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‘Making strange’ and other interpretive skills in critical development studies

Valedictory lecture Professor Des Gasper

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1. Introduction

I came to work at ISS a long time ago, in 1983. This was fortunate for me, as in ISS one can have considerable intellectual latitude, space to cross disciplinary boundaries and to attempt exploratory work if one wants to do so. This is what I have tried during the past years. In this retrospective lecture I return in part to issues discussed in my inaugural lecture (Gasper 2010a), which was on interpretive policy analysis and approached that through special attention to climate change debates. Here I concentrate instead on methods and methodology for investigation, notably various forms of discourse analysis that help us to identify and cross boundaries and that can add substance, insight and power to the interpretive and critical aspirations in critical development studies. Those studies require not just a critical attitude but tools for widened perception, including for ‘making strange’ so that we view things in a fresh and independent way, and for grounded criticism, creative thinking and self-criticism. Along the way I will mention some pieces of work that I have been involved in.

The opening picture chosen for this presentation is, you may recognise, from Delphi. Delphi is an ancient Greek sacred site in the centre of the country, on the slopes of Mount Parnassus. It was considered the centre of the world, its navel and womb, indeed the centre for the whole universe. It was the home of the earth goddess—earth mother and mother of the Earth—Gaia. Here resided the famed oracle of Delphi, which people came to consult from all over the Greek world and far beyond. Each Greek city-state built its own own representation at Delphi; a very considerable site remains that stretches over an epic mountainside.

The picture is one that I took of the remains of the Temple of Apollo. The temple stands close to the cleft or chasm in the mountain into which a mountain stream disappeared and from which the earth was born. From the cleft came mysterious vapours. Apollo had supposedly slain the previous guardian of the oracle, Pytho, the serpent son of Gaia. Apollo became thereby the oracle's new guardian. Subsequently the keepers of the Temple of Apollo interpreted the obscure supposed messages that came from the nether world in response to questions.

Here the picture alludes to mysteries, complex equivocal meanings and long traditions, that are set in multivocal multi-layered contexts – material, historical, political, cultural, semantic and discursive contexts. Second, it suggests also the careers of past and present-day interpreters scholars, seeking to unearth hidden structures and meanings – but who are somewhat dwarfed by the task and by the setting, and may disappear soon into oblivion.

In 1983 I had been hired by ISS to go to work in Zimbabwe, then a newly independent country, in a long-term project of institutional cooperation, to help set up programmes in a new department at the University of Zimbabwe. The required arrangements and approvals took far longer than envisaged, so I spent a good part of that year here in The Hague. Besides preparing for our work in Zimbabwe and doing some teaching, I had time to work on two manuscripts and for gestating thoughts that tried to link them.

One manuscript was eventually called "Motivations and Manipulations: Practices of Appraisal and Evaluation" (Gasper 1987). It reflected my work in the previous three years as a project economist in Botswana and Malawi, in confrontation with my training as an economist and development economist. In that training we had, without any questioning or indeed any real awareness, adopted a series of presumptions. The world was viewed as made up of Nations, also known as Economies. Economies consist of Firms and Individuals. These agents are and/or indeed should be oriented towards gains which can be calculated in monetary terms or monetary equivalents. Nations also have a State which steers, supports and regulates. People lived within the nations/economies, and unlike Goods and Finance they did not move much between them. So, a cast of characters was presented and tacitly described. In discourse analysis this specification and description are called, respectively, nomination and predication (e.g., Wodak 2015). Gradually I became conscious and curious about the fact that a world of major assumptions and presumptions had been incorporated in the mother's milk of my academic training and been imbibed without reflection. Not least, many value choices were built-in to the intellectual system and not openly discussed: for example, that the principle of value is that Individuals/Consumers have more of what they want, as expressed through choices in markets, that the importance of such wants is defined by the monetary magnitudes that convert them into effective demand, and that the aggregate social value of an outcome is defined by the magnitude of the gap between monetarily measured Benefits and monetarily measured Costs aggregated across the whole Economy. This vision from mainstream economics was encapsulated in the new formats of Cost-Benefit Analysis which had emerged in the 1960s and 70s, such as in the manuals of Little and Mirrlees (1974) and UNIDO (1972) which we had studied with awe and enthusiasm in our Masters programmes. In addition to now recognizing questions about the theory of project appraisal and evaluation, by 1983 I had discovered that its practice involved at each stage major choices of formulation and interpretation, leading commonly to extensive questionable (and sometimes deceitful) argumentative manipulation.[ii]

The other manuscript that I worked on in 1983 was called "Distribution and Development Ethics". A version appeared a couple of years later in an ISS lustrum volume (Gasper 1986). It was stimulated partly

by work that I had been involved in during the previous year at the Overseas Development Institute in London, about the arguments for and against international development assistance. Here the presumptions of using a nation-state framework, in description, explanation and evaluation, became much more open, even if still not always seen as requiring discussion. Correspondingly, within that work on development ethics I spent much time considering arguments for, against and around the moral status of national boundaries, and the debates which had begun to flourish in the early 1980s about the nature of nations and nationalism (e.g., Anderson 1983, Gellner 1983). Nationalism has long been central for historians and in some parts of social science, but not in economics and too little in development studies. Some of development studies has had a strong and justified interest in capitalism, but there has relatively speaking been rather little on nationalism.

These two lines of interest, on the construction of policy-oriented argumentation and on the value-principles that guide the choices in analysis as well as the choices in action, have continued through my academic career. They became further linked for me through value-critical and argument-focused policy analysis, sister streams which wer emerging in the 1970s and 80s (e.g., Rein 1976; Dunn 1981; Fischer 1980). Over time they married as what is nowadays called interpretive policy analysis, with which I affiliated, especially with policy discourse analysis, which brings in tools from discourse analysis. Discourse analysis too is a field (or domain of linked fields) that was only emerging as a distinct area when I was trained in the 1970s but that has grown enormously since then and become widely established in social sciences – although again perhaps still relatively little in international development studies.[iii]

Critical development studies has great roles to play in a world of ongoing huge change, achievements, failings and dangers. To do this we need tools that help us analyse and respond carefully, empirically, logically, ethically (value-critically), and creatively (value-constructively). In this lecture I try to outline the relevance and use of some tools of interpretive and discourse analysis. We need methods that help us to 'make strange' (a phrase used by James Paul Gee), in looking both at texts and at social realities; so that we see them afresh, independently and with curiosity, and start to discern better their and our own ethical blindspots.

After this Introduction, the lecture continues through the following stages.

- A diagnosis of some requirements of and for critical development studies,
- and of challenges and problems in doing so.
- An overview of some relevant approaches which I have tried to teach in ISS and elsewhere during the past 30 years, highlighting some that proved to be relatively accessible and helpful for development studies audiences:-
- Structured text- and argumentation- analysis, as a basis for investigation of rhetorics of persuasion
- Content analysis, as a basis for investigation of intellectual frames
- Rhetoric, as a synthesizing framework.
- Concluding reflections on where such tools fit in a bigger toolkit for critical development studies.

2. Needs in development studies

A recent project of EADI, the European Association of Development Research and Training Institutes, has led to a large book published this year entitled "Building Development Studies for the New Millennium" (Baud et al. 2019), edited by scholars from Italy, Finland, Germany, and the Netherlands, including Isa Baud of the University of Amsterdam. It concludes that: "The scope and seriousness of development issues—and their urgency—require ontological and epistemological reassessments of DS [Development Studies]" (Basile and Baud 2019: 10). Synthesizing the contributions from various countries, in their overview chapter Elisabetta Basile and Isa Baud call for the following: first, a stronger critical thinking orientation; second, strengthening of multi-, inter- and especially trans-disciplinary work; and third, democratization in knowledge processes. I argue that discourse analysis skills are invaluable in all three of these. I will sometimes employ the term 'interpretive skills', as rather broader and perhaps also more inviting than 'discourse analysis'.

Regarding the need to strengthen a critical-thinking orientation, Basile and Baud (2019: 10) use Robert Cox's (1981) famous contrast between:

> "two theoretical approaches to social change…: problem-solving and critical thinking. …problem-solving theories take 'the world as they find it', where existing power relationships are the 'framework for action'. Their aim is 'to make these relationships and institutions work smoothly', keeping problems under control. In contrast, critical theories question the very 'framework for action' that problem-solving theories take for granted…" (Basile and Baud 2019: 10, citing Cox and Sinclair 1996: 88-89).[iv]

But how can we identify and question frameworks when they are, precisely, taken for granted? 'Critical thinking' requires skills, not only good intentions or only a critical attitude. Interest and facility in investigating and reflecting on ideas, and on systems of words and ideas, are not automatic. Even when interest exists, it does not automatically generate facility. However, both interest and facility can be fostered.

Regarding Basile and Baud's second conclusion, academic disciplines exist and persist for many good reasons; but these reasons at the same time indicate disciplines' insufficiency.[v] Disciplines provide a training that goes into depth through looking at a limited set of aspects and selected issues. These sheltered zones of training provide each discipline with organizational, financial, and psychological bases for identity and internal mutual support.

> "Disciplines function in this way as culture areas not only knowledge areas (Gasper, 2004a, 2010b). … They have their own 'languages', including their own habitual metaphors, forms of humour and styles of writing, and their own approved histories with their own characteristic symbols and tales of great men and great victories. They become bases of noun-specified identity ('I am a geographer'; [or,] 'speaking as an economist'). As part of intra-group bonding, groups tend to define themselves in contra-distinction to other (perceived) groups. …This problem is more intense amongst the social sciences, since they are to some extent rivals that offer partly competing explanations; …." (Gasper 2017a: 149).

Both their restrictions of breadth and their identity-forming role make disciplines limiting and sometimes dangerous in relation to the challenges that we address in development studies. Each discipline looks by using only a few lenses and from just a few vantage points. But "we often require a broader view on a world that is too complex and interconnected to be adequately captured by single disciplines. Not least, to study effectively the particularity of specific cases, situations and histories we need multiple lenses and

viewpoints; 'breadth is an essential feature of profundity' ([says] Feng, 2011: 41-2)" (Gasper 2017a: 150). To achieve this requires much in terms of mental readiness, skills for relating to and working with others who see and think differently, and intellectual tools to organize and facilitate cooperation. Table 1 summarizes suggestions arising from studies of past experience (based on: Klein, 1996; Gasper, 2004a; Frodeman et al., 2010). I will argue in this paper that flexible and exploratory forms of discourse analysis – including in text analysis and study of argumentation structures, vocabulary choices, metaphors and the frames that they construct, and from rhetorical analysis of how frames, argumentation and emotions combine – help us towards the mental openness and agility that are required for engaging with complexity, and identifying and sometimes resisting systems of power.

