

Locating Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in discourse and social studies

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Abstract

This article addresses the position of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in discourse and social studies. It provides information about the principles of critical discourse analysis and what makes it different from other discourse analyses, which are considered to be non-critical. The term ‘critical’ has been the keyword that distinguishes any types of discourse analysis, i.e. whether or not they are oriented to social issues. Further, CDA concerns on social issues, e.g. power and social inequality, which collaborates micro-analysis of language and macro-analysis of social structure, have brought significant contributions to linguistics and social studies. Especially for linguistics, CDA has brought significant impacts to the textual analyses, which are oriented to investigate how power, social inequality, hegemony and discrimination are established and maintained through discourse presentations.

Keywords:

Discourse; linguistics; CDA; critical; power; social issues; social inequality.

1 INTRODUCTION

Discourse or discourse study has been one of the most attracting topics of study. For many years, the term ‘discourse’ has been underlying many research, either in linguistics or social studies. In linguistics, for example, the development of pragmatics, speech acts, or in general, any study that focuses on the use of language in particular context signifies the interest of linguists or students of linguistics in developing the study of discourse. The concern of the study is to see the relationship between language, when it is used, and other social elements beyond the language, which influence the production of meaning, e.g. age and social status. The analysis of discourse, i.e. investigating language in its use, is made possible due to most of the human interaction is carried through speaking and writing (Fairclough, 2003).

In its further development, such a study does not only investigate language as a merely human interaction, but it goes beyond this scope and develops into the examination of social and political issues. The language used in social interaction, how it is produced-disseminated-interpreted, what political interest underlying its creation, and the social agents/actors who produce it become the prominent issues in CDA. The concern of CDA in social issue is not expected

to replace the position of the old-established social analyses, such as those from sociology or political studies. However, it is one the many social analyses that has its own method of analysis.

The CDA analysts believe that discourse, both produced in verbal and non-verbal forms, may be employed to establish and maintain social power. Discourse is seen as an effective medium to gain a social privilege and, at the same time, to discredit others. Some prominent figures of CDA, namely Norman Fairclough, Teun van Dijk, Ruth Wodak, and Paul Chilton are not only familiar with textual or linguistic analysis, but they also have expertise in social studies as well. It can be stated here that the integration of linguistic and critical social studies has made CDA as multidisciplinary research.

2 LINGUISTICS AND NON-LINGUISTICS TRADITIONAL OF DISCOURSE

There are a number of definitions of discourse. Such a term has also been one of the most ambiguous terms in linguistic study. Many experts and discourse analysts have proposed various definitions. The difference among them is due to their respective perspective and on what academic field the experts belong to. The following are some of its definition:

- ‘Discourse is any kind of written, spoken, and any other symbolic forms that are used in people communication’ (Bloor and Bloor, 2007, p. 7);
- ‘Discourse is the actual instance of communicative action in the medium of language’ (Johnstone, 2008, p. 2);
- ‘Discourse is a particular view of language in use’ (Fairclough, 2003, p. 4);
- ‘Discourse is the discipline devoted to the investigation of the relationship between form and function in verbal communication’ (Renkema, 2004, p. 1); and
- ‘Discourse is all forms of meaningful semiotics human activities in connection with social, cultural, and historical patterns’ (Blommaert, 2005, p. 3).

The notion of discourse and discourse study can be traced back to both linguistic and non-linguistic traditions. From the linguistic point of view, the study of language is extended to not only investigate the language in isolated way by only analysing word level or how a word is taken together with other words to form phrases, clauses, and sentences. However, the study of discourse should go beyond that isolated level. It should observe how the internal structure of language is interconnected with external structure of social life. It is to see how a language is used in particular social context and how it contributes to social practice. One prominent figure in this linguistic tradition is Michael Halliday in his Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL).

Regarding this SFL theory, Halliday, when interviewed by Parret in 1972 concerning the issue of relation between language and society (2013), points out that language has a close connection with other social elements, so it is not an autonomous subject. Language should be seen as a part of social life and as a medium to build relationship between people. Language in the mind (as psychological aspect) is not contradictory to language that goes on between people (as sociological aspect). Halliday divides the function of language into

three; ideational, interpersonal, and textual, which then reveal his concern in the relationship between language and social life (Parret, 2013).

