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## **CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS AS A CRITICAL SOCIAL STUDY: NORMAN FAIRCLOUGH'S APPROACH\*\***

### **Abstract**

The initial thesis of this paper is that critical discourse analysis (CDA), as a qualitative, critical, explanatory approach in exploration of social communication, represents a valuable way of researching contemporary social/political communication, and an indispensable complement to traditional social scientific techniques, which privilege positivist paradigm, quantitative research in social/political communication examinations. Consequently, the main purpose of this paper is to point out what the uniqueness of CDA's scientific contribution to the study of society consists of, through observing the specificity of the theoretical and methodological framework, categories and analytical procedures of CDA in Norman Fairclough's approach. The introductory part of the article provides a summary overview of the starting points, notions and tenets of CDA. In the following section the focus is on the analytical review of the different levels of Norman Fairclough's theoretical framework and methodological procedures of CDA. The third, final part of the article is an attempt to provide an overall view of the importance of CDA in Fairclough's approach for critical social study.

**Keywords:** language, discourse, text, critical discourse analysis, ideology, power

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## INTRODUCTION

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is an inter(trans)disciplinary field within the humanities and social sciences with a recognizable approach to the study of the social use of language in explicit political perspective, manifested in a whole range of different approaches, which differ in theory, methodology and the type of research questions they give importance to. Although the range of approaches labeled as CDA has increased and specialized, during its development in the last three decades, three main approaches are distinguished in the literature, and associated with three key founding figures: Dialectical-relational approach (Norman Fairclough); Socio-cognitive approach (Teun A. van Dijk) and Discourse-historical approach (Ruth Wodak).

Though the main approaches within CDA have been changed and improved in the period from its founding until now, it is conceivable to abstract some general and common features both in terms of agenda, theoretical assumptions and basic analytical conceptions. CDA provided a general theory of how discourse figures as a specific form of social practice, as well as analytical concepts for discourse analysis on multiple scales, ranging from detailed linguistic analysis<sup>1</sup> of certain texts/conversation to the complex networks of social interactions. Fundamental to CDA is its starting-point in social theory, with the two main directions: theories of power and ideology<sup>2</sup> (Blommaert, 2005).

The main tenets of CDA Fairclough and Wodak (1997) summarized as follows: “CDA addresses social problems”; “power relations are discursive”; “discourse constitutes society and culture”; “discourse does ideological work”; “discourse is historical”; “the link between text and society is mediated”; “discourse analysis is interpretative and explanatory”; “discourse is a form of social action” (271–279).

Comprehension of discourse as a form of social practice implies dialectical relationship between a particular discursive event and the situations, institutions and social structures which frame it. “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” (Fairclough and Wodak 1997, 258).

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1 Prominent is the use of systemic-functional linguistics, but also categories and concepts have also been borrowed from pragmatics, discourse analysis and text linguistics, stylistics, social semiotics, social cognition, rhetoric, and conversation analysis.

2 Most common in this respect are the use of Michel Foucault's (e.g. 1975, 1982) formulations of 'orders of discourse' and 'power/knowledge'; Antonio Gramsci's (1971) notion of 'hegemony'; Louis Althusser's (1971) concepts of 'ideological state apparatuses' and 'interpellation' (Blommaert 2005, 27).

Commonly grasped as “language in use – in speech and writing” (258), discourse is used in various senses: the meaning-making element of social process; “the language associated with particular social field of practice (e.g. political discourse)”, and as “way of constructing aspects of the world associated with particular social perspective (e.g. neoliberal discourse globalization)” (Fairclough 2016, 87). Each of the mentioned aspects of the meaning of the term “discourse“ implies the key importance of context, which figures in many different levels and accordingly is multiple defined.

CDA pays special attention to the context, „analysing the relationship between texts, processes, and social conditions, both the immediate conditions of the situational context and the more remote conditions of institutions and social structures“ (Flowerdew and Richardson 2018, 5). The notion of context is important to CDA as it explicitly includes social, political, ideological and cognitive components in analysis and thus postulates an interdisciplinary procedure.<sup>3</sup>

Discourses are socially constitutive in the double sense: they contribute to sustain and reproduce the social/political *status quo*, but also to transforming it. Social influence of discourses is based on the fact that they are underpinned by ideologies, which gives rise to issues of power. Both ideology and power are common macro-analytical concepts in CDA.

Discourse does ideological work (Fairclough and Wodak 1997, 274) by continuously producing and reproducing ideology as “significations/constructions of reality (the physical world, social relations, social identities), which are built into various dimensions of the forms/meanings of discursive practices, and which contribute to the production, reproduction or transformations of relations of domination” (Fairclough 1992, 87). Such as, discourses are not just systems of ideas of beliefs but “ways of thinking in which historically transient exploitative forms of social organization are represented as eternal, natural, inevitable or ‘rational’” (Flowerdew and Richardson 2018, 3).

The main problem with ideology is that it is opaque and deeply rooted in language use, and as such, through constant reproduction and successful “naturalization”, it becomes a common sense assumption,

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3 “When context is broken down into a macro, meso and micro dimension, then is distinguished four dimensions of it: 1. the immediate, language internal “co-text”; 2. the intertextual and interdiscursive relationship between utterances, texts, genres and discourses; 3. the extralinguistic social factors and institutional frames of a specific “context of situation“ (place, time, occasion, addressees, interactive and political roles, political and ideological orientation, etc.); 4. the broader sociopolitical formation and historical context in which the discursive practices are embedded and related” (Reisigl 2018, 53).

whereby particular representations of the world, systems of ideas and values are insensibly imposed as general, universal and rational. Thus, ideology becomes a suitable tool for the pseudo-legitimization of the power of dominant groups in society, that is, for the establishment of hegemony. In Gramsci's understanding, hegemony is power exercised not through physical coercion, but covertly, through ideology and discourse. In this sense, the "Janus-headed" nature of discourse is manifested: "it is consequence of power and domination, but also a technology to exert power" (Wodak and Meyer 2016, 10). One of the goals of CDA is therefore to "'demystify' discourses by deciphering ideologies" (Wodak 2001, 10), i.e. to "deconstruct 'discursive hegemony'" (Flowerdew and Richardson 2018, 4).

