1. DISCOURSE AND TEXT

1. Language as **communicative purpose**.
2. What a term **denotes** and what it **refers to**.
3. **Text**
4. **Context**
5. **Discourse**

1. Language as **communicative purpose** /ˈpɹːpəs/

What is the Italian translation of *purpose*? Note that *communicative* is spelt with double m.

In most cases when we speak or write we have a purpose or an intention. We want to do something by using words. Example: Anna is trying to study but her little brother won’t leave her in peace. There are various things she could say to him, but in each case her communicative purpose is the same, i.e. she wants him to go away.

*It’s a lovely day for playing outside.*
*Why don’t you play a video game?*
*Haven’t you got some homework to do?*
*I have an important exam tomorrow.*
*There might be something good on television.*
*Can’t you see I’m busy?*
*Just piss off and leave me alone!*
2. What a term **denotes** and what it **refers to**

Where would you find this notice?

**Please do not feed the animals**

How do you translate *notice* into Italian?
How do you translate *notizia* into English?

We all know the denotation of animals, but the notice does not refer to all animals; it **refers to** certain specific animals. How do we know this?

3. **Text**

To a linguist a text is **an actual use of language**, whether written or spoken.

Language point: what are the Italian translations of *actual* and *actually*?

A text does not have to be grammatically complete or correct. It doesn’t always mean anything. Examples:

*You ready now?*  *I ain’t done it yet.*
*This is absolutely grendibillowful.*
4. Context

Here is another notice:

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SLOW
CHILDREN CROSSING
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The word *slow* is often used as an adjective meaning the opposite of *fast*. Is that the meaning here? Does the text translate as *bambini lenti attraversando*?

How do we interpret the meaning of this text? Where would we see this notice? What does the notice tell us about our society and our values?

“[… ] we relate the text not only to the actual situational context in which we find it, but to the abstract cultural context of what we know to be conventional.” (Widdowson 2007: 5)

“When we come across notices and labels […] we make sense of them by relating the language to the immediate perceptual context where they are located, and to the conceptual context of our knowledge of how such texts are designed to function.” (*Ibid.*)

The notice is located in the street near a school. We know that such signs are designed to influence how people drive.
5. Discourse

If text is the language actually used, we can think of it as a PRODUCT. Discourse, in contrast, is a PROCESS. Or rather, it is a double process. The following figure is a distillation of Widdowson’s explanation of the relationship between discourse and text. P1 = first participant, P2 = second participant in a communicative exchange.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>P1’s intention mediated through DISCOURSE</th>
<th>P2’s interpretation mediated through DISCOURSE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P1-----------------------------------------</td>
<td>TEXT ------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>speaker encoding decoding listener</td>
<td>writer</td>
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</table>

P1’s communicative purpose is to convey the message in her head to P2. The first stage of the process of discourse is when P1 encodes the mental message into language and produces a text. The second stage of the process is when P2 decodes the text from language to thought to interpret P1’s intended message. “[…] the term discourse is taken […] to refer both to what a text producer meant by a text and what a text means to the receiver.” (Widdowson 2007: 7)
Successful communication is achieved when there is **convergence** of P1’s discourse and P2’s discourse.

The text is not the message but the “perceptible trace” of P1’s intended message. If communication is not successful, there are two possible explanations:
(i) P1 has encoded the intended message badly, i.e. has not used the most appropriate words and has therefore produced a text that is not an accurate representation of the communicative purpose;
(ii) P1’s text is a good representation of the intended message but P2 has interpreted it badly.

Many communicative exchanges are straightforward; there are no encoding difficulties for P1 and no interpretation difficulties for P2, so there is total convergence of P1’s discourse and P2’s. Sometimes, however, things are more ambiguous:
P2: Do you think I should leave my job and start my own business?
P1: Well, that would be quite a challenge.
n.b. How do we translate *challenge* into Italian?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is P1’s communicative purpose?</th>
<th>How could P2 interpret P1’s text?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P1---------------------------------</td>
<td>TEXT-----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Well, that would be quite a challenge.”</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The ambiguity in this example could be culturally determined. Why?

