

**Teaching and Learning in the Age of
Extremism and Polarization: A Model
to Understand Discourses and
Identities in Classrooms**

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What is Discourse?

DISCOURSE IS...

“The use of language”
(Chilton, 2004, p. 16)

“Anything written or said or
communicated using signs”
(Fillingham, 1993, p. 100)

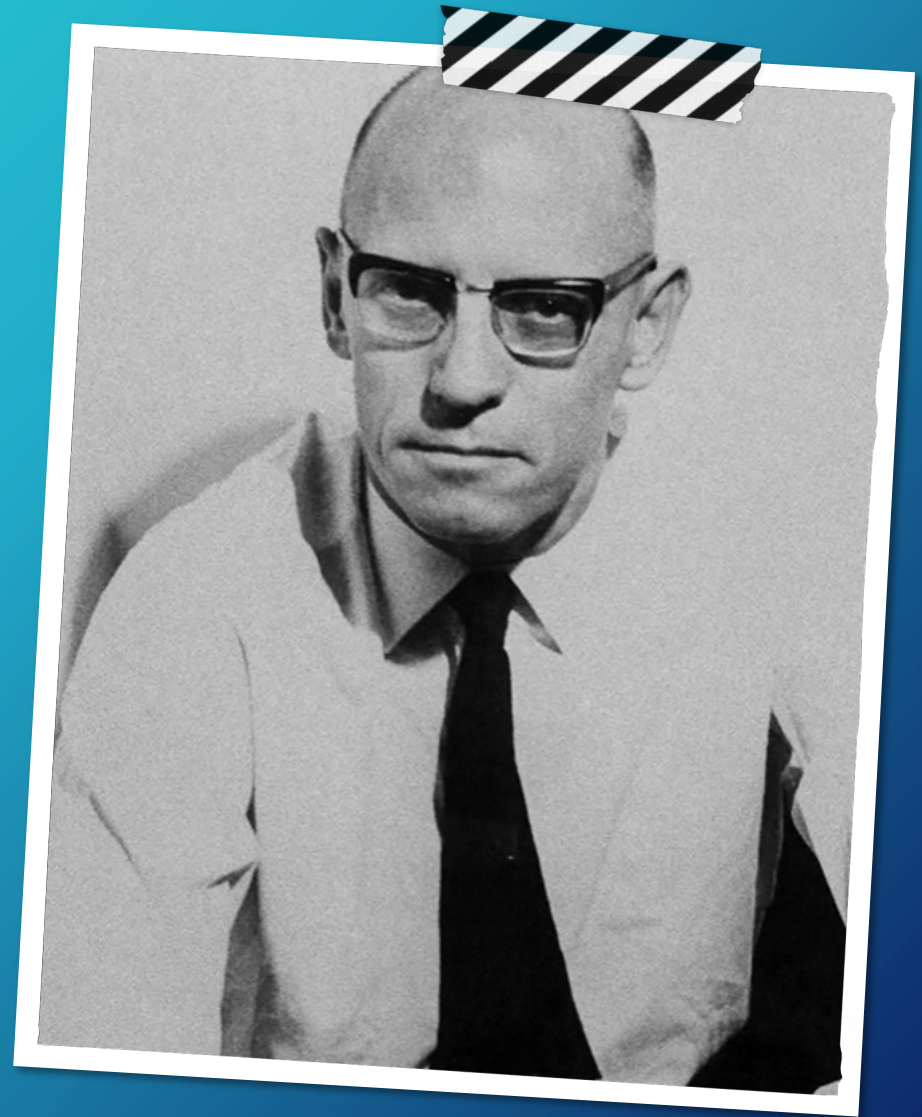
“The flow of knowledge
through time”
(Jäger, 2004, p. 129).



Foucault and Discourse

Foucault adopted the term 'discourse' to denote **a historically contingent social system that produces knowledge and meaning.**

He claimed discourse is distinctly material in effect, producing what he calls 'practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak'.





What is Discourse Theory?

