THE ROUTLEDGE HANDBOOK OF DISCOURSE ANALYSIS (2023)

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INTRODUCTION

The Routledge Handbook of Discourse Analysis includes articles written by prominent scholars in the field of Applied Linguistics. The articles are particularly helpful as they overlap in their approaches to understanding and applying discourse analysis. The book can thus be helpful to scholars and students alike, covering a wide range of topics and providing numerous examples that can provide a shortcut to the various ways in which discourse analysis could be practically applied in research.

The handbook is divided into eight parts, each of which includes a miscellany of articles. This review will cover some of the parts and only some of the articles, in the hope that they would give an overview of the content of the book.

PART I – "APPROACHES TO DISCOURSE ANALYSIS"

The first part, the introductory section, is the largest chapter in the book, consisting of twelve articles out of forty-two. Ideally, the first article is written by the pioneer of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), Norman Fairclough. In his article, Fairclough presents CDA as a trans- disciplinary research methodology that combines language and social analysis in order to understand the relation between discourse and social institutions and ideologies. Fairclough defines CDA as "normative" and "explanatory". It is "normative" because it evaluates existing realities, and "explanatory" because it explains them. He also introduces four stages to the methodology. The first stage is to find a social wrong (i.e. poverty or racism), the second stage is to identify the obstacles in addressing it, the third stage is to analyze whether society needs these social wrongs, which leads us to the fourth stage, which is to identify possible solutions to the obstacles. Fairclough argues in his article that CDA is a 'multi-disciplinary" methodology, and to apply it to any text, disciplines must be brought together to understand the "material facets of social realities", which in turn, and as a result of the dialogue between them, help develop each one of these disciplines.

PART II – GENDER AND RACE

Part II covers how certain aspects of identity affect discourse. In the first article "Gender and Discourse Analysis", Jennifer Coates and Pia Pichler focus on language and gender, which is, among various other features, an essential determinant of identity and the language through which it is constructed. According to Coates and Pichler, language and gender research can be divided into two primary areas. The first area is part of quantitative sociolinguistics where sociolinguists analyze the "co-variation of language and variables such as social class", and have concluded that certain gender differences can be detected in the data. The second area focuses on language as "discourse", in which language is seen as a multifaceted entity, a notion that recurs in many of the book's articles.

Approaches to gender and language studies include the *dominance* approach and the *difference* approach. The *dominance* approach addresses the linguistic differences between men and women as a result to the dominant–subordinate relationship between them, whereas the *difference* approach considers the linguistic difference between men and women as one that is influenced by the subculture in which they are both socialized.

In the 15th and 17th articles, "Intersectionality and Discourse Analysis" by Ebony Elizabeth Thomas, Autumn A. Griffin and S. R. Toliver, and "(Anti) Racist Discourse" by Teun A. van Dijk, respectively, the writers address the issue of racism and the intersectionality of such an issue. In the former article, the writers outline the history of intersectionality, explaining that it was first conceptualized by scholar Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw which maintained that Black women face various dangers that are directly rooted in their existence as both women and Black. Intersectionality has been for centuries present in Black feminist struggle, particularly in the works of Black women writers who aspired to attain personhood in Western societies during and post the transatlantic slave trade. Their struggle shed great focus on how an intersectional approach is mainly aimed "towards analyzing the relationships of power and inequality within a social setting and how these shape individual and group identities".

Intersectionality has thus become an essential, almost complementary, aspect of discourse analysis. In the same article, the writers introduce the history of womanist discourse analysis on the hands of women activists who have focused their writings on women's livelihood, specifically Black women and women of color.

In the 17th article, van Dijk tackles racist and antiracist discourse in the media. He argues that the system of racism is rooted in two dimensions: "racist cognition", such as ideologies, and "racist action", such as acts of discrimination and oppression. He asserts that discourse plays a huge role in any form of abuse of power. Racism is practiced through discourse, on the one hand. And on the other hand, it is through discourse that racism is acquired and reproduced. In this context, van Dijk focuses his articles on

racist practices of the media outlets, highlighting how racism is caused by two major factors: a) discrimination of journalists of color, as in the hiring of white journalists in newsrooms, and b) the routine of "white" news, as in the reportage of news that is mainly produced and reproduced in white people circles. Van Dijk mentions other factors, and in one way or another, they are all related to the second one.

