

A New Approach to Public Policy Studies Relying on the Theory of Critical Discourse Analysis Studies the State as a Discourse

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Abstract:

Understanding the policy cycle, as well as scrutinizing the text of hidden and obvious policies and rules, requires a model of discourse analysis based on which discursive approaches of policy makers are understood and estimated. However, when it comes to presenting a policy model, we have to use the views of policy theorists to see how a problem as a "public goods" can be found in the policy agenda setting. Regarding public policy-making procedures, quantitative or descriptive approaches, in studies the state, are often used to pathologizing policies or to obtaining policy advice models. However, this paper attempts to show that studies the state is a discourse that is described by the dominant discursive signifiers in the target society in which policy-makers make meaning to concepts. If we assume that the policy making cycle is something other than a several stages, such as defining a problem, finding a solution to it, decision making and implementing, then it is clear that the definition of a problem, whether the presentation of solutions and the process of decision making and its implementation, cannot be outside the discourse. Therefore, public policy at the macro level and studies the state, as one of its examples and functions, is a discursive, which its understanding is possible only if the dominant discourse and its relation to the realities of the society in question are well understood.

Keywords: Studies the state, Discourse, Public Policy, Debate, Critical Studies

Introduction

Public policy making is one of the relatively new branches in the field of humanities, which in recent years has had an important impact on research in the field of studies the state and policy-oriented research in Iran. This field of study, although methodically,

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has specific principles for detecting deficiencies and providing new recommendations for improving policy processes, it seems that these methods, and basically the understanding of policies, cannot be understandable beyond the logic of discursive studies.

In this regard, this article tries to review the policy of public policy and the current studies the state methods in the context of discourse theory, in particular the model of Norman Fairclough, which focuses on the critical understanding of discourse studies, and to show how this branch of political science is at stake and the researcher of this field is bound to pay attention to the hegemonic role of discourses in understanding politics.

The author of this paper first describes discourse analysis theories and then attempts, using a discursive methodology, to analyze issues related to politics and public policy studies and to show that discourse analysis is not just one of the methods of the qualities used in policy making, but the governing spirit of all the ways that somehow engage in policy issues.

Methodology; From Positivism to Discourse Analysis

When it comes to the cognitive approach in the social sciences, there is no escaping the fact that there is no methodical unity in these sciences. (Seyed Imami, 2012: 3) Some believe that there are five ways of social cognition: science, religion, Marxism, psychoanalysis, and metaphysics, but positivists call all four other ways except "science," as pseudo-science and inaccurate. (Benton & Craib, 2005:38) However, the evolution history of cognitive paradigms has shown that science gradually has gained more humility in using other available methods in social cognition, and from this perspective, scientific methods

in the field of social science have transformed positivism into interpretative and critical methods. The history of science, from the point of contemporary analysts. Today, there are three approaches to exploring politics: first, research in the world of language (interpretive approach), second, research in the world of the reason (critical approach), and third, research in the world of experience (positivism) sometimes it comes up with a combination of these methods. (Tajik, 2011: 253) Not only the combination of the method, but also the word of the meaning of concepts plurality is raised, as some people believe we live in the post-politics period, in which we have policies instead of policy, of the method instead of methods and theories instead of theory. (Tajik, 2011: 68)

In the social sciences, the interpretive approach began in the 1980s. Interpretationists and hermeneutics emphasize that the social sciences are realized through language, but the language is not transparent to the truth. Therefore, the social sciences cannot be extra-discursive. In expressing differences in scientific approaches, one can point out that if positivism in the social sciences looks for causes, discursive and interpretive approaches place the question of the meaning. In this approach, the reality is not visible objectivity, but a common meaning derived from the Intersubjective interaction between individuals. (Seyed Imami, 2012: 41) In other words, the experience is not merely an objective observation, but it is a kind of conceptual choice. (Benton & Craib, 2005: 70)

Regarding Interpretationists have faced positivists with serious critiques. For example, if positivism, by claiming the separation of value from reality, actually speaks of the world of values, while if we accept the nature of reality is value, or ideological, then the speaking of value is meaningless. (Trigg,

2005: 177) When the positivist methods were confronted with critiques of Interpretationists, the analysts' tendency towards critical approaches in the social sciences also slightly evolved. The approaches that violated scientific impartiality and voted for the "change of

the world" instead of its scientific description. Accordingly, there are three types of scientific methodological traditions in the social sciences, each of which has its own methodological and philosophical components.

Table 1:
Comparing the Philosophy of Science with Three Traditions of Social Cognition

	Positivism	Interpretation	Critical
The purpose of the research	Discover the cause and the rule of the world	Understanding the meaning	Criticism, an attempt to liberate and change the world
The nature of reality	Independent reality of man	Human Interaction construct (Representation of Reality)	The existence of reality is out of the mind, but entangled in false consciousness
Human nature	Rationalistic and profit oriented (mechanical)	Meaningful and revelatory	Alienate against the structure because of the instrumental wisdom
Conventional intelligence	Quite apart from science	A way to understand meaning	Denial of it as false consciousness
Social theory	Generalized, Regulatory, and Universal (Statistical)	A sensible narration	A tool for critique and social change
Correct explanation	Testable, Repeatable, Intuitive and Incompatible	Health check, by analyzing the world of contributors, triangulation, dialectics, speculation and validation	Praxis (a test in action that indicates whether a good change occurs), the theory is moderated during the practice.
Evidence based on reality	Objectivity (distance between subject and object)	The empathy of subject and object	The theory fills the gap between mentality and mind.
Reacher norms	Apart from viewing	Reflectivity	Scientific impartiality is not possible. Should be orientated.

Accordingly, although the positivist's traditional views of the social sciences still hold scientific credibility in some areas, but when it comes to interpreting and criticizing the status quo, these methods will diminish their effectiveness. Because, contrary to the natural sciences, which seeks to explain the phenomena of inhumanity by discovering its

causes, the work of the social sciences from the interpretationists point of view is that understand the will-oriented phenomena by interpreting their meanings. (Fie, 2011: 204) And understanding phenomena requires a human language instead of mathematical language. Indeed, in the opinion of the critical interpretationists that this study also consid-

ers itself to be loyal to this method, contrary to natural science, which does not consider the doctrine as recognizing but recognizable phenomena, the social sciences, and in particular the political science, sought to recognize the component which are both recognizable and can be changed, and therefore this scientific tradition comes close to the first generation of political philosophers such

as Plato and Aristotle, which transcends political science from the stage of descriptions and serves as a tool for changing proportional political orientations converts. (Bashiriye, 2017: 20) Here, when it comes to three stages of cognition, critical interpretive approaches accuse positivist ideas of ineffectiveness in recognizing human and social affairs, and limiting the ability to recognize nature.

