Discourse Analysis Paper & Final Presentation

It will be helpful to review Chapter 11 - Discourse Analysis In our textbook and watch the lecture (Week 5) so that you can get an overview of what the purpose of a discourse analysis is. Watch the explanation video for this asignment as well. It may take a little bit of time, but will help clarify how to do an assignment like this.

Due: Monday, May 12
Weight: 50 points total (40 points for Discourse Analysis Paper & 10 Points for Final Presentation/Discussion)

Purpose: Language Matters! This paper will give you the opportunity to show this important concept. The purpose of this paper will be to analyze a piece of discourse (spoken conversation or written text that goes beyond the sentence level) and apply linguistics concepts we have discussed this semester (grammar, phonological, semantics, socio-cultural, etc) to show how these ideas apply to the data you have collected. You will also present your findings in the final class "presentation" discussion board at the end of the semester. (More on Final Presentation later)

Objectives: This paper will allow you to critically assess how language functions in society to shape our ideas, beliefs, and thinking. More specifically, you will:
- Make a claim or an inquiry about what you think you'll find
- Review literature relevant to your chosen discourse context (2-3 sources)
- Analyze discourse (spoken or written)
- Provide and analyze data that you have collected
- Discuss, evaluate, and consider societal implications

Steps:
1. Make a decision about the type of discourse you will analyze. Should be authentic, representative discourse. Discourse includes a broad range of subject matter including both spoken and written. Types of authentic discourse can include:
    - Recording a *conversation* of your family, friend, colleague,
    - Reviewing a piece of *authentic writing* (newspapers, blogs, text messages, e-mail, advertisements, online comments)
    - A recorded or live *speech or interview*, live programming (radio or TV)
    - Try to avoid something that is overly scripted like a Movie, TV, or Theater
    - See **Topic Ideas** below for some examples
2. Under which linguistic point of view, framework, or concept are you going to analyze the discourse? Which subject is something that you would like to know more about (think of topics we've covered (or will cover) in class:

Linguistic Frameworks			
Dialect	Politeness	Verb tense	Pausing
Phonology	Cultural influences	Grammaticality	Semantics
Grammar	Vocabulary	Turn-taking	Pragmatics
Computer assisted editing platforms	Bi-lingualism/Code-switching	Cohesion, coherence and interpretation	See **Topic Ideas** below

3. Review the available <u>literature</u>. Who has studied this same concept in the field of Linguistics? What did they find? Use your textbook "Further Reading" at the end of each unit as an initial source. There are plenty of articles and books at the end of each chapter depending on the concept you want to investigate. Also, here is a link to our [Linguistics Research and Library Guide](#) to get you started.
4. <u>Make a claim</u> about the type of discourse you are going to analyze. What do you want to know? What do you think the results will show? What's the question you are trying to answer? This is your thesis or your main argument you are trying to make in your paper.
5. <u>Record or find the authentic discourse</u> so that you can provide the <u>physical data</u> used. For example, transcripts of recorded conversation, video links, transcript of speech, articles from newspapers (or any type of writing) analyzed. You will need to provide the actual data that you collected.
6. <u>Analyze</u> the data collected. You can use the linguistic framework that you chose above as a start for analyzing the data and branch out from there. What does your discourse tell you about human language use? Are there any noticeable patterns? How is this important in the greater perspective of language and society?

*Please note that you can analyze discourse in any language; it doesn't have to be English. However, if you do choose to analyze a language other than English, you will need to provide translations so that it would be understood to an English-speaking/reading audience.

Recommended organizational structure:

- Introduction (½-1 page) - What do you want to know?
  - Purpose of paper (linking discourse to your linguistic framework)
  - What type of discourse are you analyzing (introduce the data)
  - Your analytic focus (what linguistic concepts will you be using?)
  - What's your claim or your question you are trying to answer?
  - Preview of the parts of the paper ("I will first do X, then I'll do Y...Finally, I'll conclude by pointing out Z…")
- Review of Relevant Literature (1 page) - Who has studied this same concept?
  - Introduce and summarize 2-3 relevant sources that have studied this same concept
  - These should come from journals, articles, publications in the field of Linguistics
  - See the Library module for help with research
  - Use our textbook's "further reading" as one of your sources
- Analysis (2-3 pages) - What did you discover?
  - Present at least three pieces of evidence (or data) from your discourse and make a claim about what linguistic concept they are supporting.
  - Make a claim about what you believe is happening linguistically. Does the data support your original claim or disprove it?
  - What do your claims illustrate about linguistics and human communication or society in general?
- Discussion (1-2 pages) - Why is this important?
  - Evaluate the implications of your findings. This is the "so what?" of your research. How is this important?
  - Can you make any broader assumptions about language and society based on your analysis of the discourse?
  - Was your original question answered? Why or why not?
- Conclusion (½ page) - Summarize and Conclude
  - Summarize your original intent and key points
  - Any advice to future researchers on how to replicate this study? Would you suggest doing anything differently?
  - Any final thoughts or questions?
- References
  - In alphabetical order
  - APA style
  - See library module for info on how to easily create a reference page

