

## CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

Linguistics, particularly within English literature, examines the complex relationship between language and culture, focusing on how language functions as both a creative tool and a medium for communication. This research, titled "Communication Elements in the *Inception* Film: An Analysis using the S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G Framework by Dell Hymes," applies Dell Hymes' S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G model to Christopher Nolan's *Inception* (2010), a film known for its intricate narrative structure and complex character dynamics.

*Inception* offers a rich opportunity to explore communication elements such as setting, participants, and act sequences, as well as the recurring communication patterns that emerge throughout the story. These patterns reveal deeper psychological and cultural values, particularly in how communication evolves across different dream layers. The research aims to show how the film's dialogues not only propel the plot but also reflect deeper cultural and psychological dynamics.

The S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G framework, developed by Dell Hymes, is rooted in the ethnography of communication, which examines the role of language in its social context. Each component—Setting, Participants, Ends, Act Sequence, Key, Instrumentalities, Norms, and Genre—serves as a lens for analyzing communication and understanding how culture influences language use. By applying this framework to *Inception*, the research explores how the film's dialogue reflects both the personal motivations of its characters and broader cultural themes such as control, reality, and identity.

Set within multiple layers of dreams and reality, *Inception* provides a rich context for analyzing how language operates within varying psychological and cultural spaces. The dialogues in the film are not merely narrative devices; they



x dynamics of power, ethics, and personal identity. Through the S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G framework, this study aims to uncover the cultural values embedded in the film's communication patterns. Additionally, how individual communication elements combine to form recurring

patterns that shape the thematic development of the film, particularly in relation to hierarchy, control, and psychological conflict.

Previous studies, such as *“Ethnography of Communication in Jane Eyre (2011)”* by Pujianto and Laila (2019), have demonstrated how communication in films reflects historical and cultural settings, as seen in the depiction of 19th-century England. Similarly, Haris' study on *“Kahiyang-Bobby's Traditional Javanese Wedding”* emphasizes the importance of understanding social norms and cultural symbols in formal settings, akin to the professional and hierarchical structures in *Inception*. Reyaz and Tripathi's work, *“How Cultures Talk: A Study of Dell Hymes' Ethnography of Communication,”* further illustrates the broad applications of the S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G model in analyzing communication across various cultural contexts, offering a comparative foundation for this study.

This study undertakes an interdisciplinary approach by employing Dell Hymes' S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G framework as a methodological foundation for the analysis of cinematic discourse, specifically within the context of literary linguistics and film studies. The research focuses on the film *Inception* (2010), a complex narrative that offers a rich site for examining how language functions beyond its literal form—encompassing not only spoken dialogue but also the cultural, psychological, and ethical dimensions embedded within communicative exchanges. By applying the ethnography of communication model, this study systematically explores the interactional features that shape the narrative, including settings, participants, ends, act sequences, keys, instrumentalities, norms, and genres.

The integration of both linguistic and non-linguistic elements allows for a comprehensive analysis of how communication reflects and constructs meaning in modern cinematic storytelling. This analytical lens reveals how patterns of interaction in *Inception* contribute to the articulation of identity, power relations, moral ambiguity, and psychological depth. Through this approach, the research demonstrates how communication acts not only as a vehicle for dialogue but also as a narrative device



ences character development, thematic complexity, and the of the plot.

this study contributes to the broader discourse in literary ng the applicability and effectiveness of Hymes' sociolinguistic

s. Furthermore, it offers insights into how cinematic narratives

operate as multimodal texts where language, behavior, and context are interwoven to produce layered meanings. The findings aim to enhance scholarly understanding of how ethnographic approaches can be utilized to decode the intricate relationship between language, culture, and narrative in contemporary visual media.

## 1.2 Identification of The Problems

Based on the background of the research above, the researcher identifies some problems as follows:

### 1.2.1 Understanding the role of linguistic theory.

How Dell Hymes' S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G framework can be applied to analyze individual communication elements—such as dialogue, tone, and body language—and how these elements collectively shape the narrative structure and thematic depth of a film like *Inception*.

### 1.2.2 Examining the interplay between verbal and non-verbal communication.

How verbal strategies, like persuasion and negotiation, work with non-verbal cues, such as body language, facial expressions, and dream symbols, to express meaning and emotions that deepen the story's psychological and cultural resonance of the narrative.

