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Reading Womanpower

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Introduction

Intuitively we know that language is tied to the world. Although it can be studied as an internally coherent and structured system where the different bits have meaning in relation to other bits, such study does not explain how language can be used to make meaning in the world of utterance and communication; how speakers by simply changing their tone can make words mean exactly the opposite of what dictionaries and grammar books say they are supposed to mean; how listeners can use their knowledge of the speaker and the context to understand what was not said but what was nevertheless meant.

All critical discourse analysis (CDA) has to find a way of explaining the relationship between language, ideology and power. In simple terms this means that one needs a critical socio-cultural theory of language which posits a systematic relationship between the social environment, the functional organisation of language and the reproduction (or contestation) of relations of power. That language constructs the social and that the social affects the construction of language is easy to explain (see for example Fairclough, 1989: 23). What is difficult to explain is how we get from one to the other: how we use our knowledge of language to read social messages and how we use our social knowledge to understand how messages have been constructed in language. Having done that we have to work out how the relationship between language and society is implicated in power, how language when it is used can serve the interests of some at the expense of others.

Think for example of how much social and linguistic knowledge is necessary for a listener to interpret a remark as racist or sexist or both.*(Cross reference to Luke's account of reading the paper in his car and the man in the Ute; cross reference to Janks' analysis of the Topsport Ad)* What does the listener have to know about the meaning and choice of words, the patterns of intonation used, the sequencing of information? What does the listener have to know about the speaker? What does the listener have to know about the structures of domination and subordination in the society? What does the listener have to know about the social conventions and the context? What past experience and personal history does a listener have to bring to such a remark? How do listeners know how to combine their linguistic, social and personal knowledges? Different theorists give different answers to these questions.

Theorists account for the relationship between language and the social

The work of the socio-linguists established the general premiss, fundamental to CDA, that language is a socially constituted practice. Socio-linguistics has described the systematic variation of language in relation to social variables. From a critical perspective, however, much of socio-linguistics tends to be normative and tends not to engage with the ideologically determined nature of social conventions and practices, focussing rather on what is linguistically 'appropriate' in particular social encounters. According to Fairclough

> Sociolinguistics is strong on 'what?' questions (what are the facts of variation), but weak on 'why?' and 'how?' questions (why are the facts as they are?; how - in terms of the development of social relationships of power - was the existing social order brought into being?) (1989:8).

Despite this critique, there can be no doubt that socio-linguistic work has highlighted linguistic stratification and has done much to enable us to recognise linguistic prejudice for what it is. The pioneering work of Labov is important in this regard (1972).

Pragmatics is another area of linguistics that deals with meaning in social interaction. Pragmatics has enabled the understanding that language is a form of action, that utterances perform speech acts such as for example threats, promises, requests. In addition utterances carry assertions and implications that addressees need to infer because they are not stated explicitly. Mey's work (1993) on pragmatics has contributed to our understanding of how constraints and privileges in language use are unevenly distributed across society and paves the way for the development of a critical pragmatics.

In addition to whole branches of linguistics whose project has been trying to understand the relationship between language and meaning in social context, particular theorists have explained this relationship in different ways. I use Halliday, Volsinov and Fairclough to illustrate some of the different explanations.

In *An Introduction to Functional Grammar* (1985), Halliday goes a long way towards mapping his three functions of language - the ideational, the interpersonal and the textual functions - onto three different aspects of the context of situation - field, tenor and mode respectively. Halliday's is the only grammar that attempts systematically to relate linguistic form to meaning in context. He then uses this to theorise language as 'meaning potential' which is realised only in relation to its contexts of use. Halliday, however, does not have a theory of power.

For Volosinov (thought by some to be Bakhtin) all utterance is essentially dialogic, presupposing both an addresser and an addressee. The form that an utterance (spoken or written) takes is contingent on an aggregate of many social factors such as the nature of the social occasion, the participants and their social relations so that

> the meaning of a word is determined entirely by its context. In fact there are as many meanings of a word as there are contexts of utterance (Volosinov, 1973: 79).

In this way he fuses language and context. If all there is, is language as utterance, then there is no need to move from the form of the language to its meaning in context. As a Marxist, Volosinov stresses that words are both a site and a stake in domination and struggle and that

> contexts do not stand side by side in a row as if unaware of one another, but are in a state of constant tension, or incessant interaction and conflict (Volosinov, 1973:80).

