

EP631: Discourse analysis in educational environments

Prerequisite: EP555/CS560 (or equivalent)

Fall 2011

Time & place.

Thursdays, 5:05-7:45 pm

BEC202 (please confirm location by checking the online timetable prior to the first night of class)

Professor.

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I am generally on campus 9-5, M-F and am happy to arrange a meeting with you during those times. I also answer e-mails within 24 hours (usually much sooner).

Description and course philosophy.

This course provides an introduction to the broad area of conversation analysis (CA) and discourse analysis (DA) as an approach for understanding naturally occurring language use, or talk-in-interaction, particularly in the context of teaching and learning. We will cover both the underlying philosophy and specific methods for collecting and analyzing spoken and, to a lesser extent, written discourse. Since this is a 600 level methods class, you must have completed an introductory course on qualitative research. I don't expect that you've had any formal training in linguistics, but an inherent fascination with and/or experience with language learning, language teaching and/or language-in-use will no doubt be helpful.

This class counts toward the graduate certificate in qualitative research methods.

Just as there are many traditions of qualitative research methods, there are many traditions of discourse analysis. We'll start with the methods I have found most useful in my own research, which are CA and DA from a discursive psychology (DP) perspective. However you will also have the opportunity to explore another tradition of discourse analysis that may be more relevant to your own discipline. The experience you gain analyzing recorded conversations will be relevant to many discourse analysis traditions. We will also spend some time talking about discourse analysis of written documents, texts and computer-mediated communication.

Becoming an academic researcher (the traditional purpose of doctoral study) requires a commitment to intensive and extensive reading, writing, reflecting, analyzing and synthesizing. This process applies not only to the body of knowledge in your discipline, but the body of knowledge around the methodology you choose to use for your research. This process is a *creative* process, and, as with any creative process, takes a good deal of uninterrupted time. (A rule of thumb is that for every credit hour of class you attend, you should be investing three hours of work outside of class.) I try to use assignments in my classes to as opportunities to develop these skills (which will be put to good use, at minimum, in your dissertation work.) I consider the assigned readings and assignments to be merely starting points for your exploration this semester. My assumption is that you will be an active learner and co-participant in this class – engaging with the concepts and going the extra steps it takes to fully understand them. For example, if you encounter readings that you don't fully understand, take the time to look up key concepts, vocabulary and jargon in other resources. Exploit the references lists in articles you read– it is

there that you will find the network of scholarly relationships that will help you become part of your community of practice.

The CA/DA approach consists of collecting naturalistic conversational data by recording it, transcribing it and then listening, re-listening, reading and re-reading numerous times to identify conversational features and patterns that accomplish a particular kind of work through talk-in-interaction. There are important assumptions underlying this kind of research approach, and we will explore those assumptions this semester in conjunction with your experience identifying these patterns in your own data.

Reading the literature, listening to your data, discussing the literature and the data with each other, and creating new meaning (through many iterations of this process) is what this class is all about. If you are still in, read on!

Disability services. Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss specific needs. Please contact the Office of Disability Services at 865-974-6087 in Dunford Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

Required texts.

- Mercer, N. (2000). *Words and Minds: How We Use Language to Think Together*. Routledge.
- Wood, L.A. & Kroger, R.O. (2000). *Doing Discourse Analysis: Methods for Studying Action in Talk and Text*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Ten Have, P. (2007). *Doing conversation analysis: A practical guide*. (2nd edition). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications
- *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. 6th edition.

Additional resources.

We'll be talking a lot this semester about conversational features and their functions (e.g. turn-taking, adjacency pairs, sequences, repair, turn design, openings/closings, preference structures, extreme case formulations, overlapping speech, etc.) For additional information in these areas see:

- Hutchby, I. & Wooffitt, R. (2008). *Conversation analysis*. Malden, MA: Polity Press.
- Liddicoat, A.J. (2007). *An introduction to conversation analysis*. New York, NY: Continuum.
- Psathas, G. (1995). *Conversation analysis: The study of talk-in-interaction*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Further reading on discourse analysis in classrooms.

- Bloome, D., Carter, S.PI, Christian, B.M., Madrid, S., Otto, S., Shuart-Faris, N., & Smith, M. (2008). *Discourse analysis in classrooms: Approaches to language and literacy research*. Teacher's College Press.
- Cazden, C.B. (2001). *Classroom discourse: The language of teaching and learning*. Heinemann.
- Rex, L.A. & Schiller, L. (2009). *Using discourse analysis to improve classroom interaction*. New York: New York. Routledge Publishing.