P1: You are the most obtuse man I have ever met.
P2: Oh, er… well, er… thank you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>P1 has encoded his intended message clearly.</th>
<th>But is it clear to P2?</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P1---------------------------------</td>
<td>TEXT-----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“You are the most obtuse man I have ever met.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Spoken text: online regulation of P1’s and P2’s discourses.

Written text: not a collaborative process – P1’s intention and P2’s interpretation are separated in space and often in time. The writer may try to anticipate the readers’ difficulties, e.g. footnotes in an academic text.

Paralanguage features in spoken texts.

Formats/Multimodal elements in written texts.

There is a genre of text that is a kind of mixture of spoken and written communication. What is it?

Semantic meaning serves a pragmatic purpose. [n.b. the discipline of pragmatics]
Two translations of the verb mean: the first is concerned with semantics (significare: what words mean); the second is concerned with pragmatics (voler dire: what people mean). Utterance (enunciato).

The importance of context and shared knowledge.
Overheard in a lift: We’ll have to take it out of the freezer and hide it in a place where they’ll never think of looking for it.

What is “it”? Do you have things in your freezer you need to hide, preferably in a place where no one would think of looking?
PRACTICE FOR THE WRITTEN EXAM

Jack _____ (VISIT) America five times. The last time he _____ (GO) there was in 2011.

“How long _____ (YOU HAVE) your old Fiat 500?” “Thirty-two years. I _____ (BUY) it when I started my first job.”

She is on maternity leave at the moment. When her child _____ (START) nursery school, she _____ (RETURN) to work part-time.

I _____ (NOT HELP) you if you _____ (NOT APOLOGIZE) for your bad behaviour yesterday.

Her English isn’t very good. If she _____ (SPEAK) better English, she _____ (LOOK FOR) a job in London.

I _____ (NOT GO) to the cinema to see La Grande Bellezza this evening because I _____ (ALREADY SEE) it.

Before he _____ (COME) to Sardinia, he _____ (NEVER EAT) casu marzu.

I’m hot and tired because I _____ (WORK) in the garden all day. I _____ (PLANT) three small trees.
2. SPEECH ACT THEORY + COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

knowing a language v. knowing **about** a language

intuitive explicit knowledge of encoding conventions

**Linguistic competence**  n.b. *competence* is uncountable

But our interpretation of a discourse involves more than our linguistic competence. Can you understand the following utterances?

He done somefing really evil and now I’m gonna kill ’im.

Her as was has gone from we. Us as is will go to she.

Proposition and reference  (See the *Glossary*, pp 127-133)

I am at home. I point to a bottle of wine on the table and say, “They are on special offer in the supermarket.”

“People refer by means of words, but the words themselves do not refer.” (Widdowson 2007: 132)
Speech Act Theory (John Austin 1962, John Searle 1969) (See Widdowson 2007: 13 and 90, 91)

Locutionary Act
Illocutionary Force
Perlocutionary Effect

Boy: I think I’ll have another beer.
Girl: You’re going to drive me home later.

Boy: I think I’ll have another beer.
Girl: Don’t drink any more.
Woman: This suitcase is really heavy for me to carry.

Man: Oh, let me carry that for you.

Man: I have a bad back.

“Signora Bindi, lei è più bella che intelligente.”
Silvio Berlusconi

“Il Presidente del Consiglio è più alto che educato.”
Giovanna Melandri

Man: You look exactly like my third wife?
Woman: How many times have you been married?
Man: Twice.

Student A: Excuse me. Do you know where Prof. Greene’s office is?
Student B: Yes, I do.
Four kinds of judgement:
1. Whether (and to what degree) something is formally possible
2. Whether (and to what degree) something is feasible
3. Whether (and to what degree) something is appropriate in relation to the context in which it is used
4. Whether (and to what degree) something is actually performed

1. Me want go home.

2. University students are revolting.
   I met a man with a glass eye called Eric.
   When you are really hungry you do terrible things.
   Once I saw two children eating apples. Without a moment’s hesitation, I took them and ate them.