Any analysis of discourse is therefore necessarily an analysis of power.

Fairclough (1995:98) articulates a complex model for CDA (see Figure 1) that consists of three interdependent dimensions of discourse, represented in his model as boxes nested one within the other. Each of these dimensions requires its own form of analysis: description (text analysis), interpretation (processing analysis) and explanation (social analysis).

Figure 1: Fairclough's model for CDA

What Fairclough's theory has to do is explain the connections between his boxes - or how to get from the textual to the social. He does this by arguing first that

> the formal properties of a text can ... be regarded as on the one hand *traces* of the productive process and, on the other hand as *cues* in the process of interpretation (1989: 24).

This establishes a link between the text box and the process box. Second, he argues that production and reception are socially governed literacy practices which require social analysis to explain why texts are the way they are and why they are read in the ways that they are read. This establishes links between the social conditions and the text as both process (middle box) and product (inner box). For Fairclough these discursive conditions, which determine the construction and circulation of texts, reproduce the social relations of power. Movement between Fairclough's different dimensions of discourse and the interconnections between the different modes of analysis can never presume a neat correlation between textual realisations and social explanations which is why it is necessary to look for patterns across texts related so as to form an 'order of discourse', or for discontinuities which produce hybridity.

Enter Thompson

Because it is so difficult to articulate how language does the social work that it does, Thompson's work is very important. Thompson is not a linguist but a social theorist so his starting point is not language, grammar, utterance or discourse, but social theory. Thompson's interest in language stems from his critical theory of ideology. In Thompson's own words,

> The analysis of ideology, according to the conception which I will propose, is primarily concerned with the ways in which symbolic forms intersect with relations of power. It is concerned with the ways in which meaning is mobilized in the social world and serves thereby to bolster up individuals or groups who occupy positions of power. (Thompson, 1990:56).

Thompson's calls his conception of ideology a 'critical conception of ideology' because he wants to reserve ideology for those meanings 'which serve to establish and sustain relations of domination' (1990: 56).

Thompson (1990) gives a detailed account of the history of and struggle over the concept, 'ideology', as does Eagleton (1991). According to Eagleton a number of theorists view ideology as

> the medium in which men and women fight out their social and political battles at the level of signs, meanings and representations (1991: 11).

For Eagleton, ideology is concerned less with signification, than with 'conflicts within the field of signification' (11). In terms of this view, it is possible to see the positions of dominant **and** oppositional groups as ideological. For Thompson this does not constitute a critical conception of ideology.

The strength of Thompson's theory of ideology is that it provides CDA with powerful machinery for understanding the relationship between language, power and domination. Its

weakness is that it does not provide a machinery for analysing the ways in which subordinated groups harness language to contest dominant practices. If Foucault is right and discourse is 'the power which is to be seized' (1970: 110) and if it is possible to 'sap power' from dominant discourse, then it is also important for CDA to recognise and categorise oppositional discursive strategies.

Overview of the chapter

In the rest of this chapter I will give an account of Thompson's modes of operation of ideology including their linguistic realisations; a translation of this work into tabular form to provide a model for CDA; and an analysis of a South African advertisement using this model. Following this I will give a brief account of how Thompson's work was generative in the development of the *Critical Language Awareness Series* in order to suggest other uses for the model. Finally I will return to the need for categorising counter-hegemonic discursive strategies. At the outset though it is important to stress that both Thompson and Eagleton insist that it is not possible to read ideology off the symbolic forms themselves. It is not possible to examine the ideological work that symbolic forms are doing except in terms of their use in specific contexts. The analysis of the advertisement aims to illustrate this point clearly.

Thompson's modes of operation of ideology

In both *Studies in the Theory of Ideology* (1984) and *Ideology and Modern Culture* (1990), Thompson distinguishes five general modes through which ideology can operate: legitimation, dissimulation, unification, fragmentation, reification. In addition he identifies different kinds of symbolic construction which are typically associated with each of these modes. In fact what he is doing is identifying the linguistic and non-linguistic symbols which are regularly used to obtain particular ideological effects. He is careful to limit his claims: these symbols are not only or always used for these purposes, nor are these modes of ideology only realised in these ways, nevertheless he gives us a useful way of thinking the relation between symbolic forms, including those that are linguistic, and social effect.

