10.1 INTRODUCTION

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a transdisciplinary approach to discourse, drawing on social as well as linguistic theory. It has been influential not only in language studies, but also in other fields such as business, public health, organisational studies, media studies, accounting, and even tourism. It focuses on the ways social power is enacted through spoken and written text (and, more recently, through visual images, sound and other forms of semiosis), with a special emphasis on dominance, exploitation and resistance in various social contexts.

The approach followed by CDA differs from the other approaches dealt with in this book in that the starting point is a specific social issue or problem rather than particular linguistic features or phenomena. It investigates how such issues – for example, institutional power relations, racism, sexism, political exploitation – are instantiated in discourse, whatever form that discourse might take.

As mentioned in Chapter 1, in CDA, the term discourse may be used in a different way to that of the other chapters in this book. In previous chapters, we have used the term discourse to refer to language use in general. In CDA, the term discourse may be used to refer to a specific set of meanings expressed through particular forms and uses which give expression to particular institutions or social groups (Kress, 1989a). We can thus talk about ‘the discourse of managerialism’ or ‘the discourse of advertising’ or ‘gay discourse’ or ‘Christian discourse’. This meaning derives from the work of the French philosopher, Michel Foucault (1982), for whom discourse refers more to a set of ideas or beliefs than to specific instances of language. Discourse is what could be said about something rather than what is said about it, according to Foucault. Following this reading, discourse comes close to ideology. In this meaning, discourse is a count noun and can be used in the plural; we can talk about different discourses. As mentioned in Chapter 1, again, this understanding of the term discourse is referred to by Gee (2011a) as big ‘D’ discourse, as opposed to the other meaning, which he labels with a little ‘d’.

The antecedents of CDA are usually said to lie in Critical Linguistics, a movement developed at the University of East Anglia during the 1970s. Scholars working in this group, led by Fowler (for example, Fowler, 1991, 1996a), but also including names such as Kress, Hodge and Trew (for example, Fowler et al., 1979) were concerned to develop a social approach to linguistics which recognised power relationships as a central theoretical issue and text as its main unit of analysis (Kress, 1989a). Five figures are generally seen as key in CDA: Norman Fairclough, Gunther Kress, Teun van Dijk, Theo van Leeuwen and Ruth Wodak, although Kress and van Leeuwen have not emphasised the critical element in their more recent work, having been more active in other areas, particularly in Multimodal Discourse Analysis (for example, Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996). According to Wodak (2001a), this group of researchers came together at a meeting in 1991 organised by van Dijk in Amsterdam and which was seen as the ‘formal’ initiation of CDA. In addition, the group con-
distributed articles to a special edition of *Discourse and Society*, in 1993, entitled *Critical Discourse Analysis*. That being said, it is important to emphasise that CDA has never been a 'school' in the strict sense of the term, each member of the group following his or her own approach.

Many social theorists, such as Bernstein, Bourdieu, Derrida, Gramsci, Foucault, Giddens and Habermas, have drawn attention to the key role of language in society. However, as Fairclough (2003a: 2), probably the most prominent theoretician in CDA, has pointed out, these theorists have not examined the linguistic features of text. CDA, on the other hand, has sought to bring together social theory and textual analysis. As in mainstream critical social theory, the aim of CDA is to uncover hidden assumptions (in the case of the latter, in language use) and debunk their claims to authority. Following Hegel, however, criticism is not simply a negative judgement, but has a positive emancipatory function. CDA thus has a specific agenda in bringing about social change, or at least supporting struggle against inequality (van Dijk, 2001a).

CDA views language (and other semiotic systems) as a form of social practice (Fairclough, 1989; Fairclough & Wodak, 1997; Wodak, 2001a). According to Fairclough (1989), 'using language is the commonest form of social behaviour'. If language is a form of social behaviour, then there is a need to relate theories of society to theories of language. As Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999: 16) put it:

We see CDA as bringing a variety of theories into dialogue, especially social theories on the one hand and linguistic theories on the other, so that its theory is a shifting synthesis of other theories, though what it itself theorises in particular is the mediation between the social and the linguistic …

Fairclough sees every instance of discourse as having three interrelated dimensions: as a text (spoken or written); as an interaction between people involving processes of producing and interpreting the text; and as part of a piece of social action. These three dimensions are seen as interacting (Figure 10.1).

Fairclough (1992a:10–11) writes with regard to a later version of this diagram that:

The relationship between social action and text is mediated by interaction: that is, the nature of the interaction, how texts are produced and interpreted, depends upon the social action in

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**Figure 10.1** Fairclough’s three-dimensional view of discourse (Fairclough, 1989: 25, adapted)
which they are embedded; and the nature of the text, its formal and stylistic properties, on the one hand depends upon and constitutes ‘traces’ of its process of production, and on the other hand constitutes ‘cues’ for its interpretation.

In addition to the above, CDA has a number of other commonly shared precepts. First, as already suggested, CDA views discourse and society as mutually constitutive, that is to say, a society is not possible without discourse and discourse cannot exist without social interaction. That is not to say, however, that all action is discursive. On the contrary, CDA allows for the interplay of discursive and material action (van Leeuwen [1996], in particular, emphasises this point).

Another precept of CDA is that, because it is interested in power relations and is emancipatory in nature, it typically examines specific discursive situations where dominance and inequality are to the fore. Analysis does not view discursive interaction as necessarily a question of heroes and villains (van Dijk, 1993; Wodak, 1999), however. Participants may not be aware of how powerful or powerless they are in discourse terms. Indeed, it is the role of CDA to reveal these relationships.

In fact, CDA may play a role in bringing about change in social practices and relationships in, for example, teacher development, the design of guidelines for non-sexist language or proposals to increase the intelligibility of news and legal texts (Titscher et al., 2000). The related movement of Critical Language Awareness (CLA), developed by Fairclough and his associates at the University of Lancaster (Fairclough, 1992b) (see more on this below), argues for a systematic application of a critical approach to language along the lines of CDA in schools and in society at large.