### 1.2.3 Exploring the interaction between language and culture in film.

How recurring patterns of communication in *Inception* reflect broader cultural values—such as ambition, control, and ethical dilemmas—and individual identities, particularly through the contrast between professional dialogue and personal, emotionally charged exchanges.

## 1.3 Scope of The Problems

This research conducted an in-depth analysis of the communication dynamics within *Inception* (2010) using Dell Hymes' S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G framework. The study tried uncover how the film's professional and personal communication



language, non-verbal cues, and symbolic imagery—contribute to the film's complexity and thematic depth. By applying the eight components of the S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G framework (Setting, Participants, Ends, Act Sequence, Key, Instrumentalities, the research provides a comprehensive understanding of the

communication elements that drive the film's exploration of psychological and cultural themes.

A key focus is on the interplay between professional and personal communication. The study examines how professional norms, such as strategic planning and precision in dialogue, reflect the high-stakes mission context, while personal exchanges, particularly those involving Cobb and Mal, delve into themes of guilt, trauma, and reconciliation. The contrasting communication styles underscore the duality of the film's narrative, blending the pragmatic structure of the heist genre with the introspection of psychological drama.

The S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G framework allows for a detailed exploration of how communication evolves across the shifting contexts of *Inception*, including:

The setting, which transitions between real-world and dreamscapes, influencing the tone, style, and nature of communication.

The Participants, whose roles as leaders, followers, or antagonists shape their dialogue and interactions.

The Ends, which reflect the professional goal of completing the *inception* mission and the personal motivations driving individual characters, particularly Cobb's quest for redemption and closure.

The Act Sequence, which transitions from structured planning phases to fragmented and urgent exchanges within the dream layers, adapting to narrative demands and time distortions.

The Key, where tonal shifts alternate between professional urgency and emotional vulnerability, mirroring the characters' internal and external conflicts.

The study further explores how Instrumentalities of communication in *Inception*, including verbal exchanges, non-verbal cues, and dream-sharing technology, collectively shape the characters' interactions and reveal deeper layers of meaning. For instance, the integration of collapsing dreamscapes and symbolic objects such as spinning tops, Cobb adds psychological depth to the narrative by



subconscious instability and ethical dilemmas. Similarly, non-verbal cues such as body language and facial expressions, complement the dialogue and help to express hidden emotions, particularly in high-tension scenes.

By examining Norms, the research evaluates how professional expectations and personal ethics influence the team's interactions and decision-making processes. For example, the rules governing dream manipulation—such as not alerting Fischer to the team's presence—highlight the tension between strategic goals and moral boundaries. At the same time, Cobb's internal norms surrounding guilt and loss challenge his ability to balance professional responsibilities with personal redemption.

Finally, the research analyzes the Genre of communication in *Inception*, demonstrating how the film transitions between strategic planning reflective of the heist genre and emotionally driven exchanges aligned with psychological drama. The use of storytelling within dreams to manipulate Fischer's subconscious further blends genres, combining narrative construction with elements of persuasion and introspection.

This study aims to contribute to the field of literary linguistics and film analysis by demonstrating the effectiveness of Dell Hymes' S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G framework in deconstructing complex cinematic narratives. By integrating linguistic and non-linguistic elements, this research highlights how communication patterns in *Inception* reflect cultural, psychological, and ethical dimensions, offering a nuanced understanding of how language and interaction shape character development, thematic exploration, and narrative progression in modern cinema.

#### 1.4 Research Questions

Based on the scope of the problem, the writer formulated two main problems to be answered as follows:

- 1.4.1 How are the elements of communication in the *Inception* film described using Hyme's model?
- 1.4.2 How do the communication elements in the *inception* film affect the interactions between the characters?



#### ie Study

w the framework provides a nuanced understanding of the  
ween professional and personal communication in complex  
ings, such as *Inception*.

1.5.2 To reveal and analyse the communication elements in the dialogue of the film *Inception* using Dell Hymes' S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G theory.

## 1.6 Significance of the Study

The purpose of this study, "Communication Elements in the *Inception* Film: An Analysis using S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G Framework by Dell Hymes," is to contribute to both the theoretical and practical understanding of communication in film through a detailed linguistic analysis, with a focus on how language functions as a tool for storytelling, character development, and thematic exploration.

