Reviews of Barbara Johnstone, Discourse Analysis

Barbara Johnstone

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Discourse Analysis

In her book *Discourse Analysis* Johnstone sets out to answer two very interesting and interrelated questions: How should we conceive of the broader area of discourse analysis and, consequently, what should be taught in an introductory course on this subject matter?

In Johnstone's view, stated clearly in the very beginning (pp. xi–xii), students should not think of discourse analysis as a body of theory, but as an open-ended heuristic, a research method consisting of a set of topics to consider in connection with any instance of discourse. The basic question a discourse analyst should ask is this: Why is a discourse instance or a text the way it is? (p. 8). The answer to this question presupposes many other questions which Johnstone divides into six broad categories. Each of these categories reflects a perspective on how discourse is shaped by its context and how discourse shapes its context; more specifically (see p. 9),

1. discourse is shaped by the world, and shapes the world,
2. discourse is shaped by language, and shapes language,
3. discourse is shaped by participants, and shapes participants,
4. discourse is shaped by prior discourse, and shapes the possibilities for future discourse,
5. discourse is shaped by its medium, and shapes the possibilities of its medium,
6. discourse is shaped by purpose, and shapes possible purpose.

The above six aspects of discourse-building constitute what Johnstone calls a heuristic for analysing discourse. A heuristic, according to the author, "is not a mechanical set of steps to follow, and there is no guarantee that following it will result in a single ideal explanation. (...) A heuristic is not a theory. It is a step in analysis which may help you see what sorts of theory you need in order to connect the observations about discourse you make (...)" (p. 9).

After the first introductory chapter, devoted to the discussion of general issues, six chapters follow corresponding to the six perspectives on the reciprocal relationship between different aspects of context and discourse.

In Chapter 2, Johnstone focuses on the relationship between the world and discourse. Based on the broader framework of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, she investigates, how
languages and ways of doing things with languages constrain and shape the ways we experience the world. Discussing the differences between French and Burmese with regard to grammatical noun classifiers, she makes an interesting point on how facts about grammar can be related to habits of perception. On the other hand, the author addresses the question of how elements of physical and/or ideological world shape what people do with discourse. She remarks that what we talk about and how we talk about it is related to our “worldview”, i.e. what we think of as natural, which in most cases is actually ideological. In connection with this topic, Johnstone introduces Critical Discourse Analysis which aims at uncovering the ways in which ideology and discourse are intertwined; for example, as when racism can be traced in a discourse segment which, on the face of it, has nothing to do with race. Special reference is made to linguistic ideology, i.e. to the set of assumptions about language that help us make out what language is like and how it functions in society.

In Chapter 3, Johnstone examines the relationship between language structure and discourse, i.e. how structural conventions both constraint and reflect the ways in which information is processed and social interaction is maintained. In the first part of this chapter, the author shows how discourse is influenced by various kinds of structural conventions. In discussing discourse units of different length (i.e. words, lines, turns, moves, paragraphs, episodes and schemata), she demonstrates that discourse is built out of larger chunks that are in turn built out of smaller parts. In the second part of this chapter, Johnstone shows how structural conventions are influenced by what speakers use discourse for. She focuses on the findings of Conversation Analysis, more specifically, on how people evoke and create turn-taking structures in the process of interaction. She also presents the findings of Systemic Functional Grammar, in particular how the structure of sentences (e.g., with the relatively familiar information in the beginning and the relatively new information closer to the end of the sentence) reflects the way people process and package information in longer stretches of discourse.

Chapter 4 concerns the relationship between participants and discourse. Commenting on solidarity and power, Johnstone remarks that symmetrical relations among participants can be displayed in discourse by means of devices like the inclusive we, first names, in-group jargon, references to common knowledge, whereas asymmetrical power relations can be marked by hedging and other ways of expressing hesitancy or uncertainty. In this context, Johnstone introduces Goffman’s concept of footing in order to demonstrate that a change in the speakers’ orientation implies a change in the alignment they take up to themselves and to the others present, and this is reflected in the way they handle the production or reception of an utterance. In relation to how discourse is shaped by the audience, special emphasis is given to the theory of politeness, as linguistic politeness is one of the main reasons why people are often indirect. Johnstone does not only insist on how discourse is designed in relation to participants, but also explores, conversely, how discourse constructs social roles (though not always in a very clear way). Being a teacher, for example, can be the result of doing nominations (calling on students to speak) and performing directives (telling students to do things, such as “Open your books”).
Chapter 5 focuses on the relationship between prior discourse, and new discourse. Johnstone starts the discussion by presenting Kristeva’s notion of intertextuality which refers to the ways in which texts and ways of talking built on other texts and discourses. Put it in other words, all discourse draws on familiar discourse formats, as often-repeated discourse activities give rise to relatively fixed ways of textual unfolding. In this framework the author presents several ways of analysing phenomena of intertextuality, beginning by focusing on a functional analysis of repetition, i.e. the ways in which speakers borrow, adapt, and re-use sounds, words, phrases, and structures. Johnstone then moves on to the notions of register (defined as a style variety associated with a recurrent communicative situation, like scientific discourse), genre (defined as a recurrent text type associated with a recurrent purpose, like research reports) and their relationship, as well as to the notion of plots (defined as semantic scaffolds for creating worlds in discourse, like tragic plots). All these notions are conceived of as routinized ways of talking. The author ends this chapter by emphasizing the fundamental tension between constraint and creativity in discourse, i.e. the need to simultaneously do familiar and new things in discourse.

