# Research on Organization Discourse: Challenges and Contributions*

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## Abstract

During recent years, the body of theory on organizational discourse has grown significantly, helping to form a specific field of study and also contributing to broader organization and management theory. During this time, empirical work using discourse analysis has also increased, as organizational researchers have drawn on methods established in other domains of study to explore organizations. The study of organizational discourse is not without its problems, however, which need to be addressed as the field grows and evolves. Some of these difficulties are particularly acute for researchers wishing to conduct empirical studies. This paper will identify some of specific challenges facing researchers and then describe how an ongoing program of organizational research using discourse analysis has attempted to address them. It will also highlight some of the important contributions that empirical studies of organizational discourse can offer towards the understanding of organizational processes.

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## Introduction

Scholars are increasingly conceptualizing societies, institutions and identities as discursively constructed collections of texts and, in so doing, are focusing on language use as the central object of study (Alvesson & Karreman, 2000a). Such discursive studies are playing a major role in the study of organizations and in shaping some of the key debates that frame organizational studies (Keenoy *et al.*, 2000). However, as van Dijk (1997a) points out, discourse as a field of study is "fuzzy" and encompasses a number of approaches that are informed by a wide variety of disciplines. The role of discourse in organizations is equally difficult to define (Keenoy *et al.*, 1997; Grant *et al.*, 1998). There are divergent, and sometimes conflicting, approaches to the study of discourse in organizations, which range from speech act theory to ethnomethodological conversation analysis to critical linguistics (Putnam *et al.*, 1996; Woodilla, 1998; Putnam & Fairhurst, 2000). Despite this complexity, the body of theory on organizational discourse has grown substantially in recent years, helping to form a specific field of study and contributing to broader organization and management theory. During this time, empirical work using discourse analysis has also increased, as organizational researchers have drawn on methods established in other domains of study to explore organizations.

The study of organizational discourse is not without its problems, however, which need to be addressed as the field grows and evolves (see Grant, *et al.*, 1998; Alvesson & Karreman, 2000a). Some of these difficulties are particularly acute for researchers wishing to conduct empirical studies, who face a series of contradictions that complicate their work. They include the methodological challenges involved in discourse analysis, the difficulties of analyzing organizational texts within their broader context, the unresolved debate between structure and agency, and the demands for more reflexive research. This paper will discuss these challenges, drawing examples from an ongoing program of research on organizational discourse. It will highlight some of the difficulties we faced in carrying out this empirical work, discuss some of the ways in which we attempted to deal with them, and outline some of the contributions that empirical studies of organizational discourse can offer towards the understanding of organizational processes.

This paper is structured as follows. First, I will present an overview of organizational discourse theory and, particularly, critical discourse studies, which form the theoretical focus of our research. Second, I will present a research program, carried out with Canadian colleagues, that has used discourse analysis in a number of empirical settings. Third, I discuss some of the key challenges that complicate the work of researchers, and show how we have attempted to deal with them. Finally, I discuss some of the contributions empirical studies of discourse can make to organization and management theory.

## Organizational Discourse Theory

Discourse, in general terms, refers to the actual practices of talking and writing (Woodilla, 1998). The use of the term within organization and management theory is somewhat more specific. For example, Alvesson & Karreman (2000b) argue that there are two quite different approaches to discourse studies. One concerns the study of the social text, which highlights the "talked" and "textual" nature of everyday interaction in organizations. The idea that discourse is the foundation of the process of social construction upon which social reality depends is nothing new (Berger and Luckmann, 1966). What is less commonly understood is *how* this reality is constructed and sustained (Chia, 2000). Thus a second approach focuses on how social reality is created through historically situated discursive moves (Alvesson & Karreman, 2000b) which, rather than trying to interpret social reality as it exists, endeavours to uncover the way in which social reality is actually produced (Phillips & Ravasi, 1998). It is this interest in the constructive nature of discourse that has become particularly important in organization and management theory. Organizational researchers have studied a broad range of different organizational topics from discursive perspectives, and using a discourse analytic methodology.

Accordingly, we define a *discourse* as a system of texts that brings objects into being (Parker, 1992). Discourse does not simply mirror "reality", but brings into being "situations, objects of knowledge, and the social identities of and relations between people and groups of people" (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997: 258). By extension, *discourse analysis* is the structured investigation of these systems of texts and the concepts, objects, and subjects that they constitute (Fairclough, 1992). Discourse analysis explains how discourses are made meaningful (Alvesson, 1998) through discursive *activities* (also referred to as practices or events), such as the production, distribution and consumption of texts (Fairclough, 1995; Woodilla, 1998).

This approach to organizational discourse argues that research does not assume a pre-existing social object called an organization. Rather it argues that discourse acts at a far more constitutive level to form social objects – such as organizations – by fixing their identity so that it becomes possible to talk about them *as if they were* naturally-existing social entities. In other words, the "apparent solidity of social phenomena such as 'the organization' derives from the stabilizing *effects* of generic discursive processes rather than from the presence of independently existing concrete entities" (Chia, 2000: 514; Phillips & Ravasi, 1998).

> So discourse is firstly and fundamentally the organizing of social reality. >From this perspective, the idea of a discourse *about* organizations is an oxymoron. Discourse itself, is a form or organization and, therefore, organizational analysis is intrinsically discourse analysis (Chia, 2000: 517).

We can, then, only begin to fully appreciate the fundamental character of organization by firstly examining the workings of language itself.

Discourses are "concrete" in that they have a historical and social "reality" and help to produce a material reality in the practices they invoke. They are embodied in a variety of texts, but exist beyond the individual texts that compose them (Chalaby, 1996). *Texts* can be considered to be a discursive “unit” and a material manifestation of a discourse (Chalaby, 1996). Fairclough (1995) points out that textual analysis is insightful because texts constitute an important form of social action, are a source of evidence for claims about social relations, and a sensitive barometer of ongoing social processes. They are also a means whereby social control is exercised and resisted. Research on organizational discourse thus centres on the texts that compose, and are composed in and by, organizations (Putnam *et al.,* 1996).

> Texts are the sites of the emergence of complexes of social meanings, produced in the particular history of the situation of production, that record in partial ways the histories of both the participants in the production of the text and of the institutions that are ‘invoked’ or brought into play, indeed a partial history of the language and the social system, a partiality due to the structurings of relations of power of the participants. Kress, 1995: 122).

Texts that might studied as a result of discourse analysis might include written or spoken language, cultural artefacts and visual representations (Grant *et al.,* 1998). Methods of social scientific investigation that can be referred to as discourse analysis include a wide variety of methods (Keenoy *et al.,* 1997; van Dijk, 1997a, 1997b). These different approaches make different assumptions regarding the nature of discourse and its relation to organization (Putnam & Fairhurst, 2000). For our purposes, we are interested in approaches that are interested in the constructive effects of texts and which, as a result, are necessarily interpretative (Phillips & Ravasi, 1998).

