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# MAKING SENSE OF DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

BRIAN PALTRIDGE

SERIES EDITOR: JILL BURTON

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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,

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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.

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## 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  
Series Editor

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It clearly makes sense to raise students' awareness of the importance of discourse competence when communicating in the target language. With an understanding of the characteristics of discourse analysis, language teachers can use discourse analytical techniques to help students investigate their patterns of interaction so as to improve their communicative competence. The purpose of this article is to discuss key concepts of discourse analysis and recommend feasible solutions to help Vietnamese students successfully communicate in English. Background. Detailed information on discourse analysis... Firstly, we describe what 'discourse analysis' is, mapping the discourse analysis terrain by discussing four studies relevant to primary care to illustrate different methodological approaches and key concepts. We then address the practicalities of how to actually do discourse analysis, providing readers with a worked example using one particular approach. Thirdly, we touch on some common debates about discursive research. We conclude by advocating that researchers and practitioners take up the challenge of understanding, utilizing and extending the field of discourse studies within f