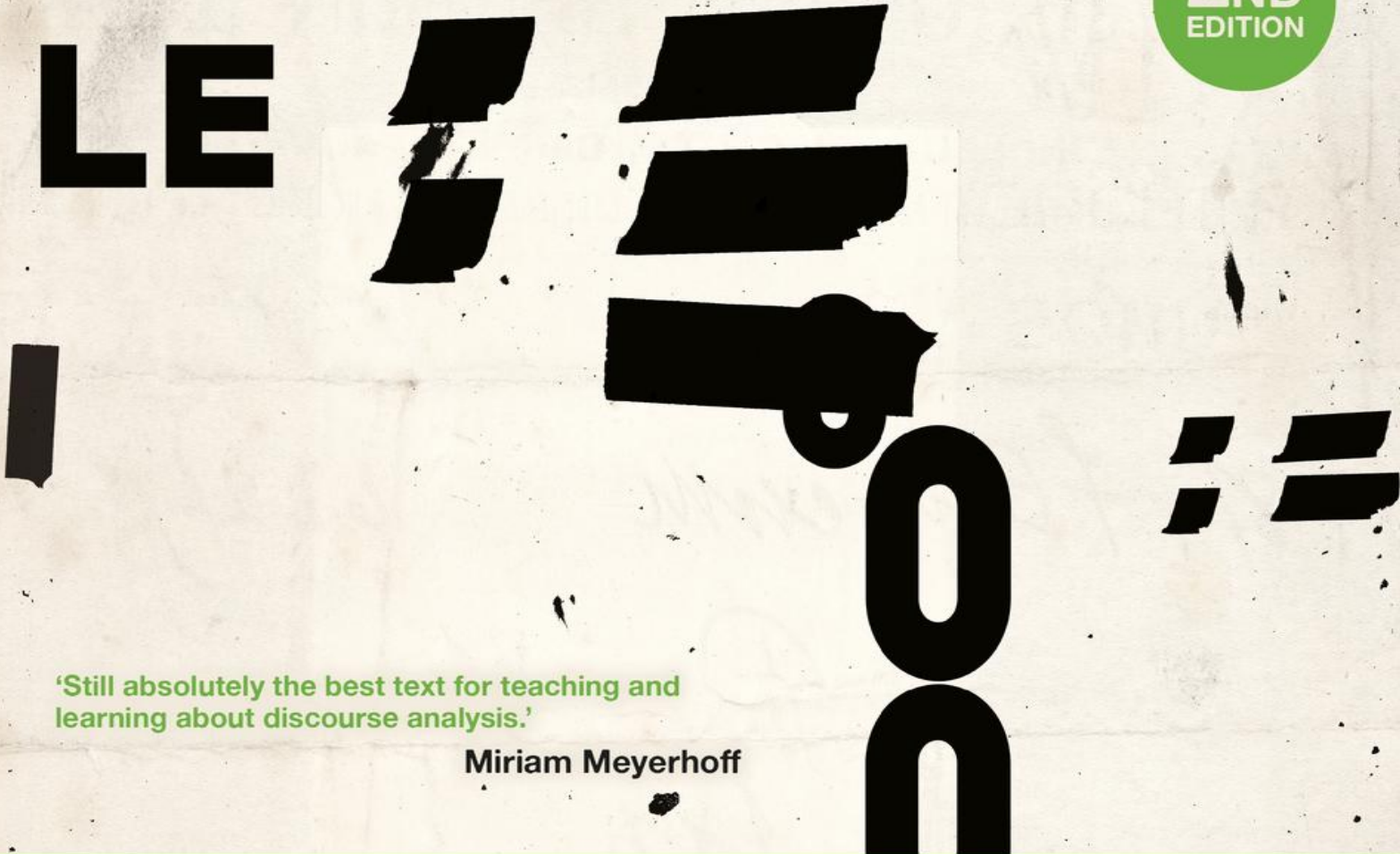BLOOMSBURY DISCOURSE **Series Editor: Ken Hyland**

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DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

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Discourse Analysis

An Introduction

2nd edition

Brian Paltridge

B L O O M S B U R Y

LONDON · NEW DELHI · NEW YORK · SYDNEY

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Preface to the Second Edition

The second edition of this book is an updated and expanded version of the book that was published in 2006. In my revisions, I have taken account of feedback from reviews of the first edition that were commissioned by the publisher as well as reviews that have been published in academic journals. Each of these has been extremely helpful to me in my thinking about this second edition of the book. More recent research has also been added to each of the chapters and I have added a new chapter on multimodal discourse analysis. In-text references have also been updated as have the further readings section at the end of each chapter. I have added exercises and sample texts for readers to analyse in each of the chapters and provided suggested answers to these exercises in the appendix at the back of the book. A further addition that comes with this edition is a companion website where I have placed extended reading and reference lists for each of the chapters, as well as set of PowerPoint slides that people who are using my book for teaching a course on discourse analysis might find useful.