The last singled out, but no less significant element of CDA's agenda is critique. It becomes self-evident, if we consider the opacity of the relationship between discourse, ideology and power as research challenge. "CDA emphasizes the need to interdisciplinary work in order to gain proper understanding of how language functions in constituting and transmitting knowledge in organizing social institutions or in exercising power" (Wodak and Meyer 2016, 7). In addition, with their insights into the fact that the use of language, as well as the overall social practice, is determined by social structures, to whose stabilization and changes they contribute at the same time, CDA scholars make an explicit commitment to adhere to the emancipatory agenda, in strivings to produce and convey critical knowledge that enables people to emancipate themselves from forms of domination through self-reflection. In this sense, CDA rejects the position of value-free dispassionate science and acknowledgements that researchers take explicit positions on the side of socially oppressed and dominated groups.<sup>4</sup> Basically, critical is understood "as having distance to the data, embedding the data in the social, taking a political stance explicitly, and a focus on self-reflection as scholars doing research" (Wodak 2001, 9).

### **FAIRCLOUGH'S THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL MODEL OF CDATHEORETICAL ASSUMPTIONS OF THE MODEL**

In the beginning of his work, Fairclough (1989; 1992; 1995) singled out revealing the meaning of language in the production,

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4 "Naming oneself 'critical' only implies specific ethical standards: an intention to make their position, research interests and values explicit and their criteria as transparent as possible, without feeling the need to apologize for the critical stance of their work (Wodak and Meyer 2009, 8).

maintenance and change of the social relation of power, as one of the main goals of CDA's critical social engagement, in order to increase consciousness of how language contributes to the domination of some people by others, by "helping people to see the extent to which their language does rest upon common-sense assumptions, and the ways in which these common-sense assumptions can be ideologically shaped by relations of power" (Fairclough 1989, 4). According to this guiding goal, he adopted some theories and concepts of power and ideology, such as Foucault's formulations of "orders of discourse" and 'power/knowledge' concept; Althusser's concepts of "ideological state apparatuses" and "interpellation" and Gramsci's notion of "hegemony". In Fairclough account, those theories "are given a linguistic translation and projected onto discourse and communicative patterns in an attempt to account for the relation between linguistic practice and social structure" (Blommaert 2005, 27). Accordingly, the goal of the discourse analysis is to map systematic analyses of spoken or written texts onto systematic analyses of social contexts.

Fairclough's theoretical framework combines three analytical traditions: the tradition of textual and linguistic analysis within linguistics; "the macro sociological tradition of analyzing social practice in relation to social structures", and "the interpretivist or micro sociological tradition of seeing social practice as something which people actively produce and make sense of on the basis of shared commonsense procedures" (Fairclough 1992, 72).

According to Fairclough (1995), there are three complementary ways of "reading" a complex social event that arise from three possible perspectives one can take upon discursive event –manifestation of discourse taken as "instance of language use": as a "spoken or written language text"; as "an instance of discourse practice, involving the production and interpretation of text", and as "a piece of social practice" (133); this insight comes from Fairclough's model of discourse.

Fairclough's theoretical model (1989; 1992; 1995; 2001; 2015) is based on consideration of three dimensions of discourse, providing a three-dimensional method for discourse analysis. According to this model, discourse can be simultaneously seen as a "language text, spoken or written"; as "discourse practice (text production and text interpretation)", and as "socio-cultural practice" (Fairclough 1995, 97). Text analysis is only a part of discourse analysis, which also includes analysis of productive and interpretative processes. "The formal properties of a text can be regarded from the perspective of discourse analysis on the one hand as traces of the productive process, and on the

other hand as cues in the process of interpretation” (Fairclough 2015, 57). Discourse analyses includes analyses of the relationship between texts, interactions, and contexts – their social conditions, both the immediate conditions of the situational context and the conditions of institutional and social structures.

According to Fairclough, productive and interpretative processes involve an “interplay between properties of texts and a cognitive recourses of people” (Fairclough 2001, 20) – so called “members resources” (MR) which they draw upon in producing or interpreting texts – including their knowledge, and representations of the world, assumptions, values, beliefs and so on. These recourses are basically cognitive, but their nature and conditions of their use are socially determined; they are socially generated, transmitted and unequally distributed. Social conditions shape the resources that people bring to production and interpretation, and these in turn shape the ways in which texts are produced and interpreted.

These dialectical relationships underlies the text – context relation, especially the long term dynamics of the process of socio-cognitive conditioning of the process of production and interpretation of texts, which are based on internalized social structures and conventions. To explain these relations, Fairclough modified Foucault’s notion of “order of discourse”, giving it the meaning of an intermediary instance between language (discourse) and society.

Orders of discourse are “intermediate organizational entities of a specifically linguistic sort, the linguistic elements of networks of social practices” (Fairclough 2003, 23). An order of discourse is “a particular combination or configuration of genres, discourses and styles” (220) which “select certain possibilities defined by languages and exclude others”, and in that way they “control linguistic variability for particular areas of social life” (24).<sup>5</sup> They are “relatively stable and durable ways of acting” (genres), “representing” (discourses) and “identifying” (styles) (28).

