Chapter 3: Grasping the Social Entrepreneurship Discourse(s) – Theoretical Framework and Methodology

3.1 Introduction: Empirically Investigating the Contested Concept of Social Entrepreneurship in Germany between 1999 and 2021

This book explores the contested concept of social entrepreneurship (SE) in Germany between 1999 and 2021 along four research themes: diversity and dominance, representation and relevance, development over time and notions of 'change' and politics. As I have explained in Chapter 1, descriptions and interpretations of the SE term and concept can be quite diverse, and are often intertwined with wider worldviews, narratives or visions about the economy and society, deriving from different normative underpinnings and political beliefs. SE seeks to advocate 'change' – but it often remains unclear, what exactly shall 'change' and how, and what sort of economy and society is ultimately envisioned by SE. Different actors see very different things in SE and pursue different goals with it. From Chapter 2, it is known that in the early phase, SE in Germany has mostly been interpreted as a neoliberal movement. However, there is a lack of academic literature – and in particular a lack of empirical sociological research – that investigates the German SE movement beyond the initial years. In addition, the SE scene has developed considerably in recent years, and has seen the emergence of new actors. Against this background, this book seeks to offer insights, contributing to a more differentiated sociological understanding of SE in the specific German context and to help better understand where the SE movement is currently standing (i.e., in the early 2020s) – when interest for SE in Germany is starting to grow.

In this chapter, I am going to explain how discourse analysis offers a suitable theoretical and methodological perspective to pursue the outlined

research issues and to help making sense of SE in Germany. Discourse analysis allows to grasp a broad picture of the SE phenomenon – one that goes beyond single cases (of social enterprises or social entrepreneurs), doing justice to the heterogeneity in how SE is conceptualised, but also allowing to identify dominant accounts of (the representations of) SE. What is more, discourse analysis provides a framework for investigating the development of concepts over time. In addition, discourse analysis seems able to bridge the analysis of the complex constructions of meaning(s) of SE that have occurred and are occurring on different levels (simultaneously) (as described in Chapter 1). For understanding the SE concept in Germany – and in particular its development over the past two decades – the empirical approach that will be outlined in this chapter is novel and promises important insights.

In a nutshell, discourse analysis offers a theoretical and methodological perspective that helps to investigate and to untangle the complex interplay of language and social relations in constructing ideas. In the past few decades, the study of discourse has undeniably gained prominence in different academic disciplines (van Dijk 2007; Diaz-Bone et al. 2007; Keller 2011). Today, researchers can choose from a wide array of different approaches that sometimes have notable differences in terms of research design and methods. In the following section, I will first give a general introduction to the theoretical framework of *discourse*. Section 3.3 will then explain what it means to *analyse* discourse and focus, in particular, on *Critical Discourse Analysis*, mainly according to Fairclough (1992; 2010), who has developed his approach integrating social theory and linguistics and whose approach is used in sociological and linguistic studies alike. Fairclough's *Critical Discourse Analysis*, complemented with the approach proposed by Diaz-Bone (2006), serves as the principal methodological framework for the empirical research. Section 3.4 will then lay out the concrete operationalization for the empirical research, describing the compiling of the corpus of newspaper articles, the analysis of the corpus, ethical considerations and the presentation of the results. In this way, my empirical study grasps the representation of SE in newspapers, which I treat as a certain 'mainstream' view on SE – i.e., what a broader audience gets to learn about the SE concept. However, it must be taken into account that this methodological choice implies certain limitations for my research findings – namely, that my empirical analysis does not grasp an all-encompassing account of SE, but, instead, a mediated account of SE 'through the eyes of newspapers', as I will explain later in this chapter.

3.2 Discourse(s) as Systems of Thought around Specific Topics

The study of discourse is usually referred back to Foucault (1961; 1966; 1969; 1975). Foucault has analysed and revealed the formation of knowledge around different topics and ideas and even whole academic disciplines over certain (usually quite large) spans of time and coined this approach as the study of discourse. For example, Foucault has demonstrated how the idea of 'madness' – that did not exist in this sense in Western societies before the late Middle Ages – has been developed in a binary juxtaposition to 'rationality' and 'normality'. 'Madness' was criminalized and later pathologized, and over the years, societies have institutionalised this idea, e.g., though establishing psychiatric facilities (Foucault 1961). Based on Foucault's accounts of dissecting the genealogies and developments of different concepts, ideas and meanings, challenging deeply rooted or taken-for-granted assumptions and ways of viewing the world, a productive research perspective has emerged across different disciplines under the banners of 'discourse' and 'discourse analysis'. Today, discourses are researched across linguistics, cultural studies, sociology, media and communications, history, anthropology, political science, philosophy and social psychology (Mills 1997; Kerchner & Schneider 2006; van Dijk 2007; Diaz-Bone et al. 2007; Keller 2011).[1] The great variety of approaches to discourse analysis is also in part attributed to Foucault, who offered a broad research framework and perspective rather than a specific methodological approach, or even a 'toolbox'. Therefore, the research design and empirical operationalization of different empirical discourse analyses can vary considerably, even if most refer back to Foucault's work (Kerchner & Schneider 2006; Keller 2011). This is sometimes criticised as a lack of methodological coherence (e.g., Kendall 2007; Keller 2011), while others welcome the diversity and transdisciplinarity of discourse studies (e.g., van Dijk 2007).

The formation, development and negotiation of ideas is relevant for understanding past and contemporary societies, which is why *discourse* and *discourse analysis* have proven to be fruitful frameworks for social science research. *Discourse* refers to linguistic expressions ('text and talk'), but going beyond language itself, since "language users engaging in discourse accomplish social acts and participate in social interactions" (van Dijk 1997: 2). Van Dijk as well as

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1　Foucault's body of work is recognised in different disciplines, and he has been described as philosopher, historian, social theorist, literary critic, sociologist or psychologist.

Fairclough and Wodak, arguably some of the most important scholars in the Anglophone tradition of discourse studies (and of *Critical Discourse Analysis* in particular), describe discourse itself as "social practice" (e.g., van Dijk 1997: 2; Fairclough & Wodak 1997: 258; Fairclough 2010: 92). The 'social practice' of discourse refers to a set of processes at the intersection of social relations and language. This includes processes of producing meaning and knowledge (around a particular topic), processes of building systems of thought (around a particular topic) or establishing "a framework through which we see the world" (Braham 2013: 58) as well as processes of constituting regimes of truth and falsity (around a particular topic). Mills (1997) explains discourses similar to this, as: "utterances which seem to be regulated in some way and which seem to have a coherence and a force to them in common" (1997: 7). This makes it possible "to talk about a discourse of femininity, a discourse of imperialism, and so on" (ibid.) – or, precisely: about a discourse of social entrepreneurship (in Germany).

Hall (1997) specifies this, explaining that discourse is not just about an idea or topic, but also about the whole system of thought around it. Discourse involves "a cluster (or formation) of ideas, images and practices, which provide ways of talking about, forms of knowledge and conduct associated with a particular topic, social activity or institutional site in society" (Hall 1997: 6). Braham further elaborates on this aspect of discourse – explaining that there are certain 'rules' that guide this production of knowledge:

> Foucault's (...) premise was that systems of thought and knowledge (epistemes or discursive formations in his terminology) were governed by rules that operated beneath the consciousness of individual subjects that determines the boundaries of thought in a given sphere and period. In his view, a discourse gave credibility to certain ideas and denied credibility to others, thus establishing what could be known and thought about a subject. For Foucault, discourse constituted the world by shaping the way knowledge was produced in particular historical circumstances (2013: 59–60).

Similar to this explanation, Diaz-Bone et al. (2007: 6) write of discourse as an 'ordered system', however, they also bring the attention to actors within a discourse. According to Diaz-Bone et al. "discourse is conceived of as a super-individual reality; as a kind of practice that belongs to collectives rather than individuals" (2007: 2). This is an important aspect of discourse, implying somewhat of a 'common' agreement or 'common' knowledge among a group of peo-

ple about a certain idea or topic. Given that discourse is somewhat 'super-individual', this leaves the question of what role (individual) actors might have in the discourse. These are not necessarily aware of, or actively shaping, the rules of the discourse. As quoted above: discourses are *governed by rules that operate beneath the consciousness of individual subjects*. Diaz-Bone et al. (2007), too, emphasise that it is not "the intentionality of individuals in situations (although individuals still have to enact discourses and statements)" (Diaz-Bone et al. 2007: 6), which constitutes a discourse.

