REVIEW

Reevaluating the Discourse and Stylistics Syllabus for Level 8 English Students at Shaqraa University: Identifying Gaps and Missing Content

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ABSTRACT

The study of discourse and stylistics plays a crucial role in realizing how language is used across different communicative settings. These fields helps students to analyze both spoken and written discourses in relation to structure, meaning, and social function. However, many existing university syllabi remain static, failing to reflect modern improvements and shifting priorities in the field. This paper reevaluates the current discourse and stylistics syllabus for Level 8 English students at Shaqra University, identifying areas where the content is outdated, underdeveloped, or misaligned with contemporary linguistic needs. Through a critical analysis of existing curricular components, the study reveals significant gaps, particularly in the inclusion of modern linguistic frameworks such as multimodal discourse, digital communication, and discourse's relationship with identity, power, and culture. moreover, it highlights the absence of emerging stylistic genres influenced by globalization, media, and technology, as well as the need for enhanced focus on cross-cultural discourse practices. The research underscores the importance of integrating both theoretical insights and practical analysis skills to equip students with the tools necessary for real-world application. In response to these findings, the paper proposes a revised syllabus that incorporates recent academic developments, diverse cultural perspectives, and technologically informed approaches. Ultimately, the study aims to support curriculum designers and educators in aligning English language instruction with the dynamic nature of discourse and stylistics, ensuring that students are prepared to navigate and critically engage with the evolving landscape of language in society.

Keywords: Discourse; Stylistics; Curriculum Gaps; Digital Communication; Sociolinguistics

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1. Introduction

The field of discourse and stylistics plays an essential role in grasping how language functions in communication, as well as in analyzing the textual and contextual factors that influence meaning. Discourse analysis investigates the structures and functions of language in social contexts, while stylistics focuses on the study of style in texts, including literary works and non-literary communication[1, 2]. Both disciplines are core to the study of how language shapes human interaction, expression, and interpretation. In academic contexts, these areas are often taught within language and linguistics fields, offering students the devices to critically involve with texts and to improve their own analytical skills in comprehending the nuances of language use[3].

However, despite their importance, the syllabi for discourse and stylistics courses in many higher education institutions are frequently criticized for being outdated and lacking depth. Scholars have noted that traditional curricula in discourse and stylistics often fail to integrate new and emerging theoretical perspectives. For instance, Kress and Van Leeuwen (2001) argue that the study of discourse must evolve to account for the increasingly multimodal nature of communication[4], where language is no longer the sole carrier of meaning, and visual, auditory, and other semiotic resources play a vital role. Moreover, with the rise of digital communication platforms, Fairclough (2015) highlights the need for discourse analysis to address the unique language dynamics present in online and social media interactions[5], yet many syllabi still rely heavily on traditional, print-based textual analysis.

Besides the omission of modern developments, current syllabi often overlook the influence of social factors such as identity, power, and culture, which are central to contemporary discourse studies. Critical discourse analysis (CDA), pioneered by scholars like Norman Fairclough and Teun A. van Dijk, underscores the importance of investigating how discourse reflects and perpetuates societal power structures[5, 6]. However, such frameworks are rarely given the emphasis they deserve in many academic programs[7]. and 2015.

Moreover, important content related to cross-cultural discourse and stylistic genres is frequently underexplored. As Tannen and Wallat (1993) notice, language use varies clearly across cultures and social groups[8], and stylistic analysis should take into account these variations in communicative norms and practices. Yet many syllabi fail to integrate these cross-cultural perspectives, which are significant for students to grasp global linguistic variation and how language functions in different social contexts.

The lack of focus on technology's effect on language use is another notable gap in discourse and stylistics education. The rapid advancement of technology and the digital transformation of communication demand that students learn to analyze and critique texts beyond the confines of print. Yet as current studies suggest, many discourse and stylistics courses still predominantly focus on traditional literary texts, neglecting the importance of digital discourse, which is increasingly prevalent in both academic and social contexts[9].