### 1.6.1 Theoretical Significance:

This study seeks to advance linguistic research by applying Dell Hymes' S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G framework to the analysis of communication patterns and elements within *Inception*. By examining the film through this lens, the study deepens our understanding of how recurring communication patterns—such as dialogue, non-verbal cues, and symbolic representations—reflect and reinforce broader cultural, social, and psychological themes in cinematic narratives.

Through its analysis, this research offers valuable insights into how films like *Inception* communicate complex ideas surrounding control, identity, reality, and moral dilemmas through structured dialogue and interpersonal interactions. The S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G framework allows for a nuanced exploration of how communication shapes character development, influences narrative progression, and connects with the thematic fabric of the film.

This theoretical contribution is significant in that it provides a robust model for future studies in linguistics, media studies, and the ethnography of communication, illustrating how communication in films can be analyzed through a structured linguistic approach. The study also demonstrates the applicability of Hymes' framework beyond traditional linguistic settings,

interdisciplinary research that merges linguistics, film analysis, and media studies.

**Significance:**

By the findings of this research offer important insights for



screenwriters, filmmakers, and educators. For filmmakers, understanding the role of recurring communication patterns—such as shifts in tone, dialogue structure, and non-verbal elements—can enhance the depth of storytelling, character complexity, and thematic resonance. By using linguistic analysis to create more coherent and layered communication, filmmakers can improve how dialogue reflects and advances the underlying psychological and cultural dynamics of their narratives.

For screenwriters, this research provides a framework for crafting dialogue that not only advances the plot but also engages with the deeper social and psychological themes present in the story. Understanding how language and communication reflect characters' internal conflicts, societal roles, and relationships can significantly enrich the writing process.

Additionally, this study has practical applications in the realm of education. It provides a model for analyzing communication in media, offering educators a valuable tool to explore how linguistic theory can be applied to film analysis. This resource can enhance teaching in English literature, film studies, and media literacy, helping students better understand the role of language in cinematic storytelling and its connection to broader cultural and societal themes. Moreover, the study's insights into linguistic theory in media can be used to support academic writing and foster a deeper understanding of how language functions in both fictional and real-world contexts.



## CHAPTER II LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Previous Studies

Previous studies provide a strong foundation for understanding the application of Dell Hymes' S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G framework and other linguistic theories in media and communication analysis.

In a 2023 study, Calista Nafi'ah, Christ Levionita Sabat, and Devi Silawati explore the use of Dell Hymes' S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G theory to analyze the film *Flipped*. The study focuses on how the film's dialogues align with the components of the S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G framework, which examines language in social and cultural contexts. The authors emphasize the importance of this framework in linguistic studies, demonstrating how it helps analyze language in different social settings. They show that the film's setting, characters, and plot provide an ideal context for applying Hymes' model, which can be systematically used to understand communication in the film. Furthermore, this study highlights the broader implications of this type of analysis for understanding how films convey social and cultural meanings through language, making it a valuable contribution to linguistic and film studies.

Similarly, in their 2019 study, Fikri Najiyah, Rezza Ayda Mutiara, and Riana Dwi Lestari apply Dell Hymes' S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G framework to analyze speech events in the reality TV show *Katakan Putus*. Like the *Flipped* study, their research examines how the show's dialogues reflect the components of the S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G model, emphasizing its ability to analyze communication within its social context by exploring elements such as Setting, Participants, and Norms. The authors argue that the emotionally charged interactions in the show offer valuable data for understanding how language operates in real-life contexts. Their analysis reveals the social and cultural norms influencing the interactions and emphasizes the



ance in media studies, particularly for deconstructing reality TV deeper social meanings. Together, these studies demonstrate the S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G framework in analyzing both scripted films and television, offering insights into how language shapes social communication in different media formats.

Expanding on this foundation, Dr. Manas Ray examined the application of Dell Hymes' S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G model within the ethnography of communication, focusing on discourse analysis. He emphasized the importance of understanding communication within its cultural and social contexts, central to ethnography. Dr. Manas explained that the S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G model, which breaks down speech events into eight components, provides a comprehensive tool for analyzing communication. His study highlighted the model's relevance in various discourse analyses, demonstrating its effectiveness in uncovering both explicit meanings and implicit social and cultural norms. Additionally, he underscored the model's versatility across disciplines such as linguistics, anthropology, and sociology, offering a holistic understanding of communication practices. His research significantly contributes to the field by illustrating the model's practical application in analyzing complex communication events and providing insights into the social and cultural dynamics of language use.