Discourse theory **proposes that the way we speak and write in our daily activities is shaped by the structures of power in our society.**

Because our society is defined by struggle and conflict, our discourses reflect and create conflicts.





How Does Discourse Fit into One's Life?

You participate in discourse whenever you communicate with someone about a topic, either in writing or speaking.

Since communication happens constantly, discourse is a fundamental part of our everyday lives.

It's vital, especially as part of the language learning process.





How is Discourse Theory Useful?

The idea of discourse suits well in **analyzing social processes and practices of knowledge in modern societies and helps to provide a better theoretical understanding of a 'stock of knowledge.'**

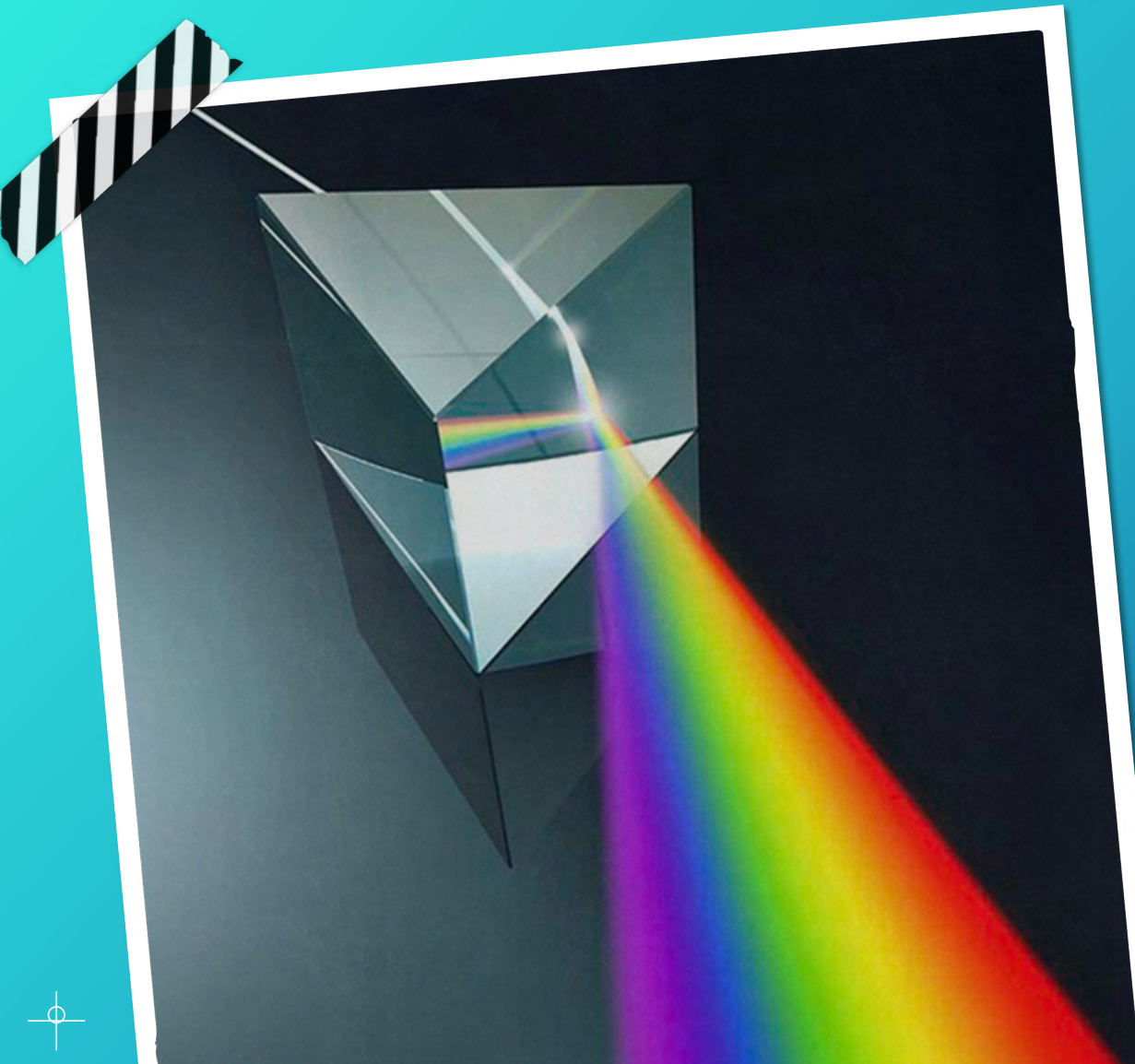
Discourse theory is a theoretical device for organizing the data and analyzing the events.



