

## Glossary

### Accent

'Accent' refers to the pronunciation of a language. The word accent is often confused with dialect, which refers to more than a variation of pronunciation. Dialect refers to a unique variety of vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation. In fact, everyone speaks with an accent. Some accents, however, like British or American English, are standardized forms of the language.

### Actual reader

Actual reader is a term that is used to refer to an individual or individuals who actually read or listen to a text.

### Actual writer

This is a term that is used to refer to the individual or individuals who actually produce a text.

### Adjective

A word class used to modify nouns.

### Adverb

A word class used for a number of functions, including modifying adjectives and verbs. Often, adverbs tell us about such things as time, manner, and place. These are called *adverbs of manner*. Adverbs can also modify adjectives and verbs by suggesting the degree - how much or little - a verb is operating or an adjective is modifying. These are called *adverbs of degree*.

### Alliteration

Alliteration is the repetition of sound at the beginning of several words. For example, 'strive, strife and style' all begin with the 'st' sound. This cartoon also shows an example of alliteration where the 'a' sound is repeated in every word. Depending on the sound that is repeated, the use of alliteration can have different effects on an audience. Generally speaking, however, alliteration is used to express the lyrical qualities of language.

### Allusion

An allusion is a form of figurative language in which reference is made to text, event, person or place. By alluding to one of these, the writer relies on the reader's contextual knowledge and makes an implicit comparison between what is presented and what is known. Allusion is a device found in all kinds of texts from ads to novels.

Here are a couple of examples of allusion:

- 'I'm not allowed to apply until I've filled out an application. It's a Catch-22.' (reference to a novel by Joseph Heller)
- 'Let's see, my dilemma for today: To teach or not to teach, that is the question.' (reference to *Hamlet* by William Shakespeare)

## Analogy

Analogy is a cognitive process of transferring traits from one thing or idea to another. In propaganda we often see false analogies used as a tool to persuade an audience, where the target is unjustly compared to another source, such as: '9/11 is our generation's Pearl Harbor.'

## Anaphora

Anaphora is the repetition of the same word/phrase in a succession of phrases or sentences. Anaphora is often used to establish rhetorical or 'literary' effect.

## Anti-advertising

An anti-ad draws your attention to and makes you aware of the conventions of advertising. In effect anti-ads seem to tell the audience that they are smart enough to see through the tricks played by advertisers. Not only does an anti-ad break the rules of advertising. It shows you how and why they have done this.

The notion of anti-advertising started in the 1950s with the 'lemon' ad from Volkswagen. 'Lemon', is another word for a bad car. Calling their cars 'lemons' shocks readers into reading the rest of a lengthy infomercial about their strict inspection process at the Volkswagen factory.

## Antithesis

A contrast between ideas (the thesis and antithesis) by placing them together for (often rhetorical or literary) effect.

## Appeal to authority

Appeal to authority is an argumentation technique, in which one refers to a source that claims to have authority. It is an argumentation fallacy because it assumes that authorities or institutions are right. This, however, does not have to be true by definition.

Source A says that premise 1 is correct  
Source A is an authority  
Therefore A must be correct

Appeal to authority is also known as 'argument from authority' or 'argumentum ad verecundiam', An example of appeal to authority can be seen here in older advertisements, where physicians are used to sell cigarettes.

### **Appeal to fear**

In advertisements, speeches or even newspaper articles we see that writers and speakers appeal to their audience's sense of fear. If you can make people scared, then they will believe or buy anything. We see it in advertising, political campaigns and public service announcements. It is an age-old technique used many campaigns from the 'War on Terror' to the 'War on Drugs'.

### **Audience**

This is a general term that refers to the reader or listener of a text.

### **Bandwagon effect**

The bandwagon effect is a propaganda technique that suggests one should do something because everyone else is doing it. It is an argumentation fallacy, because something does not have to be true if everyone is doing it. It comes from the idea of a parade, where happy people go by on bandwagons and people in the crowd have the urge to 'hop on'. The bandwagon effect is an age-old technique used to recruit soldiers for war or sell hamburgers to the masses.

### **Bias**

Bias refers to language that supports an ideological position, either explicitly or implicitly. When we see subjectivity in pieces of writing that should be objective, we can claim that they are biased. When we see an imbalance between opposite perspectives in an article, then there is evidence of bias. Good journalism aims to avoid such bias.

For example, an article in the New York Times once explored single motherhood, using the following phrase: "It used to be called illegitimacy. Now it is the new normal." This is very suggestive. The language insinuates that the term illegitimacy should still be applied to single motherhood.

### **Cacophony**

Cacophony is discordant, rugged or hard-sounded effects in prose or verse, usually produced by clusters of consonants arranged so as to make pronunciation difficult. Cacophony is frequent in comical verse and tongue-twisters.

### **Caesura**

From Latin for 'cutting', caesura is a pause within a line of verse, established by the natural organisation of language into phrases, clauses, and sentences, which do not conform to the metrical pattern.

## **Characterisation**

Characterisation is the way in which a writer creates her characters in a narrative so as to attract or repel the sympathy of the reader/audience.

## **Clause**

A clause is a group of words that express a single idea. A clause usually (albeit not always) consists of a subject and a verb.

