Introduction: Discourse Analysis and Policy Discourse

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Abstract:

As introduction to a collection on policy discourses and patterns of argumentation in international development, this paper clarifies different meanings of `discourse' and `discourse analysis', including as applied in development studies, and explains why effective discourse analysis requires systematic attention to both text and context, based on serious methods and theories.   It then outlines important areas and current work in policy discourse analysis, including with reference to metaphors, framing, and policy narratives; and comments on main emphases in a set of papers which present methical approaches of various types, for examining a range of discourses.

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Discourse analysis of policy-stating, -arguing and -justifying provides a rewarding way to consider development policy.   While recent work on development discourse has brought many striking and notable insights, there is need now for sifting and clarification, followed by more searching applications of discourse analysis.   The work on development policy in particular has been weakly connected to relevant work on policy discourse and methods of analysis.   And since `development policy' (or, as known in the U.S., international development policy) is many faceted we should be cautious in generalization.   Widely different things are done under its name; and stances to `leave it to the market' are just as much policy interventions as those advocating control by central planning.

To sustain the empirical and theoretical work required on development policy

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discourse, one should look at three existing areas: on discourse analysis in general, on development discourse, and on policy discourse. We would like in this introduction to comment on those three background areas, how they link to our foreground area, and the nature of the papers that follow. We will try to clarify the terms `discourse' and `discourse analysis', specify a number of different varieties, including as applied in development studies, and explain why effective discourse analysis requires systematic attention to both text and context, based on serious methods and theories. In the second section we outline a corresponding agenda of work in policy discourse analysis. And in the final section we introduce the contributions of the six papers here and comment on the collection as a whole.

Discourse analyses of development policy can strive for demolition or look for ways forward. Our main thrust is to increase room for manoeuvre in analysis and reform, not refuse or diminish it. And while the varieties of discourse analysis run from the linguistic-semantic to the ideological-political, our major emphasis will be to analyze development policy discourse as argumentation. Discourse analysis involves `argumentation analysis' when, through precise readings of text and subtext, it emphasizes discursive moves as being moves in logic as well as of style or community.

`Discourse', `discourse analysis', and `development discourse'

The term `development discourse' gets used in a variety of ways, for example to mean:- talking rather than doing; diversionary and deceptive language; a prescriptive rather than descriptive stance; or as expression of the type of modernization approach that became derogatorily known as `developmentalism', originally in Latin America. We mention some other ways later. This plurality reflects the state of usage of the term `discourse' more widely. For besides everyday mis-usages, significant gaps exist between the definitions in different research streams in the social sciences and policy fields. (Van Dijk, 1990, gives an overview of various streams.)

Some work uses the term to signal awareness of post-structuralist and post-modern theorists. When more than purely fashionable, this first usage is often broadly as follows:

(1) `Discourse is here defined as an ensemble of ideas, concepts, and categories through which meaning is given to phenomena. *Discourses frame certain problems; that is to say, they distinguish some aspects of a situation rather than others*.' (Hajer, 1993:45; emphasis added)

Such use of `discourse' to mean an intellectual framework has given a new name for

talking about alternative schools, approaches, `paradigms', `disciplinary matrices' and so on (e.g. Corbridge 1992, 1993). A strength but also danger of some of this type of work is a presumption that intellectual positions are structured like a `tree': i.e. that they are based on a few fundamental and invariable assumptions. In reality, positions can and do support themselves in different (even contradictory) ways, and do evolve. Further, the comprehensive sense of `paradigm' can be mis-used in claims that only a small number of `package deals' are available, with all one's choices flowing from a single choice. People may then label each other `liberal', `Marxist', `populist' or whatever, and neglect the individuality, novelty and overlaps of positions. This is not conducive to careful probing of the content and framing of specific arguments.[i] And for those not experienced in textual analysis, such work can lack systematic tools for dissection at the level of supposed paradigms and for precise examination of -- and now we shift to a second, older, usage -- actual discourses and texts.