Table 1: Requirements for effective inter- and trans-disciplinary work. (Source: Gasper 2017a)

I. MENTAL READINESS	*Attitudes, skills and expectations that are required for dealing well with what is experienced as strange:*
1. Psychological Security	Individual inquirers who do not psychologically need to hide/define themselves as tribe-X/caste-Y/physicists/economists/…
2. Mutual Respect	Empathy. Methods for 'Dealing with Differences'.
3. Realistic Expectations	Inter-discipline communication suffices for some mutual stimulation, irritation and intellectual theft, each of which can be productive. But cooperation requires far more than only such communication, including various of the tools mentioned below.
II. INSTRUMENTS / 'BRIDGING CAPITAL'	*The following types of 'bridging capital' that help inter-group links are important to counter-balance intra-group 'bonding capital':*
4. Networks	Inter-organizational linkages, meeting places, members, patterns of informal contact
5. Link-Roles, and Recognition for Performing Them	People (and organizations) who specialise as bridgers and synthesisers; and as methodologists and theorists of interdisciplinarity. This must be supported by investment in work on inter-disciplinary methodology, to be explored in joint seminars.
6. Metaphor(s) (such as 'lens' and 'hybridization') that help us grapple with the unfamiliar and complex in terms of the familiar	E.g.: to see scientific work as a complex eco-system, with many diverse life-forms, niches, feeding chains and trends, etc., and many diverse types of connection between life-forms
7. Cognitive 'Boundary Objects'	Ideas/examples/problems that serve as shared foci/interests across disciplinary or specialization boundaries
8. Some Shared Frameworks	Need for some fuller shared discourses:- mutually accessible and acceptable intellectual frameworks

Another chapter in "Building Development Studies for the New Millennium" offers insights from postcolonial studies. "Ziai ([2016]: 36) identifies Orientalism and Othering (Said 1978), Subalternity and Representation (Spivak 1988), Hybridity (Bhabha 1994) and the Provincialization of Europe (Chakrabarty 2000) as the most important postcolonial concepts" (Schöneberg 2019: 98). The chapter stresses also reflexivity regarding positionality. It correspondingly propounds "three starting points [for postcolonial development studies]…: (1) listen to and collaborate with the Subaltern; (2) provincialize Europe in knowledge production; and (3) abandon dichotomies." (Schöneberg, p. 111). Dichotomies are too crude;

but to go beyond crude tools requires flexible, subtle and open tools. 'Listening' and 'provincializing' too require skills. Unskilled 'provincializing' and re-representation create new stereotypes.

For all these challenges, we need more and finer-toothed instruments than declamation or intuition alone. Edward Said, when considering how he had developed his analysis of the macro-structures of power and perception that lay in, behind and around Jane Austen's 1814 novel *Mansfield Park*, called for a combination of different types of reflective reading (Said 1994: 100-116). *Mansfield Park* deals with the life-trajectory and maturation of a 'poor relation', a girl who is allowed to come to live with her wealthy cousins in the country estate of Mansfield Park in southern England. Her evolving relations with them and with their wealthy neighbours are described with memorable acuity. Behind the refined, elegant interaction, the 'cultivated' lifestyles at Mansfield Park are sustained by cultivation of another estate, a sugar plantation in the Caribbean, run with slave labour. It is mentioned but not described by Austen; it is taken for granted. "What assures the domestic tranquillity and attractive harmony of one [Mansfield Park] is the productivity and regulated discipline of the other", the slave labour plantation, noted Said (1994: 104). This is implicit but never explicit in the novel; for "where only one class is seen, no classes are seen" (Raymond Williams; cited by Said on p.100).

In Said's words:

> "…there is no way of doing such readings as mine, no way of understanding the 'structure of attitude and reference' except by working through the novel. Without reading it in full, we would fail to understand the strength of that structure and the way in which it was activated and maintained in literature. But in *reading it carefully*, we can sense how ideas about dependent races and territories were held both by foreign-office executives, colonial bureaucrats, and military strategists and by intelligent novel-readers educating themselves in the fine points of moral evaluation, literary balance, and stylistic finish" (Said 1994: 114; italics added).

So we need to both absorb a text as a whole and think beyond it, bringing in other considerations, comparisons and scenarios. 'Reading it carefully' means an active, questioning, comparative approach.

Much work in this field trains students to look for 'basic discourses', pervasive persistent systems of perception and representation (for helpful examples see: Frerks and Klem, 2009; Hansen 2006). To recognise though the mixtures, variations and evolution of such ways of thinking that are found in practice, and to intelligently select from, combine, or diverge from standard approaches, requires skills of independent thinking. Such skills can be promoted, I suggest, through a structured form of close reading and argumentation analysis. I have advocated a method of micro-textual analysis that is usable without linguistics training, and that assists one to read with both close attention to the actual nature of the text (not the stereotyped scripts already in one's mind) and critical distance. This helps one to see the text, and associated discursive events, in new ways, and to ask and pursue bigger social research questions. The method recognises that "Discourse Analysis means Doing Analysis" (Antaki et al. 2002). Complementing this approach, as both prelude and partner, and partly to be incorporated in it, are a set of other interpretive skills: for looking at the choices of topic and vocabulary, and at the choices of ways of looking, including through identifying and investigating the metaphors that people resort to.

So, I will reflect here on potential skills gains through learning and doing some forms of discourse analysis, based on three decades of such work with development studies students.[vi] Thinking about development requires skills also in giving attention, listening, caring, constructing, cooperating, and more. Discourse analysis has sometimes acquired a negative reputation in development studies, seen as too difficult, and/or as preoccupied with generalized theory rather than case realities, or only engaged in criticism and

not also construction, and/or as based only on finding confirmatory instances for an interpretation rather than on comprehensive coverage. All of these objections can be answered.

Section 3 overviews some relevant tools and formats. Section 4 recognizes and discusses some obstacles. Section 5 presents a simple format for text analysis and argumentation analysis, because this provides a good entry point and framework for many other types of analysis. Section 6 refers to some of those other types, notably in content analysis and frame analysis. Section 7 adds the study of rhetoric, as accessible and revealing for development studies researchers and students. One must underline in advance that discourse analysis also involves and requires context analysis and analysis of texts-in-context, not only text dissection. To convey and illustrate that well requires though a sustained exploration of particular cases, and lies beyond the scope of the present lecture. Section 8 offers concluding reflections and some connections to more advanced discourse analysis. It underlines the central theme that critical social science requires close attention to how power systems are incorporated in language and can potentially be partly counteracted through language and through its study.

3. Tools from discourse analysis

Several forms of discourse analysis are directly accessible and directly useful for international development studies students, and can together contribute in important skill areas, for work that is more critical, constructive and value-sensitive. Relevant strands include: the investigation of key concepts, including looking at "buzzwords and fuzzwords" (Cornwall and Eade 2010); lexical choice analysis and other content analysis to identify the chosen vocabularies and topics and also those that are omitted (e.g., Moretti and Pestre, 2015); category and labelling analysis, for awareness of choices made in delineating and characterizing social groups (e.g., Moncrieffe and Eyben, 2007; Yanow 2003); argumentation analysis, for better representation, evaluation and possible amendment of argument systems (e.g., Apthorpe and Gasper, 1996/2014); metaphor analysis, for probing tacit frames of reference and imagination (e.g., Stillwaggon 2003; Kornprobst 2008); narrative analysis, for examining how a past and/or prospective story is constructed with regard to a proffered cast of characters (e.g., Anderson, 1983; Roe 1999; Wodak et al. 2009); and rhetoric analysis of how these various strands are interwoven to construct, project and 'sell' an overall interpretation (e.g., Perelman 1982; Gasper and Roldan, 2011).[vii]

Some of these forms appeal more easily to students, like frame analysis, narrative and rhetoric. Also highly relevant and accessible for typical development studies students for going beyond deconstruction of buzzwords and fuzzwords or detecting dichotomies are, I suggest, metaphor analysis, content analysis and text-argumentation analysis. Each helps to identify surprises and particularities, beyond discerning what one already one expects or has been told to expect. They have an open, exploratory and systemic character that encourages independent thinking rather than repetition of acquired notions about 'basic discourses' or 'development narratives' or mere identification of particular rhetorical devices. Answering frame-analysis questions about 'What is the Problem Represented to Be?' (WPR: Bacchi 2009), for example, will gain by using such methods, rather than relying on guesswork. In my teaching I have found that a structured form of text-argumentation analysis provides a framework for situating and starting on many of the other methods.

How do these respective tools relate to each other? Argumentation and more broadly rhetoric (the use of argumentation plus all other means of persuasion) employ frames (idea patterns, structured systems

of presences and absences), of various sorts and at many scales. Frames often employ (root) metaphors and/or narratives, for those are basic modes of thought: we turn to metaphors in order to employ comparisons to try to evoke the nature of a situation, while process-description presents events and changes.[viii] Like images, metaphors and narratives are thus modes of expression that reflect fundamental modes of experience: for images, vision; for metaphors, comparison: for narrative, living in time, within sequences of connected events and persistent although evolving identities. Narratives typically use images and metaphors to express these processes; they evoke picture-families, and link them in sequences over time. They do more than just string together metaphors and other figures of speech: a narrative provides a frame, a scope and structure for thinking, in a more vivid, forceful and expressive way than can an abstracted and static description (Forester 1999; Gasper 2000b), and more elaborately and specifically than does a metaphor.

Value-sensitive discourse analysis and 'value-critical policy analysis' (Rein 1976, Schön and Rein 1994) seek to characterize existing intellectual frames, what they include and exclude, and which values guide those choices, and then to compare, assess and possibly improve or change the frames, using questions and tools such as indicated in Box 1.

Box 1: Basic questions in value-sensitive discourse analysis (Based on: Gasper 2017b)

DISCOURSE ANALYSIS / FRAME ANALYSIS

Preliminary. Ask who wrote the text, for which audience and purpose, and how this understanding should inform your interpretation of it.

Categories. Identify the categories and labels used in the text; and those that were *not* used. Reflect on the *system* of categories. Look especially at the 'cast of characters'; and at who is ignored (e.g., migrants, non-nationals, women, children…?).

Figurative language. Identify the key metaphors used; they provide clues about the assumptions and way of thinking, the way of making sense of complexity. Study also the other attention-grabbers and attention-organizers: the choice of examples, the use of images and proverbs.

Values. Identify the praise and criticism language; this provides clues about the unstated as well as the stated conclusions and proposals.

Frameworks of inclusion/exclusion. From the above steps and other indicators, especially the recurrent vocabulary used, identify which are the issues, identities and interests that receive consideration (e.g., economic growth?) and which do not (e.g., external effects; unintended effects; adequate access of poor people to water and sanitation; morbidity and mortality amongst the poor; the language of human rights?). …

Examining concepts is a traditional entry point, and can be enormously enlightening. Consider Liah Greenfield's proffered exposition of the construction of modern concepts of 'nation' (Greenfield 1992, 2016). The word 'nation' came from Latin 'natio', meaning a litter, a bunch of animal offspring. It was a derogatory term for a group of foreigners from the same region, outsiders who had come into the realm of ancient Rome. Mainstream Roman citizens viewed them as inferior, barbarians. The term evolved over the centuries to mean any same-origin group. Then, in 16th century England, 'nation' became treated as nearly synonymous with 'people', the whole population of the country, though with exclusions of some groups who were deemed outsiders; and with even sometimes a connotation of 'the people' as sovereign. This marked and promoted the emergence in England of the first modern 'nation', in the sense that this word is understood today.[ix] Corpus linguistic content analyses have shown that most of the other language that relates to nations and nationalism apparently did not exist, or was hardly used, before the 16th

century in England; and that it spread only slowly and gradually to other countries during the following several centuries.

Such examples help us to see how concepts are socially made, and imperfect, not impersonally given and perfect; and how they are often multi-dimensional, 'vectors', where many criteria of recognition apply but there is no definitive set of necessary and sufficient conditions. However, many students find this type of discussion too dry, abstract and remote, when done in isolation as an exploration in etymology, intellectual history and social semantics. One may need to link it to an agenda of case-specific investigation. Unlike intellectual historians, in development studies we are typically not centrally interested in elaborating a map of past thinking but instead in interpreting and responding to the meaning-making in present-day discourses. We are trying to strengthen awareness of how systems of linked concepts, including whole category systems (sets of concepts used to categorise) are employed to construct world pictures; we try to strengthen awareness of processes of nomination and predication.