Building on the theme of linguistic analysis, Risa Dewi Rahmawati's study explored the use of expressive speech acts in the film *Crazy Rich Asians* (2023), employing a pragmatic approach to analyze how characters communicate emotions, feelings, and attitudes. Rahmawati applied Searle's classification of speech acts, focusing on the expressive category, which includes utterances conveying psychological states such as gratitude, apologies, and congratulations. Her research demonstrated the effectiveness of analyzing films as a medium for understanding real-life social interactions. The findings suggested that *Crazy Rich Asians* utilized expressive speech acts not only for dramatic effect but also as cultural commentary, making it a significant subject for linguistic analysis. This study is particularly valuable for those interested in pragmatics, film studies, and intercultural communication, showcasing the importance of speech act theory in examining the subtleties of language use in media.

Furthering the application of Dell Hymes' framework, Umar, Lestari, and analyzed workplace communication between the owner and staff operate in Kuta Lombok. Their study utilized the framework's eight ting, Participants, Ends, Act Sequence, Key, Instrumentalities, re—to dissect the intricacies of communication within this ment. Their analysis provided insights into how social norms,



cultural values, and power dynamics shaped workplace interactions. The research demonstrated the model's utility in revealing both explicit and implicit communicative practices, offering a structured approach for understanding workplace communication in its social and cultural context. This study contributes significantly to the ethnography of communication and underscores the practical applications of linguistic theories in corporate settings, making it a valuable resource for further research in related fields.

A study that similarly applies Dell Hymes' S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G framework is *Ethnography of Communication: Messages Analysis Encountered in Cenk Blonk Using Dell Hymes' SPEAKING Theory* (2023). This research examined traditional Balinese storytelling performances, known as *Cenk Blonk*, to analyze communication patterns and messages within these performances. The study applied the eight components of the framework—Setting, Participants, Ends, Act Sequence, Key, Instrumentalities, Norms, and Genre—to investigate how cultural and social contexts shape communication during performances. By doing so, it highlighted the interaction between performers and audiences, exploring how traditional narratives are communicated and cultural values are transmitted through language.

This study is significant for its application of Dell Hymes' theory to traditional cultural performances, demonstrating the model's versatility across different forms of communication. It offers valuable insights into how the S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G framework can be applied beyond everyday interactions and into more structured, performative settings. The analysis of *Cenk Blonk* contributes to broader discussions on how language functions within specific cultural contexts, aligning closely with the objectives of this thesis in examining film communication through the same theoretical lens.

In The study by Lertsuwan and Paprach (2022), titled "*Family Communication Patterns and Conflict Management Styles in an Animated Film,*"



ication dynamics within the animated film *The Mitchells vs. the* research focuses on how family communication patterns and strategies are reflected in the characters' interactions, with to the Mitchell family's approach to resolving conflicts. Using communication Patterns instrument, the authors categorize the

Mitchell family as a "laissez-faire" type, characterized by low levels of conformity and conversation orientation. However, they note significant variation among family members, particularly in how Katie, the daughter, adopts an integrating conflict management style that contrasts with her family's typical communication approach. The findings demonstrate how diverse communication patterns and conflict management styles contribute to family cohesion and the film's narrative resolution. This study offers valuable insights for analyzing similar dynamics in *Inception*, where evolving character relationships and communication patterns play a crucial role in the film's thematic depth. Furthermore, the framework used by Lertsuwan and Paprach provides a foundation for examining dialogue-based character development in *Inception*.

Similarly, the study "*How Cultures Talk: A Study of Dell Hymes' Ethnography of Communication*" by Aiman Reyaz and Priyanka Tripathi (2016) explores the application of Dell Hymes' Ethnography of Communication framework, including the S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G model, to analyze cultural communication patterns. This research emphasizes the role of culture in shaping communication styles and norms, both verbal and non-verbal. Reyaz and Tripathi highlight the diversity in communication practices by examining various speech events across different cultures. By applying Hymes' framework, the study provides a comprehensive understanding of how language serves as a tool for expressing social norms, values, and identities within specific cultural contexts. The flexibility of the S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G model, as demonstrated in this study, complements the current research on *Inception* by offering a comparative perspective through which the social and cultural dimensions of communication can be studied. Both studies underscore the importance of the S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G framework in uncovering deeper meanings in communication, whether in daily life or cinematic narratives.

