Chapter 2
Approaches to Discourse Analysis

This chapter presents an overview of discourse, discourse analysis, and critical discourse analysis and also discusses the state of affairs within linguistics and the explanatory power of Discourse Analysis in general and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as a critical tool to unfold the hidden agendas of linguistic actions. The chapter begins with a historical perspective of discourse analysis and moves on to discuss various critical and non-critical approaches to discourse analysis and highlights why CDA emerges as one of the important tools for the present study. While non-critical approaches are merely descriptive in nature, CDA helps to interpret, understand and reveal the ideologies, discriminations, biases and asymmetrical power relations rooted in discourse and is, therefore, more suitable for studying the language of advertising.

2.1. Discourse Analysis: The Historical Perspective

Linguistics as a discipline has two broad approaches: the formal or the structural-linguistic approach and the functional or socio-linguistic approach. The structural linguistics studies the form of constituents of a sentence such as sounds and words and how they come together to form a syntactically, semantically correct sentence. However, it may be observed that structural approach looks at these sentences in isolation from the context due to which it is not possible to have a broader perspective of the situation in which language is being used and therefore the meaning perceived is also incomplete. Looking at it from the historical perspective, scholars like Saussure and Chomsky come under the purview of structural linguistics. Saussure’s *A Course in General Linguistics* has been a significant work in the field of structural linguistics and has influenced research in the field to a very large extent. Making a distinction between the language system (langue) and the speech (parole), Saussure lays emphasis on the scientific disposition of Linguistics. Saussure’s main concern was the linguistic system or langue and he was hardly interested in how the language system is related to the users and their socio-cultural context. He understood langue as a systematic entity, best studied as a static system and therefore looked at the complexity of ways in which a sentence is constructed and how its form determined the meaning of the sentence so constructed, irrespective of its function. For him, langue covers the abstract, systematic rules
and conventions of a signifying system. John Phillips observes that langue “represents the ‘work of a collective intelligence,’ which is both internal to each individual and collective, in so far as it is beyond the will of any individual to change” (1). Saussure points out that langue must be taken as the starting point of departure and used as “the norm of other manifestations of language” (9). He goes on to say:

Taken as a whole, language is many-sided and heterogeneous, straddling several areas simultaneously, physical, physiological, and psychological – it belongs both to the individual and to society, we cannot put it into any category of human facts, for we cannot discover its unity. Langue, on the contrary, is a self-contained whole. (9)

Saussure did not concern himself exhaustively with parole even though the structure of langue is revealed through the study of parole. Parole, which refers to the actual, subjective and heterogeneous instances of language use, was not considered amenable to a systematic study because of its highly individualistic nature. He considered parole very unpredictable which is shaped by the personal and social needs of an individual and therefore kept parole outside the area of research.

It may, however, be noted that parole is an observable use of language by an individual. It is the concrete use of the language or the actual utterances of an individual that combines one’s understanding of the language system and its manifestation of the same in one’s utterance. It may be understood as an external manifestation of langue i.e. the usage of the system and a series of speech acts made by a linguistic subject. Parole, therefore, deserves the status worthy of research.

Chomsky in Syntactic Structures classifies language as a reflective system, mirror of the mind – a mental phenomenon. The choice of a certain parole is a mental process which also illustrates how humans produce and process language. He states:

There are a number of questions that might lead one to undertake a study of language. Personally, I am primarily intrigued by the possibility of learning something from the study of language that will bring to light inherent properties of human mind. (qtd. in Radford 1)

Chomsky assumes that study of the nature of language also provides information about the nature of the mind, for the intricacy with which language works at multiple levels reflects the intricacies of human mind. He believes that a linguistic enquiry aims at studying the structures of language and not the functions. Chomsky observes in his Language and Mind:
If we hope to understand human language and psychological capacities on which it rests, we must first ask what is, not how or for what purposes it is used. (62)

Raymond Williams also makes a point here saying that “the living speech of human beings in their specific social relationships in the world was theoretically reduced to instances and examples of a system which lay beyond them” (27). On the other hand, sociolinguists like Hymes, Labov, Halliday (1978) and Bernstein criticized the structuralists for ignoring the ‘parole’. They asserted that the social angle in language could not be disregarded because language was shaped socially not individually. They argue that any research of language structures disregarding the social structures in which they are produced would be partial. The sociolinguists emphasise that text and context are inseparable and the study of language goes hand in hand with the study of the social situations that have produced it. Grammatical texts whether spoken or written become meaningful only when they conform to the grammar of society. Hymes argues that mere grammatical competence, as advocated by Chomsky, without appropriate communicative competence would be incomplete. He recommended that the study of knowledge that people have recourse to when they communicate, that is, communicative competence is very important because communicative competence reveals appropriacy of an utterance in a given situation just as linguistic competence reveals whether a sentence is grammatical or not. In an answer to Chomsky's abstract view of competence, Hymes carried out ethnographic study of communicative competence to emphasise ‘communicative form and function in integral relation to each other.’ Hymes therefore talked of communicative competence in terms of an inherent grammatical competence with an ability to use this grammatical competence appropriately in a variety of communicative situations, thus highlighting the sociolinguistic perspective as integral to Chomsky’s linguistic view of competence.

Sociolinguists perceive language and the social context as inseparable. Austin and Searle argue that study of language used in social contexts makes it clear that social interaction becomes impossible without shared knowledge and assumptions between speakers and listeners and that the study of a text within its context makes the study both functional and social. Thus, the social or functional approach to study language, which also includes analysis of discourse, endeavours to unravel the complex networks of a society.
2.2. Defining Discourse

Of late, there has been a growing interest in discourse studies. The word discourse originates from the Latin word ‘discursus’ which means ‘running to and fro’. In the context of language, it refers to the spoken and the written text. René Descartes, a French philosopher, used the word discourse for the first time in his *Discourse on Method* in 1637. Since then it has been subject to a lot of discussions and has been defined by people from a variety of disciplines. Of these, Michel Foucault’s work *Archeology of Knowledge* is considered to be the most significant. As a linguistic term ‘discourse’ means passages of connected speech and writing but Foucault gave it a different dimension. For Foucault, discourse may be referred to as a 'way of speaking' understood and made possible through statements at a particular point in time, through an object of analysis, a chain of concepts and by the presence of a theoretical theme. As part of discourse, he was interested in rules and practices that produced meaningful statements at different times in history. Stuart Hall explains Foucault’s notion of Discourse as “a group of statements which provide a language for talking about...a particular topic at a particular historical moment…Discourse is about production of knowledge through language. But …since all social practices entail meaning, and meanings shape and influence what we do – our conduct – all practices have a discursive aspect” (291). His concept of discourse, it may be observed was not purely linguistic but more about language and practice as there is always a distinction between what one says (language) and what one does (practice). Foucault includes social, economic, political dimensions in his explanation of discourse and also the process in which it is constructed through social entities by manipulation of power. Foucault asserts that “Discourse constructs the topic” and “defines and produces the objects of our knowledge. It governs the way that a topic can be meaningfully talked about and reasoned about.” Discourse, for him, is not limited to a simply formal linguistic aspect. In other words, discourse, power and society are connected to each other. For Foucault, discourse “exists under the positive conditions of a complex group of relations” (49) which are established among institutions, economic and social processes, behavioural patterns, etc. However these relations must be kept separate from the real or key relations that are independent of discourse between institutions, techniques and social roles and the reflexive or secondary relations in discourse and discursive relations that make possible the objects of discourse or the subject.
Zelling Harris, a linguist, coined the term ‘discourse analysis.’ He discussed discourse analysis in formal linguistic or structural terms in his paper ‘Discourse Analysis’. Guy Cook in his *Discourse* calls him a ‘sentence linguist’ as Harris was especially interested in “a search for language rules which would explain how sentences were connected within a text by a kind of extended grammar” (13). His use of the term was in a narrow technical sense for analysing, to use his words ‘language beyond a clause.’ Harris’s notion of discourse is “the sentences spoken or written in succession by one or more persons in a single situation” (3). He saw discourse as ‘sentence writ large’. Being a sentence linguist, a ‘sentence’ and ‘discourse’ were the same phenomena qualitatively for Harris, though quantitative differences between the two may also be apparent. For him, discourse was manifest in formal regularities across clauses or groups of sentences and discourse analysis a theoretical and methodological extension of linguistic structuralism. Cook (*Discourse*) however, believes that it is important to look beyond the formal rules operating within sentences. He believes that for discourse analysts ‘people who use language’ and the world in which discourse occurs are equally important (13). McCarthy also observes, “Discourse analysis is […] concerned fundamentally with the relationship between language and the contexts of its use” (10).

2.3. Defining Discourse Analysis

There is little consensus on how discourse should be defined. The term has been used in a variety of ways by different scholars. Discourse is a broad term with many definitions, which “integrates a whole palette of meanings” (Titscher et.al. 42), ranging from linguistics, sociology, philosophy and through many other disciplines. Due to its different use both within linguistics and other areas of social sciences and humanities, the term discourse has become ambiguous and cannot be pinned down to one meaning. Widdowson says that “discourse is contentious area of enquiry…” (*Discourse Analysis: A Critical View* 157). It has been observed that most discourse analysts agree that it is difficult to define the discourse. Fairclough says:

> Discourse is a difficult concept, largely because there are so many conflicting and overlapping definitions formulated from various theoretical and disciplinary standpoints. (*Discourse and Social Change* 3)

Fairclough goes on to explain this and says:
In linguistics, ‘discourse’ is sometimes used to refer to extended samples of spoken dialogue, in contrast with written ‘texts’. ‘Text analysis’ and ‘discourse analysis’ in this sense do not share the traditional limitation of linguistic analysis to sentences or smaller grammatical units; instead, they focus upon higher-level organizational properties of dialogue (e.g. turn-taking, or the structure of conversational openings and closings) or of written texts (e.g. the structure of a crime report in a newspaper). More commonly, however, ‘discourse’ is used in linguistics to refer to extended samples of either spoken or written language. In addition to preserving the emphasis upon higher-level organizational features, this sense of ‘discourse’ emphasises interaction between speaker and addressee or between writer and reader, and therefore processes of producing and interpreting speech and writing, as well as the situational context of language use. ‘Text’ is regarded here as one dimension of discourse: the written or spoken ‘product’ of the process of text production […] Finally, ‘discourse’ is also used for different types of language used in different sorts of social situation (e.g. ‘newspaper discourse’, ‘advertising discourse’, ‘classroom discourse’, ‘the discourse of medical consultations’). (Discourse and Social Change 3)

Further, discourse becomes a difficult concept because discourses differ with the kind of institutions and social practices in which they take shape; and with the positions of those who speak and those to whom they are addressed and also because of many conflicting and overlapping definitions. Stubbs points out the ambiguity of the term ‘discourse analysis’ and puts forward another broad definition:

The term discourse analysis is very ambiguous. […]it may] refer mainly to the linguistic analysis of naturally occurring connected speech or written discourse. Roughly speaking, it refers to attempts to study the organization of language above the sentence or above the clause, and therefore to study larger linguistic units, such as conversational exchanges or written texts. It follows that discourse analysis is also concerned with language use in social contexts, and in particular with interaction or dialogue between speakers. (1)

Brown and Yule give a functional account of discourse and call it a study of language use. They observe that “…the analysis of discourse is, necessarily, the analysis of language in use. As such, it cannot be restricted to the description of linguistic forms independent of the purposes or functions, which these forms are designed to serve in human affairs” (1). They
perceive discourse from the Hallidayan point of view wherein they consider the interpersonal, experiential and textual functions as integral to discourse. Widdowson (1995) defines it as a transactional process of negotiation of meaning between the text and the reader. He observes that discourse analysis is the “pragmatic process of meaning negotiation. The text is the product. When discourse takes the form of spoken interaction, the text is simultaneous and transitory and leaves no trace unless recorded” (Discourse analysis: a critical view 164). In the written text, however, the writer’s message and the reader’s interpretation of the text may generally differ as their world knowledge, beliefs, assumptions and values that interact with the text to produce and interpret the text may also be different. The reality of the reader and the writer should correspond if the intended discourse and the interpretation have to match.

Gee gives the socio-political dimension to the functional analysis of discourse. He asserts that “We continually and actively build and rebuild our worlds not just through language, but through language used in tandem with actions, interactions, non-linguistic symbol systems, objects, tools, technologies, and distinctive ways of thinking, valuing, feeling, and believing. Sometimes what we build is quite similar to what we have built before; sometimes it is not. But language-in-action is always and everywhere an active building process” (11). Gee equates discourse to different ways in which “humans integrate language with non-language ‘stuff,’ such as different ways of thinking, acting, interacting, valuing, feeling, believing, and using symbols, tools, and objects in the right places and at the right times” (13). This he observes, is done “to enact and recognize different identities and activities, give the material world certain meanings, distribute social goods in a certain way, make certain sorts of meaningful connections in our experience, and privilege certain symbol systems and ways of knowing over others” (13). Teun van Dijk also conforms to this. He asserts that discourse analysts agree that discourse is a form of language use but at the same time, it is also important for them to know “who uses language, how, why and when” (Text and Context 2).

Teun van Dijk talks of dimensions of discourse in the process of analysis which are (a) language use (b) the communication of beliefs and (c) interaction in social situations. These dimensions widen the scope of discourse analysis. Discourse analysts like to investigate the specific study of language and language use; to study the beliefs and the manner of their communication; and the social sciences to study the interactions in social situations that come under its domain. Teun van Dijk says:

It is typically the task of discourse studies to provide integrated description of these three main dimensions of discourse: how does language use influence beliefs and interaction, or vice-versa how do aspects of interaction influence
how people speak, or how do beliefs control language use and interaction? Moreover, besides giving systematic descriptions, we may expect discourse studies to formulate theories and explain such relationships between language use, beliefs and interaction. (Text and Context 2)

Teun van Dijk calls discourse, which embodies such functional aspects ‘a communicative event’. Explaining this, he says, “people use language in order to communicate ideas and beliefs (or to express emotion), and they do so as part of more complex social events, for instance in such specific situations as an encounter with friends, a phone call, a lesson in the classroom, a job interview, during a visit to the doctor, or when writing or reading a news report” (2). For him, discourse therefore is interaction or two way communication besides merely using language or communicating ideas. It also implies that the study of discourse involves many disciplines such as “linguistics (for the specific study of language and language use), psychology (for the study of beliefs and how they are communicated), and social sciences (for the analysis of interactions in social situations” (2). Therefore, text becomes discourse when there is meaningful interaction between two or more entities in a social context. Teun van Dijk observes that “the very notion of ‘context’ implies that it is defined relative to ‘text’, and that in that case the ‘text’ (or talk) is the focal phenomenon” (Discourse and Context: A Sociocognitive Approach vii). Here it is also vital to give a thought to what context is and how it relates to discourse. Teun van Dijk believes that “It is not the social situation that influences (or is influenced by) discourse, but the way the participants define such a situation” (Discourse and Context: A Sociocognitive Approach ix).