(2) `In Linguistics, a stretch of language larger than the sentence [is a discourse]' (Bullock & Stallybrass, 1977:175); `...any piece of language longer (or more complex) than the individual sentence' (Honderich, ed., 1995:202).

From the two senses, (1) `discourse' as an intellectual framework and (2) `discourse' as an extended stretch of language, comes a hybrid sense: an extended discussion within a particular framework.

Discourse analysis in this second usage means more than the analysis of single terms and of sentences as isolated propositions, namely:

`the study of those linguistic effects - semantic, stylistic, syntactic - whose description needs to take into account sentence sequences as well as sentence structure' (Bullock & Stallybrass, 1977:175).

Such analysis requires further tools -- methods, concepts, methodology -- than those for looking at single terms and propositions. Discourse analysis here draws out what is connoted in what has been denoted. Thus Gastil's review of political discourse covers rhetorical strategies and conversational tactics, not only lexicon and grammar (1992:469). `Rhetoric' here can refer to `all the ways of accomplishing things with language' (McCloskey, 1988:14), not only to persuasion regardless of reason. Modern `informal logic' and `new rhetoric' have arisen to study these ways, going of necessity beyond both the classical deductive logic for single propositions and a classical rhetoric of illogical persuasion. (See Gasper on policy arguments, in this collection.)

A third major sense of `discourse' is (3): conversation, debate, exchange. Language is interchange for communication. Louise White's recent survey of `Policy Analysis as Discourse' matches this sense (White, 1994). It says little on words, style

and argumentation, and considers instead the roles, locations and social structuring of debate and intellectual exchange in policy-making. The work it reviews starts in common from the view that `there is a plurality of values and arguments available for thinking about any specific policy issue. Analysis, therefore, has to be part of a process in which these several points of view are taken into account or directly included in the analysis' (p.507).

In a traditional dictionary we find this third sense and a variant of the second: `discourse' is defined as `talk, conversation; dissertation, treatise, sermon' (Concise Oxford, 1964). Thus to use `discourse' in the first sense, to mean an intellectual frame, or work within such a frame, moves the word away from earlier meanings which continue in use. Behind the move is a claim: `a "discourse" is not just a set of words, it is a set of rules about what you can and cannot say' (Barrett, 1995), and about what. (See Apthorpe in this collection, on languages and universes of discourse).

Going further in that direction, and further too from original and everyday usage, we find two more usages.

(4) Discourse is `"practice and theory" - material activity which transforms nature and society and the modes of thought that inform this action... In earlier days the word might have been "praxis"' (Moore, 1995:30);[ii] `a discourse... an interwoven set of languages and practices...' (Crush, 1995:xiii). Sometimes the term `discursive practice' is used like this.

And as perhaps one version of (4), `discourse' is also presented as:

(5) `a modernist regime [order] of knowledge and disciplinary power' (loc. cit.).

A sister term is `discursive field, a system of power relations which produces what Foucault (1984) calls domains of objects and rituals of truth' (Watts, 1995:56).

More ambitious than the first variant (the examination of intellectual frameworks alone), these fourth and fifth versions are adopted in much of the recent work on development discourse (e.g. Escobar 1995a & 1995b, Sachs ed. 1992, Watts 1993). One danger in such usages is loss of a distinction between discourses and practices. Thus several authors when referring to development discourse or practice often instead say `development', as in: `development simultaneously assigns each territory a characteristic morphology' (Crush, 1995:15); `International development ... depoliticizes this issue' (Mitchell, 1995:142); and so on. `Development' becomes an actor, protean, potent, all-purpose -- as in `Development, for all its power to speak and to control the terms of speaking' (ibid.:8) -- but sometimes no longer an aid to clear thinking.[iii] Work in this vein has potential for both illumination and confusion. Its ambitions require complementary use of systematic methods.

