

Interpreter-Mediated Discourse

Critical Perspectives and Approaches

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To my esteemed mentor, Prof. Dr. Aymil Doğan, with enduring gratitude for her inspiration and lasting influence on my academic journey.

Preface

The publication of *Discourse Analysis in Dialogue Interpreting* (Özsöz, 2025a) was motivated by a simple observation: dialogue interpreting cannot be adequately understood if it is treated merely as the transfer of linguistic content between languages. Rather, it is a form of discourse-mediated social interaction in which interpreters participate in the co-construction of meaning, the support of interactional management, and the accomplishment of institutional activities. That volume sought to introduce readers to the principal discourse-analytic traditions that have informed dialogue interpreting research, particularly pragmatics, multimodality, and conversation analysis, while demonstrating how these approaches can illuminate the interpreter's role beyond questions of linguistic equivalence.

Although the response to that work has been highly encouraging, writing it also made me increasingly aware of another gap in the literature. While discourse-oriented approaches have significantly enriched our understanding of interpreter-mediated interaction, much less attention has been paid to the critical dimensions of discourse. Questions concerning power, ideology, institutional authority, legitimacy, symbolic domination, identity construction, and the reproduction of social inequalities remain comparatively underexplored within dialogue interpreting studies. Existing research has undoubtedly addressed many of these issues individually, yet there is still no comprehensive volume that systematically brings together critical approaches to interpreter-mediated discourse or demonstrates how they can be applied to authentic interpreting data.

This book is an attempt to address that gap.

Rather than treating interpreters solely as linguistic mediators or interactional coordinators, this volume examines interpreters as participants in the production, negotiation, and circulation of institutional discourse. Interpreter-mediated encounters do not simply transmit pre-existing meanings; they actively shape how institutional realities are constructed, how authority is exercised, how knowledge is legitimized, and how interlocutors position themselves and others within particular social and institutional contexts. Consequently, interpreter interventions cannot always be understood merely in terms of accuracy or fidelity. They must also be examined as discourse practices embedded within broader structures of power and ideology.

The objective of this volume is therefore twofold. First, it introduces the principal critical traditions that have influenced discourse studies and discusses their relevance for dialogue interpreting research. Second, and perhaps more importantly, it demonstrates how these perspectives can be operationalized in the analysis of authentic interpreter-mediated interaction.

In the final chapter of the book, theoretical discussion is accompanied by practical analytical applications. Rather than presenting critical theories as abstract intellectual traditions, the chapter illustrates how their concepts can be employed to investigate real interpreter-mediated encounters, enabling readers to move from theoretical understanding to empirical analysis. In doing so, the book is intended not only as an introduction to critical perspectives but also as a methodological resource for researchers seeking to examine interpreter-mediated discourse through different analytical lenses.

Although each theoretical perspective offers a distinct way of understanding discourse, they share a common assumption: discourse is never neutral. If discourse is socially situated, institutionally organized, and ideologically shaped, interpreter-mediated discourse cannot be exempt from these dynamics. Interpreters inevitably participate in the production of institutional realities, whether by managing interaction, negotiating participation frameworks, shaping knowledge, or mediating competing discourses. Recognizing this does not diminish the professionalism or ethical responsibilities of interpreters; rather, it provides a richer and more realistic understanding of the complexity of their work.

It is my hope that this volume will contribute to the continued development of what may be regarded as a critical turn in dialogue interpreting studies. More importantly, I hope it will encourage researchers to explore interpreter-mediated discourse not only as interaction, but also as a site where language, power, institutions, ideology, and social practice intersect.

If the previous volume invited readers to ask *how* interpreters participate in discourse, this book invites them to ask *why* that participation matters.

Burak Özsöz

Istanbul, October, 2026

CHAPTER 1.

FROM DISCOURSE TO CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES

Introduction

This chapter introduces the main concepts needed to approach discourse from critical perspectives. It begins by examining the relationship between *text* and *discourse*, distinguishing written and spoken language and considering how linguistic form relates to communicative function. It then moves from the sentence to the utterance, with attention to speech acts and the role of inference in the construction of meaning. The discussion then turns to the broader context in which language is used, first considering context as a network of relations and then looking at the particular features of institutional interaction.

The final part of the chapter considers four concepts that connect discourse practices with wider social processes: *identity*, *power*, *agency*, and *ideology*. These concepts draw attention to how participants are positioned in interaction, how their participation is shaped by unequal relations and different forms of agency, and how discourse relates to broader systems of meaning. They are not discussed here within a single theoretical framework. Instead, the aim is to show why they matter for the study of discourse. The following chapter takes these concepts further by examining them through specific critical approaches and theoretical frameworks.

1.1. Text & Discourse

The nature of discourse, the ways in which it should be analysed, and its relationship to text have long been subjects of debate among scholars working from different theoretical perspectives. While some use the terms text and discourse synonymously, others distinguish between them primarily on the basis of the functions they serve. Widdowson (2007, p. 6), for instance, suggests that a text is the use of language for a specific purpose, arguing that it is this communicative purpose that constitutes the discourse underlying the text. House (2015) adopts a more philosophical perspective, describing discourse as the meaningful communicative act that a speaker or writer intends to perform in a particular social context. As she puts it, “[t]he text is, as it were, the linguistic trace in the speech

or writing of a person's intended discourse" (p. 358). Although not intended literally, the metaphor of a trace effectively illustrates the idea that text is the linguistic residue of discourse, the verbal evidence that a communicative event has taken place. In a broader account, Schiffrin (2003, p. 1) extends the notion of discourse beyond language above the sentence level to encompass broader social practices through which power relations and ideological meanings are (re)produced and contested. From this perspective, discourse is not simply a linguistic phenomenon but a socially situated practice shaped by the contexts in which it occurs.

Discourse analysis is therefore concerned not merely with language itself, but with the relationship between language, context, and communicative function. As Paltridge (2012, p. 1) argues, it investigates the relationship between what people say, the situations in which they say it, and what their linguistic choices accomplish. In light of the distinction between text and discourse, discourse analysis may be understood as the systematic study of how texts realize discourse in particular communicative situations. It asks questions such as: (i) Why was this particular linguistic form chosen? (ii) How do historical, institutional, cultural, and interactional contexts shape its interpretation? (iii) What social action does this utterance perform? and (iv) How does it construct social relationships and identities while reflecting, reinforcing, or challenging existing relations of power?

These questions come from different linguistic traditions, but they share an understanding of discourse as language used in context rather than as an isolated grammatical object. Several concepts are particularly important here. One is the distinction between sentence and utterance, which draws attention to the difference between grammatical structure and language in actual use. Another is context, since linguistic choices cannot be fully understood without considering the situational, institutional, cultural, and interactional circumstances in which discourse takes place. Speech acts treat utterances as forms of social action through which speakers may request, promise, apologize, persuade, or refuse while also shaping relationships between participants. These concepts show that discourse analysis is concerned not only with what language means, but also with what people do with language and how they use it to interact with others. They also prepare the ground for the critical perspectives on discourse discussed in the remainder of this chapter.

1. 1. 1. Two Modes of Discourse: Written & Spoken

Once the distinction between text and discourse has been established, the comparison is more accurately framed in terms of *spoken* and *written discourse* rather than *spoken* and *written text*. This is because the contrast concerns not merely the medium through which language is realized, but also the communicative conditions under which discourse unfolds. Consequently, although spoken and written discourse draw on the same linguistic system, each mode exhibits distinctive linguistic, interactional, and semiotic characteristics that reflect the different communicative conditions under which it occurs.

Unlike writers and readers, speakers and hearers typically share the same temporal and physical environment, enabling them to orient continuously to one another's verbal and non-verbal conduct as the interaction unfolds. This co-presence allows participants to adjust their contributions in response to emerging communicative needs, making spoken discourse highly responsive to the immediate interactional context. Contrary to the common assumption that spoken discourse is less organized than written discourse, it is more appropriately understood as being differently organized. Rather than conforming to the structural conventions typically associated with written texts, spoken interaction is governed by systematic principles of turn-taking, sequence organization, and repair, through which participants accomplish coherent interaction (Sacks et al., 1974; Schegloff, 2007). Features commonly associated with the spontaneity of speech, such as incomplete utterances, false starts, repetitions, and reformulations, should therefore not be interpreted as signs of disorganization but as natural consequences of language being planned and produced in real time. Speakers may revisit their own utterances to resolve problems of formulation or understanding through repair, either on their own initiative or in response to their interlocutors. Whereas other-initiated repair demonstrates the availability of immediate feedback, self-initiated repair reflects speakers' continuous monitoring and revision of their own contributions throughout the interaction. Spoken discourse is also generally less lexically dense and syntactically elaborate than written discourse, as interlocutors can rely on their shared physical and situational context instead of encoding all relevant information explicitly in language.

The interactional characteristics described above, however, should not be regarded as fixed properties of spoken discourse. Rather, they are shaped by the social and institutional contexts in which communication takes place. In every-

day conversation, participants generally enjoy considerable flexibility in managing topics, allocating turns, and negotiating the direction of the interaction. Institutional settings, by contrast, impose normative and procedural constraints that orient participants toward the accomplishment of specific tasks and objectives. As a result, interaction becomes more goal-directed, participants' rights and obligations are more clearly defined, and contributions are expected to conform to institutional procedures and participants' role-specific expectations. Although institutional discourse retains the collaborative nature of spoken interaction, its organization is adapted to the communicative purposes of the institution. Consequently, institutional talk often becomes more explicit and, in many contexts, more lexically and syntactically elaborated than ordinary conversation. The organization of spoken discourse is therefore determined not only by the affordances of the spoken mode itself but also by the normative frameworks governing particular institutional encounters.

A further important distinction between spoken and written discourse concerns the semiotic resources through which communication is accomplished. Unlike written discourse, which relies primarily on linguistic signs represented through graphic conventions such as typography and punctuation, spoken discourse draws on a wide range of multimodal resources in addition to spoken language. These include prosodic features, bodily orientation, gaze behaviour, posture, gestures, facial expressions, and other forms of non-verbal conduct that complement verbal communication and provide interlocutors with valuable cues for interpreting one another's communicative intentions. As Günay (2004, p. 100) observes, one of the defining characteristics of human interaction is the tendency to support speech through additional semiotic resources, including intonation, facial expressions, and bodily actions. The multimodal nature of spoken discourse thus extends communicative possibilities beyond the verbal channel alone, making meaning-making an inherently multisemiotic accomplishment.

1. 2. Relating Form and Function

The relationship between linguistic form and communicative function provides one of the fundamental points of departure for understanding language in use. Across different linguistic traditions, scholars have consistently emphasized that language serves more than a single communicative purpose. Jakobson (1960), for instance, distinguished between the referential and emotive functions of language, arguing that linguistic expressions simultaneously convey information

about the world while expressing speakers' attitudes and emotions. Halliday (1970), likewise, proposed that language fulfils both ideational and interpersonal functions, serving not only to represent experience but also to establish and negotiate social relationships. Within discourse analysis, Brown and Yule (1983), in their seminal work *Discourse Analysis*, similarly distinguished between the *transactional* and *interactional* functions of language, arguing that "communication simultaneously involves the exchange of propositional content and the management of interpersonal relations" (pp. 1-3). Although these perspectives differ in terminology and theoretical orientation, they converge in recognizing that linguistic forms cannot be fully understood independently of the communicative functions they perform. While subsequent developments have considerably broadened the scope of discourse studies, this fundamental insight continues to underpin contemporary approaches¹ to language in use.

In this sense, discourse analysis is concerned with language as it is used in communication rather than as an abstract system of grammatical structures. Its objective is not merely to describe linguistic forms but to explain how those forms are employed to accomplish communicative purposes in particular social situations. This does not imply that linguistic form is of secondary importance or should be disregarded. On the contrary, communicative functions are necessarily realized through linguistic forms. Rather than treating grammatical structure as an end in itself, discourse analysis examines how speakers strategically select and organize linguistic resources to achieve particular communicative goals.

Understanding this relationship requires moving beyond the sentence as the primary unit of grammatical analysis and examining language as it functions in naturally occurring discourse. The following sections therefore introduce closely related concepts that constitute the analytical foundations of discourse studies: the distinction between sentence and utterance, the sequential organization of discourse, and the notion of speech acts as communicative action. Together, these concepts demonstrate how discourse analysis shifts the analytical focus from the formal properties of language to the communicative work accomplished through language in use.

¹ Representative examples include interactional approaches associated with Gumperz (1982) and Schegloff (2007), as well as pragmatic and critical approaches represented by Levinson (1983) and Fairclough (1992).

1. 2. 1. *From Sentence to Utterance*

In their discussion of the distinction between *sentences* and *utterances*, Brown and Yule (1983, p. 19) associate the former with abstract grammatical description and the latter with language as used in a particular context. This distinction, however, does not mean that sentences correspond to written discourse and utterances to spoken discourse. Rather, it concerns different ways of analysing language: while a sentence can be treated as an abstract linguistic entity whose structure and meaning are considered independently of a particular occasion of use, an utterance draws attention to the relationship between the speaker and the context in which language is produced and interpreted. In this sense, spoken discourse is more usefully approached through utterances, since meaning in spoken interaction depends not only on linguistic form but also on contextual and interactional resources.

Moreover, an utterance need not constitute a complete or grammatically well-formed sentence. As Levinson (1983, p. 18) notes, an utterance may consist of a sentence analogue or a sentence fragment, as might be expected in everyday conversation, which often comprises grammatically incomplete fragments. In other words, utterances should not be reduced to instances of complete grammatical sentences because, particularly in spoken interaction, participants routinely rely on fragments, contextual information, and preceding or subsequent talk to construct meaning. In an elliptical utterance, for instance, some information is left unspoken because the context makes it recoverable. To demonstrate that grammatical incompleteness does not entail communicative incompleteness, consider the following example:

Example 1. "A: Have you finished the report?
B: Not yet."

Here, "Not yet" is an elliptical utterance. Its propositional content can be reconstructed as "I have not finished the report yet." However, the speaker does not need to produce the complete sentence because the preceding question makes the omitted information readily recoverable. This leads us to consider the sequential organization of discourse, that is, how utterances occur in sequences.

An utterance, therefore, is best understood not as an isolated linguistic unit but as a contribution to an unfolding interaction, in which each contribution is

shaped by and responsive to what has preceded it while also providing a basis for what follows. Its significance derives not solely from its verbal content but from its relationship to other participants' contributions and to the wider interactional context. This relationship may be established through spoken language as well as through silence and other semiotic resources, such as prosodic features. Accordingly, the analysis of utterances should attend less to the formal properties of an expression in isolation and more to how it functions within the ongoing social encounter. Meaning thus emerges through the position an utterance occupies and the work it performs within a dynamically organized sequence of communication.

An utterance may consist of a single word, a sentence, or several sentences, depending on where and how it is used. While a sentence can be examined in terms of how one concept is positioned in relation to another and how it is grammatically structured, the individual words within an utterance are not autonomous; their meaningfulness and validity depend on the particular situation in which they occur (Doğan, 2014, p. 49; Günay, 2004, p. 169). An utterance should therefore be considered in relation to the act of *enunciation*, that is, the moment and circumstances in which it is produced. This situation can be understood as a configuration involving elements such as the speaking time, place, speaker, and addressee, as reflected, for instance, in deictic expressions such as *I*, *now*, and *here*. Unlike a sentence, therefore, the meaning and function of the linguistic elements constituting an utterance cannot be fully understood independently of the situation in which they are produced.

Viewed from this perspective, no utterance is identical to another, even when the utterances are structurally identical, because the defining characteristics of each utterance emerge in relation to the time and place of its production and the situation in which the speaker and addressee are situated. In other words, while a sentence can be understood as an abstract linguistic unit constructed according to particular grammatical rules, an utterance can be defined as language use realized by a particular speaking subject for a particular purpose, sometimes through a single word, sometimes through a sentence fragment, and sometimes through several sentences used together.

1. 2. 2. *Speech Acts and Inferential Meaning*

Utterances are, as discussed in the previous section, actual instances of language use between a speaker and an addressee, whose interpretation cannot be separated from the particular communicative event in which they are produced. Unlike sentences, which can be treated as abstract and potentially repeatable linguistic forms, utterances are situated acts of language use through which speakers may accomplish different actions, even when the linguistic forms they produce are identical. This shift from viewing language primarily in terms of the internal structure of sentences to considering language in use reflects a broader development in linguistic thought. During the first half of the twentieth century, linguistic inquiry was largely concerned with describing the internal structure of sentences and the grammatical systems of languages. As attention increasingly extended beyond the sentence, Harris (1952) called for the analysis of discourse as language extending beyond individual sentences. From a different philosophical tradition, Austin (1962) and Searle (1969) likewise shifted attention from the formal properties of linguistic expressions to the actions performed through their use. This performative dimension of language use forms the basis of speech act theory, first systematically developed by Austin (1962) and subsequently elaborated by Searle (1969).

Austin (1962) drew attention to the action-oriented dimension of language, showing that utterances do not merely communicate information or describe states of affairs but can also be used to perform actions such as promising, warning, ordering, and apologizing. Austin (1962) thus reconceptualized utterances as forms of social action rather than merely as vehicles for the transmission of meaning. In this sense, speakers can accomplish socially meaningful acts through words without necessarily engaging in any corresponding physical activity. Such acts are made possible by socially established conventions and structures that shape how participants relate to one another and conduct their interactions. The term *speech act* consequently refers to an utterance considered in terms of the social action it performs or is intended to perform.

Austin (1962) further developed this action-oriented view by challenging the assumption that meaningful language is primarily concerned with describing states of affairs that can be evaluated as true or false. He distinguished between *constative utterances*, which are concerned with representing or asserting something, and *performative utterances*, through which an action is accomplished in

the very act of speaking (pp. 1-11). Thus, whereas a constative utterance may be assessed in terms of truth or falsity, a performative utterance is evaluated in terms of whether the action it enacts is appropriately performed under the relevant social and contextual conditions. The distinction can be illustrated by the following example:

Example 2. "I promise you, there will be a price to pay if this happens again."

Despite the presence of the performative verb *promise*, the utterance functions less as a promise than as a warning or threat. It thus shows that the action performed by an utterance cannot be determined solely by the verb it contains but must be understood in relation to its communicative function. The effectiveness of such a performative also depends on the circumstances in which it is produced. For the act to be *felicitous*, the speaker must occupy an appropriate position or possess the relevant authority to legitimately perform the act in question. If the speaker lacks the requisite status or role, the utterance may fail to accomplish the intended performative action, even when its linguistic form is appropriate.

This distinction marked an important step in Austin's broader account of language as action, which he subsequently reformulated through his three-part distinction between *locutionary*, *illocutionary*, and *perlocutionary acts* (pp. 94-109). A locutionary act refers to the production of a meaningful utterance, including the words spoken and their literal semantic content. An illocutionary act concerns what the speaker is doing in making that utterance, such as requesting, promising, apologizing, or complimenting; it captures the communicative intention or force behind the words. A perlocutionary act, in contrast, relates to the consequences the utterance has on the hearer, including the thoughts, feelings, or actions it brings about, such as persuading, reassuring, motivating, or convincing someone.

The following example provides a practical illustration of Austin's three-part distinction in speech act analysis.

Example 3. "It's getting quite dark in here."

At the locutionary level, this utterance is a declarative statement indicating that the room is becoming dark. At the illocutionary level, the utterance functions as an indirect request for someone to turn on the light or otherwise improve the lighting, rather than merely describing the situation. At the perlocutionary level, the utterance is likely to prompt the listener to respond by switching on the light, opening the curtains, or taking another action to increase the light in the room. This response reflects the effect of the speech act on the hearer.

An utterance may also convey more than one illocutionary force, as its communicative function can vary according to the circumstances in which it is produced and the manner in which it is expressed. Likewise, the perlocutionary effect is not fixed but arises from the illocutionary act and the hearer's interpretation of it. Because listeners may interpret the same utterance differently, the resulting effect cannot always be predicted, and "misinterpretation may give rise to misunderstanding or communication breakdown" (Özsöz, 2025a, p. 72).

The relationship between illocutionary force and perlocutionary effect therefore highlights the interactive nature of meaning-making in communication. Although speakers produce utterances with particular communicative intentions, hearers are responsible for interpreting those intentions and responding to them. This process involves a negotiation of meaning between interlocutors, who rely on shared background knowledge, previous experiences, and mutual assumptions to arrive at an interpretation of the utterance. Because these interpretive resources are not always shared to the same extent, the meaning intended by the speaker may not fully coincide with the meaning inferred by the hearer. This gap between intended and interpreted meaning provides a natural point of departure for Grice's (19175) account of *inferential meaning*, which explains how interlocutors derive meanings that go beyond the literal content of an utterance.

Grice's account of communication begins from the observation that speakers do not always make every aspect of their intended meaning explicit. This is evident in both everyday and institutional interactions, where interlocutors routinely rely on what is implied rather than directly stated in order to understand one another. Grice refers to such indirectly conveyed meaning as *implicature* and distinguishes between *conventional implicature* and *conversational implicature*. Conventional implicature is associated with particular linguistic expressions whose use conventionally contributes an additional meaning to an utterance. Conversational implicature, by contrast, is derived through the interpretation of an utterance in relation to the circumstances of the interaction and the assumptions

shared by the interlocutors. This distinction is central to Grice's account because it demonstrates that what a speaker communicates may extend beyond the semantic content of the words that are explicitly uttered (Grice, 1975, pp. 44-45).

Grice further proposes that successful communication generally rests on a cooperative orientation between interlocutors. In conversational interaction, participants tend to conduct their contributions in accordance with the perceived purpose and direction of the exchange, even though the topic may occasionally shift as the interaction unfolds. This cooperative orientation allows speakers to leave certain aspects of their meaning unstated, with hearers subsequently recovering those meanings through interpretation and inference. Such inferences are not expected to be arbitrary; rather, they are constrained by the assumption that speakers ordinarily make contributions that are appropriate to the ongoing exchange. In this sense, interlocutors are expected to contribute what is relevant to the discussion, at the point where it is needed, and in a manner and amount appropriate to the communicative circumstances. These expectations provide the basis for *Grice's Cooperative Principle* and, more specifically, for the *conversational maxims* through which hearers can infer meanings that have not been explicitly expressed (Grice, 1975, pp. 45-46).

The observance of Grice's maxims is not necessarily a matter of strict adherence in every interaction. Speakers may deliberately depart from one or more maxims while assuming that hearers will recognize this departure and search for an intended meaning beyond the literal content of the utterance. Such *flouting* can therefore function as an interpretive signal: rather than indicating a failure to cooperate, an apparently insufficient, excessive, ambiguous, or otherwise unexpected contribution may invite the hearer to infer an additional meaning. The interpretation of such departures is nevertheless dependent on the hearer's ability to identify the speaker's communicative intention, which means that the inferred meaning may not always correspond precisely to what the speaker intended. Flouting thus illustrates how conversational meaning is shaped not only by linguistic form and shared expectations but also by the circumstances in which an utterance is produced and interpreted. This dependence on the circumstances of interaction provides a natural transition to the consideration of discourse as situated use, where the role of context in the construction and interpretation of meaning can be examined more closely.

1. 3. Discourse as Contextually Situated Language Use

The term *context* originates from the Latin *contexere*, meaning “to weave together,” a compound of *con* (“with” or “together”) and *texere* (“to weave” or “to make”). Significantly, *texere* is also the etymological root of *text*, reflecting the close conceptual relationship between the two notions (Oxford English Dictionary, n.d.). This shared origin conveys the idea of separate elements being woven together into an organised whole and points to the close relationship between text and context in the production and interpretation of meaning.

As discussed in the preceding section, this study understands text as a communicative artefact through which meaning is produced and interpreted. Context can be understood alongside text as the conditions that shape how that meaning is interpreted in communication. Rather than treating text and context as separate entities, discourse analysis considers them mutually dependent: a text provides the linguistic and semiotic material of communication, while context provides the conditions in which that material is interpreted. Meaning thus emerges from the relationship between communicative forms (text) and the situations in which they are produced and received (context).

In this sense, context is central to meaning-making because linguistic forms and other semiotic signs do not have fixed meanings independently of their use. Their interpretation depends, at least in part, on the circumstances in which they are produced and received. The same word, expression, or symbol may therefore convey different meanings in different communicative situations, even when its linguistic form remains unchanged. As Bateson (2002) observes, “Without context, words and actions have no meaning at all” (p. 14).

The interpretation of discourse depends on the interaction between two interdependent dimensions of context: the internal and the external organisation of a text. Together, these dimensions form a coherent framework through which meaning is constructed and understood. The internal dimension refers to the linguistic environment of the text itself, including the relationships among words, phrases, sentences, and other textually defined units that contribute to the cohesion and coherence of discourse. These linguistic relations provide important cues for interpreting meaning within the boundaries of the text.

The external dimension, by contrast, extends beyond the linguistic structure to encompass the broader conditions in which communication takes place. It includes social, cultural, historical, situational, and experiential factors that shape

how an utterance is generated and interpreted, even when these elements are not explicitly expressed in the text. As a result, interpreting discourse requires attention not only to the internal linguistic organisation of a text but also to the external circumstances that surround it.

These two dimensions are mutually dependent rather than independent sources of meaning. While the internal organisation constrains interpretation through linguistic structure, external contextual factors often guide the selection of the most appropriate interpretation among several possible meanings. In many communicative situations, the external context may even exert a greater influence on interpretation than the linguistic form alone. Ignoring this broader contextual environment therefore risks misinterpreting the speaker's intended meaning or overlooking important aspects of the communicative message.

Melby and Foster (2010) offer a five-part account of context developed specifically in relation to translation, two components of which provide a useful point of comparison with the internal and external dimensions outlined above. Their notion of *co-text* concerns the textual material surrounding a particular expression within a document and can therefore be related to the internal organisation of context, insofar as interpretation is informed by linguistic elements occurring elsewhere in the text. *Non-text*, by contrast, refers to information beyond the textual material itself that may contribute to the interpretation of the source text, including aspects of the surrounding real-world situation. It thus corresponds broadly to the external dimension of context discussed above. The remaining components of Melby and Foster's framework, namely *rel-text*, *chron-text*, and *bi-text*, extend this account by incorporating related texts, different versions of a text, and bilingual textual resources, respectively (Melby & Foster, 2010).

1. 3. 1. Context as a Network of Relations

While the distinction between co-text and non-text helps delineate the textual and extra-textual dimensions of context, understanding discourse as situated language use also requires attention to the relations established among the participants and purposes of communication, particularly in spoken interaction. Context is therefore not simply a collection of information surrounding a text, whether written or spoken; it emerges through the interplay between those involved in the communicative event, what they seek to accomplish, and what has preceded the current exchange. In other words, the full meaning of a text is "a set of relations (of speaker and writer, audience, purpose, previous history etc.)

whose sum constitutes the context for a text” (Georgakopoulou & Goutsos, 2004, p. 17).

Expanding this relational perspective, Schiffrrin (1994) conceptualises context as the social world within which communication takes place. Rather than viewing context as a static background to discourse, she emphasises language users as socially and culturally situated individuals who bring particular identities, knowledge, beliefs, intentions, and expectations to interaction. Communication therefore takes place between participants who occupy specific social roles, pursue particular goals, and draw on shared cultural understandings in order to interpret one another’s utterances.

Brown and Yule (1983) similarly argue that discourse cannot be separated from the context of situation and culture in which it occurs. They highlight a range of interrelated factors that shape interpretation, including who is communicating with whom, the time and place of the interaction, the physical and social setting, the roles and status of the participants, and the communicative purpose of the exchange. They also emphasise that participants rely on socially recognised conventions and previously established patterns of interaction when interpreting discourse. Consequently, meaning is not fixed at the moment an utterance is produced; rather, it develops progressively as interlocutors interpret each contribution in relation to the unfolding interaction.

Van Dijk (2008) extends this discussion by proposing that context should be understood not merely as an objective description of the communicative environment but as a subjective cognitive representation of that environment. Each participant constructs a mental model of the communicative situation based on their knowledge, experiences, goals, and assumptions. Although these contextual models are individually constructed, successful communication depends on sufficient common ground and shared knowledge between interlocutors to enable the intended meaning to be inferred. Such a view links the social dimensions of context with the cognitive processes through which speakers and hearers interpret discourse, reinforcing the idea that meaning emerges through the interaction between participants and the situations they collectively negotiate.

The role of these contextual relations can be illustrated through a simple interaction. Imagine a manager saying to an employee during a meeting, “*We are running out of time.*” In this setting, the employee may understand the remark as an indication that the discussion should be brought to a close or that the next

item on the agenda should be addressed. The same utterance could, however, serve a different communicative purpose if the manager said it to a colleague who was preparing to leave for an appointment; in that case, it might simply signal the need to hurry. Although the linguistic expression remains identical, its interpretation changes with the activity in which it occurs and the relationship between the participants. The example demonstrates that understanding an utterance involves more than recognising its linguistic content: its significance is derived through its relation to the particular communicative circumstances in which it is used.

The implications of a contextual approach extend beyond the interpretation of individual utterances to the study of language as it occurs in actual communicative practice. The linguistic choices available to speakers are shaped by the conventions and expectations associated with particular communicative environments, meaning that language use cannot be adequately represented through de-contextualised or artificially constructed examples alone. Consequently, discourse analysts have emphasised the importance of naturally occurring data for investigating how meaning and linguistic form operate together in real interaction (Stubbs, 1996; Sinclair, 2004). Such data provide access to the ways in which participants orient to the purposes, constraints, and conventions of their encounters, thereby allowing patterns of language use to be examined as they emerge in practice rather than being imposed through hypothetical scenarios. These considerations make institutional discourse a particularly productive site for examining how contextual constraints are translated into actual patterns of language use, as participants' contributions are shaped by institutionally defined roles, purposes, and expectations.

1. 3. 2. Discourse in Institutional Contexts

Before examining discourse in institutional contexts, it is useful to begin with what may be described as *mundane talk*, namely the forms of interaction that characterise everyday communicative encounters. In discourse analysis, everyday and institutional discourse are often presented as contrasting yet complementary modes of language use. Although this distinction appears to establish a binary opposition, it primarily serves an analytical purpose by highlighting how language functions under different contextual conditions. Everyday speech events provide a useful point of departure because they represent relatively ordinary forms of interaction in which communicative practices are negotiated

through participants' shared knowledge, social relationships, and immediate situational demands.

The distinction between mundane and institutional discourse should not be understood as a rigid separation. Institutional encounters are embedded in everyday communicative practices and therefore retain many characteristics of ordinary interaction. What changes is the communicative environment in which these interactions take place. Institutional settings reorganise everyday language use around specific objectives, participant roles, and normative expectations, giving otherwise familiar conversational practices institutionally relevant functions. Viewing the relationship in this way allows institutional discourse to be approached as a specialised form of situated language use rather than a communicative system detached from everyday talk.

