

2 Central tools and techniques

Discourse analysis, whether within or across speech events, involves systematic investigation of signs that participants use to accomplish social action. If signs had univocal functions, discourse analysis would be easy—the analyst could simply consult a key that identifies what each type of sign means. But in fact any sign could signal many different types of social action. Signs only come to have clear meanings as relevant context emerges, and this happens as indexical signs come consistently to presuppose aspects of the context. Participants and analysts engage in a back-and-forth process of identifying the context that key signs index and adopting an interpretation of voicing, evaluation, positioning and social action that fits with this relevant context. Across an interaction or a pathway, relevant context and an interpretation of social action come to fit together such that participants and analysts can presuppose how participants are being positioned and what type of social action they are engaged in.

In Tyisha's case, as we saw in the last chapter, teachers and students use various signs that contribute to socially identifying her. Early in the interaction, for example, Tyisha says "my goal is to win in Nintendo." At the moment of utterance this could have meant several things: that Tyisha is trying to win an academic argument with the teacher by describing one of her activities, that she is just joking that video games are one of her primary interests, that she is interested in video games to the exclusion of other activities like schoolwork, or various other possibilities. Participants and analysts select from among these interpretations as other signs in the discursive interaction signal relevant context for interpreting the utterance about Nintendo. As described above, by the time the teacher says "so you *are* like an animal," it has become presupposed that Tyisha is more like her cat and less like other students who plan their activities systematically and pursue long-range goals. By the end of the interaction, it becomes clear that teachers and students have identified her as less diligent, as a disruptive and unpromising student. At this point indexical signs and an account of social action have come to reinforce each other and support a clear interpretation of what is happening in the narrating event.

We can use discourse analysis to study various aspects of discursive interaction. Halliday (1978) describes three "metafunctions," general types of social action that speakers accomplish. The "ideational" function communicates ideas. The

"interpersonal" function establishes relationships. And the "textual" function creates coherence across segments of discursive interaction. Any stretch of discourse always accomplishes all three metafunctions. The metafunctions are also interdependent, with each one being accomplished in part through contributions from the others. Different approaches to discourse analysis focus on different metafunctions, however. Some study how signs communicate information, while others study how elements of discourse cohere into textual wholes. In this book we focus on the interpersonal metafunction—how participants establish relationships with others, how they position themselves interactionally, perform social actions and evaluate both others and the social world. Because participants accomplish the interpersonal functions of discourse in part through ideational and textual mechanisms, we provide some strategies for analyzing these metafunctions. For example, we show how the denotational content of narrated events (established through the ideational metafunction) serves as a resource for social action in the narrating event, and we show how indexical signs cohere into configurations (through the textual metafunction) that make robust interpretations of social action possible. But we study the ideational and textual metafunctions only for their contributions to the interpersonal functions of discourse, because our approach to discourse analysis aims to uncover the social actions accomplished through language use.

Our approach to discourse analysis

The first chapter introduced our approach to doing discourse analysis of discrete speech events. Our approach has three phases, and the second phase has three components. The first phase is **mapping narrated events**, using knowledge of semantic, pragmatic and grammatical regularities to describe the narrated content. Second, the analyst engages in the iterative process of selecting, construing and configuring indexicals. These three components are not linear. Discourse analysts start by **selecting indexicals**—identifying signs that might be important signals about the social action occurring, signs that could play a central role in contextualization. In this chapter we describe types of signs that often do this work, like deictics, in more detail. After selecting some potentially salient indexicals, analysts proceed to **construing indexicals**—inferring models of voicing, evaluation, positioning and social action that could fit with the relevant context signaled by salient indexicals. Selecting and construing indexicals together form the dialectic of contextualization and entextualization, as participants identify potentially relevant context and begin to construe the types of social action that might be occurring. This iterative process of identifying indexical signs and the relevant context they presuppose, then construing those signs and interpreting the social action occurring, stops when a configuration of mutually presupposing signs emerges and brings stability. From a discourse analytic point of view, this component of the analysis involves **configuring indexicals**—describing how groups of indexical signs cohere in configurations that solidify and thus establish relevant context and signal the social action being performed. After identifying such a

Table 2.1 The phases and components of discourse analysis

Phase 1: MAPPING NARRATED EVENTS	What characters, objects and events are referred to and characterized as the narrated contents of the discursive interaction (or of the several events forming a pathway of discursive interactions)?
Phase 2/Component 1: SELECTING INDEXICALS	Attending particularly to the types of signs that often signal the social action accomplished through discourse, which indexical signs become salient and signal relevant context within (or within and across) events?
Phase 2/Component 2: CONSTRUING INDEXICALS	Which accounts of voicing, evaluation, positioning and social action do participants use, explicitly or tacitly, to construe salient indexical signs and interpret narrated and narrating events?
Phase 2/Component 3: CONFIGURING INDEXICALS	How do salient indexical signs coalesce into stable configurations within (or within and across) events, such that relevant context and recognizable types of social action are established?
Phase 3: INTERPRETING SOCIAL ACTION IN NARRATING EVENTS	What account best explains the positioning and social action occurring in the narrating event (or across the pathway of narrating events)?

configuration, the analyst can proceed to the third phase, drawing conclusions about interactional positioning and **interpreting the social action** being accomplished in the narrating event.

In this chapter we illustrate each of these phases with an example, and in the next three chapters we use the approach to analyze six other examples. This chapter first applies our approach to a discrete speech event, then extends it to discourse analysis across events. Table 2.1 lists the questions addressed in each phase.

In Phase 1 the discourse analyst describes the narrated events that form the content of the discursive interaction(s). In Phase 2/Component 1 the discourse analyst identifies indexical signs that may be salient in the discursive interaction(s). Almost any sign could turn out to be salient in a given case. But particular types of signs are often important to accomplishing social action, and in this chapter we describe the most important of these. Discourse analysts attend to these types of signs in their initial pass through the data, because this often provides important clues about salient indexicals and relevant context. In Phase 2/Component 2 the discourse analyst construes the salient indexicals, inferring models of social action that may be signaled by key indexical signs. In Phase 2/Component 3 the discourse analyst examines how configurations of indexical signs come to presuppose each other, collectively establishing coherence within a discursive interaction or across a pathway of linked interactions.

In practice the three components of Phase 2 are not separable, because participants and analysts move iteratively through them. Analytically, however, it helps to separate them. In Phase 3, the discourse analyst provides an interpretation of the interactional positioning and social action occurring in the narrating event(s).

In Table 2.1, and in the sections below, it may seem that we have reversed components 2 and 3 in Phase 2, changing their order from what appears in Table 1.1 and other tables with the same format. These tables represent “configuring indexicals” on the third line, between identifying and construing, representing the iterative cycle of configuring and construing on the second and fourth lines with the process of configuring indexicals on the third line in between them. This is meant to represent the constraining force that configuring indexicals has on both selecting and construing indexicals, as the arrows in Table 1.1 indicate. In Table 2.1, which represents the phases discourse analysis proceeds through, we have reversed the third and fourth lines. When beginning a discourse analysis, construing indexicals happens before looking for configurations of indexicals. Identifying a stable configuration of indexicals ends the second phase, solidifying accounts of salient indexicals, relevant context and social action. In the midst of an analysis we move back and forth among selecting, construing and configuring, with the order depending on the details of the discourse being analyzed. But the first two components typically begin the analysis and the third typically ends it, and so in this chapter we discuss the components in this order.

Our model applies to the analysis of discrete speech events, and we extend it to analyze pathways of linked events. We introduce our model by analyzing a single speech event, one taken from a study by Reyes (2011). Later in the chapter, we extend the approach to analyze linked events along a pathway that includes this central example. Chapters 3–5 illustrate in detail how our approach can be applied to pathways of discursive interactions drawn from ethnographic, archival and new media studies.

The central example: Crying “racist” in classroom interaction

The example that we will use to illustrate our model comes from work by Reyes (2011) that analyzes classroom conversations among Asian American youth who cry “racist,” presumably characterizing someone or something as racist. The data were collected as part of an ethnographic study of a fifth grade English language arts class that met Fridays after school in an Asian American supplementary school in New York City during 2006–2007. As was the norm in the school, this class had Korean American students and European American teachers.

In the following classroom interaction, recorded on December 8, the teacher (Mr. Bader) was trying to get the class back on task after a 10-minute break.

Segment 1: The sword of darkness

- 001 *Mr. Bader:* I- I definitely want to- s- send somebody to the office to quiet
 002 this crowd down, so, if- I see any twitches, or any, b- b- uh-
 003 defiant behavior, I will-
 004 *Hyo:* send you to the office (just say it)
 005 *Mr. Bader:* take you to the office personally
 006 *Hyo:* no I will bring the hammer down
 007 *Mr. Bader:* bring the hammer,
 008 *Luke:* not- not bring-
 009 *Mr. Bader:* the hammer of Thor right coming down
 010 *Luke:* no not the hammer of Thor, the sword of- the sword of light
 011 *Mr. Bader:* da- da- Damo- Diocles Diocl-
 012 *Luke:* no the- no the sword of darkness
 013 *Mr. Bader:* the sword of darkness is coming to those who act in a, in
 014 antisocial behavior
 015 *Joo-eun:* does that mean the sword is dark? [for does that mean-
 016 *Pete:* [you wish you were a little
 017 boy again (don't you)
 018 *Joo-eun:* does that mean the blade is black?
 019 *Mr. Bader:* yes, this is black, this is- this is- carbon-
 020 *Pete:* racist! ((embedded in a cough))
 021 *Mr. Bader:* carbon- plated- steel. now, excuse me skateboard people, we are
 022 recognizing the order of events or steps on page eleven

In this segment the teacher and students discuss how to eradicate disruptive classroom behavior with hammers and swords, using metaphors to describe the discipline the teacher threatens to impose. Then Pete cries “racist!” in line 020. How do we make sense of this utterance? The tools and techniques that we introduce in the following sections will help us analyze what is going on in this segment. The tools and techniques allow us to address the key discourse analytic questions introduced in Chapter 1: What narrated events are described as the content of this interaction? Which indexical signs should we pay attention to? How are salient indexicals construed, yielding an interpretation of the social action occurring? How does a configuration of signs establish an account of the social action occurring?

