Book Review

A New Agenda in (Critical) Discourse Analysis: Theory, Methodology and Interdisciplinarity

Ruth Wodak and Paul Chilton (eds.).Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2005. xiii+321 pp. ISBN 90-272-2703-9 (Eur.)

Li Songqing

As part of the *Discourse Approaches to Politics, Society and Culture* series, this volume mainly introduces the interdisciplinary and multi-methodological character of (critical) discourse analysis (CDA). Some of the contributions were further developed through discussion at the workshop on 'New Agenda in CDA' that was convened in 2003 at the University of Vienna. The intention of the editors was to celebrate the existence of CDA and its about thirty years' development, and the complete of a six-year project research chaired by Ruth Wodak.

Their aim, according to the editors, was to bring together scholars who share an interest in the social sciences in the expectation that they will trigger more debates that would specifically develop and enhance the field of CDA. As such a first step this publication is valuable indeed. I find the collection and the range of its concerns particular useful to an insider to the discipline of linguistics. I note however that for scholars with specialist knowledge and those who are quite familiar with the work of some contributors the detailed description of each approach could prove rather informative and heuristic. The strength of the collection lies in its range. While the seventeen contributors are concerned broadly with the social sciences and the disciplines accessible and conductible to CDA, their analytical frameworks range widely.

The collection is divided into three domains. The first area is composed of five chapters devoted to explicating theoretical and methodological issues, and possible limitations of CDA, the second domain consists of five chapters that present studies exploring the European Convention, the construction of European identities and therapeutic discourse, and the third section includes three chapters that delve into the integration of specific notions and approaches of discourse analysis into sociology and anthropology. My review follows this organizational structure.

As previously noted, the first part of the book illuminates some of the theoretical and methodological issues developing and enhancing CDA. There are five chapters each contributed by internationally recognized and respected experts in their areas of concentration and in the broader context of CDA. Theo van Leeuwen in the first chapter outlines three models of interdisciplinarity, i.e., 'centralist', 'pluralist' and 'integrationist'. The idea of 'discipline' is in effect narrowed down to 'skill' in the integrationist model (p.8). According to van Leeuwen, the main feature that distinguishes the integrationist model from the others is its interdependent disciplines. Moreover, disciplines in the pluralist and integrationist models are equally valued--- that is, one discipline is not seen as subsidiary to another---but it is not the case for the centralist model. In the pluralist and integrationist models issues and problems are central, while methods

are oriented in the centralist model. Because of the newness of integrationist model, van Leeuwen particularly leaves much space for the discussion of why and how discourse analysis can be integrated with other disciplines. Some of pitfalls of the integrationist model are also acknowledged. However, because such forms do not exist in practice, the proposed interdisciplinary models can be only understood as 'pure' or 'ideal' forms (Muntigl and Horvath: 215, this volume). The chapter ends with an integrationist research project, indicating specific, complementary roles played by the component disciplines in an integrationist model.

In chapter 2, Paul Chilton introduces the reader to a cognitive approach to the analysis of discourse in social and political contexts. This innovative idea is fairly heuristic and thought-provoking, and could easily motivate further debate. Specifically, Chilton highlights three main problems of current research in CDA in a broad sense and then the incorporation of a cognitive perspective is proposed. He believes that a possible cognitive approach combined with cognitive evolutionary psychology and cognitive linguistics, specifically blending theory, to the analysis of discourse in social and political contexts is fairly needed for CDA if it is going to be genuinely interdisciplinary. To illustrate this, he applies the combined cognitive framework to a racist discourse, exploring the work largely ignored by CDA account, and concludes that 'the framework can go beyond description (of CDA) and put forward suggestive explanatory stories' (p. 44). Based on cognitive evolutionary psychology, he also explicates initially a core empirical and theoretical question that CDA has never addressed before about to what extent language can trick, deceive or manipulate the human mind. He claims that because of its little attention paid to the human mind, 'CDA in its later manifestation has made no contribution to scientific understanding of the language capacity' (p. 22) and could not achieve the goal of answering questions regarding the nature of the human mind, of human language, of human language use and of human society. His argument guides us to the issue of the status and direction of CDA.

Norman Fairclough's chapter (Chapter 3) is an attempt to highlight and enrich a transdisciplinary approach to CDA that was first introduced into CDA by Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999). Central to Fairclough's approach is a feature of transdisciplinarity and dialectics of discourse in relation with other non-discoursal elements of social life. Fairclough contends that transdisciplinary research can be further developed and enhanced through dialogue of all the disciplines and theories involved, which has been exemplified by the treatment of genre and genre analysis in the version of CDA. CDA, he claims, can consequently make some benefit from research on other disciplines and theories, and vise versa. Nevertheless, Fairclough's contribution to the development and enrichment of transdisciplinary research seems relatively limited because on the one hand Fairclough develops and enhances the dialogue between CDA and the sociology of governance, and on the other hand his treatment of dialogue is remained in particular on the category of genre and genre analysis only.

