

Department of English Seminar



Mimicking and mocking identities: the roles of language and body language in Taylor Mali's 'Speak with conviction'

Dr Sue Hood

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Date: 4 November 2010, Thursday

Time: 4:30 - 5:30 pm

Venue: AG710, 7/F, Core A, PolyU campus

Abstract

The paper presents a multimodal analysis of champion slam poet, Taylor Mali's, performance spoof on teenspeak, 'Speak with conviction' (available on youtube). The presentation analyses the multimodal construction of two identities in the performance ('didact' and 'dork'), one projecting the other. Analyses attend to language as verbiage and intonation, to body language as proto-, linguistic and epilinguistic (Cleirigh in preparation; cf. Martin forthcoming, Hood forthcoming), and to the coupling of instantiations of meaning across different modalities. Each identity is constructed in syndromes of couplings in verbiage, intonation and dimensions of body language. Yet there are also disjunctions in these coupled instantiations, and it is at these points in the discourse that a commentary on the projected identity is construed, one that I argue functions to shift the representation from mimicry to mockery.

About the speaker

Dr Sue Hood is a Senior Lecturer in Applied Linguistics and TESOL at the University of Technology, Sydney. Her research interests are in academic discourses, disciplinarity and knowledge (Hood, 2007, 2010, in press for 2010), and in the social semiotics of body language, especially in the context of face-to-face teaching at tertiary level (in press for 2011). She is currently the Chief Investigator in a research project funded by the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at UTS to explore the multimodal construction of knowledge in lectures in sciences, social sciences and humanities in an Australian university, and is about to commence a sister study in a Chinese university. Sue is also a member of the Organising Committee for the 5th International Conference in Multimodality, December 1-3, 2010 at UTS.

References

Cleirigh, C. (in preparation). *The Life of Meaning*. Draft manuscript.

Hood, S. (2007). Arguing in and across disciplinary boundaries: legitimising strategies in applied linguistics and cultural studies. In A. McCabe, M. O'Donnell & R. Whittaker (eds) *Advances in Language & Education*. London: Continuum.

Hood, S. (2010). *Appraising research: Evaluation in Academic Writing*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

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Hood, S. (in press for 2011). Body language in face-to-face teaching: A focus on textual and interpersonal meaning. In S. Dreyfus, S. Hood & M. Stenglin (eds) *Semiotic Margins: Meaning in Multimodalities*. London: Continuum.

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