
MAKING SENSE OF DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

BRIAN PALTRIDGE

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GOLD COAST

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Preface

The Intention of this Series

The volumes in this Series are intended for English, ESL and EFL, literacy, and other language teachers; language researchers; and graduate and postgraduate students of language teacher education and applied linguistics.

The *Making Sense of Language* series focuses on the purposes, pattern, and system of spoken and written language in the context of their use.

Modern grammars highlight the fact that language is a functional resource, and that study of language form away from the context of its use cannot explain how it works. Such grammars further assert that, though language use is unique, it can be systematically examined for structure and pattern.

Examinations, such as those in this Series, aim to reveal:

- the choices language users make in interaction and text construction

and

- how meaning is made

in the belief that good analyses and grammars can help language teachers be discourse analysts in their own classrooms and, as a result, be more effective teachers.

The Rationale for this Series

Learning to communicate in a new language is difficult for all language learners—who have to make sense of it as well as in it. Language teachers,

therefore, face a challenging task, since their role is to help language learners find system, pattern, and understanding in a new language and to use that knowledge and competence effectively.

To manage language teaching successfully, every language teacher needs a good grammatical framework and set of tools. This Series provides a range of grammatical resources—functional grammars, textual analyses, and discourse grammars—that combine straightforward explanations with the right amount of grammatical delicacy. Each volume enables language teachers to make sense of language use for themselves, through introduction, explanation and guided use of the grammatical tools.

The Series enables teachers and researchers to become independent analysts of the complexities and ambiguities of language use.

The Uses of this Series

Each volume can be used by teachers or research students working on their own, or as supplementary textbooks for tertiary courses of study. The volumes can function as workbooks. They contain:

- summaries of important aspects of functional and discourse grammar
- text exemplars, illustrating key points
- activities with answers and explanations.

Each volume is readable—contrary to many students' and teachers' expectations, discourse and grammar can be made accessible and comprehensible. Sample texts come from everyday life and teaching situations, and often have a humorous touch. The balance between theory and practice is sensitively handled for busy readers who want immediate application for what they are learning.

Earlier Volumes

Making Sense of Functional Grammar
Making Sense of Text

This Volume

Making Sense of Discourse Analysis brings together the key systems of discourse analysis. The book overviews and explains communicative language theory, speech act theory, conversational analysis, genre analysis, and critical discourse analysis.

Each chapter provides a historical context, definitions for key components of each system or theory being described, textual examples with explanation, and structured activities for readers to try out the systems and theories for themselves.

The volume is a very useful, practical distillation of a complex field for language teacher educators, and a very readable introduction for language teachers and postgraduate students.

Jill Burton
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Comparing discourse analysis and sociolinguistics from the perspective of their historical international as well as French dimension while also trying to understand emerging topics does not imply simplification. Considerable effort has been made to survey approaches as well as past and present researchers who have contributed to building this research area since not doing so would inevitably be criticized. We have made some unavoidably imperfect choices, and since these can be questioned, this will allow us to have a collective discussion.

1. On Certain Traditions. 1.1. History of Discourse An... In fact, Discourse Analysis is an outcome of the Functional approach to Linguistics, and would make no sense without it. Even so-called 'formal' approaches within the field have emanated from a functional perspective. And here I refer to Semantics in its narrow sense (i.e. the kind of Semantics that deals with truth-conditional meaning) because in a broader sense, and considering that Pragmatics deals mainly with meaning, it can be said that Pragmatics belongs in the realm of Semantics as well. Discourse Analysis, like Pragmatics, is concerned with language in use and in context. Critical discourse analysis can in fact draw upon a wide range of approaches to analysing text. I have chosen in this book to place the main emphasis on grammatical and semantic analysis because while this form of analysis can, I believe, be very productive in social research, it is often difficult for researchers without a back-ground in Linguistics to access it. It would make little sense to focus on language in new capitalism if we didn't think that texts have causal effects of this sort, and effects on social change. Though as I shall argue below, these effects are mediated by meaning-making. We need, however, to be clear what sort of causality this is.