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Critical Discourse Analysis: History, Agenda, Theory, and Methodology[1]

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CDA – What is it all about?

In this chapter, we first provide a brief 'story' – how it all began; then we present an overview of some important research agendas in CDA and discuss new challenges for CDA research. Secondly, we discuss the various theoretical and methodological approaches assembled in this volume from a sociological and epistemological perspective.[2] There, we focus mostly on three central and constitutive concepts: power, ideology and critique. We also, of course, summarize some of the salient principles which are constitutive of all approaches in CDA. In addition, we mention some important criticism which CDA has been confronted with in the past years (see Billig, 2003, 2008; Chilton, 2007; Chilton and Wodak, 2007; Wodak and Cillia, 2006 for an extensive discussion of this issue).

The terms Critical Linguistics (CL) and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) are often used interchangeably. In fact, recently, the term CDA seems to have been preferred and is being used to denote the theory formerly identified as CL. Therefore, we will continue to use CDA exclusively here (see Anthonissen, 2001; Chilton and Wodak, 2007 for an extensive discussion of these terms and their history). The manifold roots of CDA lie in Rhetoric, Text linguistics, Anthropology, Philosophy, Socio-Psychology, Cognitive Science, Literary Studies and Sociolinguistics, as well as in Applied Linguistics and Pragmatics.

Nowadays, some scholars prefer the term Critical Discourse Studies (CDS). For example, Teun van Dijk provides us with a broad overview of the field of (C)DS, where one can identify the following developments: between the mid-1960s and the early 1970s, new, closely related disciplines emerged in the humanities and the social sciences. Despite their different disciplinary backgrounds and a great diversity of methods and objects of investigation, some parts of the new fields/paradigms/linguistic sub-disciplines of semiotics, pragmatics, psycho- and sociolinguistics, ethnography of speaking, conversation analysis and discourse studies all deal with discourse and have at least seven dimensions in common (see Van Dijk, 2007a; Wodak, 2008a):

- an interest in the properties of *'naturally occurring' language use* by real language users (instead of a study of abstract language systems and invented examples)
- a focus on *larger units than isolated words and sentences* and, hence, new basic units of analysis: texts, discourses, conversations, speech acts, or communicative events
- the extension of linguistics *beyond sentence grammar* towards a study of action and interaction
- the extension to *non-verbal (semiotic, multimodal, visual) aspects* of interaction and communication: gestures, images, film, the internet, and multimedia
- a focus on dynamic (socio)-cognitive or interactional moves and strategies
- the study of the functions of (social, cultural, situative and cognitive) *contexts of language use*
- an analysis of a vast number of *phenomena of text grammar and language use*: coherence, anaphora, topics, macrostructures, speech acts, interactions, turn-taking, signs, politeness, argumentation, rhetoric, mental models, and many other aspects of text and discourse.

The significant difference between DS and CDS (or CDA) lies in the *constitutive problem-oriented, interdisciplinary approach* of the latter, apart from endorsing all of the above points. *CDA is therefore not interested in investigating a linguistic unit per se but in studying social phenomena which are necessarily complex and thus require a multi-disciplinary and multi-methodical approach.* The objects under investigation do not have to be related to negative or exceptionally 'serious' social or political experiences or events – this is a frequent misunderstanding of the aims and goals of CDA and of the term 'critical' which, of course, does not mean 'negative' as in common-sense usage (see below). Any social phenomenon lends itself to critical investigation, to be challenged and not taken for granted. We will return to this important point and other common misunderstandings of CDA below.

We would also like to emphasize right at the beginning of this volume that it is obvious that the notions of *text* and *discourse* have been subject to a hugely proliferating number of usages in the social sciences. Almost no paper or article is to be found which does not revisit these notions, quoting Michel Foucault, Jürgen Habermas, Chantal Mouffe, Ernesto Laclau, Niklas Luhmann, or many others. Thus, *discourse* means anything from a historical monument, a

lieu de mémoire, a policy, a political strategy, narratives in a restricted or broad sense of the term, text, talk, a speech, topic-related conversations, to language per se. We find notions such as racist discourse, gendered discourse, discourses on un/employment, media discourse, populist discourse, discourses of the past, and many more – thus stretching the meaning of *discourse* from a genre to a register or style, from a building to a political programme. This causes and must cause confusion – which leads to much criticism and more misunderstandings (Blommaert, 2005; Reisigl, 2007; Wodak, 2008a; Wodak and deCillia, 2006). This is why each contributor to this volume was asked to define their use of the term integrated in their specific approach.

A brief history of the 'CDA Group'

The CDA as a network of scholars emerged in the early 1990s, following a small symposium in Amsterdam, in January 1991. Through the support of the University of Amsterdam, Teun van Dijk, Norman Fairclough, Gunther Kress, Theo van Leeuwen and Ruth Wodak spent two days together, and had the wonderful opportunity to discuss theories and methods of Discourse Analysis, specifically CDA. The meeting made it possible to confront with each other the very distinct and different approaches, which have, of course, changed significantly since 1991 but remain relevant, in many respects. In this process of group formation, the differences and sameness were laid out: differences with regard to other theories and methodologies in Discourse Analysis (see Renkema, 2004; Titscher et al., 2000; Wetherell et al., 2001; Wodak, 2008a) and sameness in a programmatic way, both of which frame the range of theoretical approaches (Wodak, 2004). In the meantime, for example, some of the scholars previously aligned with CDA have chosen other theoretical frameworks and have distanced themselves from CDA (such as Gunther Kress and Ron Scollon); on the other hand, new approaches have been created which frequently find innovative ways of integrating the more traditional theories or of elaborating them (see below).

In general, CDA as a school or paradigm is characterized by a number of principles: for example, all approaches are problem-oriented, and thus necessarily interdisciplinary and eclectic (see below). Moreover, CDA is characterized by the common interests in de-mystifying ideologies and power through the systematic and retroductable investigation of semiotic data (written, spoken or visual). CDA researchers also attempt to make their own positions and interests explicit while retaining their respective scientific methodologies and while remaining self-reflective of their own research process.

The start of the CDA network was marked by the launch of Van Dijk's journal *Discourse and Society* (1990), as well as by several books which were coincidentally (or because of a *Zeitgeist*) published simultaneously and led by similar research

goals.[3] The Amsterdam meeting determined an institutional start, an attempt both to constitute an exchange programme (ERASMUS for three years)[4], as well as joint projects and collaborations between scholars of different countries, and a special issue of *Discourse and Society* (1993), which presented the above-mentioned approaches. Since then, new journals have been created, multiple overviews have been written, and nowadays CDA is an established paradigm in Linguistics; currently, we encounter *Critical Discourse Studies, The Journal of Language and Politics, Discourse and Communication* and *Visual Semiotics*, among many other journals; we also find several e-journals which publish critical research, such as *CADAAD*. Book series have been launched (such as *Discourse Approaches to Politics, Culture and Society)*, regular CDA meetings and conferences take place, and handbooks are under way. In sum, CDA (CDS) has become an established discipline, institutionalized across the globe in many departments and curricula.

The common ground: discourse, critique, power and ideology

When deconstructing the label of this research programme – we view CDA basically as a research programme, the reasons for which we will explain below – we necessarily have to define what CDA means when it employs the terms 'critical' and 'discourse'. Michael Billig (2003) has clearly pointed to the fact that CDA has become an established academic discipline with the same rituals and institutional practices as all other academic disciplines. Ironically, he asks the question whether this might mean that CDA has become or might become 'uncritical' – or if the use of acronyms such as CDA might serve the same purposes as in other traditional, non-critical disciplines; namely to exclude outsiders and to mystify the functions and intentions of the research. Most recently, has Billig reiterated this question under a new umbrella: do scholars who employ CDA write in the same way mainly by using nominalizations extensively, like the many texts which they criticize ((Billig, 2008)?

> The problem with talking about the unconscious, repression, mental representations, mirror-stages, etc., is that it is easy to assume that we have solved problems by discovering 'things'. And the more we write about these 'things', the more we take their existence for granted. Analysts might have once understood these concepts semi-metaphorically, but soon they write about them literally. In my view, the cognitive psychology of 'mental representations', or the psychoanalysis of 'the unconscious' and 'repression', makes psychology too easy and too non-materialistic – too prone to accept that non-material entities provide the solution to the puzzles that, in effect, analysts are avoiding. And that is why I advocate that we should be examining nominalizing (not nominalization), representing (not representations), repressing (not repression) and so on.

Billig (2008) ends his quite provocative argument by stating:

> [t]here is no reason for supposing that for academics, writing their academic articles, the active forms are psychologically primary. In my article and in this reply, I have struggled to resist the grammatical forms with which my fingers are so familiar. I have redrafted,

often with a struggle, many sentences which spontaneously spilled out in the passive form. I have probably used the first person singular here more times than I have done in all the rest of my publications put together. And so now, I do not want to end by promoting a new label. To adapt a very famous phrase, the point is not to categorize language, but to change it.

We cannot follow Billig's recommendations in detail or answer his questions in this chapter extensively. However, we believe that he points to potentially very fruitful and necessary debates for CDA. More specifically, Billig points to the danger which can befall any discipline (or school or group) when it becomes established and institutionalized after having been marginalized for a long time. Once established, he argues, one might forget the basic desiderata and become corrupted by the system – in our case, the Knowledge-based Economy (KBE) which influences all our lives in so many ways (Billig, 2003).

At this point, it is important to stress that CDA has never been and has never attempted to be or to provide one single or specific theory. Neither is one specific methodology characteristic of research in CDA. Quite the contrary, studies in CDA are multifarious, derived from quite different theoretical backgrounds, oriented towards different data and methodologies. Researchers in CDA also rely on a variety of grammatical approaches. The definitions of the terms 'discourse', 'critical', 'ideology', 'power' and so on are also manifold. Thus, any criticism of CDA should always specify which research or researcher they relate to. 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. This programme or set of principles has, of course, changed over the years (see (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997; Wodak, 1996).

