

# **Discourse Analysis**

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Department of Political Science  
Central European University

PhD Programme

Winter semester 2010 (2 credits)

Class meetings : Wed 13:30-15:10

Office hours: Tue 11-12, Wed 15:30-17:00

## **Course description**

This course aims to introduce the students to social science discourse analysis, i.e. to a family of approaches that emphasise the constructed nature of politics and the importance of struggles over interpretive and definitory hegemony for political processes and for the definition of political “realities”. The course starts with an introduction to interpretive social science, the broader research tradition in which discourse analysis can be located. We then continue with two sessions that discuss the nature of discourse and its social and political functions. The following sessions are devoted to key themes in political discourse analysis, such as the discursive construction of identities and boundaries, the framing policy problems, the discursive constitutions of individual, collective and organisational ‘selves’, and indeed the definition of politics itself. At the end of the course, we will discuss issues of data collection/generation, and some conceptual tensions and issues in contemporary discourse theory. By the end of the course, the participants should have gained a solid understanding of the importance of language in politics and of discourse analysis as a conceptual and methodological approach. Through practical work in- and outside of the classroom, they should also have acquired a set of practical skills enabling them to use discourse analysis for their own purposes, and to find their way through the vast literature in discourse theory and analysis.

## **Learning outcomes**

By the end of this course, the students should have gained

- An understanding of the rationale and theoretical basis of discourse analysis as used in social and political analysis
- Practical skills for using discourse analysis
- Keys to find their way through the discourse analytical literature.

## **Course requirements and assessment**

The course consists of 12 sessions (one per week) that offer a mix of lectures and seminar sessions with practical exercises and class-room discussions.

Assessment will be based on the following:

*Active class-room participation and short assignments (40%)*

The students are expected to be actively present throughout the course and to have read the readings.

*Assignments (pass/fail)*

During the semester, they will be required to hand in various short assignments (such as short written applications of discourse analysis, comments to readings etc.). The assignments are designed to test the progress of the participants. They will not be graded. However, a satisfactory (pass) mark is required to receive the course credits.

***Final research paper OR essays (60%)***

The students can choose either a final research paper or theoretical essays on issue related to discourse analysis.

*Research paper:*

6,000–7,000 words research paper consisting in an empirical application of discourse analysis to data of the student's choice (upon approval by the instructor). A suggestion for a topic will have to be submitted by week 5, a more developed 2-page proposal by week 8. Deadline for the final paper: 1 April 2011.

OR

*Theoretical essays*

Two essays of about 3,000–4,000 words each on issues related to discourse analysis (in connection to, but not limited to the course readings). Possible topics will be distributed at mid-semester. Suggestions for topics by the students themselves are also welcome: they should be handed in by week 5 (a paragraph) and, if agreed by the instructor, be developed into a 2-page proposal by week 8. Deadline for the final essays: 1 April 2011.

## **Course programme**

### **Week 1 – Introduction to Interpretive Social Science**

Required readings:

Richardson, Frank C and Fowers, Blaine J. (2010). "Interpretive Social Science: An Overview", in Bevir, Mark (ed.), *Interpretive Political Science*, vol. 1. Los Angeles: Sage, pp. 3-33.

Geertz, Clifford (1987). "Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight", in Rabinow, Paul and Sullivan, William M. (eds), *Interpretive Social Science: A Second Look*. Berkeley: University of California Press, pp. 195-240.

Supplementary readings:

Rabinow, Paul and Sullivan, William M. (1987). "The Interpretive Turn: A Second Look", in Rabinow, Paul and Sullivan, William M. (eds), *Interpretive Social Science: A Second Look*. Berkeley: University of California Press, pp. 1-33.

Taylor, Charles (2001). "Interpretation and the Sciences of Man", in Martin, Michael and McIntyre, Lee C. (eds). *Readings in the Philosophy of Social Science*. Cambridge MA/London: MIT Press, pp. 181-212.

Taylor, Charles (1985). *Philosophical Papers 1*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 45-76 and 215-247 ("Self-Interpreting Animals" and "Language and the Human Nature").

Weber, Max (2001). "'Objectivity' in Social Science and Social Policy", in Martin, Michael and McIntyre, Lee C. (eds). *Readings in the Philosophy of Social Science*. Cambridge MA/London: MIT Press, pp. 535-546.

