

LSE Department of Methodology
MY 428/528 – LT 2014

Qualitative Text Analysis

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Office Hours: Thursday 11:30-13:30

**STRUCTURAL &
CRITICAL APPROACHES (II)**

Week 10

Lecture Outline

1. Conversation Analysis

2. Discourse Analysis

3. Critical Discourse Analysis

4. Recap and Summary

Conversation Analysis

Conversation Analysis

- Focuses on the *procedures* used by speakers to communicate in *socially mediated* situations.
- Look at exchanges in *naturally occurring* conversations (accompanied by visuals and non-verbal cues)
- Assumes that structures and social systems are reflected in interactive behaviours.

Conversation Analysis

- Grew out of H. Garfinkel's *Studies in Ethnomethodology* (1967).
- Study of the ways in which people make sense of what other people do in the process of social interaction.
- **Aim:** to illuminate micro level of interactions and broader systems in place which enable/constrain our behaviour.
- Ordinary conversations shed lights on the rules of social behaviour. They indicate what is acceptable and what happens when these rules are broken.

Conversation Analysis

- **When to use:** When you have access to naturally occurring conversations that can be transcribed.
- **Type of research questions best suited:** How do people interact within particular environments?
- **Examples:** What happens when a person of higher status talks to a person of a lower status in a working environment?
How do conversations between men and women differ from those when genders are mixed?
- **Strength:** Clarifies the dynamics of interactions by looking at the minutiae of turn taking.
- **Weakness:** When you have access only to transcriptions of spoken dialogue (facial expression and non-verbal communication are missing).

Conversation Analysis

‘ A CA report will not generally have an extensive a priori discussion of the literature, or details about the research situation and the subjects and the participants who have provided the data, no descriptions of sampling techniques nor coding procedures. Instead, the reader is confronted with a detailed discussion of transcriptions of recordings of interactions in terms of ‘devices’ used by participants’ (Grbich, 2013: 230).

The ‘real’ problem with Conversation Analysis.

Conversation Analysis

How to use:

- *Select episodes to be analysed*
(i.e. the opening conversation between a patient and her doctor)

- *Transcribe recordings: (aka when real fun begins!)*
Include:
 - words and sounds as uttered
 - spaces, silences,
 - overlapping speech and sounds
 - pace, stretches, stresses, volume
 - visual information

See the Jefferson system

<http://homepages.lboro.ac.uk/~ssca1/notation.htm>

Conversation Analysis

- *Check the episode carefully*
 - Note turns, pauses, overlaps, ‘disturbances’
- Look for sequences and pay attention to *repairs*
(recognition and correction of a speech error by self or others)
- *Try to make sense of the episode*
 - check your interpretation with participants
- *Interpret the material*
 - In a comparative manner (if desired)
 - Relate to concept/theories meaningful in your own discipline.

Application of Conversation Analysis

Taking Turn and taking Sides: Opening scenes from two jury deliberations

J. Manzo (1996)

- Studied how jurors for a criminal trial managed turn taking in their deliberations.
- > see transcripts.
- By the time juror 3 completes her turn, she only has to shift her weight to the left, for juror 4 to take up the next turn.
- At this point, the rule is established. No more gazes or instructions from juror 1 are needed.

Discourse Analysis

Discourse Analysis

- Questions the ways of thinking, writing and speaking about a particular topic.
- **Aim:** To discover the rules, assumptions, hidden motivations and conditions of the development of a particular discourse.
- Also look at how changes occurred or were resisted within a discourse and how it works (ordering and exclusion).

Discourse Analysis

Foucauldian discourse analysis

- Uses power as a basis for interpretation.
- Focus on the ways in which knowledge has been created and sustained within culture.
- In whose best interests was this knowledge developed? Who obscured its origins? Who were the challengers? How were they silenced by?
- Uses historical and political tracking of documentation over time.

Discourse Analysis

Foucauldian discourse analysis

- ‘ The binary opposite of structuralism, in particular the notions of ‘**right**’ or ‘**wrong**’ serve to persuade the population that **truth is singular**’.
- ‘ Discourses are not about objects; they do not identify objects, they constitute them and in the practice of doing so **conceal their own invention**’ (Foucault, 1972: 49).

Discourse Analysis

Guidelines for Foucauldian discourse analysis

- **Track the historical development of the discourse over time:**
Identify the players, the social, economic and political climate which fostered its development.
- **Identify constituents:**
Statements, themes, arguments and traces of challenges.
- **Seek disunity and discontinuity and the limits to the discourse:**
Dispersion in other fields; Intervention (rewriting and reordering of information)
- **Locate challenges and see what happened to these:**
Where did they come from? How were they dispensed? By whom? For what purpose?

Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical Discourse Analysis

- Rooted in A. Gramsci's discussion of *cultural hegemony* (1930)
- Reminiscent to Marxist Theory.
The superstructure (culture) follows the structure.
- Modern States control the *structural mechanisms for shaping and transmitting culture*.
- Lower and Middle classes come to believe in (and advocate) the entrenched differences that keep them subservient to the elite.

Critical Discourse Analysis

- Theoretical underpinnings of CDA also come out of the critical theorist tradition (Habermas; Foucault; Bourdieu).
- First formalised by Norman Fairclough (1989)
- Social practices are discursively shaped. Linguistic analysis should help to clarify relationships among discursive practices, text and events and social structures.

Critical Discourse Analysis

- **Basic premise of CDA:** Discourses are shaped by social groupings, culture and constructs. They have the power to limit and influence our knowledge and belief.
- **Aim of CDA:** To show how *power differences* – between men and women, between doctors and patients, between employers and employees – are *perpetuated, reinforced and resisted*.