Such a heterogeneous school might be confusing for some; on the other hand, it allows for continuous debates, for changes in the aims and goals, and for innovation. In contrast to 'total and closed' theories, such as Chomsky's Generative Transformational Grammar or Michael Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics, CDA has never had the image of a 'sect' and does not want to have such an image. This heterogeneity of methodological and theoretical approaches that can be found in this field would tend to confirm van Dijk's point that CDA and CL 'are at most a shared perspective on doing linguistic, semiotic or discourse analysis' (Van Dijk, 1993a: 131). Below, we summarize some of these principles, which are adhered to by most researchers.

The notion of discourse

CDA sees 'language as social practice' (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997), and considers the 'context of language use' to be crucial. We quote one definition which has become 'very popular' among CDA researchers:

CDA sees discourse – language use in speech and writing – as a form of 'social practice'. Describing discourse as social practice implies a dialectical relationship between a particular discursive event and the situation(s), institution(s) and social structure(s), which frame it:

> The discursive event is shaped by them, but it also shapes them. That is, discourse is socially constitutive as well as socially conditioned – it constitutes situations, objects of knowledge, and the social identities of and relationships between people and groups of people. It is constitutive both in the sense that it helps to sustain and reproduce the social status quo, and in the sense that it contributes to transforming it. Since discourse is so socially consequential, it gives rise to important issues of power. Discursive practices may have major ideological effects – that is, they can help produce and reproduce unequal power relations between (for instance) social classes, women and men, and ethnic/cultural majorities and minorities through the ways in which they represent things and position people. (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997: 258)

Thus, CDA understands discourses as relatively stable uses of language serving the organization and structuring of social life. Within this understanding, the term 'discourse' is of course used very differently by different researchers and also in different academic cultures (Wodak, 2006a,b). In the German and Central European context, a distinction is made between 'text' and 'discourse', relating to the tradition in text linguistics as well as to rhetoric (see Brünner and Graefen, 1994; VASS, 1992; Wodak and Koller, 2008 for summaries). In the English speaking world, 'discourse' is often used both for written and oral texts (see Gee, 2004; Schiffrin, 1994). Other researchers distinguish between different levels of abstractness: Lemke (1995) defines 'text' as the concrete realization of abstract forms of knowledge ('discourse'), thus adhering to a more Foucauldian approach (see also Jäger in this volume).

The discourse-historical approach elaborates and links to the socio-cognitive theory of Teun van Dijk (1998) and views 'discourse' as structured forms of knowledge and the memory of social practices, whereas 'text' refers to concrete oral utterances or written documents (Reisigl and Wodak, 2001, in this volume).

The critical impetus

The shared perspective and programme of CDA relate to the term 'critical', which in the work of some 'critical linguists' can be traced to the influence of the Frankfurt School and Jürgen Habermas (Anthonissen, 2001; Fay, 1987: 203; Thompson, 1988: 71ff): 'Critical Theory' in the sense of the Frankfurt School, mainly based on the famous essay of Max Horkheimer in 1937, means that social theory should be oriented towards critiquing and changing society as a whole, in contrast to traditional theory oriented solely to understanding or explaining it. The core concepts of such an understanding of Critical Theory are:

- Critical Theory should be directed at the totality of society in its historical specificity
- Critical Theory should improve the understanding of society by integrating all the major social sciences, including economics, sociology, history, political science, anthropology and psychology.

What is rarely reflected in this understanding of critique is the analyst's position itself. The social embeddedness of research and science, the fact that the research system itself and thus CDA are also dependent on social structures, and that criticism can by no means draw on an outside position but is itself well integrated within social fields has been emphasized by Pierre Bourdieu (1984). Researchers, scientists and philosophers are not outside the societal hierarchy of power and status but are subject to this structure. They have also frequently occupied and still occupy rather superior positions in society.

In language studies, the term 'critical' was first used to characterize an approach that was called Critical Linguistics (Fowler et al., 1979; Kress and Hodge, 1979). Among other ideas, those scholars held that the use of language could lead to a mystification of social events which systematic analysis could elucidate. 'For example, a missing by-phrase in English passive constructions might be seen as an ideological means for concealing or "mystifying" reference to an agent' (Chilton, 2008). One of the most significant principles of CDA is the important observation that use of language is a 'social practice' which is both determined by social structure and contributes to stabilizing and changing that structure simultaneously.

Nowadays, this concept of critique is conventionally used in a broader sense, denoting, as Krings argues, the practical linking of 'social and political engagement' with 'a sociologically informed construction of society' (Krings et al., 1973; Titscher et al., 2000: 808). Hence, 'critique' is essentially making visible the interconnectedness of things (Fairclough, 1995a: 747; see also Connerton, 1976: 11–39). The reference to the contribution of Critical Theory to the understanding of CDA and the notions of 'critical' and 'ideology' are of particular importance (see Anthonissen, 2001 for an extensive discussion of this issue).

Critical theories, thus also CDA, want to produce and convey critical knowledge that enables human beings to emancipate themselves from forms of domination through self-reflection. So they are aimed at producing 'enlightenment and emancipation'. Such theories seek not only to describe and explain, but also to root out a particular kind of delusion. Even with differing concepts of ideology, Critical Theory seeks to create awareness in agents of their own needs and interests. This was, of course, also taken up by Pierre Bourdieu's concepts of 'violence symbolique' and 'méconnaissance' (Bourdieu, 1989).

In agreement with its Critical Theory predecessors, CDA emphasizes the need for interdisciplinary work in order to gain a proper understanding of how language functions in constituting and transmitting knowledge, in organizing social institutions or in exercising power (see Graham, 2002; Lemke, 2002; Martin and Wodak, 2003). In any case, CDA researchers have to be aware that their own work is driven by social, economic and political motives like any other academic work and that they are not in any superior position. Naming oneself 'critical' only implies superior 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 (van Leeuwen, 2006: 293).

Ideology and power – a kaleidoscopic view

The critical impetus of CDA and other 'critical' research programmes is somewhat the legacy of enlightenment (Horkheimer and Adorno, 1969/1991). Critique regularly aims at revealing structures of power and unmasking ideologies. Ideology is then not understood in a positivistic way, i.e. ideologies cannot be subjected to a process of falsification. Nor is it the Marxian type of ideology according to the economic base/superstructure dichotomy that is of interest for CDA.

Political scientists name four central characteristics of ideologies:

1. Power is more important than cognitions
2. They are capable of guiding individuals' evaluations
3. They provide guidance through action.
4. They must be logically coherent. (Mullins, 1972)

Although the core definition of ideology as a *coherent and relatively stable set of beliefs or values* has remained the same in political science over time, the connotations associated with this concept have undergone many transformations. During the era of fascism, communism and the cold war, totalitarian ideology was confronted with democracy, the evil with the good. If we speak of the 'ideology of the new capitalism' (see van Dijk and Fairclough in this volume), ideology once again has a 'bad' connotation. Obviously, it is not easy to capture ideology as a belief system and simultaneously to free the concept from negative connotations (Knight, 2006: 625).

It is, however, not that type of ideology on the surface of culture that interests CDA, it is rather the more hidden and latent type of everyday beliefs, which often appear disguised as conceptual metaphors and analogies, thus attracting linguists' attention: life is a journey, social organizations are plants, love is war, and so on (Lakoff, 1987; Lakoff and Johnson, 1980, 1999). In daily discussion, certain ideas arise more commonly than others. Frequently, people with diverse backgrounds and interests may find themselves thinking alike in startling ways. Dominant ideologies appear as 'neutral', holding on to assumptions that stay largely unchallenged. Organizations that strive for power will try to influence the ideology of a society to become closer to what they want it to be. When most people in a society think alike about certain matters, or even forget that there are alternatives to the status quo, we arrive at the Gramscian concept of hegemony. With regard to this key concept of ideology, van Dijk (1998) sees ideologies as the 'worldviews' that constitute 'social cognition': 'schematically organized complexes of representations and attitudes with regard to certain aspects of the social world, e.g. the schema […] whites have about blacks' (van Dijk, 1993b: 258).

Furthermore, it is the functioning of ideologies in everyday life that intrigues CDA researchers. Fairclough has a more Marxist view of ideologies and conceives them as constructions of practices from particular perspectives:

> Ideologies are representations of aspects of the world which contribute to establishing and maintaining relations of power, domination and exploitation. They may be enacted in ways of interaction (and therefore in genres) and inculcated in ways of being identities (and therefore styles). Analysis of texts … is an important aspect of ideological analysis and critique … (Fairclough, 2003: 218)

Power is another concept which is central for CDA, as it often analyses the language use of those in power, who are responsible for the existence of inequalities. 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 (e.g. van Dijk in this volume). 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).

There are as many concepts of power as there are social theories. There is almost no sociological or socio-psychological theory which does not provide a distinctive notion of power, with a Weberian definition as the lowest common denominator: power as the chance that an individual in a social relationship can achieve his or her own will even against the resistance of others (Weber, 1980: 28).

At least three different approaches to power can be distinguished:

- power as a result of specific *resources* of individual actors (e.g. French and Raven, 1959)
- power as a specific attribute of *social exchange* in each interaction (e.g. Blau, 1964; Emerson, 1962, 1975)
- power as a systemic and constitutive element/characteristic of society (e.g. from very different angles, Foucault, 1975 and Giddens, 1984).

