

UNIT 2 LANGUAGE ISSUES AND ORIGINAL & CRITICAL WRITING

Part (a)

Language Issues essay: dominance

Response 1

To start off the spoken interaction between the student and the teacher, the teacher uses a minor sentence 'OK' before the teacher starts explaining what is needed to do be done. The next utterance the teacher starts with a fronted conjunction which breaks the rules regarding standard English. The next three utterances after this are imperative showing what the teacher wants them to do and is telling them what she wants off them. The teacher uses verbs such as 'describe' and 'look' to help her explain what they have to do. The last utterance by the teacher contains a second person pronoun 'you', this direct address makes it specific. Also in this utterance the teacher puts emphatic stress on the verb 'go'. They do this because the teacher wants the children to get on with the task.

The first utterance by the student contains a pause and a filler 'um' the filler shows nerves and that the student doesn't really know what to say and is struggling. The relationship between the two at the minute is that the student feels under pressure by the teacher and that they are not ready for what the teacher is asking or the student does just not understand. The student does not finish their utterance which proves that they are stuck.

The relationship between the two exists of the teacher getting annoyed, frustrated, stressed, and aggravated from the student not getting what they are asked. I say this from the amount of emphatic stress that the teacher is using. When the student uses the repetition of two conjunctions after each other 'and', you know that the child does not know what to say and is stuttering and this is when the teacher interrupts and overlaps their utterance. The frustration of the teacher shows when they put emphatic stress on the verb 'look' and the time adverbial 'yesterday'. This stress shows that the patients of the teacher are running out as they have explained more than once what they want. The emphatic stress of 'yesterday' shows why the teacher is getting frustrated, because they only just went over this so the student should know, however they don't. At this moment the atmosphere between the two seems to be disappointment and tension. The stress being put on the adjective 'long' shows actually the amount of time that they have spent on the topic and that the student should know the answers however they don't.

In this conversation it is very clear that the teacher is dominating and controlling the speech. We also know this by the length of the utterances between the two. The utterances by the student are short juxtaposed to the teachers utterances which are a lot longer showing that they are in charge and they know what they are talking about, unlike the student. One of the students utterances contain a rhetorical question 'modifiers?' This shows that the student is not entirely sure and is doubting himself that he is wrong.

One way speakers can control is by using modal verbs like 'must' and 'will' because this connotes certainty and obligation. In legal language it would mean that someone in court had to give their answers. For example, 'you will answer that question'. It's the same for places where there are age limits like the cinema. To see an 18 rated film the ticket office could say 'you must be 18'. This would be the way of controlling who came in to the film. These declaratives utterances are statements of fact and can't be refused because the person asking the question is in a position of authority over the other speaker this is instrumental power.

In a conversation it's the person who initiates the talking that has power because they choose what to talk about, but sometimes having longer turns gives you power. In a social context one friend could take the floor by using an interrogative 'Did you go out yesterday?' but this is giving the floor to the next speaker who can say what happened. This shows that

the speaker knows about the face needs of the other person, but if they keep interrupting the story they will show their dominance. This would be flouting Grice's Maxim of quantity and breaking Lakoff's politeness principle because you would be imposing and doing a face threatening act. If you interrupt a lot you are suggesting that you are more important than the other speakers. This is an informal context where the teacher is a formal context because friends should be equal but with a teacher who is the expert you would expect them to dominate.

Influential power is used to persuade people. Politicians try to make us vote by using positive language and rhetorical questions. Sometimes they use Giles Accommodation Theory to speak more like the voters. They say 'gonna' instead of the verb going to which is convergence. The best example is Ed Miliband with Russell Brand because he drops the h on the noun 'health' and there is a glottal stop like /g ʔ/. This is because he wants to make young people vote for Labour so he tries to sound more like them and less in authority.