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Original Article

Environmental Discourse

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Abstract
The environment has become a pressing concern in recent decades, with issues such as climate change, deforestation, and pollution dominating global headlines. As a result, environmental discourse has emerged as a critical area of study, examining how language and communication shape our understanding of environmental issues. This essay will provide a critical analysis of environmental discourse, exploring its key features, strategies, and implications. This paper discusses the evolution of the term environmental discourses and the appropriateness of each approach for environmental politics. Environmental discourse is a way of thinking about the environment and its natural and social qualities. It's a framework that describes how people construct knowledge about the environment, and how that knowledge is shaped by social and geographical factors. This study develops the concept of environmental ideologies as a belief system towards the environment, using the analogy of political ideologies that describes systems of beliefs towards political, social, and economic structures of a society.

Keywords: *Environmental discourse, knowledge, language and communication.*

Introduction

The feature of environmental discourse is its use of emotional and rhetorical strategies. Environmental issues are often framed in terms of crisis, urgency, and catastrophe, with the aim of mobilizing public concern and action. This can involve the use of vivid imagery, emotive language, and compelling narratives to convey the severity of environmental problems. The concept of the "tipping point" has been used to describe the point at which climate change becomes irreversible, creating a sense of urgency and alarm. Legitimate academic discipline that is studied in many universities around the world. Although any typology of political ideologies provides a grossly simplified version of political worldviews, this concept contributes a lot to the understanding of major belief systems about human nature and human interactions, about the role of the government and civil society, and how political power and wealth is distributed, we rarely find the concept of ideologies in the study of environmental policy and politics. Most often, this term is used to describe an ‘environmentalism’ as a type of political ideology that belongs to the same list as the other, more traditional ideologies mentioned above. In this paper, I develop a quite different notion of environmental ideologies using the ‘neutral’ or in many respects, the concept of ‘environmental ideologies’ is similar to the notion of ‘environmental discourses’ However, all these authors use the term ‘discourse’ in a broader sense, as ‘an ensemble of ideas, concepts, and categorizations’ rather than in the traditional understanding of discourse as simply being forms of textual and spoken interactions In this study, I utilize multidisciplinary approach to ideologies and thus make a conceptual difference between the terms ‘environmental discourses’ and ‘environmental ideologies.’ I do not exclude the notion of environmental discourses from the use. Thus, environmental discourses are these textual and spoken interactions about the environment. What stands behind these acts assumptions, judgments, and contentions’ in words, or discursive formations, are environmental ideologies. Essentially, environmental ideologies are group belief systems about relationships between humans and the environment. However, the use of the concept has not been justified.

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The concept of environmental ideologies allows the combining of the three core concepts of environmental politics environmental issues, environmental ideologies and environmental discourses. That environmental issues come into environmental discourse and therefore, into existence as environmental problems, through the lens of environmental ideologies. I summarize this assumption with the following formula: Environmental discourse environmental issue environmental ideology the environmental ideologies is often more appropriate to describe the variety of belief systems towards the environment than environmental discourses. From Issues to Problems the past decades have witnessed an increased awareness of pollution, environmental degradation, climate change, biodiversity loss, and overexploitation of natural resources in all countries around the world.

These devastating effects of human activity have started to occupy the attention of national governments and the international community. This has resulted in certain public policies intended to mitigate and prevent environmental problems and to regulate the use of natural resources. Although all governments in the world face a great number of social issues, there is no government that pays an equal amount of attention to every existing issue Environmental issues, as well as many other social problems, usually do not represent themselves as distinct, well-defined issues. For instance, even though air pollution, global climate change, deforestation, and biodiversity loss can be discussed as separate issues, in their ecological consequences, they are extremely interconnected. This makes their analysis very complicated. Consequently, in a political discussion, these problems are usually simplified in order to make it possible to develop a certain public policy. This simplification leads to sometimes ineffective public policies that target only certain symptoms, not the problem as a whole.

However, environmental discourse can also be criticized for its limitations and biases. For example, environmental issues are often framed in terms of Western, industrialized societies, neglecting the experiences and perspectives of non-Western cultures and communities. Additionally, environmental discourse can be dominated by elite voices, such as scientists, policymakers, and corporate leaders, marginalizing the perspectives of local communities, indigenous peoples, and other stakeholders. Additionally, the consequences of global climate change are obviously a subject of public policy because the government can definitely do something to mitigate them. A focus of public attention and governmental policy regarding the environment is also constantly shifting from some certain issues to others. The history of environmental protection is characterized by periods of increasing interest in environmental issues and, as a consequence, an increasing number of environmental legal acts and regulations, and by periods of relative low public interest and, similarly, low activity of the legislative and executive branches of government . At different periods in the United States, the focus of environmental protection has shifted between wilderness, forests, natural resources, water and air pollution, energy use, and global climate change Similarly, the approaches to solving environmental problems have also been a subject of change.

