

Current Issues in Professional & Organisational Communication Research

A seminar series

Professor Christopher N Candlin
Macquarie University Sydney

Abstract

This seminar series will present research and practice which serve to highlight a number of issues and challenges in the study of professional and organizational discourses, with a particular focus on the following themes:

- The nature of professions and organisations and the link to discourses
- The context of professional and organisational discourses in terms of themes, domains, sites
- The conditions and consequences of professional and organizational discourse studies
- Professional and organisational discourses as topics and resources for applied research
- The development of a 'communicative mentality' in the study of professional and organisational work
- Challenges to empirical research in terms of methodology and reflexivity
- Profession/organization-specific and inter-professional/organizational practice
- Interfaces between theory and practice: trading between reflexivity and relevance
- Issues of practical relevance of research into professional and organizational discourse



Seminar 1 Tuesday, October 27th 2009

Contexts, conditions and consequences of professional discourse studies

In this seminar I will explore what 'professionalism' might mean seen from the point of view of discourse and discourse analysis, emphasizing collaborative activity between discourse analysts and professional workers. What is 'inter-professional practice'? What are the key constructs: 'categorization', 'accountability', 'relevance', 'joint problematization', 'professional vision', 'membership', 'community of practice', 'communicative 'mentality', 'focal' and 'analytic' themes.

Seminar 2 Tuesday, November 10th 2009

Challenges to empirical research: modes and methodologies

The focus here will be methodologies in professional communication research, including issues of access, problem identification and analysis. So-called 'paradoxes' (that of the observer, the participant and the analyst) in the light of different *motivational relevancies* suggest more hermeneutic ways of approaching data. We return to *categorization* as a key construct and explore the idea of a 'nested system' in discourse-based research, highlighting the centrality of *interdiscursivity*, and the relationship between *domains*, *sites* and cross-cutting *themes*.

Seminar 3 Tuesday, November 17th 2009

Reflexivity at the theory-practice interface

Following Seminar 2, the focus shifts to the *role(s)* of professional communication researchers, beginning with a distinction between *reflection* and *reflexivity*, exploring researcher *stance* poised between social realism and social constructivism; how we can unpack the tacit assumptions of researchers and participants through *critical* discourse analysis, and ways to link *relevant* research to practice, through encouraging *reflexivity*. How discourse studies can engage with so-called *evidence-based* practice will feature here.

Seminar 4 Tuesday, November 24th 2009

Meeting the requirements of practical relevance: achieving 'thick' participation

Geertz's '*thick description*' underpins the exploration of a multimodal and multi-perspectived research into professional communication, integrating social interactional analyses, narrative and ethnographic analyses, textual analyses, and social institutional analyses in descriptively, interpretively and explanatorily adequate accounts. Such accounts call for '*thick participation*' among researchers and participants, and in the evidencing of claims and the prioritising of '*usefulness*' highlight again the profile of the professional communication researcher.

Each seminar will begin with a presentation of issues supported by seminar notes and references, to be followed by chaired discussion of issues raised with an emphasis on sharing research and practice in relation to key themes, domains and sites, and with some case study illustration. Readings for each seminar will be distributed in the preceding seminar. In advance of the first session we will send to interested participants a brief overview of the seminar series.

All are welcome

New
venue

Time & Venue

4.30 - 6.30 pm

Room AG434, Department of English,
4/F Core A

The Hong Kong Polytechnic University