Discourse analysis

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تنسيق: MIKAN

Definitions Introductory & First Lecture

★ Definitions. It is difficult to give a single definition of discourse analysis.

★ Discourse analysis will enable to reveal the hidden motivations behind a text or behind the choice of a particular method of research to interpret that text.

★ Discourse analysis is meant to provide a higher awareness of the hidden motivations in others and in ourselves, and therefore, enable us to solve concrete problem by making us ask ontological and epistemological questions.

★ Though critical thinking about the analysis of texts is as ancient as mankind, discourse analysis is perceived as the product of postmodern period

★ Discourse Analysis (DA) is a modern discipline of the social sciences that covers a wide variety of different sociolinguistic approaches.

It aims to study and analyses the use of discourse in at least one of the three ways stated above, and more often than not, all of them at once.

Analysis of discourse looks not only at the basic level of what is said, but takes into consideration the surrounding social and historical contexts.

★ Making the distinction between whether a person is described as a 'colonization ' or a 'occupation' is something DA would look at, whilst considering the implications of each term. To expand, 'occupation' is a term that brings negative connotations of evil and damaging, whereas 'colonization' has positive connotations of helping others to develop themselves. So, one term is looked upon a lot more favorably than the other, and this is what a Discourse Analyst would consider, as well as looking at the relationship of these terms with a widely used term.'. Discourse analysts will look at any given text, and this just means anything that communicates a message, and particularly, how that message constructs a social reality or view of the world.

Lecture 2 & 3

★ Language has a magical property: when we speak or write we craft what we have to say to *fit* the situation or context in which we are communicating . But ، at the same time, how we speak or write *creates* that very situation or context .It seems, then ، that we fit our language to a situation or context that our language, in turn ،helped to create in the first place

★ This is rather like the "chicken and egg "question: Which comes first ؟The situation we're in (e. g . a committee meeting ؟ (Or the language we use (our committee ways of talking and interacting ؟(Is this a "committee meeting "*because* we are speaking and acting this way, or are we speaking and acting this way *because* this is a committee meeting ؟ After all, if we did not speak and act in certain ways ، committees could not exist; but then, if institutions, committees, and committee meetings didn't already exist, speaking and acting this way would be nonsense .

★ Discourses and social languages: Whenever we speak or write, we always and simultaneously construct or build **six things or six areas of "reality**:"

1.The meaning and value of aspects of the material world : I enter a plain، square room, and speak and act in a certain way (e. g .like someone about to run a meeting), and, low and behold, where I sit becomes the "front" of the room .

2- Activities : We talk and act in one way and we are engaged in formally opening a committee meeting; we talk and act in another way and we are engaged in "chit-chat "before the official start of the meeting.

3-Identities and relationships : I talk and act in one way one moment and I am speaking and acting as "chair" of the committee; the next moment I speak and talk in a different way and I am speaking and acting as one peer/colleague speaking to another .

4. Politics (the distribution of social goods : I talk and act in such a way that a visibly angry male in a committee meeting (perhaps it's me!) is "standing his ground on principle," but a visibly angry female is "hysterical ".

5.Connections *:* I talk and act so as to make what I am saying here and now in this committee meeting about whether we should admit more minority students connected to or relevant to (or, on the other hand, not connected to or relevant to) what I said last week about my fears of losing my job given the new government's turn to the right .

6.Semiotics -what and how different symbol systems and different forms of knowledge "count":
I talk and act so as to make the knowledge and language of lawyers relevant (privileged), or not, over "everyday language" or over "non-lawyerly academic language" in our committee discussion of facilitating the admission of more minority students .
-There are several "tools of inquiry" (ways of looking at the world of talk and interaction) that will help us study how these building tasks are carried out and with what social and political consequences .The tools of inquiry that will be introduced in this chapter are primarily relevant to how we (together with others) build identities and activities and recognize the identities and activities that are being built around us .