3. Buckingham Palace official: Mr President, I present you Her Royal Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.
   President: Bloody hell, Liz! You’re a lot older than you look on the postage stamps.

4. She’s been being difficult.
   Too many cooks spoil the soup.
   A woman without a man is like a fish without…
VOCABULARY THEMES

1. Law and Order

If someone ____ the law, the police will arrest him.

He then goes to court and there is a _____ to discover whether he is innocent or ____.

A _____ of 12 citizens listen to all the _____ before making their decision.

People who commit minor crimes often only pay a _____ . If they commit serious crimes they go to _____.

2. Learning

If you successfully complete a university course you get a qualification called a _____ . Good students _____ in three years but some people need longer. Most university teachers are not called professors but _____.

If you memorise something, you learn it _____ _____.

If you have to learn a lot of things in a short time, we say you are on a steep learning _____.
3. CONTEXT

/
Context
\ shared knowledge

I like that. It makes you look slimmer.

Footballer John Terry's dad head-butted man outside pub and called him a "f****** Paki" jury is told

Former England captain John Terry's father drunkenly head-butted a man outside a pub and called him a "f****** Paki" in a dispute over a cigarette, a jury has heard. Ted Terry, 59, allegedly attacked railway worker Amarjit Talafair on March 22 last year after several hours drinking in the City of London. The Old Bailey heard that Terry was with co-defendants Stephen Niland, 36, and Tudor Musteata, 47, when someone asked Mr Talafair and his friend Scott Faal for a cigarette outside The Windsor pub. When the complainant and his friend said they did not have cigarettes, they were followed and Terry allegedly shouted "F****** Paki, come here" before head-butting him beneath the nose. Terry, who was wearing a West Ham top at the time, then went on to Fenchurch Street station and allegedly threatened a cleaner called Bakeba Mansuila with a bottle, saying: "I'll smash it over your head, you black c***." (Daily Mirror, 17.03.14)
[...] text does not in itself establish context but serves to activate it in the reader’s mind. (*Widdowson, 2007: 22*).

P1–Discourse–TEXT–activates P2’s–Discourse–P2

encoding conception of decoding context

[...] all texts are recipient-designed in one way or another [...] (*Widdowson, 2007: 24*)

Context and shared values.


TEXT 1 (situation)

*Wife:* Who was that?

*Husband:* Mother. She’s at the station.

*Wife:* Damn! I haven’t put the potatoes in yet.
Thousands sign petition to lower age on cervical screening after tragic death of teen Sophie Jones

More than 46,000 supporters have signed the Sophie's Choice petition calling for the age of smear tests to be lowered to 16-years-old. The call comes after aspiring model Sophie Jones died from cervical cancer after being refused a potentially life-saving smear test. Sophie, 19, from Eastham, Wirral, was initially told she had Crohn's Disease and suffered from crippling stomach pain. But bungling medics ignored Sophie's pleas for a test and said she was too young to have cervical cancer, which is extremely rare in women under 25.  (Daily Mirror, 17.03.14)

Obama’s Nobel surprise

Alfred Nobel, like Mark Twain and Earnest Hemingway, had the unusual experience of reading about his own death in the newspapers. It seems he was so depressed by the emphasis that the obituarists laid on his pioneering work on dynamite – the WMD of his day – that he resolved at once to endow an award for international peace.  (Newsweek, October 2009)
TEXT 4 (headlines incomprehensible because of lack of shared knowledge)

CARLY’S A £2M MAG WAG (*The People*, 08.02.09)

TEXT 5 (shared values)

The arrogance with which the Lisbon Treaty has been foisted on the public is quite breathtaking. In the view of Europe’s political elite, a “Yes” vote requires no confirmation, while a “No” vote simply means you have to ask the question again. Labour, for its part, has shamelessly reneged on its 2005 manifesto pledge to hold a referendum. (*The Times*, October 2009)

TEXT 6 (presumed shared values)

Why can’t we just let little girls be girly?

