Defining 'Discourse Analysis' (DA) is a formidable task. Existing definitions are numerous and the term itself has been described as 'wide-ranging and slippery' (Taylor, 2001: 8). Our definition above attempts to encompass a wider application of this method, stressing that DA is not a 'one-size-fits-all' research tool for the many disciplines that have embraced it. However, if a more abstract interpretation is applied as in Devereux’s definition of discourse as 'a form of knowledge' (Devereux, 2003: 158) then analyzing discourse can be seen to go beyond a pure examination of the words and images that constitute texts. Viewing discourse on a macro level leads to a greater understanding of the way in which it is constructed. Rather than being a search for answers, DA allows us to question, analyze and interpret beyond what may seem the preferred reading of a text, a concept used by Hall in relation to the active decoding of a text by the reader and discussed later in this chapter.
Box 4.1  Historical origins of DA

Van Dijk (1988a) provides a brief but useful review of the historical development of discourse analysis, linking its origins to classic rhetoricians such as Aristotle. The emergence of a contemporary form of discourse analysis through disciplines in the humanities and social sciences did not occur until the late 1960s and early 1970s but its roots are earlier. Van Dijk outlines influences such as Russian formalism, French structuralism, sociolinguistics, ethnographic approaches, text linguistics and psychology. Antonio Gramsci, Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, Ferdinand de Saussure, Mikhail Bakhtin and Vladimir Propp are just a few of the theorists who have influenced discourse analysis in some way.

Approaches

It is better to view DA as a range of approaches rather than a single practice (Taylor, 2001). The options include social linguistic analysis, interpretive structuralism, critical linguistic analysis, conversational analysis, genre analysis, ethnography of communication, genealogical analysis, discursive psychology, narrative analysis, literary analysis, content analysis, and the list could go on. Suffice to say that such a range of options can be overwhelming to someone approaching the field for the first time.

A factor common to all approaches is the analysis of language in use, with the methodology more likely to be qualitative than quantitative. The detail of analysis that qualitative research offers enables the deconstruction of language to reveal nuances and shades of meaning that go far beyond the benefits of a purely quantitative approach. However, as a consequence of the rise in the number of disciplines taking DA on board as an exciting and new methodology, several major strands are emerging (or perhaps rather, diverging), leading to disagreement amongst some academics over DA’s parameters and application. From one perspective, the embracing of DA by so many disciplines has facilitated its diversity and acceptance as a research methodology. From another point of view, this also poses problems. When there is such diversity, how do you teach DA? How do researchers decide on what approach to adopt for a particular purpose? How do they assess what is the most applicable, reliable and fruitful type of analysis for their purpose?
Box 4.2 Comparing different approaches

Studies such as that by a group of New Zealand researchers at Victoria University of Wellington provide useful insights into how different approaches to DA might be applied. Stubbe et al. (2003) offer a comparison between conversation analysis, interactional sociolinguistics, politeness theory, critical discourse analysis and discursive psychology through applying these five approaches to the same text – a recording of a workplace conversation. The researchers found that while these analyses had common elements, each also highlighted different aspects of the interaction.

Linguistics can be considered the major source of DA, in particular European text linguistics (van Dijk, 1988a). Halliday’s approach to linguistic description, systemic functional theory (1976, 1978, 1985), focused on the function of language and how people use it to exchange meaning. Moving from an abstract view of linguistics towards a more functional perspective led to the emergence of critical linguistics whereby choice of words and word combinations were seen to reflect ideological forces (Fowler et al., 1979). Critical linguistics however was later overtaken by social semiotics (Hodge and Kress, 1988) and critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1989, 1992, 1995; and van Dijk, 1993). Analyses of text can range from the micro-analysis of language features, such as lexical choices or syntactic forms, to a broader focus that looks at overall textual structures. These broader kinds of analyses have maintained the principle of linguistic analysis – that both language and discourse have a systematic nature that may be described through rules (van Dijk, 1988a). However, the search for meaning behind the social construction of words, sounds and images remains at the heart of modern discourse analysis, which aims to achieve a more whole and transparent view of the world through understanding dominance and power.

‘Critical Discourse Analysis’ (CDA) is the approach that has increasingly found most favour with academics across disciplines because of the attention it pays to the role of power in discourse. Wodak (2001: 2–3) defines CDA as being ‘fundamentally concerned with analysing opaque as well as transparent structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power and control as manifested in language ... three concepts figure indispensably in all CDA: the concept of power, the concept of history, and the concept of ideology’.
Box 4.3 Challenging CDA

Although a popular emergent research method, CDA has not been short of criticism and there are indications that it may take some time to reach a level of consensus amongst academics. Hammersley (1997) suggests that CDA is over-ambitious in its claim to not only understand discursive processes but also its intention to evaluate discourse against a socio-cultural background and suggest changes to address societal injustices. His view is that CDA takes a crude position on a variety of issues, recognizing, for example, only two parties in a relationship – the oppressors and the oppressed – which can be unrealistic and lead to the presentation of speculation as well-grounded knowledge. Widdowson (1995) believes that because a text can be interpreted in different ways depending on the world a person is from and what they bring to the text, CDA can produce a prejudiced view as a researcher’s preferred reading. He sees this as being more partial interpretation than analysis and also criticizes CDA for failing to distinguish text from discourse. Both these issues have been disputed by Fairclough (1996) in relation to his own research. Toolan’s view (1997) is that CDA is a meaningful tool to understand the ways that information and communication (discourse) increasingly shape our lives. However, he highlights several areas for improvement including the need for greater thoroughness in CDA’s textual analysis to strengthen the evidence in its argumentation.

