

DISCOURSE  
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&  
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SIMONE BONNAFOUS &  
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# Introduction<sup>1</sup>

Simone BONNAFOUS and Malika TEMMAR

Discourse analysis became current in France in the late 1960s, thanks to researchers working in a variety of disciplines such as linguistics, sociology, history and philosophy. They all shared an interest in linguistic phenomena considered in their social and historical contexts. Although the concepts and methods of the language sciences have long been a feature of this field of research, relationships with the other human and social sciences have always played a part too. Exchanges between these disciplines, far from signalling a fragmentation of discourse analysis, have gone hand in hand with its development as it came to be recognised and established through research centres, conferences, journals and, more recently, textbooks and dictionaries<sup>2</sup>. The

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1 Thanks to Alice Krieg-Planque and Claire Oger for reading this text and giving their advice. We would also like to thank Dominique Ducard for his support during the later stages of publication.

2 Without claiming to be exhaustive, a list might include: Dominique Maingueneau, *L'Analyse du discours. Introduction aux lectures de l'archive*, Paris, Hachette Supérieur, collection Linguistique, 1991. Georges-Elia Sarfati, *Eléments d'analyse du discours*, Paris, Nathan Université, collection 128, 2001. Francine Mazière, *L'Analyse du discours. Histoire et pratiques*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, Collection Que sais-je?, 2005. Patrick Charaudeau and Dominique Maingueneau editors, *Dictionnaire d'analyse du discours*, Paris, Seuil, 2002. Catherine Détrie, Paul Siblot and Bertrand Verine editors, *Termes et concepts pour l'analyse du discours. Une approche praxématique*, Paris, Honoré Champion, 2001. “Les analyses du discours en France” (coordinated by Dominique Maingueneau), Paris, Larousse, *Langages*, n° 117, 1995. “Le discours: enjeux et perspectives” (coordinated by Sophie Moirand), Paris, Hachette/Edicef, *Le Français dans le monde*, special edition, 1996. “Analyse du discours. Etat de l'art et perspectives” (coordinated by Dominique Maingueneau), *Marges linguistiques. Langages. Représentations. Communication*, half-yearly electronic journal of language sciences, publisher M.L.M.S., <<http://www.marges-linguistiques.com>>, n° 9, 2005.

increasing number of works on discourse analysis testifies to the vitality of this domain which has been able to interact with the growth of new disciplines such as information and communication sciences. After the “golden age” of the pioneers who featured in the great intellectual debates of the time (on the notions of ideology and subject for example), since the mid-1980s there has been a certain specialisation, in terms of topics of study and sectors, such as media, political and institutional discourse.

The Céditec (Centre d’Etude des Discours, Images, Textes, Ecrits et Communications, EA 31 19) was created in 1999 by a small group of teachers in the language sciences, information and communication sciences and sociology. Since its inception it has always placed “discourse” – which has its focus beyond diversity of meaning and conceptual frameworks – at the centre of its questioning, and been particularly interested in the relationship of discourse to the political arena and to knowledge.

This interest is the legacy of the Ecole Normale Supérieure at St Cloud, with its laboratory of lexicometry and political texts. It was founded in the 1970s by Maurice Tournier, who was a major figure in lexicology and political lexicometry in France. From these origins and from the institutional and epistemological links maintained by several of its members with the centres responsible for founding discourse analysis in France, Céditec has remained deeply grounded in the language sciences and in the political sphere. These centres were the departments of language sciences at the University of Nanterre and the groups of philosophers, linguists and psychologists gathered around Michel Pêcheux. Because of these influences, Céditec has maintained a keen interest in computer processing of texts, which is one of its major methodological contributions. It has also continued to invest substantially in the journal *Mots, les langages du politique*<sup>3</sup>.

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3 An interdisciplinary journal which brings together researchers in language sciences with those in information and communication sciences and political science around a common objective.