

Theresa Catalano  
Linda R. Waugh

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# Critical Discourse Analysis, Critical Discourse Studies and Beyond

# **Perspectives in Pragmatics, Philosophy & Psychology**

## **Volume 26**

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# Critical Discourse Analysis, Critical Discourse Studies and Beyond

 Springer

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ISSN 2214-3807 ISSN 2214-3815 (electronic)  
Perspectives in Pragmatics, Philosophy & Psychology  
ISBN 978-3-030-49377-6 ISBN 978-3-030-49379-0 (eBook)  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-49379-0>

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*To our students and all those fighting for  
social change and justice.*

# Acknowledgments

First and foremost, we would like to thank Luigi Catalano and Ron Breiger for their loving, patient, and tireless support throughout the writing process. Theresa would also like to thank her parents Jacqueline Bifano Scholar and Eric Scholar for their support and for always taking pride in what she does. We are also grateful for our children's support—Isabella Catalano, Lorenzo Catalano, and Valentina Catalano and David Waugh-Breiger. Monique Monville-Burston also deserves much gratitude for her patience and understanding. We want to acknowledge Khaled Al Masaeed, Tom Hong Do, and Paul Renigar for their original contributions to the chapter from which this book was drawn (Waugh et al., 2016).<sup>1</sup> We would also like to express our great appreciation to David Machin, Andreas Musolff, Teun van Dijk, Theo van Leeuwen, and Ruth Wodak for their advice, the time they took to converse with us about various issues and topics in the book regarding their own work, the way they helped connect us to other CDS scholars, their feedback on the first draft, and their general support, all of which have helped in making the book better than it would have been. In addition, we would like to acknowledge the input from two anonymous reviewers of our book whose advice prompted us to make needed changes. Our gratitude also goes to Helen van der Stelt and Jolanda Voogd for their work with us for most of the time it took us to write this book, to Anita Ramchat and Malini Arumugam for seeing us through the rest, to the other editors and production team at Springer, as well as to Alessandro Capone and Jacob Mey for encouraging us to write this book in the first place and to Alessandro for including it in his book series and waiting patiently for it to be done. We also want to extend heartfelt thanks to all of the contributors to Chap. 7 who took the time to think about the way they connect their work to the world and send a description to us to be published here (in the order they appear in Chap. 7): Ruth Wodak, Teun van Dijk, Andreas Musolff, Leticia Yulita, David Machin, Felicitas Macgilchrist, Marcus Otto, Riem Spielhaus, Richard Jackson, Paul Chamness Iida, John Richardson, Theo van Leeuwen, Rebecca Rogers, Paul Renigar, Emily Suh, Katelyn Hemmeke, Ian Roderick, Timothy Reagan, and Grace Fielder—and ourselves. We also appreciate the help with references and formatting that Aiqing Yu and Uma Ganesan gave us. And finally, thanks to you, our readers, who purchased this book. It means a lot to us that you are reading it, and we hope that after you do, you will be inspired to do CDA/CDS work of your own.

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<sup>1</sup> Waugh, L.R., Catalano, T., Al Masaeed, K., Hong Do, T., & Renigar, P. (2016). Critical discourse analysis: History, approaches, relation to pragmatics, critique, trends and new directions. In A. Capone, & J. Mey (eds.). *Interdisciplinary Studies in Pragmatics, Culture and Society*. (pp. 71–136). Berlin: Springer Verlag (in the series “Perspectives in Pragmatics, Philosophy and Psychology”).

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# Preface

We did not just decide one day that what the world needed most was one more book about Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA<sup>1</sup>) or Critical Discourse Studies (CDS). Rather, the idea for this book came from the chapter about CDA (“Critical Discourse Analysis: History, approaches, relation to pragmatics, critique, trends, and new directions”) we had written (along with co-authors Khaled Al Masaeed, Tom Hong Do, and Paul Renigar) for the volume *Interdisciplinary studies in pragmatics, culture and society*, edited by Alessandro Capone and Jacob Mey (see Waugh et al., 2016).<sup>2</sup> In that chapter, our primary goal was to describe CDA and its relation to pragmatics, but soon after we began to write it, we realized that there was so much to talk about and describe that we could not possibly fit them all into one chapter (even a very long one, as that chapter became). Capone and Mey agreed with us and suggested that we do a book on CDA. Our original aim was to include the history of Critical Linguistics (CritLing), which was the main source for CDA, and also to make the book broader than just CDA and its relation to pragmatics. We then decided to include a discussion of Halliday’s Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) which CritLing—and some scholars in CDA—were influenced by, more about Social Semiotics (SocSem), as well as a larger discussion of the relation between CDA and CDS, which would be signaled by the title of the book and by more attention to CDS in the text, since they are both part of the same research domain/program, which we are calling CDA/CDS, as will be discussed later in the book.

