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Critical Discourse Analysis as a Research Tool

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Critical discourse analysis (CDA) stems from a critical theory of language which sees the use of language as a form of social practice. All social practices are tied to specific historical contexts and are the means by which existing social relations are reproduced or contested and different interests are served. It is the questions pertaining to interests that relate discourse to relations of power. How is the text positioned or positioning? Whose interests are served by this positioning? Whose interests are negated? What are the consequences of this positioning? Where analysis seeks to understand how discourse is implicated in relations of power it is called critical discourse analysis.

Fairclough's (1989, 1995) model for CDA consists of three interrelated processes of analysis which are tied to three interrelated dimensions of discourse. These three dimensions are:

1. the object of analysis (including verbal, visual or verbal and visual texts);
2. the processes by which the object is produced and received(writing/speaking/designing and reading/listening/viewing) by human subjects;
3. the socio-historical conditions that govern these processes.

According to Fairclough each of these dimensions requires a different kind of analysis:

1. text analysis (description);
2. processing analysis (interpretation);
3. social analysis (explanation).

What is useful about this approach is that it enables the analyst to focus on the signifiers that make up the text, the specific linguistic selections, their juxtapositioning, their sequencing, their layout. However, it also requires that the historical determination of these selections is recognised in order to understand that these choices are tied to the conditions of possibility. This is another way of saying that texts are instantiations of socially regulated discourses and that the processes of production and reception are socially constrained. Why Fairclough's approach to CDA is so useful is that it provides multiple points of analytic entry. It does not matter which kind of analysis one begins with, as long as they are all included and are shown to be mutually explanatory. It is in the interconnections that the analyst finds interesting patterns and disjunctions that need to be described, interpreted and explained.

In this article I demonstrate how to use this three-part analytic model for working with

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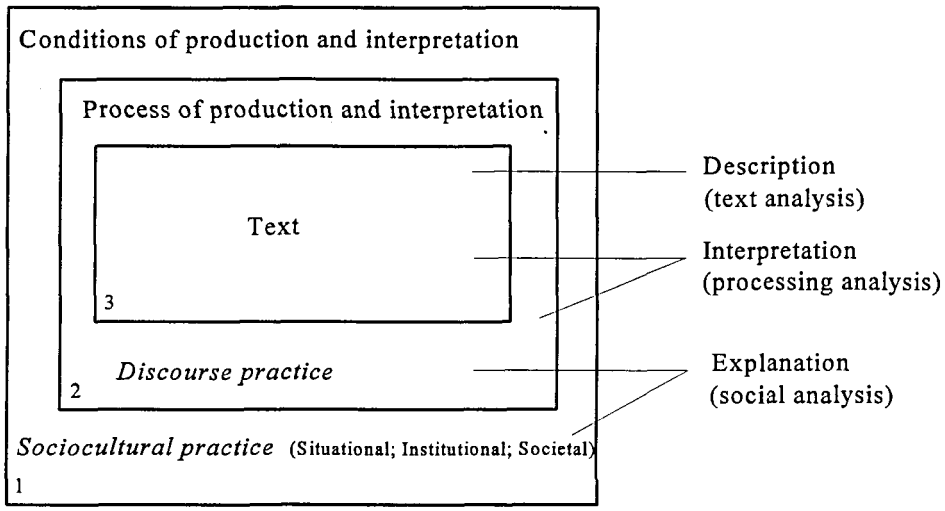


Figure 1. Fairclough's dimension of discourse and discourse analysis.

a text. However, one of the weaknesses of verbal accounts is that words cannot be presented as a gestalt: words march in rows one after the other, structured into a meaningful order. Analysis is not always as tidily linear. Fairclough tries to capture the simultaneity of his method of CDA with a model that embeds the three different kinds of analysis, one inside the other. See Figure One (Fairclough, 1995, p. 98).

