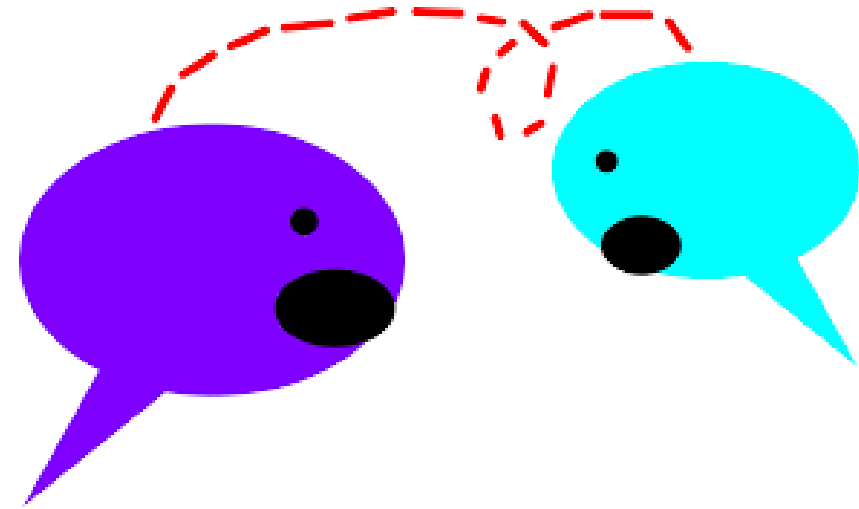




ES2660 COMMUNICATING IN THE INFORMATION AGE

SMART TALKING STUDENTS ENABLING IDEAS TO TAKE FLIGHT

**T16: “THE DEFECTIVE DETECTIVE” –
JUDGING VS JUMPING TO
CONCLUSIONS**



What is one key point we discussed in the last tutorial session?

WHY ASKING DUMB QUESTIONS SHOWS TRUE CONFIDENCE



- Adopt a “beginner’s mind”
- Be brave to ask fundamental questions and ‘why?’ questions even if they may seem dumb.

TO DO, TODAY

When reading texts....

- Avoid jumping to conclusions
- Judge conclusions
- Draw warranted conclusions

JUDGING VS JUMPING

- With all the background checks on credibility of sources, breadth and depth of knowledge, you are now ready to make a conclusion.
- Yet how can you avoid making unsound or unwarranted conclusions?
- Can you recognise warranted conclusions vs. jumping to conclusions?
- Clues:
 - ❖ Language clues – choice, denoted, intention
 - ❖ Organisational clues
 - ❖ Layout

WORLD LEADING EXPERT IN DETECTION

How does a detective identify and use clues?

Watch him at work:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4PKr_BVo4hg

The Blind Banker

(transcript in LumiNUS Extras folder)



LOOKING FOR CLUES IN READING



- All texts have clues. Knowing where they are is the key to unlocking the mystery of the message.
- Your clues lie in the text (written, visual, aural).
- Written – linguistic form, e.g. reasoning pattern, in word choice, (whether chosen deliberately or accidentally, always assumed to be deliberately).

CHOICE OF WORDS – DELIBERATE RHETORIC

- **Emotional language** – words used to touch the emotions
 - Scare tactics – *“A vote for Obama care means less money in your pocket.”*
 - Pity – *“If you were to give only, \$1 a day, this poor child in a faraway land would go to bed with a full stomach. Please, don’t let him go to bed hungry.”*
- **Hyperbole** – exaggeration, usually for humorous effect, occasionally sarcastic
 - *“We have been giving up personal data since the beginning of time!”*
- **Rhetorical question** - *“So what do you need to know about assistive technology today?”*
- **Flattery** – *“Because you deserve the good things in life”.*

DENOTATIVE AND CONNOTATIVE MEANINGS

Denoted word: word with clear 'dictionary' definition

Connoted word: one with several meanings or nuances

- Watch this video: which words give a **positive** and which words give a **negative** meaning?
- Such words must be used with care and deliberation and not accidentally or thoughtlessly.