From text to social context

The move from looking at discourse in a textual to a social context has encouraged ideological and sociological approaches in DA and has appealed to social scientific fields such as psychology and management studies. What discourse analysis brings to such disciplines is a way of analyzing their research material and data ‘more systematically and in more detail from a discourse perspective’ (Fairclough et al., 2004: 3). The recognition of the relationship between discourse and power has also led to greater critical analysis of texts. What we read, see and hear should not be taken for granted. We are daily faced with a complexity of discourse – ‘without discourse, there is no social reality, and without understanding discourse, we cannot understand our reality, our experience, or ourselves’ (Phillips and Hardy, 2002: 2). The main concern here is the need to understand and be aware of certain discourses that may mislead us in the construction of our identity and how we see ourselves. Realistically, it would be impossible for individuals to constantly monitor the
multitude of discourses in their lives without verging on paranoia, but a degree of scepticism and analysis is called for.

Foucault’s interest in the power play of specific discourses over society has influenced the postmodern connection between language and social structure (Devereux, 2003). This is echoed by Fairclough when referring to discursive practice contributing not just to the reproduction of society (‘social identities, social relationships, systems of knowledge and belief’), but also to the transformation of society (1992: 65). Analysis of texts also enables identification of the representation, identity and stereotyping of groups and individuals. It allows for critical analysis, an awareness of persuasive language, and uncovers dominating social powers behind discourses. Such critical analysis might not solve problems, but it is a prerequisite that has the ability to identify and analyze situations, and perhaps suggest ways of alleviating or resolving them (Fairclough et al., 2004). The New Zealand Government, for example, recognized that promotional texts used by tobacco companies carried tempting lifestyle messages to influence, particularly, young people’s behaviour and their attitudes towards smoking. As a result, tobacco and advertising sponsorships were banned in the 1990s (Health NZ, 2005).

A burgeoning of text types in society, largely brought about through developing technologies, compels researchers to seek understanding of social reality through analyzing the discourse of the texts and questioning them. Legal documents, advertisements, political and Government papers, company newsletters, propaganda leaflets, articles in newspapers, magazines and books, television, radio and film, music and lyrics, performing arts and more recently the Internet, mobile phones, mobile television and computer games: these are just some examples of the proliferation of texts. Added to this are the changing and merging of existing discourses through processes of globalization of discourses and discourse genres (Fairclough, 2001).

**Box 4.4  Hall’s encoding/decoding model**

Although DA mainly seeks to analyze texts themselves, it is important to acknowledge that audiences can interpret media language (signs or codes) in ways that differ from what the creator of those codes intended as the preferred reading. The encoding/decoding model was put forward by Hall (1980) to make sense of factual or current affairs television, but it has also been applied to other forms of media. The model suggests that audiences are not passive, but capable of decoding messages according to their own social identity. The meaning
Hall outlined three hypothetical interpretive codes possible for the reader when looking at mass media codes:

1. ‘dominant’ where the encoder and decoder are similarly positioned;
2. ‘negotiated’ where the decoder accepts some of the text’s meaning but rejects others;
3. ‘oppositional’ where a decoder creates his/her own version of the text with different intentions.

Obviously, this presents a challenge for discourse analysts and is one of the criticisms of CDA referred to earlier. However, Phillips and Hardy (2002) suggest that the complexity and ambiguities of DA can be dealt with, for example, by looking at the location of individual texts within larger bodies of texts and making reference to broader discourses.

**In search of stabilization**

While the surge of interest in DA is exciting, its rapid development in multi- and inter-disciplinary application can also create problems. Because discourse analysis continues to evolve, there is variation amongst researchers on how it is determined and used. Different theorists, whether concerned with linguistics, literature, film, cultural history or semiotics, may all have their own interpretation and use of discourse analysis (Paltridge, 2000). Perhaps DA is in an uncertain situation where diversification of its use will result in destabilization or inconsistency in its methodology. Or perhaps this is part of a process whereby the input of many researchers into theories and methods of DA will result in a greater understanding of its application and what it might accomplish.