In quoting Braham, I want to emphasise the above introduced idea of discourses as common agreement:

> The power of discourses therefore resides in allowing or encouraging certain things to be thought, said, or acted out by constructing positions that are seen to be 'self evident', 'received wisdom', 'taken-for-granted' because they 'make sense' to us, or are 'what we expect'. Conversely, a discourse will tend to limit or prevent other things being thought, said, or done precisely because they do not satisfy these criteria (Braham 2013: 59).

Braham's quote, therefore, raises an important point: that within a discourse and its system of knowledge, some things (or utterances) are considered true and others false, constituting a "regime of truth" (2013: 59–60). Discourse "influences, regulates and constrains practices and meanings (therefore in order to think, people have to do so in terms established by the discourse)" (Braham 2013: 60). Hall explains this in a similar way: discourses "define what is and is not appropriate in our formulation of, and our practices in relation to, a particular subject or site of social activity; what knowledge is considered useful, relevant and 'true' in that context" (Hall 1997: 6).

In sum: "The simplest way to think of the concept of discourse is that it provides a framework through which we see the world" (Braham 2013: 58). Or, put in a different way:

> Discourses, as Said (1978) and Spivak (1987) note, are not innocent explanations of the world. They are, as Spivak emphasises, a way of worlding, of appropriating the world through knowledge. The strands of knowledge with which we engage in our attempt to describe and understand the world are produced in complex power relations in which different actors and institutions work to establish a dominant interpretation of 'reality'. (Diaz-Bone et al. 2007: 6).

This quote highlights two aspects: that discourse is about power relations and that discourse is dynamic or processual. Discourse is contested by different actors and may change over time. Jäger and Jäger (2007) have proposed an interesting formulation for this that suitably expresses the dynamic and contested nature: discourse is about 'battles over meaning' or 'battles over interpreting the world' (*Deutungskämpfe*) – and this is precisely a crucial aspect. As stated, for example, in the Introduction, one of my main research interests is to examine diversity and dominance, i.e., how the idea of SE is being constructed in Germany, what different understandings can be identified, but also what the dominant views on the SE concept are. Or, in Jäger and Jäger's terms: examining the 'battles' over giving meaning to or interpreting SE in Germany. As already explained in Chapter 1, Teasdale (2012) has demonstrated (for the UK) that SE is a concept over which such 'battles over meaning' or 'battles over interpreting the world' are fought and ongoing:

> The construction of social enterprise is ongoing, and fought by a range of actors promoting different languages and practices tied to different political beliefs. That is, social enterprise is politically contested by different actors around competing discourses (Teasdale 2012: 100).

The next sections will further elaborate how this particular discourse – or these discourses (in plural) – of SE in Germany may be analysed by applying a specific approach: *Critical Discourse Analysis*.

3.3 (Critical) Discourse Analysis: Researching Not Text, but 'Social Practice'

After diving into the theoretical framework of 'discourse', the question that should be answered next is how to investigate these 'battles over meaning', 'ways of worlding', or systems of thought and their rules around a particular topic – such as SE. How can discourse be analysed, and what does this entail?

Put simply, discourse analysis entails the analysis of linguistic expressions – i.e., 'text' (in a broad understanding of the term, which also includes, for example, spoken word or images). It needs to be noted, however, that for most social science approaches to discourse analysis – and certainly for my research – it is not primarily the linguistic expressions as such that shall be investigated, but precisely the 'social practice' that this text represents

(as mentioned above). As Fairclough – one of the main discourse analysis theorists my research builds on, as I will explain shortly – puts it: discourse analysis "is not analysis of discourse 'in itself' as one might take it to be, but analysis of dialectical relations between discourse and other objects, elements or moments, as well as analysis of the 'internal relations' of discourse" (2010: 4).

I understand these 'internal relations' precisely as the set of processes that were explained above, namely: processes of producing meaning and knowledge, of building systems of thought and processes of constituting regimes of truth and falsity (around a particular topic). Or in the words of Jäger: processes of formation of meaning ("*Prozesse der Sinnbildung*", Jäger 1999: 12). These processes do not just occur 'naturally' or 'organically' – but, instead, at the interplay of the individual, society and language within discourse (Jäger 1999). Therefore, they are shaped by different agents; discourses and their production of knowledge and meaning are 'arenas' of political argument over which knowledge or meanings become valid in a specific social situation and time (Hirseland 2007). Diaz-Bone et al. describe this as "a socio-historic process in which the discourse as a field of knowledge and a system of rules emerges" (Diaz-Bone et al. 2007: 6). This also implies that in discourse analysis it is not possible to simply 'point towards' a certain (static or fixed) entity or object, as Fairclough notes (2010: 3). This gives discourse analysis a quite dynamic property, entailing an analysis of relations or processes that are in flux and constantly changing. Discourse analysis (in the social science perspective), therefore, explores how a society or group (or 'discursive community' in Jäger's term) reaches a 'common agreement' or 'super-individual reality' (around a specific topic), how and why specific ideas and systems of ideas come to be 'commonly agreed upon' (and others that do not). In sum, discourse analysis is the analysis of ideas and knowledge around a topic, how they are formed and (re-)produced as well as contested, which happens in interaction between different societal actors, who are at the same time producers and recipients of discourse (Keller 2011; Traue et al. 2014).

As noted in Fairclough's quote above, discourse analysis is also about researching the 'relations between discourse and other objects'. This means that a specific discourse (e.g., on social entrepreneurship) cannot be regarded or understood 'in isolation', but in relation to, for example, ideas of the state, of capitalism, or of entrepreneurship. Here, the 'dialectical' relationship of discourse needs to be taken into account (Fairclough 2010). Fairclough & Wodak explain this dialectical relationship as following:

A dialectical relationship is a two-way relationship: the discursive event is shaped by situations, institutions and social structures, but it also shapes them. To point the same point in a different way, discourse is socially constitutive as well as socially shaped: it constitutes situations, objects of knowledge, and the social identities of and relationships between people and groups of people. It is constitutive both in the sense that it helps to sustain and reproduce the social status quo, and in the sense that it contributes to transforming it (1997: 258).

For my empirical analysis, this means that it needs to be investigated how SE is constructed, what is 'said' (in a broad sense) about SE – but also, in which way SE contributes to the understanding of other concepts, for example, notions of the state, capitalism or entrepreneurship, more generally – and how these notions, in turn, shape the understanding of SE.

As already indicated above, analysing discourse(s) concerns many research projects in different academic disciplines, which has resulted in a wide array of different types and methodologies of discourse analysis. One approach that foregrounds the 'social practice' of discourse is *Critical Discourse Analysis* (often capitalised and abbreviated 'CDA'). CDA places a very explicit focus on investigating 'social practice' – and not the language or text as such. In addition, CDA has been developed in a systematic and replicable way, while still allowing great flexibility for the specifics of each research project. This makes CDA a suitable methodological framework for investigating the SE discourse in Germany, as I will further address in the following paragraphs.

According to van Dijk (2007), CDA emerged in the end of the 1970s, originally introduced by Fowler et al. (1979), and developed, roughly at the same time and sometimes in cooperation, by Fairclough in the UK, Wodak in Austria and van Dijk in the Netherlands, who remain to be some of the most important authors in the English-speaking literature – perhaps for discourse analysis in general, and certainly for CDA (Keller 2011). Even though van Dijk, Wodak and Fairclough are originally linguists, their approaches to CDA are widely applied in the social sciences, since they strongly build on and draw upon (critical) social (science) theory. Keller (2011), a sociologist and one of the main German contributors to discourse analysis, also recognizes Wodak's and – especially – Fairclough's approach as being characterized by their primary focus on 'social practice' and for incorporating social theory into their approaches. Although originally a linguist, Fairclough stresses that "in referring to language use as discourse, I am signalling a wish to investigate it in a social-theoreti-

cally informed way, as a form of social practice" (Fairclough 2010: 92). According to Keller (2011), CDA views linguistic expression also as action; discourses (re-)produce and transform society. "Discourse is a practice not just of representing the world, but of signifying the world, constituting and constructing the world in meaning" (Fairclough 1992: 64).