[…] it’s in all those offensive bits which have the temerity to suggest that girls are – or ought to be – especially interested in the following subjects: ponies, skincair, plairting their hair, skipping, flowerpressing, dollies, ballet and knitting. “But girls generally do love those things. They do! They do!” any sane, disinterested observer of the human species might well protest. (James Delingpole, *Mail Online*, 17.08.2008)
GUIDED COMPOSITION (choice of two titles, 120-160 words)

Do you think we worry too much about our physical appearance or is it a good thing if people try to look slim and attractive?

Some factors you might want to consider include working out in the gym, diets, our fast-food culture, the influence of television and other media, tattoos and piercing, whether men and women think differently about this matter, the use of make-up, botox and cosmetic surgery, and whether a good brain is more desirable than a beautiful body.

Paragraph 1

Paragraph 2

Paragraph 3

Paragraph 4
4. SCHEMATIC CONVENTIONS

1. Deixis (deictic reference)

This/That man looks worried. The children are her/there.

English and Italian have a binary here-there/this-that structure. What about Spanish? Other languages?

Old English: here-there-yonder/this-that-yon. The archaic forms yon and yonder survive in Yorkshire dialect.

2. Schema theory (plural: schemata)

“A schema is a construct of familiar knowledge”

Page 28: Bartlett: British students reading a Native American story.

Task 1: how do we imagine extra-terrestrial beings/Martians?
Task 2: if a dolphin could speak perfect English or Italian, we wouldn’t be able to understand it. Why?

“You cannot make sense of anything without bringing it into the confines of what is preconceived as familiar. Everything new has to be related to what is given.” Widdowson (2007: 28)

Thinking inside or outside the box.
3. **Frames of reference**  (frame = *cornice*)

The following text refers to dramatic events in 1989. When were you born? Perhaps you are too young to have a frame of reference to enable you to understand the text fully.

**Berlin marks 20 years since the fall of the wall**

… Crowds… shouted "Gorby! Gorby!", as they had on 9 November 1989…
Gorbachev was there today, accompanied by Lech Walesa, the former shipyard worker and leader of the Solidarity opposition movement…
(The Guardian 10.11.2009)

Most content words are polysemous. You will have interpretation difficulties if you don’t know all the meanings of a word.

The service was not satisfactory.

The service of my car was not satisfactory.

The service at St Mary’s Church was not satisfactory.
4. Schemata, frames of reference and cultural assumptions

Task 3: A man and his six-year-old daughter were hit by a car outside St Mary’s Church yesterday morning. The first person on the scene of the accident was the priest of St Mary’s, who screamed in desperation, “No! My beautiful daughter!”

Advantages and disadvantages of schemata

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Without them we would not understand texts. They provide frames of reference that facilitate comprehension.</td>
<td>They can trigger a preconceived mental model which inhibits us from discovering an alternative interpretation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Task 4: Lateral thinking exercises (thinking outside the box)

A man worked in an office on the 7th floor. Every morning he took the lift to the fifth floor, then walked up the stairs to the 7th floor.

5. Interpersonal routines

5.1 Terms of address (T/V pronouns)

Task 5: in what circumstances do you have difficulty in deciding whether to use tu or lei? Are the rules different in France, Spain, Germany? First name/surname/titles. Do lecturers use tu or lei with students? Academic context in other countries?
Task 6 (mostly for female students): Do you ever use *lei* with a man of your own age not to show respect but for a very different reason?

### 5.2 Conversational conventions

Turn-taking
No gap, no overlap rule

### 5.3 When schematic conventions are violated

MRS HIGGINS: Will it rain, do you think?
LIZA: The shallow depression to the west of these islands is likely to move slowly in an easterly direction. There are no indications of any great change in the barometrical situation. *(Pygmalion, George Bernard Shaw)*

Task 5: How should you answer if someone asks: *How are you? / Come stai?*
5.4 Adjacency pairs

Greeting-Greeting
Question-Answer (n.b. Are there taboo questions that we cannot ask?)
Ask permission-Give permission

Invitation-Acceptance

“Would you like to come to our party on Saturday?”
A possible answer: “No.”
An alternative answer: “Oh, I’d love to but unfortunately…”

Preferred (polite refusal) and dispreferred options

6. Speech Events, Genres, Discourse communities

Formal meeting
A chairperson decides who speaks and for how long. A secretary writes the minutes. Participants may have to ask their questions to the chair rather than to other participants. Formal language with some formulaic expressions.

