prof. dr. Dvora Yanow
Visiting Professor
Faculty of Social & Behavioral Sciences, Department of Sociology/Anthropology, University of Amsterdam
Faculty of Social Sciences, Communication Science Department, Wageningen University
d.yanow@uva.nl OR dvora.yanow@wur.nl

Course description
The ‘interpretive turn’ in late 20th century social science brought with it renewed attention to the role of language in social and political life. As researchers we work not only with language in a literal sense – that drawn from research-relevant documents, whether contemporary or archival, or from field conversations, including interviews – but also with language in the form of field note renderings of events, interactions, and the material world of research settings and artifacts in it, what Charles Taylor (1971) called ‘text analogues’ (see also Ricoeur 1971).

This course will explore several of the methods or approaches that have been developed to analyze language and politics: metaphor analysis, category analysis, narrative and storytelling analysis, framing analysis; the final session will take up text analogues in the material world, so to speak. The course will assume knowledge of interpretive methodological presuppositions, which are reflected in the central claim underpinning these approaches: that language does not mirror the world it (re-)presents (Rorty 1979), but instead constitutes it. It will be conducted as part-lecture, part seminar, and students will be expected to have done the readings for each day’s session beforehand and to actively participate in discussion.

The field of politics and language is potentially huge, as is each of the planned topics. We will not cover recent work on rhetoric or discourse, and we will touch only on briefly on language and the politics of science. Moreover, each of the five topics planned itself has an enormous literature. Each day’s session is intended to introduce at least one way of looking at the topic, theoretically; a set of empirical articles or papers that use that method; and a chance for students to work with the approach in a familiar research setting. To get the most out of the course, students should bring with them data from their own field research (including in archives) or a set of texts from some other source(s) (e.g., legislative or organizational documents, transcripts of interviews or conversations, observational notes on events) which they would like to practice with.

Dvora Yanow is a policy and organizational ethnographer and interpretive methodologist whose research and teaching are shaped by an overall interest in the communication of meaning in organizational and policy settings. Holder of the 2005-2010 term Strategic Chair in Meaning and Method in the Faculty of Social Sciences, VU University Amsterdam, she is presently Visiting Professor in the University of Amsterdam’s Faculty of Social and Behavioral Sciences, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, and at Wageningen University’s Faculty of Social Sciences, Communication Science Department. Her policy-focused research investigates state-created categories for race-ethnic identity, immigrant integration policies and citizen-making practices, policy frames and framing, and research regulation policies and practices; other projects engage science/technology museums and the ‘doing’ of science, and spatial and practice studies. She is co-editor of the Routledge Series on Interpretive Methods, with Peregrine Schwartz-Shea; their co-authored Interpretive Research Design: Concepts and Processes has just been published as volume 1 in that series. http://wur.academia.edu/DvoraYanow
Thought questions: Are metaphors just decorations littering speech and writing? If you think so, what are the implications of that view for the role of analysis?


Carver, Terrell and Pikalo, Jernej, eds. 2008. *Political language and metaphor*. London: Routledge, esp. chs. by Pikalo (metaphors in political theorists' language), van Hulst (metaphor in local planning), Yanow (how metaphors work), Cienki (on conceptual metaphor theory), Sormani/Benninghoff (on 'scientific expertise').


For further reading

Cienki, Alan and Yanow, Dvora, eds. Forthcoming. 'Politics and language', special issue; articles by Eric Blanchard, Paul Davidson, & Claudia Strauss; afterword by Alan Cienki. *Journal for International Relations and Development*.


Thought questions: What makes something belong to one category and not another? Can you think of an item that fits into 2 [ore more] categories within the same taxonomy? What are the implications of that for political action?


For further reading


**Wednesday Narrative, story-telling**

**Thought question:** If metaphors and categories also tell stories, how are they different from the kinds of stories engaged in this literature?


2 of the following, all by Shenhav:
- 2004. Once upon a time there was a nation: Narrative conceptualization analysis, the concept of ‘nation’ in the discourse of Israeli Likud party leaders. *Discourse & Society* 15 (1): 81-104.


Gabriel, Yiannis, Geiger, Daniel, and Letiche, Hugo. 2011. The marriage of story and metaphor. *Culture and Organization* 17/5: 367-71. [Intro. to special issue; see articles]

For further reading


Ospina, Sonia M. and Dodge, Jennifer. 2005. It’s about time: Catching method up to meaning—the usefulness of narrative inquiry in public administration research. *Public Administration Review* 65/2: 143-57. [1st in series of 3 articles; see also issues 3 and 4.]


**Thursday Framing analysis**

**Thought questions:** Metaphors and stories are also framing devices. How do these several concepts fit together? Do they? What are their similarities/differences? [If you are familiar with the social movement literature, how is the notion of frames as used there different from the notion of framing established in the policy literature?]

| Thought questions: Can you generate a taxonomy of non-logocentric modes of communication that are, or might be, central to understanding and analyzing political action? How would you analyze these? Do they need their own methods? |


*Danjoux, Ilan. 2006. The political cartoon and the collapse of the Oslo peace process. Presented at the annual meeting of the International Studies Association, San Diego, CA (22 March).*


*Bellhouse, Mary L. 2011. Under the eaves of the Louvre: Political theory research in American and European art museums, art collections, and art libraries. Presented at the Western Political Science Association Annual Meeting, San Antonio (March *).*

Stone, Deborah A. 2002 [1988/1997], *Policy paradox: The art of political decision making.* NY: WW Norton, ch. 7 [numbers as metaphors, stories,...].


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Year(s)</th>
<th>Publisher</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Try to look at at least one of the following, by Tufte:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For further reading</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Prior knowledge
Knowledge of interpretive methodological presuppositions is crucial for understanding these methods, as there may not be enough time to go into the methodological background in depth. For background, read:


For further reading on course topics


Writing and reading as method:

On writing as a way of worldmaking*

Clifford, James and Marcus, George E., eds. 1986. *Writing culture: The poetics and politics of


Related: On exhibits as worldmaking


In addition, Prof. Fred Schaffer’s syllabus for his politics and language course at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst is a superb resource:  

**Supplemental reading list [as of 8 February]**

**General**

Fierke, K. M. 2002. Links across the abyss: Language and logic in international relations. *International Studies Quarterly* 46: 331-54. [Wittgenstein meets Waltz and Wendt; can be read for insights into other fields]


**Rhetoric**


**Metaphors**


[*eds. Mike Featherstone, Couze Venn, Ryan Bishop and John Phillips, with Pal Ahluwalia, Roy Boyne, Chua Beng Huat, John Hutnyk, Scott Lash, Maria Esther Maciel, George Marcus, Aihwa Ong, Roland Robertson,*]
Narrative


Stories


Cartoons


Moss, Dori. 2007. The animated persuader. *PS: Political Science and Politics* 40/2: 241-44. [draws on Kenneth Burke]