

Block

1**THE NATURE OF TEXT**

Course Introduction	3
Block Introduction	4
UNIT 1	
What is a Text?	5
UNIT 2	
The Discourse Perspective	20
UNIT 3	
Application of Text Analysis to Teaching the Four Language Skills	37

EXPERT COMMITTEE

Prof. Ramakant Agnihotri
Retired -Dept. of Linguistics
Delhi University
Now: Prof. Emeritus
Vidya Bhawan Society, Udaipur

Prof. Jacob Tharu
Retired-Dept. of Evaluation
EFLU (formerly CIEFL), Hyderabad

Prof. M.L. Tickoo
Ex EFLU (formerly CIEFL), Hyderabad
Ex. Singapore University

Dr. Rajni Badlani
Formerly Reader EFLU (formerly CIEFL),
Hyderabad, Retired as Manager English
Studies, American Centre, New Delhi

Prof. Pushpinder Syal
Dept. of English
Punjab University, Chandigarh

Prof. Anju Sahgal Gupta (Formerly)
SOH, IGNOU, New Delhi

Dr. A. L. Khanna
Retired Reader - Dept. of English
Delhi University

Prof. Malati Mathur
Director, School of Humanities

IGNOU FACULTY (ENGLISH)

Prof. Neera Singh
Prof. Nandini Sahu
Prof. Pramod Kumar
Dr. Pema Eden Samdup
Ms. Mridula Rashmi Kindo
Dr. Malathy A.

COURSE COORDINATOR

Prof. Nandini Sahu
School of Humanities
IGNOU, New Delhi

Block Development and Edited by

Prof. Anju Sahgal Gupta
(Formerly), SOH, IGNOU

BLOCK PREPARATION TEAM

Course Writers

Prof. Yasmeen Lukmani
Retired, Dept. of English
University of Mumbai

Block Editor

Prof. Anju Sahgal Gupta
School of Humanities, IGNOU

Secretarial Assistance

Ms. Premlata Lingwal
PA (SOH), IGNOU, New Delhi

PRINT PRODUCTION

Mr. Y.N. Sharma
Assistant Registrar (Publication)
MPDD, IGNOU, New Delhi

Mr. Sudhir Kumar
Assistant Registrar (Publication)
MPDD, IGNOU, New Delhi

April, 2021

© Indira Gandhi National Open University, 2019

ISBN :

All rights reserved. No part of this work may be reproduced in any form, by mimeograph or any other means, without permission in writing from the Indira Gandhi National Open University.

Further information on Indira Gandhi National Open University courses may be obtained from the University's office at Maidan Garhi, New Delhi-110 068 or visit University's web site <http://www.ignou.ac.in>

Printed and published on behalf of the Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi by Registrar, MPDD, IGNOU, New Delhi

Laser Typeset by : Tessa Media & Computers, C-206, A.F.E.-II, Okhla, New Delhi

Printed at :

COURSE INTRODUCTION

The Structure of English

As teacher of English, we teach comprehension skills, vocabulary, grammar and composition, and we consider ourselves fairly proficient in English.

You may therefore ask, is there a need for a course ‘The Structure of English’? After all we cannot be teachers of English without having a good knowledge of English and its usage! Yet we are often not ‘aware’ of the structures we use. As a teacher, if we know the structure of the language we are teaching, it will go a long way in improving our classroom strategies.

Moreover, we would say that the most obvious reason for such a course is that from time to time it is helpful to revise our skills, and to get new insights about old information.

You will discover as you go through the four blocks that constitute the study material for this course, that it offers much more than a relook at the Structure of English. It offers you a deeper understanding of the nature of language and its usage.

Let us introduce you briefly to the Course.

Block 1	The Nature of Text
Block 2	Sentence Type: Form and Function
Block 3	Word Formation Strategies
Block 4	Sounds of English

We are probably used to a description of structure which begins with sound (phonology), word formation (morphology) and grammar (syntax). So you may well ask why have we included text, and why are we beginning with it.

Well, we want to give you a perspective on the organization of language beyond the level of sentence and this will help you understand what actually is meant by language in use. We also want to first introduce you to the ‘whole’ and then break it up into parts. Therefore, we have followed a top-down approach. We begin with the largest unit – text, and then proceed to grammar, words and sounds.

This approach will help you have a more meaningful perspective on the structure of English, and such an insight will assist you in teaching English better.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The material (pictures and passages) we have used is purely for educational purposes. Every effort has been made to trace the copyright holders of material reproduced in this book. Should any infringement have occurred, the publishers and editors apologize and will be pleased to make the necessary corrections in future editions of this book.

BLOCK INTRODUCTION

These three units on Text will give you a perspective on the organization of language beyond the level of the sentence. The language teacher is familiar with the sentence-based approach, and sentences fall into the domain of grammar. However, to get a wider perspective on what is meant by language, it becomes necessary to look at patterns of organization in language which go beyond the sentence. After this, we shall explore ways of incorporating these insights in the teaching of language.

Obviously, when you read these units for the first time, you may feel slightly intimidated by the technical terms that have inevitably been used. You may also feel a bit apprehensive as these units are treading on a relatively new ground. However, we assure you that as you get familiar with this area, you will realize that you probably had this information in some form at the back of your mind, although not in the manner given in the units. You will also realize how useful this information is in your own classroom teaching.

The three units in this block are:

Unit 1: What is a Text?

Unit 2: The Discourse Perspective

Unit 3: Application of Text Analysis to Teaching the Four Language Skills

We hope you enjoy reading these units and find them useful and insightful for your teaching-learning purposes.

ignou
THE PEOPLE'S
UNIVERSITY

UNIT 1 WHAT IS A TEXT?

Structure

- 1.0 Objectives
- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 How does a 'Sentence' Differ from Text?
 - 1.2.1 What is a Sentence?
 - 1.2.2 Is the Sentence the Primary Grammatical Unit?
 - 1.2.3 What is the Nature of the Clause and its Role in Text?
- 1.3 What is a Text?
 - 1.3.1 How is Text Organised?
 - a) The Role of Linguistic Linkage or Cohesion
 - b) The Role of Coherence
 - c) The Role of Background Knowledge/The Socio-cultural Context
 - d) The Role of Language Functions
- 1.4 Other Ways of Analysing Text
 - 1.4.1 The Bottom-up Approach: Grammar Building Up to Text
 - 1.4.2 The Top-down Approach: Text
- 1.5 What Makes a Piece of Speech/Writing a Text?
- 1.6 The Role of the Paragraph in Structuring a Text
- 1.7 Other Attempts to Analyse Discourse/Text into Units
- 1.8 Let Us Sum Up
- 1.9 Key Words
- 1.10 References and Suggested Readings
- 1.11 Answers

1.0 OBJECTIVES

In this unit our aim is

- to understand the nature of text
- to consider the difference between the nature of sentence and the text that it helps to build
- to discuss different ways of analysing a text.

After you have read the Unit carefully, we will give you practice in analysing the different components of text on your own.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

As language teachers, we've been teaching grammar to students for years. Grammar as you are aware, operates through a sentence-based approach i.e. it analyses single sentences and describes their functions. But a single sentence does not make up a text or a piece of discourse. It does not take into account language as it is used in real life. In order to get a wider perspective on what is meant by language, it becomes necessary to look at patterns of organisation that

go beyond the sentence level. This block on text, will hopefully give you such a perspective.

1.2 HOW DOES A ‘SENTENCE’ DIFFER FROM ‘TEXT’?

1.2.1 What is a ‘Sentence’?

A sentence is distinguished primarily in terms of its punctuation and orthography. In English, it begins with a capital letter and ends with a full stop. A sentence may be long or short, but by and large, it does not extend beyond a few lines.

1.2.2 Is the Sentence the Primary Grammatical Unit?

Sentence can be divided first into **clauses**, clauses can then be divided into **phrases**, which can then be divided into **word classes** (or parts of speech) and these can be sub-divided further into **morphemes** (see Block 3 of this course for a description of a morpheme).

A sentence may consist of one clause or many. It is perfectly possible to have only one clause per sentence; the reason for combining clauses in a sentence or separating them to form several sentences has to do with considerations of focus, emphasis and meaning, and not formal grammatical requirements.

For example, let us analyse the following sentence.

Example 1 While it is commonplace to talk about system in our linguistic descriptions of phonology, syntax, and semantics, the search for system at the discourse level is still evolving.

This sentence could be divided into clauses which can then form independent sentences. Let us see what such an analysis would look like.

Example 2 It is commonplace to talk about system in our linguistic descriptions of phonology, syntax, and semantics. However, the search for system at the discourse level is in the process of evolving.

We have now divided the original sentence into two sentences. It is possible to divide it even further into one clause per sentence:

Example 3 The following observation is commonplace. We can talk about system in our linguistic descriptions of phonology, syntax, and semantics. A search for system at the discourse level is still in the process of evolving.

You may note that while the basic meaning in each of these three versions remains unaltered, there is a marked difference in each in focus and reader-orientation. Notice also the changes in the linkage between the sentences that becomes necessary when the clauses are separated or joined into a single sentence.

What is the difference in focus?

In Example 1, the main focus is on ‘system in discourse’, while the ‘linguistic system’ is subordinated. In Example 2, both the ‘linguistic’ and ‘discourse’ systems

are given equal prominence, while in Example 3, three things are given equal prominence, the fact of the observation being ‘commonplace’, ‘the linguistic system’, and ‘the discourse system’. Information is subordinated when it is put in a subordinate clause and particularly in separate sentences.

Thus the division into clauses and sentences has clear implications for focus and meaning. Again, as the above examples demonstrate, in order to construct a sentence there is no necessity to use any particular given number of clauses.

1.2.3 What is the Nature of the Clause and its Role in Text?

We can analyse a clause in terms of the relationships of its various units. These relationships may be described in term of Subject, Verb, Complement, Adjunct (see Block 2 for a description of these terms). They can also be described in other terms, depending on the grammatical system being followed. But at least the notions of Subject, Verb and Object are crucial for establishing the nature of a clause. (Note that we are speaking of a clause, not a sentence).

Within the clause, relationships are ordered and there is less freedom of choice. The only choice lies in the use of individual phrases or words which require specific patterns of pre-and post-modifications, but this can only occur within the basic structure of the clause. All the above shows that in fact, **it is the clause which is the basic unit of grammar and not the sentence.**

If this is so, we can proceed, on the one hand, to analyse the clause into its component parts, and on the other, to build up from it to the sentence and then text. Text is an ordering of these clauses, one linked to the other to build up a coherent and meaningful whole. The same clauses can, as has already been seen, occur in one sentence, or be spread over several, depending on the kind of focus that is intended.

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) What is a sentence?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

- 2) What are the reasons for combining clauses into a sentence or separating them into different sentences? Give examples to substantiate your answer.

.....
.....
.....
.....

1.3 WHAT IS A TEXT?

A text is an organised and meaningful series of clauses/sentences. It may consist of one clause or less, or it may consist of a whole series of clauses/sentences. Example: the word 'Yes' might constitute a whole text, in answer to something spoken, with nothing preceding or succeeding it. On the other hand, the text might be a whole novel, sermon or a debate.

1.3.1 How is Text Organised?

a) The role of linguistic linkage or cohesion

A sentence is built on the relationship of its clauses. If the sentence contains more than one clause, each of the clauses, apart from having its own internal structure, needs to be connected to the other clauses. Similarly, clauses/sentences need to be connected to preceding and succeeding clauses/sentences. This connection, linking, or glueing together to form a recognisable whole, is called cohesion. For example, let us consider the following:

Example 4 The space age began on October 4, 1957, with the launching of the first artificial satellite; since then hundreds of other satellites have been launched, carrying all sorts of scientific and military equipment.

The first clause, 'The space age began on October 4, 1957, with the launching of the first artificial satellite', is linked to the second clause by the linker 'since then'. Texts are built on clauses (or even on elements of clauses) and also, particularly in orthographic terms, on sentences. There are several other ways of achieving cohesion, and we shall be dealing with them later.

b) The role of coherence

When adjacent clauses and sentences are linked, as we have seen, the type of linkage used is called cohesion, but when ideas are organised and patterns of movement established in the text as a whole, the type of linkage achieved is called **coherence**.

Thus, there are two principal patterns of structuring in a text: **Cohesion** being concerned with relating linguistic elements, particularly in adjacent constructions and **coherence** with relating ideas, particularly in terms of the organisation of the whole. A text is coherent when the different parts link together and there is an observable pattern of organisation. Shaughnessy (1977) writes about five basic types of rhetorical organisation which are outlined below:

This is what happened (**narrative, temporal organisation**)

This is the look/sound/smell of something (**description**)

This is like/unlike something (**comparison/contrast**)

This (may have, probably, certainly) caused something (**causal and evaluative**)

This is what ought to be done (**problem solving, possible solutions, the assessment of solutions and so on**).

It is not necessary to strictly follow one or the other pattern, but broadly speaking, the organisational patterns of a particular text will reflect one of the above. For

instance, a story is likely to fall into pattern 1, an argument into pattern 4 and so on.

There can also be varying levels of coherence, but at the very minimum, coherence demands that a text makes sense.

c) The role of background knowledge/the socio-cultural context

As you can see, the organisation of a text is very loose in comparison with that of a clause. There is no necessity about the occurrence of certain features, the way the clause requires features such as Subject, Verb and Object. Even overt cohesive links are not always required. For instance, to take an example made famous by Widdowson (1978: p. 29):

Example 5 A: Will you answer the telephone?