Although everyday conversation is not entirely predictable and does not unfold in a strictly linear manner, it is nevertheless organised through recurrent interactional patterns that make communication intelligible. The systematic study of these patterns began with the work of Sacks² and colleagues³, who demonstrated that ordinary conversation displays an underlying sequential organisation rather than random exchanges. This organisation is most clearly observable through the *mechanism of turn-taking*, which structures the distribution of speaking rights and responsibilities in interaction.

Because conversation is a collaborative social activity, participants must coordinate their contributions in order to accomplish the purposes of the interaction. Turn-taking provides the primary organisational resource through which this coordination is achieved, enabling speakers to produce, recognise, and respond to one another's contributions in sequence. Although conversational interaction is guided by shared expectations about when and how turns are exchanged, these expectations are not followed mechanically. Speakers may interrupt, overlap, hesitate, or compete for the floor, making turn-taking a flexible interactional system rather than a fixed set of rules.

² The sequential organisation of everyday conversation was first developed in Sacks's lectures during the 1960s and early 1970s and later published as *Lectures on Conversation* (Sacks, 1992).

³ Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson (1974) formalised the organisation of turn-taking by identifying the mechanisms through which conversational turns are allocated and transferred between participants.

The organisation of turn-taking may also vary according to the social and institutional conditions in which interaction takes place. Participants do not necessarily enter an interaction with equal opportunities to initiate, sustain, or conclude a turn; their relative status and socially recognised positions may influence when they speak and how their contributions are received. Such asymmetries become particularly visible in institutional encounters, where interaction is often organised around established roles and procedures. In a corporate meeting, for example, a junior employee may defer to a senior executive before contributing to the discussion, not because turn-taking itself operates differently, but because institutional expectations shape who is entitled to take the floor and at what point. Turn-taking thus provides a useful entry point for examining how the organisation of everyday conversation is adapted to the particular demands of institutional discourse.

Institutional settings involve forms of language use that differ from ordinary conversation in several systematic respects. Drew and Heritage (1992) identify three central characteristics of institutional interaction: participants generally pursue goals that are narrower and more specific to the institutional activity; their contributions are subject to constraints arising from that activity; and interpretation may rely on inferential frameworks associated with particular institutional settings. Institutional discourse can therefore be distinguished not by the mere presence of a formal setting, but by the ways in which institutional purposes and procedures organise communicative activity.

One way of accounting for this relationship between situation and language is through the concept of *register* in Systemic Functional Grammar. Halliday and Hasan (1985, p. 38) describe register in terms of the configuration of meanings associated with a particular combination of *field*, *mode*, and *tenor*. *Field* concerns the activity and purpose with which the discourse is associated; *mode* relates to the channel and manner through which communication is realised, including distinctions such as spoken and written discourse; and *tenor* concerns the social relations among participants and the roles they assume in the interaction (Halliday & Hasan, 1985, pp. 30-34). These dimensions provide a means of relating linguistic choices to the situational conditions in which discourse occurs. From this perspective, discourse analysis is concerned with context because text and situation continually inform one another: participants interpret linguistic choices in relation to the situation, while the linguistic text itself provides evidence for understanding that situation.

The notion of *tenor* is particularly relevant to institutional interaction because participants enter such encounters with socially and institutionally recognised positions. An interviewer and interviewee, for example, may participate in the same exchange but do not necessarily possess the same interactional rights or responsibilities. Their respective roles influence what they are expected to contribute and how their contributions are understood within the encounter. Institutional discourse therefore provides a setting in which social relationships become observable through the organisation of communicative activity, while participants may also negotiate or reproduce those relationships through their use of language.

Institutional purposes can also affect how participants manage information and generate inferences. The conversational expectations described by Grice (1975) may be modified when institutional responsibilities or procedural requirements restrict what a participant can disclose. A speaker may therefore provide less information than might otherwise be expected, not because the contribution is necessarily uncooperative, but because institutional obligations, confidentiality, professional norms, or interpersonal considerations make fuller disclosure inappropriate. The interpretation of such contributions consequently depends partly on recognising the institutional conditions under which they are produced.

Institutional constraints are likewise reflected in the linguistic resources through which events and participants are represented. In institutional reporting, for example, *nominalisation*⁴ (Halliday & Hasan, 1985; Fowler et al., 1979) can background the participant responsible for an action and thereby create greater distance from the proposition being presented. This can be illustrated by comparing “*The officer claimed that the driver had ignored the warning*” with “*There was a claim that the warning had been ignored.*” In the first formulation, the source of the claim is explicitly identified as the officer, whereas the nominalised construction presents the claim as an institutionalised piece of information without specifying who made it. The latter formulation can consequently reduce the

⁴ *Nominalisation* allows processes to be represented as entities within the grammatical structure of a text (Halliday & Hasan, 1985). Such choices may also affect the representation of agency and contribute to more impersonal forms of institutional discourse (Fowler et al., 1979).

prominence of *agency*⁵ and contribute to a more impersonal presentation of the event. Such grammatical choices demonstrate how institutional discourse can use linguistic form not merely to report events but also to manage attribution and construct an apparently neutral stance.

Institutional encounters must finally be considered in relation to the wider systems within which they are embedded. A doctor–patient consultation, for example, is not shaped exclusively by the immediate interaction between the participants; it also operates within a broader healthcare system whose organisational conditions may affect the encounter. High patient volumes, limited resources, or institutional time constraints may restrict the duration of individual consultations and consequently influence what can be accomplished within them. The immediate interaction is therefore connected to structures that extend beyond the encounter itself, providing a point of departure for examining the relationship between *micro-level discourse* and *macro-level structures* such as identity, power, and ideology.

1. 4. Linking Micro and Macro Perspectives in Discourse: Key Analytical Concepts

The distinction between micro- and macro-levels is best understood as an analytical rather than an ontological separation. Micro-level discourse analysis examines the organisation of situated interaction, including linguistic choices, sequential organisation, and participants' contributions within particular communicative events. Macro-level analysis, by contrast, considers the broader social, cultural, institutional, and ideological structures within which these interactions occur. Although these levels are analytically distinguishable, they are not independent of one another. Every communicative event is simultaneously situated within a wider social structure, while those wider structures become visible through the linguistic and interactional practices of individual encounters.

Bringing these perspectives together remains one of the principal methodological challenges in discourse analysis. An adequate analysis must account for the influence of broader social and institutional structures without losing sensitivity to the contingent and locally organised character of interaction. Conversely, an exclusive focus on immediate linguistic detail risks overlooking the larger

⁵ Following Duranti's (1994) account of *agency* as socially situated action, agency may be understood here as the capacity to engage in socially meaningful action.

frameworks that shape communicative practices. The challenge, therefore, is not to privilege either the micro or the macro level, but to explain how observations at one level can be systematically related to processes operating at the other.

Despite these methodological challenges, macro-level structures can only be observed through their manifestations in micro-level discourse. In other words, broader phenomena such as institutional authority, identity, ideology, or power become analytically accessible through linguistic and interactional cues embedded in spoken or written texts. These cues may be understood as *discourse markers*⁶ in a broad analytical sense: lexical items, expressions, or recurrent linguistic features that contribute to the organisation and interpretation of discourse. Beyond establishing coherence between parts of a text, such markers may also index particular voices, stances, identities, or institutional positions, thereby providing observable evidence of macro-level structures within local communicative practice.

The following section begins with *identity* and proceeds through *power*, *agency*, and *ideology*, tracing a progression from situated interaction to broader social organisation and considering how local linguistic practices both reflect and contribute to the constitution of wider social structures. The point of departure is *identity*, since participants and the ways in which they position themselves in interaction provide an immediately observable link between micro-level discourse practices and broader social categories. Linguistic choices, including forms of address, stance, and self-positioning, provide insight into how identities are constructed and expressed through discourse. From interactional identities, attention shifts to *power*, which concerns the relationships and asymmetries that emerge among participants in discourse. Institutional interaction is particularly relevant in this respect because participants do not necessarily occupy equal positions or possess the same communicative rights, responsibilities, or authority.

⁶ The term *discourse marker* is not used uniformly across the literature. Different scholars adopt alternative labels depending on the function they emphasise. Some foreground the connective role of these expressions in linking clauses and ideas, referring to them as *sentence connectives* (Halliday & Hasan, 1976) or *discourse connectives* (Blakemore, 1992). Others prefer terms that highlight their pragmatic and interactional functions, such as *pragmatic formatives* and *pragmatic markers* (Schiffrin, 1987; Fraser, 1988). Throughout this study, the term *discourse markers* is used as an umbrella term encompassing both their cohesive and their interactional or pragmatic functions.

Attention then turns to *agency*, considering how participants' relational and contextually situated identities intersect with their capacity to act within the possibilities and constraints of discourse. The discussion concludes with *ideology*, the broadest macro-level dimension, which concerns how recurring patterns of identity, power, and agency may become naturalised and reproduced through institutional practices and wider social processes.

The concepts of *identity*, *power*, *agency*, and *ideology* are introduced here at a general conceptual level, without being tied to any particular theoretical tradition. Their more specific conceptualisations within critical discourse approaches are examined in the following chapter, where the theoretical frameworks underpinning the present study are considered in greater detail.

1. 4. 1. Identity in Discourse

The discussion of identity focuses on how language users present, negotiate, and position themselves and others within discourse. Rather than offering an exhaustive account of the extensive literature on identity, the discussion draws selectively on several influential perspectives that are particularly relevant to its discursive and interactional construction. These include Goffman's (1959, 1967) work on *the presentation of self and face*, Gumperz's (1982) *account of contextualisation cues* and their role in signalling social meaning, Hatim and Mason's (1990) *concept of idiolect* as an expression of individual linguistic variation, Le Page and Tabouret-Keller's (1985) *concept of acts of identity*, and Bucholtz and Hall's (2005) *interactional approach to identity*. Together, these perspectives frame identity as a dynamic construct negotiated through discourse and social interaction.

Goffman's (1959, 1967) account of interaction provides an important starting point for understanding identity as something accomplished within social encounters rather than possessed independently of them. In interaction, individuals present a particular "line" (p. 5) through verbal and non-verbal conduct, thereby conveying how they understand the situation and how they wish to be regarded by others. This presentation establishes a socially recognisable image of the self, which Goffman (1967, p. 5) terms *face*. Face is therefore not an internal attribute but a socially situated construction that emerges through participants' interpretations of one another's conduct. It may also extend beyond the individual, since the image presented by a participant can reflect the values or standing of a social group, profession, or institution with which that person is associated.

Because individuals become invested in the identities established through interaction, their subsequent conduct is partly directed towards maintaining the image they have presented. Successful confirmation of this image can generate confidence, whereas information that contradicts it may produce embarrassment, insecurity, or a loss of face. Identity is consequently sustained not only through an individual's own self-presentation but also through the responses and evaluations of other participants (Goffman, 1967, p. 6). The interactional construction of identity is thus inherently relational: one's understanding of self depends, in part, on whether others recognise and support the identity being projected.

Goffman's (1967, pp. 6-7) account further highlights the role of social expectations in constraining identity performance. Particular situations and participant attributes make some forms of self-presentation more appropriate or legitimate than others, thereby limiting the range of identities that can be effectively enacted in a given encounter. An established line may also acquire a degree of continuity, as participants organise their subsequent conduct around the identities already presented. A significant departure from that line can therefore disrupt the interactional order, particularly when the new presentation is incompatible with expectations established earlier in the encounter.

Identity, from this perspective, is neither entirely self-determined nor passively imposed by others. It is produced through an ongoing process in which individuals present themselves, interpret the responses of others, and adjust their conduct to sustain a socially acceptable image. This interactional process also connects the immediate encounter to wider social expectations, since the identities available to participants and the standards against which they are evaluated are partly shaped by the social contexts in which interaction takes place.

Gumperz (1982) shifts the discussion of identity from language as an abstract system to language as it is realised in situated interaction. Drawing on Saussure's distinction between *langue* and *parole*, he emphasises *parole*, the actual utterances produced by speakers in specific communicative encounters, as the level at which social meaning is negotiated (Gumperz, 1982, pp. 10-11). While every utterance draws on the shared linguistic resources of *langue*, its meaning is shaped by the particular interaction in which it is produced. Identity therefore emerges through language in use rather than existing as a fixed social category independent of discourse.

This interactional perspective can be related to Hatim and Mason's (1990, pp. 43-44) *concept of idiolect*, which refers to the distinctive linguistic characteristics associated with an individual speaker. An idiolect reflects the uniqueness of a person's language use while also incorporating dimensions of variation such as geographical, temporal, and social background. Rather than treating individual speech as a basis for broad generalisations, the concept highlights how identity becomes observable through the particular linguistic choices made in real communicative situations.

Gumperz (1982, pp. 131-132) further argues that speakers rely on contextualisation cues, verbal and non-verbal signals that guide interlocutors in interpreting an utterance within its immediate context. These cues help participants infer social relationships, group membership, communicative intentions, and the appropriate interpretation of an interaction. Identity is thus anchored in real time through linguistic and interactional resources that participants continuously produce and interpret during communication.

Le Page and Tabouret-Keller (1985) likewise reject the view of identity as a fixed or inherent characteristic, arguing instead that it is continuously produced through language use. Central to their account is the *concept of acts of identity* (Le Page & Tabouret-Keller, 1985, p. 182), which proposes that speakers use language to project a particular image of themselves and establish relationships with others. Linguistic choices are therefore purposeful acts through which individuals express how they wish to be perceived within a given communicative context, echoing Goffman's view that identities are interactionally presented rather than simply possessed.

Le Page and Tabouret-Keller further argue that speakers align their language with the social groups they identify with, or aspire to identify with, at particular moments. Identity is consequently shaped not only by individual linguistic choices but also by affiliation with communities, social networks, and cultural groups. This perspective highlights identity as a flexible and context-dependent process in which speakers continuously adjust their linguistic behaviour according to changing social relationships and interactional goals.

The alignment of linguistic behaviour with desired social groups identified by Le Page and Tabouret-Keller (1985) can also be considered in institutional terms. Mason's (2009, p. 81) notion of *in-group allegiance* directs attention to how participants may align their discourse with the expectations, norms, and established positions of the institutional group to which they belong. In this

sense, alignment extends beyond the expression of social affiliation to include the enactment of institutionally recognised identities within particular encounters.

Bucholtz and Hall (2005) propose a sociocultural linguistic approach that defines identity as the social positioning of self and other in interaction. They argue that identity is not a stable personal attribute or a fixed demographic category; instead, it is continuously produced through linguistic and other semiotic practices in particular communicative contexts. Identity therefore emerges as a social and cultural accomplishment rather than a pre-existing characteristic of individuals.

A central contribution of their framework is the principle of *emergence* (Bucholtz and Hall, 2005, pp. 587-590), which views identity as the outcome of interaction instead of its starting point. Speakers do not simply express identities they already possess; they construct, negotiate, and modify them as interaction unfolds. Even seemingly ordinary encounters involve this ongoing process of identity production, making discourse the primary site where identities become socially meaningful.

Bucholtz and Hall further argue that identity operates simultaneously at multiple levels through the principle of *positionality* (Bucholtz and Hall, 2005, pp. 590-593). Alongside broad social categories such as gender, age, or ethnicity, speakers occupy locally meaningful cultural positions, temporary interactional stances, and participant roles that shift from moment to moment. Identity is therefore shaped not only by who participants are socially recognised to be, but also by how they position themselves and others within a particular interaction.

The principle of *indexicality* (Bucholtz and Hall, 2005, pp. 593-598) explains how identity becomes observable through linguistic choices. Labels, stance-taking, presuppositions, styles, code choice, and other linguistic resources index social meanings that participants interpret in context. Rather than pointing directly to identity categories, these resources first signal interactional orientations, which may accumulate into more durable social identities through repeated use.

Finally, Bucholtz and Hall emphasise that identity is fundamentally *relational* (Bucholtz and Hall, 2005, pp. 598-604). Identities acquire meaning through their relationship to other identities, social positions, and interactional participants rather than through isolated individual characteristics. Similarity and difference,

authenticity and artifice, and legitimacy and delegitimacy are all negotiated through discourse, demonstrating that identity is an intersubjective achievement grounded in social interaction.

1. 4. 2. Power in Discourse

Identity is a relational and contextually situated dimension of discourse, while *power* draws attention to the different degrees of authority, legitimacy, and influence that participants may hold within interaction. When considering the concept of *power*, it is commonly understood as the capacity that individuals derive from institutional roles, social status, or access to social networks and other forms of social capital. Such a view treats power as something participants bring into interaction through pre-existing institutional and social arrangements. Before examining this relational dimension, however, it is useful to begin with the discourse of power, that is, with how power itself has been conceptualised within discourse. In this chapter, *discourse* is understood not only as what has already been said about a phenomenon, but also as the broader field of meanings, assumptions, and possibilities through which it is understood. Accordingly, the discourse of power concerns the different ways in which power has been defined and represented across social and institutional contexts.

At its most general level, power can be understood as the ability to influence the behaviour, actions, or participation of others through access to various social, institutional, or interactional resources. In communicative settings, this means that some participants are more able than others to shape the course of interaction. This differential capacity does not arise randomly; rather, it reflects unequal access to resources that are distributed through institutional roles, social norms, expertise, authority, and other socially recognised forms of legitimacy.

The distribution of these resources is particularly visible in institutional discourse, where rights and obligations are often organised through asymmetrical relationships. For example, participants do not possess equal conversational rights: some interlocutors have greater authority to allocate turns, initiate or close topics, interrupt, or control the conversational floor, while others gain access to participation only to the extent that such opportunities are made available within the interaction.

Nevertheless, institutional asymmetries should not be understood as entirely fixed or mechanically imposed. Although institutional norms establish expectations about who is entitled to speak, decide, or direct interaction, the enactment

of these rights remains interactional. Conversational rights are continuously negotiated on a moment-by-moment basis as discourse unfolds. The organisation of interaction therefore shapes power dynamics, while participants simultaneously (re)produce, and even contest those dynamics through their discursive practices.

Drew and Heritage (1992) advocate a similar view and argue that institutional interaction is characterised by asymmetrical relationships in which participants have unequal access to knowledge, participation rights, and conversational resources. Rather than treating these asymmetries as fixed properties of institutional roles, Hutchby (1999) argues that power should be examined through the organisation of interaction itself. From this perspective, power is not simply imported into discourse from pre-existing institutional hierarchies; it emerges through participants' orientation to the sequential structure of conversation. The distribution of conversational rights, opportunities to initiate or respond, and access to interactional resources are therefore achieved within the unfolding interaction rather than assumed in advance. Such an approach cautions against presupposing power relations on the basis of institutional roles alone, suggesting instead that they should be demonstrated through participants' observable interactional practices.

This interactional understanding of power is evident across a range of institutional settings. Hutchby's (1999) analysis of talk radio demonstrates that conversational authority depends not merely on who speaks first or possesses greater knowledge, but on who is able to frame, challenge, and direct the trajectory of the interaction. Similarly, courtroom interactions illustrate how institutional representatives occupy structurally privileged positions while interactional outcomes remain open to negotiation. Although attorneys possess recognised authority to organise questioning and shape the development of testimony, witnesses retain interactional resources through which they can qualify, resist, or reframe institutional interpretations (Atkinson & Drew, 1979). These examples suggest that institutional discourse establishes asymmetrical participation rights, yet power remains contingent on how those rights are enacted, contested, and redistributed as interaction unfolds.

A broader perspective on power considers the interplay between language and power as a means of understanding how discourse shapes social relations and influences participants' behaviour. Power becomes particularly visible when

participants draw on linguistic, social, and institutional resources to advance particular interests, establish authority, or influence the actions and interpretations of others (Antonio et al., 2011). Such resources are not equally available to all participants; rather, their value and legitimacy are shaped by wider social and institutional arrangements. In this respect, Bourdieu's (1991) account of *symbolic power* highlights how socially recognised forms of linguistic and cultural resources can confer authority on some speakers while limiting the legitimacy of others. Foucault (1978) similarly connects power to the production and circulation of knowledge, drawing attention to how discourse contributes to establishing what counts as legitimate knowledge and who is authorised to produce or transmit it. From this perspective, power does not reside solely in individuals but is exercised through discursive practices that confer legitimacy on particular voices, forms of knowledge, and courses of action.

Institutional encounters provide a clear illustration of these dynamics. In medical consultations, doctors occupy an epistemically privileged position because their specialised knowledge is institutionally recognised and socially legitimised. This position may become visible in linguistic choices, including the use of technical terminology, diagnostic formulations, and treatment recommendations that are not equally accessible to patients. Such discourse does more than communicate expert knowledge; it also contributes to establishing the doctor's authority to define the illness and recommend a particular course of treatment. The example illustrates how institutional knowledge and linguistic practices can work together to sustain unequal positions within interaction.

A similar dynamic can arise outside formally institutionalised settings when expertise itself becomes a source of authority. For example, when an expert appraises an old household object and asks a lay participant, "Do you know how much this is worth?", the question does more than seek information. It implicitly establishes an epistemic distinction between the participants, positioning the expert as the knowledgeable party and the other participant as lacking the relevant knowledge. The expert's linguistic choice therefore contributes to defining the roles available to the interlocutors and establishes an asymmetry in their respective positions. In this case, authority does not derive primarily from a formal institutional role but from the unequal distribution of specialised knowledge made relevant through interaction.

The relationship between discourse and power also extends beyond spoken or written language to the material and semiotic resources through which social

relations are made visible and meaningful. Objects, symbols, forms of dress, and other multimodal resources can participate in the representation and legitimisation of authority by drawing on wider social and historical discourses. A uniform worn by a law enforcement officer, for example, may immediately signal an institutional position and shape how others orient to that person, even before any verbal exchange takes place (Özsöz, 2025a, p. 103). Such resources do not possess power independently; rather, their significance derives from the social meanings and institutional associations attached to them. Discourse and power therefore operate across multiple semiotic resources, linking local acts of meaning-making to the ways authority, social roles, and broader social relations are understood and reproduced.

1. 4. 3. *Agency in Discourse*

As established in the preceding discussion, power in discourse is neither a fixed possession nor a uniformly distributed resource. It is relational, arising from the positions participants occupy in relation to one another, but also dynamic, as those relations may be reinforced, modified, or challenged through interaction. The extent to which participants can exercise power consequently depends not only on their institutional or social positions but also on the resources available to them and on how those resources are taken up in the unfolding interaction. This dynamic understanding of power therefore draws attention to the varying capacities participants have to act within the unequal conditions of interaction, which provides a point of departure for understanding *agency*.

The term *agency* can be understood as a person's capacity to exercise some control over their actions, but this capacity should not be equated with complete autonomy or unrestricted freedom to act (Ahearn, 2001, p. 112). Agency is never exercised in a social vacuum; rather, it is conditioned by the institutional and social circumstances in which action takes place. Unequal access to resources may therefore restrict the range of actions available to participants without eliminating their capacity to act. Even within asymmetrical settings, participants may draw on discursive practices to influence the course of interaction, for example by declining a proposed course of action or rejecting how a more powerful interlocutor frames the interaction. Such acts, however, should not automatically be interpreted as resistance to institutional authority or as non-compliance with institutional expectations. A participant may reject a particular course of action

while remaining aligned with broader institutional goals or established procedures. Agency, therefore, does not necessarily entail resistance to power: actions that reproduce, accommodate, or sustain existing institutional arrangements may also constitute forms of agency.

This capacity for action can be observed in courtroom interaction, where linguistic resources may enable less powerful participants to exercise some control over their participation despite institutional asymmetries (Atkinson & Drew, 1979). Witnesses, for instance, may use cautious formulations, qualifications, or alternative descriptions to avoid fully accepting an attorney's framing of events and to retain control over how their accounts are represented. Such choices do not necessarily alter the institutional distribution of authority, but they allow witnesses to shape their own contributions and introduce alternative perspectives into the interaction. The example thus illustrates that agency does not depend on occupying a position of equal authority; rather, participants may exercise a degree of control over their actions and contributions even within interactional conditions that constrain their possibilities.

Giddens (1984) offers a further perspective by conceptualising agency in relation to the structures within which social action takes place. His notion of the *duality of structure* emphasises that structures do not exist independently of social action: the rules and resources that organise social practices simultaneously enable and constrain what participants can do, while being reproduced through their recurrent practices. Agency, therefore, involves more than the capacity to make choices within an existing structure; participants' actions also contribute, often through routine practices, to the continuation of the social arrangements that shape subsequent action. This perspective thus highlights the ongoing relationship between action and structure, whereby participants are neither entirely determined by structural conditions nor acting independently of them.

1. 4. 4. Ideology in Discourse

While agency draws attention to participants' capacities for action within socially and institutionally conditioned circumstances, *ideology* shifts the focus towards the broader systems of meaning through which particular ways of understanding social reality become established. The discussion draws selectively on perspectives that are particularly relevant to its relationship with discourse, power, and social relations. These include the concept of *ideology* as a system of ideas and beliefs through which social groups make sense of the world, its

relationship to the distribution and legitimization of power, and its role in making particular social arrangements appear natural. From this perspective, ideology is not limited to explicitly expressed political or social beliefs but may also operate through recurring patterns of representation, categorisation, and evaluation embedded in everyday discourse.

From a discourse perspective, texts, whether spoken or written, are not ideologically neutral; they are produced within particular social, cultural, and historical contexts and inevitably reflect and circulate systems of meaning (Fairclough, 1989; Paltridge, 2012). Consequently, discourse cannot be separated from the social realities and processes to which it contributes. Rather than merely describing the world, discourse participates in shaping how social relations, institutions, and identities are understood and organised. Threadgold (1989) extends this argument by suggesting that spoken and written genres are not simply linguistic forms or communicative categories. Instead, they constitute social practices through which dominant ideologies are reproduced, transmitted, and potentially transformed (Threadgold, 1989, p. 107). Every genre therefore carries historically and politically situated meanings that influence how events, participants, and social relationships are represented. In this sense, ideology operates not only through explicit statements or political positions but also through the routine discursive forms that make particular understandings of the social world appear legitimate and meaningful.

Thompson (1990) re-evaluates ideology by moving beyond its traditional understanding as a fixed set of political ideas or beliefs. He conceptualises ideology instead in terms of how symbolic forms, including language, texts, images, and media representations, are used to establish and sustain relations of domination in society. Ideology is thus not defined simply by the content of particular beliefs, but by the ways in which meanings acquire social significance through their role in legitimising unequal distributions of power. Thompson (1990) develops this argument in relation to modern mass communication, emphasising that newspapers, television, advertising, and other forms of mediated communication do not merely transmit information but also shape how social reality is interpreted. The repeated circulation of particular representations, narratives, and values can reinforce dominant understandings of institutions, identities, and social relations while marginalising alternative perspectives. Ideology can there-

fore be seen not only in overtly political discourse but also in the routine symbolic practices through which particular versions of reality gain legitimacy and become widely accepted within society.

A complementary perspective is offered by Fairclough (1989), who argues that ideology becomes particularly effective when embedded in everyday discursive conventions and presented as *common sense* (p. 107). Such conventions may encode assumptions about social relations, institutions, and participants that become taken for granted through repeated use. As these assumptions are naturalised, their connection to particular interests and power relations may become less visible, making specific ways of understanding social reality appear normal or self-evident. Ideology can therefore operate through the implicit assumptions embedded in routine language use, as well as through explicitly expressed beliefs or positions.

This process can be illustrated by Montgomery's (2011) analysis of representations of the *war on terror* in UK newspapers. He observes that the expression is frequently presented in quotation marks, signalling that newspapers treat the formulation as potentially problematic and attribute it to leading politicians rather than fully incorporating it into their own discourse (p. 219). The quotation marks thus create a degree of distance between the newspaper and the political formulation, showing how a seemingly minor linguistic choice can prevent a particular representation from being presented as an unproblematic description of reality. The example demonstrates that ideological meanings are not necessarily reproduced through discourse in a uniform manner; they may also be qualified, distanced, or rendered open to scrutiny through linguistic choices.

Ideological perspectives may also be conveyed through metaphorical choices, which can shape how particular aspects of social reality are conceptualised. By mapping properties from one domain onto another, metaphors⁷ can encourage particular interpretations of their target domains and reinforce existing social and cultural stereotypes (Canning & Walker, 2024, p. 194). This can be seen in representations of refugees in UK public discourse, where metaphors depicting their

⁷ Metaphor involves describing or understanding one thing in terms of another, allowing meanings or associations from one domain to be transferred to another. Although expressed through language, metaphor also operates at a conceptual level by influencing how the subject is understood; for example, describing refugees as a "flood" may encourage them to be conceptualised in terms of something large, uncontrollable, or threatening.

arrival as an unwanted or threatening phenomenon contribute to negative constructions of refugees and migration. Such metaphorical choices can communicate a speaker's stance while also drawing on and reinforcing broader ideological understandings of social groups and social events.

A further dimension of ideology concerns its role in constructing and legitimising relations between social groups. Van Dijk (1998) approaches ideology as a system of socially shared beliefs that shapes how groups understand themselves and others, with particular attention to the reproduction of racial and cultural inequality. His analysis shows how dominant groups may legitimise unequal relations by presenting their own cultural values and norms as natural, universal, or inherently superior, while representing outgroups through negative characteristics such as deviance, primitiveness, or threat. Ideology can thus operate through seemingly descriptive representations that establish distinctions between a positively evaluated "us" and a negatively evaluated "them." Van Dijk's account consequently highlights how discourse contributes to the reproduction of racial and cultural hierarchies by making particular group representations and value judgements appear legitimate (van Dijk, 1998, pp. 285–287).

CHAPTER 2.

CRITICAL APPROACHES TO DISCOURSE: THEORIES AND TRADITIONS

Introduction

The preceding chapter examined discourse as socially situated language use. The present chapter takes the next step by asking what it means to approach discourse *critically*. A critical approach is concerned not only with how discourse is structured or how meaning is produced, but also with how discourse contributes to the organisation of social life. This includes the ways in which discourse can shape what counts as knowledge, whose authority is recognised, how inequalities are maintained, and how social relations are constructed. The chapter first considers what distinguishes a critical approach from approaches that focus primarily on describing linguistic or interactional patterns. It then examines why questions of power, ideology, and social inequality have become central to critical discourse research, with particular attention to the conditions under which certain representations and forms of knowledge come to be accepted as legitimate.

The discussion then traces the historical development of critical discourse studies, from the emergence of Critical Linguistics to the development of Critical Discourse Analysis and its subsequent expansion into Critical Discourse Studies. This development helps explain the different ways in which discourse, power, ideology, and social change have been conceptualised within the field. The chapter then introduces the principal theoretical traditions that have shaped critical approaches to discourse, including the Dialectical-Relational Approach, the Discourse-Historical Approach, the Socio-Cognitive Approach, Foucauldian and Bourdieusian perspectives, and multimodal critical discourse analysis. These traditions are not treated as interchangeable. Instead, attention is given to the different questions, assumptions, and analytical emphases through which they approach the relationship between discourse and social life. The chapter concludes by providing the theoretical basis for the following chapter, which considers how these critical perspectives can be brought into dialogue with dialogue interpreting and applied to the analysis of interpreter-mediated discourse.

