

Keith WALKER

walker@liverpool.ac.uk

University of Liverpool



Boredom - Discursive Psychology (DP) as an Analytical Tool

This presentation aims to outline the use of Discursive Psychology (DP) as an analytical tool for research of secondary education and invite comments for possible developments.

Discursive psychology (Potter and Wetherell 1987; Edwards 1997) (DP) can be defined as the analysis of psychological concepts in everyday talk. There is a number of overlapping key assumptions underpinning this perspective. Firstly, language can be researched as a legitimate subject in its own right rather than a conduit to a hidden inner world. Secondly, language can be researched from an action orientation. Finally, language is constructive. When speaking, we are building our world, rather than merely describing it, often this involves rhetoric and contestation.

Secondly, I will use small extracts of classroom talk taken from Breidenstein's (2007) ethnography into the 'meaning of being a pupil' in German schools to illustrate the potential of DP as an analytical tool in examining boredom. I will hopefully demonstrate how these examples of classroom talk construct boredom as normal; situational (rather than dispositional); causal, and existing at higher and lower intensities.

Finally, I will outline my proposed focus group methodology to illicit boredom talk which can be analysed in the manner demonstrated.