Chapter 2

Related Literature

Spoken Language

Spoken language is a primary communication. It is commonly shaped by non-institutional forces, such as family members and influential peers. The way people speak thus tends to be marked by the speech patterns of their family and friends (Hughes, 1996 : 13). In a normal speech situation, people produce the utterances for various purposes. One of them is to socialize; a speaker may engage in a casual conversation with the others. In so doing, social relationships can be maintained and also established. In addition, he/she may try to exert an influence on the others by guiding them to perceive, feel or do a particular thing through the speech behavior that usually operates together with non-verbal cues (Linell, n.d.). However, on some occasions, spoken language can be used for the detailed transmission of factual information (Brown, 1983 : 13).

Since spoken language is made up of sounds and therefore produced "on the fly" (Noblia, 1998), the way in which it is transmitted and perceived is dynamic and transitory. The speaker is unable to observe the utterance produced earlier. Both behavioral movements and sounds, which are pronounced one after another, will fade away rapidly (Brown, 1983 : 14). This means that the ordering of spoken messages cannot be changed. In other words, by a linear process of speech, the utterances cannot be simply taken back. Moreover, spoken language also involves the whole interaction between the speaker and the participant(s), which is dependent on the shared situation or context. This is why expressions of spatial and temporal deixis are likely to be understood (Finegan, 1994 : 379). Furthermore, speech is continuously accompanied and supplemented by various non-verbal behaviors; people verbally and non-verbally respond to each other all the time. The immediate interpretation of verbal messages is more precise, and the feedback

continuously influences the speaker's behavior at the same time (Finegan, 1994 : 379; Linell, n.d.).

Certain advantages and limitations are found in speech communication. Brown and Yule (1983 : 5) find that there are various advantages of spoken language, especially for the speaker. Not only can the speaker observe the participant(s) and then receive immediate feedback but utterance modification is also possible. This immediate interaction can minimize the effects of vagueness and ambiguity (Crystal, 1987 : 179). However, there are some limitations. According to Hughes (1996 : 7), without recording instruments, such as tape recorders, it is impossible to make speech persist through the dimension of time. Finegan (1994 : 378-379) and Leech (1975 : 23) share a similar viewpoint on this disadvantage of speech immediacy. They both agree that the speaker has no time for planning, editing and revising utterances ; even pausing to search for the right words may risk losing the floor. Therefore, non-specific and unvaried words are mostly found.

In the studies above, there is a considerable discussion on the distinctive nature of spoken language. A sense of transient communication under the pressure of language production and reception is perceived. In addition, as seen as having a high potential for immediate response, spoken language strongly reflects highly interactive nature. These factors work to limit or shape typical speech features, supporting generalization such as "speech is less grammatically complex" or "speech conveys ideas in a simpler fashion" (Hughes, 1996: 28). We now will turn to some of its typical features. They include phonological, lexical, syntactic, discourse and non-verbal features.

1. Phonological Feature : Prosody

Prosody is a distinctive phonological feature of spoken language. It includes the nature and quality of sounds : "pitch," "duration" and "loudness". Actually, there are different kinds of pitch patterns; whether a sound is "high" or "low" or "rising," "falling" or "steady" (Cruttenden, 1997 : 3-4). For example, "no" with a falling pitch means a definite refusal, but it may be interpreted as a

question when pronounced with a rising pitch. Duration, on the other hand, concerns timing in speech production. Vowels, for instance, tend to be much longer than consonants. Different vowels also have different duration. For example, the vowel of "peat" is generally longer than that of "pit". The breath-force that a speaker uses affects loudness, the intensity of sound or sequences of sounds. For example, open vowels are of greater intensity than closed vowels. However, loudness may be used for various purposes. The speaker may shout while being angry, or an unaccented syllable that is used as an emphatic device may be pronounced much louder than the accented one (Cruttenden, 1997 : 2-3; Kreidler, 1997 : 29-30).

2. Lexical Features

One easily observed feature of the spoken language is lexicon. General observation indicates that once calculated, speech has a strikingly low lexical density. Spontaneous speech usually has a higher proportion of grammatical words (words served to show the relation between them) than lexical words (words carrying the meaning in an utterance) and therefore, it has a lower lexical density (Halliday, 1989 : 61-64; Hughes, 1996 : 156-158). The use of vocabulary also depends on the context of production (Hughes, 1996 : 24). In this section, we will confine our discussion to some lexical features of speech. They are sociolinguistic features, onomatopoeia, clipping, vague expression, deixis, vocative, expletive and interjection, respectively.

2.1 Sociolinguistic Features

Sociolinguistics is the study of language variation and social significance. It will study how language is used for social purposes and in what way it tells us about the speaker (Ellis, 1999 : 139). Here, social and regional variables are the focuses. Actually, social variables are determined by a range of demographic features, such as education, occupation, gender, age and income level, whereas regional variables usually depend on the geographical area the speaker comes from (Holmes, 1994 : 142; Malmkjxr, 1991 : 415).

In terms of social variables, speech features of the different genders may differ from each other. This characteristic is evident in word choices. It seems that adult men tend to restrict swearing largely to an all-male setting, whereas women tend to reduce their swearing in all settings as they move into adulthood (Holmes, 1994 : 183). Slang is another area of vocabulary reflecting a person's age. This term is mostly used among teenagers because it signals their membership of a youth group, and expresses intimacy with those inside the group. In fact, it is quite difficult to provide examples of slang because it is rapidly changing. Nevertheless, the following may be illustrative : a group of teenagers in New Zealand frequently uses the terms "wicked," "choice" and "rad" to describe something they approve of (Holmes, 1994 : 183).

It is also understood that members of different classes have different pronunciations. For example, members of lower class groups consistently pronounce the suffix "-ing" with the alveolar nasal /n/ rather than the velar nasal /ŋ/. This phenomenon is captured in a literary text by altering normal spelling, as in "runnin" in place of "running". However, it depends on the situation; everyone, no matter what social group they belong to, may use /ŋ/ in highly formal situations and at the same time may use /n/ in highly informal situations. Similarly, although "asked" is formally pronounced /æskt/ in standard English, even the most highly educated, cultured speaker tends to reduce this word-final consonant to be /æst/ in rapid or informal speech (Falk, 1973 : 222). Other examples are "gonna" for "going to," "wanna" for "want to" and "cos" for "because" (Goddard, 1997 : 42). Literary writers mostly use this way of speaking in order to imitate characters' actual accents and dialects in their work (Sanger, 1998 : 59).

Pronunciation, word choices and grammar also reflect regional differences. Most American varieties have a retroflex /r/ in the word-final position like "car," "sir" and "near," whereas the /r/ of these words is dropped in British varieties (Finegan, 1994 : 405). There are vocabulary differences in the varieties spoken by different regions, too. Australians may talk of "sole parents" while people in England may use the term "lone parents" and New Zealanders call them "solo parents." Americans prefer "do you have" and say "gotten," whereas the traditional

British use "have you got" and say "got", respectively. Americans use "dove" while people in England say "dived" (Holmes, 1994 : 183).

2.2 Onomatopoeia

Onomatopoeia is a process of word formation. It is formed by vocally imitating natural sounds (Algeo, 1991 : 4; Falk; 1973 : 52) with which they are associated. The onomatopoetic word is therefore extralinguistic; that is, it does not depend on language itself (Falk, 1973 : 52; Shepherd, 1994 : 48). For example, "bow-wow" is the word for the sound of a dog's barking or a dog itself, the word "moo" is a natural sound of a cow and the word "pow" suggests a blow to the chin. Sometimes, onomatopoeia is used with extended meanings to suggest mockery. For example, "meow," besides denoting the sound that a cat makes or a cat itself, is used to indicate that another person is making "catty" remarks. Another example is "boo-hoo," the sound of crying usually used mockingly by adults to mean "I'm not sorry at all" (Wentworth and Flexner, 1975 : 605).