A further commonly held precept is that CDA is open to multiple readings (although this has been critiqued: for example, Blommaert, 2005; Widdowson, 2004), as indicated by the following quotations from Fairclough (2003a: 14–15):

we should assume that no analysis of a text can tell us all there is to be said about it – there is no such thing as a complete and definitive analysis of a text …

Textual analysis is also inevitably selective: in any analysis, we choose to ask certain questions about social events and texts, and not other possible questions. … There is no such thing as an ‘objective’ analysis of a text, if by that we mean an analysis which simply describes what is ‘there’ in the text without being ‘biased’ by the ‘subjectivity’ of the analyst.

However, readings will be more plausible if grounded in the interplay of text and context (Fairclough et al., 2011). Analysis involves a continual shunting between the microanalysis of texts and the macroanalysis of social structures and formations and power relations.

Contextual analysis may or may not include ethnographic analysis. Although Fairclough (2003a: 15) allows for an ethnographic dimension, this is not part of his personal practice. For Wodak, on the other hand, ethnography is essential to her method (see below; see also Blommaert, 2005). For both Fairclough and Wodak (Fairclough et al., 2011), an important dimension of context is intertextuality (Kristeva, 1980, following Bakhtin, 1986), how one text interrelates with other texts.

In the study of context, Fairclough et al. (2011) refer to the historical dimension – understanding the historical sociopolitical situation in which a text is produced. They use an analysis of an extract of an interview with Margaret Thatcher as an example of the importance of an understanding of this historical dimension – in this case, of what was going on in Britain in the 1940s.

As well as being historical, CDA can be historiographic, that is to say, it can play a part in the writing of history (Fairclough, 2001; Flowerdew, 2012a; Fowler, 1996b). Indeed, history is one of the most obvious disciplines which might make use of CDA as an analytical method (see articles in Martin & Wodak, 2003).
10.2 SOME MAJOR PROPONENTS

10.2.1 Fairclough

Fairclough has focused on discourse and power (Fairclough, 2001), on discourse and social change (globalisation, neoliberalism, knowledge economy) and on media discourse. He takes a theoretical approach, usually examining relatively small extracts of text in order to illustrate concepts such as orders of discourse, intertextuality, hybridity and voice. On the social side, he is influenced by the work of Foucault and the political economists Laclau and Mouffe (1985/2001), among others. In terms of political engagement, his book, *New Labour, New Language?* (Fairclough, 2000), is an attempt at a more popular contribution aimed at the general public, while his earlier edited collection *Critical Language Awareness* (Fairclough, 1992b) has argued for a systematic critical approach to language that can be carried over into schools and to the public at large.

A summary of one of Fairclough’s later papers (2005) gives an idea of his approach. In this paper, Fairclough makes it clear that his is a specific version of CDA which is characterized by a realist and dialectical-relational theory of discourse, a methodology which is oriented to constructing objects of research through theorizing research topics in dialogue with other areas of social theory and research, and selecting methods which are in part inherent to this version of CDA and in part dependent upon the particular object of research.

In this particular study, Fairclough focuses on elements of political transition in Romania – the ‘knowledge-based economy’ – focusing on one discourse phenomenon – recontextualisation – how an element of discourse may be taken from a particular context and incorporated into another one, with a consequent change of meaning.

10.2.2 Wodak

In common with Fairclough, Wodak’s research agenda focuses on the development of theoretical approaches to CDA. She combines elements of ethnography, argumentation theory, rhetoric and functional systemic linguistics, focusing on gender, language in politics, prejudice and discrimination. She is best known for her work on political discourse to do with antisemitism in Austria, where she developed, with colleagues, her *discourse-historical* method. She has also studied the discourse and politics of the European Union, focusing on issues including unemployment, NATO and neutrality in Austria and Hungary, the discursive construction of European identities, racism ‘at the top’ and parliamentary debates on immigration. In general, Wodak’s approach is much more ethnographic than Fairclough’s. She is also interested in the role of history in discourse (Martin & Wodak, 2003), labelling her approach the ‘discourse historical method’ (Wodak, 2001b).

10.2.3 van Dijk

Developing earlier work in the 1970s on the psychology of text processing with Walter Kintch (van Dijk, 1977b), van Dijk’s contribution to CDA has been in developing a sociocognitive model, with a focus on the discursive reproduction of racism, in particular, by politicians, journalists, scholars and writers (which he refers to as the ‘symbolic elites’), and in printed news media. van Dijk’s sociocognitive approach attempts to bridge the gap between society and discourse. Working from a mental models approach, van Dijk sees discourse, processed via long- and short-term memory, as shaping our perceptions and understandings. Stereotypes and prejudice can occur when such models
become overgeneralised. In relation to this work, van Dijk has been interested in developing theories of ideology and context. He founded the leading journal devoted to CDA, *Discourse and Society*, which he still edits.

### 10.2.4 Kress

Although, as already mentioned, in his later work, Kress has moved away from CDA, as one of the founding members of the group, his is an important contribution. Already, in earlier work, with Fowler (*Fowler et al.*, 1979) and Hodge (*Hodge & Kress*, 1979/1989), he was a leading theoretician for critical linguistics, focusing on ideology in news discourse. His later book, *Linguistic Processes in Sociocultural Practice* (*Kress*, 1989a), is significant in setting out some important principles for CDA, as is his contribution to the special edition of *Discourse and Society*, referred to above, ‘Against Arbitrariness: The Social Production of the Sign as a Foundational Issue in Critical Discourse Analysis’. In this paper, as in his other contributions, Kress (1989b) argues that a fundamental understanding for a critical approach to discourse is the ‘motivated’ relation of the signifier and the signified, how producers and readers of signs are motivated by their backgrounds and social histories which make up the relevant context, including the social structures and the power relations existing therein. He also argues that a focus on ‘bland’ texts might be more productive than texts which are less obviously ideologically marked and for the intrinsically multimodal nature of texts.

