

Notes for Norman Fairclough's *Analysing Discourse*

(Version 4)

Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduction

1A This book is for:

- (a) social science students who are interested in language
- (b) linguistics students interested in social science

1B This book provides social scientists with a framework for analysing language.

1C The book is also an introduction to the social analysis of language for linguists.

2A The book can be used as a course textbook, or not.

2B There are **glossaries** of key terms and key thinkers at the back of the book (pp.212-228).

Social analysis, discourse analysis, text analysis

2C Fairclough's approach (called 'Critical Discourse Analysis') assumes that there is a **dialectical relationship** between language and other elements of social life.

2D There are two main kinds of discourse analysis:

- (a) Textually-Oriented Discourse Analysis (TODA)
- (b) non-TODA (for example, Michel Foucault's approach)

Fairclough's approach tries to combine these two.

3A The focus of his approach 'oscillates' between both:

- (a) specific texts (linguistic analysis)
- (b) orders of discourse (interdiscursive analysis)

Order of discourse = 'the relatively durable social structuring of language which is itself one element of the relatively durable structuring and networking of social practices.'

Interdiscursive analysis = 'seeing texts in terms of the different **discourses, genres and styles** [that] they draw upon and articulate together'

3B NF's approach to the linguistic analysis of text is part of a broader project in social research. There is a 'manifesto' about this broader project in the Conclusion chapter (p. 202).

Terminology: text, discourse, language

3C **Text** = 'any actual instance of language in use'

'Language' and 'Discourse' can be used in either a general or a particular way.

'**Discourse**' = (a) general meaning: *language in use* as an element of social life which is closely interconnected with other elements.

(b) particular meaning: e.g. New Labour 'Third Way' discourse

Language in New Capitalism (LNC)

4A There are various names for the contemporary changes in social life, including: 'globalisation', 'post-modernity', 'late-modernity', 'information society', 'knowledge economy', 'consumer culture'.

'**new capitalism**' = 'the most recent of a historical series of **radical restructurings** through which capitalism has maintained in fundamental continuity'.

LNC does not only focus on economic issues. It also considers politics, education, art, etc.

Language in the New Capitalism website = [http://www.cddc.vt.edu/host/Inc/Discourse and Society](http://www.cddc.vt.edu/host/Inc/Discourse%20and%20Society) journal: Central Library (1994-2001), Graduate School for International Development (GSID) (2002 +) In 2004 a new journal was launched called *Critical Discourse Studies*.
 4B What is the New Capitalism? During the history of capitalism there have been a number of ‘crises’. When such a crisis develops, capitalism responds by changing itself. The type of capitalism that existed since WW2 was known as ‘Fordism’. The new capitalism is sometimes called ‘Post-Fordism’.
 5A The **Appendix** (pp.229-255) has some example texts of language in the new capitalism.

The approach to text analysis

5B Fairclough’s approach draws on several older approaches. The new point is that it is based on various **new theories about society** and the relation between **language, discourse and society**. As for text analysis, NF’s approach is based on **Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL)**. The leading scholar in SFL is **Michael Halliday**, and sometimes SFL is called ‘Hallidayan Linguistics’. SFL is suitable for CDA because it emphasizes the connections between texts and (social) contexts. But SFL is very linguistic-ish, with many specialized linguistic terms.

5C SFL and CDA have some differences.

CDA is more **transdisciplinary** than SFL. CDA tries to combine SFL with various social theories. This book includes some examples of this kind of work.

CDA tries to use simpler terms to analyse texts.

6A **Corpus Analysis**. In this book, NF uses ‘**qualitative**’ analysis of texts. But CDA can also make use of ‘**quantitative**’ analysis of texts.

Corpus Analysis is a kind of quantitative analysis. It can identify certain **keywords** in a corpus of text(s) and can show patterns of relationships (**collocations**) between keywords.

6B CDA can use various approaches to analyse texts. In this book, NF focuses on **grammatical and semantic** analysis.

Social Research Themes

7A Each chapter of this book will focus on a **social theme**. These themes include:

- governance* (government) in new capitalist societies
- hybridity* (the blurring of social boundaries) as a distinctive feature of **postmodernity**
- shifts in ‘space-time’* (time and space) associated with **globalisation**
- hegemonic struggles* (for achieving ‘universality’ of discourses)
- ideologies*
- citizenship* and the changing nature of ‘*public space*’
- changes in *communication technologies*
- ‘*legitimation*’ of social action and the social order
- the dominant ‘*character*’ types of modern society (e.g. the ‘manager’ and the ‘therapist’)
- ‘*informalisation*’ of society and shift away from hierarchy.