PART III – NARRATIVITY AND DISCOURSE

Part III, "Narrativity and Discourse", focuses on the analysis of discourse in literary texts and narratives. In the article "Narrative Analysis", Joanna Thornborrow upholds the importance of narrative discourse in analyzing human life and thought. Narrative discourse analysis requires a framework, and she proposes that in order to identify how stories are structured, and how storytelling is shaped in and by a community, any framework must highlight what makes a narrative culturally resonant and significant. The framework can be summed up by approaching a narrative from several standpoints: narrative structure, participants within the narrative, social and cultural context, and discursive practices.

On the other hand, similar to the notion of womanist discourse in the previous part, Thornborrow affirms that narrative plays a crucial role in constructing social identity through the act of storytelling. The analysis of narrative, she adds, provides insight into how storytelling employs gender, ethnicity and social class in narrative constructions of the various aspects of identity.

In "Literary discourse", Peter K. W. Tan also tackles the topic of literary narrative. He explores what makes a language "literary", and suggests that analyzing literary discourse may require various approaches like pragmatic approaches, literary corpora, cognitive approaches, and cross-disciplinary methods. Furthermore, Tan states that most approaches in discourse analysis can be applied to literary discourse analysis, and particularly stylistics. He highlights Halliday's work on functional grammar in analyzing literary works, and reports that in recent times, software has increased the capability to extract data more than ever before, which has managed to elevate corpora analysis to a whole new and unprecedented level.

PART IV – GENRE AND REGISTER

In this part, Charles Bazerman explores genre and its social context. In his article "Genre as Social Action", he reaffirms language as a crafted medium, one that is used and interpreted by individuals as social practice in their daily participation in society. According to him, several social factors affect personal language, especially identity and beliefs. Therefore, the study of discourse begins with studying the history and identity of the people involved in the interaction.

Bazerman highlights another aspect of discourse, which is the distinction between spoken and written texts. In the latter case, the receiver is distant

and the interlocutor who has performed the action of writing remains uncertain whether his intended meaning will be correctly received. The receiver must then rely on clues in the text or on previous interactions.

The genre of a written text can also determine the category of utterances, and thus guide the reception and production of an individual's utterances. Genres, according to Bazerman, are defined as "familiar patterns of utterances", and the clues that are detectable to the participants in a dialog help to make sense of the utterances. In addition, other researchers have suggested that we make sense of ourselves as we attempt to make sense to others, as part of our identity is constructed within the social context we put effort to engage in.

PART VIII – INSTITUTIONAL APPLICATIONS

The articles in this part explore a wide range of discourse topics, including politics, healthcare, media, and business. In "Intercultural Discourse: Identity perspectives on business interaction" by Stadler et al., for example, identity occupies a major section. The article links the concept of identity to culture and behavior, and argues that people's understanding of their own identity plays a crucial role in their behavior and their perceptions of other people's behavior.

The relationship between language and identity reflects the latter as a construct. Stadler et al. refer to Bucholtz and Hall's (2005) and Jenkins' (2004) definitions of identity; it is our understanding of who we are with relation to others. Stadler et al. proceed to define identity as two types: individual and collective.

In a different section, they navigate the traditional and postmodern understanding of identity, explaining that traditionally there have been two recognized types: ascribed identity, and avowed identity. Ascribed identity is the identity people consider you possess, and avowed identity is the group affiliations you relate to most. When a speaker interacts within a society, people address the speaker according to the identity they ascribe to them. However, a clash may occur when the avowed identity differs from the ascribed identity, and this could negatively affect the way language is produced and evaluated. Moreover, Stadler et al. explore how the post-modern notion of identity is connected to social constructivism. They explain that social realities are "constructed" rather than "given", and they are implemented in social scenarios and through language use. Thus, since identities can be subject to change, any analysis of discourse must be open to the possibility that different identities may coexist within the same person.

Current linguistic studies of identity, therefore, focus on features reflected in language such as race and gender as well as any intersectional relationship between these features. In this article, Stadler et al. use identity and the facets that affect it in analyzing intercultural data in the field of business.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, discourse analysis stands out as a multidisciplinary field where multiple disciplines engage in dialogue. Throughout the articles, analysts provide insight into how discourse analysis can be interchangeably applied to various fields such as media, politics, policy, business, and many others. What stands common among the articles is that discourse analysis is recognized as a methodology that helps us understand texts and their most important features. At the same time, it also aids in the development of the disciplines engaged in the dialogue by approaching them in an intersectional way. In addressing certain issues, it was also evident how scholars overlap with their focus on identity and the social factors that construct it. These social factors are reflected through language and are embedded in discourse, and in any research that seeks discourse analysis, it is crucial at some point to highlight how discourse shapes and is shaped by social realities and the identities it helps construct.