the question?)
     - Does s/he define relevant concepts accurately?   _____
     - Does s/he explain processes/developments adequately?   _____

2.   Are the main points of this essay clear to the reader?   _____
     If they are clear to you, list them.

     _____

     _____

     _____

     _____

3.   Is each main point contained in its own paragraph?   _____
     - Is there a sentence in each paragraph which contains
       the main point of the paragraph?   _____
       (Underline those sentences which contain the main points
        of the essay, if there are any.)

4.   Does the student adequately support his/her main points?
     In other words: (a) Does s/he give reasons where necessary for the
                         main point in a paragraph?

     _____

                     or (b) Does s/he give examples where necessary to support
                            the main point in a paragraph?

     _____

                     or (c) Does s/he elaborate sufficiently where necessary
                            on the main point in a paragraph in order to clarify it?

     _____

5. Does the student have a plan which is obvious to you?
    If your answer is yes, very briefly write the plan below.

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

6. Is the argument developed logically, with each main point leading clearly
    to the next, or are the ideas confused?

    _____

7. Does the essay have an adequate introduction?   _____
        (a) Does it adequately address itself to the question?

    _____

    _____

        (b) Does it give an adequate overview of the way the essay will be
            structured?   Give reasons for your answers to (a) and (b).

    _____

    _____

8. Does the essay have an adequate conclusion?   _____
        (a) Does it contain any new information?   _____
        (b) Does it sum up the argument of the essay?   _____

        (c) Does it come to a relevant conclusion/decision
            about the subject of the essay?   _____

9. Can you identify the main argument of the essay?   _____
    Try and write it down in one full sentence.

    _____

    _____

10. Does the essay answer the question? _____
    (Analyse the topic closely in order to answer this question,
     and ask yourself: what <u>exactly</u> is this question asking for?)

11. Do you think this is a good essay? _____
    What mark would you give it if you were a lecturer? _____
    Give reasons for your answer.

    _____

    _____

    _____

Below are two essays from the June '84 paper.
They are actual answers to Question 6, which is reproduced below.

6. "The history of the two (commercial) presses (in South Africa)
    explains the existence of two quite different types of mass
    communication structures.   The English-language newspapers began
    as business enterprises, run for profit; in style and content they
    are fashioned on the British press.   The Afrikaans-language press
    started out to create a language, a culture and a people and was
    an integrated part of the political organ of nationalist Afrikaner-
    dom, the Nationalist Party."
                          Elaine Potter: The Press as Opposition, p. 205.

    Critically evaluate Potter's statement in ONE of the following ways:

    EITHER

    (a)   The historical development of either (i) the English-language
          or (ii) the Afrikaans-language press.

    OR

    (b)   In the light of a comparison between the socio-political position
          of the English and Afrikaans press.

6. (a)   The Afrikaans Press

The Afrikaans Press, unlike its English counterpart, was established to promote the cause rather than make money. Loyalty to the Nationalist party was taken into account. The Afrikaans press was expected to be the "Organ of the nation".

Most of the Afrikaans newspapers came into being after Hertzog had broken away from the South African Party (SAP) in 1912 to form the Nationalist Party. Most Afrikaners supported Hertzog and the need for the press grew in order to publicise ideas of the party.

The Nasionale Pers Beperk (NPB) was established in 1915 with Santam - Sanlam as the biggest shareholders. Immediately Die Burger became the first newspaper to be published, the NPB in 1915. Die Burger mainly served the interests of the Cape Nationalists.

Since the main aim of the press was to create a language Die Burger dropped the use of the Dutch language and used Afrikaans as the medium of expression. Die Volksblad and Die Oosterlig also dropped the Dutch language for Afrikaans. Die Burger changed its name from De Burger which is Dutch. Thus it becomes clear that the Afrikaans press was out to create a language, a people, culture.

Die Vaderland is well known for its editor A M van Schoor who was out to tell the Afrikaner that he had to fight for his language against the English. This editor supported separate development for the fact that he preferred Verwoerd to Vorster, claiming the latter was not knowledgeable enough.

Die Transvaler, published by the Voortrekkerpers had Dr H Verwoerd as its first editor. Again Die Transvaler was born out of the need for a "mouthpiece of the nation", now in the Transvaal.

What was peculiar about the Afrikaans editors was that they were allowed to attend pre-parliamentery meetings. .This actually allowed them to decide in advance what could be published.

One of the influential editors was Piet Cillie of Die Burger. Cillie was known for his strictness in running the newspaper. He wanted to give approval to any story that could be a front lead. At pre-parliamentary meetings, also, it was checked if whatever motion was passed was favoured by him. His paper became a training centre for other Afrikaans journalists. He also controlled Die Volksblad and Die Oosterlig. He decided what was to be published in those papers also.

The buying of shares in the Afrikaans press was closely checked. The nature of the buyer, his political affiliations were checked. The transfer of shares had to be given the approval of the directors.

The main aim of the Afrikaans press was to create unity among the members of the Volk and eventually the National Party supporters.

Question 6. (a)

The Afrikaans-language press in South Africa refers mainly to those newspapers
owned by the two great Afrikaans newspaper companies Nationale Pers (NPB) and
Suid-Afrikaanse Pers (1936) - or simply Perskor -. The newspapers owned by
these companies include Die Oggendblad, Hoof.stad, Die Oosterlig, some English-
language press and newspapers aimed for the African readers. For the purpose
of this essay on the Afrikaans press will look at major Afrikaans-language
newspapers like Die Burger, Die Vaderland and Die Transvaler.