We are also interested in approaches that locate discourses historically and socially, and which acknowledge that discursive activity does not occur in a vacuum and discourses do not “possess” meaning. Instead, their meanings are created, supported and contested through the production, dissemination and consumption of texts. Discourses are shared and social, emanating out of interactions between the social groups and the complex societal structures in which the discourse is embedded. Thus to understand discourses and their effects, we must also understand the *context* in which they arise (Sherzer, 1987; Van Dijk, 1997a).

Discourse is not produced without context and cannot be understood without

> taking context into consideration …. Discourses are always connected to other discourses which were produced earlier, as well as those which are produced synchronically and subsequently (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997: 277).

By studying the larger context and showing how it shapes and is shaped by discursive activity, the study of discourse becomes "three dimensional" (Keenoy *et al.*, 1997), as the discourse is located historically (Fairclough, 1995). This interest in text and talk in context (Van Dijk, 1997a) encompasses what is considered to be a particularly influential stream of research in organizational discourse – the study of discourse "as a constitutive part of its local and global, social and cultural contexts" (Fairclough, 1995: 29). This approach to discourse also pays attention to *intertextuality,* since "any text is a link in a chain of texts, reacting to, drawing in and transforming other texts" (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997: 262), and *interdiscursity,* which focuses on how an individual text is constituted from diverse discourses (Fairclough, 1995).

**Critical Discourse Studies**

Our interest can be further delineated with reference to *critical* discourse studies (Potter & Weatherell, 1987; Fairclough, 1992; Parker, 1992; Fairclough & Wodak, 1997) i.e.,

> [the study of] often opaque relationships of causality and determination between (a) discursive practices, events and texts, and (b) wider social and cultural structures, relations and processes; to investigate how such practices, events and texts arise out of and are ideologically shaped by relations of power and struggles over power; and to explore how the opacity of these relationships between discourse and society is itself a factor securing power (Fairclough, 1995: 132-3).

This approach sees organizations "not simply as social collectives where shared meaning is produced, but rather as sites of struggle where different groups compete to shape the social reality of organizations in ways that serve their own interests" (Mumby & Clair, 1997: 182). It argues that discourse makes certain behaviours possible and, in so doing, constitutes reality (Deetz & Mumby, 1990). A constitutive view of discursive thus "involves seeing discourse as actively constituting or constructing society on various dimensions: discourse constitutes the objects of knowledge, social subjects and forms of ‘self’, social relationships, and conceptual frameworks” (Fairclough 1995: 39-40; Fairclough, 1992; Phillips & Hardy, 1997; Hardy & Phillips, 1999). Discourse analysts are thus interested in the conditions that shape what may be said and who can speak within socially organized settings, and in analyzing those conditions and the ways in which reality claims are made (e.g., Miller, 1994).

This is not to say that discourse is the only thing that occupies the researcher – discourse analysts are also interested in how discourse evokes practices that, in turn, shape the lives and experiences of individuals.

> A material conception of discourse, then, focuses on the concrete practices in which people engage in the process of constituting the meaning systems of their everyday world (Deetz & Mumby, 1990: 42).

In other words, discourse theory does not suggest the discursive constitution of society emanates “from a free play of ideas in people’s heads but from a social practice which is firmly rooted in and oriented to real, material social structures” (Fairclough, 1992: 66). Further, by intervening in these processes of discursive production, individual actors hope to achieve “real” political effects.

This approach emphasizes dialogic or *plurivocal* discourses (Grant *et al.*, 1998). It maintains that, while some discourses and meanings may become so privileged and taken for granted that they are reified, there is always a struggle for “closure”. In other words, power relations that appear “fixed” (Clegg, 1987, 1989) are really the result of ongoing discursive struggles whereby meaning is negotiated, established and imposed (Mumby & Stohl, 1991; Van Dijk, 1997a) in ways that create particular objects of knowledge, identities, relationships, etc (Parker, 1992; Fairclough & Wodak, 1997). Such a view sees, for example, identities emerging from discourse, rather than identity as essence (Alvesson & Karreman, 2000a) and it explores how discursive activities construct individual identities and insert them into the organization in particular ways (Deetz & Mumby, 1990). In other words, critical discourse theory does not deny that some discourses may dominate, but it maintains that such dominance is an ongoing struggle among competing discourse, continually reproduced or transformed through every day communicative practices.

In summary, one important approach to organizational discourse theory focuses on the constructive effects of discourse – how discourses bring reality into being by making social relations and material objects meaningful – through the study of texts, and their production, dissemination and consumption. Texts are located within the context of their particular historical and cultural setting, and examined for their political effects, such as the creation of subject positions with the rights (or not) to speak and the invocation of particular practices. It is within the broad parameters of this critical approach to organizational discourse that we have carried out our research studies.

## Our Research Program

We have been engaged in a series of studies of discourse that conform to the approach outlined above (Hardy & Phillips, 1999; Hardy, Lawrence & Phillips, 1998; Hardy, Palmer & Phillips, 2000; Lawrence, Phillips & Hardy, 1999a; Lawrence, Phillips & Hardy, 1999b; Maguire, Phillips & Hardy, forthcoming; Phillips & Hardy, 1997; Phillips, Lawrence & Hardy, 2000; Hardy, Phillips & Clegg, forthcoming). Much of this work has involved empirical work in a variety of different settings: refugee systems in Canada, Denmark and the UK, an nongovernment organization (NGO) operating in the West Bank and Gaza, employment service organizations in Western Canada, the whale-watching industry in British Columbia, and the Canadian HIV/AIDS treatment domain. (See Table 1).

*— Table 1 near here —*

This work originally commenced in 1994, as part of a research program involving a critical study of interorganizational collaboration. At that time, we were interested in the role that power played in creating and shaping collaborations and in how the effects of collaboration, often presented in the organizational and management literature as a "good" thing, often had intensely political effects. We drew on a variety of theoretical frameworks, including institutional theory, organizational trust, and interorganizational domain theory, to explore these processes (e.g., Hardy, 1994; Hardy *et al.*, 1998; Hardy & Phillips, 1998; Lawrence & Hardy, 1999). This work helped to explain the social and political nature of these interorganizational relationships (i.e., how they existed), but it did not help us understand how they came into being or to identify the processes of social construction that held them in place (i.e., how they came to exist). So, as we started to consider these latter questions, we started to become interested in a more explicitly discursive approach in a number of different ways.

First, it became clear that issues of identity were central. It first became evident in our work on refugees – while the "official" story suggested that individuals were determined to be refugees as a result of quasi-legal process, it was all too clear that refugees existed only insofar as they were "named" and inserted into organizationally contrived categorizations. In our work on whale watching, we found that the identity of a whale – as "Free Willy" rather than "Moby Dick" – was central to the creation of a whale watching industry. Our study of the Canadian HIV/AIDS treatment domain suggested that the ability to influence events and relationships was shaped by identity – those who were volunteers in PWA (People with AIDS) organizations and who were HIV+ wielded more influence than those who were healthy, paid employees of AIDS service organizations. In other words, the data that we had collected as part of this earlier work revealed the fragmented, fluid, ambiguous nature of identity and drew our attention to the discursive way in which identities were constructed. Consequently, by 1996, we were engaging in a number of studies involving organizational discourse theory to understand issues related to identity.