Discourse analysis is fashionable; many of us now claim to do it. The label impresses, hints at uncommon insights; but to deliver on this promise is less easy. For as seen in, for example, the problematic history of attempts at computer simulation of text understanding, `producing and understanding discourse requires vast amounts of effectively organized knowledge', warns Teun van Dijk (1990:6). The journal he edits, <u>Discourse and Society</u>, aims to bridge the gap between the macro-analysis of social structures and ideologies and the micro-analysis of specific texts and conversations; in order to examine `the complex relationships between structures or strategies of discourse and both the local and the global, social or political context' and `unravel some of the fundamental processes at work in the modern forms of the reproduction of inequality' (pp.14, 11). Such processes have to be demonstrated, by more than intuition and assertion. This work needs `a level of multidisciplinary sophistication that is not usually required by traditional, monodisciplinary research or academic journals' (p.13), because:

> `both text and context need explicit and systematic analysis, and this analysis must be based on serious methods and theories' (p.14; emphasis added).

Both Fairclough (1992) and Backhouse et al. (1993) have extended this `argument for systematic textual analysis as a part of discourse analysis' (Fairclough, 1992:193).

`Serious methods and theories' are available from several sources, such as work on: informal logic and argument analysis (e.g. Wilson, 1986; Walton, 1989), the rhetorics of the social sciences (e.g. McCloskey, 1985, 1994; Nelson et al. eds., 1987), political discourse's terms (e.g. Barry 1990; Connolly, 1993) and methods (e.g. Gastil, 1992), and argumentation in policy analysis and planning (e.g. Gasper, 1991; Fischer and Forester eds., 1993). Such work situates and elucidates texts as typically reflecting social-political world views and contexts; but it tries to do this through precise and detailed analyses, not declaration alone.

Not all the literature on development discourse goes this far, the many striking contributions (especially in two major 1995 collections, edited respectively by Jonathan Crush and by David Moore and Gerald Schmitz) notwithstanding. Some of it attempts discourse analysis without procedures for examining texts, or only with apparently fixed formulae and pre-set conclusions. Escobar claims that analysis of rhetorical forms looks at surfaces, whereas his Foucault-derived characterization of discourse goes much deeper, into socio-political roots (1995a:62-3). Watts makes similar charges against Apthorpe (1986a), Roe (1991), and others:

> Some recent scholarship self-consciously explores development as a text, or more properly as a series of texts, from a semiotic or rhetorical perspective... However,

Roe's analysis, like those of Apthorpe and McCloskey, generally ignores or does not develop the social basis of ideas, the social and historical context in which such stories are produced and told, and how or why some stories become dominant and others relegated...' (Watts, 1993:265).

But concerns about the influence of arguments' contexts and purposes imply a need for more careful, more sophisticated, examination of the argument contents. Thus we require a disciplined examination of <u>both</u> text and context, as complementary. Watts's and Escobar's stance may underestimate what the work on rhetorics in social science and on policy and planning discourses attempts: to probe texts, contexts and their interrelations, using more tools, more system and a more open mind than only providing confirming instances for hypotheses about mentalities, ensembles and essential visions. Corbridge (1993) is one example of combination of a paradigms-analysis -- remaining aware that the paradigms are ideal-types -- and a more detailed and nuanced analysis of actual, nuanced texts and contexts.

Policy, policy-speak, and policy argumentation analysis

`Policy' often has the sort of meaning seen in `policy statement', `policy release' or `policy initiative'. Such `policy' is a kind of gloss on events: typically a position that claims to be exemplary in some way is presented in language chosen mainly to attract and persuade one of this. It normally neither invites nor accepts refutation, especially when it takes a high moral posture; rather, by every trick and trope in the book, its hallmark is nonrefutability.

This received sense of policy, as conception, stands in naive contrast with execution [see e.g. Clay and Schaffer, eds., 1984 passim; Schaffer coined the term `policy practice' to transcend the dichotomy]. Similarly, policy speech often refers to things which inescapably ought to be done, and which at the same time can and will be done provided only that policy is `in place'. When `policy' and its advocacy are uttered in this way as if they were the same thing, policy-talk is too easily written off as `mere rhetoric'. This implies a clear difference between such `talk' and something else called `policy making', supposed to go on as a rational decision-making process. Policy as proposition, statement and style, is indeed not policy as decision-making, interrelated though the two are. Yet one learns from experience that policy-speak is not just rhetorical hype, nor is decision-making just rational search. Crucial in all policy practice is framing, specifically what and who is actually included, and what and who is ignored and excluded. This framing cannot be settled by instrumental rationality,

precisely because it frames that.

