

# Translation of Court News: From the Critical Discourse Analysis Approach



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# Norman Fairclough: Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) 批評 / 批判語篇分析

## Discourse

- ✚ It refers to the whole process of social interaction (texts, conversation, pictures, symbols, gesture, and so forth)
- ✚ It is a social practice, Discourse has a dialectical relationship with social identities, social relationships and systems of knowledge and belief.



# Critical

- ✚ Use of rational thinking to question arguments or prevailing ideas.

(Fairclough, Mulderring and Wodak 2009 : 358)

- ✚ Critical social research aims to contribute to address social 'wrongs' of the day (in a broad sense – injustice, inequality, lack of freedom, etc.) by analysing their sources and causes, resistance in them and possibilities of overcoming them.

(Fairclough 2009 : 163)



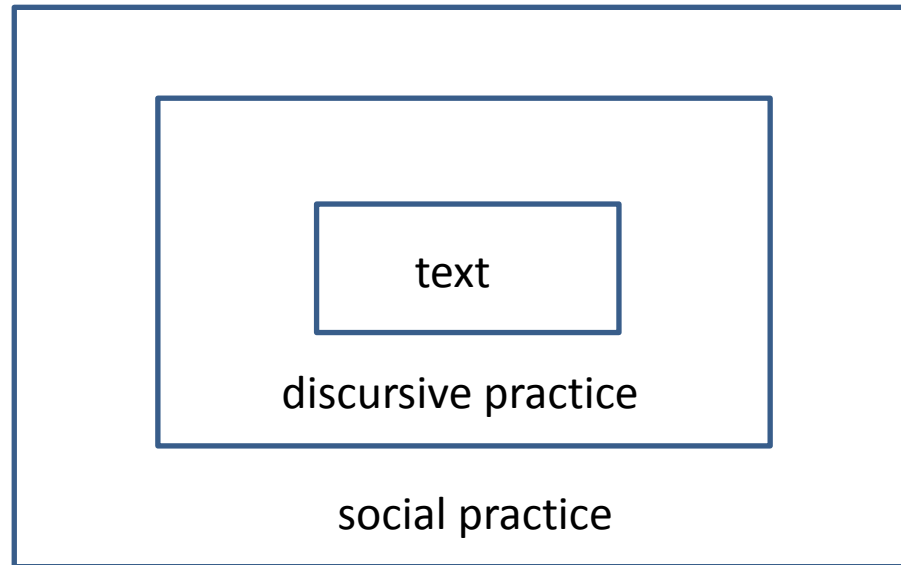
# Definition of CDA

It is a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context.

(van Dijk 2003 : 352)



# Fairclough's dialectical-relational framework for CDA sees discourse as having three dimensions:



"Relations between elements are dialectical in the sense of being different but not discrete."  
(Fairclough 2009:163)



# Text 文本

- ✚ It is concerned with formal properties of a text.
- ✚ It refers to organisation, clause combination, clause grammar, and vocabulary.

(Fairclough 1995, cited from Al-Hejin 2012 : 313;  
Fairclough 2001 : 20-21)



# Discursive practice 語篇實踐

- ✚ It is concerned with the relationship between text and interaction.

(Fairclough 2001 : 21)

- ✚ 1. Interpretation of text: phonology, grammar, vocabulary, semantics and pragmatics, etc.

2. Interpretation of context

a) situational context

- activity, topic, purpose
- participants
- relationships of power/social distance
- role of language

b) Intertextual context

- refer to previous discourses (what can be taken/alluded to / disagreed with)

(Fairclough 2001 : 118-129)



- ✚ It refers to how a text is produced, distributed, interpreted and appropriated. 生産、分配、消費  
(Fairclough 1995, cited from Al-Hejin 2012 : 313)





# Social practice 社會實踐

- ✚ It is concerned with the relationship between interaction and social context – with the social determination of the processes of production and interpretation, and their social effects.