2.3 Clipping

Clipping refers to a process whereby an element of a word is removed without a change in its meaning (Bauer, 1983 : 233) or its function (Adams , 1973 : 133). The word then becomes shorter. For example, the expression "DNA fingerprinting" loses its first element by fore-clipping to become fingerprinting, whereas the second element of "billboard antenna" is shortened by hind-clipping to become just "billboard" (Algeo, 1991 : 8). Other examples include "exam" from "examination" and "ad" from "advertisement" (Crystal, 1993 : 67). The affixed word may be clipped as well (Kenworthy, 1991 : 26). The word "Yuppie" is an example. The suffix "-ie" of this word is clipped to make "Yup". Kenworthy (1991: 27) notes that this kind of word formation is often found in casual speech, indicating the familiarity of the speaker (Adam, 1973 : 136).

2.4 Vague Expression

Vague expression is a typical style of spoken language (Brown, 1983 : 17; Brown and Yule, 1983 : 6; Carter, 1997b : 161; McCarthy, 1998b : 181). As the name suggests, it does not give a message any specific or exact meanings. A speaker prefers to use it when it is not appropriate to be precise for fear that it may sound authoritative or assertive. Vague expression may also indicate a sign of careless thinking or sloppy expression. Consider these sentences : "Can you give me a sandwich or something?" and "Have you got material or anything like that?". Vague expressions like "or something" and "or anything" do not provide a listener with any specific objects. Channell (1994, quoted in McCarthy, 1998b : 118) studies some aspects of vague language in order to confirm its widespread use in speech communication. The study finds that "thing" is a very frequent and useful example in spoken language; it can substitute for a wide range of names of objects, processes, entities or even a person. Other examples of vague expressions are "a lot of," "do," "nice," "stuff," "sort of," "place" and "things like that".

2.5 Deixis

Deixis refers to an orientational feature. It involves words that point backwards and forwards in a spoken discourse. Each deixis has its own function; *that/this/those/these/here/there* expressing the speaker's sense of closeness or involvement with something; *now/then* concerning the moment of utterance; and *we/you/they/him* relating to a person who is speaking or who is present in the utterance (McCarthy, 1998b : 178). For example, in a fictive dialogue, speaker A says of B's bicycle, "put it in here" and "put it along here". These utterances do not need any more specific details since both speakers know that "it" refers to the bicycle and "here" is a particular place they both can see at the moment of speaking (Goddard, 1997 : 41). McCarthy remarks that deixis is mostly involved in particular contexts, especially the contexts of doing things, like cooking, packing or moving furniture, because the objects being dealt with are normally visible to all speakers. Literary works also use deixis, as in:

She stabbed at the hair, sawing and hacking away almost at random.

"There you are. Give <u>that</u> lot a bit trim and you'll be all right."

Elaine's voice shook with laughter. "No, hold on, there's a bit <u>here</u>."

(Goddard, 1997 : 41)

From the extract above, the underlined deictic terms refer back to a description of the attack on the hair in the first sentence; the terms "that" and "here" refer to different positions of the speaker's hair. When using these terms, the writer has to make sure that the reader already has a clear picture of what is being referred to.

2.6 Vocative

Vocative represents the method whereby a noun phrase is generally used in a direct address (Crystal, 1992 : 143; Eggins and Slade, 1997: 114). Besides identifying someone as an addressee, vocative is used to direct a speaker's message to a particular person or group, (Biber, et al., 1999 : 140; Kolln, 1994 : 222), or to get someone's attention (Leech and Svartvik: 1975 : 154). It may be found at the beginning, middle or end of a sentence, as in the following examples:

<u>Ladies and gentlemen</u>, please be seated.

We certainly hope, <u>my dear friend</u>, that you will visit again soon.

I promise you won't see me here in court again, <u>your honor</u>.

Tell us, <u>Mr. President</u>, how your new tax plan will benefit the economy.

(Kolln, 1994 : 222)

In the sentences above, the vocatives "Ladies and gentlemen," "my dear friend," "your honor" and "Mr. President" serve as direct address of "you" to a particular person or group.

In addition, vocatives may serve an emotive purpose (Huddleston, 1993: 225), maintaining and reinforcing a social relationship between participants in a conversation. For example, in "Did you order a taxi, <u>madam</u>?", "madam" is a vocative marking respect, friendliness, warmth or formality to a stranger. Certain vocatives, such as "daddy," "you guys"(American English) and "my dear," may express a sense of familiarity as well (Leech and Svartvik, 1975 : 155). Leech and

Svartvik remark that occupations may be used as vocatives. However, certain occupational vocatives, like "waiter" or "driver," are rather impolite, whereas others, like "nurse" or "operator," are acceptable, as in "Operator, could you put through a call to Copenhagen, please?"

2.7 Expletive

The term "expletive" refers to a taboo expression (swear words) or semi-taboo expression used as an exclamation reacting to negative experiences. The taboo expletive refers to one of the taboo domains of religion, sex or bodily excretion. For example:

Fuck, I feel fucking sweaty, I can feel it already.

I know what I forgot to get in town. Damn!

Shit, play a fucking domino goddammit.

(Biber, et al., 1999 : 1094-1095)

As for the moderated or semi-expletive, it involves words that camouflage their taboo origin by various phonetic modifications, like "gosh" for "God," or by substitution of related words, like "goodness" for "God". Sometimes, its function may be similar to an interjection such as "oh" and "wow" because it expresses a generalized reaction of surprise or emotional involvement. Examples include:

Geez, that is expensive.

Oh boy, gee you've got some nice pictures.

(Biber, et al., 1999 : 1094-1095)

In the examples above, the moderated or semi-expletive "geez" and "gee" both express a speaker's surprise.

2.8 Interjection

Interjection is a traditional classification relating to parts of speech (Crystal, 1993 : 190). This term's function is purely emotive (Biber, et al., 1999: 1083-1084; Bussmann, Trauth and Kazzazi, 1996 : 235), expressing a speaker's emotions, such as feelings, curses and wishes. One of the most common

interjections is "oh". As a discourse marker, "oh" is used to introduce utterances or to respond to the utterances of others. It may appear with other elements : "Oh, yeah," "Oh, yes," "Oh, no," "Oh God," "Oh, I see" and "Oh, right," for instance. Actually, the main function of "oh" is to convey some degree of surprise, unexpectedness or emotional arousal, indicating something the speaker has just found out or noticed, as in :

> A: I think it's a mosaic.
> B: <u>Oh</u>, it is a mosaic.

> <u>Oh</u>, I should have let you read the paper, I never thought of it.
> <u>Oh</u> how awful!

(Biber, et al., 1999 : 1084)

Some examples of routine interjections are "ah" and "wow". They tend to convey greater intensity of feeling. Typically, "wow" indicates the speaker's surprise, whereas "ah" is used to express either pleasant or unpleasant feelings. Notice that by these interjections, there is emotional involvement. Look at the following examples.

> Seriously! <u>Ah</u>! It's people like him / really bug me.
> A: They're chocolates.
> B: <u>Ah</u>, isn't that nice.

> <u>Oh wow</u>, they really did that tree nice. <u>Wow</u>.

(Biber, et al.,1999 : 1984)

There are several other interjections. For example, "oops" and "whoops" are used to express a minor mishap; "ugh" is to express a degree of disgust; "ow" and "ouch" can give voice to pain, and "aargh" appears to convey physical pain and displeasure. It should be noticed that these emotional words might be employed in a comic strip to imitate face-to-face speech-like reactions (Goddard, 1997 : 58).

3. Syntactic Features

      The syntactic features of spoken language are generally far from being well understood. As has been mentioned, spoken language is constructed in real time, in which there is an inability to plan and edit the utterances (Finegan, 1994 : 379). In addition, since informal speech mostly relies on interpersonal communication as well as the physical environment, the speaker has to rely solely on the participant's understanding and on his/her ability to interpret the messages (Brown, 1983 : 15; Brown and Yule, 1983 : 16). These factors affect features of spoken syntax. Here, we will look at the recurring structures that are typical of spontaneous informal spoken English.