A menu of relevant tools of discourse analysis is not enough. New users need to unlearn some old habits, and to employ curiosity, motivation, and open eyes. Section 4 discusses why these are often absent and what we might do about this.

4. Challenges and problems -- the role for structured text analysis

> "The understanding of understanding requires a slowing down of pace and a certain distance to the subject." (Schmitt 2005: 383-4)

Problems that I have encountered during years of teaching discourse analysis and interpretive perspectives in graduate schools of development studies include, often, limited student readiness in terms of attitudes and prerequisite skills; and on the other hand, limitations in terms of what textbooks offer the students in terms of accessible and integrated methodology. Some students are uncomfortable with being asked to intellectually 'open up' issues, assumptions, authorities and identities, including their own. Many are put off by extensive and abstruse discourse theory, especially if of diverse kinds coming from diverse disciplinary and theoretical backgrounds and with little explicit interconnection. Others, plus some of the previous groups when further down the track, are interested to investigate but, on being asked to examine specific issues, discourses and texts, rush forth with pre-set or quickly intuited judgements, or feel a lack of usable methodology — workable approaches which have some investigative power, do not presume major conclusions, yet do not require long specialist training in linguistics, logic or hermeneutics.

Various approaches in interpretive analysis (e.g., those presented by Yanow 2000, or Hansen 2006) offer helpful orientation but the issues mentioned above often arise when students are asked to investigate particular cases and/or texts. First, the prerequisite of attitude: how to investigate with a suitably open, inquiring, but not empty, mind? Second, the need for skills and frameworks, to tackle specifics, integrate them into an overall interpretation, and demonstrate it effectively to others. A further obstacle and irritant is that different authors' approaches typically substantially overlap with each other, but are each presented under a different label and with much emphasis on their distinctiveness and supposed novelty. They fail to show sufficiently the great overlaps or complementarity with other approaches.

Interpretive and discourse analysis needs methods that adequately operationalise its perspectives while being absorbable and usable by ordinary practitioners and students. A combination only of abstracted theories, rich case studies, and complex methodologies that stress their own uniqueness may not achieve

widespread impact. Section 5 here presents an approach to text analysis and argumentation analysis that provides a basis and partner for using other, more complex and/or more narrowly focused, methods and approaches. It builds from students' existing skills, using a type of structured close reading, guided especially by Michael Scriven's classic textbook *Reasoning*. The approach fulfils two broad functions, with respect to attitudes and skills. It inculcates a style of reading, an investigative style, that brings an openness to discovery, through attention to both details and macro-structures. And secondly, it provides a frame for work, that gives space for a range of specific inquiries and methods (such as the investigation of categories, metaphor, assumptions and choices in framing) and gives a way to help situate and integrate them. It builds on, modifies and connects the Scriven and Toulmin formats of argument analysis, and operationalises a number of principles of critical and constructive thinking. The approach has been used in teaching and research for many years, with good results in terms of student learning and adoption. It gives a more open-ended and integrative way of pursuing the tasks of critical interpretation and reinterpretation; and a basis for entering and navigating the more demanding waters of other approaches.

We have a number of fundamental reasons for working closely with texts in this way. Language gives vital clues; we are in danger of missing these clues because of lack of curiosity and tacit mental 'scripts', including both our personal 'scripts' and dominant societal 'scripts'; and the commitments given in texts provide one line for seeking accountability in society.

First, verbal language provides vital clues, in a similar way to 'body language'. Verbal language involves so many choices that people tend to reveal more than they intend; they can typically not consciously control all the choices but instead draw on their inner 'formation', their habits, assumptions, stock of ideas and feelings. Close reading hunts out verbal language's 'body language' – the things that people seek to hide but reveal through their word choices, sequencing, omissions, repetitions, euphemisms, emphases and de-emphases. As with body language, one interprets elements in clusters and in context, not in isolation, and looks for examples of congruence or dissonance (Pease and Pease, 2004).

Second, close reading makes us less thoughtless and more self-critical in relation to our own tacit mental 'scripts'. We miss errors when proof-reading our own work, because our minds operate in terms of familiar patterns and often see only what we expect to see. In a famous experiment, the French discourse theorist Pêcheux gave two groups of students the same economics text, a text which could be described as middle-of-the-road. One group was told that it was left-wing; the other was told it was right-wing. Both groups then interpreted the text so as to match the 'frame' they had been given (Mills 2004: 12). Howard Becker warns likewise that we usually have mental 'scripts' too readily available in our minds and use these to superficially 'explain' cases of which we have little or no knowledge. Detailed description of an observed case "helps us get around [this] conventional thinking. [Otherwise, a] major obstacle to proper description and analysis of social phenomena is that we think we know most of the answers already" (Becker 1998: 83). In a similar way, detailed specification of a text, of its components and the structure of the arguments it contains, is a counter-measure against prejudgement concerning its contents and quality. It can help us to counteract our blinding by our own preconceptions and at the same time to clarify what are authors' tacit assumptions.

Third, the search for an accurate, thoughtful picture of texts leads us to think more independently in relation to existing power hierarchies and dominant societal 'scripts'. Becker notes that often we do not look in a close, fresh, independent way at a situation, because we have been assured by people in power that there is no need to do so. Close attention to a text helps us to see the choices involved in making the

text; the alternative choices that could have been made and their possible effects on meanings and conclusions; and the factors that may have influenced why they were not chosen. It highlights alternatives, and the roles of fields of influence and power; and thereby helps to build the power of alternatives.

Some analysts consider a close focus on texts to be a dead end: texts are seen as deceptive, in fact as instruments of deception. But texts almost inevitably reveal more than their authors wanted. In addition it is important to identify and analyse inconsistencies between what people say and what they do. Even when—in fact perhaps especially when—texts are a smokescreen for other intentions, they need to be clarified and tested, in order to understand, persuasively assess and improve them, and to try to choose more intelligently, effectively and democratically. Hidden assumptions or judgements need to be made explicit, and compared with alternatives. Evasions of systematic, consistent and acceptable argumentation need to be identified and made public.

Macro-textual investigation tries to identify, interpret and evaluate macro-structures (systems of ideas, of values, and of power) that are reflected in (or lie behind) a whole text or set of texts, for example a book, a series of newspaper articles, or even a set of books by the same author or a group of similar authors. Such analysis seeks a 'big picture'. Micro-textual investigation tries to identify, interpret and evaluate the meanings in a particular text or texts, through detailed micro-study of the exact choices made: of focus, of words and sequence, etcetera. Typically, such detailed analysis is done on relatively limited texts or selected passages or aspects, because the work is intricate, complex and time-consuming. Both types of inquiry are necessary. Micro-analysis which is not informed by macro-thinking can miss or misunderstand major aspects and meanings. Macro-argumentation which is not backed and tested by careful micro-textual analysis is unreliable and often crude, reductionist, preconceived and incomplete.

So, close reading is an essential balancing factor to thinking in terms of 'basic discourses' (as in e.g. Hansen 2006), but must be done in ways that destabilize or surface and test the prior presumptions of the reader too. As part of reading for initial orientation, such as when deciding whether to read a text in detail, one usually does a quick reconnaissance of the text to get an idea of an author's background, standpoint, intellectual framework, intended audience, etc. One looks at information on the author and sponsors, at the preface and acknowledgements, any summary, introduction and/or conclusion, and the list of references. While invaluable, this initial characterization done before detailed study also brings dangers of reductionism and induced blindness. Preliminary 'locating the text on the map' is meant to help us to study and interpret it, giving us a set of questions to ask, and not to substitute for open-minded and careful interpretation. It should not declare definite conclusions about the text in advance of examining its detailed content; nor assume that an author is necessarily limited to only the ideas that the reader has already seen him or her using or limited to those ideas' typical partners. 'Package deal' pictures of the intellectual alternatives available assert that if you use idea A then you must also hold ideas B through Z, so that we do not even need to check what ideas you in actuality use. Such pictures assume that only a few intellectual alternatives are available or worth considering. Often more valid are 'pick-and-mix' ('à la carte') pictures of the range of available intellectual alternatives; such pictures show many combinations of elements as possible and tenable.

One danger we face thus concerns reductionism regarding particular texts: over-simplification of their meanings, including perhaps ignoring internal plurality and contradictions. A sister danger contributes to the first and concerns reductionism about schools of thought, underestimating the depth of thinking behind viewpoints with which one disagrees. People flatter themselves by underestimating others.[x] To

counter the danger of reading a text with a strong feeling of superiority of one's own views, Klamer and McCloskey (1989) propose two principles: the Maxim of Presumed Seriousness (take other writers seriously) and the Principle of Intellectual Trade (be able to learn from others who think differently). Such principles need embodiment in working procedures. Close reading and micro-textual analysis are two such, related and important, means. Text- and argumentation analysis helps one to read afresh – *to 'make strange'* and hence not re-read one's pre-set mental script – and to get close but also seek the big picture.

5. Text- and Argumentation-Analyses organized as integrative exploratory formats

Argumentation analysis is a major strand in discourse analysis (see e.g. van Dijk ed. 1997, 2011). The approach presented here has three component strands. First, it adapts the widely known argumentation analysis-and-evaluation procedure presented by the Australian-American philosopher and theorist of evaluation, Michael Scriven. Scriven's type of argumentation analysis is richer than most because it builds on prior stages of exploration of meanings in texts, and is not preoccupied with logic in isolation. I convert the procedure into user-friendly worksheet formats: first, a text analysis worksheet ('text analysis table') which leads on to, second, a worksheet to specify and test argument structure ('argumentation synthesis table'). For both tables a family of variants is available, according to need.

Second, for the argumentation synthesis table our approach adapts the Toulmin format for examining argument structures (Toulmin 1958; van Eemeren et al. 1996), which has been widely used in fields like speech communication, planning and policy analysis (see e.g. Dunn 1981, 1st edition, through to 2016, 5th edition) and in the best-selling research methodology textbook *The Craft of Research* (Booth et al., 1995, 2003, 2008, 2016 editions). The Toulmin format has a ready accessibility, and highlights the testing of an argument as both a logical/intellectual activity and a public activity, through its categories of (potential) Rebuttals and Qualifiers to a Claim. Results in the hands of ordinary users (but also of academics) can sometimes be unfortunate (Gasper & George 1998 gave detailed examples of published misuse by academics), but the model can be converted into a more flexible, reliable and user-friendly synthesis table format. When using it to describe an existing text rather than construct a new position, the synthesis table can be built from the results of the text analysis table. Third, we connect and can adapt the worksheet formats to supplementary methods, for examination of categorisation, value language, figurative language, rhetoric, generation of alternatives, etc.

The Scriven and Toulmin approaches

Scriven's *Reasoning* gives a seven step procedure for examining a text as a pattern of argumentation.

Table 2: Scriven's procedure for argument analysis

Argument specification	Argument evaluation
1. Clarify meanings (of terms)	5. Criticize inferences and premises
2. Identify conclusions, stated and unstated	6. Consider other relevant arguments
3. Portray structure	7. Overall evaluation
4. Formulate unstated assumptions	(Any step can lead back to earlier steps.)