[*The next part was in the manuscript of this book but is not in the published book*]

Some important social theorists that Fairclough’s approach draws on include:

- Michel Foucault (social theory)
- Jurgen Habermas (social theory)
- Bob Jessop (political economy)
- Pierre Bourdieu (social and cultural theory)
- Basil Bernstein (sociology of education)
- David Harvey (social and political geography)
- Judith Butler (feminist and ‘queer’ political and cultural theory)
- Ernesto Laclau (post-Marxist political theory)
- Slavoj Zizek (postmodern political theory)

Alistair MacIntyre (moral philosophy)

Margaret Archer (critical realist philosophy, especially its theory of identity)

7B NF uses a wide variety of theories by various social theorists to analyse Language in the New Capitalism.

He wants to show that text analysis and social theory can help each other, *in general*, not just in the case of studying the New Capitalism.

7C All the social theorists that NF refers to have some connection to language and discourse, but in his opinion they do not analyse texts *closely enough*.

7D The book *Discourse in Late Modernity* (1999) by Chouliaraki and Fairclough is a theoretical study of the relationship between CDA and social theory.

Fairclough's *New Labour, New Language* (2000) is a good example of a CDA study.

Social effects of texts and on texts

8A Texts have various kinds of effects.

Immediate individual effects: they change our knowledge

Less immediate individual effects: they shape our identities (e.g. as consumers or as men or women)

Social or political effects: they can start wars, change industrial relations.

8B The **causality** associated with texts is not just **mechanical**. It is not just a matter of **regularity** either. It is a complex form of causality because it depends on the context.

8C Contemporary social theory has been strongly influenced by the concept of 'Social Constructivism'.

Social constructivism claims that the social world is socially constructed rather than real.

Social constructivism claims that language or discourse is important in constructing our social world.

However, the problem with social constructivism is that it fails to distinguish between '**constructing**' (= really making) and '**construing**' (= just representing or imagining) the social world. Because these are different, Fairclough says we should only accept a moderate or *weak version* of social constructivism. NOTE: Social constructivism is more commonly called 'social constructionism'

Ideological effects

9A

ideologies = '*representations* of aspects of the world which can be shown to contribute to establishing, maintaining and changing social relations of power, domination and exploitation.'

CDA views ideology critically, not just descriptively.

Ideological representations in texts must be studied in relation to social power.

As well as occurring as representations in texts, ideologies can also be '**enacted**' in the ways that we interact socially (institutional organisation).

Ideologies can also be '**inculcated**' in our ways of being (our identities, our social roles).

9B Example of an ideology: the claim that in the 'global' economy countries must be highly competitive to survive.

This claim is represented in texts about globalization, enacted in new forms of administration, and inculcated in new styles of being a manager.

How can we know if a claim like this is ideological or not?

Text, meanings and interpretations

10A A social approach to the study of texts means that we must study not just texts on their own but also the *interactive processes of meaning-making* of which they are a part.

10B The pub conversation example (between the Bartender and the Customer) shows how background knowledge is important for understanding the meaning of interactions.

10C **The process of meaning-making has three parts:**

- (a) the *production* of text
- (b) *the text itself*
- (c) the *reception* (or interpretation) of the text

NOTE: *Distribution* is also an important aspect.

10C+ The meanings and meaning-making processes of written (e.g. published) texts are even more difficult to analyse than spoken interactions.

11A Unspoken *assumptions* are always an important part of the meaning of texts. Analysis must consider what a text states explicitly and what is assumed without being stated. What is 'in' the text and what is 'outside' the text.

11B **Interpretation involves three factors:**

- (a) *understanding*
- (b) *evaluation* (or judgement)
- (c) *explanation*

11C In this book Fairclough analyses texts in relation to the **social effects** they have. The social effects of texts depend on processes of meaning-making. In this book, the emphasis in the analysis of meaning making is on the **production** of text (how people make or 'texture' texts). But this does not mean that he thinks that the reception and interpretation of texts is unimportant.