A link to the companion website is shown by the 🖰 icon in the margin of the text. A link to the *Continuum Companion to Discourse Analysis* (Hyland and Paltridge, 2011) is shown by the 📖 icon in the text.

Brian Paltridge

Acknowledgements

1

What is Discourse Analysis?

This chapter provides an overview of *discourse analysis*, an approach to the analysis of language that looks at patterns of language across texts as well as the social and cultural contexts in which the texts occur. The chapter commences by presenting the origins of the term discourse analysis. It then discusses particular issues which are of interest to discourse analysts, such as the relationship between language and social context, culture-specific ways of speaking and writing and ways of organizing texts in particular social and cultural situations.

The chapter continues with a discussion of different views of discourse analysis. These range from more textually oriented views of discourse analysis which concentrate mostly on language features of texts, to more socially oriented views of discourse analysis which consider what the text is doing in the social and cultural setting in which it occurs. This leads to a discussion of the *social constructionist* view of discourse; that is, the ways in which what we say as we speak contributes to the construction of certain views of the world, of people and, in turn, ourselves. The relationship between language and identity is then introduced. This includes a discussion of the ways in which, through our use of language, we not only 'display' who we are but also how we want people to see us. This includes a discussion of the ways in which, through the use of spoken and written discourse, people both 'perform' and 'create' particular social, and gendered, identities.

The ways in which 'texts rely on other texts' is also discussed in this chapter; that is the way in which we produce and understand texts in relation to other texts that have come before them as well as other texts that may follow them. This chapter, then, introduces notions and lays the ground for issues that will be discussed in greater detail in the chapters that follow.

2 **Discourse Analysis**

1.1 What is discourse analysis?

Discourse analysis examines patterns of language across texts and considers the relationship between language and the social and cultural contexts in which it is used. Discourse analysis also considers the ways that the use of language presents different views of the world and different understandings. It examines how the use of language is influenced by relationships between participants as well as the effects the use of language has upon social identities and relations. It also considers how views of the world, and identities, are constructed through the use of discourse.

The term *discourse analysis* was first introduced by Zellig Harris (1952) as a way of analysing connected speech and writing. Harris had two main interests: the examination of language beyond the level of the sentence and the relationship between linguistic and non-linguistic behaviour. He examined the first of these in most detail, aiming to provide a way for describing how language features are distributed within texts and the ways in which they are combined in particular kinds and styles of texts. An early, and important, observation he made was that:

> connected discourse occurs within a particular situation – whether of a person speaking, or of a conversation, or of someone sitting down occasionally over the period of months to write a particular kind of book in a particular literary or scientific tradition. (3)

There are, thus, typical ways of using language in particular situations. These *discourses*, he argued, not only share particular meanings, they also have characteristic linguistic features associated with them. What these meanings are and how they are realized in language is of central interest to the area of discourse analysis.

The relationship between language and context

By 'the relationship between linguistic and non-linguistic behaviour' Harris means how people know, from the situation that they are in, how to interpret what someone says. If, for example, an air traffic controller says to a pilot *The runway is full at the moment*, this most likely means it is not possible to land the plane. This may seem obvious to a native speaker of English but a non-native speaker pilot, of which there are many in the world, needs to understand the relationship between what is said and what is meant in order to understand that he/she cannot land the plane at that time. Harris' point is that the expression *The runway is full at the moment* has a particular meaning in a particular situation (in this case the landing of a plane) and may mean something different in another situation. If I say *The runway is full at the moment* to a friend who is waiting with me to pick someone up from the airport, this is now an explanation of why the plane is late landing (however I may know this) and not an instruction to not land the plane. The same discourse, thus, can

be understood differently by different language users as well as understood differently in different contexts (van Dijk 2011).

Van Dijk provides two book length accounts of the notion of context. He argues that context is a subjective construct that accounts not only for the uniqueness of each text but also for the common ground and shared representations that language users draw on to communicate with each other (van Dijk 2008). Van Dijk (2009) argues, further, that the link between society and discourse is often indirect and depends on how language users themselves define the genre or communicative event in which they engaged. Thus, in his words, '[i]t is not the social situation that influences (or is influenced by) discourse, but the way the participants *define* (original emphasis)' the situation in which the discourse occurs (van Dijk 2008: x). In his view, contexts are not objective conditions but rather (inter)subjective constructs that are constantly updated by participants in their interactions with each other as members of groups or communities.