As is vexedly well-known by those who return and return again to them, typical planning and policy problems are `wicked': they lack a definitive formulation, clear stopping rules, and an enumerable (or exhaustively describable) set of potential solutions, etc. [Rittel and Webber, 1973]. Thus policy problems differ from those that science conventionally gives itself to solve. Neither what would conventionally be understood as scientific reasoning nor a classical syllogistic procedure will do. Policy and policy analysis must find their own way.

We must be ready to examine a series of (interlinked) aspects, including the following:

- The formation and use of concepts

This area is an obvious one; examples may suggest the non-obvious insights that investigation of `naming' can yield. Development planning makes repeated use of `target group' labels such as `rural poor' or `peasant' or `landless' which are at once overdeterminate [Wood, 1985] and underdescriptive. Public policy and analysis at large, including development policy and analysis, often seeks to persuade through means of `polar words' [Arnold, 1937:167-179], `either/or' [Nott, 1977: 75-87], and similar binary couples [Apthorpe and Krahl, 1987]. (On inward/outward orientation see Gore, in this collection.) Nothing seems more bold, resolute and brilliant than to put things (sometimes literally) into `black' and `white' (e.g. `underdevelopment' and `development'), and then to proceed wholly on dualism's face values. Modernization - and dependency - writing on development is riven by such dualisms [Marglin & Marglin, 1990].

- The use of tropes and other stylistic devices

Tropes are figures of speech, where words are not used in their literal sense; for example, with metaphors we describe something as something else, to imply a similarity. A wealth of recent discussion [triggered especially by McCloskey, 1985] highlights metaphors in the literature of economics and economic development [e.g. Porter, 1995]. Effects and affects are most where the status of a turn of phrase as a discursive artefact escapes attention. Porter suggests we distinguish: metaphors in particular concrete contexts of practice; organizing metaphors in a broader practice, such as the idea of constraints-and-their-removal in post-1940s mainstream development planning; and underlying master metaphors, primarily biological ones in Marxism and mechanical ones in the neoclassical mainstream.

For instance, `market' is widely used metaphorically to mean `mechanism'. *Some* processes, such as aspects of `competitive' pricing, may indeed be described as mechanistic results of the `forces' (as the metaphor continues) of supply and demand. Yet some other features of markets, including other aspects of pricing even in `free markets', are not automatic at all but legislated or contingent on other extra-market conditions. Also the operative ideas and rules which make marketing conceivable and intelligible are not mechanisms but matters of history and institutions and non-economic processes. Further features, such as in processes of market entry or exit, reflect both mechanism and institution. So positions which proceed as if `market' denoted mechanism only are misleading: they make a machine of the ghost. Arguing as if market were institution only, makes a ghost of the machine. These different inclusions and exclusions can bring different studies and different policies [Apthorpe, in this collection].

Discourse analysis of development policy writing should also examine the use and effects of other figures of speech and stylistic device. For example: the status given to nouns as compared with verbs [Tonkin, 1982:112]; the status of many official terms as normative not descriptive statements [Abel and Blaikie, 1986:736; Apthorpe, 1986b:351]; use of keywords as banners [e.g. on `informal sector' see Peattie, 1987] and as slogans to parade grand strategies such as `basic needs'. In policy and policy analysis `basic' means basic to values held or attributed. The scores on policy indicators paraded in this as well as other areas are vindicators more than just descriptors (see Apthorpe in this collection).

- Framing

Going beyond the roles of metaphors and other figures of speech in channelling attention, policy discourse analysis must examine the framing of problems to be tackled, and its connections to the generation of answers offered. Such connections often remain implicit, either forgotten or suppressed; only when frames are obtrusive or otherwise out of the ordinary are they likely to be noticed.