Phase 1: Mapping narrated events

In the first step, a discourse analyst maps the narrated content of the discursive interaction. What narrated events do the participants describe as they speak to each other? In the example of Tyisha and her cat, from Chapter 1, these events included descriptions of Aristotle and his account of social outcasts, descriptions of what teachers and students were themselves doing in the narrating event, and the example of how Tyisha and her cat behave. We saw how narrated events can provide important resources that participants use to position themselves

and others in the narrating event—as teachers and students transferred categories like “beast” from narrated to narrating events, using them to exclude and discipline Tyisha.

In the central example from Mr. Bader’s classroom, lines 001–008 describe the classroom participants and the narrating interaction itself. Mr. Bader describes his inclination to enforce disciplinary rules, and Hyo appropriates Mr. Bader’s voice, imagining him saying “bring the hammer down.” Then from lines 009–019 teacher and students describe hammers and swords in a fantasy world, exploring their characteristics. At line 020 Pete seems to be calling the teacher a racist, although it will take further analysis to interpret this remark. In any case, at line 020 the narrated event shifts back to the classroom conversation itself. Then Mr. Bader returns to the substantive content of the lesson at lines 021–022.

In order to map narrated events, a discourse analyst must use knowledge about grammar, lexicon and sociocultural context. The goal is to identify the various narrated events—the characters, objects and actions described. In the example, the first narrated event about classroom behavior is marked in part by the use of deictics “I” and “you,” which describe participants themselves, and in part through talk about classroom behavior management—which those with cultural knowledge recognize as a common topic for teachers and students. The second narrated event about fantasy objects is marked by talk about “Thor” and a “sword of darkness,” which presuppose a realm of fantasy books, movies and games also familiar in the cultural context. The return to talk about curricular subject matter is marked by a change in aspect on the verb “we are recognizing” and by the reference to “page eleven” in their textbook. There exists no comprehensive list of cues or rules that a discourse analyst uses to identify the narrated contents of a discursive interaction—what Silverstein (1976) calls the “denotational text.” The process of interpreting narrated events requires the same sort of context-dependent inference described in the last chapter, relying on what we know about grammar, lexicon and relevant background information to interpret indexes and symbols that communicate denoted content and build an account of what is being described.

Figure 2.1 represents the narrated and narrating events at this point in the interaction. The two central narrated events are represented in embedded boxes, showing relevant characters and objects. We leave out the third narrated event, the curricular topic introduced at lines 021–022, to save space. The teacher and students are represented in the narrating event, with Pete’s puzzling accusation about “racist” off to one side because we do not yet know to whom or what this refers. It might refer to Mr. Bader, but that is not clear. As introduced in Chapter 1, such a diagram is a tool for spatially representing important information about narrated and narrating events, their elements and interrelations—not a precise representation of all possibly relevant elements. Wortham (2001) introduces such diagrams, with a few general conventions: the exterior rectangle represents the narrating event and the embedded rectangles represent narrated events; relevant characters and objects are represented as ovals in the appropriate space; relations among characters are either described in text or represented

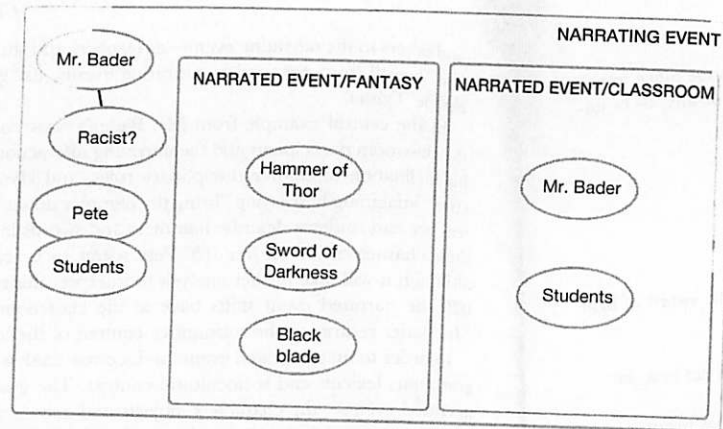


Figure 2.1 Narrated events in the central example

iconically—like the representation of hierarchical social relations represented with one character on top of another, or the representation of social relations or processes with a solid line connecting ovals; potential conceptual connections, like the possibility that Mr. Bader is racist, are also marked by solid lines; the mapping of parallel relations across narrated and narrating events is represented with dashed lines, as in Figures 1.2 and 1.6.

Phase 2/Component 1: Selecting indexicals

In the first component of the second phase, a discourse analyst looks for indexical signs that often signal voicing, evaluation, positioning and social action. Although any sign can turn out to be pivotal in a given case, social action in most events will be signaled in part through a few recurring types of indexical signs. By focusing initially on these types of signs, discourse analysts are likely to uncover some of the indexicals that signal relevant context and support inferences about social action. Other relevant signs will often be linked to instances of the three types of signs we present here.

We recommend that discourse analysts initially look for three kinds of indexicals: **deictics**, **reported speech** and **evaluative indexicals**. These are not mutually exclusive categories, and a given sign or utterance can exemplify more than one type. For example, reported speech typically contains deictics, and reported speech can function as an evaluative indexical. It is nonetheless useful to separate the three types analytically, because it allows for systematic review of data and more efficient identification of potentially salient signs. In this section we define each type and the kinds of discursive work each often accomplishes.

Deictics

Deictics are denotational indexicals: they establish reference in the narrated event by indexically presupposing or creating an aspect of the narrating context itself. The grammatical structure of different deictics presupposes different aspects of the narrating event, ranging from participants (*I, you*) to spatiotemporal information (*here, now*) to discursive topics (*this, that*). We cannot know what deictics such as *here, now* and *I* refer to without information about where, when and by whom they are spoken. The referent of a deictic term thus “shifts” according to context (Jespersen, 1924; Silverstein, 1976). *I* refers to a different person when different people utter the word, *now* picks out a different time depending on the moment of utterance, and *they* refers to an indefinitely large group that does not include the speaker, a group that can only be identified if one knows information from prior conversation.

For example, when Mr. Bader says *you* in line 005—“take you to the office personally”—*you* likely refers to any one of the students who misbehaves. When Pete says *you* in lines 016–017—“you wish you were a little boy again”—*you* likely refers to Mr. Bader. English *you* can be used to refer both to plural addressees (i.e., “students”) and to singular addressees (i.e., “Mr. Bader”). *You* can also be used as an indefinite pronoun to refer to people in general. Thus *you* can potentially refer to students, to Mr. Bader, or to any number of people or things, depending on context. Only by considering instances of *you* in an actual interaction can people begin to identify the referent of this deictic.

We will discuss four main types of deictics in this section: **spatial**, **temporal**, **person** and **discourse**. Spatial deictics presuppose information about place and location. They include words and phrases such as *here, around the corner* and *way over there*. When a speaker says “my family lives around here,” we infer that family members live in some area centered around the speaker, wherever *s/he* is located at the moment of utterance. Like many deictics in English and other languages, *here* and *there* are radial—they presuppose an unspecified boundary around the speech event, with *here* describing things inside the boundary and *there* describing things outside. Exactly where that boundary is drawn varies from case to case and must be inferred from context-specific information.

Temporal deictics are concerned with past, present and future time. They include words and phrases such as *now, then, last month* and *a few years later*. Like spatial deictics, temporal deictics presuppose a radial geometry centered on the speech event, with some boundary determining where *now* ends and *then* begins. In lines 021–022, Mr. Bader uses *now* in a somewhat complex way, stating “(this is) carbon plated steel. now. excuse me skateboard people, we are recognizing the order of events or steps on page eleven.” In this context *now* has the potential to establish the boundaries of the current event, marking the end of one phase of the activity and the beginning of another. This *now* may mark the start of a new event (one starting “right now,” as it were), an event which will focus on “page eleven.” In this context *now* marks the end of a previous narrated event in which Mr. Bader was describing “carbon plated steel.”

Person deictics refer to speakers and those spoken to and about. They include words and phrases such as *I, you, she* and *them right here two weeks ago*, the last of which combines three types of deictics: *them* (person), *right here* (spatial) and *two weeks ago* (temporal). For example, in lines 021–022, Mr. Bader says *we* in “excuse me skateboard people, we are recognizing the order of events.” It is not immediately clear whom *we* refers to in this case. There are at least four possibilities: an inclusive *we*, an exclusive *we*, a “royal *we*” and a “patronizing *we*.” *We* might refer inclusively to Mr. Bader and all of the students in the room. *We* might refer exclusively to Mr. Bader and only some of the students in the room (for example, perhaps not the “skateboard people”). In its “royal” form, *we* might refer to Mr. Bader alone, speaking about himself in the plural because of his social status. In a “patronizing” form, *we* might function more like *you* and not include the speaker (as in an interaction where a doctor asks a patient “how are we feeling today?”), such that Mr. Bader would not be included with the students who are “recognizing the order of events.”