2. 1. The Critical Perspective on Discourse

A critical approach to discourse starts from the recognition that discourse is realised through linguistic and interactional practices at the micro level of social interaction, while also contributing to broader social processes. Choices in wording, turn-taking, categorisation, framing, evaluation, and participation can position participants, construct identities, distribute authority, and shape what can be said, by whom, and under what conditions. These practices therefore need to be considered in relation to the wider social relations and systems in which they occur. The preceding chapter showed how dimensions such as identity, power, agency, and ideology become observable in discourse and connect interactional practices to broader social structures.

From a critical perspective, however, identifying and describing these discourse practices is only a starting point for analysis. Examining authentic discourse can reveal how particular forms of language are used and how participants orient to them, but a critical approach goes further by asking what these practices accomplish socially, whose interests they serve, and what consequences they may have for different participants or groups. This becomes particularly important where discourse contributes to the exercise or abuse of power, obscures forms of inequality, or sustains conditions in which some participants are disadvantaged or excluded. Critical discourse research consequently takes an explicitly evaluative position: rather than treating observed patterns as socially neutral, it seeks to make problematic relations and practices visible and subject them to critical scrutiny. In this sense, researchers working within Critical Discourse Studies commonly align their analyses with groups subject to domination and examine how the discourse of more powerful actors contributes to the maintenance, legitimisation, or challenge of unequal relations (Vine, 2023, p. 131).

An illustrative institutional encounter can further clarify what it means to approach discourse critically. Consider a selection interview in which a candidate is questioned by a three-member panel for a teaching position within a military institution. The candidate responds satisfactorily to the questions posed by the panel and appears to perform well academically. As the interview comes to an end, however, he asks the panel, “What is your criterion for this position?” Having previously attended a similar interview with the same panel, the candidate appears to be seeking clarification about the basis on which candidates are evaluated. Rather than addressing the question, a member of the panel responds that

other candidates are waiting to be interviewed and indicates that the interaction should come to an end.

At a descriptive level, the exchange could simply be characterised as an interview in which the candidate asks an unexpected question and the panel declines to answer it. A critical analysis, however, can ask what this response reveals about the distribution of interactional rights within the encounter. Throughout the interview, the panel occupies the position of questioner and evaluator, while the candidate is expected to respond within the parameters established by the institution. The candidate's final question temporarily reverses this arrangement by directing an evaluative question towards those who hold the authority to evaluate him. The panel's response restores the expected participation structure without explicitly addressing the question, thereby illustrating how institutional authority may be maintained through seemingly routine interactional practices. The episode also demonstrates why critical discourse analysis moves beyond identifying linguistic choices to consider how discourse organises participation, establishes legitimate forms of conduct, and sustains institutional relations.

The interaction further illustrates that institutional expectations may operate through norms that are not always stated as explicit selection criteria. For example, the candidate's manner of dress may subsequently become relevant to the interpretation of his suitability, reflecting an institutional expectation of seriousness and conformity even where no formal requirement determines a particular style of dress. A critical perspective can therefore examine not only what institutions explicitly require, but also how less visible norms become meaningful through discourse and interaction. What appears to be an ordinary exchange may consequently provide insight into how institutional authority defines appropriate participation and how participants can, even temporarily, challenge the terms on which that participation is organised.

Critique, however, should not be understood as synonymous with negative evaluation. A critical analysis may also draw attention to practices that have been overlooked, misunderstood, or represented inadequately, thereby producing a more comprehensive account of social activity. Wodak's (2009) analysis of political work in the European Parliament provides an instructive example. By examining the everyday practices of Members of the European Parliament (MEP) beyond their visible public performances, she brings attention to the extensive "backstage" work through which political activity is organised and sustained.

Her account of an MEP, for instance, shows how activities such as informal conversations and working discussions around routine events, including lunch, can form part of the ongoing conduct of political work. Such practices may remain largely invisible when politics is understood only through formal meetings, speeches, and public appearances. Wodak's analysis consequently challenges a restricted understanding of political activity rather than simply criticising the actors involved, arguing that the invisibility of such backstage practices can contribute to public misunderstanding and disenchantment with politics. Critical inquiry, therefore, can involve exposing problematic relations, but it can equally make overlooked practices visible and reconsider assumptions through which social activity has been understood.

The preceding discussion points to several features that distinguish a critical perspective on discourse. Discourse is approached as social practice shaped by institutional, historical, and cultural conditions, while critical analysis examines its role in sustaining or challenging established relations, assumptions, and practices, including those that may otherwise remain overlooked. Its critical commitment lies not simply in identifying what is problematic, but in interrogating how particular representations and forms of social organisation become taken for granted, whose perspectives they privilege, and what consequences they may have for different participants or groups. This orientation also requires analytical reflexivity, since critical researchers must remain attentive to the assumptions and values that inform their own interpretations.

Methodologically, this perspective requires discourse to be analysed in relation to the wider social practices of which it forms a part. Fairclough (2003, p. 3) defines discourse as "an element of social life which is closely interconnected with other elements," while Wodak (2001, p. 3) emphasises that discourse is "historically produced and interpreted." Consequently, CDA links micro-level analysis of linguistic and interactional features with macro-level analysis of the institutional, historical, and cultural processes through which those features acquire social significance. At the micro level, analysts examine lexical choices, grammatical structures, categorisation, evaluation, modality, argumentation, forms of address, and patterns of interaction. At the macro level, these choices are interpreted in relation to broader relations of authority, social identities, institutional arrangements, and historical developments. The methodological objective is therefore not to separate textual analysis from social analysis, but to

explain how specific discourse practices both reflect and shape wider structures of power and social life.

Van Dijk's (1993) analysis of racism and political discourse illustrates this movement between levels. His examination of a parliamentary speech defending a right-wing position on multicultural education begins with contextual considerations, including the setting, access, and genre of the discourse, before moving towards the organisation and semantic content of the speech and, subsequently, to local meanings and lexical and grammatical choices. The analysis thus connects features of the immediate discourse with the broader social and political relations within which the discourse operates. What matters from a critical perspective is not simply that particular words or formulations occur, but how such choices contribute to the representation of social groups, the positioning of participants, and the reproduction or contestation of wider relations of power. CDA consequently treats linguistic analysis and social critique as mutually informing dimensions of the same analytical process.

This orientation also helps explain why no single analytical model can be regarded as representative of critical discourse research as a whole. Different traditions vary in the concepts they prioritise, the levels of analysis they foreground, and the ways they conceptualise the relationship between discourse and social structure. What they share, however, is an interest in moving beyond description to examine the social significance and consequences of discourse. The historical development of this critical orientation and the theoretical traditions through which it has been elaborated are considered next.

2. 2. The Historical Development of Critical Discourse Studies

The development of Critical Discourse Studies can be understood as a gradual expansion of the ways in which language, discourse, and social relations are brought into critical analysis. This development did not occur through a single, linear theoretical trajectory; rather, it involved successive shifts in analytical focus, together with the emergence of different intellectual traditions and interdisciplinary connections. The historical account that follows therefore traces the field across several periods, beginning with the emergence of Critical Linguistics in the 1970s, followed by the development and consolidation of Critical Discourse Analysis during the 1980s and 1990s, and its subsequent expansion and diversification in the 2000s and beyond. Particular attention is given to the

changing conceptualisation of the relationship between discourse, power, ideology, and social structures, as well as to the broadening of the objects and contexts of critical inquiry. The aim is not to provide a detailed account of each theoretical approach, which is addressed in the following section, but to situate their emergence within the broader intellectual and historical development of the field.

2. 2. 1. *The 1970s: The Emergence of Critical Linguistics*

The emergence of Critical Linguistics in the 1970s marked an important shift towards examining language in relation to the social conditions in which it is used. An important intellectual influence was M. A. K. Halliday's (1978) systemic functional approach, which conceptualised language as a social semiotic system and drew attention to the relationship between linguistic choices and their social functions. Although Halliday's work was not itself a formulation of Critical Linguistics, this functional orientation provided a useful basis for approaches that sought to relate linguistic form to broader social processes. Against approaches that treated language primarily as an autonomous formal system, early critical linguists examined how linguistic choices may reflect and contribute to particular interests, social relations, and forms of power. This orientation was developed notably by Fowler, Hodge, Kress, and Trew (1979) in *Language and Control*, while Hodge and Kress (1979) examined language as a site through which ideological relations are constructed and maintained. These developments established important foundations for the subsequent emergence of Critical Discourse Analysis, as critical attention increasingly moved from linguistic form in isolation towards discourse as a socially and politically consequential practice.

2. 2. 2. *From Critical Linguistics to the Consolidation of Critical Discourse Analysis: The 1980s–1990s*

The 1980s and 1990s saw a gradual shift from the critical study of linguistic form towards a broader analysis of discourse and its social consequences. Building on the concerns established by Critical Linguistics, scholars increasingly examined how discourse participates in the construction and maintenance of unequal social relations. Fairclough (1989), for example, foregrounded the relationship between language and power by relating textual and interactional features to wider social structures. Wodak (1989, 1996) further developed a historically informed perspective, drawing attention to the ways discourse is embedded in broader political, social, and historical circumstances. Van Dijk (1993, 1998),

meanwhile, brought the analysis of discourse into closer connection with social cognition and ideology, particularly in studies of racism, political discourse, and the reproduction of social inequality. These and related developments contributed to the consolidation of Critical Discourse Analysis as an interdisciplinary field, while also encouraging greater variation in its objects of study, analytical concepts, and methodological procedures. By the end of the 1990s, critical discourse research had moved well beyond the examination of linguistic structures in isolation, establishing discourse as a central object for investigating the relationships between language, power, ideology, and social change.

2. 2. 3. Post-2000: Expansion and Diversification of Critical Discourse Studies

The post-2000 period was characterised by a substantial broadening of critical discourse research, both in the forms of communication examined and in the theoretical resources brought to their analysis. Increasing attention was given to discourse beyond conventional political and institutional texts, including media discourse, migration and identity, gender, racism, popular culture, digital communication, and other forms of mediated social interaction. At the same time, critical analysis increasingly moved beyond language alone towards the study of multimodal discourse, recognising the significance of visual, spatial, gestural, and other semiotic resources in the construction of social representations (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001; Machin & Mayr, 2012). The field also became increasingly connected with research on translation and interpreting, as scholars began to examine how critical concerns such as power, ideology, identity, and representation operate across mediated and translated discourse (Baker, 2006a; Harding, 2012). These developments encouraged a broader use of the term *Critical Discourse Studies* to encompass the range of theoretical and methodological perspectives that had emerged beyond earlier formulations of CDA. Rather than replacing the field's established concern with power and ideology, this diversification extended the ways in which their operation could be investigated across different communicative practices, media, and social contexts.

2. 3. Major Theoretical Traditions in Critical Discourse Studies

The use of the term *traditions* rather than *theoretical approaches* reflects the diversity of intellectual perspectives that have contributed to the critical study of

discourse, including perspectives that cannot be understood simply as subdivisions of Critical Discourse Analysis. The traditions discussed in this section are therefore understood as overlapping and complementary rather than as mutually exclusive schools of thought. The discussion begins with the dialectical-relational approach developed by Norman Fairclough, followed by the Discourse-Historical Approach associated particularly with Ruth Wodak and the Socio-Cognitive Approach developed by Teun A. van Dijk. It then considers the broader theoretical contributions of Michel Foucault and Pierre Bourdieu, whose work on discourse, knowledge, power, language, and symbolic power has significantly informed critical approaches to discourse. The discussion also considers the development of multimodal approaches to critical discourse, reflecting the broadening of critical inquiry beyond language-centred forms of analysis. Critical Translation Studies, which brings this inquiry into multilingual and mediated contexts, is taken up at the beginning of the following chapter. Critical Pragmatics is not treated as a separate tradition in this section; nevertheless, pragmatic theories provide conceptual and analytical resources that are integral to the critical analysis of discourse, particularly when examining how contextualised language use, inference, presupposition, implicature, speech acts, politeness, and other pragmatic phenomena contribute to the construction and negotiation of social relations. Collectively, these perspectives demonstrate the theoretical breadth of Critical Discourse Studies while providing complementary resources for examining how discourse participates in the (re)production and contestation of social relations and power.

2. 3. 1. *The Dialectical-Relational Approach*

Among the major critical traditions discussed in this chapter, Norman Fairclough's⁸ (1989; 1992; 1993; 1995; 1999; 2001; 2003; 2009; 2016) *dialectical-*

⁸ The foundations of Fairclough's dialectical-relational approach can be traced to his earlier work on the relations among language, ideology, and power (*Language and Power*; Fairclough, 1989), while its more substantive development emerged in his work on discourse and social change in the early 1990s, particularly *Discourse and Social Change* (Fairclough, 1992). This development was subsequently advanced through his analysis of the marketization of public discourse and the relationship between discourse and broader social processes (Fairclough, 1993, 1995), his methodological account of critical discourse analysis as a form of social scientific research (Fairclough, 2001), and his systematic treatment of discourse as social practice and its relationship to social structures in *Analysing Discourse* (Fairclough, 2003). Further theoretical development occurred through the work on recontextualization, orders of

relational approach (DRA) provides one of the most influential frameworks for understanding discourse as both a socially constituted and socially constitutive phenomenon. Rather than treating discourse as an autonomous linguistic system or reducing social life to discourse alone, Fairclough (2001) conceptualises discourse as “one element or moment of social practice” (p. 121) that exists in a dialectical relationship with other dimensions of social life. This position distinguishes his approach from purely linguistic models of discourse analysis as well as from approaches that understand all social reality as discursively constituted. DRA therefore seeks to explain how discourse participates in the (re)production and transformation of social life while remaining embedded within material, institutional, historical, and cultural processes (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999).

Dialectical Relationships: Semiosis and Social Practice

A defining feature of Fairclough’s approach is that it resists separating language from society. He argues that Critical Discourse Analysis should be understood not simply as a method of analysing texts but as a theoretical perspective on language and, more broadly, on *semiosis* as “part of the material social process” (Fairclough, 2001, p. 122). Semiosis refers to all forms of meaning-making, including spoken and written language, visual images, bodily conduct, gesture, and other symbolic resources through which social meaning is produced. By employing the broader notion of semiosis, Fairclough moves beyond a purely linguistic conception of discourse and situates meaning-making within wider social practices. Consequently, discourse analysis is not confined to examining linguistic forms in isolation; it investigates how semiotic resources operate alongside other social elements in concrete practices and how their significance changes across different institutional and historical contexts.

discourse, and the dialectical relations between discourse and other elements of social practice, particularly in Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999), and was later explicitly formulated as a “dialectical-relational approach” in Fairclough’s contribution to *Methods of Critical Discourse Studies* (Fairclough, 2001, 2009, 2016). The 2001 chapter, “Critical discourse analysis as a method in social scientific research” (pp. 121–138), was originally published in Wodak and Meyer’s *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis*. Although the corresponding chapter in the 2016 edition was substantially revised and retitled “A dialectical-relational approach to critical discourse analysis in social research” (pp. 86–108), its central argument and conceptual orientation remain essentially consistent with those of the 2001 version.

The central analytical unit in this perspective is social practice. Fairclough (2001, 2009, 2016) conceptualises society as a network of interconnected social practices, including economic, political, educational, legal, cultural, and everyday practices, through which social life is organised. Each practice represents a relatively stable way of acting socially while simultaneously remaining open to transformation through human action and interaction. Social practices therefore provide the point at which structural conditions and social agency intersect. They reproduce existing institutional arrangements, identities, and relations of power, but they also contain the potential for change. This emphasis enables Fairclough to overcome a simple opposition between macro-level social structures and micro-level interaction by showing that discourse operates within practices that are simultaneously structured and productive.

Every social practice comprises multiple elements, including productive activity, social relations, social identities, cultural values, consciousness, material resources, and semiosis. These elements are dialectically related: they are distinct from one another but cannot be understood independently because each internalises aspects of the others without being reducible to them (Fairclough, 2001). Social identities, for instance, are partly constituted through discourse, yet they also depend upon institutional arrangements, historical trajectories, and material conditions. Likewise, social relations have semiotic dimensions, but they cannot be analysed solely through linguistic categories because they possess properties that require sociological, political, or historical explanation. The dialectical principle therefore preserves analytical distinctions while explaining how discourse is intertwined with non-discursive dimensions of social life.

This ontological position explains why Fairclough defines Critical Discourse Analysis as the analysis of dialectical relationships between semiosis and other elements of social practices. Rather than assuming that discourse always determines social life or merely reflects it, CDA investigates the specific role discourse plays within particular practices and historical moments. The importance of semiosis cannot be taken for granted; it must be established empirically. In some practices discourse plays a relatively limited role, whereas in others, such as politics, journalism, education, law, or public administration, it becomes central to the organisation and legitimation of social activity. This makes CDA particularly suitable for examining periods of social transformation in which the relationship between discourse and other social elements is itself changing.

Fairclough (2001, p. 123) further argues that semiosis functions in social practices in three interconnected ways, each corresponding to a different analytical category. First, semiosis functions as part of social activity, since acting within any practice necessarily involves using semiotic resources in particular ways. Second, semiosis functions through representations of social practices, whereby social actors construct accounts of both their own practices and those of others. Third, semiosis functions in the performance of social positions, through which identities are enacted in interaction. These three functions give rise to three closely related concepts: genres, discourses, and styles.

Genres, Orders of Discourse and Styles

Genres refer to socially recognised ways of acting through semiosis. Meetings, interviews, consultations, lectures, courtroom examinations, press conferences, or everyday conversations are genres because they organise interaction according to relatively established conventions. Genres therefore connect discourse with patterns of social action. Discourses, by contrast, are ways of representing social life from particular social positions. Different actors represent the same social phenomenon differently because they occupy different institutional locations and ideological positions. Political, medical, legal, neoliberal, feminist, or environmental discourses each construct social reality through distinct representational perspectives. Styles represent the semiotic dimension of identity. They concern ways of being rather than simply ways of speaking, reflecting how individuals perform institutional roles while simultaneously expressing broader social identities associated with class, gender, ethnicity, nationality, or professional affiliation.

The distinction among genres, discourses, and styles is analytically significant because communicative events rarely involve only one of these elements. Institutional interactions typically combine ways of acting, representing, and performing identities simultaneously. This interaction is organised through what Fairclough (2001) terms “an order of discourse—the semiotic aspect of a social order” (p. 124). Orders of discourse refer to the configuration of genres, discourses, and styles available within a particular institution or social field. A university, a hospital, a courtroom, or the media each possesses an order of discourse that structures which genres and discourses are available, legitimate, or dominant within that domain. Orders of discourse are therefore social organisations of semiotic difference rather than closed linguistic systems.

Importantly, orders of discourse are characterised by hegemony rather than stability. Certain genres or discourses become dominant and acquire the status of common sense, whereas others remain marginal, alternative, or oppositional. Yet hegemony is never complete because dominant semiotic configurations are continually contested within social interaction. Fairclough therefore conceptualises orders of discourse as open systems that may be reproduced or transformed through communicative events. This understanding links discourse directly to Gramscian (1971) notions of hegemonic struggle and provides a mechanism for analysing ideological contestation within institutional communication.

A central process through which orders of discourse evolve is *interdiscursivity*. Fairclough (2001, p. 125) uses this concept to describe how texts combine genres, discourses, and styles originating from different social practices. Every communicative event draws upon multiple semiotic resources, but the particular articulation of these resources varies according to context. Interdiscursivity therefore examines the relationships among genres, discourses, and styles within texts and interactions rather than treating texts as homogeneous units. Closely related is the concept of recontextualization, which explains how discourses travel across institutional domains and acquire new meanings when inserted into different contexts. Economic discourse, for example, may be recontextualised within political communication, education, healthcare, or media discourse, where it is transformed to serve different institutional purposes. Recontextualization thus demonstrates that discourse does not simply circulate unchanged; it is reshaped through its incorporation into new social practices.

Fairclough illustrates this process through analyses of neoliberal discourse in the context of contemporary capitalism. Rather than treating globalisation as merely an economic phenomenon, he argues that the restructuring and rescaling of capitalism involve simultaneous restructuring of orders of discourse. Managerial discourse, market vocabulary, and entrepreneurial identities increasingly colonise public institutions such as education, healthcare, and government. However, this colonisation is never uniform. Dominant discourses encounter existing institutional traditions and may be appropriated, negotiated, resisted, or combined with alternative forms of meaning-making. Consequently, CDA investigates not only dominance but also difference and resistance within networks of social practices.

Although Fairclough's framework is grounded in social theory, its linguistic foundation derives from Halliday's (1994) Systemic Functional Linguistics.

Halliday's conception of language as a social semiotic provides the basis for analysing linguistic choices in relation to their social functions rather than as autonomous grammatical structures. Functional linguistics enables Fairclough to connect categories of linguistic analysis, such as vocabulary, grammar, modality, transitivity, evaluation, and cohesion, with categories of social analysis. However, Fairclough extends Halliday's framework beyond functional linguistics by embedding linguistic analysis within broader accounts of ideology, power, institutional practice, and social change. Linguistic analysis is therefore indispensable but insufficient on its own; it acquires explanatory value only when related to the social practices in which texts are produced and interpreted. The dialectical-relational perspective also benefits from the concept of *indexicality*, which helps explain how linguistic forms acquire social meaning within interaction. Indexicality refers to the capacity of linguistic forms and communicative actions to point beyond their literal or denotational meaning towards identities, social relationships, institutional positions, values, and communities of practice (Johnstone, 2008). A lexical choice, a form of address, a pronunciation variant, or a particular interactional strategy may simultaneously communicate propositional content and signal alignment with particular social groups or institutional identities. Indexical forms therefore do not merely reflect pre-existing social meanings; they actively participate in creating, affirming, or negotiating those meanings during interaction.

This perspective complements Fairclough's ontology in two important respects. First, it demonstrates that the meaning of discourse emerges through its relationship with socially situated practices rather than through linguistic forms alone. Second, it highlights that identities and social alignments are interactionally accomplished rather than permanently attached to individuals. Communities of practice are constituted through shared discursive activities and recurrent patterns of interaction instead of homogeneous membership in fixed speech communities. Linguistic choices thus become meaningful because they index particular social positions within concrete practices, reinforcing Fairclough's claim that semiosis is inseparable from the relational organisation of social life.

Three-dimensional Analytical Framework

Having established discourse as a moment of social practice, Fairclough (1992, p. 72) operationalises this ontological position through his *three-dimensional*

analytical framework, first developed in *Discourse and Social Change* and subsequently refined in later works (Fairclough, 1995). The framework translates the dialectical relationship between discourse and society into interconnected levels of empirical analysis. Rather than prescribing a linear analytical procedure, it provides multiple points of entry through which textual organisation, discursive processes, and broader social practices can be examined as mutually explanatory dimensions of the same communicative event (Fairclough, 1992, 1995).

The first dimension is the *text* (Fairclough, 1992, p. 73), referring to the observable linguistic and semiotic features of a communicative event, including spoken language, written language, visual images, or multimodal combinations. Textual analysis focuses on vocabulary, grammar, syntax, cohesion, modality, transitivity, evaluation, and other formal properties through which genres and discourses are realised. Fairclough describes this stage as description, because it identifies how meaning is organised linguistically and semiotically without treating textual features as socially meaningful in isolation.

The second dimension is *discursive practice* (Fairclough, 1992, p. 78), encompassing the production, circulation, reception, and interpretation of texts. Here the analytical focus shifts from textual form to the processes through which communicative events draw upon existing genres and discourses and through which audiences interpret them using available interpretative resources. Discursive practice therefore mediates between texts and wider social practices. At this level, intertextuality examines how texts draw upon previous texts, whereas interdiscursivity investigates how multiple genres and discourses are articulated within a single communicative event. Fairclough characterises this analytical stage as interpretation because it explains how texts become meaningful through socially situated processes of production and reception.

The third dimension is social practice (Fairclough, 1992, p. 86), which situates communicative events within broader institutional, historical, political, economic, and cultural contexts. Explanation at this level examines how discursive practices reproduce, legitimise, negotiate, or transform existing orders of discourse and wider social relations. Importantly, discourse analysis alone cannot fully explain social practice because social practices also contain non-discursive moments that require insights from sociology, political theory, history, econom-

ics, or other disciplines. Fairclough's framework is therefore inherently interdisciplinary, connecting textual analysis with broader theories of society rather than reducing one to the other.

The analytical strength of the three-dimensional framework lies precisely in the relationships among its dimensions. Texts cannot be understood independently of the discursive practices through which they are produced and interpreted, and discursive practices cannot be explained without reference to the wider social practices in which they are embedded. Likewise, broader social transformations become analytically visible through the examination of specific communicative events. The framework therefore enables the analyst to move systematically between linguistic detail and institutional or historical explanation without privileging either level of analysis, while also accounting for the ways in which these levels become entangled in communicative encounters involving interpreters.

2. 3. 2. The Discourse-Historical Approach

The Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA), associated particularly with Ruth Wodak and her collaborators, constitutes one of the major strands of Critical Discourse Studies (CDS). Although it shares with other critical approaches an interest in the relationships among discourse, power, ideology, and social inequality, its distinctive contribution lies in the systematic incorporation of historical and contextual dimensions into discourse analysis. Rather than treating a discourse as a self-contained linguistic object, DHA approaches it as a dynamic configuration of semiotic practices whose meanings emerge through their relations to other texts, discourses, genres, social practices, and historical developments (Reisigl & Wodak, 2001, 2009; Wodak, 2007). Its emergence is closely connected with research into anti-Semitic discourse during the 1986 Austrian presidential campaign of Kurt Waldheim, which subsequently provided the empirical and methodological foundations for what became the DHA (Wodak et al., 1990). From the outset, therefore, the approach was conceived as interdisciplinary, historically oriented, empirically grounded, and directed towards socially relevant problems. These characteristics distinguish DHA from approaches that primarily seek to explain the dialectical relationship between discourse and social structures, while also giving it a methodological profile that is particularly suited to investigating how discursive constructions develop and circulate across different historical and communicative contexts.

The origins of DHA are particularly significant because its methodological orientation emerged from the requirements of a concrete research problem rather than from the application of a previously fixed analytical model. The original study investigated the antisemitic images and stereotypes articulated in public discourse surrounding Waldheim and his concealed National Socialist past (Wodak et al., 1990). The research brought linguistic analysis into dialogue with historical and sociological investigation and was conducted collectively rather than as an exclusively individual textual enterprise. Four characteristics subsequently became central to the approach: *interdisciplinarity*, *teamwork*, *triangulation*, and an *orientation* towards practical application (Reisigl & Wodak, 2009, p. 93). These principles continued to shape the development of DHA as its empirical scope expanded to include racist discrimination against Romanian migrants, constructions of national identity in Austria, European identities, and European politics of memory (Muntigl et al., 2000; Wodak et al., 1999; Heer et al., 2008). The establishment of the Research Centre “Discourse, Politics, Identity” in Vienna further facilitated comparative and transnational research. Consequently, DHA developed from an approach initially concerned with a particular instance of antisemitic political discourse into a broader programme capable of examining identity, migration, nationalism, political memory, and other contested social issues across historical and geographical settings. This expansion, however, did not constitute a departure from its original purpose. Rather, the approach retained its initial commitments while extending their application to a wider range of discourses, genres, actors, and communicative environments.

Critical Orientation of DHA

A central concept through which DHA articulates its critical orientation is *critique* (Reisigl & Wodak, 2009, p. 87). In this framework, critique involves gaining analytical distance from the object of investigation while simultaneously recognizing that analysis itself is situated and requires continuous reflexivity (Reisigl & Wodak, 2001). DHA distinguishes three interconnected dimensions of critique. *Text- or discourse-immanent critique* identifies inconsistencies, contradictions, paradoxes, and other tensions within a discourse. *Socio-diagnostic critique* moves beyond the text by drawing on contextual knowledge and relevant social theories to uncover persuasive, ideological, or potentially manipulative aspects of discursive practices. *Prospective critique*, finally, is oriented towards the improvement of communicative practices and social conditions, for

example through recommendations intended to reduce discriminatory or exclusionary forms of language (Reisigl & Wodak, 2001). Critique therefore has both analytical and practical implications. The analyst is expected not only to interpret discourse but also to make the basis of that interpretation transparent, including the theoretical assumptions and contextual knowledge on which it rests. This reflexive orientation is particularly important to DHA because the critical assessment of discourse cannot be separated completely from questions concerning the validity of the analyst's own interpretation. The approach consequently seeks to make its analytical position explicit rather than presenting interpretation as an entirely neutral procedure.

The concepts of *ideology* and *power* provide further foundations for this critical perspective. Drawing on Thompson (1990), DHA approaches ideology in terms of social forms and processes through which symbolic forms contribute to the establishment and maintenance of unequal relations. More specifically, ideologies can be understood as relatively coherent but often one-sided perspectives or worldviews comprising shared representations, beliefs, attitudes, evaluations, and convictions within social groups (Reisigl & Wodak, 2009). Discourse becomes significant in this process because ideological perspectives can be reproduced, legitimized, challenged, or transformed through linguistic and other semiotic practices. Power, similarly, is not regarded as an inherent property of language. Rather, language becomes a resource through which actors in asymmetrical social relationships can exercise, reproduce, or contest power. Following Weber (1980), power involves the possibility of realizing one's will within a social relationship even against the interests or resistance of others. DHA therefore investigates how power relations become legitimized or delegitimized through discourse, including through control over genres, communicative occasions, and access to public spheres. This emphasis on access and discursive participation is particularly important because domination need not be expressed through explicit linguistic coercion: the organization of communicative spaces, the distribution of speaking opportunities, and the representation or exclusion of social actors may themselves contribute to unequal relations.

The DHA conception of *discourse* provides the conceptual basis for connecting these critical concerns with empirical analysis. Discourse is understood as a cluster of context-dependent semiotic practices situated within particular fields of social action. It is simultaneously socially constituted and socially constitutive, connected to a broader macro-topic and characterized by multiple perspectives

and competing validity claims (Reisigl & Wodak, 2009, p. 89). Three features are particularly important here: *macro-topic-relatedness*, *pluri-perspectivity*, and *argumentativity*. A discourse is therefore not equivalent to a single text or a collection of texts defined solely by formal linguistic similarity. Its boundaries are analytically constructed and remain open because discourses develop through the contributions of different actors and through their encounters with other discourses. Texts constitute more concrete manifestations of these broader discursive formations, while genres provide socially recognized ways of using language in relation to particular social activities (Fairclough, 1995). DHA consequently examines the relationships among texts, genres, discourses, and fields of action rather than isolating individual textual units. This perspective is particularly useful when discourse circulates across institutional settings, as a topic may emerge in one field of action, acquire new meanings in another, and subsequently become incorporated into different genres. The analytical object is thus inherently relational and open-ended.