    3.1 Ellipsis

      Ellipsis is a pervasive syntactic structure in spoken discourse. It is the way that elements of a language are removed from utterances or clauses. However, such messages can be understood because of surrounding words and contexts (Goddard, 1997 : 42; Hughes, 1996 : 21). In writing, ellipsis functions to avoid repetition where the structure may be redundant, as in the sentence "We ran for the bus but missed it", where it is clear that the pronoun "we" remains the subject of both clauses, or in "The chair was broken and the table too", where it is clearly redundant to repeat the phrase "was broken". However, in speaking, ellipsis is situational; the missing elements of the utterance could be retrievable through situational knowledge, rather than through anaphoric reference to a previous mention (Biber, et al, 1999 : 1148). In other words, this type of ellipsis affects people and things in an immediate situation. It frequently involves the omission of a personal subject, where it is evident that the reference will be unambiguous or can be predictable. This feature is commonly found with verbs for a mental process, such as "(I) think so." and "(I) wonder whether he will come or not" and "(I) guess they won't be ringing after all" (Carter, 1997b : 154-155). By using ellipsis, the speaker expects that participants are able to fill in the gaps as a result of shared knowledge and history, or the meaning can be easily understood from the context. Following are examples :

A: What's matter?
B: (I've) Got an awful cold.
A: (I've) Just seen Paco.
B: Did he say anything?
A: (He said) Nothing .

(Carter, 1997b : 155)

There are many benefits of using ellipsis. The speaker can be extremely economical in constructing utterances. It also makes the speech of the speaker sound like that of a native speaker who does not tend to cling to full sentences (Hughes, 1996 : 21) and marks a degree of informality between speakers in speech situations (Carter, 1997b : 155).

3.2 Cleft Structure

Cleft structure is a syntactic construction where a clause is split and divided into two separate clauses, but the message of the clause is still the same (Huddleston, 1993 : 459). This structure is more widespread in spoken language than in writing (Carter, 1997b : 155-157; McCarthy, 1998b : 176). Generally, the cleft structure occurs with "it" (it-cleft) and with "wh-words" (wh-cleft). The it-cleft structure is normally used when a speaker wants to emphasize key topics of the utterance (Carter, 1997b : 155). For example, the sentence "Jan ate the cake," is cleft to "It was Jan who ate the cake." Another example is the wh-cleft, as in the sentence "We need more money", which is cleft to "what we need is more money." Carter explains that wh-type clauses are fronted not only for emphasis but also to signal an evaluation or to contradict an expected response from the participant. Sometimes, the position of the wh-cleft may be reversed. For example, in "You see a weekend flight is what you want.", the wh-type clause is cleft at the end of the sentence.

3.3 Dislocation

Dislocation is a syntactic phenomenon in which sentence elements appear at or outside a sentence boundary (Bussmann, Trauth and Kazzazi, 1996 : 134). Biber, et al. (1999 : 957) claim that this construction is another exclusive feature of conversation. In general, there are two major types of dislocation: "preface" and

"noun phrase tag". Sometimes a preface may be called a head or left-dislocated structure, whereas a noun phrase tag is called a tail or right-dislocated item. Carter (1997 : 152) views that these terms, which are used to describe dislocation, suggest their oddity; that is, they do not appear in the main line of usage or they are in some ways "broken" or "damaged" structures. Furthermore, it may be because of a need to invent new terms for which "... there are no other established, standard terms available". However, these terms involve a definite noun phrase occurring together with a co-reference pronoun in the core of the clause.

Preface or head structure is almost exclusively a noun or a noun phrase. As found in an initial position of the sentence, it serves to explicitly introduce the new topic or announce important information (Collin and Hollo, 2000 : 145; McCarthy, 1998 : 180) so that a listener can establish a shared reference concerning what is important in a spoken exchange. For example, in the sentence "This girl this morning she threw a wobbly." , the preface "this girl" occurs with the co-referential pronoun "she" (McCarthy, 1998 : 180). However, the prefaces may be co-referent with an object pronoun. For example, in the sentence "But Anna-Louise – what could have attracted her to a man in his fifties?", the preface "Anna-Louise" occurs with the object pronoun "her" (Biber, et al.,1999 : 957). Here are a few examples of prefaces.

> That chap over there, he said it was ok.
>
> This friend of ours, she decided to buy one.
>
> The women in the audience, they all shouted.
>
> (Carter, 1997b : 151)

Another type of dislocation is a noun phrase tag. It is co-referent with a subject of the preceding clause. Normally, this structure is used to clarify and establish a reference of a preceding pronoun (McCarthy, 1998b : 180), or it may amplify, extend and reinforce what the speaker is saying or has already said (Carter, 1997b : 151-152). As the name suggests, a noun phrase tag is usually placed at the end of a clause in which the speaker can insert grammatical patterns of either declarative or interrogative clauses. For example, in the sentence "Has it

got double doors, <u>that shop</u>?", the tag "that shop" is co-referent with the preceding subject pronoun "it", and in "<u>She</u>'s a really good actress, <u>Clare</u>." , "Clare" is considered a noun phrase tag. Other examples of noun phrase tags are:

> They haven't mended the road yet haven't <u>those workmen</u>.
>
> He must be quite a comic <u>that fellow</u>, you know.
>
> It's not actually very good is it <u>that wine</u>?

<div align="right">(Carter, 1997b : 151)</div>

3.4 Coordinating Conjunction "and"

As the name indicates, the coordinating conjunction "and" is a grammatical term for a class of conjunction. It functions as a loose continuation marker linking clauses or sentences together (Hughes, 1996 : 153); it does not give a sense of analysis or reason but just loosely connects chunks of spoken messages together (Brown, 1983 : 15). For example:

> ...there's a blackberry field <u>and</u> he said it must have been planted in about 1910 <u>and</u> it must be the oldest one in Britain ...

<div align="right">(Hughes, 1996 : 153)</div>

This is an extract from a real speech in which the three separate sentences have been joined loosely together by the co-ordinating conjunction "and" in order to present a progression of linked ideas as they occur in the speaker's mind. The relation of ideas between sentences can be made clear by intonation. However, in a written form, this spoken message may be changed by using a subordinating conjunction as follows:

> ...there's a blackberry field which must be the oldest one in Britain, <u>because</u> he said it must have been planted in about 1910...

<div align="right">(Hughes, 1996 : 153)</div>

The subordinating conjunction "because" may be used to explicitly make the relations between the ideas each sentence conveys. Hughes (1996 : 153) suggests that there is a high incidence of the coordinating conjunction "and" in speech. The

extensive use of such conjunctions is considered poor style in writing and tends to be used in literary constructions to characterize a child speaker (Goddard, 1997: 43).

3.5 Run-on Sentence

A run-on sentence is formed by putting more than one sentence together with either no punctuation or only a comma. A run-on sentence with no punctuation is called a fused sentence, whereas a run-on sentence with a comma is called a comma splice. Blumenthal and Zahner (1963 : 256) comment that this kind of sentence is a favorite blunder of careless, untrained or uneducated writers who fail to recognize or understand a sentence unit. The following are examples of this.

(1) Capital punishment is ethically unacceptable it is against the morals of civilized societies.

(2) Capital punishment is ethically unacceptable, it is against the morals of civilized societies.

(Blumenthal and Zahner, 1963 : 256)

The first example is considered a fused sentence since there is no punctuation to clarify the meaning; the second one is a comma splice, in which two sentences are incorrectly joined or spliced with a comma. Both may be corrected by ending the first sentence after "unacceptable", then beginning a new sentence.

3.6 Existential "there"

The existential "there" is a type of grammatical structure beginning with the unstressed word "there" followed by a form of the verb "be". It emphasizes the notion of existence (Crystal, 1992 : 129). In casual conversation, even highly educated speakers of English do not consider whether the subject following is singular or plural (Berk, 1999 : 190), and the existential pattern "there's" is probably easier for the speaker to pronounce than "there are" (Carter, 1997b : 157). Thus, a singular form of "there's" is often used with plural noun phrases. The verb

is regularly contracted and attached to the preceding "there" (Berk, 1999 : 160 ; Biber et al, 1999 : 186). For example:

> There's two directions you can take her
>
> There's problems with the argument.