Legitimation is the process by which relations of domination may be established and maintained 'by being presented as legitimate, that is just and worthy of support' (1990:61). According to Thompson this is usually achieved by three discursive strategies - rationalisation, universalisation and narrativisation. In rationalisation an argument is mounted to justify something. Rationalisation usually depends on a chain of reasoning. In universalisation a set of institutional arrangements which privilege certain groups only are presented as serving the interests of all. In narrativisation stories are used to naturalise socially interested constructions of the world. Stories are presented as embodying universal timeless truths and are often used as a reference point for whole communities. Thompson includes histories, films, novels and jokes as examples of the power of narrative to construct realities which represent the apparent order of things.

Dissimulation is the process by which relations of domination are concealed or obscured. Euphemism is an obvious means of disguising unpleasant actions, events or social relations and of redescribing them positively. Displacement and trope are two other means of dissimulating. Displacement is where a term usually used to refer to one thing is used to refer

to another in order to transfer either positive or negative values from the one to the other. The Union Buildings in Pretoria, the seat of the apartheid administration for forty seven years was also the site of Mandela's inauguration ceremony. At the time the Pretoria City Council was running an advertising campaign to construct a new and positive image for the city. The word 'union' originally symbolising the State of Union achieved after the Anglo-Boer wars was displaced in the advertisements so that 'union' came to stand for the union of all the people of South Africa in the new democracy. For Thompson, trope or the use of figurative language, which enables parts to stand for wholes and wholes to stand for parts as well as the non-literal and metaphorical use of language, is the third powerful means of obfuscation.

Unification and fragmentation are related processes in that they work in opposite directions - the one seeks to unite and join people for ideological purposes and the other seeks to split people off from one another. Unification establishes a collective identity which unites individuals despite their differences. Fragmentation is a process of splitting people off from one another despite their similarities in order to divide and rule. Unity is the means of establishing an 'us'; fragmentation is tied to this process of unification, as a collective identity is partly forged by the construction of an Other or Others, a 'them' who are different from 'us'. The relation between unification and fragmentation is captured well in the irony inherent in the motto on the South African coat of arms being 'Unity is Strength', while apartheid which epitomises difference, division and fragmentation, was its reigning political ideology. *(Cross reference Janks in this volume).*

Thompson offers standardisation and symbolisation of unity as ways in which unification may be effected. Language standardisation is a good example of a social process used to construct a national language and a collective identity. The variety of the language which is codified as the standard is invariably the variety approved of or spoken by the dominant members of the society. Not all members of society have equal access to this variety so this unificatory move simultaneously dissimulates inequality. Symbols of unity can also be constructed to forge a collective identity. Non-linguistic examples include flags, uniforms, corporate logos, emblems. Linguistic examples include school songs, national anthems, slogans.

Reification is the last of Thompson's modes of operation of ideology. To reify is to turn a process into a thing or an event. Processes are encoded using verbs which have actors and which take place in time and space. Reified things just are - their socio-historical origins are concealed.

> Reification: relations of domination and subordination may be established and sustained by representing a transitory, historical state of affairs as if it were permanent, natural, outside of time (Thompson, 1990: 65).

Reification is realised in symbolic forms by naturalisation, externalisation, passivisation and nominalisation. Nominalisation is the linguistic process of turning a verb into a nominal (i.e. a noun). Here an action is turned into a thing or a state. Passivisation, also a linguistic process, is used to convert active voice to passive voice. Both these processes delete actors and agency and change what is thematised in the syntax. Naturalisation is the means by which socially constructed realities are presented as natural and inevitable. This is what Barthes calls 'myth' - the process of turning history into nature (1973: 143). Externalisation

is a process whereby social rituals, customs, traditions and institutions become fixed and immutable, external to their socio-historical conditions of their production.

Thompson's model for CDA

This summary of Thompson's ideas on the modes of operation of ideology (which can be found in more detail in Thompson 1990: pages 60 to 67) becomes more useful when it is tabulated as a model for CDA (See Figure 2).

Figure 2: CDA and Thompson's modes of operation of ideology

To illustrate this usefulness, I will now use this model to analyse an advertisement which appeared in *the press* in South Africa in 1992. (See Figure 3), which I will refer to as *Womanpower*. In terms of South Africa's history, 1992 was two years after the release of Nelson Mandela and the start of the negotiation process and two years before the first democratic elections in 1994 when a Government of National Unity, led by the African National Congress was voted into power.