### 10.2.5 van Leeuwen

van Leeuwen is influenced by his background in film and television and emphasises the overall semiotic nature of discourse (*van Leeuwen*, 2004), considering not just text, but acoustic and visual elements of discourse, as well as material action. With regard to CDA, and in accordance with his overall semiotic approach, *van Leeuwen* (1996: 33) has stated that:

> [t]here is no neat fit between sociological and linguistic categories and if Critical Discourse Analysis, in investigating for instance the representation of agency, ties itself in too closely to specific linguistic operations or categories, many relevant instances of agency might be overlooked.

van Leeuwen is well known for a large-scale project studying globalisation and discourse (*Machin & van Leeuwen*, 2003) and for his 2008 book *Discourse and Practice: New tools for CDA* (*van Leeuwen*, 2008).

### 10.3 SOME KEY ISSUES

#### 10.3.1 Language and power

Indicative of the central role of power in CDA is the title of Fairclough’s (1989) seminal collection of papers where he first published his ideas on CDA, *Language and Power*. CDA enables us to look into the discourse dimensions of power abuse, which leads to injustice and inequality. As one of the essential functions of text and talk is to persuade others to one’s point of view, it is possible to analyse the linguistic structures and the discursive strategies of a discourse in order to uncover the power struggle, social inequality and other forms of social and political problems at issue (*van Dijk*, 1993). It follows, therefore, that the social, political and cultural organisation of dominance in the language structures of a discourse is constitutive of a hierarchy of power.
When applied to the analysis of social inequality, CDA accounts for how discourse structures—which are established through various linguistic patterns and structures—work in their specific ways to convey social cognitions (how people think) —which, in turn, contribute to the development of the social structures of inequality and injustice of power in society. The relationship between power and language is not seen as deterministic, however, but as variable, power influencing language and language affecting power. It is not possible, therefore, to ‘read’ power relations ‘off the page’ or text. That being said, particular linguistic forms may typically be used in the expression of power. An early insight is the distinction in many European languages between first and second pronouns (tu/vous) of Brown and Gilman (1960), whereby the tu form may be used by the more powerful person, but the vous form is required by the less powerful.

Access to specific forms of discourse— for example, those of politics, the media, science or education— is itself a power resource. Different resources are employed to exert different kinds of power. The military exerts power through force or the threat of it; the rich exert power through money; while parents and teachers exert power through authority or knowledge (van Dijk, 2008). Whatever type of power is at stake, however, it will be exercised, to a greater or lesser degree, through discourse.

10.3.2 Hegemony

Fairclough (2003a) relates CDA to Gramsci’s (1971) notion of hegemony. Gramsci used the term ‘hegemony’ to refer to the exertion of power through implicit means rather than military force. This may be achieved through application of laws, rules and habits or may just be a matter of general consensus (van Dijk, 2008). For Fairclough (2003a: 92), hegemony is ‘leadership as much as domination across the economic, political, cultural and ideological domains of a society’. Hegemonic struggle can be related to discourse in so far as social structures and discursive structures are in a mutually defining relationship. Social structure is manifested in its discursive practices and discursive practices are constitutive of social structure, in society’s norms, conventions, relations, identities and institutions (Fairclough, 2003a: 64). This means that changes in society are reflected in changes in discursive practice and vice versa. In bringing hegemony and discourse together, one can talk of discursive hegemony. By this is meant, as Fairclough (2003a: 218) defines the term, ‘the dominance and naturalisation of particular representations’, how certain discourses come to prevail in given sociopolitical contexts, as a result of a struggle between the relevant political actors.

10.3.3 Identity

Another important concept in CDA is that of identity. Identity is a fluid construct that is subject to change. The person who I am now is different to the person I was ten years ago or even last week, or indeed yesterday, for that matter. At the same time, identity may be multiple. I have an identity as a man, as a professor, as a father, and as a husband, for example. Burgess and Ivanic (2010: 240) describe how identities in educational contexts are usually transitory.

For most students, identities in education are transitory, mediating identities; hence, the practices in which they engage while attending courses may be for extrinsic purposes, not part of the identities to which they aspire for the rest of their lives. Students may be in an ambivalent relation with this identity; partially desiring and partially resisting being constructed as ‘someone in education’. In the immediate present, however, this is an aspect of their identity that they cannot ignore.
Identity is important in discourse terms because one's identity is manifested in one's social practice, an important part of which is discursive practice. As well as individuals constructing their own identities, a large part of identity is constructed by others; by how we are perceived. Identity is therefore a binary construction. Kress (1989a) refers to this as ‘projecting’ identity on to others. He gives the example of the political leader whose role is to give definition to an entirely new group. It is the leader's role in such a situation to produce texts which bring together hitherto disparate discourses in a unified, coherent manner (Kress, 1989a: 15). In my book on the discourse of Hong Kong’s transition from British to Chinese sovereignty (Flowerdew, 2012a), I showed how the outgoing British Governor projected a rather ‘British’ identity on to the Hong Kong people, while the incoming Hong Kong Chinese Chief Executive projected a much more ‘Chinese’ identity on to these same Hong Kong citizens.

Given the foregoing, identity is constructed through space and time (Flowerdew, 2012a). In discourse analytic terms, this means that an individual or a group’s identity will to an important degree depend on the situational and historical context in which they are located. The situational aspect of context with regard to discourse identity is emphasised by Blommaert (2005). Blommaert notes how, as people shift from place to place, ‘they frequently, and delicately, and each time in very minimal ways, express different identities’ (Blommaert, 2005: 224). Wodak and colleagues (Wodak et al. 1999) have demonstrated the importance of place in the creation of national identity, how people identify with a particular country. Although identities are partly created by others and projected on to groups or individuals, there is no guarantee that the projected identities will be taken up by individuals. To quote Chiapello and Fairclough (2002: 195), ‘a new discourse may come into an institution or organisation without being enacted or inculcated’.

10.4 METHODS AND TOOLKITS FOR CDA

In terms of methodology, Reisigl (2008) has listed a sequence of steps for the systematic critical analysis of political discourse (but which can equally be applied to other fields), as follows:

1. Consult previous knowledge about the sociopolitical problem that possesses linguistic aspects.
2. Collect (triangulated) discursive data for analysis.
3. Prepare and select specific data for analysis.
4. Formulate research questions and hypotheses based on rapid checking of data or part of it.
5. Pilot the analysis to adjust analytical instruments and further spell out research questions.
6. Develop detailed case studies; these can operate at macro or micro linguistic levels or at the level of context; they lead to an overall interpretation of the results of analysis, taking into account the social, historical and political context of the analysed data.
7. Formulate critique to reveal problematic discursive strategies, solve specific problems of communication, or improve communication; this is based on ethical principles such as democratic norms and human rights; it focuses on opaque, contradictory and manipulative relations among power, language and social structures and commits itself to cognitive and political emancipation (and improvement of communication).
8. Apply results, for example, publication of a book/articles and/or more widely disseminated outlets.