The embedding of the boxes emphasises the interdependence of these dimensions and the intricate moving backwards and forwards between the different types of analysis. It is easier to capture the interdependence of Fairclough's boxes if one thinks of them three-dimensionally, as boxes nesting one inside the other rather than as concentric circles. This three-dimensional image enables one to understand that an analytic move to examine a single box necessarily breaks the interdependence between the boxes and requires subsequent moves which re-insert that box into its interconnected place. The focus on any one box, therefore, has to be seen as a relatively arbitrary place from which to begin. A technique that I use, in the initial stages of working with a text, is to draw three large, empty embedded boxes. I record my analytic comments in the appropriate box as they occur. This enables me to work with the different types of analysis simultaneously rather than sequentially and facilitates the drawing of linking lines across the boxes to stress interconnections.

Engaged and Estranged Reading Positions: reading with and against a text

Looking at a text critically is not very difficult when we disagree with it—when the positions that it offers to us as readers are far removed from what we think and believe and value. In cases where we begin from a position of estrangement or alienation from the text it is easier to read against rather than with the text. The interests served by the text may be apparent; the reader may even be at the receiving end of the consequences entailed and might have little difficulty in questioning the text.

Where the naturalisations in a text are not natural for us as readers or listeners, we are at an advantage in that this teaches us that what texts construct are only versions of

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reality. In South Africa large-scale shack settlements which had existed in the same place for at least a generation were referred to by the apartheid State as 'squatter camps'; whereas the Bantustans, which many urban dwellers had never even visited, were designated as 'homelands' to which they could be 'repatriated'. People did not need degrees in CDA to know where home was. Their lived experience deconstructed the language of apartheid. Readers who do not share the codes of the text are an important CDA resource in teaching and in research for reading against the grain. Often these readers are the very people who are labelled as disadvantaged or lacking the cultural capital for dominant literacy, that is for producing dominant readings of a text from the position of the ideal reader. This labelling implies an assimilationist model of literacy, where readers are expected to identify with the textual positionings, rather than a critical model, which requires them both to engage with and to question these positions.

A range of factors, both textual and non-textual, structure the reader's engaged–estranged location in relation to any particular text. Each on its own is a form of entrapment. Engagement without estrangement is a form of submission to the power of the text regardless of the reader's own positions. Estrangement without engagement is a refusal to leave the confines of one's own subjectivity, a refusal to allow otherness to enter. Without the entry of the other, can we be said to have read the text at all?

There are many factors that tip the scales in favour of engagement. These include: the reader cooperatively reading to make sense of the text (Grice, 1975; Smith, 1971); the writer writing so as to constrain possible interpretations, surreptitiously structuring the subjectivity of the ideal reader (Scholes, 1985); and the teacher privileging 'particular reading positions and practices from the many that are available or imaginable' (Freebody *et al.*, 1991, p. 445) so that students learn a 'singular way of reading a text properly' (Freebody *et al.*, 1991, p. 442). Cooperation, textual power and institutional practices favour engagement. In reading with the text, readers start by identifying with the 'preferred readings' (Hall, 1980) constructed by the text and then move deliberately to resist the text's apparent naturalness. The theory and practice of CDA suggests strategies that enable this deliberate move and argues the need for reading against the text to counterbalance reading with the text.

CDA: where to begin?

When I want to do a thorough critical discourse analysis, I usually begin with a text (among many). I see how far I can get with a single text and then try to fill in the gaps and unanswered questions and hypotheses raised by this limited and arbitrary entry point. What I am ultimately looking for are patterns that I can use to establish hypotheses about discourses at work in society. I then try to confirm or disconfirm these hypotheses by looking for other related texts. This enables me to discover questions that need answering with regard to the social relations and discourses instantiated in this text and others connected to it. I tend to work from text to discourse(s)—I begin with textual analysis (Fairclough's box 3), always aware that this is only one lens through which to consider the data and that the other lenses are essential to provide other perspectives.

The text that I will analyse to illustrate this method of CDA is an advertisement for the Standard Bank's Domestic Promise Plan which appeared in the *Weekly Mail and Guardian* in 1994 (see Figure Two).

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Sometimes, I stare out the window while baby Jay is sleeping and I wonder where I'll be sleeping when I'm too old to work.