This relationality is developed most explicitly through DHA's treatment of *intertextuality*, *interdiscursivity*, and *recontextualization*. Intertextuality refers to the ways in which texts are connected to previous or contemporaneous texts through explicit references, allusions, shared events, transferred arguments, or other forms of textual linkage. Interdiscursivity concerns relationships among different discourses, allowing apparently distinct areas of social concern to overlap and become combined. Recontextualization describes the movement of discursive elements from one context into another, where their meanings may be modified by the new communicative and social conditions. A political statement reproduced in a newspaper, for example, does not necessarily retain precisely the same discursive function that it had in the original political setting because journalists select, frame, and embed the statement within a new textual environment. DHA therefore asks not simply what a particular utterance says, but how it has travelled, how it has been transformed, and what other discourses and institutional practices have contributed to its present meaning. The concept of the *field of action*, developed by Girth (1996), is useful in this respect because it locates discursive practices within segments of social reality defined by particular functions. Political discourse, for instance, may involve legislation, parliamentary debate, election campaigning, media communication, political advertising, protest, international relations, and other fields, each associated with differ-

ent genres and participation structures. Historical discourse analysis consequently requires attention to movement across these fields rather than assuming that a discourse remains institutionally stable.

Historical contextualization is formalized methodologically through DHA's *four levels of context* (Reisigl & Wodak, 2009, p. 93). The first concerns the immediate linguistic environment, including *co-text* and *co-discourse*. The second concerns *intertextual* and *interdiscursive relationships* among utterances, texts, genres, and discourses. The third encompasses the *extralinguistic social variables* and *institutional frames of the specific situation*. The fourth addresses *the wider socio-political and historical context* in which discursive practices are embedded (Wodak, 2007, 2008; Reisigl & Wodak, 2009). These dimensions are not treated as separate layers to be examined only once. Rather, DHA emphasizes a recursive movement among them. A particular linguistic choice may therefore be interpreted in relation to an immediate interaction, a genre convention, an institutional setting, and a wider historical development, while insights from the broader context may in turn lead the analyst to reconsider the interpretation of the linguistic evidence. This recursive contextualization is one of the defining methodological features of DHA. It also explains why historical analysis in this approach goes beyond simply adding background information to textual analysis. Historical knowledge is used to reconstruct how discourses and discursive strategies develop over time, how particular representations are carried forward or transformed, and how earlier meanings become available for subsequent recontextualization.

Analytical Dimensions and Procedures

The methodological architecture of DHA is further structured around three interrelated analytical dimensions: the identification of discourse topics, the examination of discursive strategies, and the analysis of their linguistic realizations (Reisigl & Wodak, 2009, p. 93). First, the analyst identifies the *principal contents* or *topics of the discourse*. Second, *discursive strategies* are investigated. Third, the *linguistic means* and *context-dependent realizations* through which these strategies are enacted are examined (Reisigl & Wodak, 2001, 2009). These dimensions are operationalized through five recurrent heuristic questions: how social actors, objects, phenomena, events, processes, and actions are named; what characteristics are attributed to them; what arguments are employed; from

which perspective these nominations, attributions, and arguments are articulated; and whether particular utterances are intensified or mitigated (Reisigl & Wodak, 2009, pp. 94). Correspondingly, DHA identifies five major strategy types: *nomination*, *predication*, *argumentation*, *perspectivization/framing* or *discourse representation*, and *intensification/mitigation*. Nomination concerns the discursive construction and categorization of actors and phenomena; predication examines their positive or negative characterization; argumentation investigates how claims of truth or normative rightness are justified or challenged; perspectivization concerns the positioning of a speaker or writer and the expression of involvement or distance; and intensification or mitigation addresses modifications of illocutionary force and epistemic or deontic status. Importantly, these strategies are not treated as isolated textual devices. They may operate together, with nominations and predications, for example, contributing to the argumentative construction of a particular social actor. Their analytical value consequently derives from their relation to broader discursive purposes and ideological positions.

Among these strategies, *argumentation* occupies a particularly important position because DHA explicitly connects discourse analysis with questions of justification and validity. Claims may concern what is presented as true or what is represented as normatively right, and such claims are supported through culturally and contextually available argumentation schemes. DHA draws particularly on the concept of *topoi* (Reisigl & Wodak, 2009, p. 98), understood as warrants that connect arguments with conclusions, while also distinguishing reasonable argumentation from fallacious forms. The identification of *topoi* therefore enables the analyst to move beyond the surface description of linguistic choices and investigate the reasoning through which particular representations are legitimized. For example, arguments concerning danger, threat, numbers, consequences, responsibility, or moral obligation may establish connections between a particular representation of an event and a proposed course of action. The identification of such argumentative patterns becomes especially productive when combined with nomination and predication strategies because the characterization of social actors may establish the premises on which subsequent normative claims depend. At the same time, DHA does not assume that argumentative schemes can always be classified independently of context. Distinguishing between a legitimate *topos* and a fallacy may require substantial contextual, historical, and disciplinary knowledge. Argumentation analysis thus illustrates the

broader principle that linguistic evidence must be interpreted through triangulation rather than through textual form alone.

The principle of *triangulation* consequently constitutes one of DHA's most important methodological contributions. Because discourse is regarded as multidimensional and because linguistic and visual material represents only part of the social processes under investigation, DHA advocates the systematic combination of different types of empirical evidence, theories, methods, and contextual knowledge (Wodak, 2007; Wodak et al., 1999; Heer et al., 2008). Triangulation may involve the examination of different genres, data sources, social actors, historical periods, media, or institutional settings. It can also involve combining qualitative textual analysis with ethnographic observation, interviews, archival research, or other forms of contextual investigation where the research question requires them. The objective is not merely to accumulate data but to approach the research object from complementary perspectives. This principle is closely connected to DHA's interdisciplinary orientation: theories and methods are selected according to their explanatory usefulness rather than according to disciplinary exclusivity. At the same time, Reisigl and Wodak (2009) caution that interdisciplinary combination should not lead to the uncritical accumulation of theoretically incompatible perspectives. DHA therefore combines methodological openness with theoretical reflexivity. The analyst must be able to justify why particular theoretical and methodological resources are appropriate to the problem under investigation.

This problem-oriented character is reflected in DHA's *eight-stage research programme*. The procedure begins with the activation and consultation of preceding theoretical knowledge, followed by the systematic collection of empirical data and contextual information. The researcher then selects and prepares the data according to criteria such as salience, representativity, typicality, intertextual or interdiscursive influence, uniqueness, and redundancy. The research question and assumptions are subsequently refined through engagement with the literature and an initial examination of the data. A qualitative pilot analysis is then undertaken to test and modify the analytical categories and assumptions. This is followed by detailed case studies, formulation of critique, and, where possible, application of the results (Reisigl & Wodak, 2009). Crucially, these stages are not intended as a rigid linear sequence. DHA describes them as an ideal-typical programme and emphasizes recursive movement between theoretical assump-

tions, empirical observations, and analytical refinement. The categories themselves are not fixed in advance for every investigation; they are elaborated in accordance with the research problem and the characteristics of the data. This flexibility enables DHA to accommodate both large interdisciplinary projects and smaller studies in which only selected genres, actors, or discourse fragments can be examined. The methodological implication is therefore not that every DHA study must reproduce an identical research design, but that analytical decisions should remain transparent, problem-oriented, and theoretically justified.

The final stages of the DHA programme reveal its explicitly applied and emancipatory orientation. The formulation of critique involves evaluating discourse in relation to principles such as democratic norms, human rights, and rational argumentation, while examining how ideological representations and power relations may produce bias, exclusion, or manipulation. The application of findings extends beyond academic publication to forms of knowledge transfer directed towards wider publics, institutions, and social actors. Such transfer may involve recommendations, educational activities, public commentary, professional training, or political advising (Reisigl & Wodak, 2009). Importantly, this process is itself understood as a form of recontextualization: theoretical concepts, methodological findings, and empirical results must be reformulated when they move from academic discourse into other genres and communicative settings. The practical orientation of DHA thus does not represent an external addition to an otherwise purely academic methodology. It follows from the approach's conception of critique as a form of socially situated intervention. At the same time, this orientation makes reflexivity particularly important because the analyst is not positioned outside the social and political consequences of interpretation. The evaluation of discourse therefore requires explicit justification of the normative principles through which such evaluation is undertaken.

Over its development, DHA has consequently expanded considerably in empirical scope without abandoning the principles that characterized its emergence. Its initial concern with anti-Semitic political discourse developed into investigations of racism, migration, national identity, political memory, European identity, and transnational political discourse (Wodak et al., 1990, 1999; Muntigl et al., 2000; Heer et al., 2008). This development is better understood as elaboration rather than transformation into a fundamentally different approach. The historical dimension remained central, while the range of contexts, genres, media,

actors, and analytical resources expanded. Likewise, interdisciplinarity, triangulation, problem orientation, and practical application continued to provide the methodological infrastructure of the approach. DHA therefore evolved from a historically grounded critical analysis of a specific political controversy into a flexible research programme for examining the changing relationships among discourse, identity, ideology, and power across social and historical contexts. Its development also demonstrates that historical analysis need not be restricted to archival or explicitly historical texts. Contemporary discourses can themselves be understood historically by tracing their intertextual and interdiscursive links, their changing representations, and the recontextualization of earlier discursive patterns.

Overall, the Discourse-Historical Approach can be characterized as a critical, historically oriented, interdisciplinary, and problem-driven methodology for analysing discourse in context. Its distinctive contribution does not rest simply on adding historical information to linguistic analysis. Rather, historical and socio-political contextualization is integrated into the explanation of how discourses are constructed, circulated, transformed, and contested. The combination of the four levels of context, the three analytical dimensions, the five discursive strategies, and the principle of triangulation provides a systematic means of connecting linguistic realizations with broader argumentative, ideological, institutional, and historical processes. At the same time, its recursive research design allows categories and interpretations to be refined in response to empirical findings rather than imposed mechanically on the data. In this respect, DHA provides a methodological bridge between close analysis of discourse and the broader critical investigation of social processes. Whereas the dialectical-relational approach emphasizes the constitutive relationship between discourse and other elements of social practice, DHA places particular analytical weight on the historical trajectories, contextual embedding, intertextual/interdiscursive relations, and strategic construction of social actors and claims through which such relationships become observable. This makes the approach useful for examining how representations gain legitimacy, how different positions are constructed and defended, and how discourse may sustain or challenge existing power relations over time.

2. 3. 3. *The Socio-Cognitive Approach*

The Socio-Cognitive Approach (SCA), developed primarily by Teun A. van Dijk (1993, 1998, 2001, 2008, 2009, 2014, 2018)⁹, offers a distinct account of the relationship between discourse and society by placing cognition at the centre of discourse analysis. Rather than treating discourse as a direct reflection of social structures or historical processes, SCA emphasises the cognitive mechanisms that mediate between social situations and discourse. From this perspective, speakers and recipients construct mental models of communicative situations on the basis of their knowledge, beliefs, experiences, and expectations, and these models shape how discourse is produced and interpreted. *Cognition*¹⁰ (Fiske & Taylor, 1984) therefore functions as an interface between discourse and society, providing an account of how broader social structures and relations become relevant to individual communicative practices (van Dijk, 2008, p. 3).

Social Cognition: Connecting Discourse and Society

The concept of *social cognition* (van Dijk, 1993, p. 257) provides the basis for understanding how individuals relate their discourse to the social world in which

⁹ A chronological consideration of van Dijk's major works on the socio-cognitive approach (SCA) reveals a gradual development of its central theoretical premises. His 1993 contribution can be regarded as a foundational work in articulating the need for a cognitive interface between discourse and society. In *Ideology: A Multidisciplinary Approach* (1998), this perspective was developed more systematically through an examination of ideology, shared social representations, and the relationship between cognition and society within what would become the socio-cognitive triangle of discourse, cognition, and society. His 2001 contribution further clarified the methodological and theoretical positioning of the approach, including its distinctiveness in relation to other traditions within Critical Discourse Analysis, particularly those associated with Fairclough and Wodak. The works published in 2008 and 2009 subsequently elaborated key SCA concepts, most notably context models and mental representations, explaining how these cognitive structures mediate discourse production and interpretation and how macro-social structures, including class, gender, and institutional relations, become relevant to discourse through cognitive processes. Finally, van Dijk's later works (2014, 2018) further developed the socio-cognitive role of shared knowledge within epistemic communities and revisited the theoretical development of the approach in light of subsequent advances in linguistics and cognitive psychology.

¹⁰ The term *social cognition* began to emerge as an independent concept in the general psychology literature in the early and mid-1970s, in the context of the developing "cognitive revolution." However, the field is generally associated with the publication of Susan T. Fiske and Shelley E. Taylor's *Social Cognition* in 1984, a foundational work that helped establish and consolidate the concept in its contemporary sense.

communication takes place. It refers broadly to the socially acquired knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, norms, values, and ideologies through which individuals understand themselves, others, and the situations in which they interact. These resources are not simply individual stores of information; they are developed and shaped through participation in social groups and through communicative experience. They consequently influence what participants consider relevant, expected, or meaningful in a given interaction (van Dijk, 2009, p. 64).

This perspective adds an important dimension to the approaches discussed above. While Fairclough foregrounds the relationship between discourse and social practices and Wodak emphasises the historical and contextual dimensions of discourse, SCA draws attention to how participants cognitively process those social conditions as part of communication. A social structure, institutional role, or contextual circumstance does not by itself determine what an individual says or understands. Its relevance depends partly on how participants perceive and represent the situation, what they know about the other participants, and what they expect to occur within the interaction. Social cognition thus helps explain the participant-level processes through which socially situated knowledge becomes operative in discourse (van Dijk, 2008, p. 9).

This dimension is particularly pertinent to spoken interaction, where participants must process discourse as it unfolds and continually adjust their understanding of the developing situation. Speakers formulate their contributions in relation to what they know about the interaction and its participants, while recipients interpret incoming utterances against both the immediately preceding discourse and their broader knowledge and expectations. Such processes are especially significant where participants do not share identical knowledge or assumptions, since differences in cognitive resources may affect how utterances are understood and responded to (van Dijk, 2008, p. 29).

Mental and Context Models

SCA accounts for this relationship between knowledge and discourse more specifically through the concept of *mental models*¹¹ (van Dijk, 1985, pp. 62-66).

¹¹ The concept of mental models was developed in the context of discourse processing by Teun A. van Dijk and Walter Kintsch in their 1983 book, *Strategies of Discourse Comprehension*, where the related, though not synonymous, term situation models was conceptualized as referring to subjective representations of events and situations

These are subjective representations of events and situations stored in episodic memory. Rather than representing discourse itself, mental models capture an individual's understanding of the situation being discussed, including its participants, events, actions, and temporal and causal relations. In comprehension, recipients construct and update such models as they process discourse; in production, speakers draw on their representations of the communicative situation when deciding what to express and how to formulate it. Mental models therefore provide a more specific cognitive mechanism for explaining how participants connect linguistic discourse with the situations they understand and communicate about (van Dijk, 2008, p. 44).

Mental models help explain why spoken discourse frequently relies on information that remains only partially expressed. Speakers may use implicit meanings, incomplete references, deixis, or ellipsis because they assume that recipients can recover what is not explicitly stated from their existing knowledge and their developing representation of the situation. Linguistic expressions can therefore be understood in relation to information that is not present in the discourse itself but is available to participants through their cognitive resources. This perspective helps account for how interlocutors achieve comprehension despite the necessarily incomplete and context-dependent nature of spoken communication (van Dijk, 2008, p. 53).

Closely related to mental models, but serving a more specific function, are *context models* (van Dijk, 1999, pp. 123-128). Whereas mental models concern participants' representations of the events or situations referred to in discourse, context models represent the communicative situation in which the discourse is produced and interpreted. They incorporate such dimensions as the participants involved, their institutional or social roles, the purpose of the interaction, the relevant setting, and assumptions about what participants know. In this sense, context is not treated simply as an external set of circumstances surrounding discourse. Rather, it is represented by participants in ways that determine which aspects of the situation are considered relevant to the ongoing interaction and consequently influence what is made explicit, implicit, appropriate, or salient in discourse (van Dijk, 2008, p. 85).

constructed and stored in episodic memory. In his first solo work specifically addressing these models, van Dijk (1985) subsequently elaborated their role in discourse production.

Context models are also dynamic and continuously updated. As an interaction unfolds, participants modify their representation of the communicative situation in response to new information, changes in participation, interruptions, repairs, or shifts in topic and activity. Such adjustments can affect subsequent choices concerning lexical formulation, evaluation, politeness, and topic management. Context models thus provide an account of how speakers adapt their discourse to the changing conditions of an interaction rather than simply drawing on a fixed representation established at its outset (van Dijk, 2008, p. 107).

Knowledge, Ideology, and Power in SCA

Within SCA, *knowledge*¹² is particularly important because it provides participants with socially shared resources for interpreting discourse and determining what can remain implicit. Van Dijk (2003, pp. 1-2) conceptualises knowledge as socially acquired beliefs that members of a community accept as valid and can draw upon as common ground in communication. Speakers therefore do not need to verbalise information that they assume recipients already know, while recipients rely on shared knowledge to construct appropriate interpretations and inferences. In spoken interaction, the availability and accessibility of such knowledge consequently contribute to the efficient processing and comprehension of discourse.

Knowledge, however, is not necessarily distributed equally across social groups. Participants may possess different bodies of knowledge or different degrees of access to socially valued knowledge, depending on their social positions, experiences, and participation in particular communities. Such differences can affect what participants treat as self-evident, what requires explanation, and which interpretations are readily available during interaction. SCA therefore links the analysis of discourse to the social distribution and organisation of knowledge without reducing discourse to a direct reflection of that distribution (van Dijk, 2009, p. 15).

¹² Van Dijk's systematic and theoretically developed conceptualization of *knowledge* in direct relation to discourse analysis is most explicitly formulated in his 2003 work. This does not, however, represent his first engagement with the role of knowledge in discourse: his earlier work with Walter Kintsch (1983), for instance, had already addressed the importance of general knowledge in processes of discourse comprehension and text interpretation.

*Ideology*¹³ constitutes another important dimension of SCA. Rather than treating ideology primarily as a property of particular texts or as a historically situated worldview, van Dijk (1998, pp. 5, 48, 126–129) conceptualises it as a socially shared system of beliefs associated with group membership. Ideologies provide groups with frameworks for interpreting social actors and events, evaluating their own group and others, and organising attitudes towards socially relevant issues. Their discursive relevance lies in the ways these group-based beliefs guide the interpretation and representation of social reality in particular communicative situations.

Ideology is therefore closely related to the organisation of social knowledge, but the two concepts should not be conflated. Knowledge concerns what members of a community regard as established or accepted information, whereas ideology is more closely associated with group-based beliefs, values, and evaluative orientations. This distinction is analytically significant because discourse may draw upon widely shared knowledge while simultaneously expressing ideological positions through the evaluation of social actors, events, or groups (van Dijk, 2009, p. 109).

Power, finally, is examined in SCA in relation to the control of discourse and the cognitive consequences of that control. Van Dijk (1989, p. 20) argues that powerful groups and institutions can exercise influence through privileged access to communicative resources, public discourse, and socially consequential knowledge. Such control affects not only who can speak, where, and to whom, but also which information becomes available and which perspectives receive greater discursive prominence. Power can consequently operate through the management of the knowledge and interpretive resources available to participants (van Dijk, 2009, p. 63).

¹³ Van Dijk (1998) reconceptualises *ideology* from a sociocognitive and multidisciplinary perspective, moving beyond approaches that treat ideology primarily as a political or economic phenomenon. He conceptualizes ideologies as socially shared systems of fundamental beliefs associated with particular social groups, whose cognitive organization and social functions are articulated through the interplay of cognition, society, and discourse (van Dijk, 1998, pp. 26, 28–48). He further develops the *ideological square* as a model for analysing the discursive expression of group-based ideologies, particularly through the strategic emphasis on positive information about the ingroup and negative information about the outgroup (van Dijk, 1998, pp. 267–268).

This conception extends the analysis of power beyond formal authority or institutional position. What matters for SCA is also how unequal access to discourse and knowledge can shape people's understanding of social actors, events, and relations (van Dijk, 1989, p. 42). Power thus becomes relevant to discourse partly through its capacity to influence the cognitive resources with which individuals interpret and participate in communicative events (van Dijk, 2009, p. 140).

Analytical Categories in SCA

Van Dijk (1980) does not propose a rigid three-part analytical framework comparable to Fairclough's three-dimensional model. Rather, *macrostructure*, *superstructure*, and *microstructure* are analytical concepts¹⁴ used to describe different but interrelated dimensions of discourse organisation. They distinguish between the global semantic organisation of discourse, its conventional schematic arrangement, and its local linguistic realisation. These levels should therefore be understood as complementary analytical categories rather than as three discrete stages or components through which every discourse must necessarily be analysed. Together, they allow discourse to be examined from its overall organisation to the linguistic details through which particular propositions and relations are expressed.

Macrostructure (van Dijk, 1980, p. 26) refers to the global semantic organisation of discourse, particularly its overall topic and the main propositions through which that topic is developed. Rather than focusing on individual utterances or linguistic forms, macrostructure captures the higher-level organisation that enables a discourse to be understood as a coherent whole. It concerns which information is foregrounded, how propositions are hierarchically organised, and which elements constitute the central content of a discourse. In spoken discourse, macro structural organisation can be observed in the ways participants introduce, maintain, shift, or summarise topics. Individual contributions can therefore be examined not only in terms of their local formulation but also in relation to the broader topic structure they contribute to. From an analytical perspective,

¹⁴ The three terms did not emerge as a fixed three-level model at a single point; rather, they developed progressively in van Dijk's earlier work, with *Macrostructures* (1980) providing their first systematic formulation as related analytical concepts (van Dijk, 1980).

macrostructure makes it possible to move beyond isolated utterances and identify the global organisation of the discourse.

Superstructure (van Dijk, 1980, p. 107) refers to the schematic organisation through which discourse is conventionally structured. Whereas macrostructure concerns the global semantic content of a discourse, superstructure concerns the functional arrangement through which that content is presented. Different discourse genres may consequently display different schematic structures, with particular components occurring in conventional relationships to one another (van Dijk, 1980; 2008, pp. 191–194). In spoken discourse, such schematic organisation can be observed in recognisable communicative formats, including interviews, debates, examinations, news broadcasts, classroom interactions, and sports commentary. These formats establish expectations concerning the organisation and sequencing of contributions, although their actual realisation may vary according to the participants and circumstances of a particular interaction. Superstructure should therefore be distinguished from the *context model* discussed above: whereas superstructure concerns the conventional organisation of a discourse type, context models concern participants' representations of the communicative situation in which a particular discourse occurs.

Microstructure (van Dijk, 1980, p. 15) concerns the local organisation of discourse and includes the linguistic features through which particular propositions and relations are expressed. Lexical choice, syntax, reference, cohesion, modality, evaluation, and other local semantic and formal properties can therefore be examined at this level (van Dijk, 2008, p. 194). In spoken discourse, analysis at the microstructural level can additionally attend to features such as hesitation, emphasis, prosody, repair, and the formulation of individual turns where these contribute to the local construction of discourse.

The relationship among these analytical categories is not merely additive. Local linguistic choices contribute to the expression of broader discourse structures, while global topics and schematic organisation constrain which information is selected and how it is presented. Microstructural features can therefore be examined in relation to macro structural and super structural organisation rather than treated as independent linguistic phenomena. This relationship is particularly relevant to spoken interaction, where local formulations unfold sequentially while remaining embedded within broader patterns of discourse organisation (van Dijk, 2008, p. 187).

Illustration: Football Commentary as Socio-cognitive Discourse Processing

A live football commentary illustrates the interaction among macrostructure, superstructure, and microstructure particularly well. At the micro structural level, the commentator selects lexical items, evaluative expressions, modality, and prosody while describing rapidly unfolding events. A referee's decision, a tackle, or a missed goal requires an immediate verbal response, and each utterance constitutes a microstructural choice produced under real-time processing constraints.

These local choices, however, are not made in isolation. At the macro structural level, the commentator constructs discourse around a broader communicative representation of the match: informing viewers, maintaining narrative coherence, and preserving institutional neutrality while addressing supporters of two rival teams simultaneously. Before verbalising an evaluation, the commentator interprets the communicative situation through a wider cognitive perspective that includes assumptions about multiple audiences, expectations of impartiality, and the overall purpose of the broadcast.

The superstructure is provided by the genre of live sports broadcasting itself. This genre establishes expectations concerning the sequencing of play-by-play description, evaluation, expert commentary, replay explanation, and interaction with co-commentators. These organisational conventions regulate when evaluations become appropriate and when neutral description is expected.

The commentator's discourse also demonstrates the operation of context models. During a league match between two rival clubs, the commentator represents the audience as consisting of competing supporter groups and simultaneously represents the broadcasting institution whose neutrality must be maintained. Consequently, even if the referee appears to make a questionable decision, the commentator cannot immediately state that the referee consistently favours one team, because such an evaluation conflicts with the context model governing the communicative situation. In contrast, during a national team's match, the context model changes substantially. The audience is represented as sharing a common national affiliation, and expressions supporting the national team become interactionally expected rather than institutionally problematic. The linguistic behaviour differs not because the event itself changes, but because the speaker constructs a different cognitive representation of the communicative situation before producing discourse.

SCA offers a distinctive perspective on interpreter-mediated discourse by focusing on the cognitive processes through which participants' knowledge, expectations, and representations of the communicative situation shape discourse production and comprehension. This perspective is particularly relevant when participants possess different or only partially shared linguistic, cultural, and domain-specific knowledge, since such differences may affect how utterances are understood and subsequently rendered. The interpreter's context model may be especially consequential in this process, as representations of the participants, their knowledge, communicative purposes, and the immediate interaction guide the interpretation of incoming discourse and the formulation of subsequent renditions. These cognitive processes may become observable in choices such as explicitation, lexical selection, modality, evaluation, and repair when the information assumed by one participant is not equally accessible to another. SCA therefore enables interpreter-mediated interaction to be examined in terms of how differences in knowledge and participants' evolving representations of the communicative situation shape the processing and formulation of discourse across languages.

2. 3. 4. *The Foucauldian Perspective*

The Foucauldian perspective offers a distinctive constructionist account of discourse, viewing meaning and objects of knowledge as constituted through historically situated discursive practices rather than simply reflected in language (Foucault, 1972). It directs attention to the conditions under which particular forms of knowledge emerge and acquire authority, and to the ways in which such processes are inseparable from historically specific relations of power (Foucault, 1972, 1978, 1980). His archaeological analyses examine the historical formation and organisation of discursive formations and the rules governing what can be treated as knowledge within particular historical periods (Foucault, 1972, p. 31). Foucault's subsequent genealogical work extends this analysis by examining the intertwined production of knowledge and power and the processes through which subjects are constituted within particular regimes of truth (Foucault, 1980, pp. 109-133). In this perspective, power is not understood merely as a repressive force imposed from above, but as productive and relational, operating through practices that shape fields of knowledge, forms of conduct, and possibilities for subjectivity (Foucault, 1980, pp. 131-133; Foucault, 1983, pp. 208-210). The Foucauldian perspective has consequently provided critical discourse research

with a historically oriented way of examining how particular forms of knowledge and truth become authoritative and how they contribute to the constitution of subjects within specific social and institutional contexts (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1983).

From a Foucauldian perspective, discourse is not simply a collection of statements through which individuals communicate ideas about an independently existing reality. Rather, it is embedded in historically specific systems of rules that regulate what can be meaningfully said, known, and accepted as legitimate knowledge. Foucault (1972, p. 38) refers to the patterned regularities underlying such systems as *discursive formations*. A discursive formation establishes, implicitly rather than necessarily through formally stated rules, the conditions under which particular objects can be constituted, concepts can be formulated, statements can be produced, and certain subjects can acquire the authority to speak. Consequently, objects such as *madness* and *crime* cannot be understood solely as fixed and self-evident categories whose meanings remain constant across history; the ways in which they are identified, classified, discussed, and treated are shaped by historically variable discursive practices and institutional arrangements. What counts as legitimate knowledge about such objects is therefore inseparable from the relations of power through which particular ways of knowing become authoritative in a given period. This perspective also extends from knowledge to the constitution of subjects: individuals do not encounter discourse merely as autonomous speakers who subsequently express pre-existing ideas, but participate in historically and institutionally organized practices that shape both linguistic conduct and socially acceptable forms of behaviour. In this sense, discursive formations help establish not only what may be said about a particular object but also the positions from which it may be discussed and the forms of conduct that may be recognized as appropriate. Such a view resonates with the broader anthropological understanding of culture as the socially acquired knowledge and beliefs through which members of a community learn to conduct themselves in ways regarded as acceptable within the roles available to them (Goodenough, 1957, p. 167). Foucault's concern, however, is more specifically with the historical conditions under which such forms of knowledge, subject positions, and norms emerge and acquire authority. It is this concern with the historical organization of knowledge that provides the point of departure for his archaeological approach, developed most systematically in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (Foucault, 1972, pp. 21–22, 126–127).

The Archaeology of Knowledge

In *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, Foucault develops archaeology as a way of analysing discourse without assuming that historical knowledge develops as a continuous progression toward greater truth or coherence. Rather than treating texts and statements as expressions of an underlying consciousness, a unified intellectual tradition, or a single historical logic, archaeological analysis examines the conditions under which statements emerge, coexist, are grouped into series, and become transformed. This entails taking discontinuity seriously as an object of analysis rather than treating it as a gap to be explained away in favour of continuity. Foucault therefore draws attention to different levels and temporalities within historical formations and to the relations that may connect or separate them. As he explains, the historian's task increasingly involves constituting and comparing series, identifying their limits and specific forms of relation, and examining the relations between different series rather than reducing them to a single developmental sequence (Foucault, 1972, pp. 3–4). Archaeology consequently does not seek to recover an original meaning behind discourse; it seeks to describe the historical conditions and relations through which particular statements become possible and acquire their place within a discursive field.

