

# **Autumn School**

## **›The Sociology of Knowledge Approach to Discourse (SKAD)‹**

**University of Augsburg (Germany),  
October 5-7, 2023**

Organiser: Prof. Dr. Reiner Keller (University of Augsburg)

Please visit <https://www.uni-augsburg.de/en/fakultaet/philsoz/fakultat/soziologie/diskursforschung/> for up-to-date information and details concerning registration, venues, etc.

Following the success of the last four international workshops with participants from different countries and all world regions, there will be a fifth introductory workshop in English on the Sociology of Knowledge Approach to Discourse (SKAD) at the University of Augsburg in October 2023. The organiser invites novice as well as experienced academics from a wide range of disciplines, including but not limited to sociology, ethnology, political science, cultural studies, linguistics, education, and other humanities, to explore the potential of this approach to studying discourses in the context of their own projects and research. Please note that the autumn school gives priority to participants without a strong German language background. German speakers are invited to register for our summer school.

Discourse studies today cover a large field of approaches across the social sciences, ranging from work inspired by Foucault to Critical Discourse Analysis and through to hegemonic stability theory, corpus linguistics, and on to more interpretive approaches. The Sociology of Knowledge Approach to Discourse draws from Berger & Luckmann's sociology of knowledge, the interpretive paradigm in pragmatist sociology, and core Foucauldian concepts in the analysis of regimes of power/knowledge, discourses & dispositifs. In doing so, SKAD re-directs discourse research towards Foucauldian research interests about questions of social relationships of knowledge & knowing and politics of knowledge & knowing. Doing discourse research refers, according to SKAD, to elements of qualitative research designs (like theoretical sampling, sequential analysis, analysis by contrasting cases, category building, discourse ethnography) and interpretive analytics.

Since the late 1990s, the Sociology of Knowledge Approach to Discourse (SKAD) has been established in discourse & dispositif research in Germany and many other countries. Today, it informs a large amount of discourse & dispositif orientated research projects and publications across fields and disciplines. Workshops introducing theory, methodology, and methods of SKAD research have been established in Germany for more than 20 years. Workshops in French and English have

followed suit in the last years (e.g., in the United States, Switzerland, Austria, France, Denmark, Belgium, United Kingdom, Romania).

The Augsburg autumn school builds on the broad international interest in SKAD and introduces core issues of the concrete doing and practice of SKAD based discourse research. It addresses colleagues from the Social Sciences and the broad range of the Humanities who are interested in learning about SKAD and its profile within the field of discourse studies as well as in doing SKAD research/using SKAD methodologies in their own discourse-oriented research.

The workshop will discuss the following topics:

- What is at stake when using SKAD in discourse research?
- SKAD theory: discourses & dispositifs – and how to conceptualise them
- Research questions and conceptual tools in SKAD
- The methodology of interpretive analytics
- Getting into the field: methods of data collection and analysing data
- Getting out of the field: from data analysis to comprehensive diagnostics
- Digital data and analysis in SKAD based discourse research
- Special interest sessions (optional): SKAD applications in sociology and the humanities & SKAD application in political science

**Special interest session A: sociology & humanities (Reiner Keller)**

The session discusses specific questions on SKAD based discourse and dispositif research (for example, the analysis of visualisations, materiality, the ethnography of dispositifs) and allows for an in-depth discussion of SKAD applications in various disciplines (subject to selection if necessary). Participants are invited to discuss SKAD in relation to their own research interests and work.

**Special interest session B: political science (Miranda Böttcher)**

Discourse-oriented approaches have gained relevance in political research. This in-depth section of the SKAD autumn school will provide space to discuss basic questions and approaches of SKAD based political research. It will cover all parts of the research process: from data collection via data management and analysis to the integration and presentation of results. All steps and phases will be illustrated using examples from empirical research (previous SKAD research as well as participants' presentations).

The workshop includes data analysis sessions. Furthermore, participants are invited to present their individual research project for group discussion.

## **The venue: University of Augsburg**

The [University of Augsburg](https://www.uni-augsburg.de/) is located in the city of Augsburg in southern Germany, which is 60 km/40 miles from the Bavarian capital Munich and can be easily reached by train or by flight via Munich (MUC) airport. Hotel rooms are available from 40-90 Euro per day.

## **The workshop**

- The workshop starts on October 5/2023 at 3 pm and ends on October 7/2023 at 6 pm.
- The number of participants is limited to 25 people max. Depending on the number of participants who wish to present their work, the organisers may need to select amongst the individual projects for discussion.
- Special interest sessions "sociology & humanities" / "political science"
- Additional program: open space time slots for questions and discussion, dinner, pubcrawl
- Venue: University of Augsburg Campus; for more information see <https://www.uni-augsburg.de/en/fakultaet/philsoz/fakultat/soziologie/diskursforschung/>, "Arrival and Accomodation".
- Contact: Martin Blessinger, skad@phil.uni-augsburg.de

## **Workshop fee**

The workshop fee is **70 Euro** per person (includes refreshments during the workshop). This fee does not cover travel, accommodation, or meals, which are the responsibility of each individual participant. A reduced fee (35 Euros) might apply for participants arriving from Non-European 'low income' countries without institutional coverage of participation. Please contact us, if you this applies to you (skad@phil.uni-augsburg.de).

## **Registration**

Please register via the registration form on our homepage <https://www.uni-augsburg.de/en/fakultaet/philsoz/fakultat/soziologie/diskursforschung/>. Please fill in all fields of the form if possible. If you have any questions, feel free to contact us (skad@phil.uni-augsburg.de).