In ideational function, mind of speakers is the reflection or experience about the real world. This experience then forms the idea of the speakers, in which this idea is to be externalised through language expressions. Interpersonal function implies the function of the language to relate one person with others in a process of communication. Meanwhile, the textual function explains the function of language as texts produced by the speakers, which can be understood by listeners. These three language functions assert a belief that the investigation of a language should be put both on its internal structure and social context where the language is being used.

Similarly, language is seen as both the 'system' and 'function'. The use of language should consider the selection of words and organisation of the words available in the system of the language. Beside this notion of system, the language also has particular function achieved in the communicative events. This language function is often more important than the language structure. When talking about the function, of course, social characters of context surrounding the language use should be included in the language analysis. This Halliday's theory has much inspired the emergence of discourse analysis in linguistics field.

The prominent development initiates 'the emergence of pragmatic study in the linguistic field' (Blommaert, 2005, p. 3). According to Levinson (1983, p. 2), pragmatics is 'the study of language use'. In pragmatic study, a language is investigated from its usage, which it then covers the analysis on who use the language (participants), when it is used, what topic to be discussed, and how the language is expressed. This advanced study of language then gives much concern on the matter of meaning delivered through action and interaction. So here, we then arrive in a thought that language, in discourse studies, should be analysed both from its internal structure and from its social aspect.

Meanwhile, from the non-linguistic tradition, the study of discourse is developed in social studies. The non-linguistic approach means the analysis of discourse does give little concern to the language mechanisms in an interactional process. According to Fairclough (2003, p. 4), 'social scientists working in this tradition generally pay little close attention to the linguistic features of texts'. Although the social scientists are aware that social life is fully constructed by interactional process, their approach more likely deals with an abstract concept such as the concepts of power, identity, domination, hegemony, and ideology. Discourse in non-linguistic tradition is seen as merely the statements used by individuals or institutions to gain power in particular society.

This social concept of discourse is much based on critical social studies. The theory is heavily indebted to, e.g. the theory of hegemony developed Antonio Gramsci and the theory of object formation proposed by Michel Foucault. Some other concepts of discourse in this tradition can also be traced back to the concept of 'class' proposed in Marxism theory.

According to Hoare and Smith (1999), hegemony is constructed by power separation. Hegemony is established when person or social group holds the power and control over the others (the powerless). Regarding this concept,

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Femia (1975) argues that the term ‘hegemony’ in Gramsci’s theory refers to a situation where a social group or class is ideologically dominant. Hegemony applies when people do not have the equal access to social resources and it therefore creates social inequality.

The hegemony is gained through the control of idea, where ideology plays an important role. Hegemony is obtained through consent from the subordinate people to an idea proposed by the powerful person, group, and institution (Jones, 2006). Discourse analysis here is seen as an effort to identify how the idea operates in social life, institutionalised by power, and leads the view of the dominated groups. Therefore, hegemony is not always gained through coercion, but it is through a smooth process by the dominant group to lead the dominated group through the consent of particular idea.

Another prominent discourse concept in social studies is the concept of object formation proposed by Michel Foucault. The analysis of discourse for Foucault is applied by analysing ‘statements’, which concern on texts and utterances as the constituent element of texts (Fairclough, 2003). According to Fairclough (2003, p. 25), ‘such analysis does not use a detailed analysis of text but it is how the statements or utterances in texts are governed by particular rules.’ The text producers who hold the power control determine the rules that govern the construction of statements in texts. In Foucault’s discourse studies, power and control are exercised through discourses that classify, define, and position individuals as specific kinds of subjects and influence the way they look at themselves, others, and the world around them (Jansen, 2000).

For Foucault, the purpose of discourse analysis is to analyze the rules governing the statements in texts. These rules governing the statements are determined by ‘the regime of knowledge in order to select which statements to be accepted and to be considered as truth’ (Jorgensen and Phillips, 2002, p. 13). Different regimes will have different rules and, therefore, they will have a different construction. Besides the notion of discourse selection and rules governing it, discourse construction and justifying knowledge are used to discipline the subjects (individuals, groups, institutions) and what social position the subjects may occupy in their social life.

Various concepts developed in these two traditions – linguistics and social studies – are then incorporated to create critical social analysis, which integrates linguistic or textual analysis and critical social studies. In other words, it is how the linguistic analysis can be used to investigate the construction of power in social life. These two traditions – linguistic and critical social studies – then become the inspiration of the emergence of CDA which concerns on its ‘critical’ character.