At least I know it will be somewhere comfortable. Ever since Mrs Lambert spoke to me. She showed me this Domestic Promise Plan. Something or other about a retirement policy. She told me she was putting R30 into it each month for me.

But what happens when Jay doesn't need me anymore?

I know what to do
when the baby
has a cough.
And I know how
to prepare
a meal for twelve.
But I don't know
what happens to me
when I'm 65.

She smiled and said the policy could be taken out over 10, 15 or 20 years and I could even take it with me to my next job.

So stop worrying she said. It's all been taken care of.

I turned back to the window. And for the very first time I could see a lot further than my sixty fifth birthday.

Why not give your Domestic peace of mind about retirement? Call 0800 12 4444 toll-free today.

Underwritten by CLARTER LIFE

Standard Bank
DOMESTIC PROMISE PLAN

With us you can go so much further.

Figure 2.

Text Analysis

In unpacking a text it is important to remember that it is never possible to read meaning directly off the verbal and visual textual signs. This is well illustrated by reference to this particular text. Here the narrator, presumably the woman in the visual text who is named as a 'domestic' in the linguistic text, is wondering what will happen to her when

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she is old and the baby, baby Jay, does not need her anymore. Whose baby is baby Jay? South Africans familiar with the discourse of 'maids and madams' (Cock, 1980; and the cartoon strip 'Madam and Eve') are likely to assume that the baby is the employer's baby whom the domestic worker is employed to care for. Such an assumption would account for the worker's fear that when the baby no longer needs her she will be out of work. Many Australian readers that I have worked with, drawing their interpretation from the discourse of ageing and women's fears of not being needed once the children have grown up, assume that the worker is thinking about her own baby. The different discourses available for readers to draw on provide different conditions for the reception of this text in these two different contexts (Fairclough's box 1). Without reference to the context of production and reception (Fairclough's box 2) it is not possible to favour either of these readings on the basis of close textual analysis alone. This is not to say that some textual features—the baby's name, visual clues such as what the domestic worker is wearing while baby Jay is sleeping—used in conjunction with contextual knowledge, cannot be used as evidence to support one or other of these interpretations. Recognising the limitations of textual analysis, I will use it as a heuristic device, a place to begin. Towards the end of the paper I will consider a different possible entry point.[1]

Analysing the Visual Signs

The Standard Bank advertisement for its Domestic Promise Plan includes a visual text depicting a domestic worker, dressed in what could be an overall and scarf, staring pensively out of an open window, her face lit by the light from the window. The pensiveness is evoked by the position of her hand cupping her chin in the pose associated with Rodin's *Thinker*. The burglar bars on the window are suggestive of imprisonment but they are also shaped in the form of the cross. The cross could be seen to reinforce the suggestion of suffering created by the bars and to underscore the sense of hope created by the light that comes from outside. This hope is lexicalised as a 'promise' in the form of a retirement scheme for domestic workers. This link is established visually by the blue tints of the picture and the use of royal blue to surround the logo and the words 'Standard Bank', placed centrally at the bottom of the advertisement. The full blue of the logo compared with the muted blue tints in the picture creates a shift from uncertainty to certainty as one moves from the picture to the bank and its promise. In semiotic terms the logo has a higher modality (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1990, p. 51). These colours are not captured in the black and white reproduction of the advertisement in Figure Two.

There are other important aspects of the visual text. The woman in the text is not looking at the viewer. The picture therefore 'does not demand that the viewer enter into an imaginary social relation' with the woman (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1990, p. 28). Instead she is presented as an object for the viewer's contemplation. The shot is a close-up, which suggests the viewer's intimate knowledge of the woman. This is supported by the narratavised linguistic text which enables the viewer/reader to intrude on the woman's thoughts.

The composition of the overall text (including both visual and verbal signs) has interesting features on both its vertical (top–down) and horizontal (left–right) axes. On the vertical axis the text is divided into two parts. The top part, in which the picture of the woman occupies half of the overall text, dominates. The soft tints, the pensive pose, and the fact that from a Western left–right orientation the woman seems to be looking backwards create uncertainty in semiotic terms.