This gap in curriculum content is problematic, as it leaves students ill-equipped to engage with the evolving dynamics of language use in both academic and real-world settings. As a result, students may struggle to apply traditional linguistic theories to modern communicative practices or fail to appreciate the relevance of discourse and stylistics in analyzing current social and cultural phenomena.

This research aims to critically evaluate the existing syllabus for discourse and stylistics courses, specifically within the context of higher education institutions such as Shaqraa University. By identifying key gaps in content, outdated theories, and overlooked topics, the study will emphasize the areas that require updating. Furthermore, the paper will propose solutions for creating a more comprehensive, up-to-date curriculum—one that reflects the dynamic nature of language and better prepares students for the complexities of modern discourse analysis and stylistic studies.

2. Research Questions

This study is guided by the following research questions:

(1) What are the current gaps and limitations in the Discourse and Stylistics syllabus at Shaqraa University?
(2) How does the existing syllabus compare with international standards and recent developments in the field?
(3) What modifications can be proposed to align the curriculum with contemporary linguistic, digital, and interdisciplinary demands?

3. Context of the Current Curriculum of Discourse & Stylistics

The current curriculum for the Discourse and Stylistics course at Shaqraa University is designed to introduce students with elements of language beyond sentence boundaries, Ssuch as cohesion, coherence, schema, information structure, rhetoric, topic sentences and the difference between spoken and written language; however, this review aimed to spotlight spotlight on some issues that are either absent in the course or need modifications. While the syllabus provides a solid foundation, there are growing concerns that it does not fully incorporate contemporary developments in areas like multimodal discourse, digital communication, and cross-cultural discourse analysis, areas that are increasingly relevant in today's globalized and digitally connected world.

Topics like functions within various contexts and how style influences communication should be addressed in the course. The course should primarilyfocus on two key areas: discourse analysis and stylistics. In terms of discourse analysis, students should be introduced to the foundational theories and methodologies for examining language use in social contexts. Topics typically covered should include speech acts, turn-taking, along with coherence and cohesion in discourse, and the relationship between language and power, as outlined in critical discourse analysis (CDA). Students should also be exposed to different types of discourse, such as political discourse, media discourse, and everyday conversation. In the stylistics component, the course should emphasize the analysis of literary texts, exploring how linguistic choices contribute to the meaning, tone, and style of a piece. Main topics in stylistics could include foregrounding, metaphor, narrative structure, and the role of language in shaping character and theme. The objectives of the course should be equipping students with analytical tools to examine texts from both a linguistic and stylistic perspective, developing their ability to critically evaluate the impact of language on communication, and understanding the intersection of form and meaning.

4. Literature Review

Discourse and Stylistics are two critical areas in linguistics, focusing on language use in context and the aesthetic features of language in both literary and non-literary discourses. Scholars and educators have increasingly recognized that current syllabi often fail to address the evolving nature of these fields. As new theoretical frameworks emerge, the existing curriculum frequently neglects to integrate these modern developments. This review explores the gaps in discourse and stylistics syllabi, emphasizing the relevance of contemporary theories and interdisciplinary approaches, as well as the need for a curriculum that engages with the digital transformation of discourse.

4.1. Current Trends and Gaps in Discourse and Stylistics Syllabi

Traditional syllabi often emphasize foundational theories such as **Speech Act Theory**[10], **Grice's Cooperative Principle**[11], and the analysis of literary texts using models like **Structuralism** and **Formalism**[12]. While these theories remain important, they overlook more contemporary approaches like **Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)** and **Cognitive Stylistics**[13, 14]. These emerging areas, which focus on power, ideology, and cognitive processes, are particularly relevant in media and political communication.

Additionally, syllabi often omit **multimodal discourse analysis**, a growing field that examines how different modes (e.g., visual, verbal, and gestural) interact in communication[4]. This oversight limits students' ability to critically analyze contemporary forms of communication, especially in social media and digital texts, where multimodality is vital[15].