 B: I'm in my bath.

The link between the two parts of the dialogue is not linguistic. What connects them is a knowledge of the cultural situation. Telephones are not normally in the bathroom, and people usually find it extremely difficult to rush out of their baths to answer the phone. It is this knowledge which enables us to understand that the answer to the question is in the negative. This type of linkage can be considered as part of the background knowledge of the cultural situation in which the text occurs. This can be considered as external to the text but something which aids in giving rise to internal coherence.

d) The role of language functions

In addition to the above, are there any other principles of organisation of text? What about the role of language functions? Wittgenstein (1953) was the first to point out that philosophers, notably Austin (1962) and Searle (1969), have spoken of the different roles that language plays in the expression of meaning. The same grammatical form may perform different functions, e.g. the utterance, 'It's hot in here', may be intended to be i) a statement of fact or ii) a means of establishing contact with someone, when one doesn't know what else to say, or iii) an indirect request that someone might turn on the fan, and so on. Again, the same language function might be conveyed by different grammatical forms. e.g., if I am asking for permission to enter a room, I could say, 'May I come in?' or 'Can/could/would you mind if/would I disturb you if I...' and so on. There is, thus, a complex relationship between grammatical form and the function that it is expressing. The same form can have different functions, and the same function can be expressed through different forms. Thus, in learning a language, linguistic form in itself is not sufficient, the function it performs in social interaction is equally important. We will return to this point in more detail later. For the time being, it is sufficient to note that a language function can be an expression of sympathy, permission, obligation, refusal, denial and so on. No number can be put on the language functions that exist, whether in speech or writing. Again, in different domains of life, there may be different types of language functions, e.g. in academic writing, one can talk of an introduction, statement of premises, argument, analysis, conclusion, etc; in personal interaction, one can talk of

greeting, personal enquiries, the process of broaching the topic, the main topic, diversions, interruption/end and so on.

Check Your Progress 2

1) What is meant by text/discourse?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

2) What is the difference between coherence and cohesion?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

3) Overt linguistic devices are not always required to understand the meaning of a text. Give an instance from your language when the socio-cultural context clearly provides the required information to understand a text.

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

4) Give two examples from English where a particular function can be conveyed by different grammatical forms.

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

1.4 OTHER WAYS OF ANALYSING TEXT

There are two major positions with regard to analysing a text: the bottom-up approach and the top-down approach.

1.4.1 The Bottom-up Approach: Grammar Building Up to Text

In this approach we work out the meaning of the words and the structure of a clause(s), until we build up a composite meaning for the sentence. In other words, we understand a text by analysing the words, clauses and sentences in the text.

1.4.2 The Top-Down Approach: Text

It is more usual in discourse studies, however, to start with the larger situation, the social and cultural context of utterances and work out principles of organisation of text based on this context. Thus each specific domain of speech or writing would have the textual organisation appropriate to it. For example, speech is characteristically a dialogue, while writing typically appears as monologue. Similarly, it is the nature of speech to be more informal, and writing more formal.

Within speech, let us take a common type of situation, namely conversation. Conversation has its own organisational patterns, dictated by convention, and these conventions may vary somewhat from culture to culture. However, any conversation is likely to incorporate the notion of turn-taking, whereby someone speaks, and then the other person gets his/her turn. Again, the rules of conversation require that Speaker B's comments are relevant to what Speaker A has said, otherwise it is impossible to carry on talking.

Take the following exchange:

Example 6

A: What is your name?

B: Well, let's say you might have thought you had something from before, but you haven't got it any more.

A: I'm going to call you Dean.

(cf. Brown & Yule, 1983: p. 226)

Example 7

X: I feel hot today.

Y: No.

(Cf. Coulthard. 1970)

The complete lack of relevance in the contribution of the two participants makes it doubtful if the term 'conversation' can be applied here at all. The organisational pattern creating conversation has broken down. Under normal circumstances, speakers will go to great lengths to interpret meaning and relevance in such utterances, in order to be polite and carry on the semblance of a conversation. For instance, in Example 7, X could respond in the following way:–

X: Oh, so you think it's not hot today. Maybe I have the fever.

These are just two characteristics of the organisational patterns of conversation. They will serve to illustrate the point that the analysis of conversation need not start with linguistic patterns, but can, in the top-down approach, start from cultural conventions.

At this stage, we wish to point out that in discourse or text analysis, studies have been mainly done on speech rather than writing, and, in fact, the characteristics of speech have been carried over into the analysis of the discourse features of writing. Dialogue, rather than monologue, being the dominant feature of speech, has provided the primary paradigm, and thus even writing is regarded as an interactive activity, where the text is a form of mediation between writer and reader. Winter (1982), among the first to look at writing interactively, analyses even discursive prose, e.g. scientific reports, in terms of each utterance being an answer to an implicit question posed by the previous utterance. This can be considered a top-down approach when analysing a written text. However both types of approach are equally valid, and provide different kinds of insights into a piece of text.

Check Your Progress 3

Distinguish between the Bottom-up approach and the Top-down approach for analysing a text. Give your own examples.

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

1.5 WHAT MAKES A PIECE OF SPEECH/WRITING A TEXT?

Only in certain cases can we definitely say that something is not a text. Let us consider the following example, cited in Alderson & Lukmani (1988):

Example 8 ‘Sally first tried setting loose a team of gophers. The plan backfired when a dog chased them away. She then entertained a group of teenagers and was delighted when they brought their motorcycles. Unfortunately, she failed to find a Peeping Tom listed in the Yellow Pages. Furthermore, her stereo system was not loud enough. The crab grass might have worked but the obscene phone calls gave her hope until the number was changed. She thought about calling a door-to-door salesman but decided to hang up a clothesline instead. It was the installation of blinking neon lights across the street that did the trick. She eventually framed the ad from the classified section.’

The above passage just doesn’t seem to make sense, even though each sentence is well linked with the previous one, achieving cohesion. It is thus clear that cohesion by itself is not sufficient. What is also clear is that the passage as a whole seems to lack coherence, the ideas do not connect. Not only cohesion, but coherence is required to form a proper text, and when either of these features is completely lacking, the passage cannot be considered a text at all.

Let us take another example. This is from Barrett (1989).

Example 9 'Alcoholism Effects'

The people in the present society are mostly affected with alcohol. It's not taken by parents, children, friends, etc. but by everyone. As Dr. Ernest says that it's a disease that has slight chances of getting cured. Everyone around is affected by this disease. Alcohol is so affective that it can damage brains, stomachs ailments, lungs swell, etc. Alcohol drift's a man away from his family members. If a man is facing a problem at home well he thinks the only way to get peace is by drinking alcohol. Like this the children too pick up the negative qualities of the parents. Alcohol is a cause of splitting family. When they get addicted to it, it's just tough to leave it. This type of person is never respected in society and even at home.

Can this be considered a text? There are plenty of errors of grammar, spelling, cohesion and coherence. Yet, nevertheless, does it make some kind of sense? Does it hold together? Yes, I should think it does, and therefore, it can be dignified by the name of text, even though it is not a very good piece of text.

Thus, the formation of a text or textualisation is related to the expression of meaning, and texts are considered badly constructed when the meaning does not emerge clearly. Lack of clarity may be due to lack of appropriate connections, the incoherence of ideas, or even due to poor expression, caused by errors of grammar or style. When linguistic error blurs meaning it certainly impedes textualisation. However, even when it doesn't affect meaning, linguistic error gives rise to flawed texts. In certain contexts, the presence of error is more disruptive than in others. The more formal the context, the more impeccable must be the organisation and the language, whereas in informal contexts, much can be ignored. However, the presence of linguistic error, while it might detract from the quality of the text, doesn't necessarily disqualify it from being considered text. Thus, grammatical correctness is less a building block of text than features of connection. The usual insistence in language teaching on correct sentence production as a precondition to moving on to larger units of text would then appear to be misguided.

Texts can, thus, be connected by means of i) cohesion, ii) internal coherence or organisation, and iii) external coherence or background knowledge/the context of situation. Sometimes only one of these means might be employed, but often all of them are used to connect the same piece of text. Again, the type of connections provided, leading to textualisation, might be good, or not so good. In extreme cases, one might even deny the term 'text' to the passage. But while it is easy to decide whether a clause is correctly formed, this is not the case with text. Only the 'appropriateness' or 'felicity' of the text can be invoked. So long as it holds together and makes sense, it does not need to be linguistically correct in order to be considered a text.

Check Your Progress 4

- 1) What are the three factors that connect a text? Of these factors which one do you think is most important in understanding text?

.....

1.6 THE ROLE OF THE PARAGRAPH IN STRUCTURING A TEXT

Apart from broad organisational patterns, does text have an internal structure? Are there any recognisable units of text?

Let us, for a moment, go back to Example 9. If this piece of writing was broken off somewhere in the middle, would it still be considered a text? Yes, it probably would, for it would continue to make some kind of sense. So, it seems, the same text can contain perhaps several texts. Again, the text can be enlarged and still be considered a single text. Thus, there seems to be no space restriction to a text. It can consist of a single word, e.g. 'Yes', and the whole of 'War & Peace', and many stages in between. So, the concept of 'text' is extremely flexible.

Is it possible to divide a text into a set of formal units, the way it is possible to divide clauses into noun phrases, verb phrases, etc? What could such a unit/units be? The notion of the paragraph has been put forward as a possible candidate for the classification of units. As Hoey (1982) says, there is no doubting the psychological reality of the paragraph and various writers have shown that the paragraph is a suitable intermediate grammatical unit between sentence and discourse/text. However, it is not possible to get unanimity on how many paragraphs there should be in any given text.

Competent users of the language are found to differ on the number of paragraphs they assign to a particular passage, though there is little likelihood of disagreement on the possible points where a break is permissible. The number of breaks actually allowed depends on the rhetorical structure the writer wishes to impose on the passage. In a newspaper report there will, very likely, be short paragraphs because the newspaper reader's attention span is estimated to be low. The same piece occurring in a journal could easily have longer paragraphs. Paragraph breaks made by competent users of the language attempt to structure the text to the purpose at hand. They can be considered more or less appropriate to the expression of this purpose, rather than being clearly right or wrong. Thus, there seems to be no internal principle of organisation which determines when a paragraph break should occur. The paragraph, then, cannot be considered a unit of text. It is certainly a component of text, but one which has no fixed internal features to distinguish it as a primary unit.

Check Your Progress 5

- 1) a) Read the following passage and indicate where you can put the paragraph breaks.

The Igloo

The Eskimo's igloo is a round house of a special type. It really plays no part in our story because it is used by only one people and has had no imitations or "descendants" anywhere else in the world but Greenland, Alaska and other Eskimo lands; but it is interesting for itself. People who have never lived in arctic conditions find it difficult to believe that a house made of frozen snow can be really warm, or that, if it is really warm, the walls remain frozen. The scientific explanation is rather complicated, but a simple way of looking at it is to remember that the air outside the igloo is so bitterly cold that anything which is exposed to

it is immediately frozen solid. So even if the inside walls of the igloo begin to thaw a little because of the warmth indoors, the fact that this bitter outside air is still in contact with the outside of the walls keeps them frozen right through. This allows the air inside the igloo to reach quite a comfortable temperature, since the walls are so solid that they are completely windproof and none of the outside air can get in. The way in which they are made so airtight is also interesting. After the igloo has been built, a skilled job, incidentally, as the blocks of ice must be curved to just the right degree to make that perfect dome-like shape and the “beds” have been built (also of snow and ice), the housewife seals the “door” and lights an oil lamp. She gets up a really strong heat — much stronger than will ever be required when the family has taken up residence — and as the snow is fairly new and has only just been put in position it begins to melt. This is the beginning of the winter and the air is not yet so cold outside as it will become later. When the snow is quite soft even the blocks of ice have begun to thaw a little, the woman puts out the lamp and opens the “door”. Immediately the cold air rushes in and in no time at all the interior walls have frozen into a windproof, airtight ice-house, so solid, in fact, that it will stand up through the winter to all the howling blizzards that rage around it and a heavy man (or even a polar bear) could jump on the roof—if he could do so without sliding off— without damaging it. This type of dwelling is disappearing, although the older Eskimos believe that it will never be equalled for winter warmth and comfort. Civilization brings a wider range of materials for building even into the Arctic Circle, and the necessary stone and timber and glass can now be brought to even the most isolated places, so that more modern houses, with modern methods of heating, are taking the place of the igloo. In its day, however, it was certainly the most ingenious type of round house the world has seen.

- b) Where do you think this paragraph occurred? If it was to occur in some other type of writing, do you think you might modify the number of breaks. Why?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

- 2) Can paragraph be considered a primary unit of text? Discuss.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

1.7 OTHER ATTEMPTS TO ANALYSE DISCOURSE/TEXT INTO UNITS

Are there other attempts to analyse discourse/text into units? A few of the major units/patterns observed in existing analyses of text/discourse are dealt with here. They are presented in very brief, and are intended only to give you an idea of the types of units for analysing texts that have been put forward so far. In order to use any of these for actual discourse analysis of a speech event, you would need to go to its detailed treatment in the books referred to.