As “the discourse/semiotic aspect of a social order”, order of discourse is “a social structuring of semiotic difference – a particular social ordering of relationships amongst different ways of making meaning” (206). In this social ordering some ways of making meaning are dominant in a particular order of discourse, others are marginal or oppositional. A particular order of discourse may become hegemonic, as a part of the legitimizing common sense which sustains relations

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5 They are ways in which discourse figures in social practice – “Genres (ways of acting) Discourses (ways of representing) Styles (ways of being), correspond with three major types of meaning: “Action, Representation and Identification” (Fairclough 2003, 26 – 27).

of domination. According to Fairclough (1995) the specificity of the particular sociocultural practice is realized in “how the discursive event draws upon and works upon the order of discourse, which is in turn realized in features of texts” (10).

Processes of production and interpretation are socially constrained in a double sense: by the available MR (internalized social structures, norms and conventions, including orders of discourse, and conventions for the production, distribution and consumption of texts) and by the nature of the social practice they are parts of, which determines what elements of MR are drawn upon, and how (in normative, creative, or oppositional ways). Exploration of these constraints, especially the second, and establishing explanatory connections “between the nature of the discourse processes in particular instances, and the nature of the social practices they are a part of” (Fairclough 1992, 80) are the distinctive objectives of Fairclough’s framework for CDA.

Social orders and orders of discourse are related to particular ideologies and power relations which are opaque to a significant extent. Discourse and MR practices are shaped in ways that people are not usually aware of, by social structures, power relations and the nature of the social practice in which they are involved, in whose procedures and practices they may be politically and ideologically invested.

Institutions<sup>6</sup> construct their ideological and discursive subjects, by imposing ideological and discursive constraints upon them as a condition to qualify them to act as subjects. “In the process of acquiring the ways of talking which are normatively associated with a subject position, one necessarily acquires also its ways of seeing, or ideological norms” (Fairclough 1995, 39). To be more precise, the “ideological discursive formations” (IDF) “position subjects in relation to its own sets of speech events, participants, settings, topics, goals and, simultaneously, ideological representations” (41). Only in the cases where IDF is dominant and unchallenged, and its norms become most naturalized<sup>7</sup> and opaque, institutions give the appearance of having IDF’s properties listed above. The naturalization and opacity of ideologies is a significant property of discourse. It is the cases where discursive elements are not only explainable as effects of non-discursive social elements, but also as necessary for sustaining and reproducing them. Due to naturalization,

6 In this context a social institution is realized as “an apparatus of verbal interaction, or an ‘order of discourse’”; “every institutional frame includes formulations and symbolizations of a particular set of ideological representations: particular ways of talking are based upon particular ‘ways of seeing’” (Fairclough 1995, 38).

7 “Naturalization gives to particular ideological representations the status of common sense, and thereby makes them opaque, i.e. no longer visible as ideologies” (Fairclough 1995, 42).



subjects are unaware of the ideological dimensions of the subject positions they occupy.

The power<sup>8</sup> to sustain particular discursive practices with particular ideological investments in dominance over other alternative/oppositional practices is, according to Fairclough (1995), the power to control discourse. According to the author's point of view, the character of current social order is primarily defined by its social relations and especially its power relations.

In Fairclough's (1995) approach to the phenomenon, power is conceptualized both "in terms of asymmetries between participants in discourse events, and in terms of unequal capacity to control how texts are produced, distributed and consumed (and hence the shapes of texts) in particular sociocultural contexts" (1–2). Author (2015) is focused upon two major aspects of the power – language relation, so called "power *in* discourse", and "power *behind* discourse" (27). "Power *in* discourse" includes the exercising and enacting of power; it is to do with powerful participants controlling and constraining the contributions of non-powerful participants. The "power behind the discourse" includes the power to shape and constitute the order of discourse dimensions of social orders, social institutions or societies; as well as which discourses and genres are available and who has access to what.

"Hidden power", according to Fairclough, implies the power relations that are enacted in unclear ways. The case of "hidden power" in discourse is when people who are unequal in power are not co-present in certain social interaction, so the effects of power are less obvious (e.g. power in mass media); power behind discourse is hidden power by its very nature: "the whole social order of discourse is put together as a hidden effect of power" (Fairclough 2015, 73).

Fairclough (2015) distinguishes three types of constraint by which powerful participants can exercise power over discourse: constraints on *contents* – "what is said or done"; *relations* – "the social relations participants enter into in discourse", and *subjects* – "the 'subject positions' people can occupy" (76). All three types of constraint overlap and co-occur in practice. In immediate and concrete terms, these constraints are the matter of "power in discourse"; in a relatively structural and long-term sense, these constraints are the matter of "power behind discourse" – that is, the matter of the conventions of discourse types constraining participant's contributions in these three ways; such

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8 As Fairclough (2015) pointed out, power is not in itself bad. He distinguished "power to" things and "power over" other people; the former is generally a social good and the latter is not inherently bad either, as long as it is legitimate.



constraints on discourse may have long term structural effects in a more general way. Particular discourse type achieves effects of power through the conventions it embodies, which embody particular power relations, determining positions of the unequal participants in relation to each other, and indicates how this positioning can be seen as an effect of the power of those who dominate institutions over conventions. The policing of conventions is in the possession of institutional power-holders, at various levels.

The third aspect of “power behind discourse” that Fairclough singles out is to do with constraints on access to the particular discourse types as the component of orders of discourse. It is the question of who has access to which discourses, and who has the power to impose constraints on access to various sorts of speech, and writing. These constraints are part of more general constraints on social practice in availability of exclusive social institutions, their practices and powerful subject positions. One pervasive and familiar aspect of constraints on access to discourse is formality, as a general property of various prestigious societies of practices and discourses. Formality can be regarded as a property of social situations, manifested in the form of the three types of constraint upon practice mentioned above (constraints on contents, subjects, and relations).