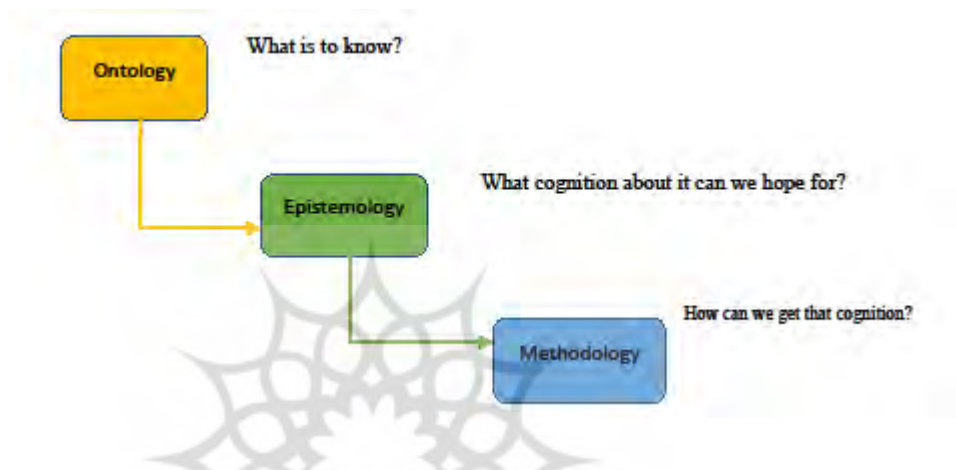


Fig 1: Three stages of cognition (2011: 111)

Therefore, in this paper, attempts have been made to remain loyal to methodological logic in the humanities, with more critical-interpretative approaches in policy making, so that research ceases to be political description

and based on the interests that are the focus of political cognition, (Sari-ol Ghalam, 2001: 19) critical interpretive glasses are considered.

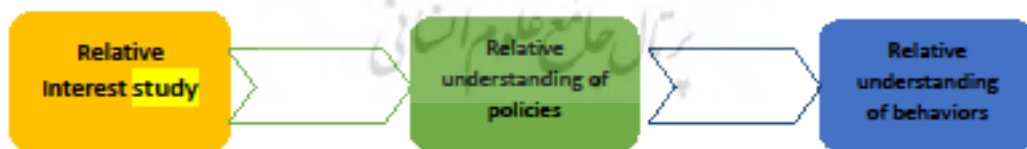


Fig 2: Stages of cognition in the political arena

To achieve such an approach attitude, this study shows that the critical discourse analysis method, which is an inter-paradigm method, uses two interpretive-critical and

constructive paradigms, (Mohammad pour, 2011: 146) is a good tool for describing policy processes. In this method, the analyst of the discourse has shown the task of striving for the consolidation of meaning at all levels

of the social. (Jorgensen & Philips, 2010: 54) The thread that emerges in the process of generating and controlling message policy making. Although this method has been considered beyond the positivist approach to interpret and criticize evidences, it is at the same time adhered to a scientific methodological test of "coherence, usefulness and transparency". (Jorgensen & Philips, 2010: 208) And this is the approach that has taken place in today's media processes, (Gibbons, 2002: 59-63) a scientific method for understanding or not necessarily proving the hypothesis in the social sciences.

Discourse Analysis; Linking Linguistic Theories with Political Approaches

Although in everyday literature, sometimes discourse and dialogue are used interchangeably, but, as in the scientific circles these two words are used, discourse is a form of using dialogue, but more general, (Van Dijk, 2011: 16) that is, in the discourse only the apparent meanings of the conversation are not involved, but the temporal, spatial, social, cultural and political spheres are also implicitly involved. (Shirazi-E Romenan, 2009:79) According to this definition, oral discourse is based on speeches and verbal statements, and written discourse is derived from the text. (Van Dijk, 2011: 26) Based on the principle of discursive relativity, each proposition of a text or conversation is influenced by its previous propositions, and discourse is coherent when its sentences refer to things that are related causally to each other.

Lukács also expressed this same theme in his other literary sociology theory and contends that mental structures are empirical facts that have been developed by social groups during the historical process. As a result, literary works do not reflect collective consciousness, but on the contrary, the constructors of these

structures, in other words, are their inseparable part. (Georg Lukács, 2002: 95) Michel Foucault's definition of discourse is also such that he writes, in a set of propositions; we say that discourses belong to a discursive formulation. In such a situation, the propositions in each discourse must have the necessary conditions. (Foucault, 1972: 117)

The term discourse, the history of which, according to some sources, dates back to the 14th century, is derived from the French discourse and Latin discourses, meaning conversation, discourse, speech, or ejection in 1952, the phrase "discourse analysis" was used in the famous English linguist Zlick Harris. (Bashir, 2006: 9) According to Harris, the constructive units of the text from small to large are, respectively, vocabularies, phrases, clauses and sentences. The study of smaller units is grammar-related, but the study of larger units is in the domain of discourse analysis. (Soltani, 2005: 28) However, this concept is now become more political, and beyond purely linguistic discussions, it is said that discourse is a concept that binds language to politics and links theories to power, ideology and language. (Soltani, 2005: 15-20) The root of such analyzes is where some philosophers referred to a wider range of languages functions. For example, Ludwig Wittgenstein says, "The limits of my language (discourse or paradigm) mean the limits of my world." (Tajik, 2011: 13) and Heidegger insists that reality is just a word within the language. (Tajik, 2011: 126) Lyotard transcends language boundaries in this regard. In his view, the social bond is a linguistic one, but not with a strand, but as a woven cloth. As Wittgenstein described the language to an ancient city of landscapes and villages and fortunes in its countryside. (Jean-François Lyotard, 2001: 129) Perhaps this is why Alster Panchuck said, "all the crit-

ical discourse analysis theories agrees that "language descriptions must go beyond what could be explained and show that social inequalities are reflected in the language of the people and in the language. Also, with the help of these approaches, these social inequalities have been discovered and changed." (Soltani, 2005: 31)

In a general definition, discourse can be considered as a window to create meaning. In fact, discourse reduces the meaning of phenomena and, by rejecting other possible meanings, considers one meaning for any phenomenon based on discursive structure. The rejected meanings are placed in the discourse field and act as a reservoir of surplus meanings. In this way, the definition of discourse in its relation to the meanings that it is rejected may be possible. There are always elements that still have no meaning. However, discourse creates a clue to understand the signs (Jorgensen & Philips, 2010: 57) and this semantic term creates a different world. Therefore, in a sense, we make sense based on the discursive production of meaning. (Jorgensen & Philips, 2010: 68)

The Priority of Political Concepts in Discourse Analysis

To better understand the relation between discourse and policy making, one should take a look at the concept of discourse analysis.

Discourse Analysis as a hybrid term, which was translated into Persian in the speech analytics, discourse analysis, and speech analysis, is an interdisciplinary study trend that began in the mid-1960s through the mid-1970s following extensive scientific changes in the fields of linguistics, semiotics, literary criticism, ethnomethodology, macro sociology, social and cognitive psychology, anthropology and other social sciences inter-

ested in systematic studies of the structure and function of the text and speech production process have emerged in the context of the sociology of wisdom. (Van Dijk, 1995: 27-33) This trend due to interdisciplinary was soon welcomed as one of the qualitative methods in various fields of politics, sociology, social sciences, communication and critical linguistics. (Gholamreza Kashi, 2008: 190)

The theory of discourse inspires interpretive sciences such as hermeneutics, phenomenology, structuralism, and deconstruction. These sciences are organized around the interpretation of literary and philosophical texts, or they are formed around the analysis of the way in which the themes and experiences of meaning are formed. It is possible in the words of thinkers like Lacan that language is an independent system that makes its own world. Therefore, in such a glance, the words retrieve words rather than reflect the experience. Therefore, according to Lacan, we cannot get out of the language because we all immerse ourselves in language. (Tajik, 2007: 24-25)