It is worth elaborating Scriven's formulation, as follows. Points in italics are my additions (Gasper 2000a).

0. *Reading and rereading (at least twice), to identify components (in a preliminary way)*

1. Look at meanings; *including by considering language choices and alternative possible formulations. (Do this for the entire text before essaying further steps.)*
2. Identify conclusions, including unstated conclusions (*focus on the main conclusion[s])*
3. Portray structure (components' connections to each other); *several alternative formats are possible; and note that one will later revise and elaborate this synthesis, in light of steps 4 and 6*
4. Identify unstated assumptions, the connections to ideas and situations outside the text; *these connections vary from more to less definite*
5. *Evaluate* premises and inferences *(i.e. engage in 'criticism' in the more neutral sense)*
6. Consider other relevant arguments *and counter-arguments*
7. Overall judgement on the text.

Preliminary identification of conclusions (step 2) – including tentatively suggesting what is the main conclusion and which are the intermediate or peripheral conclusions – must come before we attempt a picture of argument structure, the picture of how a conclusion is reached (step 3). That tentative suggestion can though be amended in light of the later steps. From a picture of structure, i.e. of the set of linkages between components which lead to the conclusion, we can then look in detail at individual linkages and see what are the assumptions on which they rely (step 4).

Toulmin's model is a way of presenting argument structure (Scriven's step 3), by identifying some standard roles/components:- *Claims* or conclusions; for which specific *Grounds*, or data, are provided in support; *Warrants* – the more general and/or theoretical (including sometimes valuative) ideas which are used to make the logical link from Grounds to Claims; and *Qualifiers*, which are limitations on the strength of the Claim, reflecting the presence of counterarguments (possible *Rebuttals*), exceptions, and so on. Grounds, warrants and rebuttals can themselves have proposed *Backing.* One key role of the Toulmin model is to make us think about the, often unstated, more general ideas – the warrants – upon which a claim relies. If the Claim is an evaluation or prescription then amongst the Warrants we will expect value-ideas. A second key role is to make us think about possible counter-arguments (rebuttals) and limitations (qualifiers) to the claim made.[xi]

While the Toulmin model has been and continues widely popular, certain weaknesses recur in use. Distinguishing between grounds and warrants can be problematic. More important, the model was usually presented in the format of a single flow-chart, which can mislead readers into oversimplifications when they describe real arguments, and into mis-describing them by always imitating the layout of the illustrative flow-chart in whichever textbook they studied. (For details and examples, see Gasper & George 1998.) Toulmin himself never proposed his flow-chart format as a working methodology or template. But it became widely used as such, because it can be easily understood by non-specialists and often helps them to do better than without it. (As mentioned, the best-selling textbooks *Public Policy Analysis* by William Dunn and *The Craft of Research* by Wayne Booth et al. have each relied heavily on a version of the Toulmin flow-chart.) If we combine Toulmin's ideas with the flexible Scriven approach, and with a more helpful presentation format—not a single flow-chart, but a table, with whenever necessary different rows for different steps in an overall argument—we can benefit from Toulmin's insights without being trapped in the original format.

Turning Scriven and Toulmin's ideas into more user-friendly work-formats

To make the ideas of Scriven and Toulmin more helpful in use, we convert them into a pair of work-formats: the analysis table and the synthesis table. The *text* a*nalysis table* (Scriven-Gasper format) is for component-by-component examination of a text. In a first column one places and considers each component of the text. Subsequent columns provide reflections on meanings, conclusions, assumptions, and possible alternative

formulations. The table has various possible versions according to the number of columns and the tasks placed in them. Choice between versions depends on the priority focus in a particular exercise (see examples in Gasper 2000a, 2002, 2004b, 2006, Gasper & Roldan 2011, and in essays in *An Exercise in Worldmaking*, ISS 2005-). For example, one can include a column to consider alternative wordings of the text; and this often helps in Scriven's steps 1 (examine meanings), 2 (identify conclusions, including unstated) and 5 (identify unstated assumptions), as well as 6 (consider alternative arguments).

For the fundamental step 1, reflecting on meanings, Box 1 above introduced some basic advice. First, Interpret meanings comparatively: i.e. through comparison with what might have been said instead. This reflects 'the contrast theory of meaning' (Scriven). Second, pay attention to praise/criticism language, including 'secondarily evaluative' terms; for this can help to reveal conclusions.[xii] Third, pay attention to uses of figurative language, such as metaphors; for these can help to reveal assumptions, including sometimes values that are more hidden. In addition, one should think about the construction of roles, through examining uses of 'I', 'you', 'they', 'it', 'we', 'us', etc. (see e.g. Gasper and Roldan 2011).

Let us take a simple worked example. *(Some readers may wish to move directly to the subsection on 'Roles of micro-analysis'.)* Table 3 analyses the following statement by a government minister in Zimbabwe: "My Ministry is resolved to phase out [the] haphazard and scatter-based settlement pattern prevailing throughout the country and establish properly planned villages. The households and their councillors must accept the concept of centralised villages." (Deputy Minister R.M. Marere, Zimbabwe, 1987)

Table 3: Illustration of use of a text analysis table

THE TEXT (Scriven's step 0: break the text into components)	**COMMENTS ON THE CHOICES OF WORDS AND THE RESULTING MEANINGS** (= Step 1: reflect on meanings)	**THE TEXT REPHRASED (*in two variants)* TO SHOW HOW THE CHOICES AFFECT THE MESSAGE** (= Step 1, meanings, & Step 6: consider alternative views)	**IDENTIFICATION OF CONCLUSIONS AND ASSUMPTIONS** (= Steps 2 and 4)
"My Ministry	This phrase gives an impression of great authority to the speaker, almost as if he owns the Ministry, and as if it is a monolith, a unified single actor. The phrase is more potent than 'I' or 'I, as Minister'.	We in the Ministry of Lands	
is resolved	'is resolved' suggests a fixed determination and leaves little or no space for discussion. It is more assertive than 'proposes' or 'would like', and even than 'has resolved', which just records a decision.	insist [= a gentler variant] */ have made up our minds [= a stronger variant]*	Stated Conclusion: We are determined to replace the present rural settlement pattern
to phase out	As if the Ministry is administering something under its authority and close control; like when a bus company phases out a bus route: a precisely calculated, timetabled, action concerning one of its own activities.	that rural households should leave */ to terminate*	
	'haphazard' (and perhaps 'scatter-based') suggests carelessness - lack		

[the] haphazard and scatter-based settlement pattern prevailing throughout the country and establish properly planned villages. The households and their councillors must accept the concept of centralised villages."	of thought and co-ordination; and that a more urban-style layout is required. Villages are to be established by the Ministry, not led by villagers. 'Planned' and 'properly' convey praise; 'properly planned' implies that the existing settlements are not properly planned, and that the Ministry knows better than the residents and so has to instruct them. 'must accept' suggests there may be penalties if they do not. Not all rural people, including councillors, agree with the Minister; for if they did then this sentence would be unnecessary. 'Properly planned' has become specified as: 'centralised'.	the dispersed and locally chosen rural settlement patterns and move to centralized villages set up and planned by my Ministry. This will be done regardless of what local people think. The Ministry knows best. Households and councillors must accept what we say (or face the consequences)	Stated Assumption: the present settlement pattern is unplanned and unacceptable by standards of proper planning Unstated Conclusion: the present rural settlement pattern should be phased out Unstated Assumption: Proper planning means centralised villages Unstated Conclusion/ Suggestion: We will go ahead even if local people do not agree.

Restatement of the text, as in the table's third column, helps to bring out possible concealed messages. The rephrased version there is more transparent, and more openly tendentious and controversial. It brings to the surface aspects half-hidden in the speech: that some people in power declare that they have such great authority and so much more understanding than ordinary rural residents, and even than the local councillors, that they can instruct the residents, as an order, to move their residences and settle in new places chosen and designed by outside experts. Language is used to express and reinforce this claim to authority and superior knowledge, and to display power.

One could also rephrase the text so as to make it more polite and less authoritarian, such as a student did as follows: "My Ministry is committed to develop the villages in such a manner that everything is in place so as to be convenient for the villagers. With the cooperation of villagers and the elected local representatives such development will become a reality." In both cases the rephrasing helps to make clear the choices and meanings in the original text, but by different routes. In the version in Table 3 it does this by using less polite, more direct, language: intensifying and slightly crudening the message. The student's more polite version provides a contrast, changing the tone through some key changes of emphasis; it leads to a quite different overall message. The actual choice of style, authoritarian but also somewhat veiled and ambiguous, suggests something about the extant power relations.

Many insights, hypotheses and issues are raised by students when examining such a text carefully through an analysis table format. Here, for example:

- Use of '*My Ministry*' not 'the/your/our Ministry' conveys a paternalist authoritarian tone;
- '*resolved'* suggests that the Ministry is resolute and will press ahead even if it faces resistance and costs; 'resolved' is an impressive and emphatic way of saying 'decided', and perhaps suggests a right

to make the decision, so can lend a favourable slant in support of the message that government has decided in favour of villagization.

- '*phase out*' reflects the ambitiousness of the policy: it is too big to be done everywhere at once; the term also suggests a measured, scientific approach, smooth and under control; and, compared to saying 'replace', it suggests replacement of something *obsolete*, which will never return.
- 'e*stablish*' sounds more imposing, permanent and solid than 'start' or 'set up'. It conveys a quasi-urban image of future village life, perhaps with new settlements rather than upgraded existing ones.
- The term *'properly'* has a praise-function, so the verb it qualifies/describes ('*planning*') must also be one considered as favourable or potentially favourable (i.e. when 'properly' done).
- For a term like 'planned' or 'unplanned' we should ask '*(un)planned by whom*?'.
- The term '*households*' suggests that people are conceived first as residents of *houses*, rather than as people/citizens/producers/migrants/…; thus where they live must be planned on the basis of efficient provision of services for these houses, rather than in terms of their traditions, culture or work.
- '*must accept*' suggests that people have not been asked or have not given clear agreement, which establishes a tension in relation to the technocratic confidence of 'phase out'; less authoritarian would be the phrase 'should come to see'.
- '*centralized*' is sometimes a term of criticism; but here, for the Minister and his advisers, it is not, instead 'properly planned' has been equated to 'centralized', with a connotation of a permanent settlement with modern facilities.
- The Minister speaks of '*The households and their councillors*', not 'villagers and councillors'. The phrase '*their* councillors' serves to downgrade the opinions of the councillors, by designating them as chosen by (presumably poorly-educated and 'haphazard') villagers who are unable to plan properly - rather than as elected representatives with an independent legitimacy as political leaders.
- The text uses *no metaphors*. The language is forceful and strongly disciplinary.
- No reference to punishments is included: perhaps it is not needed if households and councillors tolerated being spoken to like this, and accepted that the government knows far better. Also, effective surveillance may be possible; unlike for some behaviour, location of rural residence is difficult to hide.

