

English 660 — Modern English Theory: Discourse Analysis (Fall 2001)
TH 6:30 - 9:20pm McIver 139A

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Office Hours: Tues. & Fri. 11am-1pm, Thurs. 4-6 pm, and by appointment.

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Required texts:

Jaworski, A., & Coupland, N. (Eds.) (1999). *The discourse reader*. London & New York: Routledge.

Schiffrin, D. (1994). *Approaches to discourse*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Selected readings (on electronic reserve in the Jackson library).

Course Description

The analysis of discourse is one of the most widely expanding areas in English studies, communication, anthropology, and cognitive science. The goal of this course is to introduce students to some fundamental issues in discourse analysis, and for students to apply the findings to their own areas of study and discourse of their own choosing. The specific topics and selected readings will be set in consultation with students enrolled in the course. Some possible topics for discussion include, but are not limited to: philosophies of language (structuralism, formalism, functionalism, and social interactionism), approaches to discourse (speech act theory, ethnography of communication, interactional sociolinguistics, ethnomethodology, and critical theory), modes of discourse (spoken, written, visual/artistic, institutional), discourse frames, genre, scripts, schema, coherence, cohesion, and corpus linguistics; applications to English studies (broadly defined) and language teaching—particularly reading and writing instruction—will be explored at every opportunity. As much as possible, the format of the class will be dialogic in nature.

Learning Goals:

Through the readings, assignments, and class activities in this course, you will

1. learn and critically analyze methods of discourse analysis, such as speech act theory, interactional sociolinguistics, pragmatics, ethnography of communication, conversational analysis, etc.;
2. apply selected methods of discourse analysis to different forms of discourse, for example spoken, written, visual/artistic, or ideological;
3. draw critical conclusions from those applications about various research methodologies and studies;
4. establish relationships between language use, language theory, and language instruction;
5. use educational software to gather, analyze, and communicate research findings;
6. present research findings through oral presentations and written reports.

Assignments & Grading

1. Required: Class attendance, participation, and presentations, demonstrating timely reading as assigned and suggested.
2. Two short written responses (2-3pp.) of assigned readings and co-leading of the corresponding class discussions.
3. 60%: Three short analyses (5-7pp.) of different text types (oral, written, ideological). You may substitute a critical review of a book on discourse analysis for one text/discourse analysis, if you like.
4. 10%: A presentation of the term paper in progress.
5. 30%: A research paper analyzing a site of discourse (classroom interaction, literary text, interview, discipline, institutional setting, etc.) from at least two theoretical perspectives. This paper may be a revision and expansion on one of the short analyses (listed in #3)

Class Schedule

August 23rd: Course overview--philosophies of language & approaches to discourse

August 30th: What is discourse? Definitions, approaches, and epistemologies.

READ: Schiffrin, Chaps. 1-2, (12)
Reader, pp. 1-38

September 6th: Ethnography of communication

READ: Schiffrin, Chaps. 3 (skim) & 5
Reader, Chaps. 9 & 21
 Chafe, "Speaking and Writing"

September 13th: Pragmatics and transcription methodology

READ: Schiffrin, Chap. 6
Reader, Chaps. 6 & 8

September 20th: Interactional sociolinguistics and classroom discourse

Read: Schiffrin, Chap. 4
 Mehan, "The structure of classroom discourse"
 Philips, "Participant structures and communicative competence: Warm Springs children in community and classroom"

September 27th: Discourse analysis and literacy instruction

READ: Szwed, "The ethnography of literacy."
 McCarty & Watahomigie, "Language and literacy in American Indian and Alaskan Native communities."
 Wurr, Theurer, & Kim, "Retrospective miscue analysis with proficient adult ESL readers"
 (Singhal, "The effects of text familiarity on the reading comprehension strategies of three Arabic-speaking readers: A case study").

October 4th: Discourse analysis and written texts

READ: Connor, “Discourse analysis and writing/reading instruction”

Connor & Lauer, “Understanding persuasive essay writing:
Linguistic/rhetorical approach”

(Halliday & Hasan: *Cohesion in English*, Chapters 1 & 8—Skim for
familiarity; use as reference later if appropriate)

Graddol, “The semiotic construction of a wine label”

DUE: Assignment 1—Analysis of oral discourse

October 11th: Class canceled. Use Wordsmith to perform text analysis on data set

READ: Biber, “Investigating macroscopic textual variation through
multifeature/multidimensional analyses”

Biber, *Variation across speech and writing* (skim Chap. 4 and Appendix
II)

October 18th: Ideological Analysis

READ: *Reader*, Intro to Part Six & Chaps. 11, 29, 30

DUE: Assignment 2—Analysis of written discourse

October 25th: Language, knowledge, and power

READ: *Reader*, Chaps. 32-34

November 1st: Universities as sites for ideological analysis

READ: Lakoff, “The grooves of Academe”

Bourdieu, “Systems of education and systems of thought”

Foucault, “The means of correct training” and “Panopticism” (skim pp.
170-217; read pp. 218-228)

DUE: Proposal/ Rough draft of term paper

November 8th: TBA

DUE: Assignment 3—Ideological analysis

DUE: Rough draft of term paper (bring enough copies for all group members)

November 15th: Writing workshop

November 22nd: Thanksgiving Break

November 29th: Term paper presentations

December 6th: Term paper presentations

December 13th: Discourse and dining

Due: Term paper