Arguably, herein lie some of the distinctions between the different CDA scholars; van Dijk, Wodak and Fairclough each have coined their own versions of CDA, even though most differences are only nuances. The common ground between their approaches predominates, especially between those of Wodak and Faiclough.[2] Nonetheless, there are a few differences. It can be argued that van Dijk's research focus is closer to the core of linguistics, being primarily concerned with studying conversational interaction in social contexts (van Dijk 2007), rather than with the 'social practice' itself. In some of his work, van Dijk has also leaned into the psychological processes of the formation of language and ideas (Keller 2011), focusing on *cognitive* rather than *social* processes and relations. Certainly, the primary focus on 'social practice' is less explicit than in Wodak's and in Fairclough's work. In addition, as Wodak has outlined in an interview, the various approaches have different theoretical underpinnings: Fairclough bases his work strongly on Foucault, while Wodak relies more on the *Frankfurt School* (Kendall 2007). In terms of empirical research, Fairclough tends to research fewer discourse samples, while Wodak has also engaged in quite large sets of data, sometimes incorporating quantitative methods (e.g., in Baker et al. 2008). Arguably, Wodak (like van Dijk) is more interested in situating CDA within the discipline of linguistics, for example by combining CDA with corpus linguistics (e.g., in Baker et al. 2008; Wodak & Meyer 2001). Furthermore, the different schools of CDA sometimes choose quite different thematic fields or topics for research (Kendall 2007).

Today, CDA is applied to various empirical research problems, and by far not limited to the English-speaking world. Numerous empirical contributions can be found, for example, in the journals *Discourse & Society*, *Critical Approaches to Discourse Analysis Across Disciplines* (*CADAAD*), or in *Discourse Studies*. Perhaps, the most frequent research topics for CDA are studies on racism, nationalism, gender, or sexism (see, for example, the recent issues of *Discourse & Society*). Research problems related to the (political) economy – such as social en-

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2   Wodak and Fairclough also share an institutional link, having both worked at *Lancaster University*.

trepreneurship – are less common.[3] Interestingly though, Fairclough himself has often addressed discourses related to topics of political economy (in a broad sense) in his empirical research. For example, in the extensive empirical account *New Labour, New Language?* (2000), which explores the discourse and the politics of the 'Third Way' and its leaders, or in his study from 1993: *Critical discourse analysis and the marketisation of public discourse: the universities*.

The specific perspective that researchers shed upon the object of study (often a situation of injustice) is also what makes CDA 'critical' – as understood by its theorists. Fairclough explains this 'critical' notion of CDA as following:

> By 'critical' discourse analysis I mean discourse analysis which aims to systematically explore often opaque relationships of causality and determination between (a) discursive practices, events and texts, and (b) wider social and cultural structures, relations and processes; to investigate how such practices, events and texts arise out of and are ideologically shaped by relations of power and struggles over power; and to explore how the opacity of these relationships between discourse and society is itself a factor securing power and hegemony (...). In referring to opacity, I am suggesting that such linkages between discourse, ideology and power may well be unclear to those involved, and more generally that our social practice is bound up with causes and effects which may not be at all apparent (Fairclough 2010: 93).

For this 'critical' stand, CDA has sometimes been questioned and viewed as somewhat opinionated. Jäger (1999: 8), for example, has voiced that, in his regard, Fairclough and Wodak would not (thoroughly enough) disclose their political stand. Proponents of CDA would argue from a 'position of truth', and not (thoroughly enough) reflect on their own ideological positions and assumptions, taking an unrealistic and somewhat 'superior' position as analysts (Jäger & Diaz-Bone 2006: 38). Fairclough and Wodak, however, have addressed this sort of criticism in different contributions, explaining their view on the relationship between ones ideological or political stand and scientific rigor. Fairclough & Wodak acknowledge that:

> CDA sees itself not as dispassionate and objective social science, but as engaged and committed. It is a form of intervention in social practice and social

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3   A few interesting exceptions can be found in the edited volume by Diaz-Bone and Krell (2015).

relationships: many analysts are politically active against racism, or as femi-
nists, or within the peace movement, and so forth (Fairclough & Wodak 1997:
258–259).

However, the authors convincingly argue that this sort of involvement is
nothing particular to CDA. Instead, "social science is inherently tied into
politics and formulations of policy" (ibid.). On the contrary, they claim that
CDA "openly declares the emancipatory interests that motivate it. The political
interests and uses of social scientific research are usually less explicit" (ibid.).
Ultimately, CDA researchers have to uphold methodological standards of
"careful, rigorous and systematic analysis" (ibid.) and – perhaps even more
explicitly so than in other approaches – disclose their individual or political
stand. Wodak also highlights this argument in an interview, stating that CDA
needs to be

> "'[r]etroductable' (*nachvollziehbar*) (...) [i.e.] that such analyses should be
> transparent so that any reader can trace and understand the detailed
> in-depth textual analysis. In any case, all criteria which are usually applied
> to social science research apply to CDA as well" (Kendall: 2007: 38).

I agree with this assessment when it comes to personal or political involve-
ment and consider that for the researcher to reflect on their own position and
personal and political involvement is nothing exclusive to CDA and certainly
should be taken into account within all methodologies of (social) research.

This being said, I shall outline ('disclose') my own position regarding my
empirical investigation regarding the SE discourse(s) in Germany. As I have
explained in Chapter 1, normativity plays a central role in SE, being a 'value-
loaded' concept. Furthermore, as Ranville & Barros (2021) have argued, this
is only rarely acknowledged in research on SE. Normative positions are fre-
quently (left) opaque (to use Fairclough's terminology). As addressed in the in-
troduction, I have my own personal experience with the idea of SE – and cer-
tain 'hopes' that I associate with the SE movement. I was drawn to the SE con-
cept, having understood SE as an idea of doing business differently, of imag-
ining and experimenting with alternative economies that are more just and
sustainable than current – i.e., profit maximising – business models within
the capitalist economy. However, later on and especially during the research,
I have learned that not everyone shared this view, and that SE was often re-
garded as part of the capitalist (neoliberal) business and economy – the sort

of business and economy that SE (in my initial understanding) was seeking to overcome. For Germany, this even represents the dominant view – at least in the critical social science (informed) literature that comments on the early SE movement, as explained in Chapter 2. As stated in the Introduction, this 'irritation', i.e., this disconnect or even clash between my personal understanding of SE and how SE was often classified or interpreted in academic literature, was important for the starting point for this book. For the actual empirical research, however, I argue that this initial position does not represent a problem in the sense of a disproportionate 'involvement'. Ultimately, my 'irritation' and acknowledging the different understandings of SE and the different 'hopes' or 'fears' attributed to it, led me, above all, to wanting to understand, how it is possible to associate SE with such different political beliefs – which is primarily a scholarly interest.

Furthermore, I tried to ensure that my analysis would not be guided by my initial position or by any other single position. I made sure that the data (the corpus of newspaper articles) would be broad and balanced, covering a relatively high number of articles and different newspapers across the political spectrum. For the analysis, relying on Diaz-Bone (2006), I followed an approach that is strongly inductive, trying to navigate the material quite openly – instead of focussing on predetermined categories or particular aspects. These and more practicalities of my empirical operationalisation will be explained in detail in the next section.

3.4 Operationalising the Empirical Research

In the previous sections, I have introduced the concept of discourse as well as the framework of (*critical*) *discourse analysis*, and outlined reasons for why CDA, in particular according to Fairclough (1992; 2010), is a suitable approach for my empirical investigation of the SE discourse(s) in Germany. Arguably, Fairclough has the most explicit focus on social practice of the main CDA theorists and provides a framework that is systematic, while allowing flexibility for individual research problems. I will rely on the framework proposed by Fairclough, mainly based on the monograph *Discourse and Social Change* (1992), in particular, on Chapter Eight, *Doing Discourse Analysis* (1992: 225–240), where the author explains the "practicalities of doing discourse analysis" (Fairclough 1992: 225). It needs to be noted, though, that Fairclough highlights that his methodological propositions should not be regarded as a "blueprint" but rather as a "general

guideline" (ibid.) that should be adopted individually to the respective research project, leaving considerable methodological flexibility and easily allowing to incorporate other methods of (qualitative) social research, to which I will come back to later.

