

Introduction: Discourse Analysis as a New Cross-Discipline

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HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Discourse analysis is both an old and a new discipline. Its origins can be traced back to the study of language, public speech, and literature more than 2000 years ago. One major historical source is undoubtedly classical rhetoric, the art of good speaking. Whereas the *grammatica*, the historical antecedent of linguistics, was concerned with the normative rules of correct language use, its sister discipline of *rhetorica* dealt with the precepts for the planning, organization, specific operations, and performance of public speech in political and legal settings. Its crucial concern, therefore, was persuasive effectiveness. In this sense, classical rhetoric both anticipates contemporary stylistics and structural analyses of discourse and contains intuitive cognitive and social psychological notions about memory organization and attitude change in communicative contexts.

After some important revivals in the Middle Ages and the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, however, rhetoric lost much of its importance in the curricula of schools and in academic research. The emergence of historical and comparative linguistics at the beginning of the nineteenth century and the birth of structural analysis of language at the beginning of the twentieth century replaced rhetoric as the primary discipline of the humanities. Fragments of rhetoric survived only in school textbooks of speech and communication, on one hand, and in stylistics or the study of literary language, on the other.

Yet, parallel to this decline of rhetoric as an independent academic discipline, new developments in several fields of the humanities and the social sciences took place that would eventually lead to the emergence

of discourse analysis. First, the young revolution in Russia witnessed concomitant new ideas in anthropology, poetics, and linguistics, an interdisciplinary development known under the label of "Russian formalism." Apart from research by literary scholars and linguists (and related new experiments in the theory and practice of art and film), one of the (later) most influential books of that time appeared to be *Morphology of the Folktale* by Vladimir Propp (1928, first English translation 1958). Major structural principles of early linguistics (phonology, morphology) were here paralleled with a first structural analysis of discourse, namely, the Russian folktale, in terms of a set of fixed thematic functions in which variable contents of different tales could be inserted. Although it may be arbitrary to specifically select this work in this brief historical survey, its wide-ranging though often indirect influence in the study of narrative in several disciplines (semiotics, poetics, anthropology, and psychology) 40 years later bears witness to its importance.

Indeed, part of the inspiration of (initially French) structuralism in the 1960s came through the translation of this and other work of the Russian formalists (and Czech structuralists) of the 1920s and 1930s. Lévi-Strauss' structural analysis of culture, and especially his analysis of myths, in part inspired by Propp and by the further development of structural linguistics in Europe, was at the same time one of the sources for renewal in anthropology, poetics, and other branches of the humanities and the social sciences. These early interdisciplinary developments of the middle 1960s were often captured under the new (or rather, renewed) label of "semiotics," to which is associated the names of Barthes, Greimas, Todorov, and many others engaged in the structural analysis of narrative and other discourse forms or cultural practices.

STRUCTURALISM AND THE ANALYSIS OF TEXTS (1964-1972)

Although of course historical developments are more continuous than is suggested here, it seems warranted to locate the origins of modern discourse analysis in the middle 1960s. The first publication of structural analyses of discourse in France, by some of the authors mentioned above, appeared in 1964 (*Communications* 4): a new critical analysis of Propp by Bremond, an application of modern linguistics and semantics to literature by Todorov, the well-known extension to the analysis of film by Metz, the famous rhetorical analysis of publicity pictures by Barthes, and finally, the first introduction to the new discipline of semiotics *sémiologie*, also by Barthes. This issue of *Communications* was followed 2 years later

by another special issue (*Communications* 8), which was completely dedicated to the structural analysis of narrative (with contributions by the same authors, but also by Greimas, Eco, and Genette, among others). Although the background, orientations, objects of research, and methods of all these authors were still far from homogeneous, the common interest in discourse analysis within the wider framework of a linguistically inspired semiotics influenced and provided coherence in these first attempts.

At the same time, on the other side of the ocean, 1964 also saw the publication of another influential book of readings: Hymes' *Language in Culture and Society*. Although notions such as 'discourse' or 'text' do not yet dominate the contributions to that voluminous book, there is attention to forms of 'speech', 'communication', and to specific topics such as 'forms of address', which would later develop into the discourse analytical orientation of the so-called ethnography of speaking in anthropology. Of course, there are obvious differences between this and the French brands of structuralism in the 1960s. Yet on both sides the interaction between structural linguistics and anthropology appeared to be very fruitful for the initial interest in the study of language use, discourse, and communication forms. At the same time, Hymes' collection not only contained the great names of linguistic anthropology (or anthropological linguistics), such as Boas, Greenberg, Goodenough, Lévi-Strauss, Malinowski, Firth, Sapir, and many others, but also the first collection of work from what soon would be called sociolinguistics (Brown, Bernstein, Gumperz, Bright, and others). That is, not only discourse, style, forms of address and verbal art, but also the social, cultural, and historical contexts, and the variations of language use came to be studied systematically.