Chapter 6 is on medium and discourse. Orality and literacy are the first concepts introduced by Johnstone in order to show how the medium shapes discourse. She remarks that oral discourse is different in structure and function (i.e. more repetitive, rhythmic, formulaic, and aggregative) than discourse in a written context. A very interesting issue raised is how the amount of planning that is possible in different media may affect the structure of discourse. More planning (and, as a result of it, more complex syntax, among other things) is possible in situations in which discourse can be drafted in advance, like when writing a book. Discussing not only how discourse is shaped by its media, but also how the possibilities of media are shaped by their uses in discourse (although not in a systematic way and in depth), the author mentions the very interesting case of hypertext discourse. The fact that readers can choose how to proceed from section to section on Internet documents leads to the development of hypertext links with the relative fluidity and interactivity compared to the relative fixity of print writing. According to Johnstone, in hypertext discourse it is the readers, and not the writers, who create coherence.

The last component of Johnstone’s heuristic for analysing discourse, i.e. the relationship between purpose and discourse, is the topic of Chapter 7. In this chapter, the author is mainly concerned with the ways in which speakers’ intentions shape discourse. She examines how speakers indicate what speech acts they intend to perform, presenting actually the basic tenets of Speech Act Theory. She also discusses some metacommunicative aspects of discourse, like contextualization cues (for instance, pause, intonation, stress) and discourse markers (e.g., expressions like well, so, because). These means are conventions used by the speakers to indicate how they intend to connect utterances with previous and upcoming discourse segments. Another interesting topic analyzed in this framework is that of rhetorical strategies, that is, how speakers design their discourse in order to persuade others about new beliefs. The author refers to formal, syllogistic reasoning, quasiological arguments, presentational, affective strategies, and the use of stories for creating analogies between prior situations and the current one. At the end of this chapter Johnstone
presents the idea that personal identity can be thought of as a discourse construct, i.e. as the result of intentional discourse choices, rather than as a set of demographic facts (such as region of origin, gender, age, social class) about people on the basis of which they act in certain ways. However, contrary to her practice in the previous chapters, and despite her preliminary discussion on the bi-directionality of the relationship between discourse and purpose (p. 17), in Chapter 7 the author does not elaborate on how discourse shapes possible purposes.

In the last chapter, Johnstone addresses some more general questions about discourse analysis. After summarizing the six facets of discourse analysis which constitute her proposed heuristic, she discusses the various locations of discourse meaning, i.e. what the speaker means, what the text itself means, and what the audience understands. She also makes the point that language should not be conceived of as an object (a body of knowledge) but as a process, and for this reason she examines the possibility of replacing the term ‘language’ by that of ‘linguaging’. As far as the generality of the possible discourse analysis results is concerned, she points out that this discipline often focuses on the particular rather than the general, and as a consequence the results often have (and should continue to have) a suggestive character. Finally, a very important and insightful remark made in this (as well as in all the previous) chapter(s) concerns the possibility of considering discourse from two different and opposing perspectives, i.e. as adaptation to social and situational factors, and as strategy according to free intentional choices. Throughout her book, Johnstone tries to unify these two perspectives, showing (more or less successfully) that discourse is both a constraint reaction to the world and a creative intervention in it.

The overall structure of Johnstone’s book is clear and well-founded. However, the enormous range of topics presented in the book does not always allow for a thorough discussion of the issues involved. Her writing style is very careful and precise, while numerous examples from a variety of languages and situations illuminate the dense theoretical issues. All these features make Johnstone’s book a very good introductory textbook for students taking a first course on Discourse Analysis. Particularly helpful are the discussion questions and the proposed small research projects, although at times some (research) questions presuppose particular training and theoretical knowledge not always offered in the corresponding chapters. Thus, if the textbook under review is to be used in an introductory course on Discourse Analysis, it should be accompanied by additional theoretical material. The glossary offers comprehensible definitions, though of a not very broad and representative range of terms (for example, the term Pragmatics is not included, although the terms Phonology and Syntax are).

In Discourse Analysis, Johnstone takes a rather ‘eclectic’ perspective. As we have already seen, she proposes six categories of questions regarding the resources for and constraints on discourse, but in my view her approach lacks a systematic discussion of the specific principles on which these categories are based. In this sense, the reader may wonder why the author has chosen these particular six categories, and not more, or fewer, or even different categories, like for example, discourse and ideology and/or identity (cf. Verschueren, 1999), discourse and cognition (cf.
Németh, 2001), discourse and sociocultural or sociopolitical context (cf. Schiffrin et al., 2001, part III) etc. Finally, I think that Johnstone should have indicated where her proposed heuristic stands in relation to some well-known models for discourse analysis, like those proposed by Schiffrin (1987), Maynard (1993) and others, where different discourse planes (i.e. ideational, informational, participational etc.) are differentiated.

