BRIAN PALTRIDGE, *Discourse analysis: An introduction*. London & New York: Continuum, 2006. Pp. xii, 244. Pb $39.95

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An introductory book, *Discourse analysis: An introduction* by Brian Paltridge not only contains a detailed description of basic concepts concerning discourse analysis, but also gives an overview of different approaches to discourse analysis. It combines theories of discourse analysis with practices. It is highly accessible and readable for beginners in the field. In addition, it provides discussion questions, data analysis projects, and directions for further reading, which are very helpful in order for students to understand of the chapters.

The book is made up of nine chapters. Chap. 1 gives a general picture of discourse analysis by discussing its definition, its relation with pragmatics, and the discourse structures of texts, among other things. It also provides several different views of discourse analysis and distinguishes spoken from written discourse. Chap. 2 mainly deals with important aspects of the social and cultural settings of spoken and written discourse. It discusses speech communities and discourse communities and influential factors on discourse, such as social class and social networks. It is pointed out that discourse can be used to disclose gender difference, sexuality, identity, and ideology.

Chap. 3 presents the relationship between discourse and pragmatics in terms of pragmatic principles and theories, such as speech act theory, the Cooperative Principle, and the Politeness Principle. It shows that the way people perform speech acts and what speech acts mean often vary across cultures. Chap. 4 defines genre and introduces genre analysis and its applications. In particular, it discusses spoken and written genres across cultures. Chap. 5 shifts to concepts and principles concerning conversation analysis, a major area of discourse analysis. It explores how social relationships are negotiated in spoken discourse. Some criticisms of conversation analysis are also presented.

Chap. 6 discusses grammar from a discourse perspective. It elaborates on the texture of a text by introducing cohesive devices, theme, and thematic progression. Chap. 7 introduces corpus analysis and different kinds of corpora and discusses the application of corpus analysis to spoken and written discourse. Chap. 8 explores another important approach to discourse analysis: critical discourse analysis, which deals with social, cultural, and political issues such as race, politics, gender, and identity. Key points in critical discourse analysis are introduced – genre, framing, multimodality, and identity. Criticisms of critical discourse analysis are also pointed out. Chap. 9 presents concrete steps in doing discourse analysis and then analyzes spoken and written discourse samples.

Generally speaking, this can be used as a course book for those who are ready to start a journey in the field of discourse analysis and as a helpful reference book for faculty and others interested in the field.

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LUCIA THESEN & ERMEIN VAN PLETZEN (eds.), *Academic literacy and the languages of change*. London: Continuum, 2006. Pp. xii, 212. Hb $160.00.

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Thesen & van Pletzen's edited volume collects eight essays by South African scholars working in the area of New Literacy Theory. The chapters shed light on local literacy practices that are essential to

the construction and understanding of academic literacies in a multilingual society where English, the medium of instruction, is an additional language for most students. The editors maintain that the authors look "closely at [their] practice, and attempt to theorize from where [they] stand" (p. 3). The introduction provides a useful history of the institution and the political context – the emergence from apartheid – in which it operates. Additionally, the case is made for situating this research in New Literacy Studies because of its "emphasis on socio-political understandings of multiple literacy practices" (13), validating the authors' theoretical reliance on such scholars as Gee, Gough, and Halliday.

Rochelle Kapp's research comes from an ethnographic study she did in a Black township's secondary school. In chap. 1, Kapp argues that "teachers' notions of appropriate English literacy are inextricably bound to their construction of their students as border-crossers" (32). The teachers under study are concerned not only with how their students will be perceived in a more diverse South African society but also that their students maintain their Xhosa identity. Relying on Bakhtin's concept of genre, Stella Clark argues in chap. 2 that science teachers' requirement that students explain scientific premises in their own words in a "friendly letter" assignment sets the students up for failure. Because of a mixing of genres, students are denied access to scientific discourse when this discourse is not explicitly taught.

In chap. 3, Bongi Bangeni & Rochelle Kapp investigate how student identities develop in relation to the transition from a home discourse to an academic discourse. Similarly, in chap. 4 an ethnographic study provides Moragh Paxton with illustrations of how students transition into academic discourse by building on previous discourses to construct "hybrid interim literacies" (85).

Ermien van Pletzen's research in chap. 5 focuses on the reading experiences of first-year medical students, indicating that students were underprepared for psychosocial readings because these readings required the students to read for purposes other than to acquire content information concerning the science of medicine. In chap. 6, Arlene Archer describes how engineering students' use of semiotic resources is altered or mixed based on their subjectivities regarding information with which they are working. Lucia Thesen, in chap. 7, focuses on "the need to study the place of lectures in the flow of meaning in universities" (152) by concentrating on the verbal/visual aspects of the encounter and how various students understand these encounters. Last, in chap. 8, Gideon Nomdo, relying on Bourdieu's notion of capital, illustrates how two successful Black students use various forms of capital in their academic success.

The research presented in this volume is intriguing and solidly grounded in literacy theory, with the theory woven into the research in such a way that novices to literacy studies will gain valuable insights into the foundations of that field while more seasoned scholars will gain from the solid research being presented.

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K. David Harrison, *When languages die: The extinction of the world's languages and the erosion of human knowledge*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007. Pp. 292. Hb $29.95.

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Much has been written in the past 15 years on the subject of endangered languages. Linguists have published academic findings on what causes languages to die, what keeps them alive, and how to save them if they are at risk. Despite the alarming estimate that half of the world's approximately 6,900 languages will disappear during the coming century (p. 3), the plight of endangered languages has yet to take hold of the public's imagination. Harrison's book may help.

Written for both a scientific and a popular readership, the book calls for greater effort to record and save endangered languages because of what they can tell us about the human condition. Every