

## **Towards a Critical Cognitive Linguistics?**

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### **1 The landscape of modern linguistics**

At the turn of the millennium, the two most rapidly developing fields of modern linguistics are Cognitive Linguistics (CL) and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Both fields are relatively new and innovative. Both claim to offer a radical new direction for the study of language and communication, and both effect this by widening the traditional conception of *language* as an area of study in itself. Both have arisen out of interdisciplinary studies with linguistics at the core, and both are characterised by the missionary zeal of their proponents and their sense of the inadequacies of other approaches to language. This paper asks whether the two disciplines share any common ground, and whether any synthesis or at least accommodation is possible between them. The reason for this inquiry is partly to use the comparative method to highlight whether there are any proper or peculiar domains to which each discipline belongs, and partly to use the occasion of the comparison to investigate some of the claims made within each discipline.

CL is best exemplified in the work of Fauconnier (1994, 1997), Geeraerts (with Grondelaers and Bakema 1994), Gibbs (1994), Johnson (1987), Lakoff (and Johnson 1980, 1999, Lakoff 1987), Langacker (1987, 1991), Sweetser (1990, Fauconnier and Sweetser 1996), and Turner (1987, 1991, Lakoff and Turner 1989), among many others. Ungerer and Schmid (1996) is a good introduction, and though in this paper I assume some knowledge of the discipline, the key ideas are as follows.

CL represents an *experientialist* and thus *anti-objectivist* position, in describing the relationship between the world on one hand and language and thought on the other. This has far-reaching consequences for reference, anaphora, deixis, pragmatic force, categorisation, lexicalisation and lexical semantics, many of which are in the process of being developed at the moment.

The fundamental re-evaluation of CL involves a rejection of Cartesian dualism, reuniting mind and body to see language and thought - and conceptualisation itself - as *embodied*. Embodied experience finds expression functionally in metaphorical structures (idealised cognitive models, or *ICMs*) which in turn are manifest in both conventional and novel metaphors and expressions. Conventional communication involves shared (perhaps *universal*) ICMs and *image-schemas*, through which we structure our understanding of the world and through which we even structure new concepts. That is, knowledge of the world is *constituted* through and by these *conceptual metaphors*, to the extent that even newly-encountered or abstract concepts are isomorphically understood in terms of them.

The process of categorisation itself consists of *basic-level schemas* and is arranged in a way that manifests *prototype* effects. Items within such radial categories can be judged as being central or peripheral, and rated on the basis of 'goodness-of-example'. CL has

formulated constraints on metaphorical mappings so that the framework matches intuitive senses of linguistic usage. Among the many interdisciplinary applications of CL is the sub-branch of *cognitive poetics*, which investigates the consequences for literary analysis of ideas from CL.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is exemplified in the work of Birch (1989), Caldas-Coulthard and Coulthard (1996), Fairclough (1989, 1995a, 1995b), Fowler, Hodge, Kress and Trew (1979, Fowler 1981, 1986, 1991, Kress and Hodge 1979, Hodge and Kress 1988) and Toolan (1996), among many others. The key points in CDA are as follows.

The approach mainly uses Hallidayan (1985) *systemic-functional linguistics* to examine the rhetoric and *ideology* of institutions, such as the media, government, politicians, regulatory bodies and popular influential texts from fictional romances to billboard advertising. CDA developed from the *linguistic criticism* of the late 1970s and '80s, and has since broadened into *social semiotics* and a variety of critical linguistic approaches to a whole range of *discourses*. Fairclough's (1995a) analysis is explicitly Marxian and emphasises the responsibility of academic practice in unearthing the latent ideologies of controlling hegemonic institutions. This is based on a tripartite analytical framework:

- spoken and written *text* analysis
- the analysis of the *discourse practice* of production and interpretation
- and a politically situated analysis of *social practice* (Fairclough 1995a:133).

CDA is allied closely (especially in Toolan's (1996) work) with integrationalism (after Harris 1981, 1987). This means that the dimensions of communicative experience - such as context, power relations and background knowledge - are not sidelined as in traditional linguistic rule-systems, but become part of a holistic integrated study.

The respective ancestries of CL and CDA seem to be significant. CL includes practitioners who grew up as generativists studying transformational-generative grammar and language universals in the 1970s. Though many of the current writers refute their earlier selves, the search for universal or totalizing linguistic and conceptual structures is still a tendency in CL. There is less oedipal angst in the development of CDA; its roots lie in left-wing politics and systemic-functional linguistics and this is still largely the agenda for writers. It has always had a concern to expose conservative or anti-democratic ideologies in persuasive, regulatory, institutional, media and popular influential texts, though later CDA problematises the truth/falsity issue of studying textual 'distortions' of a preferred reality, in response to criticism often from within the movement (such as Pateman 1981, Richardson 1987).

In general, CL mainly has a continental European and US bias, while CDA is generally to be found amongst academics working in Britain and Australia. In spite of these geographical and historical differences, there are points of contact even at the theoretical level.