The idea of framing is itself of course a metaphor. We used it above as concerning what and whom are included and excluded. Hajer similarly uses `to frame' as `to distinguish some aspects of a situation rather than others' (1993:45).[iv] The papers here by Paine, on the presentation of Bhutan as beset with physical difficulties, and by Gore, on the focus on differences in national policies as being the key determinants of differences in national economic performance, illustrate this well. The best-known users of the term, Martin Rein and Donald Schon, treat `frame' somewhat more broadly,

equating it to `paradigm' (1993:148), the matrix of intellectual commitments within which a line of work proceeds. Gasper in his paper on policy argument suggests we use `frame' in the narrower way, restricting it to more clear-cut matters of inclusion and exclusion, rather than let it cover all aspects of situation definition and conceptualization, for which there are established and apposite terms available. Whatever the definitions used, the pieces in this collection try to probe in close detail the structures in selected discourses, and so avoid the possible misuse of `paradigms' analysis that we mentioned earlier.

- Stories and narratives

Evidence and arguments are commonly integrated in narratives, such as causal stories, which wrap up information and messages and convey plausibility. Forester (1993) cites the so-called Goldberg Rule: it is better to ask `what's the story?' than `what's the problem?'. People are often puzzled, or mistaken, concerning the nature of the problem-situation they face. They more readily think in terms of a story/ narrative which combines, implicitly and explicitly, reportage, elements of definitions of others and of self, of problems and values, priorities and constraints.

According to a leader of work on development/policy narratives (Roe, 1994, 1995), much development planning, especially if foreign aided, employs a narrative structure comparable to the archetypal folktale (Roe, 1989). A problem (often a `crisis') is encountered; it will be `solved', through the epic endeavour of a hero (the project/ policy), who faces and overcomes a series of trials (constraints), and then lives happily ever after. Employing this story line near-guarantees disappointment. But, like some religion, it thrives on disappointment: its many versions endure precisely because of widespread felt needs for simply grasped, generalized stories with an inspirational `message', with which to interpret and respond to situations that can otherwise seem bafflingly complex, variable and `other' (Roe, 1991). The papers here by Gore and Moore scrutinize the simple stories about East Asian industrialization, and about `governance' and crisis in Africa, used by the Washington development institutions. Roe argues that the needs for simple general narratives mean that to counter poor narratives requires counter-narratives, in which `what are conventionally treated as the causes of program failure will now have to be taken as the preconditions for successful new programs' (Roe, 1995:1067).

`Policy narrative' might become another catch-phrase. Sometimes it is one more synonym for `paradigm' as a way-of-seeing (e.g. Hoben, 1995), sometimes a synonym for `scenario'. In contrast, Fortmann employs `narrative' as a synonym for `story' in the

everyday sense, but uses `discourse' in the newer-fangled way: `Stories are a vehicle for transmitting and making accessible a framework of meanings, that is a discourse' (1995:1054); in other words, stories are Kuhnian `exemplars', and can have special power and roles. This she vividly illustrates through the conflicting stories told by villagers and large commercial farmers in Zimbabwe.

- The explicit and implicit rules of validation

All policy writing, considered as text and subtext, is open-able to various interpretations, some of them conflicting. Even where the writing aims to reduce the scope for interpretation as far as possible, validating one interpretation as compared with another is still not verification; we can do the former rather than the latter. Validation and invalidation `is an argumentative discipline comparable with judicial procedures of legal interpretation having a logic of uncertainty and of qualitative probability' [Ricoeur, 1979:9O].

In sum, discourse and argumentation analyses in development policy studies have to draw from areas customarily regarded as far away: semantics, semiology, socio-linguistics, philosophy. Such areas only seemingly have nothing to contribute to the urgency of action that the latest `crisis' is claimed to require; we should understand the world better - which world? - in order to try to change it.

