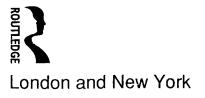
Dramatic discourse: dialogue as interaction in plays

Vimala Herman.

Dramatic Discourse

Dialogue as interaction in plays

Vimala Herman



First published 1995 by Routledge 11 New Fetter Lane, London EC4P 4EE

Simultaneously published in the USA and Canada by Routledge 29 West 35th Street, New York, NY 10001

© 1995 Vimala Herman

Typeset in Times by Michael Mepham, Frome, Somerset Printed and bound in Great Britain by T.J. Press (Padstow) Ltd, Padstow, Cornwall

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced or utilized in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publishers.

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British
Library

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book has been requested

ISBN 0-415-08241-2

To my mother and father

Contents

	Acknowledgements	ix
	Introduction	1
	Dialogue and discourse	1
	Conversation and dramatic dialogue	3
	Dialogue, interaction, utterance	13
1	The ethnography of speaking	18
	Scenes of speech	18
	Deixis	26
	Speech events in drama	28
	The participant framework	30
	Speakers and personae	37
	Participant configurations and distribution in drama	47
	Verbalizing space	48
	Time in language	60
	Time in drama	62
2	Ethnomethodology and conversation analysis	76
	The systematics of turn-taking: general	78
	Sequencing of turns: general	84
	Drama and the systematics of turn-taking	91
	Turn change options	92
	Turn constructional strategies: distribution, order and	
	length	114
3	Turn sequencing	122
	Turn sequencing in drama	122
	Intimacy sequences	142
	Alternative sequences	149
	Repetition	152
	Openings and closings	159

viii Contents

_		164
4	Pragmatics	164
	Preliminaries: general frameworks	189
	Politeness phenomena	10,
	Pragmatics and drama: general	196
	The intentional self	198
		203
	Locutionary acts	207
	Conventional/institutional acts	223
	Inter-personal acts and the trials of communication	240
	Politeness and power	240
5	Gender and language	245
	Women's talk	245
		265
	Gender and its discontents	279
	Gender and dramatic discourse	_,,
	Bibliography	306
		323
	Index	

Acknowledgements

The writing of this book was helped by various kinds of support given to me by individuals and institutions, which I gratefully acknowledge.

My thanks are extended to David Birch, Ron Carter, Bill Dodd and Bill Nash who read earlier chapters and offered invaluable advice and unfailing encouragement. Thanks are also due to the Routledge team, especially Claire L'Enfant, Julia Hall and Nikky Twyman for their understanding, patience and skilled help. To Janice Price, I owe a very special debt.

I also acknowledge with gratitude the financial support given to me by the British Academy in the form of a research grant from the Small Personal Research Grants Fund. The University of Nottingham supported me with a grant from the Humanities Rolling Project Small Grant Fund. The help given by both institutions enabled me to spend the summer of 1992 in Cambridge during a crucial period of researching and writing this book. My thanks are also extended to the staff of the Hallward Library, and the Cripps Computing Centre at the University of Nottingham, and to the staff of the Cambridge University Library, for their efficient help.

To all those scholars whose work has shaped and influenced my own thinking, either directly or indirectly, I owe a deep intellectual debt. To my family, I owe a very personal one, as also my friends for their warmth and hospitality which enabled me to put much needed distance between myself and the computer as and when the occasion arose. My students, too, have helped me test and revise both ideas and analysis by the offer of insights and critical comments of their own. Any remaining faults are inevitably my own.

Permission to use material which appeared previously under the title 'Dramatic dialogue and the systematics of turn-taking' in *Semiotica* (1991), 83, 1/2, pp. 97–121 has been granted by Mouton de Gruyter, a division of Walter de Gruyter & Co., and is gratefully acknowledged.

Introduction

DIALOGUE AND DISCOURSE

Dialogue as discourse is characterized by a fundamental structural principle; it is interactive and interactional. It is a mode of speech *exchange* among participants, speech in relation to another's speech and not merely the verbal expression of one character or actor's 'part'. Dialogue belongs not to the sphere of the 'I' but to the sphere of the 'we', as Gadamer noted (1986a: 65). It requires, in standard cases, the agency and involvement of at least two participants who communicate through the medium of language, as the etymology of the word signifies – 'dia' – through, 'logos' – word, from 'dialegomai' – to converse. The encounter of an 'I' with a 'you' in the speech situation is itself a form of drama, as Lyons (1977) following Buhler (1934) observed, which the category of 'person' in language reflects.

The grammatical category of 'person' depends upon the notion of participant-roles and upon their grammaticalization in particular languages. The origin of the traditional terms 'first person' 'second person' and 'third person' is illuminating in this connexion. The Latin word 'persona' (meaning 'mask') was used to translate the Greek word for 'dramatic character' or 'role' and the use of this term by grammarians derives from their metaphorical conception of a language event as a drama in which the principal role is played by the first person, the role subsidiary to his, by the second person, and all other roles by the third person. It is important to note, however, that only the speaker and addressee are actually participating in the drama. The third person is negatively defined with respect to the first person and second person: it does not correlate with any positive participant role.

(Lyons 1977: 638)

In the 'drama' of speech exchange the roles of speaker and hearer are

played by actual participants and the roles are exchanged during the course of dialogue. The speaker switches role to that of listener while the erstwhile listener becomes the speaker without any necessary change in place or setting, only of 'person'. The switch from attendant non-speech to speech, the change of role from listener to that of speaker, is undertaken in response to another's speech, since response is predicated by the nature of the form. The temporal progression of such alternations and interchanges constitutes the structure and course of dialogue.