<div style="text-align: right">(Carter, 1997b : 157)</div>

In the examples, the contracted singular form of the existential "there's" is followed by the plural noun phrases "directions" and "problems", respectively.

3.7 Multiple Negation

Negation is a process typically expressing a contradiction in some or all of the meanings in a sentence. Similarly, multiple negation refers to two or more negative forms that co-occur within the same clause or sentence in order to express a single negative meaning. Because of the repetition of the negative form, this type of negation appears to strengthen the negative effect (Biber, et al., 1999 : 178). There are two different types of multiple negation: dependent multiple negation and independent multiple negation.

In a dependent multiple negation, two or more negative forms co-occur within the same clause in order to express a single negative meaning. It is commonly found in spoken English and also associated with non-standard British English (Carter, 1997b : 155-157). For example, "You've never seen nothing like it. ", "I told her not to say nothing to nobody." (Biber, et al., 1999 : 178) or "He doesn't want to speak to nobody." (Carter, 1997a : 60). As for an independent multiple negation, it co-occurs in cases of repetition. Its negative forms are not integrated in the same clause. For example, "Won't eat any veggies you know, none." or "No, not tomorrow, she said." (Biber, et al., 1999 : 179). In these examples, the sentences seem to contain two clauses separated by commas, and each clause has its own negative form.

3.8 Unembedded Dependent Clause

Unembedded dependent clause is related to the nature of conversation. It refers to a clause used without being attached to a larger structure. The two important types are "clauses of reason" introduced by "because" and "relative clauses" introduced by "which". Biber, et al. (1999 : 223-224) remark that these types of clauses are connected with the nature of conversation. Normally, clauses of reason allow the speaker to add some words of explanation or justification without planning a message. As for which-clauses, they are typically sentence relatives, allowing a speaker to express a comment on something that has just been referred to, signaling a close connection to the preceding text. Biber, et al. give examples of clauses of reason :

> A: You will be careful with that, won't you?
> B: Yeah!
> A: Cos it costs a lot of money.

> I've told that men don't like women, period. Oh yeah? Who does then? Because women don't like women.
>
> (Biber, et al., 1999 : 224)

Here, the clauses of reason "Cos it costs a lot of money" and "Because women don't like women" are manifested as the complete grammatical units, which are not attached to the previous structures.

Examples of sentential relative clauses are:

> A: Well — the good news for the environmentalists is the bike runs on unleaded.
> B: Mhm.
> A: Which is good news.

> I've got Tuesday morning off now, which is quite good.
>
> (Biber, et al., 1999 : 223)

From the examples above, the relative clauses "Which is good news" and "which is quite good" refer back to the respective entire propositions "the bike runs on

unleaded" and "I've got Tuesday morning off now", rather than modifying the head nouns like most relative clauses.

3.9 Repetition of the Syntactic Form

The speaker frequently repeats the same syntactic form several times (Brown and Yule, 1983 : 17), as in "I look at fire extinguishers. I look at fire exits. I look at what gangways are available. I look at electric cables."

4. Discourse Features

In the previous section, the ways in which syntactic features are constructed in daily conversation are explored. In order to cover features of spoken language, discourse, a larger unit, will be examined in this section. Discourse actually concerns the organization of language beyond the sentence or the clause level used in social contexts and particularly with interaction between speakers. Since exchange, adjacency pair and turn-taking are typical to interactional discourse, these three features are the focuses.

4.1 Exchange

Exchange is a minimal structural unit of interaction consisting of an initiation and a response. On some occasions, it may include a third element that is a follow-up or feedback (McCarthy, 1998b : 52). Following is an example of the structure of exchange : Initiation-Response-Follow-up or Feedback :

(Speaker1 is asking her great-niece about a forthcoming trip to London)

Speaker1: What part of London would you be actually in?	Initiate
Speaker2: Well I would be going from Paddington to Victoria.	Respond
Speaker1: I see yes.	Follow-up

However, more complex sequences may be found as well :

Speaker1: What time is it?	Initiate1
Speaker2: Three o' clock.	Respond1
Speaker1: Is that all?	Initiate2

Speaker2: Yeah.   Respond2
Speaker1: Oh I thought it was later.   Follow-up
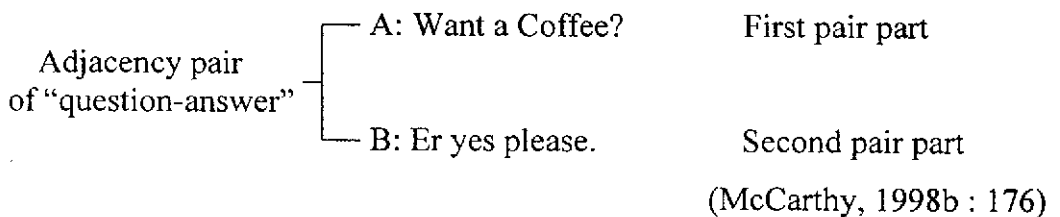   (McCarthy, 1998b : 53)

This complex sequence occurs when checking is necessary for Speaker1. It sometimes means the follow-up is delayed but it is still present.

4.2 Adjacency Pair

An adjacency pair is a sequence of successive utterances produced by different speakers (Eggins and Slade, 1997 : 27; Richard, Platt and Platt, 1992: 390). This feature functions as a turn-transfer technique, allocating the next turn, and identifying the exit from the current turn. The number of adjacent pairs is highly formulaic since it typically consists of two parts; a first pair part and a second pair part. After the first pair part (the first utterance of the adjacency pair), the addressed participant will be the next speaker, producing a relevant second pair part (Eggins and Slade, 1997 : 27). In other words, the second pair part is always a response to the first one (Matthews, 1997 : 8). On some occasions, the pair parts may be similar, as in "greeting- greeting" (hello- hello). Some first pair parts may differ from the second pair parts; for instance, "congratulation-thanks," "apology-acceptance," "informing-acknowledgement" or "question-answer". Look at the example below.

<pre>
                                 ┌─ A: Want a Coffee?   First pair part
      Adjacency pair   │
    of "question-answer"   ──────┤
                                 └─ B: Er yes please.   Second pair part
</pre>
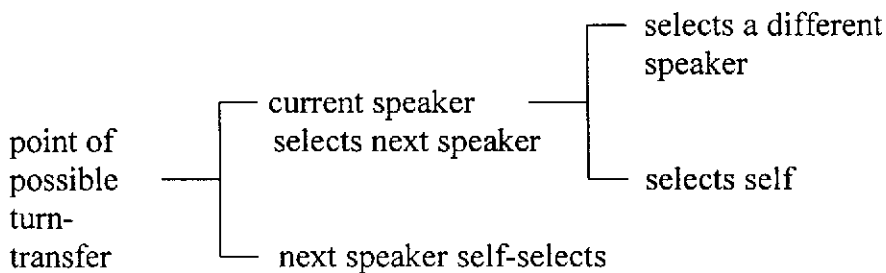   (McCarthy, 1998b : 176)

The occurrence of the second part can be explained by the first; a question in some ways implies that the next turn will be an answer. But the second pair part may presuppose a wide range of meanings in the first pair part as well. "Thanks," for instance, may presuppose the first pair part of "offers," "informing moves" or "congratulations".

McCarthy (1998b : 55) remarks that the notion of adjacency pair actually overlaps with that of exchange. Both are structural units fundamental to a spoken

interaction. However, the difference is that an exchange is primarily seen as a structural unit building up into higher order units, whereas adjacency pair is concerned more with local convergence between participants. Different roles and settings may generate different structures. A native speaker may preface his/her invitation, such as "I was wondering, uh, we're having a party..." , while the non-natives can sometimes be too formal or too blunt, as in "I would like to invite you to a party" or "I want you to go to a party."(McCarthy, 1998a : 121).