How are Discourse and Counter-Discourse Important for Society?

The power of discourse lies in the affordance to **provide legitimacy for certain kinds of knowledge while undermining others** and in its ability to create positions on subjects and turn people into objects that can be controlled.





What is Discourse Analysis?

Discourse analysis is **an approach to the study of language that demonstrates how language shapes reality**. Discourse is a way of perceiving, framing, and viewing the world.

Often, dominant discourses accentuate certain aspects and suppress other possible interpretations.

For example, A dominant discourse of gender often positions women as gentle and men as active heroes.





What is Discourse Analysis?

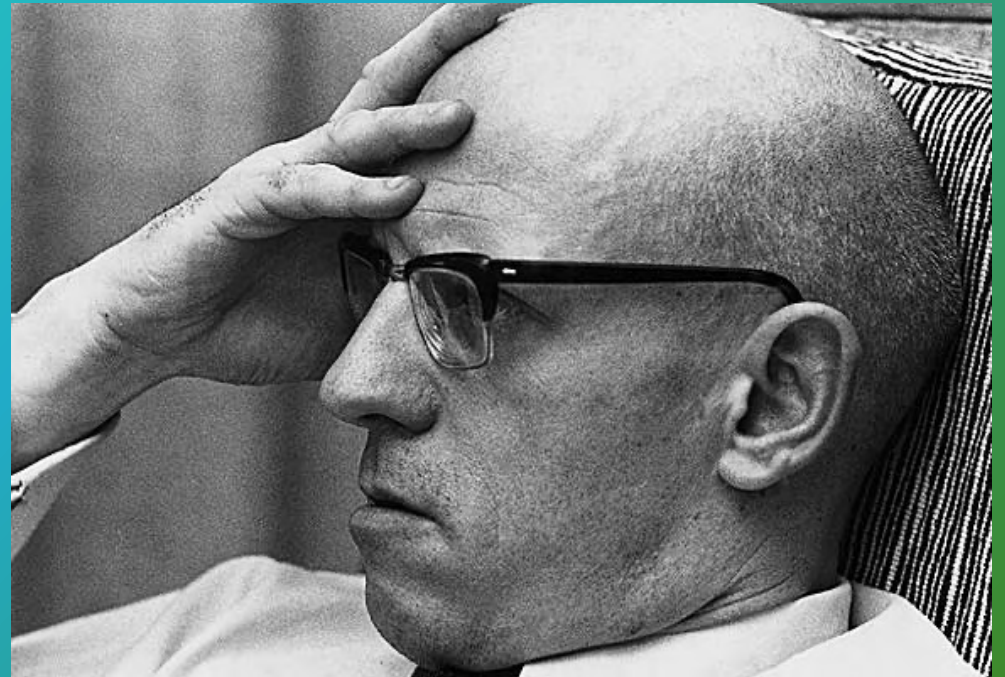
Discourse analysis focuses on **interaction, looking beyond the literal meaning of language.**

It lends itself to studying the complexities of day-to-day interactions and meaning-making, helping unpack taken-for-granted (often revered) ideas, practices, and actions.



An Example of Foucauldian Discourse Analysis

For example, in Foucault's work, *Discipline and Punishment: The Birth of the Prison* (Foucault, 1975), he made a discourse analysis of **the social and theoretical mechanisms of change that occurred in Western penal systems** to fundamentally changed the way we think about humans, laws, duties, rights, responsibilities, crimes, punishments, and our innermost selves.