On this basis, the discourse analyst studies the importance of how the structure of the meanings makes it possible to make a certain way of doing things. To this end, the analyst attempts to understand the production, function, and transformation of discourses that build the activities of social agents, and in an attempt to understand these research topics, the discourse analyst prioritizes political concepts such as anti-agency, agency, power and domination. (Marsh & Stoker, 2005: 195) In other words, change in discourse is a means to change the world. Conflict at the level of discourse changes and reproduces social reality. (Jorgensen & Philips, 2011: 30) According to Laclau and Mouffe, discourses are historically contingent and controversial, and

have a political structure. (Marsh & Stoker, 2005: 204)

This political view of the world from the discourse gateway is a rival approach to traditional discourse analysis models. In traditional discoursology, we pay more attention to the description and interpretation of the word, in a specific context, which is said to be in that framework, and thus to the term context or figurative texture, and, given this context, as much as possible, the meaning and concept we understand the word. But in the political discourse, a wider context than the context in which the expression and practice took place are taken into account, and the history of the individual and collective life of the aspirations and desires of individuals, the world view of the parties to the dialogue, the institution and organization to which individuals belong, and the construction and delivery of the community in which people live. That is why Van Dijk explicitly writes: "The ultimate goal of the discourse analysts is not merely scientific, but political and social. They want to change. In this case, discourse is critical." (Van Dijk, 2011: 54)

Other elements that link between discourse and politics is the power of constructing identity of discourses. If we accept Marsh and Stoker's statement that "the political boundaries that are identifiable", (Marsh & Stoker, 2005: 205) it can then be understood how the political and discourse boundaries are aligned through the identification of identities and the definition of "we/others", in line with political tyranny, the attraction of arbitrary slabs and the rejection of competing precedents, the secret of political success will create. (Marsh & Stoker, 2005: 213) Therefore, it should be noted that the theory of discourse is a voluntaristic theory. Because it does not accept material constraints on political action. The theory of discourse also

emphasizes political priority over economics in political analysis. (Marsh & Stoker, 2005: 217-218) This is where discourse goes away from Marxist class assumptions.

Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

A prominent figure of critical linguists, Fairclough, do not, from this angle, disclose discourse merely as a reflection of the relation of power outside of it, but give constructive aspect to discourse. From this perspective, the discourse, as it was said, is the emergence and reproduction of power, and at the same time, is critique and resistance to it. In addition, according to Fairclough, discourse is not such that it can be independently investigated by analyzing the structures of a text.

Although, according to some, discourse analysis is a method based on the analysis of the textual structure of a speech, but this method represents the relation of the text and social conditions, and relies on the principle that, according to Malinowski, words the function of which is not 'meaning' in the ordinary sense, but in situations and the social status, the layout of the words, the sentence, the effects of the adjacent words, and so forth. (Shirazi Rumenan, 2008: 73) Fairclough puts his idea of the multifunctional linguistic theory of systematic-functional Holliday's linguistics. From this perspective, every text has an implicit function through representing the experience and representation of the world. In addition, texts generate social interactions among contributors in the discourse and thus have a textual function. As far as separate components are combined in the form of a whole and combines it with situational substrates. (Mohammad Pour, 2011: 148)

As discussed earlier, discourse in the system of discursive interactions and in a com-

plex relationship with social and political conditions implies understanding and analysis; the significance of overlock in discursive studies is to transcend text from the mere linguistic level and establish a relative method between the text and the social and political context. In the model of Fairclough, we try to illustrate the dialectical relationship between discursive practice and socialist practice. Since discourse is both constructive and formative, so the discursive practice is the constructive of social practice and formative of it. Fairclough seeks to discover the social matrix of discourse (Fairclough, 1992b: 237) and according to this model, they have the meaning and experience of two different moments of a chain of action. (Bob Jessop, 1990: 299) The most important point is that, according to Fairclough, discourse analysis alone cannot analyze a socialist practice because the socialist practice has simultaneously both discursive and non-discursive elements. (Jorgensen & Philips, 2011: 123) Therefore, this model allows the researcher to use compilation methods for his research. The possibility that has been used in this research with the involvement of policy methods has been used.

Fairclough's Discourse Analysis model is influenced by how he interprets the relationship between language and power. Fairclough refers to two aspects of the relationship between power and language: "power of language" and "power behind the language." (Gholamreza Kashi, 2008: 188-189)

Power of language:

When speaking of the power of language, language means the realization of a relationship of power. In fact, we deal with rules that are embodied in a speech pattern, and as a result, they are established between the social activists of the power relationship. For example, one can refer to a conversation between a

physician and a patient or a teacher and a student based on assumptions for power.

The power behind language:

It refers to deeds, physical statue, clothes, ambiguities, and power-holders. For example, when it comes to the space of the school, the desk and the couches, the teacher's room, and beyond, what is said among the student and his teacher, we pay attention to the power. Language cannot make such a good relationship without terms. With this in mind, discourse analysis, according to Fairclough, should be able to cover these interactions between the text and the outside of the text. Obviously, in this model, any discursive practice or dialogue is a socialist practice. This definition also implies policy making as a part of the social and political realities of a society below the concept of discourse. Social practice, however, makes sense in two areas. One is individual actions and limited to the context and the other is institutionalized in the regular social patterns. From Fairclough's point of view, every socialist practice has a dialectical relationship in a discourse with other socialist practices. If we consider the axis to the right of which is the perspective of the creation of discourse (observing Althusser's view of historical materialism), and the left-hand side of the concept of the creation of reality by discourse (Laclau & Mouffe's theory), then the model is Fairclough in the middle. (Jorgensen & Philips, 2011: 44 - 45)

In Fairclough's approach, discursive practices (which result in the unequal reproduction of ideological power ties) are affected by social forces that do not have a discursive character. Such as the structure of the political system and the institutional structure of the media. Based on this view, we can have a non-discursive that is the same sedimentary

discourses that lost its discursive character. Therefore, critical discourse analysis is critical in its attempt to reveal the role of discursive practices in preserving the survival of the social world, including those social relations that are associated with unequal power relations. (Jorgensen & Philips, 2011: 111-114) For Fairclough, ideology means "meaning in the service of power." (Fairclough, 1995b: 14) In his view, ideologies are semantic constructs that contribute to the reproduction or transformation of relationships. (Jorgensen & Philips, 2011: 87) In this way, ideological discourses are those that help maintain or transform power. The dominant discourse is hegemonic, and in the critical discourse analysis, the exercise of power by this discourse is challenged. This is not, in Gramsci's terms, hegemony as domination, but a negotiating process for reaching a consensus on the meaning. (Jorgensen & Philips, 2011: 130)

As explained above, power in the language is, in terms of Fairclough, based on the analysis of the statements, the relations and the position of the subjects. But the power behind the language in his point of view refers to a kind of behavior and non-verbal behavior in a relationship. (Tajik, 2011: 276 - 277) In other words, as Foucault refers to one of his works, the selection of the vocabulary of a text depends on the social relations of the participants and contributes to its formation (Foucault, 1989: 116). For Fairclough, discursive action is just one form of social action that is in a dialectical relationship to other actions. Discourse is both constructive and constructed. It is constructive because it reproduces other social phenomena such as politics, economics, gender, etc, because it works out of them. (Soltani, 2005:99) In this regard, Fairclough organizes the study of power in language and power behind language in three stages:

description, interpretation, and explanation are in fact an analysis of the text-based textures. For this reason, he tries to consider three traditions: first, the exact analysis of the text, the second, the macro sociological analysis of the socialist practice, and the third, the interpretive tradition of the text. (Jorgensen & Philips, 2011: 117) These three phases follow the Michel Foucault's view of the power structure, which in his genealogy explains the dialectical relationship between power and discourse, which also produces the power of discourses, and discourses reproduce power. (Soltani, 2005:99)