The dialogic principle has sometimes been understood in profound ways. To Martin Buber, the I-Thou relationship bespoke a fundamental condition of inter-subjectivity as the basic ground for humans in contact (Buber 1923). For Mikhail Bakhtin (1981) dialogic interactiveness is omniscient and forms the basis of understanding itself, with social intersubjectivity taking priority over solo subjectivity in questions of meaning. In fact, dialogism for the Bakhtin school, even in its disparateness, transcended the face-to-face scenario to take in all forms of communication, including the written forms, and, more broadly, links to an epistemology that grapples with the interconnections between mind, language, culture and history (Voloshinov 1973); and argues for relatedness and for 'a necessary multiplicity in human perception' (Holquist 1990: 22). In speech, the tie with Otherness which the principle affords is manifested in the form. The production of meaning is not predicated upon univocality but is always structured under the pressure of an alternative force. An I addresses a you who responds as I addressing you, who responds as I addressing you . . . and so on. The deictic tie between addresser and target addressee - the I and you of the speech situation of dialogue - ensures that face-to-face encounter is presupposed by the form. The progress of dialogue over time is, consequently, dependent on the inputs from both poles of its structuring.

Standard definitions of the form in dictionaries link dialogue to spontaneous forms of dual interaction – conversation.

1 a literary work in conversational form 2a a conversation between 2 or more people or between a person and sthg else (e.g. a computer) b an exchange of ideas and opinions 3 the conversational element of literary or dramatic composition 4 discussion or negotiation between 2 nations, factions, groups, etc. with conflicting interests . . .

(New Penguin English Dictionary 1986)

The link between conversation and dialogue posited above relates primarily to structure and not necessarily to content, function or verbal texture. But the alternating speech possibilities afforded by the form have

been put to varied uses which have conditioned manifestations of it accordingly. Variations can be seen in both literary and philosophical texts in which opposing points of view, competing attitudes or intellectual positions on some question have been presented in dialogic form for exegetical or pedagogical purposes. Socrates' and Plato's dialogues, as much as Hume's or Berkeley's, are cases in point. In literature, dialogues of 'Self' and 'Soul' in poetry or Imaginary Conversations of the kind composed by Walter Savage Landor have surfaced from time to time in other than dramatic texts. In everyday contexts, too, variation is the norm. Dialogues in courtrooms differ from those in classrooms; social chit-chat differs from parliamentary debates. All are, nevertheless, dual or multispeech forms entailing, in one way or another or for one reason or another, the presumption of Otherness to which One relates in patterned alternations of speech.

To linguists desirous of investigating the workings of dramatic dialogue, the conflation of conversational speech with dialogue is fortuitous since there is a body of work that has studied spoken speech as 'discourse'. 'Discourse' is a term that has many uses and encompasses, broadly, units that are larger than the basic unit of the grammar, the sentence. The concept is used in this study in its relevance to spoken speech within contexts of verbal communication, the emphasis being, particularly, on the deployments of the dialogic form as situational interaction. Instances of verbal communication actually exceed conversational contexts alone, but most studies have prioritized conversation as the exemplary genre of spontaneous, spoken speech. Before we move to a consideration of the many frameworks of analysis that can contribute to our understanding of the workings of dialogue as interaction, some preliminary remarks are necessary in order to clarify the relation between conversational speech and dramatic speech. The weight of opinion, especially in literary studies, would seem to be against any such affiliation, standard dictionaries notwithstanding.

CONVERSATION AND DRAMATIC DIALOGUE

Studies of dramatic dialogue as discourse – as a speech exchange system - are hardly in evidence, even in investigations of 'the language of drama'. The thrust of the argument has generally been to safeguard the separation of dramatic dialogue from conversation in order to preserve the latter's 'literary' quality. The relation between the two forms has been examined contrastively, as between two essences, literary and non-literary. Little attention has, therefore, been paid to connections between them, although

conversation and dramatic speech share areas of commonality in being speech exchange systems, which sets them apart from poetic genres like the ode or the lyric, or narrator language in the novel. Moreover, where the relation has been confronted it has generally been confined to the uses of naturalistic speech at a certain juncture in the history of drama. Part of the reason for this bias is to do with unexamined assumptions about conversation and these focus on content or verbal texture as the point of contrast.

The differences in verbal texture, in particular, have moved critics like Allardyce Nicoll (1968) to utter uncharacteristically extreme sentiments. To Nicoll, as to many others, a playwright is 'an artist in words' (ibid.: 344), in a specific sense, as a poet, first and foremost. The world of drama is a 'world of emotions' (ibid.: 341) and Nicoll propounds on the inability of common speech to function expressively in such a world - 'everyone knows that our common speech has no power to express our passions intimately'. Conversational language, apparently, reveals us to be tonguetied, incoherent when our passions are aroused: we splutter with rage or are stunned with grief. Playwrights who use a realistic mode are hampered by the mismatch between the force of felt emotion and the threadbare possibilities for expression of them afforded by everyday speech. Reliance on naturalistic resources in drama can have dire consequences, since it could result in dramatists being 'made mum', or worse, rendering themselves too faithful to 'the suppressions and mutterings of ordinary conversation' (ibid.).

Much of this invective is directed at naturalism in general as much as at naturalistic speech in particular, but subsequent developments in drama have undermined such views. Playwrights like Pinter have not only made dramatic capital out of the dramatic figures staying 'mum' in their plays; they have also revealed the force and power of conversational resources when they are used with dramatic skill.

Yet, troubling the relationship remains. The point, if not the detail, of Nicoll's opposition has been echoed by Bernard Beckerman (1970) in more sober terms. Beckerman, more reflectively, articulates a similar underlying worry regarding the lack of possibilities for emotional eloquence in conversation, since conversation operates under social constraints which generally forbid the expression of emotion or, rather, 'passion'. To quote Beckerman:

Conversation is primarily social, that is, intended to create an atmosphere of civilization rather than reveal inner turbulence. It also resists revelation. In conversation, confidence does not readily spring forth but must be elicited by the effort of the listener. It is not a medium for conveying passion because passion is egotistical and conversation rests on implied truce: no one is to dominate completely. . .

