

Norman FAIRCLOUGH, *Discourse and social change*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992. 259 pages.

In this book, Fairclough presents his proposal for a *Critical Discourse Analysis* as a method for using language analysis in the study of social change. The notion of «social change» should be understood in a broad sense, as focussing on the study of social relations as these are manifested in discourse practice from a dynamic, historical or processual perspective. The term «critical» usually refers to the political motivations of research which seeks to uncover hidden mechanisms of social domination and to empower disadvantaged social groups. This framework is therefore being used by researchers interested in gender issues, classroom research, race relations, media discourse, social domination, bilingual studies and other aspects of social relations that are likely to have some political significance.

Fairclough defines his work as a contribution to the interdisciplinary ethos that is now developing more and more within linguistics and the social sciences as researchers realise that language plays a key role in the processes of social and cultural change. This is an important departure from more cognitive and formalistic paradigms that seek to uncover structures and synchronic regularities in language and society. In chapter 1, Fairclough reviews some traditional

approaches to linguistics and discourse analysis and argues that these usually overlook the fact that power relations are created, maintained and transformed in social interaction. However, he does recommend that discourse analysts integrate analytical tools from pragmatics, grammar and semantics.

In chapter 2, he proposes to draw upon the work of Michel Foucault (1972) in order to build a predominantly *social* theory of discourse. With Foucault, Fairclough sees discourse as constitutive and constructive of social reality. However, he argues that he avoids the more deterministic reading of Foucault because of his own focus on the details of concrete instances of social interaction. He claims that his particular contribution is to use Foucault's principles for a *text oriented* discourse analysis, and that this analysis should provide evidence of the processes whereby power relations and their accompanying belief systems or ideologies are created, struggled upon, changed or negotiated. It is also important to note that, in adopting Foucault's ideas, Fairclough also integrates a post-structuralist conceptualisation of subjectivity which is empirically orientated, and where identity appears as dynamic, sometimes unstable and contradictory rather

than static and pre-determined by social factors.

In chapter 3, he describes the main principles of his method with more detail. It is based mainly on the analysis of texts and concrete instances of social interaction. He adopts Halliday's view of language as 'multifunctional', that is, as «simultaneously representing reality, enacting social relations, and establishing identities.» (p. 9). The linguistic analyses are then used in order to theorise on issues of sociological relevance. He proposes, therefore, three levels of analysis: the text (the written or spoken product of social interaction), the 'discursive practice' dimension (where the situated processes of text production and interpretation are investigated) and the 'social practice' dimension (which considers the significance of the speech event studied within the institutional and social context where it is located).

Fairclough also proposes to study the «ideologies» that are implicit in social interaction. This interest is based on the assumption that our knowledge and beliefs about the social world are created and changed in social interaction, and that these play a key role in the maintenance or change of power relations. Therefore, texts can also be analysed in terms of struggles to legitimise or 'naturalise' particular views of the world. In these struggles, dominant groups seek to make their views appear as *natural* or *commonsensical* in order to defend their interests and establish their *hegemony*. Hegemony designates the political and ideological domination exerted by a social group within society, and which is sustained by the political relations and alliances between different social groups. These processes of ideological struggle can also be located through linguistic analysis (for instance, changes in wording) and intertextual analysis (as different social groups adopt different discourses in different ways).

One of the key ideas also adopted by Fairclough is Bakhtin's (1981, 1986) and Kristeva's (1986) notion of «intertextuality» (chapter 4). In simple terms, «intertextuality» means that each text presents traces of other texts because each utterance is historically located in relation to other discourses that exist within society. One of the examples given by Fairclough is the impact of the privatisation of traditional services such as education, health care and the arts. He argues that these changes have forced social actors to adopt «new discourse practices within existing activities», whereby the discourses of marketing, advertising and business have *colonised* the discourse of the administration and changed the social relations and identities of people working in these areas. A close analysis of texts produced by these institutions provides evidence of these political changes in the ways in which the different discourses are articulated and combined. The investigation of social change through Critical Discourse Analysis is very much based on analysing these tensions between discourses and the resulting forms of hybridity in which texts appear.

Although this brief summary of Fairclough's method may appear very theoretical, his book is actually quite readable. It has been written for people working in a variety of disciplines outside linguistics and who are not supposed to be familiar with difficult jargon. Chapters 5, 6 and 7 are devoted to showing practical instances of how his analysis can be done and how his concepts can be used, which I cannot really reproduce here. Each one of these chapters corresponds to one of the three levels of analysis: text, discursive practice and social practice. Finally, chapter 8 is even more basic, as it deals with the more practical issues of data gathering, sampling, transcribing and coding in critical discourse analysis. However, it is also important to bear in

mind that people coming from mainstream linguistics and from positivistic sociological approaches may find this type of analysis difficult to understand. This is because of its predominantly constructivist and post-structuralist basis, which encourages a very different attitude in the way data are analysed and categories are constructed as compared with traditional structuralism. Structuralist research is often geared towards finding formal features and evidence of existing «systems»,

and it predominantly contains a realist-based notion of validity. In this sense, I believe that it is necessary that critical discourse analysts develop a greater awareness of the epistemological or philosophical basis of this framework in the future. Otherwise, readers may think that they are simply dealing with another relativistic framework, which is clearly not the case.

Joan Pujolar
Lancaster University

Jan RENKEMA, *Discourse Studies. An Introductory Textbook*. Amsterdam, Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1993. ix + 224 pages.

Renkema's book is a comprehensive and thorough introduction to discourse studies intended to familiarize students at university level with the key concepts and major issues in this field. It is subdivided in three parts, preceded by a short introductory chapter in which the author presents and outlines the main topics dealt with in the text.

Part 1 (chapters 2-5) constitutes a general introduction to the field. Thus, in chapter 2, devoted to language as verbal communication, we are introduced to Bühler's Organon model (1934), Grice's cooperative principle and conversational maxims (1975), the concept of conversational implicature, and the politeness strategies which are brought to bear when language is used. Chapter 3 is concerned with speech acts and their interpretation in discourse. A clear definition of discourse and an explanation of such essential concepts in the field as the seven standards of textuality and the various types of cohesion can be found in chapter 4. Last but not least, chapter 5 deals with the term «function» as it is used in discourse studies, while stressing its dependence on the situation in which language is used. To this end Dell Hymes' SPEAKING model (1972) is employed.

Part 2 (chapters 6-9) is an introduction to basic phenomena. Chapter 6 is devoted to propositions, macrostructures, superstructures, and topics, or, in the author's words, «the building blocks of discourse», while chapter 7 is concerned with «the cement between the blocks», namely anaphora, deixis, and the various types of discourse relations. The dichotomies written language and verbal interaction, everyday and literary language are effectively dealt with in chapter 8, and several possible discourse typologies are proposed. Finally, chapter 9 discusses the question of what «style» is and the way in which stylistic variation can be described, while providing examples of stylistic research and exploring the role of metaphor in everyday language.

Part 3 (chapters 10-12) is concerned with specific types of discourse. Hence, chapter 10 examines key concepts in the analysis of conversation, namely transcription systems (focusing on score and dramaturgical notation), the turn-taking model developed by Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1974), and various types of sequential organization (turns, adjacency pairs, three-part sequences, etc.) described by Schegloff (1977) and Mehan (1979). Chapter 11, in turn, deals with