A need for synthesis is expressed in Fairclough’s book *Discourse and Social Change* which seeks to establish a ‘method of theoretically adequate and practically usable’ language analysis as a means to study social change (1992: 1). Van Dijk too emphasizes the need for ‘explicit and systematic analysis’ based on ‘serious methods and theories’ (1990: 14). Georgakopoulou and Goutsos (1997: 187) call for ‘more constructive dialogue’ between the various emerging approaches of discourse analysis to avoid the dangers that discourse analysis ‘will come to mean loosely any work from diverse analytic perspectives with no common metalanguage, method or technical apparatus’. Development of a meta-language to enable discourse analysis to achieve a distinctive methodological status has already begun (Lee, 2005) and new academic journals have
been launched, some recently, to respond to this situation (see the further reading section at the end of this chapter).

Ongoing debate, discussion and practice are essential in cultivating a common acceptance and understanding of how DA should be conducted. Antaki et al. (2002) argue that there are basic requirements for analysis, regardless of the particular type of analysis one undertakes. They point to a lack of support in the DA environment whereby researchers can test and refine methods among sympathetic colleagues, and claim this can lead to analytical shortcomings in the methodology. They state:

Writers are not doing analysis if they summarise, if they take sides, if they parade quotes, or if they simply spot in their data features of talk or text that are already well-known. Nor are they doing analysis if their discovery of discourses, or mental constructs, is circular, or if they unconsciously treat their findings as surveys. (Antaki et al., 2002: 27)

However, other academics – particularly those working in a CDA framework – emphasize the responsibility of researchers to take sides and make an impact on social inequity by pointing out the power plays of discourse. Fairclough (1995) suggests that analysis of texts may be used to encourage people to move beyond reception of media texts to action in response to those communicative events, a call which is echoed by academics from other disciplines (see Willig, 1999).

In the interests of reliability and validity, research has traditionally made a point of emphasizing the impartiality and non-involvement of researchers. However, when it comes to discourse analysis, interpretation is an unavoidable issue in the investigation of texts. Silverstone (1981) analyzed the British television serial drama *Intimate Strangers* using a Proppian analysis based on Russian formalist Vladamir Propp’s (1970) list of narrative functions, which he suggested formed a shared predictable pattern in all tales. Silverstone pointed out the difficulty of discussing an audiovisual text by way of writing. His analysis relied on his own description of the programme because there was no other way to convey the information. However, his acknowledgement that the study was based on his own interpretation did not detract from a meaningful discussion of the text. In our view, in situations where analysis can have an impact on social justice, the researcher has the right to reach through the opaqueness of texts and indicate ‘real’ meanings or power struggles as they see it. However, the researcher must also resist the temptation to become intimately involved and must support findings with theory and the evidence of other studies. Ultimately however, the audience/reader needs to be aware that they too have the right to accept, reject or negotiate the academic discourse with which they are faced and act as they see fit.
News discourse and why we should analyze it

The influence of the media in reflecting, constructing and expressing culture, politics and social life should not be underestimated. We are surrounded by media – it informs us, it is a window on the world – though whether the media reflects or constructs reality or both is a question central to discourse analysis. News is a creative process that takes raw materials (linguistic, social or historical determinants), works on them, and transforms them into ‘a recognizable product which we accept as familiar’ (Hartley, 1982: 7). Not only do news texts ‘draw upon and recirculate discourses’ (sometimes magnifying and privileging some), but they are also capable of promoting mythologies and false understandings (Burton, 2005: 292). Therefore a critical understanding of news discourse through analysis can demystify social meanings that in turn will contribute towards greater equity among people (Hartley, 1982). Alongside the growth and development of media have come more sophisticated means of media analysis (Devereux, 2003), and these offer different approaches to follow when analyzing news discourse, depending on what we are looking for and on what level.

News offers an ideal source of data from which we can learn about social meanings and stereotypes through its mode of language and communication (Bell, 1995). For example, within one text we might track the development of a narrative to determine the journalist’s perception of the significance of the order of information that is presented. Is the journalist providing us with the most important facts first, or the most entertaining? In another example we might adopt a method to investigate whether there are patterns in the language of a text which promote a particular discourse in representing or stereotyping specific groups. Van Dijk’s *Racism and the Press* (1991) is an extensive study on the reporting of ethnicity in mainly British and Dutch newspapers, but the representation of the elderly, children, women and other social groups are equally deserving of examination. We may also wish to compare the way television, radio and print media present the same news item – do they use similar or different words to describe what happened? Do they use emotive language in their description or is the language dry in its effort to be both informative and impartial? If the item is on the television news, are close-up shots used for emphasis? Is the representation of all parties fair or biased? How might this impact on the audience? The discourses of other groups such as politicians, religious leaders or pressure groups might infiltrate news discourse and become an accepted part of its structure. Investigation of such intertextuality, whereby genres and discourses can inform, influence or become embedded in an existing text, can produce some interesting insights. One example is media coverage of incidents of racist manifestations and hate propaganda. Cohen-Almagor (2001) argues the media should report such activities responsibly and not merely be a ‘loudspeaker’ for racial inciters.
Frameworks for analyzing news

As the focus of this chapter turns to news (or media) discourse it is intended to first view text as the 'outward manifestation of a communication event' (Garrett and Bell, 1998: 3) and second, for discourse to encompass two aspects: the social interaction of people mainly through language, and the social construction of reality (Fairclough, 1995: 18). A number of different frameworks for analyzing news discourse have developed over the years enabling media researchers to tailor investigations in specific directions depending on the text and what they are looking for. The following illustrate some examples which can be adopted or adapted.

