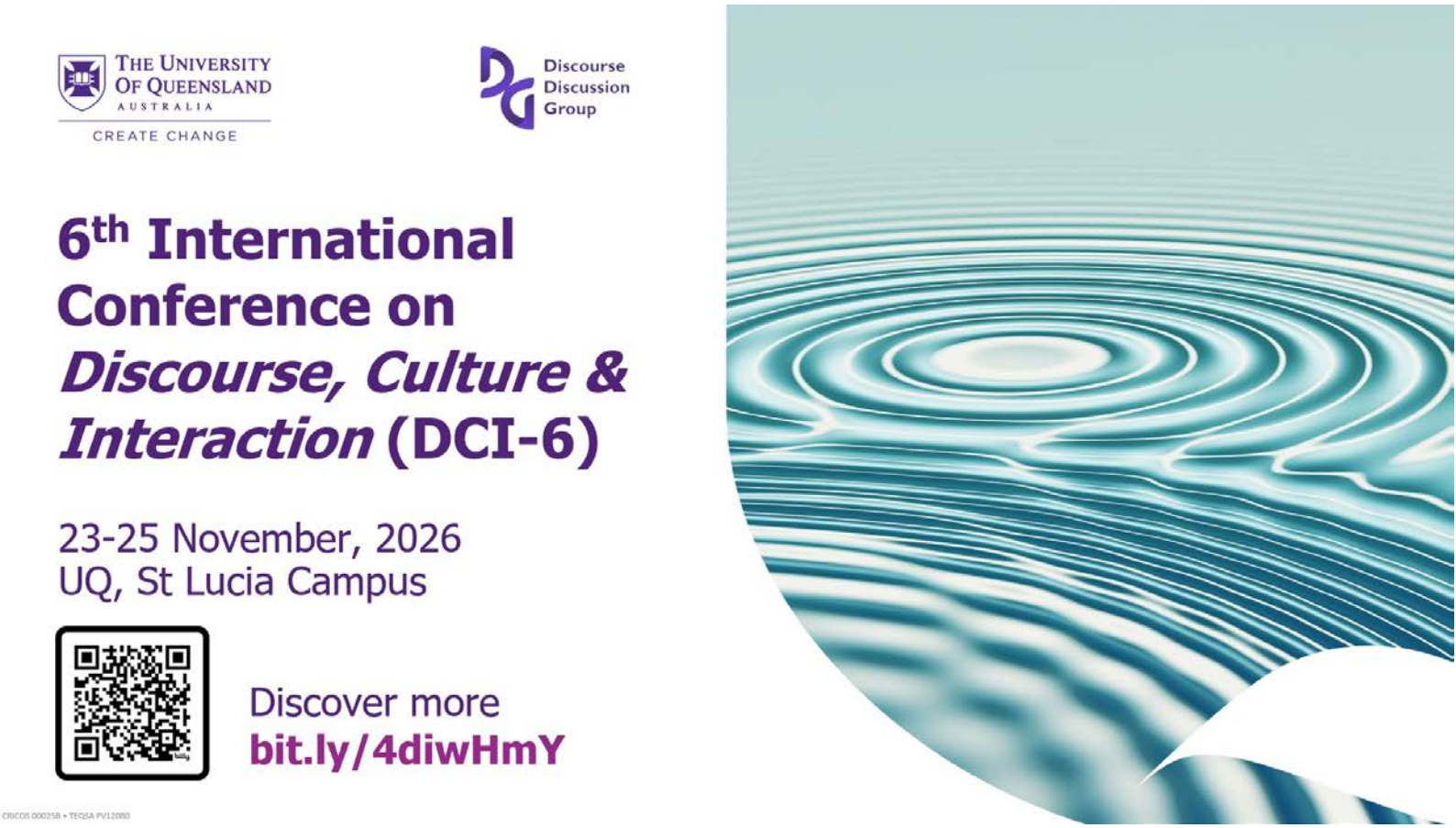
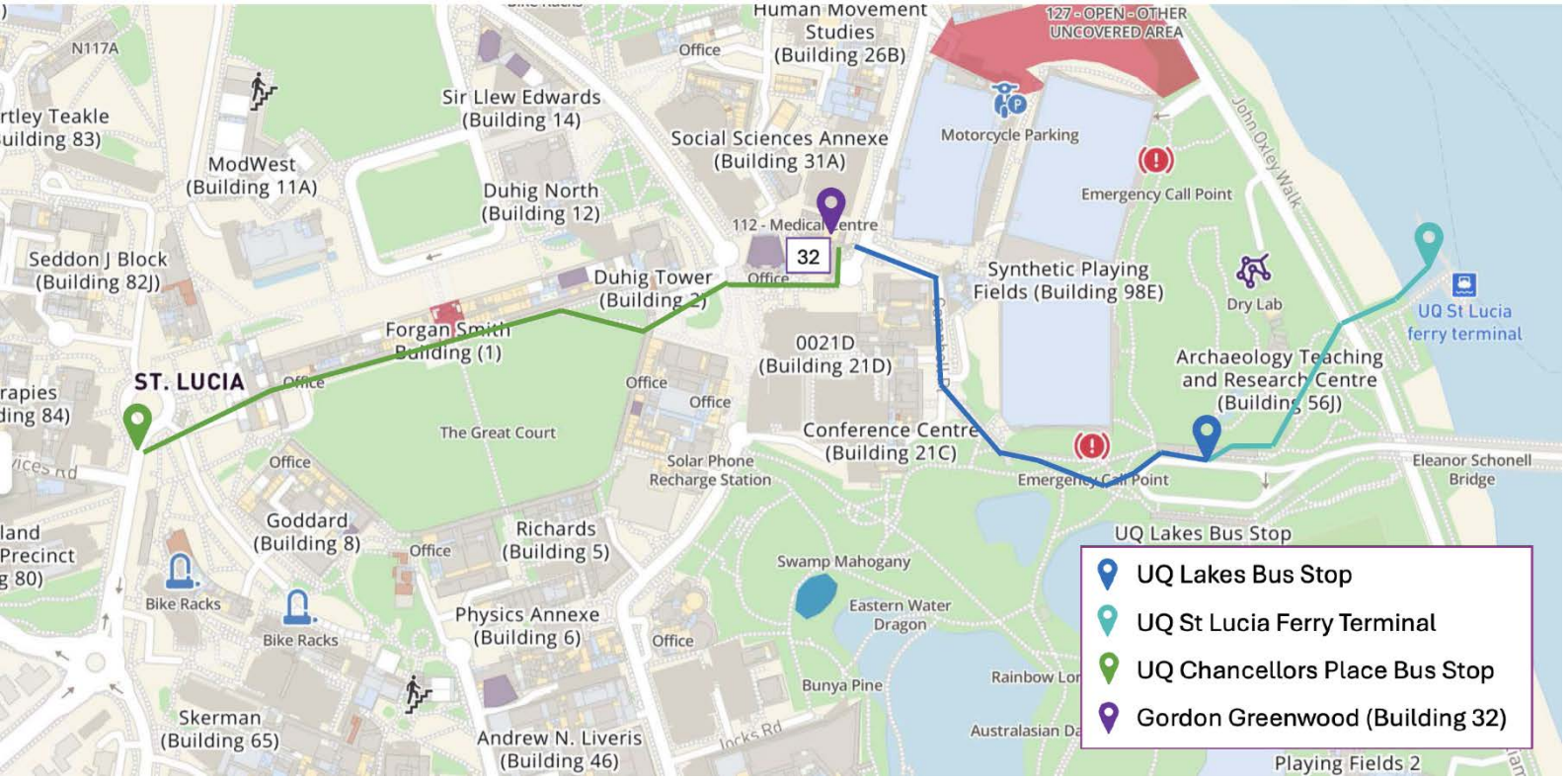
Delegates' information booklet



Conference chair: Valeria Sinkeviciute
Organised by Discourse Discussion Group (DDG)