## **2 A comparison of theoretical issues**

Both CL and CDA are interested in suggesting deep structures that are made manifest in linguistic expressions. CDA is focused on how individual utterances and sentences are expressions of ideological discursive practices (such as analyses of women's magazine articles, tabloid newspaper reports, university regulations, and so on). CL is focused on how individual utterances and sentences are expressions of conceptual metaphors (such as 'he blew his top' as an example of ANGER IS A CONTAINER OF HOT LIQUID, or 'she rejected his advances' as LOVE IS WAR, and so on). Both traditions emphasise that linguistic conventions are not just *examples* of social practice, but that linguistic usage is also 'constitutive' (Fairclough 1995a:131) of social practice. CDA focuses on how hegemonic institutions attempt to structure conventional thinking, and CL focuses on making explicit the conceptual metaphors of everyday usage.

Although CDA claims to be interventionist (it wants to make explicit an awareness of control in order to resist it critically) and CL aims to be descriptive (it wants to be simply a methodological tool which can be used in a variety of ideological ways), there is no reason why the linguistic procedures of CL cannot be used in the service of CDA. I will return to this point later.

Both CL (centrally, Lakoff 1987) and CDA (latterly, Fairclough 1995a) are anti-objectivist in their view of the conceptually constitutive power of language. Both place re-emphasis on 'experientialism'. However, there are differences in definition and how thoroughly the assimilation of the term is embraced. In CL, experientialism serves to situate conceptualisation in the body (Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 1999, Lakoff 1987, Turner 1987, 1991), and it emphasises the 'embodiment' of experience in idealised cognitive models (ICMs). Thus the abstract concept TIME is figured as the human-scale and tangible SPACE, and emotions are metaphorically directional in prepositions of being 'up' or 'down,' 'high' or 'low' in relation to the conditions of being corporeally human. Where categories and concepts are shared in the language system, the individual has learnt the convention experientially: though there is an element of a social theory here, the focus is on the individual and their mental space being imprinted with the culturally correct convention. The CDA understanding of experience is more dynamic and interactive than this. Toolan (1996) (after pointing out the problems CL has in dealing with creative and novel metaphors – see also Stockwell 1999 on this) argues that the CL rejection of objectivism is not thorough enough:

... it is clear that his [Lakoff's] rejection of abstract objectivism is in no way a rejection of collective categorization itself but rather as [an?] emphasis on different roots of categorization (experience, in the body) and a different kind of categorization (prototypical etc. rather than absolute). As a shared mental framework, categorization is crucial to the revision ... In fact, Lakoff presents 'basicness in human categorization' very much as if it is analogous, for things in the world, to what Chomsky's universal grammar is claimed to be for natural language syntactic structures ... Lakoff's [1987] book reports revisions as to what counts as 'membership of a category' (i.e., what the criteria are); it does not take the radical step of confronting the possibility that 'membershopping' (categorization) is

contingent, varying from case to case according to criteria that may differ from case to case (Toolan 1996:87-8).

There is a divergence in what 'experientialism' means and how thoroughly it can be assimilated into an investigative methodology.

Nevertheless, Toolan's book is primarily about integrationalism rather than CDA directly, and in fact there are correspondences in the notions of prototypes and categorisations between CL and CDA. An ICM is an experientially-accumulated knowledge structure that is always open to new information, is connected with other domains of knowledge in a network, and is omnipresent in cognitive activity (Ungerer and Schmid 1996:48-9). The notion is a new (Lakoff 1987) version of the notions of frames and schemas of knowledge developed in the AI research of the 1970s. Fairclough links CDA to these ideas:

It may be useful to think of ideologies in terms of content-like entities which are manifested in various formal features, and perhaps frame, schema, script and related concepts are of value in this respect (Schank and Abelson (1977)) (Fairclough 1995a:75).

In his earlier work, Fairclough (1989) developed the notion of *members' resources* (MR). These are accumulated knowledge structures 'which people have in their heads and draw upon when they produce or interpret texts – including their knowledge of language, representations of the natural and social worlds they inhabit, values, beliefs, assumptions, and so on' (Fairclough 1989:24). Fairclough's MRs are clearly experientialist ICMs. Earlier (Fairclough 1989:10) he refers to them as a set of 'prototypes', within a section entitled 'Cognitive psychology and artificial intelligence'. He links these mental structures to the cognitive dimension:

The MR which people draw upon to produce and interpret texts are cognitive in the sense that they are in people's heads, but they are social in the sense that they have social origins (Fairclough 1989:24).

It is the social aspect that is of primary interest for Fairclough, and he uses this concern to argue against the emphasis within CL:

Not surprisingly, cognitive psychology and artificial intelligence have given little attention to the social origins or significance of MR. I shall argue later that attention to the processes of production and comprehension is essential to an understanding of the interrelations of language, power and ideology, and that this is so because MR are socially determined and ideologically shaped, though their 'common sense' and automatic character typically disguises that fact. Routine and unselfconscious resort to MR in the ordinary business of discourse is, I shall suggest, a powerful mechanism for sustaining the relations of power which ultimately underlie them (Fairclough 1989:11).