For Teun van Dijk the role of participants of discourse is crucial as participants interpret discourse and respond to it according to their perceived meaning of the situation they encounter. It will be useful to consider some more definitions of discourse that indicate that discourse is concerned with use of language in social contexts:

1. Discourse is for me more than just language use: it is language use, whether speech or writing, seen as a type of social practice. (Fairclough, Discourse and Social Change 28)

2. In using the term ‘discourse’ I am claiming language use to be imbricated in social relations and processes which systematically determine variations in its properties, including the linguistic forms which appear in texts. One aspect of this imbrication in the social which is inherent to the notion of discourse is that language is a material form of ideology, and language is invested by ideology. (Fairclough, Critical Discourse Analysis 58-59)
3. Instead of gradually reducing the rather fluctuating meaning of the word ‘discourse’, I believe I have in fact added to its meanings: treating it sometimes as the general domain of all statements, sometimes as an individualizable group of statements and sometimes as a regulated practice that accounts for a number of statements. (Foucault qtd. in Mills 6)

4. Discourse constitutes the social. Three dimensions of the social are distinguished – knowledge, social relations and social identity – and these correspond respectively to large major functions of language […] Discourse is shaped by relation of power, and invested with ideologies. (Fairclough, Discourse and Social Change 8)

5. ‘Discourse’ […] refers to language in use, as a process where it is socially situated. However…we may go on to discuss the constructive and dynamic role of either spoken or written discourse in structuring areas of knowledge and the social and institutional practices, which are associated with them. In this sense, discourse is a means of talking and writing about and acting upon worlds, a means which both constructs and is constructed by a set of social practices within these worlds, and in so doing both reproduces and constructs and is constructed by a set of social practices within these worlds, and in so doing both reproduces and constructs afresh particular social discursive practices, constrained or encouraged by more macro movements in the overarching social formation. (Candlin ix)

Discourse as can be observed in the definitions above includes not only ‘language in use’ but also different dimensions of language — social, political and cultural — discourse order and a person’s social interaction. This is why discourse occupies a significant place in various disciplines such as linguistics, literary criticism, communication, geography, philosophy, sociology, social psychology, political science, etc.

Here it is also becomes important to discuss the scope and domain of discourse and discourse analysis. Jwaroski and Coupland very succinctly encapsulate the domain. They write:

1. The utterance of an event or of a single utterance is only partly accounted for by its formal features (that, by the ‘direct meaning’ of the words used). The social significance of discourse, if we define it simply as language in use, lies in the relationship between linguistic meanings and the wider context (i.e. the social,
cultural, economic, demographic and other characteristics of the communication event) in which interaction takes place.

2. Our interpretation of discourse therefore relates to what is done by participants than what is said (or written, or drawn, or pointed at) by them. That is, a functional analysis of language and other semiotic systems lies at the heart of analysing discourse.

3. It is important to distinguish between meanings (including goals and intentions) inferred by observers and meanings (including goals and interactions) inferred by participants. Analysing discourse is often making inferences about inferences.

4. All aspects of meaning – making are acts of constructions. Attributing meaning to discourse is never a neutral or value free process.

5. Social categorization is central to these acts of constructions. Our language presents us with many categories that seem ‘natural’ or ‘obvious’, although they are very probably so only at a given time and place: they may well be culture specific or idiosyncratic (favoured by an individual).

6. We can access discourse through textual data…always ‘filtered’ or ‘mediated’… a form of social (re) construction.

7. Linguistic expression itself (as speech or writing) often needs to be interrelated with other physical, temporal and behavioural aspects of the social situation such as body movement and synchronization of actions. Discourse is more than (verbal/vocal) language itself.

8. Discourse analysis proves a way of linking up the analysis of local characteristics of communication to the analysis of broader social characteristics. It can help us see how macro structures are carried through micro-structures. (12)

While discussing this concept, Charles Fillmore cites two sentences that appeared on signboards in a swimming pool. One sign said:

Please use the toilets, not the pool.

The other sign said:

Pool for members only.

(qtd. in Schiffrin, Tannen and Hamilton 9)

If each sign is read individually, they make reasonable sense. But if the sentences are read together, as if they were part of single discourse, the second sentence appears to be reinforcing the first sentence and would evoke laughter or even outrage, (if taken seriously). This example captures the essence of discourse as new meanings are created by relating the
sentences to each other. At the same time, it also illustrates the problems of discourse as ambiguity in the meanings can be seen and it becomes difficult to decide the meaning that is intended.

2.4. Discourse and Text

After defining discourse, it is equally important to give a thought to what ‘text’ is and how it is different from ‘discourse’. In conversational linguistics, the notion of ‘text’ and ‘discourse’ stand on different planes. This is because a text does not contain a meaning. The meaning is discovered by a reader. Meaning is realized, only, when there is an interaction between the text and the reader because the text has ‘meaning potential’ (Halliday; Widdowson). For Widdowson (159), text is meaning potential, be it a sign or a battery of signs, and discourse is a process of reading the text. Different readers from different backgrounds carry their roots and experiences in their comprehension of a text whether small or big, whether it consists of a single sign or a series of signs; and for this reason, the products (interpretations) of reading a text differ for different people. However, interpretation of a discourse is to be understood as a process of reading the text. Widdowson and Seidlofer observe:

…text is the linguistic product of a discourse process. As a product it can be treated simply as data manifesting language usage whereby you can identify patterns of collocational occurrence. (206)

They explain that “text can be taken up as evidence of how language is realized as use”, or even as “the trace of a discourse, of the pragmatic process of a communicative interaction.” However they point towards the difficulty that the data in the text may be quite straightforward and factual that can be agreed on but evidence implies interpretation of the data from different points of view, and these points of view being individualistic, may generally lead to some argument or disagreement. It may therefore be said that evidence is not factual but it brings with it the experience of the person interpreting it. However, it should also be taken into account that text is the only evidence available in the process of discourse and the only entity that can be relied upon in spite of its unreliability. Therefore, the basic problem of discourse analysis is to prepare a justification for interpreting a text and the message therein selectively as legitimate evidence of aspects of discourse.

For Stubbs (5), the terms ‘discourse’ and ‘text’ are often ambiguous and confusing. Stubbs (1) points out “that language and situation are inseparable”. The situation forms the
basis of the context. It means that context and text go hand in hand and are inseparable aspects that work together to constitute the discourse. For Chaffe, the two terms appear synonymous or in free variation. He asserts:

The term discourse and text are used in similar ways; both terms may refer to a unit of language larger than the sentence: one may speak of ‘a discourse’ or ‘a text’. (300)

For Crystal (The Cambridge encyclopedia of language), ‘text’ and ‘discourse’ refer to two different things (307). ‘Text’ refers to a “piece of naturally occurring spoken, written, or signed discourse identified for purposes of analysis. It is often a language unit with a definable communicative function, such as a conversation, a poster” (Introducing Linguistics 72). ‘Discourse’ for Crystal (Introducing Linguistics) is a continuous stretch of (especially spoken) language larger than a sentence, often constituting a coherent unit, such as a sermon, argument, joke or narrative (125). It is a stretch of language recorded or transcribed for the purpose of analysis and description. For him, texts are “language units which have a definable communicative function, characterized by such principles as cohesion, coherence, and informativeness which can be used to provide a formal definition of what constitutes their identifiable textuality or texture” (Crystal, Introducing Linguistics 350). Sanders and Sanders define text as:

We consider a text to be a monological stretch of written language that shows coherence. The term ‘text’ derives from the Latin verb texere ‘to weave’ (hence the resemblance between the words ‘text’ and ‘textile’). But what makes a text a text? This question has been at the centre of attention of the fields of discourse studies and text linguistics, especially since the 1970s. (598)

They further assert:

At present, the dominant stance is that ‘coherence’ explains best the connectedness shown by texts. Coherence is considered a mental phenomenon; it is not an inherent property of a text under consideration. Language users establish coherence by relating different information units in the text. (599)

It may be observed that Sanders and Sanders refer to the seminal, Introduction to Text Linguistics, by Robert de Beaugrande and Wolfgang Dressler who give a broader view of ‘text’. They term ‘text’ as a communicative occurrence that must meet the seven standards of
textuality – cohesion, coherence, intentionality, acceptability, informativity, situationality, and intertextuality. These concepts are explained below:

i. Cohesion concerns with the surface text and its relationship with syntax. The linear sequence of linguistic elements in a text is not accidental, but it obeys grammatical rules and dependencies. All the functions such as conjunction, ellipsis, anaphora, cataphora or recurrence that are applied to create relationships between surface elements are basis for cohesion.

ii. Coherence concerns with the meaning in the text. For coherence, elements of knowledge or cognitive structures that do not have a linguistic realization but are rather implied by the language used may be taken into consideration. These may, therefore, influence the reception of the message by the interlocutor.

iii. Intentionality relates to the attitude and intentions of text-producers (the speaker or writer).

iv. Acceptability concerns the degree to which hearers and readers are prepared to expect and understand a text that is useful or relevant.

v. Informativity refers to the quantity and quality of new information.

vi. Situationality emphasises the importance of context/situation (in which the text is produced) in the production and reception of the message.

vii. Intertextuality (to be discussed in detail in Chapter 3) is explained by two main facts:
   a. a text is always related to some earlier or simultaneous discourse;
   b. a text is always linked and grouped in particular text varieties or genres (e.g.: narrative, argumentative, descriptive, etc.).

Wodak explains intertextuality as the property of a text that “relates both synchronically and diachronically to other texts, and this is the only way it achieves meaning” (Discourse Studies 9). The concept has been discussed in detail in chapter 3.

While explaining ‘cohesion’ and ‘coherence’, Titscher et al. (24) state that cohesion and coherence may be looked at as text-internal, whereas the remaining five criteria are text-external. Approaches, oriented towards pure Text Linguistics, give more importance to text-internal criteria while the tradition in Discourse Analysis has always been to give more importance to the external factors, for they are believed to play an essential role in communication (24). To further distinguish between text and discourse, it is important to give some thought to how ‘discourse’ is defined. In the strict formal linguistic terms, according to Harris, ‘discourse’ investigates connected speech or writing that occurs at suprasentential level, i.e. levels that are greater – than the single sentence. In the field of Discourse Analysis,
the term ‘discourse’ is used to refer to the level of language organization beyond the
sentential level while ‘text’ is a single instance of discourse realization. To put it more
simply, discourse represents the ‘system’ whereas text is ‘a product’ of the system. Hence,
discourse may be taken as part of the deep structure phenomenon while text is surface
structure realization.

This matter becomes more problematic when discourse is used both as a collective
noun and as a count noun. When used as a collective noun, it refers to language in use while
as a count noun it refers to “relatively discrete subset of a whole language used for specific
social or institutional purposes” (McHoul, Discourse 225). Therefore ‘discourse’ may be
understood as a way of getting knowledge through the medium of language. Kress observes
that discourse:

….belong[s] to and derives from the social domain and the text is category
that belongs to and derives from the linguistic domain. The relation between
the two is one of realization; discourse finds its expression in text. (28)

Kress also points out that it may not be a straightforward relation as ‘any one text may be the
expression or realization of a number of competing and contradictory discourses.’ To explain
this, Fairclough points out:

A text is product rather than a process – a product of the process of text
production. …the term discourse refers to the whole process of social
interaction of which a text is just a part. This process includes in addition to
the text the process of production, of which the text is a product, and the
process of interpretation, for which the text is a resource. (Language and
Power 20)

Keeping this in mind, it may be said that social institutions like family, school, classroom,
police, media, advertising and many others use language in a variety of ways. The kind of
language that may be used in these institutions would be socially situated. As Kress says:

... in relation to certain areas of social life which are of significance to a social
institution... will produce a set of statements about all area which will define,
delimit and circumscribe what it is possible and impossible to say with respect
to it and how it is to be talked about. (“ideological Structures” 27-28)

He asserts that discourse is a mode of talking and that discourses are ‘systematically
organized sets of statements’ that give voice to the meanings and value of the institution they
come from. For example we have instances of legal discourse, a sexist discourse, a medical
discourse and the implication is that discourse points to the fact that social institutions
produce specific ways of writing or speaking about certain areas of social life, which depend on their place and nature of that institution in the social processes. They all have specific discourses which circumscribe the possible ways of speech and writing related to their own specific fields. The advertising discourse, for example, uses specific linguistic and non-linguistic features that express notions of consumption, persuasion, sensuousness, fashion, glamour, etc. to highlight its certain aspects.

For the purpose of the present project, the terms ‘discourse’ and ‘text’ need to be defined in more specific manner. The discourse may be understood as an extended communication which is institution specific. It is symbolic (verbal and nonverbal) representation of ideologies for the purpose of maintaining the existing order of things, but on the other hand text is its material realization. The study of discourse is called discourse analysis. There are differing views regarding the analysis of discourse as there are different ways of defining discourse. Schiffrin in her *Approaches to Discourse* differentiates between six different approaches to the linguistic analysis of discourse that includes speech act theory, pragmatics, interactional sociolinguistics, ethnography of communication, conversation analysis and variation analysis though the principles and issues in each are quite different (9). According to her, speech act theory and pragmatics primarily focus on meaning, context and communication of constructed utterances in hypothetical contexts while interactional sociolinguistics, ethnography of communication, conversation analysis and variation analysis examine stretches of discourse that have actually occurred. All these approaches, however, are quite different from each other.

