

Critical Discourse Analysis: Insights Into Approaches, Theories, And Research Implications In The 21st Century

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This review of research directs its attention towards different methodologies employed in the field of Critical Discourse Analysis within the context of interdisciplinary studies. Research conducted on Critical Discourse Analysis indicates that all methodologies adopted in this field are centered around addressing specific problems, thereby necessitating an interdisciplinary and diverse approach. Critical discourse analysis encompasses a broad array of topics pertaining to language, power dynamics, dominance, power relations, ideology, and other related aspects of interest. Firstly, this critical evaluation of Critical Discourse Analysis critically assesses the theories put forth by Foucault, Fairclough, van Dijk's Socio-Cognitive Approach, and Wodak's Discourse Historical Approach. Furthermore, it examines the pertinence and significance of these established theories and frameworks. Theoretical and methodological foundations are also given due attention. Secondly, the review delves into the examination of the interconnectedness between power, ideology, language, and the presence of embedded ideologies within language. Thirdly, this research review is centered around addressing social issues that should be undertaken in collaboration and solidarity with those in society who are most vulnerable, particularly marginalized groups. Additionally, insights gained from Critical Discourse Analysis enable us to attain a deeper understanding and garner greater visibility through the latest trends in research studies.

Key words: Methodologies, Research, Ideology, Language

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Introduction

The relationship between discourse, dominance, and dissent is examined via critical discourse studies (van Dijk, 2015). Critical discourse analysis does not take anything for granted in its pursuit of challenging the superficial meanings of speech, power, and ideology (Wodak, 2014). By emphasizing discourse and the connections between speech and other social aspects, this school of social analysis incorporated into language studies advances critical social analysis (Fairclough, 2013). Known as critical discourse analysis (CDA), this technique originated in critical linguistics and has now spread to serve as a general term for text and conversation analysis (van Dijk, 1995). Numerous subjects, including language, dominance, power dynamics, relationships of power, ideology, and more, are covered by critical discourse analysis. Additionally, critical discourse analysis (CDA) remains a theory in social science and methodology that examines how language is used, how it shapes and maintains social practices, and how language can either replicate or transform social problems (Farrelly, 2019). Viewed as irreducible components that contribute to the (re)production of society, CDA examines naturally existing spoken and written languages beyond the sentence level as well as other kinds of meaning formation, such as sounds and images (Forchtner, 2012). CDA examines how ideology, identity, & inequality are (re)enacted via texts created in political and social situations, critically analyzing the link between society and language (Hart & Hart, 2010). The goal of CDA is to clarify and assess how language and discourse contribute to the establishment, upkeep, and justification of injustice, oppression, and inequality within communities (van Leeuwen, 2015). Using systemic functional analyses as its analytical instrument, CDA seeks to reveal the relationships between language, power, as well as ideology in contexts of spontaneous speech (Dong-mei, 2008). Theoretical as well as methodological approaches in critical discourse analysis are covered by Matytsina (2019), along with viewpoints from Fairclough, van Dijk, as well as Wodak. Other frameworks are also mentioned, including Mediated Discourse Analysis and German Duisburg School in Critical

Discourse Analysis. Critical discourse studies (CDS), an approach for communication analysis that concentrates on the political elements of language and position in human interactions, is covered by Pandawan (2022). Government discourse as well as more general contexts is included in political discourse analysis. Additionally, it examines and explores language as an element of society. Tian (2021) examined how language, ideology, and power interact in speech. It seeks to reveal the power structures and underlying meaning of political discourse. It concentrates on language-based power and inequality. Through an analysis of the link between language and society, the research seeks to increase the visibility and transparency of speech (Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2000).

The discourse theory of Foucault

In his critical discourse, Michel Foucault primarily questions the link between truth and power as well as the implications of power on people and society. The goal of his genealogical critique is not justification but rather the discovery and transformation of intellectual boundaries. There are two ways that Foucault's critical effort might go: challenging the truth about the ways in which power operates and challenging the power about the ways in which truth is discoursed. Telling the truth is central to Foucauldian critique, as both a subject and as a means of critique. The work of Foucault challenges both the conceptual as well as political distance of modern political philosophy as well as conventional psychiatric treatments.

