



An Introduction to Social Psychology

Discursive Psychological Definitions

Ontology:

Discursive psychology sees both the person and their social world as constituted through discourse and social practices. This challenges the essentialist idea that human personhood is an interior fixed, an ongoing phenomenon, or that social reality in some ways out there waiting to be discovered and described prior to and independent of our construction of practises.

Methodology:

Discursive psychology methodology is qualitative, looking at how the social world of objects and events is constituted in talk and text and how social identities are created using existing cultural discourses.

Methods:

Discursive psychology methods involve the analysis of different kinds of discourse resources and discourse processes. This means that a range of discourse data is used in practice depending on the researcher's interests. Discourse methods can be applied to every day conversations, workplace interactions, interviews and text such as newspaper reports. Discourse processes refers to the ways in which people use the discourse resources that are available in their culture.

Unit of Analysis:

When analysing reports and accounts, the focus is on what people say and how they say it. That is what actions are performed. The question for discourse psychology researchers is: what cultural discourse resources are being used by speakers and how they are being used? What is being accomplished and how is personhood and social reality being constituted through the talk or text? These emerge in the analysis by focusing on interpretive repertoires, subject positions and ideological dilemmas. The discursive psychology method is not concerned with the study of interior processes such as intentions, feelings, cognitions or motives.