

Approaches to Cognition through Text and Discourse



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Approaches to Cognition through Text and Discourse

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The present volume contributes to bridging the gap that exists between discourse linguistics and cognitive linguistics – fields which share an interest in issues of discourse and cognition but differ in the frameworks and perspectives adopted for study. The first step towards this goal was a one-day thematic session on discourse approaches to cognition which I organized at the 6th International Cognitive Linguistics Conference in Stockholm, Sweden, 10-16 July, 1999. Several of the studies included in the present volume are revised versions of papers originally presented, in person or on video, in that context and I wish to thank the participants in the very popular theme session for making it such an inspiring event.

While the conference papers have been extensively revised and in some cases given a different focus, other studies not presented at the conference have since been added to extend the range of topics covered by the individual chapters of the volume. It is obvious that the number of topics that could be covered is very large; the present selection includes an overview of language, discourse and cognition, and eight studies which explore cognitive aspects of information structuring, coherence, foregrounding, knowledge structuring, negotiation for meaning, and interpretation of recontextualized material. I wish to thank the contributors both for their interesting contributions and their enthusiasm for this project.

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December 2003, Turku/Åbo, Finland

Tuija Virtanen

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Chapter 1

Text, discourse and cognition: An introduction

Tuija Virtanen

Linguists of different orientations, focusing on very different areas of the study of language, regularly come into contact with phenomena that can be related to cognitive aspects of language use. While much of the work done within the overlapping fields of text linguistics and discourse analysis touches upon phenomena which can be characterized as cognitive, much of the work within cognitive linguistics is, in its turn, concerned with areas that are also familiar to us from the study of text and discourse. The shared interest in discourse and cognition urgently calls for discussions between these and other groups of linguists, despite the present gap that exists between them caused by differences in the perspectives and frames of reference adopted for study.

The aim of this volume is to contribute to bridging that gap, by offering a forum for discussion with a relatively broad scope to meet the current general interest in the area of discourse and cognition. The volume opens with an overview chapter on the relations between language, discourse and cognition, in retrospect and prospect. The rest of the volume consists of another eight chapters focusing on central issues and highlighting methodological differences motivated by the frameworks from which these issues are approached. While we have recently been able to witness a welcome increase in studies which adopt a cognitive perspective on discourse (cf. e.g. van Hoek et al. (eds.) 1999; Koenig (ed.) 1998; Lundquist and Jarvella (eds.) 2000; Sanders et al. (eds.) 2001), it is important to note that the individual chapters of the present volume clearly opt for a discourse approach to cognition.

In this chapter the concern is first with basic notions in text and discourse linguistics – a term used to refer to the overlapping fields of text linguistics, discourse analysis/studies and conversation analysis. The main purpose of the discussion below of ‘text’, ‘discourse’, ‘context’, and variation across these, is to address issues which most clearly reflect the kinds of changes that have taken place in the study of text and discourse over the years. Unless clarified, these notions also constitute a threat to successful communication between discourse linguists and cognitive linguists. Section 2 is an introduction to the individual chapters of the volume.

Both ‘text and discourse linguistics’ – or ‘discourse linguistics’ for short – and ‘cognitive linguistics’ are here used in a broad sense, as umbrella terms for a range of different frameworks. Text and discourse linguists thus focus on *text and discourse in context*, while the concern in cognitive linguistics is primarily with *individual and/or distributed cognition*. The chapters of this volume attempt to combine the two interests.

1. Approaching cognition from the perspective of text and discourse

Let me start this section with a brief personal note. In the 1980’s when I was working in the research group ‘Style and Text as Structure and Process’, directed by Professor Nils Erik Enkvist in Åbo, Finland, the focus was on text and discourse as process in terms of various text (or discourse) strategies involving parameter weighting in relation to particular communicative goals. The texts analysed in terms of structure were, in the first place, considered products of processes constituting the actual purpose of the analyses; analysing structures was a method to get at the processes which were assumed to lie behind them and the motivations that had made particular text producers in particular contexts opt for one set of alternatives rather than another, to give textual parameters a particular weight and value in view of particular communicative goals. Such goal-oriented weightings of decision parameters were investigated to understand the ways in which particular text strategies worked towards the elimination of the interlocutors’ uncertainties through the exclusion of alternatives, and how they facilitated the production and/or interpretation of discourse. They were also investigated to find out what they told us about the construction of textuality through information structuring, coherence and text segmentation, what they told us about intertextuality, and about the ‘textual fit’ of sentences in written texts. Discussions thus also dealt with relations between sentence grammar and text where these could be seen to be pulling in different directions. Furthermore, studies focused on the relative salience of particular linguistic material in relation to its immediate context and the Figureness of a profile found in a text in relation to its Ground, the effects of experiential iconicity detected in texts, and the influence of perspectivization on the form of a text. Impromptu speech was examined to understand how hesitation phenomena disclosed aspects of on-line discourse processing, and the ways in which interlocutors negotiate meaning. Central questions also included what inferences need to be made for interlocutors to come to grips with what is left implicit in texts and discourses, what expectations people set up in text processing, and how interlocutors cope with