2.5. Approaches to Discourse Analysis

This section makes a comparison of different approaches to the study of discourse. These approaches are discussed in terms of noncritical and critical paradigms asserting in the process that critical approaches are more suitable for studying the advertising discourse. Noncritical approaches to Discourse Analysis look at the language of text to be examined as static, transparent and reflexive medium while the critical approaches look at the language of the text as a constitutive medium. Fairclough in *Discourse and Social Change* clarifies this distinction:

Critical approaches differ from non-critical approaches in not just describing discursive practices but also showing how discourse is shaped by relations of power and ideologies, and the constructive effects discourse has upon social
identities, social relations and systems of knowledge and belief, neither of which is normally apparent to discourse participants. (12)

Fairclough here compares the critical and the non-critical approaches and implies that the non-critical approaches may also be as incisive and engaging as the critical ones but lack the critical perspective to study language critically. They focus more on describing the world and choose to disregard the need of making some constructive efforts to change the world.

2.5.1. Noncritical Approaches

Research in the study of language in the modern world and study of discourse is ‘non-critical’ despite its emphasis on the social dimensions of language use. As mentioned earlier, although non-critical approaches attempt at describing the world yet do not make an effort to change it. There has been a tradition of thinking of discourse in terms of linguistic terms, whether as a mix of linguistic forms larger than the single sentence (a ‘text’) or as ‘language-in-use’, i.e. linguistic structures or real language actually used by people (Brown and Yule; de Beaugrande and Dressler).

2.5.1.1. Harris’s Approach

The trend of non-critical approaches to discourse started with Harris. The non-critical approaches do not take into account the process and the fluid nature of discourse and generally understand discourse as ‘text-analysis’. For this reason Harris(1952), who is known to be a structuralist observed that discourse is the next level in the hierarchy of morphemes, clauses and sentences. True to his structuralist foundation and like his peers in the 50s, Harris used created language data as opposed to regular language for studying the formal properties of connected speech. Harris attempted to analyse the longer connected ‘stretches of language’ using the same formal, descriptive methods of transformations used for the analysis of isolated sentences. He thought that the system of formal linguistics could be extended to comprehend the process of connected speech and writing and not merely the formal structure that exists within a sentence. Harris writes:

Discourse analysis is a method of seeking in any connected discreet linear material, whether language or language-like, which contain more than one elementary sentence, some global structure characterizing the whole discourse or larger sections of it. The structure is a pattern of occurrence (i.e. a
recurrence) of segments of a discourse relative to each other. (*Discourse Analysis Reprint 7*)

Here, an implication that discourse is a structural unit at a higher level like the sentence but at a lower level of language organization is clearly evident. Harris’s main concern was with the formal distribution of sentences without any reference to meaning. For study of discourse, he focused on invented data of a clause/sentence function in relation to each other. Schiffrin in *Approaches to Discourse* says, “Structure was so central to Harris’s view of discourse that he argued that what opposes discourse to a random sequence of sentences is precisely the fact that it has structure: a pattern by which segments of the discourse occur (and recur) relative to each other” (*Analysing Discourse* 24). Therefore, Harris’s approach to discourse analysis has the same downsides that structuralism had.

Harris’s system of inventing texts and judging their acceptability has not found widespread application unlike much of traditional linguistics. The discourse analysts prefer studying language use ‘beyond the sentence boundary’, and observing the naturally occurring language as data for analysis of discourse rather than invented examples. It is quite evident that this field started emerging as a separate and established branch of linguistics around 1970s. The observations made on the available theoretical positions taken and on the commonality with other areas are diverse enough to suggest that discourse constitutes more than one distinct subfield of linguistics. However, it is important to make a note that there is a common vein that runs through these different approaches, i.e. enough importance is given to the study of language use beyond the boundaries of clause/sentence because natural language seldom occurs in isolated sentence forms.

McHoul criticizes Harris and the other formal approaches to discourse analysis and asserts that it is quite mechanical to read the norms of general discourse “from imagined or invented texts as though discourse were less of a social phenomenon and more of a formal system in its own right” (*Towards a Critical Ethnomethodology* 942). Discourse analysts who are associated with linguistics as an academic discipline are concerned with both form and function. However, it may be important to note that all discourse analysts are linguists, which is why most discourse analysts would not like to concentrate on the understanding of language. According to Cameron they would be more concerned about “discourse as a source of evidence or insight about social life and social relations. Their questions are not like Zellig Harris’s, primarily about the way language works. Rather they use discourse analysis as a qualitative research method for investigating social phenomena: sexual harassment, attitudes
to the monarchy and youth subcultures are among the topics that have been investigated in this way” (13).

2.6. Speech Act Theory

The idea of speech acts has its roots in the Philosophy of Language. Speech Act theory is related to the ways in which language can be used. It originated with John Austin, but was developed by John Searle. Speech Act theory originated from the basic insight that language is used not to describe the world, but also to perform actions. Defining Speech acts, McCarthy observes:

When we say that a particular bit of speech or writing is a request or an instruction or an exemplification, we are concentrating on what that piece of language is doing or how the listener/reader is supposed to react: for this reason such entities are often called speech acts. (6)

A speech act refers to what is done when something is said i.e. the action performed gets indicated by the utterance made. For example, warning, threatening, promising, requesting, etc. The utterances such as ‘I like walking’ and ‘I will go for a walk’ perform the act of liking and the act of asserting or even declaring. The interpretation of the acts is done on the basis of the meaning of words uttered and the originating contexts of the utterances which interact with the knowledge of the conditions in which the utterance was realised. Carter, et al, explain that it is the intention of the speaker that determines the kind of speech act being performed. They further elaborate that saying something may be understood as doing something beyond what’s being said. They explain it with the following examples:

I apologise
I promise
I do (at a wedding) (250)

Here, s/he is doing something beyond what is being said. By saying ‘I apologise’ for instance, s/he has performed an apology; there has been a change in state of things, an act has been carried out. Carter et al emphasise the point that speech acts are common and particularly important when using language for rituals, ceremonies and legal purposes and, therefore, utterances need to be at a particular moment or context wherein there is a condition of the eligibility of the speaker. For instance, it is only the bride or the bridegroom who will be considered married if they utter “I do” and no one else even if they are part of the same gathering. It is only the judge whose words, “I sentence you to two years’ imprisonment” will
carry weight in a courtroom (Carter et al. 168). Again, it is only in the courtroom that the words, “I sentence you to two years’ imprisonment” even though uttered by a judge, will carry any weight. The speech act approach to discourse analysis, it may be inferred, emphasises the knowledge of underlying conditions for production and interpretation of acts through words.

2.6.1. Direct and Indirect Speech Acts

Searle points out that the relationship between the form and function is straightforward in direct speech acts. Using a direct speech act entails communication of the conventionally literal meanings of the words used and therefore expression of direct illocution of the utterance. In simpler words, the direct illocution of an utterance is the illocution most apparently indicated through a literal comprehension of the linguistic elements such as grammatical forms and vocabulary used in the utterance.

In an indirect speech act, there is no straightforward relationship of the form and function and the meaning conveyed is neither literal nor overtly apparent. It indicates an indirect illocution. Searle believes that there is an underlying pragmatic meaning in an indirect speech act and one speech act is performed “by means of another” (60). For example an utterance such as ‘Can you reach the salt?’ may indicate to the listener to pass the salt to the speaker who is also sitting with the listener at the dining table. In short, the speaker has to be a specific person in a special context for the speech act to be felicitous just as a judge in the courtroom. The focus here is on intentionality of action. In these examples given above, it may be noticed that words can perform more than one function at a time and that context becomes a special tool to separate multiple functions of utterances from one another. The speech acts have therefore multi-functionality and context dependency. Fetzer observes:

…meaning is conceived of as communicated by a speaker-intended act which is expressed in and through the process of communication. Because of that, felicitous communication is no longer seen as a context-independent endeavour, but as firmly anchored to a speech act’s felicity conditions, which are conceived of as linguistic-context and social-context categories. (79)

One important aspect of this approach according to Yule (The Study of Language) is its dependence on the context for resolving the conflict in the adjacency pairs (A sequence of two utterances by different speakers in conversation). The second is a response to the first, e.g. question-answer (127). This is perhaps the only advancement over the previous approach.
Like Harris’ approach to discourse analysis, the speech act approach also suffers from the same limitations: hypothetical contexts applied along with the hypothetical utterances.

Speech Act theory was not initially developed for analysing Discourse. However, issues such as problems posed by indirect speech acts wherein the problem of how it was possible for the speaker to say one thing with the intention of meaning something else; and how it was possible for the hearer to understand the indirect speech act as was intentioned by the speaker lead to the need for analysing discourse. The speech act is related to discourse as it emphasises the knowledge of basic conditions for production and interpretation of words. Words generally perform more than one action at a time and the contexts in which words are produced help to reach the intended meaning separating it from the multiple functions that utterances have. In this connection, it may be said that there is no necessary correspondence between the function of an utterance and its linguistic form.

2.7. Austin’s Performatives and Constatives

It was Austin who first drew attention to the functions that utterances perform. He points out that certain utterances not only perform the act but also describe it. He calls such utterances as performatives. Hurford and Heasley define a performative as “one that actually describes the act that it performs, i.e. it PERFORMS some act and SIMULTANEOUSLY DESCRIBES that act” (235). Austin gives the following examples of performatives where to say it is to do it:

i. ‘I do (take this woman to be my lawful wedded wife)’ - as uttered in the course of marriage ceremony.

ii. ‘I name this ship the Queen Elizabeth’ - as uttered when smashing the bottle against the stern.

iii. ‘I give and bequeath my watch to my brother’ - as occurring in a will.

iv. ‘I bet you sixpence it will rain tomorrow ’(5).

The examples given above are utterances which according to Austin are ‘not used to say things but to do things.’ The examples share several qualities. They all include a particular type of verb- a performatative verb- that realizes a particular action. In the example, ‘I promise to repay you tomorrow’ (Hurford and Heasley 235), the verb ‘promise’ is an example of a performative as through this verb, “the utterance both describes the promise and is a promise” (235).
In contrast to performatives, constatives are such propositions that can be judged true or false. For example, the utterance ‘John promised to repay me tomorrow.’ describes a promise but, in itself, it is not a promise. Therefore, it does not simultaneously do both i.e. describe and do. It can also be judged whether the ‘promise’ actually means a promise and whether John actually did repay ‘me’ the next day or whether the promise made turned out to be true or false.

2.7.1. Felicity Conditions

Levinson declares that “performative sentences achieve their corresponding actions because there are specific conventions linking the words to institutional procedures” (230). As discussed above, Austin states that it is required for the procedure and the performative to be executed in suitable and conducive circumstances for it to be successful. Schiffrin (Approaches to Discourse) discusses Austin’s observations, observes:

The circumstances allowing an act are varied: they include the existence of ‘an accepted conventional procedure having a certain conventional effect’, the presence of ‘particular persons and circumstances’, ‘the correct and complete execution of a procedure’, and (when appropriate to the act) ‘certain thoughts, feelings, or intentions’. (51)

Austin points out (as quoted in Yule) “certain expected or appropriate circumstances technically known as felicity conditions for the performance of a speech act to be recognized as intended” (50). Cutting explains Austin’s felicity conditions, stating that “the context and roles of participants must be recognized by all parties, the action must be carried out completely, and the persons must have the right intentions” (15). Regarding Searle’s position on felicity conditions, Cutting observes:

For Searle, there is a general condition for all speech acts, that the hearer must hear and understand the language, and that the speaker must not be pretending or play-acting. (15)

Searle considered some general conditions for all speech acts. He believed that both the interlocutors must have the right intentions, that is, the hearer must hear carefully and must also know the language that the speaker is using. The speaker, on the other hand, must mean what s/he says and must not pretend or play-act. For speech act such as declaration and directives, the speaker who performs a directive speech act must believe that the action (directed) is possible to be carried out by the hearer; the action performed will be beneficial
for the hearer; the speaker is sincere about carrying out the action; and that the ‘saying’ of words means ‘performing’ the act. Levinson explains felicity conditions in the following way:

A1 accepted conventional procedure
A2 appropriate persons and circumstances
B1 procedure executed properly by all
B2 procedure executed completely
C1 participants must mean what they are doing
C2 participants must subsequently conduct themselves accordingly

If conditions A1, A2 or B1 and B2 are breached, there is a MISFIRE, i.e. the action is not performed. If conditions C1 and C2 are breached there is an ABUSE, i.e. the action is achieved but is insincere.

2.7.2 The Development of Austin’s Theory

As Austin developed his theory, the distinction between constatives and performatives became hazy. Drawing a parallel between explicit performatives and primary performatives, he concluded that all utterances are characterized by the difference between ‘doing’ and ‘saying’. He gives the following examples:

Explicit Performative: I promise that I shall be there.
Primary Performative: I shall be there. (69)

Austin observed that all utterances are performatives in the sense of constituting a form of doing rather than simply saying something. He goes on to make a distinction between the locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary acts of utterances.

2.7.2.1. Locutionary Act

A locutionary act is the basic act of uttering a meaningful linguistic expression as in ‘I have repaired the bicycle’ will be considered a locutionary act in English while ‘Maine cycle theek kar di’ will not be considered a locutionary act in English as it is said in a different language which will make no sense in front of the monolingual English but will definitely be a locutionary act in Hindi. Austin defines a locutionary act as “speaking in the usual sense”
(98), while Levinson defines it as “the utterance of a sentence with determinate sense and reference” (236).

2.7.2.2. Illocutionary Act

An Illocutionary act refers to the communicative force of what is said in a particular context as the speaker generally has some function in mind while forming an utterance. Taking the same example, ‘I have repaired the bicycle,’ it can be said that the utterance may have the function of simply informing or boasting or even warning by a parent to the child to keep the bicycle well maintained in future. Austin defines illocutionary act as the way in which and the sense in which, it is used on an occasion (99). Levinson considers it as “the making of a statement, offer, promise etc. in uttering a sentence, by virtue of the conventional force associated with it (or with its explicit performative paraphrase)” (236).