This methodological shift is closely connected to Foucault's rethinking of the historical document. Instead of treating documents primarily as traces from which an already constituted past can be reconstructed, archaeology approaches them as material to be organised, differentiated, compared, and related in order to identify the regularities, discontinuities, and transformations that characterise a field of discourse (Foucault, 1972, pp. 6–7). The aim is thus not to discover a hidden principle that guarantees the unity of a body of knowledge, but to determine how different statements are distributed and related, what rules govern their formation, and how particular configurations emerge, persist, and change. This orientation becomes more explicit in Foucault's discussion of the *historical a priori*, which he defines not as a universal condition validating knowledge but as the historically specific conditions governing the emergence and coexistence of statements (1972, pp. 126–127). The concept of the *archive* further designates the system that governs the appearance, coexistence, accumulation, and transformation of statements (Foucault, 1972, pp. 129–131). Archaeology therefore offers a mode of historical analysis concerned with the rules and regularities of discourse as they operate within particular historical formations, while remaining attentive to their contingency, limits, discontinuities, and transformation.

Genealogy and the Constitution of Subjects

Genealogy does not simply abandon archaeology, which investigates the historical rules and regularities through which particular forms of knowledge become possible. Archaeology examines the conditions that allow people, within a particular historical period, to say certain things, think in particular ways, and treat certain statements as knowledge. Genealogy extends this historical inquiry by asking how such ways of knowing become connected with particular practices, institutions, norms, and relations of power and how they come to shape forms of life that may subsequently be taken for granted. It is therefore concerned not only with the historical organization of knowledge but also with the processes and consequences through which historically formed systems of knowledge become embedded in social practices. As Saar (2002, p. 233), drawing on Foucault's genealogical approach, emphasizes, genealogy historicizes phenomena that may otherwise appear to have little or no history, that is, things that seem natural, universal, necessary, or simply accepted as the way things are (Foucault, 1984, pp. 76–77). By tracing their contingent emergence, genealogy reveals that their present form is neither inevitable nor self-evident and thereby gives historical analysis a critical purpose: it invites us to reconsider arrangements that have become so familiar that they are no longer questioned.

The difference can be illustrated through the example of madness. Archaeology may examine how madness became constituted as a particular object of knowledge within a historically specific discursive formation. Genealogy pushes the inquiry further by asking how this way of defining madness became connected with particular institutions, classifications, practices, norms, and ways of treating individuals (Foucault, 1984, pp. 85–86). Such questions also direct attention to the forms of subjectivity made possible within these arrangements: what kinds of persons can be recognized, understood, and governed through particular systems of knowledge and practice? This brings the genealogical inquiry to the constitution of subjects. Rather than beginning with the assumption of an autonomous individual who subsequently enters society and acquires particular roles, Foucault (Foucault, 1983, pp. 208–210) asks how individuals come to understand themselves as particular kinds of subjects in the first place. Thus, categories such as the normal person, the criminal, the professional, the healthy person, or the deviant do not simply exist as self-evident identities waiting to be discovered. Historically available frameworks of knowledge and relations of

power shape how individuals understand and express themselves, how they relate to themselves, and how they may be described, recognized, and treated by others.

The constitution of subjectivity, however, should not be understood to mean that individuals are merely controlled by discourse or passively formed by external forces (Foucault, 1977, pp. 194–196). Subject formation also involves the ways individuals actively take up, enact, and incorporate socially available norms and roles. A person, for instance, may come to understand themselves through a socially recognized image of the “good student,” evaluate their conduct against its expectations, modify their behaviour accordingly, and assess their own success or failure in relation to that norm. In this sense, individuals participate in their own formation as particular kinds of subjects. Subjectivity is therefore neither simply imposed from outside nor freely created from within; it develops through individuals’ participation in historically available material and discursive practices. From a critical perspective, moreover, once these practices and forms of self-understanding are shown to have emerged through contingent historical processes, they can no longer be regarded as necessary or inevitable. Their historical contingency leaves open the possibility that they might be otherwise (Foucault, 1984, pp. 88–90).

Governmentality

Governmentality, in simple terms, refers to the ways in which people are guided to behave in particular ways, not only through direct coercion or explicit commands, but also by shaping what they come to regard as normal, reasonable, desirable, or responsible (Foucault, 1991, pp. 87–88). Foucault is therefore concerned not only with the question of who exercises power over others, but also with how individuals are encouraged to govern their own conduct. A university, for example, does not need to force every student to study every day. Through attendance requirements, grading systems, performance criteria, and socially recognized ideas of what constitutes a “successful student,” it creates a framework within which students evaluate and regulate their own behaviour. A student may consequently decide to attend classes regularly, study more, or improve their grades without being directly compelled to do so. In this sense, the student begins to govern themselves in accordance with norms and expectations that have been institutionally and socially established. Governmentality thus points to a subtler operation of power: rather than simply imposing rules that dictate

what individuals must do, governing practices can shape the conditions and possibilities within which individuals make choices, thereby encouraging them to conduct themselves in particular ways without the need for continuous or explicit coercion (Foucault, 1983, pp. 219–221; Foucault, 1991, pp. 92–93).

2. 3. 5. *The Bourdieusian Perspective*

Bourdieu provides a powerful conceptual vocabulary for examining how language and discourse operate within social *fields* (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 192) where actors occupy unequal positions and have access to different forms of *capital* (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 171; Bourdieu, 1986, p. 241). While Foucault focuses on how power shapes what can be said, known, and accepted as true, Bourdieu draws attention to the social conditions that give particular speakers and ways of speaking greater authority. A Bourdieusian analysis therefore asks not only what is said, but also who is speaking, what position they occupy, and what forms of capital they can draw upon. These questions are central to Bourdieu's account of social practice, in which fields are structured by unequal positions and struggles over valued resources, while *habitus*¹⁵ shapes how actors understand and act within these fields (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 94).

This perspective also highlights the unequal value attached to different ways of speaking. In *Language and Symbolic Power*, Bourdieu (1991) shows how some forms of language come to be recognized as legitimate and how the authority to speak is connected to the speaker's social position and the context in which speech takes place. From this perspective, being regarded as competent, educated, professional, or authoritative is not simply a matter of linguistic ability; it also depends on the social conditions that give particular ways of speaking greater legitimacy. Language can therefore contribute to the maintenance of social distinctions and the reproduction of inequality, even through apparently ordinary practices of communication (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 43).

¹⁵ Although Bourdieu employed the notion of *habitus* in his earlier work, including his 1962 discussion of peasant bachelors in Béarn, the concept was progressively elaborated within his developing theory of practice. It receives a more systematic formulation in *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Bourdieu, 1977, pp. 72–95), where *habitus* is conceptualised as a system of durable and transposable dispositions that generates and structures practices. The concept was subsequently refined in relation to social position, field, and different forms of capital, particularly in *Distinction* (Bourdieu, 1984, pp. 101–106) and his later theoretical writings (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, pp. 114–117).

Field: Relative Autonomy, Positions, and Internal Struggles

At the centre of Bourdieu and Wacquant's (1992) approach is a *relational mode of thinking* (pp. 94-97), in which social positions and practices are understood through the relations that connect them rather than as properties of individuals or institutions in isolation. The concept of *field* captures this relational perspective by referring to a structured space of positions whose occupants are differently situated in relation to one another. A field is thus more than a physical or institutional setting: it is an organised social space shaped by a particular history, power relations, and relatively specific principles of functioning. These relations structure the positions available to agents and shape the possibilities for action and interaction within the field.

Bourdieu's notion of the *social field* further specifies this relational space as a relatively autonomous domain of activity whose functioning is organised around particular stakes, expectations, and rules. Fields are neither completely independent of the wider social order nor reducible to it; their relative autonomy allows them to develop distinctive forms of organisation and criteria of legitimacy while remaining connected to broader relations of power. Participation in a field therefore involves more than occupying a particular institutional position: agents encounter an established order of expectations and assumptions that gives the field its recognisable logic. This logic is sustained in part through *illusio* (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 194), understood as agents' practical investment in the game of the field and their recognition that its stakes are worth pursuing. In this sense, fields operate according to particular rules and stakes that participants come to recognise, even when these principles remain largely taken for granted. At the same time, this order is not fixed. Fields are structured by ongoing struggles among differently positioned participants over the preservation, modification, or transformation of what is recognised as legitimate within the field. Established actors generally have an interest in preserving the prevailing order, whereas less established or newcomer positions may generate challenges to that order. Bourdieu distinguishes between *orthodox* and *heterodox positions* within a field: *orthodoxy* tends to uphold the established principles and relations of the field, whereas *heterodoxy* challenges their taken-for-granted status (Bourdieu, 1991, pp. 168–169). Such struggles are not external to the field but constitute part of its ongoing development and transformation (Hilgers & Mangez, 2014, p. 9).

Habitus: Embodied Dispositions

The concept of *habitus* complements Bourdieu's account of the field by directing attention to the dispositions through which agents perceive, interpret, and respond to the social world. Habitus refers to historically constituted and socially acquired dispositions that are incorporated through experience and that shape how agents understand situations and generate practices. It can therefore be understood as an embodied history: while the field represents social structures in an objectified form, habitus embodies the effects of those structures in the ways agents perceive possibilities, recognise expectations, and orient themselves towards action (Bourdieu, 1977; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Habitus does not mechanically determine behaviour; rather, it provides dispositions that enable agents to respond to situations in ways that are shaped by their previous social trajectories.

The relationship between habitus and field is consequently not one of simple correspondence but involves varying degrees of adjustment and mismatch. Dispositions acquired through socialisation may fit the conditions of a field to varying degrees, allowing agents to act with a practical sense of what is possible, appropriate, or at stake. Yet fields and the conditions within them are themselves subject to change, so that previously acquired dispositions may no longer correspond fully to new circumstances. Such mismatches can produce what Bourdieu terms *hysteresis*, whereby dispositions shaped under earlier conditions persist after the circumstances that originally supported them have changed (Bourdieu, 1977, pp. 77–78; Hilgers & Mangez, 2014, pp. 16–17). Moreover, agents are rarely shaped by a single social environment. Their trajectories across different social contexts may give rise to multiple and sometimes contradictory dispositions, which can be activated differently according to the circumstances. Bourdieu's notion of a *cleft habitus* captures this possibility, drawing attention to the internal tensions that may emerge when agents carry dispositions formed across different social experiences (Bourdieu, 1997, p. 79; Bourdieu, 2000, p. 64). The field–habitus relationship therefore helps explain both the reproduction of established ways of acting and the possibility of adjustment, tension, and transformation as agents encounter changing social conditions.

Capital as Accumulated Resources

The concept of *capital* (1986, p. 241) extends Bourdieu's analysis of social practice by accounting for the resources through which advantages are accumulated

and sustained over time. For Bourdieu, capital is not limited to money or material wealth. More broadly, it refers to resources that result from past investments and can provide their holders with capacities and advantages that persist beyond a particular interaction or moment. The distribution of these resources is therefore central to the structure of the social world, since unequal access to capital contributes to unequal opportunities and capacities for action. Capital may also take different forms and, under particular conditions, be converted from one form into another.

Bourdieu (1986, p. 243) distinguishes three fundamental forms of capital: *economic*, *cultural*, and *social capital*. *Economic capital* refers most directly to financial and material resources, such as income, property, savings, or other assets that can be used to secure particular advantages. *Cultural capital* concerns socially valued knowledge, competences, and dispositions. It may include, for example, educational qualifications, specialised knowledge, familiarity with recognised cultural practices, and linguistic competences that are valued in particular social settings. *Social capital*, in turn, refers to the actual or potential advantages associated with durable social relationships and networks. Professional contacts, membership in influential groups, or relationships through which individuals gain access to information, support, or opportunities can all provide resources that are not possessed by an individual in isolation but arise from their social connections.

These forms of capital do not operate in entirely separate ways. Their value and effectiveness depend on the social settings in which they are mobilised, and one form may, under appropriate conditions, be converted into another. Educational qualifications, for instance, may support access to occupational opportunities and economic resources, while social connections may facilitate access to information or positions that would otherwise be unavailable. Bourdieu's broader conception of capital thus makes it possible to examine inequalities that cannot be explained solely in terms of material resources. It also draws attention to the processes through which particular resources come to acquire social value and to confer recognition on those who possess them. This latter dimension leads to the question of *symbolic capital* and provides an important bridge to Bourdieu's account of language and symbolic power (Bourdieu, 1977, pp. 171–174; Bourdieu, 1991, pp. 163–165).

Capital, Symbolic Recognition, and Linguistic Power

Capital is not simply something an agent possesses; it becomes symbolically powerful when it is socially recognised as valuable (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 230). Not all resources are automatically valuable, and their significance depends on whether they are recognised as valuable within a particular social setting. A university degree, for example, constitutes cultural capital, but its value is realised when educational institutions, employers, or other relevant actors recognise the qualification as evidence of competence, particularly in employment processes. Similarly, knowing the right people constitutes social capital when those relationships provide access to information, opportunities, or influential networks that would otherwise be less accessible.

The same principle applies to linguistic resources (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 51). In institutional settings, particular ways of speaking may acquire value when they are recognised as signs of competence, education, professionalism, or authority. Consider, for example, a person seeking assistance in a hospital without access to an influential contact who could facilitate the process. In such a setting, the ability to formulate a request in a manner that is institutionally recognised as appropriate, including the use of politeness strategies when addressing staff, may affect how the speaker is perceived and how their request is received. This does not mean that linguistic politeness guarantees preferential treatment, but that ways of speaking can carry differential social value depending on the expectations and norms of the institution. The contrast becomes particularly visible when some service users treat access to the service as an unquestionable entitlement and communicate with staff accordingly, whereas others draw on institutionally valued linguistic resources to present their requests in ways that signal familiarity with expected forms of interaction. In such cases, linguistic resources may contribute to the speaker being perceived as more competent, legitimate, professional, or authoritative.

This process of recognition is central to Bourdieu's concept of *symbolic capital*. Resources acquire symbolic value when they are recognised as legitimate and worthy of esteem within a particular social context. Symbolic capital therefore does not refer simply to possessing a resource but to the social recognition attached to it: a qualification, social connection, manner of speaking, or other resource can become a source of status or authority when others recognise its value. What appears to be an individual quality, such as competence, refinement,

professionalism, or authority, may therefore be partly understood in relation to the social conditions that make particular resources recognisable as valuable.

2. 3. 6. *Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis*

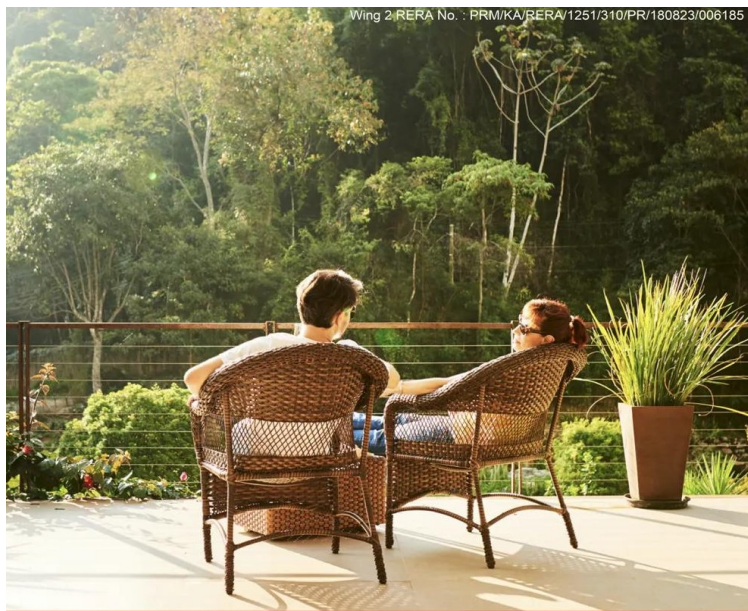
The discussion turns to Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis, which extends the scope of critical analysis beyond language-centred forms of analysis by examining how multiple semiotic resources participate in the construction of meaning and social relations. From this perspective, meaning is not necessarily carried by language alone. Images, colour, typography, layout, spatial arrangement, gaze, gesture, prosody, and other semiotic resources may contribute to what a text communicates, often in combination with linguistic elements (Machin & Mayr, 2012, p. 6-8). A multimodal text therefore involves the orchestration of different resources whose contributions to meaning may complement, reinforce, qualify, or extend one another (Ekmen & Friesen, 1969, p. 53)¹⁶.

The choice of the term *semiotic resources* to encompass both linguistic and non-linguistic elements is not incidental. The notion of a resource draws attention to the fact that the means available for meaning-making are not fixed or static. As Kress (2010, p. 8) explains, resources can be reshaped, updated, and recreated in response to changing conditions and communicative purposes, although such choices are not arbitrary. What is therefore important is to recognise the dynamic character of semiotic resources: their forms and uses may change as social conditions, communicative needs, and meaning-making purposes change. The term *semiotic resource* also avoids establishing a priori primacy between linguistic and non-linguistic resources. Rather than treating language as the primary reference point and positioning other modes in relation to it, or conversely privileging non-linguistic modes over language, a multimodal perspective considers the available resources in terms of the meanings they can make and the functions they perform within a particular communicative context.

¹⁶ Revised in their 1981 work, the authors proposed a six-part classification of the ways in which verbal and nonverbal resources may interact: repetition, conflict, complement, substitution, regulation, and accentuation/moderation.

Analysing Visual Meaning

The development of multimodal approaches to discourse became particularly influential from the late 1980s onwards, building on work such as Hodge and Kress's (1988) social semiotic approach and, subsequently, Kress and van Leeuwen's (1996) systematic account of visual communication. Rather than treating visual elements as merely supplementary to language, this work provided concepts and analytical tools for examining how images are organised and how their formal properties contribute to meaning. Kress and van Leeuwen (1996), in particular, developed a grammar of visual design that drew attention to features such as composition, salience, framing, perspective, information value, and the positioning of participants within an image. The aim was not simply to identify what an image depicts, but to examine how particular visual choices organise what is made prominent, what is backgrounded, and how viewers are positioned in relation to what they see.



Apartment that feel like independent homes

**400 mtrs from Pattanagere
Metro Station, Mysore Road, Bangalore**

**4.37 acres
Total Area**

**410
Total Units**

**72%
Open Area**

Figure 1¹⁷. Promotional visual for residential property

The image above provides an example of how visual resources can contribute to the meaning of an advertisement. The accompanying text may describe the property in relatively straightforward terms, highlighting its location, facilities, security, or architectural features. The visual composition, however, may communicate additional meanings that are difficult to capture through the verbal text

¹⁷ The image is reproduced solely for the purposes of scholarly criticism and analysis.

alone. The use of expansive views, carefully controlled lighting, reflective surfaces, muted colours, and carefully positioned human figures may associate the property with exclusivity, sophistication, privacy, or a particular lifestyle. The spatial arrangement can make the building appear dominant and the surrounding landscape accessible, while the absence of everyday signs of habitation can contribute to an impression of order, tranquillity, and distinction. These choices are not incidental features of the advertisement; they help construct a particular representation of what the property is and of the kind of life associated with it.

Such an analysis does more than establish that an image contributes meaning. By attending to the specific organisation of visual resources, it makes it possible to examine how that meaning is produced. The verbal text may describe a property as “centrally located” or “designed for contemporary living,” but the image can communicate a broader idea of modernity and distinction through its composition, colour, lighting, perspective, and selection of what is shown or left unseen. The relationship between verbal and visual resources is therefore analytically important: an image may reinforce a linguistic claim, give it a more affective dimension, or introduce meanings that are not explicitly articulated in words.

MCDA takes this multimodal perspective into critical analysis by asking how such choices participate in the representation of social actors, events, places, and practices. Images, photographs, diagrams, graphics, typography, and other semiotic resources can appear natural or self-evident while nevertheless organising particular ways of seeing and interpreting the social world. Critical multimodal analysis therefore examines not only what is represented but also how it is represented, what is foregrounded or backgrounded, which possibilities of interpretation are encouraged, and what assumptions remain taken for granted. In this respect, the critical task of denaturalisation is extended to modes of communication beyond language. By making the organisation and interaction of these semiotic resources analytically visible, MCDA can reveal how representations may reproduce particular ideological perspectives and relations of power.

Gaze and the Representation of Attitude

Visual representations of people provide a useful site for examining how semiotic resources shape the interpretation of social actors. The choice of a particular image may foreground different aspects of a person’s character, attitude, or identity, even when the accompanying verbal account remains unchanged. Gaze is

especially significant because it has an interactional dimension: in interpersonal communication, where participants direct their gaze and whether they look towards or away from one another can contribute to the organisation and interpretation of the ongoing interaction (Kendon, 1967; Argyle & Cook, 1976; Goodwin, 1981). In visual representations, gaze can similarly establish a relationship between the represented participant and the viewer. Whether depicted participants look directly at the viewer, look away, or direct their gaze towards something within or beyond the frame can therefore shape how viewers are positioned in relation to them. Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) distinguish between images that establish a direct visual address, which they term a *demand*, and images in which the participant does not address the viewer directly, which they describe as an *offer*. In the former, the viewer is positioned as someone being addressed and potentially invited to respond; in the latter, the represented participant is presented for observation rather than direct engagement. The direction and quality of gaze can thus contribute to meanings of involvement, distance, accessibility, or detachment without these meanings being explicitly stated.



Figure 2¹⁸. Off-Frame Gaze in Political Representation

¹⁸ Reproduced from a publicly accessible online post for scholarly use.

The direction of gaze can acquire further meaning when a represented participant looks beyond the frame rather than towards another participant or the viewer. In such cases, the gaze leaves its immediate visual context open and may invite viewers to associate it with an imagined point, direction, or objective beyond what is shown (Machin & Mayr, 2012, p. 72). This is particularly relevant in political imagery, where an upward and off-frame gaze can contribute to a representation of the politician as oriented towards a future, an aspiration, or a goal. The image above provides an example of this potential. The principal political figure looks away from the viewer and slightly upward, rather than establishing direct visual contact. His gaze therefore does more than position him as an object of observation: together with his upright posture and the surrounding verbal message about an “Aspirational India,” it contributes to a representation of forward-looking orientation and purposeful ambition. The gaze thus participates in constructing an attitude of confidence and aspiration, even though these qualities are not stated explicitly as attributes of the represented person.

Representing Social Actors through Language

Machin & Mayr (2012, p. 77) suggest that there is no entirely neutral way of representing a person or a group in discourse. Whenever communicators name, describe, classify, or otherwise refer to social actors, they make choices among alternative linguistic resources. Such choices foreground some aspects of identity and social role while backgrounding or omitting others, thereby associating the represented actors with particular discourses, values, and interpretations. In Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), these choices can be examined as representational strategies: ways in which people and groups are constructed as particular kinds of social actors and positioned within a social and political context. Representation therefore involves not only identifying who is being referred to, but also making particular identities, relations, forms of agency, and attributions of responsibility more salient than others. These processes operate through both linguistic and visual resources. Although the two modes may be analytically distinguished, they work together in multimodal discourse to shape how social actors and events are understood.

Consider the following newspaper headline¹⁹ and the accompanying news text:

Turkish Original

"Terörsüz Türkiye sürecinde tarihi gün: Terör örgütü PKK silah bırakıyor"
"Türkiye 47 yıldır süren terör belasından kurtuluyor. MHP Genel Başkanı Bahçeli'nin çağrısıyla başlayan ve Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan'ın kararlı tutumuyla destek verdiği 'Terörsüz Türkiye' hedefinde sahada ilk somut adım atıldı. Irak'ın Süleymaniye kentinde terör örgütü PKK'ya bağlı ilk grup silah bıraktı."

English Translation

"A historic day in the "Terror-Free Türkiye" process: The terrorist organisation PKK is laying down its arms"
"Türkiye is freeing itself from the scourge of terrorism that has continued for 47 years. The first concrete step on the ground has been taken towards the goal of "Terror-Free Türkiye," a process initiated by MHP Chairman Bahçeli's call and supported by President Erdoğan's determined stance. In the Iraqi city of Sulaymaniyah, the first group affiliated with the terrorist organisation PKK laid down its arms."



Figure 3. Accompanying image of the "Terror-Free Türkiye" news report

¹⁹ The original headline and accompanying news text are available on TRT Haber at the following webpage: <https://www.trthaber.com/haber/gundem/terorsuz-turkiye-surecinde-tarihi-gun-teror-orgutu-pkk-silah-birakiyor-913508.html>

The representation of the actors in this news item illustrates how choices of naming can shape their social recognition and the interpretation of the event. One of the most noticeable choices concerns the reference to the PKK members. The headline identifies them as a “group affiliated with the PKK” rather than simply repeating the label “terrorists” as the primary designation. Although the two expressions may refer to the same people, they do not construct them in exactly the same way. The first foregrounds their affiliation and collective status, whereas the label “terrorists” foregrounds a particular political and security-related identity and carries strong negative associations. The choice of a group-based designation can therefore shift attention from an individually or morally charged categorisation towards the collective act of laying down arms. What is foregrounded is not simply who these people are, but what they are doing within the process represented by the report.

This choice forms part of a broader pattern of selection. The headline foregrounds the event as a historical step in the process referred to as “Terörsüz Türkiye” and presents the laying down of arms as a concrete development towards its achievement. The accompanying text reinforces this orientation by describing Türkiye as moving towards freedom from a problem characterised as having lasted for decades and by presenting the disarmament as the “first concrete step” in the process. The discourse thus gives prominence to the prospect of resolution and its anticipated benefits, while the detailed consequences and experiences associated with the preceding period of violence are not foregrounded in the same way. Representation consequently operates through both *selection* and *omission*: particular aspects of the event are made salient, while others remain outside the immediate focus.

The representation of political actors follows a similar pattern. The text explicitly links the process to MHP leader Devlet Bahçeli’s call and President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan’s determined position. Through these formulations, the two political figures are constructed as active social actors in the process, rather than as peripheral observers of an event unfolding independently of political action. Their actions and positions are connected to the emergence of the outcome described in the report, thereby making political agency and responsibility salient. Erdoğan’s representation is particularly significant because his political identity is foregrounded through his institutional position as president and through the description of his stance as “determined.” The individual political actor is consequently associated with political will, authority, and the capacity to support

and advance the process. Bahçeli, meanwhile, is represented through his initiating role, while his position is linked to the wider political process through the reference to his call. Such choices demonstrate how representation can contribute to the attribution of agency, authority, and responsibility: the event is not represented merely as something that happens, but as something connected to the actions and positions of identifiable political actors.

The lexical choices also produce meanings that are not necessarily stated explicitly. Expressions such as “historical day,” “first concrete step,” “determined position,” and “Terörsüz Türkiye” do more than provide information about the event. They encourage an interpretation of the development as significant, purposeful, and oriented towards a particular future. Similarly, describing the process as an effort to free Türkiye from a longstanding “terror problem” establishes a contrast between a problematic past and a desired future without requiring the text to state directly that the process represents progress. The evaluative potential of these choices is therefore located not only in explicit claims but also in the associations and interpretive possibilities they make available.

The visual representation accompanying the report reinforces this linguistic construction. The image prominently features weapons, including Kalashnikov-type rifles associated in the report with the PKK, thereby visually connecting the named group with the material objects through which armed activity is conventionally represented. The accumulation of weapons makes the act of disarmament visually perceptible: weapons that were previously available for use are shown as collected together, separated from those who possessed them. Their being gathered and subsequently set on fire further strengthens the representation of the event as a movement from armed activity towards its cessation. The image does not need to state explicitly that the weapons will no longer be used; their collection and destruction visually suggest the removal of these instruments from future use. Language and image thus converge in constructing the event as an act of disarmament and as a step towards the resolution of the conflict.

This example demonstrates why the analysis of representation in multimodal discourse needs to consider both what is represented and how it is represented. Linguistic choices determine how social actors are named, categorised, and positioned, while visual choices can reinforce, elaborate, or extend those constructions. In this news item, the naming of the actors, the foregrounding of political agency, the emphasis on a desired future, and the visual prominence of collected and destroyed weapons work together to establish a particular interpretation of

the event. Representational strategies therefore do not merely describe social actors and events; they participate in constructing their social and political significance.

CHAPTER 3.

CRITICAL APPROACHES TO INTERPRETER-MEDIATED DISCOURSE

Introduction

Building on the critical perspectives established in Chapter 2, this chapter brings these approaches into the study of translation and interpreting. It first considers Critical Translation Studies as a broader point of departure for understanding translation as a socially situated practice, and then focuses more specifically on interpreting and its implications for the study of mediated discourse. This shift in focus provides the basis for examining how critical and discourse-analytical perspectives can illuminate the interpreter's role within the interactional and institutional conditions of interpreting.

The chapter then turns to scholarship conducted in the Türkiye context, focusing on studies that examine interpreting through CDA or closely related critical and discourse-analytical perspectives. This review situates Türkiye-based research within the wider development of critical inquiry into interpreting while drawing attention to the range of institutional and social settings in which questions of mediation, participation, and power arise. The discussion subsequently considers how these perspectives can inform the analysis of interpreter-mediated discourse, bringing together insights from critical discourse research and interpreting studies. The chapter concludes by putting this analytical orientation into practice through a critical analysis of an authentic interpreter-mediated doctor–patient encounter, demonstrating how the interpreter's discursive participation can be examined in relation to the interactional and institutional conditions in which it takes place.

3. 1. Critical Translation Studies

Hatim and Mason's *Discourse and the Translator* (1990) can be regarded as one of the first comprehensive works to apply discourse analysis to translation. To the best of my knowledge, a systematic treatment of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) within Translation Studies, however, appears much later. Leaving aside individual case studies that have independently brought CDA and translation

into dialogue, one of the first book-length treatments specifically devoted to this intersection is K. H. Kim's *Critical Discourse Analysis in Translation Studies: An Introductory Textbook*, published in 2025. Importantly, the term *Translation Studies* in the title is not restricted to written translation but is used in a broader sense that also encompasses interpreting.

The conceptual basis for such an inclusive use of *translation* can be traced to Jakobson's well-established tripartite distinction. Jakobson (1959/2000) distinguishes among three types of translation: *intralingual translation*, or "an interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs in the same language"; *interlingual translation*, or "an interpretation of verbal signs by means of some other language"; and *intersemiotic translation*, or "an interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of nonverbal sign systems." This broader conceptualisation is particularly relevant to interpreting, where all three forms may be involved in the course of a single interaction.

Intralingual translation, for example, may occur when an interpreter asks the source-speaker to reformulate or clarify an utterance because some part of it has not been understood. This may be followed by interlingual translation, conventionally understood as *translation proper*, as the interpreter renders the utterance into another language. At the same time, interpreting is not confined to the mediation of verbal signs. Interpreters may also attend to and mediate nonverbal and other semiotic resources, including gesture, gaze, prosody, facial expression, and culturally specific embodied practices. In this respect, interpreting can be understood as an activity that potentially involves intralingual, interlingual, and intersemiotic forms of mediation. Such a conception provides a principled basis for using *Translation Studies* in its broader sense and, consequently, for extending critical inquiry into translation to interpreter-mediated discourse.