According to Urosevic (2023), by using a historical-philosophical approach, he hopes to investigate novel anthropological ideas that can go beyond the limits of accepted medical knowledge. Michel Foucault's books have offered transformative reconceptualizations of the characteristics of power that seem more appropriate for the post-industrial age and propose resistance techniques that are more appropriate than those previously available. The critical theorist's position appears to have grown more complex and ambiguous at the same time. This is because of the extraordinary features of Foucault's work, which show how complex and unstable the intellectual pursuits that have frequently positioned their own as supporters to critical thought in the search of liberation—such as criminology, psychoanalysis, and psychiatry, among many others—are (Wandel, 2001).

In Urosevic's (2023) analysis, Foucault's approach is examined, along with his use of genealogy, discursive as well as non-discursive practices, and the relationship between his work and political engagement. The understanding of the link between political activity and intellectual labor by Foucault is examined in this study. Political involvement is considered by Foucault to be the main factor in selecting study topics.

Lee (2020) has provided a clear interpretation of the significance of Foucault's writings, which outline the formation of dominant narratives. Discourse, in Foucault's view, is not so much a concrete product as it is a process that is embedded in social as well as institutional circumstances. His historical analysis of discourses focuses on the social contexts in which particular claims are accepted and embedded in a particular culture (Olssen, 2004). Through a close examination of the primary conversations within disciplinary institutions (like asylums, prisons, and families) over the course of several historical eras, Foucault demonstrates how society's understanding of particular social behaviors and concepts (like madness, retribution, and sexuality) is not static but rather shows clear discontinuities between various epochs. Stated differently, he suggests that historical circumstances produce knowledge (Foucault, 1972).

New knowledge is not created by a single social group working together to achieve enlightenment (knowledge creation), nor is it discovered by a straight line of discovering pre-existing facts (knowledge evolution) (Lee, 2020). The formation of information through language and communication, as well as power relations, are the main topics of Michel Foucault's discourse theory. His research examines how speech, power, and the creation of social reality are related (Oleshkova, 2023). The terms "discursive practice" as well as "episteme," which belong to Foucault, have influenced discourse studies approach. According to him, speech serves as a vehicle for the exercise of power, and power itself is relative and ingrained in discourse. According to Koirala and Gurung (2022), the Foucault's theory, power relations in speech may be revealed by comprehending its underlying structures along with relationships. His theories on language and power have ramifications for politics and education among other domains. All things considered, Foucault's concept of discourse offers a framework for examining the ways in which communication and language influence social reality including power relations.

Discourse model and Fairclough

Studying modern political and social communication might benefit from the application of critical discourse analysis (CDA), a qualitative method for examining social communication. It emphasizes the connection between language and society and serves as a supplement to conventional quantitative research techniques. A well-known figure in CDA, Norman Fairclough's three-dimensional model is frequently utilized as an analytical framework. Through an analysis of textual elements, discursive practices, and social practices, Fairclough's paradigm reveals social critique and the impact of language on community. Zhang, (2023) and Pešić (2023) stated that his methodology has been used in a variety of settings, such as the analysis of comedic stand-up routines, news stories about public health issues, and conversations on educational initiatives. Three separate phases of discourse analysis are introduced by Fairclough's Three-dimensional Model, which he presented in 1989 and 1992. These stages include description, interpretation, as well as explanation. The process of description entails linguistic study of the text with an emphasis on identifying and analyzing linguistic concepts and devices, mostly utilizing Systemic Function Grammar. Conversely, interpretation involves interpreting the link between the text and the creative and interpretive discursive processes. It centers on the examination of discourse practice. The importance of situational settings in influencing text development,

dissemination, and consumption is also emphasized at this level. Finally, the explanation explores social practice analysis with the goal of clarifying the relationship between social and discursive processes (Qiu, 2013). Basically, it looks at the speech in a larger social context and identifies the social factors that influence and are influenced by it. The goal of explaining social practice, as stated by Fairclough (1989), is to present discourse as an interpersonal procedure and practice, emphasizing its reliance on social structures as well as the possible reproductive effects which discourses may have on them, either maintaining or changing them.