Die Burger - then known as De Burger - was established in 1915 when the Nasionale
Pers Beperk (NPB) was established. However, its establishment can be traced
back to 1876 when Di Patriot, an Afrikaans-Dutch newspaper was established by
"The Society of True Afrikaners". This group recognised the importance of
newspapers and language for group survival and nation-building. Thus Di Patriot
was established specifically for that purpose. Die Burger was also established
for that purpose. This point will become clear in the next paragraph.

The establishment of Die Burger coincided with the establishment of the National
Party. The National Party, from its very inception was a "vehicle" for Afrikaner
Nationalism. Die Burger was established as the propagator and organ of this
Afrikaner Nationalism. Soon after its establishment it also recognised the
importance of language for group survival. While the Dutch language reflected the
roots of the Afrikaner, the Afrikaner was in the process of developing another
language alongside Dutch. So Die Burger started by publishing in Dutch-Afrikaans.
However, in 1922 - when the paper changed its name to Die Burger - the paper
started to publish in Afrikaans only.

Nationale Pers established two newspapers when it was created. The other one
was Die Vaderland. The company established these two newspapers as organs of
the National Party in the Cape (Die Burger) and the Transvaal National Party
(Die Vaderland).

Die Vaderland was taken over by a new company formed in 1931 - Suid Afrikaanse
Pers. (The signatories of the Memorandum of Association included the then
Prime Minister, Hertzog, and some prominent Afrikaner cabinet ministers.) By
1935 the paper had already changed alliance to the United Party. However, in
1962, when the Suid-Afrikaanse Pers (1962) was formed, Die Vaderland was also
brought back to the Afrikaner-laager.

Up to this point the Afrikaners were really conscious of building themselves
and moulding themselves, their language, their culture and their outlook. The
newspapers were used to propagate ideas associated with these ideals. The
newspapers,so to say, were propagators of Afrikaner Nationalism which was
manifesting itself in many forms: language, institutions and culture.

One of the ramifications of this nationalism is the Afrikaner Broederbond. It
was formed in 1918 by some Afrikaner intellectuals, notably from Potchefstroom
University. These were concerned with the development of the Afrikaner
Nationalism in its nascent stages. It aspired to influencing every sphere of
life in South Africa. Today the Afrikaner Broderbond is recognised as a
powerful force in Afrikaner Politics. The Broederbond controls the Nationalist
Party, Afrikaans cultural organisations and so on. The Afrikaans Press is one
part of the propaganda machinery of the ideals of the Broederbond i.e. Domination,
in all spheres, of Afrikanerdom".

The Broederbonders, Dr van Heerden and Mr De Villiers, are current chairmen of
Perskor and Nationale Pers respectively.   This is one form of influencing the
direction of the newspaper.

The Broederbond circulars to members and branches state clearly that the Broederbond
must capture and influence those Afrikaners who were in the media industry. (Super
Afrikaners,Wilkins and Strydom).   An analysis of the editorship of these newspapers
reveals that only editors who are loyal to the party - that is the National Party
and presumably the Afrikaner Broederbond - are appointed to higher posts.   This
is another form of influencing the newspapers.

The newspapers are used to propagate the views of the National Party and to
justify, defend and present them favourably.   The editorials are also used for
this purpose.   The newspaper contents are also influenced by these considerations.

In this paper I have shown that the Afrikaans press from the very beginning, was
inextricably linked, and still is so, to the cause of Afrikaner Nationalism.   The
newspaper is also influenced by the National Party, the Broederbond - though
ownership and editors - (And several other factors also influence it, for instance,
its links to the big Afrikaans financial corporations like Sanlam, Federale
Volksbellegings, Dagbreek, Boereskor and others, which reflect some of the achieve-
ments of Afrikaner Nationalism.   Federale Volksbellegings has a majority of shares
in Nationale Pers Beperk while Dagbreek owns the major shares in Die Vaderland).
Taking all these factors into consideration one can see that the Afrikans press
was started to "create a language, a culture and a people and is an integrated
part of the political organ of Nationalist Afrikanerdom, the National Party".

One can thus conclude by saying that Elaine Potter's statement was true during
the time of Di Patriot and is still true even today.

Conversation 6 (BSAE-BSAE-BSAE)

0.1 T: we are talking english now C—— won't you join us hey h ((laughs))

0.2 Z: mm

0.3 K: °and °we've °got °to °answer °those °questions

0.4 T: ja let's see ((reading)) read each of the essays given to you then discuss the evaluation questions with your group ... (3 secs) write the answers in the sp- spaces below né ... er so how do you go about it start by reading the essays ... okay ... [Xhosa: i am going to read aloud so that you can hear] ((clears throat and starts reading)) the afrikaans press ...

[T reads through both essays.]

1 T: || p are we GOing to || [Xhosa exchange: T: It seems as if

you are not here; Z: I am here.]