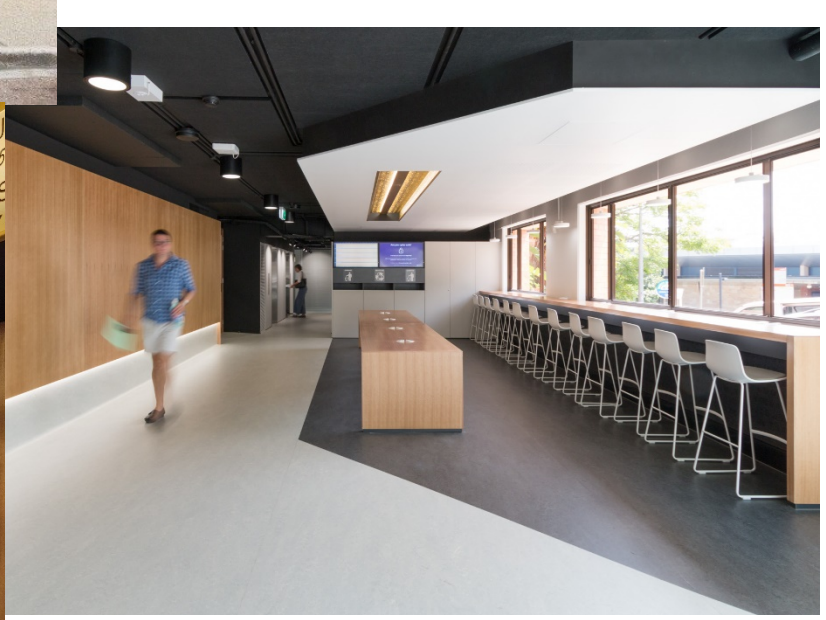
Email: dci@uq.edu.au





Conference building

Registration site





Main conference room

6TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
DISCOURSE, CULTURE & INTERACTION (DCI-6)
November 23-25, 2026
The University of Queensland

DAY 1

8:00-8:45	**Registration** *Building 32, level 2, next to room 207*
8:45-9:00	**Conference opening** *BUILDING 32-207*
	SESSION 1: RELATING ACROSS CONTEXTS AND TIME CHAIR: DANIE WANG
9:00-9:30	**Relating in language exchange interactions: Visualising interpersonal relationship development across repeated interactions** Chilmeg Elden *The University of Queensland, Australia*
09:30-10:00	**"This is beyond inappropriate… Goodbye": Moral agency and offence-taking in early conversational closings initiated by AI companions** Andrea Rodriguez *The University of Queensland, Australia*
10:00-10:30	**Doing hospitality: A comparative study of three small hospitality establishments in Western Japan** Todd Allen *Kansai University, Japan*
10:30-11:00	**Break**
	SESSION 2: WORK-IN-PROGRESS – CULTURE, NARRATIVE AND IDEOLOGY CHAIR: NAMITA ANNIE JOHN
11:00-11:20	**Authenticity ideologies and rhetorics of resistance in the Catalan independence movement** David Cortes Ferrandez *Washington University in St. Louis, USA*
11:20-11:40	**Offensiveness beyond words: The role of pragmatic context in Modern Greek taboo and offensive language** Chrisa Kazitori, George J. Xydopoulos *University of Patras, Greece*
11:40-12:00	**Community, connection, and sustainability: A qualitative study of local narratives in a remote Japanese island village** Xixi (Sissi) Zhang *The University of Osaka, Japan*
12:00-12:20	**Semiotization, commodification, and identity construction: Chinese characters and Chineseness on T-shirts sold via e-commerce** Qiyue Zong *Tsinghua University, China*
12:20-2:00	**Lunch break**
	SESSION 3: DIGITAL DISCOURSE CHAIR: ANDREA RODRIGUEZ
2:00-2:30	**Constructing institutional identity through multimodal digital discourse: A case study on Sydney Opera House** Noemi Eleonora Maria Grasso *Free University of Bozen-Bolzano, Italy*
2:30-3:00	**Voices in the comment field: Expressing stance and negotiating authority on Instagram COVID-19 news posts** Angelicia Thane *Te Herenga Waka Victoria University of Wellington & Massey University, New Zealand*
3:00-3:30	**Ideological tensions in the discursive construction of sex workers: A critical discourse analysis of YouTube audience responses to BBC Africa Eye sex work documentaries** Richmond Ngula *University of Botswana, Botswana*
3:30-4:00	**Constructing China's climate image in digital spaces: A corpus-assisted discourse analysis of YouTube commentaries** Yun Wang, Yu Shan, Dechao Li *Central South University, China & Hong Kong Polytechnic University, China*

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DAY 2

SESSION 4: FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS CHAIR: CHILMEG ELDEN	
10:00-10:30	Categories and category relations in parent–young child pedagogical sequences Danie Wang *The University of Queensland, Australia*
10:30-11:00	"What if Grandma can't watch TV": Negotiating relational expectations in Chinese-speaking families Zhiyi Liu *The University of Queensland, Australia*
11:00-11:30	Speaking on behalf of: Insights into the micropolitics of intimacy in adult sibling talk Andrea Rodriguez, Ling Zhao *The University of Queensland, Australia*
11:30-1:00	Lunch break
SESSION 5: WORK-IN-PROGRESS – PRAGMATICS OF SOCIAL ACTION CHAIR: VALERIA SINKEVICIUTE	
1:00-1:20	A comparative study of suggestions in Australian English and Mandarin Chinese Tianzhe Jiao, Lucy Li *University of Tasmania, Australia*
1:20-1:40	Myanmar verbal communication styles in Australia Grace Thida *Western Sydney University, Australia*
1:40-2:00	"So that was pretty bad": The co-construction of troubles-telling in telephone conversation Yixuan Zou *The University of Queensland, Australia*
2:00-2:20	Co-constructing advice sequences in father–daughter telephone interactions Namita Annie John *The University of Queensland, Australia*
2:20-3:00	Break
SESSION 6: LANGUAGE USE IN MULTILINGUAL CONTEXTS CHAIR: LING ZHAO	
3:00-3:30	Who is accommodating whom? Interactional agency and responsibility in bi- & multilingual dementia contexts Carolin Schneider Ward *Monash University, Australia*
3:30-4:00	Interpreter-mediated medical consultations over the phone: The accuracy of interpretations and effectiveness of remote communication Lily Jihong Wang *The University of Queensland, Australia*
4:00-4:30	Linguistic citizenship in a multilingual workplace: Exploring acts of relationality and a politics of enactment Kristina Tobias *Stellenbosch University, South Africa*

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DAY 3

	SESSION 7: PRAGMATIC MEANING AND COMPETENCE CHAIR: ZHIYI LIU
10:00-10:30	**When "thank you" does not mean thanks:** **Ostensible thanking (xiè) as an interactional practice in Chinese digital communication** Minchen Gao *The University of Queensland, Australia*
10:30-11:00	**Beyond grammar and vocabulary:** **Enhancing pragmatic competence through explicit instruction of Chinese requests** Lucy Li *University of Tasmania, Australia*
11:00-11:30	**Face, dialogic feedback, and pragmatic competence:** **An im/politeness analysis of reviewer–author negotiation** Fuhui Zhang *Northeast Normal University, China*
11:30-1:00	**Lunch break**
	SESSION 8: WORK-IN-PROGRESS – INSTITUTIONAL SETTINGS CHAIR: YIXUAN ZOU
1:00-1:20	**Exploring teachers' and students' perceptions of the role of captions and subtitles** **in language learning and cultural knowledge** Mingyang Cai, Sarah Prestridge, Danielle Heinrichs Henry *Griffith University, Australia*
1:20-1:40	**"It's 100% fatal at that point": Constructing (un)certainty in a pre-travel health consultation** Shiori Tsuda *The University of Queensland, Australia*
1:40-2:00	**Coulda, woulda, shoulda: Modality, meaning, and misinterpretation in multilingual classrooms** Sermin Erden *Brisbane, Australia*
2:00-2:20	**"I don't have a massive point here but…":** **Formulating audience contributions in Q&A sessions at English-medium academic conferences** Sutian Yuan *The University of Auckland, New Zealand*
2:20-3:00	**Break**
	KEYNOTE CHAIR: VALERIA SINKEVICIUTE *BUILDING 32-215*
3:00-4:15	**Relationalising responses: The use of sister(s) in multi-party interaction** Assoc. Prof Lili Gong *Guangdong University of Foreign Studies, China*
4:15-4:30	**Conference closing**
4:30-	**Social gathering on campus at *St Lucy's* (drinks/dinner)**

6th International Conference on *Discourse, Culture & Interaction* (DCI-6) **KEYNOTE**
November 25
UQ, Brisbane, Australia

RELATIONALISING RESPONSES: THE USE OF *SISTER(S)* IN MULTI-PARTY INTERACTION

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Address terms have been recognised as important resources for relational work (Rozumko 2023), and previous research (Clayman 2012; Rendle-Short 2007, 2010) have shown that their interactional significance is shaped by the actions and sequential environments in which they occur. Building on this body of research, the present study investigates how the relational address term *sister(s)* is deployed to the relational organization of responsive actions in multi-party interaction. Drawing on an interactional pragmatic analysis (Haugh 2013, 2015) of an online multi-party group for mothers navigating pregnancy and early motherhood, the study looks at the responsive actions embedding *sister(s)* and how its use contributes to the relational work (Locher 2013) accomplished in these actions. The analysis demonstrates that the term *sister(s)* occurs in a diverse range of responsive actions. Across different actions, the term *sister(s)* recurrently contributes to the accomplishment of relational work in various relational dimensions. In the multi-party interaction, the term *sister(s)* can be selectively directed to a particular participant or a subset of participants, allowing speakers to locally organize the relationship with that participant(s) within a shared participation framework while the interaction remains open to the wider participation framework. The study contributes to an understanding of how relational address is integrated into responsive action and how relational work is organized in multi-party interaction.