The shaping of conventions by those who have the “power behind discourse” is achieved through ideological work. “If therefore there are systematic constraints on the contents, of discourse and on the social relationships enacted in it and the social identities enacting them, these can be expected to have long-term effects on the knowledge and beliefs, social relationships, and social identities of an institution or society” (Fairclough 2015, 98). Author identifies the multiple ways in which individuals pass through institutionalized discursive regimes, constructing selves, social categories, and social realities. Fairclough’s model of discourse is framed in a theory of ideological processes in society, conceiving discourse in terms of processes of hegemony and changes in hegemony (Blommaert 2005).

Changes in hegemony and social struggles are important elements of Fairclough’s model. “In terms of ‘power in discourse’, discourse is the site of power struggles, and in term of ‘power behind discourse’, it is the stake of power struggles – for control over orders of discourse is a powerful mechanism for sustaining power” (Fairclough 2015, 98). Power can be won, held or lost in social struggle; it constantly needs to be reassert, and always can be make a bid for power, or gain it, whether in the level of the particular situation, of a social institution, or of whole society.

### **A three-stage procedure for critical discourse analysis**

Corresponding to three dimensions of discourse mentioned above – discourse as text; discourse as discursive practice and discourse as social practice – Fairclough distinguish three stages of critical discourse analysis: description – “concerned with formal properties of the text”; interpretation – deals with “the relationship between text and interaction” (text is seen as a product of process of production and resource in the process of interpretation) and explanation stage – focused on “the relationship between interaction and social context”, i.e. on “the social determination of the processes of production and interpretation, and their social effects” (Fairclough 2015, 58). The overall CDA procedure implies progression from description, to interpretation, to explanation (Fairclough 1989), and the nature of analysis changes from stage to stage. Although it has its own analytical procedures and clear objects of analysis, description is ultimately dependent on the interpretation – analyst’s choices of what is worth to describe, and to emphasize in a description are determined by how he interprets the text. Unlike the description, in the stages of interpretation and explanation, analysis cannot be seen in terms of applying a procedure to an object, because what one is analyzing is complex and invisible relationships. In the case of interpretation, it is the cognitive processes of participants (in a discursive event), and in the case of explanation, “it is relationships between transitory social events (interactions), and more durable social structures which shape and are shaped by these events” (Fairclough 2015, 59).

#### ***The first stage: description***

In the stage of description, analysis is a matter of “identifying and ‘labelling’ formal features of a text” (Fairclough 2015, 59). It includes systematic analyses of the choices and patterns in vocabulary, grammar, cohesion, and text structure. This stage of analysis is similar to that of participants, in the sense that the analyst adopts the participant’s categories in his description, but needs to make his interpretive framework explicit.

Texts are made up of forms that past discursive practice has provided meaning potential, so they are usually highly ambivalent and open to multiple interpretations. Interpreters reduce this potential ambivalence by opting for a particular meaning. The set of textual features included in analysis is highly selective, dependent on interpretation,

containing only those which tend to be most significant for critical analyses; these features are observed as particular choices from among the options available in the discourse type(s) which the text draws upon. Consequently, focus in analysis constantly alternating between what is in the text, and of the discourse type(s) which the text is drawing upon.

The general term “discourse type” Fairclough (1992) uses “if it is not clear whether something is a genre, activity type, style or discourse” (232), but certain discourse type has his own typical features, patterns and structures, configuration of subject positions, vocabulary and every particular discourse sample draws upon one or more discourse types. Institutional orders of discourse, and societal order of discourse consist of various discourse types distinctive for them. Constituted through a combination of elements of orders of discourse, discourse types differ not only in the way in which they represent discourse, but also “in the types of discourse they represent and in the functions of discourse in the representing text” (118–119). Discourse types “tend to run particular ways of drawing upon conventions and texts into routines, and to naturalize them” (85).

The connection between selection and description of textual features on the one hand, and MR, context and interpretation on the other hand, Fairclough explained by using three types of value that formal features may have: “experiential”, “relational” and “expressive”, and pointed out that any given formal feature may simultaneously have two or three of these values. A formal feature with experiential value “is a trace of and a cue to the way in which the text producer’s experience of the natural or social world is represented”; is to do with contents, knowledge and beliefs. A formal feature with relational value “is a trace of and a cue to the social relationships which are enacted via the text in the discourse”. Relational value is to do with relations and social relationships. A formal feature with expressive value “is a trace of and a cue to the producer’s evaluation (in the widest sense) of the bit of the reality it relates to” (Fairclough 2015, 130). Expressive value is to do with subjects and social identities. Formal feature, also, may have connective value in connecting together parts of a text.

The experiential values of text’s vocabulary is related to the ways of coding ideological specificity of the representations of the world in its wording. Its consideration implies classification schemes in terms of which vocabulary is organized in the text and in the discourse types that text is drawing upon, as well as ideologically significant meaning relations (synonymy, hyponymy and antonymy). According to the same principle, the expressive value of the words in the text may be

considered through analysis of the classification schemes contained in the vocabulary, which are partly evaluation systems, and which can be referred to ideologically contrastive classification schemes, embodying different values in different discourse types. The question of relational values of the vocabulary focuses on how a text's choice of wordings depends on social relationships between participants. Text producers may use prominently formal or informal words to express politeness, respect for status and position, social distance or closeness; or strategies of avoidance with respect to the expressive values of words for relational reasons, for instance euphemistic expressions.

As a way of representing one aspect of experience in terms of another, metaphor is the way of how we grasp reality, so the analysis of its use is relevant. Fairclough (1995) points out its hidden ideological loadings, due to the way it conceals and shapes understandings, while at the same time giving the impression that it reveals them. As well as other rhetorical tropes, metaphor provides linguistic resource for replacing actual, concrete process, settings, or identities with abstractions (Machin and Mayr 2012). Accordingly, the relationship/conflicts between alternative metaphors is of particular interest, because different metaphors have different ideological attachments.

