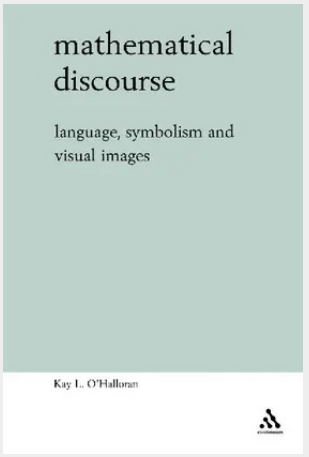
O'Halloran

Mathematical Discourse

Language, Symbolism and Visual Images



The book discusses the evolution of semiotics in mathematics, and proceeds to examine the grammar of mathematical symbolism, the grammar of mathematical visual images, intersemiosis between language, visual images and symbolism and the ways in which mathematics orders reality. The focus of this investigation is written mathematical texts. Mathematics is a key semantic area as it underlies the scientific view of the world which permeates our everyday existence. The aim of this book is therefore to understand the nature and implications of a social semiotic perspective of mathematics so that the limitations and metaphorical expansions which occur in mathematical and scientific discourse may be appreciated. The book is intended for linguists and those interested in mathematics and science education. Mathematical Discourse also has implications for other studies in systemic functional approaches to multimodality.

This book examines mathematical discourse from the perspective of Michael Halliday's social semiotic theory. In this approach, mathematics is conceptualized as a multisemiotic discourse involving language, visual images and symbolism.The book discusses the evolution of the semiotics of mathematical discourse, and then, proceeds to examine the grammar of mathematical symbolism, the grammar of mathematical visual images, intersemiosis between language, visual images and symbolism and the subsequent ways in which mathematics orders reality. The focus of this investigation is written mathematical texts. The aims of the book are to understand the semantic realm of mathematics and to appreciate the metaphorical expansions and simultaneous limitations of meaning in mathematical discourse. The book is intended for linguists, semioticians, social scientists and those interested in mathematics and science education. In addition, the close study of the multisemiotic mature of mathematics has implications for other studies adopting a social semiotic approach to multimodality.

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