The relationship between language and context is fundamental to the work of J. R. Firth (1935, 1957a, 1957b), Michael Halliday (1971, 1989a) and John Sinclair (2004), each of whom has made important contributions to the area of discourse analysis. Firth draws on the anthropologist Malinowski's (1923, 1935) notions of *context of situation* and *context of culture* to discuss this relationship, arguing that in order to understand the meaning of what a person says or writes we need to know something about the situational and cultural context in which it is located. That is, if you don't know what the people involved in a text are doing and don't understand their culture 'then you can't make sense of their text' (Martin 2001: 151).

Halliday (1971) takes the discussion further by linking context of situation with actual texts and context of culture with potential texts and the range of possibilities that are open to language users for the creation of texts. The actual choices a person makes from the options that are available to them within the particular context of culture, thus, take place within a particular context of situation, both of which influence the use of language in the text (see Hasan 2009, Halliday 2009a, van Dijk 2011 for further discussion of the relationship between language and context). The work of J. R. Firth has been similarly influential in the area of discourse analysis. This is reflected in the concern by discourse analysts to study language within authentic instances of use (as opposed to made-up examples) – a concern with the inseparability of meaning and form and a focus on a contextual theory of meaning (Stubbs 1996). Sinclair also argues that language should be studied in naturally occurring contexts and that the analysis of meaning should be its key focus (Carter 2004).

Discourse analysis, then, is interested in 'what happens when people draw on the knowledge they have about language . . . to do things in the world' (Johnstone 2002: 3). It is, thus, the analysis of language in use. Discourse analysis considers the relationship between language and the contexts in which it is used and is concerned with the description and analysis of both spoken and written interactions. Its primary purpose, as Chimombo and Roseberry (1998) argue, is to provide a deeper understanding and appreciation of texts and how they become meaningful to their users.

4 Discourse Analysis

The discourse structure of texts

Discourse analysts are also interested in how people organize what they say in the sense of what they typically say first, and what they say next and so on in a conversation or in a piece of writing. This is something that varies across cultures and is by no means the same across languages. An email, for example, to me from a Japanese academic or a member of the administrative staff at a Japanese university may start with reference to the weather saying immediately after *Dear Professor Paltridge* something like *Greetings! It's such a beautiful day today here in Kyoto*. I, of course, may also say this in an email to an overseas colleague but is it not a ritual requirement in English, as it is in Japanese. There are, thus, particular things we say and particular ways of ordering what we say in particular spoken and written situations and in particular languages and cultures.

Mitchell (1957) was one the first researchers to examine the *discourse structure* of texts. He looked at the ways in which people order what they say in buying and selling interactions. He looked at the overall structure of these kinds of texts, introducing the notion of *stages* into discourse analysis; that is the steps that language users go through as they carry out particular interactions. His interest was more in the ways in which interactions are organized at an overall textual level than the ways in which language is used in each of the stages of a text. Mitchell discusses how language is used as, what he calls, *co-operative action* and how the meaning of language lies in the situational context in which it is used and in the context of the text as a whole.

If, then, I am walking along the street in Shanghai near a market and someone says to me *Hello Mister, DVD*, I know from the situation that I am in that they want to sell me DVDs. If I then go into a market and someone asks what seems to me to be a very high price for a shirt, I know from my experience with this kind of interaction that the price they are telling me is just a starting point in the buying and selling exchange and that I can quite easily end up buying the shirt for at least half the original price. I know from my experience how the interaction will typically start, what language will typically be used in the interaction and how the interaction will typically end. I also start to learn other typical characteristics of the interaction. For example, a person will normally only say *Hello Mister, DVD* (or *Hello Mister, Louis Vuitton*, etc.) when I am between stalls, not when I am in a stall and have started a buying and selling interaction with someone.

Hasan (1989a) has continued this work into the analysis of service encounters, as has Ventola (1984, 1987). Hasan and Ventola aim to capture obligatory and optional stages that are typical of service encounters. For example, a greeting such as *Hi, how are you?* is not always obligatory at the start of a service encounter in English when someone is buying something at the delicatessen counter in a busy supermarket. However, a sales request such as *Can I have . . .* or *Give me . . .* etc. where you say what you want to buy is. Hasan and Ventola point out, further, that there are many possible ways in which the stages in a service encounter (and indeed many genres) can be realized in terms of language. For

example, a request for service might be expressed as *Could you show me . . .* or *Have you got . . .* (etc.). The ways in which these elements are expressed will vary, further, depending on where the service encounter is taking place; that is whether it is in a supermarket, at the post office or at a travel agent etc. It will also vary according to variables such as the age of the people involved in the interaction and whether the service encounter is face-to-face or on the phone, etc. (Flowerdew 1993). There is, thus, is no neat one-to-one correspondence between the structural elements of texts and the ways in which they are expressed through language.