***Figure 3: Womanpower* Advertisement**

Analysis of the Womanpower advertisement using Thompson's model for CDA

Any deconstructive analysis entails breaking a construction into bits in order to see how the bits were put together. It is necessarily atomising. Having looked at the bits, one can begin to consider how they relate to and affect one another, that is one can begin to put the bits back together again. In using Thompson's model one can, for example, find instances of rationalisation, ask how and what the use of rationalisation legitimates and then using these insights ask the power question - whose interests are served by these legitimations? Finally one can put all the modes of operation of ideology together to see how the text serves particular interests. Because in the end the bits have to be reassembled, it does not matter where one begins with the analysis. I will simply work through the model systematically. In doing so I will attempt to show that these modes interact and reinforce one another. In some instances one mode may simultaneously operate as another mode, so for example a rationalisation may also be a dissimulation

An analysis of legitimation in Womanpower

1 The use of rationalisation in *Womanpower*

The advertisement uses chains of reasoning which rely on the establishment of cause and effect to establish the need for action. It opens with the argument that the excessive and ever increasing birth rate in South Africa will cause people to die of 'poverty, hunger and disease' (lines 7 - 8). An additional reason is given for this outcome - the lack of sufficient land and resources to support this 'insupportable number of people'. This chain of reasoning legitimates arguments in favour of population control and ignores and dissimulates other causes for poverty hunger and disease such as poor health facilities, unfair distribution of land and wealth and unequal access to sanitation, clean water and housing.

Other spurious example of cause and effect are the claims that education produces 'productive, contented adults' (l24-25) and that 'prosperity', 'self-esteem', economic opportunities, and an upgraded 'quality of family life' are necessary consequences of literacy (lines 27-30). The overall argument is that educated literate women understand that small families are more sensible and they therefore practise birth control, again legitimating the need for population control.

2 The use of universalisation in *Womanpower*

The idea that 'a small family unit' (line 18) is better is part of a western middle class value system, yet here it is constructed as being in the interests of all. This takes no cognisance of African values where many children are valued in a kinship system of extended not nuclear families and where children provide wealth and security for one's old age. It also ignores polygamy a widespread form of traditional marriage. This generalising of the values of the dominant group in South Africa, the white middle class, legitimates the encouragement of birth control in African families.

3 The use of narrativisation in *Womanpower*

While the text does not make specific use of stories or traditions there are a number of biblical echoes in the text. This is achieved by the use of biblical cadences as in

-'to tackle the problem a generation from now will be to tackle the problem a generation too late' (lines 10 - 13),

-'a better chance in life, a better chance at life' (lines 19 - 20),

– 'Women using their power they have to make a better tomorrow for their children and their children's children' (lines 37 - 40).

This sounding like the bible is used to give the arguments authority and to legitimate them.

4 The use of legitimation in *Womanpower*

In the text overall, legitimation works to lay the blame for the South Africa's out-of-control growth in the population on illiterate women. It is these unproductive, discontented adults who are responsible for the crisis. Furthermore it legitimates the intervention of other women who have a responsibility to educate these women in order to protect their own and these other women's children. Notice how it also legitimates the notion that women alone are responsible for spawning children. Men are entirely absent from the text and appear to have no control over family size.

An analysis of the ideological mode of dissimulation in Womanpower

1 The use of displacement in *Womanpower*

There are two different kinds of displacement in this advertisement. The one is where there is slippage between one term and another so that the one term comes to stand for the other. For

example the text associates literacy with self-esteem so that the one comes to be the other. Literacy is conceived as singular and if people do not have this dominant literacy then they are constructed as being unable to have any self-esteem.

The other kind of displacement is where words are lifted from one discourse and placed in another discourse to do a different kind of work. The word ‘womanpower’ is taken from feminist discourse. All the positive associations of women working together to resist the oppression of patriarchy is harnessed while the text in fact divides women into us (the writer and the reader) and those others who need to be enlightened by us. This displacement is effective in attracting feminist readers to read the text in the first place.