Michel Foucault concentrates on 'technologies of power': discipline is a complex bundle of power technologies developed during the 18th and 19th centuries. Power is thus exercised with intention – but it is not individual intention. Foucault focuses on what is accepted knowledge about how to exercise power. One way of doing this is by threatening with violence. However, suggesting how happy people will become if they buy specific consumer products is also an exercise of power; marketing provides us with a large body of knowledge of powerful techniques. Though Foucault also combines the notions of power and domination in a Weberian tradition, he focuses primarily on structure. Foucault recommends an analysis of power with a rather functionalist strategy: in his historical analysis in *Surveiller et punir* (Foucault, 1975), he always asks and answers questions concerning the social functions and effects of different technologies of surveillance and punishment. How do things work at the level of ongoing subjugation, at the level of those continuous and uninterrupted processes which subject our bodies, govern our gestures and dictate our behaviours?

Within CDA, power is mostly perceived in the third way, not only because Foucault is one of the theoretical 'godfathers' of CDA, but also because the text in CDA is often regarded as a manifestation of social action which again is widely determined by social structure. Besides, CDA researchers very rarely work with interactional texts such as dialogues (Chilton, 2004; Lalouschek et al., 1990; Wodak, 2009 as exceptions). Consequently, it is not the individual resources and not the specifics of single-exchange situations that are crucial for CDA analyses, but the overall structural features in social fields or in overall society. Power is central for understanding the dynamics and specifics of control (of action) in modern societies, but power remains mostly invisible. Linguistic manifestations are under investigation in CDA. This relation between social power and language is a permanent topic not only in CDA (Fairclough, 1989/1991; Wodak, 1989) but also in sociology (Bourdieu, 1991) and sociolinguistics (e.g. Ng & Bradac, 1993; Talbot, 2003; Young and Fitzgerald, 2006).

An important perspective in CDA related to the notion of 'power' is that it is very rare that a text is the work of any one person. In texts, discursive differences are negotiated; they are governed by differences in power that is in part encoded in and determined by discourse and by genre. Therefore, texts are often sites of struggle in that they show traces of differing discourses and ideologies contending and struggling for dominance.

Thus, the defining features of CDA are its concern with power as a central condition in social life, and its efforts to develop a theory of language that incorporates this as a major premise. Closely attended to are not only the notion of struggles for power and control, but also the intertextuality and recontextualization of competing discourses in various public spaces and genres (Iedema, 1997; Iedema and Wodak, 1999; Muntigl et al., 2000). Power is about relations of difference, and particularly about the effects of differences in social structures. The constant unity of language and other social matters ensures that language is entwined in social power in a number of ways: language indexes and expresses power, and is involved where there is contention over and a challenge to power. Power does not necessarily derive from language, but language can be used to challenge power, to subvert it, to alter distributions of power in the short and the long term. Language provides a finely articulated vehicle for differences in power in hierarchical social structures.

In sum: CDA can be defined as being fundamentally interested in analysing opaque as well as transparent structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power and control as manifested in language. In other words, CDA aims to investigate critically social inequality as it is expressed, constituted, legitimized, and so on, by language use (or in discourse). Most critical discourse analysts would thus endorse Habermas's claim that 'language is also a medium of domination and social force. It serves to legitimize relations of organized power. Insofar as the legitimizations of power relations ... are not articulated, … language is also ideological' (Habermas, 1967: 259).

Main research agenda and challenges

In this section, we summarize some important research agendas which are currently
of interest in CDA. We then also list examples of research linked to these agen-
das and challenges. Although we, of course, encounter a vast amount of
research and also many methodological and theoretical challenges, we have
decided to restrict ourselves to six major areas and related challenges:

1. Analysing, understanding and explaining the impact of the Knowledge-based
    Economy on various domains of our societies; related to this, the recontextu-
    alization of KBE into other parts of the world and other societies ('transition').
2. Integrating approaches from cognitive sciences into CDA; this requires com-
    plex epistemological considerations and the development of new tools.
    Moreover, we question in which ways such approaches could be dependent on
    Western cultural contexts and how, related to these issues, Eurocentric per-
    spectives could be transcended.
3. Analysing, understanding and explaining new phenomena in our political systems,
    which are due to the impact of (new) media and to new transnational, global and
    local developments and related institutions. More specifically, phenomena such as
    'depoliticization' and 'participation' need to be investigated in detail.
4. Analysing, understanding and explaining the impact of new media and new
    genres which entails developing new multimodal theoretical and methodologi-
    cal approaches. Our concepts of space and time have changed, and these changes
    interact in dialectical ways with new modes and genres of communication.
5. Analysing, understanding and explaining the relationship between complex
    historical processes, hegemonic narratives and CDA approaches. Identity poli-
    tics on all levels always entails the integration of past experiences, present events
    and future visions in many domains of our lives. The concepts of intertextual-
    ity and recontextualization are inherently tied to interdisciplinary discourse-
    historical approaches.
6. Avoiding 'cherry picking' (choosing the examples which best fit the assump-
    tions) by integrating quantitative and qualitative methods and by providing
    retroductable, self-reflective presentations of past or current research processes.

However, we will refrain from elaborating the theoretical and methodological
approaches represented extensively in this volume (of course, the many issues of
Discourse and Society, *Journal of Language and Politics*, *Visual Semiotics*, and *Critical
Discourse Studies*, to name but a few, have published a huge variety of CDA-oriented
research over the past decade which we cannot review in detail. We therefore nec-
essarily have to refer readers to the many handbooks and journals in the field).[5]

Language of the New Capitalism and the Knowledge-based
Economy (KBE)

In Jessop et al. (2008), many aspects and dimensions of the impact of KBE
on higher education are explored from sociological, educational and CDA

perspectives. KBE has penetrated most domains of our Western societies and is also colonizing other parts of the world. Indeed, *globalization and competitiveness rhetoric* (Muntigl et al., 2000) seem to be ubiquitous, and the quantification and economization of knowledge serve to rank social institutions and individuals. Through detailed case studies, the recontextualization of more global policy strategies can be illustrated on the micro level (Falkner et al., 2005). This, of course, requires interdisciplinary research as well as new theories on transition and social change (see Krzyžianowski and Wodak, forthcoming).

Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999) explain and elaborate how CDA is useful in disclosing the discursive nature of much contemporary social and cultural change. Particularly the language of the mass media is scrutinized as a site of power, of struggle and also as a site where language is often apparently transparent. Media institutions often purport to be neutral, in that they provide space for public discourse, reflect states of affairs disinterestedly, and give the perceptions and arguments of the newsmakers. Fairclough reveals the fallacy of such assumptions, and illustrates the mediating and constructing role of the media with a variety of examples. He has also been concerned with the 'Language of New Labour' (Fairclough, 2000a) which, of course, is part and parcel of KBE ideology.

In this vein, for example, develops a methodology and interdisciplinary theoretical framework for historically analysing the exercise of governmental power in a specific policy field, thus addressing at least three of the above-mentioned challenges. At the theoretical level, this work employs a thorough-going interdisciplinary approach to CDA by grounding close textual analysis in both educational sociology and neo-Marxist state theory. It thus contextualizes the linguistic findings in terms of historical developments in the capitalist state over the last four decades. This research also develops novel ways of using corpus tools in CDA, and in particular it demonstrates their heuristic value in directing the analyst's gaze in unexpected and often fruitful directions (see Mautner in this volume; and Baker et al., 2008). More specifically, the themes explored in this research include the rise of a more personalized form of governmental identity, and the prominent role of the pronoun 'we' in legitimizing government action and deflecting its public accountability. A further strand to this research makes a direct link between the verbs used to perform government actions and the increasing social significance of 'governing at a distance' or 'networked governance' as described by, among others, the social theorist Nikolas Rose (1999).

Phil Graham also elaborates the problems of New Capitalism while integrating a strong historical perspective (Graham, 2002). The historical investigation of hortatory genres, for example, compares the emergence of, and struggles between, the Church, 'divine right' royalties and secular forces over legitimate uses of the sermon form in Western Europe between the 10th and 14th centuries, with contemporary struggles over genres that are used to motivate people on a mass scale. The main focus of Graham's research is to explore and explain the relationships

between new media, new genres, institutions and social change at a macro level. The perspective is primarily historical, political–economic, relational and dynamic. Genres are produced, textured and transformed within institutional contexts over long periods of time. In turn, institutions invest years – in some cases, millennia – in developing, maintaining and adapting generic forms to changing social conditions in order to maintain or gain power. Graham believes that at certain times in history, certain genres become very effective in motivating or manipulating large sections of society. Because genres are developed within institutions, and thus within the realms of vested interests, they display inherent axiological biases. The nature of knowledge and its status as a commodity form immediately become problematic. In the tradition of dialectical argumentation, Graham accepts the claims that knowledge can become a dominant commodity form; that a global economy can be built on such forms; and that our new media must, in some fundamental way, underpin the emergence of this new form of political economy. The research problem is therefore formulated as an historical investigation into the relationship between language, new media and social perceptions of value.

Focusing cognition

The seminal book by Teun van Dijk and Walter Kintsch, *Strategies of Discourse Comprehension* (1983), triggered research in discourse and cognition from interdisciplinary and critical perspectives. In this book, they considered the relevance of discourse to the study of language processing. Their development of a cognitive model of discourse comprehension in individuals gradually developed into cognitive models for explaining the construction of meaning at a societal level. Currently, interest in cognition has grown, and many scholars attempt a combination of new cognitive theories (on conceptual metaphors, for example) with CDA (Charteris-Black, 2006; Musolff, 2004). Some of this research draws on earlier attempts which integrated cognition, sociolinguistics and discourse analysis (such as Lutz and Wodak, 1986; Wodak, 1986a, 1996; Wodak and Schulz, 1986) by proposing new approaches (see below).

Much of the focus in this area has been placed on researching social inclusion and exclusion (Wodak, 2008b, 2008c). Teun A. van Dijk, for example, has recently paid special attention to the discursive reproduction of racism in Spain and Latin America (van Dijk, 2005). The study by John Richardson on the '(mis)representation of Islam', and research on the representation of migrants, asylum-seekers and refugees in the British Press, have elaborated research on racism, anti-Semitism and xenophobia in intricate ways, by combining quantitative and qualitative methods, and by focusing on argumentation as well (see Baker et al., 2008; Delanty et al., 2008; Richardson, 2004).

