



An Introduction to Discourse Analysis and Translation Studies

Michela Canepari

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The present book, which was devised as a general introduction to language and translation studies, aims at helping readers develop useful strategies with which to approach the analysis of discourse in various contexts.

With this intent, it begins by introducing some of the fundamental notions developed in linguistics, sociolinguistics, semiotics, critical theory, literary and cultural studies, which have influenced research work in the field of language and translation studies.

In fact, in order to understand the aims of language and translation studies and the place these disciplines have in contemporary society, we cannot ignore the theoretical background that has determined their development and still supports them.

The initial sections of this book therefore introduce various (linguistic, semiotic, literary and other) theories which, given the importance they have had for the development of language and translation studies, could not be taken for granted.

The first chapter thus provides the foundations on which the remaining sections rest, and tries to emphasise common features, influences, chronological developments and so on, in an attempt to clarify the historical background from which these theories stemmed and suggest, if only very concisely, the cultural developments which rendered possible the incredible advancement of the intellectual debate we have witnessed in the second half of the twentieth century and the first decade of the twenty-first century. The second chapter introduces some of the fundamental notions at the basis of discourse analysis, applying some of the theories elaborated on within this field to the analysis of different textual types. Even though translation issues are discussed more systematically in the third chapter, for obvious reasons it was not always possible to keep the two discussions distinct, as the notion of culture which underlies the way human beings belonging to particular communities use language, is fundamental for translation as well. The third chapter, however, deals more specifically with translation studies, applying some of the fundamental notions recently elaborated on in this field to specific textual types such as advertisements, newspapers, literature and comics.

Rather than being a compendium of theoretical jargon, this volume therefore aims at providing readers with some background in various theories, in order to bring to light the (thematic, chronological and geographical) relationship which exists between them and the impact they have had on language and translation studies. As a result, the links between the developments occurring in different fields of research are explained throughout the text, and these notions are then applied to specific texts[*]. In addition, the analysis of the translation strategies adopted in the British, American and Italian versions of Asterix developed in the Appendix by Enrico Martines offers an in-depth application of the theories approached in the remaining of the book.

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