expectations not met in the subsequent text. The interplay of the textual factors affecting the form of the actual text, i.e. the product – their ‘conflicts and conspiracies’ in text processing, to adopt Enkvist’s phrase – were ultimately connected with the basic ability of human beings to make goal-oriented, context-based decisions, and to the interpretability of texts and discourses. To cite Enkvist (1989: 166) on ‘interpretability’:

Text comprehension and interpretability can thus be seen as a highly complex, incremental process involving the interplay of bottom-up and top-down processing, as well as zig-zagging between the text, the universe of discourse meaning the universe at large within which the text can be placed, and the specific world of text with its specific, usually highly constrained states of affairs.

The views that we held on text and discourse as structure and process were well in line with those prevailing at the time (cf. e.g. de Beaugrande 1980; de Beaugrande and Dressler 1981; Brown and Yule 1983; van Dijk and Kintsch 1983). In fact, as de Beaugrande notes in Chapter 2 of the present volume, “text linguistics has always had a resolutely cognitive orientation because the text must be described as both product and process.”

Several of the basic notions of text and discourse linguistics have since developed in ways which make them, at one and the same time, even more dynamic but also much more indeterminate, and not necessarily grounded in assumptions of rationality and intentionality in human communication. In light of the relations of discourse and cognition, it therefore seems in order to pay some attention to the primary notions of ‘text’ and ‘discourse’, their relation to ‘context’, and the kinds of variation that can be found across them.

To start with text and discourse, it is obvious that for many linguists discourse consists of text and its situational context; for others texts are primarily written while discourse refers to spoken interaction; and for others still, only one of these concepts is necessary to cover the field of their study. All in all, however, both terms have acquired a more processual and interactional reading over time, and the question that cognitive linguists might wish to ask at this point is thus whether the two notions are needed and if so, what senses will best be ascribed to them if we try to keep both of them transparent for the benefit of all linguists. In what follows, the two terms will be used in the British sense of discourse including text and its situational and socio-cultural context.

Discourse can be viewed as a cognitive process involving interaction, adaptation, and negotiation between interlocutors, but it can also be viewed as a social phenomenon in a very wide sense of the term. To fully understand what people do with language it is necessary to take into account both cognitive and social concerns. This raises the issue of the status and scope of the concept of

'context'. For the purposes of cognitive linguists, context is a mental phenomenon, included in the broad notion of 'conceptualization'. In text and discourse linguistics context has traditionally been regarded as having three dimensions: we speak of the textual or linguistic context (the 'co-text'), the situational context, and the socio-cultural context. The different dimensions of context thus have to be related to the notion of context as used in cognitive linguistics, since all of them can be considered mental representations of different kinds but activated in parallel.

Furthermore, the development of text and discourse linguistics has witnessed a change in the relative status of the notions 'text' and 'context'. Whatever reading is given to text and discourse, it is important to note that from the beginning both have been viewed as closely tied to their situational and socio-cultural contexts. Recently, however, the focus of this relationship has shifted to the context itself. Hence, while the form that a particular text takes is undeniably affected by its context, it is also true that texts and discourses themselves mediate contexts and in so doing contribute to constructing, maintaining or altering those contexts. This bidirectional view of text and context has turned text producers and text receivers into interlocutors or participants in discourse, engaged in discourse practices, be they spoken, written, signed, or computer-mediated multimodal phenomena. The recognition of a two-way traffic between texts and contexts has, in turn, raised the issue of the inseparability of the two. And this view has important implications for the cognitive notion of context as a mental phenomenon.

