(Critical) Discourse Analysis

Basis II
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- Introduction
- ‘Discourse’ vs. ‘discourse’
- Critical Discourse Analysis
  - ‘Intertextual’ and ‘linguistic’ analysis
  - critique
- Discussion and application

Discourse Analyses

- Foucauldian DA
- Discourse Theory (Laclau/Mouffe)
- Critical Discourse Analysis
- Discursive Psychology
- Multimodal DA
- Nexus analysis
- …

- Theoretical sources: (Post-)structuralism, linguistics, pragmatics, etnomethodology, critical theory…

- Structure ←→ emergence, agency
- Linguistic ←→ multimodal/material
- Discourse ←→ discourse
- Documents ←→ interactions
- +/- systematic analysis of texts

Introduction

- Common denominator?
- Analysis of the mediation of social practices, the meaning making or semiosis in social practices, language being one – among others – of the main ‘mediational means’ (Scollon)
- Focus on the social production of meaning, by making visible the non-visible, but usually non-hidden mediation or semiosis. Uncovers the non-seen rather the secret
- No privileged texts or practices, rather an interest in the banal and everyday

Discourse

- ‘Discourse’ & ‘discourse’ – or ‘Discourse I’ and ‘Discourse II’
- discourse: language /semiosis as an element of social life (’discourse’). Not a level (language above the sentence) but the use of language seen as a social practice
- Discourse: A way of representing aspects of the world from a certain perspective (Fairclough)

NB: discourse is the key knowledge interest

discourse

- ”Constructing the research topic as *discourse* marks a move form considering language as an abstract system of terms to considering talk and texts as parts of social practices” (Potter, 2003: 785)
- ”DA/DP work does not, typically, ask questions of this form [*What is the influence of X on Y* (of health beliefs on diet]. Often the are more like: *What is an X? How is an X done? How is X managed in the context of Y?* The logic of these questions are conversational and rhetoric; they emphasize action and construction” (Potter, 2003: 786)

Discourse

- Hajer (1995): Discourses are ”specific ensembles of ideas, concepts and categorizations that are produced, reproduced and transformed in a particular set of practices”
- ”an institutionalized way of talking that regulates and reinforces action and thereby exerts power” (Link, 1983, in Jäger & Meier 2009: 45)

Discourse

- ”Whenever one can describe, between a number of statements, such a system of dispersion, whenever, between objects, types of statements, concepts, or thematic choices, one can define a regularity (an order, correlation, positions and functionings, transformations), we will say, for the sake of convenience, that we are dealing with a *discursive formation* (Foucault, 1972/1969: 38)
- ”There is no statement in general, no free, neutral, independent statement; but a statement always belongs to a series of statements, deriving support from them and distinguishing itself from them, it is always part of a network of statements in which it has a role, however minimal to play” (Foucault, 1972/1969: 99)

Discourse

- ”- a cluster of context-dependent semiotic practices that are situated within specific fields of action
- - socially constituted and socially constitutive
- - related to a macro-topic
- - linked to argumentation about validity claims such as truth and normative validity involving several social actors who have different points of view” (Reisigl & Wodak, 2009: 89, see also p. 93)

Discourse

- Constitutive of socially accepted knowledge
- Network of meanings
- Articulated in a social
- Provides resources for argumentation and legitimation + actions social identities in social practices

Examples

- New public management
- Strategic political communication
- Climate change and sustainability

Critical Discourse Analysis

- CDA is “not just descriptive, it is also normative. It addresses social wrongs in their discursive aspects and possible ways of righting or mitigating them” (Fairclough 2010: 11)
- CDA is not just analysis of discourse (or texts), but of “relations between discourse and other elements of the social process” (Fairclough 2010: 10)
- CDA is not just commentary, but “includes some form of systematic analysis of texts” (Fairclough 2010: 10)
- not rules, and do not exclude the use of CDA-categories in work that does not itself count as CDA

Who is who in CDA

- Norman Fairclough, Ruth Wodak, Teun van Dijk, Theo van Leeuwen, Siegfried Jäger, Jay Lemke, Rick Iedema, David Machin…
- Journals: Discourse & Society, Critical Discourse Studies, Journal of Language and Politics….

Discourse analysis

- The interplay between ‘discourse’ and ‘Discourse’ in Critical Discourse Analysis
- ”in terms of the version of CDA I shall describe below, one cannot chose between ‘big ”D”’ and ‘small ”d”’ approaches in discourse analysis: discourse analysis is concerned with the relationship between processes/events and practices (as well as structures), texts and discourses (as well as genres and styles), and therefore in the terms of the distinction used by Keenoy and Oswick the relationship between ‘big ”D”’ and ‘small ”D”’ discourses” (Fairclough, 2005: 919)