In line with general guidelines for (qualitative) social research (e.g., Flick 2012; Przyborski & Wohlrab-Sahr 2014; Silverman 2015), the empirical research process consists of data gathering, then analysing the data and, lastly, presenting the results. This being said, Fairclough (1992: 225–240), too, proposes three main steps, with several sub-steps, namely:

I.   Data
I.1 defining a project
I.2 the corpus
I.3 enhancing the corpus
I.4 (transcription)
I.5 coding and selecting samples within the corpus

II.   Analysis
II.1 discourse practice
II.2 text
II.3 social practice

III. Results

The starting point for **data** – i.e., (I.1) **defining a project** – implies identifying the discursive arenas, in which the social practice is played out and constituted, and to clarify which discursive samples are good expressions or examples for the discourse(s) that the researcher intends to study. Based on these considerations, the (I.2) **the corpus** is compiled – i.e., the body of texts or set of "discourse samples" (Fairclough 1992: 226) that will be studied. Step I.3 ('**enhancing the corpus**') should make sure that the corpus is sound, in the sense of being able to provide meaningful results for the research problem at hand. I.4 ('**transcription**') only applies for research projects that analyse spoken word (e.g., gathered in interviews), which requires transcription. This step, therefore, could be excluded from my empirical operationalisation. The last step in terms of **data** (I.5), however, namely **coding and selecting samples within the corpus** was important for my research and, arguably, already feeds

into the second major part of the empirical research: the **analysis** (II.). For this, Fairclough identifies three dimensions of studying discourse: **discourse practice**, **text** and **social practice**, while noting that these "three dimensions of analysis will inevitably overlap in practice" (Fairclough 1992: 231). Furthermore, Fairclough remarks that these propositions should be regarded as "very rough guidelines" (1992: 237). Indeed, in my research project, for the analysis, I will follow Fairclough's analysis rather loosely, focusing mainly on the dimension of social practice. I argue that some aspects of Fairclough's analysis are (too) strongly shaped by methods that derive from his background in linguistics, of which some are not relevant or suitable for my analysis. Instead, my analysis will be complemented with other approaches, mainly by Diaz-Bone (2006). As the third and last major step, Fairclough points to the (III) **results** of the discourse analysis, in which Fairclough discusses and reflects on selected aspects of (social) scientific results, and in which way findings could be (mis)used by different actors. Strictly speaking, I consider that these remarks are rather ethical and not necessarily methodological, and I will not discuss these further at this point.

In sum, *Critical Discourse Analysis* as proposed by Fairclough provides a useful general methodological framework, which can well be complemented with other approaches of social research and applied to my research on the SE discourse(s) in Germany between 1999 and 2021. In the following sub-sections, I will further outline the specific steps of operationalising the empirical research process.

3.4.1   What Data? Newspapers as Arenas of 'Common' Agreement and 'Everyday Text'

Where exactly may the SE discourse(s) in Germany be 'found'? Strictly speaking, the SE discourse or discourses would encompass all spoken word, all written text, all imagery, sound and video on SE (in Germany) that has ever been produced. As Fairclough puts it: "The order of discourse of some social domain is the totality of its discursive practices, and the relationships (...) between them" (2010: 93). The options for selecting discourse samples, therefore, seem infinite – CDA may be applied to all kinds of material, which for the researcher seems somewhat of a curse and a blessing at the same time. Naturally, however, analysing 'everything' is impossible – nor would this be necessary, given that the properties of a discourse – its rules and 'common sense' – should be inherent to different kinds of material ('text' in a broad sense). The orthodox

discourse analyst might even claim that the choice of data was irrelevant, given that the properties of the SE discourse(s) should become apparent in any type of data and that the discourse (of SE) would predetermine or rule what can and what cannot be said about SE.

However, for a concrete empirical research project, a choice of data must be made. Following Fairclough's (1992) first steps of 'defining the project' and building the 'corpus', this implies to take an informed decision concerning which discursive 'arenas' or 'domains' to investigate, and which data or material to select as 'discourse samples' to study the SE discourse(s) in Germany. The discourse arena and samples should be able to provide a valid account of the object of study, i.e., representations and constructions of the SE concept and the wider narratives about the economy and society, which are intertwined with these. The empirical analysis is based on newspapers as discursive arenas and on newspaper articles as data or material to analyse, because these are suitable and relevant to explore my four research lines: 1) *Diversity and dominance*: it is to be expected that newspapers (especially when looking at a large number of articles) offer different representations and explanations of SE – and in the analysis it can be identified what parts or aspects of SE are being presented as the dominant account of SE in German newspapers. 2) *Representation and Relevance*: newspapers reach a wide audience, a large part of society, including different socio-demographic groups. To an extent, I take newspaper as a proxy for what (aspects about SE) receive attention from 'mainstream' society. 3) *Development over time*: the very function of newspaper articles is to report on current affairs – they offer a chronical, an account of contemporary history. On a more technical-practical note, it is a favourable feature that each article is clearly assigned to a specific date, which makes newspaper articles very suitable to trace development over time. 4) *Notions of 'change' and politics*: newspaper articles tell a story. Not all but many articles offer wider explanations of SE, a sensemaking of the SE phenomenon and the societal or political role that is ascribed to SE in Germany as well as the idea of economy and society that SE envisions.

In choosing newspaper articles as a base for my empirical analysis, I am following an established route in discourse analysis. For their practical empirical research, it is a popular choice for (critical) discourse analysts to look either to the media or to politics (see e.g., van Dijk 1997), and, more specifically, to newspaper articles or to political speeches in national parliaments. For the UK, previous empirical studies – including Parkinson & Howorth (2008), Teasdale (2012) and Mason (2012) – offer interesting examples for analysing SE dis-

course(s) (see also Chapter 1), mainly based on public policy documents. However, as I have explained in Chapters 1 and 2, before the early 2020s SE in Germany has not yet attracted significant attention or involvement of policymakers. Arguably, Germany represents a context, in which SE finds itself largely in a 'pre-policy-involvement'-stage. Therefore, focusing on policy documents is a less suitable option for Germany. On the other hand, selecting discourse samples from the media and from newspapers, more specifically, is a fruitful approach for the German context, as I will further explain in the following paragraphs.

In addition to the points made above, a simple yet effective argument for focusing on newspapers is that the (mass) media is an important arena for producing and shaping knowledge and even social relations. Fairclough (1995; 2000), among others, has pointed out the important role that the (mass) media plays in constituting discourses. In his monograph *Media Discourse*, Fairclough (1995) highlights "the power of the mass media (...) to shape governments and parties, (...) to influence knowledge, beliefs, values, social relations, social identities" (Fairclough 1995: 2). Arguably, this power of the mass media is particularly relevant when it comes to presenting 'new' topics, such as SE, to a wider audience – assuming that SE is a somewhat 'new' phenomenon, or at least one being presented as 'new' (see Chapters 1 and 2).

Moreover, (daily) newspapers have the function of informing a general public of current affairs in politics, the economy, society, culture, etc., and respectively include a broad variety of contemporary topics and news. They shape or even produce collective knowledge on these topics (Luhmann 2004; Karis 2010; Meyen 2013). This makes newspapers a popular source for empirical discourse analyses (see, for example, Kurtenbach 2018, or Hunter et al. 2019). In following this path, I am building on a strong research tradition in discourse analysis (Gredel 2018),[4] with the aim of capturing "everyday text" (Hunter et al. 2019: 626) – i.e., a non-specialist discourse, outside of the niche (or 'bubble', as it might be framed) of SE practitioners, support agencies and closely related actors.

My research interest is primarily concerned with 'common' knowledge or 'commonly accepted' knowledge – i.e., the perception of a 'general' society or a 'general' public rather than with a discourse that is representative for a niche

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4   Focusing on mass media, and, more specifically, on newspaper articles is such an established practice that, e.g., Warnke criticises a "newspaper bias" (2013: 191) in discourse analysis.

or group of experts or the like. This is an important reason for concentrating on the mass media and newspapers as a source for selecting discourse samples, since it can be assumed that newspapers are playing an important part in introducing the SE concept to a broader audience and generating and establishing knowledge around it.[5] Many (readers) of the 'general' public may not be familiar with the term or concept of SE yet, and it is likely that they have found out or that they will find out about the SE term and concept only or first through the media. My book is concerned with what wide parts of society perceive and understand about SE, instead of a specialist discourse. I want to explicitly look outside or beyond the 'inner circle' of the support agencies, those who label themselves 'social entrepreneurs' and the actors, who are closely linked with the SE sector.

