

UNIT 1

THE NATURE OF LANGUAGE

2018北外开放周集体备课说课

第二组

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Text A: The Complexity of Language

Overall Lesson Plan

- Session 1: Prep work and lead-in
- Session 2-5: In-depth textual analysis
 - Session 2: The **complexity** and creativity of (verbal) language
(Paragraph 1-6)
 - Session 3: The **creativity** of language in literature and word creation
 - Session 4: Is body language “language”?
(Paragraph 7-10)
 - Session 5: Is the language of Art “language”? (Paragraph 14-15)
and other forms of language (dialect; social language; pidgin;
lingua franca; cyber language;...)
- Session 6: Explore beyond the text and intercultural reflection (40 topics in *A Little Book of Language*; body language and intercultural communication;...)

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Session 4: Is body language ‘language’?

Teaching objectives:

- 1. Understand the text
 - Clarify the structure
 - Understand the main difference between “body language” and “language”
 - Better understand the nature and features of language
- 2. Training of critical thinking
 - Is it true that body language lacks scale, creativity, and structure?
 - Why body language IS (NOT) “language”?
- 3. Language enhancement
 - new words, phrases and expressions
 - figure of speech (metaphor/rhetoric question)
 - formal/informal usages (be care with/ beware)

- Lesson review (3-5 mins)
 - Outline and arguments (8-10 mins)
 - Class activity and in-depth discussion (20-25mins)
 - Sentence analysis (8-10mins)
 - Wrapping up and assignment for next session (2-3 mins)
- ≈ **50** mins

Lesson review (3-5 mins)

➤ The complexity and creativity of (verbal) language through sharing and commenting on student's homework (play with words and write a sentence as creative as possible)

Textbook example: *Twelve police men wearing yellow socks rode donkeys along the beach.*

- E.g.
- A dolphin waltzes through the canteen in the mountain.
- The blue pigs are swimming in the flowers.
- (or, share other creative words/languages in *Alice in Wonderland*; share your own creation of words)

Is body language “language” ?



Outline and main arguments of paragraph 7-10 (8-10mins)

- Group discussion or pair work (3 mins)
- Speak out and guided discussion (5-7 mins)
- **Paragraph 7** Other ways of communications and language;
- **Paragraph 8** Language used in other senses;
- **Paragraph 9** Difference between “body language” and “language”, in terms of scale, creativity, and structure;
- **Paragraph 10** “Body language” lacks grammar.
- **Body language is not “ (verbal) language” ?**

Class activity and in-depth discussion (20-25mins)

- **Discussion questions:**
- Is it true that body language lacks scale, creativity, and structure?
- *“How many words are there in a language? Over a million...How many facial expressions are there? Only a few dozen. Maybe a few hundred... but a tiny number, compared with language.”*
- *“We can easily invent new words in a language... Can we easily invent new facial expressions? ... It’s not possible.”*
- *We can’t combine facial expressions and other body languages to have a (new) meaning.*