In the long run, it was not just a matter of taking the chapter and expanding on it—we made many changes, left out or shortened some discussions, added or lengthened others, and reconceived others, etc. In essence, the book became its own

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<sup>1</sup>For information about the acronyms and abbreviations used in this Preface and in the rest of the book, see the “List of Acronyms and Abbreviations.”

<sup>2</sup>Waugh, L.R., Catalano, T., Al Masaeed, K., Hong Do, T., & Renigar, P. (2016). Critical discourse analysis: History, approaches, relation to pragmatics, critique, trends and new directions. In A. Capone. & J. Mey (Eds.). *Interdisciplinary studies in pragmatics, culture and society* (pp. 71–136). Heidelberg: Springer Verlag (in the series “Perspectives in Pragmatics, Philosophy and Psychology”).

creature, going in its own direction, and forging its own path, which means that it is now both similar to and different from the 2016 chapter. At the same time, both CDA and CDS have changed between 2014, when we finished writing the chapter, and February 2018, our “cut-off” point for including anything new about the remarkable growth and evolution of this research domain.

We also noted in our research the differing views and perspectives on CDA, especially the different categorizations of the main approaches to CDA/CDS. There were also the ways in which the field was changing in order to address new technologies and their influence and the role in areas of importance to CDA/CDS and also to forge interdisciplinary connections with many other research domains. That is, we realized the importance of describing in detail the development of this dynamic field, the work of its founders and its progression through the years, as well as the overlapping variety of theoretical foundations from which CDA/CDS scholars draw. As a result, we decided that there was a need for some synthesizing in order to show more general patterns in terms of definitions, terminology, approaches, and interdisciplinary connections. And, finally, we wanted to provide emerging and well-established scholars with a point of reference for different approaches and connections to disciplines as well as specific examples they can use to guide their own CDA/CDS scholarship. Hence, the book attempts to do all of this—synthesize definitions, recognize contributions by major scholars in the field, document its origin and development over time, describe major frameworks and interdisciplinary connections, and provide some recent examples of each. As a result, besides the text itself, we hope the reference sections at the end of each chapter will be a valuable resource for anyone interested in this area.

Additionally, during the course of writing this book, many major political and social events have occurred, e.g., the vote for Brexit in the UK, the election of Donald Trump as President of the USA, evidence of Russian interference in the UK and the US elections, the rise of populist governments in Europe and worldwide, the (re)emergence of white-supremacist and neo-Nazi movements, the ongoing issue of refugees and (im)migrants, evidence of racism, antisemitism, bigotry and hate—and so forth—all of which are still continuing and have an enormous influence on the world we live in. These events have made us think harder and more deeply about the point of doing “critical” work. As we describe in our introductory chapter, CDA/CDS is aimed at examining social inequality and how it is produced and reproduced through many different types of communication, including those that were established in the twentieth century as well as social media such as Twitter, TV news sources, and the myriad other new and emerging modes in the twenty-first century. At the same time, we began to see in the USA, Turkey, Brazil, and elsewhere (see, e.g., the online version of *The Guardian* for a more extensive list<sup>3</sup>) the continued weakening of the free press, as well as the mass awakening of women (e.g., Women’s March) and youth (e.g., the rise of the 16-year-old Swedish activist Greta Thunberg

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<sup>3</sup> See also “The global slump in press freedom: Illiberal regimes are clamping down on independent media across the world”(2018, July 23), in *The Economist*. Retrieved from: <https://www.economist.com/graphic-detail/2018/07/23/the-global-slump-in-press-freedom>.

about climate change), and the recent emergence of activism among people of color, especially ‘blacks’, and so forth—and so we began to question why we do this work at all, if not to spur, or support in some small way, social change toward social justice. As a result, we decided to add a final chapter (Chap. 7) in which we feature the voices of both prominent and emerging CDA/CDS scholars who have agreed to tell readers of the book what they are doing to connect to the world and to address the issue of why CDA/CDS matters—what CDA/CDS scholars are doing to make a difference in the world.