Moreover, the focus on theorizing *context and knowledge* is apparent. Van Dijk argues that whereas (critical and other) discourse studies have paid extensive attention in the last few decades to the structures of text and talk, they only

paid lip-service to the necessity of developing the relations between text and context (but see Panagl and Wodak, 2004). Most approaches, also in CDA, define the influence of the social context on language variation and discourse in terms of objective social variables such as gender, class, race, ethnicity or age. Van Dijk argues that no such direct influence exists, because social structures and discourse structures cannot be related directly, and need the mediation of an interface. He shows that this interface must be cognitive, in the sense that it is not objective social situations, but the *subjective definitions of the relevant properties of communicative situations that influence text and talk*. These definitions are then made explicit in terms of a special kind of mental model (see van Dijk, this volume). In sum, van Dijk emphasizes that CDA should also not limit itself to a study of the relationship between discourse and social structure, such as racism and other forms of power abuse, but that language use and discourse always presuppose the intervening mental models, goals and general social representations (knowledge, attitudes, ideologies, norms, values) of the language users. In other words, the study of discourse triangulates between society/culture/situation, cognition and discourse/language.

Paul Chilton, who is a cognitive linguist, has never explicitly applied the term CDA to his own work and has always worked within a cognitive framework, principally on the discourse of politics and the international relations framework (cf. Chilton, 1994a, 1994b, 1996a, 1996b, 2004, 2005a, 2005b; Chilton and Lakoff, 1995). His most recent (2004, 2005a) and ongoing work departs from CDA's tendency to allegedly reify social structures and processes and raises major research questions relating to the relationship between language and social cognition in the evolution of the human species. More particularly, he has drawn on cognitive evolutionary psychology to ask whether there might exist an innate 'critical instinct'. If this were the case, he argues, then what is the role of critical discourse analysis? Chilton's argument is that the most fundamental issue is whether societies provide the freedom to enable the 'critical instinct' to operate. This position is, of course, vulnerable and has been challenged by other CDA researchers (van Dijk, 2007a; Wodak, 2007) Linked to this approach is a concern with universal aspects of language and the human mind, a concern that is also reflected in his current collaborative work on comparative discourse analysis that crosses linguistic, cultural and political boundaries (Chilton, 2007; Chilton et al., forthcoming). Comparative discourse analysis, he argues, is the most serious challenge facing practitioners of CDA, if CDA is to overcome its Euro-centric drift and respond to a globalized scholarly environment. In terms of descriptive methodology also, Chilton has always differed from many practitioners of CDA, such as Fairclough, for example. His analyses do not draw on Hallidayan linguistics, which he regards as inadequate because of its inability to deal with a range of pragmatic and semantic phenomena, such as presupposition, implicature, metaphor and blending.

The emergent blend of CDA, cognitive linguistics and corpus linguistics has obviously become a huge priority that is also recognized by many other scholars

(see, for example, Koller and Davidson, 2008). However, what remains unsolved is the apparent contradiction that CDA starts from a complex social problem or phenomenon; cognitive linguistics, however, starts from the individual mind, and corpus linguistics from the largely (but not fully!) decontextualized text. Thus, integration will have to address these epistemological considerations. Both Chilton and Koller (and many other CDA researchers) state that the analysis of powerful, even hegemonic discourse(s) which however do not necessarily discriminate against a particular social group has to be enhanced for example, by aspects of corporate self-presentation, as well as the impact of new genres, and so on (Koller, 2008; Wodak, 2008b; Wodak and Koller, 2008).

Multimodality and 'new' genres

Recognition of the contribution of all the aspects of the communicative context to text meaning, as well as a growing awareness in media studies in general and in the importance of non-verbal aspects of texts in particular, has turned attention to *semiotic devices in discourse other than the linguistic ones*. In particular, the theory put forward by Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) provides a useful framework for considering the communicative potential of visual devices in the media. Currently, van Leeuwen is focusing on the semiotics of handwriting and typography and the question of colour, as well as on the constraints imposed by certain software, PowerPoint templates and so on. Thus, it is important for social semiotics to provide models of semiotic practice that are appropriate to the practices they model, and as different semiotic practices are very differently organized, it is not possible to apply a single model to all. Van Leeuwen claims that the role and status of semiotic practices in society are currently undergoing change as a result of the fact that it is increasingly global corporations and semiotic technologies, rather than national institutions, which regulate semiotic production and consumption (see also van Leeuwen, this volume).

  Jay Lemke's recent work has emphasized multimedia semiotics, multiple timescales and hypertexts or *traversals*. This work emphasizes the implicit value systems and their connections to institutional and personal identity in new multimodal genres. The work on multiple timescales, for example, is an extension of earlier work on ecological–social systems as complex dynamical systems with semiotic cultures. It is very important in considering all aspects of social dynamics to look across multiple timescales, i.e. how processes and practices which take place at relatively faster rates are organized within the framework of more slowly changing features of social institutions and cultures (see the concept of 'non-simultaneity' or *Ungleichzeitigkeit)* (Lemke, 2001, 2002). Lemke's work has combined both these themes to develop the idea that although we tell our lives as narratives, we experience them as hypertexts. Building on research on the semantic resources of hypertext as a medium, he proposed that postmodern lifestyles are increasingly liberated from particular institutional roles, and that we tend to move, on multiple timescales, from

involvement in one institution to another, creating new kinds of meaning, less bound to fixed genres and registers, as we 'surf' across channels, websites and lived experiences. This is seen as a new historical development, not supplanting institutions, but building up new sociocultural possibilities on and over them.

Moreover, Lemke – while building on Critical Discourse Analysis and extending the tools from Systemic Linguistics – has increasingly investigated combinations of language, visual media and dynamic–interactive effects. The most advanced part of this work concerns computer games. Here, one has to take into account not only the semiotic and semantic affordances of an inter- active environment, but also the phenomenological experience and particularly the feelings and emotions of the user. This requires developing a number of new tools to think about and analyse categories of feelings, and their combi- nation with other sorts of meanings. In this vein, the semantics of evaluations and judgements is a key link, as is re-thinking feelings, at least in part, as social and distributed, rather than as totally individual and internal. Of course, there are also cultural dimensions to feelings; this point addresses similar issues to those mentioned by Chilton (see above), namely that CDA has to move away from Eurocentric focus.

Another branch of this work is the critical analysis of *transmedia*. This is the term now for sets of related media (e.g. a book and film, a website and a game, merchandise, stories written by fans of the movie or games, etc.) that either form a commercial franchise (e.g. *Harry Potter*, *Star Wars*) or some more loosely connected intertextual set (see remarks on KBE above). In either case, there are economic and material relationships as well as textual and semantic ones (see also research by Graham, above). Thus, these cases are particularly reveal- ing for a study of the political economy of signs. Commercial interests and their ideologies interact with consumer interests and consumer beliefs and desires. Of special importance is the appearance of collectives of consumers who also become producers of parallel or counter media: for instance, readers write their own stories changing the values and practices of famous charac- ters from popular movies, fiction, games, and so on, and these are widely read and distributed on the internet, for example in blogs. Something similar is also happening with art, games and music. Fans edit commercial movies, add a musical soundtrack, and create new montage effects with completely different ideological and narrative meanings from the original works, which illustrate creative and subversive processes of the recontextualization of multiple genres and modes in detail.

Therefore, Theo van Leeuwen (2006: 292) argues that:

> [c]ritical discourse analysis has also moved beyond language, taking on board that discourses are often multimodally realized, not only through text and talk, but also through other modes of communication such as images … Overall, then, critical discourse analysis has moved towards more explicit dialogue between social theory and practice, richer contextu- alization, greater interdisciplinarity and greater attention to the multimodality of discourse.

Political discourse

The study of political discourse after the Second World War was triggered in part by the investigation of National Socialist (NS) language (Klemperer, 1975/1947); it was essential to understand and explain the roles and importance of language and communication in totalitarian regimes and their propaganda. Utz Maas was the first linguist to subject the everyday linguistic practice of National Socialism to an in-depth analysis: he used NS texts to exemplify his approach of *Lesweisenanalyse* (Maas, 1984, 1989a, 1989b).

His historical 'argumentation analysis', based on the theories of Michel Foucault, demonstrates how discourse is determined by society, i.e. in what may be termed 'a social practice'. In his analysis of language practices during the National Socialist regime between 1932 and 1938, he showed how the discursive practices of society in Germany were impacted by the NS discourse characterized by social–revolutionist undertones. Nazi discourse had superseded almost all forms of language (practices), a fact that made it difficult for an individual who did not want to cherish the tradition of an unworldly Romanticism to use language in a critical–reflective way. Discourse is basically understood as the result of *collusion*: the conditions of the political, social and linguistic practice impose themselves practically 'behind the back of the subjects', while the actors do not understand 'the game' (see also Bourdieu's 'violence symbolique'). Discourse analysis identifies the rules which make a text into a fascist text. In the same way as grammar characterizes the structure of sentences, discourse rules characterize utterances/texts that are acceptable within a certain practice. The focus is not on National Socialist language per se, but the aim is rather to record and analyse the spectrum of linguistic relations based on a number of texts dealing with various spheres of life. These texts represent a complicated network of similarities, which overlap and intersect. Therefore, it is also important to do justice to the 'polyphony' of texts resulting from the fact that societal contradictions are inscribed into texts (see also the concept of 'entextualization' as employed by Blommaert, 2005). Texts from diverse social and political contexts (cooking recipes, local municipal provisions on agriculture, texts by NS politicians, but also by critics of this ideology, who are ultimately involved in the dominant discourse) are analysed in a sample representative of possible texts of NS discourse (see Wodak and deCilla, 2006 for details and an extensive overview of the field of language and politics).