Interactive and single-turn genres

Newspapers: sub-genres of cronaca nera, politica, sport…
n.b. with online newspapers the readers’ feedback blurs the distinction between interactive and single-turn genres.
VERB TENSES 2

“How long ________________ (YOU, KNOW) Theresa?”
“Fifteen years. I ________________ (MEET) her when we were at university.

I ________________ (CALL) you as soon as the plane __________ (LAND).

She’s tired because she ________________ (STUDY) for more than three hours. She ________________ (READ) about a hundred pages.

Shakespeare ___________ (WRITE) 37 plays.
J.K. Rowling ___________ (WRITE) nine novels.

Public transport is not very good where I live. I _____________ (HAVE) real difficulties if I _______________ (NOT HAVE) a driving licence. Consequently, I _______________ (TEND) to drive very carefully because I’m always afraid of _______________ (GET) my licence suspended.

Our bus _______________ (DELAY) in the heavy traffic. When we ___________ (GET) to Auditorium A the lesson _______________ (START, ALREADY).
5. CO-TEXTUAL RELATIONS

Co-text vs Context

Immigration officials turned away the boat transporting African migrants.

The boat transporting African migrants was turned away.

Immigration officials || turned away the boat transporting
theme rheme
African migrants.

The boat transporting African migrants || was turned
theme
away by immigration officials.
rheme

In passive sentences, we can omit the agent:

The boat transporting African migrants || was turned away.
theme rheme

What is the effect of omitting the agent?
What is the difference?

A. Taxes have been increased?
B. The government has increased taxes.

A. Many poor families have been given an extra 80 euros a month.
B. The government has given many poor families an extra 80 euros a month.
C. Matteo Renzi has given many poor families an extra 80 euros a month.

A. Sono stata bocciata.
B. Prof. XXXX mi ha bocciato.

n.b. Cleft sentences are also used to establish theme.

John and David voted in favour of the proposal but Michael voted against it.
It was Michael who voted against the proposal.

Given information v. new information. Sometimes the theme is information we already know and the rheme is new information.

The next written exam will probably be on the 22\textsuperscript{nd} of May.
But sometimes P1 thematizes something to give it prominence or extra importance. S/he establishes what the theme is, i.e. what s/he considers to be the main topic. Task: was the following paragraph written by a male or a female journalist?

A man who suffered head injuries when attacked by two men who broke into his home in Beckenham, Kent yesterday was pinned down on the bed by the intruders who took it in turns to rape his wife. (Daily Telegraph)

anaphora (anaphoric reference) and pro-forms

Mrs Greene’s son and daughter are living proof that astrology is ridiculous. Both children were born in the first week of May but they have totally different characters.

Beware of ambiguity with the use of pronouns!

Sally had the uncomfortable feeling that Alice could read her mind, although her face remained completely expressionless.

When you haven’t eaten for days, you will do terrible things. Once during that cold, hungry winter I saw two children eating loaves of black bread. Without hesitating for a moment, I grabbed them both and ate them.

cataphora (cataphoric reference)

When he saw the broken window, David was furious.
# COHESION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>cohesive device</th>
<th>examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reference</td>
<td>personal: <em>she</em>, <em>her</em> etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>demonstrative: <em>that</em>, <em>those</em> etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>comparative: <em>the other girls</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substitution and Ellipses</td>
<td>nominal: <em>not this pen; that one</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>verbal: <em>Do you smoke? Yes, I do.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conjunction</td>
<td>adversative: <em>however, but</em> etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>additive: <em>and, furthermore</em> etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>temporal: <em>first, then</em> etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>causal: <em>because, since</em> etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lexical cohesion</td>
<td>REITERATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>repetition: lorry/lorry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>synonym: lorry/truck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>superordinate: vehicle</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>general word: thing, stuff</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>COLLOCATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>semantically related items:</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td><em>pen/paper/word/text/write/composition</em></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Cohesion and the least effort principle

But note genres in which ambiguity must be avoided (legalese, language of civil aviation).