As well as his broad methodology, Reisigl (2008) lists a set of analytical categories:

1. How are social actors – either individual persons or groups – linguistically constructed by being named (nomination)?
2. What positive or negative traits, qualities and features are attributed to the linguistically constructed social actors (predication)?

3. Through what arguments and argumentation schemes do specific persons or social groups try to justify or delegitimise claims containing specific nominations and predications (for example, claims of discrimination of others)?

4. From what perspective or point of view are these nominations, predications and argumentations expressed (perspectivation)?

5. Are the respective utterances (nominations, predications, argumentations) articulated overtly, are they intensified or are they mitigated (mitigation versus intensification)?

In line with its eclectic approach, various other practitioners have presented ‘toolkits’ for doing CDA. The term ‘toolkit’ might not sound very scientific, but it is appropriate, given that the lists of features to look for in analysis are presented as suggestive rather than prescriptive, exhaustive taxonomies. Examples of these can be found in various sources.

To start with a simple one, van Dijk (2001c: 99) has suggested the following as features of text to examine:

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

In his early *Language and Power*, in Chapter 5, ‘Critical discourse in practice: description’, Fairclough (1989) presented what he called a ‘mini reference manual’ (p. 106) in the form of a list of questions and subquestions to ask in a CDA study. The major divisions are as follows:

1. What experiential values do words have?
2. What relational value do words have?
3. What expressive values do words have?
4. What metaphors are used?
5. What experiential value do grammatical features have?
6. What relational values do grammatical features have?
7. What expressive values do grammatical features have?
8. How are (simple) sentences linked together?
9. What interactional conventions are used?
10. What larger-scale structures does the text have?

Each of these questions has a set of subquestions. For example, question 5 has the following:

1. What types of *process* and *participant* predominate?
2. Is agency unclear?
3. Are processes what they seem?
4. Are nominalisations used?
5. Are sentences active or passive?
6. Are sentences positive or negative?

Another list is that of Huckin (2005), entitled ‘Some useful tools and concepts for Critical Discourse Analysis’.

**Word/phrase level**
- Classification, including names, labels;
- Connotations, code words;
- Metaphor;
- Lexical presupposition;
- Modality;
- Register, including synthetic personalisation;
- Politeness.

**Sentence/utterance level**
- Deletion, omission:
  - through nominalisation;
  - through agentless passive;
- Transitivity / agent–patient relations;
- Topicalisation/foregrounding;
- Presupposition;
- Insinuation, inferencing;
- Heteroglossia.

**Text level**
- Genre conventions;
- Discursive differences;
- Coherence;
- Framing;
- Foregrounding/backgrounding;
- Textual silences;
- Presupposition;
- Extended metaphor;
- Auxiliary embellishments.

**General**
- Central versus peripheral processing;
- Use of heuristics;
- Ideology;
- Reading position;
- Naturalisation, ‘common sense’;
- Reproduction–resistance–hegemony;
- Cultural models and myths; master narratives;
- Intertextuality;
- Context; contrast effects;
- Communicator ethos;
- Vividness;
- Repetition;
• Face work;
• Type of argument;
• Interests;
• Agenda-setting.

Finally, Jäger (2001: 55–56) has a further toolkit/list and Gee (2011b), who has much in common with CDA, although not normally being included in the group, has a whole book along the lines of a toolkit.

What all of these lists have in common is their emphasis on their indicative – as opposed to comprehensive – nature. One problem that they have, however, is that, although some of them include context, in their emphasis on textual features, they carry the danger of the user putting too much emphasis on textual features at the expense of context (see Blommaert, 2005, for a critique of CDA’s heavy emphasis on text at the expense of context). Perhaps what is also needed is a toolkit to help in the analysis of context.

10.5 CDA AND SYSTEMIC FUNCTIONAL LINGUISTICS

A number of CDA practitioners have claimed allegiance to Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) and a number of commentators have claimed it to be a preferred method. Fowler (1996a: 12), for example, advocates a simplified model of Halliday’s grammar (supplemented by concepts from Pragmatics). Fairclough (2003a: 5–6) adopts a similar approach, also mentioning the possible use of Pragmatics, Conversation Analysis and Corpus Linguistics. Wodak (2001a: 8), although not making consistent use of the model in her own work (see above), has stated as follows:

Whether analysts with a critical approach prefer to focus on microlinguistic features, macrolinguistic features, textual, discursive or contextual features, whether their angle is primarily philosophical, sociological or historical – in most studies there is reference to Hallidayan systemic functional grammar. This indicates that an understanding of the basic claims of Halliday’s grammar and his approach to linguistic analysis is essential for a proper understanding of CDA.

Of the commentators, we can cite Renkema (2004: 284):

In Critical Discourse Analysis more and more attempts are being made to ground analyses and interpretations of power relations on systematic descriptions of discourse. A promising perspective was developed by the founding father of the socio-semiotic approach … Michael Halliday.

As we saw in Chapter 2, according to Halliday’s SFL (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004), language is conceived of as a resource for communication and making meaning rather than as a formal system, as is the case in many other forms of linguistics. Linguistic structures, in this model, are viewed as interrelated choices (systems) which are available for the expression of meanings in situational contexts. Any utterance will simultaneously express meanings according to the three ‘macro-functions’: the ideational function (language as an expression of the individual’s experience of the world); the interpersonal function (how individuals relate to each other through language at the social level); and the textual function (how linguistic forms are used to relate to each other and to the situational context).