(Fairclough 2001 : 22)

- ✚ Social structures 社會結構 (relations of power at situational, institutional and societal levels).



Social processes (social struggle 社會鬥爭)

(Fairclough 2001 : 135)



- ✚ Discursive practices may have ideological effects, i.e., they can help produce and reproduce unequal power relations between (for instance) social classes, women and men, and ethnic groups, through the ways in which they represent things and position people.

(Fairclough, Mulderrig and Wodak 2011 : 358)

- ✚ Social effects: whether one should sustain existing power relations or transform them?  
(Fairclough 2001 : 138)



# Erwiana 印傭被虐打案件（《香港商報》 2014年1月23 日）

“Erwiana 受僱期間曾被羅用手搽、抓及掌摑，又將她的頭推向牆，令她的鼻、牙齒損裂。”

## Power relation

羅 x x : powerful

Erwiana: powerless



“律政司昨日起訴她有意圖而傷人、普通襲擊、襲擊致造成身體傷害及4項刑事恐嚇共七宗罪。”

## Power relation

律政司 : powerful

羅 x x : powerless

## Translation approach

Adopt faithful translation to maintain impartiality and objectivity.



White (2006:37) asserts that news reporting is “a value laden, ideologically determined discourse” which potentially positions the media audience.

### Evaluative resources

Graduation: Values of attitudinal resources are construed greater or lesser degrees of positivity or negativity. (Martin and White 2005:136)

(For example: Scale down negative meanings or scale up positive meanings)

(cited from Pan 2015 : 217-218)



入境處於本周一在機場離境大堂截獲「魔鬼僱主」

Is it appropriate to use a softer word?

monstrous employer

brutal/brutish

fiendish

beastly

demonic

barbaric



羅身形偏瘦，沒有化妝，狀甚憔悴。

Law appeared thin without make-up. She looked **sallow/pallid**.

### *Comments*

Sallow and pallid describe the colour of one's complexion. The colour of complexion is not in the original text, but these two words could serve as good proxies for tiredness or weakness. Someone devoids of make-up would certainly exhibit such "colours".



Law appeared thin without make-up. She looked **worn out/emaciated/haggard/weary/gaunt**.

### *Comments*

All the highlighted words mean a person looks tired and weak because of illness, worry or lack of food.





Law appeared **slim/thin/skinny** without make-up.  
She looked **worn down/defeated/listless/lifeless**  
**/drained.**

### *Comments*

1. **Slim—thin—skinny** are different  
**Slim**苗條 carries good connotation.  
**Thin**瘦削 is neutral.  
**Skinny**骨瘦如柴 carries bad connotation.



## 2. **Worn down/defeated/listless/lifeless/drained.**

Law was being pushed down into the ground by all that had happened.

**Pushed down into the ground** can mean “one cannot get up” either because one doesn’t have the energy or **something more powerful is keeping you down.**



Erwiana... 曾被羅威嚇要「聽她話」，否則「殺死你和你的家人」。

Sentence structure will affect the meaning and the force

- a. Erwiana was threatened by Law to obey her, otherwise she and her family would be killed.
- b. Law threatened to kill her and her family if she failed to obey her.

*Comments*

1. The two sentences are different in focus. Sentence a has its focus on “threatened to obey her”, while sentence b on “threatened to kill her and her family”.
2. Sentence b uses active voice in which the doer施事者 (i.e. Law) is immediately followed by the verb (i.e. threatened), and the effect is stronger. The use of passive voice in sentence a makes the sentence look impersonal and weak.



印傭 Erwiana 疑被僱主虐待至遍體鱗傷一案，引起國際社會廣泛關注。

The case in which Indonesian maid, Erwiana, had allegedly been tortured and seriously **wounded** by her employer sparked international concern.

### *Comments*

I would suggest **injured** rather than **wounded**. **Wounded** implies puncture wounds like from a knife or bullet. I think Erwiana was injured in other ways (like being attacked by mop stick or clothes hanger).



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