## **Cliché**

A cliché is a boring phrase, made tedious by frequent repetition. Clichés often attempt to be clever or sound fine, but are undermined by constant use.

## **Coherence**

Coherence describes the systematic connection of ideas in a written piece. Coherence is achieved through the use of linking words and the integration of illustrations. Coherence is what helps an idea become developed in an essay. In a coherent paragraph, one tends to state, illustrate and analyse or explain, usually in that order.

## **Colloquialism**

Colloquialism can be regarded as a kind of expression or grammar that is associated with ordinary, everyday speech rather than formal language. Colloquialism may simply be an intended relaxed way of speaking or writing. A challenge faced by English teachers is to help students develop a sense of what may be regarded as colloquial language in contrast to formal language, and to understand the contexts in which each may be considered appropriate.

## **Complex sentence**

A complex sentence consists of at least two clauses, one of which is subordinate to (or dependent on) a main clause.

## **Compound sentence**

A compound sentence consists of two or more main clauses linked with one of the conjunctions *or*, *but*, or *and*.



## **Conflict in advertising**

Including a conflict situation in an ad helps sell a product or an idea. This advertising technique relies on the audience's interest in seeing the conflict resolved. If you think about how children are intrigued by fights in the schoolyard, then you understand how conflict in advertising draws our attention to a product. Conflict in advertising can sometimes lead to shock advertising if scandalous or controversial, which goes one step further in creating a media-hype and drawing attention to the product or brand.

## **Conjunctions**

Conjunctions are words that are used to connect words, phrases, and clauses (for example *and*, *because*, *so*).

## **Connotation**

A word's connotation is the aura of emotion that is associated with the word through personal experience. It is the opposite of 'denotation', which is what a word literally stands for.

For example, the word 'home' may denote a building with a roof and a door. The connotation of 'home' may mean something different for everyone. It may mean a warm fire, a large family and a Christmas tree. It may mean a bachelor pad in a big city. It may stand for a dream or remind one of poverty. All of these are different connotations of the word 'home'.

## **Context of production**

The context of production is the situation or circumstances in which a text is produced with significant factors influencing the writing or speaking of a text.

## **Context of reception**

The context of reception is the situation or circumstances in which a text is received with significant factors influencing the reading or listening of a text.

## **Core vocabulary**

This is everyday and easily understood words that constitute a significant majority of our vocabulary.

## **Couplet**

A couplet is, in poetry, a pair of rhymed lines in any metre/meter.



## **Crowdsourcing**

In a 2006 Wired Magazine article, Jeffo Howe defined 'crowdsourcing' the act of taking a job traditionally performed by a designated employee and outsourcing it to an undefined, generally large group of people in the form of an open call."

The best way to understand crowdsourcing is to imagine the following experiment. You have a vase full of marbles and you want to find out how many are in there without taking them out and counting them one by one. Therefore you ask a lot of people. Of all the guesses that you receive, you start to notice a cluster of guesses around the right answer. Wikipedia works similarly, as there are a lot of people editing the same pages. It is the 'law of large numbers' applied to many different texts on the web.

Why is this important to the Language and Literature course? As we study the conventions of various text types, we explore the relation between form and content. The content of many webpages is affected by the medium in which they are published. If there are multiple, anonymous authors, such as we see on Wikipedia, we see a product that is generic. The principle of 'crowdsourcing' has led to this result. Hypertext literature, where multiple authors write different endings to works of fiction online, could only be possible with hyperlinks. In brief, "the medium is the message" as Marshal McLuhan once said.

## **Deictic**

Words that point in various directions, within a text and beyond it. For example, 'down there', 'this', 'that' etc. Deictic expressions may also point in time, as in 'now', 'then', and 'next year'.

## **Denotation**

This is the literal, factual meaning of a word. Often it is the meaning or the initial meaning given in a dictionary. Compare with connotation.

## **Denouement**

From the French for 'unknotting', denouement refers to the final unfolding of plot in a literary work. It is at this point that the reader's expectations of what will happen to literary characters are either satisfied or denied.

## **Dialect**

A dialect is a unique and distinguishable combination of vocabulary, pronunciation and syntax. Technically speaking from a linguistic perspective, the only difference between a language and a dialect is that a language is usually standardized. A language is a dialect that has gained a recognized, official status.



## Diatribes

A diatribe is a severely critical type of discourse, often spoken, characterised by anger directed towards something or someone.

## Direct narration

Sometimes in works of fiction, the narrator seems to tell the reader what to think. Interpretations of the events and characters are made for the reader. Take for example this passage from *Emma* by Jane Austen.

"Emma Woodhouse, handsome, clever, and rich, with a comfortable home and happy disposition, seemed to unite some of the best blessings of existence; and had lived nearly twenty-one years in the world with very little to distress or vex her."

The narrator of this text is talking to us directly and telling us what to think of Emma. This style of narration is the opposite of indirect narration, where the reader is only shown events or characters in action without any instructions on how to interpret them. Indirect narration *shows* us a story. Direct narration *tells* us a story.

## Direct speech

There are several ways to tell a story. Writers can choose to let the characters do all of the talking or they can summarize what their characters say for the reader. The first case is known as direct speech. The second case is known as reported speech. In this passage from *Alice in Wonderland*, you can see examples of direct speech.