The case for SFL in CDA is put by Martin and Wodak (2003: 8):

SFL provides critical discourse analysts with a technical language for talking about language – to make it possible to look very closely at meaning, to be explicit and precise in terms that can be shared by others, and to engage in quantitative analysis where this is appropriate.
There is no doubt there are many very good studies which make use of SFL (many of the analyses by Fairclough, for example, or the studies collected in Martin and Wodak [2003], or Martin’s [2000] exemplificatory paper on how SFL can be used in CDA) and some of the systems and concepts within Halliday’s framework, such as transitivity (categories of processes and participant roles), modality, thematic development and grammatical metaphor have been used in CDA studies in the ‘precise and explicit’ way that Martin and Wodak describe.

However, there would be a number of problems with this approach if it were to be adopted as the only framework for CDA (which, as already should be clear, is not the case). First of all, to understand the grammar fully, a lot of work is required. For example, in a talk a few years ago, Halliday (2006) stated that some 17,000 systems would be required to analyse fully the meaning potential of just one transitive verb. Similarly, Halliday’s best-known work, *An Introduction to Functional Grammar* (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004), extends to nearly 700 pages. This is why Fowler (1996a) states that this work ‘offers both more and less than is required’, ‘more’ in the sense that there is too much to absorb and ‘less’ in that it is not comprehensive enough to handle all the aspects of a text that one might want to analyse. Another problem with the SFL approach is that it is not designed to deal with pragmatic phenomena such as indirect speech acts and implicature. A third problem is that the model of context in SFL is relatively unexplored. None of these problems, however, implies that SFL cannot be employed in CDA along with other approaches. The other approaches may be desirable, however, because SFL is concerned with developing a systematic linguistic description according to a set of formal categories, but in any given text, there may be structures and functions which do not fit neatly into these categories (see van Leeuwen, 1996, for further discussion on this).

### 10.6 CDA AND CORPUS LINGUISTICS

Although slow to take off, critical discourse analysts are starting more and more to use corpus tools. Hunston (2002: 109–123) gives a summary of earlier CDA corpus-based work, while Baker (2006) and L. Flowerdew (2012) have more recent overviews. Probably the first CDA article to take a corpus approach was that of Hardt-Mautner (1995; see also Mautner, 2009a, b), while Morrison and Love (1996) and Flowerdew (1997) gave other early applications. More recent empirical studies of note are those of Baker et al. (2008) and Morley and Bayley (2009).

Hardt-Mautner (1995) lists four advantages of a corpus approach for CDA. First, a corpus approach allows the researcher to examine syntactic and semantic properties of key lexical items exhaustively. Second, it can serve as a heuristic, providing ideas for further qualitative investigation. Third, it produces ‘results’ in its own right; frequency of a certain form or of certain collocates may in itself be relevant for a critical point of view. Fourth (although perhaps this should come first), at the most fundamental level, the concordance is an extremely useful research tool, assisting the researcher in analysing the data more efficiently than would otherwise be the case.

Hardt-Mautner (1995) rightly emphasises that a corpus approach does not replace the more traditional qualitative analysis of CDA, but, instead, is a useful support. A further advantage of a corpus approach is that it may help to overcome criticisms of bias in more qualitative CDA analysis. Corpus findings may be based on large bodies of data, thereby making findings more representative and systematic (Baker, 2006).

While early corpus applications to CDA used quite simple concordancing techniques, more recent studies have used more sophisticated search and display tools, annotation systems and statistics, reflecting advances in mainstream corpus studies (Baker, 2006).

While, as we have seen in Chapter 9, teachers have embraced corpus techniques and developed data-driven learning, to date, reports are lacking of data-driven learning projects developed from a specifically critical perspective. No doubt such accounts will appear at some point, as this would seem to be a logical development.
10.7 POSITIVE DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

As a complement, or, indeed, antidote to CDA, Martin (1999), has suggested ‘PDA’, or Positive Discourse Analysis, as a possible development. ‘The approach exemplifies a positive style of Discourse Analysis that focuses on hope and change, by way of complementing the deconstructive exposé associated with Critical Discourse Analysis’ (Martin, 1999: 29). In a later paper Martin (2004: 197) has stated:

I suppose it would be going too far to propose a 10 year moratorium on deconstructive CDA, in order to get some constructive PDA off the ground. But we do need to move beyond a pre-occupation with demonology, beyond a singular focus on semiosis in the service of abusive power – and reconsider power communally as well, as it circulates through communities, as they re-align around values, and renovate discourses that enact a better world. Good question, of course, what better is! And how to achieve it? We can start to ask.

Instead of deconstructing a speech by Australian Conservative Prime Minister John Howard, Martin argues, work could be directed to the Australian Sorry Day and analysis could focus on Aboriginal Elders, the impact of their stories of being taken from their families, and its effect in turn on migrant children and their families.

In a similar vein, Luke (2002: 106) has also called for an emancipatory form of Discourse Analysis.

I have argued that to move beyond a strong focus on ideology critique, CDA would need to begin to develop a strong positive thesis about discourse and the productive uses of power. To paraphrase Marcuse (1971), we would need to begin to capture an affirmative character of culture where discourse is used aesthetically, productively, and for emancipatory purposes.

One danger of proposals such as those of Martin and Luke, however, would be that of the enterprise turning into a form of propaganda on behalf of the status quo. Another argument against PDA is that it sets up a false opposition with CDA. The term ‘critical’ incorporates both negative and positive, deconstruction and construction. One might argue, therefore, that, in arguing for a better world, CDA already incorporates a positive element.

10.8 CRITIQUE

Perhaps ironically, given its name, CDA has attracted rather a lot of criticism (in the negative sense of the word) as an approach and method for Discourse Analysis. These critiques are too numerous to review fully, but we can mention some of them. Perhaps the most common criticism is that CDA is biased. Blommaert (2005: 31–32), for example, talks about what he calls ‘the predominance of biased interpretations’ in CDA, arguing that this raises questions about ‘representativeness, selectivity, partiality, prejudice and voice (can analysts speak for the average consumer of texts?)’.

Another criticism of CDA is that it is too deterministic in its interpretations. According to Hammersley (1997: 244–245), CDA ‘often involves the adoption of a macro-sociological theory in which there are only two parties – the oppressors and the oppressed – and only one relationship between them: dominance’.