- Rhymes, B. (2009). *Classroom discourse analysis: A tool for critical reflection*. Hampton Press.
- Rogers, R. (2011). *An introduction to critical discourse analysis in education*. 2nd edition. New York: New York. Routledge Publishing.

Equipment.

- Digital voice recorder
- Headphones
- Inqscribe transcription software, free trial available, \$39 with academic discount. Available at <http://inqscribe.com/>. It is Mac/PC compatible.
- Trial versions of Transana (Mac/PC) and ATLAS.ti (PC) data analysis software

Expectations.

We will run the class much like a seminar, and those of you who have taken classes with me before will notice similarities and differences. I'll vary whole group discussion with small group discussion and mini-lectures, but I may rely more on whole group discussions since the class size is likely to be small(ish.) I will not scaffold you so heavily in terms of providing discussion questions. Instead, as co-participants in this class, I will look to your weekly reading notes (see below) to set the agenda for each class. We'll have some hands-on practice activities in addition to discussion about important concepts. As with most classes, what you get out of this class will be exactly what you put into it. With 600 level classes I also try to model the experience of being part of a collaborative research team – engaging in data sessions, workshops, and other activities that allow you to give and receive feedback from your peers in a meaningful and constructive manner.

I expect all of your submitted work (not counting the blog posts) to be written in a professional manner, starting with following APA style and ending with being carefully proofread, edited and polished. Other expectations include:

1. Come to every class session on time and be fully engaged.
2. Be prepared by having read assigned materials thoroughly and critically.
3. Check your UT email & Blackboard regularly for announcements.
4. Enthusiastically participate in group discussions.
5. We will engage in a lot of small group work, so please let me know in advance about any irregularities in your attendance &/or participation.
6. There are no excused absences or excused delays for assignment completion. As adults it is your choice whether or not to attend class and how to participate in class. My position as the professor, of course, is that you should be in every class. I am not in the position to give or withhold permission for you to miss class. I simply ask that you let me know whether or not we can expect you in class each week.
7. At the same time, late arrivals, early departures, absences &/or assignments submitted late will all negatively impact your grade. Participation entails being present and meeting the expectations outlined in this syllabus.
8. You are expected to complete your own work. You cannot re-submit work here that was done for previous classes.
9. No incompletes will be given.
10. Plagiarism will result in a zero on the assignment and a meeting with your academic adviser.

11. Please be sensitive in your class participation by not unfairly dominating discussions. The ability to listen fully and respond thoughtfully is as, if not more, important than being able to talk first and most frequently.
12. Please think carefully about your use of laptops and other electronic devices in class. That is, consider how they impact those around you. Maintaining eye contact is important to building good relationships with your professor and other students in the class. Having good relationships enables you to have effective discussions with others, a key part of this class. While I understand the overwhelming desire to constantly check email and/or Facebook and/or instantly google any unfamiliar concept or question that comes up in class (trust me, I struggle with this too), satisfying those desires can be detrimental to your ability to engage, focus, think, and sustain your attention – qualities essential for doctoral research work. I am not going to ban electronic devices outright. But I will talk to you if I feel that your use of them is distracting others and/or creating a less than optimal atmosphere in the class.

Academic honesty¹ and integrity is a responsibility of all members of the academic community. An honor statement is included on the application for admission and readmission. The applicant's signature acknowledges that adherence is confirmed. The honor statement declares

An essential feature of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, is a commitment to maintaining an atmosphere of intellectual integrity and academic honesty. As a student of the university, I pledge that I will neither knowingly give nor receive any inappropriate assistance in academic work, thus affirming my own personal commitment to honor and integrity.

Students shall not plagiarize. **Plagiarism** is using the intellectual property or product of someone else without giving proper credit. The undocumented use of someone else's words or ideas in any medium of communication (unless such information is recognized as common knowledge) is a serious offense subject to disciplinary action that may include failure in a course and/or dismissal from the university. Some examples of plagiarism are

- Using without proper documentation (quotation marks and a citation) written or spoken words, phrases, or sentences from any source.
- Summarizing without proper documentation (usually a citation) ideas from another source (unless such information is recognized as common knowledge).
- Borrowing facts, statistics, graphs, pictorial representations, or phrases without acknowledging the source (unless such information is recognized as common knowledge).
- Submitting work, either in whole or in part, created by a professional service and used without attribution (e.g., paper, speech, bibliography, or photograph).

Extreme caution should be exercised by students involved in collaborative research to avoid questions of plagiarism. If in doubt, students should check with the major professor and the Dean of the Graduate School about the project. Plagiarism will be investigated when suspected and prosecuted if established.