Second, as our work developed, we also became interested in how discursive activities helped construct, not just individual identities, but also organizations, collaborations, interorganizational domains and institutional fields. The influence of postmodernist thought on the field of organization and management theory has long emphasized the dangers of reifying phenomena like "organizations" and argued that we need to treat them as fluid, unfinished, fragile relationships that are made meaningful and "real" only though discourse. Accordingly, we relied on discourse analysis to explore the way in which the "organizations", "collaborations", interorganizational "domains" and institutional "fields" which we were studying were, in fact, created and recreated through discursive activities.

Third, the critical perspective that had initiated the original research program continued to influence our work and we were particularly interested in the strategic and political effects of discourse. Accordingly, we tended to focus on the ways in which actors engaged in discursive activities in attempts to produce certain outcomes and in the way that other actors attempted to resist these activities. In addition, we wanted to explore the scope and limits of discursive activities.

In summary, our research that had commenced as a critical study of collaboration gradually evolved into a study using organizational discourse theory that focused on the discursive construction of identity, the way in which phenomena such as organizations and collaborations were discursively constituted, and the role of deliberate discursive activity.

## Challenges in Conducting Empirical Research

In drawing on discourse analysis to conduct these empirical studies, we became aware of a number of particular challenges. In this section, I identify some of these issues and show we tried to deal with them.

## Data and Theory

There are a number of complications and contradictions associated with data collection, data analysis and the role of theory is discourse studies. First, discourse studies are typically labour-intensive and fraught with sampling problems (Putnam & Fairhurst, 2000). Organizations produce an inordinately large number of different types of texts, which makes it difficult to choose *which* texts to analyze (and also to justify that choice to reviewers). Even when particular texts are selected, the task of analyzing them still remains. When both context and text are studied, the challenge is even greater since different methods may be needed to explore the context compared to the text. For example, writers discourse analysis should be complemented with other forms of analysis, such as ethnographies (Miller, 1994; Fairclough, 1995) or interviews to complement textual analyses. In addition, when studying societal level discourses, there are difficulties in finding data that "capture" these "grand" discourses – as Parker (1992) points out, we do not find discourses in their entirety, but only clues to them in particular texts.

> The problem in organization analysis is, methodologically speaking, usually to move beyond the specific empirical material, typically linguistic in its character (interview accounts, questionnaire responses, observed talk in "natural settings" and written documents), and address discourses with a capital D – the stuff beyond the text functioning as a powerful ordering force (Alvesson & Karreman, 2000b: 1127)

Even when such data can be accessed, establishing the nature of large-scale political consequences of discourses is problematic, let alone making "valid" claims that link these consequences to particular discourses (Burman & Parker, 1993).

Second, as far as data analysis is concerned, a number of writers have bemoaned the lack of "rigour" and systematic analysis in discourse studies. They argue that discourse analysis tends to be too subjective. At the same time, others argue that too much systematization in data analysis is likely to induce reification (Burman & Parker, 1993). Discourse analysis is designed to identify (some of) the multiple meanings assigned to texts, which means that more systematic, labour-saving forms of analysis (such as traditional context analysis) are counterproductive.

Third, researchers face the choice of whether to conduct more theoretically informed work or to let the data drive the research. Some writers challenge the very idea that we should connect studies of discourse to broader theoretical frameworks and should instead allow the data to "speak for itself"; while others argue that studies in which theory "floats disconnected from any political position" raise problems of relativism (Burman & Parker, 1993: 167). Parker (2000: 519) argues that research that is undertaken simply to "understand" a phenomenon, and which is not informed by theory, makes it difficult to consider ways in which it might be changed. He argues that this tendency has led to a neglect of values and that, instead of "worrying endlessly about how the world is knowable" we need to debate the "parts of it we do, or don't, like." However, as Burman & Parker (1993) point out, such a position is likely to face charges of academic and moral imperialism.

***Our experiences***

There are, then, a number of complications related to data and theory in discourse studies. While there is a need for the empirical study of discursive phenomena, the design of research projects, the analysis of data, and the link between data and theory all pose a series of contradictory pressures for the researcher. In dealing with these issues, we have tried to collect multiple forms of data and to link data and theory.

We have conducted interviews in all our studies – both in order to understand context but also as data on discursive activity. In many respects, this part of our research constitutes a traditional qualitative methodology. For example, in the refugee study we selected the research sites – the three countries – on the basis of theoretical replication i.e., the expectation of contrary results that can be explained with reference to theory's predictions (Yin, 1984). These three countries have very different approaches to refugee determination and settlement and thus represented very different contexts in which theoretical issues are relatively transparent (Eisenhardt, 1989). We then conducted 86 interviews between 1990 and 1995. Interviewees were identified by contacting the key organizations in each country, for example, the refugee council, the government department responsible for determination, refugee activist organizations. In addition, informal networks and contacts helped to identify other interviewees.

We also explore naturally occurring text. For example, we are in the process of analyzing a significant amount of organizationally produced texts, including reports plans, newsletters, brochures, memos, etc (Table 2) in our study of the NGO in the West Bank and Gaza. In another study, we examined 127 cartoons on refugees and immigration. We felt cartoons would provide a useful source of data for a number of reasons. First, cartoons have used to explore a variety of concepts and objects, including the economy (Emmison, 1986), bi-lingualism in Quebec (Morris, 1991), political regimes (Press, 1981), and organizations (Collinson, 1988; Hatch, 1997; Rodrigues and Collinson, 1995). Second, cartoons are publicly available and relatively easy to gather. Third, political cartoons encompass different perspectives – from democratic checks on the abuse of executive power (Press, 1981) from jesters of the bourgeoisie (Morris, 1989). Similarly, humour has been seen both as a conservative (Mulkay, 1988) and a liberating (Douglas, 1975) force in society; as well as a means of domination (see Rodrigues and Collinson, 1995) and a form of resistance (Roy, 1958) in organizational settings. As a result, cartoons often bring opposing discourses together and speak from multiple subject positions. Finally, cartoons are relatively self-contained texts that portray concise representations of alternative discursive positions. They set up a mini-narrative which highlights certain regularities and features of the object of the caricature and suppresses others in order to juxtapose order and disorder, or sense and nonsense. In so doing, they provide a discursive space "outside" the discourse in question, whose assumptions the cartoonist seeks to expose, and which can be discerned by examination of the drawings (Morris, 1989, 1991).

*— Table 2 near here —*

Selecting texts is always problematic and usually driven by pragmatic as much as theoretical reasons. In the case of the cartoons, we chose to study cartoons between 1987-1989 because two important pieces of legislation concerning refugee determination were passing through Parliament during this period. As a result, we expected to find a relatively large number of editorial cartoons that would reflect not only on refugees, but also immigrants generally, the immigration system, the government and the public. In the case of the NGO, we were able to access a considerable amount of material through our relationship with the Delegate (and because it was a small organization and at a stage when one individual generated nearly all the communication and did so on a computer).