4.3 Turn-taking

In conversation, turn-taking refers to constant changes in the speaker's and listener's roles (Richard, Platt and Platt, 1992 : 390). In an English discourse, the "turn" will occur smoothly, with little overlap or interruption. The current speaker may select the next speaker or may continue the utterance. If neither of these conditions occur, the next speaker may speak by self-selection. The turn-taking system is summarized by Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1974 : 696-735, quoted in Eggins and Slade, 1997 : 26):

```
                                        ┌── selects a different
                                        │   speaker
                    ┌── current speaker ─┤
point of            │   selects next speaker
possible    ────────┤                   └── selects self
turn-               │
transfer            └── next speaker self-selects
```

Certain linguistic means may be used when a listener is not ready to take his/her turn. These are usually referred to as back-channel responses, and are used to retain the floor while the speaker is organizing the message (Eggins and Slade, 1997 : 83), such as "mm," "ah-ha," and short words and phrases such as "yeah," "no," "right," "sure" and "you know". Goddard (1997 : 44) comments that these turn-taking features help the speaker check out whether the listener understands and is still paying attention to the message or not. Another feature of turn-taking is a prediction of utterances. The speaker may predict one another's utterances and

often complete or overlap them. This phenomenon may cause a flow of turn-taking to be chaotic, as in :

A: Well, of course, people who go to the vet's are

B: ⌐ Mm

A: interested in the cats and dogs, ain't they?

B: └ Yeah, but the people that first have pets

kit— pets er don't ⌐ realize what's ⌐ involved, do they?

A: └ care └ Well it sorts them out, you know,

⌐ those that don't care that's it so…..but

B:└ Mm └ Mm

A: if you wanna, you know, somebody that's keen on having a pet

B: and want it in ⌐ good order.

A: └ Done … done properly, that's right, yeah.

(McCarthy, 1998 : 127)

5. Non-verbal Features

While a speaker, intentionally or unintentionally, produces speech or communicates with participants, various non-verbal cues are usually involved. It is estimated that in a face-to-face communication, 90 percent or more of social meanings may be conveyed in non-verbal messages and 30 percent or less is carried verbally (Osborn and Mottley, 1999 : 51; Verderber and Verderber, 1992: 102). Therefore, an ability to understand nonverbal language is required for effective communication; it may help the participants interpret verbal messages more precisely (Kreidler, 1997 : 192). The four types of non-verbal cues in spoken language are eye contact, facial expression, gesture and body position.

5.1 Eye contact serves many functions in spoken language. It may signal interest in a conversation, indicate a conversational turn, or mark when to receive feedback. For example, if a speaker pauses for a moment while looking away from a hearer, it indicates that the speaker is going to continue speaking.

5.2 A facial expression may be a display of emotion. It may suggest emotional states, provide feedback, show an interest or lack of interest, or show sincerity in communication. The meaning this expression conveys is often accurate when it is intentionally expressed. For example, the speaker intentionally puts on an angry expression to stop a child from doing something.

5.3 Gesture is a movement of the head, face or hands. A speaker may nod up and down to say "yes" and move his/her head from side to side to say "no". It rarely causes problems in conversation since the speaker knows how and when to gesture.

5.4 Body position plays a role in a spoken interaction, especially in an interpersonal interaction. It often expresses the impression of the partner's conversation. For example, the participant tends to lean towards the speaker when he is interested in what the speaker says.

Written Language

Written language is another communicative means of human interaction. It is frequently considered as a secondary system directly reflecting the spoken language. According to Goody (1977 : 78, quoted in Brown and Yule, 1983 : 13), this mode of communication generally has two important functions. The first is a storage function, allowing people to communicate with one another over time and space barriers, and the second function "shifts language from the oral to the visual domain".

Unlike speech, writing is more visual, and therefore likely to be more permanent (Carter, 1997a : 62). Although being produced temporally, written language has the potential to persist through time (Hughes, 1996:7). This relative permanence makes it suited to planning as well as recording facts, and allows repeated reading, close analysis and revising afterward (Crystal, 1987 : 178-179; Finegan, 1994 : 378-379). Vocabulary of writing is then more specific and varied than that of speech (Finegan, 1994: 378-379). Brown and Yule (1983 : 4-5) observe that the writer may "look over what he has already written, pause between

words with no fear of being interrupted by his interlocutor, take his time in choosing a particular word, ...record or change what he has written, and even change his mind about what he wants to say." Hence, it can be said that the written form of language releases people from the linear process found in the spoken language (Goody, 1977 : 124, quoted in Brown and Yule, 1983 : 13).

Many remarkable advantages are found in written communication. It maintains contact through time and space, and it tends to be the medium of the standard language used for the working out of and transference of information among the educated classes in literate culture (Davies, 1973 : 92). Through written communication, detailed facts are correctly memorized, especially over an extended period of time (Brown and Yule, 1983 : 12-15). Nevertheless, certain disadvantages are perceived. Because of distance, the writer may have no access to the recipient's immediate feedback. Moreover, due to the lack of a shared environment and paralinguistic cues (Brown and Yule, 1983 : 4-5), written meanings might be more confusing and ambiguous (Crystal, 1987 : 178-179; Finegan, 1998 : 378-379). Therefore, a writer should try to minimize the effects of these weak points (Crystal, 1987 : 178-179).

Written language seems to have a special status in most situations. With its permanence, its potential for persisting through time and space and therefore possibilities for recording, language used in written communication tends to be formal and also ideal for the dissemination of ideas for public consumption. One of the significant features of written language is abbreviation. Abbreviation is expected to be common in written language because people are allowed enough time to search for the definition of a certain ambiguous shortened word (Parisana, 1995 : 112). Moreover, since the written language is visually conveyed, the visual combination of graphic elements is also involved. Here, the two important features of written language that are initialism and capitalization will be reviewed, as they may be particularly useful for the present study.

1. Shortening : Initialism

Initialism is a type of shortening. As the name suggests. it refers to the initial letters of each word in a phrase or an expression that are pronounced individually (Algeo, 1991 : 9; Falk, 1973 : 50). The most well-known initialism is "TV" (Algeo, 1991 : 9). Falk (1973: 50) notes that such strings of letters may be regarded as a word itself, not just an abbreviation. People may use them without even knowing their original phrases or expressions or how they are created. One initialism is "GOP" standing for "Grand Old Party" but people may use the shortened form for a long time before they learn its original full phrase. Other examples are "HEW" for "Health, Education and Welfare"; "TLC" for "tender loving care" and "SLD" for the military phrase "ship landing dock" (Falk, 1973 : 50) Sometimes, the letter names are spelt out, such as "Jaycee" for "JC" or "Elsie" for "LC" (Landing Craft). Initialism also includes the echoic values. For example, "AA" stands for "ack-ack," the sound of antiaircraft fire (Algeo, 1991 : 9).

2. Capitalization

The use of capital letters is an English conventional rule. Langan (1995: 147-150), Lunsford and Connors (1992) suggest that it can be employed with :

2.1 First word in a sentence or direct quotation. For example, "Our company has began laying people off." and the doctor said, "This may hurt a bit."

2.2 First person pronoun "I". For example, "at the picnic, I met Tony and Lola."and "Do I think that human beings exist on other planets?"

2.3 Abbreviations and designations that follow a name, such as Eugene Anderson, Jr. or Anne Poletti, Ph.D.

2.4 Names of months, days of the week as well as holidays, such as May, Tuesday and Christmas.

2.5 Proper nouns : personal names (Shannon, Keats, Andrew); geographical names (New York, Tokyo); names of commercial products (Kleenex, Xerox, Ford, Benz); names of companies or associations (Prudential, Allstate, Blue Cross); people with unique public functions (the King, the President); public buildings (the

British Library, the University of Illinois); language and nationalities (English, American, Thai).

