DESCRIPTION

The study of naturally occurring connected discourse, spoken or written is one of the most promising and rapidly developing areas of linguistics. Traditional linguistics has concentrated on the analysis of single sentence or isolated speech acts. In this important new book Michael Stubbs shows that linguistic concepts can be extended to analyse spontaneous and informal talk in the home, classroom or factory, and, indeed, written narrative.

Using copious examples drawn from recorded conversations, field work observations, experimental data and written texts, he explores such questions as how far discourse structure is comparable to sentence structure; whether it is possible to talk of 'well formed' discourse as one does of 'grammatical' sentences; and whether the relation between question and answer in conversation is syntactic, semantic or pragmatic. He also demonstrates some of the limitations of contemporary linguistics and speech act theory which neglect key aspects of native speaker fluency and communicative competence.

Although written from a predominantly linguistic perspective, the book is informed by insights from sociology and anthropology. Theoretical debate is accompanied by discussion of real life implications, particularly for the teacher. A Final Chapter offers clear and practical guidelines on methods of data collection and analysis for the student and researcher; and the book includes a full bibliography and suggestions for further reading.
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Michael Stubbs is Lecturer in Linguistics at the University of Nottingham. He is author of Language, Schools and Classrooms (1976) and Language and Literacy (1980).

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