2 The use of euphemism in *Womanpower*

Euphemism is widespread in the text. The Programme of Population Development is a euphemism for a programme of population control. In the 19*0s Botha encouraged whites to have more children to increase the white population - the Botha babies. At the same time black families were encouraged to practice birth control. The black population viewed all attempts at population control with deep and justified distrust, a distrust which unfortunately has flowed over into Aids education programmes in the 1990s. Condoms are often viewed as part of the white man’s plot. The word ‘development’ taken from the discourse of developed and developing countries can also mean growth. It is ironic that in this context it in fact means population reduction and curtailment.

Other euphemisms include ‘the problem’ for too many poor black people (line 10); ‘health’ for being not pregnant (line 34) and ‘health facilities’ instead of family planning clinics (line 35).

3 The use of trope in *Womanpower*

This text makes very little use of figurative language apart from euphemism and trope is thus not a particularly useful category in analysing this text. I am happy to leave this category empty as it is important to acknowledge that different parts of the model will be more or less useful for different texts. It is also important though to recognise that the absences of figurative language suggests that the text is literal and straight forward, thus dissimulating its manipulativeness.

4 The use of dissimulation in *Womanpower*

One of my main arguments in relation to this text is that it works hard to hide any references to who these people are who are having too many babies. On the face of it these appear to be illiterate, uneducated women. This dissimulates issues of class and race. In South Africa black women have had less access to education than white women, it is black women who are poor and who are excluded from the labour force. The text suggests that they excluded themselves by failing to acquire skills (lines 28 - 33) and completely hides policies of job reservation for whites. One has to use knowledge of the social context to mount the argument that it is black women that the text aims to encourage to practise birth control as well as

further evidence from the text which I will use in discussing unification and fragmentation. Suffice it to say here that the text deliberately excludes any classification of the women by race; my argument is that although apartheid discourse is no longer overt it fundamentally structures the text. It has simply gone underground and is effectively dissimulated.

Issues of gender domination are also hidden. Procreation is constructed as an entirely female responsibility. This ignores power relations in the domain of sexual practices and reproduction and assumes problematically that women have sole control over their bodies and rights to contraception.

An analysis of the ideological mode of unification in Womanpower

1 The use of standardisation in *Womanpower*

In this advertisement the western nuclear family unit is unproblematically constructed as the norm to which all families should conform. Diversity in value or belief is not recognised or valued. In fact it represented as mitigating against the sustainability of South Africa as a viable nation.

2 The symbolisation of unity in *Womanpower*

The collective identity that the text pretends to construct is that of gender solidarity in the interests of the country: 'Women helping women help South Africa' (line 54). This slogan in ambiguous as to whether the 'helping' is reciprocal, that is woman helping one another or unidirectional. Unity would imply that woman support and learn from one another and work together to help South Africa. The binary in 'womanpower' versus 'manpower' suggests all women together against patriarchy. Nevertheless this unity is a pretend unity because while the text harnesses gender identification and unity from feminist politics it immediately cleaves women into two different groups - an us and a them. This is the work of fragmentation.

An analysis of the ideological mode of fragmentation in Womanpower

1 The use of differentiation in *Womanpower*

In lines 15 to 35 an opposition is established between the women who help and women who have to be helped. The women who help are us - the reader and the writer; those who are helped are 'them' and other. The word 'other' is used five times in these lines. And 'they', 'their' and 'them' seven times. What does the text tell us about who 'we' and 'they' are? The binary opposition constructed in the advertisement is represented in the following table.

Figure 4: Tabular summary of binary oppositions in *Womanpower*

Us	**Them**
Women who can help.	Women who need help
Women who value a small family unit.	Women who have/ are likely to have large family units. (Whether or not they value large families is silenced in the text).
Women whose children are educated.	Women whose children are not educated.
Women whose children grow into productive adults.	Women whose children do not grow into productive adults.
Women whose children grow into contented adults.	Women whose children do not grow into contented adults.
Women who can read and write.	Women who cannot read and write.
Skilled women.	Unskilled women.
Prosperous women.	Unprosperous women.

Women with self-esteem.	Women without self-esteem.
Women who have a satisfactory quality of family life.	Women who need to upgrade the quality of their family life.
Women who are aware of the need for health and who know about the health facilities available to them.	Women who need to be made aware of the need for health and who know about the health facilities available to them.
Women who have the power to transform.	Women who need to be transformed.

The construction of this binary opposition maintains and reproduces the power of the women who belong to the dominant group and systematically constructs socially disempowerd women as in deficit and as a danger to South Africa and to all its children, including the children of the dominant group.