Texts and authors

12A The concept of 'authorship' is quite complicated. (He mentions Ervin Goffman who is a famous theorist on this topic.)

Forms, meanings and effects

12B The effects of a text are not an essential, inner, property of the text. Rather, they depend on meaning and context.

Nominalization is a linguistic form which hides the agents of actions (verbs).

13A Common features of texts that often (but not always) have ideological effects include:

- Nominalisation*: e.g. 'change' used as a noun (as an active agent in a clause, not *human* action)
- Passive verbs*: e.g. 'can be made and shipped' (doesn't say *who* does the moving/shipping)
- Passive adjectives*: e.g. 'mobile' (doesn't say *who* carries it)
- Intransitive verbs*: e.g. 'migrate' (doesn't say *who or what* causes the migration to happen)
- Metaphor*: e.g. 'migration' for the way companies move technology around the world.
- Inanimate nouns* (e.g. 'capital') used as grammatical agents in clauses (hiding *human* action).

13B Whether or not these features are used to deliberately (or unconsciously!) mystify and hide the real agents depends on the context of the text. We can get evidence about the context and the influence of such texts by looking at how widely such texts are distributed in the world, who reads them, etc.

13C We must pay attention to meaning and context when we think about the effects that texts have.

Critical analysis and 'objectivity'

14A Fairclough's philosophical point of view is a **realist** one. It is a position associated with the philosopher Roy Bhaskar. He thinks that concrete social events, social practices and abstract social structures all really exist (they are all part of reality).

Reality has three levels:

- Potential*: what social events are possible, given the social structures and practices that exist.
- Actual*: what social events actually occur
- Empirical*: what we can know about social reality (what aspects of what social events?)

Texts are a part of social events.

Texts are part of reality.

No empirical analysis of a text (or a social event) can explain all of its meaning.

However, NF's transdisciplinary approach aims to reveal important aspects of texts and events.

14B We cannot have 'objective' knowledge of society, either. Textual analysis (and knowledge) is always **selective**.

People always have particular **motivations** for asking certain questions rather than others. Fairclough's motivation is a political and moral one: he wants to critically question changes in contemporary society.

14C 'There is no such thing as an 'objective' analysis of a text.'

Fairclough's approach belongs to the type of research called '**critical social science**'.

15A Every type of social science involves using technical terms and categories. The categories that we use cannot be fixed permanently. They are always open to change and revision.

The limits of textual analysis

15B 'To research meaning-making, one needs to look at *interpretations* of texts as well as texts themselves.'

'Textual analysis is best framed within *ethnography*'

We must frame textual analysis within *organizational* analysis.

We must **link** 'micro' analysis of texts to 'macro' analysis of power relations in society.

Q. How can we achieve this?

16A Some people (such as **Conversation Analysis** scholars like Schegloff) say that when we analyse texts we should *first* describe them linguistically, and *then* analyse them socially and critically.

However, this approach is not helpful for CDA because it does not encourage transdisciplinary research.

16B The way we analyse a text should not rely on a fixed, standard grammatical framework. We should use the framework which is most appropriate to the social issue we are researching and the social theory and discourse theory we are trying to use.

The organisation of the book

Part 1: [The Relationship between] Social analysis, Discourse analysis, and Text analysis

This part introduces a Framework for the 'internal' analysis of texts.

This part also describes the relationship between text analysis, discourse analysis and social analysis.

Ch 1 Introduction

This chapter!

Ch 2 Texts, Social Events, and Social Practices

Texts are elements of **social events**. Social events are influenced by (but also has an influence on) more abstract and long-lasting **social structures** and **social practices**.

Ch 3 Intertextuality and Assumptions

This chapter describes how the 'outside' of a text is brought into the text itself. This involves the following two things:

- (a) Intertextuality = 'how texts draw upon, incorporate, recontextualize and dialogue with other texts'
- (b) Assumptions and Presuppositions. 'What is *said* in a text is always said against the background of what is *unsaid*'

Part 2: GENRES and [Texts as] ActionCh 4 Genres

Genre = a particular way of acting and interacting linguistically (e.g. interview, lecture, news report).

Genres *structure* texts in specific ways (e.g. the structure of a newspaper report).

Genre has an influence on four aspects of texts. These are described in Chapters 5 and 6.