(1970:123)

At first glance, there appears to be a measure of truth in this since conversation does have a social dimension and is responsive to the social norms that govern people's conduct, but it does not follow from this that norms cannot be flouted when the occasion arises. They evidently are: in quarrels, in passionate, political arguments, in expressions of grief, anger, love and so on. Beckerman appears to have in mind stereotypes of polite exchanges in 'civilized', social settings which become a prototype for all interactions. But it is hardly the case that all day-to-day interactions are always and only passionless or that for the expression of passion in any form we must have recourse to some quotation or other from a play. Moreover, the 'eliciting' of responses and the inclusion of the effort of the listener are the staples of the dialogic form. It includes a listener, who usually changes discourse role to that of speaker, which Beckerman has overlooked, as if dramatic dialogue were monologue. The efforts of both speakers and listeners are involved in the drama of 'persons' in the speech situation itself as Lyons (1977) has made clear. And as for the injunction that 'no one is to dominate completely', this is often honoured in the breach. In mixed-sex conversations, men systematically dominate women, as research has shown (Ch. 5), and inter-personal domination is more of a norm in society, at least in some contexts, for various reasons, given social stratification on grounds of sex, race, age, status, etc. than such comfortable pronouncements would have us believe.

The problem lies deeper than this, since the assumption appears to be that the relation between conversational and dramatic speech must be predicated upon reflections of surfaces and textures of the one in the other. A mirror or glass is thus inserted between the two domains without respect to the transformations that are wrought when contexts and functions of speech are taken into account. The binary divide separating the two erases the fact of commonality of underlying interactive processes which make both, in separate ways, instances of dialogue. It also erases the variety which characterizes speech forms in daily life which are at least as remarkable as those found in plays. For instance, an informed discussion between two academic colleagues writing a book will differ from the phatic speech produced by two recent acquaintances meeting in the street. The speech 'texts' that occur will vary accordingly. Parliamentary debates organize speech exchanges in ways ordained by convention and differ

from other conventional arrangements: a board or committee meeting differs from Parliamentary debates but it also differs from a family quarrel. 'Conversation', not as social chit-chat alone, but as spontaneous speech exchange, is not the monolith of uniformity that it is projected as being. The same could be said of dramatic speech.

It is not, therefore, a question of whether dramatic dialogue is seen to mirror faithfully some real life correlate or not, even assuming that some such exists to be mirrored. Even the most naturalistic forms of dramatic speech do not quite reproduce the real life product. The mirror is not the point of reference between the two forms. Rather, it is a question of mechanics, in the exploitation by dramatists of underlying speech conventions, principles and 'rules' of use, operative in speech exchanges in the many sorts, conditions and contexts of society which members are assumed to share and use in their interactions in day-to-day exchanges. The principles, norms and conventions of use which underlie spontaneous communication in everyday life are precisely those which are exploited and manipulated by dramatists in their constructions of speech types and forms in plays. Thus, 'ordinary speech' or, more accurately, the 'rules' underlying the orderly and meaningful exchange of speech in everyday contexts are the resource that dramatists use to construct dialogue in plays. Fabricated speech in plays, however, is under no necessity to mimic some pre-given original except as a specific dramatic strategy. Even then, it is the illusion of real-life conversation that is sought which is the product of consummate art.

As Elizabeth Burns has succinctly observed, 'Drama is not a mirror of action. It is composition. . .' (1972: 33), and the fabricated activities, including speech in drama, Burns contends, need to be 'authenticated' by an audience (or reader) as credible activity in the dramatic world in which it functions. Dramatic action, broadly defined, becomes meaningful, therefore, in relation to the 'authenticating conventions' which are invoked in a play, which are drawn from the wider, social world of affairs in which dramatic activity is embedded. They imply social norms, values, modes of conduct and action which regulate how members organize their affairs, which in turn form the basis of our understanding of the speech and action of the fictional figures in the world of a play. Such a ground of commonality links playwright, actor, director, audience, reader, in a common effort at meaning, since what we encounter in plays is interpreted action, not action in the raw. In relation to dialogue, what this signifies is that it is our communicative competence (Hymes 1972) as much as our linguistic competence which is at work in interpreting 'the language of drama'. The overall conventions and 'rules' for meaningful and appropriate speech behaviour in interaction are evoked to transform the serial issue of linguistic tokens among the dramatic characters into forms of interpersonal conduct and social action as communicative activity.

The factors to be accounted for when speech is regarded as speech behaviour, exceed the limits that grammars set on it. Linguistic competence as knowledge of the grammar is obviously needed, but so are other kinds. Utterances may be perfectly grammatical but may be wholly inappropriate things to say to specific others in a context. The pressures on language in context are multiple. As communication, language needs to be sensitive to a host of contextual pressures - the role and status of participants, considerations of appropriacy of speech behaviour, setting or spatio-temporal context of speech, degrees of formality or informality, how to code-switch if necessary, how to control degrees of politeness, and expressivity, whether and to whom and when to be ironical, or sarcastic, or confidential, or reserved or passionate, and the like. In communication, linguistic tokens used are functional and sensitive to such contextual pressures. As interaction, speech takes a jointly co-ordinated and managed course along a temporal path so that understanding, misunderstanding, communication and non-communication between speaker and other become actional and dynamic matters as they materialize in their specificities, and contingencies, in time.

On the other hand, dramatic speech cannot simply be regarded as an extension of everyday speech into drama. There is interdependence but not identity between them, and although there are fundamental levels of commonality, there are also crucial points of difference. Drama, theatre and other performance genres like film, carnival, ceremonial ritual, etc. are embedded in social culture but as part of what has been termed *expressive culture' (MacAloon 1984: 4), whose hallmark it is to provide forms of activity through which subjectively experienced values, principles and modes of conduct, which are naturalized in social culture, may be reflexively confronted by members of that culture and known as other as object. Such presentations may either undercut or endorse the assumptions of the dominant culture. As Victor Turner has stated:

... any society that hopes to be imperishable must carve out for itself a piece of space and a period of time in which it can look honestly at itself. This honesty is not that of the scientist, who exchanges the honesty of his ego for the objectivity of his gaze. It is rather, akin to the supreme honesty of the creative artist, who, in his presentations on the stage, in the book, on canvas, in marble, in music, or in towers and

houses, reserves to himself the privilege to see straight what all cultures build crooked.

(1984:40)

This space of performance and the culturally endorsed reflexivity that distinguishes it Turner calls a 'liminal' (sometimes 'liminoid' for technologically advanced societies) and metasocial space, in which,

groups strive to see their own reality in new ways and to generate a language verbal or non-verbal that enables them to talk about what they normally talk. They are liminal in the sense that they are suspensions of daily reality, occupying privileged spaces where people are allowed to think about how they think about the terms in which they conduct their thinking or to feel about how they feel about daily life.