## **Week 2 – Language and Symbolic Power**

Required readings:

Fairclough, Norman (1992). *Discourse and Social Change*. Cambridge: Polity Press, pp. 62-100.

Supplementary readings:

Fairclough, Norman (1989). *Language and Power*. London/New York: Longman, pp. 43-76 (ch. 2).

Bourdieu, Pierre (1999). *Language and Symbolic Power*. Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press.

Butler, Judith (1997). *Excitable Speech. A Politics of the Performative*. New York/London: Routledge.

## **Week 3 – Discourse and Discourse Analysis**

Required readings:

Gill, Rosalind (2000). "Discourse Analysis", in Bauer, M. and Gaskell, G., *Qualitative Researching with Text, Image and Sound*. London: Sage, pp. 172-190.

Taylor, Stephanie (2001). "Locating and Conducting Discourse Analytic Research", in Wetherell, Margaret., Taylor, Stephanie and Yates, Simeon J. (Eds). *Discourse as Data. A Guide for Analysis*. London: Sage, pp. 5-48.

Supplementary readings:

Howarth, David (2000). *Discourse*. Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

Scott, Joan W. (1997). "Deconstructing Equality-Versus-Difference: Or, the Uses of Poststructuralist Theory for Feminism", in Tietjens Meyers, Diana (ed), *Feminist Social Thought*. New York/London: Routledge, pp. 758-770.

Torring, Jacob (2005). "Introduction: Discourse Theory: Achievements, Arguments and Challenges", in Howarth, David and Torring, Jakob (eds) (2005). *Discourse Theory in European Politics. Identity, Policy and Governance*. Houndmills: Palgrave, pp.

## **Week 4 – Constructing Otherness**

Required readings:

Hall, Stuart (1997). "The Spectacle of the 'Other'", in Hall, Stuart (ed.). *Representation. Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*. Milton Keynes: Open University Press, pp. 13-74.

Birnbaum, Pierre (1992). *Anti-Semitism in France: a Political History from Leon Blum to the Present*. Oxford: Blackwell, pp. (ch. 7).

Supplementary Reading:

Mottier, Véronique (2005). "From Welfare to Social Exclusion: Eugenic Social Policies and the Swiss National Order", in Howarth, David and Torfing, Jakob (eds), *Discourse Theory in European Politics. Identity, Policy and Governance*. Houndmills/New York: Palgrave, pp. 255-274.

## **Week 5 – Constructing Realities**

Required readings:

Potter, Jonathan (1996). *Representing Reality. Discourse, Rhetoric and Social Construction*. London: Sage, pp. 150-74 and 175-199 (ch. 6, 7).

Supplementary Readings:

Smith, Anthony D. (1993). "National Identity and the Idea of European Unity", in Smith, Anthony D., *Myths and Memories of the Nation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 225-251.

Deadlines suggestions for topics for final assessment (research papers or essays)

## **Week 6 – Constructing Politics**

Required readings:

Gamson, William (1992). *Talking Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp.31-57 and 135-161 (ch. 3, 8).

Supplementary Readings:

Wodak, Ruth (2009). *The Discourse of Politics in Action. Politics as Usual*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 1-27. (ch. 1).

## **Week 7 – Constructing Policy Problems**

Required readings:

Hajer, Maarten (2005), "Coalitions, Practices and Meaning in Environmental Politics: From Acid Rain to BSE", in Howarth, David and Torfing, Jakob (eds) (2005). *Discourse Theory in European Politics. Identity, Policy and Governance*. Houndmills: Palgrave.

Fischer, Frank (2003). "Public Policy as Narrative: Stories, Frames and Metanarratives", in Frank Fischer, *Reframing Public Policy: Discursive Politics and Deliberative Practices*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 161-80.

Supplementary Readings:

- Lucas, Barbara (2004). "Reducing Discursive Complexity : the Case of Alcohol policies in Europe (1850-2000)", in Muller, Richard and Klingemann, Harald (eds). *From Science to Action? 100 Years Later – Alcohol Policies Revisited*. Dordrecht: Kluwer.
- Verloo, Mieke and Lombardo, Emanuela (2007). "Contested Gender Equality and Policy Variety in Europe: Introducing a Critical Frame Analysis Approach", in Verloo, Mieke (ed.), *Multiple Meanings of Gender Equality. A Critical Frame Analysis of Gender Policies in Europe*. Budapes/New Yorkt: CPS Books/CEU Press, pp. 21-49.