2.7.2.3. Perlocutionary Act

A Perlocutionary act refers to the effect that an utterance used to perform a speech act has. The perlocutionary effect of a speech act on the hearer is very important as it shows how the hearer reacts. For example the perlocutionary effect of the utterance in an advertisement will make a consumer buy the product advertised. An advertisement being shown on television is that of a perfume called Aramusk wherein the caption that the male model Shahid Kapur utters is ‘Very Male. Very You.’ Along with the nonverbal, the caption has an effect especially on the male viewers. Some of them will go and buy the perfume and some will ridicule the whole concept of this kind of advertising. Levinson explains, the perlocutionary act is “the bringing about of effects on the audience by means of uttering the sentence, such effects being special to the circumstances of the utterance” (236). Austin defines it as “saying something will often, or even normally, produce certain consequential effects upon the feelings, thoughts, or actions of the audience or of the speaker, or of other persons: and it may be done with the design, intention or purpose of producing them” (101).

2.7.3. Searle’s Typology of Speech Acts: Refining Illocutionary Force

Searle attempts to refine the notion of Austin’s illocutionary force and proposes five classes:
i. **Representatives** are acts that commit the speaker to the truth of the proposition expressed (e.g. hypothesising, concluding, describing, claiming, insisting, predicting, etc.).

Example
This book serves as a guide through the intricate labyrinth of Adorno’s work. (Excerpt from the Blurb of the book *Theodore Adorno Key Concepts* edited by Deborah Cook)

**Claiming**

ii. **Directives** are acts in which the speaker makes attempts through words to get the hearer to do something (requesting, ordering, questioning, inviting, suggesting, forbidding, etc.)

Example 1
Better remain silent and be thought a fool, than open your mouth and remove all possible doubt. (Ancient Chinese proverb) **Suggesting**

Example 2
Do your research before buying property. (News Paper Heading in “Times Property” a supplement of *The Times of India* on June 1, 2013. Page 2) **Suggesting**

iii. **Commissives** are acts that commit the speaker to some future course of action (e.g. promising, threatening, offering, refusing, vowing, volunteering, etc.)

Example 1.
We power your dreams with knowledge.
(Excerpt from an Advertisement of RAU’S IAS Study Circle published in *Frontline* March 14-27, 2009. Page 2) **Promising**

Example 2.
Pay just 15% as booking amount and rest on possession
(Excerpt from an Advertisement of Paramount Group of Companies published in “Times Property” a supplement of *The Times of India* on June 1, 2013. Page 1) **Offering**

iv. **Expressives** express a psychological state of the speaker and the words express the feelings of the speaker (e.g. stating, thanking, apologizing, welcoming, congratulating, deploring, regretting, etc.)

Example 1.
One should be thankful to the two newspapers for placing the basic facts with such clarity and candour. (Excerpt from an article – “Police vs Lawyers” published in *Frontline*, March 14-27, 2009. Page 94) **Thanking**
Example 2.

PEACE and human rights are both important entities by themselves.
(Excerpt from a book review “Of Peace and Rights” published in *Frontline*, March 14-27, 2009 Page 74) **Stating**

v. **Declarations** effect immediate changes in the institutional state of affairs and are usually dependent on non-linguistic institutions (e.g. declaring war, marrying a couple).

Example 1.

There is no blinking at the fact that our people, our territory and our interests are in grave danger. With confidence in our armed forces, with the unbounding determination of our people, we will gain the inevitable triumph. So help us God!
(Excerpt from President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s speech on December 8, 1941, declaring war after attack on Pearl Harbour) **Declaring a War** – through institution of state

Example 2.

“I now pronounce you man and wife.” (Priest at a Christian wedding) **Declaring the marriage of a couple** – through institution of Church

Levinson however, reveals that this classification though is an improvement on Austin, yet “it lacks a principled basis” and is by no means “definitive and exhaustive” (240).

### 2.8. Halliday’s Approach

M. A. K. Halliday also made contribution to the field of discourse. For Halliday discourse is a unit of language larger than a sentence and strongly entrenched in a specific context.

#### 2.8.1. Contextual Analysis

Halliday in his *Language as Social Semiotic: The Sociological Interpretation of Language and Meaning* borrows Bronislaw Malinowski’s notion of “context of situation,” to examine the relations between language use and social interaction. Halliday concurs with Malinowski’s argument that it is not possible for foreigners living outside a given society to understand all aspects of texts written by the members of that society though translated into their own language. The reason for this is that texts have more meanings, than are apparently
understood through words. These meanings can only be understood in the context of the situations in which they were written or spoken. For Halliday "what is, the actual sentences and words that constitute our direct experience of language, derives its significance from what could be" (28). He further observes:

…language comes to life only when functioning in some environment. We do not experience language in isolation - if we did we would not recognize it as language - but always in relation to a scenario, some background of persons and actions and events from which the things which are said derive their meaning. This is referred to as the 'situation', so language is said to function in 'contexts of situation' and any account of language which fails to build in the situation as an essential ingredient is likely to be artificial and unrewarding. (28)

Halliday developed an analysis of context in terms of field, tenor and mode. These three categories present a system which may illustrate any socio-linguistic occurrence.

i. **Field of Discourse**

   It refers to the subject matter and includes what the text is about and the activity that the participants are doing. It accounts for what is happening, to whom, where and when, why it is happening, and so on.

ii. **Tenor of Discourse**

   Tenor refers to the social relation that exists between the participants in a speech situation. It includes relations of formality, power, and affect and the role of the participants. It, therefore, controls the interpersonal choices of the participants that they make in the linguistic system, which in turn influences the role and the choice of the structures and the strategies made to activate the linguistic exchange.

iii. **Mode of Discourse**

   Mode describes role played by language and the way it is being used in the speech interaction. It includes the medium (spoken, written, written to be spoken, etc.) as well as the rhetorical structure and the purpose it serves to achieve (expository, instructive, persuasive, etc.).

   Halliday considers ‘context of situation’ to be just a part of the ‘context of culture’ as for him the concept of ‘context of situation’ refers only to the narrower and immediate environment of a textual event while ‘context of culture’ refers to the wider institutional and cultural contexts.
2.8.2 Functions of Language

Halliday in his *Linguistic Study of Text and Discourse* also discusses three functions that language performs (1) ideational (experiential and logical); (2) interpersonal; and (3) textual. He observes that they are “different kinds of meaning potential that relate to the most general functions that language has evolved to serve” (198).

2.8.2.1. Ideational Function

The Ideational function of language focuses on meanings that emerge on account of the ways the language represents the interlocutor’s experience in terms of the ways the text represents the external or internal reality of the interlocutor i.e. how a certain event is carried out by a certain person at a certain situation in the real world. Locke explains that it is “concerned with how we talk about actions, happenings, feelings, beliefs, situations, states, and so on, the people and things involved in them, and the relevant circumstances of time, place, manner, and so on” (9).

2.8.2.2. Interpersonal Function

The interpersonal function is concerned with shaping the interaction through language. Locke explains it as “the ways in which we act upon one another through language-giving and requesting information, getting people to do things, and offering to do things ourselves – and the ways in which we express our judgments and attitudes – about such things as likelihood, necessity, and desirability” (9). In other words it has to do with organizing the social reality of people one interacts with by way of using language for different functions.

2.8.2.3. Textual Function

The textual function of language refers to the ways in which a stretch of language is organized in relation to its context. Since textual meaning is important in the creation of coherence in a given text, the textual function has to do with those resources of language which reflect the relationship of such elements of language that lend coherence to a text.
It is important to mention here that Halliday’s categories of context are in sync with his model of functions of language and how its resources are organized. Halliday’s field of discourse is expressed through the ideational function of language, the tenor through the interpersonal function and the mode through the textual function. This may well be summarized and understood with the help of the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discourse Categories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GENRE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIELD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TENOR</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MODE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 2.1: Contextual Analysis from Linguistic and Functional Analysis**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discourse Categories</th>
<th>Language Function</th>
<th>Questions leading to Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FIELD 8. Ideational: experiential / logical metafunction</td>
<td>Focus on lexico-grammar:</td>
<td>What is the text about?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>How are the logical relationships in the text signaled?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TENOR 9. Interpersonal metafunction</td>
<td>How is the relationship between the writer and reader constructed?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How is the power relationship between writer and reader signalled?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How does the writer signal evaluations (approval / disapproval, acceptance / rejection, certainty /uncertainty etc.)?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MODE 10. Textual metafunction</td>
<td>How is the text organized at a micro level</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Theme / Rheme) and as a series of larger units of meaning (e.g. discourse moves such as Situation, Problem, Response etc)?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 2.2 Linguistic and Functional Analysis**
Adapted from (Chris Gledhill, The ‘Field Tenor Mode’ framework for analysis, p. 2)

**2.9. Sinclair and Coulthard’s Approach**

Sinclair and Coulthard’s approach is also referred to as the Birmingham School of Discourse Analysis. They worked towards a general descriptive framework for discourse analysis of spoken classroom language based on units similar to the units in Halliday’s systemic grammar (“Categories of the theory of grammar”). In this model, the units of higher rank are made up of units of lower rank for example in grammar ‘sentence’ is made up of ‘clauses’ or ‘word’ is made up of one or more ‘morphemes’ and combines with other words to make a group (phrase). Sinclair and Coulthard study “the way in which units above the rank of clause are related and patterned- and the way in which such language functions as statement, question and command are realized through grammatical structure and position in the discourse” (8). The classroom interaction model discourse has four such units going lower in the order – transaction, exchange, move and act.
In their original model, Sinclair and Coulthard had also included the all-encompassing fifth element, i.e. ‘lesson’. Lesson for them had transactions as their immediate lower units. But later, they dismissed it because they considered it to be “stylistic type,” dependent on subjective teaching types. Cutting (26) gives the following figure that explains the structural relationships put forward by Sinclair and Coulthard.

![Diagram](image)

**Figure 2.3 Sinclair and Coulthard,**

Sinclair and Coulthard look at ‘act’ as the lowest rank. The figure given above shows that a lesson would have many transactions; each transaction may have many exchanges; each exchange may have many different moves; and each move has many acts. Acts, as mentioned earlier, are defined by their functions in the spoken discourse. Building on Austin and Searle’s speech acts, Sinclair and Coulthard, consider their acts to be more general in nature and define them by their interactive function. For example ‘Elicitation’ has the function of ‘requesting a linguistic response’ while ‘directive’ expects a non-linguistic response; ‘Marker’ such as ‘I mean’, ‘you know’ form the boundaries of discourse between ideas and topics; ‘acknowledge’ include ‘back channels’ such as ‘really?’, ‘is that so?’ or words such as ‘Now’, ‘Well’ ‘Right’, ‘Ok’, etc. that serve the purpose of acknowledging the discourse; ‘cue’ as in ‘hold on’, ‘speak up’ encourage the hearer to participate; while in ‘evaluate’, considers the hearer’s answer as in ‘you have a point here’, ‘interesting’ etc. Twenty two
different kinds of acts have been suggested in this system which are marker, starter,
elicitation, check, directive, informative, prompt, clue, cue, bid, nomination, acknowledge,
reply, react, comment, accept, evaluate, silent stress, metasatement, conclusion, loop and
aside. The strength of this approach is that it allows generalization and flexibility. As
Fairclough (Discourse and Social Change) points out:

…the strength of Sinclair and Coulthard framework is in the pioneering way in
which it draws attention to systematic organisational properties of dialogue
and provides ways of describing them. (15)

Pointing at the limitation of the approach, Fairclough says that it is descriptive and
that it also makes the classroom discourse seem more homogenous than it actually is; and
naturalizes the dominant practices by making them appear to be the only practices. He points
at the absence of a developed social orientation to discourse in Sinclair and Coulthard. He
says that it “lacks a developed social orientation in failing to consider how relations of power
have shaped discourse practices, and in failing to situate classroom discourse historically in
processes of social struggle and change” (15).

2.10. Pragmatics

Morris observes that pragmatics is “the science of the relation of signs to their
interpreters” (30). To write it simply, pragmatics has less to do with language as a system but
more with the interrelationship between language form, messages interpreted and language
users. Spencer-Oatey and Zegarac observe that pragmatics explores questions such as the
following:

i. How do people communicate more than what the words or phrases of their
utterances might mean by themselves, and how do people make these
interpretations?

ii. Why do people choose to say and/or interpret something in one way rather than
another?

iii. How do people’s perceptions of contextual factors (for example, who the
interlocutors are, what their relationship is, and what circumstances they are
communicating in) influence the process of producing and interpreting language?
(70)
The major work of pragmatics is to explain how participants in a conversation move from the linguistically encoded decontextualized meanings of the words and phrases to a comprehension of their contextual meaning. Pragmatics, to put it simply, is concerned with the study of the meaning that is received on account of the linguistic expressions used. Pragmatics, according to Yule is the “study of relationships between linguistic forms and the users of those forms”. He believes that only Pragmatics allows analysis of the language used in a particular situation. He states:

The advantage of studying language via pragmatics is that one can talk about people’s intended meanings, their assumptions, their purposes or goals and the kinds of actions (for example, requests) that they are performing when they speak. The big disadvantage is that all these very human concepts are extremely difficult to analyse in a consistent and objective way. (4)

Yule gives an example of two friends who may have a conversation with implications that they themselves are only able to comprehend as the meaning implied is not in any way related to the linguistic form used in the conversation.

Her: So – did you?
Him: Hey – who wouldn’t?

Pragmatics, Yule observes, appeals to people as it entails people to make meaning of the linguistic forms but at the same time can be frustrating experience as it requires them to comprehend not only what they say but also what they intend or what is going on in their mind (4). He explains that it is “the study of meaning as communicated by a speaker (or writer) and interpreted by a listener (or reader)” (3). Yule goes on to say that Pragmatics is more concerned with the “analysis of what people mean by their utterances than what the words or phrases in those utterances might mean by themselves” (3). Defining Pragmatics as the study of “speaker meaning” (3), Yule gives an extensive explanation of Pragmatics and observes that it is a study of

i. “contextual meaning” (3). The interpretations of what people mean in a particular context and how the context, in turn, influences what is said is central to the understanding of pragmatics. The speakers are required to organize their words in the context of where they are; who is being addressed; and under what circumstances.

ii. “how more gets communicated than is said ” (3). Here, it is important to analyse the interpretations made by the listeners to arrive at the intended meaning of the speaker and how a lot of unsaid and invisible ideas get communicated.
iii. “the expression of relative distance” (3). This perspective brings up the issue of choice the speaker has to say or leave things unsaid. It depends on the distance between the speaker and the listener – whether social, physical or conceptual. Closeness or distance also implies shared experience or the world view and it determines how much is to be said and how much to leave unsaid.