The woman's hand, which cups the lit half of her face, divides the top half of the page

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down the middle on the horizontal axis. The hand leads the viewer's eye down to the column of linguistic text immediately below it. This column is different from the other two columns of print on either side of it: it appears in a shaded box; it has a different typeface and a larger font; there is larger spacing between the lines; the Standard Bank logo, the name of the policy and a slogan are placed centrally below this column. The force of this focusing directs the eye from the picture to this column of print, thus setting up a preferred reading path. This pull to the middle column of print is offset by a tendency to start with the left-hand column of print because of the left–right reading orientation developed as a habit of Western literacy. Which of these pulls is stronger would I suspect be influenced by one's purpose for reading. If one were reading closely in order to do a textual analysis one would be more likely to begin on the left with the first column. If one were flipping through the newspaper, not really intending to read the advertisement at all, the middle column might be more likely to catch the eye.

Analysing the Verbal Signs

In the middle column, the verbal text sets up a dichotomy between knowing and not knowing, which reinforces questions relating to the woman's uncertainty or certainty raised in the visual text. The first paragraph is structured around what 'I' knows and the second states what 'I' does not know. This pattern of certainty and uncertainty is reinforced by the organisation of the columns on either side of the shaded central block. To the left we are mainly (but not exclusively) presented with the domestic worker's uncertainty, 'I wonder where I'll be sleeping when I am too old to work', 'Something or other about a retirement policy', 'But what happens to me when Jay doesn't need me anymore?' To the right we are told why the worker can 'stop worrying'; how because everything has 'been taken care of' she can say 'I turned back to the window. And for the very first time I could see a lot further than my sixty-fifth birthday'.[2] The patterns of certainty and uncertainty are also not distributed equally among the participants: the worker, the employer, the baby and the bank. The employer and the bank have certainty, the worker does not, and the baby asleep is neither certain nor uncertain. The employee's uncertainty is such that 'peace of mind about retirement' is something that an employer is able to 'give' to a worker.

If one starts with the middle column, the reader is left to work out who 'I' is from the weight of the visual text and the rules of deixis, whereby 'I' is the woman in the picture. This reading is confirmed by the column of print on the left where 'I' is said to 'stare out of the window'. With either reading path, the use of the first-person narrative is firmly established. This works to humanise the domestic worker as a subject and a potential agent. She is a person with worries about her old age. It also suggests that domestic workers who can identify with this narrative are the likely addressees for this text. The last sentence 'Why not give your domestic peace of mind?' therefore constitutes an unexpected switch of addressee to the employer. But the 'you' does not have a stable referencing function. In the slogan 'with us you can go so much further' the 'you' seems to suggest the beneficiary of the Standard Bank's services, in this instance the worker. This text's ambivalence in relation to the addressee is significant, and seems to reflect an uncertainty with regard to the changing position of 'domestics'. These shifts manifest as discoursal shifts from a paternalistic discourse of 'domestics' as servants who need to be cared for, to a liberal discourse of workers as independent human beings with needs, and possibly to a labour discourse of workers' rights.

While the use of personal narrative moves against the dehumanising and othering

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discourse of apartheid racism, the construction of the woman as an object of our gaze in the visual text does not. Neither does the pattern of lexicalisation. The employer, Mrs Lambert, and the baby, Jay, are both named. Only the domestic worker is not dignified with a name. This indignity is compounded by the failure even to nominalise her. Her status as a worker is reduced to an attribute—'domestic worker' (attribute + nominal) is thus reduced to 'domestic'. If she is a domestic worker, then Mrs Lambert is a domestic employer, but she is not lexicalised by either her attribute 'domestic' or by her status, 'employer' because she is identified by her name. The advertisers avoid the earlier lexicalisations of 'girl', 'servant' and 'maid' and capitalise on liberal reconstructions. But they stop short of labour discourse. The selection of 'domestic' as a nominal seems to be a reduction of 'domestic worker' the lexicalisation used by the Domestic Workers' Union.