2 T: ((reads)) does the student know ... does the student know what he or she is writing about mm lets take first the

                  ⌈ sec ==

3 Z: | == first one ==

4 K: ⌊ == first

5 T: ⌈ first one

6 Z: ⌊ second one ja

7 T: which one is the first ((looks)) that's ... also six ei
        ⌈ né   no no the first one is this one

8 K: ⌊ six ei   only one essay

9 T: no two

10 K: two

11 T: mm this one and this one

12 K: this one

13 T: mm

14 K: sorry

15 Z: but they are talking about the same thing

16 K: mm

17 T: || mm ...(4 secs) || p i say WHAT we must disCUSS

      is || p the STRUcture || p to see WHEther

```
                  ⌈    || ° the M A R K ||
  18   K:         |   mm

  19   T:     || ₒ S̲O̲ || ₚ DOES the student KNOW W̲H̲A̲T̲|| ₚ he or

              she is W̲R̲Iting about ...     || ₒ and the W̲A̲Y̲|| ₚ the

              FACTS are pres̲E̲N̲Ted né|| ... (10 secs)      can

  20   K:                                       | I would say she

              knows

  21   T:     ⌈ which one number

  22   Z:     | [Xhosa: the first one] i think the first one

  23   T:     number one

  24   Z:     [Xhosa: the first one] is supposed to know

  25   T:     the first essay

  26   K:     the second essay

  27   T:     he ... (5 secs)

  28   T:     the second essay

  29   K:     's it not to say that the first one

  30   T:     no

  31   K:     it's not the    ⌈ sec

  32   T:                     | what was the question that's let's °look

              at the question the history ... where is it er: ... er
              ((clears throat))     ⌈ what we are

  33   K:                           | oh is it

  34   T:     talking  ⌈ about

  35   K:              | o:h
```

36   T: is that they ... ((reads)) the english language paper the e-afrikaans press was started out to create a language a culture and a people and was an integrated part of the political organ of nationalist afrikanderdom the national party ... so that is the essay mm ... so what we are looking at is does this essay or the other one answer the question okay they answer the question but

37   Z: no (unintelligible) they still could have (handled) either the english language or the afrikaans language in the light of these the socio-political position of the english and afrikaans press [Xhosa: the second the essay is talking about the development of the afrikaans press the second one] ==

38 K: ⌈ == ja the second one

39 Z: ⌊ == mm

40 T: both six ei both six ei

41 Z: mm ==

42 T: == six ei it shows they both answered it so what do you want

43 Z: mm

44 K: historical developments

45 T: of the afrikaans press

46 Z: mm ... oh oh oh it's not different from the historical development of afrikaans press [Xhosa: the second one] the second one's the good one ... (2 secs)

47 T: these two

48 Z: ja she did give us some details about what happened with former editors

49 T: mm

50 Z: mm but this one [Xhosa: didn't give us she just gave us] ...

51 T: mm

52 Z: mm

53 T: so do you think six ei in the second essay né

54 Z: mm

55 T: yes ... second essay ... ((clears throat)) there's another important because we've got three sheets why can't we use these for answering questions about (the) first essay and the other one about the second essay so if we say yes to this one we say no this né ... (3 secs) this is the first person ... (3 secs) second essay

56 Z: mm i can't say [Xhosa: this one does not know
        ⌈ you see T—]

57 T: ⌊ mm

58 Z: [Xhosa: he knows] but he's not sure or he's just giving us

59 K: what is it not the ⌈ historical   development

60 Z: ⌊ ja...   ja

61 K: he's just describing the afrikaans press

62 T: so he didn't answer the answer maybe adequately

63   Z: ⌈ mm

64   K: ⌊ ja not adequately i mean according to historical development of the press

65   T: oh so didn't answer the question adequately

‖ $_p$ could you say THAT <u>ONE</u>‖ $_p$ <u>ANS</u>wered

it ‖ $_p$ <u>MAY</u>be‖ $_p$ <u>AD</u>equately ‖

66   Z: ‖ $_p$ ja ‖ $_o$ to a certain ex<u>TENT</u> ‖ ... (1 sec.)

67   T: ((reads)) ‖ $_p$ does <u>HE</u> ‖ $_p$ or SHE de<u>FINE</u> ‖

‖ $_p$ <u>RE</u>levant ‖ $_p$ <u>CON</u>cepts <u>ACC</u>urately‖

68   K: mm

69   T: ‖ $_p$ WHAT would be <u>RE</u>levant‖ $_p$ <u>CON</u>cepts ‖

‖ $_p$ afrik<u>AA</u>NS <u>LAN</u>guage né‖

afrikaans press afrikaans language press ... (3 secs) and ... (4 secs) maybe political organ né ... (10 secs) maybe afrikanerdom ((looking through papers)) ... (45 secs)

70   K: what are the concepts

71   T: mm ⌈ er

72   K: ⌊ what are the concepts

73   T: i don't know how how to answer but at least we can see here is the afrikaans language press né ... (1 sec.) so that a person who's reading co- one of the things you assume that the examiner doesn't know much doesn't know

74   Z: mm

75   T: he knows né but now we must at least def- define concepts in a certain way like maybe the second essay where they say ... here he shows what is the afrikaners press né own this is news newspapers owned by these two companies and then for the purpose of this essay on the afrikaans ((reads)) "press should look at major afrikaans language newspapers like die burger and die transvaler" and i think he give ... he or she gives
the examiner at least ⌈ some indication