Summing up: despite a number of objections, mainly concerning the theoretical foundations of the approach, Johnstone has presented us with a valuable book that should be recommended for introductory courses in Discourse Analysis, as it presents a good synopsis of almost all the major topics in this discipline. Moreover, Johnstone's standpoint that the six aspects of discourse-building should be considered both as a source of constraints and as a resource for creativity deserves close attention by all those interested in the development of a principled and coherent theory for Discourse Analysis.

References


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By and large, the authors succeed in marrying cultural studies to CDA. Still, social problems with which CDA is intrinsically preoccupied are given far less attention. Moreover, some inconsistencies become evident when a cultural student attempts to practice DA and a discourse analyst tries to explain cultural theories. The book thus exemplifies the risky nature of interdisciplinary research, although it may yield important results. Nevertheless, this book is a worthwhile endeavor and is best read as a guide to where such an excursion can take you. Ultimately, I know I am not alone in supporting Barker and Galasiński's argument for a stronger presence of discourse analysis in cultural studies.

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The short, and only, title of this work needs to be qualified before diving into its context. This is an introductory text for those interested in linguistics and presupposes no prior knowledge on behalf of the reader. It is structured for the students who are either guiding themselves through this process or are receiving extra tuition alongside. I approached this text from almost that position, having used discourse analysis to examine the construction of political ideology and ignoring the finer grained approach of linguistics.

Gently paced and with an arresting clarity of exposition this book leads the reader into the complexities of discourse analysis. Early in the text flags are raised about the issues that are tackled in the book and that the more controversial aspects of discourse analysis will be discussed. To get to these later treats it is necessary to pass through the admirably slowly paced series of teaching exercises and examples. This is not a book designed to be read in one sitting, but to be dipped into or consistently worked through. The learning exercises aptly reinforce each of the major points of the chapters. Each chapter is a self-sufficient investigation, logically moving from discourse and the world through to the structure of discourse, its speakers and audiences, inter-textuality, various mediums and back to the wider world. The last chapter reprises the arguments and points forward to other work.

There are considerable pleasures in this book, not least Johnstone’s explanations, and the linked openings of wider debates. Although in some cases there is much to learn in a short space of time, the tone re-assures the reader that they will not fail. For those not from North America some of the references and examples are a little opaque and the cultural specificity a little grating – a minor reservation in an otherwise excellently executed book.

My reservations about this book are at the macro-level, about the totality of the project, rather than its execution. This centres around two intertwined
arguments, which inform the whole book. The first of these is that discourse analysis is a heuristic tool that opens up linguistic and discursive structures to allow more questions to be sharply asked. This denies the possibility that discourse analysis can be a radical or challenging practice in itself. The interventions of thinkers such as Foucault would point to the practice of discourse analysis as not just a neutral tool but a political intervention (Foucault, 1979). If discourse analysis is just a tool, like the survey or questionnaire, part of its possibilities are denied.

In turn, this informs the construction of the book as a course, that will educate the reader before they attempt the analysis themselves. Alternatively, there are other texts equally introductory that seek to equip students and readers with the basics of discourse analysis without making it a generic tool (Kendall and Wickam, 1999). Another approach is the argument that sets out the basics as it develops an innovative argument and takes the novice reader with it (Darrer, 1999; Harre et al., 1999). As well as the more general ‘reader’ format that takes a more encyclopaedic approach, which provides the student with more complexity but also more choice (Titscher et al., 2000). More able or adventurous students could be guided to the sections or even whole texts that take a discourse analysis approach, even when the results are fearsomely difficult (Kay, 2000).

Ultimately, these are matters of personal opinion and teaching style. I’II retain Johnstone’s book as an excellent supportive text, superbly executed, but push my students to engage with the primary texts first. Others will, however, be able to take the other route, using this book, with full confidence.

**References**


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This book is one of the recent responses to the call for more multimodal analyses, in which words and visuals are situated in a complementary, not independent, manner. The author of the book tries to make use of a number of cogitate
and discusses its contribution to revealing the structural and organizational features of conversational turns. While Holtgraves argues that CA needs to be taken further by relating these features to 'on-line mental processes' (p. 182), it is not clear how this chapter fits with the rest of the book and its sociolinguistic emphasis. CA certainly has much to offer other areas of language research (e.g. Jaworski and Coupland. 1999) and it would have been helpful to see this teased out further in the current book.

The second concern was with the multiple references to speech act theory throughout the book. Having discussed the developments and problems with this theory in chapter 1, it was somewhat surprising to find its appearance as part of the evaluative discussions of later approaches. For instance, adjacency pairs in CA research and work on perspective taking are discussed in relation to how they might play a role in particular speech acts. It is almost as if Holtgraves is treating speech act theory as being synonymous with how activities are carried out in interaction. This may, however, be a further indication of the distinction between linguistic approaches and discursive approaches to language (see, e.g. Wetherell et al., 2001).

These concerns aside, this book makes for an engaging review of approaches to social psychology and communication, albeit at a fairly general level. While being restricted to cognitive and linguistic approaches, it serves to promote further the inclusion of language into research on social life.

REFERENCES


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Diversity is probably one of the terms that best defines the field of Discourse Analysis. The vastness of topics and methodological approaches that fall under this discipline makes any introductory volume a challenging exercise of synthesis. It is precisely Johnstone’s ability to summarize key issues in discourse analysis and offer us a comprehensive and attractive outlook of this discipline that is one of the main strengths of her work. In a conscious effort at simplification, the author tried ‘to avoid the temptation to write at such an advanced level and in such a discipline-specific way that students’ frequent suspicions that linguistics is difficult and irrelevant to their other interests are simply confirmed’ (p. xiii).