2 The expurgation of the Other in *Womanpower*

Having constructed a dangerous and threatening Other, the advertisement establishes the need for their expurgation. This can be achieved by educating these ignorant other women who will then stop having so many babies. The process of Othering often leads to the dehumanisation of people who are different and this in turn can lead to genocide, the literal killing off of the Other. This is epitomised in Nazi Germany's extermination of Jews, gypsies and homosexuals. I think it is not too far- fetched to suggest that control of human reproduction is another form of expurgation (which may account for why the Nazis experimented with sterilization) in so far as it attempts to control who should or should not be born.

3 The use of unification and fragmentation in *Womanpower*

The ideological effects of unification and fragmentation in this text is to construct a pseudo unity of all women so that privileged women can be used by the Population Development Programme as the disseminators of the programme's propaganda. Unity is necessary in order to find educators who will be able to influence illiterate women; educators who will be heard

where the State is already under suspicion. Fragmentation is inevitable because the influence is top down and enables the educated women to maintain their position of dominance. In thinking about the kinds of social contexts in which these very different women are likely to come into contact with one another in a racially segregated society, it strikes me that this may well be a move that invites women to influence their black domestic workers to use contraception. If this is correct, then there is no more evidence for this in the text than there is for the race or class identities of the women who help or who need help. I shall return to this later.

An analysis of the ideological mode of reification in Womanpower

1 The use of naturalisation in *Womanpower*

Much is naturalised in this text: that overpopulation is a problem; that poverty, hunger and disease are caused by overpopulation; that women have control over reproduction; that a small family unit is normal; that education leads to happiness and fulfilment; that literacy upgrades people's lives and that contraception will secure our children's tomorrows.

The use of the definite article with 'problem' (line 10) works to establish the existence of this problem as shared information. This is constructed as something that the reader can be expected to know about - as something that exists, in other words the definite article helps to reify the problem.

2 The use of externalisation in *Womanpower*

Many social conditions in South Africa are a direct consequence of apartheid policies. To the extent that this text constructs them as problems for the country, they are simultaneously constructed as external to these policies. So the birth rate is blamed for a range of social ills. The victims of these policies are blamed for their own misfortunes and it is their family traditions and customs that produce the current state of affairs not apartheid.

3 The use of nominalisation and passivisation in *Womanpower*

When woman exert their influence over other women this is nominalised as 'womanpower'. Overall however the text is quite explicit about the processes that are needed and who the agents and goals of these processes are. Privileged women (agents) must 'influence' other women (goals). They must 'make them realise', 'make them aware', 'teach' them, 'help' them, and give them skills.

The text also includes an excellent example of passivisation. If women acquire literacy skills this will enable them 'to open economic doors previously closed to them' (lines 31 - 32). Who closed the doors? The passive construction has allowed the agent to be deleted. The reasoning suggests that the women closed the doors on themselves by failing to become literate - they denied themselves opportunities. This completely ignores the policies that reserved certain jobs for white people and that designed Bantu education to restrict black people to certain forms of labour.

> There is no place for [the Bantu] in the European community above the level of

certain forms of labour. Within his (sic) own community, however all doors are open. For that reason it is no avail for him to receive a training which has as its aim absorption in the European community, where he cannot be absorbed (Verwoerd, Minister of Native Affairs, speech delivered to the Senate 1954, in Rose and Tunmer, 1975).

4 The use of reification in *Womanpower*

Reification is used to naturalise the current state of affairs and to blame the victims of apartheid for them. The policies of apartheid, including earlier policies of population control, are so effaced from the text that our history of institutionalised racism is denied. It is an irony of this text that it is the racial demographics of South Africa and the impossibility of controlling the size of the African population that made apartheid an unworkable policy from the outset, quite apart from its immorality.

Figure 5: Thompson's model with examples from *Womanpower*

Whose interests are served?