2.6 Titles of books, magazines, articles, films, television shows, songs, poems, stories, and papers that people write and the like. For example, "My oral report on the Diary of a Young Girl, by Ann Frank" and "While watching The Young and the Restless on television, I thumbed through Cosmopolitan magazine and The New York Times."

The Internet

The Internet is becoming a powerful and pervasive information technology. It appears in the form of an international computing or telecommunication network connecting people around the world. This modern medium has had a significant impact upon human communication. Studies of various aspects of the Internet, including its rise, dramatic growth, advantages and limitations, have proliferated.

1. The Rise of the Internet

The Internet is an example of the use of the computer as a medium of communication. Technically, it is a number of networks that communicate with one another. However, the user may think that this is simply one big network (Reid, 1991). Originally, the Internet was created by an arm of the US Department of Defence during the Cold War between Russia and the U.S. (Watcharaporn, 1999: 384). The US Defence Department was worried about the security of its networks of command and its central controls; if just one part of the network was disrupted by a nuclear attack, the entire system would be shut down. The Advanced Research Project Agency (ARPA) therefore began to interconnect disparate computer systems and this computer network was eventually known as ARPANET (Kitti, 1996 : 1-2).

ARPANET was the first step towards the Internet. Initially, it connected the computer systems of the University of California at Los Angeles and Santa

Barbara, Stanford University and the University of Utah in Salt Lake City (Pongrapee, 1996 : 18) and was intended to facilitate research at other sites (Reid, 1991). By the year 1972, the number of sites connected to ARPANET increased. It was estimated that there were about 50 different sites (Pongrapee, 1996 : 18). In 1983, ARPANET was divided into two networks, known as ARPANET (for research use) and MILNET (for military use). The ARPANET continued to grow, with various governments, educational and commercial sites being connected to the system. With the advent of satellite communications, it became possible for computers in other countries to join the network, and ARPANET became known as the Internet (Reid, 1991). Since the computer network was intended to be decentralized, the Internet today is beyond the control of any particular agencies; no one can censor or shut down its operations (Rheingold, 1993).

2. The Dramatic Growth of the Internet

The growth of the Internet was originally limited only to research, education and government uses (Lewis, 2000). Since the Internet opened to public use, its growth has increased dramatically. The Internet Domain Survey of January 2002 provides evidence.

Table 2 Numbers of Hosts Advertised in the Domain Name System (DNS) During 1994-2002

Date (January)	Survey Host Count	Adjusted Host Count[1]
2002	147,344,723	
2001	109,574,429	
2000	72,398,092	
1999	43,230,000	
1998	29,670,000	
1997	16,146,000	21,819,000
1996	9,472,000	14,352,000
1995	4,852,000	5,846,000
1994	2,217,000	

Source : Internet Software Consortium (2002)

[1] Adjusted Host Count: The host count computed by increasing the old survey host count by the percentage of domains that did not respond to the old survey method.

The table shows that the number of the Internet hosts has rapidly grown to 147.34 million by the end of January 2002. This is an increase of 37.8 million hosts since January 2001, when the total Internet hosts worldwide stood at 109.57 million.

In addition, the number of Internet users also increased dramatically. According to ComputerScope Ltd. (2002a), nearly nine percent of the world's population has accessed to the Internet; the number of Internet users worldwide increased to 544.2 million by the end of February 2002, up from its estimate of 513.41 million in August 2001. Moreover, it is expected to reach 943 million in the year 2005 (ComputerScope Ltd., 2002b). This data reveals that the Internet is becoming enormously popular and its popularity will tend to increase in the near future.

3. Advantages and Limitations of the Internet

The Internet is used for many purposes. December (n.d.) claims that there are three broad categories of advantages of the Internet : communication, interaction and information. People communicate on the Internet in order to participate in activities and research, as well as for personal or group discussions. They may use the Internet for the purpose of playing and learning. The Internet also gives information. However, December notes that these categories are not exclusive; combinations of communication, information and interaction are possibly found. Disadvantages of the Internet have also been noted. Due to its operation, the Internet has no rules for coping with a great deal of information. Certain commands on the Internet are quite difficult for beginning users. Moreover, the rapid growth of the Internet has been the source of considerable quantities of garbage information. Users often spend a lot of time searching for information, yet finally come up with nothing (Porntip, 1996 : 3; Watcharapron, 1999 : 384).

Research in Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC)

To examine the characteristics of the electronic language, some research is necessary to provide background information. This section begins with the issues

of CMC including the definition of CMC, types and identity issues. Verbal and nonverbal languages of CMC are eventually investigated.

1. Definition of CMC

Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) has emerged as one of the major forms of human communication. It refers to any form of communication conducted by a computer (Ferris, 1997; Higgins, 1998), especially the Internet (Junge, 1999). The computer may comprise a network of links or modes. People use such a network to facilitate communication between participants across space and time (Higgins, 1998). By this communicative technology, a long distance between people -- either physical, temporal, or social -- may be decreased. As a result, CMC has become an effective tool that makes it possible to construct a new type of human interaction beyond time and space barriers. Here, the characteristics of CMC are described in order to classify this type of communication.

2. Types of CMC

In general, there are two main types of CMC: synchronous communication and asynchronous communication. As earlier stated, synchronous communication involves people communicating with each other at the same time via the computer. It adds a real-time excitement to interaction and also builds a sense of social presence (Aoki, 1995). Even though interacting through a computer screen, people may feel a sense of involvement in the ongoing communication (Danet, Ruedenberg-Wright, and Rosenbaum-Tamari, 1995). However, typing skills are required for effective communication, otherwise people might fail to follow a conversation because of its rapidity (Puterman, 1994). The conversation may move too fast for non-native speakers of English, who have no time to reflect, frame questions and compose responses as the text incessantly scrolls up the screen (Aoki, 1995). Commonly, synchronous communication consists of chat modes of interaction that cannot store messages but transmit one person's contributions directly to the monitor of another person or group of people. As for asynchronous communication, people are communicating with one another via computer at

different times. They may create and then send messages at any time they want. Participants, therefore, have more time to think about their contribution and less pressure to respond (Ebbelink, n.d.). Nevertheless, it is possible for them to monitor and edit the text-based structures (Lee, 1999). Asynchronous communication normally includes e-mail, computer conferencing, and newsgroup or electronic bulletin board systems.

3. CMC and Identity Issues

Because CMC is anonymous, the ways a person is "looked at" are entirely dependant upon the information supplied by that person (Wauchope, 1997). These characteristics foster many playful strategies. One of them is playing with identities. Millions of people may play with their identities in different ways, including playing with nicknames and masking their identities.

3.1 Playing with Nicknames

Several new forms of playfulness are evident in CMC, especially in the Internet chat room. Playing with nicknames is an outstanding one. Since chatters rarely use their real names (Reid, 1991; Bechar-Isaeli, 1995), nicknames are required. The nicknames normally appear at the beginning of the chat line. They are thus a first sign of individuality, as well as the most important part of a person's identity. The chatters may create their on-line nicknames in very imaginative ways. Bechar-Isaeli (1995), who examined the use of nicknames in IRC, found that nicknames related to a person's self -- referring to character traits, physical appearances, the physical state of the self or the person's profession or hobbies -- were the favorite type. Nicknames may also be constructed from numbers and punctuation (Bays, 1998). This may consist of combinations of typographic symbols that look like a face; *^_^* is used for a feeling of embarrassment; @^_^@ is used when the chatter does not want to hear anything (as if he/she was wearing an earphone); !^_^! or o^_^o is employed to express a festive feeling, for instance. Even though this kind of nickname cannot be pronounced, the chatters' feeling can be expressed visually. By doing this, creating nicknames does not have

to depend only on words (Bechar-Isaeli, 1995). Certain nicknames may express or confirm the chatter's gender : masculine, feminine or even ambiguous gender. For example, the chatters use nicknames "Annie" to indicate the female identity (Danet, Ruedenberg-Wright and Rosenbaum-Tamari, 1997; Wauchope, 1997).