Yet, the tripartite definition also raises a further question concerning what counts as translation. Jakobson's (1959/2000) formulation accounts for the interpretation of verbal signs within the same language, across languages, and through nonverbal sign systems, but it does not explicitly address the movement from thought to linguistic expression. "Such a movement may nevertheless be understood as a form of translation" (Uygur, 1994, p. 58) if translation is conceived more broadly as the transformation or interpretation of meaning into a form through which it can become communicatively available to others. From this perspective, putting a thought into words is not simply a matter of transferring a pre-existing meaning into linguistic form. In human interaction, what is to be

said is shaped by the anticipated recipient, the immediate context, the institutional conditions of the activity, and the relations between the participants. Speakers therefore select, formulate, qualify, or withhold linguistic expressions in ways that make their intended meanings appropriate, or potentially less risky, more persuasive, or more acceptable, within a particular interaction. The movement from thought to discourse can thus be viewed as a socially situated act of meaning formation rather than a purely cognitive-to-linguistic conversion. This possibility is particularly relevant to a critical approach to translation because it draws attention to the conditions under which meanings are made linguistically available in the first place. It also invites consideration of whether the critical study of mediated discourse should begin not only with the relation between a source expression and its subsequent rendering, but also with the socially conditioned processes through which meanings are selected and formulated as discourse.

The question of what constitutes translation becomes even more consequential when linguistic varieties and registers are taken into consideration. If translation is understood as a process of reformulation, the relationship between source and target need not necessarily involve two distinct languages. A reformulation from one variety or register into another may also be understood as translational in a broader sense. This possibility is particularly significant for a critical approach because linguistic varieties and registers are not socially neutral. The choice between alternative ways of expressing a meaning may index differences in institutional authority, social identity, professional status, or the relative legitimacy accorded to particular ways of speaking. What may appear to be a linguistic adjustment at the level of vocabulary, syntax, or style can therefore also involve a shift in how a speaker, an institution, or a social position is represented (Boase-Beier, 2011, p. 7).

This perspective further complicates the notion of the source discourse itself. A source utterance does not emerge independently of the social circumstances in which it is produced; its formulation is shaped by the participants, the communicative activity, the expected recipient, and the linguistic resources regarded as appropriate within that setting. Translation or interpreting subsequently reformulates this already situated discourse under another set of communicative conditions. What is at stake in this process, therefore, is not only the preservation or alteration of propositional meaning or semantic information content. The refor-

mulation may also negotiate register, stance, participant positioning, and the social meanings associated with particular ways of speaking²⁰. In interpreting, this makes the interpreter's choices analytically significant: an intervention that modifies the form in which an utterance is presented may simultaneously modify how the speaker is positioned, how the recipient is addressed, or how the institutional interaction is organised.

Seen from this perspective, translation and interpreting can be approached as socially situated processes in which meanings are not simply transferred but reformulated within particular relations and conditions of communication. A critical approach can consequently attend not only to correspondences between source and target discourse, but also to the linguistic and interactional choices through which reformulation takes place. This shifts attention towards the discursive participation involved in mediation without presupposing that every divergence from the source has the same function or motivation.

3. 2. CDA in Interpreting Studies

Critical discourse approaches gain particular relevance when translation is examined as a spoken, interactional activity. Unlike a written translated text that can be examined as a relatively stable product, interpreting takes place within an unfolding communicative event in which participants continuously respond to one another. The interpreter therefore operates not only between languages but also within an interaction shaped by institutional purposes, participant roles, expectations, and unequal access to linguistic and social resources. This interactional nature of interpreting has made discourse analysis an important analytical resource in interpreting studies, with research drawing on pragmatic, socio-interactional, and critical perspectives to examine how meaning is constructed and negotiated in interpreter-mediated communication (Mason, 2015). From a critical stance, the significance of this approach lies in its capacity to connect observable linguistic choices with the broader social relations in which interpreting takes place.

²⁰ See, for example, Bassnett and Trivedi (1999) and Tymoczko (2007) for discussions of how linguistic choices in translation may be implicated in relations of power, authority, and social positioning, particularly in postcolonial contexts. See also Baker (2006b) for the role of contextualization in translator- and interpreter-mediated discourse and its implications for ideological positioning.

CDA-informed research has been particularly productive in bringing the interpreter's role into view. Rather than treating the interpreter as a transparent conduit (Reddy, 1979) whose task is exhausted by the transmission of pre-existing meanings, such research examines how interpreters participate in the discursive construction of mediated interaction, an orientation reflected in the increasing recognition of dialogue interpreting as *discourse interpreting*²¹. Their interventions may become visible through lexical choices, reformulations, shifts in modality, or other forms of textual and interactional reorganisation. These features provide an empirical basis for examining interpreter positioning and agency rather than assuming them from the outset. Research on political interpreting, for example, has demonstrated how lexicalisation and evaluative choices can become sites at which ideological positions are negotiated. Beaton-Thome's (2013) analysis of European Parliament interpreting shows how the rendering of contested labels can participate in the negotiation of identities and political positions, while her later work on Brexit discourse further examines the interpreter's role in multilingual political communication (Beaton-Thome, 2020). Such studies illustrate how seemingly local choices in interpreted discourse may acquire significance when considered in relation to the social and ideological positions embedded in the interaction.

The critical relevance of interpreting is not confined to political or conference settings. Interpreter-mediated encounters in institutional contexts may also involve marked asymmetries between participants, making questions of authority, access, and positioning central to the analysis. Angelelli (2011), for instance, applies CDA to a healthcare-provider–patient encounter and examines the power differentials between the participants together with the interpreter's role in either mitigating or reinforcing those differentials. Her analysis demonstrates how an interpreted medical encounter can be approached not simply as the transmission of medical information but as a communicative event in which the participants'

²¹ The term *Discourse Interpreting (DI)* was first introduced by Jiang (2007) in a conference paper to conceptualise the interpreter's active participation in interpreter-mediated interaction. DI positions the interpreter as a cooperative third party who shares responsibility for achieving the communicative goals of the interaction and for establishing discourse coherence. From this perspective, dialogue interpreting involves more than the transfer of utterances between languages; it also entails interpretive choices through which the interpreter contributes to the organisation and coherence of the ongoing discourse.

relative positions and the interpreter's participation are negotiated through discourse. The study is particularly relevant to the present discussion because it illustrates how CDA can bring together micro-level features of interpreted interaction and broader questions concerning institutional power.

A comparable concern with institutional asymmetry and interpreter intervention emerges in Pöllabauer's (2004) analysis of interpreter-mediated asylum interviews in Austria, which draws on a CDA approach informed by Fairclough's (1995) work. Rather than treating interpreters' departures from the source discourse as merely technical variations, Pöllabauer (2004) examines their observable interventions in relation to role expectations, role conflicts, and the unequal distribution of power characteristic of the asylum interview. Her analysis points to an important tension in institutional interpreting: although the responsibilities of interpreters may not be clearly or consistently defined within the setting, their choices can nevertheless be influenced by the expectations associated with the institutional role of the interviewer. At the same time, the data also indicate forms of cooperation with interviewees and efforts to preserve the face of the participants involved. The study thus demonstrates that interpreter agency may emerge through competing orientations rather than through a single, stable conception of the interpreter's role. It also illustrates why the institutional context is necessary for interpreting the significance of particular interventions: the same linguistic move may acquire different meanings when considered in relation to competing participant interests and role expectations.

The role of interpreters in negotiating face has also been examined in relation to their participation in interpreter-mediated interaction. Drawing on courtroom interaction, Lee (2011) and, in a healthcare context, Martinez-Gomez (2016) both conceptualise interpreters as ratified participants in the construction and negotiation of face, the socially situated image that interlocutors establish and manage within interaction. Martinez-Gomez (2016, p. 96) emphasises that talk is inherently a joint activity, requiring all participants, including interpreters, to collaborate in the negotiation of face and identity. From this perspective, facework cannot be understood as a concern belonging solely to the primary interlocutors but as an interactional process in which the interpreter may also participate. Lee (2011, p. 3), similarly, questions an understanding of interpreting in which the interpreter's responsibility is reduced to preserving the meaning and interpersonal effect of the original utterance, including the reproduction of any face-threatening force.

This body of research²² suggests that the critical study of interpreting operates across interconnected levels. At the micro level, attention can be directed to the linguistic and interactional features through which an interpreter's participation becomes observable. At a broader level, these features can be related to positioning, institutional roles, ideological meanings, and relations of power. The analytical movement between these levels is important because an intervention cannot be understood solely from its linguistic form. Its significance depends on how it functions within the interaction and on the social conditions in which that interaction occurs. Discourse-oriented approaches to interpreting have therefore contributed to a shift from viewing mediated communication primarily in terms of linguistic correspondence towards examining interpreting as a situated social practice in which meaning and participant relations are jointly negotiated (Wang & Munday, 2021).

At the same time, the critical interpretation of discourse requires care in moving from textual evidence to claims about social relations or interpreter motivations. Mason (2015, p. 115) points to a potential circularity in CDA-based analysis when discourse is explained through pre-existing power relations while those same relations are, in turn, inferred from the discourse. This concern is particularly relevant to interpreting research, where an observed difference between a source and an interpreted utterance does not, by itself, establish the reason for the interpreter's choice or its social consequences. A critical analysis therefore benefits from grounding interpretations in the interactional evidence available in the data and, where possible, from drawing on additional sources of evidence. Such caution does not diminish the value of CDA; rather, it clarifies the evidential basis on which claims about positioning, agency, ideology, and power should be made.

CDA-informed studies of interpreting demonstrate the value of approaching mediated discourse as both linguistic production and social action. They show that the interpreter's contribution can be examined not only in terms of what is transferred between languages but also in terms of how discourse is reformulated within particular institutional and interactional conditions. This perspective provides the immediate theoretical basis for the analysis that follows. Rather than

²² The studies discussed in this section are illustrative rather than exhaustive. They have been selected purposefully for their relevance to the present discussion and for the different ways in which they bring issues such as *interpreter participation*, *positioning*, *face*, *institutional relations*, and *power* into the analysis of interpreting.

treating interpreter interventions as isolated departures from source–target correspondence, the next chapter examines how such interventions become meaningful within an authentic interpreter-mediated encounter and how their significance can be related to the positioning of participants, the institutional organisation of the interaction, and the asymmetries that shape access to discourse.

3. 3. Critical Inquiry into Interpreting in the Türkiye Context

The relevance of critical approaches to interpreting can also be considered in relation to the particular social and institutional conditions in which interpreting takes place in Türkiye. Over the past fifteen years, Türkiye has experienced sustained movements of displaced populations associated with conflicts and political instability in neighbouring and nearby countries. It has consequently remained one of the world’s major refugee-hosting countries, with refugees and asylum-seekers originating from Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, Ukraine, and other countries. These movements have brought people into contact with a wide range of institutions and public services, including migration and asylum procedures, law enforcement and legal proceedings, healthcare, education, and social services. Such encounters frequently involve participants who do not share a common language and therefore constitute important settings for examining the role of oral language mediation.

The need for interpreting in Türkiye is not, however, limited to migration-related encounters. The country has also become a significant destination for international patients seeking healthcare. Official data indicate that more than 1.5 million people came to Türkiye to receive healthcare services in 2024, while the number remained close to 1.4 million in 2025²³. The range of services associated with this movement extends beyond routine medical treatment to include surgical and other specialised procedures, creating communicative encounters between international patients and healthcare professionals in which linguistic mediation may be required. The development of institutional structures specifically for international patients, including international patient units and systems for

²³ The figures are reported by the International Health Services (USHAŞ) on its health tourism data webpage, which identifies the Turkish Statistical Institute (TÜİK) as the source. The relevant data are available at https://www.ushas.gov.tr/saglik-turizmi-verileri/?utm_source=chatgpt.com.

managing treatment requests and patient processes, further demonstrates the institutionalisation of this form of cross-linguistic communication.

These different forms of mobility bring interpreters into communicative situations that are institutionally organised but socially heterogeneous. A person arriving from Syria, Ukraine, Iran, or elsewhere may require interpreting during an asylum-related interview, a police or prosecutorial procedure, a healthcare encounter, or an interaction concerning access to education and other public services. In other cases, interpreting may be required when an international patient seeks medical treatment in Türkiye. The communicative purposes and institutional conditions of these encounters differ considerably, but they share a feature that is central to a critical approach: the interpreter's participation takes place within interactions in which participants may have unequal access to institutional knowledge, linguistic resources, and decision-making power. The interpreter's role therefore cannot be examined independently of the institutional activity in which the interaction is embedded.

Türkiye also provides distinctive contexts in which interpreting intersects with humanitarian and disaster-related communication. The earthquakes of 6 February 2023, for example, affected eleven provinces in southeastern Türkiye, including areas with substantial refugee populations. UNHCR reports that approximately 1.75 million refugees were living in the affected region²⁴. In such circumstances, interpreting may form part of communication between international response teams and local actors, as well as of institutional encounters involving humanitarian assistance, healthcare, psychosocial support, and other services. Disaster response is itself organised through multiple institutional actors and requires coordination among public authorities, humanitarian organisations, professional teams, and affected communities. Türkiye's disaster-management framework, including accreditation structures for psychosocial support and other emergency services, reflects this institutional complexity.

These circumstances make Türkiye a particularly productive context for examining interpreting at both the interactional and institutional levels. At the micro level, interpreter-mediated encounters provide opportunities to examine how

²⁴ The figure is reported by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in its *Syria and Türkiye Earthquake Emergency Supplementary Appeal* (2023). The document is available through the UNHCR Operational Data Portal. https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/98896?utm_source=chatgpt.com

participants' meanings, positions, and relationships are negotiated through talk and how interpreters intervene in the unfolding interaction. At the macro level, these interactions are embedded in institutional procedures, professional expectations, unequal access to resources, and broader social conditions associated with migration, healthcare, law, education, and humanitarian response. The significance of the Türkiye context, therefore, lies not simply in the volume or variety of interpreting activity, but in the range of institutional situations through which questions of interpreter agency, positioning, role expectations, power, and discursive intervention can be examined.

It is against this background that scholarship on interpreting in Türkiye becomes relevant to the present discussion. Turkish interpreting scholars have examined interpreter-mediated encounters in a range of settings, including migration and asylum, healthcare, legal and public-service contexts, and other institutionally situated interactions. The following discussion introduces selected studies that approach these encounters through CDA or closely related critical and discourse-analytical perspectives. Rather than treating this literature as a separate national tradition, the aim is to show how research conducted in the Türkiye context contributes to the broader critical questions concerning the interpreter's participation in the production, organisation, and mediation of discourse.

3. 3. 1. Critical and Discourse Oriented Research on Interpreting in Türkiye

Research on interpreting in Türkiye has addressed critical questions from a range of theoretical and analytical perspectives. The studies discussed below reflect this range, including work that engages directly with CDA as well as research informed by related approaches to discourse, ideology, institutional power, professionalisation, and interpreter agency. They also cover different modes and settings of interpreting, extending beyond dialogue interpreting to include simultaneous and consecutive interpreting, media interpreting, sports interpreting, and interpreting in crisis and disaster contexts.

One strand of this research draws attention to the institutional structures within which interpreting is organised and to the constraints these structures place on interpreters. In an early study of community interpreting in Türkiye, Diriker & Tahir-Gürçağlar (2004) examined the legal framework governing interpreting in settings such as courts, hospitals, and refugee interviews. Their analysis pointed

to a discrepancy between the existence of legal provisions concerning community interpreting and the limited professional training and experience available to interpreters working in these settings. The study consequently called for institutional arrangements for interpreter training and certification. Healthcare interpreting has also been examined in relation to the institutional and professional conditions surrounding the interpreter's role. Eraslan and Şener (2018), drawing on interviews with hospital interpreters as well as observations and recordings of healthcare encounters, examine interpreter roles and decision-making at both the micro level of interaction and the broader level of institutional structures and professional expectations. Drawing on Bourdieu's concepts of *habitus* and *capital*, they relate interpreters' practices and strategies to the conditions in which hospital interpreting is organised. Similar institutional shortcomings emerge in Polat Ulaş's (2022) study of interpreters working with Syrian refugees in non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and legal and healthcare settings. Based on semi-structured interviews with 29 interpreters, the study shows that interpreters may experience emotional distress when mediating traumatic accounts and may depart from prescribed behavioural standards under such conditions. The absence of relevant guidelines, training, and support mechanisms also led interpreters to develop their own ways of coping with emotional distress. The institutional dimension identified in these studies becomes particularly visible in more recent research on crisis and disaster interpreting. Şan & Kahraman-Duru (2024), examining stress factors in disaster and crisis interpreting, report that deficiencies in institutional and organisational coordination, bureaucratic uncertainty, and unclear divisions of authority and responsibility create pressures that directly affect interpreters' activities in the field. Their findings also indicate that interpreters may respond to these conditions through strategies such as simplifying their speech and shifting from first-person to third-person reference, thereby creating greater discursive distance.

The relationship between institutional structures and interpreter agency is examined from a different perspective by Kahraman-Duru (2026) in her study of interpreting in disaster contexts. Drawing on a Bourdieusian perspective, she argues that the dominance of formal institutions governed by bureaucratic and security-oriented paradigms, such as hospitals, courts, police authorities, and the Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (AFAD), places interpreting under state regulation and hierarchical control, limiting its development as an autonomous field. She characterises this position as a "pseudo-field." At the

same time, her analysis shows that the breakdown or weakening of bureaucratic structures during a crisis can create a space in which interpreters develop what she terms “layered agency,” drawing on internal deliberation and situational justifications to determine how to act.

Questions of ideology and interpreter positioning have also been addressed in research extending beyond the immediate interpreting event. Bulut (2018), in a study of ideology and ideological translation drawing on examples from the press as well as written and oral translation, emphasises that ideological positioning may shape the interpreting process even before an interpreting event begins. Interpreters may, for example, find themselves confronted with situations that conflict with their personal, political, or religious positions and may refuse to interpret despite the professional expectations associated with their role. This issue becomes particularly pronounced in conflictual or confrontational settings, where the content to be mediated may involve ethically problematic or potentially harmful situations. Bulut (2018, p. 73) also points to the greater visibility of consecutive interpreters compared with simultaneous interpreters in settings such as sport and diplomacy, where interpreters may accompany speakers outside the immediate interpreting event and become more visibly associated with the institutional or professional team. Such visibility may generate expectations of ideological alignment with the group and, consequently, affect the interpreter’s position within it.

The visibility and representation of interpreters in public discourse are examined more directly by Diriker (2022), who analyses online editions of three widely circulated Turkish newspapers to investigate what prompts media coverage of interpreters and how interpreters are represented. Her findings reveal considerable variation across interpreting settings. References to legal interpreters are the most frequent, but these interpreters are generally mentioned only incidentally, with little opportunity to speak for themselves. A similar lack of visibility characterises references to interpreters working in refugee-related settings. By contrast, reports concerning sign-language and football interpreters give these interpreters greater visibility and a more substantial presence in the news discourse. Coverage of conference and diplomatic interpreters displays another pattern, with their neutrality becoming a subject of contestation and their voices largely absent. Diriker relates this negative representation, at least in part, to the political

tensions within the country. The study thus shifts attention from what interpreters do within mediated encounters to how their professional roles and identities are constructed in public discourse.

Sports interpreting provides another setting in which interpreter visibility, institutional interests, and ideological positioning intersect. Bulut (2016), in research on football interpreting in Türkiye, examines the translation of statements by foreign football managers in relation to club interests, pressure from supporters, and media practices. The study also draws attention to situations in which responsibility for a problematic or controversial rendition may be attributed directly to the interpreter, placing the interpreter within wider discourses of partisanship and favouritism. More recent research develops this line of inquiry by examining the discursive and institutional conditions surrounding football press conferences. Çalışır-Zenci (2026) investigates how the English discourse of foreign football managers working in Türkiye is transformed through oral interpreting into Turkish, attending to linguistic, cultural, and discourse-level changes. While central aspects of managers' positioning, including leadership, responsibility, and team identity, are largely maintained, the analysis identifies cases in which markers of epistemic uncertainty are reduced. Interpreting in this setting therefore involves not only the transfer of propositional content but also the re-shaping of discourse within the cultural and institutional context of the press conference.

Özsöz (2024) approaches football press conferences from another angle by examining the stage preceding the live interpreting event. His analysis focuses on how pre-negotiation processes and institutional structures shape interpreter-mediated communication, arguing that interpreters' observable behaviour during media events is closely connected to strategies and power relations established before the press conference itself. The study consequently directs attention beyond the interpreter's immediate linguistic output to the institutional processes that condition that output.

A related intersection of interpreting, institutional discourse, and media ideology can be seen in research on television interpreting. Arzık-Erzurumlu (2019), drawing on the concept of *transediting*, examines the hybrid role of full-time media interpreters working in the Turkish television industry. The study shows that these practitioners may move beyond conventional understandings of translation and adapt their live simultaneous output in ways that correspond to the institutional policies and political orientations of the news organisations for

which they work. The media setting thus makes particularly visible the relationship between interpreting practices and the institutional discourse within which those practices are produced.

Vural's (2023) *Çeviribilimde Kişiyi Özel Tercüme Hizmetleri: Kişiyi Özel Tercüme Modelleme (KÖTM)* [*Personalised Interpreting Services: Personalised Interpreting Modelling (PIM)*] approaches conference interpreting through the discourse of the individual speaker. Developed for simultaneous and consecutive interpreting, the model proposes that interpreters analyse a speaker's idiolect, metaphors, rhetorical habits, culturally marked expressions, and other recurrent discourse features before entering the interpreting setting. The resulting discourse profile is intended to help interpreters recognise these features as they occur and reconstruct them in the target language. The model thus assigns considerable importance to the interpreter's knowledge of the speaker as a particular discourse producer and to the decisions involved in reconstructing that speaker's discourse in another language. Vural's (2023) work is not centred on CDA in the narrower sense, but it is relevant to the discourse-oriented strand of interpreting research in Türkiye because it places the construction and reconstruction of discourse, rather than linguistic transfer alone, at the centre of interpreting practice. In this respect, it also draws attention to the interpreter as an active participant in the production of target discourse, an aspect that is particularly relevant to critical inquiry into interpreting.

3. 4. A CDA-Informed Analysis of an Interpreter-Mediated Doctor–Patient Encounter

The range of studies discussed in the Türkiye context makes it necessary to distinguish between research that addresses critical concerns and research that explicitly undertakes Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Power, ideology, institutional discourse, professional roles, and social inequality may all be examined critically without the study necessarily constituting CDA. What is distinctive about CDA is the treatment of discourse as inseparable from the social and institutional relations in which it is produced. For example, a study may relate an interpreter's lexical choices to the institutional policies or political orientations of the organisation in which the interpreting takes place. Such a study clearly raises a critical question about the conditions shaping interpreted discourse, but this does not by itself establish a CDA analysis. The distinction concerns not the

issues under investigation, but the analytical relationship established between discourse and the social relations in which it is embedded.

For the present analysis, however, this distinction is not maintained as a separation between the critical object and the analytical approach. The recorded doctor–patient interaction is examined as discourse that is already situated within particular institutional and interpersonal relations. Consequently, questions of positioning, power, participation, and agency arise through the interpretation of the interaction itself rather than being introduced as separate categories after the analysis. Attention to the interpreter’s contribution is therefore inseparable from consideration of what that contribution does within the encounter and how the institutional setting bears on its meaning. The extracts that follow are analysed from this perspective, with the discourse providing the primary evidence for understanding the interpreter’s participation and the relations within which that participation takes shape.

3.4.1. Monolingual Doctor–Patient Interaction as Institutional Discourse

Before turning to the interpreter-mediated encounter, it is useful to consider the doctor–patient interaction in its monolingual form. Understanding the dynamics of the monolingual clinical encounter provides a basis for examining how those dynamics are carried into, and potentially reshaped within, an interpreter-mediated setting. The institutional relations that organise doctor–patient interaction do not disappear when another participant enters the encounter; rather, their effects may continue to be observable in the mediated interaction, although their manifestation may change as communication is distributed across participants. The studies considered in this section have consequently been selected for the ways in which they help establish doctor–patient interaction as an institutional setting and illuminate the interactional and relational features that characterise it. This provides the institutional background against which the interpreter-mediated encounter can subsequently be examined.

The designation *doctor–patient interaction*, rather than *patient–doctor interaction*, foregrounds the directionality traditionally associated with the clinical encounter. As Huang et al. (2025, p. 2) observe, there is a “unidirectional flow of information in DP interactions, where knowledge is transmitted from doctors to patients.” This ordering draws attention to the asymmetry of knowledge and ex-

expertise that underlies the interaction. Doctors enter the encounter with specialised knowledge acquired through extensive medical education and professional training, whereas patients generally depend on them for the interpretation of symptoms, diagnosis, and treatment-related information. The resulting asymmetry is not simply a difference in what participants know; it also contributes to the distribution of authority within the encounter, giving doctors greater institutional and epistemic power and creating a marked distance between the two participants.

The authority associated with medical expertise also shapes participants' expectations of how the encounter should proceed. Patients may be inclined to accept or follow medical advice not only because doctors possess specialised knowledge, but also because the doctor–patient relationship is socially familiar as a particular type of institutional interaction. In this sense, participants may enter an encounter with an understanding of what is expected of them, even before the interaction unfolds. Such expectations can be understood as part of a socially established frame through which an unfamiliar or immediate situation is interpreted and given a recognisable form. The structural characteristics of the doctor–patient relationship consequently become visible at the micro level in the organisation of the conversation itself. Although individual encounters may depart from this pattern, doctor–patient talk can be understood as having an overall organisation that reflects the purpose for which the participants come together. Heritage and Maynard (2006) describe this organisation in terms of recurrent phases that include greetings and openings, presentation and exploration of the patient's complaint, examination, diagnosis, establishment of a therapeutic plan, closing the conversation, and leave-taking.

This overall structure, however, should not be understood as a fixed sequence that is necessarily realised in every doctor–patient encounter. Particular phases may be altered, or even omitted depending on the circumstances in which the consultation takes place. For instance, *small talk* preceding the exploration of the patient's complaint may form part of the greeting and opening phase and provide an opportunity for the doctor to establish rapport with the patient. Yet when doctors are required to attend to a large number of patients within limited consultation times, there may be little opportunity for such interaction, and small talk may be considerably reduced or omitted altogether. The absence of this opportunity is not necessarily a matter of the doctor's individual preference. The possibility of establishing a more social relationship with the patient may be

constrained by the conditions of the healthcare system (Valero-Garces, 2014: 126), which operate at a broader institutional level and shape how the consultation is organised at the interactional level. A feature that may appear as a local interactional choice can thus also reflect the wider institutional conditions under which doctor–patient encounters take place.

Like other communicative situations, the doctor–patient encounter is organised around a particular purpose. Where participants share an understanding of that purpose, their interaction can be collaborative, whereas differences in participants’ aims, particularly in institutional encounters, may give rise to more competitive forms of interaction. Peterson and Lucas (2001) indicate that competitive negotiation may involve a single available option and limited exchange, “characterised by rigid power plays” (p. 45). The doctor–patient encounter, however, does not necessarily conform to such a pattern. The institutional representative, namely the service provider, and the service user can instead be understood as working towards a broadly shared objective: addressing the patient’s needs and reaching a resolution to the problem that has brought the patient to the consultation. This macro-level orientation is also reflected in the organisation of the conversation. The doctor’s questions are primarily used to obtain information from the patient, but they also give the doctor considerable control over the direction of the interaction. By deciding what to ask and when to ask it, the doctor can determine which aspects of the patient’s experience become relevant to the conversation. At the same time, questions provide the patient with opportunities to contribute information that is necessary for understanding the problem and deciding how it should be addressed. Questioning therefore places the doctor in a position to guide the interaction, while the information elicited through this process contributes to the shared purpose of the encounter.

Although the doctor and patient may share the broader purpose of addressing the patient’s health problem, the interaction can become more competitive when treatment options and medication protocols are discussed following diagnosis. At this point, the patient may question the proposed course of treatment, request an alternative, or express preferences that do not correspond to the doctor’s recommendation. Such moves can challenge the authority through which the doctor has guided the consultation and may open the possibility of a treatment process that departs from the course initially proposed by the physician. The asymmetry between the participants can consequently become more pronounced when the authority underlying medical decision-making is at stake. One resource through

which this asymmetry may be maintained is the specialised language of medicine. As Turan (2018, p. 751) notes, the use of medical terminology can function as a means through which physicians establish power in relation to those outside the profession. Medical jargon may thus make specialised knowledge less accessible to patients and reinforce the unequal distribution of epistemic resources that characterises the doctor–patient encounter.

3.4.2. Interpreter-Mediated Doctor–Patient Interaction

The preceding discussion has established the main institutional and interactional dynamics of the monolingual doctor–patient encounter. Within this setting, the doctor speaks not only as an individual participant but also as a representative of the medical institution, while the patient brings a distinct discourse shaped by their own experience, needs, and understanding of the health problem. At the same time, institutionally established norms and expectations constitute another discourse that informs how the encounter is organised and how the participants' contributions are interpreted. When an interpreter is introduced into this interaction, a further discursive dimension emerges. As a ratified participant, the interpreter is the only interlocutor who has access to the languages of the two primary participants and consequently occupies a distinctive position in the negotiation of meaning between them. The interpreter's discourse is thus not merely a linguistic channel through which the doctor's and patient's utterances are conveyed; it also contributes to how meaning is constructed in the interaction. In this section, *discourse* is used in the sense of the individual participant's idiolect, referring to the particular linguistic resources and ways of expressing meaning associated with that participant. From this perspective, the interpreter-mediated doctor–patient encounter involves four discursive dimensions: the doctor's discourse, the patient's discourse, the institutional discourse that frames the encounter, and the interpreter's discourse.

Habermas (1990, p. 63) distinguishes between strategic action, in which an actor seeks to influence another person's behaviour through incentives or sanctions, and communicative action, in which the actor seeks to motivate the other person through the rationally binding force of a speech act. Applied to interpreter-mediated healthcare communication, this distinction suggests that the interpreter may influence, rather than simply facilitate, how the healthcare provider and care recipient understand and respond to one another (Sarangi, 2024, p. 2). The interpreter's involvement can consequently affect how the healthcare provider's

communicative acts are conveyed and how the provider's institutional authority is perceived and responded to by the care recipient. A recommendation, explanation, or instruction may acquire a different force when it is reformulated by the interpreter. The interpreter's choices may thus support or modify the authority attached to the provider's contribution. The interpreter's role consequently extends beyond facilitating communication between the two primary participants, as the interpreter's discourse may also contribute to how institutional authority is maintained or reshaped in the encounter.

