



Using Language

By *Herbert H. Clark*

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Herbert Clark argues that language use is more than the sum of a speaker speaking and a listener listening. It is the joint action that emerges when speakers and listeners, writers and readers perform their individual actions in coordination, as ensembles. In contrast to work within the cognitive sciences, which has seen language use as an individual process, and to work within the social sciences, which has seen it as a social process, the author argues strongly that language use embodies both individual and social processes.

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Using Language By *Herbert H. Clark* Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #1292406 in Books
- Brand: Brand: Cambridge University Press
- Published on: 1996-05-31
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.98" h x .98" w x 5.98" l, 1.55 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 446 pages

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Editorial Review

Review

"This is a bold, imaginative, and important book. Clark's focus on language use, and his contention that conversation transforms the nature of production and comprehension, pose a challenge to the prevailing psycholinguistic approach to language. Cognitive scientists, social psychologists, sociologists, anthropologists--indeed, all concerned with the way people employ language to accomplish their purposes in the world--will find much to interest them in this integrative and original work." Robert M. Krauss, Columbia University

"Using Language is a lucid exposition of views that Clark has been developing for over a decade. The central argument is that language must be seen within the complex belief and intentional context in which it is used. Clark tries to pinpoint exactly those features of the intentional context--the set of assumptions and ascribed intentions--which make communication possible, and, often, effortlessly effective. It is undoubtedly his major work to date." Stephen C. Levinson, Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics, Nijmegen

From the Back Cover

In this, his major work to date, Herbert Clark sets out the thesis that language use is really a form of joint action. A joint action is one thing that is carried out by an ensemble of people acting in coordination with each other.

About the Author

Clark is professor in the Department of Psychology at Stanford University.

Users Review

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