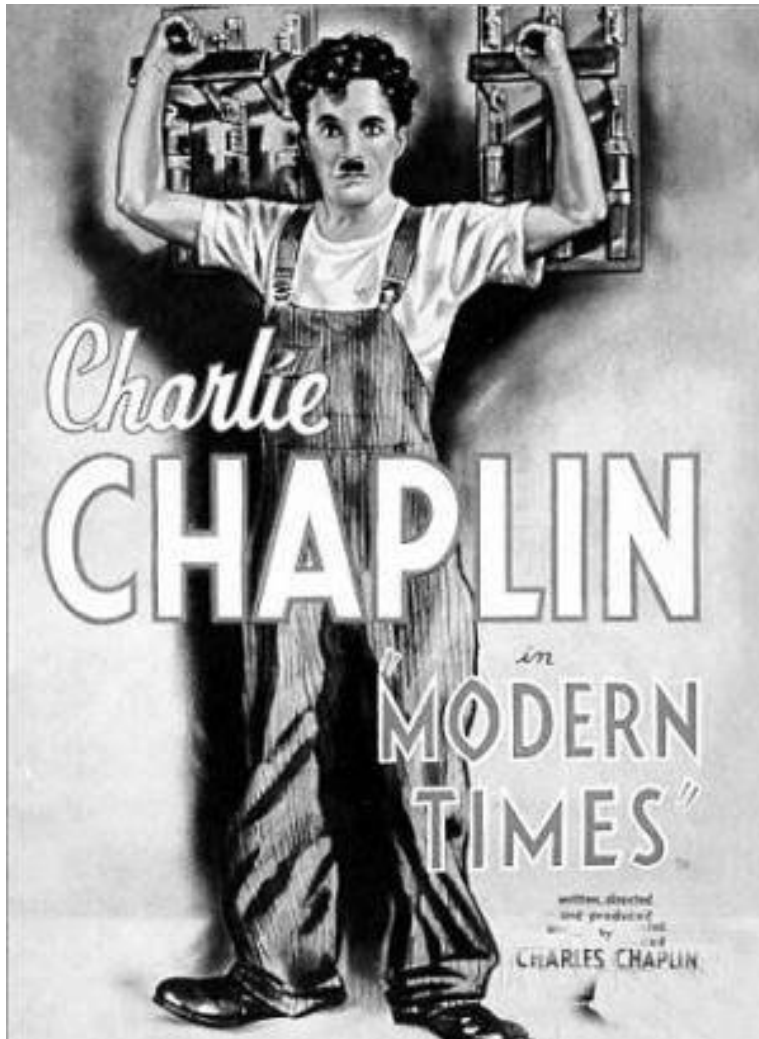
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- “We can easily invent new words in a language... *Can we easily invent new facial expressions? ... It's not possible.*”



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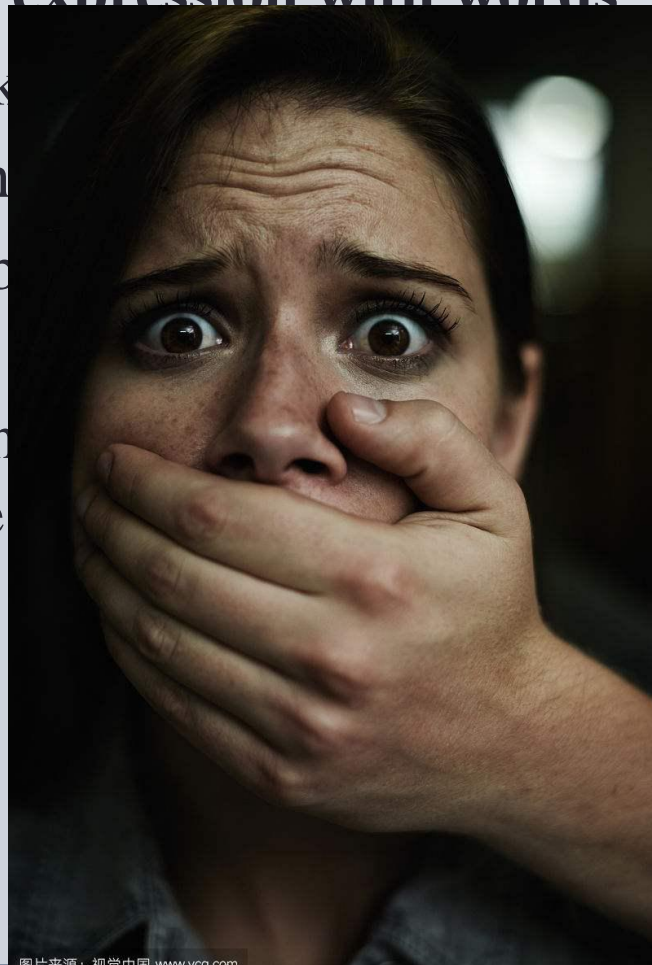
Further thought:

Are there any other differences between “body language” and “(verbal) language?”