Having collected all this data, the remains the somewhat daunting problem of what to with it – how analyze it – which is just as labour intensive as everyone says it is. More importantly, because we are interpreting meanings, there is no shortcut way of applying some systematized content analysis. Consequently, our approach to analysis strongly resembles the idea of "craft" advanced by Richard Daft (1983; see Phillips & Ravasi, 1998). In our case, because we work in different parts of the world, it often means sitting down in hotel rooms and working through the texts to find out what they mean. For example, in the cartoons study, coding was an iterative process as we ascertained which objects were constructed in each cartoon. We found that each cartoon represented one or more of four objects: the refugee, the government, the immigration system and the public. In a second step, we examined how each cartoon constituted these objects. We found that the objects were constituted according to one or more of 18 themes, which are listed in Table 3. While the identification of the four objects had been relatively straightforward, identifying the themes took more time and more iterations. We first collectively took a sample of cartoons to discuss the particular themes that each involved. We then established broad parameters concerning each these themes and an understanding of how we might identify additional themes. We then individually coded all the cartoons, listing the themes we considered to be associated with each. We then compared our listing of themes, and revisited each cartoon, talking through any themes where we disagreed. Through this process, we refined the list of themes and, by the end of the process i.e. several days later, had agreed upon the 18 themes in Table 3.

*— Table 3 near here —*

In the study of the NGO in the West Bank and Gaza, we had already constructed a chronological narrative of the case study (e.g., Eisenhardt & Bourgeois, 1988; Dougherty & Hardy, 1996) that raised an interesting discursive event. Specifically, we had become interested in the strategy of localization being implemented by the NGO's manager. Localization is a process whereby regionally based operations, administered and funded by an international NGO, are transformed into a local NGO. The localized organization typically has a steering committee comprised of representatives from the local community and is ultimately responsible for securing its own funding from a variety of sources on a sustainable basis, although the original donor usually undertakes to continue to provide funding during a transition period.

In this case, the Palestinian organization was part of a larger international NGO and was run by the Delegate – an expatriate employed by the international NGO. He had, however, had undertaken a number of steps to start the process of localization with the aim of eventually handing the organization over to a steering committee consisting of members of the local community. In September 1996, he called together a number of individuals whom he felt might become members of the prospective steering committee, although decision making remained under the control of the international NGO. The following month, the

Delegate announced the layoff of 15 employees. Although lacking any formal authority, the members of the steering committee met, in the absence of the Delegate, to discuss the matter. They felt that that the employees should be reinstated and issued a statement to that effect. The matter then escalated when disaffected employees went to the security forces and made allegations against Mère et Enfant and some of its Palestinian staff members. The security forces then exerted considerable pressure on two Palestinian managers, calling them in for interrogation and threatening imprisonment and torture unless they reinstated the employees.

By this stage, it was clear that the organization had "become" a local NGO even though it remained under the formal control of the Delegate and part of the international NGO. As a local NGO, its members were left without the political protection afforded by the status of an international agency, and were immediately subjected to all the norms and controls of the local environment. In order to protect his employees from further harassment, the Delegate engaged in a number of activities designed to re-establish the status of the organization as an international agency with political connections and financial clout. He sent out a series of memos and letters in October and early November to a range of individuals and organizations, including heads of other NGOs, members of the Palestinian National Authority, and members of the security forces. He stated the following: "with immediate effect, the process of localizing its projects in Palestine – that is of handing over the projects of [Mère et Enfant] to new owners and managers is suspended." He also let it be known that "line management responsibility for the projects of [Mère et Enfant] in Palestine will be assumed in totality by the Delegate and through him to [the government of the European country where Mère et Enfant is headquartered and funded]." He disbanded the steering committee and met with the head of the security forces, as well as members of the Palestinian National Authority to consolidate the organization's status as an international NGO.

In taking these actions, the Delegate consistently emphasized the role of European headquarters in the management of the organization. For example, he maintained that the reason why workers were asked to leave the organization was the result of “changes in our working methods [which resulted from] an evaluation of our work by the [European] government and [our headquarters], our two funders.” By the end of November, the Delegate had received reassurances from members of the Palestinian National Authority that employees were safe from further intervention by the security forces and the organization once again “became” an international NGO (Hardy *et al.*, 2000).

It was by then clear that we had a promising research site for a more intensive discursive analysis. The moment of crisis in the form of intervention by the security forces represented a discursive “event’ that we could use to focus our analysis and which would, most likely, render discursive processes more visible. Consequently, in our second stage of the analysis, we commenced a more intensive discourse analysis of all the written texts. First, we first put all the documents in chronological order, noting the date and the genre (Yates & Orlikowski, 1992; Orlikowski & Yates, 1994) of each – whether a report (R), letter (L), fax (F), memo (M), handwritten notes (N), newsletter (NL), brochure (B) or technical report (T). We then discarded the technical reports to produce the list of materials in Table 2. We noted that the period around the failed localization and the intervention of the security forces (October-November 1996) consisted primarily of faxes and letters, rather longer documents, which characterized the period before and after these events, or the newsletters and brochures, which appeared regularly throughout the entire period.

Second, to identify patterns within categories, we decided to begin by coding the letters and faxes sent out by the Delegate in response to the intervention of the security forces in his attempt to re-frame and restore the organization to its original state. We did so because they related to the crisis period in question, were of a distinctive genre and, being shorter, promised a somewhat more feasible coding process. We searched for evidence of discursive activities, such as the introduction of concepts from other discourses, innovation in the form of the creation of new concepts, new uses of existing concepts, and the invocation of legitimate symbols in support of new concepts. Specifically, having noted the target audience of the particular text, we began to code the text line by line, with the idea of incorporating a focus on both text and context. Consequently, we started off by classifying the specific speech act reference, for example, whether the text was trying to justify, empathize, correct, explain, threaten, etc. We also tried to match this more micro analysis with broader, discursive references. Accordingly, we noted, line-by-line, the concurrent references to such broad discourses as managerialism, industrial relations, progress, etc. As we engaged in this coding process, we realized that the texts drew upon to an intermediate category of object, namely the local relations or objects such as the Delegate, the local organization, the national organization, employees, particular work teams, etc. Thus we began to incorporate this third level of coding, as well as developing additional codes within each category. Having developed these codes (Table 4), we continue to refine the codes in order to produce a list of different characteristics that represent the texts.

*— Table 4 near here —*

Finally, as far as theory is concerned, if hypothesis testing is at one end of the continuum and grounded theory is at the other, our approach would be somewhere in the middle. We typically enter the field with a framework which points us in the direction of finding the interested use of power by actors that shows up in discursive activity. Within these broad parameters, we have tried to use our data and findings to yield insights into different theories. So, for example, our papers have used theories on trust, institutional theory, institutional entrepreneurship, and structuration. The reason for this is that the use of discourse analysis has generated ideas that have helped us gain greater insight into other bodies of theory. So, for example, a lot of our work seems to lend itself to ideas of agency, which is an important issue in institutional theory. The fact that we are interested in discursive construction also fits with the social construction of institutional fields which is key component of institutional theory. In carrying out the study on the Canadian HIV/AIDS treatment domain, who trusted who (and who didn't trust who) was very clear in our data and so we pursued these themes in a paper explicitly on trust.