We hope our readers will find this book informative, useful, and thought-provoking, and that it will help by continuing, and creating, many conversations and much dialogue about CDA/CDS as well as by inspiring our readers to use their knowledge to do something good in the world.

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# List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

CDA	Critical discourse analysis
CDS	Critical discourse studies
CDA/CDS	Critical discourse analysis/Critical discourse studies
CCDA/CCDS	Cultural approach to CDA/CDS
CL	Critical linguistics (in the writing of the critical linguists and others quoted in this book)
CLA	Critical language awareness
CLS	Critical language study
CogLing	Cognitive linguistics
CogLingA	Cognitive linguistic approach
CorpLing	Corpus linguistics
CorpLingA	Corpus linguistic approach
CritLing	Critical linguistics (in the text of this book)
DA	Discourse analysis
DHA	Discourse-historical approach
DPA	Dispositive analysis approach
DRA	Discourse-relational approach
DS	Discourse studies
FCDA	Feminist critical discourse analysis
MCDA	Multimodal approaches to CDA/CDS [Multimodal CDA]
SAA	Social actors approach
SocSem	Social Semiotics
SCA	Sociocognitive approach
SFG	Systemic functional grammar
SFL	Systemic functional linguistics

## Other Abbreviations

- Chap. X        refers to another chapter in this book (e.g., see Chap. 3 means “see Chap. 3 in this book”).
- Sect. x.y.(z)   refers to another section in this book (e.g., see Sect. 3.6.1 means “see chapter 3, section 6.1 in this book” and 3.6.1 (without Sect.) means the same thing).

A short note about the acronyms and abbreviations in the book (including the Preface, the Contents, the chapter, section and subsection titles, and the texts of all the chapters): we have tried to use only a few acronyms and abbreviations since we know that too many would be difficult for the reader. Some of the acronyms and abbreviations are used in the texts we cite, but others are not—we created them for use in the context of this book. Since we assume that some readers will not read the chapters in their order in the book, each of the acronyms or abbreviations listed here (in alphabetical order) is first presented in each chapter in its full, written out form, and then given in its acronymic or abbreviated form. The only ones for which this isn’t true are CDA, CDS, and CDA/CDS, which are presented in full at the beginning of the book and then used throughout the book.

Note that these acronyms change when translated (e.g., CDA becomes ACD in Spanish).

# Foreword: Critical Discourse Analysis/Studies— Challenges, Concepts, and Perspectives

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## Challenges

This comprehensive overview is both timely and topical—and very important. In our fast changing, globalized and globalizing world, the systematic and critical, qualitative and quantitative analysis of text, talk, and image, of gestures, habitus, and performance, of interaction on front- and backstage provides entry points to understanding and explaining the many complex aspects of the rapid developments, the tensions, and contradictions, which involve all of us in different and context-dependent ways. This is why discourse studies (DS) and critical discourse analysis (CDA)/studies (CDS) have become ever more relevant, not only in linguistics, but also in neighboring social science fields.

It is important, for example, to understand how and why demagogues still succeed in mobilizing large audiences after the terrible histories and experiences of the twentieth century—does this mean that one cannot learn from past failures, crises, and catastrophes (e.g., Forchtner, 2016)? Why are some people able to transgress all norms and conventions of dialogue, break taboos, and disrupt interaction—and others not; which challenges do social media pose; which positive and negative consequences does the use of social media imply and for whom, when, and where; which messages resonate in which way and why? And how are discrimination and exclusion legitimized in democratic societies; how are counter-discourses established, and so forth? The manifold transgressions and the normalization of the hitherto unsayable have multiple effects in and on our democratic and pluralist societies which should be carefully investigated (Wodak, 2018, 2020a): changing or even abolishing specific (communicative) institutional procedures may lead to discursive struggles and discursive shifts (Krzyżanowski, 2020) which might imply the

hollowing out of such institutions, not abruptly but step by step (Wodak, 2019a); discourses enable, accompany, and manifest such developments.