Other researchers have also investigated recurring patterns in spoken interactions, although in a somewhat different way from Mitchell and others following in that tradition. Researchers working in the area known as *conversation analysis* have looked at how people open and close conversations and how people take turns and overlap their speech in conversations, for example. They have looked at casual conversations, chat, as well as doctor–patient consultations, psychiatric interviews and interactions in legal settings. Their interest, in particular, is in fine-grained analyses of spoken interactions such as the use of overlap, pauses, increased volume and pitch and what these reveal about how people relate to each other in what they are saying and doing with language.

Cultural ways of speaking and writing

Different cultures often have different ways of doing things through language. This is something that was explored by Hymes (1964) through the notion of the *ethnography of communication*. Hymes' work was a reaction to the neglect, at the time, of speech in linguistic analyses and anthropological descriptions of cultures. His work was also a reaction to views of language which took little or no account of the social and cultural contexts in which language occurs. In particular, he considered aspects of speech events such as who is speaking to whom, about what, for what purpose, where and when, and how these impact on how we say and do things in culture-specific settings.

There are, for example, particular cultural ways of buying and selling things in different cultures. How I buy my lunch at a takeaway shop in an English-speaking country is different, for example, from how I might do this in Japan. In an English-speaking country there is greater ritual use of *Please* and *Thanks* on the part of the customer in this kind of interaction than there is in Japan. How I buy something in a supermarket in an English-speaking country may be more similar to how I might do this in Japan. The person at the cash register in Japan, however, will typically say much more than the customer in this sort of situation, who may indeed say nothing. This does not mean that by saying nothing the Japanese customer is being rude. It simply means that there are culturally different ways of doing things with language in different cultures. The sequence of events I go through may be the same in both cultures, but the ways of using language in these events and other sorts of non-linguistic behaviour may differ.

6 **Discourse Analysis**

A further example of this can be seen when companies decide to set up a braches of their business overseas. A number of years ago the Japanese department store Daimaru opened a branch in Melbourne. Each year the store had a spring sale and sent out circulars to its customers to let them know about it. It was interesting to see how differently the company wrote their promotional materials for their Japanese-speaking and their English-speaking customers. The Japanese texts commenced with 'seasonal greetings' (as in the emails above) referring to the warm spring weather and the sight of fresh flowers in the gardens whereas the English texts went straight to the point of the message, the sale that would be starting shortly. In the Japanese texts it would have been impolite not to do this whereas in the English texts it would have been unnecessary and, indeed, may have hidden the point of the text for the English readers if they had done this.

1.2 Different views of discourse analysis

There are in fact a number of differing views on what discourse analysis actually is. Social science researchers, for example, might argue that all their work is concerned with the analysis of discourse, yet often take up the term in their own, sometimes different, ways (Fairclough 2003). Mills (1997) makes a similar observation showing how through its relatively short history the term discourse analysis has shifted from highlighting one aspect of language usage to another, as well as being used in different ways by different researchers.

Fairclough (2003) contrasts what he calls 'textually oriented discourse analysis' with approaches to discourse analysis that have more of a social theoretical orientation. He does not see these two views as mutually exclusive, however, arguing for an analysis of discourse that is both linguistic and social in its orientation. Cameron and Kulick (2003) present a similar view. They do not take these two perspectives to be incompatible with each other, arguing that the instances of language in use that are studied under a textually oriented view of discourse are still socially situated and need to be interpreted in terms of their social meanings and functions.

David Crystal's (2008) analysis of Barack Obama's victory speech when he won the US presidential election is an example of textually oriented discourse analysis. One of the features Crystal notes in Obama's speech is the use of *parallelism*, where he repeats certain grammatical structures for rhetorical effect. In the following extract from the opening lines of his speech Obama repeats 'who clauses' (highlighted below) lowering the processing load of the speech so that listeners will focus on the content of each the clauses that follow. Crystal also shows how Obama follows the rhetorical 'rule of three' in this section of his speech in a way that mirrors the speeches of former political leaders such as Winston Churchill.

> If there is anyone out there *who still doubts* that America is a place where all things are possible, *who still wonders* if the dream of our founders is alive in our time, *who still questions* the power of our democracy, tonight is your answer. (CNNPolitics.com 2008)

Obama also uses lists of pairs in his speech to rhetorical effect, as in:

> It's the answer spoken by young and old, rich and poor, Democrat and Republican, black, white, Hispanic, Asian, Native American, gay, straight, disabled and not disabled. (ibid.)