Fairclough's first criticism here seems to have been met by CL in the 1990s. Furthermore, in the same way as Fairclough (1989:91) sees 'common sense' as the 'naturalization' of an ideological set of assumptions so that they are not perceived as ideological any more, CL regards cultural models as shared conceptual metaphors which operate as folk-theories and structure our relationship with society (Holland and Quinn 1987). Though Fairclough argues directly against early CL emphases here, it seems to me that the difference is based on a different focus and is additional or complementary rather than being an antithesis. It seems that Fairclough might prefer a framework which shifted the focus of idealised cognitive models to being *ideological cognitive models*.

Fairclough points out that 'frames, scripts, and schemata' are all 'a part of MR constituting interpretative procedures ... and share the property of mental representations in general of being ideologically variable' (Fairclough 1989:158). It is the awareness of ideology and the status of linguistic analysis as scientific method or critical engagement that is at the heart of the CL/CDA comparison. Though some work within the sub-branch of 'cognitive poetics' (Turner 1987, 1991, Lakoff and Turner 1989, D. Freeman 1993a, M.H. Freeman 1997) has focused on the stylistic expression of linguistic metaphors, in general CL is concerned mainly with the conceptual mappings which underlie metaphorical expressions. Fairclough recognises the ubiquity of metaphor, and though he is interested in underlying ideological functions, his systemic linguistic framework makes him sensitive to the ideological nuances of different stylistic choices:

Metaphor is a means of representing one aspect of experience in terms of another, and is by no means restricted to the sort of discourse it tends to be stereotypically associated with – poetry and literary discourse. But any aspect of experience can be represented in terms of any number of metaphors, and it is the relationship between alternative metaphors that is of particular interest here, for different metaphors have different ideological attachments (Fairclough 1989:119).

This seems to me to be a difference in the current practices of the two disciplines, but it is not one that is necessary to their distinctiveness as disciplines. As the cognitive poetics work shows, CL can be used successfully to discuss stylistic variation in a way that would correspond quite happily with CDA.

A more problematic divergence is in the question of what sort of disciplines CL and CDA think they are, respectively. CL explicitly and unapologetically regards itself as a science with the job of investigating a natural phenomenon (language) and producing the best possible current account of the workings of that system in the mind. Freeman (1993b) has argued that in itself CL is a method rather than a methodology, a tool with no inherent ideological assumptions, and which could be used in the service of a whole range of other ideological approaches. CL explains the detail of a range of interpretations, and excludes some readings which are demonstrably without cognitive basis, but it cannot itself choose between different interpretations of, for example, how a conceptual metaphor is applied. In relation to literary interpretation, Freeman asserts:

Of course there is no one God's-eye interpretation of a literary work, whether the evidence for such a claim arises from cognitive metaphor or anything else. But there is a range of plausible interpretations and a scale of valid ones (Freeman 1993a:17).

Freeman's challenge is to ask which part of CL is inherently ideological. Of course, considered as a 'pure' theory, this cannot be answered, except in the very general sense that there is an implicit ideological motivation in choosing the framework in the first place. However, claiming that CL is exempt from ideological assumptions does not seem tenable to me. There is a fundamental consensualism in the notion of cultural models, conventional mapping of ICMs, shared prototypes, and so on, and the common method of discussion of CL is to examine individual sentences asocially. Even if CL does not exclude a social dimension, it tends to focus elsewhere and this is an applied ideological choice. It would be true to say that it is the application that is ideological rather than the theoretical framework, but since the only way of discussing CL is to apply it, this seems a bit mischievous.

As Gross (1997) points out, new disciplines always tend to overstate their radicalism, innovativeness and novelty, and perhaps CL in this respect is a victim of its own hype. Freeman (1993a) takes a more robust but charitable view:

I am often taxed ... with being 'totalizing' or 'essentialist'. Guilty as charged. I take these terms to mean 'general, ignoring particulars that do not fit the theory'. Noam Chomsky's early work in linguistic theory is often held up to me as an example of this 'fault' ... None of ... [the modern linguistic] developments would have been possible, in my view, had not Chomsky been an unrepentant 'totalizer' from the start. Any theory of anything worth anything begins as totalizing, essentialist, and universalist, and progressively qualifies its claims as research proceeds (Freeman 1993:18).

The process is certainly the institutional practice in sciences (where scientists compete for funding by good self-marketing), but it could be argued that this 'scientific' method makes for bad science. Certainly the history of science has involved the progression from one explanatory framework to another, regarded as an improvement, but there is an inescapable ideological background and motivation to science as to every other human activity.

