

DISCOURSE STUDIES

COMM 7/8332 SEMINAR IN COMMUNICATION RESEARCH

COURSE DESCRIPTION

As Teun van Dijk argues, “discourse analysis is no more than the general academic activity of studying discourse. And such a study can be carried by a large number of different methods.”¹ Various methods of discourse analysis are united “by paying close and systematic attention to particular situations and particular utterances or sets of utterances” in order to investigate “research questions...in and across disciplines throughout the humanities and social sciences and beyond” (Johnstone, 2008, pp. xiii-xiv). This seminar then will provide a site for graduate students across the department’s research areas to learn discourse theories and methods for investigating the linguistic, rhetorical, cultural, and/or social cognitive form and function of text and talk in a variety of contexts, including public and political communication, health communication, and mediated communication. Special attention will be paid to issues of social interaction and identities, intentions and interpretations in discourse, and language, ideology and power.

¹<http://www.discourses.org/resources/teachyourself/Unlearn%20misconceptions.html>

REQUIRED TEXTS

Johnstone, B. (2008). *Discourse analysis, 2nd ed.* Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Van Dijk, T. A. (2011). *Discourse studies: A multidisciplinary introduction, 2nd ed.* Los Angeles: Sage.

Other articles available on eCourseware.

RECOMMENDED TEXT

Jaworski, A., & Coupland, N. (Eds.). (2006). *The discourse reader, 2nd ed.* New York: Routledge.

ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING

Attendance & Participation (20% of final grade)

This is a once a week graduate seminar. Therefore, you are expected to come to each class prepared to discuss the week’s readings. The material will be more or less familiar to you, depending on your background. It is important to focus on the big picture (major claims and arguments) and not to sweat the small stuff. We can work through the details together in class. I welcome questions and critiques of the assigned readings.

Article Summaries and Discussion (20% of final grade)

Each student will be assigned a certain number of articles (tbd, based on enrollment) to summarize and then lead the class discussion/activity about. For each assigned article, you should do the following:

- *Briefly* introduce the author of the article: Who are they and what do they do?
- *Briefly* summarize the overall argument of the piece: *In your own words*, what is the article's overall finding, claim, or argument? DO NOT REHEARSE THE CONTENTS OF THE ARTICLE (i.e., first it says this, and then it says that, and then it says another thing).
- The remainder of your presentation should then:
 - Describe the discourse data—what specifically is being analyzed in the piece? (If the article is more theoretical, what specific discourse is being theorized in the piece?).
 - Explain the specific discourse analysis theory/method being applied to the data—how is the data being analyzed? (You may need to draw on other sources from the course or on your own external research for this).
 - Work through some examples, either using data from the article itself, or using related data that you bring in on your own.
 - Involve the rest of the class, either through discussion questions or group activity.

The total time for each of these summaries and discussions should be 30-45 minutes.

Written Assignments

Assignment 1: Transcription (20% of final grade).

Each student will record and transcribe a 10-minute conversation, using transcription conventions as described in:

Dressler, R. A., & Kreuz, R. J. (2000). Transcribing oral discourse: A survey and model system. *Discourse Processes*, 29, 25-36.

You are required to submit three documents: (1) a recording (that you make) of a 10-minute conversation involving at least 2 participants (one of whom can be you); (2) a short paper (~3-5pp.) wherein you describe the participants and the conversation, as well reflecting on the transcription process; (3) a narrow transcript (i.e., a detailed transcript noting paralinguistic and prosodic details as described in Dressler & Kreuz (2000), and/or in Atkinson & Heritage (in Jaworski & Coupland), including a list of specific transcription conventions employed in the transcript.

Grading: A: The transcript is detailed and accurate, with few errors; B: The transcript is detailed, but contains some obvious errors or omissions; C: The transcript is broad (i.e., not detailed), but accurate, or narrow but contains numerous errors or omissions; D: The transcript is frequently inaccurate, whether detailed or broad; F: The transcript is too short, too inaccurate, and/or documents (1) and/or (2) are missing or incomplete.

Assignment 2 (40% of final grade). Assignment 2 will be a term-project culminating in an ~25pp. research paper applying a DA method to data of your choice. You are required to submit two documents: (1) a paper proposal and (2) a final research paper.

Paper proposal (due before class on 10/24): In 3-5 pages, describe your proposed research project. Include background and context, research questions, proposed data, and a brief plan for analysis.

Final paper (due by 11:59pm on 12/4): This paper should contain an Intro/Lit Review introducing your research project and situating it within a theoretical framework and/or body of previous research. It should have clearly articulated research questions as well as a specific methodological approach. The results or analysis section should clearly show how your analysis of the data answers your research questions. Finally, the paper should contain a conclusion section discussing the implications of your findings, potential limitations of the study, and directions for future research.