3.2 Masking of Identities

Another significant characteristic of new interactive encounters in the chat room is the potential for masking of identities. In face-to-face communication, people must confront one another as well as their identities, or at least their appearances have to be finally revealed. On the telephone, even though considered a non-visual environment, the speaker is allowed to hear the participants' voice, which may imply for instance their gender, nationality, age and emotions. In contrast, CMC users can neither see nor hear their participants. They will be identified only by the name they choose, the way they interact, as well as the information they supply :

> Because we cannot see one another in cyberspace, gender, age, national origin and physical appearance are not apparent unless a person wants to make characteristics public ... the medium will always be biased toward certain kinds of obfuscation (Rheingold, 1993).

By CMC, on-line people are unable to directly see each other. Their social features cannot be easily perceived. That is why the way they identify their participants may be less clear or even distorted.

Due to the anonymity, and the absence of non-verbal as well as social cues indicating identities, CMC users may be free to be other people instead of themselves, or to express themselves more than they normally do (Reid, 1991; Bechar-Isreli, 1995). Even their age may be changed, and a quiet person may become expressive, abusive or explosive (Danet, Ruedenberg-Wright and Rosenbaum-Tamari, 1995) in this digital world. In addition, different genders tend to mask their genders differently. According to Jaffe, et al. (1999), a female mostly tends to mask her gender by using a nickname while a male does not. Cutler (1995)

suggests that the participant may be willing to disclose personal information, establish trust and seek support. A sense of being in a safe learning environment is eventually created through this electronic medium.

4. CMC and Verbal Language

A number of arguments are being made about CMC and the ways it affects people's interaction. Language of CMC has several interesting aspects. Many researchers believe that CMC is a remarkable source of language change, as it influences the traditional notion of spoken and written languages and also produces a new dimension of language use. Here, a dichotomy of spoken language and written language will be discussed, together with the characteristics of this electronic language.

4.1 Hybrid of Spoken language and Written Language

In the past, language could be clearly divided into spoken and written forms. This definite division has changed since computer networks first emerged as a new means of communication. The definition of CMC texts in relation to written and spoken languages has become a subject of debate among linguists. They argue that language used in such texts should be defined as either written or spoken language. However, some assert that text-based CMC shares many aspects of both spoken and written languages.

Viewing it as a communication process, Coate (1992) argues that the language in CMC is like spoken language because of its immediate or instant responses. However, it is also like written language because the participants type messages and then send such messages to others. To Young (1994), CMC is like written language since the written communications in CMC take a longer time than conventional speech to produce a response (which can be drafted before being sent out). In addition, such a written response is usually structured and more typically focused than a spoken one. However, he points out that it is similar to speech in terms of the sense of distinct presence in time and the freedom to move freely in the text.

Junge (1999), Puterman (1994) and Werry (n.d., quoted in Shade, 1996) consider the characteristics of CMC text in relation to linguistic perspectives. Due to the lack of non-verbal and feedback cues, CMC text resembles written language. However, textual representations of images or feeling inserted into streams of conversations can provide some characteristics of speech (Junge, 1999). Puterman (1994) contends that despite using writing, CMC falls into the spoken category because the language found in CMC is similar to informal speech in vocabulary and syntax. Focusing on exchange structures, abbreviation, prosody and gesture, Werry (n.d., quoted in Shade, 1996) finds that written communication on Internet Relay Chat (IRC) has the discursive style of face-to-face spoken communication.

4.2 Language Characteristics of CMC

Language in CMC continues to occupy the attention of linguists. Linguistic studies on this electronic language in terms of phonological, lexical, syntactic and discourse features will be reviewed.

4.2.1 Phonological Features

In CMC, a voice may be detected through the use of intentional misspelling and grammatical markers. Intentional misspelling, which often involves the repetition of a vowel or consonant, could represent the accentuation of a word or a phrase (Doell, 1998) and also the chatter's social factors (Wauchope, 1997). For example, by using the extended words in "soooooo good!" or "I am hungry for FOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOD," not only the chatter's voice is intensified but also her female gender is disclosed. As for grammatical markers, it may consist of capitalization as well as repeated exclamations and question marks. Standard rules of capitalization for particular sentences are largely ignored in the chat room. Capitalization not only expresses yelling or shouting but also adds emphasis if it is used with a whole word (Doell, 1998; Ott, 1993). On some occasions, capital letters may mean singing, an activity that requires vocal power. Chatters can virtually sing together by typing the next line of the text. However, Hentschel (1998) remarks that this phenomenon is rare. Furthermore, to present rising or falling intonation certain chatters may employ some exclamation and

question marks, such as "?" or "???," "!" or "!!!" (Jaffe, et al., 1995; Wauchope, 1997). For example, in "hazelwood?????", a repetition of the question marks implies the rising intonation of this question.

4.2.2 Lexical Features

Compared to Standard English, lexical items used in the chat room are unusual. Most of them are formed under the pressure of time constraints. To speed up this synchronous communication, many inventive techniques are employed. One of them is a substitution of letters for words (Paolillo, 1999; Wohlk, 1996), as the letters "u" and "r" being substituted for the English words "you" and "are" and the letter "z" for "s", especially in the word-final position. Paolillo (1999) terms these kinds of substitution "vernacularizing changes". He also explains that these non-standard patterns as well as obscene language are frequently employed among members of strong-tie networks. As for obscene words, they are also associated with the chatters' toughness and masculinity (Paolillo, 1999).

Since typing ability is involved, typing mistakes like "jion" instead of "join" or "bowel" instead of "bowl" may be commonly found. These typing errors are considered "word play" in the chat room (Danet, Ruedenberg-Wright and Rosenbaum-Tamari, 1995). Normally, chatters do not pay attention to these mistakes except that they provide a possibility of misunderstanding (Wohlk, 1996). Additionally, there are some non-standard spelling conventions (Doell, 1998) that are very well known. Examples of these are "wanna" or "cuz" being used instead of "want to" and "because". In many cases, CMC users also create their own alternative spellings, such as "kewl" for "cool" and "yew" for "you". From these phenomena, it is found that the way chatters spell their words presents very realistically the way in which such words are used in the actual speech communication (Hentschel, 1998). Moreover, a lower case may be intentionally used at the beginning of sentences as well as proper names. Doell (1998) remarks on this spelling violation that it is difficult to determine whether the chatters intend to use it or it is just a result of neglect. However, Danet, Ruedenberg-Wright and Rosenbaum-Tamari (1997) add that even though this practice may be regarded as

producing spelling mistakes, it does not deserve penalty since it colors CMC text with personality.

The constant use of abbreviation is a prevalent aspect of CMC utterances. Since synchronous communication users have to type the utterances, certain shortened words, such as "LOL" (laugh out loud), "BRB" (be right back), "IMHO" (in my humble opinion) and "OTOH" (on the other hand), are methods of accelerating communication (Murphy and Collins, 1998; Puterman, 1994; Reid, 1991; Suler, 1997; Wohlk, 1996). The chatters who are slow typists are thus disadvantaged (Reid, 1991; Wohlk, 1996). Puterman (1994) and Wauchope (1997) remark that the use of abbreviation also marks the user's "in-group" or "out-group" identity from the perspective of CMC communities. New users consciously use the abbreviations since they think that non-use is definitely a sign of lower status in CMC. However, more frequently they are confounded by these unusual words (Suler, 1997). Another significant lexical feature in CMC is onomatopoeia. It indicates the user's attempt to convert emotional features into a written form; "wOOhOO" may imitate a shout of joy or the anticipated triumph of the user (Doell, 1998); "gluckgluckgluck" is the user' comment on the fact that he/she is drinking a glass of wine (Hentschel, 1998) ; "hehehe," or "mwhahaha" are typed to indicate the non-verbal cues of laughter (Wauchope, 1997), for instance.