The book’s addressed audience is, thus, undergraduate students taking their
first (or only) course in discourse. This work, however, is not exclusively targeted at students of linguistics. On the contrary, Johnstone is aware that much of the research carried out in this area is performed in other related disciplines such as anthropology, media studies, ethnography or foreign languages. Therefore, she includes a wide variety of texts and situations from different fields. From literary discourse to technical genres, spoken language or computer-mediated communication, Johnstone constantly encourages interdisciplinary research, and designs interesting pilot studies for the novice student.

As for the theoretical framework, Johnstone follows Schiffrin's (1994) work and A.L. Becker (1995) in viewing discourse analysis as a methodological tool, rather than as a subdiscipline of linguistics. Johnstone aims at providing learners with the adequate techniques to analyse discourse while insisting on 'asking students to think systematically about a variety of sources of constraint on and creativity in discourse, a variety of reasons why spoken utterances and texts have the meanings and uses they do' (p. xii).

The book consists of eight chapters which are self-contained. The opening chapter describes the operating framework and explores the notion of 'discourse' vs. 'discourses'. Chapters 2, 3 and 4 examine central issues in the field such as context, linguistic structure and participants. Chapter 5 is a thought-provoking section since it offers a broad view of the notion of 'intertextuality'. Following closely Kristeva's (1986) and Becker's approach (1994), Johnstone defends the idea that complete creativity is an impossible act since individuals speak and write with the words of others. In Chapter 6 an interesting account of new discursive practices is presented (mainly electronic media), while Chapter 7 deals with the main notions in pragmatics. Finally, Chapter 8 summarizes the key ideas presented throughout the book and reflects upon dichotomies such as 'language and languaging' or 'discursive strategy and adaptation'.

Another valuable aspect of Johnstone's work is the annotated bibliography provided at the end of each chapter. Her specialist expertise combines influential studies and literature reviews of discourse analysis with innovating and recently published research in an enormous variety of topics and related disciplines.

The only somewhat disappointing note in this extremely useful volume is the Glossary. Although the author makes clear that her intention is only to explain some basic terms which were not covered in the text, the criterion for term inclusion is rather confusing and, more importantly, some of the definitions provided (e.g. semantics, stylistics) are rather poor. In order to maintain the general level of this work, it would have been preferable to refer the readers directly to the encyclopaedias cited at the beginning of the Glossary.

Overall, this book offers an invaluable balance between theory and practice. It is an excellent starting point for those interested in the exciting field of discourse analysis, and also an extremely useful resource in the discourse classroom. The variety of discourses and contexts presented, the discussion questions proposed and the suggested supplementary readings make Johnstone's work an obligatory reference for both students and scholars.
REFERENCES


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This massive and solid work is an attempt to bring some order to a field of modern linguistic theory that has for too long been associated with wastebaskets. Marmaridou adopts an approach to pragmatic meaning that is rooted in cognitive linguistics and in the philosophical background underlying it, namely experiential realism (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980; Lakoff, 1987; Johnson, 1992). Her intended aim is to develop 'a new concept of pragmatic meaning which is on the one hand grounded in cognition and motivated by linguistic and cultural convention and, on the other, creates the potential for addressing the interactive and social dimensions of language use' (p. 1).

In the first chapter, the history of pragmatic research is traced. Three theoretical perspectives of pragmatic research, namely the philosophical, the cognitive pragmatic and the societal, are singled out and critically reconsidered in association with the main issues they are concerned with. In Chapter 2, experiential realism is thoroughly discussed against the philosophical background in which it is rooted. At the end of the chapter, Marmaridou proposes a new definition of pragmatics as 'the study of the use of language to structure reality as meaningful experience' (p. 61). Chapter 3 deals with deixis. It is shown that traditional accounts of deixis are inadequate in that they posit a clear-cut distinction between deictic and non-deictic uses of linguistic items. Deixis is rather to be seen as a 'graded category of usages of a number of linguistic terms' (p. 71).

In Chapter 4, an interesting analysis of presupposition based on the background/foreground image schema (cf. Lakoff, 1987) is conducted: as people interact, presuppositions are created, brought to the fore or even discarded. Speech act theory is the topic of Chapter 5. After tracing the origins and development of the theory, Marmaridou shows that speech acts too can be described in terms of experiential realism. The phenomenon of implicature (broadly defined as 'the discrepancy between what is said and what is communicated' [p. 271]) is dealt with in Chapter 6.

As a cognitive linguist, I was particularly interested in Marmaridou's account
which he theorizes or defends the personal but to his personal writing itself. If all writing is autobiographical, as Donald Murray says, and if, as Roland Barthes maintains, we study what we fear or what we desire, then the story Elbow tells in "Illiteracy at Oxford and Harvard: Reflections on the Inability to Write" may be read as a kind of writing lesson. He quit graduate school at Harvard on the brink of failure, having suffered a long tear and quiet loathing of writing. "I realize now," he confides,

that much of the texture of my academic career has been based in an oddly positive way on the experience of complete shame and failure. In the end, failing led me to have the following powerful but tacit feeling: "There’s nothing else they can do to me."