However ،the tools of inquiry introduced here are most certainly caught up with all the other building tasks above, as well, as we will see progressively in this book .The tools to be discussed in this chapter are :

a. "Situated identities" that is, different identities or social positions we enact and recognize in different settings

b. "Social languages" that is, different styles of language that we use to enact and recognize different identities in different settings ؛different social languages also allow us to engage in all the other building tasks above (in different ways, building different sorts of things) .

c. "Discourses" with a capital "D," that is, different ways in which we humans integrate language with non-language "stuff," such as different ways of thinking, acting, interacting, valuing, feeling, believing ،and using symbols tools, and objects in the right places and at the right times so as to enact and recognize different identities and activities, give the material world certain meanings, distribute social goods in a certain way, make certain sorts of meaningful connections in our experience, and privilege certain symbol systems and ways of knowing over others (i. e .carry out all the building tasks above) .

d. "Conversations" with a capital "C," that is ،long-running and important themes or motifs that have been the focus of a variety of different texts and interactions (in different social languages and Discourses) through a significant stretch of time and across an array of institutions .

Lecture 4

Who's and what's

★ When you speak or write anything, you use the resources of English to project yourself as a certain kind of person, a different kind in different circumstances.
You also project yourself as engaged in a certain kind of activity, a different kind in different circumstances. If I have no idea who you are and what you are doing, then I cannot make sense of what you have said, written, or done. You project a different identity at a formal dinner party than you do at the family dinner table. And, though these are both dinner, they are none the less different activities. The fact that people have differential access to different identities and activities, connected to different sorts of status and social goods, is a root source of inequality in society. Intervening in such matters can be a contribution to social justice. Since different identities and activities are enacted in and through language,
the study of language is integrally connected to matters of equity and justice.

★ An oral or written "utterance" has meaning, then, only if and when it communicates a *who* and a *what* (Wieder and Pratt 1990a). What I mean by a "who" is a *socially-situated identity,* the "kind of person" one is seeking to be and enact here and now. What I mean by a "what" is a socially-situated *activity* that the utterance helps to constitute.

★ Lots of interesting complications can set in when we think about identity enacted in and through language. *Who's* can be multiple and they need not always be people. The President's Press Secretary can issue an utterance that is, in fact, authored by a speech writer and authorized (and even claimed) by the President. In this case, the utterance communicates a sort of overlapping and compound *who.* The Press Secretary, even if she is directly quoting the speech writer, must inflect the remark with her own voice. In turn, the speech writer is both "mimicking" the President's "voice" and creating an identity for him.
Not just individuals, but also institutions, through the "anonymous" texts and products they circulate, can author or issue "utterances." For example, we will see below that the warning on an aspirin bottle actually communicates multiple *whos.*

★ An utterance can be authored, authorized by, or issued by a group or a single individual.
Finally, we can point out that *whos* and *whats* are not really discrete and separable.
You are *who* you are partly through *what* you are doing and *what* you are doing is partly recognized for what it is by *who* is doing it. So it is better, in fact, to say that utterances communicate an integrated, though often multiple or " heteroglossic," *who-doing-what*

lecture 5

"Real Indians"

Though I have focused on language, it is important to see that making visible and recognizable *who* we are and *what* we are doing always requires more than language. It requires, as well, that we act, think, value, and interact in ways that together with language render *who* we are and *what* we are doing recognizable to others (and ourselves). In fact, to be a particular *who* and to pull off a particular *what* requires that we act, value, interact, and use language *in sync with* or *in coordination with* other people and with various objects ("props") in appropriate locations and at appropriate times.

To see this wider notion of language as integrated with "other stuff" (other people, objects, values, times and places), we will briefly consider Wieder and Pratt's (1990a, b) fascinating work on how Native Americans (from a variety of different groups, though no claim is made that the following is true of all Native American groups) recognize each other as "really Indian." Wieder and Pratt point out that real Indians "refer to persons who are 'really Indian' in just those words with regularity and standardization" (1990a: 48). Wieder and Pratt's work will also make clear how the identities (the *whos*) we take on are flexibly negotiated in actual contexts of practice.

The term "real Indian" is, of course, an "insiders' term." The fact that it is used by some Native Americans in enacting their own identity work does not license non- Native Americans to use the term.
The problem of "recognition and being recognized" is very consequential and problematic for Native Americans. While in order to be considered a "real Indian," one must be able to make some claims to kinship with others who are recognized as "real Indians," this by no means settles the matter. People with such (biological) ties can fail to get recognized as a "real Indian," and people of mixed kinship can be so recognized.