This is what makes the following document from within CL all the more astonishing. This is the (anonymous) referee's comment on a proposed paper to be given by a colleague at a CL conference:

**Comments on:**

*'Cognitive Linguistics and the Marxist approach to ideology'*

This paper appears to have been submitted to the wrong conference. It is a critique of Cognitive Linguistics from a Marxist perspective, which would

be entirely appropriate at a conference of Marxists giving Marxist critiques of things.

The paper ignores a fundamental difference between CL and Marxism: CL is a scientific endeavor, part of cognitive science. It is not an apriori theory, as Marxism is. At a conference on CL, an appropriate paper might be a cognitive analysis of Marxist thought. Indeed, the abstract itself would make an interesting subject for analysis.

One thing is clear from the abstract (actually, it's been clear for many years): The consequences of empirical research on the mind in cognitive science in general and CL in particular are inconsistent with Marxist ideology. That is not particularly strange, since Lakoff and Johnson argue in their new book, *Philosophy in the Flesh*, that most of Western philosophy is inconsistent with results coming from cognitive science. Marx fits right in with Kant and Aristotle and Descartes. Of course, from within Marxist ideology, CL would be an example of 'false consciousness', as would anything disagreeing with Marxism, whether it had scientific support or not.

I recommend rejecting this abstract. It should be given at conference of Marxists, or perhaps paired on neutral turf with a paper analyzing the folk theories and metaphors in the paper itself. [This]... is the major conference for people engaged in CL. There is little enough room there for papers in the field.

This is not intended to discourage the author from further investigating the relationship between CL and Marxism in a more appropriate venue.

The notion that because CL is a science it is exempt from critical analysis – whether Marxian or otherwise – seems to me indefensible. Encompassing an ideological dimension when that includes both social and cognitive factors does not make the discipline less scientific. Scientific investigation of natural physical phenomena cannot be identical to the investigation of the behaviour of wilful and conscious humans, and treating them the same is unscientific. Fairclough discusses the notion that CDA is not simplistically concerned with truth and falsity; in place of this simple polarity he argues for an analytical approach that is politically motivated but also aware of its own engagement. Arguing (as does Freeman 1993a:18) against post-structuralist critical theory, Fairclough (1995a:17) claims that it is not at all critical unless 'it takes a "pejorative" view of ideology as a means through which social relations of power are reproduced'.

Central to the whole question is the understanding of what is meant by 'discourse'. Fairclough (1989) is careful to define the term not as simply the top level in the linguistic rank-structure (as in Sinclair and Coulthard 1975), but in the same sense as used by McCarthy and Carter (1994) that involves a thorough re-evaluation of 'language as discourse' at every level. Fairclough summarises his terms as follows:

<i>discourse</i> (abstract noun)	language use conceived as social practice.
<i>discursive event</i>	instance of language use, analysed as text, discursive practice, social practice.
<i>text</i>	the written or spoken language produced in a discursive event.
<i>discourse practice</i>	the production, distribution and consumption of a text.
<i>interdiscursivity</i>	the constitution of a text from diverse discourses and genres.
<i>discourse</i> (count noun)	way of signifying experience from a particular perspective.
<i>genre</i>	use of language associated with a particular social activity.
<i>order of discourse</i>	totality of discursive practices of an institution, and relations between them (Fairclough 1995a:135).

The main point of divergence between CL and CDA is a consequence of this set of terms. Most of the practical analysis within CL consists of lists of sentences (usually invented or recalled from memory by the writer) set into a scheme of conceptual metaphors. There is a clear disposition towards the establishment of general principles, the identification of cognitive linguistic universals, and scientifically recoverable, replicable and explanatory interpretations. Actual language is an exemplification of the framework. By contrast, CDA takes actual language (usually texts rather than sentences) as an occasion for a specific institutional critique that is specified to its historical point of use. The *experiential* values of content, knowledge and belief are joined by two other descriptive dimensions in CDA: the *relational* values of enacted social relationships; and the *expressive* values of evaluation and subjectivity (Fairclough 1989:112-2). These last two dimensions, which include such stylistically important features as formality and modality, are not covered by CL.

### 3 A practical point of contact

Having emphasised points of divergent concerns, the theoretical discussion can be made more specific by examination of practical analyses within CL and CDA. Both Lakoff and Fairclough have used their frameworks to analyse the linguistic representation of war and conflict in the Persian Gulf in the early 1990s.

Fairclough (1995b:94-102) discusses the British press coverage in January 1993 of an air attack by the USA, Britain and France on Iraq. He distinguishes between configurations of discourse in the reports which are either *congruent* or *metaphorical*. A congruent application is 'the use of a discourse to signify those sorts of experience it most usually signifies; a metaphorical application is the extension of a discourse to signify a sort of experience other than that which it most usually signifies' (Fairclough 1995b:94). The following two passages are contrasted, the first as congruent, the second as a metaphorical configuration:

*Saddam's UN Envoy Promises Good Behaviour After Raid by US, British  
and French Aircraft*

*Gulf Allies Attack Iraq Missiles*

More than 100 aircraft blasted Iraqi missile sites last night after the allies' patience with Saddam Hussein's defiance finally snapped.  
(*Daily Telegraph*) (Fairclough 1995b:95).