The table operationalises J.P. Gee (2011)'s 'Making Strange Tool', making us look at things explicitly and in a fresh way. Its close interrogation involves asking for each element, first, what is this? And second, why does it need to be said? Thus it also operationalizes Gee's 'Subject Tool' ('Why did she mention that?'). Third, why is it said in way W? What would the difference be if it were not included or were instead said in manner M? Having a column to consider alternative possible wordings operationalizes this inquiry, which Gee calls 'The Why This Way and Not That Way Tool'. It helps to clarify the influence which the *actual* choice of words has; *and* to suggest possible counter-arguments. For example, while the phrase 'must accept' (phasing out of 'haphazard settlements') is so peremptory that it suggests a very dominant government, an instruction in such a tone would probably not be necessary if acceptance were guaranteed and resistance inconceivable. In contrast to the technocratic confidence of 'phase out' and 'properly plan' it implied that many people did not agree with the policy and had not accepted it. The authoritarian style of the speech could thus be precisely an attempt to override opposition. Indeed, in reality Zimbabwe's authoritarian government still ultimately held back from compulsory villagization, for which there was little or no popular support and which could have led to major resistance.

The *argumentation synthesis table* or *logic table* (or Toulmin-George format) presents the structure of an argument or argument system. This corresponds to Scriven's step 3, as modifiable by the later steps. The

table is R.V. George's modification of Toulmin's format, and starts (suitably for a Western reader) on the left hand side with the claimed conclusion.

Table 4. Toulmin-George synthesis table (Source: Gasper and George 1998)

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4
Claim,	because of this Data	and this Warrant(s);	Unless those conditions &/or Despite those counter-points

A synthesis table encourages one to look for logical links, including looking for warrants, e.g. the normative warrants that are required for normative conclusions. This can also help us to find and show possible ambiguities, tensions and inconsistencies in a text. Column 4, the 'Unless' column, partly matches Scriven's step 6 ('Consider other relevant arguments'). In my usage the column covers both (a) recognized limitations and qualifications of the argument, e.g. indication of situations in which the Claim does not hold good – these link to Toulmin's 'qualifier' category; and (b) counter-arguments which more strongly dispute the argument's validity – these match Toulmin's 'rebuttal' category. Sometimes a text holds that its argument is still valid despite a recognized possible counter-argument; it employs a 'Despite' category.[xiii]

Table 5. Illustration of use of an argumentation synthesis table

I PROPOSE THAT [CLAIM],	**GIVEN THAT [DATA]**	**AND THE [WARRANTS] PRINCIPLES THAT,**	**UNLESS [REBUTTAL]** **(**for example)
The existing pattern of settlements must be phased out and replaced by centralized villages [Stated Conclusion: We are determined to replace the present rural settlement pattern…]	Stated Assumption: the present settlement pattern is unplanned and unacceptable by standards of proper planning	1. Unstated Assumption: Proper planning means centralised villages, centrally planned and suitable for providing modern services. 2. Unstated Assumption: People must live in a modern manner.	1. There are production-related reasons too for the current village locations 2. [There are other important values:] People care strongly about their traditions.
Unstated Conclusion: We will go ahead even if local people do not agree, and will be right to do so.		3. Unstated Assumption: Central government knows best 4. Unstated Assumption: Central government has the authority and right	3. Central government does not know best; [e.g. see rebuttal #1 above] 4. And does not have the right. 5. Attempts to enforce centralization will produce severe problems.

If we try to represent the illustration text as an explicit argument system, Table 5 gives one plausible version. The first claim is that people should move into centralized villages. The second is that government will rightly enforce this even if people disagree. Each claim is anatomized in a separate row, unlike in confusing attempts to squeeze everything into a single diagram. The first row's claim is supported by the stated data and warrants 1 and 2. However it is potentially vulnerable to attacks on (a) the data and the

warrants, and in addition to attacks on (b) the inference. Thus rebuttals 1, 2 and 5 all propose that the first claim may not be *sufficiently* supported by the data and warrants, even if those are valid. They concern additional factors not covered by the text's arguments but surfaced by this sort of searching investigation, using what we might call the 'What Has Been Left Out Tool'. Similarly, for the second claim, some counterarguments concern the proposed warrants and some concern factors not thought of in the text.

As with the text analysis table, alternative formats are possible for the synthesis table, according to purposes.[xiv]

Roles of micro-analysis and an argumentation analysis format

Scriven's framework, extended into these two work tables, is a good entry point to interpretive and discourse analysis. It gives close attention to texts and meanings: it uses a 'microscope'. Organised in the form of a text-analysis table for its early stages, it supports exploration of word choice, tropes, rhetoric, 'voices', categories, etc. This systematic probing for meanings gives a more reliable basis for thinking about logic; and, in turn, that attention to interconnections will deepen the discussion of meanings. The framework includes close attention to structures (in stages 3-4), and thus to roles and linkages across a text and across textual and societal contexts, including via study of the unstated; it uses also a 'telescope'. Organised in the form of a synthesis table for stages 3-6, the work strengthens a dialectical awareness of counter-arguments and the multiple voices in social contexts. Both tables help in 'making strange', changing how we view materials in order to see things afresh. Let us consider these roles more fully.

First, detailed and systematic such investigation typically reveals much more than one finds by ordinary reading. Scriven's and Toulmin's methods contain elements, which – by extending the various principles seen in 'distant reading' (i.e. skimming or reading for orientation) and 'close reading'– help us to see differently and more than by routine reading. Analysis formats and formalised language make one go slowly and systematically, and allow one to combine (i) keeping a mental distance from a text, so that one can get beyond one's preconceptions and become more likely to find the unexpected, and (ii) getting close to a text, not ignoring some parts, but instead thinking about its subtler connotations and resonances. This combination of mental distance and close involvement is productive and essential.

Second, such an approach is not only focused on 'logic', but its attention to logic gives it a way of thinking structurally and systematically. The Scriven method looks centrally at meanings, in context, and it thus also covers many aspects which are not openly stated. When it then looks at how conclusions/messages are conveyed, it asks how far this is done logically or illogically. It is a method for bringing out possible ambiguities, tensions, inconsistencies and multiple messages in a text, and for thinking more clearly about debates and disagreements within society. Systematic 'de-text-ive' work on unsystematic arguments helps us to look at all elements, including the gaps and the unstated elements, and to understand better how the elements are being linked and employed and what difference each makes.

There are dangers of over-interpretation, and needs for nuance, qualification, and proper representation of the ambiguities and tensions in a text. Appropriate nuance and qualification can be provided in many ways. We can explicitly distinguish between definite implications and assumptions and, on the other hand, the possibles, the suggestions and the hints. Scriven highlights the danger of creating 'straw-men': excessively weak versions of argumentation, that are too easy to criticize. He advocates use of the principle of charity in interpretation, as both tactically wiser and intellectually more productive. A weak representation of an argument is much easier to deny—'But of course we did not mean that'—even if it

were accurate originally; whereas formulating and assessing a strong version of an argument identifies a position's potential, which is anyway where it is likely to evolve towards under pressure of debate.

Third, the extension and integration of the Scriven and Toulmin formats presented above operationalises a number of principles of constructive thinking. All six of Edward de Bono's popular 'Thinking Hats', for example, are reflected.[xv] The Six Hats approach distinguishes key activities in thinking and provides separate guaranteed space for each of them; ensuring that this happens is a task for the steering 'Blue Hat' activity. Attention to each type of thinking is then assured and also becomes more fruitful, for each involves different skills and will benefit from concentrated attention. Specifically, our approach follows the Scriven procedure in separating argument specification (cf. the White Hat) from argument evaluation (cf. Yellow, Black, and Green Hats); it provides separate space for generation of alternatives (Green Hat); and it can provide space to explore feelings and intuitions about a text (Red Hat), allowing them to be stated, while only later and separately turning to analyse and assess them.

Fourth, the approach provides a framework and some tools with which to carry out and connect many interpretive and discourse analysis tasks. We saw, for example, that the procedure of trying out alternative formulations of a text, to see by contrast the significance of the formulation actually adopted, applies 'the contrast theory of meaning': that we should develop our understanding about what a text means by contrasting it with alternative texts. Further, the tasks are linked as parts of the stages-model for analysing texts as argument-systems.

Fifth, the approach thus provides a workable entry point and complement to more specified or complex approaches. To apply such approaches will benefit from, indeed require, skills that can be built up by using Scriven's framework. Use of the popular WPR approach ('What is the Problem Represented to Be?'; Bacchi 2010), for example, can greatly benefit from semantic and argumentation analysis (for WPR Questions 1, 2, 4), including for thinking about the unstated, the silences and alternatives. To intelligently use approaches which centre on seeking persistent standard frames, those frames should be seen as 'ideal types', together with a recognition that people typically do not adopt only one frame and that they continue innovating and improvising. Such an awareness is strengthened through the open, detailed engagement encouraged by this text-analysis approach.

Sixth, it is worth distinguishing between roles in training and roles in later doing discourse analysis. The approach helps to train one in giving sharp and close attention, in reflecting on both surface meanings and underlying meanings and values, and in finding connections and inconsistencies or tensions. As such skills are strengthened, the need to explicitly use the table formats becomes less.[xvi] Further, while sometimes they are feasible and very helpful for explicit use in research, on key materials and for generating questions and hypotheses to apply in further work (cf. e.g. Booth et al., 2003), sometimes they are not feasible and/or not necessary. There are limits to the stretches of text which can be investigated in comprehensive detail. We often need more macroscopic, less microscopic, methods; and some powerful ones are available.

6. Content and frame analyses

Content analysis of word choices and topic choices is a helpful way to explore intellectual frames, through identifying patterns of nomination and predication. Nomination, let us recall, means how a speaker or writer organises life/ experience/ the world /thinking, through using a system of concepts and categories, which are given particular names. Analysing this means seeing the choices that underlie statements of the form 'This situation contains A, B and C'. Predication means attribution of sets of characteristics to these proposed elements: 'A is p, q, r; B is s, t, u; C is v, w, x'. We want to identify the sets of concepts, categories and characterizations (sometimes we can call this a 'cast of characters') that a speaker or writer are employs, the sets of issues that are addressed or implied and those that are ignored.

Example 1: Climate Change in Global Development Reports

In two studies Ana Victoria Portocarrero, Asuncion Lera St.Clair and I examined three flagship global development reports that dealt with climate change and its implications (Gasper et al 2013a, 2013b). We look here at the first of the studies, that compared the United Nations' Human Development Report [HDR] 2007/8 (UNDP 2007) and the World Bank's World Development Report [WDR] 2010 (World Bank 2010), both of which were written in relation to the fateful unsuccessful world climate summit in Copenhagen at the end of 2009. We identified and compared the topics that the reports covered, in what ways they discussed them, and the languages that were used. We did the last of these activities, word count analysis, as a supplementary activity, but it gave particularly striking results (Gasper et al. 2013a), revealing many surprisingly sharp and partly unforeseen contrasts. It proved helpful then for identifying lines for further exploration, and for capturing audience attention and encouraging people to enter into more complex and substantive discussion of how various topics are treated.

Table 6: Vocabularies of the Overview chapters in HDR 2007/8 and WDR 2010 [xvii]

	HDR 2007/8	WDR 2010
we	56	11
children	11	3
grandchildren	3	0
future generations	19	0
the world's poor	17	0
the poor *[other uses]*	12	1
human	102	8
humanity	8	1
human rights	11	0
justice	7	0
equity/equitable	2	15
efficiency/efficient/inefficient/inefficiency	21	48
effective	2	12
manage/(mis)management/mismanaging	6	26
political	23	6
Insurance/insurers/insure	3	16
climate smart	0	9
consumption	7	19
threshold/s	7	1

Table 6 shows word counts for key terms in the two reports' nearly equal length executive summaries, which are major self-contained documents of 11,000 words.[xviii] The United Nations Human Development report summary made much reference to impacts on human rights, poor people, future generations, and 'we'. The World Bank report summary gave little or even zero mention to those themes, even though they might seem obvious and unavoidable for a report on the challenges of climate change written by an organization affiliated to the United Nations system. It talked instead in terms of management, efficiency, consumption, insurance, and 'climate-smart' solutions.