The study of political institutions and everyday life and decision-making in organizations has become a major new focus of CDA. Krzyżanowski and Oberhuber (2007), for example, have analysed the European Convention in much detail. The focus on discursive dimensions of transnational political organizations also led to the elaboration of discursively constructed visions/conceptions of social and political order in Europe/the EU. Wodak 2009 focuses on the everyday lives of MEPs and other politicians because – as she argues – *depoliticization* is linked to 'the democracy deficit' and the huge dissatisfaction about the strong

ritualization of politics and the snapshots provided by media which condense complex political processes into iconic images (Triandafyllidou et al., 2008). Such studies allow insight into 'politics as a profession' and into the complexity of political decision-making. If the media, however, allow us to venture backstage, this usually happens in the context of the sex and corruption scandals of politicians. (Hence, in the above-mentioned ethnographic studies, access to the 'backstage' opens the door to 'the doing of politics'.)

Much CDA research in the domain of politics centres on rightwing populist rhetoric on many occasions, as rightwing populist rhetoric is becoming more and more hegemonic in many European countries (see 'Haiderization' – Krzyżanowski and Wodak, forthcoming; Pelinka and Wodak, 2002; Richardson and Wodak, 2008; Rydgren, 2005; Wodak and Pelinka, 2002). This research is triggered by the rising dominance and hegemony of this kind of rhetoric and its apt use of indirect strategies to address multiple audiences (see Reisigl and Wodak, this volume). The latter research also develops new methodologies for CDA: the use of ethnography, focus groups and narrative interviews, combined with more traditional data such as newspapers and political speeches (Wodak and Krzyżanowski, 2008).

Research on politics from a historical perspective also co-triggered CDA from the very beginning. The study for which the Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA) was actually developed, for instance, first attempted to trace in detail the constitution of an anti-Semitic stereotyped image, or *Feindbild*, as it emerged in public discourse in the 1986 Austrian presidential campaign of Kurt Waldheim (Gruber, 1991; Mitten, 1992; Wodak et al., 1990). In order to be able to study the discourse about the 'Waldheim Affair', 'context' was unravelled into various dimensions.

The DHA has been further elaborated in a number of more recent studies, for example, in a study on racist discrimination against immigrants from Romania and in a study on the discourse about nation and national identity in Austria (Kovàcs and Wodak, 2003; Wodak et al., 1999) and in the European Union (Muntigl et al., 2000; Wodak and van Dijk, 2000). The 1999 study was concerned with the analysis of the relationships between the discursive construction of national sameness and the discursive construction of difference leading to the political and social exclusion of specific out-groups. The findings suggest that discourses about nations and national identities rely on at least four types of discursive macro-strategies. These are:

- constructive strategies (aiming at the construction of national identities)
- preservative or justificatory strategies (aiming at the conservation and reproduction of national identities or narratives of identity)
- transformative strategies (aiming at the change of national identities)
- destructive strategies (aiming at the dismantling of national identities).

Depending on the context – that is to say, on the social field or domain in which the 'discursive events' related to the topic under investigation take place – one or other of the aspects connected with these strategies is brought into prominence.

More recently, much research has focused on commemorative events which manifest hegemonic ways of dealing with traumatic pasts in various societies (Anthonissen and Blommaert, 2007; Blommaert, 2005; de Cillia and Wodak, 2008; Ensink and Sauer, 2003; Heer et al., 2008; Le, 2006; Martin and Wodak, 2003; Reisigl, 2007; Verdoolaege, 2008; Wodak and Cillia, 2007). In most of these studies, media, school books, speeches at national days and the like are analysed to illustrate the myths which are constructed to provide new, 'sanitized' narratives which cover up ruptures, war crimes and conflicts which have occurred in the past. For example, Heer et al. (2008) describe in detail the huge scandal and crisis when the two exhibitions on war crimes by the German Wehrmacht during the Second World War were opened to viewers, in 1995 and 2001. A carefully constructed and protected myth was totally destroyed by these exhibitions – the myth that the Wehrmacht soldiers had been innocent whereas the SS and other units had been the perpetrators.

Differences and similarities – beyond the social dimension

The differences between CDA and other DA, pragmatic and sociolinguistic approaches may be most clearly established with regard to the general principles of CDA. Firstly, the nature of the problems with which CDA is concerned is significantly different than all those approaches which do not explicitly express their interest in advance. In general, CDA asks different research questions, and some CDA scholars play an advocatory role for socially discriminated groups. Looking at the CDA contributions collected in this reader, it also becomes evident that the line drawn between social scientific research which ought to be intelligible and political argumentation sometimes gets blurred.

Specifically, we distinguish between approaches which proceed deductively and as such choose a more inductive perspective. Linked to this distinction is the choice of objects under investigation: more deductively oriented theories which also propose a closed theoretical framework are more likely to illustrate their assumptions with a few examples which seem to fit their claims (e.g. the dialectical–relational approach and socio-cognitive approach in this volume). More inductively oriented approaches usually stay at the 'meso level' and select problems which they are 'curious' about and where they attempt to discover new insights through in-depth case studies and ample data collection (for example, DHA, social actors approach, corpus linguistics approach, dispositive analysis, in this volume). Of course, all approaches moreover proceed abductively, i.e. oscillate between theory and data analysis in retroductive ways. However, on a continuum, we are able to distinguish obvious priorities in choosing entry points and themes (see Figure 1.1).

Related to the choice of more 'macro-' or 'meso-topics' (such as 'globalization' or 'knowledge' versus 'un/employment' or 'rightwing populism'), we encounter differences in the evaluation of the chosen topics and objects under investigation. Macro-topics are relatively uncontroversial in the respective
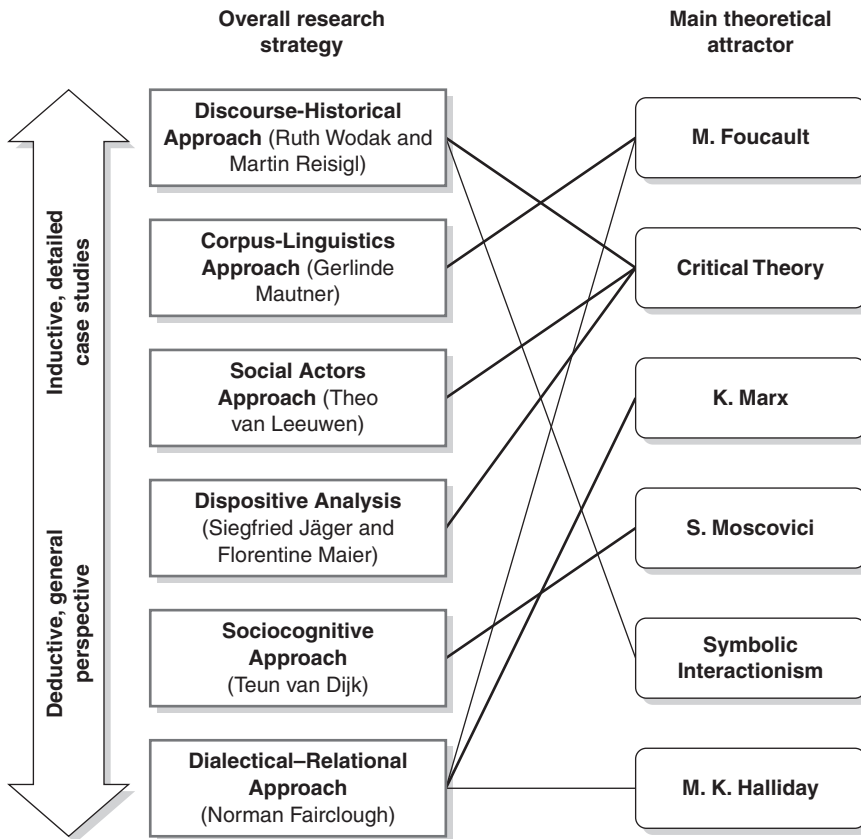
FIGURE 1.1   *Overall research strategies and theoretical background*

national or international academic contexts; some meso-topics, however, can touch on the very core of the respective national community to which the researcher belongs. For example, research on concrete anti-Semitic, xenopho-bic and racist occurrences is much more controversial in certain academic and national contexts and regarded as 'unpatriotic' or hostile, than many macro-themes – this explains grave problems which critical scholars have encountered when venturing into such seemingly tabooed fields (see Heer et al., 2008).

In any case, related to the object of investigation, it remains a fact that CDA follows a different and critical approach to problems, since it endeavours to make explicit power relations that are frequently obfuscated and hidden, and then to derive results which are also of practical relevance.

Furthermore, one important characteristic arises from the assumption of some CDA approaches that all discourses are historical and can therefore only be understood with reference to their context. Therefore, these approaches refer to such extralinguistic factors as culture, society and ideology in intricate ways,

depending on their concepts of context and their research methodologies and ways of data collection. Hence, the notion of context is crucial for CDA, since this explicitly includes social–psychological, political and ideological components and thereby postulates an interdisciplinary procedure.

Interdisciplinarity is implemented in many different ways in the CDA approaches assembled in this volume: in some cases, interdisciplinarity is characteristic of the theoretical framework (dispositive approach, dialectical–relational approach, socio-cognitive approach); in other cases, interdisciplinarity also applies to team research and to the collection and analysis of data (social actors approach, DHA). Moreover, CDA uses the concepts of intertextuality and interdiscursivity and analyses relationships with other texts; in sum, it may be concluded that CDA is open to the broadest range of factors exerting an influence on texts.