To conclude, conducting our research has been fraught with complications. Data collection and analysis has been highly labour intensive. We have conducted lots of interviews and collect lots of texts in order to try and understand complex discursive processes. Data analysis has also been a time consuming task, involving two or three researchers for days at a time in trying to ascertain and refine codes. It has also been a very "slippery" process – rather than apply a "rigorous" set of codes to the data, our search for meanings has been a highly subjective and iterative process as we have worked out the categories through our engagement with the data.. The "pay-off", however, has been some fascinating research which has incorporated a variety of different theories.

**Text and Context**

Another complication facing empirical researchers concerns whether to study text or content. Those researchers who focus on text risk the criticism that they have failed to adequately historicize their data (van Dijk, 1997a) but, on the other hand, the holism of critical discourse theory is difficult to work with since it can appear to be an analysis of everything (Thomas, 1999). Similarly, there are contradictory views about far can a researcher go "beyond" the particular text. Some writers argue that too much focus on the micro details of conversations neglects the performative aspects of language; but in arriving at an interpretation of context, researchers are often accused of putting words – or meaning – into the mouths of others (Burman & Parker, 1993).

Some writers have called for the "three-dimensional" analyses – the study of text in context (e.g., Fairclough, 1995; van Dijk, 1997a). However, most studies find it difficult to combine both and, instead, focus more closely on *either* the social context or a particular piece of text (Keenoy *et al.,* 1997; Phillips & Ravasi, 1998). One reason is undoubtedly the demands of collecting and analyzing data on both as mentioned above (van Dijk, 1997a). There are, however, other complications associated with this tension between text and context. Alvesson & Karreman (2000b) identify four different types of discourse study. *Micro-discourse* studies make a detailed study of language in a specific micro-context. *Meso-discourse* studies are relatively sensitive to language use in context, but are interested in finding broader patterns that might be generalized to other contexts. *Grand discourse* studies are interested in an assembly of discourses that are ordered and presented as an integrated frame, such as culture. *Mega discourse* studies typically addresses more or less standardized ways of referring to certain phenomena such as business reengineering, diversity or globalization. These authors argue that there is a tension between these levels. Localized studies treat discourse as an emergent and locally constructed phenomenon, while the macro studies tend to start from well-established *a priori* understandings of the phenomenon in question. It is not easy to accurately account for both in the same study.

Those researchers who do try to include context in empirical studies and to link it to more localized discursive activity are often accused of reifying context when "contexts, just like discourse, are not objective in the sense that they consist of social facts that are understood and considered relevant in the same way by all participants. They are interpreted or constructed and strategically and continually *made* relevant by and for participants" Van Dijk (1997b: 16). Consequently, responses to the demands for "thicker" descriptions of context can lead to accusations of reification and premature "closure" (Alvesson & Karreman, 2000a), particularly as researchers struggle to present an interpretation of the context – in addition to the analysis of the text – within the confines of an individual journal article, which inevitably privileges the researchers' interpretation.

In summary, organizational discourse researchers are exhorted to explore the linkages between talk, text and context, and to locate textual analyses in a broader setting. To try to accommodate text and context within a particular study is, however, relatively difficult to achieve  for a variety of reasons.

***Our experiences***

Like many other researchers, we have also struggled with the tension between context and text. In many respects, our aim has been to include both – to contextualize discursive activity by linking text and context. Because our work started with a study of collaboration in interorganizational domains, we had acquired a rich knowledge of the contexts – refugee systems, the Canadian HIV/AIDS treatment domain, the NGO sector in the West Bank and Gaza, the whale-watching industry in British Columbia – as a result of this earlier work. It was inevitable that we would draw on these understandings enhance our subsequent research on the discursive struggles within these contexts.

For example, in the case of our work on refugee systems, we had commenced our study by conducting three case studies of each of the three country-based systems, based on qualitative methods, that we could use for comparative purposes. Our earlier findings helped us to understand the context in the three countries and to use the similarities and differences between them as a way to further our research.  Specifically, it indicated that three broad groups were involved in all three countries – government departments, nongovernment organizations (NGOs) and refugee organizations (organizations run for and by refugees, usually related to a particular ethnic group). We therefore conducted further interviews with members of these organizations and collected various texts, such as government statistics, annual reports, minutes from annual meetings, newspaper articles reports, Hansard reports, etc. These data, using a traditional qualitative methodology, produced a variety of papers: on the nature of the three systems (Hardy, 1994); political strategies of organizations in the UK refugee system (Hardy & Phillips, 1998); and a comparison of the refugee council in each of the three countries (Lawrence & Hardy, 1999).

Having gained an understanding of the context through traditional qualitative research – the nature of the three systems – we then became interested in the discursive activities that helped to *construct* it. At this point, our attention turned more specifically to discourse analysis. We first wanted to explore how different organizations influenced refugee identities by engaging in discursive activities and how this helped to construct a particular type of refugee system – one in which government determination processes were an "obligatory passage point" (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985) and where NGOs "spoke" for refugees. We decided to focus on the UK refugee system, where there was visible evidence of a struggle between the government, NGO and refugee organizations around these issues and we selected four organizations that had very different agendas pertaining to refugee issues. We conducted a more intensive analysis to identify the discursive activities of these organizations, and relating them to different refugee identities and to organizational interests. Our analysis showed that the main actors, or subject positions, in the refugee system have a stake in the struggle and acted discursively to support it. For example, the government, which is in the "business" of determination, juxtaposes deserving refugees against "economic migrants", which have to be unmasked by the determination system; the white-led NGOs that speak and advocate on behalf of refugees are in the "business" of service provision, which is enhanced by refugees as needy "clients" to whom professionals can dispense services; refugee organizations are in the "business" of self-help, which is enhanced by constructing refugees as fully functioning and equal "members" of society (Phillips and Hardy, 1997).

At this point, we wanted to return to the effects of broader societal discourses on these strategies. We also wanted to "unpack" some of the context that we had perhaps reified or, at least, presented in a very matter of fact, taken for granted way in the earlier paper. For this project, we chose to focus on the Canadian refugee system and to use naturally occurring text – the cartoons on refugees and immigration – as an indicator of immigration discourse, we were able to venture how broader societal discourses constrain and facilitate the discursive activities of the individual actors. For example, the analysis revealed that societal immigration discourses can be used by the government to justify its investment and role in the determination system since the cartoons showed that that the refugees were primarily portrayed as frauds and, in many cases, even where legitimate refugees appear in cartoons, they are juxtaposed against illegitimate ones. In addition, the determination system was often portrayed in the cartoons as inadequate to safeguard a public that is primarily in need of protection. In other words, within the broader immigration discourse are constructions of not only refugees, but also an immigration system and a public, which support and reinforce government control over immigration. Second, we found that NGOs also have recourse to discursive resources to challenge the government i.e., the portrayal of the government as cruel, corrupt and incompetent; and a system that is inconsistent and often too tough. If the immigration system and the government cannot be relied upon to protect refugees, then the need for NGOs becomes clear. Third, when we look at the cartoons, there is *nothing* that represents the refugee as autonomous, empowered, independent human being, meaning that refugee organizations have difficulty in using broader immigration discourses to support their interests (Hardy & Phillips, 1999).