The experiential values of grammar, according to Fairclough (2015) “have to do with the ways in which the grammatical forms of a language code happenings or relationships in the world, the people, or animals, or things involved in those happenings or relationships, and their spatial and temporal circumstances, manner of occurrence, and so on” (137). Textual representation of action, event, state of affairs or relationship, implies a choice between different grammatical process (actions, events or attributions) and participant types (participants, an agent or a patient); Fairclough (2003) distinguishes five main process types, which differ in their key, defining participants, and in the types of circumstance associated with them: material, verbal, mental, relational, existential (141). The choice made between them can highlight or background agency, or processes of one type may appear as processes of another type. If such choices are consistent, automatic and commonsensical, they are ideological, or they may be conscious hedging or deception.

The main question is how text represents agency, whether actions are represented in ways which specify or elide the agency of actors and, consequently, causality or responsibility. This is also a consequence of using nominalization, which typically replaces verb processes with a noun construction. Its effects are more than simple removal the agent,

like in usage of passive sentence; by nominalization, the process is presented as an entity. This provides possibilities for hiding the agent and the object of the action, the representation of time, causality and modality. Nominalizations can also function as new participants in new constructions and background real agents, or increase the opacity of other nominalizations (Machin and Mayr 2012).

From the plenty of grammatical features of texts which have relational values, Fairclough (2015) particularly focused upon three: modes of sentence, pronouns and modality. Three major modes of sentence – declarative, grammatical question and imperative – position subjects differently. Systematic asymmetries in the distribution of modes between participants are important in terms of participant relations: asking (weather for action or information) is generally a position of power, as too is voluntarily giving information. But there is not a “one-to-one” relationship between modes and the positioning of subjects, for example, a declarative may have the value of a request for information and so on; and, what Fairclough (2003) points out as even more important, in the strategic replacement of speech functions in the text it is possible to give the appearance of a mere exchange of knowledge to the exchange of activities (statements, questions, requests and offers are used to act, or others are made to do something). Blurring of this distinctions as well as that between factual and evaluative statements, and factual statements and predictions, have significant manipulative potential of hidden imposition of ideas and persuasion.

Pronouns have relational values of different kinds, and the way they are used is related to relations of power and solidarity. Pronouns like “us”, “we” and “them” are often used to align participants alongside or against particular idea (Machin and Mayr 2012) or social groups, and, more generally, their use may be a matter of various kind of social grouping and divisions. According to Fairclough (2003), the first person plural pronoun, ‘we’, is important “in terms of identificational meanings, how texts represent and construct groups and communities” (149) and highlights common interests at the expense of particular ones. The variations in meaning of this pronoun are particularly significant in terms of who it includes/excludes. Inclusive “we” can be an implicit authority claim, or this can mean that one has or appropriates the authority to speak for others.

The concept of modality is important for both relational and expressive values in grammar. According to Fairclough (2003), modality is “the relationship it sets up between author and representations – what authors commit themselves to in terms of truth or necessity”; it is the

expression of the judgement of the probabilities, or the obligations, involved in what is said or wrote. Two main types of modality are: “epistemic modality” (modality of probabilities), and “deontic modality” (modality of necessity and obligation). “In the case of statements, explicitly modalized forms (marked by modal verbs such as ‘may’ or other markers) can be seen as intermediate between categorical Assertion and Denial, and they register varying degrees of commitment to truth or necessity” (219). Modality is expressed by modal auxiliary verbs like “may”, “might”, “must”, “should”, “can”, “can’t”, “ought”, but also by various other formal features.

Modality is to do with the authority of the speaker or writer and, depending on the direction in which that authority is oriented, Fairclough (2015) distinguishes “relational modality” – about the authority of one participant in relation to others, and “expressive modality” – a matter of authority of the speaker/writer with respect to the truth or the probability of representation of reality (142). Modality choices are important in the texturing of identity, both personal and social, in the sense that what one commits to is a significant part of who one is; but the process of identification is inevitably inflected by the process of social relation, because this goes on in the course of social processes (Fairclough 2003). The authority and power relations on the basis of which the producers of text withhold permission from, or impose obligations, are not explicit. It is precisely the implicitness of authority claims and power relations that makes the modality of relations a matter of ideological interest (Fairclough 2015).

Analysis of text cohesion refers to the ways in which clauses are connected into sentences and these into larger units in the text; it is question of choice between “various rhetorical schemata according to which groups of statements may be combined (...) and whose succession characterizes the architecture of the text”. Text structure also concerns the architecture of texts, and “specifically higher-level design features of different types of text: what elements or episodes are combined in what ways and what order to constitute” (Fairclough 1992, 77). According to Fairclough, structuring conventions can give a lot of insight into the systems of knowledge, belief and the assumptions about social relationships and social identities embedded in the conventions of the text type.

### *The second stage: interpretation*

Interpretation, as the second stage of CDA procedure, is concerned with the ways of reaching the understanding of the discourse by the participants, based on their cognitive, social and ideological resources; it requires a degree of distancing of the interpreter from the positions of the participants, but the interpretation is still done by their categories and criteria (Blommaert 2005). In conceiving the interpretation stage, Fairclough (2015) connected the values of the textual characteristics, discussed above (experiential, relational and expressive), with three aspects of social practice (contents, relations and subjects) constrained by power, and their structural effects on knowledge and beliefs, social relationships and social identities. The mediating instance between the text and social structures is discourse in that sense that the values of the textual features become real only embedded in the interaction, where the texts are interpreted on the background of commonsense assumptions of meaning (part of the MR). The interpretation stage deals with precisely these discourse processes and their dependence on background assumptions.

