**To Cite:**

**Critical Discourse Analysis:**

**Introduction to the Discipline and Beyond**

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Critical discourse analysis (CDA) as a young discipline has a history of only about three decades.  While it might be possible to see CDA as a particular approach to discourse analysis rather than a separate discipline, CDA's disciplinary status has been well established through its research journals and the influential work of key researchers associated with CDA; e.g., Norman Fairclough, Gunther Kress, Ruth Wodak, Tuen van Dijk, and Theo van Leeuwen (see Flowerdew, this volume).

As a young discipline, it has, however, drawn on theoretical resources dating back to

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European Enlightenment philosophy.   From the critique of metaphysics by Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) to the Critical Theory of the Frankfurt School in the twentieth century, CDA is a true descendent of the Anglo-European tradition of placing faith and value in applying the human rational faculty to the critical analysis of political, social, and cultural formations of various kinds (e.g., race, class, and gender categories) (see Chilton, this volume).

With its fluid and fast developing research questions and diverse methodologies worthy of an energetic young discipline, CDA is often a somewhat different thing to different researchers and scholars with slightly different theoretical or methodological preferences.   And yet what unites these seemingly diverse efforts in CDA inquiry is CDA's central concern with different forms of social inequality and domination and subordination that are being produced and reproduced through language and discourse, and its commitment to working towards effecting change and improvement of such situations.   This central concern and commitment underlie a nexus of basic theoretical concepts and research methodologies in CDA, which are outlined below as a synoptic introduction to this volume.

**Language as Social Practice**

One key distinction between CDA and Discourse Studies lies in CDA's consistent focus on language as social practice and particularly on the social and political context of language use. CDA is not interested in investigating language as a static linguistic entity but in studying social and discursive processes and their consequences (see Bhatia, this volume). In particular, CDA takes the theoretical stance that language should not be seen as a reified object of study and language treated as a bounded entity is actually an ideological and social construct, born of activities of political, nationalist, or colonial, segregating agendas (Pennycook, 2001, 2003, 2004, 2010). The analytical focus should thus be on how language, as continuously changing systems of semiotic resources, among other semiotic systems of resources (e.g., multimodality, see van Leeuwen, this volume), are recruited and utilized for constructing racial, gender, social, and cultural categories that legitimate and perpetuate inequalities in society. In this respect CDA shares much in common with the recent "critical turn" in Applied Linguistics, or what comes to be known as Critical Applied Linguistics (CAL). The two disciplines can be seen as sister disciplines that mutually inform each other, with CAL focusing more on Applied Linguistics issues such as language policy, language ideologies, language teaching, language learning, and language testing (see Mahboob, this volume).

**Discursive Construction of Racial and Social Categories/Identities and the Politics of Representation**

One central concern of CDA research is to critically analyse the discursive construction of racial, gender, and other social and cultural categories, identities, and stereotypes that legitimate and perpetuate discrimination against particular groups of people. Much of early CDA work focuses on the critical analysis of 'race' as a discursive construction, the role of discourse in racialization processes, and the reproduction of racialized identities and discrimination of marginalized groups in society (see Flowerdew, this volume).

Key CDA research conducted by Tuen van Dijk uses both linguistic and social psychological approaches to the critical analysis of racist discourses of the White ruling elites in European, British, Australian, New Zealand, North American, Latin American and South African societies (van Dijk, 1993, 2005; Wodak and van Dijk, 2000). Van Dijk's classical 1993 study critically analyzed racist discourses from all key domains: political discourse, corporate discourse, academic discourse, educational discourse, and media discourse. In this important study, van Dijk both integrated and theoretically elaborated his earlier research on racism and the press (van Dijk, 1991) and ethnic prejudice in thought and talk (van Dijk, 1987). Van Dijk

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differentiated between elite racism and popular racism and argued that it is the racist

discourses of the elites in different domains of society that provide both the cognitive

frameworks and the discursive resources for the reproduction of ethnic stereotypes in

everyday talk and thought of the masses.

Drawing on Bourdieu (1984, 1988), van Dijk further saw these elites as playing an

important role in the authorization and legitimation of racist policies and everyday

racist practices. Almost outperforming their earlier colonial predecessors,

contemporary elites, van Dijk argued, employ a range of sophisticated forms of

discourse to legitimate their own social, political, language and economic policies that

safeguard their elite status and privilege in society (van Dijk, 1993).

**Expanding Domains of Analysis and Interdisciplinary Methodologies**

Apart from deconstructing the categories of race and racist representations, CDA

researchers have also worked on uncovering the stereotypical representations of

different social and cultural groups, using diverse methodologies, and in a variety of

domains, including educational settings (see Glenn Toh, this volume), the new media

(see Alice Chik, this volume) and popular culture (see Patricia Duff and Sandra

Zappa-Hollman, this volume).   With the rise of new media it is increasingly

important to employ new methodologies to analyse visual images and multimedia texts (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1996). Multimodal approaches to CDA have thus made great contribution to enriching the repertoire of methodological tools available to CDA researchers. Theo van Leeuwen (this volume) shows how the Playmobil toy figurines and accessories construct reality in specific ways. For instance, the Playmobil "ethnic family box" contains a father, a mother, and three children, all with brown skin and identical hair colour, with a mother who wears her hair in a bun. The Playmobil "family" (with no further qualification), in contrast, comes in a box with a father, a mother and two children, all pink-skinned and with different hair colours, hence with some suggestion of individuality.