Higgins' (2008) analysis of Obama's speech is an example of more socially oriented discourse analysis. Higgins traces Obama's speech back to the oratory of the ancient Greeks and Romans showing how the use of the 'tricolon' (series of threes), as in the example above, was one of Cicero's, as well as Julius Caesar's, rhetorical techniques, as in Caesar's 'Veni, vidi, vici' (I came, I saw, I conquered). In doing this, Obama recalls both the politics and traditions of ancient Athens where oratory was 'the supreme political skill, on whose mastery power depended' (ibid., online). Williams (2009) discusses Obama's speech within the context of the political (and economic) moment of his victory, highlighting the central message of optimism in his speech captured in the repetition of the refrain 'Yes, we can'. Higgins (2008) also discusses how this 'Yes, we can' relates, intertextually, to the call-and-response preaching of the American church and the power that effective preachers have on their congregations. Obama's reference in his speech to previous leaders, thus, draws on the *social stock of knowledge* (Luckmann 2009) he shares with his audience and their social and cultural histories.

We can see, then, that discourse analysis is a view of language at the level of text. Discourse analysis is also a view of language in use; that is, how people achieve certain communicative goals through the use of language, perform certain communicative acts, participate in certain communicative events and present themselves to others. Discourse analysis considers how people manage interactions with each other, how people communicate within particular groups and societies as well as how they communicate with other groups, and with other cultures. It also focuses on how people do things beyond language, and the ideas and beliefs that they communicate as they use language.

Discourse as the social construction of reality

The view of discourse as the *social construction of reality* see texts as communicative units which are embedded in social and cultural practices. The texts we write and speak both shape and are shaped by these practices. Discourse, then, is both shaped by the world as well as shaping the world. Discourse is shaped by language as well as shaping language. It is shaped by the people who use the language as well as shaping the language that people use. Discourse is shaped, as well, by the discourse that has preceded it and that which might follow it. Discourse is also shaped by the medium in which it occurs as well as it shapes the possibilities for that medium. The purpose of the text also influences the discourse. Discourse also shapes the range of possible purposes of texts (Johnstone 2007).

Wetherell's (2001) analysis of the BBC *Panorama* interview with the late Diana, Princess of Wales (BBC 1995) provides an example of the role of language in the construction (and

construal) of the social world. She shows how, through the use of language, Diana 'construes' her social world, presenting herself as a sharing person and Prince Charles as 'a proud man who felt low about the attention his wife was getting' (Wetherell 2001: 15). That is, as she speaks, the Princess creates a view of herself and the world in which she lives in a way that she wishes people to see. As Wetherell points out:

> As Diana and others speak, on this and many other occasions, a formulation of the world comes into being. The world as described comes into existence at that moment. In an important sense, the social reality constructed in the Panorama interview and in other places of Diana's happy marriage bucking under media pressure did not exist before its emergence as discourse. (16)

A further example of this *social constructivist* view of discourse can be seen in the text on the cover of the December 2004 Asian edition of *Business Week*:

> The three scariest words in U.S. industry: 'The China Price'

The feature story in this issue discusses China's ability to undercut production costs to the extent that, unless US manufacturers are able to cut their prices, they can 'kiss their customers goodbye'. This special report states that for decades economists have insisted that the US wins from globalization. Now they are not so sure. China, a former US trade representative says, 'is a tiger on steroids'. A labour economist from Harvard University says in this series of articles that the wages of white collar workers in the United States 'could get whacked' as a result of this shift and that white collar workers in the United States have a right to be scared that they may lose their jobs as they are displaced by this 'offshoring'. Ultimately, the report argues, more than half the 130 million US workforce could feel the impact of this change in global competition (Engardio and Roberts 2004).

Harney (2009) in her book *The China Price* continues this discussion, showing how this reality is changing with regional labour shortages and rising wages. While 'the China Price' has become a brand that means the lowest price possible, there are Chinese factories that have had to close, have moved their business to other parts of China where labour costs are lower or have sent their work outside of China because they have not been able to maintain their earlier level of pricing (ibid.). This outsourcing of work has led to increases in manufacturing in neighbouring countries such as Malaysia where some regions have increased their productivities enormously. Penang, for example, increased its manufacturing in 2010 by 465 per cent compared to 2009 because of this, due to what is now being called 'the China effect' (Chowdhury 2011). For someone reading about this for the first time, this becomes not just part of their social stock of knowledge but also part of their social reality, a reality constructed (in part) through discourse.

Smart's (forthcoming) discussion of climate change provides an example of the use of a term, *climate change*, and accompanying arguments to create different realities for different people. He demonstrates how both advocates and sceptics of climate change draw on their

own particular take on the work of the same person, Dr James Hansen, an outspoken climate change researcher to argue both for (the advocates) and against (the sceptics) climate change. Smart shows how advocates draw on Hansen's credentials as a leading climatologist with NASA and the standing of the journal in which he has published, *Science*, to support his argument for the irreversibility of climate change. The sceptics, however, make connections between Hansen's arguments, fiction and horror movies to argue against his point of view. Here, we have opposing discourses on the same person's work to make cases both for and against the same phenomenon.

