

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### CONCLUSION

The LD-in-texts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 under investigation have been described contextually and linguistically in the last two chapters in particular with the focus on the provision of answers to these research questions: (1) what are the phasal realisations characteristic of the LD-in-texts with respect to the macro-level aspects: the macro-functions or phases in terms of their types and patterns in particular?, (2) what are the phasal realisations characteristic of the LD-in-texts with respect to the micro-level aspects: the micro-functions or sub-phases in terms of their types and patterns in particular?, (3) what are the experiential realisations characteristic of the LD-in-texts with respect to the semantic representation in terms of the semantic features?, and (4) what are the experiential realisations characteristic of the LD-in-texts with respect to the transitivity system representation in terms of the nuclear transitivity types (i.e. the process types and the inherent participant functions and types) and additionally the circumstantial transitivity types (i.e. the projecting circumstances and the expanding circumstances)? Some discussion of each description has also been provided. The discussion and conclusion in this chapter are presented in an attempt to provide an overall and yet global picture of the LD-in-texts as a whole and to set and interpret them in relevant contexts. They also need to be seen as a complement to what has been presented in the previous chapters.

Firstly, on the whole it can be stated conclusively that the LD-in-texts under investigation are as representations of *academically-oriented* (rather than socially-oriented) lecture activities, in which the lectures to a great extent have tended to focus their attention on the transformation of intellectual values (academic knowledge and/or skills) with the least social values. To this end, realisationally there are apparently a number of indicators of this, three of which stand out and need mentioning here: (1) the frequent occurrences of the relevant macro-functions such as the Substantiation (SU), Discourse Structuring (DS), Conclusion (CO) and Evaluation (EV) macro-functions at the phasal semiotic level, (2) the frequent occurrences of the relevant micro-functions such as the Definition (DE), Statement (ST), Explanation (EP), Quotation (QU), Orientation (OR), Reminder (RE), Focus (FO), Summary (SM), Emphasis (EM) and Judgement (JU) micro-functions at the sub-phasal semiotic level in support of the relevant macro-functions in the phasal semiotic space, and (3) the frequent occurrences of the relevant experiential processes such as the relational processes at the transitivity semiotic level in support of the relevant micro-functions and macro-functions.

For one thing, the revealing fact above answers the question of whether or not the LD-in-texts as activities that involve lecturers and students have achieved the academic goals. In this, the answer is apparently in the affirmative: the academic values (knowledge and skills) have been transferred through the lectures. In other words, the lectures have achieved their academic-functional goals. For another thing, the fact that the LD-in-texts exhibit the least degree of sociability leads one

to a conclusion that the lectures have not sufficiently met the social-functional goals. In another context this may lead one to wonder whether or not it could be generalised as a characteristic representation of all the lectures in the given institution.

Secondly, on the whole the LD-in-texts are so dynamic in their occurrences and semiotic positions that it would be complicated to analyse them by employing the stage-by-stage framework. In particular, the highly dynamic features of the LD-in-texts are indicated by the various micro-function types and a vast number of diversified micro-function patterns that occur in various macro-function types and patterns in the given phasal semiotic space. In this, the micro-function types and patterns do not occur linearly in developmental stages as such that one can easily identify and locate them into developmentally organised stages of the LD-in-texts in question.

Locally, the dynamic occurrences of the micro-functions in the phasal semiotic context may not be a problem for the participants involved in lectures such as those under consideration. Globally, however, their 'less developmentally' organised occurrences in the discoursal semiotic context have a potential to cause a problem for the listening participants (students), particularly in respect of what directions the lectures are heading to.

Thirdly, it occurs to me that on the whole the prominent occurrences of the relational transitivity processes have been evidently effective for the achievement of the academic goals in particular but with a price to pay: the social goals of the

LD-in-texts are in some sense marginally treated. In other words, on the whole the academic functions of the LD-in-texts are apparently fulfilled by the prominent use of the relational transitivity processes in particular but the social functions of the LD-in-texts are sacrificed in that they are insufficiently signalled through the linguistic processes. At the higher semiotic levels, the frequently occurring forms of monologuing and non-spontaneous lectures indicate this on the one hand, and on the other it is marked by the rarely occurring asides, humours, greetings, leave-takings or the like. (More discussion of these is presented below).

There are various possible motivating factors that lie behind all those processes already mentioned so far, and they may have relevance to certain contexts, particularly in the teaching-learning contexts. In this, for example it is revealed that drills have still been viewed and employed by the lecturers as efficient and effective ways of construing the 'natural' reality of the world out there and of bringing them into the lecture room.

Another example relates to the linking techniques in lecturing, which are not something new, which have also been employed, from which certain macro-functional, micro-functional and experiential processes emerge. In these techniques, the lecturer for example (1) introduces the lecture, linking it to the previous week and rounding it off, linking it to the following week, (2) relates the lecture topics to the syllabus and to what is taught elsewhere by other methods, (3) relates the lecturer himself or herself to the subject, making clear his or her

personal position in relation to the issues raised, and (4) relates the subject to the students by pitching the lecture at the right level and by using familiar material to illustrate and explain points, etc. These linking activities belong to the outer type of connections. Or, the lecturer (1) makes the lecture structure clear, tells the students what s/he is going to say, (2) uses verbal markers to punctuate and as hooks and eyes, (4) summarises periodically, tells the students what s/he has told them, (5) refers back whenever there are possible cross-connections with points made clear, (6) re-uses examples, and (7) draws it all together at the end (Cockburn & Ross n.d.:33).