Sinclair & Coulthard (1975) in analysing classroom discourse are concerned with teacher-pupil interaction, considered in terms of **Initiation, Response, and Feedback**. They posit levels of discourse within these broad categories, namely, the levels of act, move, exchange, transaction, and lesson. The act is the smallest unit within a function (e.g. greeting), and it corresponds to the clause level in grammar.

Example 10 A: Hello, how are you?

 B: Fine, thank you.

This consists of an exchange containing two acts.

According to Sinclair & Coulthard, there are three major acts which occur in all forms of spoken discourse – elicitation (asking for information), directive (giving directions/orders, making requests) and informative. These are realised by grammatical features, e.g. interrogatives, imperatives, etc. Moves are made up of acts, and can be of the following kinds in teaching exchanges: framing (e.g. Now we're going to do a writing exercise') focusing ('Now open your notebooks'), opening, answering and follow-up. A focusing move could thus be realised by a directive act as in the example given above.

Above this, and containing the level of the move, there is the level of exchange. There are two major classes of exchange: boundary and teaching. There are also free exchanges, namely: informing, directing, eliciting and checking, re-initiation, listing, reinforcing, repeating. Containing the exchange is the broader category of transaction. There are three major types of transactions: informing, directing and eliciting.

The highest unit of classroom discourse is the 'lesson' which contains the unit 'transaction'. A lesson could thus contain an informing transaction, which could then contain a reinforcing exchange, which in its turn could contain a focusing move which could be expressed by an elicitation act. This approach became the precursor of a great many efforts at analysing transcriptions of classroom discourse.

Classroom discourse has been analysed in a number of different ways: other viewpoints could provide other structuring principles. Fanselow (1979), for instance, makes an equally plausible analysis of classroom discourse by claiming that it consists of four pedagogical purposes: structuring, soliciting, responding, and reacting, and breaks up each of these into more and more detailed categories.

1.8 LET US SUM UP

Well, have you enjoyed reading this unit, and has it given you a perspective of language beyond the sentence level? In this unit, we have tried to make you aware of the following:

- the importance of the inclusion of text/discourse in any study of the structure of language
- the difference between a sentence and a clause, and the role of these in a text
- what is a text?
- the principles of organisation which link a text together: i) cohesion; ii) internal coherence or linking of ideas in a text; iii) external coherence or background knowledge; iv) types of language function appropriate to a context.
- two major positions in analysing a text: bottom-up or top-down approach.

1.9 KEY WORDS

Bottom-up approach	:	Analysing a text by describing the words and clauses in the text itself.
Cohesion	:	The grammatical and lexical relationships between the different elements of a text
Coherence	:	The relationship which link the meaning of utterances in a discourse or of the sentences in a text.
Clause	:	A group of words which form a grammatical unit and which contains a subject and a finite verb. A clause forms a sentence or part of a sentence and functions as a noun, adjective or adverb
Discourse	:	Used interchangeably with the term 'text'. Some researchers use the term 'discourse' for the study of spoken language and 'text' for the study of written language.
Focus	:	A type of linguistic analysis which deals with the distribution of known information and new information in discourse. This type of analysis is different from the traditional grammatical analysis.
Morpheme	:	The smallest meaningful unit in a language.
Orthography	:	Refers to spelling.
Pre-modification	:	Words which occur before the nouns phrase.
Post-modification	:	Words which occur after the noun phrase.

- Syntax : The study of how words combine to form sentences and the rules which govern the formation of sentences.
- Semantics : The study of meaning.
- Sentence : The largest unit of grammatical organisation within which parts of speech (e.g. nouns, verbs, adverbs) and grammatical classes (e.g. word, phrase, clause) are said to function. In English, a sentence normally contains one independent clause with a finite verb.
- Text : A piece of spoken or written language. A text may consist of just one word, e.g. **danger** on a warning sign, or it may be of considerably length, e.g. a novel, a debate, etc.
- Top-down approach : Analysing a text by starting with the context of the situation.

1.10 REFERENCES AND SUGGESTED READINGS

- Alderson, J. Charles & Lukmani, Yasmeen. 1988. *Cognition and reading: Cognitive level as embodied in test questions*. Reading English as a Foreign Language.
- Austin, J.L. 1962. *How To Do Things With Words*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Chafe, Wallace L. 1970. *Meaning and the Structure of Language*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Coulthard, M. 1976. *An Introduction to Discourse Analysis*. London: Longman.
- Hatch, Evelyn. 1982. *Discourse and Language Education*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hoey, Michael P. 1982. *On the Surface of Discourse*. London: George Allen & Unwin.
- Searle, John R. 1969. *Speech Acts*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Shaughanessy, Mina P. 1977. *Error Analysis*. N. York: Oxford University Press.
- Sinclair, J. M. & Coulthard, M. 1975. *Towards an Analysis of Discourse*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Widdowson, H.G. 1978. *Language as Communication*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Winter, E.O. 1982. *Towards a Contextual Grammar of English: The Clause and its Place in the Definition of a Sentence*. London: George Allen & Unwin.

1.11 ANSWERS

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) See 1.2.1 and the beginning of 1.2.2 for the answer. Also refer to Key Words.
- 2) Clauses are combined into a sentence or separated to form several sentences, not because of formal grammatical requirements, but because of considerations of foci emphasis and meaning (give your own examples to illustrate your answer).

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) See the introductory paragraph of 1.3 for the answer.
- 2) See 1.3.1 a) and b) for the answer. The main point you need to understand is that cohesion is concerned with the grammatical and/or lexical relationship between different elements of a text. Coherence is concerned with relating ideas. (give your own examples to illustrate the answer)

Do questions 3 and 4 yourself.

Check Your Progress 3

- 1) Read 1.4 before writing the answer. Here are some cues:

In the bottom-up approach we understand a text by analysing the words and clauses in the text. In the top-down approach, on the other hand, we begin with the larger situation, the social-cultural context of the utterances as a whole. (give your own examples)

Check Your Progress 4

- 1) See 1.5 for the answer.

Here are some cues to help you answer the question.

Text can be connected by means of

- i) cohesion i.e. linguistic linkage
- ii) coherence or linking of ideas
- iii) external coherence or knowledge of the socio-cultural context in which a text placed.

Check Your Progress 5

- 2) Consult 1.6 for the answer.

UNIT 2 THE DISCOURSE PERSPECTIVE

Structure

- 2.0 Objectives
- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 The Role of the Sentence in Language Studies
 - 2.2.1 The Consequences of Concentration on the Sentence
- 2.3 The Growth of the Discourse Perspective
- 2.4 The Role of Context in Discourse Studies
 - 2.4.1 The Textual Context
 - 2.4.2 The Context of Situation
 - 2.4.3 The Speech Situation
- 2.5 The Speech Act
- 2.6 The Speech Situation
 - 2.6.1 An Analysis of Conversation
- 2.7 Information Structure: 'Given' and 'New Information'
- 2.8 Cohesion
 - 2.8.1 Conjunction
 - 2.8.2 Reference
 - 2.8.3 Lexical Replacement
 - 2.8.4 Substitution
 - 2.8.5 Ellipsis
- 2.9 Coherence
 - 2.9.1 Thematization/Topic Formation
 - 2.9.2 Plot, Summary
 - 2.9.3 Narrative Structure as a Means of Analysing Experience
- 2.10 Let Us Sum Up
- 2.11 Key Words
- 2.12 Suggested Readings
- 2.13 Answers

2.0 OBJECTIVES

Our aim in this unit is to make you aware of

- the role of the sentence in language studies
- the consequences of concentration on the sentence
- the nature of discourse in an interactive framework
- concepts such as speech situation, speech act
- the relationship between linguistic elements and the role they perform in certain contextual situations.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

We have so far, in Unit 1, been using the words ‘text’ and ‘discourse’ almost interchangeably. Are they in fact the same?

The use of these terms varies so much from writer to writer that it is difficult to distinguish clearly between them. Quite often, ‘discourse’ seems to be used for spoken discourse and ‘text’ for written discourse. But this is not necessarily the case. The two terms are also frequently used as cover terms for both spoken and written discourse. It is more usual for Americans to use the term ‘discourse analysis’ and Europeans ‘text analysis’. In this course no distinction has been made between ‘text’ and ‘discourse’, except for a slight preference for written discourse being called ‘text’. In Unit 1, we looked at the difference between sentence/clause and discourse, and the organisational patterns of discourse. In this unit, we shall turn to the growth of discourse and its characteristics. We shall begin by looking at the role of the sentence in language studies and then move on to the development of the discourse perspective.

2.2 THE ROLE OF THE SENTENCE IN LANGUAGE STUDIES

The study of rhetoric had flourished in the time of the Greeks and Romans, but in more recent years, had fallen into decline. The systematic study of language, particularly in the twentieth century, has been focused on the sentence, the isolated sentence. This falls into the domain of grammar which looks at the simple sentence/the kernel sentence/the clause, as isolated from the text in which it occurs. And quite often it is a made-up sentence, not an authentic one which has actually occurred in real life. Therefore, in addition to being isolated from the text, it is also cut off from the social context in which the interaction is taking place.

2.2.1 The Consequences of Concentration on the Sentence

Let us look at the following lines taken from a radio talk show in the U.S. on gardening:

I suspect that if it's dropping leaves you probably... well, obviously it is in the wrong spot...

Usually in this situation, you - eh, if it were mine, I'd probably cut it hack...

What you do with em after it starts looking really really yukky...what you want to do believe it or not is to cut back about four inches...And then I would put it outside into the shade into a uh nice shady area in your yard...

What can you say after reading this text? Would you expect this to be written matter, or is it quite obviously taken from speech?

It is clear that the above example is not what you would expect to find in a grammar book. The sentences are not necessarily complete - they break off in the middle of a sentence and sometimes start afresh at some point. This is typical of oral language. Writing is usually more tightly organised. Notice that grammar book sentences are normally in the written mode. They are also always complete and entirely correct from the grammatical point of view. Look at the following grammar book sentences:

This is a pencil. Shut the door. John has gone to school.

Only highly regular and well-structured sentences are found in grammar books. However, by analysing only such sentences, a vast proportion of the language freely occurring in speech and writing is thereby ignored. This is the first consequence of having a sentence-based grammar.

Second, the sentences worthy of study for purposes of establishing the grammar of the language, are only those which represent the standard variety of the language. Dialectal variations whether regional or social class, and stylistic variations, whether informal/colloquial are ignored. Third, the sentence is studied in isolation and not in context, whether the context be textual or social. By employing sentences only of this kind, grammarians hoped that language in its essential purity would be studied, undeflected by any kind of variation, or human failings.

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) What are the three consequences of having a sentence - based grammar?

.....
.....
.....
.....

- 2) What are the features of ‘sentence - based grammar’ versus ‘text’?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

- 3) As a teacher do you think there are limitations in teaching sentence - based grammar? How would incorporating a discourse perspective help your students?

.....
.....
.....
.....

2.3 THE GROWTH OF THE DISCOURSE PERSPECTIVE

How did the discourse perspective begin to be held? In the 1960's, a movement began against the grammatical approach to language study. Research in sociolinguistics, in ethnography, and in communication, heralded a radically different conception of language. Authenticity, what was actually being said, began to be more important than an abstract standard of grammatical perfection. So, the actual utterance, however imperfect or deviant it might appear, became the object of the linguist's attention, making the context of utterance crucial, and variation of all kinds, the normal condition of speech. Initially, this made speech more important than writing as a source of data. Only after discourse studies became an established mode of linguistic analysis, did written language come in for scrutiny.

In a grammar-based approach, whether structural grammar or Chomskyan linguistics, the syntactic features of the sentence are the major concern. More recently, the meaning of the sentence or its semantic content has been given much greater status even in grammar, but this is at least partly, because of the impact of discourse studies. However, grammar is unable to absorb, even partially, the interactive nature of the context within which particular sets of utterances exist. Semantics has now become an independent branch within language study, with one foot in grammar and the other in discourse. Pragmatics, however, dealing with the meaning of utterances in context, is clearly entirely in the field of discourse.

In discourse, the purely linguistic form (syntactic and phonological) is studied in relation to its semantic and pragmatic aspects. Language study, initially entirely form-based, has become increasingly function-oriented. This means that the area of discourse is: i) the study of the functions language performs in social contexts, ii) the interaction between grammatical form and function and iii) grammatical form looked at from a functional perspective. It is argued that the text and not the isolated sentence is the basis of language. This makes discourse, and not grammar, central to the analysis of language.

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) How did the notion of 'text' assume importance?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

2) The limitations of a grammar-based approach to language study are

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

3) What are the three areas which discourse covers with regard to language teaching?

.....
.....
.....
.....

2.4 THE ROLE OF CONTEXT IN DISCOURSE STUDIES

What is meant by the context in which language occurs?

2.4.1 The Textual Context

First, we shall deal with the textual context. Consider the following piece of writing:

Language has often been defined as a system of arbitrary symbols used for human communication. The purpose of this book is to help you discover system in the ways we use language for communication in social contexts.

It is possible to isolate sentence 1 (S1) of the above and analyse it on its own. But sentence 2 cannot stand on its own. It is dependent for its meaning on S1. The use of ‘a system of arbitrary symbols’ in S1 is required in order to say ‘discover system ...’ If it had had to stand on its own, it would have had to be phrased differently. A text is built up on the basis of interrelations in sentences/clauses. Such interrelationships are crucial to language and cannot be ignored. This is the textual context, or ‘co-text’ which is essential for the expression of meaning.