Cohesion and Coherence

Cohesion: linking together parts of text
Coherence: whether the text makes sense as discourse

Widdowson’s example on p. 50 of cohesive text that it incoherent as discourse. Also example on p. 51.
EXAM PRACTICE – VOCABULARY THEMES

THEME: SHOPS AND SHOPPING

A shop where you can buy meat is called a __________.

Before you buy an article of clothing, it is normal to go into the changing room to _____ it _____.

Another name for a pharmacy is a ______________.

A big shop like Rinascente where you can buy a great variety of things is called a _____________   ________.

A shop that sells fashionable, stylish and often expensive clothes is called a ____________.

To look round the shops without planning to buy anything is called _____________   ____________.
6. THE NEGOTIATION OF MEETING

**systemic knowledge**: how the language works as grammatical and phonological systems

**schematic knowledge**: schemata and frames of reference based on our experience of the world

During interpersonal routines both kinds of knowledge may be altered or updated in real time. P1 and P2 try to achieve a degree of correspondence between their individual systemic and schematic knowledge in order to establish **communicative convergence**

In conversations P1 and P2 can negotiate an agreed meaning on-line (if they want to). In written discourse P1 has to try to anticipate possible difficulties for P2.
The Co-operative Principle (Paul Grice, 1975)


The Quantity Maxim
Make your contribution as informative as is required
Do not make your contribution more informative than is required

Mother: “Where are you going?”
Daughter: “Out.”

P1 may unintentionally flout (violate) the Quantity Maxim, e.g. by assuming more shared knowledge than is really the case. In this case P2 can negotiate by requesting additional details. If the flouting is deliberate, and P2 knows that, it means that P1 is using the communicative tactic of a conversational implicature.

Conversational implicature (not implication)
[in italiano implicatura, non implicazione]

See Widdowson pp 58, 59

Queen Elizabeth I was a virgin and a queen. As a queen she was a great success.
The Quality Maxim
Do not say what you believe to be false
Do not say that for which you have inadequate evidence

The Quality Maxim is frequently flouted (violato) for hyperbolic, ironic or comic effect. Without the flouting of this maxim, we wouldn’t have metaphors.

Abbiamo ricevuto tonnellate di lettere.
Il mio collega è un maiale.
Sono secoli che gioco con Antonio (detto da un bambino di sei anni).

Double flouting with “literally”
I’m literally disintegrating.
Sto letteralmente morendo di fame.
The Relation Maxim
Be relevant (pertinente)

P1: Scusi. Ha qualche spicciolo…
P2: Sì. Sono le dieci e venti.

Flouting to be tactful
P1: Do you like my new boyfriend?
P2: He has nice hair.
The Maxim of Manner
Avoid obscurity of expression
Avoid ambiguity
Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity)
Be orderly

Unintentional floutings, often related to the polysemic nature of content words.

“Shell found on beach” (authentic newspaper headline)
[shell = 1. granata/bomba  2. conchiglia]

But also due to syntactic imprecision.
Rummage = frugare
Rummage sale = vendita di roba usata, spesso per beneficenza
Get rid of = liberarsi di
To be (not) worth ---ing = (non) vale la pena + infinito

“Ladies, don’t forget the rummage sale. It’s a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Bring your husbands.”
Puns (giochi di parole) depend upon the flouting of the maxim of manner. The advertising industry would be lost without it.

**co-operative imperative v. territorial imperative**

We are aware of other people’s territorial imperative/face/self-esteem. Consequently, we may flout a maxim of the co-operative principle in order not to threaten another’s face. This is the basis of politeness.