The admonishing voice that intrudes on Elbow’s thoughts might be seen as the externalization—or textualization, if you will—of that part of the self formed by academics who failed him. He is still taking himself to task, still defending himself against criticism, still battling the demons.

Freewriting, we learn, was one of the “positive” outcomes of his experience of personal shame and failure. He developed the habit of writing quickly, without stopping, whatever he was thinking in order to thwart writers’ block, stave off fear, keep the internal censors at bay. Freewriting, originally a survival strategy, became an integral part of his writing process; now, as we know, it is his great legacy to scores of student writers.

The critical voice that routinely takes Elbow to task would seem to belie his notion that freewriting enables one to write ahead of the censor. In Elbow’s writing, the internal critic never truly seems at bay, never remains silent for long. I will speculate that Elbow no longer wants to outrun the pack of critics dogging him, that if he finds himself too far ahead, he pauses and waits for the pack to catch up, as it invariably does. So practiced—so very good—is Elbow at confronting his inner critic, it has become a kind of heuristic, I would surmise, to simply let the Other have its ill-tempered say. Nearly every section of Everyone Can Write begins with a mocking voice giving Elbow a good dressing down. In some places he anticipates the criticism even before he has stated a position—indeed, he seeks out the critic; it doesn’t seek him. Consider the opening lines of section X on Teaching:

Peter, you’re always telling that story of how you quit graduate school and felt you never wanted to deal with books or classrooms again, but then discovered you liked teaching. . . . Enough already. Don’t become an old geezer repeating old stories. This comfy one

just masks the old authority game: you hate following orders but you’re happy once you can give them. (320)

There in a nutshell is Peter Elbow: chiding himself for getting caught in an embrace—of contraries. Elbow’s primary passion, it turns out, is not voice or personal writing or students or college or teaching; it’s dialectic. He is an ardent believer in dialectic, in the uses of binary thinking. He positively luxuriates in holding contradictory points of view in taut suspension, and in essay after essay in Everyone Can Write he reaps the intellectual rewards. Fortunately for us, the geezer is a generous soul. He happily shares.

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Rarely do textbooks warrant much enthusiasm. As a rule, they are by their very nature conservative vehicles that “elaborate and perpetuate established paradigms” (Richard E. Young, “Paradigms and Problems,” Research on Composing, eds. Charles Cooper and Lee Odell, NCTE, 1978, 31; Thomas Kuhn, Structure of Scientific Revolutions, 2nd ed., U Chicago P, 1970). Moreover, economies of publishing typically limit textbooks to rehashing the sedimented known, the familiar, in an attempt to secure sales. Barbara Johnstone’s Discourse Analysis is an exception. Published in Blackwell’s series Introducing Linguistics, a collection of introductory textbooks that focuses on central areas of study in contemporary linguistics. Johnstone’s textbook is a valuable methodological resource for experienced teachers and novice students alike. Her interdisciplinary treatment of the study of discourse renders this textbook an indispensable tool for all those who are interested in talk and text, orality and literacy, discursive practices, semiotic systems and language structures no matter their discipline or departmental home.

In her first chapter, Johnstone introduces students to the broad, complex area of overlapping, competing, and, at times, contradictory theories and methodologies of discourse analysis. In her easily accessible account, she demon-
strates and enacts her central point that "discourse analysis is . . . a methodology that is useful in answering many kinds of questions, both questions that linguists traditionally ask and questions asked by people in other humanistic and social-scientific disciplines" (27). Discourse analysis is best understood as an interdisciplinary endeavor for at least two reasons. First, questions concerning humans, their social relations and cultural positioning in the world are central to a wide range of scholars in diverse fields. Second, the object of study—discourse practices—is so complex that it necessitates drawing on theories and modes of inquiry from a variety of different disciplines. Johnstone performs interdisciplinarity throughout her book by referencing theories and discourse examples not only from linguistics but also from anthropology, philosophy, sociology, rhetorical studies, composition studies, and literary studies.

Johnstone models a research-question-driven approach throughout her book, beginning with her early exploration of the key question: What is discourse analysis? She breaks this central question into two parts: What is discourse? and What is analysis? The answers to both questions are slippery, contingent on the theoretical frames and ideological constructs one brings to language. She begins with a provisional definition of discourse "to mean any actual talk, writing, or signing" (27). Johnstone thus makes clear that her focus is on discourse in use (praxis) rather than on language as an abstract system. Indeed, throughout the textbook her treatment of ways to study discourse is situated in an understanding of discourse as a dynamic process that both shapes and is shaped by the conventional language structures, participants, webs of prior discourses, media, context, and purpose. Johnstone tackles the second part of the central question, what is analysis, with equal thoughtfulness and depth. In the most general way, analysis may be understood as "a methodology that can be used in answering many kinds of questions" (4). Rather than pin down one answer, Johnstone provides an overview of some of the competing views on the uses, facets, entextualization of discourse data, and end goals of discourse analysis. At the core of contested views lie the basic questions: "Why is this text the way it is? Why is it no other way? Why these particular words in this order?" (8). Of course, how scholars approach these questions depends on the theoretical and ideological frames they bring to bear. As Johnstone notes toward the end of this chapter, "sensitive discourse analysts should always be casting critical eyes on their own process of analysis and on the situation they study, whether or not methodological or social critique is the end goal" (26). Such self-reflexivity requires an understanding of multiple modes of inquiry, the possibilities and limits of each, and the alternatives. Otherwise a researcher can become complacent in methodology—methods can become so naturalized and sedimented that like a fish who can know nothing about water the scholar can become blind to the limits of her mode of inquiry and the research questions it may permit but also exclude.