CONNOTATIVE MEANING: NUANCE OF WORDS

- **Nuance** - a subtle difference in or shade of meaning, expression, or sound.
- **Synonyms:** fine distinction, subtle distinction/difference

acquaintance

bath salts

624

ally

feather green

625

friend

etched glass

626

confidant

spring break

627

LANGUAGE CLUES – WEASEL WORDS

- **Weasel words** are words that change the way an uncritical or unwary audience looks at something, or introduces an author's bias.
- “I am looking for new opportunities as XX Bank recently underwent a restructuring exercise”.



LANGUAGE CLUES



"Pre-owned" <small>(Used)</small>	"Unsubscribe" <small>(Drop)</small>
"New to You!" <small>(Unfriended)</small>	"Unfriend" <small>(Drop)</small>
"Self-service" <small>(No Service)</small>	"Reliability Enhancement" <small>(Fix a Bug)</small>
"Price Adjustment" <small>(Price Hike)</small>	"Extended Viewing Fee" <small>(Late Charge)</small>
"Value Engineered" <small>(Made Cheaper)</small>	"Maturing Consumers" <small>(Those Over 50)</small>
"Less Price Sensitive" <small>(Expensive)</small>	"Full-figured" <small>(Fat)</small>
"Rightsize" <small>(Cutback)</small>	"Estimate Reevaluation" <small>(Lower Your Price)</small>
"Reduction In Force" RIF <small>(Cutback)</small>	"Wardrobe Malfunction" <small>(Unbuttoned, Unzipped or Otherwise Exposed)</small>
"Make It Work Harder" <small>(Put a Stickler On It)</small>	"Celebration of Knowledge" <small>(Final Exam)</small>
"Constructive Dismissal" <small>(Laid Off)</small>	"Gender Reassignment" <small>(Sex Change Surgery)</small>
"Voluntary Severance" <small>(Laid Off)</small>	"Negative Patient Care Outcome" <small>(He Died)</small>
"Career Reassignment" <small>(Laid Off)</small>	"Mental Activity at the Margins" <small>(He's Crazy)</small>
"Vendor Rationalization" <small>(Cutback or Vendor)</small>	
"Too Sophisticated" <small>(Dumb It Down)</small>	"Misspeak" <small>(Wily Distort the Truth)</small>

- **Doublespeak** - words to make truths more acceptable, or to put a positive spin on something that is actually unpleasant, and rarely to put a negative spin .
- Often **euphemisms**. Sometimes, justified bluntness, *terrorist vs jihadist*; others not, *collateral damage, friendly fire*.
- CT reveals/unmasks fallacies.

LANGUAGE CLUES – DOUBLESPEAK



“Pre-owned”

(Used)

“Unsubscribe”

(Drop)

“New to You!”

(Used)

“Unfriend”

(Drop)

“Self-service”

(No Service)

“Reliability Enhancement”

(Fix a Bug)

“Price Adjustment”

(Price Hike)

“Extended Viewing Fee”

(Late Charge)

“Value Engineered”

(Made Cheaper)

“Maturing Consumers”

(Those Over 50)

“Less Price Sensitive”

(Expensive)

“Full-figured”

(Fat)

“Rightsize”

(Cutback)

“Estimate Reevaluation”

(Lower Your Price)

“Reduction In Force” RIF

(Cutback)

“Make It Work Harder”

(Put a Sticker On It)

“Constructive Dismissal”

(Laid Off)

“Voluntary Severance”

(Laid Off)

“Career Reassignment”

(Laid Off)

“Vendor Rationalization”

(Cutback of Vendors)

“Wardrobe Malfunction”

(Unbuttoned, Unzipped or Otherwise Exposed)

“Celebration of Knowledge”

(Final Exam)

“Gender Reassignment”

(Sex Change Surgery)

“Negative Patient Care Outcome”

(He Died)

“Mental Activity at the Margins”

(He's Crazy)

WORD CHOICE/FORM ERRORS

“Money, money, money,
It’s so funny in a rich
man’s world” – ABBA

“Thank you for your
pointed comments in
my report.”

“I have a couple of
suggestive comments
for the essay prompt.”

“Toothsome Trading
Solutions is not a
reputable company; no
one has heard of it”.

“She lost her sleeper
in the snow.”