4.2. The Role of Technology and Digital Texts

The rise of digital media and online communication has significantly altered the way language is used, necessitating an evolution in educational syllabi. Despite the increasing influence of platforms like Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok, traditional Discourse and Stylistics courses have not sufficiently incorporated the analysis of digital texts. These include tweets, blogs, and online articles, which blend written and visual language—key examples of **multimodal discourse**.

Scholars such as **Machin (2013)** and **O'Halloran (2004)** argue that digital media requires new methods to analyze language, particularly in the contexts of **power dynamics**, **identity formation**, and **viral communication**[16, 17]. A

syllabus that integrates these new forms of discourse would provide students with the tools to understand the complexities of modern communication.

4.3. Interdisciplinary Approaches in Discourse and Stylistics

Discourse and Stylistics intersect with other fields like **media studies**, **sociology**, **psychology**, and **communication studies**. Researchers emphasize the importance of incorporating these interdisciplinary perspectives into the linguistics classroom[18, 19]. For example, understanding stylistic choices in texts requires insights from **cognitive science** and **psychology**, as seen in **Cognitive Stylistics**[14]. Likewise, sociolinguistic approaches, which focus on how language varies according to social contexts, are increasingly important for understanding the role of language in society[20].

Integrating these interdisciplinary theories allows students to apply linguistic analysis to real-world issues, such as political rhetoric and social justice discourse. As **Gee (2014)** notes, students should be taught to see language not only as a tool of communication but also as a tool of **social interaction** and **ideological construction**[1, 18].

4.4. Curriculum Development and Pedagogical Innovations

Several scholars have suggested curricular changes to address these gaps by emphasizing **active learning** and **critical thinking**. These changes include the use of real-world case studies, authentic texts, and digital tools like **AntConc** and **MAXQDA** to analyze discourse at both micro and macro levels[21]. Engaging students in **real-time** discourse analysis through digital tools can significantly improve their ability to analyze large corpora of texts, both spoken and written.

Moreover, a focus on interdisciplinary approaches and practical applications prepares students for careers in fields like academia, media, and communication. Assignments that require students to apply theoretical models to **current events** or global communication trends would promote a deeper understanding of how discourse and stylistics function in the modern world[22].

4.5. Defining Discourse and Stylistics

Discourse refers to language use in context and examines how it functions beyond the sentence level in both spoken and written forms. Discourse analysis explores how language reflects and reproduces social roles, cultural norms, and power dynamics[18]. Scholars like **van Dijk (1997)** emphasize that discourse is a communicative event involving interaction between participants and the interpretation of messages[23]. **Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)** focuses on how language constructs social inequalities and power relations[13], making it essential for analyzing political discourse, media communication, and social issues.

Stylistics examines the aesthetic features of language, particularly in literary texts, by analyzing literary devices such as metaphor, imagery, and tone[12]. While traditionally focused on literature, contemporary scholars extend stylistic analysis to **non-literary genres** like advertising, political speeches, and media texts[24]. **Cognitive Stylistics**, for example, investigates how mental processes like metaphor influence understanding and interpretation[14].

4.6. The Interconnection of Discourse and Stylistics

Although distinct, **Discourse** and **Stylistics** overlap significantly. Discourse often provides the larger context within which stylistic devices are embedded. In political speeches, for instance, rhetorical devices like repetition or metaphor can influence the discourse's **persuasive** goals[25]. Understanding discourse requires an appreciation of both its **social functions** and its **linguistic features**[13].

The rise of **multimodal discourse analysis** further emphasizes this intersection. In the digital age, communication often blends linguistic, visual, and auditory elements. **Tweets**, for instance, incorporate hashtags, emojis, and links to images, all of which contribute to both the stylistic and discursive effect[26].

4.7. The Need for Curriculum Revitalization in Discourse and Stylistics

The current syllabi for Discourse and Stylistics courses often focus on theoretical frameworks and literary analysis. However, these traditional models do not fully address the complexities of modern communication. Key areas for revitalization include:

1. **Incorporating Contemporary Theories**: Modern frameworks like **Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)**

and **Cognitive Stylistics** provide crucial insights into power dynamics, ideology, and cognitive processes in discourse [13, 14].