Being a "real Indian" is not something one can simply be. Rather, it is something that one becomes in and through the doing of it, that is, in carrying out the actual performance itself. Though one must have certain kinship ties to get in the "game," beyond this entry criterion, there is no *being* (once and for all) a "real Indian," rather there is only doing *being-or-becoming-a-"real-Indian."* If one does not continue to "practice" being a "real Indian," one ceases to be one
Finally, doing being-and-becoming-a-"real-Indian" is not something that one can do all by oneself. It requires the participation of others. One cannot be a "real Indian" unless one appropriately recognizes "real Indians" and gets recognized by others as a "real Indian" in the practices of doing being-and-becoming-a-"real- Indian." Being a "real Indian" also requires appropriate accompanying objects (props), times, and places

There are a multitude of ways one can do being-and-becoming-a-"real-Indian." Some of these are (following Wieder and Pratt 1990a): "Real Indians" prefer to avoid conversation with strangers, Native American or otherwise. They cannot be related to one another as "mere acquaintances," as some "non-Indians" might put it. So, for "real Indians," any conversation they do have with a stranger who may turn out to be a "real Indian" will, in the discovery of the other's "Indianness," establish substantial obligations between the conversational partners just through the mutual acknowledgment that they are "Indians" and that they are now no longer strangers to one another. In their search for the other's "real Indianness" and in their display of their own "Indianness," "real Indians" frequently engage in a distinctive form of verbal sparring. By correctly responding to and correctly engaging in this sparring, which "Indians" call "razzing," each participant further establishes cultural competency in the eyes of the other.

lecture 6

★ The key to Discourses is "recognition." If you put language, action, interaction, values, beliefs, symbols, objects, tools, and places together in such a way that others *recognize* you as a particular type of who (identity) engaged in a particular type of what (activity) here and now, then you have pulled off a Discourse (and thereby continued it through history, if only for a while longer).

★ It is sometimes helpful to think about social and political issues as if it is not just us humans who are talking and interacting with each other, but rather, the Discourses we represent and enact, and for which we are "carriers." The Discourses we enact existed before each of us came on the scene and most of them will exist long after we have left the scene. Discourses, through our words and deeds, carry on conversations with each other through history, and, in doing so, form human history. Think, for instance, of the long-running and ever-changing "conversation" in the U.S. and Canada between the Discourses of "being an Indian" and "being an Anglo" or of the different, but equally long-running "conversation" in New Zealand between "being a Maori" and "being an Anglo" (or, for that matter, think of the long-running conversation between "being a British Anglo" and "being an American Anglo").

★ Some studies argue the physics experimental physicists "know" is, in large part, *not* in their heads. Rather, it is spread out (distributed), inscribed in (and often trapped in) apparatus, symbolic systems, books, papers, and journals, institutions, habits of bodies, routines of practice, and other people (Latour 1987; Traweek 1988).

★ The notion of Discourses will be important throughout this book. It is important, therefore, to make some points clear to avoid some common misunderstandings. Imagine I freeze a moment of thought, talk, action, or interaction for you, in the way in which a projector can freeze a piece of film. To make sense of that moment, you have to recognize the identities and activities involved in it
Perhaps, for this frozen moment you can't do so, so you move the film back and forward enough until you can make such a recognition judgment. "Oh, now I see," you say, "it's a 'real Indian' razzing another 'real Indian'," or "it's a radical feminist berating a male for a crass male remark" or "it's a laboratory physicist orienting colleagues to a graph" or "it's a first-grader in Ms. X's class starting a sharing time story."

★ This is what I call "recognition work." People engage in such work when they try to make visible to others (and to themselves, as well) who they are and what they are doing

★ There is another term that it is useful in place of the cumbersome phrase " who-doing- what," at least as far as the *language* aspects of "who-doing-whats" are concerned (remembering that language is caught up with "other stuff" in Discourses). This term is "social language" (Gee 1996: ch. 4; Bakhtin 1986). Each of the *who-doing-whats* we saw on the aspirin bottle is linguistically expressed in different "social languages." All languages, like English or French, are composed of many (a great many) different social languages. Social languages are what we learn and what we speak

lecture 7

Two grammars

★ Each social language has its own distinctive grammar. However, two different sorts of grammars are important to social languages, only one of which we ever think to study formally in school. One grammar is the traditional set of units like nouns, verbs, inflections, phrases and clauses. These are real enough, though quite inadequately described in traditional school grammars. Let's call this "grammar one."