Much study in the area of text and discourse has traditionally been centred around individual cognition, the inferences that people are required to make to interpret discourse, and the assumptions they seem to be making about their interlocutors' consciousness and memory constraints, as manifested in discourse. Metadiscoursal exponents reveal awareness of context-based strategic planning, irrespective of whether such planning is considered rational or common-sensical and what interpretation is given to the idea of intentionality. Criticism has since been voiced of the idea of 'autonomous minds' (cf. e.g. Linell 1998), i.e. the assumption that people communicate as individuals with ready-made content in their minds. It is, however, worth noting that even in studies of discourse governed by the idea of individual cognition, the goal of the analyses and their focus has been the processes that take place when people communicate with one another in authentic situational and socio-cultural contexts.

The recent shift of interest to 'distributed cognition' has brought with it a greater concern for indeterminacy in discourse. We can see that communicative goals can be of many kinds: interlocutors can act in an explicitly intentional fashion but do not do so in all contexts and for all purposes. Communicative goals can be negotiated and adapted to, not only in impromptu speech but also

in the discourse shaping the ideologies of a given society and culture at a given point in time. Further, interlocutors can be aware of and content with the fact that the inferences they draw are not necessarily shared by others and that interpretability can be a matter of several different or overlapping alternatives activated simultaneously. The motivation for selecting a particular interpretation in a particular context can be related to the construction of that context, in the sense of adaptation, negotiation, persuasion and other dimensions of the activity of co-construction of discourse by interlocutors. The focus on distributed cognition highlights the kind of intersubjectivity that emerges through interaction both locally in a particular situational context and on a macro-level, in a particular culture and across cultures. Still, even in a globalising world – whichever of the many senses we choose to give to that notion – it is important to remember that in the first instance, people do live locally.

Interlocutors are regarded as being engaged in discourse practices of various kinds which manifest and constitute socio-cultural patterns of action and thought. And interlocutors can show metalinguistic awareness of such shared patterns, even though they do not necessarily conform to them in practice. This suggests that the role of variation across texts and discourses is another central area in the study of discourse and cognition. A burning issue here is how we can best capture the dynamism connected with these phenomena.

Two dimensions of variation have traditionally been in the focus of text and discourse linguistics. To start with, text types – or discourse types – originate in the rhetorical tradition and have to a large extent been studied by those interested in building theoretical models of language to increase our understanding of language use. Genres, again, have been adopted into linguistics from the study of literature, predominantly by those whose primary aim has been to apply the notion to practical purposes such as the study of professional discourse or learner language of a particular kind. Both notions are essentially prototypical, and they should be given a dynamic interpretation and studied in terms of the dialectical relation in which they enter with contexts of situation and culture. Furthermore, both notions seem necessary since text/discourse types cut across genres in interesting ways. Yet, however dynamically modelled, no typologies are as such sufficient to explain the variation that emerges from the actual use of texts and discourses and the mechanisms that allow interlocutors to cope with and profit from such variation in their daily lives. Apart from obvious pedagogical purposes, text classifications are still justified precisely because they help us to understand linguistic categorization and the ways in which people make dynamic use of them in continuously adapting and contributing to variation across texts and discourses, making sense of their experience of the world, and recontextualizing linguistic material in ways that have a bearing on

their participation in speech communities and professional discourse communities. Such issues have recently been the focus of studies of 'intertextuality' and 'interdiscursivity', and of the interdisciplinary field of 'genre analysis'.

Traditional typologists have argued that text/discourse types reflect the way in which we view reality; thus even such static types would seem to have an obvious cognitive basis. While prototypical types of text have been shown to differ across cultures and some of them are connected more readily than others with particular educational systems and the ideologies that these convey and help to construct, some rather high-level distinction between narrative and non-narrative can probably be given a primarily cognitive justification. Hence, the way in which we construct reality through a narrative flow of time involving human beings in a dynamic series of actions that have an outcome of some sort which is different from the situation at the beginning of the series, is very different from the way a location, a concrete object or an abstract notion is described or explained to other people or the way in which values and beliefs are constructed, mediated, and negotiated through discourse of the openly argumentative kind. If people use text types as prototypical categories against which they can match texts to detect similarities and differences and on which they can rely in recontextualizing and creating other texts in context, then the study of intertextuality in terms of text/discourse types should indeed also be very much part of the core of cognitive linguistics. Idealised types emerge and change through authentic texts, and idealised types stored in memory affect the form of authentic texts. Finally, what people actually do in their daily lives with and through narrative, and why, has proven to be fundamental for our understanding of the relations between discourse and cognition.