In this way, the three-dimensional model can be formulated so that, first, the discourse is analyzed in its most abstract form, the use of language as social practice. Just like discourse is both constructive and constructed. Second, discourse means a kind of language use in a particular domain. Like political or scientific discourse. And thirdly, discourse as meaning means an experience derived from a particular perspective. For example, feminist discourse, Marxism and ... (Fairclough, 1995a: 135). In each discourse analysis, we must consider two perspectives. First, the relational event is the subject of research, which refers to the use of language, for example, in the form of a press, cinema, and the like. Second, the discursive order defines the genres of discourse. These genres, for example, make media discursive order different from health care. In Fairclough's three-dimensional model, the use of language is a relational event. An event that has three dimensions; first, is a text. Second, it is a discursive practice (production and use of the text), that is, production and consumption. Third, it is a social practice, that is, it is related to the external social environment. The text is the first layer that its discourse layer is

attached to the social layer. (Jorgensen & Philips, 2011: 119-120)

Therefore, what Fairclough expresses is due to the fact that discursive practices are ideologically burdensome insofar as they help to preserve or weaken the power relations (whether scientific, political, cultural, etc.). Nevertheless, in this framework of thought, Ideology generally does not act in a social way and imposes a dominant through system the passage of class societies (including the classes of gender, racial, political, etc.).(Fairclough, 2000: 111) It should not be forgotten that in the opinion of Fairclough, the ideology of "meaning in the service of power" is defined, and ideologies in his view construct a meaning that helps to produce, reproduce, and transform the relations of domination. (Jorgensen & Philips, 2010: 130-131) In other words, if in Marxism theory, the power is at the disposal of the owners of the means of production, in the discourse, power is available to the owners of the discourse product. (Van Dijk, 2011: 197) And one of the major goals of critical analysis is the elimination of "power / domination" in theory and in practice.(Soltani, 2005: 33) So if this is the point of discourse that "is created by the discursive production of meaning, the objective reality and the purpose of political analysis, the discovery of the processes of constructive means" (Tajik, 2016: 11), Then policy discourse studies, in addition to describing the reality or reality of the real, ask them how to formulate policies and make them meaningful.

In this regard, government policies are understood as a discursive act, and policy-makers, are defined within the framework of discourses as actors that are invoked in different situations by invoking each discourse, and through the articulation of a particular political possibility is given to each policy making term are based on their assumptions. (Marsh & Stoker, 2013: 202) If we accept that discourse is the consolidation

of meaning within a particular realm, and the articulation is also practical, it establishes the relation between the components that are not naturally correlated with each other (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985), then it must be admitted that policy making in any political period in the structure of the political system is a way of understanding the dominant discourse of this period, and therefore, as Laclau and Mouffe explained in *Hegemony and Socialist Strategies*, Social as a social structure can be achieved by the goal of discourse theory.(Laclau and Mouffe, 1985)

This critique may involve the use of a discursive methodology for policy making studies that cannot be considered by qualitative methods, sometimes somewhat quantitative, but the method seems to be inadequate in policy understanding because of the pause in describing policies, we are forced to use methods such as discourse analysis.

Understanding Discourse of Policy making

But in order to explain the discourse of discursive processes, this concept must first be understood. In the political science literature, there is a significant difference between the two terms politics and policy. The former is the science of the power struggle, but the latter is the policy to govern the government.

Based on the second word, the science of policy making emerged. The advent of the science of policy making was rooted in the works of Lasswell and Lerner in the early 1950s, as well as Max Weber. According to some definitions, public policy making answers the question of who gets when, where, why what, and ... Accordingly, the science of policy making is a combination of science, skill and art. Science- theoretical body, include concepts and methodology of research include skills, is practical techniques and standard operating methods, and art includes policy and style of research.

As Parsons writes, public policy making focuses on how problems are defined and built in the first place. (Parsons, 2013: 9) Of course, with a pessimistic view, he also gives the definition of public policy, and for example, he writes: "Public policy making is a reaction to a problem, not necessarily a problem solving. Public policy is a show. A show of doing something." (Parsons, 2013: 275)

Lasswell, as one of the founders of public policy science, counts its several features. The first one is multi-discipline. The next is the problem solving feature, and the third one is explicitly normative. Therefore, it can be said that, according to Lasswell, public policy making does not rely solely on scientific objectivity, but accepts that goals and tools are not separate from values. (Ashtaryan, 2007: 12-16) In other words, public policy making is not just a desire to describe, but that the desire for change is based on goals that the researcher has taken into account (Bashiriyeh, 2017) and this is one of the

common features of public policy making and Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis. In fact, this inseparability of policy making science is one of the values and objectives in the field of political science, which relates it to discourse as a framework for understanding power struggles. It illustrates the impact of its discourse within the framework of what is called the policy making cycle.

According to some definitions, the policy cycle involves a series of steps that are sequentially emerging, however, it should not be forgotten that all these steps take place in a political environment. (J. M. Shafritz, 2011: 1357). Some have described these steps as six and some others as three. For example, Parsons argues that public policy making has three main stages. First, understanding the problem (the stage before the decision), the second problem finding (the decision-making stage) and the third problem-solving (the post-decision phase).



Fig 3: James, Anderson, "Public Policy and Politics in America" (Monterey: book/Cole, 1984), p.5

Thus, if we adhere to the definition of discourse as a semantic framework for understanding the facts, then it is clear that policy making whether in formulating the problem, formulating government's agenda setting to solve it, politicians' decision-making, implementing stage, estimating, is under the influence of the dominant discourses in society.

However, it is not just that policy-making must be understood in the context of hegemonic discourses in a society, because policy making is sometimes not based on common discourses, which are based on the interests of actors formulated. (Kingdom: 1995) This is an interpretation based on which policy making is a complex interactive process without initiation and accomplishment. In the

study of the policy process, not only should consider elections, bureaucracies, parties and politicians and interest groups, but also take into account the deeper forces of trade, inequality and unlimited capacities. (Woodhouse & Lyndon, 1993: 11)

Of course, in addition, the interests of the state, the classes, the intensity of the protests, and the media approach can also have a definite effect on the policy cycle. So, if we look at the policy issue outside the discourse's intellectual coordinating system, we must acknowledge that, as Kiyomars Ashtaryan explained in his book, titled, *Basics and Principle of Public Policy Making*, we can identify the six fold common characteristics of all public policy processes which Press policy is not out of the box either.

Table 2:
Common Features of Public Policy

1	Policy-making is purposeful, not accidental.
2	Policy-making are a set of government actions, not just a specific action one.
3	Policy-making is action and not the words and slogans of the state.
4	Policymaking can be unnecessary for a government to deal with a particular issue.
5	Policy-making is based on law.
6	Policy-making is policy.