The other – less studied, but more important – grammar is the "rules" by which grammatical units like nouns and verbs, phrases and clauses, are used to create *patterns* which signal or "index" characteristic *whos-doing-whats-within- Discourses.* That is, we speakers and writers design our oral or written utterances to have patterns in them in virtue of which interpreters can attribute situated identities and specific activities to us and our utterances. We will call this "grammar two."

★ Let me give a couple of examples from Gee of social languages at work, beyond the example of the two different social languages in the warning on the aspirin bottle, examples Gee has used over the years as particularly clear instances of different social languages (e.g. Gee 1996). Consider, for instance, the following case of an upper-middle-class, Anglo-American young woman named "Jane," in her twenties, who was attending one of the author (Gee) courses on language and communication.

The course was discussing different social languages and, during the discussion, Jane claimed that she herself did not use different social languages in different contexts, but rather, was consistent from context to context. In fact, to do otherwise, she said, would be "hypocritical," a failure to "be oneself." In order to support her claim that she did not switch her style of speaking in different contexts and for different conversational partners, Jane decided to record herself talking to her parents and to her boyfriend. In both cases, she decided to discuss a story the class had discussed earlier, so as to be sure that, in both contexts, she was talking about the same thing. In the story, a character named Abigail wants to get across a river to see her true love, Gregory. A river boat captain (Roger) says he will take her only if she consents to sleep with him. In desperation to see Gregory, Abigail agrees to do so. But when she arrives and tells Gregory what she has done, he disowns her and sends her away. There is more to the story, but this is enough for our purposes here. Students in my class had been asked to rank order the characters in the story from the most offensive to the least. In explaining to her parents why she thought Gregory was the worst (least moral) character in the story, the young woman said the following:
Well, when I thought about it, I don't know, it seemed to me that Gregory should be the most offensive. He showed no understanding for Abigail, when she told him what she was forced to do. He was callous. He was hypocritical, in the sense that he professed to love her, then acted like that.

Earlier, in her discussion with her boyfriend, in an informal setting, she had also explained why she thought Gregory was the worst character. In this context she said:
What that guy was, you know, her boyfriend. I should hope, if I ever did that to see you, you would shoot the guy. He uses her and he says he loves her. Roger never lies, you know what I mean?
It was clear – even to Jane – that she had used two very different forms of language. The differences between Jane's two social languages are everywhere apparent in the two texts. To her parents, she carefully hedges her claims ("I don't know," "it seemed to me"); to her boyfriend, she makes her claims straight out To her boyfriend, she uses terms like "guy," while to her parents she uses more formal terms like "offensive," "understanding," "callous," "hypocritical" and "professed." She also uses more formal sentence structure to her parents ("it seemed to me that . . . ," "He showed no understanding for Abigail, when . . . ," "He was hypocritical in the sense that . . .") than she does to her boyfriend (". . . that guy, you know, her boyfriend," "Roger never lies, you know what I mean?").

Jane repeatedly addresses her boyfriend as "you," thereby noting his social involvement as a listener, but does not directly address her parents in this way

In talking to her boyfriend, she leaves several points to be inferred, points that she spells out more explicitly to her parents (e.g. her boyfriend must infer that Gregory is being accused of being a hypocrite from the information that though Roger is bad, at least he does not lie, which Gregory did in claiming to love Abigail). All in all, Jane appears to use more "school-like" language to her parents. Her language to them requires less inferencing on their part and distances them as listeners from social and emotional involvement with what she is saying, while stressing, perhaps, their cognitive involvement and their judgment of her and her "intelligence." Her language to her boyfriend, on the other hand, stresses social and affective involvement, solidarity, and co-participation in meaning making. This young woman is making visible and recognizable two different versions of *who* she is and *what* she is doing. In one case she is "a dutiful and intelligent daughter having dinner with her proud parents" and in the other case she is "a girl friend being intimate with her boyfriend."

LECTURE 8

★ All of us master and control more than one social language. So we switch among them according to the situation we are in.
★ Big "C" Conversations: Conversation among Discourses.

Now it is time to become clearer about what we mean by "conversation." The word "conversation," as Gee is using it here, can be misleading. We tend to think of conversations as "just words." But the sorts of conversations he is talking about involve a lot more than words; they involve, in fact, Discourses. It is better, perhaps, to call them "Conversations" with a "big C," since they are better viewed as (historic) conversations between and among Discourses, not just among individual people. Think, for instance, as we mentioned above, of the long-running, historic Conversation between biology and creationism, or between the Los Angeles police department and Latino street gangs.
More than people, and more than language, are involved in Conversations.