One of the huge challenges critical researchers are confronted with is the current rejection of academic elites and scholarly expertise by far-right populist parties and by their followers, i.e., parties which are governing or supporting governments in many countries in Europe and beyond. This leads to a rejection of fact-based knowledge. Facts are being degraded to the status of opinions, the so-called alternative facts. Manifold lies are disseminated by powerful people, without any consequences or sanctions, even without the need to apologize if such untruths are uncovered. Simple solutions naturally allow for rapid successes, yet they frequently turn out to be shortsighted, ineffective, or even false. Moreover, the performance of politics is gaining the upper hand at the expense of differentiated as well as complex content. Slogans have taken over the function of arguments; and superficial consensus—the function of a plurality of opinions and of discussion (e.g., Wodak, 2020b).

CDA/S are not only concerned with analysis, interpretation, and explanation—but also with application. Apart from academic relevance, many practical applications have been achieved and implemented, especially in the fields of *inter alia* education, politics, medicine, advertising, social work, and journalism. Insights into power relationships, into the power of discourse, and power in discourse support awareness of hegemonic struggles and the creation of counter-discourses in such struggles. Accordingly, Holzscheiter (2010) distinguishes three modes of exercising power in discourse which should be considered when designing applications of the results of in-depth studies: power in discourse is defined as actors' struggles with different interpretations of meaning. Power over discourse is defined as possessing general “access to the stage” in macro- and micro-contexts, i.e., processes of inclusion and exclusion. Finally, power of discourse relates to “the influence of historically grown macro-structures of meaning, of the conventions of the language game in which actors find themselves.”

## Some Important Concepts

Nowadays, DS involves scholars from a range of disciplines. Many actually contest the idea that it is derived from linguistics, even in the larger sense of the term. To this extent, DS could be considered to be not only a transdisciplinary or even post-disciplinary project but rather one which runs counter to the division of knowledge into specialized disciplines and subdisciplines (e.g., Angermüller, Maingueneau, & Wodak, 2014). Generally, “discourse” is used in two ways: (a) as a pragmatic understanding, predominant among linguistic and micro-sociological discourse analysts, who consider discourse as a process of contextualizing texts, language in use, the situated production of speech acts, or a turn-taking practice; (b) a socio-historical understanding, preferred by more macro-sociological discourse theorists interested in power, for whom “discourse” refers to the ensemble of verbal and non-verbal practices of large social communities (Wodak, 2019b).

In order to have some meaning for somebody, texts need to be contextualized (Wittgenstein, 1967). For discourse analysts, therefore, meaning is a fragile and contested construction of the discourse participants. While discourse may take place between the physically present participants of an interaction in an institutional setting, it can also be produced in and by large communities mediated through newspapers, a range of online genres, social movements, and television. Embedded in larger socio-historical configurations and structures, discursive practices can operate with various types of media—oral, written, multimodal, allowing large or small numbers of participants to communicate over shorter or longer distances.

The significant difference between DS and CDA/S lies in the constitutive problem-oriented interdisciplinary approach of the latter. CDA/S does not study a linguistic unit per se (such as sentence structure, metaphors, pronouns, and so forth) but rather social phenomena which are necessarily complex and thus require a multi-/inter-/transdisciplinary and multi-method approach. In contrast to much common-sense understandings, the objects under investigation do not have to be related to negative or exceptionally “serious” social or political experiences or events; indeed, this is a frequent misunderstanding of the aims and goals of CDA/S and of the term “critical” which does not necessarily mean “negative” (Chilton, Tian, & Wodak, 2010). Any social phenomenon lends itself to critical investigation, to be challenged and not taken for granted, not to be essentialized.

Also, in contrast to many beliefs, CDA/S has never been and has never attempted to be or to provide one single or specific theory (Wodak & Meyer, 2015a, 2015b). Indeed, Van Dijk (2008: 82) has pointed to “the lack of theory about the norms and principles of its [CDA’s] own critical activity.” More specifically, what is needed—Forchtner (2011: 2) argues—is an “extensive elaboration of why one’s critique is particularly reliable.” Furthermore, it is important, in my view, to distinguish between ideology (and other frequently used terms such as stance/beliefs/opinions/*Weltanschauung*/position) and discourse (Purvis & Hunt, 1993: 474ff). Quite rightly, Purvis and Hunt state that these concepts “do not stand alone but are associated not only with other concepts but with different theoretical traditions” (1993: 474). Thus, “ideology” is usually (more or less) closely associated with the Marxist tradition, whereas “discourse” has gained much significance in the linguistic turn in modern social theory “by providing a term with which to grasp the way in which language and other forms of social semiotics not merely convey social experience but play some major part in constituting social objects (the subjectivities and their associated identities), their relations, and the field in which they exist” (1993: 474). The conflation of “ideology” and “discourse” might thus lead to an inflationary use of both “ideologies” and “discourses,” in which both concepts tend to simultaneously indicate texts, positioning, and subjectivities as well as belief systems, structures of knowledge, and social practices.