76   K: mm

77   T: ⌊ as to what he or she means about

the afrikaans press so: ... so maybe if you compare it with this one ... ((reads)) "the afrikaners press unlike its english counterpart was established to promote this" er so a person who doesn't know anything about the afrikaners press won't really know what is this person talking about also- and the english counterpart there is this person also goes on to show also the newspapers owned by these companies keep order né and some english language papers

newspapers aim for the african audience but this one didn't say anything about he just ... he or she just start by getting directly into the essay

78 Z: mm ... (3 secs)

79 T: er and maybe when you say the organ of the nation and then this side you see that how does the national party works as
an organ for instance ⌈ so

80 Z: ⌊ mm maybe [Xhosa: this] she gives

details into detail showing how south af- afrikaner press was used as an organ of the nation what ever ... (2 secs)

81 T: so do you think that he or she ⌈ defined

82 Z: ⌊ er the second one did it

you know in detail here

83 T: mm

84 Z: she sort of did it accurately unlike ⌈ the

85 T: ⌊ the first one

86 Z: the first one

87 K: what's that

88 T: well Z— says the second one defined the concepts relevant concepts in detail

89 K: the second one

90 Z: ⌈ mm

91 T: ⌊ ja the second essay

92 K: so ... she prefers the first one

93 Z: no the second ⌈ one

94 T: ⌊ no the

95 K: second o:h

96 T: ⌈ not the answered the question such

97 K: ⌊ she defined such concepts accurately

98 Z: ja she did well to me

99 K: another paragraph er let's look and see i mean to build the the language ((reads)) up to this point the afrikaners were really building themselves and moulding themselves their

language their culture and their outlook

100 T: ⌊ mm

101 K: the these papers newspapers were used to propagate ideas associated with these ideals these papers ... i mean

102 T: mm

103 K: she's describing it yes

104 T: so do you think that one the answer is yes né

105 K: mm

106 T: yes mm in detail ... so that this one ... (3 secs)
⌈ didn't

107 Z: ⌊ she was fumbling h ((laughs))

108 T: ‖ ₚ HOW do you KNOW that ‖ ₚ it's SHE ‖

109 Z: i mean ... (3 secs)

110 K: h ((laughs))

111 T: h ((laughs))

112 K: the women the women used to fumble

((all laugh))

113 T: is that ⌈ what she believes

114 Z: ⌊ no it's just that in in the essay [Xhosa: her

essay and even the scheme she wrote] shows that he she or he wasn't sure of what was potting or he was that not ... (1 sec.) didn't really know it he didn't really know the depths of the whole thing ⌈ see

115 T: mm

116 K: ⌊ mm

117 Z: ‖ ₚ i THAT'S WHY‖ ₚ i SAY ‖ ₚ SHE was

FUMbling ‖ₚ and that ge- ESsay ‖ ₚ THIS is ‖

‖ ₚ SORT of an ‖ ₚ EMpty ESsay ‖

118 T: you mean the first one

119 Z: ja ... (1 sec) any way in terms of i must withdraw my statement

120 T: h ((laughs))

121 K: h ((laughs))

122 K: ⌈ okay

123 T: ⌊ so how do you know how do you know that that one was a he

124 Z: h ((laughs)) okay those were shes ((laughs))

125 T: oh both of them

126 Z: mm ((laughs))

127 T: ((reading)) does he or she explain processes or developments adequately

128 Z: [Xhosa: this one ⌈ is telling us accurately]

129 K: ⌊ second one

130 T: the second ⌈ one

131 K: ⌊ yes yes

132 T: and the first one you say no

133 K: in fact i don't know what in the second one

134 T: ‖ r he: ‖

135 K: i mean ... developments adequately ja in the second one

136 T: ‖ p the second ONE ... (3 secs) ‖ o SO ‖

‖ p SEcond QUEstion ‖ ((reading)) are the main points

of this essay clear to the reader if they are clear to you list
them

137 Z: national organ organ of the nation language

138 Z: afrikaner language press ⌈ means

139 T: ⌊ which okay let's start by this

are the main points of this essay clear to the reader

140 Z: ja second essay ⌈ second essay

141 T: ⌊ which ⹀

142 Z: ⹀ is just that

143 T: second essay

144 Z: ja

145 T: hé

146 Z: ⎡ mm

      K: ⎣ h ((coughs))

147 Z: i mean he defi- she defined the i mean organ she sort of gave a definition of afrikaans press afrikaans language press

148 T: mm

149 Z: telling us that it's not owned this press what constituted this afrikaans language press then after that [Xhosa: she then goes] she then goes into detail by telling us how was the afrikaans language press u- used as an organ of the nation

150 T: ja and then can we leave those things then those ═

151 K: ═ what were they

152 T: points né in the second essay ...(1 sec) so we identified the afrikaans press

153 K: ‖ ₀ the AfrikAANS PRE:SS ‖

154 T: first paragraph ... (4 secs) m- m- there

          ⎡ (unintelligible)

155 Z: ⎣ the first paragraph is the definition of the

          ⎡ afrikaans press

156 T: ⎣ oh it's the definition of it ... this is the definition of the afrikaans press né

157 Z: mm ... (3 secs)

158 T: ((writing)) and now the second one

159 Z: e- then they ... (3 secs) what's this she then goes into details by telling us how the this is being used as the organ of the nation

160 T: mm so the link ...

[Interrupted for class discussion]

APPENDIX IV

QUESTIONNAIRE AND INTERVIEW SAMPLES

PARTICIPANT QUESTIONNAIRES.