While word counts on their own can mislead, they form a good starting point for dissecting discourse. They often provide some unexpected findings and suggest lines for inquiry, and they give a clearer sharper impression than can unquantified commentary, helping to gain the interest and the credence of many in the audience. Moretti and Pestre (2015)'s famous study of 'Bankspeak', the contemporary language of the World Bank, relied similarly on quantified content analysis, but as an example of 'corpus linguistics' work on the word usages in large bodies of literature across extended periods of time. Modern computer capacities and programmes make such studies possible.[xix] Fortunately non-specialist users too can now easily run simpler wordcount studies of any digitalized text.

In some cases digitalized texts are not available or different sorts of questions need to be asked. Here topic-choice analysis, rather than lexical-choice (word choice) analysis, can be feasible and helpful, as illustrated in the next example.

Example 2: Visions of India's development

In a study of several prominent authors on contemporary development paths in India I compared which topics they discussed (Gasper 2018). The authors were: the best-selling former President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam; the current Prime Minister Narendra Modi; the famous corporate strategist C.K. Prahalad, who became an iconic figure in Indian business circles; the IT billionaire Nandan Nilekani, a founder of Infosys; and the Nobel-Prize winning economist-philosopher Amartya Sen (writing in partnership with Jean Drèze), himself an icon in some streams in development studies. In each case an influential book was taken as the main focus, except for Mr. Modi where the main source was an analysis of all the political speeches on his website during the lead-in to his 2014 national election victory (Nair 2013). Also included was a book by Harriss-White and Subramaniam (1999), that gave a baseline from development studies discussions in India in the 1990s, before the rise of the perspectives that are prominent in more recent books.[xx]

This type of focused comparison emerges out of, complements and interacts with the forms of reflective reading that Said advocated.[xxi] As one reads different authors with a comparative interest in mind, one starts to identify themes and features that could be checked across each of them. In this study of prominent Indian writers, such checking suggested, first, some areas of broad consensus across time and despite political differences, including a belief in the necessity of economic and technological transformation; second, areas of dispute and changing balances, including on the roles of the public sector versus private business; and third, continuous widely shared (but not invariable) blind-spots, such as lack of attention to informal sector migrant workers and their families and to sanitation facilities for poor people. The exercise provides a testing of hypotheses arising from ordinary reading and in many cases adds unexpected insights (see Table 7).

Table 7: Six perspectives on India: patterns of attention and inattention. (Based on Gasper 2018)[xxii]

	Harriss-White, Subramaniam *ILLFARE IN INDIA,* 1947-99	C.K. PRAHALAD, *FORTUNE AT THE B.O.P.* (2005)	NANDAN NILEKANI, *IMAGINING INDIA* (2009)	A.P.J. ABDUL KALAM, *IGNITING MINDS* (2002)	DRÈZE & SEN *AN UN-CERTAIN GLORY* (2013)	NARENDRA MODI SPEECHES
RATIONALE FOR INCLUSION	Provides a baseline for viewing more recent work	Management orientation; strong links to big business	Management plus high tech; link to Congress Party	High-tech plus lyrical nationalism	Humanism, democracy and participation	New BJP: which preceding elements does it reflect?
SANITATION	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES
THE POOREST	Yes	Concerns 3rd & 4th quintiles but not 5th	No	No	YES	Talks of the poor not of the rich
AGEING	(Yes)		Yes	No	No	
DISABILITY	Yes	(Yes)	No	No	(Yes)	
MIGRATION	No	No	As a solution	No	No	No
DISPLACE-MENT	No	No	No, despite much on roads	No	(Yes)	
CASTE	(A little)	No	Yes; plus 'commun-ities'	No	Yes	No
MUSLIMS	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	(nor Hindu)
POWER SYSTEM	(Little)	No	YES: as Leftist incubus	No	(Little)	
THE STATE	(A little)	State as incompetent but reformable	State as obstacle; reformable	(No)	State as reformable	State as reformable
BUSINESS	No	YES	YES	(No)	(NO)	YES
INTERSECT-IONALITY, REAL CASES	(Little)	Some	Some; via anecdotes	Some	(Yes: multi-dimensional poverty)	
CHILDREN	(As pupils)		As pupils	As minds, creators, value-holders	As pupils &c, with details on ill-/welfare	
PRE-BRITISH	No	No	No	Yes, as great	No	Yes, as great
BRITISH COLONIAL	No	No	Yes, as problem	(No)	Yes	(Yes)
NEHRU(S) &c	(A little)	No	Yes – as a major problem	(No)	(No)	Attention instead to Vivekananda
(AMERICAN-STYLE) GLOBALIZN.	(Little)	Yes	YES – as the answer. Asset of English.	(yes)	Yes	Yes
CHINA	(No)	(Yes)	(Little)	No	Yes	
BANGLA-DESH	No	No	No	No	YES	No
ICT	(No)	Yes	YES	Yes	NO	Yes
ETHICS	(Needed)	(implicit)	No	YES	Yes	Yes; service
THE NATION	(Little)	(implicit)	Yes	YES	Yes	YES
GENDER	(Little)	(A little)	(Little)	No	Yes	(?)

The comparison located blindspots in each perspective. Nilekani's 500-page prospectus *Imagining India: Ideas for the New Century*, for example, ignored sanitation, disability, India's Muslim population, and the remarkable progress in India's closely comparable neighbour Bangladesh. Yet lack of sanitation has been a huge blackspot as well as blindspot in India compared to many developing countries, that is shaming in itself and a major contributor factor to ill-health and ongoing poverty; a high proportion of India's poorest people are disabled in one or another way or, often, multiple ways; a very high proportion of them are Muslims; and Bangladesh is both perhaps the most comparable country to India overall and a remarkable example of rapid social progress since the 1970s in respect of health, education, female emancipation, sanitation, nutrition and more (see e.g. Hossain 2017). But Nilekani's scope of comparison, like Abdul Kalam or Prahalad or Modi's, does not include Bangladesh; they appear to think and write rather in terms of the USA, or Singapore, or in some cases a dreamed-of glorious (Hindu) classical past.

Sen and Dreze gave close attention to most topics neglected by Nilekani and others, and are far more informed on several important human development sectors and many relevant comparator countries in Asia and beyond; but the topics comparison reveals notable gaps in their coverage too. They delicately passed over core realities of social power in India, perhaps because hoping still to persuade the Congress Party, the traditional post-independence vehicle of rule, to commit to serious prioritization of human development; and they omitted the inspirational trump-cards mobilized by the competitor visions – the presumed magics of the market, of the business corporation, of high-tech and ICT, and of assertive nationalism.

Correspondingly, systematic identification and comparison of themes and topics helps to show also how the current ruling Bharatiya Janata Party under Narendra Modi has astutely crafted a combination of appeals that were found across diverse earlier strands: the American business-school vision exemplified by Prahalad; the glamour of I.T. and other high-tech, underpinning a proposed process re-engineering for India Inc., exemplified by Nilekani; plus the excitement and heady group passions of a quasi-religious nationalism and a cult of young India, exemplified by Abdul Kalam, rocket scientist and inspirer of youth; all combined with the creation of a defined gallery of the nation's heroes and villains, with the latter too often including—for some purposes, audiences and occasions—Muslim groups at home and abroad. The BJP's armoury includes, in addition, a shrewd incorporation, certainly in parts of its discourse, of some elements from originally quite different intellectual and political traditions: not least a declared priority attention to the traditional blindspot, sanitation, as part of its reaching out both to lower castes and to potentially disgusted Non-Resident Indian supporters.[xxiii] Large gaps remain, for example regarding migrant labourers, displacement, caste discrimination, and the possible relevance of learning from Bangladesh if truly serious about mass social progress.

Example 3: the IPCC 2014 Assessment Report on climate change -- what attention to human significance?

Our third example of using content-analysis as a tool in characterizing intellectual frames – the topics covered, thought systems, emphases and absences – concerns the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's 2014 Assessment Report (AR5) on the findings of preceding scientific research. A study done with Kjersti Fløttum and Asuncion St. Clair (Fløttum, Gasper and Lera St.Clair 2016) concluded that, despite the huge intellectual investment, the Report showed the continuing neglect of the interests of poor people. We investigated the rhetorical character of this inhuman gaze, hidden in the traditions of natural science, the restrictions of texts that are subjected to (inter-)governmental approval and veto, and how a

subset of concerned scientists sought still to draw attention to the huge damage and risks that are arising for poor people. In this case the content analysis was on a larger scale and more technical. We studied the four Summary-for-Policy-Makers (SPM) documents: for the three Working Groups (WG1 - The Physical Science Basis; WG2 - Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability; WG3 - Mitigation of Climate Change) and the Synthesis Report (SYR-SPM).[xxiv] We looked for similarities and differences between the Working Group SPMs and between these and the Synthesis Report SPM. Some of the results are given in Table 8.

Table 8: AR5 Synthesis Report's Summary-for-Policy-Makers compared to 3 Working Group SPMs[xxv]

	SYR (Synthesis Report) SPM		WGI SPM	WGII SPM	WGIII SPM
	frequency	per 10,000	per 10,000	per 10,000	per 10,000
climate	144	96 [75](2)	56	125	44
change	119	79 [65](1)	44	117	34
emissions	118	79 [45](3)	37	3	95
mitigation	106	71 [35](3)	1	20	85
confidence	105	70 [64](1,2)	84	80	28
scenarios	96	64 [30](3)	12	11	68
CO_2	88	59 [26](1,3)	40	2	37
adaptation	86	57 [28](2)	0	77	8
Figure	72	48 [41](2)	40	42	41
global	66	44 [35](1)	58	24	24
likely	66	44 [27](1)	67	6	7
levels	58	38 [25](3)	8	24	43
medium	57	38 [45](1,2)	31	44	59
warming	57	38 [21](1)	36	27	1
risks	*53*	*35 [28](3)*	*0*	*73*	*10*
risk	*21*	*14 [29](2)*	*0*	*42*	*1*
century	47	31 [26](2)	50	19	9
impacts	45	30 [25](2)	0	73	3
energy	42	28 [29](1,2)	6	6	75
human	24	16 [20](1)	13	36	11

Numbers in [ ] = mean frequencies per 10K across the three WG SPMs; numbers in ( ) = which WG the SYR's relative frequency is closest to

First, we noted shared features across the four SPMs. Reflecting the terms of reference for the IPCC, all four followed an impersonal style, avoided open evaluations and prescriptions, for they are instructed to be policy-relevant but not policy-prescriptive, and were obliged to use the same context-independent terminology for estimates of probability and of confidence-levels. The terminology for probability appears to be derived from what fits Working Group I (physical sciences), but often does not fit well the subject-matter in the other Working Groups. So, for example, a chance of mortalities that is below 33% had to be called 'unlikely'; wheras in almost any social context a chance of death of 30%, 20%, 10%, even 5%, would be called very high. In a human-related context, risk should be seen as [*probability x damage*], with damage being measured in terms of human concerns (Hansson 1999, Wynne 2009). So a fairly low-probability of very-high-damage can be understood as high risk. But when an impersonal context-independent language about probability levels becomes combined with an inhibition or even prohibition about using language that highlights human values, great danger arises of under-emphasising the risks faced by vulnerable poor people.