The Caterpillar and Alice looked at each other for some time in silence: at last the Caterpillar took the hookah out of its mouth, and addressed her in a languid, sleepy voice.

'Who are YOU?' said the Caterpillar.

This was not an encouraging opening for a conversation. Alice replied, rather shyly, 'I--I hardly know, sir, just at present-- at least I know who I WAS when I got up this morning, but I think I must have been changed several times since then.'

'What do you mean by that?' said the Caterpillar sternly. 'Explain yourself!'

'I can't explain MYSELF, I'm afraid, sir' said Alice, 'because I'm not myself, you see.'

In this example you can see a lot of dialogue, which in essence, defines direct speech. Strangely enough direct speech is characteristic of indirect narration.

## Dramatic irony

Dramatic irony is a frequent feature of dramatic texts. In plays, it occurs when the development of the plot allows the audience to possess more information about what is taking place than some of the characters themselves have.

## Ellipsis

The omission of part of a language structure. In conversation, ellipsis is frequently used for economy and to affirm a sense of informality. For example, in the exchange

*Coming?*

*Soon.*

the ellipited words are 'Are you' and 'I will be (coming)' respectively. Ellipsis is commonplace in advertising. Frequently, ellipsis involves the omission of grammatical words such as prepositions and articles. Ellipsis gives a sense of replicating spoken language, establishing apparent closeness between text and reader.

## End-stopped line

An end-stopped line of verse is one in which the end of the line coincides with a grammatical pause usually signalled by punctuation.

## Enjambment

From the French, to stride, the term enjambment is used to describe a line of poetry that is not end-stopped. That is, the sentence continues into the next line without pause or punctuation.

## Equivocation

Equivocation is when a word is used in two different senses in an argument. Take for example the following syllogism:

A hamburger is better than nothing  
Nothing is better than good health  
Therefore a hamburger is better than good health

The word 'nothing' has two meanings. In the first line it means the absence of something. In the second line it refers to a range of things, as in: 'of all the good things in life, nothing is better than good health.' This accounts for why the conclusion sounds so strange. This linguistic device can be used to manipulate people, by making false arguments sound convincing.

## Ethos

In Greek the term 'ethos' means 'character'. It can be used to describe the character of an audience, nation or community. For example, one can speak of the 'American ethos' as the characteristics that define American culture. A US presidential candidate would have to speak to the ethos of this nation and culture in order to win votes.

Understanding ethos is important to understanding speech writing. As we study the rhetorical devices of speakers, we want to ask ourselves how the speaker appeals to the ethos of his or her audience. Texts often contain a sense of ethos in order to give the speaker more credit or authority on a matter.



In a sense, ethos answers the question: "What gives you a mandate to speak to me?"

## Euphemism

'Euphemism' is a word or phrase that makes something sound better than it actually is. Euphemisms can be found in political speeches, advertising campaigns or everyday conversation.

For example, instead of saying someone 'died', we say they 'passed away'. Euphemisms are related to censorship, in the sense that they only tell half-truths and distort reality.

## First-person point-of-view

When a narrator is included in his or her story, we refer to a form known as the first-person point-of-view. It is the 'I' perspective. This is not to say that the first-person narrator is always the main character of the story, even though this is often the case. Sometimes the narrator observes the main character from a close distance. This is called observer narration, which can be seen in the following passage from *The Great Gatsby*.

That's my Middle West . . . the street lamps and sleigh bells in the frosty dark. . . . I see now that this has been a story of the West, after all—Tom and Gatsby, Daisy and Jordan and I, were all Westerners, and perhaps we possessed some deficiency in common which made us subtly unadaptable to Eastern life.

The narrator, Nick, goes on to tell the story of his neighbor, Gatsby.

With first-person point-of-view we get to hear the thoughts of the narrator directly, which raises some interesting questions. Can we rely on the truthfulness of the narrator? Or is it an unreliable narrator? Is the narrator speaking directly to us, the reader? Or do we get to listen in on his or her thoughts? Is the narrator speaking to a nebulous, an undefined audience? In the latter case we sometimes see a stream-of-consciousness style, in which grammatical conventions are ignored, such as in this passage from *The Handmaid's Tale*:

I pray where I am, sitting by the window, looking out through the curtain at the empty garden. I don't even close my eyes. Out there or inside my head, it's an equal darkness. Or light. To summarize, there are several points worth considering in when reading a work written in the first-person point-of-view.

- Is the narrator an observer or the protagonist?
- Is the narrator reliable or unreliable?
- To whom is the narrator speaking? Is he/she speaking to a nebulous? Or is he/she speaking to the reader directly? (see direct narration)
- If so, does the narrator use a style of stream-of-consciousness style?

## Formalism

Formalism is a school of literary criticism that looks at texts at face value, without biographical, historical or contextual considerations. At the heart of formalism is this notion that a text can have inherent meaning. This meaning is constructed through the use of

language, i.e. stylistic or structural features. According to the school of formalism, it is up to the reader to deconstruct or unpack the meaning of texts by identifying the use of these features. There are two branches of formalism: the Russian formalists and the New Critics.

The Russian formalists are the founders of this tradition of literary criticism. Their influence on academics and education was built on several key principles.