(ibid.: 23)

The imagined and imaged worlds of drama, therefore, have a complex relation to the world of existing human affairs on which they draw for their possibilities of meaning, remaining both like and yet unlike those worlds in which they are embedded and to which they speak. Dramatic worlds, like fictional worlds in general, are not transparent to our everyday worlds, or reflections of them, but opaque to some degree, since they present alternatives, possibilities, worlds in the 'subjunctive' rather than the 'indicative' mood or mode of experience (ibid.: 21), worlds that could or might be, in different modalities, to some operative notion of 'what is'.

Such worlds have also been characterized as possible worlds, counterfactual, 'as if' worlds (Elam 1980: Ch. 4), but whose logic is accessible since taken to be similar to the world in which it is represented. The creation of such worlds draws on given, existing resources - of language, action, gesture, etc. and the conventions of use underlying these - but exploits them in order to design episodes, interactive events and situations in plays into patterns of feeling and experience of a kind that may never be felt, known or encountered anywhere but in drama. Dramatic action and speech are thus bracketed out of social reality and put into quotation marks, as it were, when they become part of stage reality where they are framed and foregrounded for heightened attention. The force of the quotation marks can either emphasize difference as in avant-garde plays, or similarity as in naturalistic plays. The conventions of behaviour, action and speech in ordinary contexts of living are made operative in the creation, assessment and understanding of behaviour in the fictional world of the play. It is the evocation of these which underlies the promise of

intelligibility of the hitherto-unencountered fictional world being created through the unfolding of its interactions and actions.

The governance of convention and assumptions in questions of intelligibility and understanding cannot, however, be seen as a mechanical or compulsory mapping of a priori rules on to speech or behaviour in uniform fashion in every instance of communication or conduct either inside or outside drama. For a start, rules may be broken within the contingencies of specific situations, assumptions might have to be abandoned or the performance of our social obligations could be skilfully or clumsily executed. Social life, moreover, is not a monolith of uniformity and could involve competing conventions and norms given conflicting interests and subcultures among groups in society. A working notion of convention must allow for gaps and conflicts in interpretation, since ambiguity, bafflement or incomprehension are legitimate responses to behaviour both inside and outside drama. To quote Turner again:

if all principles and norms were consistent and if all persons obeyed them, then culture and society would be unselfconscious and innocent, untroubled by doubt. But few indeed are the human groups whose relationships are perpetually in equilibrium and who are free from agonistic strivings.

(1984: 23)

The shift of context to the 'liminal' or expressive sphere and the activation of dramatic constraints (on text and performance) which this entails brings its own set of necessities and transformations. For a start, there is the question of dramatic organization, the internal designing of the individual events and their interrelating as they unfold linearly in time. These may be overtly cohesive, cause-effect designs or they may not. Such internal designs project outwards as well, are simultaneously rhetorical designs manipulating audience involvement and response. And drama is a brief form, as Bentley noted (1965: 79), forever under the constraint of passing time - the time allotted to the whole performance. Then, there are aesthetic and expressive requirements for which, in performance, groups assume responsibility and activate the various codes of theatre as desired (Elam 1980). For this is 'framed' activity, foregrounded for attention, participation, interpretation and appreciation, with all elements in this 'bracketed' world being relevant elements in that world with multi-functions to perform.

There is, consequently, a high level of pre-formation in scripting dramatic action and speech, and pre-formance in realizing a play in its context. And if the script is pre-formed, the performance is even more so,

to the extent that analysts like David Birch have argued for the notion of a separate 'text' for performance (Birch 1991: 25-33). Drama as a hybrid form leads a double life as both literature and theatre and is responsive to different traditions, but in either case the life of the dramatic tradition realizes itself and is made material and manifest through such pre-formed activities. Nor is the tradition itself transmitted through the actions of human agents acting spontaneously, but through institutionally organized forms of activity, public, collective and social. The accumulated practices of both domains are also influential.

Drama has its own history - other performances, other texts, other contexts of performance, other theatrical conventions - and its own contemporary constraints for aesthetic, experimental or social purposes. Its indebtedness to other domains of activity has also been acknowledged from time to time - the music hall, circus, mime and so on. Dramatic performances are among those which Dell Hymes has called 'authoritative' and 'authentic' performances (1975: 18), in a very specific sense, as those which materialize the tradition from age to age, as activity, practice, and in which the tradition lives, and in which the standards appropriate and intrinsic to the tradition itself are shaped, applied, tested and revised.

As far as dramatic speech is concerned, such pressures ensure that the face-to-face interactions that inform the dialogic scene are always responsible to the audience presence - however the role of the audience is assessed, as overhearers or participants - and to the necessities of presentation. Extra explicitness or expressiveness in speech may be called for to satisfy both the informational and aesthetic demands of the audience. The flow of information about off-stage and on-stage events needs to be made available or withheld as necessary, with the explicitness, inexplicitness or irony that result being products of the dramatic context itself. Overall, rhythms must be created and modulated across and within speech transactions, each interactional event providing its own form of interest while simultaneously functioning as an element in the total design. The design itself, as noted earlier, can vary, as it has done across the history of drama. The verbal component needs to integrate with the other codes of theatre with varying degrees of interrelatedness as dramatic convention or experimentation requires (Veltrusky 1941: 94-117). Moreover, dialogue and interaction are among the most immediate and accessible levels of drama, but they mediate other, more abstract levels of the genre - plot, character, thematic issues and the like. It is through the course of interactions and their outcomes among relevant participants - that is, in what the dramatic figures say and do to each other in specific situations - cumulatively, that

we come to understand the kind of beings they are, the kind of events they are involved in and the nature of the world that makes such things possible.