Van Dijk’s work on media discourse (1985, 1988a, 1988b, 1991) proposes an analytical framework for the structures of news discourse by bringing together production and interpretation of discourse as well as its textual analysis. Thematic analysis goes beyond micro-analysis of language and concentrates on the arrangement of themes in news reports, such as narrative patterns which create dramatic tension in a story, or the non-chronological description of events influenced by its news value or relevance. Van Dijk parallels this broad semantic structure with a syntactic structure termed ‘schemas’ – the conventions and rules that organize content and the complexity of news themes. This includes categories such as the headline, lead paragraph, previous events (what happened before), background and the main event, which can be analyzed and their interrelationships investigated.

Bell (1998) offers a step-by-step guide to analysis, which is used to determine the event structure in a news story and establish what a story actually says happened. Analysis of events, actors, times and places in a story ‘shows up inconsistencies, incoherence, gaps and ambiguities within the story, conflicting forces during the story’s production by journalist and copy-editor, and implications for readers’ comprehension’ (Garrett and Bell, 1998: 9). In The Language of News Media (1991), Bell focuses on three themes: the processes which produce media language; the notion of the news story; and the role of the media audience. By analyzing news discourse through a framework that draws on analysis of personal narrative and van Dijk’s structural approach, Bell emphasizes the concept of the ‘story’ as being central to the news.

Fairclough’s (1995) framework for critical discourse analysis of communicative events involves the three overlapping dimensions of text, discourse practice and sociocultural practice. Each area can be dealt with separately but the interrelationship of all three is integral to the framework. Analyzing text involves areas such as structure, vocabulary or representation of actors through image, language or sound. Discourse practice relates to processes of text production and consumption which Fairclough divides into two threads – institutional routines such as journalistic practices of news selection, and discourse practices...
Japan may use ‘military’ on Greenpeace

Tokyo considers asking Australia to protect its whalers from Southern Ocean protesters

by Almeida Thomson
political reporter

Japan has warned it may send armed aircraft to defend its whaling ships in the Southern Ocean if violent clashes with protest boats escalate.

The strongly pro-whaling nation also says it may ask the Australian Government to take action against Greenpeace protesters.

The increasingly fierce conflict prompted a Green Party call last night for New Zealand to send a frigate to Antarctica in a monitoring role—an option the Government has quietly ruled out.

The protesters’ confrontations with the whalers intensified yesterday, with an extreme conservation group, Sea Shepherd, threatening to ram and sink Japanese vessels in the Antarctic this month.

The group’s ship, Farley Mowat, is equipped with a blade device—known as the “can opener”—mounted on its side and designed to rip open a ship’s hull.

Sea Shepherd’s threat came as Japan’s Fisheries Agency said it was considering asking its Maritime Police Agency to send armed aircraft to defend the whaling ships if the protest action worsened.

The Melbourne Age, which reported the proposal, described it as using “quasi-military aircraft under the guise of the police to quell a civilian protest”.

The newspaper also reported that the agency might ask the Australian Government to act against Greenpeace—a separate organisation from Sea shepherd—to “normalise the situation”.

Two New Zealanders are among the Greenpeace protestors in vessels chasing the whaling ships.

New Zealand and Australia share strong anti-whaling sentiment, but both say the whaling is necessary for research.

Greenpeace leader Joydell Fitliman says the New Zealand Government should send a frigate to monitor events in Antarctica.

“New Zealand has taken a strong position against the resumption of commercial whaling, but now it is time to stand up and be counted the way we did when we sent the frigate to Murmansk Abid in 1972.”

“New Zealand had the courage to take action then and it should do the same now.”

But Conservation Minister Chris Carter said a frigate would be unlikely to help the situation and instead urged the whalers and the protesters to act responsibly.

“Show restraint and act responsibly because this is a very dangerous part of the world and it would be very difficult to effect a rescue if people got into danger down there.”

Daily political Phil Guill also said there would be no role for a Navy ship.

“We have no legal authority over either party. Sending a frigate down there would have no purpose because we would have no authority to act as intermediaries between the protesters and the whalers.”

The Greens have also joined the Australian Green Party in calling for their respective Governments to stop Japanese whaling, military and police using New Zealand and Australia’s protection zones.

“Japan is flouting international agreements and public opinion by escalating its slaughter of whales, especially when everyone knows that claims of scientific research are just an excuse to get fresh whale meat on to Japanese dinner plates,” said Ms Pittman.

Greenpeace has had two ships, Esperanza and Arctic Sunrise, chasing the Japanese fleet across the Southern Ocean Whaling Sanctuary since December 21 in an attempt to stop Japan killing the minke and fin whales.