The interpreter may also assume a *gatekeeping role*²⁵, exercising control over what is conveyed between the two primary participants. This role becomes particularly visible in the organisation of the question–answer sequence. When a question initiated by either primary participant is rendered with its interrogative force intact, the other participant is positioned as the intended responder. The question–answer sequence is thus preserved, although it is mediated through the interpreter. At times, however, the interpreter responds directly to a question from either the doctor or the patient without first rendering the original utterance for its intended recipient. This may occur in either direction: the interpreter may answer the doctor's question on behalf of the patient or respond to the patient's question without conveying it to the doctor. Such practices can be especially relevant when the interpreter is also a hospital employee, such as a nurse, since the interpreter may have professional knowledge that enables them to respond directly (Kilian et al., 2021, p. 32). In these moments, the other primary participant is temporarily excluded from the immediate participatory framework, as the interpreter occupies the position of the respondent rather than that of the mediator between the two participants. The sequence consequently gives the interpreter a more authoritative position within the interaction. This positioning is particularly significant where doctors explicitly state a preference for receiving answers directly from their patients, since such a preference reflects the importance they attach to retaining the patient as the primary respondent and to

²⁵ Davidson (2002) explicitly formulates the *Interpreter as Gatekeeper* framework in the context of interpreter-mediated medical encounters, characterising interpreters as “informational gatekeepers” who keep the interview “on track” and the physician “on schedule” (p. 400). Although interpreters convey much of what is said, Davidson observes that they also interpret selectively and that this selectivity appears to follow patterned rather than random practices.

reducing the risks that may arise when the interpreter answers on the patient's behalf.

The medical expertise acquired through years of professional education does not necessarily equip doctors with the communicative skills required to convey that expertise effectively to patients, particularly in interpreter-mediated encounters. Research on interpreter-mediated consultations has shown that physicians may lack both experience and training in working with interpreters, and that their communication practices can limit patient participation (Friedman-Rhodes & Hale, 2010, p. 122). The interpreter may consequently become an important resource for managing the communicative demands that arise from this gap. In bilingual healthcare encounters, interpreters can support communication by helping doctors make medical information accessible to patients and by enabling patients to express questions, concerns, and responses. (Hsieh, 2022, p. 2), for example, show that interpreters may intervene in ways that support communication and care, including by addressing potentially stigmatising expressions, voicing questions on behalf of patients, and attending to cultural differences. Such interventions indicate that the interpreter's contribution may extend beyond the transfer of information between languages. By influencing how the doctor's expertise is presented to the patient and how the patient's concerns are made available to the doctor, the interpreter can affect the communicative conditions under which the two primary participants engage with one another.

Doctor–patient interactions are goal-oriented institutional encounters that may privilege the clinician's biomedical perspective and leave less space for patients' non-medical concerns. When interpreters approach such encounters through this understanding, they may underestimate the multilayered nature of the clinician's communicative task and overlook pragmatic meanings that emerge in the course of interaction. Ross (2018), for example, discusses the use of inclusive *we* in an utterance such as “we need to have some tests done.” The clinician's choice of *we* may align the clinician with the patient, soften the potentially negative associations of the word *tests*, and convey that the clinician will accompany the patient through the process. If an interpreter fails to recognise this pragmatic value in the course of the interaction, the inclusive *we* may instead be rendered as “you need to have some tests done,” shifting the alignment established in the source utterance. Although the propositional content remains broadly similar, the interpersonal meaning and illocutionary force of the utterance are altered. The reformulation may consequently weaken the sense of cooperation that the clinician

seeks to establish with the patient and present the proposed course of action as more directly imposed on the patient.

Although interpreters may make conditionally oriented discursive interventions in response to the demands of a particular interaction, their rendition practices remain subject to professional expectations concerning accuracy, impartiality, and confidentiality. As Hale (2007) notes, these constitute some of the broad areas of responsibility associated with the interpreter's professional role. This creates a tension for healthcare interpreters when the interaction involves an asymmetry between the institutional authority of the doctor and the patient's comparatively weaker position. An interpreter may, for instance, depart from a close rendition in an effort to make the patient's voice more audible or to prevent the patient's concerns from being overshadowed by the doctor's institutional authority. Such an intervention may serve an interactional purpose, yet the departure from the source utterance may also raise questions about the interpreter's adherence to professional expectations of accuracy and impartiality. A similar tension arises when the interpreter softens a face-threatening utterance produced by the doctor through hedging in order to protect the patient's face. Although such a rendition may facilitate the interaction and preserve the patient's dignity, it also introduces a degree of distance from the source utterance. In the absence of an absolute standard of equivalence in interpreting, such departures cannot simply be treated as errors; nevertheless, they may place the interpreter in a difficult position where an interactionally motivated intervention comes into tension with the professional norms governing the interpreter's role.

3.4.3. The Case Study

The case examined in this chapter is an authentic, naturally occurring interpreter-mediated doctor–patient encounter recorded in the consultation room of a private hospital in Istanbul. The encounter is distinctive in that it extends beyond a consultation organised primarily through verbal question-and-answer sequences. In response to the patient's complaint, the doctor also conducts a physical examination, during which the doctor and patient move behind the standard privacy curtain provided in the examination room. They consequently remain temporarily outside the camera's field of view. During this part of the encounter, the interpreter has access to the linguistic exchange but not to the visual aspects of the doctor–patient interaction. This temporary restriction is analytically significant

because it changes the conditions under which the interpreter mediates the encounter: while normally able to draw on both verbal and visible interactional resources, the interpreter must at this point mediate on the basis of what is verbally available.

The use of a single case does not imply that the analysis seeks to establish generalisable patterns of interpreter behaviour or to present its observations as universally applicable to healthcare interpreting. Rather, the case is examined as a site in which interactional and institutional dimensions of interpreter-mediated discourse can be observed in detail. As Machin & Mayr (2012, p. 207) note, conducting a CDA analysis may involve the analysis of only a small number of texts, including one or two texts, selected in accordance with the analytical interests of the researcher and the possibility of identifying ideology in operation. A single case can therefore provide a sufficiently rich site for examining how broader structural relations become observable through particular linguistic and interactional choices. The findings presented here are not intended as generalisable norms of interpreter behaviour; instead, they contribute to understanding how macro-level institutional and social relations may become manifest in the linguistic and interactional practices of a particular mediated encounter.

The selection of a healthcare setting was likewise deliberate. Doctor–patient encounters bring together participants occupying asymmetrical institutional and epistemic positions and provide a setting in which positioning in relation to other interlocutors, institutional positioning, agency, and the negotiation of power can become visible in interaction. The encounter also provides an opportunity to examine how broader social and cultural factors may shape linguistic behaviour as participants negotiate their respective positions within an institutional setting. These characteristics make healthcare interpreting a productive context for examining how the interpreter’s discourse intersects with the institutional authority of the doctor, the patient’s position as a care recipient, and the norms that organise the encounter.

Before the recording took place, the researcher contacted the institutional side and obtained institutional consent for the encounter to be recorded. Consent was subsequently obtained from the doctor, the patient, and the interpreter. All three participants were explicitly informed that they could withdraw from the study before or at any stage of the encounter. They were also informed that all potentially identifying information would be anonymised and that the recording would

be used solely for educational and research purposes. Ethical approval was obtained from the relevant ethics committee at Marmara University's Institute of Turkic Studies before the date of the encounter was communicated to the researcher by the institution. The committee also indicated that, where possible, it wished to have access to the audiovisual corpus subsequently.

The participants occupied different institutional and linguistic positions within the encounter. The doctor, as the institutional representative, was a specialist in oncology and a first-language speaker of Turkish. The patient was of Russian origin and had previously lived in a country where English was used as a first language, enabling him to use English actively. He reported knowing only a few expressions in Turkish beyond basic social communication. The doctor, for his part, had sufficient English competence for basic social communication but did not possess the level of linguistic competence required for the consultation to proceed without interpreting. The interpreter was consequently the only participant with functional command of both languages used in the encounter. This configuration is central to the analysis because communication between the doctor and patient could not proceed independently of the interpreter, except in instances involving certain medical terms that could be regarded as *bivalent* or *near-bivalent terms* (Özsöz, 2023) and whose meanings were accessible to the participants without explicit interpreting.

The interpreter was not an in-house hospital interpreter. In response to the researcher's enquiry about how interpreting needs were normally addressed within the hospital, the hospital administration explained that front-desk employees with knowledge of the relevant languages sometimes provided immediate interpreting despite having no formal interpreter training. Some doctors, according to the administration, did not require an interpreter, while external interpreters could be arranged for particular appointments when doctors considered interpreting necessary, especially for more sensitive consultations. The interpreter in the recorded encounter was a relatively recent graduate of a Translation and Interpreting programme working as a freelance interpreter. Her position is consequently different from that of hospital personnel who may provide ad hoc language assistance, as she entered the encounter with formal training in translation and interpreting rather than as a member of the hospital staff.

The patient had sought medical attention because a current health-related concern had acquired particular significance in light of cancer having occurred previously within his family. This background is relevant to the interaction because

the consultation was not limited to the transmission of medical information; the patient's concerns and the doctor's professional assessment formed part of an encounter in which information, expectations, and possible courses of action were negotiated through interpreting. The recording was made by a member of the hospital staff who followed the hospital's social media activities and provided recording services for events such as births when requested. A semi-professional camera was used for the audiovisual recording. During the part of the consultation conducted at the doctor's desk, an additional audio recorder was placed outside the camera frame on the desk in order to obtain clearer audio. The researcher was not present in the room during the recording, and no observation or field notes were produced by the researcher.

The recording lasted 39 minutes in total, including the opening exchanges, greeting and reception talk, and closing conversation. The analysis therefore draws on the encounter as a complete communicative event rather than treating the medical consultation as beginning only when the doctor starts asking medically oriented questions. For transcription, the conventions²⁶ developed by Yılmaz and Kara (2026) for the representation of spoken Turkish were adopted. These conventions allow observable structural features of spoken language, including prosodic features, to be represented systematically in written form and also provide means of representing extralinguistic features that interact with linguistic production. Since no transcription system can reproduce every feature of spoken interaction in written form, the aim was not exhaustive visual or auditory replication. The conventions were instead selected for their ability to maintain readability while representing discursive practices relevant to the analytical aims of the study.

The extracts analysed in the following section were selected for their capacity to make visible the interactional and institutional dimensions of interpreter-mediated healthcare communication. Particular attention is given to moments in which the interpreter's participation affects the organisation of the interaction, the distribution of participation, the positioning of the primary interlocutors, or the relationship between the interpreter's rendition practices and the institutional context. The analysis does not impose a fixed set of categories on the encounter in advance. Rather, the analytical focus emerges from the recorded interaction,

²⁶ See "Appendix" for a complete list of the transcription conventions used in this study.

with attention to how particular discursive choices become meaningful within the institutional and interpersonal relations that organise the encounter.

3.4.4. Analysis of the Recorded Encounter

The analysis of the recorded encounter follows the critical and discourse-oriented perspective established in the preceding sections. The extracts have not been selected or organised according to a set of analytical categories determined in advance. Rather, the interaction is approached as discourse situated within the institutional and interpersonal relations of the healthcare encounter, allowing the recurrent features and analytically significant moments of the interaction to emerge from the data. This does not mean, however, that the analysis begins without any theoretical orientation. The preceding discussion of positioning, institutional roles, power, agency, and ideology provides a set of critical concerns through which the discourse can be examined. These concerns function as points of analytical attention rather than as predetermined categories to which individual extracts must conform.

This approach is consistent with the distinction established earlier between research that addresses critical concerns and research that explicitly undertakes Critical Discourse Analysis. The present analysis does not treat power, ideology, positioning, or institutional relations as separate topics to be identified after the linguistic analysis has been completed. Instead, these dimensions are considered insofar as they become relevant to the way discourse is produced and interpreted within the encounter. A particular reformulation, omission, addition, response, or turn-management practice may, for example, become significant because of the position it assigns to a participant, the institutional role it enacts or modifies, the degree of agency it affords, or the relationship of authority it sustains or alters. Where the data provide sufficient evidence, such practices may also point to ideological meanings or assumptions embedded in the interaction. The analytical significance of these features therefore derives from their relation to the interaction as a whole rather than from the presence of any particular linguistic form in isolation.

The interpreter's contribution is central to this approach. The analysis does not assume that an interpreter's departure from a close rendition is inherently an instance of agency, nor that an addition or omission necessarily represents an exercise of power. Such interpretations require consideration of the surrounding sequence, the preceding and following turns, the roles of the participants, and

the institutional circumstances in which the utterance occurs. The question is therefore not simply what the interpreter says, but what the interpreter's contribution does within the interaction and how it relates to the positions and relations of the participants. In this sense, the discourse provides the primary evidence through which the interpreter's participation and its institutional and interpersonal implications are examined.

The extracts that follow were consequently identified through close engagement with the transcript rather than through prior assignment to fixed categories. Some may foreground the organisation of participation, others the positioning of the participants or the interpreter's role, and others the ways in which institutional authority, agency, or relations of power become observable in discourse. These dimensions may also intersect within a single extract. The analysis therefore retains the categories as analytically open, allowing their relevance, boundaries, and interrelationships to be determined by the interaction itself.

The boundaries of the extracts are likewise determined by the organisation of the interaction rather than by an equal division of the recording or by the prior allocation of passages to analytical categories. An extract is treated as a coherent unit when the turns within it form an interactional sequence in which a particular discursive development can be followed from its initiation through its response, reformulation, or subsequent consequence. This allows the analysis to retain the sequential character of the encounter and to examine how the meaning and significance of an interpreter's contribution develop in relation to the surrounding talk.

3. 4. 4. 1. *Recontextualization and Representation of Patient Experience*

I1- mer(h)aba hocam <ruslan bey rusyadan hasta>nemize başvurdu

Hello professor Mr Ruslan from Russia has applied to our hospital

D1- <mer(h)abalar hoş geldiniz> # hoş geldiniz ruslan bey

Hello welcome Welcome Mr Ruslan

I2- eem he is our doctor ee doctor mesut ee in oncology eem you can tell me about your complaints and I will translate it for him

P1- right okay ## sooo few weeks ago uhm when I went to toilet # I suddenly saw that there is a something like blood {you know (?)}

I3- hihim

P2- it was almost dark color # uhm near to black or something like that

I4- hihim

P3- I think I was afraid of (.) that it was bleeding ## so after that aaa it passed some days maybe two or three [like that] aa it happened # again so I was aa wondering that I have to check (...) out because

of (.) in our family also there are some bad character disease aa for example my father had also rectum cancer and that(i)s why it(i)s a little bit problem for me because I wan(t)(to)na check it out to see everthing(i)s right or (...) what is happening # so all complaints is like that but other complaints (.) # there is no # just I wan(t)(to)na check myself

I5- okay eem bi(r)kaç hafta önce ee tuvalete gittiğinde ee koyu bi(r) miktar kan rengi bi(r) akıntısı okay um a few weeks ago when he went to the toilet he had a rather dark, blood-coloured discharge olmuş aa bi(r)kaç gün sonra tekrarladığını görmüş bu durum onu korkutmuş ee ailesinde daha önce ah a few days later he saw that it had happened again this frightened him um in his family previously böyle şeyler yaşandığını babasının aa rektum kanseri geçmiş olduğunu ve bunun kendisini he had experienced such things before and his father had a history of rectal cancer which made him korkuttuğunu bu yüzden ee kontrole gelmek istediğini {söylüyo(r) hastamız} frightened and therefore um our patient says that he wanted to come in for a check-up
D2- ya şunu sorabilir miyiz {hastamıza} gördüğü koyu renk şu şekilde siyah parlak mıymış could we ask our patient whether the dark-coloured discharge he saw was like this black and shiny ya da sace koyu kahverengi mi (?)

or was it just dark brown

I6- the colour you saw on your discharge ee is shiny black like that or aaa dark brown (?)

P4- sooo it(i)s not totally black but it is (.) I can say in the middle of brown and black it was (...) like that but it(wa)s not totally black

I7- tamamen siyah değil ama kahveyle siyah arası ikisinin arası bir renk {diyo(r)}

he says it wasn't completely black but rather a colour somewhere between brown and black

The opening of the encounter already reveals that the interpreter participates in organising the interaction rather than simply transferring the participants' utterances between languages. The sequence begins with the interpreter's introduction of the patient to the doctor: "Ruslan bey Rusya'dan hastanemize başvurdu" (I1). The expression *hastanemize başvurdu* ("has applied to our hospital") places the patient within the institutional setting before the doctor has directly engaged with him. The possessive form *hastanemize* ("to our hospital") is particularly noteworthy because it linguistically aligns the interpreter with the institution and presents the patient as someone who has entered "our" institutional space. This formulation need not be taken as evidence of deliberate institutional alignment or of "in-group allegiance" (Mason, 2009, p. 81); it may simply reflect the interpreter's position within the organisational context in which the interpreting service is provided. Nevertheless, it establishes an institutional frame for the encounter from its outset.

The doctor then addresses the patient directly with *Hoşgeldiniz Ruslan bey* ("welcome Mr. Ruslan") (D1). Although the doctor is evidently aware that his utterances will require interpreting, he directs the greeting to the patient rather

than to the interpreter. The move maintains the doctor–patient relationship as the primary interactional relationship while allowing the interpreter to mediate between them. At the same time, the greeting performs an interpersonal function. It opens the encounter through a socially oriented move before the consultation turns to the patient’s medical concerns, thereby creating an opportunity for *rapport* to be established. *Rapport* can be understood as the way in which “speakers express their feelings of harmony or discord, the smoothness or turbulence of interactions, and the warmth or hostility” in their relationships with others (Spencer-Oatey, 2008, p. 35). In this sense, the doctor’s greeting constitutes an initial interpersonal move through which a welcoming and potentially harmonious relationship is made relevant at the beginning of the consultation.

The interpreter does not render this greeting. Instead, *I2* introduces the doctor as “our doctor,” identifies him as an oncology doctor, and immediately invites the patient to present his complaints: “you can tell me about your complaints and I will translate it for him.” The omission of the greeting therefore does more than leave a few words untranslated. It can be characterised as *zero translation*, whereby an interpreter leaves an original speaker’s utterance completely untranslated, resulting in its total omission from the mediated interaction (Wadensjö, 1998, p. 109). It removes the doctor’s opening interpersonal move from the mediated exchange and replaces it with an instruction concerning how the consultation is to proceed. The patient is no longer being welcomed into the interaction through the doctor’s social opening; he is being invited to provide medically relevant information.

This shift also gives the interpreter an active role in establishing the immediate conditions of participation. By telling the patient to speak to her and promising to translate “for him,” the interpreter positions herself as the participant through whom the patient can gain access to the doctor. She thereby constructs a communicative space in which she is not merely transmitting completed utterances but organising the exchange between the two primary participants. The formulation also establishes an asymmetrical participation structure: the patient is invited to address the interpreter, while the interpreter undertakes responsibility for making his account available to the doctor.

The significance of this intervention becomes clearer in relation to the setting. A consultation room in a hospital establishes a strong expectation that the interaction will eventually concern a medical problem, but this does not make the social opening irrelevant. The doctor could have allowed the greeting to develop into

a brief period of *small talk* before moving to the patient's complaint. Instead, the interpreter moves directly to the medical purpose of the encounter. The transition from social interaction to institutional business is therefore accomplished through the interpreter's discourse. A critical reading of the sequence does not require this to be interpreted as a deliberate attempt to control the interaction. Rather, it shows how the interpreter's apparently small organisational decision contributes to defining what counts as immediately relevant within the encounter.

The patient's response in *P1–P2–P3* is substantially different in form from the concise medical orientation established by *I2*. He provides an extended first-person account in which the description of the symptom is intertwined with uncertainty, fear, family history, and his reasons for seeking medical attention. Expressions such as "I think I was afraid," "I was wondering," and "I wanna check it out" present the experience from the patient's own perspective. His account therefore does not consist solely of information that can be categorised as medically relevant; it also conveys how he experienced and interpreted the event and why it became significant enough to seek professional advice. *I5* transforms this extended account into a compact report for the doctor. The patient's first-person perspective is replaced by third-person formulations such as "bu durum onu korkutmuş" ("this situation frightened him"), "babasının ... rektum kanseri geçmişi olduğunu" ("that his father had a history of rectal cancer"), and, most significantly, "kontrole gelmek istediğini söylüyor hastamız" ("our patient says that he wanted to come for a check-up"). The shift from *I* to *he* is not merely a grammatical consequence of consecutive interpreting. It changes the participant perspective from which the account is presented: an experience narrated by the patient becomes information reported about the patient to the doctor.

The rendition also involves a reorganisation of the patient's priorities. Elements that are central to his narrative—his fear, uncertainty, family history, and motivation for seeking medical attention—are retained, but they are compressed into a sequence that is more readily usable as a medical account. The patient's explicit statement that he has no other complaints and his wish to "check myself" to see whether "everything's right" or "what is happening" do not appear in *I5*. Rather than reproducing the full progression of his reasoning, the interpreter presents selected elements as a concise account of why he has come for consultation. The result is not simply a shorter version of the original turn; it is a different organisation of the information for institutional uptake.

This selectivity is also apparent in the treatment of the symptom. The patient initially describes “something like blood” and then works towards a more precise description by explaining that the colour was between brown and black. *I5*, however, refers to a “kan rengi” (“blood-coloured”) discharge. The tentative and exploratory quality of the original description is consequently replaced by a more categorical formulation. This does not necessarily mean that the interpreter has introduced a medically inaccurate interpretation; rather, it illustrates how an uncertain experiential description can acquire greater specificity when reformulated for a professional interlocutor. The doctor’s subsequent response makes this transformation interactionally consequential: in *D2*, he asks whether the colour was shiny black or dark brown, thereby taking the reformulated symptom as the basis for further questioning. *I6* renders this question, *P4* provides the clarification, and *I7* returns the answer to the doctor. The sequence therefore demonstrates that an interpreter’s rendition can shape the next conversational move without determining it unilaterally. What becomes the focus of medical inquiry is thus partly dependent on how the preceding account has been rendered.

The use of reported speech in *I5* further contributes to this recontextualization. Through “söylüyor hastamız” (“our patient says”), the interpreter frames the preceding information explicitly as something attributed to the patient. The formulation distinguishes between the patient as the source of the account and the interpreter as the speaker who delivers it to the doctor. This attribution preserves a link to the patient’s voice while simultaneously converting his narrative into a report addressed to an institutional professional. The patient remains the experiential source of the information, but his account reaches the doctor in a discourse format shaped by the interpreter.

The doctor’s formulation in *D2* provides an additional indication of how the participation framework is negotiated in the mediated exchange. By asking “şunu sorabilir miyiz hastamıza” (“can we ask our patient this...”), the doctor refers to the patient in the third person even though the patient is physically present. This resembles the interpreter’s earlier use of *hastamız* and places the patient momentarily in the position of the person about whom the consultation is being conducted rather than the direct addressee of the question. *I6* subsequently converts the question into direct English address, restoring the patient’s role as respondent. The sequence thus moves between third-person reference and direct address

as the utterance passes through the interpreter, revealing how mediated interaction can involve shifts in participant roles even when the underlying communicative purpose remains unchanged.

From a critical discourse perspective, and particularly through the lens of Wodak's (2001) Discourse-Historical Approach, the significance of this sequence lies in how the patient's experiential discourse is recontextualised within the institutional medical encounter. Rather than being reproduced directly, his account of perceptions, fears, family history, and reasons for seeking reassurance is reorganised by the interpreter into information that is institutionally relevant to the doctor. In doing so, the interpreter establishes the focus of the consultation and positions herself as the communicative link between the two primary interlocutors. The sequence thus illustrates how experiential discourse is transformed through selection and reformulation as it moves from the patient's personal account into the institutional framework of the medical consultation.

What emerges here is a form of interpreter agency that is observable not through an overt attempt to control the encounter, but through the organisation and reformulation of discourse. The interpreter's contribution affects the transition from social opening to medical business, the way in which the patient's experience is institutionally represented, and the subsequent direction of the doctor's questioning. The interaction thus provides an initial indication of how participant positioning and institutional discourse intersect in interpreter-mediated healthcare communication. From a DHA perspective, the critical significance lies in how the patient's experiential discourse is recontextualised through mediation and thereby transformed to meet the communicative demands of the institutional setting (Reisigl & Wodak, 2009, p. 89).

3. 4. 4. 2. Institutional Authority and the Categorisation of Patient Experience

D3- tamam %peki% ishal ve kabızlığı var mı (?)

okay does he have diarrhoea and constipation

I8- uhm do you have (.) experienced any ee discharge problems (?)

P5- what kind of problems (?) [in a probing tone]

I9- like diarrhea

P6- diarr (.) # %no% it(i)s normal # for example one time in a day

I10- okay

P7- (...) maximum two times

I11- okay

P8- it(i)s not rare but it(i)s normal {I can say}

I12- okay eee günde bir veya iki kez tualete çıkıyo(r)muş absürt bi(r) durum olmadığını söylüyo(r)

okay um he says he goes to the toilet once or twice a day and that there's nothing unusual
D4- peki batında ağrısı var mı (?) karın bölgelerinde [gesturing towards his abdominal area] ağrısı var
 okay does he have any abdominal pain does he have any pain in his abdominal area
 mı {sorabilir miyiz(?)}
 can we ask him
I13- do you have any abdominal pains around this area [pointing to her abdomen] (?)
P9- pain (?) I dont (.) ## I think # no pain but its every time full of gas # %yes% # *but it(i)s* may be
 sometimes giving pain # I was thinking that it was because of gas # but I'm not sure # but I cannot say
 it hurts me too much
I14- çok fazla bi(r) ağrı değil ağrı değil de gazı olduğunu hissettiğini <söylüyor {bazen}
 it is not very painful well not really pain but he says he sometimes feels that he has gas

D5- <diskonfor var {yani} (?)
 there is discomfort then

I15- evet
 yes

D6- huzursuzluk
 discomfort

P10- <discom>fort *yep yep* # discomfort what he said (?) [in a questioning manner]

I16- <evet
 yes

D3 asks about two possible symptoms, diarrhoea and constipation, selected for their potential relevance to the complaint previously mentioned in the interaction. The question is therefore already shaped by the medical orientation of the encounter: rather than inviting the patient to describe his condition freely, the doctor proposes two specific categories through which the symptom can be identified. *I8*, however, reformulates these two alternatives more generally as “discharge problems.” This lexical generalisation changes the semantic scope of the question. The doctor’s formulation presents two medically distinguishable possibilities, whereas the interpreter’s formulation provides a broader category that does not preserve the distinction between them.

The patient’s response in *P5*—“what kind of problems (?)”—indicates that this reformulation has not provided sufficient access to the intended meaning. His request can be understood as an attempt to recover the referential specificity of the doctor’s question. Significantly, the repair is initiated by the patient rather than by the interpreter or the doctor. In this moment, the patient moves beyond the linear question–answer framework by requesting an intralingual translation, or rewording, of the interpreter’s formulation (Jakobson, 2000, p. 114). The re-

pair also has interactional significance because an other-initiated repair may potentially constitute a face threat to the interpreter: by requesting clarification, the patient implicitly draws attention to the possibility that the interpreter's preceding formulation has not been sufficiently clear or adequate (Özsöz, 2025b, p. 63). The repair request therefore not only seeks access to the intended meaning but also places the adequacy of the preceding rendition under interactional scrutiny. *I9* makes the discourse object more explicit by supplying "like diarrhea." However, only one component of the doctor's two-part question is rendered. The resulting exchange temporarily develops as a sub-conversation between the patient and interpreter, while the doctor remains outside the immediate verbal exchange.

Partial rendering of a multi-part utterance is not necessarily an indicator of problematic interpreting. A source utterance containing several components that require separate responses may be divided into smaller units, or *chunked*, during interpreting (Ahrens, 2017, p. 68). Such segmentation can provide useful processing cues and reduce the cognitive demands associated with retaining and reformulating longer stretches of discourse. In the present case, however, the relatively short length and syntactic simplicity of *D3*, together with the absence of potentially problematic stimuli or conditions such as high information density, make an explanation in terms of processing demands less compelling. Such factors are among the *problem triggers* identified by Gile (1995) as potentially increasing the processing demands placed on the interpreter. The reduction may instead be associated with lexical accessibility, particularly if the interpreter is uncertain about the Turkish equivalent of *kabızlık* ("constipation"). The available data do not permit this possibility to be established, but the discrepancy between the two-part source question and its one-part rendition makes the lexical asymmetry analytically relevant.

The temporary sub-conversation also has consequences for the distribution of participation. The doctor, who occupies the institutionally authorised position of medical expert, is momentarily excluded from the verbal exchange while the patient and interpreter negotiate what the question means. This does not necessarily constitute a deliberate exclusion. Rather, it illustrates how the interpreter-mediated interaction can temporarily reorganise access to the floor: the interpreter becomes the immediate source of clarification, while the doctor's institutional authority does not give him direct access to the repair sequence. The doc-

tor follows this brief exchange nonverbally through his gaze, but does not intervene verbally before producing a further question. The episode is therefore short-lived, yet it makes visible the interpreter's intermediary position between institutional expertise and the patient's access to that expertise.

From a critical discourse perspective, the subconversation, or *schism* (Sacks et al., 1974), creates two temporarily overlapping floors. Here, *floor* refers to the interactional space in which one participant retains the right to speak, while the other participants may intervene only through minimal responses in separate turns. At the CDA level, this temporary redistribution of access makes visible how institutional authority and control over discourse may be distributed differently among participants. This participatory configuration can be related to Fairclough's (1992) conception of discourse in institutional contexts, which draws attention to who can speak, under what interactional conditions, and how such arrangements relate to institutional relations. It also brings positioning and agency into focus. The interpreter's agency, however, does not arise from an explicit claim to authority; rather, the structure of mediated interaction temporarily positions her as the necessary access point for clarification. Her mediating role therefore gives her temporary control over the communicative channel through which the doctor and patient access one another, while the doctor remains physically and institutionally present and continues to monitor the exchange through gaze. The sequence thus illustrates how institutional authority can remain with the doctor even as immediate access to the interactional floor is temporarily organised through the interpreter.

D4 provides a revealing contrast. The doctor first formulates the question using the more specialised expression *batında ağrı* ("abdominal pain") but immediately reformulates it as *karın bölgelerinde ağrı* ("pain in the abdominal area"). He also accompanies the second formulation with a gesture indicating the relevant part of his body. The lexical reformulation makes the intended meaning more accessible, while the gesture provides a nonverbal specification of the bodily location to which the question refers. Here, the doctor does not simply repeat the same linguistic formulation. He combines lexical simplification with a multimodal resource to reduce the possibility of misunderstanding and to secure a response to the intended medical question.

I13 reproduces both dimensions of this clarification. The interpreter renders the reformulated question as "do you have any abdominal pains around this area (?)" and simultaneously points to her own abdomen. The gesture therefore does not

remain attached to the doctor's turn but becomes part of the mediated message. This is significant for a CDA-oriented analysis because the meaning of the question is constructed through the coordination of linguistic and embodied resources. The interpreter's intervention makes the anatomical reference accessible to the patient while preserving the doctor's medical purpose. At this point, mediation extends beyond linguistic transfer to the management of how the patient is directed to attend to his own body.