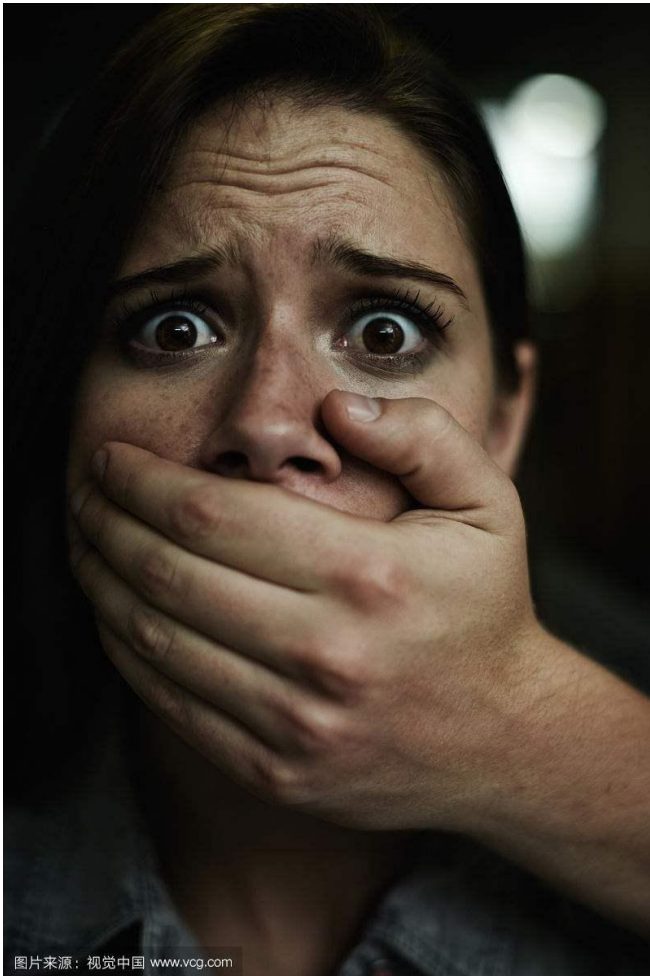
- **Class activity: describe facial expression with words**
- Rows of odd numbers turn back to face rows of even numbers
- Show the following image to the class
- Rows can see the image describe the facial expression with words.
- Rows cannot see the image turn around and compare the description and the facial expression.

Further thought: Are there any other differences between “body language” and “(verbal) language?”

- **Class activity: describe facial expression with words**
 - Rows of odd numbers turn back to the image and describe the facial expressions with words.
 - Show the following image to the class.
 - Rows can see the image describe the facial expression with words.
 - Rows cannot see the image turn back to the image and describe the facial expression with words.



“(Non-verbal) body language” speaks louder and speaks more than “verbal language”



Diana is very horrified at seeing what's in front of her, but she is not able to scream or say anything, her mouth being covered by a hand.

“(Non-verbal) body language” speaks louder and speaks more than “verbal language”



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Further questions for thought

- Are there any other possible advantages of “body language” over “language”?
- TED talk: “Your body language shapes what you are”, Amy Cuddy

Sentence analysis (8-10mins)

- Ask the students to pick first;
- If not effective, then work on “Paraphrasing” (Pg. 15)
- (1) “This ability to take familiar bits of language and to combine them to make new words and sentences is what **sets** language **apart from** other ways that human beings use to communicate.” (para.7)
- (2) “We have to **beware** the word ‘language’. It’s often used in a vivid way to mean any kind of connection between people.” (para. 8)
- (3) “The band was brilliant. Every instrument **was playing the same language.**” (para. 8)
-

Wrapping up and assignment for next session (2-3 mins)

- **Wrapping up:** Is body language language?
- **Assignment:**
 - List your points in response to the question, “Is the language of painting/music/sculpture ‘language’? ”; and prepare for class discussion for next session.
 - Research online to find out other specific uses of “languages” (e.g. dialect; social language; pidgin; lingua franca; cyber language;...)
 - Is emoji “language”?

《地书》 by 徐冰, 2012

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