Research modeled on Fairclough's theory

Horvath (2009) conducted a study examining the inaugural speech delivered by Obama. The study analyzed the persuasive strategies and ideological components employed by Obama using Fairclough's three dimensional model. Additionally, Fairclough's concepts from 1995 were utilized, highlighting the presence of ideologies in texts that are susceptible to a range of interpretations. This underscored the importance of extracting meanings from the text. The results indicated the presence of certain ideological components, such as unity, liberalism, and pragmatism, while also shedding light on the prominent features of Obama's speech that revealed his ideology and purpose. In another research, Stobbs (2012) conducted a study on the same speech by Obama, thereby addressing the gap in the previous study by employing Fairclough's model once again. The previous study had not analyzed the specific use of pronouns, hence this study focused on the purpose behind their usage. Additionally, it examined the lexical and syntactic choices, as well as the repetition of certain words by the speaker. The findings revealed that Obama frequently employed the pronoun 'we' to establish a sense of intimacy with the listeners. Furthermore, the intentional repetition of certain phrases and the carefully chosen syntactic structures aided in maintaining the flow of the speech and evoking emotions. Most studies employ the model in political discourse. For example, Jalali and Sadeghi (2014) analyzed the speeches, slogans, and campaign materials utilized by Candidates in the City Council Elections using Fairclough's model. The researchers administered a questionnaire to the candidates, which encompassed inquiries about their background, goals, motives, and the types of political propaganda employed. In addition, a controlled interview was conducted, where the researchers posed several questions. The gathered information was subsequently examined and compared to elucidate the ideas and opinions expressed by each candidate in their speeches. It was revealed that candidates employ appropriate ideological discourse structures in their speeches in an endeavor to persuade their audiences and justify their positions. Hussein (2016) analyzed the political speech delivered by Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi during the opening of the New Suez Canal. The study aimed to investigate the intended ideologies and significant linguistic details of political speech using Fairclough's model. The study focused on situating the themes within their respective social and cultural contexts. The findings of the study demonstrated that this speech possessed unique characteristics, with the speaker skillfully utilizing language to achieve the intended goals. The speaker employed collocation, synonymy, repetition, and figures of speech to effectively convey various political philosophies (Shakeel & Arshad, 2023).

Wodak discourse model

The technique of critical discourse analysis involves examining different texts to see how speech affects public opinion and perception of sociopolitical situations. It also looks at how discourse functions in sociopolitical situations, supporting or undermining arguments and narratives. The discourse analysis paradigm developed by Ruth Wodak (2011, 2015, 1999) is widely applied in this discipline of study. Her research focuses on examining the discursive processes that have allowed views that were once taboo to become commonplace in political discourse. Political deception, the accepted status of far-right rhetoric, and the portrayal of social strata in discourse are just a few of the subjects that Wodak's study has examined. By revealing hidden meanings and discourses and exposing unrealistic beliefs about certain groups, her work has advanced the area of critical analysis of discourse (Uluk, 2023). Including texts from a variety of genres and the historical background of the topic under investigation is the main goal of the discourse-historical technique. Discourse-historical analysis connects the tactics used and the data's substance, as well as how they are expressed linguistically (Wodak, 2011, 2014).

The sociocognitive model and Tuen van Dijk

Discourse from a variety of fields is analyzed using linguistic approaches in Van Dijk's socio-cognitive theory of critical discourse analysis. The method supports multidisciplinary analysis by utilizing both pragmatic and semantic ideas. It highlights how crucial pragmatics are to recognizing and assessing political speech, especially when it comes to examining slanted and indirect statements. The method also takes into account how semantic microstructures and macrostructures contribute to discourse interpretation (Nisar & Hussain, 2023). Research from a number of writers shows how van Dijk's approach may be used to analyze many speech kinds, including political discourse, news assessment, and instructional strategies. The research studies of Hamdi (2022); Indrawan (2022) shows how well the model works when analyzing speech and ideological disparities, assessing the efficacy of instructional strategies, and assessing news text discourse. van Dijk (2009) offers to explain and illustrate a few of the values he tried to follow while researching the field of Critical Discourse Studies (CDS) within this framework. Because of his interdisciplinary approach, the general term for this framework is the application of his method, which is called "sociocognitive" discourse analysis. Unlike other discourse analysis specialists, van Dijk maintains that critical investigation of speech, communication, and interaction must include an exploration of cognition (as well as society). This means that he is interested in investigating the mental models and cognitive processes that language users use to produce and understand discourse, communicate verbally, and adopt common knowledge, ideologies, and additional beliefs within

social groupings. Simultaneously, this methodology examines the ways in which these cognitive processes interact with language, linguistic contact, communication events, and circumstances, in addition to societal structures, such as social inequality and dominance (2009).