Discourse deictics are words or expressions such as *this* or *that* which stand in for prior or future discourse, or refer exophorically to objects in the context. They are words used in place of other words or the topics referred to by other words. For example, when Joo-eun says *that* in line 015, “does that mean the sword is dark,” *that* might refer back to the prior phrase, *the sword of darkness*, in lines 012 and 013. *That* may be a word standing in for *the sword of darkness*, thus making “does that mean the sword is dark” equivalent to saying “does the sword of darkness mean the sword is dark.” Discourse deictics are flexible, able to refer to broad topics as well as specific utterances.

As discussed in Chapter 1, our approach to discourse analysis takes the distinction between narrated and narrating events as central. For discourse analysts to study the social actions accomplished through speech, a crucial task is to infer how participants’ descriptions of narrated events have implications for their evaluations, positioning and social actions in the narrating event. Deictics are often important because they link narrated and narrating events, because their contributions to the narrated event (what they denote) depend on information they presuppose about the narrating event. Thus analysts can infer crucial information from deictics that may be relevant to understanding the positioning of interlocutors in the narrating event. For example, the distinction between *we* and *they* is often important to interpreting the relational functions of discourse. If a speaker systematically separates *us* from *them*, s/he may be giving participants and analysts crucial information about who is included in and who is excluded from some relevant group that includes the speaker.

When Mr. Bader says *I* in line 001—“I definitely want to send somebody to the office”—*I* surely refers to Mr. Bader. But when Hyo says *I* in line 006—“I will bring the hammer down”—does *I* refer to Hyo himself in the narrating event? It is more likely that Hyo is using reported speech and speaking as Mr. Bader. This introduces a more complex configuration of roles in both narrated and narrating events. We now have more than Mr. Bader the teacher interacting with a group of students. We also have at least one student (Hyo) speaking as

a hypothetical Mr. Bader. This elaborates the narrated event that describes the classroom, the one represented on the right in Figure 2.1. We have Mr. Bader speaking as himself, saying what he would do to the students, and we have a student speaking as a hypothetical Mr. Bader and describing what Mr. Bader would do. By tracing the deictics, we can learn more about this narrated event and begin to identify its implications for the voicing, evaluation, positioning and social action occurring in the narrated and narrating events. The implications of Hyo’s comment for the narrating event are not yet clear in the segment presented above. He might be teasing the teacher, implying that Mr. Bader is in fact a pushover and would never mete out such discipline. He might be criticizing the teacher for being a harsh disciplinarian. We can imagine other possibilities as well. The sections that follow elaborate the analysis to some extent, but our main purpose in this chapter is to use the example to illustrate the steps involved in our approach to discourse analysis. See Reyes (2011) for a fuller analysis of this discursive interaction.

Reported speech

Reported speech describes speech that is framed as occurring at some other time. Reported speech typically occurred in the past (e.g., “I told him, ‘I’m busy’”), but it can also describe speech that will occur in the future (e.g., “I will tell him, ‘I’m busy’”). By analogy, discourse analysts can also study reported thought, reported action or reports of any other performable display—“she said X,” “she thought X,” “she did X,” where “X” can be any sign that is attributed to the actor referred to as “she.” Reported speech marks a division between the narrating and narrated events in discursive interaction: the speaker who is reporting the speech is located in the narrating event, while the speaker whose speech is being reported is located in a narrated event, even if it is the same biographical person. Describing someone else’s speech or action provides a powerful opportunity to voice or characterize them in the narrated event, and speakers often do this in ways that have implications for evaluation, positioning and social action in the narrating event. Reported speech is also a common means of linking speech events across pathways.

Reported speech is often divided into two main types: **direct** and **indirect**, although there are in fact intermediate forms like “indirect freestyle” (Fludernik, 1993). Consider the following ways that Mr. Bader could report to someone what Pete said:

“Pete said, ‘you wish you were a little boy again’.”

“Pete said that I want to be a little boy again.”

In the first report Mr. Bader would be presenting reported speech directly, quoting the words that Pete uttered. In the second sentence, Mr. Bader would be presenting reported speech indirectly, summarizing Pete’s utterance. The former claims to represent precisely what Pete said: “you wish you were a little

boy again." The latter merely paraphrases what Pete said: "that I want to be a little boy again." Notice the shift in participant deictics used in the two cases. *You* refers to Mr. Bader when directly quoting Pete, and *I* refers to Mr. Bader when indirectly quoting Pete. In direct reported speech, deictics are used as if they were occurring in the narrated event (i.e., *you*/Mr. Bader who is narrated), whereas in indirect reported speech deictics are centered in the narrating event (i.e., *I*/Mr. Bader who is narrating).

In practice it is not always clear when speech is reported. For example, in line 004 Hyo says, "send you to the office," and in line 006, he says, "no I will bring the hammer down." Perhaps Hyo is reporting the (hypothetical or anticipated) speech of Mr. Bader, even though both utterances lack a clear framing (that is, Hyo does not explicitly say: "you should say, 'I will bring the hammer down'"). Hyo is apparently speaking as if he were Mr. Bader, such that *I* refers to Mr. Bader (not Hyo) and *you* in line 004 refers to students (perhaps including Hyo himself). Hyo is speaking as if he were Mr. Bader, appropriating his voice and elaborating his utterance as Hyo playfully imagines it should be.

Reported speech can be useful for discourse analysis in various ways. Reported speech creates or elaborates narrated events, and these events can be resources for performing social action. In Hyo's case, two events are in play: Mr. Bader describing what he might do to students and Hyo hypothetically describing what Mr. Bader might do to students. Depending on how it is formulated, Hyo's reported speech could have implications both for interpreting the first narrated event (perhaps implying that Mr. Bader would not actually do what he is describing, for example) and for the narrating event (perhaps characterizing Mr. Bader himself as harsh, or perhaps as lacking courage).

Reported speech also gives a speaker the opportunity to put words into the mouth of the quoted speaker, which allows the speaker to characterize that person. Reported speech often deploys **metapragmatic verbs**, "verbs of speaking," which are powerful ways of characterizing narrated speakers and positioning people in the narrating event (Silverstein, 1976). Compare the following ways that Mr. Bader could report what Pete said:

- "Pete said, 'you wish you were a little boy again'."
 "Pete insightfully remarked that I want to be a little boy again."
 "Pete rudely interrupted me."

The metapragmatic verb that Mr. Bader chooses would position him with respect to the narrated event and with respect to Pete. *Said* is the most neutral of the three metapragmatic descriptions, while *insightfully remarked* and *rudely interrupted* make more presuppositions about the nature of the narrated event (e.g., it was rude) and about Pete's character. These characterizations also have implications for the narrating event. For example, Pete may be an undisciplined student who lacks academic promise. Metapragmatic verbs sometimes contrast with the content of reported speech, creating ironic and other effects. The second

report above might have this form, if we presuppose that no reasonable person could claim that Mr. Bader wants to be a boy again.

Evaluative indexicals

By "evaluative indexical" we mean a very broad category of signs: indexes that point to relevant context in ways that potentially characterize and evaluate narrated characters and narrating participants. In the central example, what does it mean for Mr. Bader to say "quiet this crowd down" (lines 001–002), instead of "quiet this class down" or "quiet you down"? The different formulations presuppose different things about the group of students. Calling them a "crowd" might presuppose an evaluation of them, perhaps as disorganized or as vaguely threatening. As another example, consider the selection of "hammer" and "sword" from among all of the potential weapons that could have been referred to, and the depiction of those hammers and swords in terms of legends, colors and blades, as opposed to the various other ways hammers and swords could have been characterized. The following list sketches this progression of **reference** (underlined) and **predication** (bolded):

- "the hammer" (line 006)
 "the hammer of Thor" (line 009)
 "the sword of light" (line 010)
 "the sword of darkness" (line 012)
 "the sword is dark" (line 015)
 "the blade is black" (line 018)
 "this is black" (line 019)

The types of people associated with these changing terms allow students to position Mr. Bader in a distinctive way. When we discuss the component "construing indexicals" below, we will see in more detail how attention to this progression of reference and predication can help us analyze the social action occurring in the speech event. For now, we emphasize simply that the different terms used to describe these objects are associated with different types of people and activities. Referring to a sword as a "blade," for example, is an expression that only certain kinds of people would unselfconsciously use—fans of movies and books from the fantasy genre, for instance.

When referring and predicating, speakers must select from among alternatives in paradigmatic sets. This applies to names, labels and descriptions. For example, what does it mean to refer to someone as an "attorney" as opposed to a "lawyer"? Both pick out the same group of professionals, but they presuppose different things about how much respect the speaker has for those people. "Ambulance chaser" is an alternative way of referring to the same group, one that has different presuppositions. Similarly, to describe someone as "assertive," as opposed to "aggressive" or "belligerent," presupposes different things about the character of the referent and the evaluation being made by the speaker. Evaluative indexicals

are any signs that presuppose some evaluation of the people or objects being described, of the speaker, audience and others in the narrating event, or of relevant context—any signs that associate people or objects with some recognizable social type and evaluate that type.