3 ‘CRITICAL’: DISTINGUISHING CDA FROM THE NON-CRITICAL DISCOURSE STUDIES

The word ‘critical’ in CDA studies distinguishes it from other types of discourse analysis (called non-critical discourse analysis). The term ‘critical’ is defined as the orientation of social studies and research to contribute to critically examining and changing society, not just explaining and understanding the reality. This term can be traced back to the influence of Frankfurt School and Jurgen Habermas (Wodak and Meyer, 2009). This

definition notices the purpose of social studies, including CDA, to deconstruct a reality by criticizing and initiating a change of social inequality and injustice, which has been previously established by particular power.

The word 'critical' signifies the orientation of CDA to critically investigate the power construction, in which this power might create social inequality or injustice. The critical investigation in CDA is conducted through analyzing texts. Texts, whether they are produced in written, spoken, audio-visual, or the combination of these three forms (multimodality), are believed to contribute to gain and maintain power. Texts are considered as social events and they play important role in constructing social structure. Texts are not merely seen as linguistic constructions but they have social function, i.e. they can provide information and knowledge about social contexts. The use language in texts is considered as medium, which carries out or delivers particular meaning to support certain ideology or interest hold by the text producers or other social agents.

The 'critical' notion is taken from the discourse tradition developed in social studies, which mainly focuses on the concept of power. The critical studies proposed by, e.g., Gramsci and Foucault, have been an inspiration for CDA prominent figures such as Fairclough in his socio-linguistic approach, Van Dijk in his socio-cognitive approach, and Wodak in her discourse-historical approach, to establish critical discourse studies, which are then oriented to textual-linguistic analysis.

The efforts of these figures, therefore, turn the abstract analysis of power in social studies into the more technical and concrete analysis of linguistics. The background assumption of their thought is based on the belief that textual analysis can contribute to analyzing power construction in particular social context. McKenzie (2006) argues that the analysis of discourse can be seen as a political intervention, which is employed to challenge particular dominant discourse. The dominant discourses meant in this argument are discourses constructed by specific individuals or groups to gain power and privileged access to public resources, which may deny the existence of other individuals and groups.

In its further development, such studies have been extended to find a more complex relationship between texts, social actors, text production, text dissemination, text interpretation, as well as political purposes underpinning the texts. The discourse studies should also consider the interrelationship between verbal and non-verbal aspects of interaction (Wodak, 2010). This extension is based on the assumption that the accomplishment of particular political purposes can be achieved through the use of texts. Texts can bring about change, both short-term and long-term changes (Fairclough, 2003). For the short term one, they can contribute to the change in our knowledge, belief, attitude, and our values. For the longer-term effect, texts can shape people's identity.

By understanding the terms 'critical', and 'discourse,' CDA could be simply defined as the analysis of verbal as well as non-verbal languages of text in particular social context of action and interaction in order to contribute to not only understand and explain reality but also to criticize and change it. Such reality meant here is the reality of power, which is closely related to the

creation of inequality between the powerful (the holder of power) and the powerless.

Therefore, the critical study of discourse, to distinguish it from the non-critical one, will reveal the deliberate attempt of an individual or a group in gaining power through texts, in showing the ideological interest established in the texts, and in leading the readers to understand the social reality and to initiate a social change. Thus, research on CDA should take a socio-political position (van Dijk, 2001).

Further, Wodak also believes that CDA should take particular attention to the relationship between language and power (Wodak and Reisigl, 2001). She convincingly points out that language, in the written and spoken texts, can be used to attain power. It is not only because positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation can be constructed in a text, but it can also lead the thought and opinion of other people cognitively to a particular concern, e.g., hatred to particular group.

In his socio-cognitive approach of CDA, van Dijk (1996) argues that the investigation of cognition in CDA studies is one of the important elements in the field. It is because nowadays power is gained through persuasion and consent. Because power is no longer gained through coercion, persuasion through text and talk is an effective way to influence the mind of people. When consent is taken through this persuasive process, the text producer can control the mind of the text recipient (van Dijk, 1996). The smooth process of persuasion can establish discrimination more effective and efficient because the target of discrimination (i.e. minority people) might be unaware about it. According to Gotsbachner (2001, p. 750), 'if discrimination is always exerted openly, where it is prone to challenge and criticism by other social actors, its effect possibly would be more limited.'