*Wipe Out The Mad Menace*

At long last, Allied warplanes have bombed the hell out of Saddam Hussein.

The Iraqi madman has pushed the West too far.  
He has played a dangerous game and now he must pay the price.  
Four times Saddam has sent raiding parties over the border into Kuwait.

*Menace*

His boast that Iraq planned to 'recover' Kuwait was the last straw.

The tinpot tyrant could not be allowed to cling onto power a moment longer.

He is an international terrorist, a constant menace to peace.  
The tragedy is that we did not finish him off last time!  
Go get him, boys! [*The Sun*] (Fairclough 1995b:100-1).

In the first passage, Fairclough identifies the lexico-grammar as configuring the discourse of a military attack. This is mainly congruently applied in the sense that the only departure is the lexical selection of 'blasted', which is more appropriate to a fictionalised account of military action. The second passage, however, displays 'discoursal overkill' (Fairclough 1995b:101). Here there is a density of discourses, including those of legal retribution ('he must pay the price'), war fiction ('bombed the hell out of'), and westerns ('finish off', 'go get him, boys').

In these, and several other analyses, Fairclough tracks the metaphorical representation of Saddam Hussein as an errant schoolboy, a school bully, a naughty child corrected by exasperated parents, a young offender, a clown, an unrepentant sinner (imposing a Christian discourse onto the Islamic head of state), and a madman. The analysis is a detailed linguistic account which draws on Hallidayan terminology and the systemic-functional framework. Fairclough (1995b:94) is especially interested in the metaphorical configurations of discourses since he claims convincingly that they are 'socially motivated, [and] different metaphors may correspond to different interests and perspectives, and may have different ideological loadings'.

The detail of the analysis is largely descriptive, though it is generally deployed in the service of a critical discussion of media representation. Fairclough ends the chapter by pointing out that the discussion could have been undertaken using different terminology and other linguistic frameworks:

Other terms which are roughly equivalent to 'discourses', but derive from different theoretical frameworks and traditions, are quite widely used,

including schemata, frames, and scripts (from cognitive psychology), metaphors, and vocabularies (Fairclough 1995b:101).

At both the analytical level and the general objective of the analysis, there is little difference between Fairclough's writing and that of Lakoff in relation to the same subject matter. An article entitled, 'Metaphor and War: The Metaphor System Used to Justify War in the Gulf', was circulated by fax in early 1991, and later revised and published (Lakoff 1992, though I am using the earlier version here). Lakoff identifies many of the conceptual metaphors which were used to legitimise war as a business practice, as an extension of politics, as a game, and as an argument between people rather than states. The discussion focuses on individual utterances rather than complete texts, but like Fairclough's material they are taken from media representations and combine to form a coherent system of metaphorical strategies. Like Fairclough, Lakoff clearly sets himself up in opposition to the dominant ideology of the justification of the war.

Lakoff (1992) points out that the war story was presented metaphorically as a fairy-tale. As an idealised cognitive model, the fairy-tale is a very strong base domain for metaphorical mappings. Lakoff sketches out a brief narratological framework adapted in general from Propp (1970), and uses it to discuss several of the scenarios set up by the media. These include the 'Rescue scenario', in which Kuwait is the victim of the evil Iraq, the US is the hero, and the crime is kidnap and rape; and the 'Self-defence scenario', in which Iraq and the US are still villain and hero, but the world is the victim of a death-threat (to economic health) which must be dealt with by the Allies.

Though both Fairclough's and Lakoff's treatments are recognisable as being, respectively, CDA and CL, the actual practical differences are minimal. Fairclough (1995b) has greater detail in linguistic description, though his analysis is certainly not exhaustive. Lakoff discusses underlying conceptual metaphor, though not in a way that is inimical to CDA. It seems that, at the practical level, CL and CDA can be very similar, at least in this case of investigating discourse which is foregrounded for its ideological and political status.

Before considering these Gulf War discussions further, it is worth introducing work done by Chilton (1985, 1986, 1988) which, to a large extent, offers a synthesis between CDA and CL work in the political domain. Chilton develops Hobbs' (1981) notion of selective inferencing in metaphorical mappings in order to see metaphoric language in the domain of international politics as the operation of a mathematical *morphism* between two domains (since the root studies used here originate in artificial intelligence research, it corresponds quite well with the CL model of mapped ICMs):

A morphism exists when you can prove or calculate something by mapping one set of things into another, doing the proof or calculation in another domain, and then mapping back to the problematic domain you were first interested in (Chilton 1988:63).