Discourse Analysis

- Two (simultaneous) analyses:
- Linguistic (or multimodal) analysis: Based on SFL, text linguistics, pragmatics etc.
- Intertextual analysis:”Whereas linguistic analysis shows how texts selectively draw upon linguistic systems [..], intertextual analysis shows how texts selectively draw upon *orders of discourse*”(Fairclough 1995: 188)
- ”Intertextual analysis consequently presupposes accounts of individual genres and types of discourse [..]. But intertextual analysis as it is dynamically and dialectically conceived by Bakhtin also draws attention to how texts may transform these social and historical ressources, how texts may ’re-accentuate’ genres, how genres (discourses, narratives, registers) may be mixed in texts” (Fairclough 1995: 189)

Discourse Analysis

- ”Much work in discourse analysis including critical discourse has focused upon a more or less idealized version of the homogeneous text, and virtually ignored heterogenous texts, and more generally what Bakhtin (1981) has called ’heteroglossia’” (Fairclough 1995: 8)
- “The heterogeneities of texts code social contradictions. It is this property of texts that makes them the sensitive indicators of sociocultural processes and change” (Fairclough 1995: 8)

- The intertextual analysis is a way of a way of analyzing the local by delocalizing it, of ‘transcending’ the here-and-now

‘linguistic’ analysis

- Analysis – Method – Methodology – Research Programme – Theory?
- “[I]t is important to stress that CDA has never been and has never attempted to be or provide one single or specific theory. Neither is one specific methodology characteristic of research in CDA [..] Researchers in CDA also rely on a variety of grammatical approaches [..] Hence, we suggest using the notion of a ‘school’ for CDA, or of a programme, which many researchers find useful and to which they can relate” (Wodak/Meyer 2009: 5)

‘Lingustic’ Analysis

- No specific CDA-analysis, but a large repertoire of analytical tools from
  - Systemic funtional linguistics (SFL) (e.g. transitivity and modality)
  - Text linguistics (e.g. cohesion)
  - Pragmatics (e.g. presupposition)
  - Rhetoric and argumentation theory (e.g. topoi and metaphors)
  - Multimodal analysis (concerning image, typography, sound, bodily action, architecture etc.)
- ”There is no CDA way of gathering data” (Wodak/Meyer 2009: 27)

‘Linguistic’ analysis

Reisigl/Wodak 2009: Levels of analysis

Higher level:

- How are persons, objects, phenomena/events, processes and actions named and referred to linguistically?
- What characteristics, qualities and features are attributed to social actors, objects, phenomena/events and processes?
- Which arguments are employed?
- From what perspective are these nominations, attributions and arguments expressed?
- Are the respective utterances articulated overtly; are they intensified or mitigated?

Lower level: Linguistic categories, see table

Analysis

- Other organizations of the ‘linguistic’ analysis
- NB: multimodal categories
- Example: timing

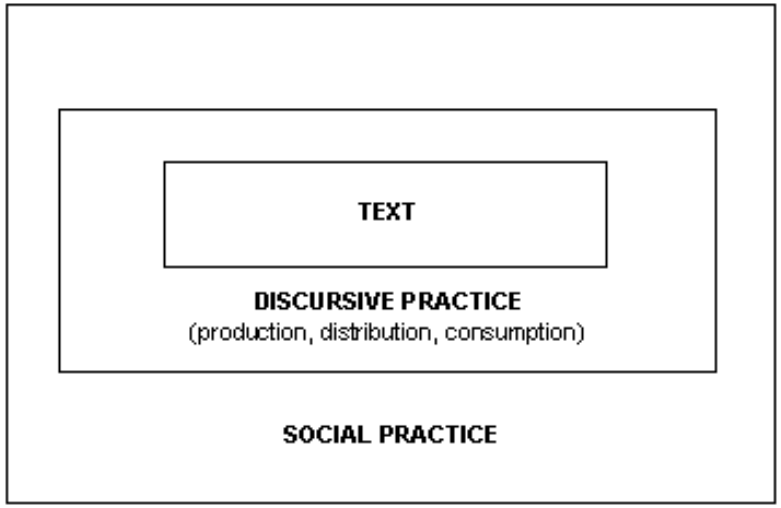
‘Intertextual’ analysis II

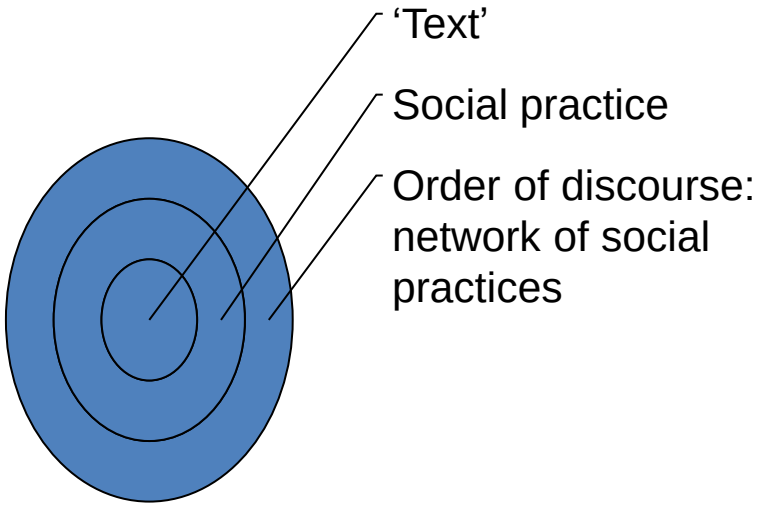
- Scaling: Relating the individual text or talk or interaction to an ‘order of discourse’
- social practices unfold at different ´time scales’ (Lemke 2000), within different circles of discourse (Scollon 2005)

