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Discourse Syntax

Discourse Syntax is the study of syntax that requires an understanding of the surrounding text and the overall discourse situation, including considerations of genre and modality. Using corpus data and insights from current research, this textbook is a comprehensive guide to this fast-developing field. It takes the reader "beyond the sentence" to study grammatical phenomena, such as word order variation, connectives, ellipsis, and complexity. It introduces the core concepts of discourse syntax, integrating insights from corpus-based research and inviting the reader to reflect on research design decisions. Each chapter begins with a definition of learning outcomes, provides results from empirical articles, and enables readers to assess data visualizations critically. Complete with helpful further reading recommendations and a range of exercises, it is geared toward intermediate to advanced students of English linguistics and is also essential reading for anyone interested in this exciting, fast-moving discipline.

Heidrun Dorgeloh is Professor of English Linguistics at the Heinrich Heine University Düsseldorf with many years of experience in teaching English syntax, discourse analysis, and the corpus-based study of language use. She has published books and journal articles on word order, syntactic variation, and genre and register.

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English Grammar Beyond the Sentence

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Acknowledgments

This book is the result of many years of teaching courses in English linguistics on syntax, discourse analysis, and syntactic variation. We often wished there would be a textbook that would situate such variation in the context of the surrounding text, while keeping a focus on grammar and syntactic form. We didn't find that textbook, and so we have written it. The book reflects what we appreciate about textbooks – providing a coherent framework and systematic terminology, making results from influential research accessible, and guiding students toward designing their own research projects.

This book is also the result of many years of collaborating on topics in syntax, register studies, and genre variation. We thank our colleagues at Heinrich Heine University Düsseldorf and the University of Wisconsin–Madison, who made it possible that we could consistently teach courses that led to the development of this book, and our families, who supported our work every day, throughout a global health crisis. We owe you. We thank Lynn Zhang for her wonderful illustrations and insightful comments on all data visualizations, Sara Asher and Sally Kolasa for their proofreading, and the student assistants at the Department of English Linguistics at Heinrich Heine University Düsseldorf for being our test readers. Further support was provided by the College of Letters and Science and the Wisconsin Foundation and Alumni Association.

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