### **Week 8 – Politics in the Making**

Required readings:

- Reisigl, M. (2009). "Analyzing Political Rhetoric", in Wodak, Ruth and Krzyzanowski, Michal (eds) (2008). *Qualitative Discourse Analysis in the Social Sciences*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.
- Myers, G. (2009). "Analyzing Interaction in Broadcast Debates", in Wodak, Ruth and Krzyzanowski, Michal (eds) (2008). *Qualitative Discourse Analysis in the Social Sciences*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.

Deadliner 2-page proposals for final assesement

### **Week 9 - Construction of Selves**

Required readings:

- Boydell, Katherine M.; Goering, Paula and Morrell-Bellai, Tammy, L. (2000). "Homelessness and Identity: Re-presentation of Self in People Who Are Homeless", *Qualitative Health Research* 10(1): 26-38.
- Plummer, Ken (1995). *Telling Sexual Stories. Power, Change and Social Worlds*. London: Sage, pp. 18-31 and 49-61.

Supplementary Readings:

- Gubrium, Jaber F. and Holsein, James A. (2009). *Analyzing Narrative Reality*. Thousand Oaks: Sage, pp. 39-109.
- Kohler Riessman, Catherine (2008). *Narrative Methods for the Human Sciences*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

### **Week 10 – Discourse as Interaction; Quality Criteria in Qualitative Research**

Required readings:

- Goffman, Erving (1999). "On Face-Work: an Analysis of Ritual Elements in Social Interaction", in Jaworski, Adam and Coupland, Nikolas (eds). *The Discourse Reader*. London: Routledge, pp. 306-320.
- Maxwell, Joseph A. (2002). "Understanding and Validity in Qualitative Research", in Huberman, A. Michael and Miles, Matthew B. (eds), *The Qualitative Research Companion*. Thousand Oaks: Sage, pp. 37-64.

Supplementary Reading:

- Drew, Paul and Sorjonen, Maria-Leena (1997). "Institutional Dialogue", in Van Dijk, Teun A. (ed.). *Discourse as Social Interaction*. London : Sage, pp. 92-118.
- Goffman, Erving (1981). *Forms of Talk*. Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press.

### **Week 11 – Generating Data for Discourse Analysis: In-Depth Interviewing**

Required readings:

- Berg, Bruce L. (1995). "A Dramaturgical Look at Interviewing", in Berg, B.L., *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences*. Boston : Allyn&Bacon, pp. 66-110.
- Hermanowicz, Joseph C. (2002). "The Great Interview: 25 Strategies for Studying People in Bed", *Qualitative Sociology* 25(4): 479-499.

Supplementary Readings:

- Arthur, Sue et Nazroo, James (2003). "Designing Fieldwork Strategies and Materials", in Ritchie, Jane et Lewis, Jane (eds), *Qualitative Research Practice*. London: Sage (chap. 5, pp. 109-137).
- Holstein, James A. and Gubrium, Jaber F. (1995). *The Active Interview*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

### **Week 12 – Epistemological and Conceptual Issues in Discourse Analysis**

Required readings:

- Howarth, David (2005). "Applying Discourse Theory: The Method of Articulation", in Howarth, David and Torfing, Jakob (eds) (2005). *Discourse Theory in European Politics. Identity, Policy and Governance*. Houndmills: Palgrave, pp. .xx.

Supplementary readings:

- Bacchi, Carol (2009). "The Issue of Intentionality in Frame Theory", in Lombardo, Emanuela, Meier, Petra and Verloo, Mieke (eds). *The Discursive Politics of Gender Equality*. London/New York: Routledge: ppl 19-35
- Wetherell, Margaret (2001), "Debates in Discourse Research", in Wetherell, Margaret, Taylor, Stephanie and Yates, Simeon, J. (eds), *Discourse Theory and Practice. A Reader*. London: Sage, pp. 380-399.

08.12.2010/ls