An **emblem** is a particular kind of evaluative indexical, a sign or group of signs that presupposes and characterizes a recognizable social type (Agha, 2007). Take, for example, the term “little boy,” which Pete uses in lines 016–017 when he says “you wish you were a little boy again.” Various signs might be recognized as emblems of a “little boy” persona. If this is a social type that plays a significant role in the social action occurring in the classroom, we would expect other indexicals to presuppose it. It could be that Mr. Bader discussing hammers (lines 007, 009), Thor (line 009) and swords (line 013) also indicates “boyhood” to Pete—given widely circulating cultural associations between toy weapons, mythological superheroes and gendered childhood play. If this is in fact the case, we would have the three required elements of an emblem: (1) a sign or group of signs (“hammer,” “Thor,” “swords”); (2) a social type (“little boy”); and (3) a person for whom the sign is an emblem of the type (Pete and other participants who are familiar with this emblem).

Agha (2007) describes how emblems, and evaluative indexicals more broadly, fall on a continuum between **enregistered** and **emergent**. An enregistered emblem or indexical presupposes an established link between a sign and its social presuppositions. “Skateboard people” at line 021 presupposes a recognizable, largely male youth subculture that is associated with a constellation of features—people who ride skateboards like to hang out, are laid back, oppose themselves to mainstream culture in some ways, and so on. This set of associations, or the **voice** indexed by the term “skateboard people,” has become enregistered for a large group of speakers in the U.S. Over several decades, more and more people have come to associate the riding of skateboards with this social type. An emergent emblem or indexical, on the other hand, has a more situation-specific meaning, with some important presuppositions having emerged recently in a given group or interaction. When Tyisha became a “beast,” for example, teachers and students could subsequently presuppose that terms like “beast” and “animal” presupposed Tyisha herself. A comment like “some people behave like animals,” in that classroom after the example described in Chapter 1, could be interpreted as a comment about Tyisha to people who participated in that classroom interaction—but it would not indicate that to someone familiar with more enregistered presuppositions but unfamiliar with that particular classroom conversation. Most discourse analyses rely more heavily on enregistered evaluative indexicals, but emergent meanings are often important as well.

Emblems and other evaluative indexicals can be linguistic or nonlinguistic signs. So far we have been concerned solely with linguistic signs. The words “hammer,” “Thor” and “sword” might be emblems of the “little boy” persona. Evaluative indexicals can go beyond individual words as well. The use of a particular language, dialect or register can also be an emblem of a social type. For example, speaking a certain kind of French in a certain kind of place and

time might be recognized as an emblem of a cosmopolitan persona. In addition, nonlinguistic signs, such as actions (e.g., gestures) or displays (e.g., clothing), can be read as indexes and sometimes evaluations of social types. Chapter 5 presents an analysis that focuses in significant part on nonlinguistic signs, when we discuss work by Rymes (2014) on pathways of events in new media.

Iteratively selecting indexicals

Deictics, reported speech and evaluative indexicals play important roles in discourse analysis that focuses on social action. We have sketched how each type of sign can communicate information about narrated and narrating events, about the types of social action occurring and about the social and interactional positions of participants. These three types of signs do not always play a crucial role in the social action accomplished through discourse, but we advise discourse analysts to start with these three types of indexicals because they often communicate important information about social action. We thus recommend that discourse analysts systematically identify the deictics, reported speech and evaluative indexicals in a text, picking them out before proceeding to further interpretation in components 2 and 3. Going systematically through a piece of discourse and identifying these three types of signs also establishes somewhat greater validity for the analysis, since systematic attention to all instances of these types makes an analyst less likely to seize on one interpretation and ignore other possibilities.

The three types of indexicals differ in one crucial respect. Deictics and reported speech are tokens of grammatical categories that can be identified relatively easily, without much dispute among analysts. Identifying evaluative indexicals requires more extensive knowledge of social context and cultural models, and different interpreters will sometimes disagree about what signs count as evaluative indexicals, what social type an evaluative indexical is indexing, and/or what evaluation is being made of that type. The class of evaluative indexicals is indefinitely large, because any sign could conceivably count as an index of a social type and an evaluation of that type, one that has implications for interpreting the social action in a discursive interaction. It requires substantial interpretation to identify an evaluative indexical, and multiple interpretations may be plausible in any given case. Thus the discourse analyst must have extensive experience with or ethnographic information about the relevant social group in order to identify and interpret evaluative indexicals.

This means that a first pass through a text in Phase 2/Component 1, identifying potentially relevant indexicals, will usually not capture all relevant evaluative indexicals. It is best to note as many as possible, but discourse analysts should not be overly concerned that some will be missed. As we have said, the process of discourse analysis is iterative. The analyst attends to salient indexicals and to the relevant context they index. By attending to deictics, reported speech and some evaluative indexicals, analysts can make inferences about contextualization, about aspects of the context that might be relevant to understanding the positioning

and social action occurring. These inferences lead to provisional construals of the types of social action that salient indexicals and relevant contexts make plausible. Having construed social actions that might be occurring in the interaction, the analyst must then reconsider apparently salient indexicals, probably concluding that some are not so salient in this case and probably identifying others that had not been considered before. This latter group will most likely include indexes that did not appear to be important before a certain account of the narrating event became plausible. After reinterpreting salient indexicals, the analyst reconsiders whether these make certain types of social action more or less likely to be the ones occurring in the interaction.

This interpretive process often goes through several cycles, back and forth from part to whole, from particular salient indexicals to interpretations of the social action occurring across the whole discursive interaction. As analysis proceeds, there will be opportunities for analysts to notice relevant evaluative indexicals that might have been missed during the first pass. The first component in the second phase of our approach to discourse analysis, then, involves the systematic identification of potentially salient indexicals. The analyst should identify all deictics and reported speech, and as many evaluative indexicals as s/he can, expecting that other signs might become salient in future iterations of the analysis.

Phase 2/Component 2: Construing indexicals

In Phase 1 the discourse analyst describes the narrated events, identifying characters and models that might serve as resources for social action in the narrating event. In Phase 2/Component 1 the discourse analyst locates deictics, reported speech and evaluative indexicals that might signal the social action occurring. We focus on these three types of indexicals because of their potential to signal the social actions accomplished through discourse. But how do we know whether a given narrated pattern is in fact a resource for social action in the narrating event? How do we know whether an indexical sign is in fact important to signaling the social action occurring, and how do we know what it means? We can only answer these questions by, in Phase 2/Component 2, attending to **metapragmatic** processes (Silverstein, 1976, 1993). "Metapragmatics" refers to the signs and processes that describe how language performs action. "Metalanguage" is language referring to and characterizing language. "Metasemantics" is a more familiar subset of metalanguage, involving linguistic signs (e.g., explicit definitions) that describe the semantic meaning of linguistic forms. "Metapragmatics" is a less familiar type of metalanguage, describing linguistic signs that sometimes explicitly denote but more often implicitly organize the social action accomplished through discourse.

Metapragmatic models construe indexical signs. A given sign might have more than one potential implication for the social action occurring in the narrating event. In the example of Tyisha the beast in Chapter 1, her utterance "my goal is to win in Nintendo" could have had various implications. It could have pointed to potentially relevant contexts that supported more than one metapragmatic

model of the interaction. Perhaps Tyisha just said that while trying to win an academic argument with the teacher, and it did not really matter whether or not she plays video games. Perhaps she was joking when she suggested that video games were one of her primary interests, and perhaps the teachers and students knew that she was in fact a diligent student. Or perhaps she is actually interested in video games to the exclusion of other activities like schoolwork. These are three possible models for construing that utterance and the indexical signs in it. As shown in Chapter 1, the evaluative indexical "Nintendo" in fact came to presuppose a model of intellectually deadening video game activities and students like Tyisha who allegedly favor such activities over intellectually productive activities.

In Phase 2/Component 2 the discourse analyst attends to salient indexicals and the context that they make salient, then infers which metapragmatic models might make sense of this context and describe the social action occurring in the discursive interaction. In other words, the analyst develops provisional accounts of the entextualization occurring in the discursive interaction. In this section we describe how metapragmatic discourse can be **explicit** or **implicit**. Then we describe two key processes for discourse analysts to focus on, as they identify the metapragmatic construals that participants make of salient indexicals. We introduced the first process in Chapter 1: through **voicing**, speakers identify narrated characters as having identifiable social roles. Through **evaluation**, speakers position themselves with respect to these voices, taking evaluative stances on the voiced characters, on other features of the social world and on other participants.

Explicit metapragmatic discourse

Metapragmatic discourse can be explicit. For example, if a speaker says "he speaks Korean too much," the speaker is explicitly characterizing someone's use of language. If a speaker says "you insulted me," the speaker is explicitly labeling prior discourse as an insult. Explicit metapragmatic discourse can be useful to a discourse analyst interpreting an interaction. At its most explicit, metapragmatic discourse can gloss the functions of specific talk—as in, "when I said 'my goal is to win in Nintendo,' I was just joking." If participants and analysts believe the speaker in such a case, they have a plausible account of what is occurring at that point in the discursive interaction, both the indexical signs that were salient and an account of the social action that occurred. Of course, speakers may be lying or they may be mistaken in their explicit metapragmatic accounts, so an analyst must continue to gather information about alternative interpretations despite the presence of such statements.

Explicitness is not a cleanly bounded category, and metapragmatic statements range from maximally explicit to less so. In the central example, Pete cries "racist" in line 020. Here the use of the word "racist" might overtly label prior language as "racist." But we do not yet know what language is being referred to or what precisely is racist about it. Pete does not give a full and explicit

metapragmatic account of what the prior discourse was doing and what types of people other participants are, so full analysis of this example will also require examination of implicit metapragmatic processes. But through his use of that one explicit word, we do know that Pete is metapragmatically characterizing some segment of immediately preceding speech and evaluating it as “racist.”