A third criticism is that the interpretation of the lay reader is ignored (see, for example,Stubbs, 1994). Analysts may have different readings from the actual consumers of the texts analysed. This is Blommaert’s (2005: 32) point in the above quotation, ‘can analysis speak for the average consumer of texts?’
Each of these criticisms has been responded to by various CDA practitioners, although there is not space here to enter into this debate. The following, however, are relevant references for both sides of the argument (Billig, 2008; Blommaert, 2005; de Beaugrande, undated; Fairclough, 1996, 2008; Flowerdew, 1999/2007; Stubbs, 1997; Widdowson, 1995a, b, 1996, 1998a, 2004).

10.9 APPLICATION TO PEDAGOGY

When it comes to application to pedagogy, CDA is more concerned with raising general awareness on the part of learners of the role of language in society than directly improving their proficiency in the use of the language. In addition to learner awareness, CDA has an important role to play in teacher education and can be applied to the analysis of learning materials in order to analyse their ideological underpinnings; are the materials politically biased, sexist, and so forth?

10.9.1 Critical Language Awareness

CLA is a concept developed by Fairclough (1992b) and colleagues, building on the Language Awareness movement, which was itself started earlier by Hawkins (1984). CLA presupposes a critical conception of education and schooling (Fairclough, 1992c: 2) and, as such, can be related to the more familiar parallel movement of critical pedagogy, based on the work of Freire (1985).

Fairclough’s case for CLA was based on three arguments (Fairclough, 1992c: 3). First, in the place where and at the time when it was developed (the UK in the late 1980s and early 1990s), there were changes taking place in the ways in which power and social control were exercised, changes in which language was deeply imbricated. Second, there were changes in the role of language in various types of work and in professional–client relationships, with a larger service sector and smaller manufacturing sector and quality of communication coming to be seen as part of the quality of service. Third, there were changes in language practices as an important element of the imposition of change, with language becoming less formal and professionals having to adapt their communicative styles to clients rather than vice versa.

As a consequence of these three changes, Fairclough claimed that ‘people commonly have problems knowing how to act as professionals, clients, parents, children, managers, employees, colleagues; and part of the problem is not being quite sure how to talk, write, or interpret what others say or write’ (p. 6).

Based on these premises, Fairclough argued that CLA was an urgently needed element in Language Education, ‘a prerequisite for effective democratic citizenship’ and that CLA should be ‘an entitlement for citizens, especially children developing towards citizenship in the educational system’ (p. 3, original emphasis).

Fairclough recommended that CLA should be developed using the same tools as those identified in Figure 10.1 above for CDA, namely description of formal aspects of language in texts; interpretation of interaction, that is what conventions are employed and how; and explanation of how processes of interaction relate to social action.

Elsewhere in the 1992 volume, Janks and Ivanic (1992) argued that simple ‘language awareness’, or ‘raised consciousness’, is not enough if CLA is to be truly emancipatory. They argue:

It is a central tenet of this chapter that ‘language awareness’ or ‘raised consciousness’, is not liberatory enough. Only if CLA empowers people to successfully contest the practices which disempower them would we claim that it is emancipatory. Awareness needs to be turned into action (Janks and Ivanic, 1992: 305).

In his main contribution to the original volume on CLA – a chapter entitled ‘The appropriacy of “appropriateness”’ – Fairclough (1992d) critiqued the notion of appropriateness underlying thinking on
Language Education and language awareness at the time. His main target was Hymes’s conception of communicative competence, as referred to in Chapter 1 of this volume, and Hymes’s view that:

[w]e have to account for the fact that a normal child acquires knowledge of sentences, not only as grammatical, but also as appropriate. He or she acquires competence as to when to speak, when not, and as to what to talk about, with whom, when and in what manner… There are rules of use without which the rules of grammar would be useless (Hymes, 1974: 15).

For Fairclough, this view was normative; imposing the ‘rules of use’ was to perpetuate the social status quo, a status quo which was tied to relations of domination and subordination. Hymes’s notion of communicative competence, as taken up by educationists, was a reification and naturalisation of these unequal power relations in society, Fairclough argued. Because such a notion of appropriateness was widely taken up in educational contexts – unthinkingly, as common sense, in Fairclough’s view – it was an important obstacle for CLA to overcome. The view of CLA put forward by Fairclough and colleagues ‘stresses the mutually reinforcing development of critical understanding of the sociolinguistic order, and practice, including the creative practice of probing and shifting existing conventions’ (Fairclough, 1992d: 53). Language awareness ‘should not push learners into oppositional practices which condemn them to disadvantage and marginalization; it should equip them with the capacities and understanding which are preconditions for meaningful choice and effective citizenship in the domain of language’ (Fairclough, 1992d: 54).

One of the examples Fairclough uses to illustrate what he refers to as ‘sociolinguistic hegemony’ is that of standard English and ‘doctrines of correctness’ (p. 51). It is a case of saying that only standard English is acceptable and other varieties are inappropriate. Fairclough had in mind the situation in the UK, but a similar argument is valid in countries where English in not the mother tongue and where governments and educational institutions impose standard English as the target second language and, in so doing, reject available local varieties.

### 10.9.2 Some examples of the application of Critical Language Awareness

It might seem that CLA is an activity more suited to L1 than L2 education, but this need not be the case, as some of the examples in this section will demonstrate.

In my own work (with Lindsay Miller) (Flowerdew & Miller, 2005), we have argued for a critical component to be incorporated into the second-language syllabus (specifically related to listening, but the same would apply to comprehension in general, including both listening and reading) for two reasons. First, such a component introduces a level of sophistication to language learning, where there is often a danger of trivialisation. Comprehension questions, particularly at the beginner’s level, are very often at a rather inconsequential, surface level. Encouraging learners to be critical is more likely to exercise their analytical abilities and, at the same time, to be motivational. Second, echoing CLA, with a critical approach, language teaching has the opportunity of preparing learners for responsible citizenship. English is increasingly becoming an international lingua franca and it is appropriate that the learning of English should incorporate a (critical) international perspective on the world.