3.4.2 Reflections on the Choice of Data: Representations of SE in Newspapers as a Specific Part of the SE Discourse(s)

An orthodox discourse analyst might argue that material or data is irrelevant for analysing discourse. After all, the discourse (of SE) predetermines or rules what can and what cannot be said about SE – and the properties of the SE discourse(s) should become apparent in analysing any type of data. However, I do not support this view, following Fairclough (1992; 2010) and other authors, who have addressed the issue of 'discourse practice' – i.e., that different 'genres' or types of texts (such as newspapers) and the ways that these are produced are, indeed, relevant to empirical discourse analysis. Therefore, I argue that the choice of data does have an impact on the findings, and that it matters whether one analyses political speeches, newspaper articles, social media channels, transcribed interviews, or other types of data or text. So, what role does it play that I am basing my analysis on newspaper articles, and what can this type of data actually tell, and what can it not? Two main points should be considered here. First, my findings concern, strictly speaking, mainly representations of SE in the analysed newspapers – and not directly the SE phenomenon 'itself'. Second (and related to the first point made here), this means that my empirical analysis of newspapers only grasps certain parts, or a selection, of the SE discourse(s).

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5   Of course, this shall be taken with caution, as newspapers do not reach *all* parts of society.

First, the representation of SE in (German) newspapers cannot be seen as an all-encompassing and balanced depiction of the SE field, covering the phenomenon in its entirety. Newspaper articles as data source provide insight on a specific perspective on SE – one that foregrounds the view of certain actors on SE – i.e., the view of journalists and editors. Instead of an all-encompassing account of SE, newspapers may provide one that journalists and editors find most interesting – and they may, perhaps, (over-) emphasise aspects of SE that (in their eyes) make interesting and marketable news stories. Furthermore, it should be noted that the representation of SE in newspapers is a perspective on SE that is mediated by a third party. It is rather an 'outside' view, instead of one that is promoted by 'inside' actors (who constitute the SE field), say social entrepreneurs or SE support agencies. This seems particularly relevant when it comes to the wider explanations of SE and to the narratives around it, i.e., when SE is embedded in a socio-economic or political narratives – as these narratives are curated by the journalists and editors, who are responsible for producing the news stories. The wider explanations of SE, the making sense of SE, to a large extent, is transmitted through the eyes of those producing the newspaper articles.

Here, it must be noted that newspapers are embedded in certain social and power relations that determine, which articles are produced, and how these are produced. It can be assumed that this might have an influence on the findings of my empirical research. It may be the case that the newspaper articles only represent the parts of SE that *can* be represented within the constraints of the social and power relations within neoliberal capitalism, in which the media are embedded (Fairclough 1995). As I have mentioned in Chapter 1, some authors (including Ridley-Duff & Bull 2011; Kay et al. 2016) have described two different 'camps' of SE: a 'radical' and a 'reformist' one. Following this thought, it could be the case that parts of SE that present a challenge or an alternative to neoliberal capitalism – namely, 'radical' versions of SE – are widely excluded from the media (newspaper) discourse, because they are beyond the limits of what can be said within the constraints of the neoliberal power structures. Newspapers, especially the more conservative outlets, might represent only a reformist version of SE, one that is more conforming to the current economic and social system.

These reflections on the role of newspapers as data source and what it means that my empirical analysis focuses on what newspapers represent about SE bring me to the other main point: the fact that the analysis of newspapers only grasps a part, a selection of the SE discourse(s). In sum, it can

be assumed that the parts and aspects of the SE discourse(s) grasped by my analysis are restricted in the following ways, namely including:

- the part of SE discourse(s) that makes it into the news,
- the part of SE discourse(s) that journalists and editors find interesting – i.e., aspects of SE that make marketable news stories and/or that relate well to trending topics and current affairs,
- the part of SE discourse(s) that the media is able and willing to represent, possibly excluding more radical versions or aspects of SE.

In sum, my chosen research design and data base (newspaper articles) leads to certain limitations of the findings of my research that need to be taken into account. Strictly speaking, the empirical findings of my analysis are on certain *representations* of SE in newspapers – and not directly on the SE phenomenon and movement itself. Therefore, my empirical results mainly refer to an 'outside' view on SE. The data tells little about the 'inside' of the SE scene and its actors, its network(s) of practitioners, support organisations, etc. My research offers only marginal insight on the 'inside' view, on how the SE scene and its actors may try to construct a 'common agreement' or identity, nor does it explain the internal workings of the SE movement.

However, I argue that the mediatic representations, on which my empirical analysis is based, are a valid proxy for my research questions. As explained in the Introduction and in Chapter 3, my study is concerned with making sense of the SE phenomenon in Germany from a sociological perspective, in analysing different understandings of SE but also identifying dominant versions of SE, in particular aspects of the SE concept and wider narratives linked to it that receive attention from a broad(er) societal audience. It is, therefore, precisely this certain 'outside' view on SE that I am principally interested in capturing: i.e., what a broader (or 'mainstream') audience gets to perceive of the SE concept (which ideas 'make the news'), what ideas of and around SE reach out into wider society. I am mainly interested in the 'dominant', the main(stream) view, beyond the SE niche or 'bubble'.

Nonetheless, due to the points made in this sub-section, readers of this book must note that my findings are mainly on the main view on SE in the print media – and that they do not necessarily represent the dominant perspective in all parts of society, nor the main take on SE *within* the SE field, its practitioners and support organisations. People in the SE field might agree, but also disagree, with the media representation of SE. In order to gain a more

encompassing picture of the SE phenomenon and movement in Germany, my research will need to combined and complemented with further research, as I will explore in Chapter 7.

3.4.3 Building the Corpus of Newspapers Articles

After explaining the rationale for conducting a media analysis – more specifically: an analysis of (generalist) (daily) newspapers – in order to grasp aspects of the SE discourse(s) in Germany, which are relevant to my four research themes (diversity and dominance, representation and relevance, development over time and notion of 'change' and politics), as well as reflecting on the limitations and implications of this choice of data, the next step of operationalising the empirical analysis consists in compiling a concrete corpus (Fairclough 1992; 2010) of newspaper articles. For compiling the corpus of newspaper articles, i.e., the data of my empirical analysis, I mainly used the *WISO* database, provided by *GBI-Genios Deutsche Wirtschaftsdatenbank GmbH*, a private company specialised on social science research. I gained access to *WISO* through the libraries of the *Berlin School of Economics and Law*, the *Free University Berlin* and the *Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin*. The licenses of different institutions vary, which means that certain newspapers may only be accessed in some libraries. Most of Germany's regional and national (daily and weekly) newspapers and magazines could already be accessed via the *WISO* database. However, for the corpus to encompass all the main newspapers, it was necessary to use two additional databases: the archive of the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (FAZ) and the archive of the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (SZ). As a result, the corpus could be based on the most important newsprint media (see Table 2 for a complete overview of all the captured sources). In total, ca. 180 newspapers were covered, including the most-sold daily papers with national reach, i.e., *BILD, Süddeutsche Zeitung, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, Handelsblatt, Die Welt* and *taz.die tageszeitung* (IVW 2020), important weekly newspapers (*Zeit, Focus, Welt am Sonntag*), as well as many regional newspapers.[6]

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6   Regional papers are quite important in Germany, their quantitative reach sometimes being higher than the reach of national papers (IVW 2021a; IVW 2021b). Collectively, more copies are sold of regional papers than of national papers (IVW 2021c).

Table 2: Overview of Newspapers Covered for Compiling the Corpus

Name of Newspaper	Available from (Date)
Aachener Nachrichten	03.03.2004
Aachener Zeitung	01.07.2003
Aar-Bote	02.01.1998
Alb Bote	01.02.2013
Aller-Zeitung	26.09.2015
Allgemeine Zeitung Mainz-Rheinhessen	02.01.1998
Anzeiger für Burgdorf & Uetze	26.09.2015
Anzeiger für Lehrte & Sehnde	26.09.2015
Badische Zeitung	15.08.2003
Bayerische Rundschau	01.09.2008
Bergedorfer Zeitung	22.12.2011
Bergische Morgenpost	25.02.2013
Berliner Kurier	24.09.1999
Berliner Morgenpost	01.03.1999
Berliner Zeitung	03.01.2000
Bersenbrücker Kreisblatt	03.07.2012
BILD	01.01.2014
BILD am Sonntag	01.01.1956
BILD International	02.07.2017
Börsen-Zeitung	03.01.1995
Bonner General-Anzeiger	02.01.1983
Bote vom Haßgau	27.08.2013
Bramscher Nachrichten	03.07.2012
Braunauer Warte am Inn	28.02.2013
Braunschweiger Zeitung	10.11.2020
Bürstädter Zeitung	02.10.2006