- Literature is comprised of language. Linguistic forms can be studied scientifically.
- Language is independent of external factors, such as economic, social and regional values. Linguistic forms, such as meter and metaphor, have a history of their own which can be documented and studied.
- The content and form of work are inseparable. *How* and idea is expressed is inseparable from *what* is expressed.

The New Critics were also branch of this movement, who were very firm in believing that all meaning of a text can be gathered by looking at the text only. It was a backlash to reader-response theory, which claimed the opposite, 'literature is in the eye of the beholder'. The New Critics succeeded in writing many textbooks for American public high schools in the 1950s-1970s, which essentially kept political, racial and social conflict out of the classroom. The defining characteristics of New Criticism expanded on the Russian formalist method.

- 'Close reading', a form of isolated textual analysis where one studies dense passages of text carefully, is a method for ascertaining the meaning of a text.
- Paradox, ambiguity, tension and irony are formal features of a text. By studying such features, the reader comes closer to understanding the themes of the text. It is believed that every text has an inherent tension of conflicting ideas.

In the Language and Literature classroom, we recognize that the tradition of formalism has both its shortcomings and merits. Without exploring the context in which a work was written, we can miss much of the meaning. Readers must also be entitled to their own response. At the same time, we realize that close reading is a good exercise in coming making more informed interpretations. Some forms of assessment, such as the individual oral commentary, are really rooted in the formalist tradition of literary criticism. Similarly, examiners for Paper 1 receive a list of items to look for in a good analysis (these are called the 'marking notes'). Therefore it is important to study form, style and structure in the Language and Literature classroom.

### Free indirect speech

When stories are told in the third person, they are usually told in the third-person omniscient or third-person limited point-of-view. In the latter variety we see that the narrator shows us the thoughts and actions of one character, usually the main character. Sometimes the narrator will state these thoughts explicitly. For example: "Madam Bovary thought to herself, 'how nice it would be to have son!' She considered how fortunate boys were to have so many opportunities." This style of writing is a combination of direct speech and reported speech. But Gustave Flaubert did not use these forms of speech when writing his novel *Madam Bovary*. Instead he wrote in a style known as free indirect speech. Below you see a passage from this novel.

She hoped for a son; he would be strong and dark; she would call him George; and this idea of having a male child was like an expected revenge for all her impotence in the past. A man, at least, is free; he can explore all passions and all countries, overcome obstacles, taste of the most distant pleasures. But a woman is always hampered. Being inert as well as pliable, she has against her the weakness of the flesh and the inequity of the law. Like the veil held to her hat by a ribbon, her will flutters in every breeze; she is always drawn by some desire, restrained by some rule of conduct.

Notice that we, as readers, come to see the world through Madam Bovary's perspective, and the narrator does not have to indicate explicitly that these are her thoughts. Free indirect speech gives us the sense of first-person narration, while told through third-person narration.

### **Free verse**

Free verse is verse that is released from the convention of metre, with its regular pattern of stresses and line lengths. Free verse is printed in broken-up lines like verse (unlike prose) and it is frequently rhythmical, sometimes containing metrical regularity, but overall free from regular lines of repeated feet.

### **Function**

What language is used for. Often, students discuss the *purpose* or *purposes* of a text. *Function* is simply a synonym, and is frequently the word used within the discipline of linguistics.

### **Gatekeeper**

As we explore the role of the Internet, as a medium that is changing our lives, we come across in an important term: the gatekeeper. A gatekeeper is a person who has access to a particular medium and can disseminate ideas with it. One can think of an editor at a publishing house as a gatekeeper; one who determines who may, or may not publish. Gatekeepers seem to hold the key to publishing. The term is often used when talking about how the Internet has democratized our world, for better or worse, by eliminating the role of the gatekeeper.

#### Generalizations

As we study argumentation and propaganda techniques, we come across hasty generalizations. Generalization occurs when large conclusions are drawn from a few instances. It is the weakness of inductive reasoning. For example if premise A reads, 'our school's bandwidth is slow,' and premise B reads, 'we don't have anything sweet in the vending machines,' then the conclusion, 'our school sucks,' would be a generalization.

### **Genre**

Genre is a term used to refer to a kind or type of literature. The three major genres of literature are normally claimed to be poetry, drama and the novel (i.e. prose). These genres may be subdivided into, for example, tragedy, comedy, short story, autobiography etc.

### **Graphology**

The visual aspect of a text, including layout, font, and image. In the study of English Language and Literature, students are, in Paper 1 in particular, expected to comment meaningfully of the graphological aspects of texts.

## Haiku

A haiku is a Japanese lyric form. Exactly seventeen syllables are used in three lines: 5-7-5. Each haiku is a complete idea or observation: their common method is to describe a natural scene or object as a way of implying feeling.

## Hyperbole

Hyperbole is a figure of speech; emphasis through exaggeration. Hyperbole may be used rhetorically and is commonplace in everyday language (e.g. there were millions of students at the disco).

## Idiolect

Idiolect refers to the way in which we all speak an individual and unique variety of a language. Some may be so bold as to say that there are as many Englishes as there are English speakers. While this may be an exaggeration, it illustrates the idea that pronunciation, idiom (word choice) and syntax are all expressions of a unique identity. Because everyone's identity is influenced by a range of unique, cultural and contextual factors, people end up speaking unique varieties of English.