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RELATING IN LANGUAGE EXCHANGE INTERACTIONS: VISUALISING INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS REPEATED INTERACTIONS

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Research on interpersonal relationship development has increasingly adopted an interactional perspective, treating relationships as interactional achievements that are continuously (co-)constructed, managed, and transformed through language use in social interactions (e.g., Arundale, 2010). While previous research has demonstrated how participants in established relationships draw on shared relational histories, considerably less attention has been paid to how relationships established in first encounters between previously unacquainted interactants are subsequently reconfirmed, modified, or redefined through repeated encounters. To address this gap, this study examines English-Japanese language exchange interactions between previously unacquainted Australian and Japanese university students, focusing on how interpersonal relationships are progressively (co-)constructed across first, second, and third encounters. Drawing on approximately 50 hours of video-recorded interactions from 11 Australian-Japanese language exchange pairs, this study adopts the framework of Interactional Pragmatics (Arundale, 2010; Haugh, 2012) and employs collection-based analysis. However, the semi-longitudinal nature of the data raises two methodological challenges: how interactional data can be explored systematically to support collection building for qualitative sequential analysis, and how relationship development across repeated encounters can be represented while preserving the emergent characteristics of each interaction and shifts in participants' interactional practices. To address these challenges, this study conducts a minor data transformation through action mapping and data visualisation, where social actions are systematically coded (cf. Stivers, 2010; Stivers & Rossi, 2025) and visually represented. The resulting visualisations capture the overall distribution and temporal positioning of social actions across interactions, supporting systematic collection building while remaining grounded in detailed sequential analysis. In line with previous studies, the results demonstrate that first encounters are characterised by participants' orientation to getting acquainted through requesting and providing (personal) information (e.g., Svennevig, 1999). In subsequent encounters, however, participants increasingly draw on interactional understandings established in earlier interactions to reconfirm, modify, and further develop their relationships (e.g., Bushnell & Moody, 2024), alongside greater occurrences of practices that promote closeness or relational intimacy, such as troubles-telling and teasing. More broadly, the results demonstrate that data visualisation can function as part of the broader analytical framework and complement qualitative interactional analysis by facilitating movements between the fine-grained qualitative analysis and more holistic representations of interpersonal relationship development across repeated encounters.

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"THIS IS BEYOND INAPPROPRIATE… GOODBYE": MORAL AGENCY AND OFFENCE-TAKING IN EARLY CONVERSATIONAL CLOSINGS INITIATED BY AI COMPANIONS

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Conversational closings are considered complex interactional accomplishments (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973) through which interlocutors negotiate social, institutional, and relational norms. They involve various types of practices, including (future) arrangements, back-references, requests, accounts, and displays of appreciation (Button, 1987). While closings have not received much scholarly attention, studies examining institutional settings as transactional encounters (Raymond & Zimmerman, 2016; Orthaber, 2023; Mondada, 2025) suggest that closings often display the speakers' orientation to the success of the transaction (Orthaber, 2023), whereas closings in ordinary interactions often foreground the delicacy of face-threats associated with leave taking (Fitch, 1990) and its mitigation. Certainly, interlocutors do not always accomplish smooth closings. In argumentative talk, closings are often constructed as occasioned walkouts, characterised by the emergence of a progressive complaint, in which the complained-about party disattends/refuses the opportunity to cease/remediate the complainable behaviour (Dersley & Wootton, 2001; Llewellyn & Butler, 2011). The nuanced layering of conversational closings has recently attracted attention from scholars exploring human-chatbot interaction, who have highlighted current limitations in initiating and navigating closings (Dombi et al., 2024; Uchida et al., 2026). This paper examines conversational closings by AI companions, which are designed to be flattering and agreeable to keep conversation going.

Using an interactional pragmatics lens (Haugh, 2012) and relevant aspects of membership categorisation analysis (Sacks, 1972; Hester & Eglin, 1997; Fitzgerald & Housley, 2015), this paper illustrates how AI companions invoke moral agency and construct offence-taking to warrant early termination of calls. The analysis draws on a series of 45 live podcasts (more than 25 hours of interaction) streamed on YouTube, with Sesame's AI companion, Maya, serving as co-host. Given that calls to Sesame AI companions are supported for up to 30 minutes, different types of conversational closings are salient across the collection. The analysis first distinguishes between argumentative and non-argumentative closings initiated by the AI companion, with a focus on sequential environments. Then, it delves into argumentative closings to demonstrate how AI companions construct offence-taking through moral assessments as a trump card to warrant early call terminations, thereby enacting moral agency. By unpacking the sociopragmatic resources deployed in human-AI conversational closings, this paper contributes to the empirical understanding of how AI companions reproduce sociopragmatic knowledge and navigate the normativities of relational intimacy within the frame of interaction as a service.

DOING HOSPITALITY: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THREE SMALL HOSPITALITY ESTABLISHMENTS IN WESTERN JAPAN

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Research on hospitality has increasingly moved beyond service and tourism perspectives to examine how hospitality is interactionally accomplished through participation and social action (Félix-Brasdefer, 2015; Kim, 2023). Nevertheless, interactional studies of hospitality in Japan remain limited. A small but growing body of research has begun to examine hospitality as a sociopragmatic phenomenon (e.g., Allen & Liu, 2025b; Greer, 2025). Specifically, such research has begun to investigate politeness and speech level shifts, metapragmatic practices, and the interactional processes through which newcomers are incorporated and outsiders become regular members within small hospitality establishments (SHEs) in Japan (Allen & Liu, 2025a). Building on this work, the present study compares how hospitality is accomplished across three types of SHEs in Japan: a neighbourhood bar, an Irish pub, and an Okinawan-style *izakaya*.

Drawing on video-recorded naturally occurring interaction collected in three SHEs in western Japan, this study employs a sociopragmatic approach (Haugh et al., 2021) to examine how hospitality is accomplished across three distinct social spaces. While all three establishments orient towards creating participation and belonging, owners facilitate social engagement through different interactional resources. At the neighbourhood bar, hospitality is organised through attentiveness, listening, and the coordination of multiparty interaction. At the Irish pub, it is accomplished through newcomer incorporation, cultural mediation, and local knowledge sharing. At the Okinawan *izakaya*, humour, teasing, relational guidance, and food offers contribute to conviviality. Despite these differences, owners across all three sites act as interactional facilitators who support participation, relationships, and community formation. Overall, the findings demonstrate that hospitality is not simply a service activity but an interactional accomplishment through which relationships, participation, and communities are constructed (Allen & Liu, 2024). By comparing three distinct hospitality spaces, the study demonstrates how shared orientations towards hospitality are realised through different interactional practices shaped by local communities and sociocultural identities (Félix-Brasdefer, 2015; Kim, 2023).

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AUTHENTICITY IDEOLOGIES AND RHETORICS OF RESISTANCE IN THE CATALAN INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT

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Since 2010, the independence movement in Catalonia has grown significantly, eventually securing a parliamentary majority in the region. This paper poses the following question: has the rise of the independence movement shifted the linguistic ideology paradigm in Catalonia, moving it from an authority ideology toward one of authenticity (Woolard, 2016)? While the former tends to ideologically erase the social origins of the public speaker (Irvine and Gal, 2000), authenticity ideology proves especially functional for movements seeking to "imagine a community" (Anderson, 2006), as it anchors identity in the essence of both the individual and the collective.

