Book review:

Paul Chilton, *Analysing Political Discourse: Theory and Practice*, Routledge, 2004 (£18.99, xiv + 226 pp., ISBN 0-415-31472-0).

Language scholars may be tempted to regard a book entitled *Analysing Political Discourse* as 'just politics,' much as politicians may regard linguistic form as 'just semantics.' However, Paul Chilton's new book takes a broad view of political interaction, discourse, and language, which should be of interest to a wide variety of scholars and thinkers. In fact, this brief volume is really two books in one. Part I, 'Political animals as articulate mammals,' consists of four chapters on human beings' cognitive linguistic ability, including thoughts on its evolution and relation to social order, and what might be broadly called politics. Parts II and III give samples of the analysis of political discourse in 'The domestic arena' and 'The global arena.' The discourse analysis presented is greatly influenced by cognitive linguistics and the philosophy of language, and at times may seem more familiar to scholars of semantics and conceptual metaphor than to those in discourse and social interaction. The 'Concluding thoughts' of Part IV seek to tie together these two threads: human interaction, and mental representations of world. Thus, scholars from across a wide spectrum of cognitive and social sciences will find the book noteworthy.

Chapters 1 and 2, entitled 'Politics and Language' and 'Language and Politics,' respectively, define the book's subject by defining these two familiar yet complex terms in relation to one another. While no single work can be expected to offer the ultimate account of either, Chilton begins with the description that Aristotle offers of man [sic] in *The Politics*. According to Aristotle, humans are at once uniquely political animals (*politikon zoon*), and the only species endowed with reasoned speech (*logos*). The basis of human society is shared perceptions and values, and the language endowment has the function of communicating these notions among members of a household or a city (*polis*). Thus, according to Chilton, discussion of the connection between language and politics has a great heritage in Western philosophy. This connection exists despite protests by some politicians that debates over language use at the level of words and phrases are mere 'political correctness.' Chilton suggests that such arguments about the (un)importance of linguistic form suggest that form is important enough to be debated.

The term 'politics,' then, is given two broad definitions. First, politics is the struggle over power, in attempts to assert and maintain authority, as well as attempts to resist it. Alternatively, as mentioned above, politics is cooperation, including social practices and institutions of all types. Chilton breaks the term 'language' into three separate terms, marked $language_L$, ''the universal genetically transmitted ability of humans to acquire any language, and often more than one'' (9), $language_l$, a particular language such as French, and $language_{l/u}$, the use of language in a particular instance, or what is commonly called 'discourse.'

Chapters 1 and 2 include a good deal of speculation about the evolution of $language_L$, linguistic ability, and its relation to politics in the sense of cooperation and social interaction. Chilton argues that even if, as Chomsky (e.g. 1975, 2000) suggests, $language_L$ is an accident of evolution, unrelated to other aspects of human evolution or cognition, $language_{l/u}$ (discourse) is still available as a tool of social interaction. While he is perhaps a bit sly in his reconciliation of the Chomskyan position on

generative creativity with the Sapir–Whorf hypothesis, Chilton's theories are certainly thought provoking. He suggests that both language and political behavior can be seen as based on cognitive endowments rather than social practices, but despite this suggestion, both are closely tied, ''probably in innate mechanisms or innately developing mechanisms of the mind, and probably as a result of evolutionary adaptations'' (29).

The next two chapters complete Part I by sketching the philosophy of language and cognitive linguistics in a way essential for the modes of discourse analysis to be followed in Parts II and III. Chapter 3, 'Interaction,' discusses pragmatics, including speech act theory and Grice's cooperative principal, as well as notions of face and sequential interaction. The relationship of pragmatic acts to political organization is suggested largely by well-chosen examples. For example, the concept of implicature is illustrated with extracts from a 1968 speech by Conservative MP Enoch Powell. Chilton illustrates how implicature allows politicians to convey information beyond what is said 'on record.' The chapter also introduces Habermas's view of rationality and universal pragmatics. Chapter 4, 'Representation,' discusses notions from semantic theory. Included are reference versus sense, deixis, modality, agency and thematic roles, metaphor, conceptual frames, and an intriguing use of Fauconnier's (1985) mental spaces that Chilton labels discourse ontologies. All of these concepts are important for the three-dimensional model of language use Chilton draws in this chapter and illustrates in Parts II and III of the book. This three dimensional model includes a spatial, a temporal, and a modal axis, all meeting at a deictic center, the Self. An utterance is 'positioned' somewhere in this three-dimensional 'space' relative to the deictic center, largely through the use of indexical expressions or deictic expressions.

Part II of the book, 'The domestic arena,' includes three chapters offering models for the analysis of political discourse. The discourses treated in these chapters are all drawn from the United Kingdom. However, as Chilton points out, they represent genres of interaction that are common in many societies throughout the world. The methods of analysis should be applicable in other national and cultural settings. Chapter 5 analyzes 'Political interviews,' specifically John Humphrys' interview of Labour MP Margaret Beckett just prior to the general election in June of 2001 on the BBC Radio 4 program *Today*. Chapter 6 treats 'Parliamentary language,' focusing both on explicitly agreed institutional rules and the implicitly understood norms for turn taking, preference structure, and repair. Chapter 7, 'Foreigners,' treats two very different discourses. The first, Enoch Powell's 1968 'Rivers of Blood' speech, takes advantage of the indirect communication allowed by conversational implicature to imply that British immigration policies will result in interracial conflict. The second, a conversation between white gang members in 1994, uses Powell, with his iconic significance as a media figure and elite authority, to legitimize overt racism and xenophobia. These varied speech events support a broad view of the meaning of political discourse, encompassing official parliamentary interactions, media interviews, political campaign speeches, and in-group formation and legitimization through mundane conversation.