Greenpeace claims the Arctic Sunrise was rammed by the Japanese ship Nisshin Maru on Sunday, leaving it with a huge dent in its hull and a bent mast.

Sea Shepherd captain Paul Watson said his ship had side-swiped and damaged a Japanese ship to “get our point across”.

The whalers have assaulted whale defenders with water cannon and wooden pikes. The whalers’ vessels have rammed the Greenpeace ships and attempted to ram the Farley Mowat.

Sea Shepherd has been battling whalers since 1973 and in that time has sunk nine illegal whaling ships without causing injury. Mr Watson said he would not try to sink a whaling vessel at sea because it would be “far too dangerous”.

Figure 4.1 ‘Reporting on The Whale Wars’. [Reproduced with kind permission © The New Zealand Herald (2006)]
MEDIA STUDIES

whereby texts can pass through a series of transformations. An example of this would be the text originating as an interview, which is then written up by a journalist, passes through the hands of a sub-editor, is published and then interpreted by the reader. Sociocultural practice requires consideration of outside influences or powers that affect the construction and production of a text, for example, politics, the economy or societal attitudes. Fairclough points out that users of this CDA framework might choose to emphasize one dimension more than the other, but maintaining a broad orientation to all three dimensions of a communicative event is still important.

The remainder of this chapter is dedicated to a case study of one newspaper story describing conflict in the Southern Ocean over whaling. In exemplifying the discourse analysis of news through an examination of the article’s structure, the social, cultural and political discourses embedded within the text are brought to light, presenting a much clearer picture of what is really going on.

Case study: The Whale Wars

The article displayed as Figure 4.1 appeared as the lead story on the front page of the daily newspaper The New Zealand Herald on 11 January 2006. It was the most recent of several articles that had appeared over the previous three weeks documenting a conflict over whaling in the Southern Ocean near Antarctica. A Japanese whaling ship was pursued by protestors in boats from two conservation groups – Greenpeace and the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society. Both groups aimed to impede attempts by the Japanese to harpoon and capture whales for so-called ‘scientific’ purposes. The protestors held that the whaling ship was simply a factory ship harvesting whale meat for the Japanese market. New Zealanders had an interest in this story for several reasons: New Zealand is a firm supporter of the International Whaling Commission’s moratorium on the killing of whales for commercial reasons, introduced in 1986; two New Zealanders were part of the Greenpeace protest; and New Zealand territory neighbours the whale sanctuary in the Southern Ocean.

A first impression is that this article presents a story about drama, heroism and conflict at sea. We are told of a dangerous journey to the cold and isolation of the Southern Ocean to save the lives of whales, of the ramming of ships, and of high emotions. It is a story that involves politicking between nations with threats of ‘military’ intervention and calls for countries to take action. The story has all the marks of a good movie, but it appears as a daily ‘news’ story, which stresses factuality and asks to be read with care. Analyzing the news discourse in this front page lead article enables us to take a closer look at what has happened here, to see the way the story has been constructed and what the mix of discourses is, embedded in its telling.
A full close analysis of the macro and micro levels of language and discourse in this story would consume a lot of time and space. We therefore concentrate on specific areas in applying discourse analysis to delve deep into the article and tease out a number of different layers to ascertain exactly what has occurred in this communicative event. These areas are:

1. The structure and coherence of the story.
2. Intertextuality.
3. The nature of the story’s sources.
4. The positioning of the various parties involved, particularly through lexical choice.
5. The news practice behind the story.

**Structure and coherence**

Coherence relates to the flow of a news story, how information is structured and how well its various sections hold together. We examine the order of events assessing their chronology and newsworthiness, and how the story-line develops in relation to the actual news event.

News stories begin with a headline (although from the viewpoint of news practice, it is the last piece of the news text to be written). Here the eye is immediately drawn by the bold headline announcing **JAPAN MAY USE ‘MILITARY’ ON GREENPEACE**. This immediately puts Japan in the role of a potential aggressor, although – unusually for a headline – the nature of the force contemplated is mitigated by the scare quotes around ‘military’ (deriving from the description ‘quasi-military’ in the body of the story). It is also partly counterpointed by the ‘standfirst’ (the line of text after the headline that gives more information about the article) which announces: **Tokyo considers asking Australia to protect its whalers from Southern Ocean protesters**. This standfirst casts the whalers as being in need of protection and positions Japan as asking another nation to take some responsibility for the conflict. The metonym ‘Tokyo’ is used to indicate the Japanese government as the source of the request, although it appears from the body of the story that it is a state agency rather than the Government that has involved itself. The linking of headline and standfirst suggests a potential threat from Japan that unless Australia takes some action to intervene, Japan may take a more aggressive role. Japan is represented as taking a determinedly militaristic role in this ‘war’ against the anti-whaling protesters. By contrast, the very names of the protest organizations – ‘green’, ‘peace’, ‘shepherd’ – represent them as being concerned with the peaceful protection of the environment.
Moving into the main body of the story, we can number its paragraphs and identify their topics and how they relate to each other. The first three paragraphs cover the most recent round in the verbal conflict between Japan and its opponents, each side suggesting more aggressive intervention through the possible use of Japanese ‘armed aircraft’ and a New Zealand ‘frigate’. The who, what, when, where and how of the story are immediately presented here at the start of the story. However paragraphs 4–5 divert from the present story to highlight the intensification of the conflict by jumping back in time to the events of the day before. This is in fact introducing a different set of events, although related as an explanation of the latest war of words. At this stage, although Greenpeace features in the headline, the dramatic actions of Sea Shepherd draw the most attention. Paragraphs 6–8 introduce the interplay of Japanese, Australian and conservation-group interests in the situation.