We deal with the four maxims, conversational implicature and the question of face and politeness in real time with extraordinary speed and efficiency.
How to write a B2 level composition in English

http://www.flo-joe.co.uk/fce/students/writing/makeover/archive.htm

http://www.scribd.com/doc/56245348/Writing-samples-B2-Level

REMEMBER

1. In English there is not an enormous difference between the way we speak and the way we write. Use the English you know and don’t invent “Italglese” or “Anglo-Sardo”.

2. When we evaluate compositions, we tolerate mistakes made because the student has tried to be ambitious by using advanced structures, low-frequency vocabulary or idiomatic expressions.

3. We are not tolerant of elementary mistakes, such as the omission of 3\textsuperscript{rd} persons.

Check the “avvisi” on my page on the Faculty site. There are example compositions with commentary prepared by John Di Girolamo.

If you write practice compositions I will check them during my “ricevimento”. On paper with double line spacing. I won’t look at compositions sent to me as email attachments.
7. CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS (CDA)

CDA is concerned with “the use (and abuse) of language for the exercise of socio-political power”. (Widdowson 2007: 70)

“The task that CDA sets itself is to discover traces of ideological bias (parzialità) in texts. [omissis] CDA is critical in the sense that it calls into question ideas and assumptions that have become taken for granted as self-evidently valid on the grounds that they actually preserve a status quo which in effect sustains inequality and injustice by privileging the elite and the powerful at the expense of everybody else. So CDA is committed to a cause and puts its own ideological agenda up front. Its proponents are not simply analysts but activists.” (Ibid.: 71)

“The critical scholars make their social and political position explicit; they take sides, and actively participate in order to uncover, demystify or otherwise challenge dominance with their discourse analyses.” (Van Dijk 1997, cited by Widdowson 2007: 106)

Key issues: implicature connotation metaphor
Negotiations between management and unions have failed to reach agreement in the postal workers’ dispute. Postal services have already been seriously disrupted by strike action and there is now a real danger that the strikes will continue into next week.

Negotiations between management and unions have failed to reach agreement in the postal workers’ dispute. Postal services have already been seriously disrupted by strike action and there is now a real hope that the strikes will continue into next week.

In the Emergency Room a doctor may have to take decisions that are literally a question of life or death with no time to reflect and no chance to consult colleagues. If he makes a mistake, he does so in good faith, and we should not condemn him for an error that has nothing to do with negligence or incompetence.

The generic masculine

In the area of Fallujah in Iraq a huge increase in deformities in new-born children has been caused by toxic materials left over from fighting in 2004.

In the area of Fallujah in Iraq a huge increase in deformities in new-born children has been caused by toxic materials left over from fighting by US troops in 2004.

Toxic materials left over from fighting by US troops in 2004 have caused a huge increase in deformities in new-born children in the area of Fallujah in Iraq.
Thematizing (theme and rheme)

TONY CAN’T TURN THE TIDE
A tidal wave of economic migrants is moving across Europe and is about to crash onto our shores. Why?
Countries such as France and Germany have set up water-tight laws to ensure their welfare handouts cannot be creamed off by foreign freeloaders.
[omissis]
But Tony Blair’s government has only introduced a handful of feeble, last-minute safeguards.
[omissis]
But Blair’s blundering has made soft-touch Britain the No. 1 destination for everyone who does not.
(The Sun, 03.05.2004)
Qualche volta vi pesa essere qui? C’è qualcuno che ve lo fa pesare? O qualche volta c’è qualche stronzo che dice qualche parola di troppo? Il presidente della Camera, dicono, è un’alta carica dello Stato, forse perché è alto un metro e ottantacinque, ma pensa come voi, parla come voi. Se si dice una parolaccia non succede niente, l’importante è che non si offenda nessuno. Uso questa parola perché se qualcuno dice che siete diversi la parolaccia se la merita, voi la pensate, io la dico.
(Gianfranco Fini, 21.11.09)

Fini ha perfettamente ragione a dire che è stronzo chi considera lo straniero diverso, ma è stronzo anche chi illude gli immigrati. È una stronzata illudere gli extracomunitari che il nostro è il paese di Bengodi, e che c’è lavoro per tutti visto che il lavoro manca in primo luogo ai nostri cittadini. Fare questo è pura demagogia e allora si spalancano le porte a persone destinate a finire nella rete di criminalità e sfruttamento.
(Roberto Calderoli, 21.11.09)
VERB TENSES

1. If it _________ (NOT RAIN), we _________ (PLAY) golf tomorrow morning.

2. Suzanne is 75. She says that if she _____________ (BE) thirty years younger, she ________________ (EMIGRATE) to Australia.

