

Language and Subjectivity

Understanding the role of language within the formation of a sense of self has been revolutionized by developments in social theory, particularly poststructuralism. There is now a new emphasis on the way in which subjects are vulnerable in the face of powerful discourses such as nation, gender, race and sexuality. This book is a clear and engaging introduction to these developments and their relevance to students of language. Using lively and often personal examples throughout, Tim McNamara explores the role of language within processes of subjectivity using the insights of Conversation Analysis (CA), creating an original conceptual and methodological bridge between the macro- and micro-dimensions of social discourse and everyday conversational interaction.

TIM McNAMARA is Redmond Barry Distinguished Professor Emeritus at The University of Melbourne

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When I returned to Melbourne, I joined a group of graduate students in other disciplines, all much younger than me, who were interested in reading in social theory. We read Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks* and then decided that we wanted to read Derrida. None of us were philosophers, but we persisted, starting by reading the text of *Of Grammatology* aloud in the group, pausing at the end of each paragraph to check our understanding, which was often limited – and so we talked in order to try and make sense of what we had read. We managed four or five pages in a 90-minute session and did

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The map of the linguistic boundaries in Guinea Bissau and surrounding countries (Figure 9.2) is reproduced by permission of Mutuzikin.com.