## Perspectives

Critical scholarship can make a significant contribution to enlightenment, yet “scholarship” needs to take a stance and express itself in comprehensible ways, in many different public spheres, many languages, and via different genres of text and talk. Obviously, academics and intellectuals, of all people, belong to the so-called elites. Academia and academics must therefore seek to enter into dialogue with different groups of people, to answer questions, to listen, without a moralizing forefinger while at the same time indicating clear boundaries of the acceptable based on the principles of our pluralistic democracies, of human rights, and our constitutions.

Theresa Catalano and Linda Waugh have produced a much-needed book—a book which helps answer some of the questions posed at the outset. It allows tracing the history of the discipline of CDA/S; and by so doing, it points to important new approaches to confront the major challenges our societies will have to cope with. This is why I hope that this book reaches and inspires many readers, inside academia and beyond.

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# Chapter 1

## Introduction to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), Critical Discourse Studies (CDS), and Beyond



*“To draw the consequences for political action from critical theory is the aspiration of those who have serious intentions, and yet there is no general prescription unless it is the necessity for insight into one’s own responsibility.”*  
(Horkheimer quoted in O’Neill, 1979, from Wodak, 2001: 1)

### 1.1 General Definition of CDA, CDS and CDA/CDS

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA<sup>1</sup>), along with Critical Discourse Studies (CDS), is a problem-oriented interdisciplinary research movement, school, or field (Wodak & Meyer, 2009b: 3) which studies language and other semiotic systems in use and subsumes “a variety of approaches, each with different theoretical models, research methods and agenda” (Fairclough, Mulderrig, & Wodak, 2011: 357). It is interested in “analyzing hidden, opaque, and visible structures of dominance, discrimination, power and control as manifested in language” (Wodak & Meyer, 2016b: 12). Its objective is to examine critically the relationship between language, ideology, power and social structure, for example, social inequality as it is constructed, re-produced, legitimized, and resisted in language and other modes of communication.

CDA emerged after a small symposium in Amsterdam as a loosely networked group of scholars in the 1990s and has since then developed into a broadly based international program with a set of approaches that explores the relationships between discourse (language use) and the people who create and use it, and the social and political contexts, structures, and practices in which it occurs. It aims (Flowerdew and Richardson (2018: 1) “to advance our understanding of how discourse figures in social processes, social figures, and social change”. By critically studying discourse, it emphasizes the way in which language is implicated in issues

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<sup>1</sup>See the List of Acronyms and Abbreviations.



such as power and ideology that determine how language is used, what effect it has, and how it reflects, serves, and furthers the interests, positions, perspectives, and values of those who are in power. From this point of view, discourse perpetuates social patterns like domination, discrimination, exploitation, dehumanization, naturalization, and (ideologically driven) ‘common sense’—unless its usually hidden effects are exposed so that awareness, resistance, emancipation and social action can bring about social change and social justice. Thus, CDA typically is ‘normative’, in that it judges what is right and what is wrong and “addresses social wrongs in their discursive aspects and possible ways of righting or mitigating them” (Fairclough, 2010: 11).

While we have been using CDA up to now in this introduction, we must note briefly that some scholars have begun to use the acronym CDS (for Critical Discourse Studies) for various reasons, such as to denote the expansion of CDA into a larger transdisciplinary/cross-disciplinary research domain, and/or to convey a rejection of language or language-based analysis as its major focus (see further discussion in Sect. 4.1). This means that CDS has recently replaced CDA for some (but not all) major scholars in the field in their most recent publications. In this book (see below Sect. 1.3 and Chaps. 2 and 3) we are taking a historical look at CDA, starting from its origins in Critical Linguistics (CritLing) in the 1970s to its development into CDA in the 1990s and early 2000s, to currently, when it is referred to as either CDA or CDS or both (and we use either one in our discussion, depending on the scholar or approach). And when we talk about general trends in this research area, we use our own acronym ‘CDA/CDS’, which recognizes the historical and intellectual ties between them and at the same time is a more inclusive way of referring to all the scholars and all the approaches in this domain.

