



Discourse Analysis: Investigating Processes of Social Construction

By Nelson Phillips, Cynthia Hardy

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Discourse Analysis: Investigating Processes of Social Construction is the first book to provide a concise, straightforward guide for students and researchers who are interested in understanding and using discourse analysis. The authors reflect on the practice of analyzing discourse and the potential for revealing the processes of social construction that constitute social and organizational life. Addressed to graduate students, academics, and experienced researchers, this book is a comprehensive guide for those new to discourse analysis as well as for researchers in need of a complement to other modes of inquiry.

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Editorial Review

Review

“The authors have successfully achieved their intent: to produce a short, readable guide to discourse analysis. The book is suitable for doctoral students, academics and researchers wishing to understand the basics of discourse analysis. As a doctoral student, I found it a helpful overview of the current debates and practices surrounding this potentially daunting methodology.

The book is the 50th volume in the Sage Series on Qualitative Research Methods. It is a short guide on the theoretical background, empirical use and practical application of discourse theory. At only 97 pages including bibliography, it is an accessible, yet content-rich overview of discourse theory. As I am new to discourse analysis, I found chapters one (a definition and rationale for discourse analysis), two (the theory and practical examples of discourse analysis) and four (how to conduct research using discourse analysis) the most useful. These chapters provide clear and practical information on why and how to use discourse theory in research. Chapter three is a reflection by the authors on their use of discourse theory in various projects. It is useful in understanding the range of research questions and organizations that can be studied using this technique. Chapter 5, the conclusion, has a useful table describing how reflexivity should be applied in discourse analysis and points the way for new directions in using discourse analysis.

The strengths of the book include an extensive bibliography, helpful for those readers in search of disciplines and projects which use discourse analysis: for example, psychology, political science, business and management and environment studies.

The weakness is that the authors argue that discourse analysis contributes to the plurality of research methods; however, it is hard to see how the requirement for a social constructivist philosophy would fit alongside a positivist philosophy, in a quantitative analysis, for example, in a mixed methods study.

In summary, this book is an essential starting point for anyone considering using this technique, which is well established in the UK, although less so in the USA. The authors must be applauded on this interesting and elegant introduction to a powerful technique.” (Udeni Salmon *Inspection Copy request email*)

About the Author

Research Interests

Organization discourse theory
Power and politics in organizations
Social construction of Identity
Organizational change

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Thomas Hodge:

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