Implicit metapragmatic discourse

If a person says “he speaks Korean too much,” after someone speaks in Korean, this explicitly characterizes the use of Korean negatively. But metapragmatic construal can also happen implicitly. Instead of saying “he speaks Korean too much,” the subsequent speaker could have said “I’m getting dizzy” or could have rolled his or her eyes. These subsequent signs might tacitly construe the use of Korean negatively. Such tacit commentary often has implications for social action. For example, when Luke introduces “the sword of light” in line 010, we do not yet know what significance (if any) this phrase will have for the interaction. By looking for tacit metapragmatic commentary, we can begin to see how participants are construing this term. Rather than ignore Luke’s contribution, Mr. Bader mentions the Roman figures of Diocletian and Damocles, central characters in stories that feature swords. Luke, although it is unclear whether he understands Mr. Bader’s response, elaborates on his initial utterance by suggesting instead “the sword of darkness” in line 012. Mr. Bader then repeats “the sword of darkness” and continues by saying that it will be “coming to those who act in antisocial behavior.” Joo-eun enters the discussion and asks if “the sword/blade is black” (lines 015, 018), after which Mr. Bader confirms: “this is black.” Thus three participants take up the term “sword,” making it increasingly central to the discussion, and together they make the sword seem increasingly dark and perhaps more menacing (going from “light” to “dark” to “black”). These are all instances of implicit metapragmatic commentary, which together make it more and more likely that the sword, its character and color will be relevant to some aspect of the discursive interaction. But its full implications are not yet clear.

Following the discussion about swords, Pete cries “racist” in line 020. Yet the term “racist” is not metapragmatically construed in any explicit way. There is no metapragmatic discourse after Pete’s comment—such as “that’s preposterous” or “stop calling Mr. Bader a racist”—no repetition or elaboration, such as “yes, that’s obviously racist,” and no implicit acts of acknowledgment, such as nervous giggles, head turns or audible inhalations of shock. Instead, Mr. Bader uses the deictic “now” to transition abruptly from the lengthy discussion about swords to the curricular task at hand: “we are recognizing the order of events or steps on page eleven.” Is Mr. Bader’s move in lines 021–022 implicit metapragmatic commentary on Pete’s comment, or not? Was Mr. Bader’s abrupt transition a response to Pete’s racist accusation—perhaps trying to close off the possibility that something racist was said in their discussion—or was it a coincidence that Mr. Bader transitioned to another topic at that moment? Looking only at the segment provided above, we cannot answer with certainty.

Discourse analysis is an interpretive activity, not an algorithmic one in which correct answers can be derived. As described in the last chapter, there is no one-to-one correspondence between form and function, between a sign and the social actions that it signals. In some discursive interactions relatively univocal signs unproblematically signal the action occurring, but in general the signs that signal social action could support more than one interpretation. In order to figure out which indexicals are salient and what these indexicals signal, discourse analysts must select relevant context and infer appropriate metapragmatic models of the social action occurring. They do this in part by attending to voicing and evaluation.

Voicing

For discourse analysts interested in the social actions accomplished through language use, metapragmatic construal centrally involves the social identification of narrated characters and narrating participants. Participants and analysts identify the social action occurring, adopting a metapragmatic model of the discursive interaction, in significant part as they identify narrated characters and narrating participants as socially recognizable types of people who typically participate in some type of action. Mikhail Bakhtin (1935/1981) calls the establishment of such recognizable types “voicing.” A “voice” (Wortham, 2001) or “figure of personhood” (Agha, 2005) is a recognizable social position. Take, for example, the “racist” voice (Hill, 2008). Many Americans today might associate this voice with certain kinds of racial identities (e.g., white), spatial locations (e.g., the American South), historical periods (e.g., before the Civil Rights Movement), musical tastes (e.g., country music), and so on. We can voice narrated characters or narrating participants as racists by drawing on the types of indexicals discussed in Phase 2/Component 2: spatial and temporal deictics (e.g., “racism was a big problem down South a while back”), reported speech (e.g., “racists say, ‘I’m not a racist but . . .’” [Bonilla-Silva & Forman, 2000]), reference and predication (e.g., “those racists are uneducated”) and other emblems of the racist voice (e.g., “they drive pick-up trucks”).

For the racist voice to be recognizable to others, it must circulate across different temporal and spatial scales. The link between indexical signs and a social type or voice has what Agha (2007) calls a **social domain**, a social group within which this association circulates and is recognizable. Social domains can range from large to small, and they can expand and contract. For example, “jocks” and “burnouts” (Eckert, 1989) are social categories that circulate widely in American high schools, perhaps reaching their broadest social domain in the late twentieth century. Contemporary figures that circulate in more restricted domains might include “wiggers” (Bucholtz and Lopez, 2011), “fobs” (Reyes, 2007), and “model minorities,” whether Asian American (Lee, 1996) or Latino (Wortham, Mortimer and Allard, 2009). Voicing also depends on **voicing contrasts** (Agha, 2005). For example, the racist figure is often positioned against the “liberal” figure and the jock against the burnout, with each voice emerging only as it is positioned relative to other voices.

As described in detail by Wortham (2001), after identifying central characters in the narrated events discourse analysts should look for salient indexicals that voice those characters. Tyisha had “the same goal my cat had, to go to sleep, and get up and eat” and “to win in Nintendo.” These evaluative indexicals presuppose a voice—the lazy, intellectually unengaged teenager—that in fact ends up being assigned to Tyisha in the narrated event. The discourse analysis sketched in the last chapter (and described in detail in Wortham, 2006) presents many more indexical cues that together established this voice for Tyisha the narrated character. In the central example in this chapter, the teacher and students explicitly describe and implicitly presuppose the voices of “little boy” (lines 016–017), “racist” (line 020) and “skateboard people” (line 021). Pete accuses Mr. Bader of wanting to be a “little boy,” for example, but in the short segment we have analyzed so far it is not yet clear whether this voice will become firmly established.

Once voices are established in the narrated event, they can have implications for the narrating event. Tyisha the narrated character is voiced as a “beast,” and then she herself is positioned as an outcast in the narrating event, as less promising than the other students. In the example from this chapter, consider how Pete accuses Mr. Bader of wanting to be a “little boy” then quickly cries “racist.” The juxtaposition of these two voices—the former potentially lighthearted, the latter potentially dangerous—might have implications for social action in the narrating event. The playful teasing through which the “little boy” accusation emerges might suggest that the “racist” accusation is playful as well. If the accusation of racism was made impishly, then it may not have serious implications for Mr. Bader himself.

Voices are central to discourse analysis that focuses on the social actions accomplished in discursive interaction. Characters that appear in narrated events are inevitably voiced, identified (clearly or ambiguously) as belonging to recognizable social types. Voicing is accomplished through signs like deictics, reported speech and evaluative indexicals. Analysts must attend to these signs and the context they make relevant, then infer the voices being assigned to narrated characters. Wortham (2001) describes a step-by-step procedure for analyzing voicing, and the examples in Chapters 3–5 illustrate our approach to uncovering voices. The process of voicing is important for two reasons: it gives the analyst a fuller picture of the narrated events, and it provides resources that speakers use to perform social action in the narrating events. In order to understand more fully how voicing contributes to social action, we need to explore how it inevitably involves evaluation.

Evaluation and positioning

Voicing always produces **speaker alignments** (Agha, 2005; Bakhtin, 1935/1981). When speakers presuppose a voice for a narrated character or narrating participant, they also position themselves with respect to that voice and evaluate it. When choosing between the terms “attorney,” “lawyer” and “ambulance

chaser,” for example, a speaker communicates something about the characteristics of this group—perhaps that it is composed of high-status, respectable people or lower-status people who do not deserve respect—and simultaneously communicates something about his or her evaluation of the group. Discourse analysts study the complex ways in which participants position themselves with respect to the messages they deliver, the people they interact with and the larger social world.

Evaluation happens when participants position themselves with respect to voices deployed in narrated events. When Tyisha says “my goal is to win in Nintendo” and another student replies “that’s your goal?” in an incredulous tone of voice, this other student negatively evaluates the voice of an intellectually unengaged video gamer. **Interactional positioning** happens when participants position themselves with respect to one another in the narrating event. When a student and then one of the teachers say to Tyisha “so you are like an animal,” they are positioning themselves as fundamentally different from Tyisha, as more rational and civilized than she is. Evaluation and positioning happen simultaneously, but it is useful to distinguish them for analytic purposes.

The central example from Mr. Bader’s class involves both evaluation and interactional positioning. Evidence is relatively limited from the short segment given above, but Pete probably evaluated the racist voice negatively. In most mainstream institutions like schools, calling something racist also means evaluating it as immoral. We would normally presuppose that Pete is positioning himself against racism, and against whatever person or thing he is characterizing as racist in the classroom. Pete may be positioning Mr. Bader and his classmates (or at least their discourse) as racist, and positioning himself as morally superior to them because he is not racist and because he is able to detect covert racism.