As we will see, many of the statements in these three opening paragraphs (and not just the issue of CDA vs. CDS) are highly contested, not only by those who have had sometimes very strong critiques of CDA/CDS (see Chap. 5), but also by those who practice it. There are many different approaches to CDA/CDS and not all their adherents agree with others on basic questions or even recognize their affinity with each other. As said above, scholars differ on whether or not language (or linguistics) should be central and, as a result, some bring in semiotic and multimodal approaches which deal with the meaning potential of modes besides language and analyze them differently. Furthermore, scholars differ in their definitions of the terminology they use (e.g., ‘discourse’, ‘critical’, ‘context’). These, and other differences will be discussed in Chap. 4 and elsewhere, but for a more detailed description see Wodak and Meyer (2016a).

As for the commonalities across the approaches to CDA/CDS, Wodak and Meyer (2009b: 2) provide a helpful list of seven dimensions (see van Dijk, 2007; Wodak, 2008) of discourse studies (DS, and DA, in Wodak, 2001), which “some parts of the new fields/paradigms/linguistic sub-disciplines of semiotics, pragmatics, psycho- and sociolinguistics, ethnography of speaking, conversation analysis” (Wodak & Meyer, 2009b: 2) that deal with discourse with a non-critical approach have in common. The seven dimensions are (italics, single quotes, and bullet points in the original):

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

They also go on to say that “the significant difference between DS and CDS (or CDA) lies in the *constitutive problem-oriented, interdisciplinary approach* of the latter, apart from endorsing all of the above points” (Wodak & Meyer, 2009b: 2)—as well as its critical stance. These will be discussed throughout this book, but we would like to note here that some scholars also refer to this approach as “multidisciplinary” (e.g., van Dijk, 1998, 2009, 2016), “cross-disciplinary” (Wodak, 2001) or “transdisciplinary” (see Fairclough, 2009, 2015) when referring to CDA/CDS, or at least their own approach to CDA. In addition, Wodak and Meyer (2009a, 2009b/2016a, 2016b) distinguish between “interdisciplinary” as characteristic of the “theoretical framework” as a whole vs. its application to “the collection and analysis of data” (see Sect. 4.5 for more on this in relation to Wodak’s discourse-historical approach). We have decided to use inter-/multi-/cross-/trans-disciplinary interchangeably, in relation to the way that scholars we discuss use the terms themselves, without differentiation and without attempting to take sides. In this case, we adhere to the adage “let a thousand flowers bloom”.

In principle, CDA/CDS can be used in relation to any type of topic, in any type of discourse, in any type of medium (discourse modality), adopting a variety of types of methodology—although a given CDA/CDS scholar or group of analysts will prefer/focus on one or more of these, according to their own predilections. With these provisos in mind, we can say that many of the topics that CDA/CDS takes up include the unjust or biased treatment of people based on differences (e.g. religion, race, sexual orientation, gender, social (or socioeconomic) class/status, nationality/citizenship status and stereotyping) and the related use of language, discourse and other semiotic phenomena by groups (e.g. Wall Street CEOs, corporations, Mafia, politicians, governments, media) to gain power, stay in power, or oppress minority groups. In addition, much CDA/CDS work often focuses on capitalism, globalization, and/or neoliberalism (which are all highly inter-connected), as well as nationalism, language planning/policy and pedagogy, including the analysis

of teaching materials and policy documents, and more recently, environmental (climate change) discourse. These are treated in a wide variety of discourse contexts including media discourse of all types (e.g. film, newspapers, TV news broadcasts, internet, email, social media—e.g., Twitter and other social media), as well as elite, literary, and narrative discourses, government policy meetings, advertising, legal/courtroom, medical, cross-/inter-/transcultural, parental/family discourses and conversational interaction. The discourse modalities studied are equally wide: e.g., written texts, monomodal and multimodal texts, visual, oral/aural/spoken, musical, natural/mechanical, etc.—although the majority of work in CDA/CDS is on linguistic and visual modalities.