From a methodological point of view, it is interesting to note that the new linguistic paradigm that also came to be established in the mid-1960s, Chomsky's generative—transformational grammar, hardly appears in this book of classics. His name is mentioned only once in the index, merely referring to a 1955 article by him, although his *Syntactic Structures* figures in the general bibliography.

One other name that appears in Hymes' collection is that of Pike, whose tagmemic approach to language and human behavior would soon also provide background for new developments in discourse analysis (Pike, 1967). The study of narratives in indigenous languages by him and his followers had always been closely related to the analysis of discourse (Grimes, 1975; Longacre, 1977).

Back in Europe again, 1964 also was the year in which the first linguistic appeals were made in favor of a so-called text linguistics or text grammar, first by Hartmann in a small paper, and soon by his students, such as

Schmidt and others in the Germanies and the surrounding countries. In Europe, more than in the United States, the original plea by Harris (1952) for a linguistic discourse analysis was taken seriously and eventually led to a new, generative—transformational approach to the grammar of discourse.

Similarly, the functional orientation of linguistics in Czechoslovakia, such as the interest in notions such as "topic" and "comment" in the study of functional sentence perspective, also provided a natural stimulus to take discourse structures into account (see for instance, the work by Palek [1968] on hyper-syntax). Ten years later, this work would be one of the sources for American work on the functional analysis of topic and the discourse dependence of grammar (Givón, 1979).

Another functional approach, finally, is characterized by the "systemic grammar" developed by Halliday (1961), in which not only the thematic organization of sentences, but also the relations between sentences and discourse, were analyzed. This work gave rise to several studies at the boundaries of linguistics, stylistics, and poetics, both by Halliday himself and by Leech and Crystal. Besides poetry, conversation, advertising, and news received systematic attention in these English studies.

From this brief historical review of the origins of modern discourse analysis, we may draw several conclusions. First, the early interest in systematic discourse analysis was essentially a descriptive and structuralist enterprise, mainly at the boundaries of linguistics and anthropology. Second, this interest primarily involved indigenous or popular discourse genres, such as folktales, myths, and stories, as well as some ritual interaction forms. Third, the functional analysis of sentence and discourse structure as well as the first attempts toward text linguistics often took place independently of or against the increasingly prevailing paradigm of generative—transformational grammars. Both the formal sophistication and the inherent limitations of this approach to language would decisively influence the development of discourse analysis and other studies of language during the 1970s.

THE EMERGENCE OF DISCOURSE ANALYSIS AS A NEW DISCIPLINE (1972-1974)

Whereas the 1960s had brought various scattered attempts to apply semiotic or linguistic methods to the study of texts and communicative events, the early 1970s saw the publication of the first monographs and collections wholly and explicitly dealing with systematic discourse analysis as an independent orientation of research within and across several disciplines.

This development, however, did not corlee alone. Part of its theoretical and methodological inspiration was shared by other paradigm shifts in the study of language, for example, a critical extension or refutation of formal, context-free transformational grammars. Thus, sociolinguistics, which had also begun to take shape in the late 1960s (Fishman, 1968), emphasized that the theoretical distinction between competence and performance, as it had been reintroduced by Chomsky (after Saussure's distinction between *langue* and *parole*), was not without problems. Against notions such as 'ideal speakers' and 'homogeneous speech community', sociolinguistic work stressed the importance of language variation in the sociocultural context. Apart from variations in phonology, morphology, and syntax, and the dependence of stylistic variation on social factors, this reorientation also soon began to pay specific attention to discourse, for example, the work of Labov (1972a, 1972b). His studies of Black English also involved analyses of forms of verbal dueling among adolescents, and his other sociolinguistic work featured analyses of natural storytelling about personal experience. This latter research was in marked contrast to the structuralist analysis of written stories mentioned above because of its interest in spoken language and the functions of discourse in the social context.

