

BOOK NOTES

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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

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