## 1.2 Three Recent Examples of CDA/CDS

In order to grasp more concretely what CDA/CDS is and does, we begin by giving brief synopses of three recently published articles, which in no way represent all approaches; rather, they provide a quick glance at both how CDA/CDS works and three different trends in the field. In doing so, our intention is not to restrict the description of the field to only these specific applications of CDA, but rather to aid readers in understanding the range of research being done that calls itself CDA or CDS. Furthermore, the examples illustrate CDA/CDS and its use and need in society as well as the different types of topics and issues covered and the range of countries and disciplines of CDA/CDS scholars. The articles were chosen as suitable examples of CDA/CDS based on the following criteria: (1) The article specifically mentions CDA or CDS and clearly fits within our definitions of what CDA/CDS is and does; (2) The article was published in 2018, the year much of this book was written in order to show the most recent trends and issues, and in a well-regarded journal; (3) The three examples together represent different topics, as well as genders, nationalities and locations of the authors; (4) The articles vary in theoretical framework and disciplines of interest; and (5) The articles represent high-quality research that poses important and interesting questions for our readers to ponder. In our discussion below we use some technical terminology that is contained in the articles and which we will define later in the book.

### 1.2.1 *“Fabricating the American Dream in US media Portrayals of Syrian Refugees: A Discourse Analytical Study” (Bhatia & Jenks, 2018)*

This first example by two associate professors of English from Hong Kong Polytechnic university—Aditi Bhatia and Christopher J. Jenks—investigates media portrayals of refugees within the context of the ‘American Dream’ and argues that

the political climate in the era of President Trump of the US (2017-present) demands a new understanding of “how the refugee construct is connected vis-à-vis the political rhetoric of the Trump Administration, as well as to the Syrian refugee crisis” (2018: 221). The authors analyze opinion, editorial, and news pieces from American mainstream media as well as independent news sources from both liberal and conservative perspectives. Selected data focuses on Syrian refugees or refugees in the context of the Syrian war and is examined in terms of: (1) Historicity (e.g., how events are recontextualized based on how participants connect actions to the past); (2) Linguistic and semiotic action (e.g., conceptualisations of the world via critical metaphor analysis); and (3) Social impact (e.g., the categorizations of people according to the way they are represented in the text).

The analysis reveals how the American Dream is used as a rhetorical tool to inform the media’s respective audiences as to how individuals come to understand policy decisions. Furthermore, Syrian refugees are shown to fit within two largely opposing narratives: they are (a) hardworking victims of war in need of protection, or (b) a threat to American life that must be feared. Bhatia and Jenks carefully reveal the rhetorical tools by which these narratives are portrayed, demonstrating how in the case of (a), the media acts as “social educator”, evaluating the crisis through the frame of past war experiences and reminding Americans of the consequences of war; but at the same time, it invokes in audiences “not only a sense of guilt, but also the need for White saviourism” (2018: 227). This narrative represents a “humanistic perspective on the crisis while at the same time exploiting a banal understanding of the American dream” (2018: 221). In the case of (b), the authors show how the opposing narrative fits within the Trump campaign discourse of ‘Make America Great Again’ by positioning Syrian immigrants as “not great” and as a result, Americans must meet Syrians with “disdain, anger, and fear” in order to protect the “American way of life” (2018: 234). Bhatia and Jenks come to a revealing and foreboding conclusion about the value of the media in general, noting that, regardless of political affiliation, media sources compete to project their story (which typically differs from the opposing political view) and do an excellent job of persuading readers to support their viewpoint. Yet, even though they make it easy for readers to align with their view, this obviously does not mean that the media sources are trustworthy.

### ***1.2.2 “Traces of Neoliberalism in English Teaching Materials: A Critical Discourse Analysis” (Babaii & Sheikhi, 2018)***

This study by Esmat Babaii, an associate professor of applied linguistics at Kharazmi University in Iran, and Mohammad Sheikhi, who has an MA in Teaching English as a Foreign Language, is one of many CDA/CDS articles that take up Fairclough’s call (2015: 252, see Sect. 3.5.5) to expose neoliberal ideologies and fight back against them. Here they study those ideologies as manifested in English language

