What is Discourse Community?

James Paul Gee explains Discourse Community as "saying-writing-doing-being-valuing-believing combinations". He also stresses the difference between D and d when he mentions discourse. Other terms he uses is dominant and nondominant Discourses, and primary and secondary Discourses. He believes that it's not all-or-nothing, he feels that we are never "purely" members of a single Discourse, rather a given Discourse is influenced by other Discourses we are members of.

John Swales has very strict guidelines on his definition of a Discourse community. He has six characteristics in his definition:

1. A discourse community has a broadly agreed set of common public goals.
2. A discourse community has mechanisms of intercommunication among its members.
3. A discourse community uses its participatory mechanisms primarily to provide information and feedback.
4. A discourse community utilizes and hence possesses one or more genres in the communicative furtherance of its aims.
5. In addition to owning genres, a discourse community has acquired some specific lexis.
6. A discourse community has a threshold level of members with a suitable degree of relevant content and discoursal expertise.

Swales Guidelines in use:

1. The field of Athletic Training possesses an agreed set of common public goals including goals for professional growth and a set of agreed patient care goals.
2. The community has built up multiple ways for intercommunication including the National Athletic Trainers Association.
3. The community utilizes the process of evidence based practice in order to keep information and feedback current.
4. The writing within the Athletic Training community is often different from many other styles of writing. The information contained in these notes is specific and concrete so no further justification of the information obtained is needed, with this style of writing less is always more.
5. The community possesses its own individual language consisting of symbols and acronyms to communicate with one another within the field.
6. The community includes members within a wide range of expertise levels. This includes those new members applying to Athletic Training education programs and members who have pioneered the field and are now considered the experts.

**SOAP Note:**

The first form of communication is a SOAP note. SOAP notes are the most commonly used forms for patient documentation. The acronym SOAP stands for Subjective, Objective, Assessment, and Plan, each one describing a separate part in the note. Within the subjective portion a list of current conditions and complaints, prior level of function, patient’s goals, social history, current living environment, health habits, family health history, activity level, history of past medical procedures, current medication, and any other information the patient sees relevant is included. Next the objective portion of the evaluation includes tests and measures to review the cardiovascular, pulmonary, integumentary, musculoskeletal, and neuromuscular systems. In the assessment an overall evaluation of the patient is done by listing all impairments, functional limitations, and disabilities. Once all the information in the evaluation is put together a clinical diagnosis can be made. The final stage is planning by making sure to set goals for the individual but to make sure the goals are reachable.

![SOAP Note](image)

These must be accurate, brief, and clear, the notes must find the perfect balance between too much and not enough information.

**Rehabilitation Log**

The second most common form of text is the rehabilitation logs. They are a lot like the SOAP notes and use the same symbols and abbreviations that the SOAP notes use. In order to write a complete rehabilitation log several components must be included: alignment and stabilization, intensity, volume, exercise order, frequency, duration, recovery period, mode of exercise, velocity of exercise and periodization.

**Conclusion**

Entering a discourse community is not as easy as just signing up for a club. It takes time, dedication and a lot of effort. An individual wishing to enter any discourse community must first research if the community will match up with the individual’s mission, vision, and values. Athletic Training is one of those discourse communities that relies on the determination of its members to help the community change for the future. Athletic Training is a very popular field and therefore the discourse community must be somewhat exclusive to eliminate those candidates who are not willing to put in the work to help the community continue to grow.
Works Cited


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