By way of example, Chilton cites Glenn Hook's (1984) study of the media in Japan, at a period of Japanese sensitivity to the visits of US naval ships which might have been

carrying nuclear weapons. This sensitivity was metaphorically presented as an allergy. The basic terms of the familiar base domain are *patient, allergen, doctor*. These map onto the targets *people, nuclear weapons, government*. The predicate relations between these nodes produce a complex expression which is mapped between the frames: *a patient overreacts to the allergen, so a doctor injects a small dose, and the patient no longer reacts*. The process is mapped thus: *people overreact to nuclear weapons, so the government introduces them gradually, and the people no longer react* (Chilton 1986:9). When this schema was worked through, the process resulted in real policy implications, structured by the metaphor, that nuclear weapons are harmless to normal people.

Chilton (1986) synthesises a wide range of analytical frameworks in order to discuss the ‘militarization’ of language. He refers to the early CDA work that was available to him (Kress and Hodge 1979, Thompson 1984), as well as a range of early work in the CL tradition (Schank and Abelson 1977, Lakoff and Johnson 1980, Johnson-Laird 1983). He also adapts work in pragmatics (Searle 1969, and Brown & Levinson’s (1978) notion of a ‘face-threatening act’ FTA) in order to describe the point at which a text presents an oppositional ideological representation to the reader as a ‘critical discourse moment’ (CDM). Both Fairclough (1995b) and Lakoff (1992) would recognise this in their own analyses. Finally, analogously with Jakobson’s (1956) *structural* poles of *metaphor* and *metonymy*, Chilton (1986:14-15) sets up the *functional* poles of ideological discourse as being *metaphorism* and *euphemism*.

Where ideological discourse functions metaphorically, it constructs a political situation in a complex representational system, and is thus coercive. Where it functions euphemistically, it silences alternative interpretations, and is thus suppressive. Metaphorical discourse legitimizes a viewpoint, and euphemistic discourse dissimulates. The linguistic resources available within metaphorical discourse include framing, modalisation, narrative; and the resources within euphemistic discourse include passivisation, nominalisation, lexical replacement, and so on (Chilton 1986:15). It is not difficult to see that Lakoff’s (1992) analysis largely focuses on the former set of features, while Fairclough’s (1995b) analysis involves detailed discussion of the latter set of linguistic features. Chilton’s work can be seen as a blend of cognitivism and critical analysis.

With this in mind, I will return to the Gulf War fairy-tale identified by Lakoff (1992), in order to try to sketch out what a critical cognitive linguistics might look like in practice.

Central to my ICM of the fairy-tale (based on my experience of both reading them as a child and reading about them in work from narratology to educational linguistics) are the following features:

- Formal opening (‘Once upon a time’)
- Formal ending (‘They lived happily ever after’)
- Pragmatically distinct from surrounding discourse
- Children’s story
- Potential tragedy/evil-doing

Happy resolution  
Medieval or feudal setting  
Allegorical component  
Magical aspect (cause and effect)  
Animals as humans  
Good hero  
Wicked villain/monster  
Innocent victim/damsel in distress  
Background community

In relation to Lakoff's (1992) analysis of the Gulf War as mentioned above, the way elements of the controlling fairy-tale metaphor are filled in constitute different scenarios and different complex expressions. The Self-defence scenario, in which the evil-doing is a death-threat (since, in a subsidiary metaphor, oil is the lifeblood of the state-as-individual), became less popular as the Gulf crisis developed, since the complex expression of this scenario maps back to the political domain as trading lives for oil.

The scenario that replaced it was the Rescue scenario (Lakoff 1992). Since Kuwait is then the damsel in distress, it is appropriate to talk of the rape of Kuwait, its life-blood being sapped, and the invasion as penetration. The complex expression of this is that the United States is justified in setting off on a quest to free Kuwait from evil Iraq. However, this slot-filling of the scenario is not the whole story. In order to more closely analyse the GULF WAR AS FAIRY-TALE metaphor, it is necessary to examine the linguistic detail in the manner of Fairclough.

The invasion of Kuwait in August 1990 marks the formal opening of the story. Almost all newspaper reports and comments and even the Security Council resolutions regard this as the starting-point of the immediate crisis. It is also the beginning of the evil-doing by Iraq. The evil-doing is therefore foregrounded as the focus and root cause of all the trouble that follows, and attention is heavily drawn to the malice of the aggressor in initial position in the narrative. Fairy-stories are pragmatically distinct from the surrounding discourse, which is an effect of the formal opening and ending. In a classroom, for example, when a story is being told, the opening formula 'Once upon a time...' serves to render the narrative that follows pragmatically independent of the classroom environment. That environment is reinstated by the closing formula '...and they all lived happily ever after'. The opening and ending provide boundaries within which the rules of textual cohesion and coherence must operate. The pragmatic independence of the story is shown in the 'normal' use of indefinite articles to introduce noun-phrases ('There was once a dragon'). Even if the story has been told many times before, the introductory noun-phrase will keep to this form, implying a new reference (Gopnik 1989:234).