“He is a cooker.”

“There work is
satisfactory.”

“Our rubric should be
used chronologically”.

WE SEEK HONEST AND BOLD IDEAS

Essay Competition

Islamophobia - Do Two Wrongs Make a Right?

“Islamophobia” and “Islamic radicalism” are two sides of the same coin. While Islamophobia refers to fear of, hatred and discrimination towards Islam and Muslims, Islamic radicalism is associated with acts of violence and terrorism committed in the name of religion. It is not easy to determine whether one leads to the other, but there is clearly a connection between the two.


Is either justified? Is the problem merely about labelling? Do these labels reflect a hard truth? Do these questions warrant debate?

This essay competition is open to all students of Singapore universities and polytechnics, as well as NUS alumni. We invite you to present your thoughts and arguments on the topic. We seek honest and bold ideas that are actionable.

IDEAS THAT ARE ACTIONABLE

[HTTPS://WWW.MERRIAM-WEBSTER.COM/Dictionary/ACTIONABLE](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/actionable)

actionable adjective

ac·tion·able | \ 'ak-sh(ə-)nə-bəl  \

Definition of *actionable*

- 1 : subject to or affording ground for an action or suit at law
- 2 : capable of being acted on
// actionable information

VALUE JUDGEMENTS AS CLUES TO OPINIONS



■ Tone

- Subjective vs objective
- Subjective word choice
 - “Our rubrics will help *you* to become a better thinker.”
 - “CT is not to be *relegated* to the *realms of academics alone...*”

■ Value judgments versus factual statements

- “Facial recognition is a dangerous technology that will invade our privacy” vs.
- “Facial recognition technology sometimes goes wrong such as the case where a scanner identified a chocolate chip muffin as a Chihuahua.”
- “A human doctor is better than a robot doctor, a human doctor cares about you.”

LANGUAGE CLUES – SIGNAL WORDS (COHESIVE DEVICES)

- These words **show the links between the reasons in the line of reasoning**. What logical relationships are signalled with these links?

firstly	on the other hand	secondarily	but	on the contrary	similarly	moreover	notwithstanding
thus	alternatively	although	so	points to	perhaps	proves	shows
therefore	significantly	surely	hence	finally	likely link	consequently	most importantly

- Which are important clues that show how the author is leading towards to a conclusion?

LANGUAGE CLUES - MINI RECAP FOR USE OF WORDS



- **Choice of words**, nuance, doublespeak, weasel words – these are words used deliberately to make a point stronger or weaker, to change a view, to affect a decision.
- There is an element of subjectivity, but you can mitigate this by being as **objective** as possible.
- **Signal words** show line of reasoning and are important to help assess the author's conclusion.

ORGANIZATIONAL CLUES THAT HELP STRUCTURE MEANING

- **Introduction:** background, thesis, outline
- **Body paragraphs:** topic sentence, supporting details, counter argument and refutation
- **Conclusion:** summary, logical final word

ORGANISATIONAL CLUES – WHERE IS THE CONCLUSION?



- The **conclusion** of an argument is:
 - (a) at the end of the text.
 - (b) at the beginning of the text.
 - (c) at the beginning and at the end of the text.
 - (d) at the beginning, at various points in the text and at the end of the text.

ORGANISATIONAL CLUES: EXAMPLE FROM COMPUTATIONAL SCIENCE

Part III: A Fully Abstract and Universal Game Model

7. A FULLY ABSTRACT DIALOGUE GAME MODEL OF PCF

In this section we show how PCF may be interpreted in the category \mathbb{CA} of computational arenas and innocent strategies. This interpretation is computationally adequate and the derived interpretation in the observational quotient $\widehat{\mathbb{CA}}$ is order (or inequationally) fully abstract for PCF. Full abstraction is obtained as a consequence of a strong definability result: not only are all compact innocent strategies (of PCF-types) definable in \mathbf{P} , but the valuation map actually gives an order-isomorphism between syntax (a class of finite canonical forms of a PCF-variant called \mathbf{P} ordered by the standard Ω -matching) and semantics (compact innocent strategies ordered by set inclusion). The language \mathbf{P} is just PCF extended by a family of definition-by-cases constructs. We conclude this section by examining in some detail two instructive examples: the innocent strategies defined by a type-2 and a type-3 functional, respectively.