Cameron and Kulick (2003: 29) in their discussion of the history of the terms 'gay', 'lesbian' and 'queer' provide a further example of the connections between words and the meanings that become associated with them. As they argue:

> words in isolation are not the issue. It is in *discourse* – the use of language in specific contexts – that words acquire meaning.

> Whenever people argue about words, they are also arguing about the assumptions and values that have clustered around those words in the course of their history of being used. We cannot understand the significance of any word unless we attend closely to its relationship to other words and to the discourse (indeed, the competing discourses) in which words are always embedded. And we must bear in mind that discourse shifts and changes constantly, which is why arguments about words and their meanings are never settled once and for all.

As Firth argued 'the complete meaning of a word is always contextual' (Firth 1935: 37). These meanings, however, change over time in relation to particular contexts of use and changes in the social, cultural and ideological background/s to this use.

Discourse and socially situated identities

When we speak or write we use more than just language to display who we are, and how we want people to see us. The way we dress, the gestures we use and the way/s we act and interact also influence how we display social identity. Other factors which influence this include the ways we think, the attitudes we display and the things we value, feel and believe. As Gee (2011) argues, the ways we make visible and recognizable *who* we are and *what* we are doing always involves more than just language. It involves acting, interacting and thinking in certain ways. It also involves valuing and talking (or reading and writing) in appropriate ways with appropriate 'props', at appropriate times and in appropriate places.

The Princess of Wales, for example, knows in the *Panorama* interview not only how she is expected to speak in the particular place and at the particular time but also how she should dress, how she can use body language to achieve the effect that she wants as well as the values, attitudes, beliefs and emotions it is appropriate for her to express (as well as those it is not appropriate for her to express) in this situation. That is, she knows how to enact the *discourse* of a Princess being interviewed about her private life in the open and public medium

of television. This *discourse,* of course, may be different from, but related to, the *discourses* she participated in in her role as mother of her children, and the public and private roles and identities she had as wife of the Prince of Wales. A given discourse, thus, can involve more than just the one single identity (ibid.).

Discourses, then, involve the *socially situated identities* that we enact and recognize in the different settings that we interact in. They include culture-specific ways of performing and culture-specific ways of recognizing identities and activities. Discourses also include the different styles of language that we use to enact and recognize these identities; that is, different *social languages* (Gee 1996). Discourses also involve characteristic ways of acting, interacting and feeling, and characteristic ways of showing emotion, gesturing, dressing and posturing. They also involve particular ways of valuing, thinking, believing, knowing, speaking and listening, reading and writing (Gee 2011).

Discourse and performance

As Gee explains:

> a Discourse is a 'dance' that exists in the abstract as a coordinated pattern of words, deeds, values, beliefs, symbols, tools, objects, times, and places in the here and now as a performance that is recognizable as just such a coordination. Like a dance, the performance here and now is never exactly the same. It all comes down, often, to what the 'masters of the dance' will allow to be recognised or will be forced to recognize as a possible instantiation of the dance. (36)

This notion of performance and, in particular, *performativity*, is taken up by authors such as Butler (1990, 1991, 1997, 1999, 2004), Cameron (1999), Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2003), Hall (2000) and Pennycook (2004, 2007). The notion of performativity derives from speech act theory and the work of the linguistic philosopher Austin. It is based on the view that in *saying* something, we *do* it (Cameron and Kulick 2003). That is, we bring states of affairs into being as a result of what we say and what we do. Examples of this are *I promise* and *I now pronounce you husband and wife*. Once I have said I promise I have committed myself to doing something. Once a priest, or a marriage celebrant, says *I now pronounce you husband and wife*, the couple have 'become' husband and wife. Performance, thus, brings the social world into being (Bucholtz and Hall 2003).

Butler, Cameron and others talk about doing gender in much the way that Gee talks about discourse as performance. Discourses, then, like the performance of gendered identities, are socially constructed, rather than 'natural'. People 'are who they are because of (among other things) the way they talk' not 'because of who they (already) are' (Cameron 1999: 144). We, thus, 'are not who we are because of some inner being but because of what we do' (Pennycook 2007: 70). It is, thus, 'in the doing that the identity is produced' (Pennycook 2011).

Social identities, then, are not pre-given, but are formed in the use of language and the various other ways we display who we are, what we think, value and feel, etc. The way, for

example, a rap singer uses language, what they rap about and how they present themselves as they do this, all contributes to their performance and creation of themselves as a rap singer (Pennycook 2007). They may do this in a particular way on the streets of New York, in another way in a show in Quebec, and yet another way in a night club in Seoul. As they *do* being a rap singer, they bring into existence, or repeat, their social persona as a rap singer.