There is another possibility, however. It may be less that Pete is evaluating the racist voice negatively in order to position himself as nonracist, and more that he is constructing a clever persona by presupposing a humorous metapragmatic model that has become prevalent in recent years. A decade or two ago calling someone a racist was normally a serious accusation, in most mainstream settings, and it is of course still serious in many contexts. But crying “racist” has become a joke as well. In other words, a robust branching pathway of speech events has developed, in which accusations of “racist” have become more and more likely to be a joke than a serious description of morally offensive behavior. There are other pathways of speech events in which accusations of racism remain serious and should be considered as such. But popular discourse also contains this new way of using and construing the accusation, and the metapragmatic model of crying “racist” circulates densely in certain kinds of popular culture that is avidly consumed by people like Pete and his friends. In order to explore how this dense pathway of crying “racist” events might help us construe Pete’s utterance, we need to go beyond this one speech event. We do this in the next major section below, after we discuss the third component of configuring indexicals.

In Phase 2/Component 1, the discourse analyst identifies potentially salient signs—like deictics, reported speech and evaluative indexicals—that might signal the social action occurring. These signs point to potentially relevant context. In Phase 2/Component 2, the discourse analyst makes inferences from this potentially relevant context. Some of these inferences involve voicing, identifying the types of people and events being described in the narrated events. Some inferences are about the narrating event, inferring how speakers evaluate those voices and position themselves with respect to each other. These inferences are provisional, however, because newly salient indexicals and relevant context can emerge, as the iterative process of selecting and construing indexicals takes place. In the next section we discuss the discursive mechanisms through which this dialectic of contextualization and entextualization eventually ends, such that participants and analysts know what type of action is occurring, as a configuration of indexical signs solidifies.

Phase 2/Component 3: Configuring indexicals

Explicit or implicit metapragmatic discourse indicates how participants and analysts should interpret key indexicals, making certain metapragmatic models the most plausible ones for construing the social action occurring in a discursive interaction. As we have described, however, the process of interpreting a discursive interaction is not unidirectional. There are no unequivocal indexical signs that indicate how participants and analysts must understand the social action occurring. Neither do metapragmatic models have priority over indexicals, determining the meaning of an event regardless of the indexicals present. Instead, there is a back-and-forth, part-whole interpretive process, what (following Silverstein, 1992, 1993) we called in Chapter 1 the dialectic between contextualization and entextualization. Indexicals indicate which metapragmatic models are most likely in play, then those models organize the indexicals—making some of them appear more salient and making clear what context they index. But then these indexicals and newly relevant context lead participants and analysts to reconsider appropriate metapragmatic models, and so on.

This is a familiar interpretive process, the “hermeneutic circle” (Heidegger, 1927/1962). Construal of a whole text depends on interpretations of individual parts, but those parts are selected and construed based on a presupposed account of the whole. In theory, there is no end to this circle. In practice, people interpret their discursive interactions, most often unproblematically, all the time. How do they do it? Stated in abstract terms, unproblematic interpretation of a discursive interaction happens as a configuration of mutually presupposing indexical signs emerges and solidifies, locking into place a mutually reinforcing construal of key indexicals and a metapragmatic model of the overall social action—a process described by Silverstein (1992, 1993). In Phase 2/Component 3, discourse analysts trace these emerging and solidifying configurations.

This section describes how discourse analysts do it. In Phase 2/Component 3 we examine how indexicals are configured in ways that make entextualization

possible. The process of entextualization describes how an account of social action emerges over the course of an interaction, as indexical signs and metapragmatic models come to buttress each other. Entextualization involves solidification, as the meaning of an event—the voices in the narrated events, the evaluation, positioning and social action in the narrating event—becomes more robust and more highly presupposable over time. We will illustrate this process by describing the textual parallelisms created in Mr. Bader’s class above, in which, as weapons become increasingly dangerous, they become increasingly dark.

Entextualization

As described in Chapter 1, we adopt a “consequentialist” view of meaning in discourse. Some elements of meaning are decontextualizable, with a linguistic form having in some respects the same meaning in whatever setting (Putnam, 1975). Grammatical categories capture some such elements—“boy,” for example, is a count noun, and it can be the subject of mental state verbs, among other enduring properties. Thus we know that, whatever context we utter the word “boy” in, the entity thus denoted is expected to be physically discrete and capable of human mental activities. But in most respects meaning is context dependent or indexical. The meaning of an utterance depends in significant part on how it is taken up by subsequent utterances. The concept of **uptake** is central to a consequentialist view of meaning (Garfinkel, 1967). Rather than understand meaning as fully locatable in preexisting definitions or speaker intentions, the meaning of a sign depends in substantial part on how it is taken up by subsequent speakers and utterances, on how it is metapragmatically construed, explicitly or implicitly, in subsequent discourse. This brings us to “entextualization,” as described in the last chapter, the process through which signs are recontextualized such that an account of social action emerges to organize the discursive interaction.

Most discursive interactions could be interpreted in more than one way. What sounds like a compliment can turn out to be an insult (“Wow, you’re on time today!”). What seems to be lunch with a friend can become a therapy session. What starts as routine classroom management can end as racist discourse. Entextualization is the process through which an interaction with indeterminate meaning comes to be recognizable as one type of event or another, as having been a recognizable type of social action (Bauman and Briggs, 1990; Silverstein, 1976; Silverstein and Urban, 1996). Without entextualization there could not be a recognizable event apart from the stream of discursive activity. Entextualization establishes an event, its boundaries and its meaning. Entextualization is somewhat like the gelling of Jell-O, as it transitions from a liquid to a solid state. When Tyisha was talking about playing Nintendo, sleeping and eating, it was still not clear what implications this might have for her position in the narrating classroom interaction. But around the moment when the teacher said “you are like an animal,” her position as a disruptive outcast, as someone less worthy than the other students and teachers, became more solid and presupposable.

We can recast our question about Mr. Bader's class in these terms. The utterance "racist" at line 020 is a sign that needs interpretation. It is not explicitly metapragmatically framed, so we need to identify the implicit metapragmatic construal that indicates what sort of social action it helps to signal. This construal would normally occur over time, as other signs come to presuppose a convergent interpretation. The back-and-forth, part-and-whole circle of interpretation, from indexical signs to metapragmatic construals and back, comes to a provisional end when a set of indexical signs locks together in what Silverstein (1993) calls a **poetic structure**. Poetics in this sense involves the recurrent patterning of indexicals. This "text-metricity," as Jakobson (1960) calls it, emerges from textual parallelisms in which similar linguistic forms recur. In our terms, speakers create **configurations** of mutually presupposing indexicals.

When analyzing the discourse immediately preceding Pete's utterance, we asked whether Hyo was reporting the speech of Mr. Bader in line 004 when he says "send you to the office" and in line 006 when he says "I will bring the hammer down." By looking at an emerging configuration of indexical signs, we can begin to answer this question:

- "I definitely want to **send somebody to the office**" (Mr. Bader in line 001)
 "I will . . . **send you to the office**" (Mr. Bader and Hyo in lines 003–004)
 "I will . . . take you to the office personally" (Mr. Bader in lines 003, 005)
 "I will bring the hammer down" (Hyo in line 006)

There are two overlapping poetic patternings across these text segments. One is "send [pronoun] to the office," and the other is "I will [verb phrase]." After Mr. Bader says "send somebody to the office," Hyo repeats this phrase—changing only one word, "somebody" to "you." Mr. Bader also uses an "I will" sentence structure, and Hyo echoes with threats that adopt this structure. These two parallelisms, in which Mr. Bader leads and Hyo follows, provide more evidence that Hyo is, in fact, speaking as if he were Mr. Bader in lines 004 and 006. Hyo may be reporting anticipated speech of Mr. Bader or reformulating and suggesting new threats for Mr. Bader to use.

The progression of reference and predication about hammers and swords, described above, also involves poetic parallelism, a configuration of mutually presupposing indexical signs:

- "the hammer" (line 006)
 "the hammer of Thor" (line 009)
 "the sword of light" (line 010)
 "the sword of darkness" (line 012)
 "the sword is dark" (line 015)
 "the blade is black" (line 018)
 "this is black" (line 019)

Several parallelisms occur in these segments. There are repetitions of the head of the noun phrase, "the [hammer/sword/blade]," and the two characterizations

of this noun, "of [Thor/light/darkness]" and "is [dark/black]." The poetic progression involves shifts in both slots. In the head of the noun phrase, the weapon becomes increasingly dangerous, changing from "hammer" to "sword" to "blade." In the characterizations of this object, the weapon becomes increasingly dark: from "light" to "dark" to "black." These configurations will help us interpret the social action occurring in Mr. Bader's classroom.

Let us return to Pete's puzzling utterance about racism. This utterance takes up the emergent configurations just described. That is, as the unfolding discourse links increasing forms of violence (from "hammer" to "sword" to "blade") to the darkening of those forms (from "light" to "dark" to "black"), Pete seems to presuppose wider U.S. racial ideologies that link blackness—as an emblem of a racialized identity—to negative qualities like danger and brutality. Pete construes the configuration of implicit indexical links between "black" and violence and characterizes the preceding discussion as racist. His crying "racist" entextualizes the preceding discourse as racist, presupposing an ideology that associates violence with blackness.

Our analysis so far has focused on the discourse in Mr. Bader's classroom, using it as an example to illustrate the various components of our approach to discourse analysis within the speech event. Table 2.2 summarizes the steps in our approach.

The final step is to identify the positioning and social action occurring in the narrating event. We have argued that Pete is probably crying "racist," making a joke by accusing Mr. Bader of using the word "black" inappropriately. In order to understand this construal of the narrating event more fully, however, we need to examine other speech events in the branching pathway across which people cry "racist."

