

Education 645: Methods of Discourse Analysis

Fall 2007, Wednesdays 2:00-4:00

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Discourse analysis is a broad and complex interdisciplinary field. It includes somewhat diverse theoretical and methodological approaches from linguistics, anthropology, and sociology. All approaches to discourse share a commitment to studying language in context. But “context” is notoriously indeterminate, and different approaches to discourse analysis emphasize different aspects of context as potentially relevant to understanding language use.

This course focuses on several important methodological approaches that have been developed to do discourse analysis. Methods are motivated by and intertwined with theories, so the course inevitably addresses some theoretical issues. But the course intends primarily to provide students with methodological tools for studying naturally-occurring speech.

Because of its methodological goals, the course involves both reading and data analysis exercises. The course introduces a few approaches to understanding the relations between linguistic categories and social life, spending more time on conceptual issues earlier in the semester. Then it alternates between further reading and opportunities to analyze data. Some classes are set aside as data analysis sessions, in which data provided by the instructor or the students is analyzed in detail.

Students are expected to: (1) do the reading and come to class; (2) prepare the sample analyses for data analysis sessions—both preparing analyses for each session and taking responsibility for one session, including handing in a sample analysis for evaluation; (3) complete a larger piece of discourse analysis by the end of the term. This final paper should be primarily empirical, using techniques from one or more of the approaches to analyze a transcript of naturally occurring conversation or a piece of written discourse found in the social world. The paper should also include a brief discussion of why you chose the approach(es) you did—citing the strengths and weaknesses of these approaches for particular purposes. Deadlines for the project are: by October 3, a one page description of the data you plan to use; by November 7, a brief two page excerpt from the data analysis you are working on; by December 12, the final project. Grades will be determined using the following rule-of-thumb: 70% final paper; 30% completion of weekly analyses and class discussion.

When preparing your discourse analyses, you might try the coding program (“Coder”) available at www.wagsoft.com. Or you can use a qualitative data analysis program like NVivo (www.qsrinternational.com). You will have to tailor any software to your specific form of discourse analysis and use judgment in analyzing the data—there is no automated way to do complex discourse analyses of the sort we will discuss.

Books (available at the Penn Bookstore)

- Blommaert, J. (2005). *Discourse*. NY: Cambridge.
Fairclough, N. (2003). *Analysing discourse*. NY: Routledge.
Gee, J. (1999). *An introduction to discourse analysis*. NY: Routledge.
Schegloff, E. (2007). *Sequence organization in interaction*. NY: Cambridge.

Readings

September 5 **Introduction**

Consult the following books for an overview of the field, whenever it is helpful. These books are on reserve, but you do not have to read them if you do not find them useful.

- Cameron, D. (2001). *Working with spoken discourse*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
Schiffrin, D. (1994). *Approaches to discourse*. Oxford: Blackwell.
Titscher, S. et al. (2000). *Methods of text and discourse analysis*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

September 12 **Text and Context I**

- Blommaert, J. (2005). *Discourse*. NY: Cambridge. (Chs. 1-5)

September 19 **Text and Context II**

- Blommaert, J. (2005). *Discourse*. NY: Cambridge. (Chs. 6-8)
He, A. (2000). Discourse analysis. In M. Aronoff & J. Rees-Miller (Eds.), *The handbook of linguistics* (pp. 428-445). Oxford: Blackwell.
Rampton, B. (2006). *Language in late modernity*. NY: Cambridge. (Ch. 10, pp. 385-409)

September 26 **Conversation Analysis I**

- First, do the transcription tutorial at
<http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/soc/faculty/schegloff/TranscriptionProject/index.html>
Schegloff, E. (2007). *Sequence organization in interaction*. NY: Cambridge. (Chs. 1-9)

October 3 **Conversation Analysis II**

- Schegloff, E. (2007). *Sequence organization in interaction*. NY: Cambridge. (Chs. 10-14)

Pomerantz, A. & Fehr, B.J. (1997). Conversation analysis. In T. van Dijk (Ed.), *Discourse as social interaction*. London: Sage.

See also the resources on CA available at

<http://www2.fmg.uva.nl/emca/resource.htm>

Workshop #1: bring text analyses

October 10 **Linguistic Anthropology I**

Silverstein, M. (1985). On the pragmatic "poetry" of prose. In D. Schiffrin, ed., *Meaning, form and use in context*. Washington: Georgetown University Press.

Wortham, S. (2001). *Narratives in action* (Ch. 2-4). NY: Teachers College.

Wortham, S. (1996). Deictic mapping. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 25, 331-348.

October 17 **Linguistic Anthropology II**

Wortham, S. (2003). Linguistic anthropology of education. In S. Wortham & B. Rymes (Eds.), *Linguistic anthropology of education*. Westport, CT: Praeger.

Modan, G. (2007). *Turf wars*. London: Blackwell. (Ch. 5)

Workshop #2: bring text analyses

October 24 **Critical Literacy I**

Gee, James. (1999). *An introduction to discourse analysis*. NY: Routledge.

October 31 **Critical Literacy II**

Gee, J. (1991). A linguistic approach to narrative. *Journal of Narrative and Life History*, 1, 15-39.

Hymes, D. 1996. Ethnopoetics and sociolinguistics. In D. Hymes, *Ethnography, linguistics, narrative inequality*. Bristol, PA: Taylor & Francis.

Workshop #3: bring text analyses

November 7 **Critical Discourse Analysis I**

Fairclough, N. (2003). *Analysing discourse*. NY: Routledge.

November 14 **Critical Discourse Analysis II**

Fairclough, N. (2000). Discourse, social theory, and social research: the discourse of welfare reform. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, 4: 163-195.

McKenna, B. & Graham, P. (2000). Technocratic discourse: A primer.
Journal of Technical Writing and Communication, 30: 219-247.
If you are interested, also browse <http://www.languageandcapitalism.info/>
Workshop #4: bring text analyses

November 21 **Workshop #5 & #6**

Bring text analyses

November 28 **No Class (AAA)**

Continue to work on your own text analyses

December 5 **Social Semiotics**

Stillar, G. (1998). *Analyzing everyday texts*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
(Ch. 2, pp.14-57)
Halliday, M.A.K. (1994). *An introduction to functional grammar* (2nd
Ed.). London: Edward Arnold. (Appendix 1, pp. 368-391)
Baldry, A. & Thibault, P. (2006). *Multimodal transcription and text
analysis*. London: Equinox. (Ch. 1, pp. 1-56)
See also the “appraisal” website for more detail on how systemic
functional linguistics analyzes evaluative positioning:
<http://www.grammatics.com/appraisal/>

December 12 Final projects due