Aims and objectives.

Aims: To gain participants' views of what their intentions were in the conversation in which they were involved, how they felt during the conversation (for example, whether the communicative process was relaxed/difficult), and whether they were happy with the outcome. (The questions are mainly open-ended so as to minimise bias in the information obtained.)

Objectives: To ascertain:

1.   whether the participants had an aim for the outcome of the conversation, and if so, what it was;

2.   the perceptions of participants regarding what the conversation was actually about (macrotheme);

3.   their perceptions of the intentions of the other participants at selected points (illocutionary force);

4.   their reactions to what the other participants said at selected points (perlocutionary force);

5.   whether participants understood the propositional meaning and intentions of one another's utterances;

6.   their perceptions of TRP's, and the meaning of overlap and pauses;

7.   their perceptions of the development of theme, and sequential relevance;

8.   their reasons for their answers in 1-7 (their perception of the propositional flow, and their understanding of contextualisation cues).

Sample Questionnaire - participant A in interview 5.

(1)   What were you hoping to get out of this discussion?

(2)   What do you think this extract of the conversation was about?

(3)   T.2.   What was Kh saying here?

(4)   T.4.   What was Kh trying to say here?

        i. That he had nothing to say for the two questions, and so wrote Prof's section within 20 minutes
        ii. That he ran out of time and so wrote Prof's section within 20 minutes
        iii. Anything else?

(5)   T.5-6.
        a. Was T.5 a question, a statement or something else?
        b. What did Kh mean in T.6?

(6)   T. 8-9.
        a. Why did you wait before you said turn 9?
        b. Why did you say it?

(7)   T.15-16.
        a. Was T15 a question, a statement, or something else?
        b. What were you trying to do in T.16?

(8)   T.19
        a. Why did you say this?
        b. What were you leading up to?
        c. How did you feel towards Kh here?

(9)   T.28. How do you think Kh felt about being referred to ASP?

(10)   T.29-30.
        a. Was T.29 a question, a statement or something else?
        b. Why did you say this?

(11)   T.33. What does your 'well' mean here?

(12)   T.47-49.
        a. What were you trying to do in T.47?
        b. Why do you think Kh said this in T.48?
        c. How did you feel at T.49?

(13)   T.77. What did you mean here?

(14)   T. 80. Was this a question, a statement or something else?

(15)   T.91-94.
        a. Was T.91 a question, a statement or something else?
        b. Was T. 92 a question, a statement or something else?
        c. Why did Kh say this in T.93?

(16)   T.100-105.
        a. How did you feel during this interchange?
        b. Why did you say this in T.102?   How does it fit in?
        c. What was Kh saying in T.103?

(17)   T.132.
        a. What was Kh trying to do here?
        b. How did you feel about it?

(18)   T.136-154.
        a. How did you feel during this part of the conversation?
        b. What was Kh trying to say in T.136, 140, & 144?
        c. Why did you say this in T.147?
        d. How did you feel in T.148-9?

(19)   T.155-160.
        a. Did you want to read Kh's essay?
        b. Did you think Kh wanted you to read it?

(20)   a. What was the outcome of this conversation, as you saw it?
        b. All in all, were you satisfied with this outcome?   (Had you achieved what you had hoped for?)

<u>Sample Questionnaire - participant Kh in interview 5.</u>

Please answer the questions that follow as honestly as possible. (You needn't be polite!) Your honesty is vital for the validity of this research.

Thank you.

(1)   What were you hoping to get out of this discussion?

(2)   What do you think this extract of the discussion was about?

(3)   T.2. What were you saying here?

(Follow-up interview question:
         Was the exam difficult for you?)

(4)   T.4. What were you trying to say here?
         i. That you had nothing to say for the two questions, and so wrote the Prof's section within 20 minutes
         ii. That you ran out of time and so wrote Prof's section within 20 minutes
         iii. Anything else?

(5)   T.2-3.
         a. There is a pause here. Were you expecting A to say something?
         b. What were you going to say just after the pause?
         c. How did you feel about A coming in here?

(6)   T.5-6.
         a. Was T.5 a question, a statement or something else?
         b. Why did you say T.6?

(7)   T.9.
         a. Why do think A said this?
         b. How did you feel about it?

(8)   T.19.
         a. Why do you think A said this?
         b. What do you think she was leading up to?

(9)   T28. How did you feel about Prof. referring you to ASP?

(10)   T.29-30.
         a. What was A doing in T.29 ?
            i. Asking a question because she'd misheard?
            ii. Making a statement?
            iii. Asking you for a reason?
            iv. Anything else?

         b. What were you doing in T.29? Do you think it was required?

(Follow-up interview question:
         Did you think A was asking you for a reason, or did you just want to give it anyway?)

(11)   T.47-49
         a. What was A trying to do in T.47?
         b. Why did you respond like this?
         c. Why did A say this in T.49?

(12)   T.77. What did A mean here?

(13)   T.80. Was this a question, a statement or something else?

(14)   T.91-94.
a. Were you asking A a question in T.91, telling her what you thought, or something else?
b. Was A answering your question, asking you another question, or something else?