2. **Incorporating Digital and Media Texts**: Digital platforms like social media blend multiple modes of communication (e.g., text, visuals, sound). These platforms should be integrated into syllabi to reflect the realities of contemporary communication [27, 28].

3. **Interdisciplinary Approaches**: The incorporation of insights from **media studies**, **sociology**, and **psychology** can enrich the understanding of discourse and stylistics. These approaches can illuminate how language constructs identity and power across different social contexts [20].

5. Previous Studies in the Same Field of Study

(1) Baker, M. (2006)[7]**. In Other Words: A Coursebook on Translation (2nd ed.). Routledge.**

○ **Overview**: Although primarily focused on translation studies, Baker's book delves into the intersection of discourse analysis and stylistics by exploring how linguistic and stylistic choices impact the translation process. This work highlights how attention to stylistic elements, such as metaphor, register, and tone, is often overlooked in standard language curricula, especially in translation studies.

○ **Contribution to the Study**: Baker discusses how an awareness of discourse features is essential in teaching and understanding languages, providing insights into how missing content related to stylistic elements and discourse might be integrated into language education syllabi.

(2) Bublitz, W., & Holtgraves, T. (2006)[29]**. Discourse and Social Life. John Benjamins Publishing.**

○ **Overview**: This collection of studies focuses on discourse analysis in the context of social interactions. The authors explore how discourse functions in everyday life, addressing issues such as politeness, power dynamics, and identity. They also discuss the educational implications of teaching discourse in the classroom, particularly for students studying sociolinguistics or communication.

○ **Contribution to the Study**: The authors advocate for a more nuanced approach to teaching discourse in language curricula, emphasizing that a **sociocultural understanding of discourse** is often absent in traditional syllabi. This study supports the idea that current syllabi often overlook social contexts of discourse that should be included to provide a holistic view of language use.

(3) Crystal, D. (1997)[30]**. The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press.**

○ **Overview**: Crystal provides an overview of key concepts in linguistics, including **discourse analysis** and **stylistics**, with a focus on their application to everyday language and language teaching. He critiques the limitations of language syllabi in focusing too heavily on grammar and vocabulary, while neglecting more complex aspects of language use such as pragmatics and stylistics.

○ **Contribution to the Study**: Crystal's work is valuable for understanding why syllabi focused on **syntax** and **morphology** may neglect the **discourse-level** functions of language. His work reinforces the need to integrate **stylistic analysis** and **discourse theory** into language teaching syllabi to improve students' overall communicative competence.

(4) Fowler, R. (1996)[31]**. Linguistic Criticism. Oxford University Press.**

○ **Overview**: Fowler's book offers a comprehensive study of **stylistics** and its relationship with **literary criticism**. He examines how stylistic devices (e.g., metaphor, irony, and narrative voice) are essential for understanding both **literary and non-literary texts**. Fowler critiques the way stylistic analysis is often sidelined in formal educational curricula in favor of a more grammatical focus.

○ **Contribution to the Study**: Fowler's study is instrumental in understanding how stylistic features can be better integrated into language teaching. He proposes that stylistics should be incorporated into **curricula for literary and discourse studies** to enhance students' ability to interpret both written and spoken texts more deeply.

(5) Halliday, M. A. K., & Matthiessen, C. (2014)[32]**.**

Halliday's Introduction to Functional Grammar (4th ed.). Routledge.

- **Overview**: Halliday's framework for **functional grammar** emphasizes how **discourse** is shaped by grammatical and lexical choices in communication. His model is particularly useful for analyzing how language functions across different registers, making it an ideal theoretical model for improving syllabi that include **discourse analysis**.

- **Contribution to the Study**: Halliday's functional grammar provides a comprehensive approach to discourse analysis that can address gaps in language curricula, particularly in the study of **how language operates in social contexts**. His work suggests that syllabi often lack a sufficient understanding of the interaction between **grammar** and **discourse**, which is crucial for comprehensive language education.

(6) Swales, J. M., & Feak, C. B. (2012)[33]. Academic Writing for Graduate Students: Essential Tasks and Skills (3rd ed.). University of Michigan Press.