2.4.2 The Context of Situation

The **context of situation** is also important. Who is the writing being addressed to? What is the tone and attitude? The use of the words ‘you’ and ‘we’ involves direct address and participation in a common activity. A relationship of friendliness is being established with the reader. If the sentence had read,

‘The purpose of this book is to establish system in the ways in which language is used for communication in social contexts.’

a much more formal relationship would have been established. The nature of the relationship between reader and writer/speaker and listener is reflected in the choice of language. Questions such as the relative status of the participants in the relationship, the degree of politeness required, the effect of the topic being discussed, all these are of importance in deciding on the words to use. Analysis involving only isolated sentences seems to rob language of its life-blood.

2.4.3 The Speech Situation

In order to study the way language operates in social interaction (whether in speech or writing) one requires the concept of speech situation. The speech situation is built on a wide variety of factors, which takes into account everything that makes up the total situation in which the discourse occurs, not only the linguistic factors. Though it is not always possible to analyse all of these factors, it is important to be aware of them in a speech situation. The following are some of the possible factors:

- i) Speaker-hearer interactional information drawn from the two fields of i) kinesics (i.e. patterns of movement, gestures and body language) and ii) proxemics (i.e. movement in terms of spaces occupied). Kinesics and proxemics supplement the information derived from the spoken word, and should form a part of the analysis of spoken discourse.

In analysing writing, factors such as style, register, expressing the writer's attitude to his/her subject and the demands of the reader are important as they affect the nature of the text actually produced.

- ii) Ethnographic information relates to the cultural conventions and norms of behaviour prevalent in a particular speech community and the effect these have on the language used.

Within the speech situation can occur many speech events, and the speech event can itself contain many speech acts. We shall discuss these concepts in later sections.

Check Your Progress 3

- 1) What is meant by 'co-text' and the 'context of the situation'?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

- 2) What are their component features? In what way is it useful to consider these in analysing a text?

.....

.....

.....

2.5 THE SPEECH ACT

The notion of the speech act derives from the work of linguistic philosophers, mainly Austin (1962) and Searle (1969). It takes the basic unit of language to be communication rather than grammatical form, and by doing this implies that through language, actions are being performed. In the case of some utterances, the words themselves alone can perform an action.

I pronounce you man and wife.

I name this university the Indira Gandhi National Open University.

Such utterances can be called performatives because through their very articulation an action has been performed.

Utterances other than performatives require action as a follow-up, as for example in the request, ‘Open the window, please’, where the statement is followed by the action, i.e. the actual opening of the window. Yet it is possible to look at the request itself as performing a kind of act, what can be called a **speech act**. There are different kinds of speech acts, such as requests, orders, commands, complaints, promises and so on.

We can distinguish between the meaning of an utterance and the force it carries. It is obvious that the same utterance can carry different force in different contexts. For instance, let us consider the request, ‘Open the window, please’. Supposing I had decided to shut myself up in my house and have nothing to do with the world, and then one day, being persuaded to change my viewpoint, I made this request. It would then come across with dramatic impact, and carry quite a different force from that in a normal, routine situation.

Check Your Progress 4

- 1) What is a speech act?

.....

.....

.....

.....

2.6 THE SPEECH SITUATION

There can be many different speech situations or types/genres of discourse. In oral language, there is classroom and meeting discourse, conversation, oral narrative, jokes, teacher talk, etc. In written text, there is narrative, drama, legal statutes, advertisements, academic prose, scientific writing, journalese and so on. Each such genre has its own conventions which need to be respected in order to bring the genre into existence.

2.6.1 An Analysis of Conversation

Let us, for example, now analyse the framework of a particular speech situation that has been much studied in the literature, namely, conversation.

a) Turn-taking

Any interactive encounter or conversation is governed by some rules. For instance, it is not possible for one of the participants to hold the floor endlessly. The others must get their turn to speak. Thus, turn-taking is a basic feature of conversation and textualisation as such. Mothers of infants in arms look for some kind of response from them; even a person going on endlessly on the telephone requires constant feedback. In writing, the situation is only different in terms of the techniques adopted. The writer has to respond to the implicit/assumed questions of the reader. If s/he moves too far away from these questions, the reader will lose interest. Thus, we talk about the readership of a particular work, and whether certain forms of writing (e.g. manuals of instructions) are reader-friendly or not.

There are ways of ensuring that you get your turn to speak, particularly in a multi-party encounter. It is necessary to watch out for signals when the speaker will surrender his/her turn. Normally, the listener looks at the speaker, with the speaker looking at the listener only from time to time. At the end of his/her turn, there is likely to be change in the speaker's gaze direction. Apart from this, there seems to be a general slowing down of tempo, vowel elongation, and falling intonation. Also, the speaker will have reached a syntactic boundary (Hatch, 1992: p.16-17). Body language and gestures might also reflect the end of a turn. Although turns are normally well timed, overlaps in the talk of different speakers in conversation do occur. In fact, such overlaps (as quite distinct from interruptions) are thought to show alignment between the communication partners.

b) Feed-back or Backchannel Cues and Repair

Speakers also need feedback or backchannel cues to know whether communication is taking place. If there is a breakdown in understanding, repairs to the message and re-adjustments are possible. In research on language learning, the repairs often lead to special registers such as 'foreigner talk' or 'teacher talk'. These registers have many things in common. In each, there is an increase in phonological clarity. The rate of speech is slowed down, lessening the number of reduced vowels, contractions, and complex consonant clusters. Heavy stress is laid on important content words, and there is a longer break at syntactic boundaries. The slower rate not only increases phonetic accuracy but gives the learner more processing time.

The need to repair utterances is shown up in vocabulary selection and syntactic change as well. Less slang, fewer idioms are used, more high frequency items, short simple syntax, less pronominalisation, and simpler noun phrases (Hatch, 1992: p.22- 23).

Look at the following repairs, taken from second language acquisition research, which give evidence of simplification:

Native speaker: Do you wear them everyday?

Ricardo: Huh?

Native speaker: Do you put them on everyday?

Native speaker: Did you have a nice weekend?

Ricardo: Huh?

Native speaker: Friday, Saturday ... did you have fun?

(Hatch, 1978: p.414) c)

c) Opening and Closing of Conversations

Openings and closings of conversations also have their own specific signals in a conversation. There are obvious cross-cultural differences to be found in these. For instance on a business visit, how long do you spend talking about general matters before getting down to business? On a personal visit, how do you manage to surreptitiously introduce a business matter? How do you engineer it? Closings sometimes raise more problems. When is it appropriate to end a conversation or to get up to leave? One doesn't normally wish to be impolite, or overstay one's welcome. What cues do people give, and what should we be sensitive to?

Check Your Progress 5

- 1) We have discussed the structure of 'conversation'. You have now to apply this kind of analysis to other forms of communication. Let us start with the classroom. You have to observe a particular class closely. Who are the participants in the communication. Who speaks more? Who initiates the discussion? What procedure is followed in the course of the class? Break up classroom time into how the activities are being conducted.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

- 2) Observe yourself and others in a conversation. Notice how the participants enter the conversation; give feedback that they are listening; notice also how they restate when they are not understood.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

2.7 INFORMATION STRUCTURE: 'GIVEN' AND 'NEW INFORMATION'

How is information ordered in the utterance? What is stated first and what next? In English, the flow of information proceeds from the already known to something different within the same utterance. In a typical utterance, the subject of the clause will coincide with the topic that is being dealt with. The subject will then make an assertion through the use of the verb about something which is expressed in the predicate. **The subject is the given or known information, while the predicate is the new part of the information which is now being presented.**

‘Given’ and ‘new’ information is also referred to as ‘topic’ and ‘comment’ or ‘theme’ and ‘rheme’, where ‘given’, ‘topic’ and ‘theme’ carry much the same meaning, while ‘new’, ‘comment’ and ‘rheme’ are similar. The organisation of information in a sentence, or its communicative dynamism, can be considered in terms of how pieces of information are modified and developed, providing focus and clarity.

Check Your Progress 6

- 1) Analyse the following paragraph into ‘given’ and ‘new’ or ‘topic’ and ‘comment’ relations. A little initial guidance is given.

Whenever there is snow in England, some of the country roads may have black ice. Motorists coming suddenly upon stretches of black ice may find themselves skidding off the road. Road maintenance crews try to reduce the danger of skidding by scattering sand upon the road surfaces. Such a measure is generally adequate for our very brief snowfalls. Its main drawback is that if there are fresh snowfalls the whole process has to be repeated, and if the snowfalls continue, it becomes increasingly ineffective in providing some kind of grip for tyres.

In the first sentence, the whole of ‘Whenever there is snow in England, some of the country roads’ is taken to be assumed information. The fact that there is snow in England, and that there are country roads does not need to be asserted, all this is assumed to exist. It is the ‘given’ information. It is also the ‘topic’ about which we get further information, namely, ‘may have black ice’. It is expected that we don’t know about this, otherwise it would not have been needed to be stated. So this is the ‘new’ information, or the ‘comment’ on the topic. Now work on the rest of the passage on your own.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

2.8 COHESION

As we have discussed in the previous Unit, when information is organised in a clause/sentence and connected to the next clause/sentence, progressively subsuming the importance of the previous sentence and leading on to a new focus, or a new development, cohesive links need to be established. The earliest systematic study of cohesion was done by Halliday & Hasan (1976). They outline five types of cohesive relations. These are:

2.8.1 Conjunction

Conjunctions may be **additive** (e.g. and, as well as); or **adversative** (e.g. but, however) in nature; or express **causal** (e.g. thus, because) and **temporal** relations (e.g. then, firstly); and so on.

2.8.2 Reference

Reference is concerned with marking and identifying items, people, events. (Please note that the word 'reference' in cohesion has a different connotation).

The umbrella I left behind has been returned.

'The' identifies a particular umbrella which, the text implies, has been mentioned earlier.

If, instead, the sentence had read:

An umbrella I left behind has been returned.

'An' does not refer back to a previous statement.

Again, if I said: *'I'm glad I went to the party. It was fun'*. 'It' refers to 'the party' which was already mentioned and substitutes for it. This is known as referencing.

Now look at:

The students have sent in a representation. The said students have stated that...

This is clumsy. It would have been much better to avoid using 'the said students' as a form of referring back and instead to refer to them as 'They'.

2.8.3 Lexical Replacement

Instead of using pronouns to represent people, objects, events, it is possible to use lexical items like nouns, e.g. *Her son has gone mountaineering again. The boy is never here during the holidays.*

The phrase 'The boy' replaces 'Her son'.

2.8.4 Substitution

It is possible to substitute other words for something previously mentioned. e.g.

Fawzia has a birthday next month. My brother's family has one too.

In the second statement, 'a birthday' is replaced by 'one'.

It is also possible to have said:

Fawzia has a birthday next month. So does my brother's family.

What is now being substituted is 'has a birthday' with 'so does'.

2.8.5 Ellipsis

Let me explain ellipsis by an example

Fawzia has a birthday next month. My brother's family has too. OR So also my brother's family.

Here, the element is not replaced, it is dropped because the context clearly supplies the information.

The four types of replacement mentioned here, namely, reference, lexical replacement, substitution, and ellipsis could all fall under a single category, replacement. Thus, we can have two major types of cohesive devices: conjunction and replacement.

- 1) Go back to the passage given in Check Your Progress 6 and analyse it for cohesive links.
- 2) Now analyse the following passage for cohesive links. Refer back to the section on Cohesion for guidelines. We have done two cohesive linkers for you as examples.

One hundred years ago going to the dentist was a very painful experience, *and* many people did not go *until* their jaws swelled up, and they had terrible toothaches. Now people know how important it is to see the dentist regularly, and it is not painful, because the dentist uses anaesthetics that kill pain. There are two kinds of anaesthetic that the dentist most often uses. He may give his patient an injection of novocin, which is a drug that makes the whole area that he is going to work on numb. When he is going to pull a tooth, he may give the patient a little gas, so he will go to sleep while the dentist is doing his work.

and- additive conjunction

until- indicating temporal relation (conjunction)

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

2.9 COHERENCE

The notion of coherence has already been introduced in Unit 1. What is required here is to add some more dimensions to the term. Organisation and rhetorical form, which have been dealt with earlier, are not the only aspects of coherence. Let's look at some more aspects of coherence:

2.9.1 Thematization/Topic Formation

Coherence can also be seen in the processes of thematization, i.e. of embodying a theme in any piece of writing. A theme could thus provide the underlying principle which links separate aspects of a discursive text together. Thus, coherence is involved in determining the topic/theme of a text. If what is being discussed is not very clear, the text lacks coherence. Again, the topic might contain sub-topics. These also must hang together as parts of a unified whole.

2.9.2 Plot, Summary

Coherence can also be seen to be the organising principle of the plot of a narrative, or involved in binding together the summary of a text. Thus, coherence relates to the basic meaning of a text.

2.9.3 Narrative Structure as a Means of Analysing Experience

Labov & Waletzky (1966) and Labov (1972) go one stage further and propose the structure of narrative as a means for analysing personal experience, such as the account of an accident or other traumatic/emotion-packed event. Looking at the expression of the (traumatic) experience as an organic whole, the narrative structure suggests the following lines of textual analysis:

Abstract: providing a summary or encapsulation of the story

Orientation: identifying the time, place, persons, activities and situations; usually marked by the past continuous tense

Evaluation: indicating the point or interest of the story

Narrative clauses: characterised by the simple past, sometimes simple present tense; and unmarked word order

Result: saying what finally happened

Coda: signalling the end.