Grading: An “A” analysis paper is one that contributes to scholarship by presenting an analysis that contributes an interesting new finding or findings to the literature and/or builds or extends theory. This paper could be submitted to NCA or ICA essentially as is. A “B” paper would require some revisions to be acceptable for an NCA or ICA submission, or might be appropriate for a regional conference (i.e., for a more generalist than specialist audience). A “B” doctoral-level paper would be an “A” MA-level paper. A “C” paper would demonstrate post-baccalaureate mastery of theory and/or methods, but would not represent a potential contribution to knowledge in the field. A “C” MA-level paper would be a “D” or “F” doctoral-level paper. The final paper should, of course, follow through on the paper proposal, and changes to the paper proposal should be discussed in advance with the instructor. Failure to submit a proposal will result in an F for the project.

Final Grades will be assigned as follows:

A = 93% and above. A- = 90-92%. B+ = 88-89%. B = 83-87%. B- = 80-82%. C+ = 78-79%. C = 73-77%. C- = 70-72%. F = 69% and below.

ACADEMIC HONESTY/PLAGIARISM

As graduate students, you are becoming producers, not just consumers, of knowledge in communication studies. Therefore, it is very important that you (a) properly acknowledge those who are responsible for the research and ideas that you are drawing upon and (b) do not inappropriately take credit for research and ideas that are not your own. Everyone makes honest mistakes, and I am willing to help correct these mistakes. However, deliberate efforts to represent others’ words, ideas, and/or research as your own will not be tolerated. Cheating, academic dishonesty, and/or plagiarism (including submitting the same paper for more than one course without permission) may result in an F for the course and will be reported to the Office of Judicial Affairs. <http://saweb.memphis.edu/judicialaffairs/>

“Your written work may be submitted to Turnitin.com, or a similar electronic detection method, for an evaluation of the originality of your ideas and proper use and attribution of sources. As part of this process, you may be required to submit electronic as well as hard copies of your written work, or be given other instructions to follow. By taking this course,

you agree that all assignments may undergo this review process and that the assignment may be included as a source document in Turnitin.com's restricted access database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in such documents. Any assignment not submitted according to the procedures given by the instructor may be penalized or may not be accepted at all." (Office of Legal Counsel, October 17, 2005)

SAMPLE

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Reading assignments should be completed before the class date listed. All listed articles are on eCourseware, under Content. Articles are listed by suggested order of reading. J & C refers to Jaworski & Coupland (2006).

Week 1: Introductions

Week 2: What is Discourse Analysis?

Van Dijk, Ch. 1

Johnstone, Ch. 1

Eisenhart, C., & Johnstone, B. (2008). Discourse analysis and rhetorical studies. In B. Johnstone & C. Eisenhart (Eds.), *Rhetoric in detail: Discourse analyses of rhetorical talk and text* (pp. 3-21). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Tracy, K. (2001). Discourse analysis in communication. In D. Schiffrin, D. Tannen, & H. E. Hamilton (Eds.), *The handbook of discourse analysis* (pp. 725-749). Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Week 3: Discourse and World

Johnstone, Ch. 2

Van Dijk, Chs. 16, 17, & 18

Tracy, K., Martínez, S., Robles, J. S., & Casteline, K. E. (2011). Critical discourse analysis and (U.S.) communication scholarship. In C. T. Salmon (Ed.), *Communication yearbook* (Vol. 35, pp. 241-286). New York: Routledge.

Week 4: Discourse and World II

Woolard, K. A., & Schieffelin, B. B. (1994). Language ideology. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 23, 55-82.

Billig, M., & Macmillan, K. (2005). Metaphor, idiom, & ideology: The search for 'no smoking guns' across time. *Discourse & Society*, 16, 459-480.

Johnson, K. A., Sonnett, J., Dolan, M. K., Reppin, R., & Johnson, L. (2010). Interjournalistic discourse about African Americans in television news coverage of Hurricane Katrina. *Discourse & Communication*, 4, 243-261.

Guillem, S. M. (2013). Constructing contexts, (re)defining immigrants: Mental models and social representations in immigration policy defense. *Discourse & Society*, 24, 208-228.

Week 5: Discourse Structure: Parts and Sequences

Johnstone, Ch. 3

Van Dijk, Chs. 2, 4, 5 & 9

Week 6: Discourse Structure II

Butt, D. G., Lukin, A., & Mathiessen, C. M. I. M. (2004). Grammar-The first covert operation of war. *Discourse & Society*, 15, 267-290.

Rhymes, B. (1995). The construction of moral agency in the narratives of high-school drop-outs. *Discourse & Society*, 6, 495- 516.

