

Discourse Analysis covers the analysis and study of the information-containing elements of conversation between two or more people. Conversations include those that are written, spoken, or communicated via any meaningful sign or signal-based method.

Gee's Unified Discourse Analysis aims to take Discourse Analysis and break it down into even more base elements such that the parties of conversation need not be human and the conversation itself need not be communicated with language. As long as a method of communication conveys information, and as long as a participant responds to input, then they are valid for analysis. For example, a verbal conversation between two people speaking the same language, someone in the wilderness testing the toxicity of a foreign berry, and someone playing a video game can be broken down to two entities taking turns receiving and responding to input.

I believe that a unified theory for discourse analysis makes sense. Anything that can be broken down into shared elements can be compared in some meaningful way, with the level of meaningful analysis directly related to how far the targets of analysis need to be broken down. Gee's theory so far makes sense, he breaks down the player's interaction with games into a turn-taking exchange of information, which shares the base elements with verbal conversation, making a unified analysis possible.