A further difference between CDA and other DA approaches emerges in connection with the assumptions about the relation between language and society. CDA does not take this relationship to be simply deterministic but invokes an idea of *mediation*. The dialectical–relational approach draws on Halliday's multifunctional linguistic theory (Halliday, 1985) and the concept of orders of discourse according to Foucault, while the discourse-historical approach and the socio-cognitive approach make use of theories of social cognition (e.g. Moscovici, 2000). This reflection on issues of mediation between language and social structure is absent from many other linguistic approaches, for example from conversation analysis. This is somewhat related to the level of social aggregation: though CDA concentrates on social phenomena like ideology or power, scholars focus on different units of analysis – the way in which individuals mentally perceive, or the way social structures determine discourse (see Figure 1.2). In simplified terms, we can distinguish between more cognitive–socio-psychological and more macro-sociological–structural approaches – although, admittedly, this is a rough distinction.

A further characteristic of CDA is that most researchers integrate linguistic categories into its analyses – but to a different extent and with a different focus and intensity. CDA does not necessarily include a broad range of linguistic categories in each single analysis; one might get the impression that only a very few linguistic devices are central to CDA studies. For instance, many CDA scholars consistently use social actor analyses by means of focusing upon pronouns, attributes and the verbal mode, time and tense; Halidayan transitivity analysis and the analysis of *topoi* are also used frequently by other social scientists because these concepts seem to be quite easy to apply without very much linguistic background knowledge. Exceptions always prove the generalization: Reisigl and Wodak (this volume) and van Dijk (this volume) illustrate how a broad range of macro and micro linguistic, pragmatic and argumentative features can be operationalized and integrated in the analysis of texts (Figure 1.2).

In principle, we may assume that categories such as *deixis* and pronouns can be analysed in any linguistic methodology, but they seem crucial for CDA.
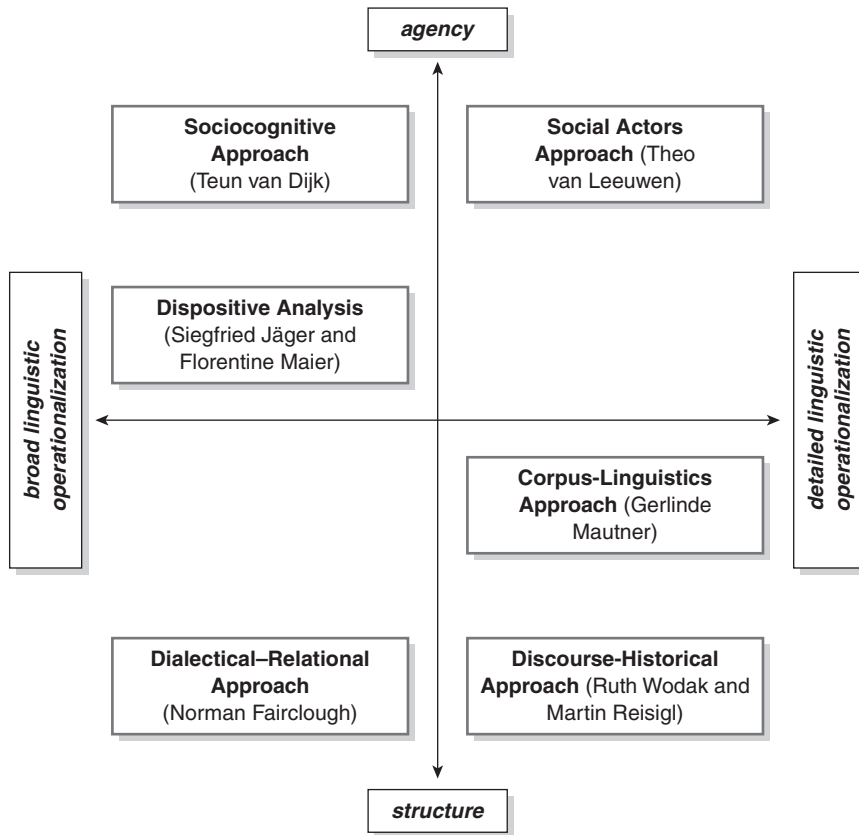
FIGURE 1.2   *Linguistic depth of field and level of aggregation*

Explicitly or implicitly, CDA distinguishes between the so-called linguistic surface and some kind of deep structure; for instance, the dialectical–relational approach speaks of form and texture at the textual level, the discourse-historical approach of forms of linguistic realization.

As for the methods and procedures used for the analysis of discourse, CDA generally sees them as a hermeneutic process, although this characteristic is not completely evident in the positioning of every author. As an opponent to (causal) explanations of the natural sciences, hermeneutics can be understood as the method of grasping and producing meaning relations. The *hermeneutic circle* – i.e. the meaning of one part can only be understood in the context of the whole, but this in turn is only accessible from its component parts – indicates the problem of intelligibility of hermeneutic interpretation. Therefore, hermeneutic interpretation especially requires detailed documentation. Actually, the specifics of the hermeneutic interpretation process are not made completely transparent by many CDA-orientated studies.[6] If a crude distinction has to be made between

'text-extending' and 'text-reducing' methods of analysis, then CDA, on account of its concentration of very clear formal properties and the associated compression of texts during analysis, may be characterized as 'text-reducing'. These findings contradict the mainly hermeneutic impetus of most CDA approaches.

Methodology

CDA in all its various forms understands itself to be strongly based in theory. To which theories do the different methods refer? Here we find a wide variety of theories, ranging from theories on society and power in Michel Foucault's tradition and theories of social cognition and grammar, to individual concepts that are borrowed from larger theoretical traditions. As a first step, this section aims to systematize these different theoretical influences (see Figure 1.1).

A second step in this section is devoted to the problem of the operationalization of theoretical concepts. The primary issue here is how the various methods of CDA are able to translate their theoretical claims into instruments and methods of analysis. In particular, the emphasis is on the mediation between 'grand theories' as applied to larger society and concrete instances of social interaction which result in texts to be analysed. With regard to methodology, there are several perspectives within CDA: in addition to what can be described primarily as variations from hermeneutics, one finds interpretative perspectives with differing emphases, among them even quantitative procedures (see Mautner, this volume).

Particularly worthy of discussion is the way in which sampling is conducted in CDA. Most studies analyse 'typical texts'. What is typical in which social situation, and for which aspect of a social problem, remains a matter of argument. The possibilities and limits with regard to the units of analysis chosen will be illuminated within the context of the issue of theoretical sampling. Some authors explicitly refer to the ethnographic tradition of field research (e.g. DHA).

The connection between theory and discourse in CDA can be described in terms of the model for theoretical and methodological research procedures illustrated in Figure 1.3:

Theoretical grounding and objectives

Among the different positions within CDA presented in this book, theoretical pieces of very different origins are employed to build their CDA castles. Neither is there any guiding theoretical viewpoint that is used coherently within CDA, nor do the CDA protagonists proceed consistently from the area of theory to the field of discourse and the way back to theory (see Figure 1.1).
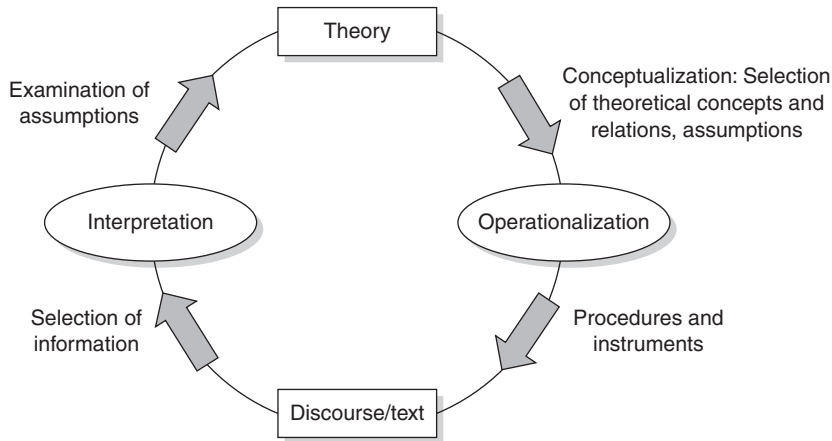
FIGURE 1.3   *Empirical research as a circular process*

Within the CDA approaches presented here, you can find all the theoretical levels of sociological and socio-psychological theory (the concept of different theoretical levels is in the tradition of Merton, 1967: 39–72):

- **Epistemology**, i.e. theories which provide models of the conditions, contingencies and limit of human perception in general and scientific perception in particular.
- **General social theories**, often called 'grand theories', try to conceptualize the relations between social structure and social action and thus link micro- and macro-sociological phenomena. Within this level, one can distinguish between the more structuralist and the more individualist approaches. To put it very simply, the former provide top-down explanations (structure>action), whereas the latter prefer bottom-up explanations (action>structure). Many modern theories try to reconcile these positions and imply some kind of circularity between social action and social structure.
- **Middle-range theories** focus either upon specific social phenomena (e.g. conflict, cognition, social networks) or on specific subsystems of society (e.g. economy, politics, religion).
- **Micro-sociological theories** try to explain social interaction, for example the resolution of the double contingency problem (Parsons and Shils, 1951: 3–29) or the reconstruction of everyday procedures which members of a society use to create their own social order, which is the objective of ethnomethodology.
- **Socio-psychogical theories** concentrate upon the social conditions of emotion and cognition and, compared to microsociology, prefer causal explanations to a hermeneutic understanding of meaning.
- **Discourse theories** aim at the conceptualization of discourse as a social phenomenon and try to explain its genesis and its structure.

- **Linguistic theories**, e.g. theories of argumentation, of grammar, of rhetoric, try to describe and explain the pattern specific to language systems and verbal communication.

As all these theoretical levels can be found in CDA, at first glance it seems that the unifying parentheses of CDA are rather the specifics of research questions than the theoretical positioning. In the following, we want give a short outline of the theoretical positions and methodological objectives of CDA approaches.