In his socio-linguistics approach, Fairclough states that language in CDA is seen as social practice (Fairclough, 1992, 2003). The practice of using language is a domain of social action and interaction by considering the context where the language is used. In Fairclough's point of view, 'language is an irreducible part of social life, and it is dialectically interconnected with other elements of social life' (Fairclough, 2003, p. 3). We act and interact in our social life using language.

Fairclough calls his discourse concept as Textually Oriented Discourse Analysis (TODA) (See Fairclough, 1992). He develops his concept of discourse by dividing discourse into three levels; they are (i) discourse as text, (ii) discourse as discursive practice, and (iii) discourse as social practice. The first level refers to the use of language in its structural-grammatical way. The second level refers to the text production, dissemination, and interpretation by social actors or agents. Meanwhile, the last level refers to how the power, which is constructed and mediated in the texts, is then exercised in society. These three levels are closely related in CDA to reveal the salient role of discourse in society. Blackledge (2005) then extends this Fairclough's concept by saying that CDA studies should focus on both microanalysis of language and macro analysis of social practice. Therefore, CDA defends for a belief that

social life or, precisely, social problem needs to be investigated through the combination of language and social analyses (Fairclough, 1995).

All in all, it can be summarized here that the CDA studies should investigate both linguistic texts and social characteristics surrounding the linguistic texts, which contribute to gain social power. A text here may not be defined in a narrow sense, by saying that it is just in a written form. Text should be defined here as all symbolic forms, which contribute to meaning construction in particular social context. In the process of action and interaction, many symbolic forms attached to text, e.g., the social position of text producers/actors, what institution he/she represents, and what discourse genre being used. The last purpose of discourse is to gain and maintain power in order to have privileged access to public resources such as wealth, job, and official position.

4 CDA AND THE SOCIAL CHARACTERS OF LANGUAGE

The use or application of Critical Discourse Analysis (henceforth CDA) as an analytical tool in social issues has rapidly developed and known worldwide. Such worldwide application cannot be separated from the variability of social problems in different contexts, which requires a set of various analyses and methods. As can be observed in many kinds of literature, the focus of CDA is on social problems that establish and maintain social inequality, power abuse, hegemony, domination, and discrimination through the use of discourses (Fairclough, 1992, 2003; van Dijk, 1993a).

Employing discourse approaches to analyse such social problems draws on the social characters of language. Basically, discourse is constructed using words, phrases, and other linguistic units. However, the construction of discourse does not occur in a vacuum without being affected by the cultural and political settings. Blackledge (2005, p. 6) argues that ‘no text stands alone and outside of its context’, i.e. each text has a connection with other texts synchronically and diachronically as the background of relation between discourse and social practice. Hence, there are always social and political backgrounds to perform the critical analysis, either in the written or spoken form.

As has been mentioned above, Fairclough (2003, p. 4) argues, ‘discourse is a particular view of language in use’. Similar to this, Blommaert (2005, p. 2) also defines discourse as ‘a language-in-action’. The words ‘use’ and ‘action’ imply that the texts or discourses and their linguistic features and structures are parts of wider social context, embodied in action and interaction. In line with this concept, discourse is not only seen as the realisation or externalisation of idea or meaning in communication mediated by language form, but it is also a style. The style means the way the participants use the language, institutions involved, particular purpose, phrase, and other linguistic units, and the meaning embedded to these features.

At this point, language and its units are not only seen as the reflection of social reality, but it also shapes and constructs the reality. In a dialectical relationship, Mulderrig (2012) states that situations, institutions, and social structures do not only shape discursive events, but the discourse also shapes them. To some extent, discourse and the social situation, where the discourse

exists, are dialogic. Regarding this dialogic perspective, Paltridge (2006) suggests the principle of discourse is to reflect as well as to reproduce the social relation. The choice, the structure, and the construction of language in the process of social action and interaction, are socially motivated and ideologically represented. Discourse is 'socially constitutive as well as socially conditioned' (Blommaert, 2005, p. 25; Blommaert and Bulcaen, 2000, p. 448). Clearly, discourse represents the realities as well as constitutes them.

The primary concern of the social character of discourse is by presenting the social functions of text, i.e., it is to construct knowledge or belief (ideational level), social identity (interpersonal level), and social relationship (relational level) (Fairclough, 1992). The text is a representation of reality, but it does not mean that it is without any distortion. The producers of the text also have a particular purpose in amplifying their belief and ideological purpose through the use of linguistic features that they configure.

