Discourse Analysis

Step by Step guide.
First step

• Locating the correct elements for your introduction:
  • Form
  • Topic
  • Audience
  • Purpose (primary/secondary)
  • Register/tone
  • Domain
Putting this together in a fluent paragraph:

• ‘Panic Room’ is the transcript of a highly informal spoken dialogue between two teenager girls. They are discussing a movie that one has seen and the other would like to see. The audience for this spoken discourse are the interlocutors themselves and the semantic field primarily relating to horror movies, the interlocutors experience of them, and to a lesser extent recent casting issues relating to actresses who have appeared in said movies. The primary purpose of the conversation appears to be ‘referential’- to discuss the film Panic Room, as well as others in the horror genre. Secondary functions for the discourse are less obvious however it could be said that such a conversation (being an exchange of personal, untechnical ideas and responses) fulfils a phatic function, that is, enhancing social connection or bonding between the pair, in a co-operative and supportive way, as this one is.
Finding the significant elements.

- As you’re getting started- it’s best to work with a list-

- Use the one I gave you ‘metalanguage under subsystems’ as a mental check list

- If you think about your function/audience/etc. what fosters this most significantly.
Picking out phonology:

• As the text is spoken, it makes sense to discuss phonology:
• Looking over your ‘Panic Room’ text- see if you can find-
• Non fluency features
• HRT (High rising tone)
• Elongation of words
• Prosody
• Minimal responses
Getting CLOSER to your text

• Once you have located a ‘Noted Element’ you need to think about your Explanation and Interpretation.

• In short:
  • What does this element suggest/imply?
  • HOW EXACTLY is the language working?
  • How is this connected to a wider purpose
NEIL

- Noted element- Literally the language used- Can be a particular foci ou are covering (subsystem/Language feature)
- Explanation- Where is it? Metalinguistic term
- Interpretation- What linguistic function is it performing? Is it supporting an element of the discourse?
- Link- How does this link to the wider purpose/context- formality in the case of this task.
NEIL

• N-oted Element: Non-fluency features

• E-xplanation: Fillers, Minimal responses

• I-nterpretation: Supportive function, thinking on feet, holding the floor

• L- Link- shows is informality, social closeness between the two (not as much onus on positive face) the fact that they are both attempting to appear engaged in the conversation (both have an interest in the topic at hand)
Non-fluency features - Expanding on this

• The overall patterning of phonological features in the discourse supports the conclusion that this is a highly informal spoken language text. We can see this phonologically via such linguistic features as the presence of non-fluency features and minimal responses, which suggests the interlocutors are comfortable enough in each other's company to let their guard down and not worry too much about each other's 'face needs'. The usage of minimal responses also serve as an encouragement for the other interlocutors, by giving the indication that they are not only a captive audience, but they are actively engaged and encouraging via the usage of sounds that imply agreement ('mmmmmm' Line 12). The usage of fillers such as (umm as in lines 2, 39, 46) are indicative that as 'thinking on their feet' ensuring that the speaker maintains the floor (as they have not finished their turn) yet has time to consider their response in the fluid conversation. The fact that they are fostering the conversation with these strategies also demonstrate a genuine engagement in the topic and hand and wish to support the referential nature of the discourse. These conversational phonological markers, as above, further confirm that this is a highly informal interaction.
Let’s do one together.