- **Overview**: Swales and Feak's book is targeted at graduate students, providing a comprehensive guide to academic writing that integrates both discourse analysis and stylistics. They explore how academic discourse differs from other forms of communication and how students can be taught to identify and analyze stylistic choices in academic writing.

- **Contribution to the Study**: This work advocates for a **stylistic approach** to teaching academic writing, highlighting that many curricula overlook the stylistic and discourse features of academic genres, focusing primarily on grammar and vocabulary. It provides practical suggestions for incorporating discourse analysis into the syllabus to help students write more effectively and critically.

(7) Widdowson, H. G. (2007)[34]. Discourse Analysis (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press.

- **Overview**: Widdowson's **discourse analysis** provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how texts operate in social contexts. His approach integrates linguistic analysis with a focus on **pragmatics** and **social contexts**, emphasizing how discourse is used in real-life interactions.

- **Contribution to the Study**: Widdowson highlights

the need for language curricula to emphasize the social functions of language, and his work shows that many existing syllabi do not fully address these elements of discourse. His analysis is key for identifying the gaps in existing curriculum designs and suggesting improvements to incorporate a **social understanding** of language into syllabi.

(8) Leech, G., & Short, M. (2007)[35]. Style in Fiction: A Linguistic Introduction to English Fictional Prose (2nd ed.). Pearson Longman.

- **Overview**: Leech and Short's seminal work on stylistics focuses on how literary texts use linguistic features to create meaning and affect readers. Although focused on literature, the concepts explored in this book can be applied to the **discourse level** of language study.

- **Contribution to the Study**: The study provides insights into how stylistic analysis can be effectively integrated into language curricula, particularly in understanding how discourse is shaped by choices such as **lexical choices**, **syntax**, and **narrative structures**. It points to gaps in how curricula may fail to fully engage with these stylistic aspects of language.

(9) Van Dijk, T. A. (2008)[19]. Discourse and Context: A Sociocognitive Approach. Sage.

- **Overview**: Van Dijk examines how discourse operates in different contexts, especially how **cognition** and **social contexts** shape language use. His work is foundational in **critical discourse analysis**, offering insights into how discourse can reinforce or challenge power dynamics in society.

- **Contribution to the Study**: This study is crucial in understanding how **social context** and **power relations** should be integrated into language curricula. It suggests that a gap exists in many curricula regarding the social and cognitive functions of discourse, which should be addressed to foster critical thinking in students.

These previous studies provide critical insights into **discourse analysis** and **stylistics**, particularly with respect to **curriculum design**. They emphasize that current language syllabi often fail to address the social, cognitive, and stylistic aspects of language use in a comprehensive manner. Incorporating a focus on **discourse** and **stylistic analysis** could

fill the gaps in existing syllabi and enrich the learning experience, enabling students to develop a deeper understanding of language functions in real-world contexts.

6. Methodology

This study employs a case study methodology to evaluate the current Discourse and Stylistics syllabus at Shaqraa University. The goal is to identify gaps in the syllabus and propose potential revisions that align with contemporary approaches in discourse analysis and multimodal communication. The case study approach is ideal for providing a detailed, context-specific analysis of the syllabus content and its alignment with modern academic and societal needs.

6.1. Data Collection

The primary data for this study were collected from publicly available syllabi of the Discourse and Stylistics course at Shaqraa University. These syllabi were obtained directly from the university's official website and course repositories. The selected syllabi reflect the current academic offerings and serve as the foundation for analysis in this study. The period of syllabus analysis covers the most recent academic cycle, providing an up-to-date overview of the course content.