The materialization of ideology through text and its circulation through discursive practices enable the constitution of one's belief and political purpose to be the public discourse. At this point, through text and discursive practice, ideology is introduced to the society as something necessary and natural. The role of linguistic features is to externalize the belief, idea, purpose, and common sense as something inherent in particular social context on the grounds that this ideology can bring the society into the better condition.

Besides, the existence of ideology in a text or discourse can change the perception, cognition, attitude, and the behavior of individual or groups about something. When this ideology is permeated individually or collectively by the society without filtering, the process of domination is carried out. Power or ideology will be successfully exercised in the society depending on the text constructions and the discursive practices. Ideology in CDA analysis relies upon the assumption that the belief, idea, interest, and interpretation of reality can be mediated through discourse to constitute social inequality and power. Ideology is abstractness of reality in one's mind while the discourse is a medium to materialize it.

The ways of putting together the linguistic elements and their construction in a specific genre, context, and institution are not arbitrary, but they are created purposefully by social actors to construct particular meaning. In the process of interaction, especially in political context, each participant encodes his or her belief in linguistic expressions to persuade others, in order to do some purposeful actions positively or negatively (van Dijk, 1995). At this point, ideology plays a pivotal role in a particular language construction, e.g., word selection and meaning being produced (either implicit or explicit).

Ideology, according to van Dijk (2001, p. 12), is 'a special form of social cognition shared by social groups'. Ideology constitutes individuals and groups' social representations, practices, and their discourses. This social cognition is introduced to the society through texts and discursive practices. Texts, in this case, are seen as the use of language in particular context to introduce, cultivate, and maintain certain belief and knowledge both in written and spoken forms.

In promoting an ideology, individuals or groups try to identify themselves positively, while at the same time, they construct others negatively. This concept is called 'ideological square' to constitute the positive self-presentation and negative-other presentation (van Dijk, 2006). These self- and other-presentations are performed through the use of contrastive argumentation and some other linguistic strategies. These have been found in the use of CDA to examine or investigate social problems.

5 CDA AND ITS USES

CDA has frequently been used to analyze social problems in various social contexts. This critical analysis has been employed to examine the discriminatory discourse practices against immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers, ethnic groups, women, minority employees, and the adherents of a particular religion. In CDA, particular individuals or groups are discursively discriminated when they are presented negatively in texts (van Dijk, 1993a, 1998, 2002; Fairclough and Wodak, 1997; Wodak and Reisigl, 1999, 2001, 2007) using discriminatory discourse strategies. Discriminatory discourse strategies are employed to constitute negative presentations against others (Flowerdew, Li, and Tran, 2002; Wodak and Reisigl, 1999, 2001; Blackledge, 2005; van Dijk, 1984; KhosraviNik, 2009).

The negative presentations against immigrants can be identified in the selection of some words containing negative meaning. In Hong Kong, the Chinese immigrants from Mainland China are negatively attributed as 'poor,' 'dirty,' 'unemployable,' 'uneducated,' 'uncivilized,' and 'lazy' (Flowerdew *et al.* 2002). They are also metaphorically presented – using the metaphor of water – as 'influx,' 'flood,' and 'burden', which could bring tremendous social impact to Hong Kong society, e.g. the threat to interest and privileges of dominant groups, public order, and political stability (Flowerdew, *et al.*, 2002).

Similar negative presentations are also found in the study carried out by Baker *et al.* (2008). In the study, immigrants are presented negatively as the actors of economic problems (economic burden and economic threat). They are also accused of being the troublemakers, which have negatively contributed to problems of economy and security. In the United States, the Mexican immigrants are depicted as 'chaotic' and 'destructive' by the U.S.' anti-immigrant organization (Minuteman Project/MMP). The immigrants are illustrated as illegal aliens who are 'dangerous,' 'threatening,' 'predatory,' 'barbaric,' 'numerous,' 'unstoppable,' 'vengeful,' 'unpleasant,' and 'disagreeable' (Smith and Waugh, 2008).