One example that Flowerdew and Miller (2005) use to illustrate how this might work, even at a beginner’s level, is a television advertisement for Thai International Airlines. In this advertisement, a voice whispers the words ‘smooth as silk’. This phrase is a commonly used idiom in English, but when used in this particular context it takes on a new meaning; smoothness does not refer to a surface here, but to the smooth ride one has with this particular airline and the smooth service – a distinctive feature of certain South-East Asian airlines – that is offered. If we consider the context of airline service, we may realise that this utterance has a political dimension that may not strike us
on first hearing. ‘Smooth as silk,’ in the context of the television advertisement, is accompanied by an image of a beautiful young female cabin crew member attending to a male passenger. It is not unreasonable to ‘read’ this image as suggesting that it is the woman, or one of her peers, who will make travel with Thai airways ‘smooth’. There are gendered inequalities of power here in the suggestion that the female cabin crew member is expected to smoothen one’s (men’s) travel. What this might suggest for a model of listening (or reading) is a critical component that encourages learners to analyse the context within which what they hear is created and thereby deconstruct it so as to reveal the inequalities of power that the text reproduces. This may seem a demanding requirement best left to advanced students, but if we think about it, the utterance ‘Smooth as silk’, from a strictly linguistic point of view at any rate, is hardly complex. As such it could quite appropriately be used in teaching at the most elementary levels.

Turning now to other approaches to application, an early account of the application of CLA is that of Wallace (1992), who describes how she applied CDA to reading materials, arguing that a critical element is generally missing from textbooks, selected texts being on bland topics unlikely to be controversial, often in order to exemplify linguistic structures. Wallace developed a reading methodology which involves the questioning of ideological assumptions as well as ‘general’ reading comprehension. In this methodology, rather than emphasising right and wrong answers, questioning encourages a critical reading and asks learners to use language to explore and explain a text’s ideological positioning.

In further early work, Clark and Ivanic (1997) developed a CLA approach to English for Academic Purposes courses at university level in writing. Their approach is summarised as asking students constantly to answer the following questions: ‘Why are conventions/practices the way they are?’, ‘In whose interests do they operate?’, ‘What views of knowledge and representations of the world do they perpetuate?’ and ‘What are the possible alternatives?’ (Clark & Ivanic, 1999: 66). Clark and Ivanic (1997: 217) seek to ‘empower learners by providing them with a critical analytical framework to help them reflect on their own language experiences and practices, the language practices of others in the institutions of which they are a part, and the wider society within which they live’.

Janks (1999) discusses the use of student journals as a means of assessing the development of students engaged in a postgraduate course in CLA in South Africa. Janks demonstrates the multiple identities that are revealed through the journals and how these identities are transformed or conserved as learners enter a new discourse community. In addition, Janks raises the difficult question as to whether CLA increases students’ agency and leads to transformative action or not.2

In a later development of her earlier work, Wallace (2009) describes an advanced reading course for foreign-language learners in London which allowed her to examine some key principles of CLA. Wallace argues for the need of a course such as the one she describes to draw attention to the ideological bases of discourses as they circulate both in everyday life and within specific texts. The course Wallace describes:

directed students’ attention to the manner in which literacy practices offer insight into power relations in everyday life, as well as, at the micro level, examining the manner in which specific texts reinforce or challenge relations of power through the patterning of linguistic choices (pp. 98–99).

Wallace’s course description included the following goals for students (p. 109):

- Do you want to improve your critical reading skills in English?
- Do you feel that you would like a fuller understanding of the written texts which you encounter in your day-to-day life in Britain?

This class aims to help you:
• Read between the lines, that is, understand the hidden messages of written texts.
• Understand some of the cultural meanings in written texts.
• See how texts persuade us to behave or think in particular ways.
• Appreciate the ways in which texts are written for different audiences.
• See how texts may be read in different ways by different people.

The course included a wide range of different texts, including advertisements, newspaper texts, leaflets and forms, textbooks and magazines.

Wallace claims that there is a need to go beyond expert exegesis in CDA and examine how it might become an activity in which social groups can participate, with its potential to empower participants both in educational settings and in everyday life. This, she claims, is the great advantage of CLA, in so far as it can take place in a classroom, with 'a ready-made interpretative community' (p. 99). Another advantage of this group approach is that interpretation becomes negotiable, where in the CDA literature it is usually the work of 'the lone armchair critic' (Stubbs, 1994: 99), a complaint of critics of CDA, as noted above.

A very practical approach to using CDA in the language classroom is presented by Cots (2006). Cots does not use the term CLA, instead locating his approach in CDA theory, but it clearly is an instance of CLA. Cots (2006) contrasts what he considers to be two different approaches to discourse: a non-critical view and a critical view, as follows.

A non-critical view of discourse:
• a stretch of language perceived to be meaningful, unified, and purposive;
• different ways of talking / writing about (and structuring) areas of knowledge or social practice (for example, medical discourse, ecological discourse).

A critical view of discourse:
• ideologically determined ways of talking or writing about persons, places, events or phenomena;
• a mode of social practice that is both structured by society and, at the same time, contributes to structuring that same society.

This is followed by a comparison of critical and non-critical views of Discourse Analysis, as follows.

A non-critical view of Discourse Analysis:
• description of natural spoken or written discourse;
• study of what gives a stretch of language unity and meaning.

A critical view of Discourse Analysis:
• analysis of how texts work within specific sociocultural practices;
• explanation of how discourse is shaped by relations of power and ideology and, at the same time, is used to construct social identities, social relations, and systems of knowledge and belief.

Cots relates his pedagogical approach to Fairclough's model of CDA, as was shown above, with the stages slightly modified as social practice, discursive practice and textual practice.

From an analytical point of view, the model of CDA proposed by Fairclough (1989, 1992b) considers discourse as the result of three different types of practice: social, discursive, and textual. At the level of social practice, the goal is to discover the extent to which discourse is shaped by and, at the same time, influences social structures and the nature of the social
activity of which it forms part. The discursive practice dimension acknowledges the specificity of the communicative situation, taking into account both material and cognitive aspects related to the conditions of textual production and interpretation (for example, intertextuality, presuppositions, etc.). Finally, the textual practice dimension focuses on formal and semantic features of text construction, such as grammar or vocabulary, which contribute to conveying/interpreting a specific message (p. 339).

