

Basic Symbols for Discourse Transcription

Level 3+ by Topic

MEANING	SYMBOL	COMMENTS
Unit		
word	<u>SPACE</u>	space before and after marks word
intonation unit	<u>LINE</u>	one new line for each intonation unit
Participation		
speaker attribution	JILL;	semicolon follows name in CAPS
Pause		
pause, timed	(1.2)	pause duration in seconds and tenths of seconds
hold/micropause	..	< 150 milliseconds; brief silence, break in phonation
pause, untimed	...	0.2 seconds or more (timed pause is preferred)
lag/prosodic lengthening	:	colon marks slowing of local tempo, segment lengthening
Sequence		
overlap (first pair)	[]	align left square brackets vertically
overlap (2nd pair)	[₂]	align left brackets, co-indexed with subscript numeral
Boundary Tone/Closure		
terminative	.	intonation morpheme signaling finality (period)
continuative	,	intonation morpheme signaling continuation (comma)
truncated intonation unit	—	aborting projected IU (em dash; OR: two hyphens)
appeal	?	combines with final/continuing: ?. ?,
Dysfluency		
truncated/cut-off word	wor–	aborting projected word (en dash)
Vocalisms		
breath (in)	(H)	audible inhalation
exhale	(Hx)	audible exhalation
laugh	@	one per pulse or particle of laughter
laughing word	@you're @kidding	laugh symbol marks laughter during word
vocalism	(COUGH)	various notations: (SNIFF), (AHEM), etc.
click	(TSK)	alveolar click
glottal stop, creak	(%)	separate vocalism = separate “word”

Du Bois: Representing Discourse

MEANING	SYMBOL	COMMENTS
Manner		
manner/quality	<MISC> </MISC>	various notations for manner of speaking
vox	<VOX> </VOX>	voice of another
Metatranscription		
unintelligible	###	one symbol per syllable
uncertain	#you're #kidding	transcribed words are uncertain
comment	((WORDS))	analyst comment on any topic
pseudograph	~Jill	name change to preserve anonymity (tilde)
Grammar		
sentence start	<i>Capital initial</i>	Capitalize for beginning of new discourse "sentence"
Time		
index/line numbers	1	number each line for referencing
timestamp	<T=154.762>	time in seconds from start of recording

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