

## When Language Breaks Down

Doctors, nurses, and other caregivers often know what people with Alzheimer's disease or Asperger's 'sound like' – that is, they recognize patterns in people's discourse from sounds and silences, to words, sentences, and story structures. Such discourse patterns may inform their clinical judgements and affect the decisions they make. However, this knowledge is often tacit, like recognizing a regional accent without knowing how to describe its features. The absence of explicit knowledge of discourse patterns may be partly because research and practice associating neurocognitive function with language has tended to focus on (often isolated) linguistic 'deficits' as signs or symptoms of brain injury or disorder rather than beginning with comprehensive descriptions of discourse. In contrast, this is the first book to present models for comprehensively describing discourse specifically in clinical contexts and to illustrate models with detailed analyses of discourse patterns associated with degenerative (Alzheimer's) and developmental (autism spectrum) disorders. The authors also suggest how clinical discourse analysis, combined with neuropsychological and imaging data, can add to our understanding of neurocognition. The book is aimed not only at advanced students and researchers in linguistics, discourse analysis, speech pathology, and clinical psychology but also at researchers, clinicians, and caregivers for whom explicit knowledge of discourse patterns might be helpful.

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Elissa D. Asp , Jessica de Villiers

Frontmatter

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*Analysing Discourse in Clinical Contexts*

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Elissa D. Asp and Jessica de Villiers



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## Transcription conventions

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SP1	speaker 1
SP2	speaker 2
IV	interviewer
CG	caregiver
P	patient (in caregiver and patient interviews)
CHI	child
RES	researcher (in semi-structured conversations with researcher)
(1)	line 1
(5)	line 5
()	material in parentheses is inaudible or there is doubt of accuracy
(( ))	double parentheses indicate clarifying information, e.g. ((laughter))
(.)	a pause which is noticeable but too short to measure
(.5)	a pause timed in tenths of a second
#	noticeable pause, unmeasured
##	long pause, unmeasured
:	colon indicates an extension of the preceding vowel sound
<text>[>]	overlaps following text
<text> [<]	overlaps preceding text
...	some text intervening
<b>Bold</b>	bold is for prominent information (presented as new or emphasized)
<u>Under</u>	underscore is for information that is the focus (unmarked starting point) of a construction
//text//	tone group
//2 text//	tone 2
xxx	unintelligible
[if]	uncertain
^	silent beat

Many of the transcription conventions used are borrowed or adapted from Gail Jefferson's system. (See for example Jefferson 1985; 2004.)