The analysis of the account of a personal experience in terms of narrative structure can proceed only if the stages are coherently presented and the whole hangs together. Thus, coherence is crucial to the meaningful existence of any linguistic structure or genre.

Check Your Progress 8

- 1) What are the factors which bring about coherence in a text?

.....
.....
.....
.....

2.10 LET US SUM UP

Now that you've read this unit, are you more comfortable with the notion of text/discourse? It seems less intimidating, doesn't it? Also do you see the relevance of it for any kind of linguistic description? In fact, we hope that you have now realized the limitations of the sentence-based approach. You have also understood why it became necessary and inevitable to include the discourse perspective in our understanding of language. The technical terms used, should be taken in the right spirit. Don't let them worry you. After you read this unit a couple of times, they will become part of your repertoire.

2.11 KEY WORDS

- Rhetoric : The study of style through grammatical and logical analysis.
- Standard variety : The variety of a language which has the highest status in a nation, and is usually based on the speech/writing of the educated native speakers of the language.

Ethnography	: The study of the life and culture of a society or ethnic group, especially by personal observation.
Stylistic variation	: Differences in the speech or writing of a person or group of people according to the situation, the addressee(s) and the location.
Process of standardization	: The process of making some aspect of language usage conform to a standard variety. This is usually implemented by a government authority.
Sociolinguistics	: The study of language in relation to social factors, i.e. social class, educational level, age, sex, ethnic origin, etc.
Authenticity	: Texts which are taken from natural speech or writing.
Deviant	: Any pronunciation, word, or sentence structure which does not conform to the norm.
Turn-taking	: In conversation, the roles of speaker and listener change constantly. The person who speaks first becomes a listener as soon as the person addressed to takes his or her turn in the conversation by beginning to speak.
Feedback	: In Discourse Analysis, the feedback given while some one is speaking is sometimes called backchannel cues , for example comments such as ‘uh’, ‘yes’, ‘really’, smiles, headshakes which indicate success or failure of communication.
Repair	: (In Conversational Analysis) A term for ways in which errors or misunderstandings are corrected by speakers or others during conversation.
Presupposition	: What the speaker or writer assumes that the receiver of the message already knows.
Ellipsis	: The leaving out of words or phrases from sentences when they are unnecessary because they have already been referred to or mentioned Example: Anil went to the window and (he) opened it (subject ellipses). Mary ate a mango and Sunita (ate) a pear. (verb ellipsis)
Theme	: (In discourse analysis) Refers to information that is not new to the reader or listener.
Rheme	: Refers to new information, not known to the listener or reader.
Variation	: Differences in pronunciation, grammar or word choice within a language. Variation in a language may be related to region, to social class or to the degree or formality of a situation in which language is used.
Semantics	: The study of meaning.

Pragmatics	: The study of the use of language in communication particularly the relationships between sentences and the contexts and situations in which they are used.
Speech event	: A particular instance when people exchange speech, e.g. an exchange or greeting, an enquiry, a conversation.
Speech situation	: Any situation which is associated with speech, e.g. a classroom lesson, a party.
Performative	: (In speech act theory) an utterance which performs an act, such as 'look out' (= a warning), 'I promise not to do that again' (=a promise).
Frame or scripts	: Units of meaning consisting of sequences of events and actions that are related to particular situations. For example a "restaurant frame script" would have the knowledge that a restaurant is a place where waiters and cooks work, where food is served to customers, and so on. And knowledge of this frame/script helps us to understand texts pertaining to restaurants.
Schemata	: Different kinds of text have different kinds of underlying structure.

2.12 SUGGESTED READINGS

Brown & Yule, 1983. *Discourse Analysis*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hatch, Evelyn. 1992. *Discourse and Language Education*, Cambridge University Press.

Halliday, M.A.K. (1970) *Language Structure and Language Function*. In Lyons, J., Ed., *New Horizons in Linguistics*, Penguin, Harmondsworth.

Halliday, M. A. K., & Hasan, R. 1976. *Cohesion in English*. English Language Series, London: Longman.

Philip N. Johnson-Laird, *Mental Models of Meaning*. In A. Joshi, Bruce H. Weber & Ivan A. Sag (eds.), *Elements of Discourse Understanding*, Cambridge University Press.

Stubbs, Michael. 1991 *Discourse Analysis: The Sociolinguistic Analysis of Natural Language*. Wiley Blackwell.

2.13 ANSWERS

Check Your Progress 1

- 1)
 - i) Language occurring in speech is totally ignored.
 - ii) Only standard variety of language studied.
 - iii) Sentences which are not in any context are studied.
- 2) Sentences which are not in any context are studied.

These are merely cues to help you answer.

	Text	Sentence
1)	In a text (especially oral) sentences not necessarily complete - may break off in the middle	Grammatically correct and well-structured
2)	Part of a context – both textual and social	Sentences looked at in isolation from the context or social situation

- 3) Yes it would, because
- i) Students would work with authentic language.
 - ii) They would analyse both the spoken and written form of language.
 - iii) They would be able to understand language in context.

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) Research in sociolinguistics, in ethnography, and in communication, heralded a radically different conception of language. Authenticity, what was actually being said, began to be more important than an abstract standard of grammatical perfection. So, the actual utterance, however imperfect or deviant it might appear, became the object of the linguist's attention, making the context of utterance crucial, and variation of all kinds, the normal condition of speech.
- 2) The limitations are:
 - i) unable to capture authentic language.
 - ii) unable to absorb the context of utterances.
 - iii) unable to fully look at the meaning of sentence.
- 3)
 - i) the study of the functions language performs in social contexts
 - ii) the interaction between grammatical form and function and
 - iii) grammatical form looked at from a functional perspective. It is argued that the text and not the isolated sentence is the basis of language.

Check Your Progress 3

- 1) **Co-text:** A text is built up on the basis of interrelations in sentences/clauses. Such interrelationships are crucial to language and cannot be ignored. This is the textual context, or 'co-text' which is essential for the expression of meaning.

Context of situation: This relates to the relationship of participants in a discourse, degree of politeness required because of the relationship and the topic being discussed, etc.

- 2) **Components features:**
 - i) speaker-hearer/writer-reader interactional
 - ii) Ethnographic information which relates to cultural conventions and norms of behavior in a society.

Check Your Progress 4

- 1) Speech Act - an utterance as a functional unit in communication. There are many different kinds of speech acts, such as requests, orders, commands, complaints, promises.

Check Your Progress 5

Do it yourself.

Check Your Progress 6

- 1) 'Such a measure' refers to the whole of the previous sentence, 'Road maintenance crews try to reduce the danger of skidding by scattering sand upon the road surfaces.' It is an instance of 'substitution'. 'Its' in 'Its main drawback' refers to 'such a measure'. It is an instance of 'reference'. The phrase, 'the whole process' substitutes for 'Its' which again refers to 'such a measure'. 'The snowfalls' in the last sentence refers back to all the previous mentions of 'snowfalls'. The last 'it' refers to 'the whole process' and everything that 'the whole process' stands for.

Check Your Progress 7

One hundred years ago going to the dentist was a very painful experience, **and** many people did not go **until** their jaws swelled up, **and** they had terrible toothaches. **Now** people know how important it is to see the dentist regularly, **and** it is not painful, **because** the dentist uses anaesthetics **that** kill pain. There are two kinds of anaesthetic **that** the dentist most often uses. **He** may give his patient an injection of novocin, **which** is a drug that makes the whole area **that** he is going to work on numb. **When** he is going to pull a tooth, **he** may give the patient a little gas, **so** he will go to sleep while the dentist is doing his work.

Check Your Progress 8

Theme, plot, summary.

UNIT 3 APPLICATION OF TEXT ANALYSIS TO TEACHING THE FOUR LANGUAGE SKILLS

Structure

- 3.0 Objectives
- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Approaches to Teaching
- 3.3 Reading and Listening: Comprehension Skills
 - 3.3.1 Comprehension Purposes
 - 3.3.2 Analysis of Some Sub-skills of Reading and Listening
 - 3.3.3 Further Analysis of the Component Sub-skills
- 3.4 Writing and Speaking: Production Skills
 - 3.4.1 Teaching Exercises
- 3.5 Let Us Sum Up
- 3.6 Suggested Readings

3.0 OBJECTIVES

Our aim in this Unit is to help you create interesting activities/exercises for your own students using the discourse perspective. We have given you several cues and suggestions which you could adapt in your context. Our concentration in this Unit is on the skills of Reading, Listening, Writing and Speaking. We have also enunciated the sub-skills of all the skills so you can help your students develop adequate strategies.

Our aim in this Unit, therefore, will be to

- understand the purpose of teaching the four skills of Reading, Listening, Writing and Speaking;
- analyse the sub-skills involved in both comprehension (for Reading – Listening) and production (for Writing – Speaking); and
- give you hints to the exercise types that you may use in the classroom with your students.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The introduction of text analysis in Units 1 and 2 would have prepared you for the next task which is practical, and has immediate application to classroom teaching. Text analysis will have enabled you to see that the teaching of grammar and vocabulary, as such, is not sufficient for language learning. Language learning requires exposure to and use of language in context and language in chunks, as under normal conditions of use. This means that the ability to produce and process language and thus command of the four skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking becomes crucial in order to use language in authentic contexts. We will now analyse the different aspects of the four skills and consider possible techniques for teaching these.

3.2 APPROACHES TO TEACHING

As we have seen, Text Analysis releases us from the bondage of the sentence and the exclusive concern with grammatical patterning. In the wide open spaces now available to us, we not only have the text with its own internal system of organisation, but also the social context in which the text takes shape, and the psychological processes of encoding by the speaker/writer as well as the processes of decoding by the listener/reader. Interactivity is the key word over here, for we are concerned mainly with communication, and with making sense, and not merely with grammatical correctness. Thus, the nature of the background information available, and presuppositions of both speaker and listener become crucial, as also the mental models constructed by each participant in the interaction. As there is no restriction on the topics that may be considered, or to the operations that the mind can perform on the topic, the level of abstractness/concreteness can vary, and the mental operations may consist of, among others, analysis, interpretation, comparison, definition and so on.

Each teaching exercise will be concerned with the overall aim of developing communication skills in English, and the specific aim of developing one aspect of one skill in particular.

We shall start with comprehension, and lead on to production. As you go through the types of skills, with suggested exercises, we would like you to

- 1) consider if there are any other sub-skills you would like to add. If so, note them down promptly. Check back later if they are in fact different, and if so in what respect.
- 2) also note down any other teaching exercises or modifications of these that occur to you.
- 3) look at other teaching materials, starting with the recommended list, and moving on to any others that you can lay your hands on, to draw out other suitable exercises.
- 4) analyse these exercises and assess their usefulness in the classroom.

3.3 READING AND LISTENING: COMPREHENSION SKILLS

3.3.1 Comprehension Purposes

Before analysing the nature of the individual skills, let us first consider the general purpose that can be considered to underlie comprehension. We are concerned with real life purposes and not made-up classroom purposes.

The following would seem to be the major purposes that motivate reading/listening:

- 1) To understand someone's feelings
- 2) To be entertained or stimulated emotionally
- 3) To acquire information
- 4) To find out about the point of view or experience of others

- 5) To review or refine one's understanding
- 6) To appreciate the writer's/ speaker's craft.

If these are accepted as the major purposes of reading/listening, then it would appear that we should try to gear our comprehension courses to develop the skills required to fulfill these purposes.

- 1) To understand someone's feeling, the reader/listener must be sensitive to the nuances of expression, tone, attitude, must be able to read between the lines, must not be blocked by cross-cultural differences, or varying presuppositions or background information.
- 2) To be entertained or stimulated emotionally, the content of the communication is important. It must be relevant to one's needs, and must fulfill the basic requirements of good communication.
- 3) To acquire information, one must learn how to focus on what is important; distinguish between major and minor points, ideas, etc.
- 4) To find out about the view point or experience of others, one has to distinguish between facts and attitudes/view points, to analyse and interpret text.
- 5) To review or refine one's understanding, it is necessary to learn how to acquire the type of information one wants, to analyse, interpret, infer, evaluate that information.
- 6) To appreciate the writer's/speaker's craft, the skill of verbal expression needs to be understood.

As we have seen, a variety of skills is required in order to fulfill the purposes most individuals have for reading/listening. In addition to these, there are a number of other skills, which underlie these or else are also required to facilitate better comprehension. Alderson (1984) raised the question, 'Is reading a language problem or a reading problem? which is pertinent to the skill of comprehension. We have to be concerned with aspects of both the language which is used in communication, as well as the skills of comprehension.