Teun A. Van Dijk continues in chapter 4 to draw a new theory of the way knowledge is managed in discourse processing as well as a new theory of context. Knowledge is defined pragmatically and socio-cognitively as 'shared beliefs satisfying the specific (epistemic) criteria of an (epistemic) community' (p.73). The way knowledge in discourse production and comprehension is seen as a function of context. Van Dijk argues that social context and text are linked by a 'context model' (van Dijk 2001; Wodak 2000), 'the mental representation of the participants about the relevant properties of the social situation in which participants interact, and

produce and comprehend text or talk' (p.75). One of the crucial properties of such context models, he suggests, is the knowledge of language users, which is a cognitive device named the K-device, about the knowledge of the recipient. Because this K-device is crucial for the control of many important aspects of discourse, speakers need a number of K-device strategies of context models to manage in discourse production and comprehension various kinds of knowledge. The overall K-device strategies are simple according to van Dijk, but more specific strategies are needed for special cases despite the presupposition of a common ground of shared general, sociocultural knowledge. He argues that K-strategies can be associated with CDA in the sense that 'symbolic elites may impose their own beliefs as generally accepted knowledge, marginalize large audience segments by presupposing knowledge that is not generally known, or conversely by infravaloring non-dominant groups as ignorant' (p. 96).

Scollon and Scollon (Chapter 5) present a theory of nexus analysis developed in a series of earlier papers (e.g. Scollon 2001; Scollon & Scollon 2002). They stress the urgency for CDA to theorize the linkages among discourse and action in the light of activity theory or sociocultural psychology. Their example of lighting a stove to make breakfast points out that discourse in general is sedimented as habitus through a sequence of actions over time. They explain the concept of habitus principally in Nishida's (1958) terms 'historical body' and 'action-institution'. From the example of a child learning to read the word 'trilogy', they illustrate that some psychological formations are internalized first as actions and only subsequently externalized as discourse. The authors argue that CDA is hardly sufficient in itself because it has not integrated the analysis of the social semiosis of the social world which must be that which is internalized with a theorization of the process of internalization and externalization except to assert the concept of the habitus as the location of those processes (p. 113). They therefore urge a much broader conceptualization of moments of social action, a nexus analysis, which encompasses not only cycles of discourse and resemiotization, but also the ecological interactions among the multiple cycles of discourse.

The next part of the book consists of five chapters presenting detailed text analysis. Unfortunately, its focus is predominantly on topics such as the European Convention, the construction of European identities and therapeutic discourse. This has to do with who was available to attend the workshop on 'New Agenda in CDA' at the University of Vienna. The analysis, however, is not restricted to some perspectives of interdisciplinary CDA explored in the first part, but dealt with in an inter/trans/multi-disciplinary way, which makes the collection more heuristic and debatable. In chapter 6, Ruth Wodak and Gilbert Weiss, drawing upon their research on European Union discourses with a wide range of genres, critically discuss recent theory formation in some approaches of CDA and elaborate some thoughts on the mediation between the social and discourse through a particular focus on the discursive construction of European identities. Although the plurality of theories and methodologies can be highlighted as a specific strength of CDA, they maintain, it is also crucial to develop an integrated theoretical framework for CDA capable of reconciling sociological and linguistic perspectives without reducing them to one another because a synthesis of theories illustrated by Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999) is by no means 'a monistic theory model' or 'more true than the individual theories' (p. 125). Three basic steps for developing an integrated theoretical framework are proposed---clarifying the theoretical assumptions before the actual analysis, developing the

conceptual tools capable of connecting both directions of sociology and linguistics, and finally defining categories. They argue that European identities are constructed differently in particular contexts and discursively re-negotiated and co-constructed, and propose for further study three perspectives – historical, communicative, and participation and representation.

In chapter 7 Michal Krzyzanowski examines the various discursive constructions, negotiations and reformulations of political and institutional identity of the EU within the recently completed European Convention within the discourse-historical framework developed by Ruth Wodak. The study concentrates in particular on communication flows and plenary sessions to elaborate the European Convention as an arena of institutional communication. It also explores characteristics of the EU discourse about the future of Europe by illustrating the discursive realization of the 'mainstream voice' in the European Convention, its dissolution of national standpoints, and the characteristics of discourse of convention members from the EU-Candidate countries.