Johnstone organizes the rest of her book around a sexpartite heuristic that offers multidimensional approaches to the study of discourse in action. Each chapter introduces some of the relevant, and at times contradictory, theorizing and modes of inquiry for exploring one interdynamic dimension of discourse and its bi-directional relationship to the world, socialized language structures, discourse participants, prior discourses, media, context, and purpose.

In chapter two Johnstone explores some of the ways scholars have tried to account for the complex relationship between "discourse" and the "world." Existential questions concerning discourse raise other interdynamic relational pairings: language/thought, language/culture, discourse/society, discourse/ideology that Johnstone deftly covers by introducing theoretical constructs such as a moderate Sapir-Whorf hypothesis as well as approaches rooted in the Prague School of linguistics and literary theory as well as in neo-Marxist and Foucauldian social theory. In a textbook that covers so much ground, Johnstone cannot fully explore the complexities of the selection of theories and approaches she introduces, nor would it be appropriate in an introductory textbook. But in the spaces she leaves are the rich areas for further exploration by teachers and students; moreover, these spaces are buttressed by useful bibliographies for further reading that appear at the end of each chapter.

Chapter three examines the ways discourse practices are influenced by various structural conventions, and how such conventions are in turn shaped by the purposes, participants, and contexts for discourse. Along the way, Johnstone provides a brief genealogy of studies that have led to competing views about the role and nature of language structure, and how these views have contributed to modes of inquiry. Chapter four grapples with questions concerning and methods for studying the complex relationships among participants and discourse practices and how in turn talk and text define and position participants in discourse situations. Chapter five explores how discourses are situated in relation to prior discourses and how some scholars have theorized that relationship, most notably via the construct of intertextuality, a term coined by Julia Kristeva. Johnstone outlines some ways of studying intertextuality on both micro and macro levels by examining repetition, register, genre, and plot. Johnstone begins chapter six by sketching a brief history of scholarship on the interdynamic relationship between discourse and medium, exploring in more general terms "the role of mediations in discourse and some of the dimensions along which discourse in different media may be different" (169). In chapter seven Johnstone takes up ways of examining the relationship between discourse and goals, purposes, and intentions, focusing on speech acts, contextualization cues and discourse marking, rhetorical aims, strategies and styles, and verbal art and performance. Chapter eight, the final chapter, summarizes the preceding chapters and thus offers a good starting place for those who
want to consider adopting this textbook either for an undergraduate class or an
introductory graduate class in discourse analysis.

Although *Discourse Analysis* is designed as a "first-level text for undergraduates and beginning graduate students taking their first (or only) course about discourse" (xi), it would also serve as a valuable adjunct text in any number of advanced undergraduate and graduate courses in the humanities and social sciences that focus on language, society, and culture. Throughout her book Johnstone introduces complicated theories in accessible, though not watered down, language. For instance, in introducing the construct of performances of identity, she explains, "discourse analysts have found the idea of performance useful in understanding how aspects of personal dentity such as gender, ethnicity and region identification are connected to discourse" (223). She presents in similarly accessible ways other theoretical constructs such as discourse community, speech community, intertextuality, grammatization to name a few. For teachers and students alike, the pedagogical apparatus Johnstone provides is very valuable. Interspersed throughout each chapter are relevant discussion questions, discourse examples, and methodological heuristics that challenge students to think about the multiple ways discourse has been and can be examined. At the end of each chapter are useful bibliographies of suggested theoretical and methodological readings. For those new to the discourse of discourse analysis, she furnishes a glossary of terms at the end of the book.

In adopting a "heuristic approach" to discourse analysis, Johnstone's book provides a valuable toolbox of critical methodologies that are important on several levels. First, these provide students with powerful, concrete and systematic ways to explore a variety of questions concerning discourse and its sociocultural roles—ways that are often buried or sedimented in bodies of research on discourse. Second, in tackling complex questions concerning language practices (for example, where does meaning reside, who participates, how do they participate, where and when do they participate, and so on) that have occupied rhetoricians since ancient times and detailing rigorous methodologies for exploring such questions, Johnstone asks us to be reflexive on the discourse ideologies we as scholars, teachers, and students bring to our subject of study. This critical attention is vitally important, for how discourse is conceived of influences and is influenced by not only the ways we study and teach it, but, as Johnstone notes, "beliefs about what language is and how it works can affect languages as well as social relations among speakers" (56). In other words, what researchers name and teach as discourse and ways of studying it leads to privileging certain practices and products while marginalizing or rendering invisible others. What counts as discourse praxis and product and who counts in its construction and performance are political questions that we

need to consider as we study and teach what is discourse, what is analysis, and how are the two related. In the process of teaching, we train future generations who will reenact or redraw margins in the sociocultural discursive landscape.