After your registration you will receive a preliminary confirmation. We will also send you an invoice for the participation fee to be paid. The registration becomes fully effective when the participation fee has been received on our booking account. Withdrawing from the workshop is possible until four weeks before the event; cancellations after this time will not be refunded. There will be a waiting list in case the event is fully booked.

Please note that depending on the Corona situation in October 2023, particular university campus regulations (such as proof of vaccinations, obligatory mask wearing) might apply.

## **Preliminary Workshop Program**

### **Thursday (5/10/2023)**

- 2.30 pm Registration
- 3.00 pm Welcome from the organisers + Introduction of the participants  
The Arena of Discourse Studies  
SKAD: What's it all about?
- 7.00 pm Welcome reception with food & drinks

### **Friday (6/10/2023)**

- 9.00 am SKAD: Theory & Methodology
- 10.45 am *Break*
- 11.00 am SKAD: Research process and methods
- 12.30 am *Lunch (not included)*
- 1.45 pm SKAD goes digital
- 3.15 pm *Break*
- 3.30 pm Data analysis sessions I & II (parallel sessions)
- 5.30 pm *Break*
- 5.40 pm Open Space
- 6.15 pm ---End of Day 2---
- 7.00 pm *Dinner (not included)*

### **Saturday (7/10/2023)**

- 9.00 am Data analysis sessions I & II (parallel sessions)
- 11.00 am *Break*
- 11.15 am Discussion of participants projects
- 12.30 am *Lunch (not included)*
- 1.45 pm Special interest sessions A (sociology & humanities) or B (political science) (including discussion of participants projects)
- 3.00 pm *Break*
- 3.15 pm Special interest sessions A (sociology & humanities) or B (political science) (including discussion of participants projects)
- 5.00 pm *Break*
- 5.20 pm Open Discussion
- 6.00 pm ---End of Workshop---
- 7.00 pm *Dinner & optional pubcrawl (not included)*

## The Organisers

**Prof. Dr. Reiner Keller** is Professor of Sociology at the University of Augsburg; co-director of the Centre for Transnational Studies and member of the executive board of the German Sociological Association (DGS). From 2011 to 2016 he headed the sociology of knowledge division of the DGS. He started working on and with SKAD in the 1990s. He has longstanding experiences in discourse workshops as well as a long list of publications in discourse research. His work & research interests include social science discourse research, sociology of knowledge and culture, qualitative methods, and analysis of contemporary societies. He has a longstanding experience in conducting and directing collaborative research projects. Keller was a member of the Munich Centre for Reflexive Modernization from 1999 to 2010 and has just finished co-directing a comparative research on French and German history of sociological knowledge production since the 1960s, funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG). Current projects include DFG-funded research on politics of knowledge and knowing in the field of hydraulic fracturing (2017-2021), energy transition (2018-2023) and regulatory conflicts surrounding prostitution (2018-2023), respectively. See <http://www.uni-augsburg.de/keller>

Keller, R. (2011): The Sociology of Knowledge Approach to Discourse (SKAD). In: *Human Studies*, 34 (1), pp. 43-65.

Keller, R. (2012): Entering Discourses: A New Agenda for Qualitative Research and Sociology of Knowledge. In: *Qualitative Sociology Review*, Vol. VIII Issue 2, pp. 46-55.

Keller, R. (2013): *Doing Discourse Research. An Introduction for the Social Sciences*. London: Sage.

Keller, R. (2014): Comparing Discourse Between Cultures. A Discursive Approach to Movement Knowledge. In: Baumgarten, B., Daphi, P., Ulrich, P. (Eds.): *Conceptualizing Culture in Social Movement Research*. Hampshire: Palgrave, pp. 113-139 (with P. Ullrich).

Keller, R./Hornidge, A./Schünemann, W. (Eds.) (2019): *The Sociology of Knowledge Approach to Discourse. Investigating the Politics of Knowledge and Meaning-Making*. London: Routledge.

Keller, R. (2023): *The Sociology of Knowledge Approach to Discourse. A Research Agenda*. New York: Springer (translated from the 3rd German edition, in prep).

**Dr. Miranda Böttcher** combines her background in political science and linguistics in her research on the discursive construction of environmental policy. She adapted the Sociology of Knowledge Approach to Discourse (SKAD) for her dissertation project, which examined the privileging and marginalization of types of knowledge within the emerging governance of "climate engineering".

Boettcher, M. (2020): Coming to GRIPs with NETs Discourse: Implications of discursive structures for emerging governance of Negative Emissions Technologies in the UK, *Frontiers in Climate*, 2 (20).

Boettcher, M. (2019): Cracking the code. How discursive structures shape climate engineering research governance. *Environmental Politics*, 5 (29).

Boettcher, M. (2022): *Language, knowledge, power: The Discursive Construction of Climate Engineering Governance*, Doctoral Dissertation, Utrecht University.

## **General conditions for participation**

1. Participants who have received preliminary confirmation must pay all fees associated with workshop participation within four weeks after initial confirmation. Should payment not be received at this time, their right to participate is forfeit.
2. Paying the appropriate fee within the allocated timeframe grants participants access to a workshop. Participants may transfer their right to participate to another person with the organisers' permission.
3. Participants may withdraw from workshops up to 4 weeks before the event. Participants will receive a refund in this case. Fees cannot be refunded if a participant withdraws after this time.
4. In case that the workshop must be cancelled by the organisers due to force majeure, all fees will be refunded.
5. The organisers take no responsibility for damage to or loss of electronic and other equipment.
6. Please note that depending on the Corona situation in October 2023, particular university campus regulations (such as proof of vaccinations, obligatory mask wearing) might apply.