Name of Newspaper	Available from (Date)
B.Z.	01.09.2000
Calenberger Zeitung	26.09.2015
Christ und Welt	29.04.2015
Coburger Tageblatt	01.09.2008
Darmstädter Echo	01.09.1998
Deister-Anzeiger	26.09.2015
Döbelner Allgemeine Zeitung	01.10.2011
Dresden am Wochenende	27.01.2018
Dresdner Neueste Nachrichten	29.10.2011
Eichsfelder Tageblatt	26.09.2015
Ems-Zeitung	03.07.2012
EXPRESS	01.01.2000
F.A.Z. Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung	01.01.1993
Frankfurter Allgemeine Sonntagszeitung	01.01.1993
F.A.Z. Einspruch	27.11.2017
F.A.Z. Wirtschaftswissenschaft	02.01.2003
FOCUS	18.01.1993
FOCUS-MONEY	30.03.2000
Fränkischer Tag	01.08.2005
Frankfurter Neue Presse	27.06.1995
Frankfurter Rundschau	02.01.1995
Freie Presse	16.08.2011
Gelnhäuser Tageblatt	01.07.2004
Gießener Anzeiger	01.07.2004
Gifhorner Rundschau	10.11.2020
Göttinger Tageblatt	26.09.2015
Haller Tagblatt	01.02.2013
Hamburger Abendblatt	19.01.1999
Hamburger Morgenpost	02.01.1999
Handelsblatt	02.01.1986

Name of Newspaper	Available from (Date)
HANDELSBLATT MAGAZIN	02.10.2014
Handelsblatt Morning Briefing	18.11.2015
Hannoversche Allgemeine Zeitung	11.02.2016
HarzKurier	10.11.2020
Heilbronner Stimme	02.06.2008
Hildesheimer Allgemeine Zeitung	23.10.2017
Hochheimer Zeitung	02.07.2004
Höchster Kreisblatt	25.02.2013
Hofheimer Zeitung	11.04.2003
Hohenloher Tagblatt	01.02.2013
Hohenzollerische Zeitung	01.02.2013
Idsteiner Zeitung	02.01.1998
Jüdische Allgemeine	27.05.2010
Kieler Nachrichten	24.08.2017
Kirner Zeitung	19.09.2013
DIE KITZINGER	01.10.2010
Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger	30.10.2000
Kölnische Rundschau	02.01.2002
Kreis-Anzeiger	01.07.2004
kulturSPIEGEL	01.01.2003
Lampertheimer Zeitung	30.06.2007
Landshuter Zeitung	23.07.2014
Lausitzer Rundschau – Elbe-Elster-Rundschau	01.05.1997
Lauterbacher Anzeiger	01.07.2004
Le Monde diplomatique	13.02.2015
Leine-Zeitung Ausgabe Garbsen/Seelze	10.06.2016
Leine-Zeitung Ausgabe Neustadt/Wunstorf	10.06.2016
Leipziger Volkszeitung	02.01.1997
Lingener Tagespost	03.07.2012
Lübecker Nachrichten	07.06.2016

Name of Newspaper	Available from (Date)
Märkische Allgemeine	02.01.2006
Magdeburger General-Anzeiger	27.01.2016
Magdeburger Volksstimme	22.01.2016
Main-Post	14.08.1997
Main-Spitze	02.01.1998
Main-Taunus-Kurier	02.01.2002
Meller Kreisblatt	03.07.2012
Meppener Tagespost	03.07.2012
Metzinger Uracher Volksblatt	01.02.2013
Mittelbayerische Zeitung	29.10.2014
Mitteldeutsche Zeitung	17.03.1990
Münchner Abendzeitung	01.03.2005
Münchner Merkur	07.01.2016
Nahe-Zeitung	19.09.2013
Nassauische Neue Presse	25.02.2013
Neue Osnabrücker Zeitung	03.07.2012
Neue Presse	26.09.2015
Neue Ruhr/Neue Rhein Zeitung	10.11.2020
Neue Westfälische	02.01.2003
Neue Württembergische Zeitung	28.09.2007
Neuß-Grevenbroicher Zeitung	25.02.2013
Nordbayerischer Kurier	20.06.2015
Norddeutsche Neueste Nachrichten	22.11.2012
Nordhannoversche Zeitung	26.09.2015
Nordkurier	05.08.1999
Nordwest Zeitung	01.04.1946
Nordwest-Zeitung 1946 – 2016	01.04.1946
Nürnberger Nachrichten	21.11.1989
Nürnberger Zeitung	18.06.2002
Oberhessische Zeitung	01.02.2007

Name of Newspaper	Available from (Date)
Öffentlicher Anzeiger	19.09.2013
Oschatzer Allgemeine Zeitung	01.10.2011
Osterländer Volkszeitung	25.02.2013
Ostsee-Zeitung	07.06.2016
Ostthüringer Zeitung	03.01.2000
Passauer Neue Presse	01.10.1996
Peiner Allgemeine Zeitung	26.09.2015
Potsdamer Neueste Nachrichten	03.01.2005
Der Prignitzer	01.09.2012
Reutlinger General-Anzeiger	08.10.2007
Reutlinger Nachrichten	01.02.2013
Rhein-Hunsrück-Zeitung	19.09.2013
Rheinische Post	01.10.2001
Rhein-Lahn-Zeitung	19.09.2013
Rhein-Main-Zeitung	01.01.1993
Rhein-Zeitung	02.01.1997
Rieder Volkszeitung	28.02.2013
Rüsselsheimer Echo	01.08.2015
Rundschau für den schwäbischen Wald	01.02.2013
Saale Zeitung	01.10.2010
Saarbrücker Zeitung	02.01.1993
Sächsische Zeitung	01.10.1996
Salzgitter-Zeitung	10.11.2020
Schwäbische Zeitung	18.07.2011
Schweinfurter Tagblatt	27.08.2013
Schweriner Volkszeitung	01.09.2004
Segeberger Zeitung	24.08.2017
Solinger Morgenpost	25.02.2013
DER SPIEGEL	04.01.1993
SPIEGEL ONLINE	01.03.2002

Name of Newspaper	Available from (Date)
SPIEGEL special	01.10.2003
SPIEGEL Bestseller	12.10.2019
Stern	01.01.1996
Straubinger Tagblatt	24.07.2014
Süddeutsche Zeitung	06.10.1945
Südkurier	01.03.1999
SÜDWEST PRESSE	28.09.2007
Der Tagesspiegel	01.10.1993
Der Tagesspiegel Berliner Köpfe	01.02.2008
Taunus Zeitung	25.02.2013
taz. die tageszeitung	30.05.1988
Thüringer Allgemeine	03.01.2000
Thüringische Landeszeitung	03.01.2000
Torgauer Zeitung	01.10.2011
Trierischer Volksfreund	25.11.1997
uniSPIEGEL	01.05.2003
Usinger Anzeiger	01.07.2004
Volksblatt Würzburg	27.08.2013
Volkszeitung Schweinfurt	27.08.2013
DIE WELT	01.03.1999
WELT am SONNTAG	12.01.1997
WELT KOMPAKT	02.01.2008
WELT ONLINE	01.01.2009
Westdeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung	02.11.2020
Westdeutsche Zeitung	17.10.2008
Westerwälder Zeitung	19.09.2013
Westfälische Rundschau	02.11.2020
Westfalen-Blatt	29.04.2010
Westfalenpost	02.11.2020
Wiesbadener Kurier	02.06.1998

Name of Newspaper	Available from (Date)
Wiesbadener Tagblatt	02.01.1998
Wirtschaftszeitung	17.10.2014
Wittlager Kreisblatt	03.07.2012
Wolfenbütteler Zeitung	10.11.2020
Wolfsburger Allgemeine Zeitung	26.09.2015
Wolfsburger Nachrichten	10.11.2020
Wormser Zeitung	02.01.1998
DIE ZEIT	30.12.1994

Overall, this ensures that the corpus could be compiled on the basis of a broad scope of newspapers – both in terms of regional as well as quantitative reach (or circulation). All regions are covered: North, South, East and West Germany. In addition, the political spectrum of the news sources has been taken into account: it was made sure that the data basis contains more conservative papers, like the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, and more a left-leaning papers, such as *taz.die tageszeitung*. The data basis, too, includes both 'tabloid' and 'quality' newspapers. Most importantly, I have included the so-called *Leitmedien*, which are considered to be the most influential in shaping public opinion (Meyen 2013).[7] According to Meyen (2013: 41), these are: *Der Spiegel*, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, *Süddeutsche Zeitung* and *Die Zeit*.

