

ANNA'S DISCOURSE ANALYSIS TOOLKIT:

DISCOURSE ANALYSTS ARE AS INTERESTED IN WHAT PEOPLE DO NOT SAY AS WHAT THEY DO, COULD HAVE SAID BUT DIDN'T - SOME UNITS OF ANALYSIS IN DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

Deixis “pointing elements.” reveal contextual information about speaker/hearer and their relationship
Adverbs about time and place: *here/there; then/now; up/down;*
Verbs and tenses that give info about the vantage point of the speaker: *go/come; went/came*

Referring Terms –Who are the other people in the story world? What are they called? What kind of categories? Who is a member? what were the other naming options? What are the different identities that the different terms index? *Pronouns*: inclusive vs. exclusive: *I* vs. *we*, *you* vs. *us*, *us* vs. *them* THINK, difference in saying “that lady” vs. “Mother” vs. “Mommy” “Ma”

Discourse Markers – e.g.s *oh, well, so, but, then, and, or, you know, I mean*

These “little words” break our speech up into parts and show the relation between parts. They help organize the sequence and relationship between utterances, give information as to the speaker’s attitude to the hearer, to the information, and to the world. Each also operates at and attends to different “planes” of discourse.

Constructed Dialogue – giving voice to the speech of people who are depicted as taking part in events
May represent something that wasn’t said, inner speech, the inner speech of others,
Key idea: The way that you present their speech usually gives information about how you feel about it.

Repetition - full/ partial; self/other; diachronic/synchronic (other time, place, person)

you can repeat: word, phrase, phonemes (alliteration), intonation, stress, pitch, voice quality, dialect, Rhetorical functions of repetition - think of MLK’s “I have a dream” speech

Frame - language always comes with a "frame" a sense for “what is going on here?” For George Lakoff (who studies messaging in the political sphere) every word is defined relative to a conceptual framework, think of “illegal immigration,” which he very aptly points out is a label that is “anything but neutral.” (classic cognitive linguistic example: *Don’t Think of an Elephant* - makes everyone think of an elephant.) Similarly, the word “illegal” invokes a legal frame, when indeed immigration could just as easily be defined as an employment problem, a civil rights issue, and a humanitarian concern. Framing the issue as a legal one defines immigration in a very particular way, constrains the discussion around the issue, and ultimately limits the solutions that may then be found to address it.

Footing- the changing alignments that participants are continually taking up toward one another as interaction unfolds. Questions of footing and framing are dynamic and apply both to speaker and hearer

Positioning - Positionings are “the meanings of a person’s actions are the acts they are used to perform. But those acts come into being only in so far as they are taken as such by conversational partners. ... I don’t and indeed can’t decide what my actions mean. Only you and I can do that. The investigation of the devices by which some people can manage to get you to give my meaning to what both of us say and do is the study of power.” (Harré, 1997: 182)