To conclude, we have tried to include text and context in our studies. We found that the earlier research and the study of organizations' discursive strategies, based on qualitative, comparative case studies, helped to provide an understanding and analysis of the context of refugee systems, while our study of the cartoons uses particular texts in a more focused way. It is worth noting that we could not have made sense of those texts without the considerable amount of "traditional" research that preceded it. In the case of the cartoon study, it would have been impossible to analyze the cartoons without the extensive "background" data collection and analysis or to present a paper that was comprehensible to readers. We would also claim that such "data" are more than simply background information since we have used the earlier interviews to draw conclusions about the discursive strategies of actors in the refugee system.

In this regard, we subscribe to what Alvesson & Karreman (2000a) call *discursive pragmatism*: where researchers, while needing to be modest in claiming empirical grounding for "reality" are interested in discursively produced outcomes in ways that allow interpretations beyond the text itself. It is also necessary because of the imperative, within critical discourse analysis at least, to understand the political effects of discourse (Fairclough, 1992, 1995). Ignoring the temporal and historical setting tends to overemphasize "the static features of discursive relations. This is an effect which, paradoxically, threatens to reinstate discourses as being as universal, fixed and timeless" (Burman & Parker, 1993: 164).

**Structure and Agency**

Another contradiction concerns structure and agency. Reed (1998) argues that a common approach  to discourse in organization and management theory is informed by Foucault's work, which has promoted an agent-less conception of discourse that rejects the idea that discourses, and the practices and structures they constitute, are "the direct expression of strategies of control and domination pursued by identifiable individuals, social groups, classes and movements within a wider historical and institutional context" (Reed, 1998: 197). Consequently, the bulk of organizational discourse theory is unable to differentiate between "open doors" and "brick walls." It downplays the scope and limits of individual resistance Reed (1998: 209), since a "unitary" analysis that goes with such collective action goes against the discourse grain (Burman & Parker, 1993). Consequently, power is often seen as inescapable, and resistance as pointless Yet, at the same time, the fluidity of discourse suggest that, because closure is never fully achieved, discourses are *always* subject to resistance (Fairclough, 1995).

> Any discourse is constituted as an attempt to dominate the field of discursivity, to arrest the flow of differences, to construct a centre. We will call the privileged discursive points of this partial fixation, nodal points … which partially fix meaning and the partial character of this fixation proceeds from the openness of the social, a result, in its turn; of the constant overflowing of every discourse by the infinitude of the field of discursivity (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985: 111-113).

Reed (2000) argues that in order to incorporate the tensions between structure and agency, we must reject the prevailing Foucauldian view of discourse, with its radical ontological constructivism, wherein reality is "talked" into existence, and which asserts that there is nothing outside discourse apart from than more discourse. He argues instead for a critical realist approach that acknowledges that discursive activity occurs within a pre-existing structure of material, social and discursive relations. Tsoukas (2000) counters with the argument that the dichotomy between realism and constructivism is misleading and that research should accommodate both.

> Realists are right in saying that there is a social world outside our heads. Constructivists are right in claiming that the social world is constituted by language-based distinctions which are socially defined and established. Both sides can be reconciled if it is accepted that social reality is causally independent of actors (hence realists have a point) and, at the same time, what social reality is depends on how it has been historically defined, the cultural meanings and distinctions which have made it this reality is opposed to that (hence constructivists also have a point) (Tsoukas, 2000: 531).

In summary, another contradiction for researchers to address in studies of organizational discourse it in exploring how material and social constructions are both constrained and facilitated through discursive activity, and in incorporating recursive relations between structure and agency – between the “discourse driven subject” and “the discourse-teflonic subject” (Alvesson, 1998).

> The explicit or implicit identification of intentional agents manipulating discourses or engaging in discursive strategies (because there is an inadequately theorized notion of resistance and discursive position) smacks of a voluntarism that tends also towards cognitivism. On the other hand, the conception of discourses as if they were “tectonic plates” whose clashes constitute subjectivity can present so distributed a notion of power that there is no room for agency, thus also lapsing into mechanistic explanation (Burman & Parker, 1993: 163).

Incorporating agency into discourse analysis is problematic under any circumstances because of because of the difficulties in theorizing the complex recursive nature between structure and agency (Burman & Parker, 1993). Studying it in empirical settings is even complicated.

***Our experiences***

While aware of the debate between structure and agency in discourse theory in particular, not to mention in organization and management theory more generally, our interest has been in those approaches within discourse theory that admit some form of agency. Our original interest in critical studies of collaboration and our use of critical discourse theory has led to a view of the constructive effects of discourse as political (Potter & Wetherell, 1987; Fairclough, 1995). We see organizations as “sites of struggle where different groups compete to shape the social reality of organizations in ways that serve their own interests” (Mumby & Clair, 1997: 182). Discursive activity is thus a form of political activity that tries to change understandings of a social situation which, in turn, shape particular experiences and invoke certain practices. It is effective when an actor is able frame to discursive practices within a system of meanings commensurate with their interests (Deetz & Mumby, 1990; Mumby & Stohl, 1991).

> [T]the inherently relational notion of field, *qua* space of struggles, reintroduces the dynamic of the agent into textual analysis. Discourse analysts should never lose sight of this dynamic. Indeed, texts are weapons that agents in struggle use in their discursive strategies. It is the particularity of these strategies, continuously creating and recreating *intertextual, discursive*

> *phenomena* … that constitutes the specificity of a class of texts (Chalaby, 1996: 694).

At the same time, we are aware of the interplay between structure *and* agency and would encourage researchers to address this complex issue. In many respects, this is the most difficult aspect of our research for a variety of reasons. First, the theoretical debate between structure and agency is itself deeply embedded in the field of organization and management theory. It is longstanding and affects every aspect of our work. It is not a matter that is easily resolved if, indeed, it is resolvable at all. Second, the structure agency debate involves complex theorizing about complex relationships, which become even more complex when trying to design empirical studies to address these issues. In spite of, or perhaps, because of the complexity of this debate, we believe that it is imperative that researchers continue to address issues of agency and structure in their empirical work.

**Reflexivity and Pragmatism**

A final complication relates to the call for "reflexive" research, also a concern of many postmodernist writers generally (see Clegg & Hardy, 1999). With crises in legitimation and representation (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994), writers worry about the dilemma of imposing meaning on language when both meaning and language are the object of study and when a commitment to multiple meanings prevails (Wallemacq & Sims, 1998).

> What would the polyphonic text look like? A text where multiple meanings permeate the story? Here, I am the one who is authoritarian in synthesizing the multiple voices into this monology you are reading. It seems as if we cannot avoid what Geertz (1988) refers to as 'the burden of authorship'. So with the authority of being the author, most of the time it is my own voice which is doing the telling in this text. And when other voices are heard in the text, I of course have used my power to choose quotes, to edit the text, and so on. Even though my construction of this story partly aims at creating a sense of the multiplicity of meanings in organizations, at the same time I am inevitably creating a sense of order (Salzer-Mõrling, 1998: 115).