The immigrants from Eastern Europe (e.g., Serbia, Bosnia, and Yugoslavia) are presented negatively by Vienna people in Austria (Gotsbachner, 2001). In their naturally occurring talk in the form of gossip, the Vienna people constitute social demarcation by saying that 'they live in expensive flat, upper-middle-class houses, or purely Austrian houses where the immigrants cannot afford it'; 'immigrants are janitors', 'they have no money, they live from our assets'. The similar negative presentation against immigrants through devaluation or exception of good characterization of immigrants 'diligence is not a personal characteristic of immigrants, but rather

it is an effect of social pressure'. Another negative presentation is also constructed through cultural difference by depicting bad characters of immigrants, e.g. 'they have the deviant mentality, are uneducated, lazy, workshy and are not able to adapt with the dominant culture.'

Similar negative presentations are also found in the discourse presentations against particular religious adherents, i.e., Islam and Muslims. Izadi and Biria (2007) investigate the discourse of the United States policies on the Iranian nuclear program as elaborated in the headlines of three most powerful American newspapers, namely *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and *The Wall Street Journal*. The negative depiction is presented using the strategy of collocations. The collocation is used to identify the co-occurrence of words, which are deliberately combined to attach a particular image to particular individuals or groups.

In so many headlines found in the three newspapers, the collocation is used to present Iran, as well as Islam and Muslims, as a threat and the source of terrorism by using specific terms, such as 'the rogue nation', 'the danger flows from Mullah', 'the Mullah's nuke', 'the Mullah's Bomb', 'the Iran's bomb', and 'one more round on Iran's Nuke'. All of these collocations are ideologically selected to construct a negative image for Iran, Islam, and Muslims.

Regarding this negative presentation against Islam and Muslims by word collocation, Baker (2012) has also analyzed newspaper texts published by the British press from 1998-2009, such as *The Star*, *The Mirror*, *The Sun*, *The Daily Mail*, and *The Daily Express*. By using a corpus linguistic approach, he collected 200,000 articles (143 million words), and he identified occurrences of the word 'Muslim' in singular and plural forms. In his finding, this word is frequently used and collocated with the extreme belief terms such as 'extremist(s),' 'militant(s),' and 'fundamentalist(s),' in order to build a negative perception about 'Islam' and 'Muslims.' This co-occurrence may produce a negative image of Muslims as the perpetrator of terror and any other violent actions.

The discriminatory discourses are also created to undermine particular religious minority groups, e.g. Ahmadiyya sect. In Indonesia, this sect has been a target of violent acts perpetrated by some members of public. The reason is Ahmadiyya has deviated from the principle teaching of Islam, especially its belief of the coming of a new prophet of Islam after Prophet Muhammad. In religious decree (*fatwa*) issued by Indonesian Council of Clerics (MUI) in 1980, Ahmadiyya is presented discursively as criminal actors who create blasphemy and social conflict. In the decree, it is stated that *Jemaat Ahmadiyah Indonesia* is considered to cause *keresahan, karena isi ajarannya bertentangan dengan ajaran Islam* [unrest, because its teaching is contradictory to Islamic teaching], *Perpecahan, terutama dalam hal ubudiyah (ibadah)* [Split, especially in the case of prayers], and *Bahaya bagi ketertiban Negara* [Danger for the order and security of the state]. The similar presentation is then reinforced by the official of the Ministry of Religious Affairs who states that 'Ahmadiyya has preached certain doctrines that had proved to cause

conflicting polarisation in society, which in turn disturbed law and order' (Mudzhar, 2011, pp. 17-18).

These examples reveal that discrimination against particular individual or groups is created through text or discourse construction. The discriminatory discourses are the subtle form of control that is mainly presented by powerful groups. They are deliberately used by the power holders to establish and maintain their power and, at the same time, to discredit others. CDA is used to examine how this process of discrimination, what discourses being created, and what linguistic strategies employed to create the discourses.

6 CONCLUSION

CDA is a type of discourse analysis which concerns on investigating the issues of power, power abuse, social inequality and injustice, and discrimination. This concern has distinguished CDA from other types of discourse analysis. The term 'critical' is attached to it to emphasize its focus on social problems. Such an analysis has integrated textual and social analyses. The selection of social problems as its object of analysis is influenced by critical social studies.

Some CDA studies have revealed the creation of discriminatory practices through text or discourse. Most of the studies have mainly focused on investigating how immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers, women, minority employees, adherents of a particular religion, and the religious minority sect are negatively presented. This negative presentation is considered as a new way of control over and discrimination against others. CDA, among other discourse analyses and social studies, has shown its specialty to investigate the alike-social issue.

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