The next two paragraphs (9 and 10) background New Zealand’s interest in the story, establishing that two New Zealanders are part of the Greenpeace protest, and align Australia and New Zealand as anti-whaling nations, in contrast with Japan’s claim that whaling is ‘necessary for research’. Paragraphs 11–19 function to relate the story to the New Zealand political and international scene by introducing comment from New Zealand politicians. The Green Party leader, Jeanette Fitzsimons, appeals to nationalism by referring to New Zealand’s past involvement in maritime protests, such as against the 1973 French nuclear testing in the Pacific, and demanding that the Government should take similar action now by sending out a frigate. Two Government ministers introduce some of the typical vocabulary of diplomatic discourse. Both are quoted directly in ruling out the use of naval ships and distancing New Zealand from responsibility for the situation, with the repeated phrasing that the country has ‘no authority’ to intervene. Carter, the Conservation minister, implies some heroism on the part of the protestors in putting their lives at risk in ‘a very dangerous part of the world’.

The story then adds chronological background (paragraphs 20 and 21) concerning the activities of the protestors and whaling fleet in the Southern Ocean and the collision of the Japanese and Greenpeace boats. The final four paragraphs (22 onwards) return to the story of the previous day’s events, and include historical background on Sea Shepherd’s activities and comment on their tactics.

**Intertextuality**

The discourses of different parties are introduced through direct quote and by being embedded in the reporter’s words. The report drawn from the Melbourne...
Age gives the New Zealand journalist the opportunity to introduce a military discourse into the story. Japan is associated with the word ‘military’, which leads on to other words of conflict such as warn, armed and defend. ‘Military’ is put into quotation marks in the headline to dissociate the newspaper from this reference, although the only actual evidence in the story that there is anything military involved is the quoted description from the Melbourne Age of ‘quasi-military aircraft’, which is not necessarily the same as outright ‘military’. Discursive practice is also a factor here: news headlines are written by sub-editors who are working under tight space restrictions as they choose their words to attract buyers to the newspaper.

Jeanette Fitzsimons gets a further opportunity to promote her party’s discourse in this area in a direct quote which challenges Japanese credibility. She characterizes Japan as being irresponsible in ‘flouting’ international agreements and public opinion and ‘escalating’ its slaughter of whales. She critiques Japan’s discourse of science as a cover for whaling – ‘everyone knows their claims of scientific research are just an excuse to get fresh whale meat on to Japanese dinner plates’, appealing to readers’ commonsense that they could not possibly believe otherwise.

Sources

Reading on, we discover that the source of the story about Japan looking to use ‘military’ action is actually embedded a third of the way through the article in paragraphs 6–8. What is reported from The Melbourne Age is the source and core of the story on which the rest of the article is built. First, we are told that the Japanese Fisheries Agency (not in fact the Japanese Government as implied in the headline and introduction to the story) was considering asking the Maritime Police to get involved. Second, we learn that this proposal was not sourced first hand by the New Zealand reporter but came from an article in the Australian newspaper the Melbourne Age. There is, however, no indication of what the source of the Age’s story is or when it was published. The Age is quoted directly as describing the Japanese proposal as being ‘quasi-military aircraft under the guise of the police to quell a civilian protest’. This quote contains opinion and it is not clear whether the words come from another party, are taken from an editorial, or are possibly a reporter’s comment. Third, it states that the newspaper ‘reported’ that the agency might ask the Australian Government to act against Greenpeace. As we close in on the gist of this story, we discover that its core becomes softer. The heart of this front page news article is based on what another newspaper said that the Agency said that it ‘might’ do or would ‘consider’ doing. Here we can see the reasoning behind the
bolded headline and standfirst using the hedging verbs of ‘may’ and ‘considers’, because although the implications are threatening, the article is relying on evidence from another newspaper and can only allude to the action that may be taken, or considered, by Japan.