3. Jack didn’t study enough, so he failed the exam. If he _____________ (STUDY) more, perhaps he _________________ (PASS) it.

4. She _________________ (WORK) for this company since she left school. Two years ago she _________________ (THINK) about getting a new job but she is still here.

5. Before Roberto ______________ (COME) to Sardinia, he _________________ (NEVER EAT) malloreddus.

6. I ________________ (HAVE) a bath when the phone ______________ (RING).

7. “You are sweating. What _____________________ (YOU, DO)?”
   “I ______________ (WORK) in the garden. I _______________ (PLANTED) tomatoes, cucumbers and lettuces.

8. “Who ______________ (KISS) Lucia yesterday evening?”

9. “Who _________________ (RENZO, KISS) yesterday evening?”

10. “________________ (YOU, EVER, BE) to Germany?”
    “Yes, several times. The first time I ____________ (GO) there was in 1995.”
8. TEXT ANALYSIS: NORMS AND DEVIATIONS

Implicature

_Bessie Braddock:_ Winston, you’re drunk.
_Winston Churchill:_ Bessie, you’re ugly. But tomorrow I shall be sober.

Connotation

slim (+) thin skinny (-)

“La situazione politica italiana è grave ma non è seria.”
(Ennio Flaiano 1910-1972)

Metaphor

He has a heart of gold.
Her home was a prison.
America is a melting pot.
An extended metaphor

All the world’s a stage,
And all the men and women merely players;
They have their exits and their entrances,
And one man in his time plays many parts,
His acts being seven ages.
(Shakespeare)

*On communicative competence*, Dell Hymes, 1972
(Widdowson chapter 2 + p 89)
Four kinds of judgement:

Whether (and to what degree) something is formally possible
Whether (and to what degree) something is feasible
Whether (and to what degree) something is appropriate in relation to the context in which it is used
Whether (and to what degree) something is actually performed

Corpus linguistics  The study of corpora
Norms of usage: frequency, range, collocation
collocation:  *small*     *little*

It’s a _____ price to pay.
What a lovely _____ kitten!
Tell me a _____ bit about your new boss.
The sizes available are extra-large, large, medium and _____.

Colour television arrived in Europe in the 1970s.
In the 1960s we watched television in _____ and _____.
Negli anni sessanta la televisione era in _____ e _____.

Range:  talkative vs loquacious     tolerate vs put up with

Frequency:  English translation of *inoltre* – moreover, furthermore, what’s more, in addition
Deviation
When we deviate from the norms of usage (or use a deviant form), we create an implicature. P2 wants to know why the deviant form was chosen.

May I have your attention, ladies and blokes, please!

He’s a middle-aged man with a great future behind him.

Tragedy is a conflict between right and right.

What’s the good of happiness? It can’t buy you money.

Why is there so much month left at the end of the money?

Why do you have to be a nonconformist like everyone else?

I’m not as think as you drunk I am.

Neologisms: phat to smirt bankster
When you arrive at the airport you first of all go to the ______-___ desk. Here they __________ your luggage to make sure that it is not over the limit of 20 kilos. They will also give you your __________ if you have not already downloaded it from airline’s website. Once on the plane you have to put your hand luggage in the __________ locker. Before, during and for some minutes after ______-_____ you must keep your seat belt ______________ and your seat in an ________ position. Later you are allowed to move around and use the bathrooms. During the flight the _________ ________ check that passengers comply with safety regulations. They also serve drinks and snacks. A few minutes before __________ passengers are instructed to __________ _______ computers, Ipads and mobile phones.