The study "*The Elements of Ethnography 'Speaking' in Fist Fight Movies (2017)*" by Ni Ketut Sukiani and I Gusti Ngurah Agung Wira Hadijaya applies the



model to analyze communication patterns within the movie *Fist*. The authors dissect various dialogue interactions using Hymes' framework on how the characters communicate in relation to their social norms, and context. Their research illustrates how communication is shaped by its cultural and social environments, emphasizing the

influence of power dynamics and personal relationships on character interactions. Sukiani and Hadijaya argue that film dialogue, much like real-world communication, reflects broader social values and conventions. This study aligns with the current research on *Inception* by demonstrating the effectiveness of the S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G model in uncovering deeper layers of meaning in film dialogues. By exploring how character interactions are structured through this framework, the study highlights its relevance for analyzing the cultural and communicative aspects of *Inception*.

Finally, the study "*Ethnography of Communication Analysis in Jane Eyre Movie (2011)*" by Pujianto, Riski, and Dra. Malikatul Laila, M. Hum. applies Dell Hymes' S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G framework to analyze dialogue in the 2011 adaptation of *Jane Eyre*. This research investigates how communication reflects the social and cultural settings of 19th-century England, with a focus on the elements of Setting, Participants, Ends, Act Sequence, Key, Instrumentalities, Norms, and Genre. The study reveals that the characters' conversations and relationships are deeply influenced by the social hierarchy and gender roles of the time. By applying the S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G model, the research uncovers the underlying power dynamics, social expectations, and cultural values that shape the characters' dialogue and behavior. This study is particularly relevant to the current research on *Inception*, as both analyses employ Hymes' model to explore how film dialogue reflects broader cultural narratives. Pujianto, Riski, and Laila's work provides a useful comparison for understanding character interactions and their connection to the film's social and cultural contexts.

## 2.2 Synopsis of *INCEPTION* Movie.

*Inception* opens with Dom Cobb, a highly skilled thief who specializes in the rare art of "extraction" stealing secrets from deep within a person's subconscious while they are dreaming. Cobb is offered a seemingly impossible task by a wealthy



o, to perform *inception*, planting an idea in someone's mind in they believe the idea originated from themselves. Saito's target the heir to a powerful conglomerate, with the ultimate goal of er to dissolve his late father's empire. In exchange, Saito Cobb's criminal charges, allowing him to return to his children.

To execute this complex mission, Cobb assembles a specialized team such as Ariadne, the brilliant architect who designs the dreamscapes; Arthur, the meticulous point man who ensures the plan's details; Eames, the forger capable of impersonating others within dreams; Yusuf, the chemist responsible for creating the sedative required for multi-layered dreaming; and Saito himself, who insists on joining to ensure the mission's success.

The team infiltrates Fischer's subconscious through a series of dreams within dreams, each layer presenting unique challenges and increasing risks. These layers include meticulously crafted environments where time moves at different speeds. Complicating the mission are the projections of Fischer's subconscious, which act as defense mechanisms, and Cobb's unresolved guilt surrounding his wife, Mal, whose projection haunts his dreams. Mal's presence jeopardizes the mission repeatedly, embodying Cobb's inability to let go of his past.

As the team navigates deeper layers of Fischer's subconscious, they strategically plant the idea that Fischer should dissolve his father's empire to build something of his own. Through emotionally charged setups and manipulations, Fischer comes to believe this idea as his own revelation. Despite numerous setbacks, including near-catastrophic encounters with Mal's projection, the team succeeds in planting the idea and safely exiting the dream layers.

The story concludes with Cobb returning home to reunite with his children, having seemingly achieved redemption. However, the film's final scene leaves viewers questioning reality. Cobb spins his totem—a spinning top used to distinguish dreams from reality—but the film cuts to black before revealing whether it stops spinning, leaving the audience uncertain if Cobb is awake or still dreaming.

An article explained by Renée (2014) provides an in-depth analysis of Christopher Nolan's *Inception*, emphasizing the narrative complexity and its broader implications on human cognition and belief systems. The study highlights



multi-layered plot structure serves as a metaphor for the complexity of human thought processes and the subconscious.