(15)   T.100-105
a. How did you feel during this interchange?
b. Why do you think A said this in T.102? What caused her to say it?
c. Why did you say this in T.103?

(Follow-up interview question:
a. Were you starting a new topic or still talking about what you had been talking about?
b. Why do you think A responded as she did in T.102?
c. So it was a something rather than a general thing?)

(16)   T131-132. What did you mean in T.32? Why did you say it?

(17)   T.136-154.
a. How did you feel during this interchange?
b. What were you trying to say at T.140?
c. What were you trying to say at T144?
d. What did you mean in T.148? What do you think A thought you meant?

(18)   T.155-160.
a. Did you want A to read your essay?
b. Did you think she wanted you to read it?

(Follow-up interview question:
a. But had you originally wanted A to?
b. How did you feel: angry with A, disappointed, frustrated, anything else?)

(19)   a. What was the outcome of the conversation, as you saw it?
b. All in all, were you satisfied with the outcome? (Had you achieved what you had hoped for?)

[NOTE: The questionnaire samples were chosen from interview 5 because Kh 's responses were the fullest and most coherent. His written expression suffers from fewer problems than that of the other subjects.]

SAMPLE LETTER TO PARTICIPANTS

Dear

You have already been verbally invited to participate in a study of language learning. The purpose of this study is to learn more about the importance of stress and intonation in conversations, and the implications of this for the learning and teaching of English as a second language in South Africa.

You have been selected as a possible participant in this study because you have normal hearing and your first language is an African language.

I already have a recording of you in conversation, for which you gave me verbal permission at the time. Before I use the data you have provided, I would like your assurance in writing that I may analyse that conversation for the purposes of my research. If you agree, you will also be asked to come in just for one session, lasting about one hour. You will then be asked to listen to extracts from the recordings and answer some very basic questions on each extract. Your performance will in no way reflect your intellectual abilities or personality.

The results of my research will be used as part of the requirements for a Master of Arts Degree, and might also be published. I shall endeavour to retain your anonymity, if you wish.

Your decision whether or not to allow me to use our conversation as data will not prejudice your future relations with me or the Academic Support Programme as a whole.

It is hoped that this research may eventually contribute to the upgrading of oral English education in South Africa, and hence your contribution would be invaluable.

Thank you very much for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely

Daniela Gennrich-de Lisle
Junior Lecturer, ASP
MA student in Dept. of Linguistics and English Language.

———*——*——*———

Please circle that which <u>DOES</u> apply below:

1. I give / do not give my permission for the recording of my voice in conversation to be analysed for this research.

2. I am willing / not willing to answer questions on extracts from the recording.

3. I wish / do not wish my name to be changed in any published reports.

I UNDERSTAND THAT I CAN REFUSE PERMISSION, WITHOUT PREJUDICE.

Signed:_____

Date: _____

(If you have any queries, please contact me (tel. 3823).)

INTERVIEWS WITH OUTSIDE INFORMANTS.

Aims and objectives.

Aims: These interviews are to provide a check on the viewpoints of the analyst on the one hand, and the viewpoints of the participants on the other. Interviewees will be asked to listen to extracts from the conversations in the data, after having been given an adequate summary of the background. They will then be asked to answer questions which aim to elicit their perceptions of: the degree of stressfulness of an extract; the origins of the stressfulness (in terms of the respondents' socio-cultural assumptions, and from the contextualisation cues provided in the utterances); and speaker meaning and intentions. (Questions will be either closed or open-ended.)

Objectives: To gain outsiders' perceptions of

1. speaker meaning (in terms of the development of propositional meaning and context up to that point);

2. speaker intention (illocutionary and perlocutionary);

3. participants' attitudes towards each other;

4. the overall 'atmosphere' of a specific extract (i.e., degree of stressfulness);

5. the interrelationship between the various socio-pragmatic principles and their maxims, according to their socio-cultural perceptions (either by general questions or with reference to a specific extract);

6. whether a speaker was successful in communicating his/her intent; and if not

7. what that speaker did wrong.

8. More specific questions aim to elicit from interviewees how they actually made their judgement, relating to what they actually heard - cues on the level of: lexical semantics, syntax, phonology and logical connectors (especially metacommunicative function markers, deixis, demonstrative reference, pronominalisation etc.).

Interviewer Schedule.

Background to the first five conversations:

All the interviews are taking place after the June vacation in 1984. The students concerned had previously brought their June exam scripts to A for her to criticise and diagnose problems (usually because they are not entirely satisfied with their results). During this meeting, it is expected that A will give each student criticisms of the way they have written their exam essay questions, and then A and the students will decide together how to start working on particular study problems which emerge from their discussion. (Only in the interview with T has the student passed the exam in question. The others have all failed their exams.)

A: Interview 1

Background: This is the first meeting between A and D, after the initial encounter in which the appointment was made.

PLAY T.1–100 (with transcript).
(This extract takes place right at the beginning of the interview.)

Qu.(1):   a. How do you think A felt during this extract?
        (i) relaxed;
        (ii) tense;
        (iii) confident;
        (iv) awkward.

       b. Do you find clues to this in what they say?

       c. Any other reasons?

Qu.(2):   a. How do you think D felt during this interview?
        (i) relaxed;
        (ii) tense;
        (iii) confident;
        (iv) awkward.

       b. Do you find clues to this in what they say?

       c. Any other reasons?