Discourse Analysis



A. Think about discourse in relation to the following definitions...

DISCOURSE IS

"The use of language" (Chilton, 2004, p. 16), or

"Anything written or said or communicated using signs" (Fillingham, 1993, p. 100), or

"The flow of knowledge through time" (Jäger, 2004, p. 129).

B. Then, realize that discourses are expressed in many ways including:

- sound
- writing
- gestures
- multimodal forms that convey meaning and information

C. And that discourse may be considered in relation to:

- syntax (the arrangement of words or phrases to create well-formed sentences in a language)
- lexicon (the vocabulary of a person, language, branch of knowledge)
- speech acts (the action of speaking with a clearly intended meaning behind the speech)
- rhetoric (persuasion of speech and writing)
- style

D. Also, be aware that there are different **genres of discourse** such as:

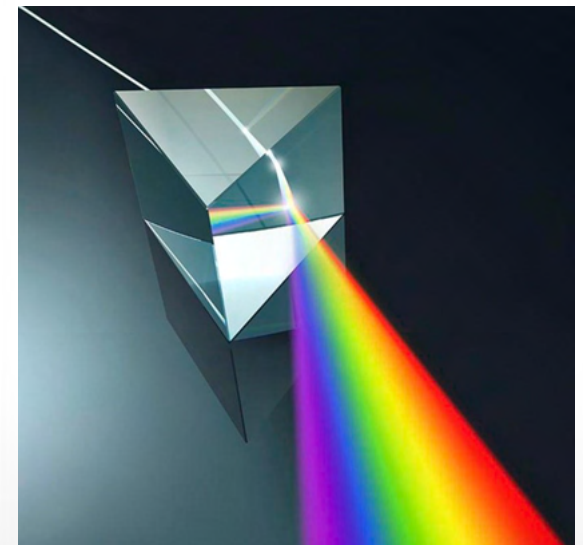
- social, political or economic
- educational
- media
- science
- ecological
- generational

E. Discourse analysis is the study of discourses that leads to understanding aspects that include:

- relations between discourse and the emergence of syntactic structure
- relations between text (discourse) and context
- relations between discourse and power
- relations between discourse and interaction
- relations between discourse and cognition and memory

F. Remember:

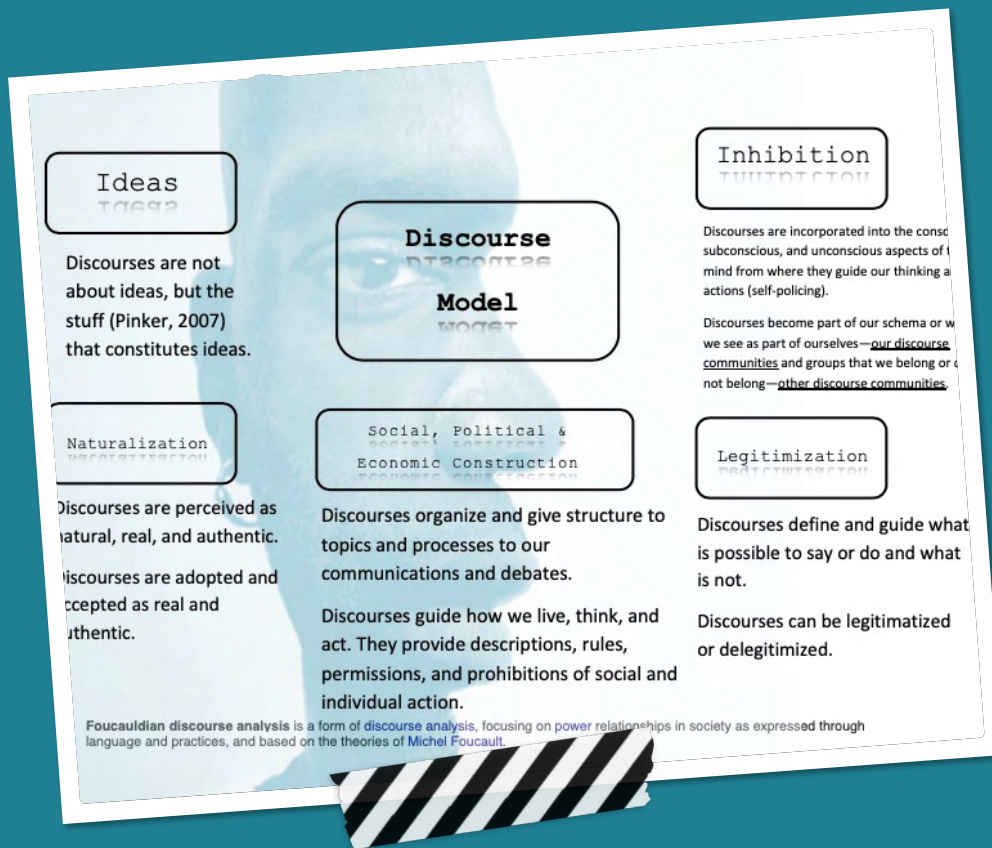
- Look for the hidden power relations within discourses.
- Look to see who is exercising power.
- Ask yourself, whose discourses are being presented, privileged, or hidden or maybe even shut down?
- Who are the authorities of knowledge being used in the discourse?
- Who is the ideal subject or audience for the discourse?
- What is left unsaid?
- What type of voice is used? Active? Passive?
- How is information presented?
- How are people characterized?
- What is the intent of the message?
- Are there supportive messages, images, signs, or symbols?
- What messages are being repeated?
- In what ways is the argument being presented?
- Where do people encounter the message?
- What standards are applied to the truthfulness or authenticity of the information?