Course activities.

¹ From the Graduate Catalogue (<http://catalog.utk.edu/content.php?catoid=2&navoid=27>):

10%. Participation and attendance.

See expectations above.

30%. Reading notes & reflections.

Engaging in researcher reflexivity is key for qualitative studies (Watt, 2007²) This semester you'll begin (or continue) a research journal in which you keep track of your questions, a-ha moments, ideas, and conundrums related to the readings and to your data collection and analysis. Blogs are ideal locations for such journals since others (myself and your classmates) can easily read and provide feedback on your ideas and questions. Blogger and Wordpress are two free blog hosting services. Blogs can be password protected if you're more comfortable limiting access to only those of us in the class. You can also set up a blog reader to make it easier to keep up with the blog posts from the class (Google reader is one example.)

You should post, at minimum, one time to your blog each week, and make an effort to read the posts of others in the class. By Wednesday at midnight you should have written, at minimum, a reflection on the week's readings. The reflections should 1) demonstrate that you have critically read the assigned readings; and 2) raise questions that you would like us to discuss in class. I will be reviewing the blogs each Thursday morning bright and early as I prepare for class. I encourage you to read each other's blogs regularly, too.

10% Data sessions & transcription

You will record and transcribe 30 minutes of naturally-occurring conversation from the setting of your choice, analyze it and write up a final report. During the second half of the semester we will engage in "data sessions", listening together and analyzing the conversational data that you have collected. You will also collect some documents and/or CMC data to analyze in conjunction with your recorded conversational data. This assignment will give you practice listening and re-listening and re-listening to naturally occurring talk and making sense of what is happening, that is, what is being accomplished with the talk.³

For this assignment please put to practice all of the fieldwork skills you learned in Introduction to Qualitative Research⁴. You will also learn new skills (e.g. recording group interaction, using Jeffersonian

² Watt, D. (2007). On becoming a qualitative researcher: The value of reflexivity. *The Qualitative Report* 12 (1), 82-101.

³ Unless you have IRB approval, keep in mind that you cannot publish or present the results of the analysis done for this class.

⁴ Important and necessary steps for entering the field: securing permission via a signed consent form to collect data (tape recording conversations); informing the participants that the data will be recorded, transcribed and shared with your instructor & classmates, but will not be used in public presentations or publications; writing up a description of the context; taking field notes as appropriate; writing up a thick description based on the field notes as appropriate.

transcription.) We'll talk in class about ideas for data collection sites and other issues related to this assignment.

The conversations should be digitally recorded and transcribed. Here are a few tutorials you may want to review. We will work through these in class together.

Transcript Symbols for Conversation Analysis (Schegloff)

<http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/soc/faculty/schegloff/TranscriptionProject/page1.html>

An Introduction to Conversation Analysis (Antaki)

<http://www-staff.lboro.ac.uk/~ssca1/sitemenu.htm>

Tutorial on Analysing Observational 'Real Time' Data (Llewellyn)

<http://sites.google.com/site/llewellynnick/tutorial>

When you bring your transcripts to the data session, please include the following:

- Bring hard copies for each person in class.
- Your transcript should be as accurate as possible with Jeffersonian notation as appropriate
- Choose a manageable portion of the transcript for us to listen to
- Consider bringing your document for us to look at as well
- Include line numbers and page numbers on transcripts
- Use pseudonyms for all proper nouns (names)
- Do not discuss any of your or your classmates' data outside of this class
- Have your audio ready for us to listen to in Inqscribe

50% Final report on data analysis

At the end of the semester you'll submit a final report about your data analysis that includes the following components:

Introduction:

- Rationale for collecting this data
- Reflexivity statement
- Research question

Methodological literature review:

- Synthesize the course readings to make a case for why you are doing a discourse analysis study

Method:

- How you gained entry to the site/access to the data
- Description of the setting & participants
- Description of data you collected
- Description of how you approached the analysis
- Warranting claims

Findings:

- Initial/tentative findings (i.e. identification of interesting features & what they are doing in the talk)
- Write your findings as possibilities – reminding the reader that yours is but one interpretation of the data

Discussion:

- Connection of your tentative findings with existing CA/DA findings and/or findings from your field

Conclusion & Reflection:

- What you would do next if you were to continue analyzing this kind of talk
- What surprised you/what you learned through this experience

Appendices:

Consent forms; Data

Format:

- Please include citations to the literature we have read in class as well as other things you have read throughout the semester.
- Be sure to follow APA style. Include full references for all in-text citations and in-text citations for all references.
- Include page numbers and a title page.
- Use double-spaced Times New Roman 12 point font.
- Be sure to proofread your paper.