Cutting believes that pragmatics and discourse analysis are approaches to studying relation of language to contextual background features. For Example, if Queen Victoria said, “We are not amused”, it was taken as normal due to the convention for the royalty to use ‘We’ for a singular personal pronoun ‘I’; but it became a matter of ridicule for Margaret Thatcher, the prime minister of England, who gave a statement to the press in 1989, “We are a grandmother” on the birth of her first grandchild, Mark Thatcher's son Michael. It got reported in all the leading newspapers and television. The video is available on YouTube and the URL link has also been cited. The use of the ‘royal we’ (the ‘pluralis majestatis’ or ‘majestic plural’) had previously been restricted to royalty as Queen Victoria's 'we are not amused'. The use of 'we' by a mere prime minister was ascribed to Thatcher's conceit.

It may be said that pragmatics and discourse analysis study the context, text and function. Schiffrin (1994) also talks about pragmatic approach to discourse analysis and terms the pragmatic approach to be purely descriptive. She states that it helps to understand speaker meaning (192). Crystal considers pragmatics as:

the study of language from the point of view of users, especially of the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction and the effects their use of language has on other participants, in the act of communication. (*English as Global Language* 301)

Kasper and Rose define it as “the study of communicative action in its socio-cultural context. Communicative action includes not only using speech acts (such as apologizing, complaining, complimenting, and requesting), but also engaging in different types of discourse and participating in speech events of varying length and complexity” (2). Searle, Kiefer and Bierwisch observe that, “Pragmatics is one of those words (societal and cognitive are others) that give the impression that something quite specific and technical is being talked about when often in fact it has no clear meaning” (7). What Searle, Kiefer and Bierwisch say is very significant as trying to define the term, one ends up delimiting the scope of Pragmatics. In fact, there is no consensus regarding the domain of pragmatics. Levinson discussing the scope of Pragmatics says:
…the term pragmatics covers both context-dependent aspects of language structure and principles of language usage and understanding that have nothing or little to do with linguistic structure. It is difficult to forge a definition that will happily cover both aspects. But this should not be taken to imply that pragmatics is a hodge-podge, concerned with quite disparate and unrelated aspects of language… (9)

Levinson explains pragmatics as a field that has more to do with how the language structure and principles of language usage relate to each other (9). The combination of structure and usage of language implies not only the accurate use of language but also the contextual appropriacy so that it is seen as meaningful discourse that involves all the participants in the interaction. This brings the discussion to the importance of the production of discourse. Cutting defines three types of context:

i. the situational context, what speakers know about what they can see around them;
ii. the background knowledge context, what they know about each other and the world;
iii. the co-textual context, what they know about what they have been saying. (5)

Cutting continues to define the three types of contexts and believes that the social context may include clues present situationally such as the body gestures used along with the text uttered, for example, pointing at a particular object while using a demonstrative pronoun as ‘that’ which only the speaker and the hearer can see. She says:

The situational context is the immediate physical co-presence, the situation where the interaction is taking place at the moment of speaking. (5)

The context of the assumed background knowledge can be cultural or interpersonal. The cultural knowledge includes the general knowledge that people share and have in their minds about life and the interpersonal knowledge refers to the specific or private information about the speakers known to both the interlocutors. Sperber and Wilson believe, “if interlocutors establish that they are part of the same group, they can assume mutual knowledge of everything normally known by group members” (qtd. in Cutting 5). She observes that the shared interpersonal knowledge is knowledge “acquired through previous verbal interactions or joint activities and experiences and it includes privileged personal knowledge about the interlocutor” (Cutting 6). For example there may be reference to certain people who may not be present where conversation is taking place but the interlocutors understand the conversation without any communication gap.

The co-textual context springs from the context of text itself and is called the co-text. The referents such as the personal pronouns ‘we’, ‘they’ and ‘he’ used in the conversation are
understood by all the participants in the conversation. It is assumed that everyone has enough knowledge of what has been said to be able to comprehend the right reference. Such words point to the entity they refer to. They are also referred to as deictic words.

2.10.1. Deixis

Deixis refers to speaker’s context and the choice of expressions depends on whether the utterance being made is ‘near speaker’ or ‘away from speaker’. These are called proximal terms (this, here, now) and distal terms (that, there, then). Yule observes:

It should not be a surprise to learn that deictic expressions were all to be found in the pragmatics wastebasket. Their interpretation depends on the context, the speaker’s intention, and they express relative distance. Given their small size and extremely wide range of possible uses, deictic expressions always communicate much more than is said. (16)

Yule talks about three types of deictic expressions:

i. person deixis to indicate people such as ‘you’, ‘me’…
ii. spatial deixis to indicate location such as ‘here’, ‘there’…
iii. temporal deixis to indicate time such as ‘now’, ‘then’…

2.10.2. Presupposition

A presupposition is something that is assumed by the speaker prior to making an utterance. A presupposition, it may be said is information that is known and shared, such information is not explicitly stated but it is part of the information that is communicated but not said. Defining a presupposition, Baker and Ellece observe:

A presupposition as a proposition which, although not formally stated, is understood and taken for granted in order for an utterance or a statement to make sense. For example, the statement ‘John’s presentation was well received’ presupposes that ‘John gave a presentation’. (103)

It is to do with what kinds of meanings are assumed as given in a text. All language use is thick with presuppositions. An utterance such as, ‘I bought a blue Sony Vaio laptop, has the following presuppositions.

i. We know what a laptop is.
ii. We are aware of the Sony Vaio brand.
iii. We know what the colour blue looks like.
iv. We know that Sony laptops are available in different colours.

What is important to note is that it is the speaker and not the utterances, who has a presupposition based on which s/he utters a sentence and his/her intended meaning has a presupposed position about a particular situation, which also becomes a platform for making a biased utterance. The listener, here, is expected to share the presupposition and arrive at a conclusion that s/he was expected to.

It is worth noting that presuppositions have a place in the analysis of discourse as, according to Baker and Ellece, presuppositions can identify “speakers’ or writers’ commonsense assumptions, beliefs and attitudes’ that are taken as given. Analysis of presuppositions allows the discourse analyst identify implicit meanings in texts” (103). Presuppositions can be used to build a basis for what sounds like a logical argument. Another related concept is ‘entailment’ (Yule 25) which refers to something that logically follows from what is said in the utterance. Using the same (John’s) example, Baker and Ellece illustrate the difference between a presupposition and an entailment:

Presuppositions differ from ENTAILMENTS in that if the statement is negated, ‘John’s presentation was not well received’, then the presupposition still holds true (John still gave a presentation). Entailments, however, cannot be shown to hold true when statements are negated. (103)

The terms ‘presupposition’ and ‘entailment’, it may be said, are used to illustrate two different aspects of the information communicated. However, in contrast to presuppositions, it is the utterances and not the speakers that have entailments.

2.10.3. Cooperation and Conversational Implicature

A conversation, according to Yule, requires both the speaker and the listener to trust and cooperate with each other. The listener has to trust the speaker when s/he says something; take the utterance at its face value and build his/her interpretation according to what he hears taking into account the context in which the utterance is produced. Grice describes the cooperative principle (CP) as:

Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged. (45)
CP is supported by conversational maxims of implicature (developed by Grice to explain how people carry out conversations). Grice gives four maxims that are to be followed for the normal and successful conversation. Woods observes, “…in accepting the cooperative principle, we seek to make our conversational contributions absolutely truthful, informative, relevant and clear” (xii). These maxims can just be considered as “expectations that people have about how conversations will normally be conducted” (Baker and Ellece 23).

Bloor and Bloor (24) give the following figure for the explanation of maxims.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Quality</th>
<th>Relation</th>
<th>Manner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Make your contribution as informative as is required for the current purposes of the exchange.</td>
<td>1. Do not say what you believe to be false.</td>
<td>Be relevant</td>
<td>1. Avoid obscurity of expression.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.</td>
<td>2. Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.</td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Avoid ambiguity.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 2.4 Grice’s Maxims**

In simple terms the maxims can be summed up as:

i. **Quantity** – say as much as is needed
ii. **Quality** – tell the truth.
iii. **Relation** – be relevant
iv. **Manner** – be clear

However, these maxims can be flouted for different reasons. They are flouted by the speakers if they want to mislead the listeners or opt out of the actions performed for which the utterance was made. To illustrate this, the example can be taken of a speaker who says, ‘My Mac…’, the listener needs to trust the speaker and believe that he possesses a Mac in reality and is not telling a lie. Such a conversation would not normally confuse the listener or hide or withhold any information from the listener but this kind of cooperation would just be a beginning point in a conversation. It may be commonly observed that these maxims are not
observed by people because “people lie, waffle, digress and so on” (24). The point becomes clear with the examples given by Yule. He points out that tautologies such as a woman uttering, ‘A hamburger is a hamburger’ in response to ‘How’s the hamburger?’ at lunch time cannot be taken as her unwillingness to speak. In fact, it is giving more information than is apparent. Just as ‘Boys will be boys’ communicates more than apparent, this expression also has more to say. Another example of this may be:

i. Speaker A: Did you go to Radha’s house today?
ii. Speaker B: I got a call from the Bank.

To understand this, it may be worth noticing that utterance 1 is a direct utterance requesting for information. It also requires confirmation by the Speaker B. But utterance 2 is indirect and the meaning becomes clear only if there is some shared knowledge between Speaker A and Speaker B. In the exchange, it appears that Speaker B’s response is not relevant. But it is clear that B’s response is quite relevant otherwise, s/he would not have said it. Speaker A has to interpret that Speaker B had some important work with the bank (shared knowledge) and had been waiting for a call which prevented Speaker B from going to Radha’s house. Here the maxim of relevance has been flouted which gives rise to implicature.

Grice appears to be particularly interested in implicatures (Grice believes that the word implicature is different from the word implication which has a slightly different meaning in philosophical logic.). Implicatures are generally referred to as implied information that is evident in language use without being explicitly stated. Baker and Ellece define implicature as:

…information which is implied in a statement but cannot be derived from applying logical inferencing techniques to it. An implicature is therefore what is suggested but not formally expressed. Instead, the reader or hearer must either understand that part of the statement has a conventionalized, special meaning or take context into account in order to decode the implicature.

(59)

The listener/ reader has to read between the lines to comprehend the implied. Such indirect meanings are essentially in conformity with the CP and rely on it in order for the implicature to work CP. According to LoCastro, the hearer has to do the following to arrive at any implicature:

i. Process and arrive at the literal meaning of the utterance
ii. Check the literal meaning against the Cooperative Principle
iii. Check the context of utterance
iv. Check the background information
v. Assume that i-iv are part of the mutual knowledge shared between the speaker and the hearer
vi. Calculate any implicatures (137)

2.10.4. The Politeness Principle

According to Brown and Levinson, politeness is concerned with the way people establish and maintain social cohesion. For this they may use both verbal and nonverbal strategies and avoid any such talk that may cause conflict or social disharmony. Lakoff observes that politeness is “… the way in which individuals relate to one another- that directly affects the use of language” (910). In simple words, Lakoff observes that language gets affected in an attempt to use appropriate polite behaviour in particular situations for establishing and maintaining successful social relationships and to avoid behaviour that may cause conflict.

Politeness theory proved to be a major work in the field of pragmatics. It refers to the way people establish and sustain social harmony using various strategies that may be verbal or nonverbal. It also refers to how people avoid conflict and social disharmony by not saying or doing certain things (Brown and Levinson). Brown and Levinson point out that politeness is often a motivation for deviating from Grice’s maxims, a point which Grice himself had mentioned but not developed. Borrowing Ervin Goffman’s idea of FACE, they discuss two types of Face in their Politeness model: Negative face and Positive face. Goffman defines ‘face’ as:

…the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact. Face is an image of self-delineated in terms of approved social attributes – albeit an image that others may share, as when a person makes a good showing for his profession or religion by making a good showing for himself. (5)

It follows that face refers to the self-esteem or the public self-image of a person. Positive face involves our desire to be liked by others, to seek their approval of our actions and interests whereas negative face involves our wish for autonomy so that our actions are not impeded by others. Bloor and Bloor observe:
Negative face is basically freedom from imposition; positive face is the wish to be approved of in certain respects. This distinction gives rise to two kinds of politeness: negative politeness and positive politeness. (105)

According to them, the terms negative politeness and positive politeness are ‘potentially confusing’. They observe that things that instantly come to most people’s minds on hearing the word ‘politeness’ such as social distancing, non-encroachment, deference may be referred to as negative politeness. Bloor and Bloor cite examples of negative politeness as saying words and expressions such as ‘please’, using people’s titles (e.g. Ms/ Mc/ Dr/ Al Shabab/ Sergeant), using apologetic language, hedging, being indirect, and so on” (105). On the other hand positive politeness includes such behaviour that “might not always be generally thought of as politeness” (105). Behaviour that shows solidarity such as being too familiar or ‘matey’ and being on first name basis that is not generally considered polite comes under positive politeness. It indicates some common interest, and inclusivity of the addressee (105).

Brown and Levinson believe that positive face holds that every person feels the need to feel understood, acknowledged, appreciated, and accepted. For example, people expect and want others to acknowledge their achievement by using good words or giving them compliments when they have done something well. Positive face, according to, Baker and Ellece:

…is related to issues of self-esteem, reputation and social standing. Positive face can sometimes be maintained by banter or playful insults, the implication being that two speakers are so close that they can appear to be rude to each other and no offence will be taken. (95)

Negative Face according to Brown and Levinson refers to a person’s desire to act out of their own volition rather than as an imposition by others. To put it simply, in the words of Baker and Ellece negative face is our desire for freedom to do

i. what we want
ii. how we want to and
iii. when we want to

They cite the following examples of negative face

i. Please, you go first.
ii. Welcome to my humble abode. (75)

In a normal social exchange, many acts that threaten the other person’s face are performed. Avoiding face threats is impossible in any normal interaction. Such acts, according to Brown
and Levinson, are called ‘face-threatening acts’ (FTAs). Calling names or using abusive words, for example, threatens a person’s positive face while asking someone to do something (such as fixing a meal) threatens that person’s negative face. However, the effect of FTAs can be reduced or mitigated by using certain strategies.