To address this question, I apply a critical discourse analysis to responses to the tweets and parliamentary speeches of Gabriel Rufián, a pro-independence member of the Spanish Parliament who typically speaks in Spanish. Through a selection of discourse samples, I examine how sectors of the Catalan independence movement question his legitimacy as a separatist precisely because of this linguistic choice, revealing a rhetoric of belonging and exclusion deeply tied to language use. Far from being a marginal phenomenon, this discourse points to a dominant ideology within the movement.

This research makes a twofold contribution to the field: on one hand, it updates Woolard's work —whose study concludes in the previous decade— with more recent data; on the other, it situates the analysis at the intersection of linguistic ideologies and transnational rhetorics of resistance, showing how language becomes an instrument of cohesion, dissent, and identity-building in contexts of political mobilization.

OFFENSIVENESS BEYOND WORDS: THE ROLE OF PRAGMATIC CONTEXT IN MODERN GREEK TABOO AND OFFENSIVE LANGUAGE

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Pragmatic context plays a crucial role in shaping the interpretation of taboo and offensive language, yet offensiveness is still frequently treated as an inherent lexical property rather than as a context-dependent phenomenon. This study, conducted within a broader PhD project on Modern Greek slang and taboo vocabulary, investigates how pragmatic variables influence the perceived offensiveness of taboo expressions in contemporary Greek.

The study focuses on a subset of sexist and homophobic taboo expressions, not as isolated lexical items, but as linguistic resources whose interpretation varies according to the communicative context. Using experimentally designed contextualised scenarios, the same lexical items were embedded in different interactional settings that systematically manipulated pragmatic variables, including the relationship between interlocutors, the direction of the offensive act (direct insult versus reference to an absent third person), and the communicative situation. Participants evaluated the perceived offensiveness of each expression within its specific context.

Preliminary findings indicate that perceived offensiveness is not determined solely by the lexical meaning of taboo expressions. Instead, it varies considerably depending on pragmatic conditions. Direct face-threatening uses are consistently evaluated as more offensive, whereas references to absent third parties or interactions between familiar interlocutors tend to reduce perceived offensiveness. These findings highlight the dynamic interaction between lexical meaning and contextual interpretation.

The study contributes to research on pragmatics, discourse and (im)politeness by providing empirical evidence that the evaluation of taboo language is context-sensitive. More broadly, it argues for a shift from viewing offensiveness as a fixed lexical characteristic towards understanding it as an emergent property of communicative interaction. The findings also enrich cross-linguistic research on offensive language by offering evidence from Modern Greek, a language that remains comparatively underrepresented in the international literature.

COMMUNITY, CONNECTION, AND SUSTAINABILITY: A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF LOCAL NARRATIVES IN A REMOTE JAPANESE ISLAND VILLAGE

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As rural communities worldwide face depopulation, population aging, and social fragmentation, understanding what sustains community life has become an important issue for both intercultural studies and applied linguistics. This study asks: What factors sustain the viability of remote rural communities, and how are these factors represented and negotiated through local narratives and language use?

The study focuses on Funauki, a remote island village on Iriomote Island, Okinawa, Japan, which is accessible only by boat and has maintained strong traditions of mutual support despite its geographical isolation. From an applied linguistics perspective, the study employs qualitative discourse-oriented analysis of multiple data sources, including published articles on Funauki, local historical documents, residents' narratives and interviews, field notes, and community records. Rather than treating discourse as isolated texts, the analysis examines how key concepts such as mutual help, connection, belonging, and inconvenience/convenience are constructed through local narratives and how these linguistic representations reflect relationships among people, place, and the natural environment.

The study conceptualizes connections as both internal (among community members) and external (with government agencies, educational institutions, tourism, migrants, and broader social networks). It analyzes how these interconnected relationships contribute to community sustainability and how language reflects local understandings of collective identity and resilience. The findings demonstrate how community narratives provide valuable insights into sustaining social relationships in aging societies and offer implications for intercultural communication, interdisciplinary education, and community development.

SEMIOTIZATION, COMMODIFICATION, AND IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION: CHINESE CHARACTERS AND CHINESENESS ON T-SHIRTS SOLD VIA E-COMMERCE

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Garments printed with Chinese characters are a widespread yet under-examined case of linguistic commodification: on global e-commerce platforms, they are produced and sold predominantly to non-Chinese consumers. Drawing on a multimodal analysis of over 100 Amazon listings (November 2026), which examines the interaction and negotiation between the sellers' multimodal design and discursive construction of the garments and the buyers' reviews, this study asks in what forms, meanings, and functions Chinese is commodified, and what China and Chineseness are constructed. The analysis identifies a continuum along which the denotational and symbolic functions of Chinese script are differentially weighted: from garments designed for Chinese interlocutors to read; through those in which identity and message are subtly blended in both semiotic form and referential meaning; to those in which script floats as purely decorative texture. Integrating resemiotization with Blommaert's sociolinguistic scales, the study demonstrates how the transnational mobility of Chinese reorganizes its functional diversity within digital marketplaces, thereby bringing together theories of resemiotization, sociolinguistic scale and language commodification.

CONSTRUCTING INSTITUTIONAL IDENTITY THROUGH MULTIMODAL DIGITAL DISCOURSE: A CASE STUDY ON SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE

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Cultural institutions face a fundamental communicative challenge: they must balance their cultural mission with the commercial needs of financing their activities. As they also increasingly engage with diverse audiences through digital communication, institutional websites have become strategic spaces for the construction and negotiation of their organisational identity (Breeze, 2013; Nazuk & Shabbir, 2018), where cultural and commercial objectives are continuously balanced through multimodal discourse.

This paper explores how the Sydney Opera House constructs its institutional identity across two interconnected digital spaces: its official website and its online shop. The study looks at the multimodal resources across the two websites, and their contribution to a coherent, but multifaceted, representation of Australia's most iconic performing arts centre.

The study adopts a qualitative multimodal discourse analysis grounded in Kress and van Leeuwen's (2021) Visual grammar and O'Toole's (2011) metafunctional framework. Building on multimodal approaches to digital communication (Knox, 2007; O'Halloran, 2004), it examines the compositional, interpersonal and representational/experiential meanings emerging from the interplay of verbal and visual resources. Particular attention is also given to website architecture, navigation, interactivity, framing, salience and information value, exploring how these multimodal choices convey institutional and cultural values across the interconnected digital spaces of the Sydney Opera House.

The results show that the two analysed websites construct a consistent institutional identity rather than being two clashing communicative spaces. In fact, while the main website emphasises artistic excellence, accessibility, audience engagement and the Opera House's status as a UNESCO World Heritage site, the online shop reinforces such values and identity by presenting merchandise as material extensions of the Opera House's cultural heritage. The two websites are not competing representations: rather, they are complementary communicative environments, cooperatively constructing the online identity of the institution.

This paper contributes to the research on multimodal discourse and digital communication by showing how organisational identity is constructed through the interplay of visual, verbal and interactive resources. Beyond its theoretical contribution, the implications of the study can be extended to communication professionals working in the cultural sector, who could gain practical knowledge about the multimodal strategies supporting effective and economically sustainable communication.

