Context in the System and Process of Language

The Collected Works of Ruqaiya Hasan Volume 4

by Ruqaiya Hasan, edited by Jonathan J. Webster

DESCRIPTION:
The concept "context of situation" introduced by Malinowski some eighty years ago has now become an essential element of the vocabulary of any linguistic theory whose aim is to reveal the nature of language. With the abandonment of the spurious distinction between competence and performance, the process of language, i.e., language use, has claimed its rightful place in the study of language. The chapters of this book focus on the relations of context and text, conceptualising the latter as language operative in some recognizable social context. It is argued that context is not simply a backdrop for the occurrence of words; rather, it is an active element which on the one hand plays a crucial role in the progression of human discourse and on the other enters into and shapes the very nature of language as process and as system, furnishing the foundation for functionality in language. Acting as the interface between language and society, context analysis reveals the power of language for creating, maintaining and changing human relationships.

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