In this light, genres seem much more context-oriented than text types. Genres emerge and are maintained or altered in particular socio-cultural contexts, helping to construct those contexts in the first place. Essentially this takes place through interdiscursivity, in the sense of genre-mixing and embedding of emergent and established genres in one another. Hence, to a greater extent than text types, genres appear to be in line with the socio-cultural concerns that are in focus in discourse linguistics, pragmatics and social sciences today. While it is possible to argue that anything in language use can be ascribed a cognitive function and it is indeed possible to study any linguistic phenomenon from a cognitive point of view, the very origin of genres seems to be the discourse community and socio-cultural context which they help to construct. Genres are thus essentially part of our distributed cognition, of our social memory, or the shared knowledge of a particular discourse community. Perhaps we can conclude by placing text/discourse types in a framework where the focus is on the first member of the text-context pair, whereas genres, as the dynamic constructs

that they are regarded as today, would rather tend to highlight the second member of the pair. Genres would thus seem to make 'context' more Figure-like than the actual texts representing or helping to construct or develop those genres.

Taken together, the study of text/discourse types and genres is an area which will add to our understanding of the interplay of the cognitive and social concerns and constructs. Such an interplay is manifest in discourse, and it motivates people to use language in particular ways. Variation across texts and discourses thus demands some consideration in cognitive linguistics at least as concerns the mechanisms of emergence and use – or indeed, non-use – of text categorizations of various kinds, the distinction between text/discourse types and genres, and their relations to the notion of 'context' as a mental phenomenon. Among text types, an important and cognitively highly relevant area of study concerns the status of narrative in relation to other types. Genres have been in focus in the study of professional discourse and the interaction between professionals of various kinds and/or non-professionals in institutional discourse. At the same time, the study of genre dynamism in non-professional discourse seems to be an area where models of analysis are at present lacking. This is a task where a combination of the expertise of both discourse linguists and cognitive linguists might prove to be particularly advantageous. Furthermore, another area of growing relevance in today's rapidly changing world of communication is multimodality, in the sense of the construction and interpretation of multisemiotic meaning. Hence, the dynamism of multimodal variation emergent in the new media awaits thorough study, and this is yet another forum where cognitive linguists and discourse linguists can profitably meet.

Text and discourse linguistics constitutes a very wide field of study in which proponents of different frameworks and methodologies meet to investigate a shared interest: text or discourse. Similarly, in cognitive linguistics the common denominator is what constitutes the object of study, i.e. cognition. As Geeraerts (1995: 114) rightly points out, what people with different orientations and methodologies refer to as cognitive linguistics is "not a single theory of language, but rather a cluster of broadly compatible approaches." The meeting point of discourse linguistics and cognitive linguistics has traditionally been the individual mind, engaged in interaction with other minds. Recent developments in the humanities and social sciences have, however, brought social cognition very much to the fore. Hence, to cite for instance Edwards (1997: 28), "cognition is [...] clearly a cultural and discursive matter." The studies included in this volume have the purpose of contributing to our understanding of the area in which the individual and distributed cognition meet, i.e. discourse. In doing so, they also forcefully testify to the benefits of communication across academic disciplines and invite further discussions in that spirit.

2. The studies included in the present volume

The individual chapters of the present volume focus on both text and discourse, and their textual, situational and socio-cultural contexts. The data range from narrative to non-narrative, written to spoken, informative to literary, experimental to authentic, professional genres to impromptu speech, and from public to semi-private or private discourse. Several languages are discussed, including discourse originating in bilingual speech communities. We also find cross-linguistic data at a high level of abstraction where a certain extent of decontextualization seems mandatory, and we find data originating in automatic searches run on very large corpora of authentic texts and discourses, yet obviously recontextualized to appear in new formats on computer screens and printouts.

