



# Interpreting Across Settings: Discourse Analysis

Kyiv, Ukraine

Debra Russell 2013-03-14

## Beginnings

- Welcome
- Thank you
- Introductions:
  - When I think about interpreting, I am most concerned about (Insert one word)

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## Guidelines for Today

- No such thing as a dumb question
- Respect for all contributions and work
- Take responsibility for own learning
- Sharing the talking space
- Other guidelines?

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## Conference Themes



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## Legal, Education, Healthcare

- What is the common factor across all settings?
- Demands may differ. Controls may differ (Dean & Pollard, 2004)
- Critical element: how we understand what people are doing with language in the interaction
- Interpreters: must hone discourse analysis skills in order to work effectively in any setting
- Life long process

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## What is Discourse & Text Analysis?

- Small Groups - 6 minutes
- Brainstorm: What does discourse analysis mean to you? What is text analysis?
- Report back to large group

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## What are texts?

- Written text
- Prepared text
- Signed or spoken text, spontaneously generated

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## What is Discourse?

- The way we talk about what we choose to talk about (Hatch, 1992)
- Discourse = any coherent set of utterances within a specific communicative context through use of language

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## Discourse & Interpreting

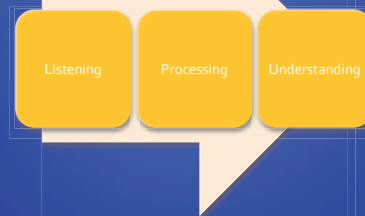
- Wadensjo, 1988:
- “Interpreting is the task of trying to find out what meaning participants give to specific words, phrases and stretches of talk that make sense to different participants in situated events.”

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## So what's the process of discourse analysis?

Effective interpreting means:



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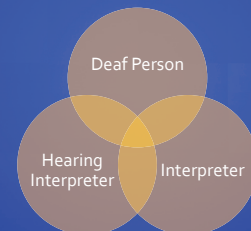
## Discourse and Text Analysis

- **Discourse:**
  - Participant goals
  - Social relationships
  - Shared knowledge
  - Conversational mechanisms
  - Discourse type
  - Discourse structure
- **Text:**
  - Sounds & letters
  - Lexical Choices
  - Grammatical features
  - Text or discourse functions

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## Co-Construction of Meaning



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## Why do I Have to Know This?

- Interpreters must understand discourse processes, and know/recognize ways of using language
- Most common error pattern on screening tools and certification exams - lack of text analysis skills
- Many interpreters- little or no training in text analysis or looking at meanings and functions within layers of context
- "Learn as many signs as you can and then sign them as fast as you can!"

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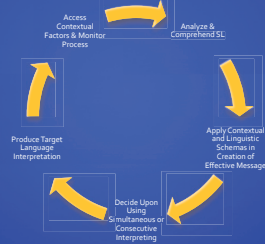
## What's the big deal?

- Without discourse and text analysis skills we skip stages of a process model of interpretation and achieve skopos (function/purpose)
- Ex: Colonomos (CRP)
  - Concentrating
  - Visualizing/Representing
  - Planning

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## Russell Meaning-Based Model (2002)



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## Focus of this Workshop

- Creating Successful Interpretations: The Role of Discourse & Text Analysis
- Apply discourse analysis strategies as tools for creating effective translation work
  - Translation skills support effective interpreting work
  - Use a 10 step model in our practice – through mentorship, courses, workshop, self-study

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## Listening for meaning

SURE, I' LL GO..

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## Context

We can hear all the words, or see all the signs,  
and still not get what is meant.

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## In response to...

"Gee, I have a ticket I can't use for the soccer game. Anyone want it?" ...said to an ardent Ukrainian soccer fan

"We're all out of milk, dear. Can you run to the store and get some?" ...said to a tired office worker who just arrived home after a long commute

"If you don't go to AA, I'm leaving you!" ...said to a spouse who doesn't want to lose a relationship...and also doesn't want to stop drinking.

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## Listening & Comprehension Challenges

- Context Features
- Task Features
- Text Features

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## Translation

- No written form of Signed Languages
- Sight translation (forms, letters, documents)
- [Code of Ethics - CoEGPC 3.0 - AVLIC](#)
- Permanent Text available

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## Applying Discourse Analysis

Tools and Techniques

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## Text Genres

- 4 typical kinds of interactions
- Inquiry
- Narrative
- Expository
- Persuasive

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## Text or Discourse Functions

- Inquiry - elicit a response; interviews
- Narrative - recount a series of events chronologically; informational
- Expository - explanatory; seeks to provide information required in a particular circumstance; contrast perspectives
- Persuasive - attempts to influence conduct of listener

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## Recognize the Genre

- By recognizing the genre we increase our awareness of the goals of participants and the typical kinds of linguistic structures that will be used
- We also recognize the features within the utterances that lead us through the discourse event

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## Apply to Many Settings

- Medical - instructions, exam
- Legal- narrative, argumentative, persuasive
- Employment - narrative, procedural, explanatory, argumentative, interrogative
- Education - all of the above!