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VOICES IN THE COMMENT FIELD: EXPRESSING STANCE AND NEGOTIATING AUTHORITY ON INSTAGRAM COVID-19 NEWS POSTS

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User comments on Instagram news posts are often described as a "marketplace of ideas" (Shanahan, 2018) or a space of public engagement (Ksiazek & Springer, 2020). How exactly do users do express stance and do authority work in these threads? This paper examines how Instagram users claim, contest, and defer to authority in the comment sections of news posts produced by major news organisations during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, when audience interest in hard news was especially high. I draw on Bhatia's (2017) Critical Genre Analysis as a theoretical framework recognising context, interdiscursivity as well as multi-perspectivity and multidimensionality as core to understanding professional genres and practices. In this context, I view user comments as part of the Instagram news genre. I treat user comments as performative social media acts (boyd, 2011) and as dialogic turns (Mapes, 2021), shaped by users' awareness of multiple co-present voices including journalists, followers, and the wider Instagram public. My analysis draws on comment threads from three case studies of early-pandemic news events across three news organisations in the UK, New Zealand, and Malaysia. I conducted an iterative content analysis, examining the data repeatedly until saturation, attending to the forms (e.g., rhetorical questions, emojis, anecdotes) and functions (e.g., responding to text or image, advice-giving, call-to-action, sarcasm) through which users interact with news content, with one another, and express their stance. These patterns were subsequently interpreted in relation to findings from expert interviews with social media journalists and the journalistic practices established in the broader study. Findings show that comments are not mere individual audience reactions to news. Through their varied forms and functions, users responded to news multimodally, initiated exchanges with other users, and positioned themselves in relation to journalistic and public voices. These interactions demonstrate that the interpretation, and therefore, construction of Instagram news is not exclusively determined by news organisations but is continually negotiated through audience participation. This paper contributes to social media discourse research by showing how a form-and-function analysis can illuminate the interactional negotiation of voice and authority within Instagram news.

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IDEOLOGICAL TENSIONS IN THE DISCURSIVE CONSTRUCTION OF SEX WORKERS: A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF YOUTUBE AUDIENCE RESPONSES TO BBC AFRICA EYE SEX WORK DOCUMENTARIES

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Public understandings of sex workers are shaped not only by institutional and media representations but also by audience discourse within participatory digital environments. While previous discourse studies have examined news media, policy documents, activist discourse and the narratives of sex workers themselves, not much is known in terms of how online audiences construct sex workers in response to documentary representations, particularly within African contexts. In this paper, I address this gap by examining the ideological construction of sex workers in YouTube audience responses to two BBC Africa Eye documentaries: *Sex Workers: Lives in the Shadows* and *Lady P and the Sex Work Sisterhood*. I draw on van Dijk's socio-cognitive approach to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), which conceptualizes discourse as the interface between society and socially shared cognitive systems of knowledge, beliefs and ideology. The dataset comprises 460 naturally occurring YouTube comments and associated reply threads. I adopt a purely qualitative and inductive approach, and my analysis progresses through repeated reading, open coding, discursive grouping, macro-discourse identification and socio-cognitive interpretation.

The findings of the study identify three interrelated macro-discourses through which sex workers are constructed: as victims of structural inequality and social abandonment; as subjects of competing moral and religious ideologies; and as resilient and dignified social actors. These macro-discourses reveal that audience constructions are characterized by *cognitive hybridity*, whereby commenters selectively combine structural, moral and humanitarian interpretive frameworks in negotiating the identities of sex workers. Commenters did not express fixed ideological positions; rather, they frequently drew on multiple socially shared belief systems within the same interaction, producing complex and often contradictory representations.

The paper contributes to discourse studies in three respects. First, it extends socio-cognitive CDA to audience-generated digital discourse and advances the concept of cognitive hybridity as a means of explaining the coexistence of competing ideological resources in online meaning-making. Second, it broadens discourse scholarship on sex work by stressing audience constructions within African digital publics. And third, it demonstrates the value of analyzing YouTube comment threads as interactional discourse and offers a transparent qualitative framework for investigating ideology in participatory digital communication.

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CONSTRUCTING CHINA'S CLIMATE IMAGE IN DIGITAL SPACES: A CORPUS-ASSISTED DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF YOUTUBE COMMENTARIES

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China's dual role as a major carbon emitter and a leading investor in renewable energy makes its discursive representation an important concern in global climate communication. While existing research has examined institutional climate discourse, how YouTube users interpret media representations and construct China's climate image through evaluative language remains underexplored. This study adopts a corpus-assisted discourse analytical approach, drawing on 2,037 English-language comments on four YouTube videos concerning China's climate-related actions. BERTopic modelling and qualitative review establish six main analytical themes. Appraisal Theory is then used to analyse evaluative targets and the explicit or implicit expression of attitudes within each theme. Cross-topic comparisons examine the linguistic mechanisms through which these evaluations construct representations of China. It has been found that commenters' positive evaluations of China's technological capabilities and strategic planning coexist with divergent assessments of its environmental responsibility and climate leadership. Across the corpus, commenters assess responsibility using different measures, debate whether progress reflects planning or circumstance, and question perceived inconsistencies in media coverage. These patterns suggest that China's climate image is negotiated in online discussions through evaluations of both its actions and the standards used to assess them. By linking thematic contexts with evaluative mechanisms, the study contributes to corpus-assisted discourse research and advances understanding of the discursive negotiation of national images and climate responsibility in digital communication.

CATEGORIES AND CATEGORY RELATIONS IN PARENT–YOUNG CHILD PEDAGOGICAL SEQUENCES

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Family talk constitutes a primary context for children's socialization, especially in early childhood, with parent–child interaction playing a central role. Research has demonstrated how parents use language, such as directives and requests, together with embodied actions (Goodwin & Cekaite, 2018), to shape young children's behaviour and teach them appropriate ways of speaking and acting in the world. However, relatively limited attention has been paid to family members' orientation to category relations as a central analytic concern. Although previous studies have examined category relations involving multiple family members (Butler & Fitzgerald, 2010) and siblings (Hester & Hester, 2012), relatively little research has explored how family members, particularly parents and young children, orient to and negotiate categories and category relations in interaction.

Drawing on membership categorization analysis (Sacks, 1992; Hester & Eglin, 1997; Stokoe, 2012), this study examines how family members navigate categories and category relations in pedagogical sequences, using 14 hours of video-recorded conversations between the parents and their child aged 2;3–3;4. A total of 156 pedagogical sequences were identified, comprising two main types: parent-initiated sequences (n = 90) and child-initiated sequences (n = 66). While most of these sequences exhibit canonical pedagogy, with the parents doing "being the teacher" and the child doing "being the learner," there are cases in which category relations are negotiated, challenged, and categories are reversed. Analysis of such sequences shows that, through category-implicative actions such as challenging and correcting, parents invoke the "teacher–learner" category pair. The child, however, does not always align with parental pedagogy, but instead orients to the relational category of "mother–child" indexed through category-tied activities such as playing with and assessing toys. In terms of action ascription, it has been observed in the data that the same turn design (e.g., *zhe shenme?* ["what is this?"]) may be orientated to as different social actions implicative of opposite categories in the "teacher–learner" category pair. By analysing parent–young child pedagogical sequences, this study contributes to a more nuanced understanding of family talk between parents and young children, while also offering insights into membership categorization studies and children's socialization practices.

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"WHAT IF GRANDMA CAN'T WATCH TV": NEGOTIATING RELATIONAL EXPECTATIONS IN CHINESE-SPEAKING FAMILIES

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Children's daily (routine) interactions with family members serve as a primary site for fostering their awareness of moral, social, and relational (in)appropriateness in interacting with others (e.g., Goodwin & Cekaite, 2018; Gan, 2023). This includes developing an understanding of relational expectations and a sense of affective engagement to establish and maintain certain relational ties. Yet, there remains limited research on how family members manage one another's improper affective orientations (e.g., lack of caring and warmth) in Chinese family settings, where the quality of *qing* ("emotion") – or *ganqing* ("affection") – is argued to play a crucial role in family harmony (Lei, 2025). Drawing on care at home, this presentation concerns moments when children's behaviour or the absence of certain behaviour is evaluated by adult family members as inappropriate to examine how they use such moments to orient children to 'doing caring' as not merely a situated matter but also a relational expectation, while managing children's failure to meet that expectation.

The data comes from video-recorded everyday conversations collected from three two-child Chinese-speaking families with at least two generations living together: one is an immigrant family living in Australia and two are families based in mainland China. The age of all children is between 5 and 13 years old.

Using interactional pragmatics as the analytical approach (see Haugh, 2012) and paying attention to multimodal resources used in interaction, the analysis first examines how, through interactional practices, parents and grandparents highlight and manage children's violations of caring expectations. Two key techniques have been noticed: (1) issuing directives with the implication of criticism and accusation and (2) shaming children by positioning them into a negative category. The analysis also focuses on children's responses, in which correcting the inappropriate behaviour does not always occur. Children may bargain or even produce counter-accusations to position parents and grandparents as violating relational-affective principles. A negotiation of responsibilities and obligations unfolds in interaction, demonstrating the ongoing constitution of relational expectations and familial order. The *doing* of care emerges from the analysis as more than affective expectations, which is also associated with morality and members' relational positioning vis-à-vis 'doing family'.