It is noted that Nolan intentionally constructs the film to mirror the way we experience layered and interconnected realities. The dream layers in the film exist at different levels of consciousness, each with its own rules, time

dynamics, and emotional stakes. This structure challenges viewers to question the nature of perception and reality, drawing parallels to how individuals experience and interpret their own mental and emotional landscapes.

### 2.3 THE ETHNOGRAPHY OF SPEAKING by Dell Hymes

A study by Dell Hymes (1962) highlights the importance of language as a cornerstone of human behavior and cultural transmission. While anthropologists have long acknowledged the role of speech, its detailed study often takes a backseat. Early figures like Boas view language as integral to cultural phenomena, connecting unconscious processes with biological and sociocultural dimensions. Later contributions by Sapir and Bloomfield significantly advance the intersection of linguistics, anthropology, and psychology, emphasizing the study of speech as both a cultural and cognitive activity.

Despite these advancements, a gap remains between grammars, which focus on linguistic structures, and ethnographies, which explore cultural patterns. Neither directly examines the unique functions and patterns of speech itself. The ethnography of speaking addresses this gap by analyzing speech as an activity in its own right, studying its contexts, uses, and social functions. For example, understanding what a child internalizes about speaking or what a foreigner must learn to communicate effectively in a new community reveals how speech shapes social interaction.

However, developing a systematic framework for studying speech remains challenging due to limited fieldwork and underdeveloped theoretical approaches. Although existing studies show significant cultural variations in speech patterns, particularly in education or socialization, comprehensive frameworks are needed to catalog all variables. Field research is essential for providing detailed insights into speech, enabling systematic descriptions, comparative analysis, and practical applications in areas such as childhood development.

These studies contribute to organizing observable phenomena and uses of speech as a cultural behavior, offering insights into its expressive dimensions. By focusing on individual systems rather than universal categories, structural analysis uncovers the patterns and functions of speech in specific cultural contexts. For instance, frameworks of ethnography show how linguistic habits influence thought, while



semantic analysis tied to cultural settings helps explain how speech forms convey meaning within social contexts.

The role of speech varies widely across societal activities, individual behaviors, and multilingual settings. Experimental research provides some insights, but real-world fieldwork is indispensable for understanding how speech habits adapt to cultural frameworks, particularly in multilingual or educational contexts. Structural analysis in the ethnography of speaking emphasizes the importance of studying speech as a structured system, analyzing its cross-cultural variations and making speech activities central to understanding human interaction.

Speech is an essential component of human behavior, yet its contextual study remains underexplored. Traditional approaches often treat language as a formal, isolated system or use speech as a tool for other objectives, neglecting its role in linking language and culture. Addressing this oversight requires recognizing speech as a structured system, exploring its cross-cultural variations, and prioritizing its functions and patterns. The ethnography of speaking expands the scope of linguistic study to include cultural and social dimensions, offering a more holistic understanding of communication within its broader context.

## 2.4 Models of the Interaction of Language and Social Life by Dell Hymes

A study by Dell Hymes (1972) introduces the S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G framework as part of his ethnographic approach to understanding communication. Hymes develops this framework to provide a systematic method for analyzing the social and cultural dimensions of speech, emphasizing that language use is deeply embedded in its context. Each component of S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G represents a critical aspect of communication, enabling researchers to dissect and comprehensively understand speech events within their broader social and cultural settings.

### 2.4.1 Setting and Scene (S)



The **setting** refers to the physical location, time, and surrounding context where communication occurs, while the **scene** captures the social and cultural atmosphere of the interaction. Hymes emphasizes that both tangible and intangible aspects of context shape how speech is interpreted and used. For example, a wedding ceremony in a church creates a formal and sacred atmosphere, influencing the tone and content of the communication.

type of language used, such as vows or blessings. Similarly, the scene in a casual family dinner differs in emotional warmth and conversational flow. These dimensions highlight the interplay between environment and cultural meaning in structuring communication. In diverse cultural contexts, the same physical setting can evoke varying psychological interpretations, emphasizing the need to consider both aspects simultaneously.