So, second, we noted that the predominant tone of discussion taken over from the natural sciences became at the expense of a focus on human beings and what matters in social systems. There is extensive attention to physical systems, and mention even of flora and fauna and of possible GDP losses. In contrast the attention to vulnerable human populations is remarkably thin. The very term *'human'* was little used in the SPMs of WGs I and III; it was more common in the SPMs of WGII on Impacts and of the SYR, but even there without differentiation amongst human populations: between rich and poor countries, between rich and poor people, between those groups who are (much) more vulnerable (e.g., often, children) and others. This combined with, indeed perhaps derived from, the absence or weakness of explicit human(e) values, for example the values of human rights that are supposed to inform the work of all governments and inter-governmental organizations. As a result, one sees that the Report mentions GDP losses but has no estimates of possible fatalities; and that the main victims of climate change (consisting to a large extent of children in the poorest families; see e.g. WHO 2014) remained virtually invisible.

Third, although the incipient 'human' language in WGII had little force or wider impact, we found that WGII had a second instrument, that seemed to be more palatable in an impersonal-cum-inhuman discursive world of climate discussions that report to governments: the language of risk. Even though not explicitly articulated in terms of the human values (including health and lives) that are at risk, WGII implicitly resorted to risk language as a politically safe route to try to emphasise human concerns and vulnerabilities. As seen in Table 8, this was then taken up in the SYR-SPM, despite the near total absence of risk language in the other two Working Groups. Indeed, even though still indirect, incomplete, and conservative in many ways, the SYR-SPM went further and conveyed human significance better. Unlike any of the Working Groups, it was bold enough to even briefly speak of 'human mortality'. Centrally it repeatedly combined risk language and 'irreversibility' language.[xxvi] Irreversibility is a physical science term, unlike 'human rights', hence faces less resistance from some natural scientists and governments; but it only "becomes worth stressing when the loss of things of great value, not least the loss of life, is at stake" (Fløttum, Gasper and Lera St.Clair 2016: 126). Its use implied such stakes and conveyed some of the required urgency. In the next section I will touch further on the rhetorical relevance of such language in that context.

7. Rhetoric as one framework for synthesis

> "...in rhetorical analysis even students can do useful work almost immediately" (McCloskey 1994: 322)

Ruth Wodak's variant of critical discourse analysis highlights five fundamental strands in discourse: i) nomination, ii) predication, iii) argumentation, each of which we mentioned earlier; iv) perspectivization/ framing (defined as "positioning [the] speaker's or writer's point of view and expressing involvement or distance", Wodak 2015: Table 1), as we saw for example in regard to Minister Marere's statement; and v) mitigation/ intensification, the modulation of a position. Text-analysis tables provide a starting-point for thinking carefully about each of these. Rhetoric as a branch of study concerned with the varieties, forms and techniques of attempted persuasion has long looked at all five and at other strands too, and developed many concepts for doing so. Modern discourse analysis has added more. Rhetoric remains a helpful framework in taking an overall view, due to its broad and balanced scope and because it is readily accessible to students not trained in linguistics or hermeneutics.[xxvii] Further, it has been modernized and extended in recent times through interaction with discourse- and argumentation analysis.[xxviii]

The universally known triad of dimensions of rhetoric are: *logos* – argumentation; *pathos* – arousing feelings, capturing attention, mobilizing values; and *ethos* – seeking trust from an audience and authority in relation to it. Other aspects are important too, like *kairos* – the degree of appropriateness of discourse to the context.[xxix] Several ISS student essays in the annual volumes of the series *An Exercise in Worldmaking*, plus many unpublished ISS essays and group reports, illustrate how themes from the field of rhetoric can stimulate students to do deeply probing work.[xxx]

Jenna Juwono's 2018 paper "Balancing Ethos, Kairos, Logos and Pathos: Rhetoric Analysis of Esther Duflo's 2010 TED Talk" offers a topical recent example. Esther Duflo is the French economist who has become the main public propagator of Randomized Controlled Trials as an evaluation method for development policy options. "Duflo's TED Talk...can be seen as Duflo attempting to fulfill [her] vision of popularizing RCT" (Juwono 2018: 139). The talk received over a million views by mid-2018, and has played a significant role in spreading her group's message. She, her partner Abhijit Banerjee, and Michael Kremer received the 2019 Nobel Prize for Economics for this extension of a medical research approach to social and development policy.

Juwono undertakes a rhetoric analysis enriched by other tools of discourse analysis, starting with the examination of contexts. That includes considering the moment in history and the phase in debate. The *randomistas* were seeking to reach beyond academic colleagues, considerable numbers of whom were sceptical about transferring the medical model to very different situations, concerning not human bodies but 'social bodies'. RCT proponents addressed themselves now instead to funders, policymakers, practitioners and wider interested publics. The context analysis further involves considering the nature of the TED Talks genre, and the specifics of the immediate event and its audience, recognizing also that overwhelmingly the main audience consists of later online viewers. "...taking into account the different target audience [a wider public, not scientists]…, it is particularly interesting to see how Duflo uses different linguistic devices instead of resorting to her usual way of explaining or defending RCT to other economists" (Juwono 2018: 139).

Lexical choice analysis and a text analysis table are used to explore pathos and ethos in the talk, with a focus on Duflo's presentation of self, her use of metaphors and narrative, and particular strategic word

choices. Duflo presents herself as businesslike, data-driven, and having intensive direct field-knowledge (‘*I went…’, ‘I saw…’, ‘I [conquered]’);* in sum, as being simultaneously an embodiment of science and out of the ivory-tower, unlike those who are still in “the Middle Ages” (p.146). She engages her audience by use of stories, often about dying children (this is not a criticism of Duflo), and of central metaphors and analogies: “robust answers” are obtained via the “beauty of randomization”, “like [in] 20th century medicine” (p.146). While the talk is largely structured in a conventional sequence of Introduction-Problem-Causes-Solution-ActionCall, it also uses a detective-mystery format to hold audience attention. A particular puzzle-case is introduced in detail early on, but is not resolved; instead Duflo turns to new puzzles; only near the end does she return to the early case and unveil the answer. Growing from the text analysis table, Juwono’s argumentation synthesis table looks at the talk’s *logos*. It identifies that Duflo presents no counter-arguments. Her work of public propagation relied heavily instead on ethos and pathos.

Rhetoric, as the attempt to persuade by use of available means, is inevitable and needs to be studied and better understood. The authors of the most important component of IPCC’s 2014 Report, namely the Summary for Policymakers of the Synthesis Report (which is the most that—at best—any policymaker is likely to read), used a variety of legitimate means to try to fulfil their mandate of making sense of climate research findings for policy-makers and conveying key policy-relevant messages, despite the inherited prohibitions on open reference to values and on giving advice. The SYR-SPM used and amplified some key themes from WG II on Impacts—and from some other IPCC reports, such as one on extreme climate events—even when such themes had little or no reflection in the other WGs. We noted that it adopted and amplified WGII’s risk theme, where ‘risk’ implies that something of human value is at stake; we hardly talk of a ‘risk’ of hurricanes decreasing. While not drawing definite policy implications it stressed ‘challenges’ and dangers, and pointed to opportunities, through sketching relevant possible scenarios. Amongst its linguistic intensifier devices, it combined the word ‘risk’ with, first, the word ‘key’, including in highlighted headlines, and second with the idea of ‘*irreversible’* and its implication of the loss of things of great human value.

An additional reason for discussing rhetoric is this. By studying strategic uses of language, including in widespread manipulation of words and people, one can perhaps reduce the danger of an idolatry of ‘discussion’ and ‘democracy’ as such, as supposedly unqualified goods. Basile and Baud (2019) rightly call for democratization in knowledge processes; but democratization without citizen skills, just like ‘critical thinking’ where there is only criticism and little thinking skill, is only a very limited—and risky—good. Similarly, discussion is not invariably constructive and without downsides. The modern-day ‘Delphi Method’ for review of a complex issue deliberately avoids face-to-face encounters amongst participatns, since the discussions those produce can often be distorted through interpersonal hierarchies or antagonisms. Instead a moderator shares questions with separated discussants, who respond after reflection; the moderator then writes a digest and suggested synthesis (typically with extracts) of the responses, plus prepares a second round of questions; and so on. Sometimes this approach can lead to a thoughtfully reasoned convergence of thinking, and to a respected accepted working consensus plus a set of identified disagreements, unknowns and questions for the next phase.

8. Conclusion: helping 'make strange' what really should be strange but sadly is 'normal'

We saw that a discourse gives a mental world. One lives within it and needs special tools to question it. Even in mainstream development studies it seems taken for granted that a climate change report may talk about possible impacts on GDP but need not discuss, for example, the impacts on small children's mortality—because, if any reason at all is given, supposedly the data is not precise enough or the topic belongs to other fora. Nor will the report use the criteria and language of human rights—even though these are the declared guiding principles adopted by all member nations of the United Nations—because supposedly they are 'political' and do not belong in a scientific report.[xxxi] Our task includes making these sorts of habits and routines seem strange, perhaps even benighted. Critical reading and value-sensitive discourse analysis are central in this process of 'making strange'. Flexible and exploratory forms of discourse analysis help towards the mental readiness, openness and agility that are required for engaging with complexity, and for identifying and sometimes resisting systems of power.

The lecture has aimed to present some appropriate, complex yet accessible, composite methods in discourse analysis for development studies. Discourse analysis offers invaluable tools for critical thinking, provided it is itself self-critical. Many socio-linguists warn social scientists about casual use of textual material (the 'Look at this quotation which illustrates my conclusion' syndrome), including failing to analyse all of a text, systematically, leading then to over-simple and often seriously misleading interpretations. "Usually in the social sciences, text sequences are used as illustrations, sentences are taken out of context, and specific text sequences are used to validate or reject claims without relating them to the entire textual material and without providing any explicit justification or external evidence for their selection." (Wodak, 2008: 1). Such dangers are perhaps especially great in development studies, where the moral and political urgency of issues can lead to hasty and rigid position-taking. Serious content analysis – including investigation of word counts and identification of the topics and attention given across a whole text, as illustrated here in Section 6 – is one approach that avoids Wodak's criticism.

Many socio-linguists worry similarly that proposed identifications of 'basic discourses' and 'interpretative repertoires' are often too casual and arbitrary, 'off-the-shelf', not based in rigorous evidence and testing, and too sweeping, not sensitive to the influences of the specific context and the stage of interaction in which a statement is made. Such mechanical discourse analysis reflects an 'impoverished view of human conduct' (Wooffitt 2005: 179), in which people are seen as relatively simple creatures, able only to choose between a sharply limited number of discourses, or tightly pre-programmed into a single discourse. The framework presented in Sections 4 and especially 5 provides an entrée to more flexible discourse analysis that is yet accessible for students without prior background in philosophy, linguistics or logic. Much remains to be said on its use, for example regarding how to selectively use a detailed micro-analysis approach when tackling larger texts. Other papers (e.g., Gasper 2000a, 2002, 2004b; Gasper and Roldan, 2011; and various in ISS 2005-) provide further explication and illustration. Scriven's *Reasoning* remains a good source for detailed discussions of certain aspects. While widely accessible, the framework offers significant gains in understanding, even in simpler versions. It gives a purposeful structured family of activities that allows students to see roles for and connections between many component activities in interpretive analysis, such as category analysis, metaphor analysis and frame analysis. It provides a space for concentrated, successive attention to diverse aspects of a text, which can otherwise be muddled, rushed or elided. It helps to build skills required for successful engagement with texts and with more complex methods: notably the skill of combining an alert, observant, absorbed micro-analysis with a more

distanced and comparative macro-perspective. The skills for more incisive reading contribute also to more effective communication. The framework provides a good entry point to, and partner for, various more complex approaches, including varieties of rhetoric analysis and critical discourse analysis.

