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The Illusion of Objectivity: How Language Constructs Authority.

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The Illusion of Objectivity: How Language Constructs Authority

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Abstract

This chapter explores how the apparent objectivity of language becomes a strategy for legitimization in authoritarian, institutional, or scientific discourses. Through functional and pragmatic linguistic analysis, it shows that discursive “neutrality” is often a form of invisible ideological imposition. The analysis draws on authors such as Halliday, Ducrot, and Hyland, and provides a sample of the critical and multidisciplinary approach of the book **Grammars of Power**.

Excerpt

Authority in discourse is not manifested exclusively through explicit commands or appeals to hierarchy, but is also constructed through the apparent objectivity of language. This chapter examines how certain grammatical structures—such as impersonal passive voice or nominalization—enable the elimination of the agent from the statement and, with it, their responsibility. By stating, for example, that “it has been demonstrated that...” or that “the evidence indicates...,” the speaker hides behind a guise of alleged epistemic neutrality. In reality, these strategies reinforce a type of invisible authority that is difficult to question, as it does not present itself as subjective or biased, but as scientific, technical, and objective. It is, therefore, a form of power that operates on the grammatical and semantic levels, structuring not only what is said, but also what can or cannot be said.