Jackson, S., & Jacobs, S. (1980). The structure of conversational argument: Pragmatic bases for the enthymeme. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 66, 251-265.

Ainsworth-Vaughn, N. (1992). Topic transitions in physician-patient interviews: Power, gender, and discourse change. *Language in Society*, 21, 409-426.

Recommended:

Labov, "The transformation of experience in narrative" (J & C, Ch. 14)

Edwards, "Narrative analysis" (J & C, Ch. 15)

Pomerantz, "Preference in conversation: Agreeing and disagreeing with assessments" (J & C, Ch. 17)

Schegloff & Sacks, "Opening up closings" (J & C, Ch. 18)

Week 7: Participants in Discourse: Relationships, Roles, Identities

Johnstone, Ch. 4

Van Dijk, Chs. 10, 11, 12, 13

Week 8: Participants in Discourse II

Buchholtz, M., & Hall, K. (2005). Identity and interaction: A sociocultural linguistic approach. *Discourse Studies*, 7, 585-614.

Kitzinger, C. A. (2005). "Speaking as a heterosexual": (How) does sexuality matter for talk-in-interaction? *Research on Language & Social Interaction*, 38, 221-265.

Kitzinger, C. A., & Mandelbaum, J. (2013). Word selection and social identities in talk-in-interaction. *Communication Monographs*, 80, 176-198.

Coupland, N., Coupland, J., Giles, H., & Henwood, K. (1988). Accommodating the elderly: Invoking and extending a theory. *Language in Society*, 17, 1-41.

Recommended:

Goffman, "On face-work: An analysis of ritual elements in social interaction" (J & C, Ch. 21)

Brown & Levinson, "Politeness: Some universals in language usage" (J & C, Ch. 22)

Cameron, "Performing gender identity: Young men's talk and the construction of heterosexual masculinity" (J & C, Ch. 29)

Transcript Assignment Due M 10/21 by 11:59pm

Week 9: Prior Texts, Prior Discourses

Johnstone, Ch. 5

Paper Proposal Due Before Class on 10/24

Week 10: Prior Texts, Prior Discourses II

Miller, C. R. (1984). Genre as social action. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 70, 151-167.

Tannen, D., & Wallat, C. (1987). Interactive frames and knowledge schemas in interaction: Examples from a medical examination/interview. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 50, 205-216.

Stewart, C. O. (2009). Socioscientific controversies: A theoretical and methodological framework. *Communication Theory*, 19, 124-145.

Andrus, J. (2011). Beyond texts in contexts: Recontextualization and the co-production of texts and contexts in the legal discourse, excited utterance exception to hearsay. *Discourse & Society*, 22, 115-136.

Recommended:

Bakhtin, "The problem of speech genres" (J & C, Ch. 6)

Week 11: Discourse and Medium

Johnstone, Ch. 6

Van Dijk, Ch. 6

Herring, S. (1999). Interactional coherence in CMC. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 4(4) [Online].

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1083-6101.1999.tb00106.x/full>

Squires, L. (2010). Enregistering internet language. *Language in Society*, 39, 457-492.

Page, R. (2012). The linguistics of self-branding and micro-celebrity in Twitter: The role of hashtags. *Discourse & Communication*, 6, 181-201.

Recommended:

Hutchby, "Power in discourse: The case of arguments on a British talk radio show" (J & C, Ch. 36).

Kress & Van Leeuwen, "Visual interaction" (J & C, Ch. 26).

Week 12: Intention and Interpretation

Johnstone, Ch. 7

Van Dijk, Chs. 3 & 8

Week 13: Intention and Interpretation II

Scott, K. D. (2000). Crossing cultural borders: "Girl" and "look" as markers of identity in Black women's language use. *Discourse & Society*, 11, 237-248.

Pérez, R. (2013). Learning to make racism funny in the "color-blind" era: Stand-up comedy students, performance strategies, and the (re)production of racist jokes in public. *Discourse & Society*, 24, 478-503.

Link, K. E., & Kreuz, R. J. (2005). The comprehension of ostensible speech acts. *Journal of Language & Social Psychology*, 24, 227-251.

McGlone, M. S., Beck, G., & Pfister, A. (2006). Contamination and camouflage in euphemisms. *Communication Monographs*, 73, 261-282.

Recommended:

Austin, "How to do things with words" (J & C, Ch. 2).

Grice, "Logic and conversation" (J & C, Ch. 3).

Schiffrin, "Oh as a marker of information management" (J & C, Ch. 19).

Tannen, "New York Jewish conversational style" (J & C, Ch. 31).

Week 14: Thanksgiving - No class.

Final Papers Due W 12/4 by 11:59pm