Dialogue should, therefore, be seen more in the nature of a 'device' (Honzl 1940: 118-26), rather than as a 'reflector' in drama, with a world-creating, not a world-mirroring function. It is a complex device given that it is 'overdetermined' (Dodd 1981) in many ways when it is called upon to function in the dramatic context. Speech in drama is responsive to many of these simultaneously - to aesthetic, expressive, informational and interactional overdeterminations. The 'intentionalities' in the two domains differ as their goals differ. Such pressures have tempted some analysts to classify dramatic speech as 'deviant' but this brings its own dangers. In the first place, the problem of defining a norm from which dramatic speech is supposed to deviate can be as difficult as it has proved to be in similar debates regarding poetic language (Herman 1983: 99-122). Notions of deviance are often grammatically motivated, but there is little in the grammatical structures of dramatic speech which could be classified as deviant. Poetry may be a candidate case, but not all dramatic speech is poetry, not even in a dramatist like Shakespeare.

Manfred Pfister (1988: 104-5), in more complex mode, proposes a double deviance, one on the synchronic dimension, the other on the diachronic, as distinctive of dramatic speech which deviates from 'ordinary' language but can deviate, internally, from the tradition of dramatic language or styles which are in force. Instances of the former include neologisms, archaisms and highly stylized, metred language as in classical French tragedy or verse dramas written by a Fry or an Eliot. Examples of the latter can be found in Fry and Eliot, too, whose stylizations are departures from the argumentative or witty prose of a Shaw, Galsworthy or Coward. Pfister, however, has greater difficulty with dramatists who use the kind of conversational styles that had provoked Nicoll's ire. He sees these as stylistic reductions which still preserve 'an element of deviation - if only in the fact that in reproducing it they expose and clarify its characteristic stylistic features' (ibid.: 104). A cline, in fact, is posited, which weakens the argument for deviance since departures from norms become a question of degree, which only stylized, metred forms can uncontroversially support. The scope of the notion of deviance becomes less comprehensive.

Other aspects like polyfunctionality are also mobilized by Pfister, but such factors are available in day-to-day contexts. Radio interviews have to respect the fact that the audience has to be informed about relevant aspects of the interview, and hence the extra informational load to be communicated about participants, for example, is nearer to dramatic

language in some measure than face-to-face conversation. Given that the dramatic context is one that is 'framed' as such, and, frames are cognitive and activate various knowledges of behaviours, and protocols of speech and action as appropriate to them, the issue of deviance seems to be redundant. Given the notion of a cline, the binary is not required or is unhelpful in providing us with clear-cut, unambiguous categories, in which something is to be identified in its difference from something else as if the boundaries between standard and deviant were clear-cut. There are too may overlaps for a binary division like standard/deviant to hold across the board.

This does not erase the argument for differences, since differences in the form of variation are the order of the day. It states that differences are to be sought in the constraints of context and not in features of language, for these are distributed across contexts. At any rate, binary divisions require phenomena to be classified into polar opposites – numerically, two categories. Differences as variation are many and not necessarily numerically even, to be divided into opposites by the number two. The threes and the fives and the sevens and so on cannot be so neatly organized and compartmentalized within the binary. Bits spill over, overlap and overhang. Categorizations of the binary kind are, therefore, risks, not certainties.

More broadly, the relationship between drama and life can be two-way, as Elizabeth Burns (1972: 8-11, 33-4, 98-121) has argued. If the stage is a world in its own right, all the world is equally a stage it would seem, and the 'doubling' of the metaphor has provided its own forms of illumination. Much of the modern analysis of social life uses the stage as its root metaphor - social actor, social performance and the like. So what is supposed to be deviating from what is a problem? We prefer the pragmatic and discoursal notion of context, which enables and authorizes arrangements and activities appropriately within it. Such a notion anchors dramatic activity within social life, but with its own specificities, with differences being sought within the play of pressures in the context of functioning. Different dramaturgies have mobilized different linguistic styles in drama's long history and the history of dramatic speech styles is both varied and complex including, as it does, poetry, formal prose, colloquial prose, phatic prose, plain and ornate speech, structurally and semantically complex as well as simple speech, fluency, disfluency and the like. The 'rules' of interaction have been put to use in highly creative and productive ways. The strength of the contextual view rests on its ability to motivate relevance for the wealth of linguistic experimentation and variety in drama as germane to its own development and functioning.

as appropriate and 'authentic' activity, in Dell Hymes' sense, in a way that deviance by itself cannot do.

DIALOGUE, INTERACTION, UTTERANCE

This study focuses on the study of dialogue as interaction. With reference to dramatic dialogue this means that the perspective taken is one where the genre presupposes spoken interaction among participants in speech events. The dramatic text, as written text, addresses a context of performance which requires a change in mode of discourse - the transformation and transmutation of the written lines into the dynamics of spoken speech, which involve more than the recitation of the lines of the text by actors. Dialogue creates situations, as those jointly achieved by the participants themselves. It is as spoken speech, too, that the linguistic code which is employed in dialogue is integrated with the other codes of theatre paralinguistic, kinesic, gestural, etc. since both verbal and non-verbal codes of this kind exploit the performer's body, including voice, which the deictic tie of speaker with speech makes available. The alternating issue of speech, as managed by the participants themselves in an episode or scene, creates the trajectory, the development in its specificity, of the situation and relationship itself as it unfolds in time. The management of the interactional dynamics of speech is thus a major aspect of dialogic art in drama.

The linguistic units of analysis appropriate to dialogue as interactional speech are utterances. The sentence is an abstract entity in linguistics, defined in relation to particular grammars, and not in absolute terms. Utterances bring back into the reckoning the contextual factors which are abstracted away by grammatical sentences. Utterances are relevant to areas of 'language-in-use', sentences to grammars. Although further complexities can be introduced, the simple distinction made above will serve for our purposes although it must be noted that there is not always a one-to-one relation between them when sentences are used in context as utterances. Utterances may be liable to false starts, slips of the tongue, be elliptical, incomplete, etc. so that it could be unclear as to which sentence analogue is being used.

Utterances do not stand alone. They are generally issued and exchanged in specific contexts, and form complex units, within wider in like speech events. As such they are forms of social and in action as well, and not just a collection of sentences inv 'meaning' in the abstract. Thus, not just the meaning of what i. its place and function within the wider units of which it is a par-

possible reasons for its use by users, in context, are also significant when the play of utterances is regarded as forms of action, and contextualized and particularized action at that.