(3) PLAY T. 35–37 (with transcript).

       a. How do you think A understood D?

       b. Do you think D's response was appropriate?

(4) PLAY T.69 (with transcript).
       What was this?
        (i) a question;
        (ii) a statement;
        (iii) a suggestion;
        (iv) anything else.

(5) PLAY T.100–139 (with transcript).

       What is A suggesting?

(6) PLAY T.135–131 (with transcript).

       a. Do you think A wants to work on D's literature essay?

       b. Do you think D wants her to?

       c. What is it about the way A speaks that makes you answer as you do in (a)?

       d. What is it about the way D speaks that makes you answer as you do in (b)?

B: Interview 2

Background: This is the first section of the interview. T has done very well in his exams. He is merely coming to receive a criticism of his essays from A so that he can do even better in the end of the year exams. He has also handed A a class essay to assess, for which he obtained 78%.

(1)PLAY T.1-6 (with transcript).

    a. What do you think A is trying to say here?

    b. How would you have reacted to what A said in T.3 and 5?

    c. How would you have told T this same thing?
(Elicit whether it is possible to do this in an African language – give someone a compliment by insulting him/her.)

(2) PLAY T.11-13 (with transcript).

    a. How do you think T feels at T.12?

    b. Have you ever thought of criticising an exam paper?

    c. Would it make a difference if you knew other students had complained?

(3) ASK:

    A is a lecturer in ASP. She is 24 years old, a woman, and a Master's student. Would you relate to her any differently to how you would relate to a fellow student? Explain in which way, and why.

(4) PLAY T. 31-38 (without transcript), then RE-PLAY T.35.

    a. Try to sum up what T is saying in T.35

GIVE the TRANSCRIPT, then RE-PLAY T.35-38.

    b. T.36: was this the right place for A to say something?

    c. Why do you think she said it at this point?

C: Interview 5

(1) PLAY T.1-2 (without transcript).

Background: This is the beginning of the conversation. Kh has failed this exam.

    a. What is Kh trying to say in T.2?
        (i) that he found the exam unfair because he had prepared for it;
        (ii) that he found the exam fair, but he had not prepared for

it, so it was not fair for him;
(iii) that he did not think the exam was fair;
(iv) any other thing.

(2) PLAY T.3-4 (without transcript).

    a. What was Kh's main argument in T.4
    (i) that he had nothing to say for the two questions, and so wrote the Prof's section within twenty minutes;
    (ii) that he ran out of time and so wrote the prof's section within twenty minutes;
    (iii) anything else.

    b. What about Kh's turn makes you think that?

(3) PLAY T.12-15 (Not in schedule, but asked).

    What was A doing in T.15?
    (i) making a suggestion;
    (ii) telling Kh what she thought;
    (iii) asking him a question;
    (iv) anything else.

(4) PLAY T.47 (with transcript).

    a. What is A doing in T.47?
    (i) telling Kh how she thinks they should start working on Kh's study problems;
    (ii) asking Kh where he thinks they should start working on Kh's study problems;
    (iii) asking Kh's opinion on her suggestion about how they should start working on Kh's study problems;
    (v) anything else.

    b. What is it about the words she uses that makes you think that A is doing this in T.47 (c.f. question a.)?

(5) PLAY T.48-50 (with transcript).

    a. How would you have said this (in turn 47) in order to achieve the same intention as you think A had in mind (c.f. question a.)?

    b. How do you think Kh interpreted what A was doing in T.47? A was:
    (i) telling Kh how she thinks they should start working on Kh's study problems;
    (ii) asking Kh where he thinks they should start working on Kh's study problems;
    (iii) asking Kh's opinion on her suggestion about how they should start working on Kh's study problems;
    (v) anything else.

(6) PLAY T. 51-63 (with transcript).
Background: this leads on from the previous extracts (with a few minor turns in between)

    a. What is A asking in T. 63? Did Kh have a specific book in mind in T.60?

    b. Is A's question in T.63 appropriate? (Does it make sense?)

    c. Give reasons.

    d. How do you think Kh will respond

(7) PLAY T. 99-101 (with transcript).

    a. What is Kh talking about in T.101? (Try this as an open question first, only then give the alternatives):
        (i) that he might give a bad impression again;
        (ii) that he must not get the impression that he will be alright in the November exam.;
        (iii) that something specific made him fail now, and it may make him fail again;
        (iv) that the same sorts of things which made him fail now might make him fail again.

    b. Is he starting a new topic, or continuing on the same topic as before?

(8) PLAY T.136-154 (with transcript).

Background: This is right near the end, after Kh and A had decided on a time for their next meeting.

    a. Try to sum up what this is all about.

    b. Is Kh behaving appropriately in T.144?

    c. How would you make this point?

    d. T.148: is Kh behaving appropriately here? Why?/Why not?

(10) PLAY T. 155-159 (with transcript).

    a. Do you think A is keen to still look at Kh's essay?

    b. What is it about the way A speaks in T. 155 and 157 that makes you answer as you did in (a)?

D: Interview 4

Background: A had asked C and K why both of them had answered only three questions (instead of four). C had mentioned that he ran out of time during the exam. The first four quesions relate to turns 18-43, and the extracts lead on from each other.

(1) PLAY T.18-28 (with transcript).