They involve, as well, at least the following three non-verbal things:
1. controversy, that is, "sides" we can identify as constituting a debate (Billig 1987).
2. values and ways of thinking connected to the debate.
3. The "symbolic" value of objects and institutions that are what we might call non-verbal participants in the Conversation (Latour 1987).

Let me give you an example of what I am trying to get at here. It is fashionable today for businesses to announce (in "mission statements") their "core values" in an attempt to create a particular company "culture" (Collins and Porras 1994, examples below are from pp. 68–9). For instance, the announced core values of Johnson & Johnson, a large pharmaceutical company, include "The company exists to alleviate pain and disease" and "Individual opportunity and reward based on merit," as well as several others.

"A heteroglossic aspirin bottle"
I want now to return to how ***whos*** and ***whats*** are communicated in ***language*** (keeping in mind that language alone is rarely enough and is always put together with "other stuff" to pull off a Discourse). It is time, then, to turn to examples in order to make my points about ***whos-doing-whats*** more concrete. Consider, then, the warning on my aspirin bottle (Gee 1996), reprinted below (italics and capitals are on the warning):

Warnings: *Children and teenagers should not use this medication for chicken pox or flu symptoms before a doctor is consulted about Reye Syndrome, a rare but serious illness reported to be associated with aspirin.* Keep this and all drugs out of the reach of children. In case of accidental overdose, seek professional assistance or contact a poison control center immediately
As with any drug, if you are pregnant or nursing a baby, seek the advice of a health professional before using this product. IT IS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT NOT TO USE ASPIRIN DURING THE LAST 3 MONTHS OF PREGNANCY UNLESS SPECIFICALLY DIRECTED TO DO SO BY A DOCTOR BECAUSE IT MAY CAUSE PROBLEMS IN THE UNBORN CHILD OR COMPLICATIONS DURING DELIVERY.

My interpretation of this text is that there are two ***who-doing-whats*** in this warning, and they are interleaved. The first is made up of the following sentences: Children and teenagers should not use this medication for chicken pox or flu symptoms before a doctor is consulted about Reye Syndrome, a rare but serious illness reported to be associated with aspirin. It is especially important not to use aspirin during the last 3 months of pregnancy unless specifically directed to do so by a doctor because it may cause problems in the unborn child or complications during delivery.

Here things are referred to quite specifically ("children or teenagers," "this medication," "chicken pox," " flu," "Reye Syndrome," "aspirin," "last 3 months," "unborn child," "delivery"), doctors are called "doctor," and matters are treated emphatically (italics, capitals, "should not," "rare but serious," "especially important," "specifically directed").

The second ***who-doing-what*** is made up of the following sentences, placed in the middle of the other two: Keep this and all drugs out of the reach of children. In case of accidental overdose, seek professional assistance or contact a poison control center immediately. As with any drug, if you are pregnant or nursing a baby, seek the advice of a health professional before using this product.

Here things are referred to more generally and generically ("this and all drugs," "any drug," and "this product," rather than "this medication" and "aspirin"; "children" rather than "children and teenagers," "pregnant" rather than "last 3 months of pregnancy"), doctors are not mentioned, rather the health profession is referred to more generally ("professional assistance," "poison control center," "health professional"), and matters are treated less stridently with the exception of that "immediately" (small print, "keep out of reach," "accidental overdose," "seek .. . assistance," "seek advice," rather than "should not" and "important not to use").

These two ***who-doing-whats*** "feel" different. They are authorized and issued by different "voices" to different purposes and effects. The first speaks with a lawyerly voice responding to specific court cases; the second speaks with the official voice of a caring, but authoritatively knowledgeable company trying to avoid anyone thinking that aspirin in particular is a potentially harmful drug. Of course, this second ***who-doing- what*** partly contradicts the first. By the way, the second ***who doing-what*** on the aspirin bottle used to be the only warning on the bottle (with the order of the sentences a bit different).