The notion of 'context' has been used in various ways, but it includes extra-linguistic co-ordinates like the immediate spatio-temporal setting of speech, the roles and status of the participants, etc. Context can also refer to the cognitive context, the set of beliefs, assumptions, presuppositions, frames, which participants activate or draw on to interpret interactions. The linguistic environment within which a linguistic feature is located has also been termed the context of that feature, but where utterances are concerned, it is usual to refer to the co-text instead. The wider context of culture and the norms for behaviour required by society, or a particular subculture, exert their influence on linguistic behaviour in particular settings, or with specific social others.

Language use is, moreover, functional in contexts. Utterances are employed by speakers to others in spatio-temporal situations, for specific ends, and others respond as speakers in the change of discourse role. Sets of reciprocal utterances are cued in various ways as speech-event units. Speech is employed for various purposes between participants – to pass the time, to socialize, to communicate thoughts or opinions or emotions, to express profundities or superficialities, to share thoughts, feelings, emotions, to withhold them, to offer to do things for others, to get others to do things, to congratulate, insult, quarrel, lie, cheat, dupe, manipulate... The notion of 'language use' thus makes language, precisely, a tool -Bolinger called it a loaded weapon – to be exercised by users; at any rate, one that can be wielded co-operatively or coercively, or somewhere in between, for various purposes in interaction. Speech, like language, is not only descriptive; it is actional, and can be used to intervene into existing states of affairs and to create others as much as to describe them.

Whatever speakers attempt to mean and do via their utterances, their success or otherwise is dependent on how the risk of resistance is negotiated with the other or others in the situation of speech. Notions like communication and action are thus highly contingent on mutual categorizations of them among the participants involved, in particular situations of utterance. The tension generated accounts for much of the interest in the outcomes of dialogue as interaction. The patterns of strategies used, how negotiated and with what consequences, can be traced as speech takes its alternating course, in time. The dramas of dialogue are the dramas of meaning and interpretation, but also of communication, or miscommunication or non-communication, and dramas of action or inaction or stasis,

as enacted in the temporal dimension, with repercussions in situ. They are cultural, sometimes cross-cultural, and cognitive dramas as well.

Such considerations take us well beyond the kinds of analysis which are to be found in literary studies, of whatever critical-theoretical ilk, since interaction and the dynamics of dialogic discourse are rarely the point of focus. Most of the attention has been focused on the linguistic texture of the utterances, whether poetic or 'naturalistic' or phatic, for instance, or whether speech is fluent or disfluent, and so on, but these are only a limited set of the variables to be taken into account when dialogue is regarded as discourse. The different speech styles that are exhibited across different types of drama - Renaissance, Naturalist, Expressionist, Absurd, etc. from the perspective of discourse would still remain the exploitation of options; the forms of interaction they produce are also within the province of the conventions and rules of speech interchange employed. Performance studies are concerned less with dialogue, which is seen as literary, than with the constraints of the practices of theatre which, again, are not the central point of concern here.

Drama is more than dialogue, but, where dialogue is employed as a dramatic resource, its mechanics have a fundamental role to play and it is these that are the focus of this study. Thus, 'dialogue as interaction': and interactions are open to enormous variation. Participants can be mutually supportive, or mutually alienating, or separately ensconced within their own subjective worlds. Interactions can fashion or fabricate similar differences in situation and condition the kind of subjectivities that could be inferred from speech behaviour. Speakers, addressees and speech signify in different directions simultaneously - to themselves, the other, each other, the context of situation, the context of culture, the enaction of action, and in their totality they make appeals to interpreters for meaning. Where dialogue is operative in drama, speech functioning is complex with its own specificities which are different to those dealt with in the literary field. The multiple aspects, levels and conditions that affect the functioning of dialogue as spoken discourse are dealt with in greater detail in the rest of the chapters to follow.

Different frameworks of analysis are used in order to examine the multi-aspected workings of dialogic discourse. Chapter 1 deals with its situated dynamics, the framework derived from the Ethnography of Communication, as developed principally by Dell Hymes. Speech is never speech in the abstract, but is always 'occasioned' and encountered in relation to the specificities of persons, time and place, among other things. The broad notion of the speech event, and its influence on speech, are detailed. Chapter 2 investigates Ethnomethodological approaches to turn-

Introduction 17

taking, or the mechanisms that control the alternation of speech among participants in the speech event itself and the management of the interactional 'floor'. Chapter 3 focuses on the structural organization of alternating speech, its sequencing procedures, since speech has a projective and a retroactive dimension to it; it calls forth counter-speech in different ways since speech alternation is not random, but structured even when spontaneous. Chapter 4 moves to the Pragmatics of language use and explores the 'performative' aspects of language and to the processes that underlie meaning and communication as interpersonal accomplishments, the role of inference, and to the turbulence of the space between turn and turn. The final chapter, 5 on Gender and Language, explores the asymmetrical workings of such normative, seemingly neutral frameworks, when the issue of sex and gender are taken into account, the issue itself being one among others like race or culture, for instance, where other forms of imbalance are also visible, but which are drawn on intermittently, not comprehensively, in this study.

Each chapter reviews the particular framework under consideration and, having set the context of terms and assumptions as appropriate to the framework to be used, explores its uses in understanding the workings of discourse in drama. The models and frameworks are presented selectively, and in a more or less integrated fashion although the scope and explanatory power of the models are continually debated in the appropriate sub-disciplines. The emphasis in each case, as in the book overall, is on issues of language as discourse, as interaction, from contemporary discourse – analytic perspectives, as these have been theorized in the post-Chomskyan climate of enquiry - i.e. as linguistic 'performance' - and which are delimited accordingly.

The study draws on contemporary work in the fields of 'discourse' in a comprehensive fashion, and attempts to provide the relevant concepts, vocabulary, modes of argumentation, and tools of analysis that would enable the scrutiny of dramatic speech as interaction. As argued earlier, interaction is presupposed by the dialogic form, as a multi-input form, but dialogue in drama is rarely analysed as such. It also invites a reconsideration of the notion of 'the verbal' in drama away from its traditional restrictions to patterns of syntax, imagery, metre or thematics in the name of 'language', since interaction is concerned also with speakers and addressees and the dramas of interchange of utterances in contexts. Discourse studies offer much that is relevant to performance and it is hoped that the parallels will be drawn by those interested in that field. Given that different and competing claims are often made on the drama text – as literary or performance text, for instance – one study cannot hope

to encompass all concerns equally without losing its focus, and the focus here is on modern discourse frameworks for the different kinds of illumination they offer with respect to the workings of dramatic speech in plays.