The Administrative mechanisms, such as bans and fines, are more often replaced by market-based solutions, such as emission trading. The major question is how certain issues, which always exist in society, turn into policy problems that require governmental redress or relief. Before the government steps in, issues need to be officially defined as policy problems Environmental issues such as air pollution, global climate change, and biodiversity loss can only become public environmental problems when they are recognized as unacceptable and, therefore, needing to be addressed. In other words, environmental issues are only acknowledged when they are defined, articulated and brought to the public attention as such. Thus, environmental issues that hurt people do not necessarily become public environmental problems If nobody persuades the public that a certain environmental issue is harmful, then the government will not seek to act because the problem is not perceived as such. An additional difficulty is that different people disagree over whether or not certain environmental issues should be viewed as policy problems.

This question is crucial because the way in which people interpret environmental issues finally determines governmental environmental policies. In contrast to the actual existence of issues, policy problems are almost never objective but are socially constructed and so can vary in different times and places, and in different social groups. This subjectivity is due to the fact that any debate about environmental issues involves a debate not only on ‘hard’ evidence such as physical concentration or temperature, but also on its consequences, especially social, political, and economic. Therefore, environmental debates are not usually the conflicts over the content of environmental issues but struggles over the definition of these issues as environmental problems the interpretation of an environmental issue is always just that of a certain group in a given time and place. Thus, the perception of an environmental issue, that is, the way in which actors define it, depends on the actors’ subjective belief systems towards the environment. This subjectivity of belief systems does not contradict the rational choice model that identified as being central to the study of the decision-making process.

The rational choice theory, people respond to a certain event using a means-ends calculation to identify the most efficient solution to a specific problem. In this process, a policy-maker identifies the ends and then looks for the means to achieve them. It is important to note that the word rational is applied to the means, but not to the ends. That is, the intended goal is never judged and, therefore, rationality makes sense only within a consistent system of beliefs are, definition is ‘anything than can be thought’ ideas, I prefer to use the term environmental beliefs over environmental ideas or worldviews which have a similar meaning. The terms ideas and worldviews are more general than beliefs.

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The term ideas are often has a meaning of a 'new thought.' Most importantly, the word belief explicitly emphasizes the imaginary component, as opposed to knowledge. Thus, beliefs are usually imaginary and represent an interpretation of reality, an ideal view, express a will a hope or nostalgia, rather than a precise description of a reality since a traditional epistemological definition of knowledge is justified belief the relationships between knowledge and beliefs depend on the method of justification. From Beliefs to Ideologies Socially shared beliefs have been always associated with the term ideology However, historically, beginning from the ideologues in post-revolutionary France, the concept of ideology often has negative connotations, meaning systems of ideas of the ruling class and, correspondingly, a distorted or even inverted image of their social existence for the working class .

The real motive forces impelling him remain unknown to him; otherwise it simply would not be an ideological process. Hence, he imagines false or seeming motive forces' This understanding of ideology as false consciousness produces what Thompson calls 'a critical conception of ideology' divides this critical notion of ideology into two categories. In the first case, ideologies present idiosyncratic beliefs, preconceptions, mistakes, and narrowness. Nevertheless, this type does not imply insincerity. This type of ideology is 'the cousin of error and falsehood, the brother of illusion' the second type of ideology presents not just the distorted image of reality, but also refers to insincerity. Thus, the distorted image of reality is actively promoted to others as indoctrination or propaganda. The primary function of this type of ideology is domination and, by the ambiguity of the term discourse, at least in the social sciences.

This ambiguity inevitably results in a vague concept, which hinders a common agreement about its use. Although the term ideology is not free from the ambiguity either, mainly due to its Marxist heritage, the term environmental ideology appears to be more appropriate for describing and classifying coherent systems of beliefs towards the environment. Regardless of the theoretical debate on the appropriateness of the terms discourse and ideology as a definition for group beliefs, the priority of the term environmental ideology over environmental discourse is also in a vein of contemporary political science and environmental politics. The neutral conception of ideology has produced a notion of political ideologies, which is a well-developed and broadly accepted concept in social sciences. Obviously, any answer to the three questions about human-nature relationships that an environmental ideology should answer would necessarily reveal a political ideology or, at least, some components of it. In this sense, the environmental ideologies nonetheless have clear links with the political ideologies. But to be effective as a concept, they must also stand apart. Environmental discourse is a complex and multifaceted field that requires critical analysis and reflection. While environmental discourse can provide a powerful tool for raising awareness and mobilizing action on environmental issues, it can also be limited by its reliance on technical language, emotional and rhetorical strategies, and dominant ideologies and interests. As such, it is essential to approach environmental discourse with a critical eye, recognizing both its potential and its limitations.

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