In the play *Pygmalion*, a linguist by the name of Henry Higgins claims that he can locate anyone's origin according to his or her accent or dialect. While this is a rather extreme claim, it is worth considering that regional, social and economical factors influence the way we speak.

## Imagery

Imagery is a stylistic device, which uses language to appeal to the reader's senses of sight, sound, smell, taste or touch. It is sometimes used as a form of analogy, comparing an abstract idea to a concrete experience. Its aim is to paint a picture in the mind of the reader and bring a text 'to life'. This engages the reader further and makes him/her want to read on.

## Indirect narration

When a narrator shows the readers the events of a story without telling us how to interpret them, we can speak of indirect narration. It is the opposite of direct narration, where the narrator *tells* the reader how to interpret events. Here is an example of indirect narration from *Hills Like White Elephants* by Ernest Hemmingway.

*The woman came out through the curtains with two glasses of beer and put them down on the damp felt pads. "The train comes in five minutes," she said.*

*"What did she say?" asked the girl.*

*"That the train is coming in five minutes."*

Notice that this story is told as if the narrator is filming from behind a camera. The dialogue seems pointlessly repetitive. We call such an extreme version of indirect narration 'fly-on-the-wall' narration. It is very objective and not emotionally involved.

## Intertextuality

The ways in which a text resonates or refers to another text. For example, 'to be a subscriber to the InThinking website or not to be a subscriber to the InThinking website is an (admittedly not particularly imaginative) intertextual reference to Shakespeare's play *Hamlet*. Intertextuality works at many levels, including lexical, phonological and graphological.

## Irony

Irony is a literary or stylistic device in which one states something that is in discordance with what is expected. In brief, irony is when someone says one thing but means something else. An understanding of irony depends entirely on an understanding of context. If it is raining and you say, 'nice weather we're having, don't you think?' then there is evidence of irony. Without the context, i.e. rain, the meaning is different.

There are several forms of irony. The example above is a form of verbal irony. Furthermore it takes the form of a question, which is not meant to be answered. Rhetorical questions such as these also fall under the category of verbal irony, just like sarcasm, hyperbole, understatement or double entendre.

Another form of irony is situational irony. Situational irony occurs when the opposite happens from what one would expect. For example, in this image, one would expect these people to take the stairs instead of the escalator, as they are interested in working out and improving their health. One could say it is ironic that they are taking the escalator.

In literature, we come across another form of irony: dramatic irony. This is where the audience knows more than the characters. For example in his autobiographical novel *A Long Way Gone*, Ishmael Beah, a child soldier from Sierra Leone describes a remarkable event that happens to him when he visits New York. White flakes fall from the sky. Naturally, the reader knows this is snow. We know more than the narrator. Similarly in Shakespeare's play *Othello*, the audience knows that Desdemona has been faithful and that Iago is scheming to overthrow Othello, which Othello himself is ignorant of. These are two examples of dramatic irony.

Irony is an important concept to understanding both literary and non-literary texts. Once you start noticing irony, you realize how much of human interaction depends upon it. It also makes us more aware of the importance of context in constructing meaning.

## Jargon

Jargon is the special technical language of any trade, profession, branch, or scholarship. Jargon may sometimes be used, like euphemism, for the purpose of obfuscation.

### Juxtaposition

Juxtaposition is the placement of two opposite ideas in close proximity. These opposite ideas can be expressed through words or images. Juxtaposition is an important concept for analyzing all texts, both literary and non-literary. When an author includes such opposites in a text, he or she is drawing our attention to an inherent tension or conflict.

## Language

At the heart of the Language A: Language and literature course is the term 'language'. What exactly though does 'language' mean?

A language is a system of communication that is mutually intelligible among all members of a community. How is this different from a dialect? In fact, all languages are dialects. A dialect gains 'language' status when it gains official acceptance as the standard to which all other varieties are compared. This is a rather linguistic approach to defining 'language'.

In the Language A: Language and Literature course, you will notice that the word 'language' is used in another sense. You may be asked to comment on the use of 'language' in a particular text. In this sense we are referring to style, diction or even tone. In other words, 'how has the author carefully selected his or her words and syntax?'

The study of language is not an exact science. In the Language A: Language and Literature classroom, we constantly come back to the question: "What is the effect of this language on its audience?" There can be as many effects as there are audiences. In brief, the effects of language are difficult to measure. Nevertheless, engaging in textual analysis and close reading increase our understanding of language and its effects.

## Logos

For our purposes, 'logos' is the appeal to a reader or listener's sense of logic. 'How do your arguments convince me to take action?' This is the kind of question that an audience asks when listening to a speech or reading a text. This definition comes from the tradition of analyzing rhetoric, as founded by the Greek philosopher Aristotle. In this tradition, logos is one of three main rhetorical appeals, together with pathos and ethos, which are appeals to the sense of emotion and authority respectively. Appealing to a sense of logic usually involves arguments, syllogisms, and reasoning. This means that a persuasive speaker will present several premises before coming to a conclusion.

## Long tail marketing

As the Internet brings people together through social networking and large databases (super crunching), smaller, niche markets are being targeted more effectively by advertisers. These niche markets are part of what Chris Anderson, editor of Wired magazine, calls 'the long tail'.