When this feature is mapped from the war domain, it functions to isolate the war period from surrounding history. The cause of the war was the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, not facts prior to the narrative such as Kuwait's reneging on its promise to finance Iraq's war with Iran, or the Kuwaiti overproduction of its oil quota to bankrupt Iraq by pushing down prices, or Kuwait's theft of oil from Iraq by lateral drilling in the

Rumailah oilfield, or its inhuman treatment of immigrant (often Iraqi) labour (all noted by Lakoff 1992). Similarly, although many antiwar politicians pointed to the West's arms sales to Iraq, this was often brushed aside as being irrelevant in the new situation, since it occurred before the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. Likewise, the formal ending of the narrative metaphor serves to exonerate the Allies from any blame in the environmental disaster and the subsequent famine and homelessness of Kurdish and Iraqi refugees, driven out of a bomb-damaged country by the humiliated Iraqi army. Subsidiary metaphors of 'surgical strikes' and 'getting the job over with' also implied that the surrender of Iraq would be the end of the problem.

A fairy-tale is a children's story in the sense that it is often uttered by an adult for child listeners. Most of our experience of the war was through the narratives of reporters and politicians. But the fairy-tale metaphor also implies that we are childish in our understanding relative to the expert and mature utterers. The fairy-tale metaphor itself claims the status of being unchallengeable. Though, in Fairclough's (1995b:94) term, this configuration is a metaphorical discursive strategy, it becomes used so frequently that it achieves a 'naturalization' of the configuration, and is thus not easily defeasible. This makes it appear a very clear, explanatory metaphor (in Gentner's (1982) terms) and the user appears rational. With those features that are less clear, but very rich in 'evocations' (the medieval setting, magic and human-animals, as below), then the utterer appears to be using an expressive metaphor to convey morally justified outrage.

That there would be a happy resolution was essential to the public acceptance of Allied troops being sent to the Gulf. But the happy resolution is defined within the metaphor as a victory for the Allies. Victory for the Allies is a very narrowly selected concept indeed in the metaphor. It means only a military victory, and this glorious outcome happens at the climax of the tale, in the Iraqi surrender. As already mentioned, the formal ending of the tale as a self-contained narrative entity closes off subsequent tarnishings of the victory such as the continued rule of Hussein, the destruction of Kuwait, the possibility of terrorist attacks, Arab hostility to the West, and so on.

The medieval or feudal setting is filled nicely by the perception of property and ownership essential as a prerequisite for talking about invasion and theft. That the Allies were fighting to restore a monarchy in Kuwait is also made acceptable by this aspect of the fairy-tale metaphor. Medieval chivalric notions of honour, glory, truth and liberty were also prevalent in the discourse of Allied politicians, the United States particularly using the conflict to right the perceived injustice done to it in Vietnam. When George Bush declared, 'We've kicked the Vietnam syndrome for good', he is mapping the defeat as a temporary illness or phase, as a habit that has been overcome (Lakoff 1992).

The allegorical component of fairy-tales is an important validating feature that indicates and legitimizes the reading of the Gulf War as a fairy-tale. It also allows simplistic black and white morals to be drawn from complex political events: there is an absolutely good side and a side who are absolutely evil. There are lessons to be drawn, such as the 'standing up to a bully' lesson. In this way the allegorical component of fairy-tales allows the domain of international politics to be seen as operating by the same general rules as, say, the playground or the home. This is particularly dangerous

when talking about nuclear weapons. The notion of allegory also strongly suggests that there is a meaning to the war. This underlies the saying that soldiers and air-crew killed 'did not die in vain'.

In fairy-tales, the rules of cause and effect are often seen to operate as a result of magic. A different order of expectations is set up. In the Gulf War story, the 'normal' conventions of international politics and diplomacy are set aside, and new rules are accepted as being in force. Diplomatic niceties, violations of national air- and sea-space, attacks on unarmed civilians, bombing and killing people in cities are all expected in the course of the war. The technological superiority of the Allies (often framed as 'technical wizardry') can be seen as a kind of magic.

Talking animals are common characters in fairy-tales, and animal metaphors are numerous in the Gulf War. From the desert rats to deceitful snakes, generals as wise old birds, special forces as 'snake-eaters', hawks and doves, Tariq Aziz as a cunning dog, John Major as the 'silver-haired fox of the desert', all of these fit into the fairy-tale metaphor, and all contribute to its naturalization as the 'common-sense' version of events.

#### **4 Necessary accommodations**

Though applied analysis within the same domain appears to allow CDA and CL treatments to be complementary, most criticism of both early CDA and CL has focused on the methodological problem of their theorising of truth and falsity in textual representation (see, for example, Downes 1993 and Gross 1997 on CL and Pateman 1981 and Richardson 1987 on CDA). The early work in CDA appeared to present media texts as 'distortions' of true realities, so that one particular syntactic form would have been a more 'truthful' representation than the one actually presented in a newspaper. For example, a passive construction might be compared with its active counterpart and the latter held up as a more accurate version of events. It is clear that such 'objectivism' undermines the approach. However, CL talks about even its own practices as the experientialist 'myth' (Lakoff 1987), and in his later CDA work, Fairclough addresses this directly:

In claiming that a discursive event works ideologically, one is not in the first instance claiming that it is false, or claiming a privileged position from which judgements of truth or falsity can be made. One is claiming that it contributes to the reproduction of relations of power. On this view of ideological analysis, attacks on ideological critique because of its supposed privileged truth claims ... miss their target (Fairclough 1995a:18).