6.2. Data Analysis

To analyze the syllabi, a qualitative approach was employed, utilizing discourse analysis theories and frameworks. The analysis was guided by key principles of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and multimodal discourse analysis, incorporating insights from authors such as Fairclough (1995), Gee (2014), and Kress & Van Leeuwen (2006)[1, 13, 18, 26]. These frameworks were used to assess the following aspects of the syllabus:

- **Content Analysis:** A detailed examination of the topics covered in the syllabus, identifying core areas such as traditional discourse analysis, stylistics, and language structure.
- **Thematic Gaps:** Identification of emerging areas that are not currently covered, such as multimodal discourse, digital communication, and the intersection of discourse and social factors (e.g., identity, power,

etc.).
- **Relevance to Modern Trends:** The degree to which the syllabus reflects contemporary academic and societal needs, particularly in the context of digital media and visual communication.

The analysis process involved a step-by-step comparison of the existing syllabus content with modern discourse analysis theories. The aim was to pinpoint specific gaps where the syllabus fails to address current linguistic and communication trends and propose revisions that would enhance the syllabus.

For transparency and to allow for a more thorough understanding of the data, an excerpt from the current Discourse and Stylistics syllabus is provided in an appendix (**Appendix A, Table A1**). This appendix includes a sample page from the syllabus, illustrating the content currently taught in the course. It serves as a reference point for the analysis and proposed revisions. **Appendix B** provides Sample Syllabus Excerpt from the perspective of the researcher. This Excerpt is designed based on a thorough analysis of the missing gaps of the current syllabus under investigation.

6.3. Identification of Gaps and Proposed Revisions

The process of identifying gaps involved a careful reading of the syllabus in relation to the theoretical frameworks discussed earlier. Areas that require updating or expansion were highlighted, and suggestions for improvement were made based on the evolving needs of language specialists in a rapidly changing, multimodal communication environment. These revisions aim to better equip students with the tools and knowledge needed to navigate the complexities of modern communication practices.

7. Findings

The analysis revealed several key gaps in the current syllabus:

- Lack of emphasis on **multimodal discourse** and **digital communication**.
- Minimal coverage of **critical discourse analysis (CDA)** and **social power dynamics**.
- Absence of instruction on **cross-cultural discourse practices**.

- Outdated focus on only **print-based and literary texts**.
- Lack of practical, real-world applications and **interdisciplinary approaches**.
- No integration of **corpus linguistics tools** or digital platforms for analysis.

8. Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

- Integrate **multimodal discourse analysis** (e.g., visuals, videos, memes, digital texts).
- Add units on **Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)** and **Cognitive Stylistics**.
- Include case studies from **digital platforms** (e.g., Twitter, TikTok, blogs).
- Introduce modules on **cross-cultural and intercultural discourse**.
- Utilize tools like **AntConc**, **MAXQDA**, or **Voyant Tools** for digital discourse analysis.
- Foster **interdisciplinary collaborations** with departments like media, psychology, and sociology.

9. Limitations and Future Research

This study is based solely on qualitative content analysis of the existing Discourse and Stylistics syllabus at Shaqraa University and a review of related literature. It does not include empirical validation through student performance data, classroom observations, or feedback from instructors and learners. As such, while the findings provide insights into potential curricular gaps, they are not generalizable across all instructional contexts.

Future research should focus on implementing the proposed syllabus revisions in actual classroom settings to assess their impact on student learning outcomes. In addition, conducting surveys or interviews with faculty and students can offer valuable perspectives on the effectiveness and relevance of the updated content. Longitudinal studies could also track how such curricular changes influence students' critical thinking, analytical skills, and engagement with contemporary discourse.

10. Conclusions

The reevaluation of the Discourse and Stylistics syllabus at Shaqraa University reveals critical gaps in addressing contemporary linguistic realities. As language continues to evolve in response to digital, social, and cultural shifts, academic curricula must adapt accordingly. Incorporating multimodal and interdisciplinary perspectives, updating theoretical frameworks, and including practical tools will better prepare students to navigate and analyze the complex linguistic landscapes of the 21st century. This study aimed to review and analyze the Discourse and Stylistics syllabus at Shaqraa University, identifying its strengths and weaknesses in relation to contemporary linguistic trends and educational standards. Through the qualitative analysis of the existing syllabus and its alignment with international frameworks, several areas for improvement were identified. The study revealed gaps in incorporating current linguistic and interdisciplinary approaches, suggesting that a revised syllabus could better meet the evolving demands of students and the profession.