Brown and Levinson make a distinction between acts that threaten negative face and positive face. FTAs that threaten the negative face of the hearer indicate that the speaker encroaches upon the hearer’s freedom of action in some way (65–68). Given below are the acts that threaten the hearer’s negative face using pressure on the hearer to do or refrain from something; to accept or reject some positive future act; and to give or refuse to give one of their possessions to the speaker.

A. Acts of pressure on the hearer for doing something or refraining from it:
   i. orders and requests
   ii. reminders
   iii. suggestions or advice
   iv. dares, warnings, threats

B. Acts of pressure on the hearer to accept or reject some positive future act:
   i. offers
   ii. promises

C. Acts of pressure on the hearer to protect the object of the speaker’s desire or give it to the speaker due to the speaker’s admiration/desire for the hearer or their possessions.
   i. compliments, words of envy or admiration
   ii. strong negative emotions like hatred, anger or desire toward the hearer

Given below are the acts that threaten the hearer’s positive face want. Such FTAs indicate that the speaker has no consideration for the hearer’s wants, feelings, emotions, etc.

A. Acts that exhibit negative assessment of the hearer’s positive face.
   i. criticism, contempt, complaints, accusations, insults
   ii. disagreements, challenges

B. Acts that display lack of the speaker’s concern for the hearer’s positive face.
   i. violent emotions
   ii. expressions of irreverence or inappropriate language, mention of taboo topics and use of such words
   iii. bringing out in the open some wrong side of the hearer or boasting
   iv. giving bad news about the hearer
v. bringing up emotional or divisive topics like racism, religion, politics, women’s liberation
vi. interrupting the hearer or showing non-attention
vii. using status-marked identifications and inappropriate address-expressions in initial meetings

Brown and Levinson further state that interruptions, threats, complaints and strong emotional outbursts threaten both positive and negative face. They also differentiate between FTAs that threaten the hearer’s face and those that threaten the speaker’s face. FTAs that threaten the speaker’s negative face:

i. expressing thanks
ii. accepting the hearer’s thanks or the hearer’s apology
iii. excuses on part of the speaker after the hearer has criticized the speaker
iv. accepting offers
v. responding to the hearer’s faux pas
vi. making unwilling promises and offers (when the speaker’s unwillingness is apparent)

FTAs that directly damage the speaker’s positive face:

i. apologies
ii. accepting a compliment
iii. breakdown of physical control over body
iv. self-humiliation, acting stupid, self-contradicting
v. confessions, admissions of guilt
vi. non-control of laughter or tears

2.10.4.1. Strategies for Performing Face-Threatening Acts

According to Brown and Levinson, the first decision to be made by any individual is whether to perform the face-threatening act or not. It may also be worth mentioning that in case a desired action is thought to be too face-threatening, it may better be not used which amounts to avoiding the face-threatening act altogether. However, if the speaker decides to do the face-threatening act, there are four ways of doing the same as shown in the figure adapted from Brown and Levinson (69).
Figure 2.5 Possible Strategies for Doing FTAs

For an ‘on record’ FTA, the communicative intention of an act is clear to the discourse participants. However, the ‘off record’ FTA does not communicate much to the hearer and the speaker cannot be thought of having any particular intention. A redressive FTA supposedly has an intention of or attempts at ‘giving face’ to indicate that the speaker has no intention of giving any face threat to the hearer. A bald FTA without redressive action is direct. It is done to bring home the message in concise, clear and unambiguous terms and in full conformity with Grice’s maxims of cooperation. In case of an emergency or urgency, the speaker is not expected to do any face saving action and this is done in agreement with the hearer. It is considered acceptable to perform an FTA without mitigation, in emergent situations. For example, it is acceptable for a man genuinely shouting for help to just shout the imperative, ‘Help!’ without filling it up with the features of politeness and request the passer by saying, ‘Excuse me, sir, I need your help to get out of this situation. Would it be alright if I request you to give me a hand?’ Also when the face-threatening act is done in the interest of the hearer, indirectness is not normally employed. Additionally, it may be noticed that politeness and power are also linked to each other. In cases where the power differential is great, there is no attempt on the part of the powerful participant to mitigate the face-threatening act or to use indirectness and that less powerful people are expected to use more polite forms of language. Politeness criteria can vary between cultures or regions. For example, in Hindi, the use of the third person pronoun ‘woh’ (he/she) in the singular form is considered impolite if used by a younger person to address an older person. The polite form is the plural ‘wey’ (they). In English, such a thing becomes ungrammatical. There is also a
difference between how older persons are addressed directly by the younger persons using various forms of second person pronouns ‘tu’, ‘tum’, and ‘aap’. It is this difference in culture that also affects the languages. However, people at the extreme high end and the low end in the social hierarchy generally give a skip to these politeness norms of society. In cases where the face-threatening act is done in the interest of the hearer, indirectness is not normally employed.

Examples of FTAs:

i. Close the window. (Bald ‘on-record’ without any redress)

ii. Could I ask you to close the window? (With redressive action, negative politeness)

iii. Dear, shall we close the window? (With redressive action, positive politeness)

iv. The window is open. (Off-record)

2.10.4.2. Positive Politeness and Negative Politeness

As demonstrated by the examples given above, when the speaker decides to perform an FTA with redress, he/she may use positive politeness or negative politeness strategies. As mentioned earlier, the same content, for example, someone asking for a small favour can illustrate the use of both negative politeness or positive politeness depending on the words used which may in turn depend on the relationship of the interlocutors:

i. Negative politeness: I’m really sorry to trouble you, Sir, but could I possibly borrow your umbrella?

ii. Positive politeness: Ram, toss your umbrella, buddy.

Sometimes the features of both the negative and the positive politeness get converged as in the following sentence:

Could you get me a cup of milk, darling?

Here the use of ‘could’ transforms the sentence from an imperative to a request which mitigates the effect of the command to get a cup of milk. To further reduce the effect of the face threatening act (FTA), the word ‘darling’ has been used. As such the combination of the negative and the positive features is apparent in the example. Many a time, people use excessive politeness. Such excessive politeness is interpreted as sarcasm that increases the effect of the FTA. It may be observed that excessive politeness or sweetness gets overtly noticed as it is different from normal. Such superficial politeness is considered part of negative politeness and words and phrases expressing the same are often understood as complaints with a tinge of sarcasm. It is also called as mock politeness which Culpeper
defines, “as cases of impoliteness where the FTA is performed with the use of politeness strategies that are obviously insincere, and thus remain surface realizations” (356). Such strategies, as mentioned above, are to be conventionally indirect, using hedges, being pessimistic, minimising impositions, impersonalising, apologising, etc. For example the following sentences can be referred to as negatively polite:

i. We feel obligated to inform you about...(Impersonalisation)
ii. Give me a minute...(Minimising Imposition)
iii. You couldn’t drop me home, could you? (Being Pessimistic)
iv. I hope this isn’t going to bother you too much... (Apology)

Looking at the last example, one may say that apparently it is an apology and is often used as a face-saving reaction to a disapproving or a negative response. Negative politeness therefore can be understood as a redressive action addressed to the addressee’s negative face using strategies, mentioned above, to minimize the effect of impositions resulted by an FTA.

Leech also conceives of a Politeness Principle which is very similar to Grice’s Cooperative principle. Leech’s Politeness Principle has maxims of tact, generosity, approbation, modesty, agreement and sympathy which explain how politeness operates in conversational exchanges. While explaining his maxims, Leech gives his own names to two kinds of illocutionary acts. For him, representatives are “assertives”, and directives are “impositives”.

i. Tact (in directives /impositives and commissives): minimize cost and maximize benefit to other
ii. Generosity (in directives and commissives): minimize benefit and maximize cost to self
iii. Approbation maxim (in expressives and representatives /assertives): minimize dispraise and maximize praise of other
iv. Modesty maxim (in expressives and representatives): minimize praise and maximize dispraise of self
v. Agreement maxim (in representatives): minimize disagreement and maximize agreement between self and other
vi. Sympathy maxim (in representatives): minimize antipathy and maximize sympathy between self and other

FTAs are significant in the analysis of discourse of advertising also. Many advertisements are based on problem solution method wherein a problem is created for the consumer which confronts the consumer’s positive face which is then converted to a
negative. In advertising, the interpellated subject has no option of responding verbally. Therefore, the interpellated subjects act according to the solution provided i.e. consumption of the advertised product. The solution of consumption is provided to the consumer’s negative face using politeness strategies. In the discourse of advertising, these FTAs are performed using all kind of strategies –without redressive and with redressive actions. In the Himalayan face wash television advertisement, the girl model asks the mirror who is the fairest of all and the reply of the mirror is without any redressive action ‘tum to bilkul nahin’ [at least you are not the one]. An LIC slogan, ‘Ensure your child’s future, fully’ may be an example of FTA with redressive action. The use of ‘fully’ mitigates the FTA as it suggests that it is not that the consumer is not making any efforts but that one needs to make MORE effort for ensuring the child’s future.

2.11. Conversation Analysis

Conversation Analysis is also considered as one of the approaches to discourse analysis. It is considered to be a highly empirical approach to examining the structure of discourse. It is a form of linguistic analysis that pays attention to transcripts of real-life spoken interactions and is often referred to as the study of talk in interaction. The term conversation analysis (CA) came to prominence in the 1970s but it originated in the early 1960s at the University of California with the works of the sociologists Harvey Sacks, Emanuel A. Schegloff and Gail Jefferson. Since CA comes from the field of sociology, it takes into consideration the contribution that language makes in performing social actions and how social worlds are jointly constructed and recognized by the interlocutors rather than the linguistic view of the spoken discourse. Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson were not happy with the methods of traditional sociologists such as the use of questionnaires as they felt that responses to the questionnaires may be more ideal than real. They found conversation more interesting, to use their words,

…not because of a special interest in language, or any theoretical primacy we accord conversation. Nonetheless the character of our materials as conversational has attracted our attention to the study of conversation as an activity in its own right, and thereby to the ways in which any actions accomplished in conversation require reference to the properties and organisation of conversation for their understanding and analysis. (Opening up Closings 263)
Johnstone also makes a point towards analysis of conversation because for her, conversation is not only “one of the main things that we do with language, but because it is a good place to look at how people evoke and create structure in the process of interacting” (101). She goes on to say:

In spontaneous, casual, everyday conversation, there are no pre-set rules about who talks when, about what, or for how long (no rules such as “oldest first,” for example, or “each speaker talks for three minutes”), but conversations are nonetheless not chaotic. Everyone is not always talking at once, and people generally (though of course there are exceptions) do not say things that strike others as bizarre non sequiturs. (101-102)

Paltridge asserts:

Conversation analysis looks at ordinary everyday spoken discourse and aims to understand, from a fine-grained analysis of the conversation, how people manage their interactions. (106)

Paltridge observes that early work in conversation analysis examined mostly the everyday spoken interactions such as casual conversation. Later it was extended to include institutional spoken discourse such as doctor patient consultations, legal hearings, news interviews, psychiatric interviews and interactions in courtrooms and classrooms.

Conversation analysis examines aspects of spoken discourse such as conversational openings and closings, preferences for particular combinations of utterances, sequences of related utterances or adjacency pairs, turn-taking, feedback or back channelling, repair, discourse markers and response tokens. Conversation analysis works with recordings of spoken data and its transcription and carries out careful and fine-grained analyses of this data. It does not make its inferences about what people are thinking and how their talk is related to their real identity or their social context. In practice, it entails minimum theorizing and more emphasis upon raw data and on the patterns that emerge from the data. CA involves carrying out a close reading of a transcript, focusing on smallest details like pauses, interruptions and laughter. CA looks at the transcription of the spoken data with the belief that conversations follow regular structures and that breakdowns in such structures have value.

1. An important aspect of discourse analysis, Conversation Analysis also forms part of analytic framework. It investigates aspects of spoken discourse such as conversational openings and closings, preferences for particular combinations of utterances sequences of related utterances or adjacency pairs, turn-taking, feedback or back channeling, repair, discourse markers and response tokens. CA
alone is not sufficient in itself being a non-critical approach but is well complemented by CDA tools for a greater comprehension of the text.

Some useful concepts in Conversation Analysis are discussed in the following sections

2.11.1. Adjacency Pairs

An adjacency pair is a combination of two utterances produced by different interlocutors that are syntactically, semantically, lexically and cohesively linked to each other as are question/answer, accusation/defense, apology/acceptance, greeting/greeting and so on. The first part of the adjacency pair is called ‘first pair-parts’ which set the constraint for what the second part should be. This entails that the second utterance needs to be relevantly linked to the first one as an expected follow up to that utterance. However, the adjacency pairs may not always be adjacent and there may be some intervening utterances. Amy B Tsui suggests that both socially and structurally, the possibility of a three part exchange is more than the two part exchange. Generally, the two utterance pair can be expanded by inserting some ‘insertion sequence’ rather than straightaway answering the first part. For example:

A: When are you coming home?
B: Why?
A: I am going out and wondered if you had the keys.
B: Oh! I will get late.

The insertion question ‘Why?’ is not an answer to the question ‘When are you coming home?’, but it starts another sequence which gets a reply in A’s second utterance. In CA, particular responses are preferred for second-parts of adjacency pairs. For example, the desired response to a greeting would be a greeting. If the response to a greeting is not a greeting, it might be considered as an insult to the person who makes the first move in the conversation. According to Blimes, preference is a composite of related notions rather than a stand-alone notion. For Blimes, every turn has three options: a preferred answer (X), a dispreferred one (Y) or neither of the two (N) which again is the equivalent of the dispreferred. What people chose to say, in response, shows how meaning is created in discourse.

Adjacency pairs are used in such advertisements which have more than one speaker as in the electronic advertisements on TV. For example, in one of the Bournvita advertisements (July 2013) on TV, a child pretends to be sick and calls the doctor home. The following conversation is a good example of adjacency pairs:
i. Child to the Doctor: Ma ko lagta hai sirf doodh peene se mujhe calcium milta hai. (Mother thinks that I get calcium by only drinking milk)

ii. The Doctor (smilingly looking at the child) to child: Tumhe kya lagta hai? (What do you think?)

iii. The child takes his toy loudspeaker and announces: Waste waste waste, bina vitamin D, doodh ka calcium waste hota hai. (Waste, waste, waste, without Vitamin D, calcium in milk gets wasted!)