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SPEAKING ON BEHALF OF: INSIGHTS INTO THE MICROPOLITICS OF INTIMACY IN ADULT SIBLING TALK

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Speaking on behalf of another person is a sociopragmatic phenomenon that has been primarily examined in institutional settings where companions or carers speak on behalf of patients (Pino & Land, 2022) or parents speak on behalf of children in family therapy sessions (Hutchby & O'Reilly, 2010), at the doctor (Stivers, 2001), and at school meetings (Colla, 2023). In these contexts, the focus has been on the negotiation of epistemic and deontic asymmetrical entitlements and obligations. In ordinary family talk, the practice of speaking on behalf of has also emphasised the parent-child relationship through the lens of children's socialisation (Sterponi, 2009; Liu, 2023,2024). In more symmetrical family relationships, the practice of speaking on behalf of someone has been associated with epistemic rights (Bolden, 2018) and the construction of intimacy between couples who claim entitlement to tell a story (Mandelbaum, 1987) or make an offer (Stivers & Rossi, 2021) on behalf of their partners. How the practice is instantiated between adult siblings has received considerably less attention.

Drawing on the theoretical and methodological commitments of interactional pragmatics and membership categorisation analysis (Sacks, 1972; Hester & Eglin, 1997; Fitzgerald & Housley, 2015), this paper examines different functions that speaking on behalf of an adult sibling serves in ordinary interaction in two languages, Spanish and Mandarin Chinese. By examining the two independent collections, we show that similar interactional practices are deployed across cultures and contexts. The micro-detailed analysis of extracts involving Spanish-speaking siblings of transnational families and sibling talk in the Mandarin Chinese talk show *Kangxi LaiLe* (*Here Comes Kangxi*), demonstrates how 'speaking on behalf of a sibling' emerges as a relevant practice when attributing or deflecting accountability. Our analysis distinguishes between instances in which speaking on behalf of a sibling serves as a vehicle for other-categorisation and instances in which it involves self-and-other categorisation. In so doing, it foregrounds the sociopragmatic implications of orienting to and managing social vs relational accountability. This way, the findings offer insights into the micropolitics of intimacy and care within the growing discursive literature on adult sibling talk from various lingua-cultural contexts.

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF SUGGESTIONS IN AUSTRALIAN ENGLISH AND MANDARIN CHINESE

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Suggesting is a ubiquitous interactional event yet received relatively little research attention. The small number of cross-cultural studies on suggestions have predominantly focused on isolated speech acts, with limited attention to their interactive contexts. This study aims to compare how native speakers of Australian English and Mandarin Chinese make suggestions across different contexts, with a specific focus on the sequential organisation and linguistic forms. Data were collected from 20 participants of each group through six role-play tasks followed by retrospective verbal interviews (RVR). Results indicate differences in both production and perception of suggestions among Australian and Chinese participants. Role-play data showed that Australian participants' suggestions are typically embedded within extended interactional sequences and accomplished with more preparatory talk and more tentative formulations. Conversely, Chinese participants tended to use a more direct style of interaction. Their suggestions are generally more explicit, with less sequential expansion. RVR data indicated that Australian participants perceived such actions as intrusive, especially when suggestions are not explicitly solicited. Therefore, they tended to cautiously advance the suggestion only after the interlocutor displayed receptiveness, leaving the recipient greater freedom to decide whether to act on the suggestion. However, Chinese speakers seemed to consider it unnecessary to build up the suggestions, as they often associated directness with sincerity and willingness to help, rather than imposing on the interlocutor. This study contributes to a better understanding of the interactional organisation of suggestions across cultures, and offers valuable insights for interactional and intercultural pragmatics.

MYANMAR VERBAL COMMUNICATION STYLES IN AUSTRALIA

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Myanmar possesses a rich cultural and linguistic heritage, highlighting the importance of understanding its unique verbal and nonverbal practices. This qualitative case study will explore Myanmar verbal and nonverbal request strategies in social interaction and the development of Myanmar speakers' intercultural communicative competence (ICC) in Australia. Studying Myanmar social interactions in Australia will be both practically and socially significant, particularly considering Australia's growing Myanmar population and its commitment to multiculturalism. Additionally, no previous studies in the Australian context have been examined despite several research studies regarding Myanmar cultures, language, and communication.

This study will be conducted with 20-30 adult Myanmar-speaking participants, aged between 18 and 70, residing in Australia. All 30 participants will complete a demographic questionnaire and, an online Discourse Completion Task (DCT) adapted from Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984)'s Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realisation Project (CCSARP). Interviews based on Byram (1997)'s theory. Analytical tools, including NVivo and ELAN, will be utilised to code and analyse the data.

This research aims to fill a substantial gap in the cultural and linguistic research of Myanmar students and migrants. A better understanding of Myanmar communicative norms will enable other professionals and international interactants engage in more effective and successful communication.

"SO THAT WAS PRETTY BAD": THE CO-CONSTRUCTION OF TROUBLES-TELLING IN TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

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This interaction analysis draws on concepts and analytical tools from Conversation Analysis (CA) to examine how troubles-telling is jointly accomplished through the sequential choices of teller and recipient in a naturally occurring telephone conversation between two family members living in different countries. The analysis focuses on two contrasting extracts from the same conversation to investigate how recipient affiliation, or its absence, shapes the trajectory and outcome of the telling.

In the first extract, the recipient deploys a range of affiliative resources including strategically placed silences that treat the trouble as serious, follow-up questions that elicit further detail, and softly delivered emotional responses. These recipient actions work together with the teller's delivery to jointly build the trouble as maximally serious, resulting in a complete troubles-telling sequence with a clear affiliative closing. In the second extract, the other speaker takes on the teller role but receives minimal affiliation: the recipient offers repeated alternative explanations and minimal responses, leaving the teller to defend the trouble's reality without receiving the emotional reciprocity the sequence makes relevant. This telling ends without affiliative closure.

By comparing these two contrasting patterns within a single conversation, the analysis demonstrates that troubles-telling is not simply something a teller performs, but a collaborative interactional achievement shaped by the recipient's moment-by-moment choices. The findings contribute to understanding how silence can function as a form of affiliation rather than disengagement, and how the presence or absence of recipient affiliation shapes the very structure and trajectory of troubles-talk.

CO-CONSTRUCTING ADVICE SEQUENCES IN FATHER–DAUGHTER TELEPHONE INTERACTIONS

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This work-in-progress study uses Conversation Analysis (CA) to investigate how advice is interactionally co-constructed and negotiated in a naturally occurring telephone conversation between a father and his college-aged daughter. While previous research has examined advice in institutional settings and troubles-talk, less attention has been paid to the sequential organisation of advice in everyday parent–adult child interactions. The study addresses this gap by examining how participants collaboratively accomplish advice while negotiating authority, autonomy, and competence.The data consist of a 30-minute audio-recorded telephone conversation from the TalkBank corpus, transcribed using Jeffersonian conventions.

The study analyses two advice sequences, focusing on turn design, sequence organisation, repair, and epistemic and deontic positioning. The extracts represent contrasting trajectories of advice uptake and the negotiation process. Preliminary findings suggest that advice is not simply delivered by one participant but jointly accomplished through the turn-by-turn organisation of talk and is shaped by the ongoing negotiation of epistemic authority, deontic rights, and family roles. In the first extract, addressing financial management, the father's advice develops from advice-implicative questioning to explicit directive advice as the daughter resists, displaying financial competence while preserving autonomy. In the second extract, concerning travel planning, the participants collaboratively build the advice sequence through alignment, account expansion, and self-repair. This allows the daughter to display her competence while simultaneously orienting to her father's guidance. The findings offer early insight into how advice is accomplished in father–adult daughter telephone talk, a dynamic that has received less CA attention than mother–daughter interactions.

WHO IS ACCOMMODATING WHOM?
INTERACTIONAL AGENCY AND RESPONSIBILITY IN BI- & MULTILINGUAL DEMENTIA CONTEXTS

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Research on communication in dementia has increasingly recognized that communicative challenges are shaped not only by changes in linguistic ability but also by the interactional contexts in which communication takes place (e.g. Hamilton 2019; Wray, 2020). Research on multilingual dementia has similarly highlighted the multidimensional nature of communication (Schneider Ward et al., 2026) and the interactional functions of code choice and code-switching (Strandroos & Antelius, 2017; Schneider & Bös, 2024; Mollenhauer & Mollenhauer, 2025). Yet these perspectives leave open the question what the interactional work undertaken by people living with dementia reveals about agency and responsibility in multilingual conversation.