3.3.2 Analysis of Some Sub-skills of Reading and Listening

Leaving the language aspects aside for the moment, can we break down the global notion of comprehension skills into specific skills of comprehension? What are these? The following would appear to be the major sub-skills of comprehension:

- A) The mechanics of reading/listening**
- B) Making sense (assigning meaning to phrases/sentences)**
- C) Reading for information, opinion, attitude.**

These major sub-skills could then be further sub-divided into component sub-skills:

A) The Mechanics of Reading/Listening

- 1) Decoding print/phonology/intonation patterns
- 2) Fluency in handling orthography/phonology
- 3) Variable purpose eye movement: skimming, scanning, close reading

B) Making sense (assigning meaning to phrases/sentences)

- 1) Anticipating syntactic and semantic categories. Deducing meaning from context. Registering cohesive links and recognising discourse patterns. (grammar, vocabulary, cohesion, discourse patterning)
- 2) Perceiving the sequence of ideas; the relationship between different ideas; organising and classifying facts
- 3) Understanding and interpreting non-verbal information—maps, charts, graphs, etc. Relating, converting non-verbal information to verbal information

C) Reading for information, opinion, attitude

- 1) Getting the general idea of what is being said; overview
- 2) Getting the gist of the communication. Separating the main idea from related details - summarising
- 3) Extracting specific information
- 4) Predicting what will come next; outcomes
- 5) Noting discrepancies between different statements, deciding, distinguishing fact from opinion
- 6) Inferring opinion and attitude
- 7) Reading for appreciation

The following is a further analysis of these component sub-skills and some suggestions about how to develop them in the classroom.

3.3.3 Further Analysis of the Component Sub-skills

A) The Mechanics of Reading/Listening

i) Reading:

Decoding print/handwriting. Understanding format

Whole word reading; reading for visual patterns; spelling; punctuation

Eye span increase; movement of eyes on the page

Reading in meaningful units

ii) Listening:

Retaining chunks of language of different lengths for short periods

Discriminating between the distinctive sounds of the target language, particularly between commonly confused phonological units

Becoming aware of word boundaries, other grammatical boundaries

Sound-symbol correspondence; relationship between sound patterns and grammatical patterns; listening in meaningful units

Recognising the stress patterns of words

Decoding intonation patterns

Teaching Exercises

We have given you information on the mechanics of reading/listening. We give below some exercises which you could try out in the classroom.

- 1) **i) Finding patterns in orthography; in spelling; in larger formats,**
e.g. a letter as opposed to a report.

Ask students to identify specific patterns in text(s) and relate them to sound e.g. spelling patterns to their corresponding sound patterns; or other visual/orthographic patterns to meaning, e.g. the article 'a' as seen in its various occurrences. Learning to read by visual patterning 'whole words' rather than by learning each letter of the alphabet separately. Learning how to read whole words has the advantage of dealing with a meaningful unit; learning individual letters of the alphabet is a much more abstract activity. **This activity you could try out in the primary classes.**

- ii) Finding patterns in language sounds**

- a) In a passage that is read out, e.g. the 'shn' sound in '-tion', '-sion' (attention, extension) and then linking these with the meaning
- b) In order to acquire a sense of **word boundaries**, get students to distinguish whatever words they can from the flow of speech. Let them listen to the same passage spoken at different speeds, and pick out words they can distinguish. Let them do this in pairs, with each member of the pair performing in turn.

- 2) **Use speed reading/chunk listening techniques to simultaneously increase speed and comprehension**

- i) Eye span increases by reading in meaningful units.** Break up a paragraph into phrases/clauses and put each phrase/clause on a separate line. Give students practice in seeing each of these in one eye movement, pausing only at the end of the line. Increase the length of the line by using a larger unit of grammar.
- ii) Training the eye to move swiftly** left to right and top to bottom, picking up whatever comes along the way. Pick up one key word per line; move the eye down a paragraph rapidly, keeping the eye on the centre of the first line down through to the centre of the last line, taking in what information it can through peripheral vision.
- iii) Oral memory** increases by listening to a passage read in chunks, consisting of specific phrases/clauses, e.g. An earthquake strikes without warning/when it does/its power is immense...

- iv) **Listening only for key words:** for particular grammatical units; for specific information (later being checked for what else the student remembers (peripheral listening).
- v) **Recognising the odd man out** in vowels/consonants in single words; in differential stress used to mark nouns from verbs in sentences, e.g. He remained a ‘rebel all his life (‘rebel: noun; stress on first syllable). He continued to rebel all his life (rebel: verb; stress on second syllable).
- vi) **Decoding intonation patterns.** This is very important in terms of understanding tone and attitude; politeness or the lack of it; shades of meaning. Listening to recorded speech and trying to isolate instances of politeness/rudeness.

3) **Developing fluency in handling orthography/phonology**

Reading for fluency/listening to language spoken at its normal pace. Being able to cope with less than full understanding. One of the ways to develop fluency is to guess at the meaning of unfamiliar words. This is meant to encourage weaker students who tend to read slowly and never skim through a text because they think there is too much they do not understand. The idea is to show them that even a few words understood here and there can be enough to understand what the passage is about. In fact, it is what often happens when we run our eyes over a text to get the gist of it.

For example consider the following exercise. You are skimming through an article in which most of the words are unknown to you. Here are the ones you can understand, however

professor

Institute of Biochemistry

hard-working man

results of experiments

published

confession

invention

different results

fraud

regrets it

Can you guess, from these few words, if the article is about:

“ a well-known professor who has just published his confessions”

“ a scientist who has admitted inventing the results of his experiments”

“ a scientist who has killed himself because he couldn’t get the same results as everybody else”

“ a scientist who regrets the publication of the results of his experiments”.

(from Grellet, 1980)

4) i) **Variable purpose eye movement: Skimming, scanning, close reading**

Practice in skimming to get an overview, scanning for specific information, and close reading.

- a) **Scanning:** Try the following exercise. When looking at a text for the first time ask the students not to read it, but merely to mark out in words which recur, along with the number of times they occur. If, for example, in a particular passage the recurrent words are young, old man/men, friends(s), ask them what insights they have derived about the passage from this. Is the passage likely to deal with a comparison between old and young men? Let them then read the passage to find out if they were right in their surmises. The passage in question is as follows:

‘Some of Naseeruddin’s old friends were talking about the young people of their town. Then one of the old men said, ‘But young men are stronger than old then’.

All of them agreed that this was so, except Naseeruddin. He said, ‘No. I am as strong now as when I was a young man.’ ‘How is that possible?’ asked his friend. ‘Well,’ said Naseeruddin, ‘in one of my fields there is a rock. When I was a young man, I used to try to move it, but I couldn’t because I was not strong enough. I am an old man now, and when I try to move it, I still cannot.’

Making students aware of their own strategies in reading

Get them to introspect on what they are doing when they are reading a text. How do their eyes move – word by word, line by line, or in a zigzag pattern? Do they turn back to something already read, which they now feel they can’t understand? When do the eyes pause; how often do they pause? and what happens when they pause? Consciousness of their own reading strategies can be one way of moving them into the use of more efficient strategies. Guidance on how to develop efficient reading strategies can be procured from any book on speed reading.

Variable purpose listening: for overview, detail, specific information

Listening to recorded announcements and drawing out only the information required, e.g. the status of the train you are travelling on.

B) Making sense (assigning meaning to phrases/sentences)

This implies inculcating an awareness of the form, organisation through which the content is expressed.

- i) Recognising basic grammatical patterning and punctuation.
- ii) Awareness of word formation patterns and ability to distinguish between different semantic fields.
- iii) Anticipating syntactic and semantic categories.
- iv) Awareness of the use of cohesive links.

- v) Perceiving patterns in discourse: sequencing, comparison contrast, classification, argumentation, ability to analyse the types of relationships being forged, organising and classifying information
- vi) Understanding and interpreting non-verbal information – maps, charts, graphs, etc. Relating, converting non-verbal information to verbal.

Teaching exercises

1) Knowledge of basic grammatical patterning and punctuation

- a) **Punctuation and its relationship to meaning.** Inserting punctuation marks in a passage where the use of punctuation/different punctuation/ no punctuation affects meaning. Analysing the differences these introduce in the meaning of the passage.
- b) **Understanding the difference in information focusing and emphasis brought in by the subordination and coordination** of clauses in a sentence. Analysing two passages which differ only in terms of subordination and coordination patterns.
- c) **Analysing the effect of different sentence types, and the positioning of adverbials** and other words in a sentence, as for example in the following:

I saw the big, black dog here again yesterday.
 Yesterday I saw the big, black dog here again.
 It was the big, black dog that I saw here again yesterday.
 It was yesterday that I saw the big, black dog here again.
 What I saw here again yesterday was the big, black dog.

2) Knowledge of word formation patterns and ability to distinguish between different semantic fields

- a) **Crossword puzzles to improve spelling, vocabulary recall**
- b) **Understanding the connections between words in the same semantic range in a passage.** Being aware that such connections exist, and looking for them in a text is important in developing a strategy of inference.

Consider the following exercise:

Reading the text a second time to find all the words related to particular ideas. In the example given below, the idea chosen is *dependence/independence*. The task is to find words related in meaning to these words in the given passage, and then to fill in this information in a table, such as the following

	Nouns	Adjectives	Verbs
dependence e.g.	slaves	insecure	
independence			

(Grellet, p.29-30)

Can you think of other words to complete the table?

Let's look at another example:

Read the following paragraph and pick out words that suggest the idea of largeness:

It was a turtle, an upside-down turtle lying on its back on the sand. But what a turtle it was! It was a giant, a mammoth. I had not thought it possible for a turtle to be as enormous as this. It was perhaps five feet long and four feet across: with a high-domed shell of great beauty.

(from *Routes to English*, Orient Longman, Reader 8)

- c) **Recognising equivalence and the use of general words to cover more specific ones** (hyponymy). Identifying instances of synonymy, antonym, markers of equivalence, words which introduce examples, rephrasing of the same idea, an equivalent expression, general words to cover more specific ones.

You could give a suitable passage and ask the following questions:

- i) Find at least one instance of synonymy
- ii) Find at least one instance of antonym
- iii) Find at least three markers of equivalence
- iv) Which of these words introduce(s)
 - an example:
 - a rephrasing of what has been said before:
 - an equivalent expression:

(Grellet, p. 30-31)

- d) **Inferring the meaning of unfamiliar/incomplete words**

Reading the whole text, looking at certain words and guessing their meaning from the context. The relationship between the word and context is given (e.g. equivalence: a synonym is mentioned in the text; contrast: the word means the contrary of another word or expression given in the text)

- e) **Drawing out expressions which are equivalent in a text** and isolating the expressions that are used to express this equivalence (Grellet, p.31-2).

Presented in tabular form:

Quotation from text	Word which is explained	Explanation (equivalence)	Device used
e.g. in addition, the concept has been criticized as being tautological – that is, circular in its reasoning – and we should examine that accusation.	tautological	Circular in its reasoning	Explicit marker 'that is' and hyphenation

f) Deducing the meaning and use of unfamiliar lexical items through understanding word formation (Grellet, p.41)

You could train your students by giving an appropriate passage and asking the following type of questions:

- i) Two words with the suffix - 'ible' appear in the text. What are they? Can you think of other words in the same way?
- ii) Underline the suffixes in the following words:
 - psychologist
 - wondrous
 - spoonful
 - softly
 - observation

Can you guess the meaning of each of the suffixes?

Can you think of other words formed with the same suffixes?

- iii) Find two words with a prefix in the text:
 - Define the value of each prefix.
 - One of them is used to make a word negative. What prefix would you add to each of these adjectives/nouns in order to make them negative?
 - print
 - trained
 - organization
 - ability

g) At the beginning of the text, you can find the word 'psychologist'

- Can you find another word formed in the same way?
- Can you complete the following table with the appropriate words?

Noun	Adjective	Person	Verb	Adverb
Hypnosis	Hypnotic	Hypnotist	Hypnotize	Hypnotizingly
Psychology	Psychological	Psychologist		
Hypnotism		Hypnotizer		
		Employer		
Science				
	Free			

3) Anticipating syntactic and semantic categories

This can be done by deducing meaning from context, registering cohesive links and recognising discourse patterns.

4) Knowledge of cohesive links

It is obvious that *all* the words and structures used in a particular text play a role in creating a meaningful discourse. But there are some words that play a crucial role in connecting sentences together. This linking of sentences is known as **cohesion**. Given below is a list of cohesive devices that we are going to discuss and structure words that operate in them.

i) **Definite Reference:**

a) **Personal reference:**

personal pronouns (**I, we, you, he, she, it, they**), possessive pronouns (**mine, yours**, etc.) and the determiners (**my, your**, etc.)

b) **Demonstrative reference: this/that, these/those**, used either as pronouns or as determiners, the article **the**, and the adverbs **here** and **there**.

ii) **Linkage:**

a) **Coordinating conjunctions: and, or, but, neithernor**, etc.

b) **Linking adverbials: for, so yet, however, meanwhile, for example**, etc.

Let's try to differentiate between Reference and Linkage.

Reference, as you already know, is a device which indicates that 'the same person or object' is being referred to in different parts of a text, i.e. in the preceding or the following text. Reference basically involves either a repeated reference to a person or object, or a repetition of a meaning (extended reference).

Linkage, on the other hand, is not a device to identify items in the preceding or the following text. It is primarily a way of signalling how one idea leads on to another. The words and phrases which have this connecting function are like signposts on a journey. They generally come at the beginning of a sentence.

a) **Understanding the use of reference (Grellet, p.46)**

In a paragraph given, referential relations are indicated by the use of underlining in the first few lines. Use the same procedure in the rest of the text. Example:

One day the good journal announced a special offer of eight thousand rupees. It excited Rama Rao's vision of a future tenfold. He studied the puzzle. There were only four doubtful corners in it, and he might have to send in at least four entries. A large outlay was indicated. 'You must give me five rupees this time'; he said to his wife, at which that good lady became speechless. He had become rather insensitive to such things these days, but even he could not help feeling the atrocious nature of his demand....