The long tail is the opposite of the 'head' of the market. Because of the limitations of traditional media, publishers, record companies and manufacturers have traditionally only targeted the head of the market, meaning they advertise best-sellers, pop-chart hits and Barbie dolls for example. However, the total sales of *unpopular* products is larger than the total sales of popular products. Thanks to the Internet, niche markets, who have 'obscure' tastes, such as Kurdish dance music, cold-war stamps and Siberian poetry, are being targeted more effectively.

## Mash up

Mash ups are online texts, usually short films, that copy content from an original source and alter it to some extent to give it new meaning. These are texts that borrow from and build on other texts. They intend to make their audience laugh, as they compare one concept to another through allusion or analogy. They rely on contextual knowledge and a mutual understanding of the original text. Furthermore, they are often the result of copyright infringement.

## Metaphor

Metaphor is the comparison of two concepts through language, often done by using the verb 'to be'. Metaphor is often seen as a literary device used by poets. Metaphors, however, can be found in every day speech and images.

Take for example this image, which is an advertisement for a car, the Volvo 850. It compares the car to an egg carton. We assume they share properties. They are both vehicles that protect their content securely. In every day speech, people say things like one is 'a beacon of knowledge,' or a 'light at the end of the tunnel.' In essence these are metaphors as well.

Metaphor should not be confused with 'simile' which is also a linguistic device that compares two things. Simile, however, uses words such as 'like' or 'as' in order to compare two concepts.

## Metonymy

Metonymy is the act of referring to a concept not by its name, but by something intimately associated with it. For example when journalists refer to "Washington's response," they mean the political response of the United States. Similarly we see in this example "Palace fury at D-day snub to Queen." Naturally the palace itself is not furious, but it is a symbol that represents the royal family.

Metonymy is closely related to, but should not be confused with synecdoche, which is where one part of something is used to refer to the whole thing.

## Modality

Modality is the linguistics of judgement. It is the way in which writers express attitudes towards their subject matter. and towards their addresses. Modality has a range of functions in language, including but not limited to, the *truth*, *likelihood*, *desirability*, and *permission*. Often, authority is expressed through modality; for this reason, not least, it is an extremely important concept for students to understand.

## Multivocal

Multivocal literally means 'many-voiced'. The term can be usefully employed when discussing the nature of texts and their meanings. Multivocality suggests that meaning is not fixed 'in' a text in any kind of immutable, unified way. Instead, meaning is constructed by

readers who occupy particular positions, who are informed ideologically, and who exist in particular historical and cultural contexts. Consequently, the meaning of a text may be contested.

### **Newsworthiness**

What makes a story newsworthy? Every editor-in-chief has a different opinion on this matter. Generally speaking however, there seem to be three reasons why a story is deemed 'newsworthy'. Although they do not all pertain to all stories, at least one aspect usually pertains to every story.

1. Negative - 'If it bleeds, it leads', as the saying goes in the media world. Stories about disasters, disease and disappointment tend to sell well.
2. Relevance - If people are affected by events then they are more likely to read about them. A passenger plane crashing in Bolivia is not reported on in the UK, unless British citizens are on board.
3. Extraordinary - If something remarkable or extraordinary happens in any part of the world, it usually warrants coverage. 'Dog Bites Man' is not extraordinary, whereas 'Man Bites Dog' is.

### **Nominalisation**

Nominalisation is a process in which a verb or verb group is transformed into a noun. Nominalisation is a frequent feature in media texts in which it may be advantageous or desirable to omit the agent of an action. For example the utterance *Army shoot demonstrators* can be transformed into *Demonstrators die in shooting*. Students of Language and Literature should be alert to this kind of obfuscation in media texts. Other examples of nominalization may be found in media texts that assert, for example, *Great looks for your kitchen*. This transformation of *Your kitchen looks great* gives a sense of permanence to an otherwise temporary situation.

### **Notifications**

While the concept of notifications may seem simple, it is very important in our efforts to understand the type of text known as 'website'. In traditional media, if you want to find out something, such as a job vacancy, you must go to it physically. You open the newspaper and looking for vacancies that suit your career, filtering through the ones that do not.

Nowadays however, people are subscribing to streams of information through RSS feeds (Really Simple Syndication). This RSS feed icon (see image) appears on many websites, below articles, vacancies, blogs, etc. By clicking on it, you subscribe to any changes that are made to the particular page. Instead of going to the information, it comes to you, usually in the form of an e-mail notification or into an RSS reader.

Facebook, Twitter and Flipboard are examples of RSS readers that filter and collect information that we find relevant. The concept of notifications is very powerful to understanding how digital texts target specific audiences.



## Noun phrase

A word or group of words with a noun at its head (i.e. the noun is the essential word), often with added information in the form of modifiers. Premodifiers precede the head, and post-modifiers follow it. Thus a noun phrase could include a determiner (e.g. the article *the*), a premodifier (e.g. the adjective *intelligent*), a headword (e.g. the noun *girl*), and a post-modifier (e.g. the prepositional phrase *on the sofa*). Understanding the noun phrase is very useful for students of Language and Literature; it is here that students can identify (some of) the perspective or ideology of a text.

## Onomatopoeia

Onomatopoeia is a stylistic device that refers to words that sound like what they represent. 'Swish' or 'snap' are good examples of onomatopoeia. The very sound of these words imitates the actions that they represent.

