

Chapter 2 – Lines and Clines

In the last twenty years, there has been a growing trend towards the recognition of spoken language in linguistics. Halliday argues that the potential of the language system is much more richly realised in spoken than in written discourse.

Given the conversationalisation of written English nowadays, McCarthy has argued that the most useful thing to do is conceive the differences as scales along which individual texts can be plotted rather than distinct binary differences between written and spoken language.

The main models for definition of literary language can be grouped into inherency and sociocultural models:

Inherency models

Inherency definitions are predicated on a division between poetic and practical language. Literariness inheres in the degrees to which language use departs or deviates from expected patterns and thus defamiliarises the reader.

This model is particularly associated with Roman Jakobson who saw poetic language as self-referential – e.g. /like/ is a deliberate choice to draw attention to the phono-aesthetic device rather than use a different verb choice. According to Jakobson, in non-literary discourse, the word or phrase is a mere vehicle for what it refers to.

Most descriptions of linguistic deviation and self-referential uses of language are exemplified by individual words or phrases. Guy Cook has looked at the effects of creativity on larger chunks of language, concluding that discursual deviance can act as a specific trigger to *schema refreshment*. This notion is based on the idea that what is generally understood to be aesthetically valued literature are the texts which introduce schematic or cognitive refreshment. They introduce a new way of viewing the world.

Sociocultural models

Literary language which attempts to underscore the role of reader and receiver interacting in a more sociocultural context has been generally termed speech act theories of literary discourse. In reference to this idea, Ohmann states that

humorous effect serving to bring people together and membership them inclusively; that this kind of creativity is almost always contextually embedded depending on the social relations between participants; it involves both pattern re-forming and pattern forming forms; it is a frequent feature of ordinary language and that it is a common practice to share pleasure, align viewpoints and create convergence in and thought language.

Demotic Creativity: Conclusions

CANCODE has clearly revealed two levels of creative interactions: more overt, presentational uses of language, open displays of metaphoric invention, punning, uses of idioms and departures from expected idiomatic formulations (pattern re-forming) and less overt, subconscious and subliminal parallelisms, echoes and related matchings which regularly result in expressions of affective convergence (pattern forming). Both fulfil fundamental communicative purposes.

As well as conferring pleasure, we use creative language to display identity. Speakers may signal that they like to be thought of as individuals who are fun to be with or may want to signal their sense of belonging to a group.

Generally, pattern re-forming structures and forms involve greater risks for speakers, particularly potential failures of uptake, the embarrassment of unsuccessful performance or ineffective presentationality. Puns are relatively self-conscious acts of language and attempts may fail. When performed successfully, however, there are corresponding rewards as the results can be schema-refreshing.

One must point out that creativity is not always used to form relationships and can actually be played upon to critique somebody and oppose an established institutional order.

Language, Creativity and Models of Language

Written	Spoken
Sentence	Stretches of discourse
Invented data	Naturally occurring data
Ideal individual speaker	Real speaker
Rule-governed creativity	Co-creative talk

- Counterfactual expressions (often used in conjunction with *literally*, *nearly* etc) - e.g. *I ran a mile when I saw her, we literally froze to death*

Hyperbole functions to evaluate, to introduce humour and informality into proceedings, to mark solidarity and mutuality between speakers as well as to gain attention. Hyperbole, however, is different from other figures of speech as its primary function is to intensify an utterance. It often involves speakers in saying things which cannot be true or are recognised as untrue or contrary to perceived facts.

Thus, hyperbole often stimulates laughter and enables participants to achieve a degree of convergence. It is a common strategy and has an inbuilt creative potential. Hyperbole operates along clines of intensity, evaluation and intimacy but is most marked in operation along an intensity scale.

Indirectness and Creativity

Figures of speech such as innuendo, understatement, irony and other more indirect modes such as allegory often require a complete stretch of text in order for their functions to be more fully discerned.

Patternings: Creativities and Clines - A Summary

- Figures of speech constitute a potential resource for creativity. In addition to puns and wordplay, other key forms have been shown to include repetition, metaphor, metonymy, simile, idioms and hyperbole
- Spoken creativity is instantial and emergent coming from local, particular instances, often unplanned and unprepared for by participants
- Creativity is a matter of degree, pervasive in the daily commerce of language, especially in ordinary everyday exchanges
- Spoken creativity can occur in monologues and in the context of a transmission of information but is more likely to grow out of dialogic interaction in which creative forms and functions are co-produced
- There is often a sense in which the co-production of creativity by pattern re-forming means results in our not seeing things subsequently in quite the same way

Chapter 6 – Creativity, Discourse and Social Practice

Interlingual Creativity, Crossings and Identities

Bilingual and multilingual communities are also especially rich in the production of creative artefacts and there is some evidence to suggest that conditions of multilingualism and multiculturalism may favour creative production.

Rampton termed the word *crossing* to refer to cross-lingual transfers and creative mixing of language codes. Often these exchanges took place in liminally fluid encounters where normally ordered social life is loosened and normally social settings and interactions involving rules set by adults do not apply. Thus, language crossing is more likely to occur when young people come together without any overt goals. Typical contexts include the playground; the school corridor; street corners and shopping malls. Often, Rampton notes *double voicing* whereby two different voices, both Creole and non-Creole are mixed for the purpose of criticism, banter or verbal juggling which reinforces group values and affiliations.

Code-Mixing and Online Communication

In online exchanges of Chinese speakers writing in English, it is interesting to note that they almost creatively play with the boundaries of English to create their own version that makes sense to them and enables them to develop a repertoire of mixed codes in order to give expression to their feelings of friendship, intimacy and involvement.

Alternative Dispute Resolution: Creativity and Interdiscursivity

The practice of parties brought together to avoid recourse to a court of law is a recent phenomena that is making us reassess the boundaries between lawyers and clients. Here, creativity is strategically blended with the lawyer sometimes adopting a confrontational and adversarial attitude and other times, more conciliatory and symmetrical. The term *interdiscursivity* captures this idea.

A Post-Modern Critical Creative Practice

Particularly in counselling, creativity takes place in very liminal social spaces often by realigning expectations and outcomes, by widening, narrowing,