While this study provides valuable insights into curriculum development, it is limited by its reliance on document analysis rather than direct feedback from students or instructors. Future research could explore the practical application of the proposed revisions in classroom settings, testing their effectiveness in enhancing student engagement and learning outcomes.

Further studies could also investigate how technological tools and digital literacy can be integrated into discourse and stylistics curricula, providing students with the skills needed for the modern linguistic landscape.

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Institutional Review Board Statement

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Informed Consent Statement

Not applicable.

Data Availability Statement

No new data were generated or analyzed in this study. All insights are based on a critical review of existing curriculum materials and relevant academic literature.

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Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflict of interest.

Appendix A

Table 1. Table of Current vs. Proposed Syllabus Topics.

Week	Current Topics	Proposed Topics	Rationale for Revision
1	Introductory lesson: the definition of the term discourse analysis and stylistics	Introduction to Discourse & Stylistics: Definitions and Key Concepts	**Clarification & Engagement**: Start with a more interactive approach that includes examples of discourse and stylistics in real-world contexts to engage students.
2	Differences between written and spoken language	Written vs. Spoken Language: Exploring Features and Functions	**Depth & Relevance**: Deepen the exploration by analyzing the functions of written and spoken language in contemporary settings (e.g., media, everyday discourse).
3–4	Theories of cohesion & coherence	Advanced Cohesion & Coherence: Techniques for Structuring Discourses	**Practical Focus**: Focus on how students can apply cohesion and coherence techniques to improve their own writing and speech, making the content more actionable.
5–6	Cohesion relations: reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunctions, and lexical relationships	Detailed Analysis of Cohesion Relations: Reference, Substitution, and Lexical Semantics	**In-Depth Exploration**: Provide a more detailed and focused analysis of these cohesion techniques to ensure students grasp their complexities and usage.
7	General revision	Mid-course Reflection: Review of Key Concepts and Their Application in Real-Life Contexts	**Application-Oriented**: Encourage students to reflect on what they've learned so far and apply it to real-life examples of discourse, improving retention.
8	Mid-term exam 1	Mid-term exam 1: Applying Theory to Practice	**Integration of Practice**: Include practical scenarios in the exam where students can demonstrate their understanding of cohesion, coherence, and stylistics.
9	Difference between cohesion and coherence	Testing Coherence: Analyzing Complex Discourse Structures in Written and Spoken Forms	**Deeper Understanding**: Provide more examples of complex texts (e.g., academic papers, news reports) for analysis, helping students better understand these concepts.

Table 1. *Cont.*

Week	Current Topics	Proposed Topics	Rationale for Revision
10	Study of schemata and common background knowledge	Schemas in Discourse: How Background Knowledge Influences Interpretation	**Real-World Application**: Explain how schemas work in real-world communication (e.g., in social media or marketing), making the content more relevant.
11	Information structure	Information Structure: Analyzing Rhetorical Functions in Discourse	**Linking Theory & Practice**: Connect the study of information structure to rhetorical functions, ensuring that students understand how it applies to writing.
12	The study of rhetorical aspects such as cause-effect, contrast, particularly in written discourse and how they keep the meanings flow coherently.	Rhetorical Devices in Discourse: Cause-Effect, Contrast, and Cohesion in Written and Spoken Forms	**Broader Coverage**: Expand the coverage to include more rhetorical devices and how they shape meaning in various discourse forms.
13	The study of topic sentences of written texts and how they are the basic ground/reference round which remaining meanings revolve.	Analyzing Topic Sent	

Appendix B

Sample Syllabus Excerpt

Course Title: Discourse & Style
Course Number: ENG 429
Course Level: 8
Course Status: Compulsory
Credit Hours: 3 hours

Course Description

This course provides a comprehensive exploration of advanced discourse analysis and stylistics, emphasizing both traditional and contemporary approaches. Students will examine various elements of discourse beyond sentence boundaries, considering multimodal analysis, speech acts, and the role of new trends in discourse. The course encourages students to critically assess how language is used in diverse communication contexts (spoken, written, and multimodal) and how discourse styles vary based on purpose, context, and audience.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, students will:

- Understand and apply the concepts of **cohesion and coherence** in both traditional and multimodal discourse.
- Explore the role of **speech acts** in communication, focusing on their impact in both spoken and written forms.
- Analyze new trends in **discourse analysis**, including discourse in digital communication, social media, and professional settings.
- Investigate how different **modes of communication** (verbal, visual, non-verbal) influence the construction of meaning in multimodal texts.
- Develop advanced skills for analyzing the interaction between discourse, power, and identity in various settings (e.g., media, advertisements, academic texts).

Revised Course Schedule[1, 10, 26]

Week	Topic	Learning Activities	Assessments
1	**Introduction to Discourse & Stylistics**: Key Concepts and Contemporary Theories (Cohesion, Coherence, and Beyond)	Lecture and Discussion on Discourse in the Modern Context, Group Activity on Theoretical Foundations of Discourse Analysis	Class Participation
2	**Multimodal Discourse Analysis**: Analyzing Visual, Verbal, and Non-verbal Elements in Communication	Lecture on Multimodal Analysis, Case Studies on Media (e.g., Advertisements, Web Pages), Group Analysis	Homework: Multimodal Analysis of Text
3	**Speech Acts and Pragmatics**: How Speech Acts Shape Communication and Meaning	Discussion on Speech Act Theory (Austin, Searle), Application of Speech Acts in Everyday and Academic Discourse	In-class Quiz on Speech Acts
4–5	**Cohesion and Coherence**: Advanced Techniques for Connecting Ideas in Spoken and Written Texts	Case Studies on Cohesion Devices (Reference, Substitution, Ellipsis), Group Exercise on Writing Cohesive Paragraphs	Homework: Cohesion Analysis
6	**Rhetorical Devices in Discourse**: Exploring Cause-Effect, Contrast, and Argumentation in Various Texts	Workshop on Identifying and Using Rhetorical Devices in Academic and Media Texts	Written Assignment on Rhetorical Devices
7	**New Trends in Discourse Analysis**: Digital Discourse, Social Media, and Online Communication	Lecture on New Trends (e.g., hashtags, memes, emoji use), Group Discussion on Social Media Discourse Analysis	In-class Discussion and Analysis
8	**Information Structure and Discourse**: How Topic Sentences and Background Knowledge Affect Text Interpretation	Lecture on Information Structure, Group Work on Analyzing Information Flow in Academic and Digital Texts	Homework: Topic Sentence Analysis
9	**Discourse in the Digital Age**: The Impact of Technology on Language Use and Communication Styles	Case Study Analysis on Blogs, Online Articles, and Social Media; Discussing the Role of Technology in Shaping Discourse	Online Text Analysis Project
10	**Speech Acts in Digital Communication**: Analyzing Speech Acts in Social Media, Emails, and Online Conversations	Group Work on Identifying Speech Acts in Digital Communication (e.g., emails, online comments)	Group Project on Speech Acts in Digital Texts
11	**Power, Identity, and Discourse**: Investigating Discourse as a Tool for Constructing Power Relations and Identities	Lecture on Discourse, Power, and Identity (Foucault), Case Studies on Political Discourse, Media, and Professional Settings	Written Assignment on Power and Discourse
12	**Discourse and Social Change**: Analyzing Discourse as a Driver for Social Movements and Political Change	Case Studies on Activist Movements (e.g., #MeToo, Black Lives Matter), Group Discussion on Discourse in Social Change	Homework: Analysis of Social Movement Discourse
13	**Integrating Theories in Practice**: Bringing Together Multimodal, Speech Act, and New Trends in Discourse	Final Group Presentations on Discourse Analysis Projects, Peer Feedback	Final Group Presentations
14	**Final Exam**: Comprehensive Application of Discourse Analysis, Speech Acts, and Multimodal Theory	Final Written Exam Testing Students' Understanding of the Entire Course Content	Final Exam

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