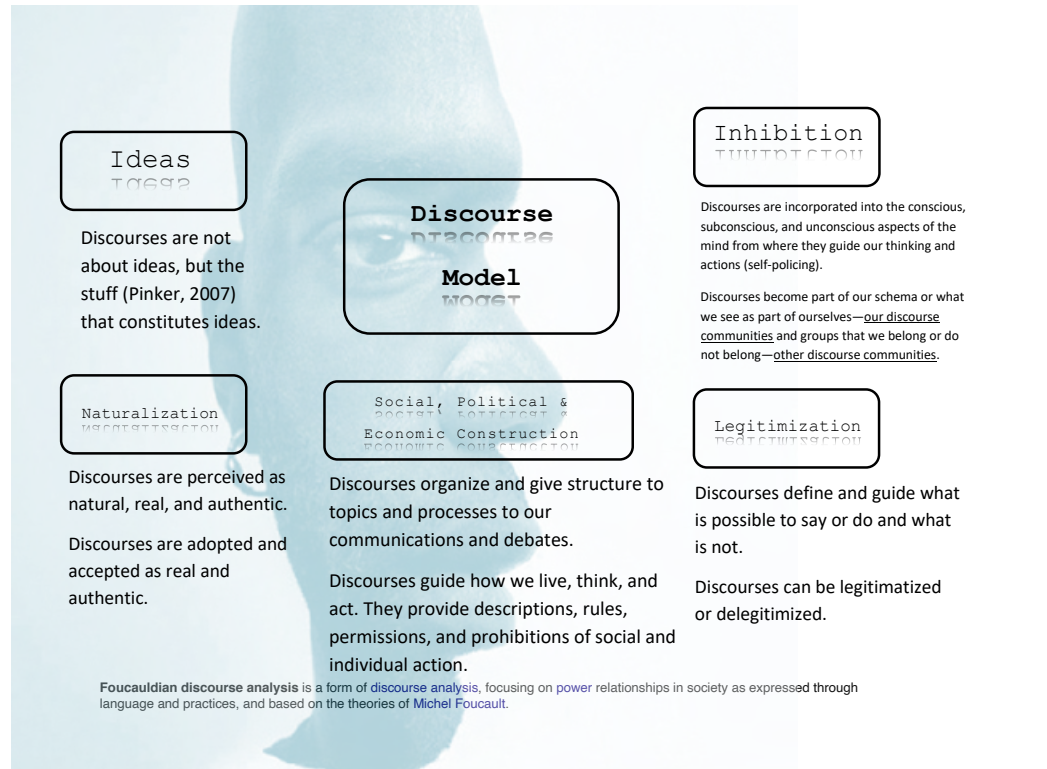
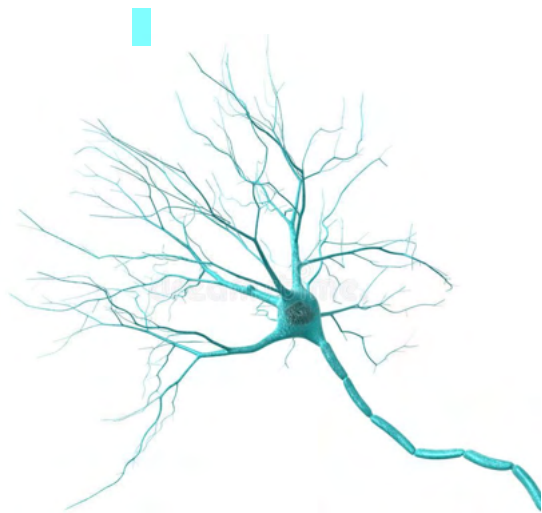