As an inter-disciplinary work, the book can be approached in different ways. Those conversant with the theoretical frameworks and familiar with the analysis of conversation could well find the extension into dramatic texts profitable; those interested in the theories could well pause on these sections; those unfamiliar with or interested in both theory and application, especially in drama, or, more generally in dialogue as interaction, could well spend time on both. And the theories offer resources which actually exceed the applications attempted which is the reason for taking the risk of including them in some detail in the book, and for presenting them on their own terms before analysing their productivities in the study of dramatic interactions. But other books could be written on dialogic discourse in its relation to performance; to specific dramaturgies, or authors or periods; or in engagement with various literary-critical theories; or in more traditional fashion to 'the language of drama'; but these directions, worthwhile as they are, are not undertaken here, although issues as they arise are addressed judiciously.

The ethnography of speaking

SCENES OF SPEECH

K (key)

One of the major distinctions to be made in the study of language as spoken discourse is that speech is always contextually 'situated' and occasioned: it occurs among specific participants, who use speech for various purposes, in certain settings and across various spans of time. Utterances exist and function within their situations of utterance which are in turn embedded in 'contexts of culture'. Utterances are thus always embedded in situations, within cultures, and are open to various social and not grammatical meanings alone. Moreover, they function within larger units like speech events or communicative events as they have also been termed. The co-ordinates of speech events are complex and comprise the basic prerequisites that determine speech use. The model chosen to explore the influence of such parameters on interaction comes from the sociolinguistic perspective, more precisely from the Ethnography of Communication. The range of factors that need to be accounted for is best summarized by Dell Hymes' (1972) mnemonic of SPEAKING. The following is a slightly revised version.

S (situation)	1. setting
,	2. scene
P (participants)	speaker or reader
i (para-r	4. addressor
	hearer or receiver or audience
	6. addressee
E (ends)	purposes – outcomes
L (circs)	8. purposes – goals
A (act sequence)	9. message form
	10. message content

11. key

1. setting

12. channel I (instrumentalities)

13. forms of speech

N (norms) 14. norms of interaction

16. genres

15. norms of interpretation

G (genres)

(Duranti 1985: 209)

The sixteen components characterize the complexity of factors involved in the notion of situated speech and provide the circumstantial and material elements that configure such events. Speech is functional in these events, and Hymes' model is but the most recent of a long line of investigation into language as a functional phenomenon, which did not focus on the grammar alone. Malinowski (1923) included magical and ritual functions of speech. Karl Buhler (1934) used the grammatical system of persons derived from the rhetorical grammar that preceded Plato, in which the speech scene was seen as a drama basically between the first person (speaker) and the second person (addressee). The third person referred to all else. Jakobson (1960) included six functions – the referential, the conative, the expressive, the poetic, the metalingual and the phatic. Hymes' model attempts to capture the insights from all these forebears since speech is multi-functional in context. The 'etic' grid was supplied for use and adaptation on 'emic' levels – to analyse the specificity of any speech event under investigation. The notion itself, it must be borne in mind, captures the components of a context of communication in abstract mode, and is a term with a reality in the analyst's descriptive framework. As Duranti notes:

we should not expect to find speech events out there in the world, in the same way we should not expect to find sentences, predicates or adverbs in texts. We only find linguistic signs that can be classified in terms of such analytic frameworks. We do expect, however, to use the notion of speech event to make sense out of discourse patterns found in verbal interaction.

(Duranti 1985: 201-2)

It must be added that overlaps among the categories are also possible.

Speech events occur within contexts, an immediate context of situation, within the wider context of culture. The cultural load on the context of situation in which speech is used can be considerable, even if unconscious, since it includes all the 'knowledges' that native speakers may be assumed to draw upon in order to communicate and use language coherently and appropriately in the multifarious situations in which they

perform (Lyons 1977: 611). The notion of linguistic or speech community has been invoked; a difficult notion, which attempts to ensure that language, cultural norms and modes of evaluation used are in common between or among participants in a speech event. But 'language' does not exist in uniform mode in cultural contexts, for there is usually variation in speech types and forms in any society. Dialects, accents, registers, pidgins, creoles, multi- or bi-lingualism and diglossia complicate the notion of a unitary or holistic speech community, as do international varieties of the same language with their own histories and cultures and national boundaries - British English, American English, Australian, West Indian, Nigerian, Indian English, for instance. As a general definition, Hymes proposes the following:

Tentatively, a speech community is defined as a community sharing rules for the conduct and interpretation of speech, and rules for the interpretation of at least one linguistic variety.

(Hymes 1972: 54)

Given, however, that there can be differences among groups regarding 'norms' as Victor Turner (1984) noted, and that problems may arise in cases where interaction is between participants who may speak the same language, but whose cultural codes for speaking are different (for example, where the language used is the first language for one speaker and a second language for the other), or that speaking rules may be similar across contiguous areas, but languages or dialects may be different, Hymes qualifies the above definition by drawing on some related notions - the language field, the speech field and the speech network. The former refers to the 'total range of communities within which a person's knowledge of varieties and speaking rules potentially enables him to move communicatively'. The speech network operates within the speech field, and defines 'the specific linkages of persons through shared varieties and speaking rules across communities'. Given that individuals in communicative contact may affiliate only in overlapping fashion rather than in some total fashion within and across sub-groups, Hymes proposes a more delimited scope for the notion of *speech community*:

one's speech community may be, effectively, a single locality or portion of it; one's language field will be delimited by one's repertoire of varieties; one's speech field by one's repertoire of patterns of speaking. One's speech network is the effective union of these last two. (Hymes 1972: 55)

Speech resources are not in common even if the language is shared.