'Critical Discourse Analysis' (CDA) is a major such more ambitious approach – in reality a family of approaches that are unified by shared general intentions more than by use of an agreed procedure and methods, as is well described in the standard textbook edited by Wodak and Meyer (2016). Correspondingly, many authors now use the name 'Critical Discourse Studies'. Even to understand the distinctiveness and relationships between different currents in the CDA stream requires considerable care. Van Dijk's lucid, tidy introductory model (see e.g. van Dijk 2016) centres on the sort of micro-analysis of selected key texts that we discussed in Sections 4 and 5, with attention to the context-specific and/or person-specific mental models that are in play. This type of analysis faces criticism from some commentators as being too narrow. In contrast, Fairclough, long the best known CDA author, presents a more demanding approach, with major attention to macro-social theory and posited large-scale and extremely persistent standard discourses, relatively more than on building up from micro-level analyses. He seeks to examine how major social change is implemented linguistically (see e.g. Fairclough 2010, 2016). This work has faced more criticisms of supposed pre-judgement. A third leader of CDA, Wodak, may bridge effectively between the contrasting orientations of Fairclough and van Dijk (e.g., Wodak et al., 2009; Reisigl and Wodak 2016).

To engage effectively in the ambitious, complex endeavours of critical discourse analysis, including with the requisite capacity for self-criticism, requires considerable skills. Some development studies students who essay a CDA path can easily become lost. The extended Scriven approach gives a useful prelude and partner to such attempts. Compatible with the agenda of the CDA movement, it can contribute in various desirable roles in interpretive analysis: it provides an arena for public sharing, testing and evolution of views; it helps in surfacing values and other important presumptions; it contributes to constructing creative counter-argumentation and coherent alternatives and not only in critique.

Carved into the temple of Apollo at Delphi were, reportedly, three phrases.[xxxii] One warned: "make a pledge and mischief is nigh". This is the danger in any enterprise, including every academic enterprise. We can also read it in various different ways in regard to human discourse. A second aphorism advised: "know thyself". I know myself to the extent at least of realising that sometimes my lectures continue until students from the next session start coming into the room. I conclude here, taking satisfaction from the third warning: "nothing in excess". I hope to have conveyed the core theme of critical discourse analysis, that systems of social exclusion and injustice are embodied in systems of language, and must be contested partly through the systematic examination of language.

Finally and briefly, but with feeling: my warm thanks for their support, encouragement and tolerance, to my family, especially to Shanti, my partner, to many colleagues inside and outside ISS, to the Institute as such, and to my students over the past decades. *Ik heb gezegd.* Thank you for your attention.

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[i] For the shorter, spoken and illustrated, version of the lecture, see https://www.iss.nl/en/news/critical-development-studies-valedictory-des-gasper

[ii] My interest in deconstructing intellectual systems in development policy argumentation had begun already in the late 1970s in England, encouraged by my then professor, Raymond Apthorpe. He moved to ISS and we continued a cooperation that led to an ISS Occasional Paper in 1980 and a journal article in 1982 (Apthorpe and Gasper, 1980, 1982). These papers began an exploration of essentialism, which I took further later (Gasper 1996), as part of a volume co-edited with Raymond that consolidated and highlighted our interest in framing and other dimensions of discourse beyond argumentation (Apthorpe and Gasper, 1996). Cristóbal Kay greatly encouraged and facilitated the volume. Later, Dvora Yanow's writings and guest lecturer contributions in ISS were particularly stimulating for extending my focus further beyond argumentation.

[iii] 'Critical linguistics' was being launched elsewhere on the University of East Anglia campus when I was a research student there in development studies in the late 1970s (Fowler et al. 1979), and I briefly interacted with Tony Trew, one of its progenitors. It was one of the precursor streams emerging in various locations that fed into 'Critical Discourse Analysis' and that became connected under that name at the end of the 1980s.

[iv] Cox's 1981 characterization needs to be strengthened, because assertion by various power-holders has grown that universities should be entirely guided by the value weights given by markets and by current rulers of their

nation-state. Issues such as the global crisis of sustainability suggest the fallaciousness of these views (Boni and Gasper 2012; Gasper 2017a).

[v] This section draws on ideas in Gasper (2004a, 2010b, 2017a).

[vi] This has included teaching in international development studies programmes in The Netherlands, and as a visiting lecturer/professor in Bangladesh (U. of Dhaka; BRACU), Denmark (Roskilde), Hungary (CEU), India (IIT-Bombay, IIM-Trichy, NLSUI-Bangalore), South Africa (Witwatersrand), Thailand (Chulalongkorn), and Zimbabwe.

[vii] See for example many of the selected best essays by students of ISS, The Hague, in the yearly editions of *An Exercise in Worldmaking*, at https://www.iss.nl/en/prospective-students/studying-iss/iss-student-association/exercise-worldmaking-best-student-essays. For example, papers by: Silvia Forno (2008, ch.11), Juan Mejia Delgado (2008, ch.10), and Pablo Ruiz (2016, ch.14), for combined use of several methods within an overall rhetoric analysis; Teresa Jopson (2009, ch.13), a rhetorical analysis of images of women in the New Philippines Army; Tara Tabassi (2009, ch.16), on 'the Afghan Girl' *Newsweek* covers, with primary use of narrative and metaphor analyses; Ana Victoria Portocarrero Lacayo (2010, ch.3), on Sophocles' *Antigone,* with primary use of post-structuralism and text analysis; Mahsa Shekarloo (2011, ch.12), on US feminist Susan Faludi, with primary use of narrative analysis; Elisabeth IJmker (2015, ch.13) on Xi Jinping's first speech as General Secretary, with primary use of content and narrative analyses; Shikha Sethia (2016, ch.15) on John Ruggie, with primary use of lexical choice and frame analyses; and ISS Working Papers 440 (Kumar) and 514 (Eyre) with primary use of frame analysis.

[viii] Thus the term 'root metaphor' itself employs a metaphor; see e.g. Pepper (1935). And, revealingly, our standard phrase 'turn to' when trying to describe complexity is itself a metaphorical expression – as is 'revealingly'.

[ix] A useful text for class discussion in this context is Queen Elizabeth I's speech to troops at Tilbury, 9 August 1588, that rhetorically entangled sovereign and people.

[x] Gasper (1996) discusses such types of reductionism, illustrated from (supposedly) critical development studies.

[xi] See Gold et al. (2002) and Gasper (2017c) for fuller discussion of roles of argumentation analysis in fostering critical thinking.

[xii] 'Secondarily evaluative' terms are those which can be understood as both descriptive and normative. 'Democratic', for example, can be a descriptive term, to identify rule by 'the people'; but it is also often also used with strong favourable normative connotations, so that disapproved cases of rule by the people are then not called 'democratic' but instead, for example, 'populist'. See e.g. Hare (1965), Putnam (2002).

[xiii] Gasper (2006) uses the synthesis table to show how types of standard methodology in policy analysis—such as results-chain analysis or cost-benefit analysis—can each be seen as a distinctive standardized pattern of argumentation which brings in some things and leaves out others. Tankha and Gasper (2010) illustrates use of synthesis tables as a format for students' project work, for building and integrating their own argumentation systems.

[xiv] For example, the text analysis table can have separate columns for each of Ethos, Pathos, and Logos, or for any other theme selected for particular attention, to ensure one considers them carefully; similarly, the synthesis table can use separate rows for Ethos, Pathos, and Logos. See for example Mejia Delgado (2008) for innovative adaptations of analysis and synthesis tables to study ethos, pathos and logos in a speech on deregulation by the CEO of FedEx.

[xv] Edward de Bono's popular 'Six Hats' format for organizing discussions, especially group discussions, distinguishes six types of thinking, which should be focused on each in turn, not mixed and confused: 1. Thinking of options (Green Hat), 2. Thinking about facts, data (White Hat), 3. Thinking about advantages, optimistic scenarios (Yellow Hat), 4. Thinking about problems, disadvantages, dangers, negative scenarios (Black Hat), 5. Articulating emotions, likes, dislikes, hopes, fears (Red Hat), 6. Managing the allocation and focusing of attention and the sequence of discussion (Blue Hat). All people participating in a discussion should focus together successively on one type at a time, thus reducing unproductive inter-personal conflicts and increasing productive concentrated complementary reflection.

[xvi] See e.g. the approach followed in Rem and Gasper (2018).

[xvii] Based on Gasper et al. (2013a).

[xviii] Excluding the list of references.

[xix] Moretti and Pestre (2015) explored the World Bank's Annual Reports from 1946 to 2012, producing remarkable findings of linguistic shifts over time that vividly illustrated the changing roles and ideology of the Bank.

[xx] The main sources compared were: Abdul Kalam (2002); Dreze and Sen (2013); Harriss-White and Subramaniam (1999); Nilekani (2009); Prahalad (2005; with use also of Paramanand 2014); and Nair (2013) for Narendra Modi's speeches.

[xxi] See also Beer (1999) on multiple relevant types of reading.

[xxii] Table 7: Blank spaces indicate that the issue is not relevant or not answerable in yes/no terms, or the answer is not known to this author. Brackets indicate that the degree of attention is modest. Capital letters indicate a strong emphasis.

[xxiii] "Your children talk about going to India, but they turn their nose up at us because they think it's dirty," Modi told an audience at Fiji National University on Nov. 19 [2014]. "I'm going to make such a country your children will want to come and see. They will never again turn their nose up at India."
http://www.thestarphoenix.com/Caste+complicates+push+Clean+India/10681063/story.html (accessed March 2015); and https://www.shethepeople.tv/news/come-visit-our-safe-clean-india/ (January 27, 2015)

[xxiv] The four Summary-for-Policymakers reports were of similar length: Working Group 1, The Physical Science Basis = 14,739 words; WG2, Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability = 12,735 words; WG3, Mitigation of Climate Change = 14,512 words; Synthesis, 14,894 words.

[xxv] Based on Table 5 in Fløttum, Gasper and Lera St.Clair (2016).

[xxvi] 'Irreversible' was little used in the three WG SPMs but was amongst the top 25 content-keywords in the SYR-SPM (Fløttum et al. 2016, Table 4).

[xxvii] For clear introductions to rhetoric see, for example, McCloskey (1994), Gill and Whedbee (1997).

[xxviii] Such as in the work of Richards (1936), Perelman (1968), Perelman and Obrechts-Tynteca (1982), Toulmin (1958), Jonsen and Toulmin (1990).

[xxix] See e.g. Gill and Whedbee (1997), Gasper (2014), Kuitenbrouwer (2019).

[xxx] See e.g. Forno (2008), Mejia (2008), Portocarrero (2010).

[xxxi] See analyses of these syndromes in e.g. Gasper (2012), Gasper and Rocca (2020).

[xxxii] Wikipedia, 16 October 2019, entry on Delphi.