What is a Discourse Model?

A discourse model is a mental object that constitutes an individual's discourse knowledge.

A discourse model is constructed and based on what has occurred in the discourse, supplemented by general and specific knowledge.





Factors that lead to radicalization p. 8

Ideas

Discourses are not about ideas, but the stuff (Pinker, 2007) that constitutes ideas.

Violent extremism: Forms and ideologies pp. 18-19
Symbols p. 28
Model

Inhibition

Discourses are incorporated into the conscious, subconscious, and unconscious aspects of the mind from where they guide our thinking and actions (self-policing).

Discourses become part of our schema or what we see as part of ourselves—our discourse communities and groups that we belong or do not belong—other discourse communities.

Warning signs of radicalization p. 22

Naturalization

Discourses are perceived as natural, real, and authentic.

Discourses are adopted and accepted as real and authentic.

Social, Political & Economic Construction

Discourses organize and give structure to topics and processes to our communications and debates.

Discourses guide how we live, think, and act. They provide descriptions, rules, permissions, and prohibitions of social individual action.

Legitimization

Discourses define and guide what is possible to say or do and what is not.

Discourses legitimized

Stages of radicalization to violence p. 11
Recruitment p. 24

Foucauldian discourse analysis is a form of discourse analysis, focusing on power relations, language and practices, and based on the theories of Michel Foucault.

Discourse and counter-discourse

Drivers that influence extremism p. 12
Identity and belonging p. 30



EXTREMISM
AND
RADICALIZATION TO VIOLENCE
PREVENTION
IN
MANITOBA

A Resource for Educators



*"It's never too late for one caring adult to make
a difference in the life of an at-risk youth."*



<https://www.ERIMCA.org/toolkits/>





Voices into Action and Choose your Voice are award-winning programs that are in demand in today's classrooms.

Voices into Action is our high school program and it is continually updated and expanded to include a huge variety of subjects related to human rights, Canadian history, and world history. Antisemitism and the Holocaust are addressed specifically, as are residential schools, homophobia, sexism, racism, Islamophobia, cyberbullying and harassment, the genocides in Armenia, Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia, and the Holodomor, as well as a variety of discriminatory case studies from Canadian history.

Choose your Voice is for elementary and middle years students. It includes material and exercises that teach children about the dangers of stereotypes and discriminatory attitudes. The program helps teachers tackle the issue of exclusion head on and encourages students to uncover some of the historical and present-day narratives of groups who have faced discrimination in Canada.

Both programs teach young people and adults that hatred and discrimination have no place in Canada. We encourage individuals to celebrate human diversity and to feel safe and secure to be who they are in the world.

Thanks to the generosity of CISA's donors, teachers and students in over 17,000 schools across Canada (and even some in the US and Europe) use these web-based mobile-ready programs free of charge.

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