However, one should not forget that various actors play a role in the public policy process. From government to non-state actors, Leslie Paul (1987) identifies four major policy makers: government actors, interest groups, expert groups and information owners, citizens. (Pierre Muller, 1999) Nevertheless, all of these actors play a policy game in the general context of the state structure that emerges from a hegemonic paradigm. According to Kyomars Ashtatyan, policy making is the result of the linkage of administrative relations with the political interests of the state. (Ashtatyan, 2007: 82)

Perhaps this is why, according to Philip Bro, public policy is the study of the state, in

practice (vahid, 2009: 7), or as Shafritz describes in his book, titled, *The US Public Policy*, public policy is the government can choose to act, or choose not to act (Shafritz, 2011: 41) In fact, public policy making has two areas: "subject" and "method". None of these, of course, can be outside the structure of discourse and is defined within the "constructive / constructed" round. The subject of public policy making is government. Regarding this, there are three general theories about public policy: the first is pluralist theory, in which the state is seen as guarantor of the interests of the majority and meets the needs of the majority. Second, neo-Marxist or neo-Weberian theories in which the state guaran-

tees the interests of the ruling class or the bureaucratic class. Third, neo-institutionalism or neo corporative theories in which a balance between government and social classes is created (Vahid, 2009: 19).

But with all the emphasis that policy thinkers have on the importance of the role of government in decision making and policy making process, the role of non-state actors should not be overlooked. According to Majid Vahid, when a problem is placed on the agenda setting of a government that has been politicized; in other words, in the framework of the dominant discourse, it can be politically meaningful. What is the meaning of this politicalization? He replies, attributing a problem to the field of public authority and public decision-makers, is the result of an effort by the practitioners whose profession is to politicize general problems. They know

how to form a demand and contextualized it so that it can be understandable and reviewed by policymakers (Vahid, 2009: 73). In fact, these actors turn the issue into the problem of policy making politics by relying on to give meaning to the floating signifiers. Therefore, he emphasizes that subjectivity (meaning discourse) means an objective problem (Vahid, 2009: 76). Therefore, outside of the discourse, one cannot understand the "problem" that initiates the policy cycle.

To use discourse in public policy, can suddenly put a problem into the agenda setting of the government and vice versa. Anthony Downs` model explains why a problem, after sudden attention, disappears from the point of view of people, and public opinion becomes tired of changing the status quo. (Shafritz, 2011: 140 & 141)

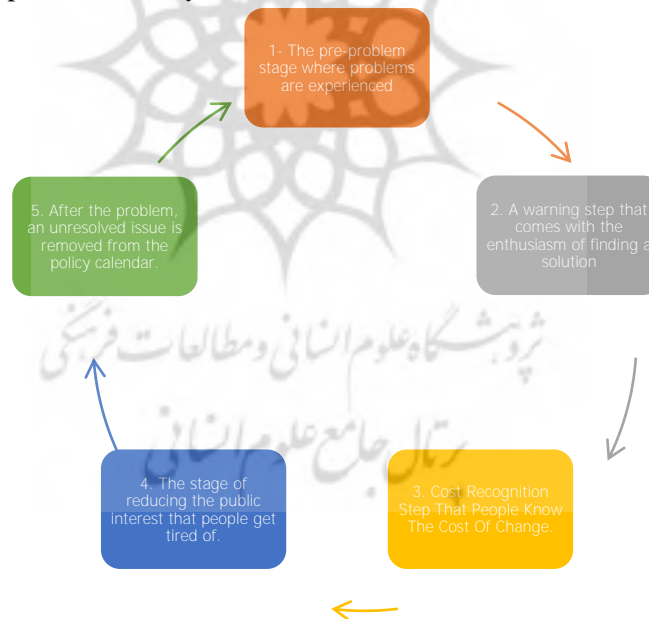


Fig 4: Anthony Downs` Model

This is where the definition of coding for discourse can be used for public policy making in the sense that understanding policy outside the discourse circle of policy makers often makes no sense. Pierre Muller calls "the

referential," or the reference of that policy, to represent the set of representations and realities that underlie a public policy. Referential is an epistemic process whose function is intelligible by limiting the com-

plexities of a problem. In this regard, two operations are coding and decoding. In the first step, the actors decoding to understand the problem and remove the ambiguity of it,

and then, for the purpose of governmental interpretation and formulation, they will code the problem.

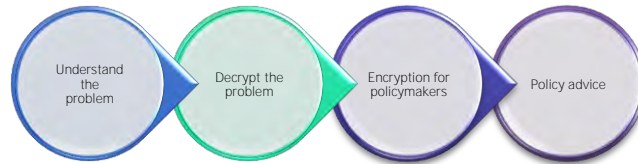


Fig 5: The process of understanding a policy based on discursive coding

So given the role of values in defining a problem, the very definition of a problem is a political action and of course a discourse. Here, are intertwined and a policy cannot be understood outside of political understanding, and even agency to pursue a problem is itself a form of political agency. The four steps stages of the Cobb for entering a problem into the government's policy calendar illustrate how actors' mindsets, values, and discourses influence the concept of a policy and its perception.



Fig 6: Combine goals and tools in formulating policies

Roger Cobb's Major Stages

1. Initiation.
2. Specification.
3. Expansion.
4. Entrance.

According to another definition, although the goals and problem finding and the proposed solutions to problem-solving in policy-making process are not related to the discourse, this does not mean that the policy-making methods are also a matter of discourse and policy work.

In other words, if we consider policy making as a set of goals and methods, then it is clear that the methods do not follow the discourse requirements of the goals.

However, there are those who believe that even these seemingly specialized tools are not acceptable outside the realm of discourse. That's why the former Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, Tip O'Neill, had earlier said that "all politics is local". That is, any particular country-specific policy has been formulated with a specific dominant culture, values, and discourse and even the methods used in other countries cannot be without this discourse origin (Rose, 2011: 17).

So to use the policy experiences of other countries, instead of describing policies, we have come up with a model of discourse understanding that is understandable to the policy makers of the target country. (Rose, 2011:

31) This model should have seven important components for separating goals and tools:

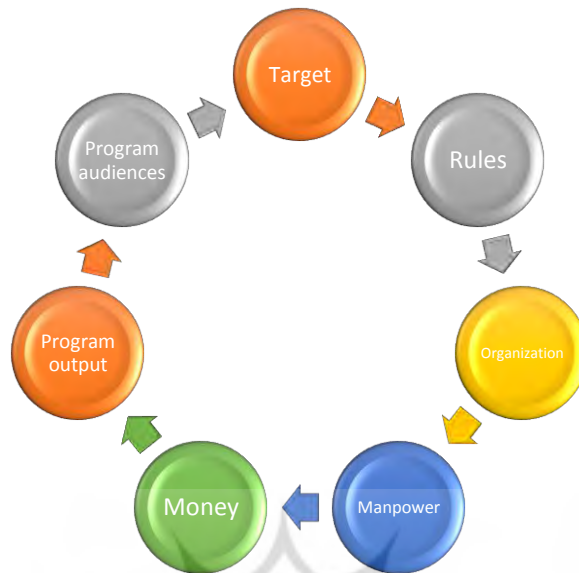


Fig 7: Component for designing policy model (Rose, 2011: 145)

In fact, the reverse engineering process is used here to get experience policy making in other countries (Rose, 2011: 160) and so a country is successful in modeling policies from other countries that can somehow incorporate its own discourses and values into the policy making process. In the policy making

literature, the Intermediary Doctrine is used to understand the impact of discourse on policy making. Doctrine is a mediating force between philosophy (ambiguity and abstraction) and policy (practice). The doctrine contains the basic principles of how to live and how to do things (Shafritz, 2011: 283).