Submitting written assignments.

- Please save your files as “your last name-assignment description.” For example, “Smith-final-proj-proposal.docx”. This helps me organize the files as I download them from Blackboard.
- Completed assignments should be posted to the appropriate Blackboard discussion forum prior to the class session in which they are due.
- I ask you to post assignments publicly so that you can get a sense of the many possibilities within discourse analysis work. I encourage you to read each other’s work. If you are not comfortable posting your work, you can email your work to me privately.
- I then download your assignments and insert my comments and feedback electronically in Word, then return it to you privately via e-mail. You should see comments inserted throughout your paper when it is returned. If you can’t see these comments, please let me know.

Academic writing conventions and abilities.

- Assignments must conform to the style and reference notation format outlined in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th edition*. The APA manual is an essential tool

for survival in graduate school. Please study it carefully and refer to it often. If you are unsure about particular APA formatting and citation rules, refer to the manual.

- The ability to write in an appropriate academic manner is critical to successful graduate study and to qualitative research in particular. If you find that you need assistance with your writing, please visit the university's free Writing Center housed in the English department: <http://web.utk.edu/~english/writing/writing.shtml>. They do not proofread or edit your work, but they can help with idea development and organization – key elements of successful academic writing.
- A wonderful way to improve your writing is by taking ENGLISH 462, WRITING FOR PUBLICATION, a course developed and taught in the English Department by Dr. Michael L. Keene. The course teaches the kind of writing involved in dissertation proposals, scholarly articles, theses, and dissertations. The course has received rave reviews from many doctoral students in our college.

Assessment. Grades are updated regularly in Blackboard. Final grades will be given according to the UT grading scale:

A=90-100%
B+=85-89%
B=80-84%
C+=75-79%
C=70-74%
D=60-69%
F=59% and below

A Note Regarding Letter Grades:

The defining characteristic of a successful graduate student is not their GPA, but their ability to do research as evidenced by their publication record upon graduation. Nevertheless, many graduate students continue to be highly concerned about their grades. Thus, I am including this short explanation of my philosophy of letter grades. Completing all assignments and meeting the expectations of the course constitutes "B" work; truly outstanding work constitutes "A" work; and failing to meet the minimum expectations will result in a grade of "C" or lower. This class is skills-based and time intensive and possibly different from other courses you have taken. Spending a lot of time on course requirements (or having a history of being an "A" student) will not, in and of itself, result in an "A" grade in this class.

Course schedule tentative and subject to change

<i>Week</i>	<i>Readings to be completed before class</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Due before class (in addition to readings)</i>
1. 8/18	<p>Burck, C. (2005). Comparing qualitative research methodologies for systemic research: the use of grounded theory, discourse analysis and narrative analysis. <i>Journal of Family Therapy</i> 27, 237-262.</p> <p>Starks, H. & Trinidad, S.B. (2007). Choose your method: A comparison of phenomenology, discourse analysis and grounded theory. <i>Qualitative Health Research</i> 17, 1372-1380.</p> <p>Silverman, D. (2001). Naturally occurring talk (Chapter 6, pp. 159-192) in <i>Interpreting qualitative data: Methods for analyzing talk, text and interaction</i>. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.</p> <p>Arminen, I. (2005). Classrooms and the transmission of knowledge and expertise (pp. 112-134). In I. Arminen (Ed.) <i>Institutional interaction: Studies of talk at work</i>. Ashgate Publishing.</p>	Introductions	<p>Introductory post (see instructions in Blackboard)</p> <p>Syllabus read and questions raised</p> <p>Set up reflective blog and post URL</p>
2. 8/25	Mercer, Chapters 1-4	Discourse & learning	Reading notes
3. 9/1	Mercer, Chapters 5-7	Discourse & learning Jeffersonian tutorial	Reading notes Post description of data in the blog
4. 9/8	<p>Wood & Kroger 1-3 & Appendix B & C Ten Have 1-4</p> <p>Edwards, D. (2006). Discourse, cognition and social practices: the rich surface of language and social interaction. <i>Discourse Studies</i> 8(1), 41-49.</p>	<p>Epistemological foundations</p> <p>Jeffersonian quiz, discuss/critique the studies in the readings</p> <p>Types of DA</p>	Reading notes
5. 9/15	Buttny, R. & Rath, S.K. (2007). Discursive practices in talking problems	What discourse analysis studies look like	Reading notes