Table 2.2 The components of our approach to within-event discourse analysis

Map Narrated Events	Describe the characters, actions and events in the various narrated events, perhaps representing them visually
↓	
Select Indexicals/ Relevant Context	Attend initially to deictics, reported speech and evaluative indexicals
↕	
Configure Indexicals	Identify configurations of indexicals that emerge and collectively presuppose relevant context and support some model of the social action occurring
↕	
Construe Indexicals	Through an iterative process, infer construals of social action that could explain the salient indexicals, then reconsider which indexicals might be salient, then infer a revised account
↓	
Identify Positioning/Action in Narrating Events	Draw conclusions about the social action occurring in the narrating event

Across events

Our model for discourse analysis of discrete speech events—which involves the mapping of narrated events and then the selection, construal and configuration of indexicals—shows that individual events can never be understood in isolation. Reported speech, to take one of our central types of indexicals, depends on links across quoted and quoting events, and so it cannot be understood without reference to at least two linked events. Emblems presuppose associations between indexical forms and social types, associations that are established through branching chains of events that extend far beyond any individual speech event. So even discourse analysis of discrete events must extend beyond a focal event, relying on knowledge of specific other events (like those quoted or presupposed in other ways) and background knowledge about signs and social types from the larger social world which have been established across many events.

When we say “discourse analysis beyond the speech event” we mean more than this type of cross-event dependence, however. As described in Chapter 1, this book applies discourse analysis to an object more extensive than a discrete discursive interaction or a repeated type of interaction. We focus on **pathways** of linked speech events, a series of events that presuppose each other and have some temporal direction. Many important social processes involve such pathways. Socialization and ontogenetic development necessarily involve individual change across a series of events (Wortham, 2005). The historical emergence of social types, together with habitual evaluations of those types, necessarily involves linked series of events (Agha, 2007). In this section we further develop our approach to discourse analysis, sketching how the tools we have described can be used to study trajectories of events.

In the second section below we illustrate discourse analysis beyond the speech event by introducing more interactions, from the fifth grade classroom at the Asian American supplementary school and from television comedies, in which people cry “racist” and by considering mass media discourses about what crying “racist” means. We show how a discourse analyst can trace cross-event linkages that are established across such events. Thus we explore how racist discourse becomes **enregistered** and widely recognized in contemporary U.S. society. Before moving to this illustration, we review the concept of enregisterment and the three additional components required for discourse analysis across speech events.

Enregisterment

As described in Chapter 1, Agha (2007) defines “enregisterment” as the process through which signs come reliably to signal certain social types, for some group of speakers, over time. Enregisterment is analogous to the process of entextualization in many ways, except that it occurs across events. As an example of enregisterment Agha (2007) describes how the association between the phonological regularities described as British “Received Pronunciation” and a speaker

of Standard English did not exist at the beginning of the nineteenth century, but was well established a century later. He shows how the change occurred through a linked series of speech events in which the hearer in one event circulated a sign or model when speaking in a subsequent event. Hearing someone associate a phonological regularity from Received Pronunciation with educated, refined character, a hearer might presuppose the same association in subsequent speech. As more hearers and speakers did this, the sign–identity linkage circulated more widely. Agha describes how readers of prescriptivist works that specified “correct” pronunciation in nineteenth-century Britain sometimes wrote novels that circulated Received Pronunciation more widely as an index of refined social identity. Over time, as links between pronunciation and models of personhood traveled across branching pathways, more people recognized and accepted the association between these phonological forms and personal characteristics like “educated” and “refined.”

Enregisterment involves the creation of links across pathways of events, through which a larger social process occurs—like the establishment of a social type (refined, educated Britons) and the linguistic signs that index it (the phonological regularities of Received Pronunciation). For smaller scale cross-event processes, too—like the emergence of a social identity for someone like Tyisha across weeks or months in classroom discourse—the appropriate metapragmatic model for understanding the student’s identity may not solidify in one speech event or one class session. Instead, as illustrated in Chapter 1, it may take several linked events for an identity to emerge, and that identity might subsequently shift across a pathway of subsequent events. Discourse analysis across speech events traces the linked events across which enregisterment occurs.

As described in Chapter 1, the solidification of cross-event pathways is similar in many respects to within-event entextualization, the gelling of indexes and metapragmatic models that buttress each other within an event. Early in a pathway, like Tyisha’s pathway through the classroom discussions across that academic year, the nature of an emerging identity might be ambiguous. More than one model might conceivably describe the focal person’s identity or the ongoing type of social action occurring. Just the discussion of Tyisha the courageous liar, taken by itself, could have merely involved teachers and students teasing Tyisha, or it could have been an aberration. Across events, however, as teachers and students continued to talk with and about Tyisha, a clearer identity emerged for her. The discussion of Tyisha the beast reinforced Tyisha’s status as an outcast, as someone different from the other students who was likely to disrupt classroom activities and did not follow mainstream social norms. The pathway became more rigid, as it were, and subsequent events were increasingly constrained by the mutually reinforcing models of identity that had been applied to her in earlier events.

Pathways become more rigid in this way as a set of mutually presupposing indexicals emerges across events. Within an event, the cycle of iterative part–whole interpretation comes to an end when a set of indexicals and the metapragmatic models they make salient come to buttress each other, as a configuration of indexical signs gels and presupposes relevant context that supports consistent

inferences about the types of social action occurring. Across events, something similar happens. Indexicals across several events come to presuppose each other and to presuppose certain models of social identity and social action, thus making the pathway more rigid and the metapragmatic model more easily presupposable across events.

Discourse analysts must do three things to trace cross-event pathways, in addition to analyzing contextualization and entextualization within discrete events. First, we must **identify linked events** that make up a pathway. We do this by describing how quotation, parallelism across events and other devices establish linkages and thus create **cross-event context**—linked events across a pathway that become a special kind of context crucial to enregisterment. In the case of Tyisha from Chapter 1, for example, Figures 1.5 and 1.6 represent the parallel narrated voices, narrating positions and narrating evaluations across the events of Tyisha the courageous liar and Tyisha the beast. The robust parallels across both narrated and narrating events on these two days indicate that the events are linked as part of a pathway. They form cross-event context for each other, context crucial to interpreting the emergence of Tyisha's social identity across these and other events in the pathway.

Second, we must **delineate cross-event configurations** of signs, describing how indexical signs from more than one event come to presuppose each other and create relevant context for interpreting both individual events and pathways across them. In Chapter 1, for example, we described various signs that helped characterize Tyisha as an immoral, disruptive outcast. In the discussion of Tyisha the courageous liar, the expressions "lie to her face," "lying in another person mother face" and "tell her this big bold-faced lie" accumulate to voice Tyisha as unethical. In the discussion of Tyisha the beast that occurred a week later, "play Nintendo" and "go to sleep, get up and eat" presuppose a related voice of someone wasting her life and refusing to participate in socially valued pursuits. In the courageous liar discussion, the teacher implies that Tyisha is not cooperating with others to move the conversation forward, saying "I know you never bought into it, but the rest of us seem to be using this as a definition." In the beast discussion, the teacher says "you throw out seventeen things and then nobody can even begin to address any of these things." These claims presuppose similar models of Tyisha's disruptive behavior in the narrating events, and they thus form cross-event configurations that hold these events together and collectively presuppose a narrated voice (immoral and beast-like), a narrating position (outcast from the core group of teachers and students) and a consistent type of social action (exclusion) across the pathway.

Third, we must **trace the shape of pathways**, showing how they become rigid and thereby accomplish processes like socialization and learning. This requires inference from cross-event configurations, in which participants and analysts construe a cross-event process like the social identification of Tyisha. As sketched in Chapter 1 and described in detail by Wortham (2006), Tyisha becomes a disruptive outcast across several classroom conversations from December through February. Her pathway shifts from the direction it was going early in the academic

Table 2.3 The phases and components of discourse analysis beyond the speech event

Phase 1: IDENTIFYING LINKED EVENTS AND MAPPING NARRATED EVENTS	What events are linked in a pathway, through reported speech, parallelism, shared referents or other devices, such that the events might together accomplish some social process? What characters, objects and events are referred to and characterized in the narrated events of these linked discursive interactions?
Phase 2/Component 1: SELECTING INDEXICALS AND IDENTIFYING RELEVANT CROSS-EVENT CONTEXT	Attending particularly to types of signs that often signal the social action accomplished through discourse, which indexical signs become salient both within and across events? What context do these signs make relevant—attending both to larger social context and to cross-event context, to how signs index other events in the trajectory?
Phase 2/Component 2: CONSTRUING INDEXICALS AND TRACING SHAPE OF PATHWAYS	Which accounts of voicing, evaluation, positioning and social action make sense of salient indexical signs and allow participants and analysts to interpret narrated and narrating events? How do these accounts organize both individual events and the pathway across events?
Phase 2/Component 3: CONFIGURING INDEXICALS AND DELINEATING CROSS- EVENT CONFIGURATIONS	How do salient indexical signs coalesce into stable configurations within and across events, such that relevant context, recognizable types of social action and more rigid pathways are established?
Phase 3: INTERPRETING SOCIAL ACTION AND IDENTIFYING CROSS-EVENT PROCESSES	What account best explains the positioning and social action occurring in the narrating event (or across the pathway of narrating events)?

year. She stops being another good student and becomes identified as disruptive. Later in the spring her identity changes again, and she becomes a reasoned dissenter instead of a disruptive outcast.

We illustrate these three components of discourse analysis across speech events briefly here, with more data from the Asian American supplementary school classroom and short examples from more widely circulating media discourse. Table 2.3 describes the steps in discourse analysis beyond the speech event. The next three chapters illustrate our approach in more detail.

