

Livi Swiech: The Discourses of Me

Friend

Goals:

- Maintain bonds despite being physically hours apart
- Be supportive of each other
- Love each other like family

Intercommunication:

- Text group chat
- Group video calls
- Group hangouts



Lexis:

- slang
- inside jokes
- “Who gave you the right to move that far away?”

Texts/Genres:

- group texts
- pet pictures
- daily fit checks

Shared Expertise:

- childhood memories
- hometown gossip
- experts on each other’s pets

Goals:

- Facilitate Deliberative Dialogues for the Center for Civic Engagement
- Speak as little as possible
- Make everyone comfortable enough to participate

Intercommunication:

- Work GroupMe and email chain
- Small groups
- Whole class discussions

Dialogue Facilitator



Lexis:

- “What might someone who disagrees with you say?”
- “Whose perspective is missing from this conversation?”

Texts/Genres:

- issue guides
- group norms

Shared Expertise:

- ISU or BloNo community
- adults who have survived a pandemic

Goals:

- encourage the next generation of campus leaders
- talk through challenges
- provide support through tough moments

Intercommunication:

- Text messages
- Office hours conversations
- Video and voice calls

Mentor



Lexis:

- “Yes I’m awake and yes you can call me”
- ISU administrative jargon
- parliamentary procedures

Texts/Genres:

- Robert’s Rules of Order
- SGA Constitution
- Bills and Resolutions

Shared Expertise:

- ISU student life
- Academic Senate
- student advocacy

Goals:

- live together peacefully
- support each other during tough times
- have a fun college experience

Intercommunication:

- group texts and Snapchats
- mirror messages
- mandatory roommate bonding nights

Roommate



Lexis:

- “I hate our neighbors”
- “What are we doing for dinner?”
- nursing and educational jargon

Texts/Genres:

- House rules list
- apartment enemies list
- pet pictures

Shared Expertise:

- freshman year dorm life
- demanding majors
- pet lovers

Reflecting

What have you learned about your Discourses across multiple communities? How are the communities different? How are they the same?

It's been really interesting to see how much my discourses actually do vary. I knew that I alter the way I communicate based on whether I feel I need to be professional or not, but I didn't realize that I also changed depending on which professional or non-professional situation I was in. I didn't think that there would be much difference between the way I interact with my hometown friends and the way I interact with my roommates, but I discovered that there is a difference in the intimacy between having grown up with my friends and living with my roommates. However, across discourses I still maintain my sense of self and authentic image.

What characteristics of language shape how you interact with the world? What words stand out in each of the communities? What symbols? How is the way you structure the language similar and/or different?

Characteristics of language shape the way I interact with the world as they impact the way others perceive me. Language choice, from what slang I use to the literal way I decide to phrase sentences, informs people's opinion on who I am. The words that stand out are the words that convey caring—regardless of which community it is, there is a sense of belonging and the desire to take care of each other. Language is structured differently depending on the formality required for the situation, but ultimately all of my communities have a shared sense of respect for each other.

Reflecting

What do you now realize about the role of Discourse in your students' lives? How will this knowledge guide your instructional decisions? What connections can you make to teaching in your discipline?

The role of Discourse in students' lives is a critical one that we must be aware of in order to meet their needs. There's different communication between students and me as a student teacher compared to them and my CT. There's different communication amongst students in the classroom compared to students in the hall or students outside of school. As a teacher of middle schoolers, it's critical to understand that students are struggling with their identity, which alters the way they communicate with us and their friends. As an ESL teacher, it's especially critical to help students navigate their discourses because they're also learning where their place is in the English language and in America.

What about the language allows you to KNOW that members of your community are a part of the community? How does the language used exclude others?

Jargon is often the biggest indicator that someone is a member of a community. My roommates and I often joke about this: my fellow education major roommate and I feel like we're also members of the nursing community because of everything we've learned from our nurse roommates, and my nurse roommates feel like they're teachers because of everything they hear from us. It's easy to throw around jargon and acronyms without thinking anything of it, but it excludes others who may have valuable input but just don't know what certain words mean.