Interpretation is produced through the “dialectical interplay of textual features and interpreter’s MR” (155): the former is cue which activates elements of MR, the latter generates interpretative procedures, many of which are ideological. Each of the main elements of MR is specifically associated with a certain level of interpretation. Fairclough distinguishes six main domains of interpretation; four levels refer to the interpretation of the text and two relate to the interpretation of the context (situational and intertextual).

Fairclough (2015) identifies the following four levels according to the domains of textual interpretation: 1. “surface of utterance”; 2. “meaning of the utterance”; 3. “local coherence” and 4. “text structure and ‘point’” (156). The first level of interpretation is a matter of recognition words, phrases and sentences, based on interpreter’s knowledge of the language (as element of interpreter’s MR).

The second level of interpretation relates to the processes of assigning meanings to the constituent parts of a text (utterances, or semantic proposition). It is a matter of semantic aspects of interpreter’s MR – representations of the meanings of words, the ability to combine word meanings and grammatical information; relying on them, the analyst works out the implicit meanings to reach meanings of whole propositions, as well as he relies on pragmatic conventions within his MR, which enable him to establish what speech act(s) an utterance is



being used. As Fairclough (2015) pointed out, insights into who is using which speech act and in what form are important because the conventions for speech acts epitomize ideological representations of subjects and their social relationships.

The third level of interpretation establishes meaning connections between utterances, producing coherent interpretations of their pair or sequences. This is a matter of local coherence relations within a particular part of a text, which are not reducible to formal cohesion, because coherence relations between utterances can be established even in the absence of formal cohesive signs, by the pragmatic interpretative procedure based on the implicit assumptions that are often of an ideological character. These are naturalized pre-constructions of semantic relations (adopted as part of interpreter MR) that ultimately participate in the constitution of certain/preferred representations of the world.

The fourth level of interpretation provides comprehension of how text works as a whole, its global coherence. It is the question of the interpreter's insights into the ideological choices related to the repertoire of schemata and patterns of organization, frames, and scripts,<sup>9</sup> distinctive for a certain type of discourse on which the text relies and accordingly appropriates them. As types of mental representation of the aspects of the world, schemata, frames and scripts are part of interpreter's MR, as well as of the interpretative procedure: in dialectical interplay between textual cues and MR, "textual cues evoke schemata, frames, or scripts, and these set up expectations which color the way in which subsequent textual cues are interpreted" (Fairclough 2015, 170).

Interpretation of the text as a whole summarized on the text point is also matter of this level of interpretation. Topic is considered as the content, or experiential aspect of a text point, but point is not reducible to topic, because it has both a relational and an expressive dimension. Meanings which are related to these dimensions text conveys implicitly, and their interpretations are relied upon the interpreter's MR. Since the point tends to be stored in long-term memory, as well as to be intertextually recalled, the ways of its interpretation are of great importance in terms of the potential effects of the texts.

Relations between interpretations domains are relations of interdependence – each domain relies on interpretations in other domains as part of its "resources", whether it is a direction from lower to higher

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9 Shema is "representation of a particular type of activity in terms of predictable elements in a predictable sequence"; a frame is "a representation of whatever can figure as a topic, or 'subject matter', or 'referent' within an activity"; and scripts represent the subjects involved in activities, and their relationships, typifying "the ways in which specific classes of subject behave in social activities" (Fairclough 2015, 168–169).

levels, or that interpretations at a higher level shape those at a lower level. Fairclough (2015) sees a similar relationship of interdependence between the interpretation of the text and the interpretation of the context. An initial, quick decision about what the context is may influence the interpretation of the text, but the interpretation of the context may change during the textual interpretation, since it is partly based on it.

Interpretations of the situational context is partly based of external cues – features of the physical situation, of the participants, or on what was previously said – but also on the aspects of interpreter’s MR – “mental map of the social order” (Fairclough 1995, 82). On the basis of these elements of his MR, the interpreter interprets these external signs, attributing real situations to certain types of situations. The way participants interpret the situation foregrounds certain elements and backgrounds others, relates elements to each other in certain ways and determines the insights into which types of discourse<sup>10</sup> are used, and this in turn affects the character of the interpretive procedures.

The interpretation of the situational context Fairclough (2015) explains by elaborating four questions related to the four main dimensions of the situation “what’s going on, who’s involved, what relationships are at issue, and what’s the role of language in what’s going on?”. The considerations under the first question relate to identifying situations “in terms of one of a set of activity types, or distinctive categories of activity, which are recognized as distinctive within a particular social order in a particular institution, and which have larger- scale textual structures” (159–160); they are also associated with particular institutionally recognized purposes, and are likely to constrain the set of possible topics. The second question involves specifying which subject positions are set up in particular situation type, while third question implies consideration of subject positions in terms relations of power, social closeness and distance manifested in that situation. The fourth question implies the consideration of certain purposes and ways of using language in relation to certain situations, which includes identifying the speech functions as well as genre language specificities.

The concept of intertextual context implies observing discourses and texts in terms of referring to other texts and discourses; it is a view of the text as a product of the author’s reliance on two or more types of discourse, conventions and traditions (Fairclough 2015). Snatches of other texts in a given text may be explicitly demarcated or not; the text

10 In this context of the use of the term, “discourse type” should be thought of as a meaning potential, “a particular constrained configuration of possible experiential, expressive and relational and connective meanings” (161–162), which are underlying conventions belonging to some particular order of discourse.

may assimilate them, or contradict to, and so on. “In terms of production, an intertextual perspective stresses the historicity of texts: how they always constitute additions to existing ‘chains of speech communication’ (...) consisting of prior texts to which they respond” (Fairclough 1992, 84); in terms of consumption this perspective stresses that interpretation is not shaped only by insights into the texts that intertextually constitute that particular text, but also those other texts which interpreters bring to the interpretation process.