Nor are we who we are because of how we (physically) look or where we were originally born. Otsuji (2010: 189) gives the example of asking a student (in a Japanese class) with an Indonesian name and Indonesian appearance 'How is it in Indonesia?' to which the student simply replied (in Japanese) 'I am Australian'. Similarly, she asks another student 'Where are you from?' to which the student replies 'Well, maybe China . . . my parents are from Shanghai but I don't know much about China. Cause I grew up here'. Otsuji's parents are ethnically Japanese. She was born, however, in the United States. She has lived in Japan, as well as in Scotland, Singapore, Holland and Australia. When she tells this to a Japanese person in a casual meeting a frequent reply is 'Then you are not Japanese'. Otsuji, however, is Japanese in appearance, she speaks Japanese, she has lived in Japan and she has strong family connections in Japan. So what, then, does it mean 'to be Japanese', or to have a 'Japanese' identity? (see Choi 2010, Otsuji 2010 for further discussions of this).

Discourse and intertextuality

All texts, whether they are spoken or written, make their meanings against the background of other texts and things that have been said on other occasions (Lemke 1992). Texts may more or less implicitly or explicitly cite other texts; they may refer to other texts, or they may allude to other past, or future, texts. We thus 'make sense of every word, every utterance, or act against the background of (some) other words, utterances, acts of a similar kind' (Lemke 1995: 23). All texts are, thus, in an *intertextual* relationship with other texts. As Bazerman (2004: 83) argues:

> We create our texts out of the sea of former texts that surround us, the sea of language we live in. And we understand the texts of others within that same sea.

Umberto Eco (1987) provides an interesting discussion of intertextuality in his chapter 'Casablanca: Cult movies and intertextual collage'. Eco points out that the film *Casablanca* was made on a very small budget and in a very short time. As a result its creators were forced to improvise the plot, mixing a little of everything they knew worked in a movie as they went. The result is what Eco (1987) describes as an 'intertextual collage'. For Eco, *Casablanca* has been so successful because it is not, in fact, an instance of a single kind of film genre but a mixing of stereotyped situations that are drawn from a number of different kinds of film genres. As the film proceeds, he argues, we recognize the film genres that they recall. We also recognize the pleasures we have experienced when we have watched these kinds of films.

Wang's (2007) study of newspaper commentaries in Chinese and English on the events of September 11 provides an example of how writers in different languages and cultural settings draw on intertextual resources for the writing of their texts and how they position themselves in relation to their sources. One of the most striking differences Wang found was that in the Chinese texts he examined the writers often drew their views from other sources but made it clear they were not the authors of the texts. They did not attempt to endorse these views or take a stance towards them, thereby keeping a distance from the views that they had presented. In the English language texts, however, the writers took the points of view they were presenting as widely held within the particular community and did not try to distance themselves from them. Wang then discusses how many of the differences he observed can be traced back to the different sociocultural settings in which the texts occurred, and especially the role of the media in the two different settings. Thus, while media discourses are often global in nature, they are, at the same time, often very local (Machin and van Leeuwen 2007) and draw on other texts for different purposes and often in rather different ways (see Paltridge and Wang 2010, 2011 for further discussion of this study).

1.3 Summary

Discourse analysis, then, considers the relationship between language and the social and cultural contexts in which it is used. It considers what people mean by what they say, how they work out what people mean and the way language presents different views of the world and different understandings. This includes an examination of how discourse is shaped by relationships between participants, and the effects discourse has upon social identities and relations.

Discourse analysis takes us into what Riggenbach (1999) calls the 'bigger picture' of language description that is often left out of more micro-level descriptions of language use. It takes us into the social and cultural settings of language use to help us understand particular language choices. That is, it takes us beyond description to explanation and helps us understand the 'rules of the game' that language users draw on in their everyday spoken and written interactions. There are many ways in which one could (and can) approach discourse analysis. What each of these ways reveals is, in part, a result of the perspective taken in the analysis, and the questions that have been asked. The aim of this book is to provide an introduction to some of these perspectives.

1.4 Discussion questions

(1) Think of examples of how people recognize your socially situated identity through your use of language. For example, in what ways does your use of language reflect your age, social class, gender, ethnic background or nationality? This might be through your use of vocabulary, your accent

or the things you talk about and how you talk about them. Try to think of specific examples of each of these.

(2) Think of a situation you have been in where someone has meant more than what they said in their use of language. For example, you may have asked someone a favour and not got a direct answer from them. How would the other person have expected you to work out their answer to your request? Or perhaps someone wanted to complain to you about something but thought it would not be polite to do this directly. How did they do this indirectly, yet still feel sure you would get the point of what they are saying?