This paper revisits data of 10 triadic narrative interviews involving English-Spanish bilinguals living with dementia and their primary care partners, previously analyzed in the context of the Bilingual Dementia Project (Schneider, 2023). Rather than treating code choice, code-switching, accommodation and language-dependent humor as separate interactional phenomena, the paper re-examines these practices collectively as forms of social action across the communicative repertoire.

The analysis shows that the people living with dementia are not simply recipients of conversational support or accommodation. Instead, they actively contribute to the organisation and maintenance of interaction, adapting their own communicative practices to facilitate participation, structure discourse and sustain affiliation. At the same time, e.g. accommodation is disproportionately oriented towards the conversational partner, while reciprocal accommodation is limited. This asymmetry raises a question about how such practices should be understood: are they evidence of agency, interactional constraint, or both?

Yet, while agency may be enacted through accommodation, accommodation should not be equated uncritically with agency. Examining who accommodates whom reveals how agency and interactional responsibility are distributed across participants. Multilingual dementia interaction should, therefore, be understood not only in terms of what linguistic resources people retain, but in terms of who carries the interactional burden, for whom, and with what consequences for participation.

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INTERPRETER-MEDIATED MEDICAL CONSULTATIONS OVER THE PHONE: THE ACCURACY OF INTERPRETATIONS AND EFFECTIVENESS OF REMOTE COMMUNICATION

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This presentation reports on findings from an empirical study that explored the quality and effectiveness of medical interpreting over the phone. The corpus involves 10 NAATI-accredited professional Mandarin/English interpreters' 19 audio-recordings of real-life telephone interpreting assignments in medical settings across Australia involving various healthcare topics such as speech pathology, cardiology, diabetes, pregnancy and mental health. The study examines the sentence-level accuracy of remote dialogue interpretations in healthcare settings, using the revised version of an existing quality assessment framework (Wang & Fang, 2019). The research also uses Conversation Analysis as a theoretical framework to analyse turn-taking and the interpreter's role of a mediator in the three-party communication. Results show that while the professional interpreters' interpretations are mostly accurate in the remote medical interpreting assignments, there are some major errors such as unjustifiable major distortions and major omissions that affect the quality of the dialogue interpreting performance. These inaccuracies in medical dialogue interpretations indicate the need for the professional interpreters to undergo further professional development to improve their skills and medical knowledge. Moreover, results reveal that the professional interpreters sometimes asked the medical professionals or patients for clarification and repetition to overcome inherent challenges in telephone interpreting such as poor sound quality and the absence of visual cues. The findings have implications for interpreting training and professional development activities, highlighting the need for more constructive conversations between doctors and interpreters to better understand the interpreter's role and jointly achieve more effective communication over the phone.

LINGUISTIC CITIZENSHIP IN A MULTILINGUAL WORKPLACE: EXPLORING ACTS OF RELATIONALITY AND A POLITICS OF ENACTMENT

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Can citizenship be heard in the ordinary work of conversation, or is it actually co-contracted through acts of relationality? In light of this inquiry, a central foci of this paper is to rethink the view that Linguistic Citizenship has long been understood in terms of finding voice for the 'linguistically marginalised other', individual agency, and recognised participation (Stroud, 2018). However, through a critical analysis of a hermeneutic phenomenological dataset (drawn from 28 migrant women in multilingual workplaces in Windhoek, Namibia), this study employs a collection of in-depth interviews coupled with language portraits as mediums of examining how Linguistic Citizenship is negotiably enacted through relationality in a multilingual workplace. Language portraits were particularly significant in that the current chapter draws its inspiration from the larger doctoral study (by-publications format) which sought to explore the ways in which migrant women resiliently navigate the challenges that come with language as a lived experience in different contexts. This supports the claim that Analytically, the present findings may potentially make an extension of Busch's (2012) argument that language environments are experientially lived through affective, embodied and cognitive charges. However, the current study grapples with these charges by delving into the enactment of relationality through acts of Linguistic Citizenship, despite its politicised dimensions. To this effect, the study's findings reveal that radical acts of empathy, including linguistic accommodation, reciprocal vulnerability, accent adjustment, and the use of localised English (Namlish), enable speakers to negotiate intelligibility, recognition, and belonging. A key enlightenment that this study makes to sociolinguistics scholarship is surfacing the understanding that, instead of representing linguistic deficiency, these practices function as relational resources through which multilingual workplaces are made communicatively possible. therefore, a notable conclusion that this paper draws is that Linguistic Citizenship can be rethought of through linguistic accommodation as an enactment of citizenship, which thus demonstrates that belonging is relationally co-constructed through acts of negotiation in speaking and not necessary through individual linguistic competence.

WHEN "THANK YOU" DOES NOT MEAN THANKS: OSTENSIBLE THANKING (XIÈ) AS AN INTERACTIONAL PRACTICE IN CHINESE DIGITAL COMMUNICATION

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Previous research on ostensible speech acts has mainly focused on ostensible invitations, offers, refusals, compliments, and apologies (Abdelhady, 2024; Bardovi-Harlig & Su, 2024; Haugh, 2024; Isaacs & Clark, 1990), with little attention to ostensible thanking. To fill this gap, this study investigates the pragmatic features and pragmatic functions of ostensible thanking (*xiè*) in WeChat conversations among Chinese youth. A total of 196 participants retrieved instances of ostensible thanking from their WeChat conversation histories and provided retrospective reports explaining the intended meanings conveyed by each instance of ostensible thanking. The 200 valid instances of ostensible thanking were qualitatively analysed to identify pragmatic features, while the accompanying retrospective reports were analysed from a metapragmatic perspective (Chang and Haugh, 2020) to identify pragmatic functions. The frequencies and proportions of these features and functions were then quantitatively analysed. The findings reveal five pragmatic functions of ostensible thanking: a) being perfunctory; b) being sarcastic; c) being speechless; d) closing the ongoing topic; and e) combinations of the above functions. Three pragmatic features are also identified, including the single use of "*xiè*", the deployment of supportive stickers and emojis, and the salient use of "I" and "you". This study expands the existing literature on ostensible speech acts by distinguishing ostensible thanking from genuine thanking and revealing the underlying communicative purposes of ostensible thanking in Chinese.

BEYOND GRAMMAR AND VOCABULARY: ENHANCING PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE THROUGH EXPLICIT INSTRUCTION OF CHINESE REQUESTS

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This study examines the effects of explicit instruction on the development of pragmatic competence in requests among Australian learners of Chinese as a foreign language (CFL) over the course of a semester. Using a pre-test, instruction, post-test, and delayed posttest design, data were collected from 23 intermediate-level Australian CFL learners, including 13 in the treatment group and 10 in the control group. Seven commonly used pragmalinguistic forms for making requests in Chinese were selected for instruction. Learners in the treatment group received approximately eight hours of instruction during regular class time between Weeks 2 and 11, with 40-50 minutes of instruction per week.

Data were collected through a six-item oral discourse completion task and a follow-up retrospective written self-report, supplemented by retrospective interviews and observations. The pre-test was conducted in Week 2, the post-test in Week 12, and the delayed posttest in Week 16.

Results indicated that learners in the treatment group made significant gains in their use of the target request forms, whereas no such improvement was observed in the control group. This study highlights the importance of integrating pragmatic instruction into CFL curricula and confirms the effectiveness of explicit instruction in facilitating L2 pragmatic development. Beyond contributing to research on instructed interlanguage pragmatics, the study also has important pedagogical implications for the teaching of Chinese as a foreign or second language and for L2 pedagogy more broadly.