The discussion proceeds from the construction of textuality, in terms of considerations of information structuring, coherence, and foregrounding, in (inter)textual and interdiscursive contexts, and across languages of very different kinds, to examinations of negotiation of meaning, distribution and recognition of knowledge, and the recontextualization and interpretation of discourse in textual, situational and socio-cultural contexts. Hence, the context taken into account expands as we proceed through the different chapters. The volume highlights linguistic elements of relatively small size within and across languages and cultures; it also highlights local and global discourse phenomena ranging across parts of texts or entire texts. Such discourse phenomena are signalled with the help of linguistic elements that serve important cognitive functions in the use of language. The cognitive issues brought to the fore by the individual studies range from accessibility and assumptions we make about our interlocutors' memory constraints to information structuring, the relative salience we give to elements of discourse, prototypicality, figure-ground distinctions reflected in language use, knowledge structure, locative concerns, iconicity, recontextualization of communicative fragments originating in social memory, negotiation between people or groups of people of mental spaces and the establishment of shared conceptual models within society at large, pertaining to culture and ideology. The studies thus vary in their relative orientation towards individual and distributed cognition.

What is common to the contributions to this volume is a concern for context. In light of cognitive linguistics, these studies open avenues to ways of conceptualizing this primary concept of text and discourse linguistics which is notorious in resisting definition but without which we can hardly hope to approach text and discourse at all. The focus of several studies is on individuals processing text and discourse in a given situational context, making sense of and mediating their experience of the world through discourse, constructing

conceptual models and activating mental spaces, recontextualizing elements of earlier texts and discourses in novel ways, and negotiating common ground through adaptation to and manipulation of what they assume to be their interlocutors' activated conceptual models and their possibly shared mental spaces. But individuals form part of and help to create socio-cultural contexts that are of prime relevance to a discourse approach to cognition. Hence, other chapters rather focus on what can be regarded as distributed cognition, the collective memory of a particular speech community, socio-cultural knowledge shared by most members of a speech community, or again, professional knowledge shared by members of discourse communities, which is, in turn, constitutive or regulative of such communities.

Chapter 2, entitled "Language, discourse, and cognition: retrospects and prospects", is by *Robert de Beaugrande*. Examining discussions of language and cognition in the linguistic literature, the chapter opens with the claim that while the wheel has turned a long way, the relation between cognition and language has not, as yet, been adequately defined. A dialectical model of 'language' and 'discourse' is then presented such that language specifies the standing constraints of discourse while discourse manifests emergent constraints for language. The traditional division into 'theory' and 'practice' is thus fundamentally called into question as the dialectics between language and discourse turn the theory of language into 'theoretical practice', essentially 'practice-driven', and the practice of discourse into 'practical theory', essentially 'theory-driven'. A similar dialectical model is suggested to account for the relations between 'cognition' and 'language', such that cognition generates meanings while language determines meanings. The fundamental problem for linguists is of course the fact that "meanings will not hold still or remain constant while we 'analyse' them."

This chapter provides us with a number of analogies which we can use in our attempts to understand cognition and its relation to language and discourse. Tacit assumptions and explicit statements originating in several schools of thought are addressed in light of current models of cognitive processing. The chapter closes with an agenda for some of the most urgent tasks for what the author calls 'cognitive text linguistics' – and which is what by any other name the contributors to this volume are promoting by simply participating in this endeavour.

The variety of methods and frameworks represented in this volume, together with many others outside it, testify to the richness of work in this field but also to the fact that there is no one way of accomplishing what these and other linguists are engaged in doing. What is thus urgently needed is a forum for discussion between proponents of the different frameworks and practitioners of the

different methodologies. Rather than adding to the fragmentation of today's linguistic map, we need to create connections between text linguistics, discourse analysis, conversation analysis, pragmatics and related fields, to make explicit the ties between this area of study and cognition. And as in this volume, we need to build bridges between discourse linguistics and cognitive linguistics. One way of starting to do this, de Beaugrande suggests, is to study meanings in very large corpora of text and discourse. The study of collocations, he predicts, can lead us to a level between 'language' and 'text/discourse' with the missing links partly explicated, and to the content of meanings in terms of the multiple activations in networks with other meanings of the events thus presented to us.