In addition to the main body of the story the article also features visual material – a map and a photograph. These are located below the headline and centrally, with the body of the story around them. They serve to focus the story and to frame it, especially since there is a headline above the map, ‘Antarctic Standoff’, which emphasizes the polarization of the parties. The map shows the location of the conflict, with Australia and New Zealand being the countries of closest proximity, therefore legitimizing their concerns. The map bears its own headline and features a short story, partly summarized from paragraph 21 of the main story, describing the collision of the Japanese whaling ship and Greenpeace’s ship Arctic Sunrise. Although the article states that both sides blamed each other for the incident, the text already allocates responsibility to Japan by saying its ship collided with the Arctic Sunrise rather than vice versa, or by using an even-handed wording such as ‘the boats collided’. Greenpeace is listed as the source of the map, and may also be the source of the photograph below it. The photograph is captioned ‘Sea drama’, and implies a David and Goliath battle as the side of the whaling ship looms over a small Greenpeace inflatable, while crew members direct a high-powered water canon down at the protesters on board. The use of visuals originating from one of the parties in such a polarized situation is a thorny one for journalistic practice, and may illustrate the extent to which the New Zealand Herald and its readers are anticipated to align with the protesters rather than the whalers.

**Labelling**

The article is based on a dichotomy of good versus bad, probably the essence of most narratives involving drama. There is obvious demarcation of two sides – those who are anti-whaling (New Zealanders, Australians, and the Greenpeace and Sea Shepherd protestors) and the ‘other’ side (the pro-whalers, the Japanese, the Japanese Fisheries Agency, the Japanese Maritime Police and the Nisshin Maru whaling ship). While the anti-whalers are a cross section of groups – Governments, Green parties and protestors – and the article includes comments from three New Zealand politicians and one protestor, the Japanese are represented by official groups only and with no direct quotes from a single Japanese spokesperson. The positioning of good versus bad is seen in how the groups are represented, on three levels – self-labelling, description by others, and the media’s own representation.
Self-labelling: The self-labelling of groups such as the Green Parties, Greenpeace and Sea Shepherd, carries connotations of caring for the environment. Even the Greenpeace boats promulgate a discourse of enlightened caring through their names *Arctic Sunrise* and *Esperanza* (Spanish for ‘hope’).\(^1\) In another example of self-labelling, Sea Shepherd captain Paul Watson refers to whale ‘defenders’ rather than ‘protestors’ in paragraph 23. Such labelling also contrasts markedly in this article with the Japanese groups which are tied in with officialdom and authority (police, maritime, agency) and industry (fisheries). There is no opportunity for the Japanese groups to self-label other than by their official names.

Description by others: Description by others can be used to promote or denounce other groups in a text. Jeanette Fitzsimmons has three paragraphs of reported speech where she juxtaposes New Zealand’s courage against Japan’s deceptiveness. Using words to invoke national pride in paragraphs 12 and 13, she seeks support for Government intervention in the conflict and in clichéd political discourse she says ‘Now it is time to stand up and be counted...’ Later, in paragraph 19, she discredits Japan saying it was ‘flouting international agreements’ in an attempt to ‘get fresh whale meat on to Japanese dinner plates’.

Further suggestion of Japanese deceit is conveyed through a quotation from the *Melbourne Age* implying that the Japanese Maritime Police have a secretive militaristic agenda in using ‘quasi-military aircraft under the guise of the police to quell a civilian protest’. While this last quotation does not appear until the 7th paragraph in the article, it is solely this comment that is the source for the use of the word ‘military’ used in the heading.

Media descriptors: Apart from direct quotations from the politicians and the Sea Shepherd captain, the way the parties are represented is the newspaper’s doing. Japan is described as a ‘strongly pro-whaling nation’, and New Zealand and Australia ‘share strong anti-whaling views’, the conflict polarized and reified in the hyphenated descriptors. The use of the word strong further separates Japan from Australia and New Zealand and reinforces the conflict. Australia and New Zealand are positioned as cooperative with each other, for example, in their respective Green parties joining in the call for Government intervention.

Most of what ‘happens’ in this story is talk – on-the-ground action occurred yesterday, but today’s story is largely an exchange of words. The talk verbs in the story include *warn, rule out, urge, called for, consider, may ask, may use*. The first two verbs – *warn* and *rule out* – can be viewed as authoritative, while *urge* and *called for* are more restrained, suggesting a politically responsible and tolerant attitude is being taken to the conflict in a diplomatic sense. The verbs *consider,*


**Conclusion**

It seems somewhat ironic to point out that this present chapter, like DA itself, is built on academic discourse. This is something we cannot escape from but can be sensitive to (Phillips and Hardy, 2002). It also reinforces the concept that it is virtually impossible for a text not to have at least one discourse embedded within it. To highlight some of the debate surrounding discourse analysis as we know it today, we felt it important to show the roots of discourse analysis as a precursor to understanding the direction it is taking as a popular form of textual analysis. At the same time we have indicated DA's diverse use amongst varying disciplines, which has led to scholars' concerns over its blurring of boundaries and inconsistencies in its methodological application. A call for harmonization is apparent from many quarters.