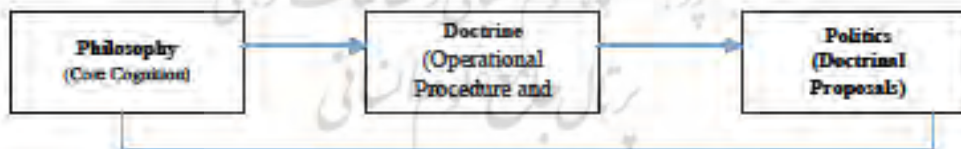


Fig 8: The doctrinal relationship between philosophy and politics

Policy; the link between discourse and the policy work

It is thus clear that policy within the framework of public policy making cannot be meaning outside the concept of discourse. Therefore, in policy analysis, one should consider and explain the discourses.

The important point is that understanding the meaning of policy in a particular field can be helpful in understanding discourses. Indeed, if we accept that discourse, as a formless energy flows into the atmosphere of policy, policy is the way it can embody discourse and link it to politics. In other words,

a fixed semantic signifier that has been transformed from a floating problem state to a specific discursive element. Thus, the political analyst has no choice but to look at policies in every field, to understand the consequences of a discourse, and also to discourse about policy analysis. In fact, in order to analyze public policy making processes, we have to go back to the famous controversial "structure / agent" binary. Some consider structures in assessing political phenomena and some look at the behaviors and agents involved in them. In the analysis of policies, this is also the case. Some examine policies within the framework of policy makers, while others look at decision-making structures, discourses, and doctrines. This paper attempts to discuss the issue of policies from the perspective of discourse structure. So if we base on the famous Hofferbert's funnel, we find that

it is more effective in policy making than in policy makers, historical and cultural pressures, and so on (Parsons, 2013: 323).

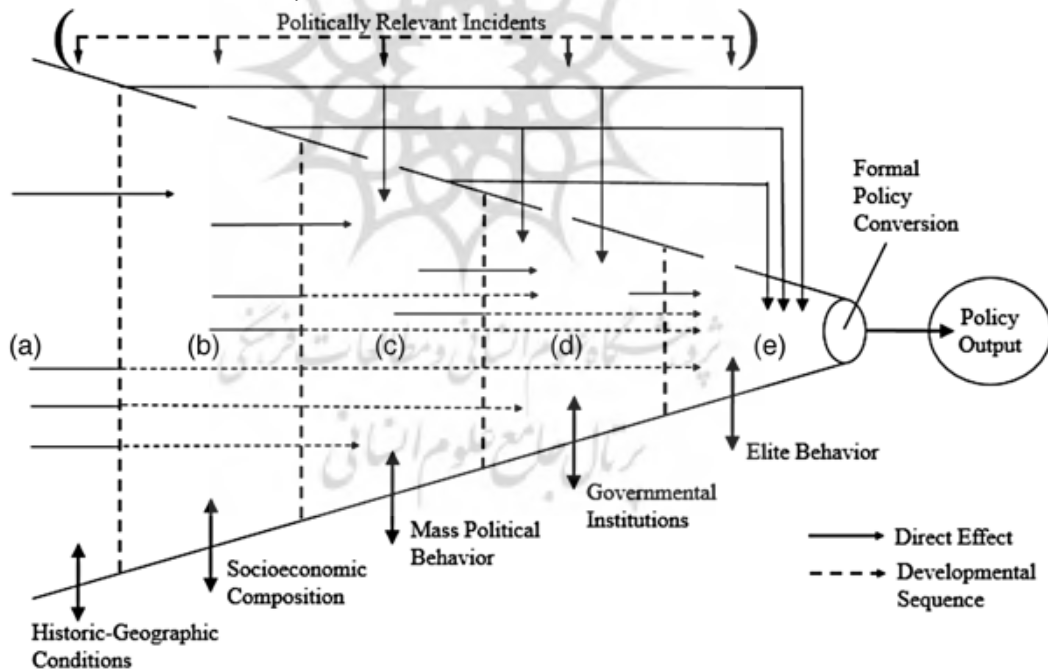
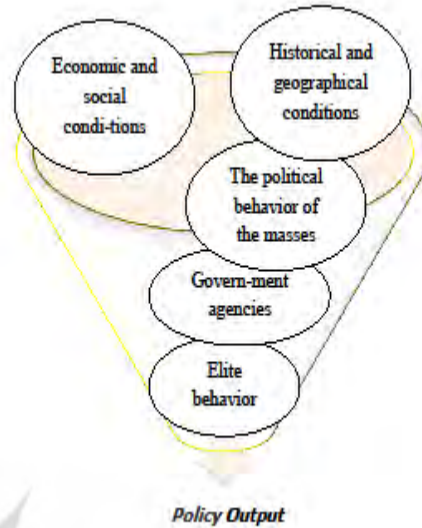


Fig 9: Hofferbert's Funnel

So if you consider the three levels of issues, policies, and policy output for any governmental decision, then it is clear that these three stages did not take place outside an

intellectual, cultural, and social structure and many structures in problem design, policy design, and ultimately. The choice of policy output has been involved. One of the best

examples of understanding the nature of issues and policies is Kingdom. He argues that the streams of ideas and the movement of policy contractors in the community environment is like a soup pot where ideas rise and fall and sometimes merge and sometimes disappear (Parsons, 2013: 293). What ultimately determine the nature of this soup is not its independent components but a hidden identity in the composition of all those components that makes the concept of soup understandable to a hungry human.

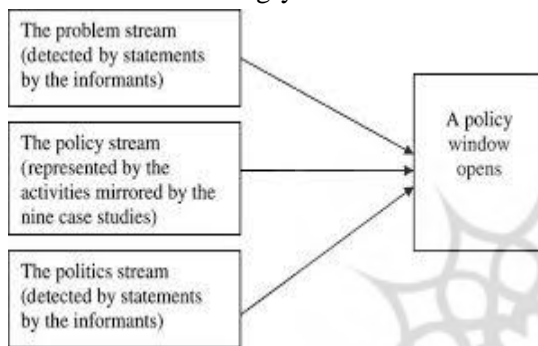


Fig 10: Kingdom's Three Stream Policy Window Model

The discourse-based analysis of the policy cycle, which is less discussed in the mainstream literature of policy making, may be a different version of what is known in the systematic approach to popular policy theories. Therefore, if we consider the following five approaches as the main axes of policy making approaches, we must acknowledge that in this study we present a sixth approach in which policy making is examined within a critical discourse analysis framework.

Table 3:
Theoretical Approaches to Public Policy (Ashtaryan, 2007: 28)

Institutional Theory
Elite Theory
Group Theory
Input and Output Models
Systems Theory

Here, the systematic analysis of policies is not to avoid their political and ideological evaluation, but to consider ideology and, more generally, discourse as the general space within which the policy making system is made possible. In this method, as stated, institutions are nothing but discourse sediments, and the elite are actors who are influenced by and discourses based on the model of discourse analysis. In this framework, interest groups are also meaningful in their particular discourse structure, and any design of a policy model makes sense with a look at the discourse system.

In his book, titled, *Public Policy*, Kyomars Ashtaryan defines policy analysis at three levels: micro, subsystem, and macro (Ashtaryan, 2007: 28).