<i>Week</i>	<i>Readings to be completed before class</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Due before class (in addition to readings)</i>
	during a school-family meeting (pp. 247-262.) In A. Hepburn & S. Wiggins (Eds.) <i>Discursive Research in Practice: New Approaches to Psychology and Interaction</i> . Cambridge University Press.	Inqscribe Choose data session dates	Bring headphones & laptop w/ Inqscribe installed and files downloaded
	Benwell, B. & Stokoe, E.H. (2002). Constructing discussion tasks in university tutorials: shifting dynamics and identities. <i>Discourse Studies</i> 4(4), 429-453.		
	Cromdal, J., Tholander, M. & Aronsson, K. (2007). 'Doing reluctance': managing delivery of assessments in peer evaluation (pp. 203-223). In A. Hepburn & S. Wiggins (Eds.) <i>Discursive Research in Practice: New Approaches to Psychology and Interaction</i> . Cambridge University Press.		
	Graff, N. (2009). Classroom talk: co-constructing a 'difficult student.' <i>Educational Research</i> 51(4), 439-454.		
	Young, R.F. & E.R. Miller (2004). Learning as changing participation: Discourse roles in ESL writing conferences. <i>The Modern Language Journal</i> , 88, iv, pp. 519-535.		
6. 9/22	Wood & Kroger, 4-6; ten Have 5-6 Ochs, E. (1979). Transcription as theory. In by E. Ochs & B. Schieffelin (Eds.) <i>Developmental pragmatics</i> (pp. 43-72). New York: Academic Press. Jefferson, G. (2004). Glossary of transcript symbols with an Introduction. In G. H. Lerner (Ed.) <i>Conversation analysis: Studies from the first generation</i> (pp. 13-23). Philadelphia: John Benjamins.	Collecting, recording and transcribing data Antaki tutorial	Reading notes (post your ideas for papers 1 and 2)

<i>Week</i>	<i>Readings to be completed before class</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Due before class (in addition to readings)</i>
	Why change names in CA transcripts? & Ten guidelines for changing names in transcripts (links in Blackboard)		
Fall break			
7. 10/6	Wood & Kroger, 7-9, ten Have, 7-8	Data session Analyzing data Llewellynnick tutorial	Reading notes
8. 10/13	Wood & Kroger, 10-12; ten Have, 9-10 Antaki, C., Billig, M.G., Edwards, D. and Potter, J.A., (2003) Discourse Analysis Means Doing Analysis: A Critique of Six Analytic Shortcomings, <i>Discourse Analysis Online</i> , 1 Available from: http://www.shu.ac.uk/daol/articles/v1/n1/a1/antaki2002002-paper.html Goodman, S. (2008). The generalizability of discursive research. <i>Qualitative Research in Psychology</i> 5, 265-275.	Warranting, generalizability and other issues related to establishing the quality of DA research; writing up DA, institutional talk & applied CA Data session	Reading notes
9. 10/20	Prior, L. (2008). Doing things with documents. In D. Silverman <i>Qualitative Research: Theory Method and Practice</i> (pp. 76-94). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. Rapley, T. (2007). Exploring conversations about and with documents (ch 7) and Exploring documents (ch 9). In <i>Doing conversation, discourse and document analysis</i> . Titscher, Meyer, Wodak & Vetter (2005). Two approaches to critical discourse analysis. In <i>Methods of text and discourse analysis</i> .	Text/document analysis Data sessions	Reading notes

<i>Week</i>	<i>Readings to be completed before class</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Due before class (in addition to readings)</i>
10. 10/27	<p>Markham, A. (2008). Internet communication as a tool for qualitative research. In D. Silverman <i>Qualitative Research: Theory Method and Practice</i> (pp. 95-124). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.</p> <p>Lamerichs, J. & te Molder, H.F.M. (2003). Computer-mediated communication: From a cognitive to a discursive model. <i>New Media & Society</i> 5(4): 451-473.</p> <p>Horne, J. & Wiggins, S. (2009). Doing being 'on the edge': Managing the dilemma of being authentically suicidal in an online forum. <i>Sociology of Health & Illness</i> 31(2): 170-184.</p> <p>Lester, J. & Paulus, T. (Forthcoming). Accountability and public displays of knowing in an undergraduate computer-mediated communication context. <i>Discourse Studies</i> 13(5).</p>	<p>CMC data analysis</p> <p>Data sessions</p>	
11. 11/3	No readings	Data sessions	
12. 11/10	No readings	Data sessions	
13. 11/17	No readings	Final data sessions & wrap up & course evaluations	
Final paper due at midnight on November 29			