Intertextual analysis II

- Dialectics:
- ’Discursive event’ ⟷ ’order of discourse’
- “the ordered set of discursive practices associated with a particular social domain or institution (e.g. the lecture, the seminar, counseling, and informal conversation in an academic institution) and boundaries and relationships” (Fairclough 1995: 12)
- A social field or domain in its discursive aspect
- Moderate social constructionism – ‘construals’ are not ‘constructions’
- Structure *and* agency, reproduction and transformation, centripetal vs. centrifugal forces

Scales


TEXT
DISCURSIVE PRACTICE
(production, distribution, consumption)
SOCIAL PRACTICE


'Text'
Social practice
Order of discourse: network of social practices

Intertextual analysis II

- Situates the social practice / texts / interactions in focus within a wider set of practices, a field or social domain (compare Scollon & Scollon: ‘engaging’ the nexus of practice)
- The field or social domain is seen as ordered, yet not necessarily monolithic – with (changing) relations of dominance
- Analysis with different levels of detail (order of discourse vs. selected discursive events)

Intertextual analysis II

- NB: how do we identify an order of discourse?
- The investigation of an order of discourse may include work from other relevant disciplines
- CDA often implies a dialogue between disciplines, theories and framework that can be a source for theoretical and methodological developments (Fairclough 2010)

Critical Discourse *Analysis*

- Recontextualization – the transfer or ‘translation’ of discourse from one context to another
  - Resemiotization (talk, texts, artefacts)
  - Genre chains (relations between social practices)
- Iedema (2001): resemiotization – from talk at meetings to the construction of a building. Solidifying process.
- Wodak (2000): The co-construction of a EU-policy paper on employment policy.

  Negotiations and compromising between business and trade union voices.

Critical Discourse Analysis

Approaches to studying Discourse (Fairclough 2010)

- Emergence of discourses(representation, narration, explanations, justifications*)*
- Relations of dialogue, contestation and dominance between discourses (hegemony). How particular discourses gain prominence, become marginalised or emerge as hegemonic over time
- Recontextualization of discourses: dissemination across structural boundaries, i.e. between different social fields such as education and politics and across scalar boundaries (local and national)
- Operationalization of discourses – how are discourses operationalized as strategies and implemented: enacted in changed practiced (genres), inculcated in changed ways of being (styles), materialized in changes in material reality

Critical Discourse Analysis

- CDA ”focuses on what is wrong with a society (an institution, an organisation etc.), and how ’wrongs’ might be ’righted’ or mitigated from a particular normative standpoint” (Fairclough 2010: 7)
- CDA ”is interested in the ways that ideologies and power relations are expressed through language. Critical discourse analysts are particularly interested in issues of inequality” (Baker/Ellege 2011: 26´)

Critical Discourse Analysis

- A shift in focus from power in/of discourse (e.g. Foucault) to power through/by discourse
- ”Foucault’s work in particular has popularized a different understanding of power as a ubiquitous property of the technologies which structure modern institutions, not possessed by or attached to any particular social class, stratum or group (Foucault 1979). My concern is that this sense of power has displaced the former, more traditional one, and more importantly has helped divert attention form the analysis of power asymmetries and relations of domination.” (Fairclough 1995: 17)
- NB: Can be both!

Critical Discourse Analysis

- ”Typically, CDA researchers are interested in the way discourse (re)produces social domination, that is, the power abuse of one group over others, and how dominated groups may discursively resist such abuse […]. This raises the question of how CDA researchers understand power and what moral standards allow them to differentiate between power use and abuse – a question which has so far had to remain unanswered (Billig, 2008)” (Wodak/Meyer 2009: 9)
- NB: risk of ’under-analysis through taking sides’ (Antaki et al. 2000)

To end on a positive note

- ”[S]ome critics will continue to state that CDA sits on the fence between social research and political argumentation [..], while others will accuse some CDA studies of being too linguistic or not linguistic enough. In our view, such criticism keeps a field alive because it necessarily stimulates more self-reflection and encourages new questions, new responses and new thoughts.” (Wodak/Meyer 2009: 32)

application

- How would you relate your own research to CDA?
- Would concepts like ‘discourse’, ‘genre’‘intertextuality’, ‘order of discourse’, or ‘recontextualization’ be applicable to your work?
- Are some of the text analytic categories relevant to your work?
- What do you make of the notion of critique? Does it play a role in your research?

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