Part III, 'The global arena,' examines political discourse beyond national borders. It expands previously published analyses (Chilton, 2002, 2003; Doran, 2001) and is perhaps the best illustration of Chilton's semantics-based discourse analysis. The section concentrates on war, terrorism, and military intervention, what Chilton calls, ''the most salient aspect of globalisation in the late twentieth- and early twenty-first century'' (137). Chapter 8, 'Distant places,' considers US President

Bill Clinton's speech to the nation in March of 1999, which offered a justification of American military involvement in Kosovo. Chapter 9, 'Worlds apart,' examines responses to the terrorist attacks in the United States on September 11, 2001, visible in speeches by US President George W. Bush and an English translation of a text authored by Osama bin Laden originally aired by al Jazeera television. Chapter 10, 'The role of religion,' revisits this bin Laden text, and compares it to President Bush's 'Remarks at National Day of Prayer and Remembrance,' delivered at the National Cathedral on September 14, 2001.

Chilton presents a variety of analytic techniques in his explication of these texts. In several cases, he undertakes a micro-level analysis of interactional behavior, somewhat reminiscent of conversation analysis. However, unlike CA, the analyses presented here are often interested in the effects of a speech on society, beyond the parties in the interaction. Chilton also points out how public discourse often requires the audience to rely on knowledge of wider context, including other discourses. The analyses point to the importance of broad context, while also exploring the local interaction, including turn taking, interruption, and presequences. Speakers use interactional and contextual elements to legitimate implicit validity claims and the 'rightness' of political positions.

In addition to interactional analyses, Chilton undertakes a close analysis of the linguistic structures on which political discourse relies. Several analyses give special attention to syntactic structures, including embedding and conditional clauses. Embedded structures allow speakers to draw multiple discourse worlds, and at times to blur the boundaries between them. Thus, a speaker can make claims about what is happening, and through embedded structures introduce hopes or fears about what might happen. Conversational implicature leads hearers to draw conclusions about the relationship between these mental spaces, and allows a political speaker to communicate beyond what is actually said. Other analyses point out the presumed knowledge and cognitive frames that speakers draw on. Chilton presents transcribed speech beside explanations of presumed knowledge or emotive effect in two-column tables. Another interesting transcription convention is presented in tables showing propositional embedding: clauses are broken into syntactic arguments and predicates, with successive or embedded clauses presented on separate lines. The resulting transcripts trace the relationships between linguistic elements in ways that are not always apparent in real time. These analyses illustrate how linguistic structures such as nominalization, agentless passives, and pronouns with ambiguous antecedents are useful for implying politically sensitive propositions without stating them explicitly.

The most intriguing—and challenging—mode of transcription and analysis Chilton introduces is the three-dimensional model mentioned above. Using spatial, temporal, and modal axes, Chilton presents a visual representation of the mental spaces that a discourse creates. A model illustration is the visual outline of President Clinton's description of Kosovo, presented in Chapter 8. Within that description, Clinton said:

> Sarajevo, the capital of neighboring Bosnia, is where World War I began. World War II and the Holocaust engulfed this region. In both wars Europe was slow to recognize the dangers, and the United States waited even longer to enter the conflicts. Just imagine if leaders back then had acted wisely and early enough, how many lives could have been saved, how many Americans would not have had to die.

Chilton offers a visual diagram of Clinton's remarks, depicting arguments as positions along his three axes. The deictic center represents the American 'here', and the 'now' of 1994. The modal axis collapses epistemic modality (what actually happened) and deontic modality (what should, by moral right, occur). Clinton's references to Sarajevo and the Balkans are relatively distant along the spatial axis, but close to the center of the temporal axis. On the other hand, past wars are temporally distant, but spatially close by virtue of the United States's involvement in those wars. A third degree of distance exists on the modal axis, where the counterfactual events introduced by the phrase ''just imagine'' are removed from the center. Chilton then goes beyond placing these discourse elements in the representational space, illustrating the inferences that Clinton's words may call to the hearer's mind. That is, the imagined effects of early intervention in World War I and World War II also call to mind the actual loss of life in those conflicts, and imply a loss of life that would result from a failure to fight in the Balkans. The final visual representation is difficult to parse, but it helps to clarify the potential inferences of Clinton's dense rhetoric.

Ultimately, there is much to recommend *Analysing Political Discourse*. At times, particularly in the early chapters, Chilton may be overly speculative. The models of discourse analysis illustrated, drawing on semantic and pragmatic analyses as much as discourse and social practices, might not appeal to all scholars. However, the mixture of cognitive science, social theory, and discourse analysis presented here provides ample inspiration for further thought. I expect that scholars from across disciplines will use, debate, and think about the ideas presented here for some time to come.

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