White's review of American work on policy analysis as discourse--as debate and intellectual exchange in policy-making--discerns three overlapping streams or perspectives. The first she calls analytic discourse: it recognizes the limits of any single method or policy frame, calls for recognition of and interchange between multiple approaches, and offers procedures to sift from the different pictures and build a more adequate view for the case or issue concerned. In development research this is often summarized as `triangulation'. The second stream White calls critical discourse, which `is more self-consciously philosophical, ... emphasizes that value questions have to be explicitly included in analysis' [White, 1994:512], and identifies structural biases in policy processes, related to unequal power positions. Different approaches must not only be represented but philosophically - and ideologically - examined, for example along the lines suggested by Fischer (see Gasper's paper on analysing policy arguments). The third stream, entitled persuasive discourse, studies the role of ideas in policy change. `Because preferences are always being interpreted and because they can and do change, [policy] entrepreneurs are not limited to traditional brokering roles, but can and do trade in the currency of ideas and problem solving strategies to build coalitions and promote change. The lesson is that political conflict is less about negotiating clear

interests and more about framing policy issues' [ibid.:516].   Much of this applies beyond U.S. politics.   Analysts' most important roles are then to introduce new information and generate new frames, rather than offer solutions.   White's three streams are reflected, in varying degrees, in each of the six papers that follow.

This collection

In this collection an interdisciplinary group of authors delineate and apply, for their chosen areas in development policy studies, the discourse analysis ideas and methods they consider important for the task. The emphases on policy and on discourse analysis methodology distinguish our enterprise from most current work on development discourse, where the focus tends to be (for or more usually against) `developmentalism' in development studies generally or in the work of international donors.

The set starts with two more methodological papers, and ends with another. In between are three case studies.   The three methodological papers look respectively at: framing, naming, numbering and coding; argument structures and argument assessment; and essentialism.

In `Reading development policy and policy analysis...', Apthorpe advocates what B.S. Green calls `emancipatory reading'. He presents the ideas of languages and universes of discourse, and then reviews the discourse analysis of development policy, including by situating and evaluating his own 1986 paper which helped to open up this topic.   What are generally known as framing and naming are highlighted as core procedures in policy discourse. To these he adds `numbering': the various forms of use of quantification; and `coding': the choice of sense-making styles of composition which lie behind, as well as on, the printed page in front of you. Illustrations are given from humanistic and economistic discourses in poverty studies.

In `Analysing Policy Arguments', Gasper provides an elementary survey of methods for examining policy argumentation.   The first set are *general tools* from `informal logic', including: (1) Toulmin's format for looking at a particular proposition or well-knit set of propositions, which has been widely applied to policy arguments; (2) the more open-ended exploratory methods of Scriven and others for specifying and then assessing the components and structure of extended sets of propositions that make up broad arguments; and (3) compilations of possible fallacies in argument.   A second set comprise commentaries on important *components and tactics in policy argumentation in particular*: (4) General lists of component; (5) Checklists of elements that deserve special attention in framing and structuring policy arguments - notably ideas about the

boundaries of analysis, the burden of proof, the `without-policy' case, the alternatives and means available, and the relevant constraints; (6) `Pitfall marking' - illustration of tactics and dangers associated with each of these types of component; and, closely related, (7) Illustration of particular stylistic devices, e.g. those used to exclude some matters from consideration. Style provides, in McCloskey's phrase, `the details of substance'. Tactics build structures, not only fill in details; and `argumentation theory gives us tools for unpacking how various elements are tied together towards conclusions' [Gasper   ]. The final set of methods seek to specify and appraise overall *systems or structures of policy argument*: (8) Methods for specification - including by Hambrick, Fischer, and the `logical framework approach'; and (9) Pointers for assessment, together with tactical advice on presentation, such as given by Scriven, Dunn and MacRae.

The three case study papers focus respectively on aspects of geographical, economic growth and governance discourses.

To get closer to the substantive associated with the discursive can be especially difficult when the discourse itself is `physical' and seen therefore as unarguable. In `Re-reading "mountainous", "isolated", "inaccessible" and "small" in the case of Bhutan', Adam Pain explores how its environment is described in words which have tended to be interpreted only negatively. Policy then takes the features as intractable constraints or has sought to mitigate them. Yet he argues that there are many positive elements of being mountainous, and so on, that could be `re-framed' and harnessed towards broader national objectives.