7.1. Semantics of PCF in \mathbb{CA}

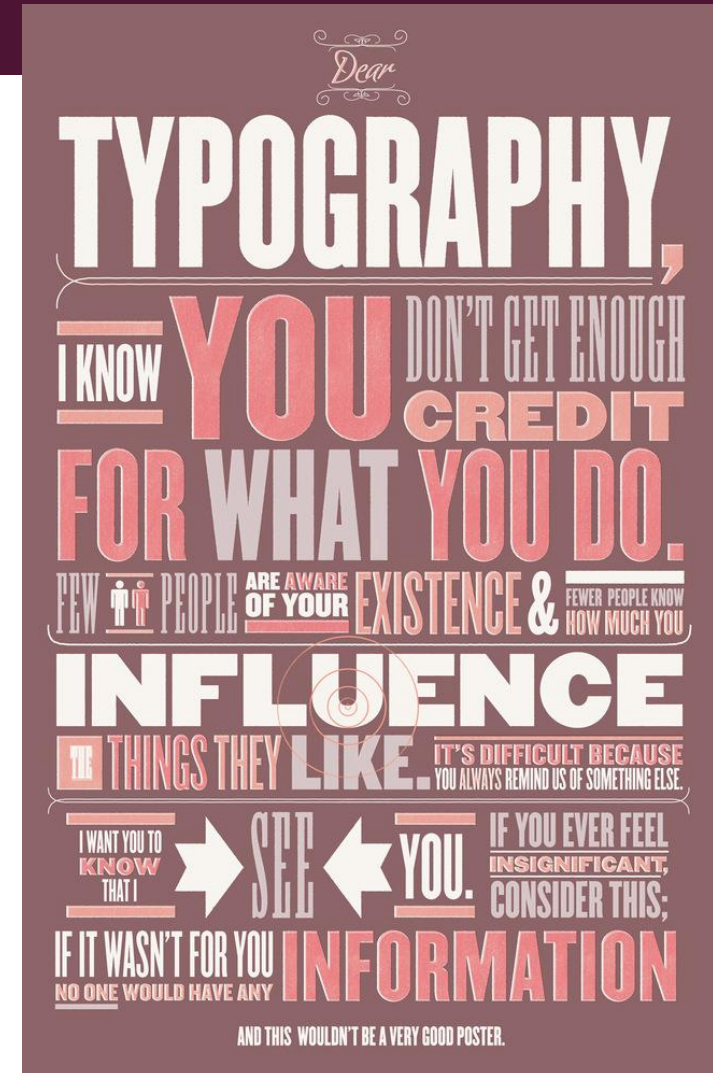
PCF-types. For any PCF-type A we define the interpretation $\llbracket \text{mng} \rrbracket A$ as a computational arena recursively as follows,

$$\begin{aligned}\llbracket o \rrbracket &\stackrel{\text{def}}{=} \mathbb{B}, \\ \llbracket i \rrbracket &\stackrel{\text{def}}{=} \mathbb{N}, \\ \llbracket A_1 \Rightarrow A_2 \rrbracket &\stackrel{\text{def}}{=} \llbracket A_1 \rrbracket \Rightarrow \llbracket A_2 \rrbracket,\end{aligned}$$

