

POWER THEORIES

Fairclough – synthetic personalisation is often used to exert power in a friendly way through pronouns i.e. 'Have you ever wondered...?' or 'we're in it together.'

Holmes – imperatives are forceful so people in power often use softened directives or mitigated imperatives such as 'please don't do that.'

Wareing – personal power (*linked to occupation*), social power (*linked to being part of a dominant social group*) and political power (*linked to the law*).

- **Political** - Legal e.g. Police, Judge, Barrister
- **Personal** - Occupational e.g. Doctor, Teacher
- **Social Group** - Friends and family, class

Influential vs. instrumental – instrumental power is power used to maintain authority whereas influential power is power through persuasion and influence.

Asymmetry – one person has more power than the other. Shown by flouting conversational rules.

H.P. Grice, spoke of CONVERSATIONAL IMPLICATURE, an unspoken meaning (pragmatics).

Grice proposed that, in ordinary conversation, speakers follow four maxims in order to make a conversation cooperative and be understood.

His Maxims:

- **QUALITY:** Speakers should be truthful. They should not say what they believe to be false or make statements for which they lack evidence (supermaxim).
- **QUANTITY:** A contribution should be as informative as is required; it should be neither too long nor too short.
- **RELEVANCE:** Speakers' contributions should relate clearly to the purpose of the exchange (Jackson and Stockwell believed relevance to be the most important maxim).
- **MANNER:** Speakers' contributions should be clear, orderly and brief, avoiding obscurity and ambiguity (supermaxim).

Leech, a linguist, used maxims to explain politeness strategies.

He believed that politeness in conversation involved establishing and maintaining harmony.
More than one maxim may be used at the same time and some are more important than others.

His Principles:

- **TACT:** Minimise cost to other (maximise benefit to other).
- **GENEROSITY:** Minimise benefit to self (maximise cost to self).
- **APPROBATION:** Minimise dispraise of other (maximise praise of other).
- **MODESTY:** Minimise praise of self (maximise dispraise of self).
- **AGREEMENT:** Minimise disagreement between self and other (maximise agreement between self and other).
- **SYMPATHY:** Minimise antipathy between self and other (maximise sympathy between self and other).

Power within discourse - *features used to convey power*

Power behind discourse - *who? what? why?*

Morreal

- **Relief**- Laughter signals the release of nervous energy, therefore humour can be used to overcome social inhibitions and increase relations between interlocutors.
- **Superiority**- We can laugh at other's misfortunes and make them feel inferior to increase our feelings of superiority.
- **Incongruity**- The incongruity theory suggests that humour arises when things that do not normally go together replace logic and familiarity. For example, a joke becomes funny when we predict an outcome and another happens.

Sapir Whorf

- **Linguistic Determinism**- Language determines thought
- **Linguistic Relativity**- Language influences thought

Labov

- **Overt Prestige**- Using the standard, culturally dominant accent/dialect (RP) to show high social class
- **Covert Prestige**- Using Jargon, slang, and non-standard language to fit in with the local dialect and exclude others

Giles

Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT)- people with different dialects who want to cooperate will 'converge' to sound more like each other. People who want to compete/contrast each other will 'diverge' to sound less like each other.

Upwards- Towards RP/SE

Downwards- Towards Estuary English/NSE