This warning, like all utterances, reflects the company it has kept, or, to put the matter another way, it reflects a history that has given rise to it. In this case, presumably, the new sterner, more direct ***who-doing-what*** was added to the more general and avuncular one because the company got sued over things like Reye Syndrome. The warning on the aspirin bottle is heteroglossic. That is, it is "double-voiced," since it interleaves two different ***whos-doing-whats*** together. Of course, in different cases, this sort of interleaving could be much more intricate, with the two (or more) ***whos-doing-whats*** more fully integrated, and harder to tease apart.

LECTURE 9

DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

In this chapter, Gee integrates the tools of inquiry we have discussed in the earlier chapters into an overall model of discourse analysis that stresses the six building tasks introduced at the opening of Chapter 2. I will also discuss, from the perspective on discourse analysis taken in this book, the role of transcripts in discourse analysis, what might constitute an "ideal" discourse analysis, and the nature of validity in discourse analysis.

In this section, Gee summarizes the two types of meaning that he argued, **A situated meaning** is an image or pattern that we assemble "on the spot" as we communicate in a given context, based on our construal of that context and on our past experiences (Agar 1994; Barsalou 1991, 1992; Clark 1993; Clark 1996; Hofstadter 1997; Kress 1985, 1996; Kress and van Leeuwen 1996). In Chapter 3, I used the example of the following two utterances: "The coffee spilled, get a mop"; "The coffee spilled, get a broom" (p. 48). In the first case, triggered by the word "mop" in the context, you assemble a situated meaning something like "dark liquid we drink" for "coffee";
In the second case, triggered by the word "broom" and your experience of such matters, you assemble either a situated meaning something like "grains that we make our coffee from" or like "beans from which we grind coffee." Of course, in a real context, there are many more signals as how to go about assembling situated meanings for words and phrases.

Situated meanings don't simply reside in individual minds; very often they are ***negotiated*** between people in and through communicative social interaction (Billig 1987; Edwards and Potter 1992; Goffman 1981; Goodwin 1990). For example, in Chapter 2, I used the example of someone in a relationship saying "I think good relationships shouldn't take work." A good part of the conversation following such a remark might very well involve mutually negotiating (directly, or indirectly through inferencing) what "work" is going to mean for the people concerned, in this specific context, as well as in the larger context of their ongoing relationship. Furthermore, as conversations and indeed, relationships, develop, participants continually revise their situated meanings.

Words like "work" and "coffee" seem to have more general meanings than are apparent in the sorts of situated meanings we have discussed so far. This is because words are also associated with what, in Chapters 3 and 4, I called "cultural models." Cultural models are "storylines," families of connected images (like a mental movie), or (informal) "theories" shared by people belonging to specific social or cultural groups (D'Andrade 1995; D'Andrade and Strauss 1992; Holland and Quinn 1987; Strauss and Quinn 1997).

LECTURE 10

Reflexivity

When we think about how meaning is situated in actual contexts of use, we quickly face an important property of language, a property I will call "reflexivity" (Duranti and Goodwin 1992; Hanks 1996; Heritage 1984; Gumperz and Levinson 1996). This is the "magical" property of language.

We can see this property clearly by considering even so simple a dialogue as: "How are ya?," "Fine," exchanged between colleagues in an office corridor. Why do they use ***these*** words in ***this situation?*** ***Because*** they take the situation they are in to be but a brief and mundane encounter between acquaintances, and these are the "appropriate" words to use in such a situation. But why do they take the situation to be ***thus****?* In part, ***because*** they are using just such words, and related behaviors, as they are. Had the exchange opened with "What's YOUR problem?," the situation would have been construed quite differently.

As we saw before, we face, then, a chicken and egg question: Which comes first? The situation or the language? This question reflects an important ***reciprocity*** between language and "reality": language simultaneously ***reflects*** reality ("the way things are") and ***constructs*** (*construes*) it to be a certain way. While "reciprocity" would be a good term for this property of language, the more commonly used term is "reflexivity" (in the sense of language and context being like two mirrors facing each other and constantly and endlessly reflecting their own images back and forth between each other).

Situations

Language then always simultaneously reflects and constructs the situation or context in which it is used (hereafter Gee will use the term "situation," rather than "context," because he wants to define it in a particular way). But what do we mean by a "situation"? Situations, when they involve communicative social interaction, always involve the following inextricably connected components or aspects (Hymes 1974; Ochs 1996).