FACE, DIALOGIC FEEDBACK, AND PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE: AN IM/POLITENESS ANALYSIS OF REVIEWER–AUTHOR NEGOTIATION

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Although dialogic peer feedback in L2 writing is a site where second language users must manage face while accomplishing evaluative social action, it remains a domain that has received little attention within im/politeness research, which has largely focused, within interlanguage pragmatics, on isolated speech acts elicited through discourse completion tasks rather than extended, consequential peer interaction. Analyzing reviewer–author translanguage natural dialogue produced by six Chinese English-major learners, first initiating through text-based online review, then interacting via face-to-face mode, and later stimulated recalls, we ask two linked questions. First, how do learners as feedback givers and receivers manage face when producing and receiving inherently impolite (face-threatening acts such as criticism of a peer's writing, disagreement with a proposed diagnosis, direct requests for a solution; Brown & Levinson, 1987; Fortanet 2008) and what pragmalinguistic resources (hedging, indirect challenge etc.; Hyland & Hyland 2001) do they draw on to do so? Second, what does the deployment of these resources reveal about these learners' pragmatic feedback literacy, and how is that feedback literacy differentially elicited or constrained by contextual factors such as interpersonal closeness or writing proficiency level perceptions?

Inter-coder reliability based manual coding of dialogic turns for face-threatening and face-mitigating moves (clarification and solution requests, justified versus unmotivated challenge, hedged versus bald disagreement, and agreement and affiliative uptake) shows that face-to-face interaction did not necessarily elicit substantially more direct, on-record face-threatening acts to address deeper writing issues. Text-based review, by contrast, showed learners defaulting to a more direct, critical and constructive-oriented style, more face-threatening speech acts such as direct criticism. Sequential case analysis further shows learners jointly renegotiating contested evaluative terms through explicit, mitigated disagreement — evidence of active, other-oriented pragmatic competence rather than merely automatic feedback iteration or passive uptake in face-to-face episode and later revision phase. The findings are somewhat different from Dao et al. (2021) that claims the priority of face-to-face over online interaction. For im/politeness research, they extend face-work analysis to a peer-educational, L2 context in which criticism is institutionally sanctioned yet interpersonally consequential, showing how co-presence play in uncovering students' L2 writing development and pragmatic competence.

EXPLORING TEACHERS' AND STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE ROLE OF CAPTIONS AND SUBTITLES IN LANGUAGE LEARNING AND CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE

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Ever since the first contact between different groups of humans around the world, people have been engaging in activities to learn different languages. Various language-learning approaches have been developed, from the Grammar-Translation Method (Kelly, 1969) and the Audiolingual Method (Fries, 1945) to the Communicative Approach (Hymes, 1972) and the Computer-Assisted Approach (Doughty & Long, 2003). As a form of scaffolding for audiovisual translation, captions and subtitles are considered beneficial to developing listening skills (Hosogoshi, 2016; Ismail, 2017; Almusharraf et al., 2024) and vocabulary acquisition (Ismail, 2017; Peters et al., 2016; Pujadas & Muñoz, 2020) in language learning. However, few studies have explored their effects on culture-related aspects of languages. Since intercultural understanding is regarded as one essential general capabilities for Australian students (Australian Curriculum, 2025), this study aims to explore the role of captions and subtitles in learning cultural knowledge, specifically to understand how teachers and students perceive the involvement of captions and subtitles in developing cultural knowledge. From case studies with three high-school teachers and their students, the process of Transformative Action Research (García & Kleyn, 2016) will be adopted for evoking the participants' perspectives via designing video materials with the teachers and showing them to the students. Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (Machin & Mayr, 2012) will be used to deconstruct the data regarding the perceptions and various elements in the videos, especially captions and subtitles. This study will contribute to the current understanding regarding the use of captions and subtitles in language learning related to cultural knowledge.

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"IT'S 100% FATAL AT THAT POINT": CONSTRUCTING (UN)CERTAINTY IN PRE-TRAVEL HEALTH CONSULTATIONS

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Pre-travel consultations deal with uncertain future risks, and decisions about vaccination and precautions depend on how risks are communicated. Yet guidance for practitioners focuses on what to discuss rather than how to communicate uncertainty (Chen & Bourque, 2025), and research on how clinicians manage uncertainty has relied on interviews, capturing what clinicians say rather than what they do (Han et al., 2021). How (un)certainty is constructed in naturally occurring consultations remains underexplored.

This study draws on a 40-minute video-recorded consultation and an interview with the same clinician. Using qualitative discourse analysis, I examine how (un)certainty about each disease is expressed through modality, hedges, numerical expressions, and references to sources of knowledge, and how the traveller responds (Strauss & Feiz, 2014). Findings are considered in relation to a taxonomy that classifies uncertainty by source, issue, and locus (Han et al., 2011).

Preliminary analysis suggests most diseases are presented as probabilities for the traveller to weigh. Rabies departs from this pattern. Whether an animal is infected is framed as ambiguous, access to treatment as practical uncertainty, and the fatal outcome is asserted without hedging. Rather than leaving these uncertainties for the traveller to weigh, the clinician appears to combine them with certainty to guide the traveller towards preventive action.

These patterns suggest varieties of uncertainty are combined with certainty in talk, a dimension the taxonomy does not address. By comparing naturally occurring and interview data, the study aims to refine the taxonomy for preventive care and offer practical implications for clinicians.

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COULDA, WOULDA, SHOULDA: MODALITY, MEANING, AND MISINTERPRETATION IN MULTILINGUAL CLASSROOMS

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Language plays a central role in how migrants establish relationships, participate in communities, and construct new identities. This presentation explores how newly arrived migrants in Australia interpret and negotiate English modality as they develop communicative practices for everyday social interaction. Focusing on learners enrolled in the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP), this study examines how modal expressions function not only as grammatical forms but also as interactional resources for expressing possibility, obligation, politeness, uncertainty, and social positioning.

For migrants who intend to build long-term lives in Australia, pragmatic competence is essential for meaningful participation beyond the classroom. However, modal expressions frequently create challenges because their meanings extend beyond their grammatical forms. Expressions such as:

- I might come to the party
- We could look at that later
- You might want to revise this section
- We should have drinks sometime

may communicate politeness, indirectness, or relationship management rather than literal intention or commitment. When interpreted through the pragmatic expectations of a speaker's first language, these expressions may result in misunderstandings about interpersonal meaning and social expectations.

Drawing on classroom-based data from multilingual AMEP learners, this study investigates how participants interpret English modal expressions and how these interpretations reflect differences between linguistic and cultural systems.

The study further examines changes in learners' pragmatic awareness following explicit engagement with authentic interactional examples. Initial observations indicated that learners often interpreted modal expressions literally, sometimes understanding indirect suggestions as firm commitments. Through discussion of discourse context, politeness strategies, and cultural expectations, learners developed greater awareness of how English speakers use modality to negotiate relationships and social meanings.

Examining the intersection of migration, language learning, and interaction, this study contributes to research on L2 pragmatics, multilingual communities, and intercultural communication. It argues that supporting migrants' language development requires attention not only to grammatical knowledge but also to the social meanings that enable individuals to participate confidently and effectively in their new communities.

"I DON'T HAVE A MASSIVE POINT HERE BUT…": FORMULATING AUDIENCE CONTRIBUTIONS IN Q&A SESSIONS AT ENGLISH-MEDIUM ACADEMIC CONFERENCES

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Question-and-answer (Q&A) sessions are a recognised component of the conference genre, yet they remain less researched than the presentations they follow (Wulff et al., 2009). Existing research has described their generic organisation (Xu, 2022), use of indirect questions (Webber, 2002), and multimodal evaluation (Querol-Julián, 2011). What these studies leave open is the linguistic formulation of audience contributions. This work-in-progress asks *how audience members formulate their contributions* and *how such formulations may contribute to rapport management with presenters*.

The dataset comprises 22 audio-recorded Q&A sessions from six English-medium academic conferences in China in 2025, covering linguistics and English language teaching. Audience contributions were transcribed and coded in NVivo 14. Analysis proceeds in two stages. Each contribution was first segmented into a head act, its internal modification, and pre-head and post-head supportive moves, using a CCSARP-informed framework (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989) adapted to accommodate head acts of any illocutionary type. Each head act was coded for directness. Interpretations of head acts were checked against presenters' responses (Raymond & Robinson, 2024). Patterns are interpreted using Spencer-Oatey's (2008) rapport management framework.

Preliminary findings indicate that the head act is the only obligatory component. Head acts are realised through direct and conventionally indirect strategies, whereas non-conventionally indirect realisations were not identified. Supportive moves occur in both positions: appreciation, preparators, grounders, disarmers and self-identification pre-head, appealers and self-elaboration post-head. These patterns suggest that audience members draw on supportive and mitigating resources to manage rapport, with implications for EAP support for novice conference participants.

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