Among the approaches assembled in this reader, **Dispositive Analysis** (**DA** – Siegfried Jäger and Florentine Maier in this volume) is closest to the origin of the notion of discourse, i.e. to Michel Foucault's structuralist explanations of discursive phenomena. However, it detects a blind spot in Foucault's theory, namely the mediation between subject and object, between discursive and non-discursive practices (activities) on the one hand and manifestations (objects) on the other. Here, DA strategically inserts Aleksej Leontjew's (e.g. 1982) activity theory: the mediation between these corners of a triangle is performed by work, activity and non-discursive practices. Thus, the social acting subject becomes the link between discourse and reality, a theoretical movement which moderates the stringency of Foucauldian structuralism. The epistemological position is based upon Ernesto Laclau's social constructivism, which denies any societal reality that is determined outside the discursive. In that way, Dispositive Analysis introduces a dualism of discourse and reality.

As all CDA approaches accept that discourse, understood as language use, is but one manifestation of social action (Chilton, 2005b: 20), DA is forced to argue against the Foucauldian notion of discourse which also includes non-linguistic elements. DA therefore applies Jürgen Link's notion of discourse as 'an institutionalized way of talking that regulates and reinforces action and thereby exerts power' (Link, 1983: 60). Furthermore, Foucault's concept of the 'dispositive' is introduced as a shell which envelops both discursive and nondiscursive practices and materializations. DA thus explicitly aims at the analysis of discourses and dispositives.

The **Sociocognitive Approach** (**SCA** – Teun van Dijk in this volume) is on the socio-psychological side of the CDA field. Hereby, the theory serves as a framework systematizing phenomena of social reality. The approach is in the tradition of social representation theory (e.g. Moscovici, 2000). Its focal triad is construed between discourse, cognition and society. Discourse is seen as a communicative event, including conversational interaction, written text, as well as associated gestures, facework, typographical layout, images and any other 'semiotic' or multi-media dimension of signification. Van Dijk relies on socio-cognitive theory-splints and understands linguistics in a broad 'structural–functional' sense. He argues that CDA should be based on a sound theory of context. Within this claim, the theory of social representations plays a main part:

Social actors involved in discourse do not only use their individual experiences and strategies, they rely mainly upon collective frames of perceptions, called social representations. These socially shared perceptions form the link between the social system and the individual cognitive system, and perform the translation, homogenization and coordination between external requirements and subjective experience. Thus, the approach somehow points to the link which Chilton (2005a) detects as missing. This assumption is not new: already in the first half of the 19th century, Emile Durkheim (e.g. 1933) pointed out the significance of collective ideas which help societies to consciousness and the reification of social norms. Serge Moscovici (1982) coined the notion of social representations as a bulk of concepts, opinions, attitudes, evaluations, images and explanations which result from daily life and are sustained by communication. Social representations are shared among members of a social group, which was again already stated by Emile Durkheim: 'The ideas of man … are not personal and are not restricted to me; I share them, to a large degree, with all the men who belong to the same social group that I do. Because they are held in common, concepts are the supreme instrument of all intellectual exchange' (cited in Bellah, 1973: 52). Thus, they form a core element of the individual's social identity (Wagner, 1994: 132). Social representations are bound to specific social groups and do not span society as a whole. They are dynamic constructs and subject to permanent change. Together, they constitute a hierarchical order of mutual dependency (Duveen and Lloyd, 1990). SCA introduces the concept of context models, which are understood as mental representations of the structures of the communicative situation that are discursively relevant for a participant. These context models control the 'pragmatic' part of discourse, whereas event models do so with the 'semantic' part. Three forms of social representations are relevant to understand discourse:

1. knowledge (personal, group, cultural)
2. attitudes (not in the social psychology understanding)
3. ideologies. Discourses take place within society, and can only be understood in the interplay of social situation, action, actor and societal structures.

Perhaps the **Discourse–Historical Approach (DHA)** is the most linguistically orientated of the approaches selected in this volume (see also Figure 1.2). It explicitly tries to establish a theory of discourse by establishing the connection between *fields of action* (Girnth, 1996), *genres*, *discourses* and *texts*. Although DHA is aligned to Critical Theory, general social theory plays a minor role compared with the discourse model and the emphasis on historical analysis: context is understood as mainly historical. Thus far, the DHA consistently agrees with Mouzelis's (1995) pessimistic diagnosis of social research. DHA consequently follows his recommendations: not to get lost in theoretical labyrinths, not to invest too much in the operationalization of inoperationalizable 'grand theories', yes – but rather to develop conceptual tools relevant for specific social problems. The DHA concentrates its efforts in the field of politics, where it tries to develop conceptual frameworks for

political discourse. Reisigl and Wodak try to fit linguistic theories into their model of discourse. They therefore make extensive use of argumentation theory in the example presented in this volume. That does not necessarily mean that the concepts resulting from argumentation theory fit well with other research questions.

As the **Corpus Linguistics Approach** (**CLA** – Gerlinde Mautner in this volume) is rather a linguistic extension of CDA, it provides additional linguistic devices for thorough analysis – and can be applied principally against the backdrop of various CDA approaches.

The **Social Actors Approach** (**SAA** – Theo van Leuuwen in this volume) refers to a broad scope of sociological and linguistic theories, especially to those explaining the role of action to establish social structure: representation is ultimately based on practice, on that which people do – it is the primacy of practice which constitutes the theoretical core of SAA. Therefore, SAA introduces sources from Malinkowski to Parsons, from Bernstein to Bourdieu. This idea of individual actors permanently constituting and reproducing social structure is linked with a Foucauldian notion of discourse, somewhat similar to DA and DRA.

The **Dialectical–Relational Approach** (**DRA –** Norman Fairclough in this volume) takes a rather grand-theory-oriented position: Fairclough focuses upon social conflict in the Marxian tradition and tries to detect its linguistic manifestations in discourses, in particular elements of dominance, difference and resistance. According to DRA, every social practice has a semiotic element. Productive activity, the means of production, social relations, social identities, cultural values, consciousness and semiosis are dialectically related elements of social practice. He understands CDA as the analysis of the dialectical relationships between semiosis (including language) and other elements of social practices. These semiotic aspects of social practice are responsible for the constitution of genres and styles. The semiotic aspect of social order is called the order of discourse. His approach to CDA oscillates between a focus on structure and a focus on action. Both strategies ought to be problem-based: by all means, CDA should pursue emancipatory objectives, and should be focused upon the problems confronting what can loosely be referred to as the 'losers' within particular forms of social life. DRA draws upon a particular linguistic theory – Systemic Functional Linguistics (Halliday, 1985) – which analyses language as shaped (even in its grammar) by the social functions it has come to serve.

Gathering data

We concluded above that CDA does not constitute a well-defined empirical method but rather a bulk of approaches with theoretical similarities and research questions of a specific kind. But there is no CDA way of gathering data, either. Some authors do not even mention data-gathering methods, while other scholars strongly rely on traditions based outside the sociolinguistic field.[7] In any case, similar to Grounded Theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967), data collection is not considered to be a specific phase that must be completed before analysis begins: after the first collection exercise, it is a matter of carrying out

the first analyses, finding indicators for particular concepts, expanding concepts into categories and, on the basis of these results, collecting further data (*theoretical sampling*). In this mode of procedure, data collection is never completely excluded, and new questions always arise which can only be dealt with if new data are collected or earlier data are re-examined (Strauss, 1987; Strauss and Corbin, 1990).

Most of the approaches to CDA do not explicitly explain or recommend data-gathering procedures. Obviously, CLA specifically refers to large corpora of text. DA, SCA, SAA and DRA mainly rely on existing texts, such as mass media communication or organizational documents. This also holds good for DHA, though it additionally postulates that studies should always incorporate fieldwork and ethnography to explore the object under investigation as a precondition for any further analysis and theorizing. The concentration on already existing texts implies specific strengths, in particular it provides non-reactive data (Webb et al., 1966), and certain weaknesses concerning the research questions which have to be handled.

Operationalization and analysis

CDA places its methodology in the hermeneutic rather than in the analytical–deductive tradition. In any case, the linguistic character of CDA becomes evident in this section, because in contrast to other approaches of text and discourse analysis (e.g. Content Analysis, Grounded Theory, Conversation Analysis; see Titscher et al., 2000), CDA strongly relies on linguistic categories. This does not mean that topics and contents play no role at all, but the core operationalizations depend on linguistic concepts such as actors, mode, time, tense, argumentation and so on. Nevertheless, a completed list of linguistic devices relevant for CDA cannot be given, for their selection depends mainly on the specific research questions.

DA distinguishes between a more content-oriented step of (1) structure analysis and a more linguistically oriented step of (2) fine analysis. Within *stucture analysis*, a characterization of the media and the general themes has to be made. Within the *fine analysis*, DA focuses upon context, text surface and rhetorical means. Exemplary linguistic instruments are figurativeness, vocabulary and argumentation types. DA takes into account both qualitative and quantitative aspects of these features. DA analyses:

- the kind and form of argumentation
- certain argumentation strategies
- the intrinsic logic and composition of texts
- somehow implicit implications and insinuations
- the collective symbolism or 'figurativeness', symbolism, metaphorism and so on, both in language and in graphic contexts (statistics, photographs, pictures, caricatures, etc.)
- idioms, sayings, clichés, vocabulary and style

- actors (persons, pronominal structure)
- references, for example, to (the) science(s)
- the particulars of the sources of knowledge, etc.

SCA generally argues that a complete discourse analysis of a large corpus of text or talk, as we often have in CDA research, is therefore totally out of the question. If the focus of research is on the ways in which some speakers or writers exercise power in or by their discourse, the focus of study will in practice be on those properties that can vary as a function of social power. SCA therefore suggests concentrating the analysis upon linguistic markers as follows:

- stress and intonation
- word order
- lexical style
- coherence
- local semantic moves such as disclaimers
- topic choice
- speech acts
- schematic organization
- rhetorical figures
- syntactic structures
- propositional structures
- turn-takings
- repairs
- hesitation.

