Reporting as a discourse phenomenon

I propose a discourse-level analysis of report constructions in which indirect discourse, quotation, free indirect discourse, and attitude ascriptions are all analyzed in terms of a discourse relation of Attribution connecting two propositional discourse units: a frame unit (*he said*, *she dreamed*) and a (possibly complex, multi-sentence) report unit (*"I'm an idiot", that she was president*). In the talk I discuss two advantages of the discourse approach over traditional approaches at the syntax/semantics interface: (i) it naturally accounts for cases of direct, indirect, and free indirect reports that extend beyond the single embedded or quoted clause; and (ii) It allows for a reappraisal of Dan Everett's infamous claim that the Pirahã language has no clausal embedding syntax, and yet clearly allows Pirahã speakers to report what others are saying, and to ascribe complex mental states to each other.