As Johnstone observes, “anyone who wants to understand human beings has to understand discourse” (7). All those who seek such understanding and teach others how to study discourses regardless of their discipline or departmental home ought to have Johnstone’s *Discourse Analysis* in their bookshelves.

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As the Internet increasingly constitutes the verbal and nonverbal reality of students, the concepts identified in the title of this slim volume would seem to focus on topics every communication and language arts professor would now like to explore in their courses. Specifically, the title of this volume promises to at least define and explore the interrelationships among the terms digital era, technology, rhetoric, and the public interest within the context of a critical literacy. It would be wonderful if a single volume, especially in less than 150 pages, could provide an adequate integration of digital communication, technology, rhetoric, and the public interest within a single critical and literary matrix. I doubt that a volume of any reasonable length can achieve such an end. Nonetheless, this volume provides a useful introduction to the issues involved in such an integrative process. It is worth a careful and thoughtful read.

In the “Preface,” the author particularly identifies “persuasive discourse about technology” in the “popular media” as her object of study. Warnick’s self-imposed task is to determine how these persuasive discourses “affects how we think” about technology that should, Warnick holds, make us “aware of what is assumed, unquestioned, and naturalized in our media experience” (vii).

This volume is divided into five parts.

The “Introduction: Rhetoric and Critical Literacy” initially identifies the idealized future that Internet advocates have provided. These advocates have ap-
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It was Harris (1952) who first used the term ‘discourse analysis’ when he touched upon the syntax of units of communication larger than words or sentences. Ever since the 1960s, discourse analysis has gradually grown into a research topic of much concern, and the last two or so decades of the twentieth century in particular witnessed a nearly geometric increase in the number of articles and books dealing with discourse analysis couched within various theoretical frameworks. And to appreciate the diversity of approaches, methods, and even definitions regarding discourse analysis, one only needs to take a glance at the 41 articles collected in The Handbook of Discourse Analysis (Schiffrin et al. 2001). The present book under review, Discourse Analysis, in comparison with other recent books on this topic (e.g. Dooley and Levinschn 2001; Sifianou 2001), serves as a significant contribution to this very line of inquiry in that it approaches the topic in question differently. In this monograph, Johnstone, inspired by the work of Becker (e.g., 1995), presents a unique, insightful perspective to discourse analysis by treating it ‘not as a discipline (or as a subdiscipline of linguistics) but as a systematic, rigorous way of suggesting answers to research questions posed in and across disciplines throughout the humanities and social sciences and beyond’ (p. xi; cf. pp. xxii; 4; 27; 229). And this has turned out to be the recurring theme of this volume, the tenet guiding the whole discussion. This book is divided into eight chapters, followed by a glossary, references, and an index.

The curtain rises with the beginning of Chapter 1, where Johnstone presents the preliminaries to the present work, attaching much importance to specifying what makes discourse analysis different from other approaches to language study. Johnstone opens this chapter by asking the question: What is discourse analysis? For her, the word ‘discourse’ has two senses, which are crucially connected and which are ‘at the center of human experience activity’ (p. 7). As a mass noun, ‘discourse’ means ‘actual instances of communication in the medium of language’ (p. 2; cf. p. 27); as a count noun, ‘discourses’ are ‘conventional ways of talking that both create and are created by conventional ways of thinking’ (p. 3; cf. p. 27). And the role discourse analysis plays has been highlighted by Johnstone when she claims that discourse analysis can help in answering any question that could be asked about humans in society. Much of the space in this chapter is devoted to a brief analysis of some material about a museum exhibit called ‘Splendors of Ancient Egypt’ to illustrate a number of ways in which a systematic, heuristic
analysis of discourse can help illuminate facets of the communication process and of discourse analysis.

Starting in Chapter 2 and continuing through Chapter 7, Johnstone elaborates on six facets of discourse analysis, each corresponding to one particular set of questions that can be usefully asked about a text or a transcript. Although these chapters are self-contained, they cater to students’ interests and expectations (cf. p. xii). Chapter 2 deals with the relationship between discourse and the world, reinforcing the claim that discourse is both shaped by and helps to shape the human life world, or the world as we experience it. Johnstone touches upon the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, drawing on French and Burmese noun classification systems (cf. pp. 32–9). According to Johnstone, the difficulty of answering questions about language, thought, and reality—three key terms in the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis—is closely associated with that of providing a satisfactory definition for each of the three terms. And one way to avoid the problems posed by the hypothesis when it comes to the relationship between language and world is to think about discourse rather than about language. After that, Johnstone presents two important approaches to discourse and world, each with different aspects in focus. One, with its roots in Prague School linguistics and literary theory, focuses on the ways discourse and language, particular speech events and reusable ‘ways of speaking’, create and reinforce one another. The other, rooted in neo-Marxist and Foucauldian social theory and usually labeled as ‘Critical Discourse Analysis’, claims that discourse is one of the principal activities through which ideology is circulated and reproduced (pp. 41–55). As for language ideology, Johnstone subscribes to the idea that it is in relation to ‘the ways in which language is conceived of and thought to articulate with other aspects of social life’ (p. 55). This chapter concludes with a discussion of silence, with the underlying idea that the worlds evoked and created in discourse are also shaped by silence: by what cannot be said or what is not said (pp. 58–61; cf. p. 11).