`Methodological Nationalism and the Misunderstanding of East Asian Industrialization' by Charles Gore dissects 1980s and 90s Washington-style economic growth discourse, seen for example in major World Bank documents and policies. He shows how poorly it grasps `the East Asian model', relates this to a discordance between its global normative approach and its nation-state focused explanatory frame, and mounts a sustained critique of the latter. He shows in depth how the neo-liberal Washington growth discourse has sought to accomodate and `tame' alternative views and the East Asian experience, by a series of discursive devices, including tacit shifts in the meanings of several key terms, such as `structural adjustment' and `outward-oriented'.

In `Reading Americans on Democracy in Africa: From the CIA to "Good Governance"', David Moore argues that `any study of contemporary development policy must take into account the... American efforts to create economic, political and ideological hegemony on a global scale in the last fifty years' (p.xxx below). Probing

behind changes in languages of discourse, from the 1940s to the 1990s, he finds continuities in thought and policy. Official American discourse on governance for Africa remains paternalistic: `guidance' and periodic physical intervention are necessary to help the African toward democracy as defined in Washington. Unjust in its claimed prerogatives of definition, it is also likely to be ineffective and erratic, resting on liberal theories of democracy which assume market freedom and political freedom are highly compatible. `When the two do not match in reality American policy makers have to turn either to "order" or to "exit"' (p.yyy).

Finally, in `Essentialism in and about development discourse' Gasper warns against conceptual and normative oversimplification through forms of essentialism:- in defining terms; in characterizing certain policies as having inherent virtues or failings; and in identifying schools of thought (especially those that one disapproves of). `Proper', `basically' and `essentially' should be treated as warning-signs of possible oversimplification.

Early and some more recent treatments of development discourse have been under-differentiated. Once a stimulating new scene has been set, the plot must move forward, the story should gain in breadth and depth, and come to terms with the variety, dis-unity, and lack of clear boundaries of development discourse. We have argued the role for methods of discourse analysis, not only general claims about paradigms or essential discursive commitments. In a field of wide scope and many faces, analysis needs many tools not a few. This collection seeks linkages in particular with broader work on policy analysis, including on policy discourse.

In the absence of methical approaches to the dimension of discourse in policy, either too much is made of it or too little, or both. If too much is made of it, the processes of the stating of policy may not sufficiently have been distinguished from those of its making. If too little, the art and craft of stating may be overlooked. In both cases, the chances of making a serious difference to policy become low.

Discourse analysis at its best in all its varieties has great value. Applied in policy analysis, discourse analysis's appetites are for the ways of other discourses, the customary and new means of legitimation and delegitimation. It can become open to criticism as too voracious, as not knowing where to stop. Some discourse analysis has gained a reputation of being only destructive, a dead end. Discourse and argumentation analysis as pursued in this collection is not nihilistic. Where it finds a theory or policy or advocacy poorly conceptualised or formulated, the aim is to renew, not give up, the struggle. Towards these ends it can enhance established lines of analysis in development studies, and add something new.

NOTES

i. The interconnection of elements in a position would imply just a small number of intellectual `package-deals' only if, inter alia, elements were precisely defined. Instead they can in general be variously formulated, developed and linked up. See Gasper's paper on essentialism, in this collection.

ii. Moore adds that `Discourse remains much closer to the practices of discrete institutions, the struggles within them and their "micro-power", than is ideology' (1995:30). This assumes that all discourses share a similar degree of generality. Porter (1995), referred to in the sub-section on metaphor in this Introduction, suggests we instead think of three levels of generality. This might still oversimplify.

iii. The usage is of course deliberate. For Escobar, `development can be best described as an apparatus that links forms of knowledge about the Third World with the deployment of forms of power and intervention' (1995b:213); and he still calls this a discourse. Hajer's better, clearer, umbrella term `discourse coalition' covers `the ensemble of a set of story lines, the actors that utter these story lines, and the practices that conform to these story lines, all organized around a discourse', in our sense (1) above (1993:47).

iv. Given his concept of discourse, for him `Discourses frame certain problems' (loc.cit.); whereas with the linguistics concept of discourse, it is frames that set the scene for discourses.

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