Within the same framework, Florian Oberhuber (Chapter 8) continues with a special focus on the phenomenological reality of the European Convention process in the context of the on-going constitutional debates in Europe. Based on the empirical study, he critically discusses the application of a model of deliberation for describing and interpreting the Convention process, and doubts its capacity in grasping the essence of the Convention process. It is agued that deliberation, being inherent to human communication under particular ideal condition, is not a best solution to interpreting the Convention process. Thus, the concept 'mainstreaming' which is then inherent to the process itself is proposed as a research agenda for an empirical account of the Convention process, indicating the necessity of an integration of perspectives and methods from linguistics and political sociology on such a problem-oriented basis. Oberhuber finally provides a frame of reference for researching the European Convention.

In chapter 9, Christoph Barenreuter presents the results of his investigation into the discursive construction of Europe in Swedish newspapers. The author couches his research within a heuristic model as it accounts for the reciprocal relationship between discourses on the national 'we' and on 'Europe'. Drawing upon 1018 reporting articles on the formation of government in Austria in four major Swedish newspapers between January and September 2000, Barenreuter notes that 'Swedish national identity is characterised by a tight discursive coupling between the nation and the state', and that 'whatever stance the various newspapers took on the matter, discourses on European issues are closely intertwined with and influenced by discourses on national identity' (p. 206). However, it is also noted that Swedish national and European identity can be possibly accommodated. The results raise a question for further study on whether the question of democracy and of the tension between state-sovereignty and supra-nationality lead to an increasingly sceptical perception of the notion of a European constitution.

Chapter 10 written by Peter Muntigl and Adam Horvath is an exploration of the integration of systemic function linguistics and psychotherapy research associated with the examination of client change process realized in narrative therapy. Grounded in the integrationist model of interdisciplinarity (van Leeuwen, this volume), the authors suggest that narrative activities of therapists relate to client change in two ways---through the genre used in narrative therapy and through the therapist's social action guiding client behaviour. Copying the terms logogenesis and ontogenesis (Halliday & Matthiessen 1999), they respectively account for genre

and its relation to client change, and how clients develop semiotic repertoires of their meaning-making lives and relationships in therapy. Taken together, 'the genres and stages of narrative therapy have been responsible for clients' semiotic change' (p. 227). The authors also find that interpersonal relationship factors might have certain influence on the change process though the therapists and clients' negotiation of authority and expertise. Their findings reveal that both linguistics and psychotherapeutic theories may play a complementary role in conceptualizing change.

The final section of the book is devoted to exploring the integration of specific notions and approaches of discourse analysis into sociology and anthropology. There are three chapters in this section, each presenting its own unique perspective looking into interdisciplinarity. In chapter 11 Irene Bellier provides an answer to the question 'How do institutions think?' from the perspective of anthropology through the study of texts and discourses in the European Commission and the United Nations. It is unfortunate that his concern remains only on the process of thinking in institutions, the production of discourses in a multinational environment, and the partition of objects and interdisciplinarity in the discussion of anthropology's and linguistics' distinct approaches of discourse practices. Consequently, the outcome and effect of complementary work is not discussed sufficiently.

Andras Kovacs (Chapter 12) examines the role of empirical social science in defining the borders of public and private communication, and consequential act of people's communication. He begins by elaborating the importance of constant re-evaluation of the communicative situation in the determination of the public or private nature of the interaction. Drawing upon the results of several experimental studies carried out on latent anti-Semitic prejudices in Hungary, he distinguishes two different social groups in terms of a combination of various attitudes towards anti-Semitism. The implication for these findings is that anti-Semitism can be functioned as a code to symbolize the boundaries of public and private. In this way, we can comprehend the establishment of public political and cultural identity easily.

The last chapter by Tom R. Burns and Marcus Carson is an effort to contribute systematically to transdiscipinary integration of institutional theory with cognitive science and discourse analysis. The authors believe that 'the investigation and analysis of social phenomena needs each of the three scientific traditions' (p. 284). Their concern remains mostly on institution, paradigm and discourse and their interrelationships. Of particular noteworthiness, they identify common patterns of emerging paradigms, paradigm competition, and paradigm shifts, as well as particular types of discourses in connection with institutional crisis. This study indicates societal institutions and the paradigms upon which they are modeled are most likely to undergo change under extreme circumstances.

Individually, the chapters of this collection present firmly grounded conceptual and operational perspectives about CDA. Its innovative approach is some of its great assets. It is a welcome addition to the growing base of literature devoted to the field of the social sciences, and CDA in particular. I am confident that the collection will be an informative read to many readers across a number of disciplines.

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Li Songqing
Department of English Language and Literature
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
National University of Singapore