One determining factor that has motivated the speakers (three lecturers only) to produce less frequently occurring greetings, leave-takings or the like may be related to the social distance with the relatively high frequency of meeting among the participants, because they see each other every week.

The 'prescriptive' attitude performed by one lecturer may not necessary aim at creating an authoritative atmosphere. It may be motivated by the fact that there a lot of lecture materials to be presented within a two-hour lecture duration. Or, it may be motivated by the need to be efficient, or to avoid digression.

Why do some lecturers control the floor by way of monologuing and non-spontaneous lectures? One possibility is that they are worried that the lecture contents to be transferred to the students would need more time than the time available for them (one hour).

Why does one lecturer say too many expressions of "you know" and "isn't it"? One possible motivating factor is that this lecturer does conversing, she prepares worksheets for the students to practise certain technique and worksheets for class-work activities. Expressions such as these generally imply that the speaker (lecturer) is seeking an acknowledgement or a confirmation from the students.

Two lecturers are younger than the other five lecturers and they would be more comfortable if they are seen as being friendly with the students. This is indicated by their tendency to produce humorous linguistic expressions.

As an academic discourse, I can see that there are social and intellectual classifications that are related to the lecture content. The power dimension of the academic discourse is hierarchical, asymmetrical, here the lecturers versus students. As a result, it produces authority and the intellectual value produces expertise. The language of statement, explanation and all the substantiation, conclusion, evaluation obviously represent academic language. The language of expertise is expressed in association with the technical linguistics and language teaching terminology. The lecturers are knowledgeable in these areas of study. In this, as Poynton (1985) points out, the greater the inequality between interactants the more likely it is that their linguistic behaviours will be non-reciprocal. This is related to the power of superiority so to speak, in which the lecturers have the right to describe, define, nominate, etc without interruption. This is how the monologue comes into existence.

Certain lecturers have a tendency to spoon-feed the students. Because the lectures are in face-to-face interactions, there is direct contact among the interactants.. The frequency of contact of the teaching-learning activity is once or twice a week in which the human relations are structured in terms of intimacy (this is what Poynton 1985 calls "multiplex"). In the conversing lecture, the contact relationship increases, the interchange also rises, the interest is generated, the understanding and. clarification increase. In terms of affect, the relationships are cordially institutionalised by the system of the University of Malaya. The emotional states relate to power. Actually the attitudes of both parties (lecturers and students) are generally positive. At times the lecturers lose temper which affects the lecture discourse but this is not to be seen as characteristic of the overall LD-in-texts in question.

The researcher's general claim is that what has been revealed represents the contextual and linguistic realisations characteristic of the lecture discourse-in-texts at the Faculty of Languages and Linguistics of the University of Malaya as far as the seven lectures as data and the macro-functional, the micro-functional and the experiential realisations are concerned. The seven-lecture corpora are too small to make such a claim. I hope that the findings of this study would motivate other interested researchers to increase the number of the corpora of the similar study as such that the overall and complete picture in question can be put into view.

As has been indicated above, for some reason the scope of the contextual and linguistic investigation of the LD-in-texts has been delimited by employing the semiotic slicing technique. The contextual aspects (religious, ideological, cultural and situational) have been thin-sliced into the situational aspects only, further sliced into the diatypic aspects and finally sliced into the macro-functional and micro-functional aspects only. For further research the researcher would suggest that at the contextual level the field, the tenor and the mode aspects be included and at the linguistic level the logical, the mood and the theme aspects be included as well in such an investigation.

As has been indicated in Chapter 1, the slicing technique is related to the principled selections that this study has made as regards the relevant aspects and dimensions of investigation. That is, the sliced selections are designed to pave the way for any interested researchers in the same field to do further research that will ultimately provide a comprehensive account of the lecture discourse phenomena in the overall semiotic space of language-in-context at the Faculty of Languages and Linguistics of the University of Malaya in particular.

Specifically, for theoretical and practical/applied areas of further research, the researcher would suggest the following:

- (1). At the language level, there is a need to extend the scope of research that involves all the four semantic components (experiential and logical, interpersonal and textual) and in line with the four lexical grammatical components.



- (2). At the situational (discoursal) context level, there is a need to involve at least all the variables of the functional variation.
- (3). For a more comprehensive study, there is a need to involve higher levels of semiotic that take all cultural, ideological and religious aspects, dimensions and representations.
- (4). At the higher-order semiotic levels of study, there is a need to establish and develop a more satisfactory framework on which practical/applied research activities are based. Such a framework needs to be applicable to capture higher-order phenomena such as those indicated in Figures 1.1 and 1,2 in Chapter 1.

As far as this study is concerned, the necessary conclusion and suggestions have been made descriptively. The researcher hopes this study has fulfilled the requirements to confine itself as the study of the contextual and linguistic realisations of the lecture discourse-in-texts that involves seven lectures as texts, with specific reference to the macro-functional, micro-functional and experiential realisations of the LD-in-texts.