A semiotic aspect, that is, the "sign systems," such as language, gestures, images, or other symbolic systems (Kress and van Leeuwen 1996), and the forms of knowledge, that are operative and important here and now. Different sign systems and different ways of knowing have, in turn, different implications for what is taken as the "real" world, and what is taken as probable and possible and impossible, here and now, since it is only through sign systems that we have access to "reality."

An activity aspect, that is, the specific social activity or activities in which the participants are engaging; activities are, in turn, made up of a sequence of actions (Engestrom 1987, 1990; Leont'ev 1978; 1981; Wertsch 1998).

A material aspect, that is, the place, time, bodies and objects present during interaction (Clark 1997; Latour 1991; Levinson 1996).

A political aspect, that is, the distribution of "social goods" in the interaction, such as, power, status, and anything else deemed a "social good" by the participants in terms of their cultural models and Discourses, e.g. beauty, intelligence, "street smarts," strength, possessions, race, gender, sexual orientation, etc. (Fairclough 1989, 1992, 1995; Gee 1996; Luke 1995).

A sociocultural aspect, that is, the personal, social, and cultural knowledge, feelings, values, identities, and relationships relevant in the interaction, including, of course, sociocultural knowledge about sign systems, activities, the material world, and politics, i.e. all the other aspects above .

LECTURE 11

All these aspects together constitute a ***system*** (an interrelated network) within which each of the components or aspects simultaneously gives meaning to all the others and gets meaning from them. That is, we have another form of reflexivity here, as well. For a shorthand, let us call this system the "situation network." Situations are never completely novel (indeed, if they were, we wouldn't understand them). Rather, they are repeated, with more or less variation, over time (that is, distinctive configurations or patterns of semiotic resources, activities, things, and political and sociocultural elements are repeated). Such repetition tends to "ritualize," "habitualize," or "freeze" situations to varying degrees, that is, to cause them to be repeated with less variation (Douglas 1986).

Such repetition (e.g. imagine the old style spelling bee or the traditional doctor– nurse–patient relationship around a hospital bed) is the life blood out of which ***institutions,*** such as distinctive types of schools, hospitals, businesses, industries, government agencies, political parties, street gangs, academic disciplines, colleges or college classrooms, and so on and so forth through a nearly endless list, are created. Institutions, in turn, create forces (e.g. laws, disciplinary procedures, apprenticeships, etc.) that ensure the repetition and ritualization of the situations that sustain them.

Studying the way in which situations produce and reproduce institutions, and are, in turn, sustained by them, is an important part of discourse analysis (Bernstein 1996; Bourdieu 1985; Foucault 1973, 1977; Gee, Hull, and Lankshear 1996; Lynch and Bogen 1996). All of the elements in the situation network are like connected threads; if you pull on one you get all the others. Though discourse analysis usually focuses on the language (semiotic) aspect, it can start from any of these aspects of a situation and will, in the end, get right back to all the others.

Let me give some brief examples of how all the aspects in the situation network are integrally intertwined. Consider a small seminar room with a circular table in it, and blackboard on all sides. The room has a "front" and "back" when a teacher is standing at the "front" addressing students. What gives the room (a material thing) a "front" and a "back" (meanings/values) is a socioculturally distinctive activity, teaching of a certain sort, which some cultures engage in and others do not, an activity realized through socioculturally distinctive forms of language and certain sorts of sociocultural knowledge, attitudes, and identities. Furthermore, the "front"–"back" dimension of the room reflects the traditional political alignments of teachers as "authorities" and students as subservient. Thus, the room, the activity, the talk, sociocultural identities, and political relations all mean together, giving and taking meaning from each other.

LECTURE 12

Words like "work" and "coffee" seem to have more general meanings than are apparent in the sorts of situated meanings we have discussed so far. This is because words are also associated with what, in Chapters 3 and 4, I called "cultural models." Cultural models are "storylines," families of connected images (like a mental movie), or (informal) "theories" shared by people belonging to specific social or cultural groups (D'Andrade 1995; D'Andrade and Strauss 1992; Holland and Quinn 1987; Strauss and Quinn 1997).