The search for a deeper understanding of discourse as organization is further complicated by the fact we can only use language to express our understanding of the organizational character of language itself (Alvesson & Karreman, 2000a,b; Chia, 2000).

There is then a need, for research that is attentive to the power relations between researcher and researched, and which remembers the fact that analysts are not only readers, but also producers of discourse (Burman & Parker, 1993). In this way, Chia (2000) argues that the study of discourse *as* organisation should be elliptical.

***Our experiences***

We are well aware of the importance of reflexivity in studying organizational discourse in particular, as well as in organization and management theory more generally and try to take opportunities to reflect back on our work by writing specific reflective pieces and revisiting our methodologies (e.g., Hardy et al., forthcoming). We also have a particular perspective on reflexivity and have sought to broaden the focus on the researcher, which is emphasized in much of this literature on reflexivity, to include the broader research community. Aware that our research is discursively constructed through our own participation in it, *and* by the larger academic community of which we are a part, we have resisted calls for confessional monologues where researchers present their experience and declare their personality for interpretation by the reader (Parker, 1992; Jeffcutt, 1994; Linstead, 1992).

The reason we do so is that this approach to reflexivity tends to draw attention away from the research subject towards the researcher as subject (Hardy & Clegg, 1997; Hardy *et al.,* forthcoming).

> We agree with those who wish to focus on signification, language as productive when it has no "referents" outside, but it is also important to hold onto some notion of representation… [otherwise] the emphasis can shift the focus to the account rather than what is being accounted for. Second, wallowing in the researcher's interpretive assumptions and processes can detract from the importance of the topic and possible political interventions.

> Third, agonizing about subjectivity and power can lead worried researchers to abandon the project of making interpretations that go beyond reflexive concerns because of anxieties about exploitation or the paternalist relations set up in research (Burman & Parker, 1993: 168).

This danger of neglecting the research community means that the researcher is seen as a form of hero (Jeffcutt, 1994) — a free agent, largely disconnected from the professional networks of individuals and institutions in which they are embedded. Yet, as Jeffcutt (1994) also acknowledges, the research "quest" is shaped by the need to submit doctoral theses, publish articles, appear at conferences, etc. (Hardy & Clegg, 1997).

So, while we do, at times, attempt to be reflexive, we might also be described as pragmatists. We try to write interesting papers that examine individuals' experiences and link them to theoretical ideas. In so doing, we inevitably risk falling into the trap that Alvesson & Karreman (2000a) warn us about: that, even when researchers philosophically question the assumption that language is simply the medium for conveying meaning that represents reality, they still write up their research as if it does. We would argue that this is largely unavoidable. We would also warn against privileging and idealizing reflexivity – as with anything in this postmodern world, it constructs a particular reality in which some voices are made louder and others are silenced.

## Conclusions

In this final section, I will outline some of (what we believe to be) the contributions of our work and some of the lessons we have learned in carrying out this research program.

First, we have learned a lot about the value of empirical research and the contribution it can make to the field of organizational discourse. Our work has emphasized the use of different research sites to explore how discursive activities construct our social world. In the first instance, then, we believe we have provided a variety of interesting empirical examples and have used discourse analysis as an alternative way of examining them. This focus has not precluded the use of other theoretical frameworks, nor has it prevented us from engaging in analyses that have nothing to with discourse. In fact, it is the use of these different frameworks that has helped us gain a more varied and richer (although not necessarily more "accurate") understanding of these research sites.

Second, we have tried to explore dialogic or plurivocal discourses (Grant *et al.*, 1998) and the struggle between actors as they attempt to create objects of knowledge, identities, relationships, etc (e.g., Mumby & Stohl, 1991; Fairclough & Wodak, 1997). We have been lucky enough to find research sites where such struggles are particularly visible which, we believe, offers the greatest potential to see discursive processes at work. In this regard, we often frame our studies around a "moment of crisis" which lends itself to exploring how texts might otherwise be constructed to "make visible aspects of practice that might be normally be neglected or normalized" (Woodilla, 1998: 41).

Third, we have attempted to show some of the ways in which the constructive effects of discourse are strategic, and how power is continually reproduced through day-to-day communicative practices and exercized in the struggle over meaning (Deetz & Mumby, 1990). In this way, we have shown how actors engage in discursive activities with the aim of producing various types of effects. We are starting to work on the idea of interdiscursivity – drawing on a variety of different discourses and bringing in "new" concepts from other discourses as a way of creating a space for discursive action.

Fourth, at the same time, we have tried to show that the discursive strategies of an individual actor do not operate in a vacuum, nor is discursive activity subject to infinite manipulation. Discursive activity is embedded in a rich context of meanings and understandings that emerge from ongoing struggles at all levels in the setting or context. Consequently, we have shown how broader discourses can be appropriated by actors to support their discursive strategies; and how they might also constrain what actors can do at a local level. In this regard, we have tried to steer away from the idea of "levels" of analysis to concentrate on how actors operate in concentric circles of discourse, from the local to the broad or from the micro to the mega in Alvesson & Karreman's (2000b) terms.

Finally, we have learned to tell some interesting stories. By using discourse theory and analysis to contribute to other theories of organization, we have found – together with the many other researchers using discourse analysis and employing discourse theory – ways to introduce new insight into the study of organizational phenomena.

| Table 1: Summary of Research Publications | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Research Site | Object of Research | Data/Method | Findings |
| Phillips & Hardy, 1997 | Refugee system in the UK | Refugee identities | Interviews | Organizations engage in discursive strategies to produce particular refugee identities and in so doing construct not only refugee identities, but also organizational identities. |
| Hardy & Phillips, 1999 | Refugee system in Canada | Refugee (and other) identities | Cartoons | Societal level discourses help to construct identities of different actors and in so doing provide resources for some actors to use in their discursive strategies. |
| Hardy *et al.*, 1998 | Employment services in Canada | Collaboration | Interviews, participant observation | Collaboration is constructed discursively through the construction of emotion, identity and cultural skills. |
| Hardy *et al.*, 2000 | NGO in the West Bank & Gaza | Discursive strategies | Interviews, organizational texts | Discourse becomes a strategic resource when discursive activity are grounded in the particular context in which they are enacted. |
| Hardy *et al.*, forthcoming | Studies of refugee identity | Refugee identity and research subjects | Our own research | Subjects of academic study are related to, but distinct from, the "social" subject produced in the social setting under study. They are produced not just by researchers conducting the research, but also by the broader research community. |
| Lawrence *et al.*, 1999a | Theoretical paper | Collaboration | N/A | Collaboration depends on an ongoing process of discursive negotiation regarding the meaning of the issues addressed by the collaboration, the interests relevant to the collaboration and the actors who will represent these interests. |
| Lawrence *et al.*, 1999b | Whale watching in Canada | Collaboration | Interviews | The discursive resources that constitute the organizational field form the backdrop to collaboration, and play an enabling or a constraining role through the way in which they produce the meaning of issues, interests, and representatives. |
| Phillips *et al.*, 2000 | Theoretical paper | Collaboration, interorganizational domain, institutional field | N/A | Institutional fields provide the rules and resources upon which collaborations are constructed, while collaboration provides a context for the ongoing processes of structuration that sustain the institutional fields of collaborating participants. |
| Maguire *et al.*, forthcoming | Canadian HIV/AIDS treatment domain | Trust and identity | Interviews | Identification-based trust can be achieved through the discursive construction of identities that behave predictably with goodwill within the context of a shared myth. To be constructed as a trusted identity thus also means to be subject to a particular set of normative controls on behaviour. |

