



## **Discourse Analysis**

**Asst. Prof. Mohammad Sabah Abdulwahid (M.A)**

**Mm673932@tu.edu.iq**

**Tikrit University**

**College of Education for Women**

**Department of English**

**Fourth year Students/ Undergraduates**

**General Linguistics**

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**Discourse analysis** is a broad field within linguistics and social sciences that focuses on studying language in its social context and analyzing how language is used to construct meaning, negotiate power relations, and shape social interactions. It examines both spoken and written language and explores the ways in which language reflects and influences society, culture, and identity.

### **Theoretical Foundations:**

1. **Structuralism:** Discourse analysis draws on structuralist theories, which emphasize the underlying structures and systems that shape language and meaning. Structuralism focuses on the relationships between elements within a system, such as the relations between words, sentences, and larger units of discourse.
2. **Poststructuralism:** Poststructuralist theories, particularly associated with Michel Foucault, challenge the notion of fixed and objective meanings in language. They emphasize the role of power, knowledge, and social institutions in shaping discourse and argue that meaning is contingent and subject to historical, social, and cultural contexts.

### **Classification of Discourse Analysis:**

1. **Microdiscourse Analysis:** This approach focuses on analyzing small-scale interactions and examines the linguistic features, strategies, and patterns used in conversation, interviews, or other forms of spoken discourse.
2. **Macrodiscourse Analysis:** Macrodiscourse analysis zooms out to analyze larger units of discourse such as texts, speeches, or social practices. It investigates the social, cultural, and ideological dimensions of these discourses and their impact on society.

## **Categories of Discourse Analysis:**

1. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA): CDA aims to uncover and challenge power relations, ideologies, and social inequalities embedded in language. It examines how language is used to maintain or challenge dominant social structures and highlights the role of discourse in shaping social practices and identities.
2. Conversation Analysis (CA): CA focuses on the organization and structure of spoken interaction. It examines the sequential patterns, turn-taking, repair, and other conversational phenomena to understand how meaning is constructed in conversation.
3. Sociolinguistic Discourse Analysis: This approach explores the relationship between language and social factors such as class, gender, ethnicity, and identity. It investigates how language choices and linguistic features reflect and shape social identities and group dynamics.

## **Pioneers in Discourse Analysis:**

1. Michel Foucault: Foucault's work on power, discourse, and knowledge has had a profound influence on discourse analysis. He emphasized the role of discourse in shaping social institutions, practices, and power relations.
2. Erving Goffman: Goffman's work on interactional analysis and face-to-face communication laid the foundation for conversation analysis. He explored how individuals manage their social identities and engage in impression management through language and non-verbal cues.

3. Norman Fairclough: Fairclough's contributions to critical discourse analysis have been significant. He developed a framework that combines linguistic analysis with social theory to examine how language reproduces and challenges social inequalities.

### **Types of Discourse:**

1. Narrative Discourse: Narrative discourse involves the telling of stories or recounting events. It follows a specific structure and often includes elements such as characters, plot, setting, and resolution.

2. Argumentative Discourse: Argumentative discourse aims to persuade or convince the audience by presenting claims, evidence, and reasoning. It often involves the use of rhetorical devices and strategies to support a particular viewpoint.

3. Institutional Discourse: Institutional discourse refers to the language used in specific institutional contexts, such as legal, medical, or educational settings. It has specific conventions and discursive practices associated with each institution.

4. Media Discourse: Media discourse encompasses the language used in various forms of media, including news articles, advertisements, and social media. It examines how media constructs meanings, shapes public opinion, and influences social attitudes.

It's important to note that the field of discourse analysis is diverse and constantly evolving, and there are various approaches and theories within the discipline. The above overview provides a general framework, but specific

theories and methodologies may vary depending on the researchers and their areas of focus.