When this model is applied to language users or learners:

[...]the 'critical' nature of the model is that it relies on the users'/learners' capacity to interpret a text within a specific communicative, social, and ideological context and react to it taking into account their personal experience and values.

Pedagogical exploitation of a given text, as exemplified by a piece about the Amish religious community in North America, follows the three stages of Fairclough's model. In the social practice phase of the activity, learners reflect upon the following aspects:

1. how the text contributes to a particular representation of the world and whether this representation comes into conflict with readers' own representations;
2. how the textual representation is shaped by the ideological position of its producer(s);
3. how the text contributes to reinforcing or changing the ideological position of its readers.

The following set of questions is suggested to help learners in their analysis in this social practice stage:

1. Are the Amish typical American people? Why?
2. In your opinion, who wrote the text? An Amish or a non-Amish person? Try to justify your answer.
3. What do you think of the Amish after reading the text? Would you like to be an Amish?

The discourse practice phase of the activity centres on the specificity of the communicative situation of the text, taking into account material and cognitive circumstances such as the following:

1. the discourse type or genre that the text can be classified into and the intertextual chains it enters into;
2. the contribution of the different propositions in the text to the overall impression of coherence;
3. the readers' knowledge of the world and experience of other texts that the author draws upon.

The following are suggested facilitating questions for learners for this discourse practice stage:

1. Where can you find a text like this? What kind of readers is it addressed to? Is it written for Amish or non-Amish people?
2. What is the 'point' of the text? What is the author trying to tell us? What do you remember from the Amish after reading the text?
3. What do you know about New York or the USA? The Amish live near New York. Are they really 'an unusual community'? How does the author of the text try to show us that they are 'unusual'?
The third stage, the textual stage, focuses on the salient formal and semantic features of text construction. The following example questions focus on connectors, modality and vocabulary, respectively:

1. What linking words connect the following ideas in the text:
   - Living near New York < > Lifestyle of the Amish
   - Using banks and going to the doctor’s < > Having phones
   - Playing baseball and eating hot dogs < > Having TVs, radios, carpets …
   - Having churches < > Being very religious

2. Are the ideas on both sides presented as paradoxical or contradictory?

3. Look for examples in the text containing the verb can/can’t. What can the Amish do? What can the Amish not do? Next look for examples containing the verbs have to and allow, expressing obligation. What are the Amish obliged to do?

4. Fill in the ‘you’ column in the table below and say in each case if the word/phrase in question has a positive (+) or a negative (−) meaning for you. When you have finished, do the same to fill in the ‘Amish’ column according to what the text says.

Cots concludes his article with a checklist of questions for teachers (a) to approach language use with a ‘critical’ attitude, and (b) as a reference framework to plan how to present language use to learners. The list is as follows:

A Social practice
A.1 What social identities does/do the author(s) of the text represent?
A.2 What is the relationship between the social identities the author(s) represent(s)?
A.3 What is/are the social goal(s) the author(s) has/have with the text?
A.4 To what extent is the text necessary to accomplish the goal(s)?
A.5 In what kind of social situation is the text produced? How conventional is it?
A.6 Does/do the author(s) represent or appeal to particular beliefs?
A.7 What are/may be the social consequences of the text?

B Discourse practice
B.1 How conventional is the text taking into account its situation of use?
B.2 Does it remind us of other texts we have encountered either in its form or in its content?
B.3 Can we classify it as representative of a specific type?
B.4 Is the text more or less accessible to different kinds of readers?
B.5 Does it require us to ‘read between the lines’?
B.6 Does it presuppose anything?
B.7 Who are the producer(s) and intended receiver(s) of the text?

C Textual practice
C.1 If the text is co-operatively constructed (for example, a conversation), is it obvious in any way that one of the participants is more in control of the construction than the others?
C.2 How are the ideas represented by utterances, sentences, or paragraphs connected in the text?
C.3 Does/do the author(s) follow any rules of politeness?

The examples from Flowerdew and Miller, Wallace, Clark and Ivanic, Janks and Cots presented in this section are quite varied in their approaches. What they all have in common, however, is the goal
of raising awareness on the part of learners of societal inequalities as argued for by Fairclough and what he claims as ‘a prerequisite for effective democratic citizenship’ and as ‘an entitlement for citizens, especially children developing towards citizenship in the educational system’, as cited above.

10.10 QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. In section 10.1, it is stated that CDA ‘typically examines specific discursive situations where dominance and inequality are to the fore’. Can you think of any situations where this is the case? In what ways is language used to enact dominance and inequality in these situations?
2. In section 10.1, it is stated, again, that ‘Participants may not be aware of how powerful or powerless they are in discourse terms.’ Can you think of any examples where this is the case? What are the reasons for this?
3. Think of a ‘big D’ discourse with which you are familiar. What are some of its linguistic characteristics?
4. Select a newspaper with which you are familiar. What sort of identity does this newspaper project on to its government or the government of another country? What are some of the linguistic/discursive features of this projection of identity?
5. Can you think of a discursive situation where a PDA study might be appropriate? What might some of the features of this discourse be?
6. In section 10.9, it is stated: ‘When it comes to application to pedagogy, CDA is more concerned with raising general awareness on the part of learners of the role of language in society than directly improving their proficiency in the use of the language.’ Do you think there is any benefit for language proficiency in a CDA approach? If so, how might this come about?
7. Do you agree that there is a role for CDA and CLA in schools and in society at large? If so, what is this role?
8. Wallace lists the following goals for a critical reading course:
   a) Read between the lines, that is, understand the hidden messages of written texts.
   b) Understand some of the cultural meanings in written texts.
   c) See how texts persuade us to behave or think in particular ways.
   d) Appreciate the ways in which texts are written for different audiences.
   e) See how texts may be read in different ways by different people.

Find a text or texts which might be suitable for such an analysis. Then apply the stages that Wallace suggests to the text. How effective do you think this approach would be with a group of learners with whom you are familiar?

10.11 FURTHER READING

Cots, 2006; Fairclough, 1992b, 2003a, b; Fairclough et al., 2011; Wodak, 2001a; Wodak and Meyer, 2001.