## Paralanguage

Aspects of communication functioning in conjunction with verbal language. For example, facial expression and body posture.

## Pathos

When speakers appeal to one's sense of emotion, they are using pathos. 'Why should I care about what you have to say?' This is the kind of question on an audience's mind when listening to a speech or reading a persuasive text. You can find the same semantic root of pathos in similar, related words such as 'sympathy' or 'pathetic'. Rhetorical questions, emotive language and sensationalism appeal to our sense of pathos.

Pathos is one of three rhetorical appeals, traditionally studied in speech writing. This tradition, founded by Aristotle, also includes ethos and logos, as appeals to one's sense of authority and logic respectfully.

## Pay-per-click

Many websites allow 'sponsors' or advertisers to place ads on their website as a means of generating revenue. Advertisements are often related to the content of the websites which host them, as search engines such as Google scan the site for relevant words. These ads are called 'pay-per-click' because they only generate revenue for the host website once the user has clicked on the link or the ad.

Google 'adwords' are also very relevant here. We should understand that words are for sale on the Internet. Google auctions off words in through their adwords marketing program. If one is not satisfied with their Google ranking through 'organic hits', one can buy their way to the top and appear on the 'sponsored links'. Some words are more expensive than others. 'Safari tours South Africa' is more expensive than 'zebra', for example.

Why is all of this important for the Language A: Language and Literature course? It is our task to study a multitude of text types. Print ads that traditionally appear in magazines or billboards are only one kind of advertisement. Pay-per-click ads are another type of text that

uses persuasive language, and equally deserve our attention. What's more, the websites that host these 'sponsors' are also altered in appearance and purpose by allowing them on. The reader of a 'sponsored' website will take the advertising into consideration when reading the text. Certain expectations are created when Google 'adwords' are allowed on. Depending on the reader's history with Google, ads can be tailor-made to the reader's interests to some extent.

Besides the argument that we should be exploring various text types and their structural conventions, there is the basic principle that we should be going behind the scenes (or 'screens') to think critically about how are media are constructed. Studying the 'pay-per-click' may seem insignificant, but it opens up a whole world of interconnectivity that is rapidly changing the way we do business and organize our lives.

### **Personalization**

As we deconstruct websites and understand how they target specific audiences, it is important to see how many sites rely on personalization. Creating an account, logging on or editing a profile page are just several ways sites engage users. Many website have a separate address once you have logged on, usually starting with 'my...'. These tools activate users and allow them to contribute to the growing database of users' history and behaviour. Furthermore the personalization tools enable users to generate content (also known as user-generated content or UGC). Naturally Facebook relies heavily on UGC and profiling, but many other sites make use of personalization to a great extent as well.

### **Personification**

Personification is a stylistic device where inanimate objects are given human qualities. It is a form of analogy, where one thing is compared to another thing (or person). This allows the reader to think differently about the characteristics or traits of the object or person.

A good example is this Virgin Radio ad with the copy that reads: 'Give your radio a reason to live.' The radio is compared to a suicidal person. It looks sad and lonely on the edge of the platform, ready to jump before the metro or train and kill itself. The target audience is meant to feel sympathy for their radio, like they would feel sympathy for a suicidal person. Logic would tell us that Virgin provides up-beat music to cheer up this radio and yours. This line of logic only works, however, if you believe that radios can be cheered up.

### **Phonological**

Relates to the sound system of a language. A phoneme is a single unit of sound. *Phonological substitution*, replacing an anticipated sound with an unanticipated sound is commonplace in media texts such as advertisements and tabloid journalism. An example of phonological substitution can be found in the less that inspired joke: Q. 'What newspaper does a cat read?' A. 'The Mews of the World'. Notice that phonological substitution draws on preexisting contextual awareness if it is to make sense.

### **Phrase**

A phrase is a unit of language made up of anything from an individual word to several words acting together, but smaller than a sentence. Phrases take their identity from their head

word; that is, the most important word in the phrase. For example, the phrase *the* (article/determiner) *black* (adjective) *cat*(noun) is an example of a noun phrase.

### **Problem/solution technique**

If you can convince someone that they have a problem, you can sell them a solution. This is the kind of persuasive technique used by advertisers and politicians, known as the problem / solution technique. If an audience can identify with one characteristic of the problem, then they can be persuaded to believe that they must buy into the solution.

### **Pun**

A play on words, often comic, resulting from a word having more than one meaning, or two words with the different meanings having the same sound. This second form of punning is called *homophony*; compare, for example Dickens' novel *Great Expectations* with a fireplace shop that could be called 'Grate Expectations'.

### **Reported speech**

There is more than one way to tell a story. Sometimes the narrator of a story summarizes what other characters say. We call this style of speech, reported speech or indirect speech. It looks like this:

The President said that NAFTA would eventually be a boon to small businesses in both countries.

Professor Villa told her students the textbooks were not yet in the bookstore.

The opposite of reported speech is direct speech, where you need quotation marks. Such as:

The President said, "NAFTA will eventually be a boon to small businesses in both countries."

Professor Villa said, "Students, the textbooks are not yet in the bookstore."

Interestingly reported speech is often a tool found in direct narration, where we, as readers, are told what to think of events and how they unfolded.

### **Second-person point-of-view**

The second-person point-of-view makes use of the pronoun 'you'. It targets the reader directly, by referring to 'you'.