Power, ideology, language, and critical discourse

Research has indicated the importance of power and ideology in addition to the part language plays in preserving and enhancing them. According to van Dijk (1995), ideologies structure social group attitudes by assembling broadly held beliefs about pertinent social issues in a methodical manner, including inequality, dominance, and the misuse of power. Since ideologies serve as the basis for our societal judgments, propositions governed by ideology frequently take the shape of statements of opinion, conveying beliefs about other people that frequently highlight the ideological limitations at work (van Dijk, 1995; 2015). Ideologies, in the words of Fairclough (2003), are features of the world that support the creation and upkeep of dominance, exploitation, and power relations. These ideals may permeate many spheres of contact, leading to genres, and become embedded in a person's identity, leading to styles. The study and criticism of ideologies heavily relies on text analysis. Developing the idea further, van Dijk (2015) contends that ideologies can have a standard schematic organization made up of a small number of fixed categories, much like other social representations. Furthermore, ideologies are not exclusive to groups united by conflict, domination, or power. There are institutional ideologies, professional ideologies (such as those of professors and journalists), and ideologies of several other social groupings.

In addition, he talks about how the goal of ideology discourse analysis is to methodically link speech patterns with ideological structures in addition to revealing underlying ideologies. Conclusions about news reports, textbook excerpts, and conversations being conservative, sexist, and environmentalist might be drawn without specialized knowledge in discourse analysis. As stated, "All studies of language are critical because language is a social activity and not all social practices are generated and treated equally (Rogers et al., 2005). The goal of critical discourse analysis, or CDA, is to understand, characterize, and clarify the connections among language, social norms, and the social environment. Language expresses and indexes social relations; it also subverts them. Power in language is recognized by critical discourse analysts as a social practice. But power may take both empowering and repressive forms "(Rogers et al., 2005). To be sure, Wodak and Meyer (2008) stated that power is about relationships of difference, especially the implications of inequalities in social structure. Language is entwined with social authority in a variety of ways since language along with other social characteristics are inherently united. Language is used to index and express power as well as to intervene in circumstances where power is challenged or contested. Language is not the only source of power; it may also be used to question, undermine, and change the way power is distributed both temporarily and permanently. Thus, under hierarchical social institutions, language functions as a subtle medium for articulating power differentials.

Discussion

Foucault's model of discourse has been subject to critique in the literature. One critique argues that Foucault's concept of subject formation is overly determinist, while another critique suggests that his concept of discourse is too deterministic as well (Lorenzini&Tiisala, 2023). Additionally, it has been argued that Foucault's critical project seeks to eliminate truth from the picture, but this is a misinterpretation. In fact, truth-telling remains an essential element of Foucauldian critique, and combining the dimensions of truth-telling as avowal and truth-telling as parrhesia is crucial for understanding his critical project (Haugaard, 2022). Furthermore, it has been proposed that critique is an indispensable resource in mental health nursing, as it allows for the questioning and challenging of hegemonic discourses and practices (Oleshkova, 2023). Overall, Foucault's model of discourse has been both praised and critiqued in the literature, with scholars offering different perspectives on its strengths and limitations. van Dijk's critical discourse analysis model consists of three components: text analysis, social cognition, and social context. The model has been applied in various studies to analyze different forms of discourse, such as music lyrics (Hermawan, 2022), news and information evaluation (Hamidi, 2022), da'wah messages in novels (Pakaya et al., 2022), and the interpretation of speech acts (Indrawn, 2022). These studies have shown the effectiveness of van Dijk's model in analyzing discourse and uncovering underlying meanings and messages. The model allows for a comprehensive analysis of different aspects of discourse, including the structure, cognition, and social relevance. It provides a framework for understanding the relationship between language use and social phenomena, such as corruption, critical thinking, and religious messages. Overall, van Dijk's critical discourse analysis model offers a valuable tool for analyzing and understanding various forms of discourse in different contexts.