A second example: Crying "racist" in classroom interaction again

The following excerpt comes from a conversation that occurred two months after the central example from Mr. Bader's classroom. It was recorded at the same school, and contained most of the same students, but took place in a different classroom with a different teacher. Here again a student cries "racist"

during a classroom conversation. In this interaction the teacher, Mrs. Turner, is explaining a homework assignment on gun control. Mrs. Turner and the students are discussing the Columbine shooting—an event in which two students shot many people at their school in 1999—as a sample topic for their essay.

Segment 2: *Goths with guns*

- 030 Mrs. Turner: these were not your (2.0) typical high school students, s- th- the
 031 rest of the students at school were not like that. it was this
 032 isolated group that unfortunately turned on their own, yes.
 033 ((calling on Dan whose hand is raised))
 034 Dan: maybe it was like- like jealousy
 035 Mrs. Turner: well whatever the case they were fr- members of a group, i- it
 036 was very much like the gothic- groups, that wear the black
 037 clothes and the- y'know- the- the black makeup and-
 038 Ike: Men in Black ((several students laugh))
 039 Chul: racism
 040 Mrs. Turner: th- the point is these kids got a hold of their parents' guns, now
 041 out west, where you can easily get a gun like this, and shop at a
 042 local Walmart

We will begin by sketching how we might analyze this as a discrete discursive interaction, using the approach we have outlined. The main narrated event involves the students who shot people at Columbine High School in 1999, but there is another narrated event that describes "Goth" people more generally. Figure 2.2 represents these narrated events.

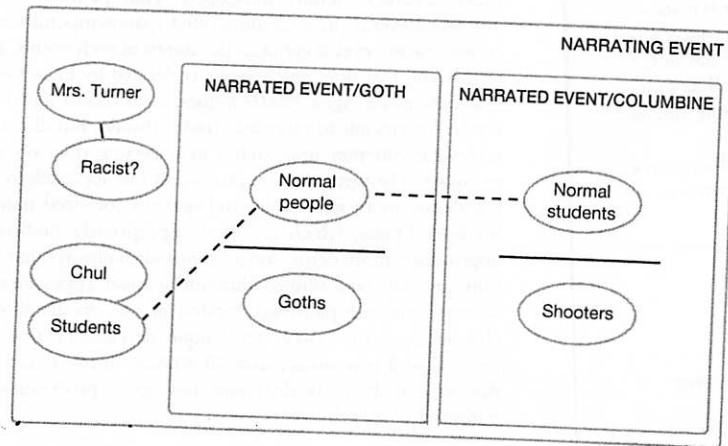


Figure 2.2 Narrated events in the Columbine example

In Phase 2/Component 1, we would select indexicals that might be salient, point to relevant context and support some account of the social action occurring. Exploring the voicing, we would note that the shooters are characterized, using evaluative indexicals, as "not . . . typical" (line 030), "isolated" (line 032), "turn[ing] on their own" (line 032) and "jealous" (line 034). The teacher also compares the shooters to "gothic groups" (line 036). "Goth" is a widely recognized subcultural movement, identifiable through various emblems of the Goth persona—which often include black hair, dark eyeliner, black nail polish, black period clothing and use of pagan or occult symbolism. The color black is central, and the teacher mentions it twice in her description of Goth clothes and makeup (at lines 036–037). After Ike shouts out the title of a Hollywood movie, "Men in Black" (line 038), Chul cries "racism" (line 039). This accusation is not picked up in subsequent discourse, and Mrs. Turner immediately uses the deictic "now" (line 040) and changes the topic back to gun control and the academic task.

In Phase 2/Component 2 of a more extensive analysis of this discursive interaction, we would explore the metapragmatic construals participants make of salient indexicals. In this case speakers presuppose a recognizable voice for the Columbine shooters, characterizing them as deviant. The teacher establishes a voicing contrast between two types of students: the deviant shooters, who are "not your typical high school students" (line 030) and "the rest of the students" (line 031). She evaluates the Goth voice negatively and positions herself and the students as normal people who differ from this deviant group. But then Chul goes in a different direction. Like Pete in the discursive interaction described earlier, Chul apparently positions himself as a morally superior decoder of covert racism. But from this brief excerpt it is not yet clear how this voice relates to the teacher and students themselves and to the social action occurring in the narrating event.

Chul's and Pete's comments share at least three features. First, the cries of "racist" in both interactions immediately follow descriptions of violence that are linked to the term "black." Crying "racist" in these cases is triggered by associations between blackness and deviance or violence. Second, in both cases the teachers react quickly and abruptly, transitioning back to academic topics immediately after the comment. They both use the deictic "now" to recenter the interaction on official classroom business. Third, we argue that both are best read as jokes. The teachers apparently sense some danger in these comments about racism, which explains their abrupt transitions. But both instances belong to a dense, branching pathway of events in contemporary American society in which people cry "racist." In order to understand this event, and the earlier one in Mr. Bader's classroom, we need to examine this pathway. Reyes (2011) provides a detailed analysis of how these students draw on other events in this broad pathway in order to make jokes and unsettle white teachers. Here we will briefly sketch some other events in the pathway.

Other examples: Crying “racist” in mass media

Reyes (2011) describes examples of crying “racist” from the mass media. Consider examples from two situation comedies on network television: *30 Rock* and *Parks and Recreation*. In a 2006 episode of *30 Rock*, a white character (Liz) believed her black co-worker (Tracy) when he told her that he could not read in order to get out of work. When the truth comes out, they have the following confrontation:

Segment 3: 30 Rock

- 050 Liz: you are unbelievable
 051 Tracy: I’m unbelievable? what about your racist mess. thinking a grown
 052 man is illiterate. that’s the subtle racism of lowered expectations.
 053 Bing Crosby said that.
 054 Liz: no, Bill Cosby said that
 055 Tracy: that’s racist
 056 Pete: look, we can all agree Liz is generally pretty racist, the point is
 057 you have people counting on you, you can’t be finding excuses
 058 not to be here
 059 Tracy: but this job is hard

The first accusation of racism here, at lines 051–052, is more substantial. But “that’s racist” at 055 is less clear. In line 052, Tracy loosely cites a quote, whose popularity is often attributed to George W. Bush: “the soft bigotry of low expectations.” But Tracy attributes the quote to Bing Crosby. Even though Tracy delivers the line with a straight face, this is surely a joke to the show’s producers and audience, because Bing Crosby was not known for his anti-racist consciousness. Liz then attributes the quote to Bill Cosby. Bill Cosby has in fact said things like this, and so her correction is at least reasonable. But Tracy accuses her of racism, perhaps because she corrected him for confusing similar sounding names: Bing Crosby and Bill Cosby.

In another example, from *Parks and Recreation* in 2011, a character (Ben) moves in with his married co-workers (April and Andy) and tries to teach them how to do laundry:

Segment 4: Parks and Recreation

- 060 Ben: okay, so you always separate your lights from your darks
 061 April: that’s racist
 062 Ben: and then you get your laundry- where’s your laundry detergent

This is also clearly a joke, because distinguishing between “light” and “dark” clothing does not in this case seem to have anything to do with racism. The two examples of crying “racist” in classroom interactions participate in a broad, branching pathway that includes clearly humorous instances like these.

Instances of crying “racist” have become so established that mass media discourse now contains many explicit metapragmatic commentaries on the phenomenon, as described in Reyes (2011). For example, the website *Know Your Meme* created a webpage in 2010 that defines the phrase, “that’s racist,” as “an expression often used in jest to point out the politically incorrect or racially insensitive nature of a post or comment online.” *All Things Considered*, a news program on National Public Radio, did a story in 2011 on how the phrase “that’s racist” has shifted from a “serious accusation” to a “commonplace quip.” Moreover, animated memes have been widely distributed in online communication that present crying “racist” as a joke.

So the classroom instances of crying “racist” discussed above can be linked to these and other instances of the phenomenon that appear in the mass media. Pete and Chul are most likely trying to link their comments in a pathway with other instances of crying “racist,” ones that they and their peers—but perhaps not their teachers—are familiar with from mass media. Reyes (2011) argues that these instances form a pathway because they share the three features described above: they respond to some comment about blackness, they are short and dropped quickly from subsequent conversation, and they are probably best construed as jokes. This constitutes a cross-event configuration, a set of indexical signs that establish these three features in each event, in parallel fashion. These and many other events constitute a broad, branching pathway of discursive interactions in which some accusations of racism have shifted over the past decade or two from being serious to being humorous.

This pathway is in some respects different from the pathway of events across which Tyisha’s identity developed. That pathway included a dozen or so individual events, in a circumscribed spatiotemporal location. The pathway of crying “racist” events contains thousands of such events, branching widely across virtual and real time and space, accelerated by mass media and social network distribution. As Agha (2007) argues, such robust and branching pathways are similar in principle to more localized pathways. But discourse analysts must adopt somewhat different approaches to collecting data on these different types of pathways. The next three chapters apply our approach to three types of pathways: less dense, more temporally and spatially localized pathways like the one that involved Tyisha, which are most appropriately studied through ethnographic approaches; more dense, longer timescale pathways that emerge across historical time and are best studied through archival approaches; and more dense but shorter timescale pathways created in new media discourse. The next three chapters apply the tools and techniques developed in this chapter to ethnographic, archival and new media data, illustrating in more detail how our approach to discourse analysis can document how social processes are accomplished across pathways of speech events.