> T.28: is K adding a new point here, or is he continuing what he was talking about before?
> Give reasons. (What was C talking about? What is K talking about?

(2) PLAY T.28-38 (with transcript).

> a. T.34: is this a question, a statement, or something else?
>
> b. T.34: what is A saying here?
>
> c. T.34: why is A saying this do you think?
> (look back at what happened between T.18-33)
>
> d. T.35: how do you think C understands A in T. 34?
>
> e. T.35: do you think he is right?

(3) PLAY T. 38-41 (with transcript).

> What is C saying in T.39?
> (i) that he in particular (as opposed to K) did not plan
> (ii) that he did not plan (not in contrast to K)
> (iii) that he did not prepare adequately
> (iv) anything else

(4) PLAY T.40-42 (with transcript).

> a. T.42: do you think C thought there was a need for planning?
> He thought: (i) very definitely yes;
> (ii) yes;
> (iii) maybe;
> (iv) no;
> (v) definitely not.

> PLAY T.43 (with transcript).

> b. T.43: is this a question, statement or something else?
>
> c. T.43: what do you think A's response is to what C has just said in T.42?
> (i) she agrees;
> (ii) she disagrees mildly;
> (iii) she disagrees strongly.

(5) PLAY T. 70-73 (with transcript).

Background: A,C and K are still discussing planning of exam essays.

> a. From the way C says it, do you think C is saying what he really thinks in T.73?
>
> b. Is this an appropriate way to answer A's question in T.70?
>
> c. How would you have answered it?

(6) PLAY T.132-144 (with transcript).

Background: This is near the end of the interview, after A,C and K have decided on their work for the following four weeks.

> a. Do you think A wants to look at the other essays of C and K?
>
> b. Do you think C and K want A to look at their essays?
>
> c. Look at T.135, 139, 143: Do you think C is behaving appropriately in this situation?
>
> d. How would you have reacted in this situation?

E: Conversation 6

Background: T, Z and K are in a Journalism I lecture. The class has been divided into groups in order to discuss a worksheet, as part of an exam skills workshop. They have been asked to evaluate two June exam essays, using specific questions set on a separate sheet [hand informants the relevant sheets]. T has just finished reading the essays aloud.

(1) PLAY T.1-20 (with transcript).

> a. What are T,Z and K talking about in this extract?
>
> b. How do you know what they are talking about?
>
> c. Does T know what they are talking about? Does K? Does Z?
>
> d. Do you find it easy to follow? Why/why not?
>
> e. T.19: is T introducing a new topic here, or continuing with the same topic, or what is he doing?
>
> f. What clues can you find in the way he says T.19 which helped you decide on your answer in (e).

(2) PLAY T.64-66 (with transcript).

Background: T,Z and K are now trying to answer the question "Did s/he answer the question adequately?".

> a. What do you think T or K's response will be to Z at this point?

(3) PLAY T.66-69 (with transcript).

> a. What is T. doing in T. 67?
>> (i) correcting Z;
>> (ii) adding to what Z said in T.66;

(iii) going on to a new topic;
(iv) anything else.

    b. What is it about the tone of voice which T uses in T.67, or the words he uses, that makes you think that (c.f. your answer to [a]).

(4) PLAY T.107-121 (with transcript).

Background: T,Z and K are discussing the question "does s/he define the relevant concepts accurately?"

    a. T.108: what is T asking in T.108?

    b. T.114-117: Does Z answer his question adequately in T.114-117? Explain.

(5) PLAY T.121-136 (with transcript).

    a.What is T doing in T.136?
        (i) carrying on along the same topic line;
        (ii) introducing a new topic;
        (iii) going off on a tangent that is irrelevant?

    b. What is it about the way he speaks, and about his tone of voice in T.136 that makes you answer as you did in (a) above?

(6) PLAY T.136-140(with transcript).

    a. What is Z doing in T. 137?

    b. Is this appropriate?

    c. What is T doing in T.139? Is it sufficient?

(7) Background: T,Z and K are still on the same topic as in question (5).

PLAY T.150-153 (with transcript).

    a. What is K doing in T.151?

    b. How do you think he is feeling?

    c. Is T's response in T.152 adequate? Why/why not?

    d. Do you think K is satisfied with T's response?

    e. How can you tell this from what he says in T.153, and how he says it?

(8) PLAY T.153-157 (with transcript).

    a. What is Z doing in T.155?
        (i) adding to what T is saying in T.154;
        (ii) contradicting what T is saying in T.154;
        (iii) correcting what T is saying in T.154.

    b. How can you tell this from the way in which she speaks in T.155?

(9)   How do think T feels during this whole discussion (i.e.
T.1–157)?   (i) elated;
                (ii) satisfied;
                (iii) quite happy;
                (iv) a bit uneasy;
                (v) irritable;
                (vi) frustrated.

(10)   How do think Z feels during this whole discussion (i.e.
T.1–157)?   (i) elated;
                (ii) satisfied;
                (iii) quite happy;
                (iv) a bit uneasy;
                (v) irritable;
                (vi) frustrated.

(11)   How do think K feels during this whole discussion (i.e.
T.1–157)?   (i) elated;
                (ii) satisfied;
                (iii) quite happy;
                (iv) a bit uneasy;
                (v) irritable;
                (vi) frustrated.

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