#### 2.4.2 Participants (P)

Participants are the individuals involved in the communicative act, including the addresser, addressee, and any observers or audiences. Hymes highlights that communication is shaped not only by who speaks and listens but also by their roles, relationships, and social status. For example, a conversation between a teacher and a student carries an inherent hierarchy, influencing the level of formality and the power dynamics within the interaction. In contrast, a dialogue between close friends may involve informal language and equal participation. Participants' social identities—such as age, gender, and cultural background—further enrich the analysis, as these factors influence not only the content but also the delivery and interpretation of speech.

#### 2.4.3 Ends (E)

The **ends** of communication involve the purposes, goals, and outcomes of a speech event. Hymes differentiates between the **intended goals**, such as persuading, informing, or entertaining, and the **actual results**, which may deviate from the speaker's intentions. Cultural norms and values often shape these objectives, such as the use of storytelling to impart moral lessons in certain societies. Understanding ends requires examining both individual motivations and collective societal expectations

within communication



ance (A)

: **act sequence** refers to the order and structure of the five actions that unfold during an interaction. Hymes notes that

this includes the arrangement of speech acts, such as greetings, questions, and responses, as well as the flow of dialogue. The sequence often mirrors cultural norms and expectations about interaction. For example, a formal interview might begin with introductions, followed by structured questions, and conclude with thanks or farewells. In storytelling, the sequence might include a setup, conflict, climax, and resolution. By analyzing the act sequence, researchers can identify patterns in communication that reveal underlying cultural and social rules

#### 2.4.5 Key (K)

The **key** encompasses the tone, manner, or spirit in which communication is carried out, reflecting the emotional or attitudinal context of the interaction. Hymes emphasizes that the key can drastically alter the meaning of speech. For instance, a phrase delivered sarcastically carries a different connotation than the same phrase spoken sincerely. The key is shaped by vocal inflections, gestures, and cultural expectations, making it an essential component for understanding nuanced communication. In many societies, tone serves as a critical indicator of respect, humor, anger, or affection, influencing both the intent and interpretation of speech

#### 2.4.6 Instrumentalities (I)

**Instrumentalities** refer to the channels and forms of communication used, such as verbal speech, non-verbal gestures, written text, or digital media. Hymes highlights the importance of understanding both the medium and the linguistic codes employed in communication. For example, a formal speech delivered in a standard dialect at a political rally carries a different communicative weight than casual texting in a regional vernacular. Instrumentalities also include non-verbal elements, such as

ssions or body language, which often complement or substitute munication. By examining these channels, researchers can diverse ways in which messages are conveyed and understood ires.



### 2.4.7 Norms (N)

The **norms** of communication refer to the social rules and conventions that guide how people interact and interpret messages. Hymes distinguishes between **norms of interaction**, such as turn-taking or politeness strategies, and **norms of interpretation**, which involve understanding meaning based on cultural context. For instance, interrupting a speaker might be seen as rude in one culture but a sign of engagement in another. Norms also dictate appropriate language use based on factors like setting, participants, and purpose. These social rules are deeply embedded in cultural practices, making them essential for understanding how communication operates within and across communities.

### 2.4.8 Genre (G)

The **genre** of communication refers to the type or category of speech act or communicative event, such as storytelling, prayers, debates, or greetings. Hymes emphasizes that genres are culturally defined and carry specific expectations for structure and content. For example, a folktale in one culture may follow a specific narrative pattern with moral lessons, while a political speech in another setting may focus on persuasion and authority. The analysis of genre provides insights into how societies categorize and value different forms of communication, revealing the intersection between language, culture, and social organization.

Hymes emphasized that the components of the S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G framework do not operate independently but function interactively within any communicative event, forming a comprehensive system that reflects the complexity of human interaction. By applying this framework, researchers can explore the social structures, cultural norms, and individual



added within communication. Hymes demonstrated the utility of each through his analysis of speech events in diverse cultural contexts such as storytelling in Indigenous communities, where narrative participant roles, and contextual factors revealed the interplay of language and cultural values.

The S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G framework offers a valuable lens for analyzing communication in *Inception*. By examining the setting (the multilayered dreamscapes), participants (Cobb, Fischer, and the rest of the team), ends (the inception of an idea in Fischer's mind), and other components, the analysis uncovers how communication patterns not only propel the narrative but also reflect deeper psychological, social, and cultural dimensions within the film. This integrative approach highlights the intricate dynamics of interaction in both real and constructed realities, aligning with Hymes' vision of a holistic ethnographic analysis of communication.