Research studies approve and propose Wodak's model of critical discourse analysis explicitly. Furthermore, several studies highlight the importance and usefulness of Wodak's model in analyzing various texts related to socio-political issues (Uluk, 2023). Wodak's model is used to understand how discourse shapes public perception and opinion, and how it can be used to strengthen or undermine arguments and narratives in socio-political contexts (Fauzan, 2023). Research modeled within the framework, also emphasizes the need to critically analyze discourse and consider the wider socio-political context (Sardoč&Wodak, 2023). Wodak's model is applied in analyzing the forms of ideology reflected in Western media coverage and religious moderation policy in Indonesia (Burnett, 2021). Additionally, Wodak's work in critical discourse analysis is discussed in an interview, where slogans and political discourse are examined (Ali & Soomro, 2020). Most research provides relevance to Wodak's model and demonstrates its significant application in analyzing socio-political issues (Memon, Bughio&Gopang, 2014).

Fairclough's critical discourse analysis (CDA) model has garnered widespread recognition as a valuable approach for examining social communication and political discourse (Pešić, 2023). It is deemed an indispensable complement to conventional social scientific methods that rely on a positivist paradigm and quantitative research techniques. The distinctiveness of CDA resides in its theoretical and methodological framework, categories, and analytical procedures, as exemplified in Fairclough's approach. CDA permits the exploration of social critique and the scrutiny of contemporary social and political communication. It offers insights into the conveyance of social criticism through text structure, discourse practice, and sociocultural practice. CDA also unveils the impact of discourse practices and sociocultural factors on the construction of discourse. Through the analysis of various dimensions of discourse, namely text, discursive practice, and social practice, CDA elucidates the connection between language and society. Fairclough's CDA model has made substantial contributions to critical social studies and the examination of public health events, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Scholars of critical speech studies show a special interest in how speech maintains social domination—a term that describes the exercise of power by a single group over another—as well as how oppressed groups might use discourse to challenge this dominance. Because it is predicated on the knowledge that certain texts and conversations might be unfair, Critical Discourse Studies sets itself apart from other types of social and political inquiry. One of its main goals is to define what constitutes "discursive injustice." It aims to identify and address this injustice. It does not follow any one philosophy or discipline; instead, it focuses on solving issues. Discourses that eventually uphold disparities based on socioeconomic class, gender, or race are examples of this type. By concentrating specifically in discourse and the connections between discourse as well as additional social elements like power dynamics, ideologies, organizations, social identities, and so forth, Fairclough (2013) demonstrates how Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) supports critical social analysis and includes the critical framework of social analysis to language studies. One way to conceptualize critical social analysis is as an explanation and normative critique. It is a normative criticism in that it describes the reality as it is, but it also assesses how well it conforms to values that are deemed essential to fair or decent societies (like standards of well-being for people that take into account material, political, along with cultural factors).

It is an explanatory critique in the sense that it tries to explain existing realities by showing how they are the product of structures, systems, or forces which the analyst proposes and wants to test (for instance, the mechanisms as well forces related to 'capitalism' might be used to explain why there are disparities in wealth, income, as well as access to social goods). Additionally, along the same vein, Fairclough (2013) puts forth the notion that critical social analysis differs from not critical types of social analysis in that it places a strong emphasis on seeing the social realities that currently exist as human-produced limitations that, in some cases, unnecessarily reduce people's happiness or well-being alongside increase human suffering. It also highlights the historical justification for the emergence of these social realities as well as the potential for their transformation into more positive and less painful states. van Dijk (2015) provided repeated observations on how scholars could not consider the CDA to be the exclusive method for addressing important problems. A common misperception regarding Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) exists that it's a special method of discourse analysis. There isn't a single, CDA-only approach. Rather, it incorporates all approaches used in transdisciplinary discourse studies together with pertinent approaches from the social sciences and humanities (Wodak and Meyer, 2008).

