

Task 3. – Oral and written language: discourse analysis.

Question 1.

a.

Lines 5 to 9 show a good example of turn taking (Hymes, Dell. 1964. Language in Culture and Society. New York. Harper & Row). This is simply a social ritual in dialogue where the speaking is happening in pairs with each pair knowing when it is his or her turn to speak without there necessarily being a serious of question – answer, question – answer.

Lines 11 to 13 show a good example of self-repair (Hymes, Dell. 1964. Language in Culture and Society. New York. Harper & Row). This is the process in discourse where one party has said something they then decide they do not themselves agree with totally or fully believe in so has noticed this and corrected themselves before the other party has said anything.

Line 7 is a good example of back-channelling (Hymes, Dell. 1964. Language in Culture and Society. New York. Harper & Row). In this line J simply uses the word 'goodness' to act as encouragement and reinforce that M's answer of 'no' was a good enough an acceptable answer. To this end back-channelling is simply the use of short words or phrases to signal reinforcement and encouragement.

Question 1.

b.

Spoken Language	Written Language
Meaning can be carried through intonation.	All meaning has to be expressed through text.
Body language gives us signs and signals of meaning.	There are no seen movements.
Can be clarified if anything is unclear as all parties are present.	Needs more clarity as questions can't be asked of the writer (usually).
Is synchronous communication.	None synchronous communication.
Has a conversational convention to adhere to.	Has no such convention, the writer may write as he/she pleases.
Should be relevant to a given situation.	May not be relevant to a situation.

Analysis.

These differences are very significant for teaching adults to use written languages, from two specific angles.

Firstly when the teacher themselves is preparing and delivering a lesson, they must be aware of their own spoken language. The teacher must make sure that what they are saying, the words they use and the way they are using them are relevant to the specific situation. For instance if teaching a low level literacy class,

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the use of words the students may not be familiar with would be a poor choice as the students may feel inadequate and consequently 'switch off' to the lesson. Conversely when teaching a high-level literacy class the 'dumbing down' can cause the students to feel patronised.

Secondly when encouraging students to use written language themselves, it is important to teach the students to be aware that what they are thinking and what they are actually writing may well be two different things entirely. A person can quite often have ideas in their head however when it comes to putting them down on paper in the written word, these ideas could come out differently or be read and understood differently by the reader.

Any writer must be aware that their writing is 'for the reader' and not for themselves so they must take into account, the context of what they are writing and use clarity to attempt to make sure the reader is understanding the writing as was intended.

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Question 2.

In the extract given it appears that J is controlling the discourse, however without knowing what had transpired earlier it is not 100% certain that that isn't simply the case in this brief extract.

The context of this piece appears to be a conversation about what denotes what an 'educated person' is. It is a formal discussion, perhaps between a student and teacher, with J playing the part of the teacher.

It can be seen that J is controlling the conversation due to several discourse strategies.

J uses back channelling, where she offers affirmation to M after M has answered a question (line 7). J also uses a tag question; that you'd think? (line 5) to confirm a previously answered point in the discourse.

After M attempts self repair (lines 11 to 13) J then initiates a piece of self repair herself to clarify a point with the question, what do you mean? (line 16).

All of these markers point to J being the dominant party, or the party with 'power' in this piece of discourse and thus controlling it.