Chapters 3–6 deal with ways of structuring information, creating coherence, and signalling foregrounding. Here we are focusing on the cognitive aspects of the construction of textuality. In Chapter 3, "on the discourse basis of person agreement", *Anna Siewierska* examines person agreement marking cross-linguistically, addressing the issue of the discourse context for its development in light of two diachronic scenarios that have been proposed in the literature. In the first of these, person agreement markers originate in the third person while the second, based on accessibility theory, postulates first and second person pronouns as the source of grammaticalization of person agreement. Studies of discourse have often tacitly assumed that narrative constitutes a good exemplar of discourse, and the focus has usually been on third person narratives, which may, but need not, contribute to the discourse basis of the first scenario. The encoding of discourse referents in impromptu speech, however, would rather seem to point to the necessity of taking into account the fact that first and second person referents are inherently more accessible in memory than third person referents. While critically examining the claims concerning the discourse bases of the two diachronic scenarios, this chapter argues for an extension of the second model, based on the accessibility of referents in memory, such that (a) not only high accessibility but a wider range – or different levels – of accessibility be taken into account, and (b) third person pronouns, as well as both subject and object functions, be included in the scenario. In this way, *Siewierska* points out, it will be possible to fully assess the merits of the model in terms of cross-linguistic data.

Chapter 4 presents a series of studies by *M.M. Jocelyne Fernandez-Vest*, of "the information structure of bilingual meaning", in which she adopts "a constructivist approach to California Finnish conversation". Information structuring is examined in impromptu speech emerging in both monolingual and bilingual contexts, using a tripartite model of Theme-Rheme-Mneme. The last of the three concepts refers to elements following the Rheme which carry a flat intonation, convey shared knowledge, and receive affective modulation. Analysis

of the dialectics of bilingual meaning as the outcome of a co-determination of discourse-pragmatic and morphosyntactic factors in American Finnish oral narratives reveals a tendency for the Rheme or the Mneme to be marked by code-switching, from Finnish to English. In non-narrative, again, code-switching is mainly motivated by situational needs such as the presence of a monolingual interlocutor or the need to be exact about referents related to life in the USA. This latter need is also shown to occasionally invite metalinguistic comments. The second main motivation for code-switching in impromptu speech has to do with the interlocutors' memory processes. When another piece of discourse is recontextualized in the form of a memorized quotation or social situation with a high degree of affect which took place in English, these tend to trigger code-switching into the language of the memorized situation. Finally, the chapter deals with the social parameters of quantitative memory in Sami contexts, where men and women are shown to manifest different mechanisms of remembering dates, estimating distances, and so forth. Applied to American Finnish contexts, the analysis shows that the sex or gender differences here concern code-switching at temporal signposts of a story. All in all, the chapter reveals a high degree of creativity in the way bilingual interlocutors construct textuality through information structuring where code-switching serves an important function. Through the decision to focus on information structuring in bilingual discourse, this chapter presents a new approach to code-switching, linking it closely to cognitive concerns.

In Chapter 5, entitled "Point of departure: cognitive aspects of sentence-initial adverbials", I revisit sentence-initial adverbials, exploring their discourse functions in written texts from a cognitive point of view. To start with information structuring, sentence-initial adverbials appear in the theme position, which constitutes the prominent starting point of the sentence: theme can be seen as Figure in relation to the Ground of the rheme. Elements that interlocutors choose to place in this position are thus informationally foregrounded at the stage at which they appear in the text. Subsequently, of course, they will be integrated into the Ground. In terms of persuasion, it is important to note that thematic adverbials can mediate information, beliefs and attitudes that the writer wishes the reader to interpret as given even when they cannot be automatically assumed to be so. Sentence-initial adverbials can, in fact, convey information of any kind. The extremes of brand-new information and textually given information are, however, less usual here than inferrable and unused information, which are found in the middle of the given-new scale. This variation also accounts for the efficiency with which sentence-initial adverbials contribute to the signalling of textual boundaries. After a discussion of thematic adverbials in light of coherence, text type, and iconicity of two different kinds, the chapter concludes by

claiming that the sentence-initial slot itself constitutes a rich source of discourse meanings precisely because of its cognitive relevance for our processing capacities and memory constraints.