A second important development in the early 1970s was the discovery in linguistics of the philosophical work by Austin, Grice, and Searle about speech acts. Whereas sociolinguistics stressed the role of language variation and the social context, this approach considered verbal utterances not only as sentences, but also as specific forms of social action. That is, sentences when used in some specific context also should be assigned some additional meaning or function, an illocutionary one, to be defined in terms of speaker intentions, beliefs, or evaluations, or relations between speaker and hearer. In this way, not only could systematic properties of the context be accounted for, but also the relation between utterances as abstract linguistic objects and utterances taken as a form of social interaction could be explained. This new dimension added a pragmatic orientation to the usual theoretical components of language. This development of linguistics toward a study of language use also appeared in published form between 1972 and 1974 (e.g., Maas & Wunderlich, 1972; Sadock, 1974), although the integration of speech act theory and discourse analysis was to be paid attention to only some years later.

Third, within the framework of grammatical theory itself, it was repeatedly maintained that grammars should not merely provide structural characterizations of isolated sentences. This and other arguments led to the development of text grammars, mainly in the Germanies and other European countries. The study of pronouns and other cohesion markers, of semantic coherence, presupposition, topic and comment, overall se-

mantic macrostructures, and other typical features of texts, understood as sequences of sentences, began to be studied in linguistics within a new, integrated perspective. Though demonstrating a more formal point of view, this new orientation shared with sociolinguistics and pragmatics its interest for an account of the structures of actual language use. The first books in the field, after a few articles in the 1960s, also began to appear in the early 1970s (Dressler, 1972; Petófi, 1971; Schmidt, 1973; van Dijk, 1972), soon leading to a more widespread, interdisciplinary and broader study of textlinguistics and discourse, often independently in various countries (e.g., Halliday & Hasan, 1976).

At the same time psychology and the new field of artificial intelligence rediscovered discourse, after the early, and later influential, work on memory for stories by Bartlett (1932). More than other neighboring disciplines, psychology and psycholinguistics developed in the shadow of transformational grammar, so that much work was concerned with the experimental testing of the psychological reality of, for example, syntactic trees. The early 1970s brought not only a decisive breakthrough—conditioned by Chomsky, Miller, and others—of the cognitive and information processing paradigm against the prevailing behaviorism of the previous decades, but also a greater interest in semantic memory and the representation of knowledge (Carroll & Freedle, 1972; Lindsay & Norman, 1972). The extension of this cognitive research to models of memory for texts and of processes for text understanding and production was a natural step, and the collection edited by Carroll and Freedle, just mentioned, represents the first attempts in that direction. Work done by Kintsch, Bower, Rumelhart and others marked the beginnings of the psychological study of discourse (e.g., Kintsch, 1974) and at the same time demonstrated renewed interest for the earlier work by Bartlett (1932).

Artificial intelligence, the computer simulation of language understanding, at the same time started its important work about knowledge representations in memory. Thus, Charniak (1972) in his dissertation on children's stories showed the relevance of the vast amounts of world knowledge and the great numbers of knowledge-activation strategies needed for the understanding of even very simple children's stories. Bartlett's early notion of 'schema' now had the more sophisticated company of similar notions in artificial intelligence, such as 'script', 'scenario', 'Frame', in the work by Schank, Abelson, Rumelhart, and others in this new sister discipline of cognitive psychology (e.g., Schank & Abelson, 1977).

Apparently, paradigmatic shifts seldom come alone in a single discipline. The early 1970s also witnessed important developments in sociology, such as the increasing attention to the analysis of everyday conversations and other forms of natural dialogue in social interaction. Here too, the

late 1960s saw a critical refutation of the prevailing macrosociological approaches to social structure. Attention was turned to everyday social interaction and to commonsense interpretation categories at the microlevel of social reality. This interpretative, phenomenological sociology was advocated by Goffman, Garfinkel, and others. Work by the late Harvey Sacks (through his unpublished lecture notes and an occasional paper) primarily initiated and stimulated the soon quickly spreading analysis of everyday conversation. The early 1970s also saw the first published and widely read versions of this work (Cicourel, 1973; Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson, 1974; Sudnow, 1972). With this approach, the predominant interest in monological discourse genres (texts, stories, myths, etc.) had found its necessary complement. Natural, mundane, and spontaneous language use was primarily identified with conversation and other forms of dialogue in the social situation. People not only have implicit knowledge of the rules of grammar, but also of the rules of, for example, turn taking in conversation. In this respect, this conversational analysis recalls the early structural and formal approaches to the structures of sentences and provides the first elements of a grammar of verbal interaction. Thus, not only was a new dialogical dimension added to the earlier monological studies of discourse structures, but also a plea was made for the study of language and language use as a form of social interaction, as pragmatics or speech act theory had done in more formal and philosophical terms. Soon this work in sociology found its way into linguistics and other neighboring disciplines. Not only conversations but also dialogues in the classroom or in other institutional settings received extensive interest, such as in the discourse analysis approach to classroom talk by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) in England.