Table 4:
Different levels of policy analysis

1	Micro level	Policy making a person or a private company for himself
2	Subsystem level of secondary systems	Focus on the interests of particular groups or groups
3	macro level	To the general public. According to the public

In this leveling, it is clear that policy making discourse analysis and looking at the policy making field are defined as a discourse at the macro level. At such a level, the application of power in government policy is the regulation of social relations, a form of hegemonic discourse (Ashtaryan, 2007: 86). In this analytical approach, a policy will be examined according to its peripheral environment and in particular the policies of other sectors. This is in contrast to the traditional approach of analyzing a policy independent of its environment. In fact, the fundamentals of the policy analysis systematic approach are: first, goal analysis; second, resources

analysis, third, analysis of the relations between resources, fourth, policies of target based population, and fifth, managing programs which each is made possible by considering the environment's discourse system within the policy framework.,

The systematic approach to policy making is based on the theories of Ludwig von Bertalanfy, the father founding father of Systems Theory and David Easton. In this theory, a system is an organized a cohesive conglomeration of interrelated and interdependent parts prescribed by interactions; a system designed

to accomplish a particular purpose or public purpose. Therefore, a system approach is an analytical framework that considers situations from the perspective of systems (Shafritz, 2011: 57). So it would definitely be said that policy making discourse analysis is a kind of spotlight on David Easton's black box. Discourses are, in fact, the secret of the policy-making system in every culture and society, and the analyst can well observe existing government policies that recognize the hegemonic discourses and their rivals and are familiar with their meaningful components.

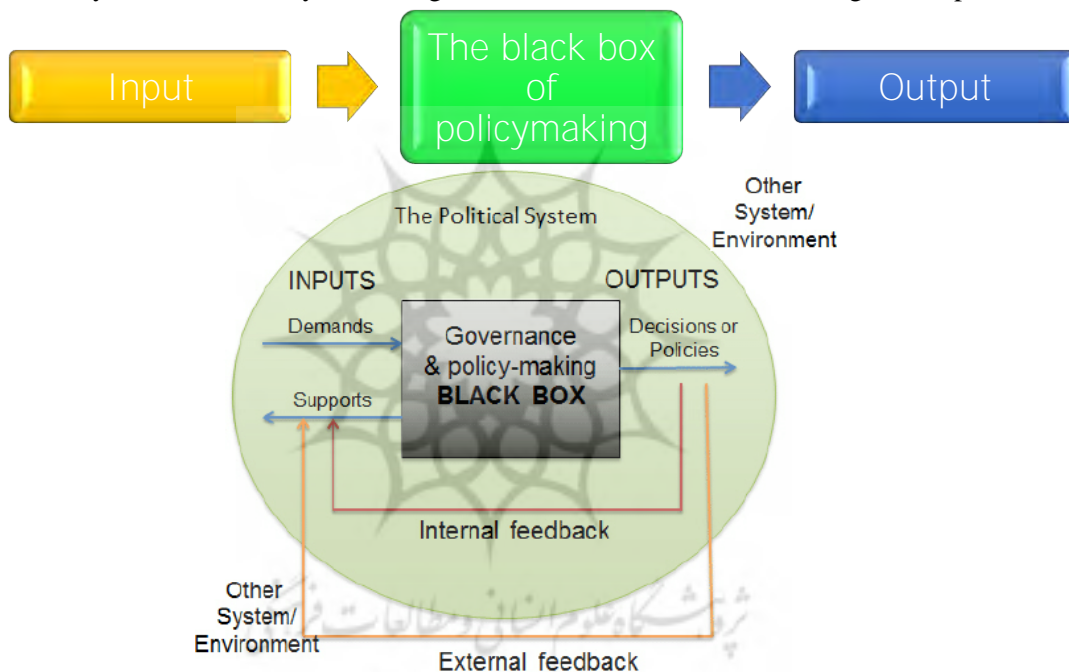


Fig 11: Easton's Black Box Model (Vahid, 2011: 20)

Policy making discourse analysis, of course, does not negate the use of models such as sequential analysis based on the Charles Jones model. However, this approach attempts to distance itself from the instrumentalism that is based on the reductionism and simplification of phenomena in Charles Lindblum's literature and present policy making in a larger picture than even its governmental one. In fact, although this method

regards who, how and where make policy, but more than these key questions are the relationships that are significant among the components of the policy system. For example, Figure 22 shows that if we consider the Iron Triangle hypothesis in relation to policymakers, it is still the individuals, the relationships between them, and the discourses behind their thoughts that influence policies.

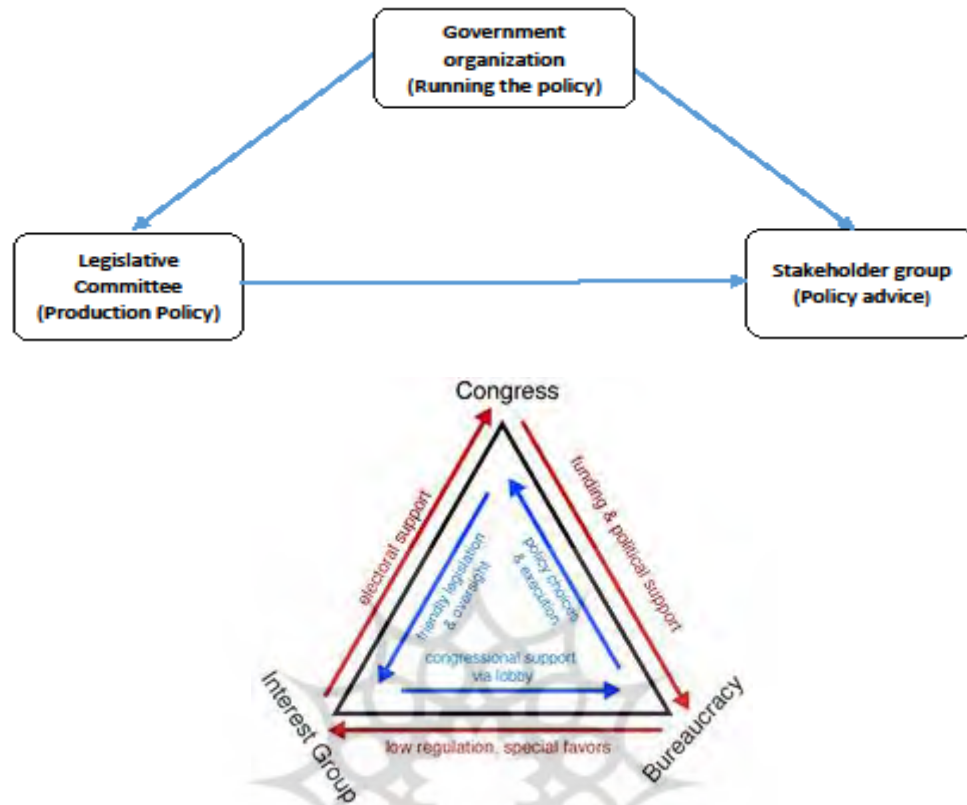


Fig 12: The Iron Triangle of Policy makers (Shafritz, 2011: 109)

In policy-making, what makes relationships between policy makers important is the effect that each have on the whole system. Indeed, when policy makers make a decision that may relate to one part of the system, it will have unforeseen effects on the system. This is a statement of chaos theory that is called "butterfly effect" in meteorology. Therefore, the policy-making system is an open one that influences its environment (Shafritz, 2011: 123) and it is clear that this external environment is in fact a kind of discursive space where the whole problem defining system, its solution, decision-making, implementation, and includes feedback.