After three chapters on information structuring and coherence, we proceed to a discussion of (fore)grounding in Chapter 6, entitled “What is foregrounded in narratives? Hypotheses for the cognitive basis of foregrounding”. In this chapter *Brita Wårvik* explores parallels between the textual foreground-background distinction in narrative and perceptual and cognitive principles of organization. The relative foregrounding and backgrounding of elements in narrative is here considered from three cognitive perspectives, i.e. those of the figure-ground distinction, prototype, and salience. The chapter also includes a discussion of relevant aspects of iconicity. One of the most urgent tasks for students of grounding, Wårvik argues, is to devise a model to come to grips with the relative weightings of the different grounding criteria so far established for narrative. Another obvious, but similarly in no way straightforward task is to systematically establish grounding criteria for non-narrative text. Scrutiny of the cognitive basis of the meticulous system of grounding criteria presented in this chapter reveals important links and networks of links between different approaches to foregrounding in the study of discourse. It also serves to relate principles of textual organization to corresponding phenomena in other fields of human activity.

At this point a terminological note is in order. The use of the term ‘grounding’ in text and discourse linguistics and the study of literature, to indicate the relative degree of foregrounding vs backgrounding of elements in a text, does not correspond to the use of the term ‘grounding’ in cognitive linguistics (manifest in this volume in Chapter 10, where the focus is on the ‘discourse grounding’ of a conceptual model). Further, when the term ‘foregrounding’ appears in Chapter 8 (on the use of conditionals in interaction), it simply functions as a metaphor for dominances of scales connected with discourse-pragmatic processes in face-to-face argumentation. Thirdly, Chapter 5 touches on the status of sentence-initial elements as ‘informationally foregrounded’ at the stage where they appear in the text. This status is, however, only related to the Figureness of the theme in relation to the rheme. In contrast, (fore)grounding as dealt with in Chapter 6, which is entirely devoted to the phenomenon, pertains to the systematic study of the organization of textual material in narrative in terms of its cognitive basis.

Chapters 7–10 discuss ways in which interlocutors distribute and recognize knowledge, negotiate meaning, recontextualize linguistic material, and interpret discourse. Hence, Chapter 7 is a study of the relations between legal knowledge and legal discourse, Chapter 8 is concerned with the furnishing of mental

spaces in business talk, Chapter 9 focuses on communicative fragments used for literary purposes, and Chapter 10 deals with a particular conceptual model mediated through discourse in a given socio-cultural context.

Adopting experimental methods for a linguistic and cognitive analysis of legal texts, *Lita Lundquist* investigates expert and non-expert knowledge of two types of legal concepts: 'contract' and 'judgement'. In Chapter 7, entitled "From legal knowledge to legal discourse – and back again", we learn what 'knowledge' is, how specialised knowledge differs from that of laypeople, and more particularly, what the structure of legal knowledge can look like. Through an investigation of three types of 'qualia' – semantic notions used to analyse the data – the knowledge structures of expert and non-expert texts are shown to vary such that experts use a higher number of qualia than non-experts. It also turns out that an expert rater recognizes more qualia than a non-expert one. Furthermore, the type of qualia present in the 'contracts' and 'judgements' produced by experts and non-experts vary in interesting ways, which supports hypotheses concerning the existence of important differences in the knowledge structures available to these two groups of subjects.

All through the chapter, Lundquist engages in a critical discussion of the methods used to obtain the results, thus stressing the fundamental problem of studying discourse and cognition through discourse and cognition themselves. This discussion is reminiscent of de Beaugrandes's worries in Chapter 2 concerning the fact that "we do not have any language-independent modality for accessing cognition beyond the limits of what we happen to perceive with our senses", which is also "partly pre-organized by language, so its potential for testing language remains limited in principle." Lundquist's discussion is highly instructive to anyone involved in the study of discourse and/or cognition.

Chapter 8 is a study of conditionals in context, entitled "Conditionals: your space or mine?" Adopting a scalar view of the phenomenon, *Anne Marie Bülow-Møller* here shows that classifications based on decontextualized sentences, which cognitive linguists often rely on to study conditionals, do not hold in practice. This is so because authentic interaction manifests blends of such uses of conditionals and secondly, because the idea of mapping mental spaces together, to form a shared space is too simple for the purposes of actual analysis. This chapter shows that furnishing mental spaces, be they yours, mine, or something in-between, is what the interlocutors engaged in business talk do, and they do so for strategic purposes. The study accounts for the use of conditionals in authentic argumentation by postulating a number of fundamental scales, which can be foregrounded or backgrounded (cf. above) for different communicative purposes. The model thus also allows for interlocutors, given their stake, to mean more than one thing at a time, which is what regularly happens in au-

thentic discourse, where interlocutors are in the process of negotiating meaning, adapting to situations, and constructing contexts through discourse. It is obvious from this chapter that conditionals are used in argumentative discourse in ways which cannot be accounted for without full consideration of the relevant context and the communicative strategies of the interlocutors engaged in the discourse.