Participants in any discourse work on the basis of assumptions about which previous discourses the current one is connected to, and this determines what can be taken as given, as a part of common experience. Presuppositions are not properties of texts, but an aspect of interpretations of intertextual context, because they are to do with kind of meanings are assumed as a given in the text; however, presuppositions are cued in texts, by quite a considerable range of formal features. Presuppositions can be sincere or manipulative, and can also have ideological functions when what is assumed has the character of common sense in the service of power; powerful participant may determine presuppositions and impose their interpretation upon others (Fairclough 2015). Intertextual analysis also “draws attention to the dependence of texts upon society and history in the form of the resources made available within the order of discourse (genres, discourses, etc.) (Fairclough 1995, 188–189).

When we refer to the role of context in the interpretation or production of a text, we cannot take context for granted, or assume that it is transparently available to all participants. As Fairclough (2015) points out, it is necessary to establish with which interpretation(s) of the situational context the participants are working with, and whether there is a shared interpretation. It is also important to keep in mind that the interpretation by a more powerful participant can be imposed on others. More broadly, the consequence of such impositions may be that the ideologies and power relations underlying them have a profound impact on the interpretation and production of discourse; “for they are embedded in the interpretative procedures – the social orders – which underlie the highest level of interpretative decision on which others are dependent” (163).

### ***The third stage: explanation***

The objective of the stage of explanation is, according to Fairclough (2015), to elucidate the ideological effects and hegemonic processes in which discourse as social practice operates. The main focus is explanation of how discourse is determined by social structures, and what cumulative effects it can have on those structures, sustaining or changing them. The intermediate instance of these processes is MR – they are shaped by social structures, and in turn shape discourses which sustain or change them, and MR in turn sustain or change structures.

Fairclough (2015) singles out two dimensions of explanation according to two focuses of consideration in this stage of analysis: process (of struggle) and structure (relations of power). In the first case, discourses are contextualize in terms of social struggles and the effects of these struggles on structures, with the emphasis on the social effects of discourse, on creativity, and on the future. In the second case discourses are contextualize in terms of their determination by power relations, which are established by those with power and can be naturalized; emphasis is on the social determination of discourse, and on the results of past struggles.

Any discourse, as author assumes, will have determinants and effects at all three levels of social organization – the situational level, the institutional level and the societal level – and, accordingly, should be investigated at each of these levels, because any discourse is shaped by institutional and societal power relations, and contributes to institutional and societal struggles.

Discourse can reproduce its own social determinants, or it can contribute to their transformation to a greater or lesser degree; it is the question of sustaining or changing MR which discourse draws upon. The same contrasting choices are available to producers and interpreters of the text in their relationships to their MR; in normative relation to MR, they act in accordance with them in a rather direct way, and in a creative relation to MR they draw upon them by combining and transforming them.

Generally, the choice between normative or creative relations to MR depends on situation – whether it is problematic or not. Participants can easily and harmoniously interpret unproblematic situation “as an instance of a familiar situation type – if what is going on, who’s involved, and the relations between those involved, are clear and ‘according to type’. In such cases, MR constitute appropriate norms (discourse types, interpretative procedures) which can simply be followed” (Fairclough

2015, 174). If MR do not provide clear norms for a given situation, a creative way of relying on them is needed to handle with the problematic properties of the situation. These situations typically arise when social struggle becomes overt, and when MR and the power relations which underlie them come into crisis. If certain directions of creative use and adaptation of MR become systematic, they can lead to a long-term transformation of MR, and thus the social relations which underlie them.

In the explanatory stage it is necessary for analyst to rely on social theory, in order to reveal the ideological underpinnings of lay interpretive procedures, to move from “non-critical” to “critical” discourse analysis. Social theory “provides the larger picture in which individual instances of communication can be placed and from which they derive meaning”, or “a metadiscourse on linguistic phenomena” (Blommaert 2005, 30–31). Analyst insights into the ideological dimensions of discourse go beyond layman’s awareness of it, as Fairclough (2015) points out, exploration of the determinants and effects of discourse at the institutional and societal levels in particular (can) lead one into detailed sociological analysis. For instance, a specific ideological perspective on MR implies that assumptions about social relationships, social identities and culture, which are incorporated in it, need to be seen as determined by particular power relations in the society or institution, and in terms of their contribution to struggles, to sustain, or change these power relations.

## CONCLUSION

Fairclough’s three-dimensional theoretical model of discourse and the methodological framework for the CDA procedure, which we tried to present analytically in this paper, represents the basis on which the author developed his approach in several stages, in response to social changes. As author points out, in the first stage, his work was oriented to the post-World War Two social settlement, focused on “critique of ideological discourse as part of a concern with the reproduction of the existing social order (Fairclough 1989)”. The second stage, “corresponding to the shift to neoliberalism from the 1970s, centred upon critique of discourse as part of social change, especially part of attempts to impose ‘top-down’ neoliberal restructuring (Fairclough 1992)”. The third stage “corresponding to the 2007+ financial and economic crisis, centres upon critique of deliberative discourse as part of a wider concern with struggles over strategies to overcome the crisis (Fairclough and Fairclough 2012)” (Fairclough 2018, 14). Although emphasis shifts between versions, his work incorporates earlier concerns into new syntheses. Critique of

ideology remains important throughout, as well as orientation to the text analysis; discourse analyses includes detailed textual analyses and interdiscursive analyses of “hybrid articulations” (15) that results from the recontextualization of market discourse, shifting discourse, genres and styles (configuring elements of orders of discourse) from one context to another.