CDA's methodology has sometimes been criticized as subjective and not "scientific": e.g., CDA researchers typically choose text examples to support their analytical claims without first establishing a representative sample of texts to conduct their analysis (see critique by Chilton, this volume). In recent years, however, more and more CDA researchers are integrating Corpus Linguistic methods into their methodology. Corpus-based methods have complemented traditional CDA methods well by using random sampling, analysing a large collection of texts, and comparing the textual features under study with language norms captured in a corpus in order to

make reliable generalisations about typical language use (see Winnie Cheng, this volume).

**Papers Collected in this Volume**

To introduce this energetic young "trans-disciplinary" discipline with all its fluid and fast developing issues and diverse methodologies presents a daunting task. The authors of the eleven papers collected in this volume have done an exemplary job within the limited assigned space. Paul Chilton starts off by problematizing the "critical" in CDA through tracing the etymological roots of the word and the philosophical sources of the discipline. He summarizes two major critiques of CDA: one is philosophical and the other is methodological. The philosophical critique is based on the postmodernist orientation towards plurality of values across different cultural systems of the world. If CDA has a basic ethical concern about uncovering social injustice then there is the question regarding CDA's claims about social injustice; e.g., an instance of social injustice seen in one culture might not be seen that way in another culture. While Chilton has put forward this question to CDA researchers only recently, the deeper theoretical debate has in fact long been carried out in Critical Cultural Studies: Is critical theory still tenable in the face of challenges

from postmodernist philosophies?   It seems to me that CDA researchers can draw on some theoretical resources from post-Marxist responses to postmodernism (e.g., Laclau and Mouffe, 1985; Chen, 1996).   For instance, if CDA is both seen and carried out as a situated practice and not as a set of universal theoretical claims, then the postmodernist challenge should not be fatal to CDA.

The methodological critique summarized by Chilton has to do with the methods of selecting text samples in CDA practice.   CDA researchers have been criticized for selecting only those samples of texts that support their claims and not paying attention to other texts that do not support their claims.   In a way, this critique is answered by the papers of Aditi Bhatia and Winnie Cheng.   Aditi Bhatia provides an overview of the historical development of CDA as a discipline, from its early association with Critical Linguistics (Fowler, Kress and Trew, 1979; Fowler, 1996) to its recent strengthening of its methodologies by integrating concepts and methods of Corpus Linguistics and Cognitive Linguistics (e.g., Charteris-Black, 2004, 2005).   Winnie Cheng's paper further provides a comprehensive account of the recent development of applying corpus-based approaches to CDA and how Corpus Linguistics has contributed to the methodological repertoire of CDA in response to criticism about lack of systematic representative text sampling procedure in CDA research.

Ahmar Mahboob's paper offers us an overview of Critical Applied Linguistics (CAL) and shows how much both CDA and CAL share in common, with CAL focusing more on social inequalities arising from language ideologies and legitimated ideological language policies and language education practices. Theo van Leeuwen further advances our knowledge of the relationship between multimodality analysis and CDA. Although the two disciplines have developed independently, there are multimodality researchers with a critical concern, and CDA researchers who employ multimodal analysis methodologies to analyse visual images and multimodal texts, as images construct reality in ideological ways just as much as language does, if not more. John Flowerdew further describes the historical development of CDA work in political domains, in particular, illustrating the value of longitudinal analysis with his own study that tracks the political discourse of British governors in their last years of colonial rule in Hong Kong in the 1990s. Glenn Toh offers an account of CDA research in educational settings, illustrating that while historically CDA started off with concerns mainly with political and media discourse, CDA practice is very important in uncovering the working of ideologies and inequalities in education domains.

With much recent global corporate and popular discourse celebrating the new media and Internet as emancipatory and democratic, Patricia Duff and Sandra Zappa-Hollman give a note of caution in their paper on critical analysis of popular culture.   They also point out that there is great value in applying critical approaches to the study of popular culture discourse(s) in both educational settings and society at large given the pervasiveness, power, and significance of these textual practices. Related to this topic is Alice Chik's paper on the increasing presence of multilingual, multimodal interactions in the new social media.   Although her paper deals mainly with these new sociolinguistic phenomena, it points to the need for more future CDA research in the new media which are increasingly characterized with superdiversity and "supervernacularization" in communication patterns and networks of these virtual "supercommunities" (Blommaert, 2011).

This collection devotes its final two papers to biographical accounts of two central figures in the development of CDA as a discipline: Norman Fairclough and Ruth Wodak.   From the perspective of an applied and educational linguist, Huhua Ouyang describes the development of the work of Norman Fairclough and his contribution to the trans-disciplinary nature of CDA emphasizing how Fairclough integrated critical social theory into textual analysis of discourse.   Miguel Perez Milans details the

contribution of Ruth Wodak, stressing her role not only as an academic and researcher but, much more importantly, also as a public intellectual deeply committed to the battle against racism, anti-Semitism, and right-wing populist rhetoric in Austria and Europe.   The future of CDA, as the authors in this volume all point to, is still fluid, dynamic, and very much in the making.   With its commitment to critical analysis of the discursive processes of domination and subordination, social injustice, and symbolic violence, CDA continues to make important contribution to the theory and practice of Applied Linguists.

SEE ALSO: Critical Media Literacy, Context in the Analysis of Discourse and Interaction; Institutional Ethnography; Language Ideology and Gender; Language Ideology and Public Discourse; Kress, Gunther; Van Dijk, Teun A.; Van Leeuwen, Theo.

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