

mind that people coming from mainstream linguistics and from positivistic sociological approaches may find this type of analysis difficult to understand. This is because of its predominantly constructivist and post-structuralist basis, which encourages a very different attitude in the way data are analysed and categories are constructed as compared with traditional structuralism. Structuralist research is often geared towards finding formal features and evidence of existing «systems»,

and it predominantly contains a realist-based notion of validity. In this sense, I believe that it is necessary that critical discourse analysts develop a greater awareness of the epistemological or philosophical basis of this framework in the future. Otherwise, readers may think that they are simply dealing with another relativistic framework, which is clearly not the case.

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Jan RENKEMA, *Discourse Studies. An Introductory Textbook*. Amsterdam, Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1993. ix + 224 pages.

Renkema's book is a comprehensive and thorough introduction to discourse studies intended to familiarize students at university level with the key concepts and major issues in this field. It is subdivided in three parts, preceded by a short introductory chapter in which the author presents and outlines the main topics dealt with in the text.

Part 1 (chapters 2-5) constitutes a general introduction to the field. Thus, in chapter 2, devoted to language as verbal communication, we are introduced to Bühler's Organon model (1934), Grice's cooperative principle and conversational maxims (1975), the concept of conversational implicature, and the politeness strategies which are brought to bear when language is used. Chapter 3 is concerned with speech acts and their interpretation in discourse. A clear definition of discourse and an explanation of such essential concepts in the field as the seven standards of textuality and the various types of cohesion can be found in chapter 4. Last but not least, chapter 5 deals with the term «function» as it is used in discourse studies, while stressing its dependence on the situation in which language is used. To this end Dell Hymes' SPEAKING model (1972) is employed.

Part 2 (chapters 6-9) is an introduction to basic phenomena. Chapter 6 is devoted to propositions, macrostructures, superstructures, and topics, or, in the author's words, «the building blocks of discourse», while chapter 7 is concerned with «the cement between the blocks», namely anaphora, deixis, and the various types of discourse relations. The dichotomies written language and verbal interaction, everyday and literary language are effectively dealt with in chapter 8, and several possible discourse typologies are proposed. Finally, chapter 9 discusses the question of what «style» is and the way in which stylistic variation can be described, while providing examples of stylistic research and exploring the role of metaphor in everyday language.

Part 3 (chapters 10-12) is concerned with specific types of discourse. Hence, chapter 10 examines key concepts in the analysis of conversation, namely transcription systems (focusing on score and dramaturgical notation), the turn-taking model developed by Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1974), and various types of sequential organization (turns, adjacency pairs, three-part sequences, etc.) described by Schegloff (1977) and Mehan (1979). Chapter 11, in turn, deals with

the investigation of narration both from a socio- and a psycholinguistic perspective, while chapter 12 presents major issues in research on argumentative and persuasive language use.

Part 4 (chapters 13-17) is the most interesting section of the book, for it deals with the production and perception of discourse. Chapters 13 and 14 are devoted to the production and the derivation of information, respectively. In the former, the author discusses the three major variables in the presentation of information, namely staging, perspectivization and the management of given and new information. The theater metaphor of «staging» is used in order to explain the management of foreground and background information on the part of the writer or the speaker, while a reference is made to cinematic art to introduce the concept of perspective, i.e., the viewpoint from which a topic is dealt with, making a clear distinction between vision (the ideological perspective), focalization (the narrator's perspective), and empathy (the speaker's attitude). The main topic of chapter 14 is inference, a collective term for all possible implicit information which can be derived from a discourse, whose most significant cases, i.e., presupposition, entailment, conventional and conversational implicature, and connotation are clearly explained and exemplified. Schema theory, or the role of prior knowledge in the derivation of information, is also dealt with in this chapter.

Chapters 15 and 16 are concerned with a number of important issues in writing and reading. The former, clearly related to the presentation of information in chapter 13, is devoted to the writing process, the development of writing skills and the study of text quality. The latter comments on research into the readability of a text and the processes of discourse comprehension.

The final chapter provides a frame-

work of the main concepts introduced in the book, as well as information on major research issues such as the discourse functions of syntactic forms and how to improve text quality.

On the whole, *Discourse Studies. An Introductory Textbook* stands out as a piece of reference for anyone who is interested in or is currently working within the field of discourse studies. The book presupposes no previous knowledge of discourse analysis. However, it provides an accessible and comprehensive description of the topics which, together with the list of suggested readings and the assignments at the end of each chapter, will serve both the student, and the trainee, and the practising language teacher as a stepping-stone to more specialized reading in scientific journals and handbooks.

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