

## Abstract

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### **The language of power and the power of language How Region Västra Götaland was created**

In this study the construction of a reform is treated. Particularly, the influence of language and power in such a process is discussed. The starting-point is that a reform is not just something that is instrumental and concise, but it is a activity that must be understood as argumentation. Words are therefore not only words. Language has the task of pinpointing a piece of reality; such as it is and/or should be. To understand a reform as a linguistic construction rather than as being outside language also gives the possibility of investigating those practices where 'mobilisation of bias' is linguistically constructed, and reproduced, and how they in turn create what Foucault (1972) calls "truth effects". In this connection the study investigates how "the region" as a new concept of categorisation becomes a dominating discourse in how the regional organisation should be organised. In order to study how both language of power and power of language are produced within different practices, I use a model for critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1989; 1992; 1995).

By following the reform over time an understanding has been gained as to how separate events and the condition of different things are transformed from being an object of region discourse to being a part of the discourse instruction. In the theoretical contribution the power of reproduction of certain discourses in reformation and the role of a discourse community is treated. It exposes the linguistic aspects of political actions that normally would not be understood as linguistic, i.e., interest, motive and intention. The study offers a clarification and deeper understanding of the reform discourse and its effects.

**Key words:** reform, region, discourse, rhetoric, discursive practice, rhetorical situation, discourse community

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