(3) Think of rules of communication that people seem to follow when they are using language. For example what are some of the rules that students follow when talking to their teachers? Do they use a typical level of formality and typical forms of address (such as 'Sir', or 'Miss') when they speak to their teachers? Are there typical topics they talk to their teachers about, and some topics they do not talk about? Are there typical ways they start and end a conversation with a teacher? Do some of these depend on the setting in which the conversation takes place, such as in a classroom, or in the teacher's office?

(4) Think of some of the kinds of spoken or written discourse that you participate in, such as lunchtime conversations with your friends, tutorial discussions with other students or email messages to friends. What are some of the characteristic ways in which you interact in this kind of situation? How do you typically express yourself in these situations? Is the way in which you communicate the same or different in each of these situations? Why do you think this is the case?

1.5 Exercise

Exercise 1: Definitions of discourse analysis

Below are a number of definitions of the term 'discourse analysis'. Read each of these definitions and summarize the main features they list as being characteristic of discourse analysis.

Discourse analysis examines how stretches of language, considered in their full textual, social, and psychological context, become meaning and unified for their users. (Cook 1989: viii)

Discourse analysis is concerned with the study of the relationship between language and the contexts in which it is used . . . Discourse analysis is not only concerned with the description and analysis of spoken interaction . . . discourse analysts are equally interested in the organisation of written interaction. (McCarthy 1991: 12)

Discourse analysis is the analysis of language in use. Better put, it is the study of language at use in the world, not just to say things, but to do things. (Gee 2011: ix)

While some discourse analysts focus on how meaning and structure are signaled in texts, others, especially since the early 1990s, have used discourse analysis more critically to examine issue relating to power, inequality and ideology. (Baker and Ellece 2011: 32)

Discourse is language use relative to social, political and cultural formations – it is language reflecting social order but also language shaping social order, and shaping individuals' interaction with society. (Jaworski and Coupland 2006: 3)

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> Discourse analysis is not just one approach, but a series of interdisciplinary approaches that can be used to explore many different social domains in many different types of studies. (Phillips and Jorgenson 2002: 1)

1.6 Directions for further reading

Baker, P. and Ellece, S. (2011), *Key Terms in Discourse Analysis*. London: Continuum.

    This book provides a very useful set of definitions of terms in the area of discourse analysis. It also provides short biographies of key researchers as well as summaries of key books in the area of discourse analysis.

Gee, J. and Handford, M. (eds) (2011), *The Routledge Handbook to Discourse Analysis*. London: Routledge.

    This Handbook contains chapters on a wide range of areas including conversation analysis, genre analysis, corpus-based studies, multimodal discourse analysis and critical discourse analysis. Educational and institutional applications of discourse analysis are discussed as well as topics such as identity, power, ethnicity, intercultural communication, cognition and discourse.

Hall, C. J., Smith, P. H. and Wicaksono, R. (2011), *Mapping Applied Linguistics. A Guide for Students and Practitioners*. London: Routledge. Chapter 4. Discourse analysis.

    This chapter is a very accessibly written overview of discourse analysis. Topics covered include linguistic approaches to discourse analysis, social approaches to discourse analysis and current themes in discourse analysis including conversation analysis, corpus linguistics, discursive psychology, multimodality and critical discourse analysis.

Hyland, K. and Paltridge, B. (eds) (2011), *Continuum Companion to Discourse Analysis*. London: Continuum.

    This collection of chapters discusses a range of approaches and issues in researching discourse. Assumptions underlying methods and approaches are discussed as are research techniques and instruments appropriate to the goal and method of the research. The second part of the book provides an overview of key areas of discourse studies. In each chapter the authors include a sample study which illustrates the points they are making and identify resources for further reading on the particular approach or issue under discussion.

Jaworski, A. and Coupland, N. (2006), 'Introduction: Perspectives on discourse analysis', in A. Jaworski and N. Coupland (eds), *The Discourse Reader* (2nd edn). London: Routledge, pp. 1–37.

    Jaworski and Coupland's introduction to the second edition of their book provides further details on a number of topics that have been presented in this chapter. This includes definitions of the term 'discourse', traditions in the analysis of discourse, speech act theory and pragmatics, conversation analysis, and critical discourse analysis. Strengths and limitations of discourse studies are also discussed.

1.7 Useful website

A list of introductory texts on discourse analysis prepared by Teun van Dijk, editor of *Discourse & Society*, *Discourse Studies* and *Discourse & Communication*.

    www.discourses.org/introductions.pdf

For an extended list of references and further readings see the companion website to this book.