3.4.4 Search Criteria

All three utilised databases (*WISO*, archives of *FAZ* and *SZ*) allow to conduct full-text searches within the accessed news articles. Therefore, I undertook a Boolean full-text search for the term 'social entrepreneurship' (i.e., as a fixed word combination) to identify articles that contain the terms 'social entrepreneurship' within the text (not just in the headlines). The Boolean search ensures that only articles appear that contain both words and in this particular order, excluding articles that contain only either the words 'entrepreneurship'

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7   There does not seem to be an equivalent English term to '*Leitmedien*'; it roughly refers to: opinion-shaping broadsheet newspapers.

or 'social' or both words scattered across the text, which unlikely cover my research topic.

As I have explained in Chapter 2, searching for the English, non-translated term 'social entrepreneurship' in a German language context might, at first, seem unusual. To justify this approach, I rely on previous academic literature, in particular on Birkhölzer (2015), who has explained that 'social entrepreneurship' refers to a specific social economy or social enterprise movement of a specific time in history that can be differentiated from other social economy movements (as explained in Chapter 2). Following this view, I argue that searching for 'social entrepreneurship' in a German language context not only makes sense with regards to my particular research object – even more so, I argue that it is necessary, since any translation of 'social entrepreneurship' would be unprecise – and bare the risk of not capturing the social practice that should be studied. The specific ('social economy') phenomenon and movement that I am addressing in this book is terminologically linked to the English term 'social entrepreneurship' – therefore, possible translations of the term (such as 'Sozialunternehmertum') are not or less suitable for capturing my object of study.

In Chapters 1 and 2, I have also explained that some terms are used more or less interchangeably with 'social entrepreneurship'. In the German context, the main other term to consider is 'social business' (Birkhölzer 2015: 22–23). Hence, I have also searched the mentioned databases for articles on 'social business' and scanned over 600 articles containing the term. However, these articles were not included in the corpus for the following reasons: First, because the search results for articles on 'social entrepreneurship' provided a sufficiently sound basis for a qualitative analysis. Second, because the cursory overview of the search results for 'social business' showed that articles on 'social business' are very often related to a specific social entrepreneur: Muhammad Yunus. The articles on 'social business', therefore, portray a quite narrow account of the phenomenon that the terms 'social entrepreneurship' and 'social business' are supposed to refer to. Including these articles would then bare the risk of overemphasising particular aspects of the SE phenomenon or movement. Most importantly, I argue that in Germany, the term 'social entrepreneurship' is more usual and more relevant to refer to the movement as a whole. This can also be observed when it comes to the main actors in the German SE field, including the *Social Entrepreneurship Netzwerk Deutschland* (which carries the term in its name). In sum, the articles that include the term

'social entrepreneurship' are best suited to represent my research object and grasp it in a more precise and encompassing way than 'social business'.

Through the search in the three databases, it was found that the term 'social entrepreneurship' appears for the first time in 1999, therefore marking the possible starting point for my empirical analysis. This, of course, needs to be regarded carefully, since I cannot fully exclude that there might have been articles in the German press mentioning the term before this. As previously mentioned, the databases (*WISO*, *FAZ* archive and *SZ* archive) do not cover *all* newspapers before 1999. Therefore, it cannot be completely excluded that there might have been articles containing the term 'social entrepreneurship' before 1999. Nonetheless, this seems unlikely, given that the term is rather young and given that the databases (*WISO*, *FAZ* archive and *SZ* archive) cover the main newspapers long before 1999 (see Table 2), including the four *Leitmedien*. 2021 marks the end date of my corpus and research time frame for two reasons. First, 2021 is an interesting year for contextualising and situating my research. Even though this is too soon to tell, 2021 could mark the end of SE being in a stage of 'pre-policy-involvement'. As I have argued in the introduction and in Chapter 2, at the time of writing, political interest in SE in Germany is growing. National (*Bundestag*) elections took place in September 2021, and the coalition agreement of the resulting federal government between *SPD*, *Bündnis 90/Die Grünen* and *FDP* (for 2021–2025) promises the most specific support for SE in Germany so far (Scheper 2021). Second, 2021 needs to mark the end of the analysis for practical reasons – simply to allow the research process to proceed to the writing-up of the results of the analysis.

3.4.5 Overview of Search Results and Selection of Articles that Constitute the Corpus

The search for 'social entrepreneurship' via *WISO* provided over 600 results for the time frame 1999–2021 plus over 40 results each in both the *FAZ* archive and in the *SZ* archive. During the search process, it could easily be noted that the number of yearly texts mentioning the term 'social entrepreneurship' in German newspapers has been increasing over time in the time period 1999–2021.

In order to compile a corpus of original articles that are relevant and meaningful to my research object, a total of about 700 search results were then filtered as following, excluding:

- Articles that were found twice or multiple times. The same article sometimes appears in several different (regional) newspapers with different regional reach, as the same story is sometimes purchased and published by various news outlets.
- Articles that were published in monthly magazines, in order to keep the sampling coherent and focused on newspapers (daily or weekly) that, in principle, have the same function (i.e., informing a general public about general current affairs). Monthly magazines are usually more specialised.
- Articles from online outlets. It was found that the texts published online were often the same or adapted versions of texts published in the respective newspapers' print editions. This should avoid repetition and that certain news stories would be overrepresented.
- Articles that are very short (generally under 200 words). It was found that these texts were mostly announcements (e.g., for an event), and not 'proper' (original) news stories, where ideas are fully developed and presented to the reader. These short texts, therefore, did not prove fruitful for my research of the SE discourse(s).
- Furthermore, 27 articles were excluded, based on a closer reading. Even though these articles included the term 'social entrepreneurship', they had little relevance and connection to my object of study. The context either remained unclear, or the term was mentioned completely incidentally, without developing ideas around SE.

These filtering steps, finally, resulted in a corpus of 349 original articles for the time period 1999–2021. Looking at the development over time, the increase of articles is also visible in the overview of the filtered results, as demonstrated in Graph 1, which was already included in Chapter 2. This might be an indication for confirming an assumption that is often found in literature on SE (see Chapters 1 and 2), namely that the SE term and phenomenon is getting more attention around the world in recent years. The increased attention in the German media certainly seems to reflect this.

The corpus of 349 articles includes a few different genres or types of text that are found in newspapers, e.g., news reports, opinion pieces or interviews. When this seems relevant for the analysis or presentation of results, I will address the specificity of the respective text types. For example, when someone is interviewed it might be relevant to briefly say who the interviewee is or to which organisation they are affiliated. But overall, since this is a sociological and not a linguistic analysis, and I am focussing on the 'social practice', not too

much emphasis shall be given to the different 'genres' of newspaper articles. In order to maintain a clear overview during the analysis and presentation of the results, the 349 articles were archived, indicating year and newspaper. In addition, the articles were numerated chronologically, from 'A_1' being the first article (to appear in April of 1999) to 'A_349' (of December 2021), being the last article of the corpus.

3.4.6 Data Analysis and Identifying the Three Different Periods between 1999 and 2021

For the analysis of the corpus, I first gained a general overview of the articles by reading through all of them. Diaz-Bone (2006) proposes to engage in a naive reading of the text as someone, who (at best) knows nothing about the topic at hand. This should help the researcher to leave out previous knowledge and preconceived categories, in order to be able to explore terms, objects, argumentations, value statements, oppositions, etc. that emerge from the text (inductively). Of course, this approach is not entirely realistic, since it is impossible to 'forget' all background knowledge (on SE and the debates around it) when reading the texts. In addition, my research – just as any research project – is guided by specific research interests and questions, which inevitably bring a deductive element to the analysis. Nonetheless, I made an attempt to follow the idea of a naive reading and therefore delayed focussing on aspects such as the relationship between SE and the state, or about SE and capitalism and so on, which are close to my core research focus – i.e., how to make sense of SE as a movement and what sort of society and economy is envisioned by SE. Instead, I first focused on very general aspects, such as: 'what is said about SE?', or: 'how and why does SE appear in the article?' and so forth. I argue that following this approach also helps taking into account some of the ethical considerations that were raised earlier – in particular: not 'jumping' to particular aspects or themes around SE and making sure that the analysis captures an encompassing representation of SE in the corpus and allowing the researcher to identify aspects inductively that would otherwise, perhaps, be disregarded. In particular, this should have helped to challenge preconceived notions of SE, including certain 'hopes' that I might have associated with the SE phenomenon.