### **Semantic field**

A group of words that are related or analogous in meaning, and are often connected with a particular context of use. An alternative, similar term sometimes used by linguists is *lexical cluster*. Thus, words such as *goal*, *offside*, *corner kick*, and *referee* could be said to belong to the semantic field of football (soccer). This is rather benign. However, a newspaper article that is oppositional to immigration containing words like *swamped*, *flooded*, and *deluged* is

arguably a less benevolent semantic field. Students of Language and Literature should be alert to this kind of ideological discourse.

### **Sensationalism**

Sensationalism refers to language that appeals to emotions. It exaggerates, over-hypes and attracts attention to controversy.

### **Setting**

The setting of a story is more than where it takes place, geographically, and when it takes place, temporally. When discussing setting as a literary technique, we often look at it in relation to its main characters. After all, setting creates a set of expectations for the reader and an environment for its characters. We usually use these terms when talking about setting and characters:

1. *Mirror* - The setting can reflect the overall mood of the story, and it can reflect the personality of the characters in the story.
2. *Mould* - The setting may shape characters and make them act the way they do.
3. *Escape* - The setting can often be a fantasy-like escape, taking us to imaginary worlds, either in the past or the future.
4. *Alien* - Many times the setting will be hostile to the character who is an outsider, exile, or refugee. These types of settings emphasize the loss of roots and sense of home.

### **Shock advertising**

Shock advertising is used to gain attention. If an advertisement is controversial, then it gains free publicity through the press and on blogs. Even though this kind of publicity can be negative, it is still publicity nonetheless. Shock advertising leads to brand awareness and an eventual rise in sales. Many companies that use shock advertising do not even show their product. The interest is solely on creating a very memorable impact on their audience. Studies show that shock advertising can be effective for increasing brand awareness and sales.

### **Simile**

Simile is the comparison of two things, using the words 'like' or 'as'. It is similar to, but different from, metaphor that compares two things without the use of such words such as 'like' or 'as'.

A famous example is found in the movie *Forest Gump*: "Life is like a box of chocolates. You never know what you're going to get."

## **Slang**

'Slang' refers to a deviation in language use, be it vocabulary or expressions, from the standardized form of a particular language. Technically speaking from a linguistic point of view, the word is not recognized. From a social point of view, we often view slang as a 'lesser' variety of language use, often associated with dialects or accents. Slang often defines who the members are of an 'in-crowd'. It is a social marker.

## **Slogan**

A slogan is a phrase used in a political or commercial campaign repeatedly. Slogans are meant to be simple, as they express a shared purpose or idea. 'Think Different' has been Apple's slogan for decades.

## **Social networking**

Although many people use social networking websites daily, we rarely stop to define the term or ponder its significance to our lives. A social network describes a structure of individuals and their interdependence on each other, be it through friendship, economics or interests. Social networks on the Internet, such as LinkedIn and Facebook enable us to see visual representations of these relationships so that we can make better decision, find lost friends or collaborate on projects with strangers. Along with new text types in the digital age, come new dynamics of communication.

## **Stereotyping**

Assigning fixed characteristics to individuals on the basis of their group membership (e.g. ethnicity, nationality, gender etc.).

## **Supercrunching**

The term 'super crunchers' is the title of a book by Ian Ayres (picture). It refers to the phenomenon of how large databases are helping us make decisions everyday, especially on the Internet. For example, on Amazon, there is a function called 'Customers who bought this item also bought this item'. It keeps a record of the purchasing history of consumers and uses it to target new customers. You can see evidence of super crunching on a lot of different types of websites from online radio stations to dating sites. It is changing the way we communicate and make decisions.

## **Synecdoche**

Synecdoche is a stylistic device. It is the act of referring to an entity by one of its parts. For example, if you refer to your car as your 'wheels', you are using synecdoche. 'All hands on deck!' is another example.

Synecdoche is closely related to but different from metonymy, where a concept is referred to by something closely associated.



## Testimonial

If someone tells you about a personal experience with a product, then you are likely to believe that person. If that 'someone' is a celebrity, you may be even more likely to buy a product that he or she is promoting. This kind of story about a personal experience is known as a 'testimonial'. Testimonials are used in advertising and political campaigns to appeal to the audience's sense of *ethos*, i.e. that which gives someone credit or a mandate. If a third, independent party has approved of a product or idea through experience, then the speaker's voice is validated. What's more, the audience may be able to identify with person giving the testimonial. This is why the person from the testimonial usually comes from the same demographic group as the target audience.

## Textuality

When we refer to 'textuality' we mean the characteristics that define a text. What makes a speech a speech? What makes a blog a blog? What are the inherent structures that define a text? This is what we are interested in when studying textuality. The term relates to all parts of the course. In Part 1, for example, we discuss a great variety of texts. In Part 2 we discuss how the medium affects the message. In the literary parts of the course we look at the textuality of literary texts by studying genre.

## Use of celebrities

In advertisements, public service announcements and propaganda, we often see the use of celebrities to try to sell us an idea or product. It is an age-old technique in the world of advertising and marketing. Whether or not it works effectively remains debated. This technique relies on the premise that people want to be like the celebrities. If the celebrities endorse a product then it must be good. This is the line of logic that follows.