If we put the different aspects of Thompson's model together are we able to answer this question? It seems to me that what the model enables the analyst to see is not enough, as the workings of power are not on the surface. The really important question relating to which women in South Africa belong to 'us' and which to 'them' is unclear. One could for instance argue that 'us' includes all literate women, black and white and that identity is based more on a class divide than a racial divide. There is no conclusive evidence in the text. In fact so far I have simply used the model for *text* analysis not for *discourse* analysis. Herein lies the key. All that text analysis can do is provide us with hypotheses and questions which can only be confirmed or answered by considering the text in context, both its social context and its discursive context. I have already given an example of how knowledge of the social context suggests that maybe the women concerned could be domestic workers and their employees as this is the most likely point of contact between such differently located women. It is important now to turn to the discursive context. One way of doing this is to research the material produced by the Population Development Programme over time and to look for patterns and discontinuities. This is a research project in its own right. For the purposes of this paper it is sufficient to consider one other advertisement published by the Population Development Programme in 1989, just two years prior to the publication of the *Womanpower* advertisement.

Figure 6: 1989 advertisement

This advertisement makes it quite clear that 'they' are domestic workers or employees. While on the surface the text includes a range of employees, the picture at the top of the advertisement is a picture of typical living quarters for domestic workers and Thursday afternoon, the time when churches run literacy classes, is traditionally the domestic worker's day off. Although references to race are also suppressed in this advertisement they are more easily recovered. There are no white domestic workers in South Africa. This makes the identity of 'them' very clear. 'Us' now refers to employers, not all of whom are white..

Does CDA enable us to answer the question of interests? Both advertisements argue that a higher rate of literacy and a lower birth would benefit everyone in South Africa. Is this a case of universalisation where the arrangements that serve the interests of some are represented as serving the interests of all? There are cogent arguments in the literature to suggest that the belief that literacy necessarily improves people's quality of life and their life's chances is a myth that ignores other socio-economic forces which reproduce social stratification (Graff, 1978; Stuckey, 1991). There are no equivalent arguments against the dangers of overpopulation. The growth of the world's population is a serious threat to the sustainability of the planet as a whole and this is an important issue which has to be tackled both nationally and internationally. While population management is an issue that any South African government has to confront, it is a particularly sensitive issue given the racial overtones of such policies under apartheid. Neither advertisement escapes the racial overtones of Population Development Programmes and neither advertisement takes seriously the value that some cultures place on having many children. Africans are not alone in cherishing large families. Religious catholics and orthodox Jews also reject contraception yet they are not singled out for birth control in the Population Development Programme as illiterate people are. Dissimulation is achieved as much by silences and absences in texts as by textual backgrounding. Locating these absences requires a knowledge of or research into context - considerations which go beyond the text and the model that I have illustrated here. If one puts textual analysis together with understanding gleaned from the social and discursive context it becomes clear that this text does not work in the interests of poorly educated, disadvantaged black South Africans.

Other uses of the Thompson model

Before concluding with comments on the limitations of Thompson's model it is useful to consider other uses of Thompson's model. In my own work Thompson's attention to the way in which ideology operates has been extremely generative. In developing the *Critical Language Awareness Series* it was possible to translate his ideas into classroom materials. In *Language Identity and Power*, I made direct use of the modes of unification ('common identity') and fragmentation ('different identities').

Figure 7: Page 5 Language Identity and Power

In earlier research (Janks, 1988), I collected a wide range of discourse samples from the South African press and found that they fitted the categorisations articulated by Thompson (1984), although our starting points were different. The 1984 work influenced the writing of *Language and Position*. Figure 7 gives examples of Thompson's modes of operation of ideology that can be found in the *Critical Language Awareness Series* as an illustration of how teachers might use the model to create their own classroom materials.

Figure 8: The *Critical Language Awareness Series* and the modes of operation of ideology

The limitations and strengths of the Thompson model

In working with Thompson's modes, in order to develop the table in Figure 7, it became clear

that Thompson's model does not provide categories for oppositional discursive strategies. This is in keeping with his critical theory of ideology which does not regard the discourse of disempowerd groups as ideological. However, I want to argue that these strategies are necessary for CLA and CDA. If students are to learn how to resist dominant discourse then it is important for CLA to offer learners oppositional discursive practices. Examples of these from the *Critical Language Awareness Series* include renaming, the valuing of multi-lingualism, oppositional reading, satirisation, hypothetical play with the reversal of discursive norms, disidentification, searching for and exploiting contradictions and breaks within discourse, de-naturalisation and de-construction, to name just a few.

But no single model can be expected to do all things and Thompson's model provides ways of thinking the relationship between language and the ideological work that it does, that is unparalleled.

(6256 words)

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