Following the 'open' reading and getting an overview of all the articles, I developed a set of 'heuristic questions' (Diaz-Bone 2006) to guide the next steps of the analysis. These were informed by the literature review but also formu-

lated and refined continuously, integrating (inductive) elements of the open or naive reading. The main heuristic questions included:

- How is SE defined or explained?
- What examples are provided for SE (enterprises, entrepreneurs, organizations, activities)?
- What characterizes these examples of SE, what is said about their 'economic' and 'social' logics?
- Who are the actors of the SE field? Who appears and who 'speaks' about SE?
- In which fields is SE taking place?
- In which sector (area of society) is SE placed? How is the relationship to other institutions described?
- What is the need for SE and what sort of change shall SE bring about?

Based on the open reading and the heuristic questions, themes were identified that later developed into codes.[8] For closer analysis, the 349 articles were imported into the software *MAXQDA*, which allows coding large amounts of text – i.e., simplifying and segmenting the data into general, common denominators (e.g., Coffey & Atkinson 1996) – and organising the coded text passages. This involved a long process of close reading of the articles and coding of text passages, based on both inductively generated codes (see above) as well as deductively generated codes (close to the main research topics and questions). There is a cyclical relationship between these two types of codes, with both groups informing each other.

During the coding of text passages, the codes and the code structure (code tree) were constantly developed and adapted. From the codes – which in my understanding are rather transitory, assisting the process of the analysis (e.g., Coffey & Atkinson 1996) – the main categories and themes were developed, establishing the main findings of the analysis. For this, I identified commonalities, differences, patterns and structures in the material, sometimes paraphrasing selected text passages to assist the process. The software programmes *MAXQDA* and *Microsoft Excel* helped to organise the material in this process. While my analysis is qualitative, in a few instances, when this seemed possible and plausible (i.e., when segments of data could be reduced to the extent of

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8   This, to an extent, was a circular process. Developing and refining the codes sometimes resulted in adjusting and refining the heuristic questions.

becoming quantifiable), I also counted selected aspects in the corpus. For example, I counted, in how many articles certain actors (such as *Ashoka*) are mentioned. The reader should note, however, that all numbers that are included in the results Chapters (4–6) are indicative or illustrative.

As said earlier in this chapter, *discourse* and *discourse analysis* often include a temporal element (sometimes having been described as 'history of ideas'). This is also an important element of Foucault's work, who has analysed developments over several centuries (e.g., the concept of 'madness'). Developments are of central interest, discourse analysts explore how ideas and concepts develop over time – what might changes, what might emerge, and so on. For my analysis of SE discourse(s) between 1999 and 2021, I, therefore, also focused on temporal aspects, asking whether I could identify developments over time, and whether the understandings of SE and/or the wider ideas and political beliefs associated with SE change.

This approach proved successful. In the analysis, I was able to identify three periods within the analysed time frame: a first period from 1999–2008, a second period from 2009–2014 and a third period from 2015–2021. This periodisation is based on the analysis and identification of commonalities, differences, patterns and structures in the material, and represents the central contribution of my book. It was found that each period has certain distinctive features that distinguish it from other periods – and that changes in the media representations of SE became apparent in two instances: around 2008–2009 (marking the shift from the first to the second period) and around 2014–2015 (marking the shift from the second to the third period). The most relevant categories that allowed to establish this periodisation are included in the following table:

Table 3: From Data to Three Periods

Category	Time Period		
	1999–2008	2009–2014	2015–2021
SE is frequently defined or explained through...	the person (the social entrepreneur)	the organisation (SE as business)	the organisation (business – however, a specific phase or process within business, namely: entrepreneurship/founding)
Examples of SE mainly come from the fields of...	work integration & education	poverty reduction and development, sustainable production and goods & education	sustainable production and goods, environmental or climate protection, technology & work integration
Derived from these fields, the main sector(s), in which SE is taking place, is/are...	the traditional 'social' (nonprofit) and public sector	the economy	the economy
Important actors	*Ashoka* and the *Schwab Foundation* have a prominent (almost exclusive) role in the media representation	business schools and universities become more important	Several different actors start to engage with SE, the *Social Entrepreneurship Netzwerk Deutschland* (SEND) is founded (and appears prominently in the media representation)
SE is mainly presented as an example or role model for...	traditional social and public institutions	traditional social and public institutions and (private) businesses	traditional social and public institutions and (private) businesses

Category	Time Period		
	1999–2008	2009–2014	2015–2021
Main target of reform addressed by SE	The traditional social sector and the state and their institutions and ways of functioning	Both the traditional social sector and the state as well as businesses and business logics in the private sector	Both the traditional social sector and the state as well as the private sector
References or links to broader political and social events/ circumstances	High unemployment, high costs for welfare	Financial crisis of 2008	The start-up culture and 'hype' on the one hand, deeper societal transformation on the other
(New) themes that emerge, or that become more dominant (only in the respective time period)	–	SE as work, SE as 'meaningful work' in particular, SE and business ethics.	SE is embedded in the context of start-ups, including tech companies, SE appears the political sphere (e.g., through media representation of policies targeting SE)
References to broader (geographical) models of economy/economic development	the US model is presented as positive, as 'better' and as a role model for Germany	–	the German – or sometimes regional or local models (e.g., Berlin or Stuttgart) are presented as positive models, and sometimes as counter-models to the US or Silicon Valley

3.4.7 Ethical Considerations

My empirical research is mostly desk-based. It does not involve the interaction with vulnerable groups. Anyone can purchase or (via the respective databases) access the data that the research is based on, i.e., newspaper articles. As already argued in 3.3, the most important ethical aspects seem to revolve around my position in the SE discourse. To do the CDA approach justice, it is important to establish a sound research design as well as to conduct a thorough analysis that would ensure that my own (initial) position or perspective on SE (and 'hopes' or 'fears' associated with the SE movement) would not overshadow other perspectives. This ethical consideration is already acknowledged in the theoretical chapters, which presented various perspectives on the SE phenomenon. As explained in Chapter 1, this book does not settle on a specific definition of SE, which would inevitably establish a specific (normative) perspective and be contrary to my main research problem. In order to prevent that during the data gathering and during the analysis certain positions would be disproportionately represented, I compiled a broad and balanced corpus, covering a relatively high number of articles and different newspapers (e.g., across the political spectrum). The analysis, too, aimed to capture and present a balanced account of the various representations of SE as they were found in the newspaper articles, and refrain from prematurely focusing on particular aspects in the material or 'jumping' to early conclusions. As explained above, in following a widely inductive approach, approaching the material step by step and first engaging in a naive and open reading of the articles, 'slowing down' the process of analysis, I am confident that I was able to apply these principles throughout the empirical research process. Finally, these ethical considerations also fed into the presentation of the results – in which I intended to offer an encompassing picture of the wide range of results that would not overemphasise particular aspects. Therefore, the presentation of the results in Chapter 4 intentionally begins in a rather descriptive way, which leads me to the next subsection.

3.4.8 Presentation of the Results

The results of the data analysis will be presented in three chapters, according to the three periods that were identified in the analysis: Chapter 4 (1999–2008), Chapter 5 (2009–2014) and Chapter 6 (2015–2021). The chapters present the summarised findings of the empirical analysis and include particularly exem-

plary text excerpts from the newspaper articles. The text passages quoted from the newspaper articles are all translated into English by the author. The (translated) text excerpts from the articles are indented and in italics (even if the text is shorter than 3 full lines, which is usually the rule for indenting text), in order to mark a clear separation to the rest of the text. The news articles will be referenced according to their number in the corpus (chronologically). For example, in the short version, the seventh article in the corpus is referred to as: 'A_7' and in the detailed version as: 'A_7_Frankfurter Rundschau_31.03.2004'.

Each results chapter (4–6) has its own character and structure. Even though the analysis in principle was applied similarly to all articles and period, it is due to the strongly inductive approach that not all categories and themes receive the same attention in all three chapters. Being the first chapter that presents the findings of the data analysis, Chapter 4 will begin more descriptively than the subsequent Chapters (5 and 6). To some extent, this is to give Chapter 4 a somewhat double function in order to also reveal more about the process of data analysis (next to presenting the findings for 1999–2008). To avoid repetition, but also for more fluidity and in order to give more room for analytic aspects, Chapters 5 and 6 will dive faster into a more analytical presentation of the findings. In addition, due to the chronological sequence, Chapters 5 and 6 also allow to draw comparisons to earlier periods.