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## Choose a Genre

With a partner, create a 2 minute presentation in USL

- Persuasive (2 groups)
- Narrative (2 minutes)
- Argumentative (2 groups)
- Explanatory (2 minutes)

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## Influence of Context on Discourse & Meaning

- Context: information that surrounds the message
- Understanding full intent of message must consider context in which message is framed and expressed
- Context: 3 parts:
  - participants, setting, purpose

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## Context: Participants

### Individuals

- Who & the state of being:
  - Physical
  - Temporary
  - Permanent

### Relationships

- Real & perceived
  - Impacts comfort, openness & manner in which messages will be constructed (Isham, 1985)

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## Other Factors Influencing Individuals

- General knowledge
- Expectations from the interaction
- Cultural awareness
- World views

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## Context: Setting

- Physical setting – church, temple different than school, court, workplace, social setting
- Time aspects – time of day &/or week, time of year – “due to the holiday...”
- Other people present in interaction – active or bystanders

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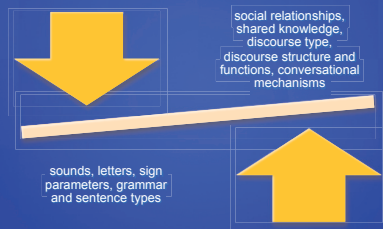
## Context: Purpose/Skopos

- Motivating factor that stimulates communication interaction
- Purpose: what people are trying to do; what the interaction is about
- Skopos: purpose within utterances and within interaction

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## Context: Top Down/Bottom Up



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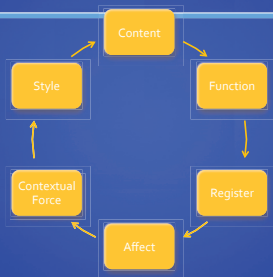
## Discourse Analysis Requires

- Distinguishing and considering the component parts of a message in order to understand the whole of the message (Witter-Merithew, 1987)
- Systematical approach to look at what we say and how we say it

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## Effective Interpreting Parameters



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## Apply Parameters

- INSERT USL MOVIE

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## Another Tool: 10 Step Model

- Step 1: Predict
  - Step 2: View and Recall
  - Step 3: Content map
  - Step 4: Salient Linguistic Features
  - Step 5: Abstraction
  - Step 6: Retell in SL
  - Step 7: Salient Features in TL
  - Step 8: Mapping
  - Step 9: Retell in TL
  - Step 10: Interpretation
- Witter-Merithew, Taylor, & Johnson (2002)

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## Step One: Prediction

- Context...legal, educational, healthcare
- Prediction skills – based on our knowledge, schemas, prep information

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## Step 2: View and Recall

- View the text; Don't take notes – just take in
- Then, randomly recall what was discussed in the text
- Record in visual manner
- Compare to your first brainstorm
- These two steps focus on:
  - attending to the message, working on processing skills, chunking of information, and development of memory

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## Step 2: View & Recall

- Add USL movie clip

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## Step 3 – Content Mapping

- Creation of a visual representation – think of mind mapping, webbing, charting, tree icon
- Themes, main ideas, supporting idea, supporting details
- Use pictures, symbols, icons, colour
- Goal: visual representation of relationship between ideas to the topic

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## Step 4: Abstraction

- Theme?
- Take Away Message?
- One sentence - KERNAL

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## Step 5: Retell

- With partner, retell passage in USL

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## Step Six

### Identify Source Language Salient Linguistic Features

- Content map WHAT
- SLF more about HOW
- Prosody: Features of language that make it sound/look natural
  - Prosody – conveys style, mood, manner, purpose
- Coherence: what features create cohesion across topics

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### SLF: specific importance to understanding overall meaning of text

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Lexical Choices</li><li>● Use of Space</li><li>● Cohesive devices/ Discourse Markers</li><li>● Use of repetition</li><li>● Constructed Action</li><li>● Use of CL</li><li>● Body Movement</li><li>● Rhythm</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● NMS</li><li>● Listing</li><li>● Pacing</li><li>● Pausing/emphasis</li><li>● Fingerspelling</li><li>● Poetic devices</li><li>● Affect/intensifiers</li><li>● Register</li><li>● Affect</li></ul> |
|--|---|

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## Cohesion

- Lexical Cohesion & Semantic Intent
  - Why were the words/signs chosen?
  - What do they mean in the context of this interaction?
- Cohesion
  - How do these utterances connect?
  - Role of discourse markers
- Coherence
  - What are they doing in this interaction?
  - We use our knowledge of the world (schemata) and knowledge of context to achieve meaning

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## Information Structure

- Often moves from presentation of known and unknown information
- Old information ..... New Information
- Topic + Comment
- Interactive Discourse – Adjacency Pairs; turns between two people
  - How are you?
  - Fine thanks.

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## Turn-Taking in Conversation

- Culture-Specific differences
  - Openings
  - Closings
  - Length of turns
  - Length of pauses
  - Right to interrupt
  - Overlapping utterances
  - Topics Changes
  - Repairs or completion of each others' utterances

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## Step 7: Retell in TL

- With partner, retell in TL (Spoken Ukrainian)

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## Step 8: Identify Target Language SLF

- Think about Isham parameters

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## Step 9: Consecutive Interpretation or Translation

- With partner, tell me when to pause video;
- Produce interpretation in that pause

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## Step 10: Simultaneous Interpretation

- With partner, provide simultaneous interpreting...

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## Role Plays

- Groups of 4 people
- One Deaf, one hearing, one Teacher/lawyer/doctor, One observer
- 8 minute interaction
- Observer: Take tools from today determine elements
- Feedback – positive for interpreter

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## Wrapping Up

- What is discourse
- Why important for us as interpreters
- Tools – Isham; Witter-Merithew, Russell
- Features of Language and Interactio

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## Taking Time to Reflect

- Individual reflection – 2 minute Quick Write
- Join a small group, share your thoughts
- Return to Large group
- Prompts....
  - I am so excited about learning \_\_\_\_\_
  - I am still confused about \_\_\_\_\_
  - A goal I am setting for myself in relation to this workshop is...

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## Questions & Comments

- Take Away Message?
- Thank you!
- Contact me: [Debra.russell@ualberta.ca](mailto:Debra.russell@ualberta.ca)

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