4.2.3   Syntactic Features

CMC, despite being a text-based interaction through a writing system, has the speech-like syntactic features, which are normally found in informal speech communication (Puterman, 1994). The sentence structure is not grammatically complete and complex (Doell, 1998; Suler, 1997); that is, it contains only one or two words (Wohlk, 1996), and the subject, verb or both are often missed, as in "you a spy?," "like cameras and shit" and "cool" (Ott, 1993). Doell (1998) adds that contractions or shortened forms are used almost exclusively; for instance, "I'm," is for "I am" or "don't," for "do not". Even an apostrophe of the contraction is sometimes omitted, as in "cant," or "ill"(Doell, 1998). In addition, due to the lack of the visual cues of face-to-face communication, users who meet for the first time need to determine their participants' characteristics. Certain

questions about physical characteristics are frequently expressed in one or two brief sentences, or in sentence fragments. Such terse inquiries include "Age?" and "M/F?". It should be observed that these questions, rarely found in face-to-face encounters, seem to be more socially acceptable in CMC (Suler, 1997). Moreover, some programming conventions may be applied. By using "!political" , the users say "not political" with the convention of an exclamation point as a prefix. There are other examples of symbols or programming code used in conversational interaction. For example, the symbol "=" stands for "means" or "is the same as". Sometimes, the syntax of code is used; for instance "have you asked (players)?" meaning "have you asked any of the players?", or an arrow pointing to a participant's name, as in "lmarvin<- - Philadelphia," indicating "lmarvin lives in Philadelphia"(Marvin, 1995).

4.2.4 Discourse Features

CMC written discourse is a relatively new form with its own peculiarities. In the chat room, the chatter will see what the participant types only if the message is "sent" by pressing the return key. In other words, if the chatter keeps typing, his/her participant will not be able to notice the utterances. The communication therefore seems to be silent. This may be interpreted as a temporary wish not to say anything, as a private conversation, or as a result of a lag[1]. The question like "are you there" (Hentschel, 1998) or a verbalization of minimal responses, such as "hmmm," "uhuh," "mmm" (Puterman, 1994), may eventually appear. Puterman remarks on the use of these minimal responses that the inexperienced chatters are often unaware of the necessity of using them because in real life conversation, they are unconsciously produced. It should be noticed, however, that to prevent the participants from taking a turn, the chat speaker's utterances may be broken into small pieces (Hentschel, 1998).

Adjacency pairs are another phenomenon observed in the chat room. In daily conversation, an adjacency pair is a sequence of successive utterances

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[1] The term "lag" is an Internet jargon. It refers to a slow speed of communication resulting from the problem of a system (Marvin, 1995).

produced by different speakers (Eggins and Slade, 1997 : 27; Richard, Platt and Platt, 1992 : 390). It functions as a turn-transfer technique, allocating the next turn, and identifying the exit from the current turn (Eggins and Slade, 1997 : 27). Like in the speech communication, adjacency pairs in the chat room perform a double function; they help identify the speaker and the listener, and also give coherence to the speech. When interactions simultaneously occur, the participant's understanding of the messages may be hindered. However, an answer, which is associated with a former question, may accurately direct the participant (Noblia, 1998).

Because of the simultaneous interactions in a single room, messages from other participants arrive and are displayed in the middle of the chat speaker's turn (Doell, 1998). This is why Robin (1992) considers that communication in the chat room resembles that of cocktail parties. However, this interruption is not interpreted as an offence because there is no intention (Doell, 1998). In addition, it seems that turn-taking has already lost its significance in CMC conversation. When there are many users in a channel, it is unclear to whom a message is addressed. The speaker thus frequently starts an utterance with the addressee's nickname. For example (Doell, 1998) :

> <participant1> hey venom
> <participant1> I'm 22
> <participant1> and look 13
> <participant1> so use my id

The example above indicates a typical example of a CMC turn that is split up into multiple messages. The messages identify the addressee as "venom" at the beginning, without the partner's taking a turn.

5. CMC and Non-verbal Language

As non-verbal language is not visible in the CMC environment, participants may translate it into written form. Textual translation for traditional non-verbal behavior is highly stylized and artistic (Reid, 1991). It makes messages

in CMC similar to those of speech communication (Junge, 1999; Puterman, 1994). According to Murphy and Collins (1997), besides substituting for non-verbal cues, these written behaviors are designed to present a recognized self, set a context for interactions, share effect and meaning, minimize misunderstanding, and importantly construct the chat-room community (Reid, 1991). This new convention of non-verbal language is presented as follows :

5.1 Movement

Movement in CMC would be expressed by the use of asterisks, repetition and ellipsis. CMC users will type words in asterisks to present their physical actions or reactions; *giggle*. This type of marker might be used to indicate private communication or whispering (Suler, 1997). Danet, Ruedenberg-Wright and Rosenbaum-Tamari (1997) support the claim that the repetition of consonants may indicate the movement of objects. For example, "sssssssssssss" is a graphic representation of dissipating smoke. This convention resembles the representation of action in comics. To Murphy and Collins (1997), ellipsis (...) can show the continuation of the users' thought. Sometimes, a series of periods is placed where a pause occurs in speech, as in "your mom's too old for me ...although I'm reaaaally flattered" and "awesome.. don't you think 22's over doing it =)" (Doell, 1998).

5.2 Facial Expression

With respect to the face, CMC systems usually support a "low-end ASCII" [American Standard Code for Information Interchange] set called "emoticons", which were first introduced by Scott Fahlman around 1980 (Doell, 1998). These icons look like a face, consisting of eyes, nose and mouth, when they are rotated 90 degree clockwise. They use a colon to substitute for eyes, a hyphen for a nose and a parenthesis for a smile or frown. (Witmer and Katzman, 1997). Even though emoticons demand skill (Marvin, 1995; Reid, 1991), it is common for anyone to develop them by adapting the symbols available on the standard keyboard (Reid, 1991). The original emoticon is the smiley face :) or :-) but there are countless variations. While most emoticons appear horizontally and sideways, there are also

vertical ones, such as "contentment": <-_->. Witmer and Katzman comment that these vertical emoticons are like letters and so are easy to read. However, they cannot be extended horizontally or sideways to show double chins, eyebrows or hats, as the horizontal emoticons can.

Emoticons are widely used along with words in written messages for many purposes. They can compensate for the inability to convey inflections, facial expressions and bodily gestures. These icons can also represent the emotional conditions of the user; the plain smiling face denotes the user's pleasure, for example (Reid; 1994). According to Andrews (1994), emoticons are regarded as a way of clarifying an ambiguous statement. People use them to indicate that an otherwise strange or opaque declaration is meant only as a joke, for example, "you idiot! :-)" means such a sentence is just a joke -- the speaker does not believe that a person is an idiot, as the message literally suggests. Creative icons may indicate the users' identities : an 8-) shows that the user is wearing glasses (Baym, 1994: 152), or an object (Reid, 1991): @}---,-\-- is for a virtual rose. Bechar-Israeli (1995) uses emoticons as her name so that her feeling can be expressed visually and doesn't depend on words. For example, the user may use the icon :-O as a substitute for her name so that her feeling of surprise is visually expressed. Due to this playfulness of graphic symbols, Danet, Ruedenberg-Wright, and Rosenbaum-Tamari (1995) call communication in a chat room "a veritable forest of symbols". Reid (1991) suggests that successful communication in the chat room depends on the use of these icons because they are regarded as a sign of "inside status".

Despite many benefits, emoticons also have a dark side. Andrews (1994) presents his negative attitude towards emoticons. He argues that emoticons should not be used in communication between adults because such icons can consume disc space and lead to computer injuries; typing heavy colons, hyphens and commas can cause repetitive strain injuries. Emoticons are also sometimes considered "in poor taste" or "in conflict with standards of good writing" (Danet, Ruedenberg-Wright and Rosenbaum-Tamari, 1997) since some consider a well-constructed sentence alone should be enough for the users to understand each other (Andrew, 1994). Sproull and Kiesler (1991, quoted in Katzman, 1994) remark on the limitations of

graphic accents. They point out that emoticons not only signal mood weakly but are also flat and stereotyping; the boss's smile is not different from the secretary's.