(From 'Out of Business' by R. K. Narayan, in *An Astrologer's Day and Other Stories*, Indian Thought Publications).

Structure word	Grammatical category	Refers to
1) It (2nd sentence)	Personal pronoun	A special offer
2) He (3rd sentence)	Personal pronoun	Rama Rao
3) it (4th sentence)	Personal pronoun	The puzzle
4) he (4th sentence)		

- b) **Use of link words.** The link words in a passage are italicised/underlined. They have to be replaced by other link words, or the sentences have to be rewritten, making sure that the meaning remains the same.
- c) **Tracing lexical relationships in text.** Awareness of how often a particular lexical item occurs in a text, and ways in which it is replaced (by pronouns, substitution, ellipsis)
- d) **Understanding the organisation of a discursive passage,** i.e. observing the relations between the different parts of the text and the cohesive links which signal these relations. Analysis of a text and representation of the information as a table or diagram/flow chart, indicating on the chart the cohesive link which signals this relation.
- e) **A more complex handling of the same.** The link words in a passage are removed, and in addition, the sentences are jumbled. All you know is that a given set of points occur in the text in a particular order (given), and that a given list of link words is to be inserted in appropriate places. Reconstructing a passage from these specifications. Example (a slightly simpler one)

The following sentences go together to form a story but they are in the wrong order. Working in groups of two or three, put them in the right order, and decide how the words and phrases in bold type help to link the text together. Then compare your answers with those of other groups.

- i) **But** the strange thing is that nobody seems to live there.
- ii) **It** is a large two-storey house with an ample garden.
- iii) I don't like to stand **there and stare in**, but even a quick glance tells you that everything is **perfectly kept**.
- iv) **Or is it?**
- v) Along the street from where I live is a house that is something of a mystery.
- vi) But no one that I know **can**.
- vii) **The** garden is neat and tidy, and **the** house itself is freshly painted and clean.
- viii) Perhaps the people who live opposite could clarify **the point**.
- ix) From when **they** leave until **their** next visit, the house is completely empty.
- x) This is surrounded by a high wall, and the only spot where you can see inside is the gate.

- xi) The only people you ever see are the gardener and the house-keeper, who come early in the morning two or three times a week, and go away in the late afternoon.

(From Coe, N. et al. 1983)

f) Marking out the cohesive links in the given passage:

He came home laden with roses. Nevertheless, he was still somewhat in fear of his wife's reaction to his unexplained absence. Would she look at the roses and forget everything else? What if she didn't? Of course, he had his story ready, but in face of an angry woman which story would hold water? Yet, she was not always unreasonable. There was he felt, still hope.

Try substituting other words for these cohesive links and see what changes in construction are required. Does any change in meaning result? For example:

Breaking down the sentences into their simplest forms and considering the differences in style and emphasis. e.g. *He came home. He was laden with roses. Nevertheless, he was still somewhat in fear. He was afraid of his wife's reaction to his unexplained absence...* Consider the degrees of simplification necessary for different audiences.

5) Knowledge of patterns of discourse: Sequencing, comparison, contrast, classification, argumentation; ability to analyse the types of relationships being forged

a) Removing irrelevancies, redundancies from text

- b) Cloze test**, i.e. a passage with every 5th, 6th or 7th word left blank, regardless of what the word might be. Students have to fill in the blanks on the basis of their overall comprehension of the text. For example:

Our house is filled with photos. They cover the walls ofkitchen, dining room and den. see our family's entire history, with my wedding, continuing throughbirths of both sons, buying home, family gatherings and vacations.my sons were little, they to pose. They waved, danced,trees, batted balls, hung upsidefrom the jungle gym and anything for a picture. Butthey reached adolescence, picture-taking changedsomething they barely tolerated. Theirwere growing at haphazard speeds. they stood with us ortheir grandparents at birthday celebrationssmiled weakly at the cameraas short a time as possible.

- c) Dictation given at normal speaking pace.** Students have been found to write down only what they have been able to understand, and therefore absorb.

- d) Filling in gaps (words, phrases, information) in an orally presented passage.**

- e) **Filling in whole sentences or paragraphs which are missing from a text**
- f) **Cloze Dictogloss:** Read the students a short poem, getting them to jot down the key words as they listen. Then they are each given one of the following lists: all the verbs/nouns and pronouns/all other words in the passage. Also a cloze version of the poem. Students work in groups of three having between them all the three lists. The task is to reconstruct the poem as closely as possible.
- g) **Give the topic sentence of each paragraph of a passage**, stating what expansions occur in the rest of the paragraph, and what relation these expansions have to the topic sentence (e.g. illustration, cause, detail)
- h) **Reorganizing information according to specification of rhetorical patterns:**
Introducing chronological/spatial order; cause-consequence relations; contrast-comparison, etc.
- i) **Re-ordering information to form a coherent paragraph.** (Examples can be taken from faulty student writing)
- j) **Understanding the patterning of conceptual relationships in a text**, e.g. through subordination-super ordination; idea - example; chronology; cause - effect, etc.
- k) **Understanding argument by differentiating between different stands taken**

C) **Reading for information, opinion, attitude**

Here, what is being stressed is the content of what is to be comprehended. Some teaching techniques are suggested to acquire control over the content:

- 1) **Getting the general idea of what is being said – an overview**
 - a) Topic formulation, with or without isolation of a topic sentence. Creation of the appropriate mental schemata to process the information.
 - b) Relating the incoming message to one's own background knowledge
- 2) **Getting the gist of the communication.** Separating the main idea from related details
 - a) **Separation of major from minor ideas;** separation of ideas from examples of ideas. Schematic summarisation, use of tables, charts, flow-charts, diagrams.
 - b) **Summary completion**, i.e. presenting a summary of a passage or larger text and leaving gaps for key terms/concepts to be filled in.

3) Extracting specific information

e.g. Given a travel brochure, to pick out the relevant hotels and fix an itinerary, given the budget, preferences and amount of time available to the group.

4) Anticipating/predicting what will come next; outcomes

- a) **Pre-reading questions to anticipate information.** Before reading a text, ask questions which will make students guess what is to come, thus arousing their interest. Give them first the title and ask what is likely to be the content of the passage. Also, ask general questions which have some bearing on the text. The students will bear these in mind when reading it, and this will give them a focus. Example,

The Lost Beauty of Angkor Vat

Preparation

- 1) Angkor Vat was a temple in the country known as Kampuchea. Where is Kampuchea?
- 2) What was Kampuchea's old name?
- 3) What do you think could have caused the loss of beauty of the Angkor Vat temple? Make a list of these causes.

(from Routes to English, Orient Longman)

- b) **Predicting/anticipating information from available cues; filling in gaps in the passage.**
- i) Presenting a story with gaps, asking questions about what could have happened at a particular point, proceeding with the story, then presenting another gap with questions/multiple-choice options about what could have happened in the gap.
 - ii) Reconstructing a torn newspaper report. Hand out the pieces to the students and they have to put it together like a jigsaw puzzle.
 - iii) Reconstructing a message from the radio/telephone presented with a great deal of static/cross-connections
 - iv) Reconstructing the meaning of a garbled Twitter message
 - v) Prediction from incomplete passages. e.g. 'Well, I've thought about it, and I know I ought to go and see it. It is after all one of his best films and it's only on for a few days. (Sigh). Anyway, the fact of the matter is ...

The correct continuation of the last sentence is:

- A) I just can't wait to see it.
- B) I thought it was a waste of time

- C) I just haven't got the time to spare.
- 5) **Noting discrepancies between different statements or between what is read/heard and what is known**
e.g. Comparing two newspaper reports of the same event
- 6) **Judging, weighing evidence, reconciling discrepancies, deciding, distinguishing fact from opinion**
- a) Categorising particular interactive events, such as storytelling, joking, praying, complaining, on the basis of the language used
 - b) Assigning places, persons or things to categories
 - c) Inferring the sequence between events in a story/report
- 7) **Inferring opinion and attitude**
- a) Interpreting rhythm, stress, intonation to identify information focus and emotional/attitudinal tone
 - b) Interpreting type of vocabulary, syntax used to establish tone
- 8) **Reading for appreciation**
Reading widely to be encouraged. Views on what is read can be discussed.

3.4 WRITING AND SPEAKING: PRODUCTION SKILLS

Can we break down the global notion of 'production skills' into specific skills? What are these?

I) Mechanics of speech/ writing

- 1) Learning the script through visual patterns
- 2) Fluency; appropriate pace

Non-stop speech/writing. Get students to speak individually into an audio recorder or to each other in pairs. What they say is not important - they can say anything that comes to mind, the events of the day from morning, for example. But they must not stop speaking even for a moment. If they can't think of what to say next, they should go on repeating the last word till they can think of another.

The same tactics can be applied to writing. This exercise builds confidence and is very good as a warm-up for other activities.

II) Coherence in Writing: The Organisation of Ideas

- 1) Rhetorical development
 - Temporal sequence
 - Spatial sequence/ order
 - Comparison and contrast (clarity about the points of comparison/ contrast and the grounds for comparison)

- Cause and consequence/ effect; purpose and result; hypothesis and result, problem and solution
- Reporting the views of others and stating one's own point of view

- 2) Summarizing
- 3) Degree of prominence
- 4) Precision of detail
- 5) Restatement of same idea

III) Applied Grammar: Correctness, Flexibility, Variety in Language, Editing

IV) Communication: Writing/Speaking as a Dialogic Process

V) Fantasy; Creative Thinking; Problem-solving

3.4.1 Teaching Exercises

I) We have already discussed the Mechanics of Reading/Listening. Let us look at point II in some detail.

II) Coherence in Writing: The Organisation of Ideas

1) Rhetorical Development

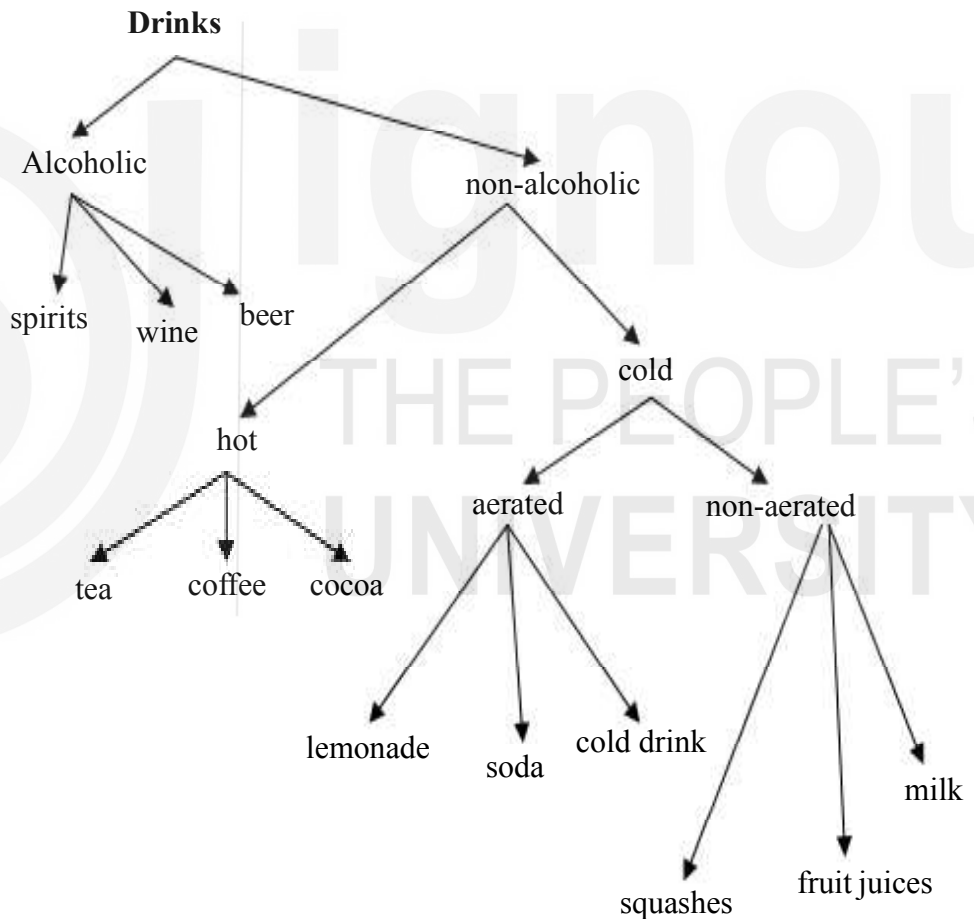
- a) Combining a given pair of sentences in order to indicate a particular kind of relationship: e.g. comparison-contrast, cause-effect, etc.
- b) Unjumbling a jumbled paragraph. Taking a paragraph and putting the sentences in jumbled order. Unjumbling involves knowledge of the rhetorical development of ideas as well as of the linguistic signals which indicate these relationships
- c) Editing unsuitable passages of student writing/ journalistic writing/ correspondence to improve the rhetorical patterning of the texts
- d) Creating a coherent passage from a collection of different bits of information
- e) Analysing a model text, exemplifying a particular discourse pattern, and writing another passage on the basis of the model
- f) Adding given pieces of information to a passage. Provide suitable additional information. Deciding where and how to insert this from the point of view of appropriate organization.
- g) Producing certain rhetorical patterns according to a (flexible) format. Examples are given of different rhetorical patterns, in which you have to fill in the blanks. e.g.