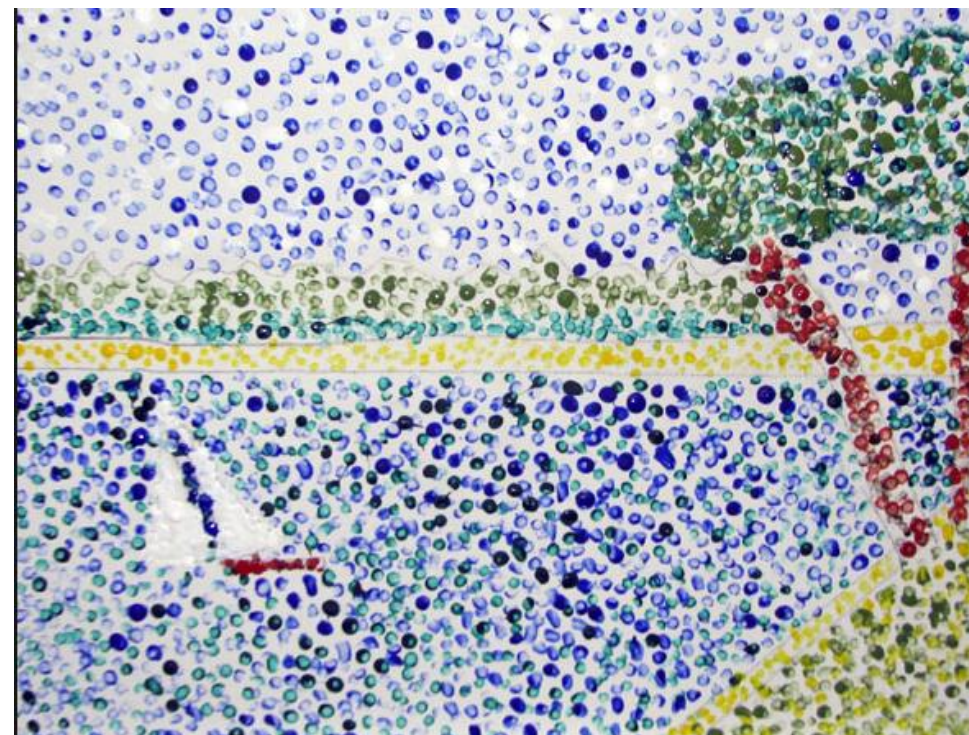
LAYOUT CLUES



- Titles
- Headings and subheadings
- Font sizes
- Text boxes/call outs
- Italics, bold
- Use of colour
- Icons



WHAT'S THE POINT OF LOOKING FOR ALL THESE CLUES?



JUDGING CONCLUSIONS – LOOKING FOR TENTATIVE CONCLUSIONS

- These are usually found when the evidence is good but not overwhelming.
- A kind of academic **hedging** of bets.

Tentative conclusions

- In the early stages of implementation the improvement in student attitudes (the ICC group) seen at DC (C) is not seen in calculus-based courses at other small LA colleges adopting WP.
- Some improvement is seen in algebra-based courses.
- We will continue to collect data -- both MPEX and implementation observations -- from cooperating schools as the implementation of WP is refined and stabilized.

Often seen in academic writing

- It is **possible** that...
- The evidence **suggests** that...
- The data **appear** to support...

Seldom seen:

- The data **prove** that ...

HEDGING AS A CLUE TO CIRCUMSPECTION

- Hedging shows circumspection, caution and **humility**.
 - “Recent *incidents* regarding difficulty in securing *mid range rental accommodation* in Singapore for Indian and Chinese expatriates *suggest* there *may* be *some localised* discrimination on the part of *a section of* Singaporean landlords.”
 - “if the logical gaps are irreconcilable, it **proves** their argument is weak” vs “if the logical gaps are irreconcilable, it *may indicate* their argument is weak”.

JUDGING CONCLUSIONS – OMISSION AND MISREPRESENTATION

Some conclusions in arguments cannot be accepted because they may contain:

- Omissions

- Major opposing reasons or ideas or objections not taken into account and refuted or conceded
- Key evidence or data that may have contradicted argument left out

OR

- Misrepresentation

- Describing someone or a group of people with an unfair focus on a single aspect of their character or abilities.

Activity: **Consider the following flawed conclusions in Tutorial 16 and give reasons to why they are flawed.**



JUDGING CONCLUSIONS – THE DEFECTIVE DETECTIVE



Now watch this video.

- How did the defective detective make the wrong conclusions?
- How is this applicable to us?



Weigh the facts as logically as possible. Don't be a defective detective.

DRAW WARRANTED CONCLUSIONS: ARE KIM HUAT'S CONCLUSIONS ALL WARRANTED?



Kim Huat watches Criminal Minds Beyond Borders (part 1 of 2)



In this video clip, Kim Huat has drawn a number of conclusions which are not wrong in themselves, but which don't pass muster in an academic context because of how they were expressed. So, what linguistic transformation must occur before his conclusions are taken more seriously?