In learning about DA as it continues to evolve, taking an objective viewpoint is essential. While this subject continues to be discussed at length, wide reading of appropriate books, journals and papers is called for to get a good sense of the ways it is used, and to critically evaluate whether it is done convincingly. Building confidence in making judgements when using DA, being aware of making too many assumptions, or realizing that analysis requires strong evidence to support interpretation are necessary at any level of scholarship. In the words of Hall:
The best way to ‘settle’ such contested readings is to look again at the concrete example and try to justify one’s reading in detail in relation to the actual practices and forms of signification used, and what meanings they seem to you to be producing. (1997: 9)

The purpose of our Whale Wars case study as an example of news discourse was to demonstrate the different discourses that contribute to the construction of a single text and the inequalities or challenges of power that are inherent in it. Blommaert (2005) refers to the stratified layering of discourses in text, created by influences operating simultaneously but not necessarily equally. Using DA we were able to identify such layers in this article. The scholar’s ability to uncover such stratification through DA by taking a multi-faceted approach looking at not just linguistic features, but also context, discursive practice, and historical, social and cultural aspects, encourages a much deeper understanding of ideologies at work. There is much to be gained through DA and with new patterns of communication surfacing through globalisation (Blommaert, 2005) there is certainly no lack of text – spoken, written and visual – to work from.

**Summary**

- DA is an emerging methodology which has grown from an examination of spoken or written language to include sound and image.
- Through DA we are able to question, analyze and interpret beyond the preferred reading of a text to assess what is really being said, and to question and understand social reality.
- A burgeoning of text types accompanied by a wide range of approaches to DA, often relating to the discipline of the researcher, has resulted in a call from academics for a synthesis in its application.
- The news has its own discourse, which is shaped by variables such as journalistic practice and media ownership.
- A number of different frameworks for analyzing news can be applied, including the micro-analysis of language, examination of event structure, text production and consumption and the influence of outside powers.
- Other discourses, such as those relating to social, cultural and political texts, can also be found embedded in the news.
**GOING FURTHER**


Includes chapters from various academics on their presentations and exemplifications of the main approaches to news discourse, a summary of frameworks and illustrative analysis to show how they work. See in particular Bell’s chapter on ‘The Discourse Structure of News Stories’ pp. 64–104 for an example of an analytical framework applied in deconstructing a news story.


Lee and Poynton discuss the use of discourse analysis as a research method in a range of cultural and social contexts


Seeks to clarify the term ‘discourse’ through the common ground of a variety of theoretical approaches, as well as providing an overview of the range of ideas, concepts and frameworks that can be applied.


Demonstrates the use of DA within critical management studies through research into refugee systems, the Canadian whale-watching industry, HIV/AIDS, an aid organisation in the Middle East and employment service organizations.


This book provides examples of the wide application of DA. It covers research topics such as psychic practitioners, New Labour discourse, and the construction of the disease M.E.

There are also a number of useful journals to consult including *Discourse and Society, Discourse and Communication*, and *Discourse Studies: An interdisciplinary journal for the study of text and talk* – all edited by T. A. van Dijk; the on-line journals *Critical Discourse Studies* [http://www.cds-web.net/] edited by Norman Fairclough, Phil Graham, Jay Lemke and Ruth Wodak, and *Discourse Analysis Online* [http://extra.shu.ac.uk/daol/] with an editorial management team consisting of Simeon J. Yates, Kathy Doherty, and Noel Williams.
STUDENT ACTIVITY 4.1

1. Choose a newspaper article that catches your eye.
2. Read it initially as you would normally when browsing through a newspaper and then jot down a few notes about what you think the article is about. Do not refer back to the article while doing this but keep these notes to one side.
3. Now do a more detailed analysis of the article by writing down notes relating to the following: First of all look at its placing on the page. Is it a lead story or buried amongst other articles? Why do you think the sub-editor placed it there? How many headlines are there? Do they relate directly to each other or do they relate to two different aspects of the story? How big is the typeface? Does the article include photographs or diagrams and are they directly related to what the article is about? What is their source?
4. Number each paragraph and then look to see if the order of events follows chronologically or not. List the paragraphs in their chronological order to compare with the article. How has the ordering of events affected the reader’s interpretation of the story? What is the time frame of the story?
5. Looking carefully at the language used, what other discourses can you detect are embedded within the story? This may be shown in direct quotes or reported speech. Also assess whether the journalist has taken on board certain words that may suggest a certain viewpoint. What sort of language is used? Is it emotive? Is it trying to entertain, inform or persuade?
6. If possible see if you can find other texts which are related to this article. Does it stem from a news release or another document? Compare the language and see if their discourses are within the news text.
7. Finally, compare the notes from your first reading with your detailed analysis. What was your first impression on reading and is this still the same now that you have deconstructed the article? How has news discourse influenced the view of the reader?

References


**Note**

1 Most New Zealand readers of the article would be unaware that Sea Shepherd’s boat Farley Mowat is named after a famous Canadian novelist who was also an activist against American cruise missile testing in Canada in the 1980s. However, the example still serves to show that groups have input in creating the discourse that surrounds them.