P9 subsequently resists the simple categorisation implied by the question. Rather than confirming or denying the presence of "pain," he distinguishes between pain and another bodily sensation: his abdomen is "every time full of gas," and although this may sometimes give him pain, he is uncertain whether the sensation should be understood as pain and emphasises that it does not hurt him very much. His response consequently introduces a degree of uncertainty into the medical category proposed by the doctor. The patient's own description does not map neatly onto the binary distinction of having or not having abdominal pain; instead, he negotiates the category through his subjective experience of the sensation.

I14 condenses this account into "çok fazla bir ağrı değil ağrı değil de gazı olduğunu hissettiğini söylüyor {bazen}" ("it is not very painful, well, not really pain, but he says he sometimes feels that he has gas"). The interpreter preserves the patient's rejection of "pain" and his association of the sensation with gas. Yet the rendition also reorganises the patient's more hesitant account into a compact proposition that can be readily taken up by the doctor. The distinction between what the patient experiences and how that experience is medically categorised therefore remains important: the patient provides an experiential description, while the interpreter packages that description into a form oriented towards the doctor's diagnostic questioning.

D5 marks a further shift in this categorisation. Rather than rendering the patient's account further, the doctor proposes a lexical label: "discomfort." The term functions as an intermediate category between the patient's rejection of significant pain and the doctor's need to establish whether some form of abdominal symptom is nevertheless present. *I15* responds simply with "evet" ("yes"), effectively accepting the doctor's proposed formulation rather than rendering an additional patient utterance. This is a form of non-rendition in which the interpreter momentarily responds to the doctor on the patient's behalf, corresponding to one of the three categories of *unjustified non-renditions* identified by Vargas-Urpi

(2019). Such a move is significant because it ratifies the doctor's proposed medical characterisation as the patient's response.

D6 then makes the proposed category explicit in Turkish: "huzursuzluk" ("discomfort"). The repetition suggests that the doctor treats the categorisation as requiring confirmation rather than leaving the patient's "yes" as sufficient. The move is significant because the doctor actively seeks to establish a shared lexical formulation for the patient's experience. In this respect, the sequence demonstrates how medical meaning is not simply extracted from the patient's account but negotiated through successive formulations by the participants.

The patient's response in *P10* further complicates this process. By repeating "discomfort" and responding affirmatively, he appears to recognise and accept the lexical item introduced by the doctor. The term is particularly interesting because "discomfort" is a *bivalent item* (Woolard, 1998) across the two languages in the interaction, although its pronunciation is adapted to the speaker's linguistic system. Its recognisability enables the patient to recover the intended meaning from the doctor's utterance despite the interpreter's non-rendition in *I15*. The patient's delayed uptake therefore demonstrates that the absence of an interpreter rendition does not necessarily terminate access to the meaning being negotiated; participants may draw on lexical overlap and contextual information to repair the gap themselves.

From a critical discourse perspective, and particularly in relation to Fairclough's (1992) account of discourse and institutional power, the sequence is revealing because the patient's bodily experience is progressively transformed into institutionally recognisable medical categories. The doctor initially proposes two specific symptom categories; the interpreter broadens them; the patient requests clarification; and the doctor later introduces "discomfort" as a further category through which the patient's experience can be understood. These shifts should not be treated as evidence that any one participant controls the meaning of the encounter. Rather, they show how access to medical knowledge and the authority to categorise bodily experience are distributed unevenly across the interaction. The doctor possesses the institutional authority to formulate medically relevant categories, while the interpreter controls much of the linguistic access through which these categories are negotiated with the patient.

The extract therefore illustrates a dimension of interpreter agency that extends beyond turn management. The interpreter's choices influence which medical

distinctions become available to the patient and which aspects of his account are presented to the doctor, while the doctor retains the institutional authority to reformulate, specify, and ultimately label the patient's experience. The interaction thus demonstrates that the mediation of healthcare discourse involves not only the transfer of information but also the negotiation of the categories through which experience becomes institutionally intelligible (2001, p. 123-124). In this respect, the extract makes visible the intersection of interpreting, participation, and the unequal distribution of authority over medical meaning.

3. 4. 4. 3. *The Distribution of Capital in Medical Interaction*

- D7-** *şimdi ben hastamızı* muayene masasına alı(a)ca(ğ)ım # siz perdenin dışında kalırsınız # ben ona
 now I will have our patient move onto the examination table you can stay behind the curtain
 sorduğum soruları %siz bana% tercüme edersiniz # ben onun karın muayenesini yap(a)ca(ğ)ım #
 you will interpret the questions I ask I will examine his abdomen
 bazı yerlere bastırı(a)ca(ğ)ım # %bastırdığım% o dokunduğum muayene ettiğim yerlerde ağrı olursa
 I will press on certain areas of your abdomen if you feel any pain where I press or examine
 size söyler siz de bana çevirirsiniz <olur mu (?)
 they will tell you and you will interpret it for me okay
I16- <tamam> hocam # doctor wants to um examine you in the table #
 okay professor
 eee he(i)s go(ing)(to)nna press some of the areas on your <ee button (.)
P11- <oh sure> okay
I17- and uhm I will stand outside of <the curtain
P12- <okay no problem
I18- and I will translate for you # I(wi)ll keep translating for you
P13- okay # okay no problem ## right now (?)
I19: yeah
D8- buy(u)run
 please come in
P14- shall I take it off (?)
I20- çıkarmalı mıyım {dedi(?)}
 should I take it off he said
D9- evet karnınızı açacaksınız # şey [in a puzzled tone] # yatıp karnını açmasını söyler misiniz (?)
 yes you will need to expose your abdomen um could you ask him to lie down and expose his abdomen
I21- can you lay down and open your # belly (?)
D10- tamam *aynen o şekilde* # güzelce yukarı kadar açalım # güzelce yukarı şuraya kadar açalım
 okay just like that let's pull it up nicely all the way up let's pull it up nicely up to here
I22- take it up above your ee chest <please
P15- <okay> okay

From a Bourdieusian perspective, *D7* is significant because the doctor establishes the participation framework of the physical examination before it takes

place. By stating that he will examine the patient while the interpreter remains behind the curtain and translates his questions from there, the doctor defines both the spatial and communicative arrangements of the encounter. At the interactional level, this constitutes an explicit reorganisation of participation: the doctor assigns the patient to the examination space and the interpreter to a position outside it, while simultaneously specifying the interpreter's communicative role through "siz bana tercüme edersiniz" ("You will interpret it for me.") Such changes in participation and alignment can be examined through Goffman's (1981) concepts of *participation framework* and *footing*, which draw attention to the differentiated participation statuses that may be established within an interaction. These arrangements can also be understood in relation to the medical *field* (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 192) and the *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 86) associated with clinical practice, within which the doctor is institutionally positioned as the professional responsible for determining how the examination is conducted. The separation of the interpreter from the examination area may reflect culturally and institutionally situated expectations concerning bodily exposure during a medical examination, although the interaction does not establish the doctor's specific motivation for making this arrangement.

This positioning reveals an asymmetrical distribution of *capital* (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 171). The doctor's professional and institutional capital enables him to define the conditions under which the examination and its associated communication will proceed, whereas the interpreter's linguistic capital is recognised as necessary but confined to the mediation of verbal interaction. Bourdieu's (1977; 1986) conceptualisation of *capital* is useful here because different forms of capital acquire value within particular *fields* and contribute to the positioning of participants. The doctor's subsequent specification that the patient should report any pain in the areas he presses or examines is particularly significant in this respect. The focalised repetition of this condition foregrounds the interpreter's communicative responsibility: although physically separated from the examination, she is expected to ensure that the patient's report of pain reaches the doctor. Her response (I16), "tamam hocam" ("okay Professor"), can be understood interactionally as an alignment move, while the institutional address *hocam* also foregrounds the doctor's professional status and acknowledges the position from which he is organising the activity.

The interpreter then addresses the patient directly and explains how the interaction will proceed: she will remain outside the curtain (I17) but will continue to

translate for him (*I18*). This move has an important interactional function because the interpreter does not merely render the doctor's instructions; she also anticipates a potential problem created by the physical separation and reassures the patient that communication will remain available. Her repeated "I will translate for you" and "I'll keep translating for you" reinforce the continuity of the communicative channel. The doctor's "buyurun," followed by his direct instruction to the patient (*D8*), marks the transition into the examination space and establishes a new participation arrangement. The use of direct address at this point contrasts with the earlier third-person reference to the patient and contributes to his repositioning from a participant in the verbal consultation to the immediate subject of the physical examination.

The following sequence further demonstrates the interaction between institutional authority and linguistic mediation. When the patient asks, "shall I take it off?" (*P14*), the interpreter renders the question as "çıkarmalı mıyım, dedi," using reported speech rather than directly reproducing the patient's first-person perspective (*I20*). The doctor initially responds with "evet," but then reformulates the instruction and asks the interpreter to tell the patient to lie down and expose his abdomen (*D10*). Interactionally, the sequence shows that the doctor's directive requires mediation before it can be understood and acted upon by the patient. The interpreter's linguistic capital therefore becomes indispensable at the point where institutional authority must be converted into patient action. The doctor's subsequent repetition—"aynen o şekilde," "güzелce," "yukarı kadar," "şuraya kadar"—further specifies the required bodily movement. These incremental formulations, accompanied by the doctor's embodied orientation to the patient's body, demonstrate how the examination is coordinated through the combined use of verbal directives and embodied resources.

The extract therefore illustrates a dynamic relationship between different forms of capital and different levels of interactional organisation. The doctor's institutional and professional capital enables him to define the activity, allocate participants to particular positions, and specify the bodily actions required by the examination. The interpreter's linguistic capital, however, is necessary to make these institutional directives actionable across the language boundary. Her agency becomes particularly visible when the interaction moves between these two levels: she accepts the doctor's institutional framing, reassures the patient about continued communication, and mediates the directives through which the patient's physical participation is organised. The sequence thus shows that the

distribution of authority within the medical field does not eliminate the interpreter's interactional significance; rather, the institutional activity becomes executable through the complementary mobilisation of professional and linguistic capital.

3. 4. 4. *Knowledge and Access in Medical Interaction*

- 148-** başka bir doktor da kan testlerine göre bi(r) sorun olmadığını söylemiş
another doctor also said the blood tests showed no problem
- D31-** ama tam doğru söylememiş (!) sadece biyokimyaları iyi # %şimdi% şöyle bir şey # erkeklerde
but that wasn't quite accurate just that his biochemicals were good the thing is in men
anemi beklemeyiz ## erkeklerde kan düşüklüğü olmaz
we wouldn't expect anemia men don't usually have low blood counts
- 149-** çevireyim mi (?)
shall I translate it
- D32-** çevirin lütfen
translate it please
- 150-** he(i)s not completely right doctor says} because (.)
- P36-** my doctor (?)
- 151-** yeah
- P37-** oh really (?)
- 152-** because he says that only your biochemistry results are good *and* # (.)
- P38-** okay
- 153-** he says um they(a)re not usually expecting anemia from ee men patients
- P39-** I have anemia (?)
- 154-** and ee <I think you do
- D33-** <şimdi hemoglobini> kendi de bakabilir [gesturing toward the test results] hemoglobini
he can check his hemoglobin himself now his hemoglobin
on iki nokta beşle on beş nokta beş arası olması gerekiyo(r) # kendisinin on bir nokta bir # yani
it should be between twelve point five and fifteen point five his is eleven point one so
hemoglobini düşük
his hemoglobin is low
- 155-** the umm results should be between (.) ##
- D34-** şur(a)da bakın [indicating a specific point] # on iki nokta beş ile (.)
look here between twelve point five and
- 156-** hıhım
- D35-** on iki on beş arası olması gerekiyor # onunki on bir
it should be between twelve and fifteen his is eleven
- 157-** yours are eleven
- P40-** <yeah> doctor said (.)
- 158-** <so> they(a)re a little bit low
- P41-** (...) its not important # {my doctor # told me like that}
- 159-** biraz düşük olduğunu ve önemli olmadığını söylemişler {bunun}
they said it was a little low and that it was not important

- D36-** önemli niye (?) %önemli çünkü% şimdi bayan olsa # önemli değil ama erkekte kanama
it is important it is because now if it were a woman # it wouldn't be important but in a man bleeding
beklemeyiz # *hele de* ailevi # kolon rektum hikayesi olan insanda %hiç% beklememeliyiz
is not expected especially with a family history of colorectal cancer we shouldn't expect it at all
- I60-** yeah # eee he says that its normal if eee it is seen in women patients but in men its not eee seen as
normal # especially if they have eee a history about eee colon and rectum cancer
- P42-** I dont have such history # my father had it
- I61-** no (!) in your family {I mean} # if you have this in your family history eee its not ee seen as a
normal ## result

The sequence beginning with *D31* is particularly revealing of how socially acquired knowledge enters the immediate medical encounter and shapes the ways in which participants interpret and respond to medical information. The patient does not approach the consultation without a prior understanding of his condition. Earlier in the encounter, he has already referred to his symptoms and to his father's history of colorectal cancer, and in the present sequence he introduces information previously provided by another doctor: according to that doctor, his blood tests did not indicate a significant problem (*I48*). The current doctor explicitly qualifies this assessment, stating that the previous doctor had not explained the situation completely correctly (*D31*). The extract therefore brings two medical interpretations into interaction: the patient's existing understanding, derived from a previous medical encounter, and the current doctor's interpretation of the same or related test results.

This conflict is important from a sociocognitive perspective because the patient's prior medical knowledge does not simply remain in the background; it becomes an active resource through which the current discourse is interpreted. His response that the result was "not important" because he had previously been told so (*P41*) demonstrates that the earlier medical assessment continues to shape how he evaluates the current doctor's explanation. Rather than receiving the latter as entirely new information, he relates it to an already established understanding and tests the apparent discrepancy between the two accounts. In this respect, the sequence illustrates that the patient's contribution to the interaction is consequently shaped not only by what is being said at that moment but also by knowledge acquired through previous participation in medical encounters.

The patient's decision to seek medical attention can itself be understood within this broader sociocognitive framework. His earlier account indicates that the presence of blood in his stool, combined with his father's history of colorectal

cancer, constituted sufficient grounds for seeking medical advice. This behaviour can be understood against a socially available health discourse in which a family history of disease, particularly when accompanied by a potentially relevant symptom, is treated as a reason for medical consultation and preventive investigation. The point is not to infer a particular private belief on the patient's part, but to recognise that his action is intelligible within socially circulated understandings of health risk and appropriate medical behaviour. Van Dijk's (2008, 2009, 2014, 2018) sociocognitive approach is useful precisely because it allows such socially acquired knowledge to be related to individual action without reducing the relationship to a direct causal effect of social structure. Socially shared knowledge and beliefs become relevant to individual behaviour through the cognitive representations that participants develop through social experience (van Dijk, 2009, pp. 64).

The same perspective also opens a broader level of analysis. Ideas about the value of early detection, the significance of family history, and the appropriateness of seeking medical advice in the presence of particular symptoms do not arise solely from individual experience. They may be circulated and reinforced through medical institutions, professional discourse, public-health communication, and health policy. For instance, when preventive intervention is represented as preferable to the social and economic costs associated with delayed diagnosis, such understandings can become institutionalised through screening programmes and other public-health practices. The relevance of this macro-social dimension here is not to claim that a particular policy directly caused the patient's behaviour, but to show how socially available health knowledge can be produced, legitimised, and disseminated through institutions before becoming part of the knowledge resources on which individuals draw in particular situations. In van Dijk's (1993, p. 257) terms, the cognitive interface makes it possible to connect such broader social processes with the discourse and actions of individual participants rather than treating the two levels as directly connected.

The consultation itself subsequently becomes a site at which these previously acquired understandings are reconsidered. When the interpreter reports the current doctor's explanation that the blood result is not considered normal in a male patient, particularly in the presence of a family history of colorectal cancer (160), the patient immediately contests the apparent implication of "family history": "I don't have history # My father had it" (P42). His response suggests that he initially interprets the doctor's reference as concerning his own medical history

rather than his family history. The interpreter then reformulates the reference explicitly as “in your family” (161), thereby resolving the ambiguity. This is an other-initiated clarification at the level of meaning: the patient’s contribution exposes a mismatch between the category invoked in the medical explanation and the category he has applied to himself. The interpreter’s reformulation makes the intended referent explicit and enables the interaction to proceed.

The sequence also demonstrates that the patient’s prior knowledge is not merely reproduced but potentially reorganised through interaction. His understanding that the blood-test result was unimportant, acquired from a previous doctor, is challenged by the present doctor’s explanation. His question “I have anemia?” (P39) similarly marks a moment at which the implications of the doctor’s account are being worked out in relation to his own condition. The subsequent provision of haemoglobin values and reference ranges (D33–D35; I55–I57) further develops this process. Medical knowledge is therefore not simply transmitted from doctor to patient through the interpreter. It is introduced, questioned, compared with prior knowledge, clarified, and progressively incorporated into the ongoing interaction. The patient’s questions and challenges are important interactional resources in this process because they make visible points at which the information being mediated does not fit smoothly with his existing understanding.

The interpreter’s role is consequently significant not only because she provides linguistic access but because her reformulations participate in the negotiation between different knowledge positions. Her rendering of the previous doctor’s assessment (I48), her staged mediation of the current doctor’s explanation (I50–I53), and her clarification of “family history” (I61) help bring previously acquired and newly introduced knowledge into the same interactional space. Yet the sequence does not position her as the sole mediator of meaning. The patient actively evaluates the information available to him, while the doctor retains institutional authority to determine the clinical significance of the test results. The interaction therefore involves a differentiated distribution of epistemic resources: the doctor contributes specialised medical knowledge, the patient contributes experiential and previously acquired medical knowledge, and the interpreter facilitates the communicative conditions under which these knowledge positions can be brought into relation.

The contrast between the two doctors’ assessments is particularly significant in this respect. The patient has previously been given an interpretation under which

the blood result was not important; the current doctor constructs the same information differently, linking it to the patient's sex and family history and thereby assigning it greater clinical significance. The patient's understanding of the situation consequently becomes a site of negotiation between competing medical accounts. From a sociocognitive perspective, this illustrates how context models are not static representations carried unchanged from one situation to another. Participants continually adapt their understanding of the communicative situation as new information becomes available, while existing knowledge remains relevant to the interpretation of that information (van Dijk, 2009, pp. 64–68). The patient's questions and responses provide interactional evidence of this ongoing adjustment.

At the critical level, the sequence therefore allows the relationship between knowledge, discourse, and institutional authority to be examined across micro- and macro-levels. At the micro level, the patient brings prior medical knowledge into the consultation, compares it with the current doctor's account, questions apparent inconsistencies, and seeks clarification. At the institutional level, the doctor possesses the authority to evaluate the clinical significance of the test results and to redefine what counts as medically important in this particular case. At a broader social level, the knowledge that informs decisions about when symptoms warrant medical attention may itself be shaped by professional, institutional, and public-health discourses. Van Dijk's (1980) sociocognitive framework makes it possible to connect these levels through the socially mediated knowledge and beliefs that participants bring to interaction, without assuming a direct or deterministic relationship between macro-social structures and individual behaviour.

The extract thus illustrates interpreter-mediated healthcare communication as a site where medical knowledge is not merely transferred but negotiated across differently situated knowledge positions. The patient's previous medical encounter remains active in the present interaction; the current doctor's interpretation challenges and recontextualises that knowledge; and the interpreter's interventions facilitate the negotiation between the two. What emerges is not simply a question of whether information has been accurately conveyed, but of how socially acquired knowledge becomes relevant to individual action, how competing understandings are reconciled in interaction, and how institutional medical authority participates in reshaping a patient's interpretation of his own con-

dition. In this sense, the extract demonstrates the value of a sociocognitive perspective for connecting the interactional details of interpreting with the wider social processes through which medical knowledge becomes available, meaningful, and actionable.

3. 4. 5. Overall Interpretation of the Extracts

Across the four extracts, the interpreter's role extends beyond conveying what the doctor and patient say to each other. Her renditions can shape the next turn, influence what the participants respond to, and affect which aspects of the consultation become relevant. This makes her contribution relevant not only for what is said, but also for how the exchange unfolds in terms of interaction management.

A central pattern across the encounter is the way the patient's own account is presented within the language of the medical consultation. The patient's experience does not reach the doctor in exactly the form in which he describes it. The interpreter sometimes gives a shorter version of what the patient utters. The doctor's questions then direct the discussion towards particular aspects of the patient's account, while the interpreter's renditions shape how the patient's responses are presented in relation to those questions. The interpreter thus has a role in how the patient's account is presented to the doctor.

A similar process can be seen in the use of medical terminology, where the patient's descriptions and the doctor's terms do not always refer to the same aspect of the experience. When a term remains unclear or appears to carry a different meaning for the participants, its meaning is established through the course of interaction. This is evident when the patient asks for clarification or when the doctor reformulates a term to make the intended meaning more specific. The interpreter is also involved in this process, since the wording she chooses can influence how a medical question is understood, whether in a broader or more specific sense. Medical meaning, therefore, emerges through the interaction rather than being simply transferred from one language to another.

The encounter also shows that access to medical communication is linked to the different positions of the three participants. The doctor has professional knowledge and institutional authority. The interpreter has the linguistic resources needed to make the doctor's questions and explanations accessible to the patient and to convey the patient's responses to the doctor. The patient has knowledge of his own symptoms and of previous medical encounters. These

forms of knowledge are not treated in the same way. The doctor has the authority to decide what is medically relevant, while the interpreter has an important role in making the doctor's discourse accessible and in conveying the patient's contribution back to the doctor.

The patient's participation remains important in this process. He asks when he does not understand a question, responds to the doctor's descriptions, refers to information given by another doctor, and corrects information when necessary. These responses show that the patient is not simply receiving medical information. He can question what is said and bring other knowledge into the consultation. The interpreter mediates these exchanges, but does not control them. The patient's responses can also affect what the doctor asks or explains next.

This interactional pattern is important for understanding interpreter agency. A departure from a close rendition does not, by itself, demonstrate that the interpreter is exercising power or pursuing a particular intention. Its significance depends on what is happening around it. A change in wording may affect the next question, lead to a clarification, or alter how the patient's information is taken up by the doctor. The analysis therefore treats agency as something that can be examined through the interpreter's observable choices and their effects within the interaction, rather than as something that can simply be assumed whenever her rendition deviates from the original utterance.

The significance of the interpreter's role lies in how she mediates between institutional authority and communicative access. She does not occupy the same position as the doctor, but her linguistic mediation is necessary for the doctor and patient to participate in the consultation across languages. This position gives her opportunities to shape the interaction, while the responses of the doctor and patient place limits on what any individual intervention can accomplish.

The four extracts bring together the main concerns of the analysis: representation, categorisation, authority, knowledge, and access, and show that they cannot be examined separately. Examining these processes at the level of actual interaction also shows why institutional roles alone cannot explain every intervention. The significance of individual linguistic choices depends on where they occur in the sequence and on how the other participants respond to them. Attention to participants' turns and responses makes it possible to see how institutional authority and communicative access are negotiated through interpreting. The case study therefore places interpreter mediated discourse within the institutional

setting in which it occurs, where language, knowledge, and authority are closely connected.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

Critical discourse analysis is a critical approach, not the definition of all critical approaches. In this book, we have therefore looked at interpreter-mediated discourse from more than one critical perspective, bringing together approaches that help us examine power, ideology, knowledge, representation, and social relations in interpreting.

My aim in taking a critical view of interpreter-mediated discourse has not been to search for interpreters' errors, criticise their decisions, or judge their choices against what the literature defines as appropriate interpreting. Rather, I have sought to understand what may shape interpreter decisions, including those that might be regarded as deviations or errors in the literature. These decisions cannot always be understood solely through the linguistic and non-linguistic actions that become visible in the interaction itself. To understand these decisions, one also needs to look at what lies behind the interaction: the relationships among participants, the knowledge available to them, the expectations of the institution, and the positions they occupy.

We can therefore suggest that CDA goes beyond identifying features of discourse to interpreting their significance in a wider social context. It involves interpretation as well as analysis. The mediated medical setting makes this distinction particularly clear. In a doctor–patient interaction, for example, the doctor may initiate the talk, and the interpreter may render the doctor's words fully, omit part of them, or leave them untranslated. At the level of analysis, these are observable features of the interaction: who speaks first, who introduces a topic, what the interpreter renders, and what is omitted. A critical interpretation, however, asks why the doctor is in a position to initiate the talk and determine its topic, what this reveals about the distribution of power in the encounter, and how the interpreter's renditions may reinforce or alter the way that authority is represented. It also asks what space the patient is given to describe their own experience in response to the translated discourse, and how institutional and wider social norms shape the relations within which these exchanges take place.

CDA usually studies the message rather than the person receiving the message. In the sequence discussed in the previous paragraph, for example, CDA may analyse and interpret the doctor's words and the authority they represent within the power relationship between doctor and patient. It may ask what power spoken discourse produces in the interaction, but it may not go far enough to ask

what an actual patient understands from that discourse or how the patient responds to it. This distinction matters in an interpreter-mediated encounter because the patient's response can tell us something about how the mediated discourse was received. In the doctor–patient encounter examined in this book, we can see and hear what participants do with what they are told. If, for example, the interpreter changes the doctor's utterance and the patient then asks for clarification, that response is not simply another part of the sequence; it also provides evidence of how the patient has understood, or failed to understand, the mediated utterance.

To observe not only what discourse does but also what participants actually do with it, we need real communicative settings rather than hypothetical readers or listeners. Access to such settings may sometimes be limited, particularly when the interaction involves privacy, as in doctor–patient encounters. Yet audiovisual recordings of naturally occurring interactions are essential if we want to observe what actually happens between participants. In conventional role-play, participants have to act as someone they are not and reproduce behaviour shaped by a character and the social norms associated with that role (Özsöz, 2021, p. 112). Such simulations may provide useful data, but they cannot fully capture the ways in which people behave, respond, and make decisions in situations that are genuinely theirs.

Although corpus-based studies drawing on larger datasets can provide substantial material for critical inquiry, particularly by allowing researchers to compare multiple recordings from the same institutional setting across different times and to identify more clearly the characteristics of that setting, the limitations of access to naturally occurring interactions also make single-case studies valuable. Such studies may not support broad generalisations, but they can provide detailed insights into particular interactions and contribute to a better understanding of findings reported in previous research. The single recording of a doctor–patient interaction used in the empirical part of this book is important in this respect. It offers a detailed view of an actual institutional encounter and can therefore complement existing research on interpreter-mediated medical interaction. It is particularly valuable because doctor–patient interaction is commonly associated with a physical examination, yet recordings that capture this aspect of the encounter are relatively rare. Since the interaction examined here includes

such an examination, it provides an opportunity to consider how interpreting operates not only in the verbal exchange but also in the course of an embodied clinical encounter.

The interpretations offered in the analysis of the extracts in this book are not the only possible ones. Another researcher, or even another viewer of the same interaction, may notice different features, attach different significance to particular moments, or interpret the participants' actions differently. This does not make one interpretation necessarily right and the other wrong. Critical analysis involves making sense of discourse in relation to the questions, concepts, and perspective brought to the analysis. What matters, therefore, is not to claim a single definitive interpretation, but to make the basis of an interpretation clear and show how it is supported by what can be observed in the interaction. In this sense, the extracts analysed in this book should also remain open to further interpretations and to other ways of understanding what takes place in interpreter-mediated discourse.

If the aim of critical research is to examine how discourse practices may affect people in unequal relations of power, it is reasonable for a researcher to select an interaction in which such issues are likely to be relevant. The same consideration informed the selection of the interaction examined in this book. The choice of a doctor–patient encounter was not incidental; it was made with an awareness that institutional authority, unequal access to knowledge, and the representation of patient experience could be critically examined in such a setting. At the same time, the analysis did not begin with fixed assumptions about how these issues would appear in the interaction. Although the broader areas of critical inquiry were known in advance, I did not determine beforehand what particular forms they would take in this specific encounter. The analysis was therefore guided by critical concerns while remaining open to what the interaction itself revealed.

The approach taken here also reflects a distinction established earlier in this book: addressing critical concerns does not necessarily mean undertaking Critical Discourse Analysis in a strict methodological sense. A study may examine issues such as power, inequality, institutional authority, knowledge, or representation without necessarily defining itself as a CDA study. What makes such an inquiry critical is not simply the use of the label CDA, but the questions it asks about discourse and the social relations within which discourse is produced and understood. In the present study, the interaction was selected because it offered

a setting in which such questions could be explored, while the analysis remained open to the forms these issues took in the actual encounter.

Looking back at the discussions in this book, I see interpreter-mediated discourse as something that cannot be fully understood by looking at interpreting alone. What an interpreter says, does not say, or changes takes place within an interaction that already has its own participants, expectations, knowledge, and institutional conditions. These conditions matter for how interpreting is carried out and for how the mediated discourse is understood by those involved. This is why I have found it useful to approach interpreter-mediated discourse from different critical perspectives rather than through a single framework. Each perspective draws attention to something that may otherwise remain unnoticed. For me, this is the value of a critical approach: it encourages us to look more closely at what happens in interpreter-mediated interaction and to ask what may lie behind what we can see and hear.

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Appendix. Special Transcription Conventions

Table A1. Special symbols used in the transcription

Symbol / notation	Meaning
Speaker initials + number	Speaker initials in bold capitals followed by a sequential number (e.g., SY1, SY2, SY3).
(?) / (!)	Indicates an interrogative (?) or exclamatory (!) utterance.
–	Marks the beginning of a speaker's turn (e.g., SY1 – ...).
#, ##, ### ...	Indicates a pause; more symbols indicate a longer pause.
ooo, aaa ...	Indicates vowel lengthening or emphatic/exclamatory pronunciation, preserving the spoken form.
(.)	Indicates an incomplete or cut-short word or utterance.
(x), (xy), (xyz)	Indicates unspoken letters/words supplied to facilitate reading and interpretation (e.g., bur(a)da).
_____	Indicates emphasis in pronunciation.
e, ee, eee ...	Represents hesitation while formulating an utterance or searching for an appropriate expression.
m, mm, mmm ...	Represents a closed-lip vocalization signaling confirmation, acceptance, or approval.
{...}	Marks elements occurring after the predicate at the end of an utterance, characteristic of spoken-language syntax.
[...]	Encloses non-verbal actions or noises such as [laughter], [cough], or [sneeze].
<...>	Indicates overlapping speech, including interruptions or simultaneous talk.
...	Indicates a segment pronounced more rapidly than the surrounding speech.
(...)	Indicates an unintelligible or not fully audible segment.
%...%	Encloses sections in which speech melody or intonation is considered significant.

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