SCA supposes that most of these are exemplary forms of interaction which are in principle susceptible to speaker control, but in practice mostly not consciously controlled. Other structures, such as the form of words and many structures of sentences, are grammatically obligatory and contextually invariant and hence usually not subject to speaker control and social power. SCA further suggests six steps of analysis:

1. The analysis of *semantic macrostructures*: topics and macropropositions.
2. The analysis of *local meanings*, where the many forms of implicit or indirect meanings, such as implications, presuppositions, allusions, vagueness, omissions and polarizations are especially interesting.
3. The analysis of '*subtle' formal structures*: here, most of the linguistic markers mentioned are analysed.
4. The analysis of *global and local discourse forms* or formats.
5. The analysis of *specific linguistic realizations*, e.g. hyperbole, litotes.
6. The analysis of *context*.

In the studies on racist and discriminatory discourse, DHA unfolds a four-step strategy of analysis: after (1) having established the specific *contents* or *topics*

of a specific discourse (e.g. with racist, antisemitic, nationalist or ethnicist ingredients), (2) the *discursive strategies* (including argumentation strategies) are investigated. Then (3), the *linguistic means* (as types) and the specific, context-dependent *linguistic realizations* (as tokens) of the discriminatory stereotypes are examined (4).

In these studies, the discourse-historical approach concentrates upon the following discursive strategies:

- *Referential strategy or strategy of nomination*, where the linguistic devices of interest are membership categorization (Sacks, 1992), metaphors and metonymies and synecdoches.
- *Strategies of predication* which appear in stereotypical, evaluative attributions of positive or negative traits and implicit or explicit predicates.
- *Strategies of argumentation* which are reflected in certain *topoi* used to justify political inclusion or exclusion.
- *Strategies of perspectivization, framing or discourse representation* use means of reporting, description, narration or quotation of events and utterances.
- *Strategies of intensification and mitigation* try to intensify or mitigate the illocutionary force of utterances (Ng and Bradac, 1993).

This methodology aims to be abductive, because the categories of analysis are firstly developed in accordance with the research questions, and a constant movement back and forth between theory and empirical data is suggested. The historical context is always analysed and integrated into the interpretation, although there is no stringent procedure for this task.

CLA adds a quantitative methodology to DHA: large corpora are analysed by means of concordance software, thus providing frequency lists and specific measures of statistical significance. Therefore, CLA applies a rather deductive methodology in selecting specific words which are relevant for analysis, but also offers concordance lines as a basis for further (qualitative) interpretation.

In a very general sense, SAA describes and explains social practices by identifying seven core elements. Firstly, it tries to identify (1) actions within given texts, then it analyses (2) performance modes and denotes (3) actors which apply (4) specific presentation styles of their actions. Social practices which are constituted by these actions take place in (5) specific times and (6) spaces, and actors require (7) specific resources. Some of these elements of social practice are eligible, while some are deleted, i.e. are not represented in a specific discourse. Some are substituted; some reactions and motives are added to the representation of social practices.

DRA suggests a stepwise procedure in preparation for analysis. Like DHA, it prefers a pragmatic, problem-oriented approach, where the first step is to identify and describe the social problem which should be analysed. DRA propositions are as follows:

1. Focus upon a specific social problem which has a semiotic aspect, go outside the text and describe the problem, and identify its semiotic aspect.
2. Identify the dominant styles, genres and discourses constituting this semiotic aspect.
3. Consider the range of difference and diversity in styles, genres and discourses within this aspect.
4. Identify the resistance against the colonialization processes executed by the dominant styles, genres and discourses.

After these preparatory steps, which also help to select the material, DRA suggests (1) a *structural analysis* of the context, and then (2) an interactional analysis, which focuses on such linguistic features as:

- agents
- time
- tense
- modality
- syntax

and finally (3) an *analysis of interdiscursivity*, which tries to compare the dominant and resistant strands of discourse.

Above, we have only been able to give a brief outline of the core procedures applied in the different approaches to CDA. Finally, it should be pointed out that, although there is no consistent CDA methodology, some features are common to most CDA approaches: (1) they are problem-oriented and not focused on specific linguistic items, yet linguistic expertise is obligatory for the selection of the items relevant to specific research objectives; (2) theory as well as methodology is eclectic, both of which are integrated as far as is helpful to understand the social problems under investigation.

Criteria for assessing quality

It seems to be beyond controversy that qualitative social research also needs concepts and criteria to assess the quality of its findings. It is also indisputable that the classical concepts of validity, reliability and objectivity used in quantitative research cannot be applied unmodified. 'The real issue is how our research can be both intellectually challenging and rigorous and critical' (Silverman, 1993: 144); Silverman also provides a detailed discussion of these concepts and a reformulation for qualitative research. Within CDA, there is little specific discussion on quality criteria.

DA at least mentions the classical criteria of representativeness, reliability and validity. Beyond it, DA suggests 'completeness' as a criterion suited for CDA: the results of a study will be 'complete' if new data and the analysis of new linguistic devices reveal no new findings. SCA suggests accessibility as a criterion which takes into account the practical targets of CDA: findings should be at least accessible and readable for the social groups under investigation.

DHA suggests triangulation procedures to ensure validity – ' … which is appropriate whatever one's theoretical orientation or use of quantitative or qualitative data' (Silverman, 1993: 156).[8] DHA's triangulatory approach is mainly *theoretical* and based on the concept of context which takes into account four levels: (1) the immediate language- or text-internal co-text; (2) the inter-textual and interdiscursive relationship between utterances, texts, genres and discourses; (3) the extralinguistic (social) level, which is called the 'context of situation' and explained by middle-range theories; and (4) the broader sociopo-litical and historical contexts. Permanent switching between these levels and evaluating the findings from these different perspectives should minimize the risk of being biased. Beyond it, DHA suggests methodical triangulation by using multimethodical designs on the basis of a variety of empirical data as well as background information.

Triangulation among different types of data, participants' definition of sig-nificance and issue-based analysis to establish the significance of the sites of engagement and mediated actions under study, are suited to bring the analyses back to participants to get their reactions and interpretations: to uncover diver-gences and contradictions between one's own analysis of the mediated actions one is studying and those of participants.

Nevertheless, severe 'objectivity' cannot be reached by means of discourse analysis, for each 'technology' of research must itself be examined as potentially embedding the beliefs and ideologies of the analysts and therefore prejudicing the analysis towards the analysts' preconceptions.

Summary and criticism

The goal of this chapter was to provide a summary of CDA approaches, their similarities and differences. One of CDA's volitional characteristics is its diver-sity. Nevertheless, a few cornerstones can be noticed within this diversity:

- Concerning its theoretical background, CDA works eclectically in many aspects. The whole range between grand theories and linguistic theories is touched, although each single approach emphasizes different levels.
- There is no accepted canon of data collection, but many CDA approaches work with existing data, i.e. texts not specifically produced for the respective research projects.
- Operationalization and analysis are problem-oriented and imply linguistic expertise.

The most evident similarity is a shared interest in social processes of power, hierarchy-building, exclusion and subordination. In the tradition of Critical Theory, CDA aims to shed light on the discursive aspects of societal disparities and inequalities. CDA frequently detects the linguistic means used by the privileged

to stabilize or even to intensify inequities in society. This entails careful systematic analysis, self-reflection at every point of one's research and distance from the data which are being investigated. Description and interpretation should be kept apart, thus enabling transparency and retroduction of the respective analysis. Of course, not all of these recommendations are consistently followed, and they cannot always be implemented in detail because of time pressures and similar structural constraints. Therefore, some critics will continue to state that CDA constantly sits on the fence between social research and political argumentation (Wodak, 2006a), while others 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 responses and new thoughts.

Notes

1   This chapter is based on long and extensive discussions with friends, colleagues and co-researchers as well as students. Ruth Wodak would like to mention and thank Teun van Dijk, Paul Chilton, Theo van Leeuwen, John Richardson and Michael Billig as well as all her co-researchers and (former) students. Finally, we would like to thank the many colleagues we have not been able to mention here.

2   See Anthonissen, 2001; Blommaert and Bulcaen, 2000; Fairclough and Wodak, 1997; Reisigl and Wodak, 2001; Titscher et al., 2000; Weiss et al., 2003; Wodak and Meyer, 2001; Wodak and Pelinka, 2002, etc.

3   See Language and Power by Norman Fairclough (1989/1991), Language, Power and Ideology by Ruth Wodak (1989) and Prejudice in Discourse by Teun van Dijk (1984).

4   The Erasmus network consisted of a cooperation between Siegfried Jäger, Duisburg, Per Linell, Linkoeping, Norman Fairclough, Lancaster, Teun van Dijk, Amsterdam, Gunther Kress, London, Theo van Leeuwen, London and Ruth Wodak, Vienna.

5   Unfortunately, we have to neglect much research here which could certainly also be categorized as critical approaches, such as feminist CDA (see Lazar, 2005), critical ethnographic approaches (see Blommaert, 2005), research situated between sociolinguistics, literacy research and CDA (see Tricento, 2005), etc. We have to refer readers to the many publications and overview essays in the field.

6   The question of whether it is possible to make hermeneutic processes transparent and intelligible at all remains undecided, although some authors (Oevermann et al., 1979) developed a hermeneutically orientated method with well-defined procedures and rules.

7   A general survey on sampling and the selection of texts is given by Titscher et al. (2000).

8   An early proponent of the method of triangulation is Norman Denzin (1970). For further discussion of criteria for assessing interpretive validity in qualitative research, see, for example, Altheide and Johnson, 1994; Morse et al., 2002.