

Critical discourse analysis and change in management discourse and ideology: a transdisciplinary approach

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Abstract

Recent work in Critical Discourse Analysis has been focused upon the theoretical and methodological enhancement of the analysis of discourse within transdisciplinary research on social transformations variously referred to as ‘globalisation’, ‘new capitalism’, ‘knowledge-based economy and learning society’, and so forth (see Chouliaraki & Fairclough 1999, Fairclough 2000a, 2000b, 2003, and the ‘Language in New Capitalism’ website). Discourse (or ‘semiosis’) is conceived as a moment of the social dialectically interconnected with other moments (Fairclough 2001, Fairclough, Jessop & Sayer 2002). From this perspective, the focus is on how changes in fields such as business or politics relate to these broader dynamics of social transformation and restructuring, and particularly on relationships between discourse and other moments of the social in these changes (Fairclough & Thomas forthcoming).

In this paper I shall briefly set out a version of Critical Discourse Analysis which can I believe serve as a resource for framing and researching many of the themes listed by the conference organisers as relevant to the conference. But I shall refer specifically to the preliminary exploration of transdisciplinary dialogue between CDA and ‘the new sociology of capitalism’ in Chiapello & Fairclough 2002, specifically the analysis of the ‘new spirit of capitalism’ in Boltanski & Chiapello 1999. The latter was grounded in a contrastive study of the language of management literature of the 1960s and 1990s, and one question addressed by our paper is how a dialogue with CDA might enhance theoretically and methodologically its already existing orientation to discourse. For illustrative purposes I shall refer to one management ‘guru’ text (Kanter 2001).

The paper will address a number of issues including: the dialectics of discourse (Harvey 1996); the nature of ‘transdisciplinary’ as opposed to other forms of ‘interdisciplinary’ research; analysis of change in management discourse and ideology; the place of linguistic text analysis in social research.

References

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Note: colleagues may be interested to know that a new interdisciplinary journal, *Critical Discourse Studies*, will be published by Routledge from 2004, co-edited by Phil Graham, Jay Lemke, Ruth Wodak and myself. Further details will be available at the conference, and I shall be very happy to discuss possible papers.