Critical Discourse Analysis

On a practical Level 3 things interact (Fairclough, 2010)

1. The Text:

Representation of facts, beliefs and events (**micro level**)

2. Discursive Practices:

Rules, norms, text production, power relations (**meso level**)

3. The broad social Context:

intertextual understanding of the societal situation (**macro level**)

Critical Discourse Analysis

- Like Foucauldian discourse analysis, CDA has no clear stage-by-stage strategies, only general guidelines.
- This allows considerable flexibility in how to approach the task.
- Past researchers have combined CDA's basic premises with Conversation analysis, narrative analysis, semiotic linguistic approaches, content analysis (...)

Critical Discourse Analysis

Thomas Huckin (1997) has developed the following CDA method:

1. Identify Framing

- **Read the text twice:**
first in a general manner, next within the expected structure of its genre.
- **Identify structure of placement:**
headings, graphs, pictures, keywords
- **Identify whose voices are used and whose are missing:**
note what could have been said (but wasn't).

Critical Discourse Analysis

2. Interpretation

- **Note use of sentences:**
how many on one aspect of a topic and how many on another
- **Who is depicted as powerful?**
Who is passive? Why?
- **Question statements the author is taking for granted**
- **Note insinuation to take power from people**
(i.e. minimizing, comparing with others)
- **Note connotations**
(i.e. 'terrorist' v. 'freedom fighter')
- **Note use of uncertainty to slant information**
(i.e. may; might, could, should, would...)
- **Note the register**
(i.e. pessimistic v. optimistic)
(direct quotes v. third person comments)

Critical Discourse Analysis

- Unlike Conversation Analysis, Discourse Analysis and CDA explicitly emphasize that power relationships are pervasive in the production and understanding of text.
- CDA focuses more on words and language structure than DA but ultimately the analyses between the two approaches would not be dissimilar in outcome.

Critical Discourse Analysis

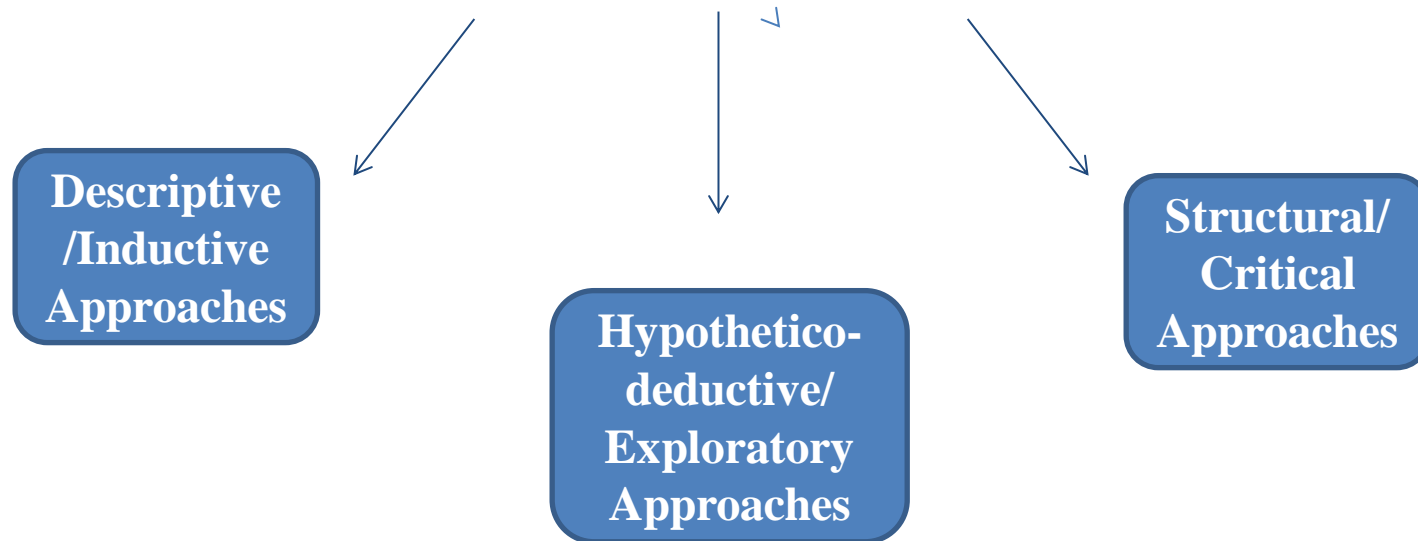
Criticisms of CDA:

- If action and emancipation are core to CDA how will they be evaluated as outcome?
- How systematic is CDA analysis, linguistically speaking?
- Are people active agents who can identify and resist oppression? Or can they recognize it but are too conditioned to act effectively?

Recap & Summary

Textual Data: Methods of Analysis

Textual Analysis



Textual Data: Methods of Analysis

Textual Analysis

- Classical Thematic
- Network Thematic
- Hybrid Approach
- Summative CA

- Exploratory CA
- Enumerative CA
- Classical CA
- Dictionary-based
- Semantic network

- Structural Appr.
- Narrative Analysis
- Rhetorical Analysis
- Semiotic/Semiology
- Conversation Analysis
- (Critical) Discourse Analysis

Recap & Summary

- Don't be too worried about labelling your approach in a perfect way but be very clear/ transparent about your analytical strategy.
- Don't forget that coding is simply a means to an end and not an end in itself.
'Micro analysis' (coding) < 'Macro analysis' (discussion of the results)
- Don't be afraid of loosing data complexity (Thematic/Content analysis).
Don't be afraid of expending on data/ being creative (Structural/Critical approaches).
- Justify, justify, justify ... but remain open to/acknowledge alternatives (build 'ambiguity tolerance').