Definition: _____ is a kind of _____ (device/ form/ species/ category) which has/was meant for _____. (name, class, distinguishing features).

Classification: _____ may be divided/classified into _____ groups; those which _____ and those which _____.

Hypothesis framing: If _____ then _____ (Condition/ Circumstance leading to predicted consequence).

- h) A paragraph is presented. The student is asked to imagine the situation in which it occurs and write up a beginning and end for it.
- i) Diagrammatic display of rhetorical relationships. For example: Look at the following tree diagram: classification
- ii) What are the three criteria that are used in the classification?
- iii) Write a description of the classification of drinks based upon the information in the diagram. Begin your description: Drinks may be classified into two main groups...



Using a scale of qualification

When generalizing from data, it is possible to make the generalizations more or less precise by qualifying them. Change a factual passage into one which involves generalization, using the chart given below as a reference guide.

%AGE GUIDE	QUANTITY	FREQUENCY	PROBABILITY	VERBS
100%	all/ever/each/most/a majority of many/much a lot (of)/enough some a number (of) several a minority a few/a little few/little no/ none/ not	always usual(ly) normal(ly) general(ly) regular(ly) often frequent(ly) sometimes occasion(ly) rare(ly) seldom hardly ever scarcely ever never	certain(ly) definite(ly) undoubtedly probably/probable likely perhaps possibly/possible may be unlikely	will is/are/must have to should out to may might can could will is/are cannot could

2) Summarising for Different Purposes

Exercises:

- Writing a schematic summary, expressing the logical organisation of the passage
- Selecting relevant information from a passage/ speech and putting it in point form
- Writing the minutes of a meeting
- Taking notes from a lecture

3) Appropriate focus for major and minor ideas/examples

Exercises:

- From a given list of ideas selecting those to be given major or minor focus and constructing a passage accordingly
- Editing a given passage to provide appropriate focus

4) Degree of prominence to be given to rhetorical units/ ordering of topic and comment relations according to the purpose of writing/ speech.

Exercises:

- Interpreting passages rendered incoherent by lack of appropriate focus and rewriting these in coherent form
- Changing the format of writing, e.g. from a lecture transcript into a piece of academic prose or from a passage from a text-book into an examination answer, in order to give the appropriate focus and organisation
- Changing the topic-comment relations of individual sentences in a given passage in order to study the changes that take place in the substance of what is communicated
- Changing the order of presentation of points in order to see what changes take place in focus and prominence

5) Precision of detail and the relationship of detail to specific generalizations

Take a particular topic, e.g. 'Heat in summer' and come up with a number of concrete observations about it – no generalizations, only observations which are available to the senses. If there is a large list, they could be grouped into different categories. Then write up a category heading and a generalization based on that for each. Don't use clichés in language or in thought. Try and respond to the situation as completely as possible and as if for the first time. Concreteness is perhaps even more difficult to achieve successfully than generalization.

6) Restatement of the same idea in different words for purposes of clarification/effect, while avoiding redundancy and padding.

i) Coherence in speech

Let us look at some of the activities that you could try out in your classroom.

- a) *Work in pairs.* One person from each pair is given a sentence which he has to weave into the conversation, and he has to do this so skillfully that his partner doesn't guess what the sentence is. He has to provide a natural context for his sentence (using exactly the same form as what is given) and somehow turn the conversation in that direction. Simultaneously, his partner has his own sentence which he is trying to weave into the conversation. The one who guesses what the sentence is, wins. Some sample sentences which are difficult, but make for creative conversations, are:

Imitation is the best form of flattery

Don't make war, make love

Stone walls do not a prison make, nor iron bars a cage

In the old days giraffes spouted fire

All I want is someone to love

An astrologer told me I would become Prime Minister in 2020.

(from Maley and Duff, 1978)

ii) Speech

The students work in pairs. Each pair is asked to imagine a city of the future. This city may, of course, be in space, underwater, underground, etc. They decide on the main features of this new civilization, and design signs and notices, which a visitor to the city might see. Clearly these signs will be meaningful only to the inhabitants. There should, therefore, be no recognizable words on them. About 12-15 minutes are allowed for preparation. Both partners make a copy (copies) of their signs. Now the pairs break up. Each finds a different partner. By guessing and questioning, they try to discover the meaning of each other's signs. (Maley & Duff, 1978, 1983)

III) Applied Grammar: Correctness, flexibility, variety in language

1) Facility in producing variety in sentence structure

- a) Rewriting a paragraph, making any number of grammatical changes, with no alteration in the meaning. (The number and position of clauses/

phrases in individual sentences could change; cohesive links could change)

- b) Expansion of telegraphese/ newspaper headlines
- c) Writing on the same topic in successive class periods and then comparing changes in the drafts

2) Understanding when to use complex sentences (to subordinate one idea to others)

Editing a passage which is entirely reduced to simple sentences. Asked to introduce suitable complexity in sentence structure (subordination, coordination) in order to give the passage focus

3) How to handle given and new information: topic-comment relations

- a) Editing and rewriting a passage of student writing for better topic-comment relations, so that the passage as a whole appears more focused and clear

4) Appropriacy of lexical items. Handling paraphrase relations; synonymy; elegant variation in language; understanding the structure of affixes, compound words

- a) Editing text to learn the use of these features
- b) Replacement of phrasal verbs, for example in a passage with non-phrasal verbs

5) Appropriacy of cohesive devices: transition markers, contextual reference, ellipsis, substitution

- a) Linking sentences in appropriate pairs (from a jumbled set of sentences, using sentence connectives such as *because*, *however*, etc.)
- b) Editing text to achieve a smooth and connected flow

6) Learning how to signal relationships between ideas, e.g. contrast, development. When to use paragraphs

- a) Analysing a passage in terms of relationships being signaled. Writing another passage using similar signals on a different subject
- b) A passage, as well as a set of points for inclusion in it is given. Decisions have to be taken on where and how to insert these

7) Use of succinct, precise language

Summarising a phrase into a word, a clause into a phrase, one sentence for several. Choice of the right word out of several near-equivalents to be inserted in a sentence/ text.

IV) Communication: Writing/Speaking as a Dialogic Process

- 1) Writing for different types of audiences: academic, popular, technical writing
 - a) Reporting an incident for different audiences, in speech and writing
 - b) The following sentences all relate to a person who can't hear what the other is saying: The speaker and hearer and their relationship to each

other varies in each case, as seen in the language used:

‘I’m sorry, I didn’t catch what you said’

‘Speak a little louder, can’t you?’

‘Could you say that again?’

‘I can’t hear you’

‘Make yourself clear man, don’t mumble.’

Imagine contexts for these sentences and provide a few lines before and after each of them. Be sure to mention the relationship between the participants in the exchange.

2) Types of presuppositions, background knowledge expected

Choose a well-known figure from literature/ film and prepare to explain to him/her why you think he/she is acting wrongly. The subject and tone will be dependent on your presuppositions about the character. State these presuppositions and put down aspects of your background knowledge about the character.

3) Appropriate levels of formality

- a) Try and put down as many words for ‘Closed’ as you can think of and range these on a scale of formality-informality.
- b) Hand out a few photographs of different individuals who present formal and informal appearances. Working in pairs, one student will choose a photograph whose subject s/he will impersonate, and speak through his/her voice. The partner will also have chosen a photograph and will assume that persona. The conversation will proceed as if between those two individuals in the photographs. Keeping the subject of the conversation unaltered, change the personae through the use of other photographs. Notice the changes that take place in the language and tone.

4) Use of established conventions for different types of writing

e.g. a story, a technical report, an academic article. Present the same information in these different formats.

5) Predictive and retrospective abilities in responding to information from available cues

- a) Filling in the gaps in conversation e.g. in this telephone conversation:
...He’s not in, I’m afraid...No, I know it’s a nuisance but he does travel a lot and...Well. I could always put you through to his assistant...Yes, I quite understand, but she does know what’s going on... Ah well, that’s another matter, of course. No, I doubt if she’d know about that... Why not try again tomorrow? He may pop in for a few minutes... About 9 o’clock, I should think... Yes, I’ll tell him. (Maley & Duff, 1978)

- b) **Considering a discursive text as a dialogue.** With every statement being regarded as the answer to an unstated question. Taking a text and putting it into a question-answer format.

e.g. 'Whenever there is snow in England, some of the country roads may have black ice. Motorists coming suddenly upon stretches of black ice may find themselves skidding off the road. Road maintenance crews try to reduce the danger of skidding by scattering sand upon the road surfaces. Such a measure is generally adequate for our very brief snowfalls. Its main drawback is that if there are any fresh snowfalls, the whole process has to be repeated, and if the snowfalls continue, it becomes increasingly ineffective in providing some kind of grip for car tyres.'

- 1) *What happens to country roads whenever there is snow in England?*

Ans. Whenever there is snow in England, some of the country roads may have black ice.

- 2) *What problem does this give rise to for the motorist?*

Ans. Motorists coming suddenly upon stretches of black ice may find themselves skidding off the road.

- 3) *How is this problem overcome? Specifically, what do road maintenance crews do about it?*

Ans. Road maintenance crews try to reduce the danger of skidding by scattering sand upon the road surfaces.

- 4) *Does it really work? Specifically, how good/bad is such a measure?*

Ans. Such a measure is generally adequate for our very brief snowfalls. Its main drawback is that if there any fresh snowfalls, the whole process has to be repeated, and if the snowfalls continue, it becomes increasingly ineffective in providing some kind of grip for car tyres.

(Winter, 1976)

V) **Imagination**

i) **Fantasy; creative thinking; problem-solving**

- a) It is possible to build towards this by providing props. e.g. **Here is a recipe for writing a poem, a diamond-shaped one:**

First line: A noun

2nd line: Two adjectives describing the noun

3rd line: Three participles (words that end with -ing or -ed)

4th line: Four nouns related to the subject (The second two nouns may have opposite meanings from the first two)

5th line: Three participles indicating change or development of the subject

6th line: Two adjectives carrying on the idea of change or development

7th line: A noun that is the opposite of the subject.

A poem following this pattern is given below:

Galaxies
Distant, huge
Glowing, turning, going
Space, mystery, energy, life
Growing, circling, building
Tiny, basic
Atoms.

Here is a set of rules for producing another sort of poem:

1st line: A noun - a person, place or thing

2nd line: Two adjectives separated by a comma

3rd line: Three verbs that tell what the noun does. These verbs are separated by commas

4th line: A thought about your noun. A short phrase will do nicely

5th line: Repeat the word you wrote on the first line. Or a synonym or a related word.

An example of such a poem:

Skirts
Red, green
Hanging short, hanging long,
hanging just right
They have their ups and downs
Skirts

Next, try a **haiku**. The magic of a good haiku is its power of suggestion. Look for meaningful and vivid details that portray your subject. The words you choose will suggest how you feel about the subject. Here are some examples:

- Fish lie lazily
In their still home waters
Basking in shadow.
 - Goldfish in a bowl
Swimming day and night
Never arriving.
- b) **Pictures of two different games are presented. The student has to select one of these and make up the rules for playing it.**
- c) The student has to think of a complex device (e.g. Robot), only it cannot be a device already in existence. It has to be invented (e.g. an instrument for

clearing smog). A picture of the device has to be created, the parts labeled and a description provided of how it works.

- d) Creating connections in different types of material. E.g. four pictures are given to the student. There need not be much in common between them. The student has to connect them in any order preferred and make a story out of it. The place of each picture has to be clear in the story.

HOW TO MAKE USE OF THESE IDEAS:

Pick out any two exercises that excite you or that you feel you can make work in the classroom. Try these out. Record what happened in the classroom. 1) How much of classroom time was spent in you talking? 2) How much time did the students have to talk? 3) Did the less confident students speak in English at all? 4) What did you think was the learning experience?

Now do you feel like trying any more of these? Choose an area among the many dealt with that you feel like working in. Try out some exercises from that section. Discuss these with others who are offering this course. Ask the same questions to yourself as the ones given above. In addition, ask yourself if you feel that students are 1) more interested, 2) learning more. Why/ why not?

Check You Progress 1

- 1) Make a report of any of the exercises that you tried in your classroom.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

3.5 LET US SUM UP

After helping you to understand the discourse perspective, we have suggested teaching-learning activities that you could use in your classroom. These pertain to the four skills (LSRW) but are integrative in nature. We have merely given you pointers which you should develop on your own. Most of the activities pertain to reading and writing skills but can be adapted for listening and speaking skills. Do make use of this repository of exercises and tasks.

3.6 SUGGESTED READINGS

Alderson, Charles J. (1984). Reading in a Foreign Language (Applied Linguistics and Language Study) (1984-06-30), Longman Pub Group (1633)

The Nature of Text

Grellet, Franc'oise, (1981) *Developing Reading Skills: A Practical Guide to Reading Comprehension Exercises* / Cambridge, [Cambridgeshire]; New York: Cambridge University Press,

Maley, A, & Duff, A. (1983). *Drama Techniques in Language Learning: A Resource Book of Communication Activities for Language Teachers* (Cambridge Handbooks for Language Teachers). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Winter, E.O., 1976. *Fundamentals of Information Structure*. Hartfield: The Hartfield Polytechnic



ignou
THE PEOPLE'S
UNIVERSITY