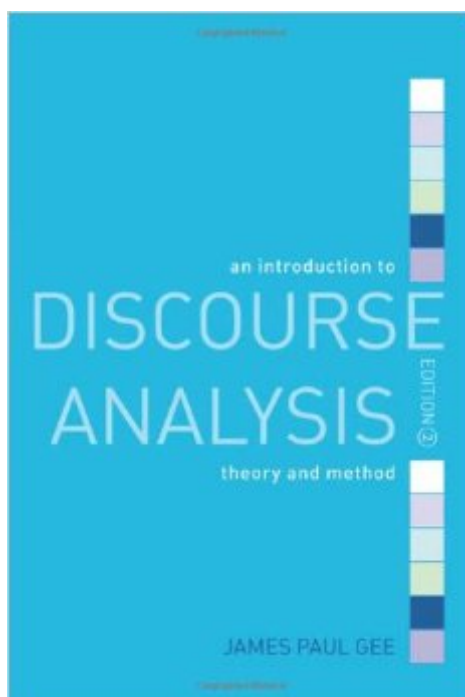


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An Introduction To Discourse Analysis: Theory And Method



Synopsis

Discourse analysis considers how language, both spoken and written, enacts social and cultural perspectives and identities. In this book, James Paul Gee introduces the field and presents his unique integrated approach to it. Assuming no prior knowledge of linguistics, the author presents both a theory of language-in-use and a method of research. Clearly structured and written in a highly accessible style, *An Introduction to Discourse Analysis* incorporates perspectives from a variety of approaches and disciplines, including applied linguistics, education, psychology, anthropology and communication to help students and scholars from a range of backgrounds to formulate their own views on discourse and engage in their own discourse analysis. The second edition has been completely revised and updated and contains substantial new material and examples of oral and written language, ranging from group discussions with children, adults, students and teachers to conversations, interviews, academic texts and policy documents.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Reading the book does not require prior knowledge and training in linguistics or social theory because the book was written at the really introductory level. The author has intentionally stayed away from using too many technical jargons and dumping too many names on his readers. Thus, it is actually a very good introduction for students who haven't had prior experiences of reading linguistic stuffs. While the book does not deal with discourse analysis deeply, it certainly can provide an entry point for people who would like to know more about discourse analysis.

Having read this book for a graduate seminar in Discourse Analysis I can give Gee credit for producing a very readable book on a subject that has literature that often strays into the hard to read category. The book systematically lays out Gee's version of Discourse Analysis with useful examples and citations of others' work. The one negative that I ran into consistently is that the book does tend to require the reader to readily absorb a large vocabulary that Gee introduces almost immediately. If you forget some of Gee's terms and phrases, you will find yourself flipping back and forth through pages to see what exactly he means when he says X word or phrase. Considering the relative shortness of the book, this isn't that big of a problem. Also, it is important to realize that Discourse Analysis brings with it by its very nature a large vocabulary--it is something Gee can not help but include in his book.

This book is a very thorough analysis of the language as used in social contexts, by one of the foremost authors in the area. Gee's key premise is that "discourse" (ie language use) can only be interpreted in a larger context including non-linguistic communication (body language, etc...) as well as psychological variables such as attitudes and beliefs. He calls this larger grouping a "Discourse" (with a capital "D") and gives a very thorough exposition of the topic. I don't agree with Gee about how much psychological baggage needs to be included in the picture. But the book is still an excellent read, and very instructive.

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