



Bachelor's courses Faculty of Humanities

VU University Amsterdam - Student- & Onderwijszaken - Exchange programme Vrije Universiteit - 2019-2020

Discourse and Social Interaction

Course code	L_NCBACIW215 ()
Period	Period 2
Credits	6.0
Language of tuition	English
Faculty	Faculty of Humanities
Coordinator	dr. J.M.W.J. Lamerichs
Examinator	dr. J.M.W.J. Lamerichs
Teaching staff	dr. J.M.W.J. Lamerichs
Teaching method(s)	Seminar, Lecture
Level	300

Course objective

After completion of this course,

- you can describe the principles of inductive, data-driven research in the field of discourse and social interaction;
- you are familiar with the basic concepts used to analyse discourse as social interaction;
- you are able to apply the basic concepts used to analyse discourse as social interaction in spoken and mediated/online settings;
- you are able to use the basic concepts to analyse a range of different conversations and evaluate them in terms of progressivity;
- you are able to collect different kinds of data in an ethical manner.

Course content

This course starts from the idea that spoken and written discourse can be studied as social action: when interacting with each other via different modes of communication, people manage to accomplish a variety of actions, such as inviting or blaming, accounting or denying. This course aims to develop your analytical skills to understand what it is exactly that people do when they talk in person or over the phone, or when they use chat or twitter. It also helps you to see how interactional features such as a gap or silence or giving a summary of what the other person has said or written, might have different consequences in chat or face-to-face interaction. The focus across these modes of communication will always be on examining how speakers accomplish whatever it is they are doing and how this influences the unfolding conversation in the immediate next turn.

The analytical skills are based on the concepts and principles used in conversation analysis and reflect current research that has applied them to different modes of communication. You will analyse instances of informal talk as well as talk in institutional or organisational settings. Examples that are drawn on for analysis might thus be derived from various settings, including doctor patient interaction, news interviews, political debates, business meetings and contain instances of spoken interaction as well as mediated discourse and a range of timely examples from social media. What they all share is that they can be approached from an interactional point of view, as instances of social interaction.

When you pass this course you are able to break down any conversation in turns, ascribe social actions to these turns by asking and developing claims on what would be an appropriate response to what the

conversational partner has done in the previous turn. This procedure helps you to see how it is that evolving turns at talk drive conversations. You will be able to use these analytical skills to evaluate and offer advice on the options speakers have at different moment in the interaction and how this has an influence on the course of the conversation, whatever mode of communication they employ. You are able to point out how what they do takes the conversation in different directions and you may examine and discuss what the interactional consequences are of these different possible directions, and which ones are more appropriate or desirable in the given context.

Form of tuition

Lecture, seminars and workshops, 6 hours per week in total.

Type of assessment

Written exam and graded (seminars) and ungraded assignments (workshops). You have to pass the written exam to pass this course. There are no resits for the graded assignments.

Entry requirements

The first-year course Discourse Analysis + workshop Transana on transcription.

Target group

Second-year students in the Bachelor's program in Communication and Information Studies, specialisations <Language & Media> and <Taal, Media & Samenleving>;