DRAW WARRANTED CONCLUSIONS: ARE KIM HUAT'S CONCLUSIONS ALL WARRANTED?

In this video clip, Kim Huat has drawn a number of conclusions which are not wrong in themselves, but which don't pass muster in an academic context because of how they were expressed. So, what linguistic transformation must occur before his conclusions are taken more seriously?



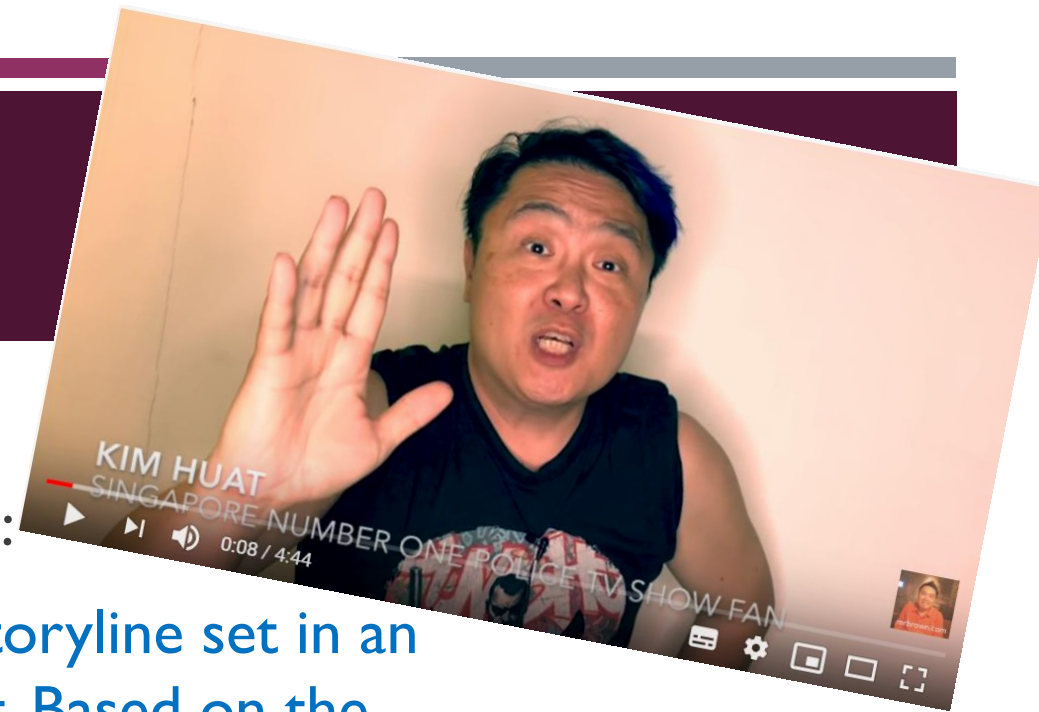
- “It’s not beyond borders, it’s beyond stupid!”
- “The only proverb I know is ‘where there is a queue, there is good food’.”
- “The Cathy walked from Changi to Bedok?”
- “What do you mean by the dark side of paradise?”
- “Singapore got poor people and got crime but what you mean by a lot of crime and human trafficking? The writer got pull all this information from out of their backside one is it?”
- “The FBI can *suka suka* take out gun in Singapore and bang the door and shoot the bad guy one, got permit or not? Is this call the Foreign Bureau of Interference or not?”

OPTIONAL FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Write a short response (300 words) to this question:

- In this episode, the producers wanted a credible storyline set in an exotic foreign location with drama and excitement. Based on the points of contention in the episode, *Criminal Minds, Beyond Borders*, that Mr Brown has pointed out, how would you define the term “realistic”?

Drop this in the LumiNUS folder Criminal Minds Formative Assessment for feedback. Definitions are quite important in writing your essay in CA3, so it is not a bad idea to get some practice in. Clearly, a dictionary definition is not what is required here.



HOMEWORK WILD CARD PRACTICE #7

Can you speak for two minutes on the importance of words?



QUESTIONS?

- Questions, please?
- Thank you.