textbooks used in Iranian private language institutes. Rather than taking a sweeping approach that condemns all “Western” values seen in English teaching, Babaii and Sheikhi (2018) use systematic and careful analysis to show exactly how neoliberal thinking is manifested in textbooks and how it shapes (or attempts to shape) learners’ views of the world<sup>2</sup>. In an informative discussion of neoliberalism and the way that multicultural competence is viewed as another type of human capital in a world where market values reign, the authors show how English is commonly portrayed as a commodified skill and teachers are the providers of this skill to learners. On the basis of a corpus consisting of 67% of the English language teaching materials in the language institutes of Tehran, the authors use Fairclough’s approach to analyze the constraints that are put on Iranian learners by American and British publishers on content (e.g., type or category of information provided in the books) and the relations/subjects (e.g., type of social relationships and roles ascribed to the people—aka ‘social actors’—depicted in the material). Their findings expose language examples that convey high value placed on competition among individuals, hypothetical scenarios that give importance to economic concerns over healthcare and well-being, and that in highlighting a cosmopolitan and globalized world, English-speakers are valued over non-English speakers and Anglo-American cultures/locations are shown in more positive ways and are advocated for over “Eastern” ones. The authors conclude by calling for teachers to utilize critical pedagogy to counter the “inculcation” found in the textbooks that naturalizes “partial and interested practices to facilitate the exercise and maintenance of power” (2018: 261). Hence, by teaching critical thinking and sensitizing students to the “overt as well as covert messages they encounter in the media and teaching materials”, teachers can use the textbooks they are given while employing critical pedagogy to counter the neoliberal thinking expressed in them.

### 1.2.3 “*The Selfie as a Global Discourse*” (Veum & Undrum, 2018)

This final example of recent CDA/CDS work, by Aslaug Veum, an associate professor in Text and Communication Studies at the University College of Southeast Norway, and Linda Victoria Moland Undrum (2018), who holds a Master’s degree in Text and Communication Studies and is a critical multimodal discourse analysis (CMDA, see Sect. 4.6)<sup>3</sup> of meaning-making as it occurs through digital self-portraits known as ‘selfies’.

<sup>2</sup> See Chap. 4 for a more detailed discussion of neoliberalism and CDA/CDS’s role in resisting it.

<sup>3</sup> Our readers will see in Chaps. 2, 4, and elsewhere that we refer to this approach as MCDA or Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis, but as we note in that chapter, some scholars also refer to it as Critical Multimodal Discourse Analysis (e.g., CMDA) as is the case with Veum and Undrum. Nevertheless, both acronyms refer to the same approach, which examines not only language but all elements of communication; in this particular case, the main focus is on image and text (including

Utilizing CDA/CDS, social semiotics, and multimodality, and drawing on a number of scholars from these areas, the authors examine the meaning potential of the selfies with regard to Halliday's (1994) "meta-functions" of language (discussed in Sect. 2.3.4). Additionally, their study frequently draws on Kress and van Leeuwen's work (1996, 2001, which we discuss in detail in Sect. 2.6, especially Sect. 2.6.3). With a corpus of 100 selfies published on Instagram, the authors examined interaction with viewers via gaze and camera shot/angle, whether the person was represented within a contextualized setting and as performing an action (or not), and whether or not the images appeared to be digitally edited. The findings show that the majority of selfies are of single individuals who are largely under the age of 30 and that more women than men were selfie producers. Interestingly, most of the selfies were images of the subject in passive positions, although the few selfies that showed the subjects to be participating in an ongoing act or in essence, doing something, were of men. Typically, the selfies were shown in settings that don't indicate time or place and are highly de-contextualized; moreover, they were also "designed, calculated and generalized" through digital editing (2018: 93).

The authors also found that the majority of the images were "demanding images" in which the person gazes directly at the viewer, and most of the images had high angles, communicating power on behalf of the viewer, and they presented themselves horizontally and frontally, with no intent of expressing power for the person in the image, but rather constructing themselves as friends. Additionally, the meaning potential of the texts balanced between making the statement of "this is me" to "this is how I want to be" (2018: 93). Text analysis revealed the common use of hashtags as well as slang and abbreviations (e.g., #wbu? [what about you?]), and a "style of the street" that conveyed a particular identity and resembled "advertising style", as discussed by Fairclough (1992, 1995, see Sects. 3.5.4 and 3.5.5) (2018: 97). The authors conclude that image banks have influenced the visual norm of social media, leaving traces of globalization and the marketization of discourse. In essence, even though selfie-makers do not have to fulfill commercial targets such as in advertising, they seem to adapt a homogenized multimodal language co-opted from commercial venues, thereby "spreading values and interests of global corporations" (2018: 100). As a consequence, social media users receive a limited view of how people (especially young women) should behave and look.

### 1.3 What is in this Book

As we mentioned in our Preface, this book aims to help scholars and students understand what CDA/CDS is and what it does. As such, we synthesize many major publications that take up this topic, comparing and contrasting definitions and

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hashtags, slang and abbreviations).