In the conversation above Utterance (i) is a declarative statement addressed to the doctor. The doctor’s responds to it non-verbally by smiling at the child. Broadly speaking, the non-verbal action of smiling is an approval of what the child asserts. The child’s comment and the cooperative non-verbal response of the doctor constitute an adjacency pair. However, utterance (ii) clearly begins another adjacency pair with utterance (iii) as the second pair part.

2.1.2. Turn-Taking

Turn-taking is an integral part of a conversation. It is the set of practices through which conversation is organized. This organization determines the selection of the ‘next speaker’ in a conversation. A turn is what one speaker says before the other begins to speak. In English speaking countries, taking turns in speaking demands that one speaker speaks at a time and all the speakers are expected to cooperate with each other for successful conversation.

The turn-taking model has its origin in the ethnomethodological approach of Harold Garfinkel and Aaron Cicourel. It was first described as an outcome of a study on using English on telephone and in group-discussions. According to Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson, rules of turn-taking are governed by a ‘local management system’ wherein speakers are expected to share the ‘floor’ in turns. The ‘floor’ stands for the right to speak and be listened to.

Turn-taking can be observed in different settings such as business meetings, panel discussions, debates, interviews, general interactions and law courts – and becomes the focus of analytical study. The reason for this is that turn-taking prevails in everyday general interaction because of which it is sensitive to context and is at the same time context free because the general rules are similar in different types of talk. Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson while commenting upon the structure of conversational behaviour summarized some ‘grossly apparent facts’ that have been listed as under:
Speaker-change recurs, or at least occurs.

Overwhelmingly, one party talks at a time.

Occurrences of more than one speaker at a time are common, but brief.

Transitions (from one turn to next) with no gap and no overlap are common. Together with transitions characterized by slight gap or slight overlap, they make up the majority of transitions.

Turn order is not fixed, but varies.

Turn size is not fixed, but varies.

Length of conversation is not specified in advance.

What parties say is not specified in advance.

Relative distribution of turns is not specified in advance.

Number of parties can vary.

Talk can be continuous or discontinuous.

Turn-allocation techniques are obviously used. A current speaker may select a next speaker (as when he addresses a question to another party); or parties may self-select in starting to talk.

Various ‘turn-constructional units’ are employed; e.g. turns can be projectedly one word long’ or they can be sentential in length.

Repair mechanisms exist for dealing with turn-taking errors and violations; e.g. if two parties find themselves talking at the same time, one of them will stop prematurely, thus repairing the trouble. (700-701)

The smallest units by which speakers share the turns are called turn-construction units which are grammatically complete sentences, clauses or phrases the end of which indicates to the interactants a point at which it is possible for the next speaker to take the turn in a conversation, that is, where speakers change. This end point is known as the Transition Relevance Place or TRP. A TRP does not necessitate change of speakers but indicates the possibility of change at that point. A TRP gets identified by the intonation and other prosodic features such as body language and eye movements.

There are rules that govern a TRP or speaker change or how the floor is shared in the course of an interaction. This is concerned with speaker selection. Adapting the pattern advocated by Levinson (298), Baker and Ellece observe a situation when A is the current speaker and B is the next speaker. They assert:

If A selects B in the current turn, then A must stop speaking and B must speak next. Transition occurs at the first transition relevance place after B’s selection.
ii. If A does not select B, then any other party may self-select, the first speaker gaining rights to the floor then makes a contribution.

iii. A has not selected B, and no other party self-selects, A may (but need not) continue speaking. In other words, he or she may claim the right to a next turn constructional unit but does not have to. (195)

These rules also entail that only one person speaks at a time. If this rule is not observed there are possibilities of overlap. Overlaps also occur if the TRP is ‘mis-projected’ and not perceived rightly by the interactants. This may also result in a breakdown of turn-taking mechanism. According to Baker and Ellece, conversation analysts are particularly interested in this kind of break-down in the turn-taking mechanism as it may indicate that something interesting and significant is happening in the conversation (195).

However, it may be pointed out that turn-taking is not done in the same way in different situations and different cultures (in some cultures turn-taking might also be considered rude especially in a situation when talking to people who are placed on a more powerful pedestal) and languages. In many cultures, younger members in a family are not expected to take a turn in the conversation that involves the elders because it is not considered appropriate to interrupt their elders. An analysis of turn-taking system in conversation can reveal the relative power of speakers and can be very usefully employed in Critical Discourse Analysis. The turn-taking mechanism is one of the tools in Fairclough’s model Textually Oriented Discourse Analysis which will be discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

In advertisements, especially the electronic ones which are generally conversational, turn-taking can reveal the power relations among participants in the world of advertisements. A person who gets more to speak or a person who initiates more turns is socially more powerful. It may be seen in the doctor-patient advertisements that the doctor talks more. In a family context, it is generally the man who gets more turns product. Additionally, the turns that women take are generally not used to give their opinion but to seek information/opinion of more knowledgeable participants in a conversation. In a Bournvita TV advertisement, the woman is shown to be less knowledgeable than her 8-10 year old son and she asks the man, who is a doctor, ‘Fir iss Bandar ko kya doon?’ (then what should I give to this monkey? – talking fondly about her son). And the doctor father instead of giving the answer himself directs the question to his son implying that the son has more knowledge than the mother.
2.11.3. Repair

Repair was first defined by Schegloff, Jefferson and Sacks. Richards et al define repair as “a term for ways in which errors, unintended forms, or misunderstandings are corrected by speakers or others during conversation” (314). Repair is used to ensure “that the interaction does not freeze in its place when trouble arises, that intersubjectivity is maintained or restored, and that the turn and sequence and activity can progress to possible completion” (Schegloff, *Sequence Organization in Interaction: A Primer in Conversation Analysis* xiv).

Repair is when one of the speakers interrupts the interaction to address the problematic areas, if any, that hinder comprehension. These problematic areas include “misarticulations, malapropisms, use of a ‘wrong’ word, unavailability of a word when needed, failure to hear or to be heard, trouble on the part of the recipient in understanding, incorrect understandings by recipients” (Schegloff, *Between Micro and Macro* 210), among others.

As mentioned earlier, a conversation may break for various reasons. It often happens when certain protocols – whether linguistic or cultural are not maintained. To prevent such breaks, it is important to maintain the protocols to have some kind of balance in conversation which can happen only if there is collaboration and cooperation by the speakers. The reasons may be grammatical inappropriacy; inappropriate choice of vocabulary or violations in turn-taking. All this may result in some sort of communication gap. Repair mechanism remediates the situation. At the individual level also speakers often repair their own speech when they take their turn to speak. At times, a speaker also selects another speaker in a conversation by either pinpointing or naming but at times the listener also self-selects himself/herself if the speaker continues to speak and takes a turn.

Levinson (*Pragmatics*) states that when someone else repairs the speaker’s violation, it could be considered offensive or indicate power imbalance. Thus, for the maintenance of harmony, self-repair is preferred. One kind of repair device according to Cody and McLaughlin is the reproach-account-evaluation of account structure where a mistake is reproached, followed by an account or reason for its occurrence and then the evaluation or assessment by the offended party.
2.11.4. Backchannel

Backchannels are an important feature in turn-taking. They are minimal verbal expressions such as ‘uh, hmm’, ‘yeah’ or even facial and eye expressions which have functions such as signalling attentiveness, showing agreement or even disagreement though they are interpreted more as agreement. Here participants need to maintain intersubjectivity (understanding of each other’s utterances and their actions thereby) for the conversation to proceed. In the domain of advertising backchannels are especially used in electronic advertisements. The backchannels in advertising are interested verbal expressions of the listeners and at times extended ones for example phrases such as ‘really?’ or ‘can you tell me more about it’ as in teleshopping advertisements in order to elicit more content from the speaker so that it reaches the audience. These backchannels therefore render more power to the advertisers who are in reality selling their products rather than giving information to the audience. The backchannels therefore promote listener solidarity in favour of the advertisers.

To compare CA to Sinclair and Coulthard’s model, it may be said that the two are similar in their orientation to discovering structures in the text. In Sinclair and Coulthard, discourse is looked at as predetermined sequence, thus viewing conversation as a product as it begins with the theory of how units above the clause are patterned and shows how the participant talk fits the model. Conversation analysis, on the other hand, starts with the conversation and lets the data determine its own structure. Using bottom-up approach, it looks at the conversation as a linear ongoing event, implying a negotiation of cooperation between speakers as the conversation progresses bit by bit. It therefore views conversation as a process. In Sinclair and Coulthard, the exchange structures are identified as concepts and then their role is examined in the real data. CA is different from Sinclair and Coulthard’s approach. It highlights the discourse process i.e. ‘what speakers do when they talk’. In addition, it may be observed that CA is descriptively refined and exhaustive but it often gets criticized for a number of reasons. CA does not include discussion of power as a factor in conversation. CA also does not discuss the asymmetry of conversational moves that results in asymmetrical power relations. The conversation analyst is like a detached observer who looks for common or generalizable pattern of talk. Teun van Dijk observes that CA may be more subjective as the researcher’s perceptions become important in the analysis and are imposed on the text while trying to comprehend the text. CA therefore is another non-critical approach to discourse analysis as it does not consider the contextual features of conversation and as
such becomes a mechanical activity. Teun van Dijk (Elite Discourse and Racism) while discussing the limitations of CA says:

   It is evident in any conversation situation that producing discourse is part of wider process of producing social life, social relationships and social identities; yet much of CA in its harmonious reading of interaction between the equals gives the impression that producing discourse is an end in itself. (19)

Nevertheless, CA can offer useful insights to discourse analysts who would like to study social relationships and identities.

2.12. Other Non-critical Approaches

   There are some other non-critical approaches also which are quite important but they generally do not approach the study of discourse as social action. These approaches are Dell Hymes’ Ethnography of Communication, Labov and Fanshell’s Therapeutic Discourse, Gumperz’s the International Sociolinguistic Approach to Discourse Analysis, Potter and Wetherell’s Social Psychology to Discourse Analysis. These approaches have been more descriptive in nature and do not go beyond description of the obvious and the overt in language. They are all generally influenced by the orthodox linguistics and its descriptive character. These approaches describe language as an innocent medium of communication without a critical perspective. But linguists, who are influenced by powerful social theories, assert that different goals and procedures are required for comprehension of real meaning and therefore there should be different branches of linguistics that incorporate the social action as well. These linguists believe that language is not a transparent medium; it is a refracting and inflected medium in terms of values, beliefs, ideology, inequality, power etc. These linguists advocate the use of such language that helps in emancipation of society and addressing the social issues by recognizing the crucial role played by deeper, larger social forces which exist in a dialectical relationship with the discourse. Such a branch has come to be known as Critical Linguistics (CL) or Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA).

   In this context it is very significant to consider Sapir and Whorf’s hypothesis and their comment on social reality. Fairclough observes that “the objective is to produce an analytic method which is usable by people who may, for example, be historians rather than specialists in linguistics” (Discourse and Social Change 26-27). In this connection, Fairclough quotes Fowler et al:
The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis that languages embody particular world-views is extended to varieties within a language; particular texts embody particular ideologies or theories, and the aim is the ‘critical interpretation’ of texts: ‘recovering the social meanings expressed in discourse by analysing the linguistic structures in the light of their interactional and wider social contexts.

(qtd. in Fairclough Discourse and Social Change 26-27)

For Sapir and Whorf, language is not simply a tool by which people may communicate but rather, it has a subsuming position in the very fabric of our perceptions. It is a guide to social reality which is different for each society and it is possible through language only to get a window into a particular society, its beliefs and ideology. In Sapir’s words:

The fact of the matter is that the “real world” is to a large extent unconsciously built upon the language habits of the group. No two languages are ever sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same social reality. The worlds in which different societies live are distinct worlds, not merely the same world with different labels attached... We see and hear and otherwise experience very largely as we do because the language habits of our community predispose certain choices of interpretation. (69)

Sapir believes that human beings need their language to express themselves in society as they “do not live in the objective world alone, nor alone in the world of social activity” (69).

2.13. The Critical Approach or Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is a field of language study that is fast developing. Critical discourse analysis (CDA) stems from a critical theory of language which perceives social practices as the base for the use of language in society i.e. discourse as ‘a form as social practice’ (Fairclough & Wodak,“Critical Discourse Analysis” 258). It takes into consideration the context of language use which is crucial to discourse. Social practices, on the other hand, have specific historical contexts and are the means by which existing social relations are reproduced or contested to serve the interests of dominant people or groups. Hence, questions such as whose interests are being served relate discourse to relations of power. CDA seeks answers to the following questions to understand how discourse is implicated in relations of power.

i. How is the text positioned or positioning?
ii. Are the interests of some individuals or groups being served by this positioning? Whose?

iii. Are the interests of some individuals or groups being negated? Whose?

iv. Are there any consequences of this positioning? What?

Hence, the main concern of CDA’s is to decode the relation between language and power. For this reason, it may be understood that CDA has neo-Marxist concerns and that cultural and economic extents form the base for establishing and maintaining power relations. The most significant proponents of CDA are Fairclough, Teun van Dijk, Gee, van Leeuwen, and Scollon.

What makes CDA different from other noncritical approaches to the analysis of discourse is the term ‘critical’. The term affects the analysis of discourse and also changes its orientation. Kinchloe and McLaren give a commonality to the interpretation of the word ‘critical’ even if used for different discourse types. Kinchloe and McLaren point out that a critical orientation presupposes:

i. all thought is rooted in the socially and historically situated power relations

ii. that reality very much falls in the realm of values and some form of ideological inscriptions

iii. that the relationship between concept and object and between signifier and signified is never stable or fixed and is often mediated by the social relations of capitalist production and consumption

iv. language is central to the formation of subjectivity (conscious and unconscious unawareness)

v. that certain groups in any society are privileged over others and, although the reasons for this privileging may vary, the oppression that characterizes contemporary societies is most forcefully reproduced when subordinates accept their social status as natural, necessary, or inevitable

vi. that oppression has many faces and that focusing on only one at the expense of others (e.g. class oppression versus racism) often elides the interconnections among them

vii. that mainstream research practices are generally, although most often unwittingly, implicated in the reproduction of systems of class, race, and gender oppression. (qtd. in Locke 25-26)

It may be observed here that ‘critical’ entails a departure from purely descriptive methods and objectives of noncritical discourse analysis and at the same time also signifies the need for analysts to uncover the ideological underpinnings of discourse that have become so
naturalized over time that we begin to treat them as common, acceptable and natural features of discourse.