Conclusion

Given the efficacy of the discourse approach in public policy making studies, it can be

concluded that the relationship between policy and discourse analysis is so intimate that politics can actually be considered a translation of the realized objectivity of a discourse component. In other words, the discourse embodies its existence in the form of politics and becomes tangible in the context of society. This is perhaps why it is said that the description of issues is a fundamental form of political power (Schneider, 1960: 69), and the one who determines what policies is in charge of governing the state (Parsons, 2013: 194). It has been said earlier that there is power in meaning-making in society (Deluxe, 1974, p. 43), so policy-making is the process of concretizing power in society. If the making policy process is in a democratic way, it is natural to consider power democratically, but if the policy-making path is not very democratic, a democratic form of power

cannot be experienced in society. Perhaps this is why Habermas suggests that in order for social issues to be addressed in an equal situation, society must be in a state of ideal dialogue to clarify the public policy agenda setting (Parsons, 2013: 225). This is the result of the statement that there are two approaches to answer the question of who makes policies. There are two approaches: First, the "power-elite" theory of elite governance and policymaking, and the theory of citizen participant that speaks of pluralism and the role of all citizens in a democratic definition of policy making.

Moreover, it should be kept in mind that the impact of policy making on ideals and values does not mean ignoring the political marketing process and mobilizing the demands. Thus, policy calendars reflect the mobilization of political demands rather than reflecting a rational process of assessing needs, values, and goals. So, problems often appear on the policy calendar without sufficiently conceptualizing or thinking about them (Wellman, 1981: 463). The importance of public mobilization for turning a problem into a public agenda setting is because it is one of the five models of influencing the policy cycle. In this model, which is a traditional model, public opinion raises a problem and puts it on the policy calendar. Moreover, in a political supply model that still reflects the social pressure to pursue a problem, although it is not a real need in society, the parties raise and maneuver the need. There is another form of mobilization in the model of media use. There is no social need here either, but the media is pursuing the issue. There are, however, two models of top-down policy making. One of these two methods is the precursor model in practice. In this model, the government tries to solve it before a need arises. Also, in the model of corporatist silent

action, lobbies place a problem on the policy calendar without a media or party reflection (vahid, 2009: 92).

Thus, unlike conventional policy-making approaches that address issues of problem finding, decision-making, implementation, and feedback processes and neglect the formulation and implementation of policy discourse, it should be remembered that policy making is the antidote to technocracy. Technocracy is based on expertise and proficient, but policy is focused on policy and engineering expertise. Policy is the common language of all specialties (Drucker, 1996, 371 and 372). In other words, public policy is not just the hardware of a political decision, but of the political and discourse itself. Public policy is a set of targeted actions and practices that guide decision-makers in a society to address a public issue or problem (Alwani, 1999: 20-22). Public policy is a guide that defines how to justify and interpret tasks and how they are to be performed in society at large (Self, 1972: 67). So it is like an atmosphere for policy makers and actors in the political field who try to give a concrete meaning to the concept of power by relying on policy formulation. The definition of policy making that 'politics is neither a decision nor a goal; it is not just a general solution. Rather, it is a framework of coherent measures aimed at solving the problem' (Ashtatyan, 2007: 79). It is well to say that policy-making should generally be devoid of conventional bureaucratic debate.

So if we consider the soft and hard dimensions of policy making, then we will see that public policy is the product of bureaucratic interaction, of elites, groups, and socio-economic classifications (Ibid, 75), which makes sense within a discourse narrative. This is where the discussion of the structural aspects of policy making mentioned earlier

makes sense, and the role of historical structures, political culture, environmental factors (geographical, demographic, etc.), public opinion (which regulates the speed of government action in policymaking). And the socio-economic system (pressure groups and government facilities) is highlighted (Ibid, 35). Structural backgrounds beyond the elite and policy makers that change over time.

Because policy making, due to its scientific and specialized nature, has given the state scientific legitimacy (Ibid. 14) and conceals state policies based on ideology and political interests under the guise of expert reasons, all governments try to describe it politically. Policy-making processes hide the discourses of policy-dominated discourse. This is an interpretation of Foucault's point that he emphasizes that modern power is more acceptable if it conceals its own face, just as the model of the Bentham-based society. In other words, modern power disguises itself by producing a discourse that is apparently anti-power but part of the wider use of modern power. For example, the discourse of law, where the will is the rule and the law is one, is a form of legitimizing discourse production (Robino, 2013: 238 and 239).

The legitimizing and apparently specialized policy apparatus is also a kind of peer-to-peer coverage of processes that actors pursue within their political interests. Even political marketers and problem-solving experts in the community try to pursue problems with expert but discursive nature (Lozick, 2012). They know that if the basic nature of public policy, which is the pursuit of political dis-

course, is made clear to the public, then many policies will be more difficult to formulate and enforce. While there may be little doubt in the definition of public policy that "the implementation of a doctrine prevails, provided that it contains and provides direction for strategy, tactics and principles" (Shafritz, 2011: 22), but the details of the implementation are the same. The prevailing doctrine is that it sometimes laments the course of policy making and implementation.

In this regard, it is recalled that the claim of this article is that it seeks to add another point to this model, that not only data and outputs, but also policy makers and the policy cycle are influenced by dominant discourses or discourse is at stake, and so the same data, in different dominant discourses, leads to a different systematic output. In this sense, the policy cycle is not an independent discourse cycle, and in addition to data and outputs, the policy cycle is also influential in the discourse, which makes, for example, media policy, not just data and outputs, but also is the type of policy making to become a function of political discourse.

The figure below shows that the policy cycle and the data and outputs are embedded in a network of floating disc slabs represented by colored balls. These floating pointers in each discourse find their own meaning, and so no one's problem-solving, decision-making, and policy-making processes can be ignored. The same discursive meaning will affect not only the meaning of the data but also the decision-making mechanisms.

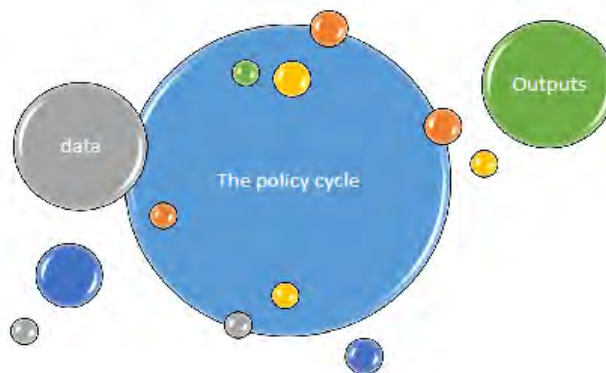


Fig 13: Theoretical Framework of Research Based on the Discursive Nature of the Policy Cycle

What is a policy is meaningless outside the understanding of discursive signifiers. Therefore, policy making is not only a method for understanding policy making, but also as this paper claims, the core nature of policy making, and virtually every method outside the framework of discourse analysis does not have the competence to fully understand the policy issue.

In this regard, the studies of the state that govern policy making, without considering discourse analysis and specifying the relation of discourses to policies adopted, are in fact not responsive to all aspects of these studies.

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