The phrase "Critical Discourse Studies" (CDS) has come to serve as a more inclusive as well as comprehensive a descriptor for this particular area of research in order to clarify this misunderstanding and highlight the wide range of techniques and methods used for the critical analysis of text and discourse (van Dijk, 2008b). Nevertheless, this chapter will make use of the well recognized acronym CDA because it is still used in the majority of research. Discourse analysis (DA) should be approached critically, with a goal to permeating all fields of discourse analysis, rather than as a singular research direction within the larger discourse study. These fields include, among others, semiotics in society, sociolinguistics, ethnographic research of communication, discourse grammar, the conversation Analysis, discourse pragmatism rhetoric, style, analysis of narratives, argumentation analyzing, multimodal discourse analysis, and psychological aspects of discourse processing (van Dijk, 2015). CDA is, at its core, the critical discourse analysis approach to discourse analysis.

Fairclough presents a comprehensive framework that allows for the examination of text and discourse from a three-dimensional perspective. Firstly, this framework entails a linguistic description of the formal properties exhibited by the text. Secondly, it involves the interpretation of the relationship between discursive processes and interaction, and the text itself. Lastly, it encompasses the explanation of the connection between discourse and social and cultural reality. In contrast, van Dijk's Socio-Cognitive Approach conceptualizes discourse as a type of social practice. However, this approach does not emphasize discursive practice. Instead, van Dijk focuses on social cognition as the intermediary component between text and society. Similar to the approaches of Fairclough and van Dijk, Wodak's discourse-historical approach considers discourse as a manifestation of social practice (Amoussou & Allagbe, 2018). CDA theorists and practitioners present comprehensive frameworks that allow the dense examination of discourse written and spoken. Insights into micro and macro levels in CDA research are explored linguistically and thematically. According to CDA, language acquires power through the applications that influential individuals make of it. This is why critical discourse analysis (CDA) frequently choose the viewpoint of the disadvantaged and scrutinizes the language used by the powerful, who both create inequality and have the means and chance to make things better. In the words of Wodak (2014), per the principles of critical theory, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) delves into the

rhetorical components of social disparities and inequalities. CDA frequently uncovers the linguistic methods employed by the advantaged to establish or even heighten imbalances within society. CDA research encompasses meticulous examination, introspection throughout the entirety of one's investigation, and detachment from the data under scrutiny.

If language is perceived as a form of activity within a societal framework, a series of outcomes can be observed. Initially, every form of interaction inherently encompasses power dynamics and ideological perspectives. It is impossible to encounter an interaction devoid of power relations or lacking the influence of values and norms (Wodak, 2011). Researchers opt for objects of investigation, delineate them, and assess them. They refrain from segregating their values and convictions from the research they engage in; acknowledging, as Habermas (1967) convincingly demonstrated many years ago, that researchers' interests and knowledge inevitably influence their research. Hence, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) necessitates a continual equilibrium between theory and empirical phenomena. Analyses should not be purely inductive or deductive, but rather abductive, wherein analysts are explicit about their actual actions. Finally, research that is dedicated to addressing social issues should be conducted in intimate partnership and unity with those individuals who are in the greatest need of it, such as the various marginalized groups within society. Furthermore, this entails that CDS research, including its pragmatic implementations, should be easily attainable and refrain from adopting an obscure manner of presentation, particularly for students. In this regard, as well as many others, CDS researchers possess a profound awareness of the role that scholarly pursuits play within society (van Dijk, 2009).

Conclusion

The review of CDA research, theorists, and models indicates a new trend in interdisciplinary studies. Most researchers focus on social issues, inequality, racism, gender, power relations, language ideology, and much more. CDA theorists and practitioners present comprehensive frameworks that allow the dense examination of discourse written and spoken. Insights into micro and macro levels in CDA research are explored linguistically and thematically Forchtner (2012). Finally, research focused on addressing social issues should be conducted in close collaboration and solidarity with those individuals who are most in need of it, such as the various marginalized groups within society. Moreover, this implies that research on CDS, along with its practical applications, should be easily accessible and avoid using an unclear style of presentation, especially for students (van Dijk, 2009). In this respect, as well as in many others, researchers at CDS possess a deep understanding of the role that scholarly pursuits play in society.

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