It was Fowler et al (Language and Control) and Kress and Hodge (Language as Ideology) who first used the term ‘critical’ with linguistics. Critical linguistics (CL) dealt with systematic analysis of discourse to reveal how discourse was used for sustaining power and ideological gains of dominant groups of society. Critical Linguistics began as precursor to Critical Discourse Analysis, but now the two terms are often substituted for each other. As a matter of fact, CDA is now preferred to CL as it is considered to be an improvement upon CL and is used to denote the theory that was earlier associated with CL. Critical linguists argue that language does not merely reflect social processes but also affirms, consolidates and therefore reproduces the existing social relationships. CDA practitioners assert that CDA also incorporates a social agenda in order to reveal and unmask the social meanings that get generated through use of language. Fairclough and Wodak also affirm discourse is, “socially constituted and socially constitutive, against the backdrop of socio-cultural and political forces” (Critical Discourse Analysis 258) and its analysis would help uncover the social realities. Wodak in her “Discourse Historical Approach” writes:

…for CDA, language is not powerful on its own – it gains power by the use powerful people make of it. This explains why CDA often chooses the perspective of those who suffer, and critically analyses the language use of those in power, who are responsible for the existence of inequalities and who also have the means and opportunity to improve conditions. (14) CDA began as a practice to examine how power is wielded through discourse in the early 1990’s after a symposium was organized in Amsterdam in January 1991 in which some principal practitioners of CDA – Norman Fairclough, Ruth Wodak, Teun van Dijk, Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen spent two days together, discussing theories and methods related to CDA. Today CDA has become a full-fledged linguistic practice. The strength of CDA, therefore, lies in its analysis of the relationship between language and the social practices. CDA sees language as dialectically interconnected with other social elements and offers a framework for conceptualizing language use as an irreducible part of social life (Fairclough, Analysing Discourse 2). Fairclough believes discourse analysis is more than just cataloguing the discourse markers that help to make a text cohesive and that it must have a social agenda. Unlike some traditional socio-linguists and noncritical discourse analysts, the critical discourse analysts do not subscribe to the notion of reified language and society but an active social language. Fairclough and Wodak regard CDA as a social practice or a
revelation of how language works to carry out political and ideological practices. They observe:

CDA sees discourse — language use in speech and writing — as a form of ‘social practice’. Describing discourse as social practice implies a dialectical relationship between a particular discursive event and the situation(s), institution(s) and social structure(s) which frame it. A dialectical relationship is a two-way relationship: the discursive event is shaped by situations, institutions and social structures, but it also shapes them. To put the same point in a different way, discourse is socially constitutive as well as socially shaped: it constitutes situations, objects of knowledge, and the social identities of and relationships between people and groups of people. It is constitutive both in the sense that it helps to sustain and reproduce the social status quo, and in the sense that it contributes to transforming it. Since discourse is so socially influential, it gives rise to important issues of power. Discursive practices may have major ideological effects: that is, they can help produce and reproduce unequal power relations between (for instance) social classes, women and men, and ethnic/cultural majorities and minorities through the ways in which they represent things and position people… both the ideological loading of particular ways of using language and the relations of power which underlie them are often unclear to people. CDA aims to make more visible these opaque aspects of discourse. (258)

Delineating the principles of CDA, Fairclough and Wodak observe:

i. CDA’s object of inquiry is social problems. It is interdisciplinary in analysis, concerned with the linguistic nature of sociocultural processes or problems, not exclusively with language use.

ii. Power and discourse are interrelated topics of study in CDA. An example that can be cited to show the discursive nature of power mediated and negotiated through discourse is that of political interviews. A rigorous study would examine the present and long-term effects of power relations manipulated and managed through discourse.

iii. Society and culture shape discourse and are shaped by it. Social life can be categorized into representations of the world, relations between people and their social and personal identities, and use of language assists in reproducing or changing these forms and thereby society at large.
iv. Ideologies are the social tools for establishing or dismantling power relations either through speech or writing. Language use in texts is ideological hence it is essential to analyse texts for the manner in which they are interpreted and the effects they produce. Only then can social reality and its representations be understood.

v. Discourses are intertextually linked to their predecessors or contemporaries, embedded in ideology, culture and history and can only be comprehended with reference to them.

vi. The connection between text and society is indirect and can be made obvious through ‘orders of discourse’ (Fairclough), a socio-psychological approach (Wodak and Meyer) and a socio-cognitive model (Teun van Dijk).

vii. CDA is a systematic method that is interpretative and explanatory. It surveys the relations between the text, society ideologies, power play, new contexts and information to analyse and highlight social conditions. However the interpretations and explanations are not closed and fixed but open and dynamic.

viii. CDA is a “socially committed scientific paradigm” (Fairclough and Wodak 279-80) that views discourse as social behaviour. Its central objective is “to uncover opaqueness and power relationships” (Fairclough and Wodak, 280) and is thus self-reflexive, making explicit its interests and is interested in the practical issues.

Taylor observes that CDA “allows a detailed investigation of the relationship of language to other social processes, and of how language works within power relations.” He believes that CDA provides a framework for a systematic analysis following which researchers can demonstrate the working of texts and go beyond mere speculation. Different theoretical models are practised by the CDA practitioners. However, according to Teun van Dijk, (Principles of Critical Discourse Analysis) they may have common perspectives on doing linguistic, semiotic or discourse analysis. CDA is influenced to a very large extent, by the writings of Michel Foucault, Antonio Gramsci and Althusser. Discourse is linguistically created and its analysis reveals the process of how meanings are negotiated, and ideologies of superior ‘US’ are constructed and reconstructed to dominate and subdue the ‘OTHER’ and how the socio-political matrix assists discourse to make it happen. The social institutions become carriers of ideological manipulation of power that is wielded through discourse and discursive subjects to the disadvantage of ‘others’.
Bakhtin and Volosinov explored the interrelatedness between different texts. They investigate language and ‘intertextuality’, a term coined by Julia Kristeva which refers to the ways that texts refer to or incorporate aspects of other texts within them. Baker and Ellece while defining Intertextuality assert that it “may take many forms, for example, parodies, retellings, sampling, direct reference or quotation and allusions” (64). They say that making sense of a text depends on fully understanding how it refers to other texts. Bakhtin investigated the relationship between different texts, whether in the past or the present and how they related to each other, their dialogic property and genre theory. Drawing on Bakhtin and Volosinov, Kristeva suggests that texts are “constructed of a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another” (66). Kristeva uses the notion of the textual mosaic to make a point and argue that no texts are original and that it is the common cultural experience that aids the sharing of text as people always take up individual subject positions. Intertextuality is now an essential tool for critical discourse analysts. Intertextuality is discussed in detail in chapter 3.

Weiss and Wodak view CDA as an interdisciplinary approach. For them, ‘Interdisciplinarity’, and ‘transdisciplinarity’ have become catchwords of CDA. CDA does not follow a single model but is rather a potpourri of different models. These models are based on different theoretical backgrounds and data. The concepts such as power, ideology, and discourse which are integral to CDA come from different disciplines. They observe: … it is quite difficult to make consistent statements about the theoretical foundation of CDA. There is no such thing as a uniform, common theory formation determining CDA; in fact, there are several approaches. (6)

Wodak and Myer point out that CDA follows a different and critical approach to problems because of its commitment to reveal power relations that are “frequently obfuscated and hidden” and also to “derive results which are also of practical relevance” (20). Wodak and Myer regard discourses as historical in nature and dependant on that context for meaning. For this reason, CDA would refer to extra linguistic features such as culture, society and ideology in various ways taking in view “their concept of context and their research methodologies and ways of data collection” (21), suggesting that the context is crucial for CDA thereby including social-psychological, political and ideological components which assume interdisciplinary procedures. They take into account epistemological theories, general social theories, middle-range theories, micro-sociological theories, socio-psychological theories, discourse theories and linguistic theories as part of CDA (24).
CDA, however, does not include a wide range of linguistic categories in every analysis and it is possible to assume that only a few linguistic devices are used in CDA. Generally, to use the social actor analysis and Halliday’s transitivity analysis, not much linguistic knowledge is required. Teun van Dijk (Critical Discourse Analysis) and Reisigl and Wodak demonstrate that a wide range of macro and micro linguistic, pragmatic and argumentative features can also be integrated in CDA when analysis of specific texts is done. CDA also aims at distinguishing between what is said at the surface level and what it means at the deeper level. Wodak and Myer (22) illustrate through the trans-disciplinary nature of CDA through the following diagram.

Figure 2.6 Linguistic Depth of Field and Level of Aggregation, Methods 22

Fairclough explains that the term ‘discourse’ is used in various senses which are easily confused. They are:

i. meaning-making as an element of the social process

ii. the language associated with a particular social field or practice (e.g. ‘political discourse’).
iii. a way of construing aspects of the world associated with a particular social perspective (e.g., a ‘neo-liberal economic discourse’) (Critical Discourse Analysis 232-33)

Fairclough uses the word semiosis for this, in a very general sense, in order to avoid confusion and to reiterate that analysis of discourse is concerned with semiotic modalities of which language is a small part and it also includes other elements such as visual images and body language. Fairclough views semiosis as an element of social process which is also dialectically related to these other elements which is why it is called dialectical-relational approach. Fairclough calls these relations between elements dialectically different and not discrete. Quoting Harvey, he suggests that these elements internalize each other without being reducible to them just as social relations, power, situations, beliefs and cultural values are in part semiotic; they internalize semiosis without being reducible to it (Critical Discourse Analysis 358). The term Discourse-Historical approach is a form of critical discourse analysis, developed by Martin Riesigl and Ruth Wodak. Discourse-Historical approach combines different methods and data together and has its main focus on the context, the analysis of which looks at the use of language in particular texts, intertextuality, interdiscursivity, social variables and institutional frames which relate to the context of a situation and sociopolitical and Historical context. Reisigl and Wodak point out that the discourse historical approach “attempts to integrate much available knowledge about the historical sources and the background of the social and political fields in which discursive “events” are embedded” (35). Fairclough says:

Bringing diverse theories or frameworks together to co-construct transdisciplinary objects of research gives rise to issues of ‘translation’ between the concepts, categories and relations of CDA and of other theories or frameworks. (Critical Discourse Analysis 6)

He illustrates this through the “theories of and frameworks for analysing relations of power” (Critical Discourse Analysis 6). He believes that in matters of research involved with dialectical relations between discourse and power,

…the challenge is to find ways of coherently connecting categories and relations such as ‘discourse’, ‘genre’, ‘recontextualisation’ and argumentation (from discourse theory) with categories and relations such as power’, ‘hegemony’, ‘ideology’ and ‘legitimacy (from political theory). Given a particular theory of power, how can we coherently articulate its categories and relations with those of a theory of discourse so as to analyse ways in which
discourse is internalized in power and power is internalized in discourse, that is, so as to be able to analyse dialectical relations between discourse and power for the particular topic and object of research? (Critical Discourse Analysis 6)

He elaborates that substituting discourse-analytical categories and relations for political ones, or vice-versa is not an important issue but rather recognizing the need for them to be separate (power is not just discourse, discourse is not just power) and avoiding incoherent eclecticism is important. As Jessop and Sum put it, it is a matter of the translatability or commensurability of concepts, categories and relations which is an important issue in transdisciplinary research.

Teun van Dijk in “Principles of Critical Discourse Analysis” suggests that the term ‘Critical Discourse Studies (CDS)’ is more suitable to use because of the heterogeneity of theories and models followed in the discipline. For methods used for interpretation, CDA theorists imply that CDA may include a historical approach, the functional approach proposed by Halliday (Cohesion; Functional Grammar), Teun van Dijk’s socio-cognitive approach or even the multi-functionality of texts. The French Discourse Analysts such as Michel Pêcheux emphasise a mix of Althusser’s notion of ideology and Foucault’s idea of orders of discourse. Utz Maas (qtd. in Teun van Dijk, Discourse as Structure 267) also prefers a combination of Foucault’s framework with hermeneutic methodology which is understood as the method of grasping and interpreting meanings or as the reading analysis. The Critical Linguists following Halliday’s systemic grammar emphasise the practical ways of textual analysis. Kress and Hodge talk of ‘social semiotics’ which to some extent is similar to ‘critical linguistics’ but they extend its scope by including interpretation of visual texts also such as photographs, films, renaissance paintings in addition to verbal texts. Socio-cognitive studies of Teun van Dijk investigate racism and prejudices in social institutions such as schools and newspapers. Wodak’s Discourse-Historical Method has also effectively analysed social issues such as racism, anti-Semitism, sexism, medical language in hospitals, employing the historical context and socio-psychological elements of race, class, gender etc. Ron Scollon discusses his version of CDA known as Mediated Discourse Analysis (MDA) that lays primary emphasis on discourse in action rather than discourse as social action, thus making discourse analysts responsible for applying discourse into various practical and useful contexts. Fairclough examines, in most of his works, the discourse of politics, advertising, marketization of British universities through intertextuality using the genre of advertising, doctor-patient interaction and language education while focusing on discursive analysis of
sociocultural processes and institutions. He employs tools from Hallidayan grammar, genre types and intertextuality for the purpose. Wodak and Myer point out:

CDA has never been and has never attempted to be or to provide one single or specific theory. Neither is one specific methodology characteristic of research in CDA. Quite the contrary, studies in CDA are multifarious, derived from quite different theoretical backgrounds, oriented towards different data and methodologies. (5)

They go on to explain that researchers in CDA rely on a variety of grammatical approaches. Further, essentially CDA terms such as discourse, critical, ideology, power, etc. also have been explained in a variety of ways. Therefore it is better to consider CDA a school or a programme that different researchers can relate to or find useful.