Chapter 3 examines the role of structure in discourse. Close attention is paid to two ways in which grammar and discourse intersect. One is to explore how the sentence-level grammar of a language, the set of conventions used for generating phrases, clauses, and sentences, influences and is influenced by the ways in which these conventions are deployed in discourse. The other is to examine the ways in which utterances longer than a sentence can be described as having discourse-level grammars of their own (p. 64). Through a discussion of various elements of discourse, from words and lines to turns and moves in conversation, from paragraphs and episodes to discourse schemata, Johnstone claims, among others, that grammars of sentences and grammars of texts both reflect and constrain the ways in which information is processed and social interaction maintained and that discourse is fundamentally the result of flexible strategies, not fixed rules. This chapter also touches upon the emergent organization of conversation, old and new information and the organization of sentences and, cohesion,
concluding with a presentation of two views on rules in discourse-building, which might be interpreted as pre-utterance descriptions and as post-utterance statistical generalizations, the latter of which seems to be in Johnstone's favor.

Chapter 4 tackles the relationship between discourse and participants. Johnstone begins with two aspects of social relatedness: power and solidarity, arguing that power is both institutionally defined and negotiable and that discursive practices function as both signals of group solidarity and claims to group membership (cf. pp. 112–19). Resorting to Goffman's notion of 'footing', Johnstone discusses how people orient to their own and others' roles in interaction. And it is pointed out that the most universal way in which the audiences shape their discourse is by means of linguistic politeness. Johnstone concludes in this chapter that 'linguistic behavior is ultimately the result of choices by particular people' (p. 135).

Chapter 5, 'Prior texts, prior discourses', presents several ways of analyzing intertextuality. The study of the ways in which texts and prior texts are connected owes much to the Soviet linguist Mikhail Bakhtin, and it was the French scholar Julia Kristeva who coined this very term of intertextuality (cf. p. 139). By dealing with repetition in conversation, register, genre, and plot, Johnstone investigates at length repetition on all levels, arguing that discourse is shaped by expectations created by familiar discourse, and that new instances of discourse help to shape our expectations about what future discourse will be like and how it should be interpreted (cf. p. 15).

Chapter 6 deals with discourse and medium, arguing that medium affects, and is affected by, what people do with discourse. Johnstone begins her presentation by sketching the history of scholarship on discourse and medium, pointing out, among others, that 'the entire endeavor of discourse analysis depends on thinking of oral discourse as if it were written' (p. 170). In discussing communication and technology, Johnstone calls our attention to the fact that no communication would be possible without technology or its equivalent and that there are at least four dimensions along which medium might influence discourse and can be explored (p. 181; cf. pp. 182–92). Johnstone concludes that 'discourse is never a transparent medium for the exchange of information' (p. 192).

Chapter 7 delves into the connections between discourse and people's purposes, intentions and goals. Johnstone opens this chapter by claiming that 'all discourse is both adaptive and strategic' (p. 196). The theory of speech acts and one set of contextualization cues known as discourse markers are illustrated before the emphasis is placed on rhetorical strategies, where Johnstone distinguishes quasi-logical persuasion and presentational discourse. The former views persuasion as a process of rational convincing while the latter, assuming that being persuaded is being moved, is characterized by rhythmic, paratactic flow, the use of rhetorical deixis and features that create interpersonal involvement (cf. pp. 211–14). After that, Johnstone moves on to examine conventions for interpreting verbal art before considering perform-
ances of identity, concluding that ‘discourse is not either completely a matter of strategy or completely a function of the “social construction” of individuals and the world’ (p. 224).

Chapter 8, the last chapter, repeats the heuristic approach adopted in this book and presents some more general themes coming up alongside the discussions. For instance, there are four possibilities when it comes to the issue of where the meaning of a text is located (cf. p. 230). And Johnstone reminds us that interdisciplinarity is a central fact about discourse analysis as well as an attractive feature of it before the curtain falls.

In sum, Johnstone has in this volume compellingly argued that discourse analysis is an open-ended, analytical heuristic, ‘a research method consisting of a set of topics to consider in connection with any instance of discourse’ (p. xii). This book is a welcome addition to the increasing literature on discourse, well conceived, and written in a clean and clear style without losing its academic flavor. The book is user-friendly, with each chapter (except Chapter 3) ending with a summary repeating important points made. Exhaustive, stimulating discussion questions are inserted in each section, most of which are excellent research topics, and the suggested supplementary readings listed at the end of each chapter (except Chapter 8) are most impressive and would be of much value for further researching. More important, this monograph has been used many times before being published, receiving many responses from its users (cf. p. vii). In this sense, this is a good coursebook to help anyone intending to embark on this very line of inquiry to come to grips with the major topics in this discipline. Of course, since the book’s intended readers are ‘undergraduates and beginning graduate students taking their first (or only) course about discourse’ (p. xii), it is little wonder that some, if not many of the topics covered suffer the disadvantage of being sketched briefly. In addition, many of the questions for discussion would be demanding for the students to tackle without instructions from the teacher. And it would be better if the glossary could have covered more technical terms and if the index could have been documented more comprehensively.

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