| Table 2: Organizational Texts Studied in the NGO in the West Bank & Gaza | | |
|---|---|---|
| May 1993 | R | 1. Core Strategy Statement |
| October 1994 | R | 2. Strategic Plan 1994-8 |
| 1994 | R | 3. Annual Report 1994 |
| 3 April 1995 | M | 4. Memo regarding localization |
| 3 April 1995 | R | 5. Questionnaire results regarding localization |
| 1995 | R | 6. Annual Report |
| January 1996 | Report | 7. Mère et Enfant Policies |
| May 1996 | Report | 8. The Process of Localizing |
| February 1997 | Report | 9. Agreement to Form a Steering Committee…. |
| October 1996 | Report | 10. The Process of Localisation |
| October 1996 | Report | 11. Report on the Nutrition Workshop in Gaza |
| October 9th 1996 | Fax | 12. Fax regarding the strike and dismissals |
| 10th October 1996 | Fax | 13. Communication to dismissed staff |
| 10th October 1996 | Fax | 14. Communication to steering committee members |
| 14th October 1996 | Fax | 15. Communication to steering committee members |
| 17th October 1996 | Fax | 16. Communication to steering committee members |
| 17th October 1996 | Fax | 17. Communication "To Whom it May Concern" |
| November 1996 | Notes | 18. Handwritten notes |
| 5th November 1996 | Letter | 19. Letter to the PC |
| November 8th 1996 | Letter | 20. Letter to MT |
| November 8th 1996 | Letter | 21. Letter to MD |
| November 11th 1996 | Letter | 22. Letter to FA |
| November 12th 1996 | Letter | 23. Letter to FA |
| November 12th 1996 | Notes | 24. Handwritten notes re FA |
| 18th November 1996 | Fax | 25. Fax to CH |
| 25th November 1996 | Fax | 26. Letter to HA |
| January 1997 | Report | 27. Two day workshop in Gaza: A Review of 1996 |
| 1997 | Report | 28. Job Description for Incoming Delegate |
| April 1995-Spring 1997 | News-letters | 29. Newsletters: complete set from 1.1 (April 1995 until 3.1 (Spring 1997 |
| | Brochures | 30. Copy of all the brochures available in 1997 |

| Table 3: Definitions of Themes Analyzed in Cartoons | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Actor represented in cartoon** | **Theme** | **Definition** | **#** |
| **Refugee** | Fraud | Those presenting themselves as refugees are in no danger | 22 |
| | Both victim and fraud | Those presenting themselves as refugees may be either of the above | 13 |
| | Victim | Those presenting themselves as refugees are at risk from persecution and warrant protection | 11 |
| | Privileged | Those presenting themselves as refugees gain quicker access to Canada than other immigrants | 2 |
| **Government** | Cruel | The government is unwilling to take responsibility for refugees | 13 |
| | Corrupt | Individuals in the government allows entry to Canada based on personal reasons | 9 |
| | Incompetent | The government is unable to administer the system effectively | 8 |
| | Under tension | The government is subject to contradictory and unresolvable tensions regarding their responsibility to refugees and the public | 6 |
| **Immigration System** | Inconsistent | Certain groups, such as illegal immigrants, fraudulent refugees or individuals with political connections, are treated preferentially | 23 |
| | Inadequate | The determination system is unable to prevent large numbers of refugees entering Canada | 17 |
| | Too tough | The determination system keeps out people who should be allowed in to Canada | 12 |
| | Too lenient | The determination system lets people in who should be kept out of Canada | 10 |
| | Too slow | The determination system takes too long to render decisions | 7 |
| | Gullible | Officials are unable to distinguish between genuine and fraudulent refugees | 7 |
| | Honourable | The determination system carries out its responsibilities towards refugees | 1 |
| **Public** | Requiring protection | The public requires protection from large numbers of refugees entering Canada | 8 |
| | Opposed | The public is opposed to refugees entering Canada | 4 |
| **Inversion: concept of refugee constructs another issue** | | First Nations (9); political corruption (9); Quebec separation (3); environment (1) | 22 |

| Table 4: Sample Coding of NGO Data[*] | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Date | Doc # | Genre | Target | Line # | Speech Act | Local Objects/Relations | Institutional References |
| 96/10/10 | 13 | L | Dismissed Employees | 1-2 | Intertextual Reference | Previous Fax<br>Delegate | |
| 96/10/10 | 13 | L | Dismissed Employees | 3-7 | Correction/ Re-framing | Employment Relationship | Industrial Relations |
| 96/10/10 | 13 | L | Dismissed Employees | 3-4 | Analogy | Previous Delegate<br>Current Delegate | |
| 96/10/10 | 13 | L | Dismissed Employees | 8-11 | Justification | Dismissal Decision<br>Organization History<br>Organizational Needs<br>Mère et Enfant<br>Delegate | Collectivism<br>Managerialism |
| 96/10/10 | 13 | L | Dismissed Employees | 11-12 | Empathizing | Mère et Enfant | |
| 96/10/10 | 13 | L | Dismissed Employees | 13-17 | Justification | Mère et Enfant<br>Change Process | Change/ Progress |
| 96/10/10 | 13 | L | Dismissed Employees | 17-27 | Justification | Change Process<br>Dismissal Decision | Rational Management<br>Consultation |
| 96/10/10 | 14 | L | Steering Committee Member | 1-2 | Empathizing | Delegate<br>Dismissed Employees<br>Committee Member | |
| 96/10/10 | 14 | L | Steering Committee Member | 2-4 | Introduce Letter | Delegate<br>Committee Member | |
| 96/10/10 | 14 | L | Steering Committee Member | 5-6 | Correction/ Re-framing | Employment Relationship | Industrial Relations |
| 96/10/10 | 14 | L | Steering Committee Member | 6-7 | Analogy | Previous Delegate<br>Current Delegate | |
| 96/10/10 | 14 | L | Steering Committee Member | 7-8 | Justification | Mère et Enfant (Europe) | |
| 96/10/10 | 14 | L | Steering Committee Member | 9-10 | Explanation | Employment Relationship | Industrial Relations |
| 96/10/10 | 14 | L | Steering Committee Member | 10-11 | Justification | Employment relationship | |
| 96/10/10 | 14 | L | Steering Committee Member | 11-15 | Explanation<br>Justification | The old days<br>Mère et Enfant<br>Change process<br>Delegate | |

[*] Definitions: Date – The date on the document; Doc # a – A unique file number; Genre – A single letter code for the type of document (e.g., M for memo, F for fax, etc.); Target – The intended audience for the document; Line Number – The line number(s) that we are coding in that record; Speech act – The action the text is intended to produce; Local Social Relations/Objects – The discursive objects from the social context of the text that are referred to in the text; Institutional References – The broader discourses that appear in the text.

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