Fairclough’s work in any stage links the critical tradition of social analysis and the study of language, focusing on the relationships between discourse and other social elements. “Its critical social analysis is normative and explanatory criticism: it not only describes existing realities, but also examines them, assessing to what extent they correspond to values that are (arguably) taken as fundamental for just or decent social communities” (Fairclough 2013, 3).

In his approach to CDA, there is a shift in what is critiqued: immanent critique of discourse (normative critique) leads to explanatory critique of contradictions of existing social reality, which are manifested in dialectical relations between discourse and other social elements, as power, ideologies, social structures, institutions, social identities, and the aim is not just a critique of discourse, leading to change in it; explanatory critique is a basis for action to change reality for the better.

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## **КРИТИЧКА АНАЛИЗА ДИСКУРСА КАО КРИТИЧКА СТУДИЈА ДРУШТВА: ПРИСТУП НОРМАНА ФЕРКЛАФА**

### **Резиме**

Својим квалитативним, критичким и експланаторним приступом у проучавању друштвене/политичке комуникације критичка анализа дискурса (ЦДА) постала је незаобилазна у њеним савременим истраживањима, развијајући своје аналитичке увиде у правцу обухватније критике друштва. Аргументе за ову тезу настојали смо да равијемо кроз аналитички приказ теоријско-методолошког модела ЦДА једног од њених утемељивача и водећих аутора Нормана Ферклафа (Norman Fairclough). Три комплементарна начина „читања” комплексних друштвених појава произилазе из три могуће перспективе гледања на, њима кореспондентне, дискурзивне догађаје (као инстанце употребе језика), што је у најдиректнијој вези са Феркафовим тродимензионалним моделом дискурса: дискурс као текст; дискурс као дискурсна пракса (производња и интерпретација текста), и дискурс као социокултурна пракса. У складу са ове три димензије дискурса, Ферклаф је постулирао три међусобно повезане фазе критичке анализе дискурса: дескрипцију, интерпретацију и објашњење. Дескрипција је усмерена на формална својства текста (изборе и обрасце у вокабулару, граматички, кохезији и структури текста). Интерпретација тумачи однос између текста и интеракције (текст се посматра као производ процеса производње и ресурс у процесу интерпретације), односно бави се начинима на које учесници долазе до разумевања дискурса на основу њихових когнитивних, друштвених и идеолошких ресурса. Фаза објашњења фокусирана је на однос између интеракције и друштвеног контекста, односно на друштвено детерминисање процеса производње и интерпретације од стране друштвених структура и њихове друштвене последице (идеолошке ефекте и хегемонијске процесе у оквиру којих дискурс фигурира). Анализа текста само је део анализе дискурса, која

укључује и анализу процеса производње и интерпретације текста чијим формалним својствима, сходно томе, приступа као траговима процеса његовог стварања и као знаковима (путоказима) у процесу интерпретације. Процеси стварања и интерпретације укључују узајамно дејство између одлика текстова и когнитивних ресурса учесника у дискурзивном догађају. Друштвени услови обликују когнитивне ресурсе које људи уносе у стварање и интерпретацију текстова, а ови ресурси заузврат обликују начине на које се текстови производе и тумаче. Процеси производње и тумачења текстова двоструко су друштвено ограничени: с једне стране доступним когнитивним и језичким ресурсима људи, укључујући и поретке дискурса као посебне конфигурације дистинктивних ресурса за стварање значења (дискурса, жанрова и стилова), а с друге природом друштвених пракси чији су учесници, а која одређује на које елементе ресурса се ослањају и како (на нормативни, креативни или опозициони начин). Истраживање ових ограничења, посебно другог, и успостављање експланаторних веза између природе дискурских процеса у одређеним случајевима и природе друштвених пракси чији су они део, дистинктивни су циљеви Ферклафовог оквира за ЦДА. Дискурсне праксе и когнитивни ресурси људи обликовани су на начине којих људи највећим делом нису свесни, друштвеним структурама, односима моћи и природом друштвене праксе у коју су укључени, а чије процедуре и праксе могу бити политички и идеолошки „инвестиране”. Моћ контроле дискурса је моћ одржавања дискурских пракси са одређеним идеолошким „инвестирањима“ у доминацију над другим алтернативним/опозиционим праксама. Моћ Феркаф концептуализује у терминима асиметрије између учесника у дискурзивним догађајима, и у смислу неједнаких способности контролисања како се текстови производе, дистрибуирају и тумаче (сходно томе и њихових облика) у посебним социокултурним контекстима. Укрстивши врсте моћи („моћ у дискурсу”, „моћ иза дискурса” „скривена моћ”) и типове ограничења које поседници моћи намећу дискурсу (ограничења садржаја, односа и субјекта) са три типа вредности које формалне одлике текстова могу имати (искусствену, релациону и експресивну), Ферклаф је створио својеврсни координатни систем за позиционирање

тумачења систематских избора које аутори и тумачи тестова праве у оквирима одређених текстуалних, ситуационих и друштвених контекста. Полазећи од дијалектичког односа између дискурзивних догађаја, друштвених ситуација, институција и друштвених структура које га уоквирују, као и од грамшијевске поставке моћи која се спроводи прикривено, кроз идеолошки рад на успостављању хегемоније, Ферклаф је развио двоструки поглед на дискурс као продукт моћи и доминације и инструмент за њихово спровођење. Његов руководећи критички циљ био је да посредством дискурсне анализе расветли непрозирне односе између дискурса, идеологије и моћи и на основама тих демаскирања развије критичке увиде у различите негативне друштвене и политичке феномене савременог доба.

**Кључне речи:** језик, дискурс, текст, критичка анализа дискурса, идеологија, моћ

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