Ch 5 Meaning Relations between Sentences and Clauses

(1) Genre influences the character of the semantic (= meaning) and grammatical relations between the sentences and clauses of a text.

Ch 6 Clauses: Types of Exchange, Speech Functions, and Grammatical Mood

(2) Genre influences the type of 'exchange' (e.g. giving information, making someone do something) of a text.

(3) Genre influences the speech functions (statement, offer, demand) of a text.

(4) Genres influence the grammatical mood (declarative, interrogative, imperative) of a text.

Part 3: DISCOURSES and [Texts as] Representations

Discourse = a particular way of representing some part of the (physical, social, psychological) world.

Ch 7 Discourses

Different social groups often have different (alternative and competing) discourses. That is, they have different ways of representing the world.

Ch 8 Representations of Social Events

This chapter describes how 'representational meanings' are made in texts.

In particular, in this chapter the focus is on how **social events** are represented in texts.

Part 4: STYLES and [Texts as ways of constructing] IdentitiesCh 9 Styles

Style = the discursal aspect of a particular way of being.

Texts have an important role in creating peoples' *social identities*. This process is called **Identification**.

Ch 10 Modality and Evaluation

Identification involves two aspects.

(1) Grammatical modality.

Modality is concerned with:

(a) How much people commit themselves to (or believe in) the **truth** of what they say or write.

(b) The degree of **obligation** or **necessity** involved in what people say.

(2) Evaluation

Evaluation is concerned with the **values** which people commit themselves to in texts.

ConclusionCh 11 Conclusion

This chapter summarizes the ideas of the book and then uses them to analyse one of the Example texts.

Appendix: Examples of ‘Language in the New Capitalism’ texts

****NOTE****

In the book Fairclough often refers to these Examples mistakenly, using the wrong number. You must check the extracts carefully.

- 1 Extract from an ethnographic book about business managers and management. In this extract, an interview with a manager, the manager gives his opinions about the ‘negative culture’ of the workers in the city of Liverpool, in England..
2. Extract from a Hungarian (but English language) newspaper.
3. An example of an ‘Intertextual Chain’ (or ‘Genre Chain’). This extract comes from a study of a project to renovate (‘reform’ in Japanese English) a mental hospital. It contains three different kinds of texts (that is, three different genres: interview, transcripts of a meeting, final written project report) which illustrate how different texts link together to make chains.
4. Extract from an official European Union ‘Policy Paper’ about Economic Competitiveness. This is an example of Language in the New Capitalism.
5. Extract from a speech by the British Prime Minister, Tony Blair about the September 11th 2001 terrorist incident in New York. This is a classic example of the War on Terrorism (WOT) discourse.
6. Extract from a British radio news programme about a terrorist incident in Scotland called ‘The Lockerbie Bombing’ which was said to have been carried out by spies from Libya (in North Africa). Another, early example of a WOT text.
7. Extract from the website of the World Economic Forum when it held its annual meeting in Davos, Switzerland, in 2001. The extract contains (a) a summary of one part of the meeting, (b) one quotation from the meeting, and (c) one email comment about the meeting that someone sent to the website.
- 8 Extract from a British television ‘debate’ programme about the future of the British monarchy (‘royal family’).
- 9 Extract from a best-selling American ‘Management Guru’ book about successful Internet companies and ‘E-Culture’.
- 10 Extract from a meeting of supervisors (managers) in an Australian factory which is owned by a multinational company. The topic of the meeting is new ‘quality practices’ (ways of working) that the multinational company wants them to use.
- 11 Extract from a ‘Consultation Paper’ produced by the British government about the concept of ‘Lifelong Learning’.
- 12 Extract from a book about how unemployed computer programmers in America try to understand why they lost their jobs. First they blame the company, then they blame globalization, then they blame themselves for their failure!
- 13 Extract from a book about the ‘New’ Labour Party in Britain and its ideas about ‘capitalist globalisation’ (or ‘the new global economy’).
- 14 A selection of materials and notes which Norman Fairclough collected at a ‘staff appraisal training session’ held at his university (Lancaster University, UK). The use of the Staff Appraisal process is an example of how the discourse of management is creeping into the academic world.
- 15 Extracts from a public ‘consultation’ meeting in England about Genetically Modified (GM) food. The local people are doubtful about whether the government and the GM businesses really want to genuinely ‘consult’ them or not.

END