Cultural models "explain," relative to the standards of the group, why words have the various situated meanings they do and fuel their ability to grow more. Cultural models are usually not completely stored in any one person's head. Rather, they are distributed across the different sorts of "expertise" and viewpoints found in the group (Hutchins 1995; Shore 1996), much like a plot to a story or pieces of a puzzle that different people have different bits of and which they can potentially share in order to mutually develop the "big picture."
The cultural model connected to "coffee," for example, is, for some of us, something like: berries are picked (somewhere? from some sort of plant?)and then prepared (how?) as beans or grain to be made later into a drink, as well as into flavorings (how?) for other foods. Different types of coffee, drunk in different ways, have different social and cultural implications, for example, in terms of status. This is about all of the model I know, the rest of it (I trust) is distributed elsewhere in the society should I need it.

Cultural models link to each other in complex ways to create bigger and bigger storylines. Such linked networks of cultural models help organize the thinking and social practices of sociocultural groups. For example, taking a more consequential example than "coffee," as we saw in Chapter 4, some people use a cultural model for raising young children that runs something like this (Harkness, Super, and Keefer 1992): Children are born dependent on their parents and then they go through various stages during which they often engage in disruptive behaviors in pursuit of their growing desire for independence.

This cultural model, which integrates models for children, child-rearing, stages, development, and independence, as well as others, helps parents explain their children's behavior in terms of a value the group holds (e.g. independence). It is continually revised and developed (consciously and unconsciously) in interaction with others in the group, as well as through exposure to various books and other media.

children differently (Philipsen 1975): for example, as beings who start out as too unsocialized and whose disruptive behaviors are not so much signs of their growing desire for independence as they are signals of their need for greater socialization within the family, i.e. for less independence (less "selfishness").

LECTURE 13
Six building tasks

Discourse analysis focuses on the thread of language (and related semiotic systems) used in the situation network. Any piece of language, oral or written, is composed of a set of grammatical *cues or clues* (Gumperz 1982) that help listeners or readers (in negotiation and collaboration with others in an interaction) to *build* six things (in one sense of the word, these six things are interlinked "representations," that is. "re-presentings").

I want to stress that utterances are made up of cues or clues as to how to move back and forth between language and context (situations). not signals of fixed and decontextualized meanings. These cues or clues are part and parcel of what *we* called, in Chapter 2, "grammar one" and "grammar two" (p. 29). Language, then, always contains cues or clues that guide us (either as interpreters on the scene or as analysts) in the six sorts of building tasks listed below (these were briefly discussed in Chapter 2).

These building tasks involve us in using language (and other semiotic systems) to construe the situation network in certain ways and not others. They are carried out all at once and together. And, they are carried out in negotiation and collaboration with others in interaction, with due regard for other related oral and written texts and situations we have encountered before.

Even when we are silently reading, these building tasks are carried out in negotiation and collaboration with the writer in various guises such as the "actual writer," "assumed writer," and the narrator, as well as in collaboration with other, related texts we have read, sociocultural knowledge we bring to the text, and discussions we have had with other people. That is, these building tasks can be seen simultaneously as cognitive achievements, interactional achievements, and inter-textual achievements.

LECTURE 14

The six building tasks, the tasks through which we use language to construct and/or construe the situation network, at a given time and place, in a certain way, are :

1. Semiotic building, that is, using cues or clues to assemble situated meanings about what semiotic (communicative) systems, systems of knowledge. and ways of knowing, are here and now relevant and activated.

2.*World building.* that is, using cues or clues to assemble situated meanings about what is here and now (taken as) "reality," what is here and now (taken as) present and absent, concrete and abstract, 'real' and "unreal," probable, possible, and impossible.

3. *Activity building,* that is, using cues or clues to assemble situated meanings about what activity or activities are going on, composed of what specific actions.

4. *Socioculturally-situated identity and relationship building,* that is, using cues or clues to assemble situated meanings about what identities and relationships are relevant to the interaction, with their concomitant attitudes, values, ways of feeling, ways of knowing and believing, as well as ways of acting and interacting.

5. *Political budding,* that is, using cues or clues to construct the nature and relevance of various "social goods," such as status and power, and anything else taken as a "social good" here and now (e.g. beauty, humor, verbalness, specialist knowledge, a fancy car, etc.).

6. *Connection building*, that is, using cues or clues to make assumptions about how the past and future of an interaction, verbally and non-verbally, are connected to the present moment and to each other — after all, interactions always have some degree of continuous coherence.

Different grammatical devices contribute differently to these six tasks and many devices contribute to more than one at the same time. All together these six building tasks spell out the work of the semiotic aspect of the situation network, with special reference here to language.