Formatting and Style:

- ☐ Use APA style. This is the style for the field of Linguistics. For help on how to organize an APA paper, I always refer to Purdue's OWL or the Cypress College APA Library Guide for help.
- ☐ Paper should be between 5-7 pages in length.
- ☐ Double space, 1 inch margins, 11-12 point font (use a widely readable font like Arial, Calibri, Times New Roman)
- ☐ Paraphrasing and summarizing are preferable to quoting. Please keep quotes to a minimum (think less than a sentence for a quote). The general guideline is to keep your turntin.com similarity in the "green"
- ☐ Keep the language used in the paper as academic as possible. Keep the tone neutral and factual in the analysis and evaluation of the evidence.
- ☐ Make sure to proofread your paper carefully before turning it in.
- ☐ Use transitions to show clear linking between ideas or causal relationships (cause/effect, compare/contrast, addition, etc.)
- ☐ Check for spelling, capitalization, and punctuation errors (there are lots of tutoring options available to review your paper before submitting like the ESC's drop-in tutoring and Smarthinking (login using your MyGateway ID) that are free to Cypress College students)

Topic Ideas:

Advice for choosing a topic: choose something that you are interested in or that relates to your profession or field of interest. I have brainstormed some topic ideas that I have had over the years as well as areas that I have studied before. Feel free to mix and match or use any of these ideas to create your own. I've underlined the linguistic framework, point of view, or concept that is being studied in each example. (Keep in mind, these are brainstorms, so pardon the incomplete sentences)

-Compare and contrast two conflicting news organizations for their use of "hedging" strategies or the use of hypothetical "if" clauses or the future tense. How fear is used to sell media? Focus on grammar

-How is language and word formation/vocabulary used to sell products? Advertisements, commercials. Hidden or invisible meaning in advertising.

-Analyze language, vocabulary used to vilify certain groups while praising others. See pg 180 in text. For example, finding newspaper articles prior to Sept. 11, 2001 and how Arab-Americans were referred to after Sept. 11, 2001, or do a historical analysis of old newspapers to see how the Japanese were referred to pre and post Pearl Harbor/Internment. How vocabulary is used to "demonize" people on the opposite side of an argument. What are the implications for using language to dehumanize individuals or groups?

-The use of the passive voice to remove the "agent" as the source of action, thereby removing culpability and responsibility. (looking at news sources)

-Health Care provider's use of <u>jargon</u> (Nurse to nurse communication when they don't want the patient to understand what they are saying)

-Investigate the <u>uncomfortable "pause"</u> in stranger interaction (or group communication) and how it is remedied.

-<u>Development of sounds</u> in toddlers. If you have a toddler, record them. Which sounds do children acquire first and which do they have problems with?

-Record your family around the dinner table to analyze how and when you <u>mix languages or "code switch"</u> back and forth between two languages. Could also analyze for <u>turn-taking</u> and who <u>interrupts</u> the most.

-Find instances of <u>discourse</u> that are <u>"ungrammatical"</u> and analyze the grammatical structures to see if they can be interpreted or understood to a general audience even if ungrammatical

-Record or find instances of various <u>dialects</u> of English (or another language) and record phonetically how the pronunciation varies from one dialect to the next. This can also be done with grammar. Something fun would be to record people with different languages and dialects around southern california to see variations in pronunciation for the same spoken phrase.

-Record a conversation of someone having an argument to analyze the <u>turn-taking strategies</u> or who <u>interrupts</u> the most. Could also record a conversation about a negotiation (think about a family negotiating on where to go to dinner) to see the <u>language of agreement</u> and what <u>strategies</u> are used to come to a solution.

-Count the number of <u>insertion sequences</u> that happen in an acceptance speech (think of <u>fillers or pausing</u>).

-Review <u>cross-cultural instances</u> of <u>direct vs indirectness</u> or <u>politeness strategies</u>. Or in <u>face-saving strategies</u>

-Anything regarding <u>Jargon</u>, <u>Slang</u>, <u>Taboo</u> language, for example in what instances are these acceptable and not acceptable? How do we know how to <u>switch back and forth</u>? Which audience is appropriate?

-Record friends or instances of "<u>non-standard English</u>" ie - Chicano, Asian, Arabic, African-American variations of English for variations in pronunciation, vocabulary or grammar. Are there "rules" associated with these varieties of Englishes?

-Analyze the language used for radio talk show hosts to interpret the question being asked. What are the <u>strategies</u> used for <u>confirming understanding</u>?

*If you are going to record anyone, make sure to get their **permission** first.