Focusing on literary discourse, *Martina Björklund* sets out to explore “communicative fragments and the interpretation of discourse” in Chapter 9. Presenting an analysis of a Russian short story as a showcase, she emphasizes the crucial impact that such communicative fragments – prefabricated patterns, or simply, ‘recycled’ linguistic material – have on the interpretation of the text. It is evident that the recognition of recontextualized elements, present in discourse in new or modified combinations, and in new and always unique contexts, is a prerequisite if we are to fully appreciate a piece of literary discourse. This has important implications not least for translators of such texts. More generally, Björklund’s study contributes to our understanding of the interpretation of discourse, literary and non-literary, by providing us with a tool for the analysis of its many voices, originating in the distributed cognition related to a given socio-cultural context. The effect of communicative fragments on the interpretation of discourse constitutes a cognitive concern of a very central kind.

While our metalinguistic awareness may allow us to reflect on the intertextual links activated in a given communication situation – in relation to literary or non-literary discourse – the relevant communicative fragments ultimately only pertain to that very context – textual, situational and socio-cultural – thus making us see the discourse we are engaged in as new, as something unique whose construction and interpretation we are participating in, here and now. This separation of our automatic use of language from our metalinguistic awareness may in part explain why so few linguistic models still reckon with a store of prefabricated linguistic expressions in the memory which are put into use in daily communication. As Miller (1984: 156) puts it in an entirely different context, “recurrence is an intersubjective phenomenon, a social occurrence”; “what recurs cannot be a material configuration of objects, events and people, nor can it be a subjective configuration, a ‘perception’, for these, too, are unique from moment to moment and person to person.” Communicative fragments help people in the task of interpreting contexts and relating to them; yet, not enough is known today about the uses of recontextualized prefabricated patterns, lexico-grammatical and textual, which regularly appear in the web of discourses of many kinds.

The final chapter of the volume, entitled “Drawing the line: a contested conceptual model in Danish ‘child care talk’”, is by *Peter Harder*, who investigates

the negotiation of common ground in a wide socio-cultural context, through an analysis of the conceptual models and norms which we construct in society. He considers the issue in terms of a case study of a particular conceptual model in a Danish context, that of 'drawing the line' in the interaction between adults and the children for whom they are responsible. The chapter analyses the on-going collective discourse through various dimensions of the metaphor activated here, showing that it is not enough to refer to the basic bodily grounding (cf. above) familiar to us from cognitive linguistics. What we also need to consider is the discourse grounding of the metaphorical mapping, i.e. the processes taking place in the interaction between interlocutors seeking to align the metaphor with their own experience and to analyse the mappings of their opponents in ways that result in a polarization of the public debate and hence a battle ground in which even a lack of an acceptable mapping for the current metaphor is one discourse strategy among others. We are here dealing with a mapping from source domain, to target domain the analysis of which can only be partial when conceptualization is seen as a product. Instead, Harder argues that we need to consider conceptualization as an on-going discourse process "where mental structures meet actual experience and there is a struggle to impose some conceptual order on it." It is evident from this analysis that the socio-cultural context in which the metaphor is activated is crucial for the understanding of conceptual models being constructed, altered or maintained through discourse.

To sum up, the variety of frameworks represented in this volume highlights methodological issues concerning the study of, on the one hand, text and discourse, and on the other, cognition – and the tacit assumptions that come with the packages. While the methods adopted for study thus vary a great deal across the chapters, what is shared is an awareness of the fact that discourse and cognition can only be studied with the help of discourse and cognition. This unavoidable state of affairs has important implications for the discourse of discourse: scholarly discourse, too, serves to create contexts. At the same time, what emerges from the different chapters is the uniqueness of discourse as a site for the study of both individual and distributed cognition and their interplay in authentic situational and socio-cultural contexts. All the chapters also show that both discourse linguistics and cognitive linguistics profit from interdisciplinary discussions, which have greatly contributed to bringing these areas of study closer to one another in the recent past. It is thus hoped that in addition to the discoveries and insights of the discourse-based approaches to cognition included in this volume, the present selection of studies also serves to inspire linguists of various orientations to go on building bridges across academic boundaries.