The potential for conflict is as much a reality as the potential for harmony in communication, since not every member has equal access to the speech networks or speech patterns in a community. The scale of linguistic repertoires can be limited or broad. In the cultural politics of speaking, control of speaking norms is as important as command over the rules of the grammar, in terms of access to contexts and with respect to conduct once within them. Moreover, different styles of speech can acquire affective and aesthetic values in a community, where some styles or manners of speaking are regarded as more persuasive or pleasing than others. Even quantitative characteristics like amount, duration or length of speech can be assessed qualitatively. Fluency, verbosity, pithiness, laconicity, will be differently graded as more or less desirable in different communities and even in different situations. Styles may differ according to sex – men are expected to be more voluble than women in power-driven contexts; or according to situation or formal convention in ritual speech events where discursivity may contrast with reticence; styles of performance may alternate between elaboration or sparseness, or according to status – some cultures give equal weight to valour in war and eloquence in speech in assessing their chiefs. The Bella Coolans privilege fluent, witty talk, while the democratic culture of the Gbeyas does not privilege verbal facility unduly. The value placed on witty talkers, the raconteurs, the verbal duellers, the experts of understatement or eloquence, reveals the value of the aesthetic dimension in speech in everyday use. The negative values imposed on other styles is the reverse of the same coin. Given such enormous variety and asymmetry in the use of resources, Hymes' notion of the speech community and the speech event attempts to ensure some common ground, since such is required for successful communication, without homogenizing the concept of a speech community or undermining the possibilities for miscommunication.

If the notion of speech community caters for the social resources which may be utilized in language use, the notion of speech event focuses especially on those situations whose activities are constituted by or governed by speech, where speech plays an essential, constitutive part of the activity. Speech events are distinguished from speech situation, which is used in a more technical and restricted sense by Hymes than would appear at first sight. It refers to situations in which speech plays a secondary role to other activities: for instance, chatting to someone while on a journey, or a bicycle ride, as opposed to a debate or an argument in which speech plays a primary role.

Hymes' 'etic' grid could be seen as static if the fact that speech events are dynamic enactments, and activity-based, is forgotten. The relationship

between speech and context is reciprocal, reflexive and flexible, not unidirectional (Auer 1992). Although the kind of speech required in a context may be constrained, it is the issue of appropriate speech within it that makes the context what it is. Events are enacted, and speech both creates and is created by the context in which it functions. The relationship is a vital one. Participants use 'contextualizing cues' (Gumperz 1982) in order to make available relevant aspects of context to each other - and cues can be quite varied, including pronominal usage and address forms that frame and mark status, code-switching, prosodic variation, and nonverbal signals like gaze, body posture, etc., to signal either response or shifts of direction in interaction. These cannot be specified in advance; they belong to the contingencies of the interaction itself. Abstract social directives have thus to be enacted in situ, as forms of social praxis; typifications of behaviour must be made particular and interpretable within the contingencies of the interaction itself. As Auer notes, being a doctor does not mean having the relevant qualifications alone; nor being a patient being physically present in a doctor's surgery. The complementary role relationships have to be actualized through enactments of them within the incidentals of the situation itself - for instance, who the patient is, what the complaint is and how doctor and patient actually interact with each other can change from case to case. Moreover, role relationships can change - the participants can switch roles to that of being neighbours for a time, without changing the fact that the event is, basically, a medical consultation (Auer 1992: 22).

Certain things are thus 'brought along', others are 'brought about' and have an endogenous, emergent character. Presuppositions on the part of participants about appropriate behaviour, derived from cognitive frames or schemata as some term them, or what Gumperz (1992) terms activity types, which are conceptually typified representations of activities as sociocultural knowledges, are constantly being evoked and constrain interpretation of whatever is in progress. Interpretations of current activity can be revised, consolidated or changed as they are being enacted. Whereas sociocultural knowledge enters interactions via such frames or activity types, activity is constrained, but not determined by them (ibid.: 45). Such activity constructs enable appropriate attention to be given to the organizational requirements of speech events, but they can also be seen as members' and analysts' constructs which underwrite the generation of inferences for interpretation. The processes involved in inference generation have been comprehensively examined by Sperber and Wilson (1986). Contexts in the cognitive sense, therefore, are in a constant state of flux during interactions, even when other aspects remain seemingly stable.

These different facets of context – as space–time–participant co-ordinates that indexicalize speech, as sociocultural activity constructs, and as the space and processes of cognitive and inferential activity - come together in instances of language-in-use in interactions.

Of the eight major components of the SPEAKING model, the first two are concerned with the spatio-temporal setting in which speech occurs among the particular participants who are involved in the speech event, since speech does not reside in a grammar or on a page alone, but is produced by someone, for or to someone, in time and space. The others deal with various aspects of the use of speech, the medium. The component of situation is sub-divided into setting and scene which recognizes that verbal interaction is a spatio-temporal event and that time and place can influence speech activity. Certain kinds of speech activity are expected in bounded spaces and culturally endorsed places - in church, in court, in the drawing-room, the shop or the street. Scene refers to the psychological orientation and accounts for the identification or acceptance of a conventional or traditional definition of a certain occasion as itself. It also covers shifts in psychological direction when interactions change from formal to informal or when a conversation which started off as an informal chat develops into an argument or a quarrel. In plays, a change in 'scene-orientation' is required when there are indications that a time span has elapsed between the last (dramatic) scene and the current one, for instance.

The setting thus involves not only the actual physical setting, but also the psychological orientation to the activity in progress, and the cognitive uptake via inference and continuous categorization of what is going on. This is necessary since the actual physical setting can change while the verbal activity remains the same - one may keep conversing while leaving one's place of work, while driving home, and continue the conversation within the home. The physical setting can thus tightly or very loosely constrain the kind of activity in progress.

On the other hand, the activity can be varied and the setting remain the same. In shopping precincts where buskers occasionally perform, the organization of the setting is purely internal, cognitive and scene-orientated. A performer space is divided from the audience space which is self-selected spontaneously. Shoppers generally respect the arrangement and avoid or skirt around the performance space as they go about their own business. They rarely cut across it, although the precinct is 'theirs' as shoppers. Institutional or formal settings are far more restrictive in the kind of activity permitted. Physical setting can also signify certain functional or attitudinal requirements of participants, as when chairs are