And finally, the circle of these independent beginnings of contemporary discourse analysis can be closed by returning again to the discipline where much of it had started in the first place: anthropology. The work by Hymes, Gumperz, and others had yielded an increasingly autonomous orientation of ethnographic research on communicative events, labeled the "ethnography of speaking" (or the "ethnography of communication"). Under the inspiration of the influential and programmatic work of Hymes in the 1960s, new theories and fieldwork were collected in two readers (Bauman & Scherzer, 1974; Gumperz & Hymes, 1972). The boundaries between the sociolinguistics of discourse and this new branch of anthropology were fuzzy: the study of "real" language use in the sociocultural context no longer stopped at form of address, rituals, or myth, but also began to pay attention to the mundane forms of talk in different cultures, such as greetings, spontaneous storytelling, formal meetings, verbal dueling, and other forms of communication and verbal interaction.

CONCLUSION

This brief survey of the emergence of new directions in the study of language use and discourse at the beginning of the 1970s shows that there was both continuity and change with respect to the previous decade. Formal sentence grammars had been challenged from several sides and were at least complemented with new ideas about language use, linguistic variation, speech acts, conversation, other dialogues, text structures, communicative events, and their cognitive and social contexts. Most of the paradigmatic shifts in the various language disciplines also brought a natural extension toward discourse phenomena. And soon, this common interest in the respective disciplines led to a more integrated, autonomous, and interdisciplinary study of discourse in the following decade (1974-1984). Work during this decade is exemplified and reviewed in the respective chapters of this first volume of the *Handbook of Discourse Analysis*, which itself may be interpreted as a signal of the independence and autonomy of the new cross-discipline.

Whereas the respective chapters of this volume pay detailed attention to the major notions, theories, results, and some of the historical background of current discourse analysis, this introduction has shown the sources, contacts, and early interdisciplinary work of the 1960s that led to the current approaches that emerged in several countries at the beginning of the 1970s. Much of the still burgeoning variety of orientations, methods, characteristic objects of research (e.g., genres of discourse or dimensions of context), and styles of theory formation and description finds its origin in the different historical backgrounds of each of the disciplines engaged. Thus, conversational analysis and interaction theories in many respects had to develop as an anti-(macro-)sociology, text grammar as a antisentence grammar, speech act theory as an antigrammar *tout court*, and much of current psychology and sociology of language as antilinguistics. Much formal rigor and theoretical sophistication had to be temporarily bracketed out in order to formulate completely new approaches, to set out new areas of research, and to introduce new and sometimes strange notions. But from the initial paradigm shifts briefly described above, we now seem to have entered the stage of normal science for the field of discourse analysis. The chapters of this volume provide ample evidence for this view of the field, as well as introductions and a description of the current state of insights into the structures and functions of discourse and its contexts. Yet 10 or maybe 20 years after the first modern studies of discourse is not much, and it will therefore also be apparent that the discipline is still in the first stage of its normal development.

In the meantime, the four or five central disciplines of discourse have received company elsewhere. In the field of law studies it has been

realized that much of its object domain, such as laws, legal (inter-)action, and legal documents, has a textual or dialogical nature. The same holds for history and historiography, of which both the sources and the products are mostly texts and, more recently, also oral discourse forms. The study of mass communication, dealing with mass-mediated messages and their conditions of production and reception, also is developing from early content analysis to more sophisticated discourse analysis of media texts and talk. Here, as well as in semiotics, the relation between discourse and pictures, photographs, or film also are systematically analyzed. Poetics, interested in literary texts but also in dramatic dialogue, has been closely associated with the structuralist beginnings of discourse analysis and continues to be influenced by it. Clinical psychology has paid attention to therapeutic discourse, and social psychology to the interaction of cognitive and social aspects of persuasive communication and attitude change, to the situational analysis of verbal interaction, and to the

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It is not difficult to continue this list of social sciences that have, since the 1970s, paid attention to text and talk. Some of these disciplines are also presented in this volume; others—such as the political analysis of discourse—receive more specific attention in later volumes. It may be expected, thus, that in the 1980s discourse analysis will on the one hand lead to further integration and expansion, while on the other hand it will differentiate into inevitable specialization.

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This list of references is merely a selective bibliography of the major works and names of the people mentioned in this historical survey of the emergence of discourse analysis. Further references and bibliographic details of the historical backgrounds in the respective disciplines can be found in the following chapters.

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