It seems that both CL and CDA converge on this point, and if the disciplines can ever be synthesised, or at least work complementary to each other, then it is at the level of theoretical inconsistencies that accommodation needs to be found. It seems to me that there are many areas where this can be argued.

For example, though Fairclough's work in general is explicitly allied to a Marxian view of society and economics, there is no necessary reason why the principles of CDA

cannot be disentangled from such a position. This is largely made possible by Fairclough's (1995a:18) comment quoted immediately above, which allows the method to be used not in the service of 'truth' but to identify different ideological discursive practices.

Secondly, though CDA has traditionally been closely associated with Halliday's (1985) systemic-functional framework of analysis, again there is no necessary reason why this should be the case. Fairclough acknowledges this in linking the cognitive field with his social theory:

Texts are social spaces in which two fundamental social processes simultaneously occur: cognition and representation of the world, and social interaction. A multifunctional view of text is therefore essential (Fairclough 1995a:6).

He goes on to indicate that the CDA use of systemic-functional linguistics is no more than a provisional convenience:

Textual analysis presupposes a theory of language and a grammatical theory, and one problem for critical discourse analysis is to select from amongst those available. I have referred at various points to systemic linguistics, which has a number of strengths from the perspective of CDA ... While systemic linguistics is thus a congenial theory to work with, in the longer term critical discourse analysis should, as Kress has argued (1993), be informing the development of a new social theory of language which may include a new grammatical theory (Fairclough 1995a:10).

It is perfectly possible to imagine a socio-cognitive theory developing that would be amenable to both CL and CDA. Though this is, of course, way beyond the scope of this paper, some of its necessary features might be imagined. For example, the disposition towards establishing conceptual universals in CL needs to be matched with a sensitivity to context and the material conditions of production and reception that give a discourse its immediate meaning. Toolan (1996) is right to point out that setting these factors aside in order to discover general principles means that the general principles are not in fact and in the end principles of anything real. Adopting the guiding idea that language can only properly be analysed as discourse entails a necessary re-orientation of CL away from the classification of decontextualised sentences and towards a situated analysis. This is not to abandon frameworks already established, but requires a use of the CL notion of embodied discourse that is more reception-oriented than has been the case. After all, the cognitive mind lives in a material body, and recasting the mind-body issue as Lakoff and Johnson (1999) do involves a recognition of the socially-shared values and conflicts involved in communication.

In practical analysis, much CL could be improved with a greater sensitivity and attention to the stylistic manifestation of conceptual metaphor. When this is done within the sub-branch of cognitive poetics, it can produce complex and subtle insights into situated meaning (see, for example, M. Freeman's (1997) discussion of Emily

Dickinson's poetry, or Weber's (1995) analysis of a short story by Doris Lessing, for some elegant applications within CL that are sensitive to style). The danger is that a neglect of this dimension results in highly schematic readings that are conservative and simply not very interesting.

Gross (1997) points out that relatively new disciplines tend to minimise their debt to previous traditions and over-sell their own innovativeness. There is a tendency within CL in this direction which simply promotes exclusivity and uncritical acceptance of authority. For example, the notion of embodied experience being a determinant of conceptual and linguistic form is presented without acknowledgement that radical feminism was founded on the idea, and was described by, for example, Virginia Woolf over sixty years ago. There is a regrettable tendency to present the work only of one's co-workers, with the unfortunate consequence that the scholarship appears shoddy or ill-informed. And there is often a dismissive attitude to criticism rather than a serious engagement with counter-arguments.

In short, the main thing that CL can learn from CDA is to be more self-reflexive and socially-aware, and less totalizing. The main advantage that CL models offer to CDA is a wider scope of method and a means of theorising metaphorical representations, foreground and background, social and conventional categories, and attention. Examples of the benefits of such an accommodation can be seen, as above, when both approaches are brought to bear on the same domain, or in the interdisciplinary work being conducted within cognitive poetics. I suspect that this sub-branch of CL will prove to be more theoretically influential in future than it currently appears.

In sketching out these general conclusions, I am conscious that a synthesis between CL and CDA is barely possible only in a specific domain in which a political text uses metaphorical discursive strategies. Neither can the relationship between the two be said to be dialectic, since in general I feel that CL has more to take from CDA than the reverse. Perhaps this is why, in the end, I feel that the formulation of my title, 'Towards a Critical Cognitive Linguistics?' is better than 'Towards a Cognitive CDA', though I might now feel confident enough to remove the question mark.

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