Different lexical selections can signal different discourses (colonial, liberal, labour discourses). Most texts are hybrids, which draw on more than one discourse. I argue that the specific hybridity of this text provides evidence for values in transition. It shows the tenacity of existing discourses at work in society and the struggle of alternative discourses to emerge. Textual instantiations capture the clash of discourses and demonstrate ideological forces at work to produce a different hegemony.

It is easy to show the power of the racist discourse of paternalism if one does a transitivity analysis of this text. Before turning to a transitivity analysis, it is important to make explicit the means I have used to produce the verbal analysis thus far. Essentially I work with a check list based on Halliday's *Introduction to Functional Grammar* (1985). This is also the basis for Fairclough's key questions for text analysis (1989, pp. 110–111). In simple terms one has systematically to examine:

1. lexicalisation;
2. patterns of transitivity;
3. the use of active and passive voice;
4. the use of nominalisation;
5. choices of mood;
6. choices of modality or polarity;
7. the thematic structure of the text;
8. the information focus;
9. cohesion devices.

These are Halliday's grammatical resources for ideational, interpersonal and textual meanings. What one is looking for are patterns that emerge across these linguistic functions which confirm or contradict one another. So, for instance, the pattern of certainty/uncertainty, essentially an analysis of modality and polarity, establishes a hierarchy of power which is confirmed by the naming practices and the transitivity analysis. An examination of cohesion which, amongst other things, requires one to look at how pronouns are used to refer, reveals that the reference system is not stable. This instability does not surface elsewhere in the textual analysis and can only be understood by using the other dimensions of CDA, as I will show later. Because it is difficult to know what aspect of the grammar is going to be most fruitful in the analysis of a particular text, I find it essential to examine all aspects. Often the analysis of the separate elements produces patterns that are confirmed across the elements. As it is not possible to include a detailed analysis of every aspect in this article, I demonstrate the kind of systematicity required by focusing on transitivity. Transitivity was chosen because of all the grammatical aspects I analysed, it yielded the most fruitful data for this text.

In his *Introduction to Functional Grammar* Halliday (1985) explains transitivity as follows:

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_____*Types of doing* **Material processes: actor + goal**
Doing—e.g. Parents sometimes hit children. (active voice)
doing to—e.g. Small babies should not be hit. (passive voice)
Creating—e.g. The investigator does not have to make inferences.

_____*Saying* **Verbal processes: sayer + what is said + (receiver)**
e.g. One of the workers suggested that I try some shebeen brew.

_____*Sensing* **Mental processes: Senser + phenomenon**
Feeling—e.g. I like that one. The children feel angry.
Thinking—think, know, understand, interpret etc.
Perceiving—saw, noticed, stared at etc.

_____*Types of being* **Relational processes**
Being—x **is** y—e.g. Child abuse is terrible (or a terrible thing).
Having—x **has** y—e.g. This child has a dog.

Types of behaving—**Behavioural processes**
Physiological—breathe, dream, sleep.
Psychological—smile, laugh.

_____*Things that exist or happen* **Existential processes**
e.g.. The world is round. There was a man at the door.

Figure 3. The system of transitivity in the clause: summary of types with examples.

> A fundamental property of language is that it enables human beings to build a mental picture of reality, to make sense of their experience of what goes on around them and inside them ... Our most powerful conception of reality is that it consists of 'goings-on': of doing, happening, feeling, being. These goings on are sorted out in the semantic system of the language, and expressed through the grammar of the clause. (p. 101)

Amongst other things the clause evolved to express the

> ... reflective, experiential aspects of meaning. This ... is the system of TRANSITIVITY. Transitivity specifies the different types of processes that are recognised in the language and the structures by which they are expressed. (p. 101)

Halliday's grammar proposes six different processes or kinds of transitivity (see Figure Three). To do a transitivity analysis it is necessary to identify every verb and its associated process. It is then necessary to identify patterns in the use of these processes. So Luke (1988) in analysing early readers notices a pattern in which the child characters Dick and Jane are only given material and verbal processes. From this he concludes that children are represented as allowed only to do and to say; they are not allowed to think (mental processes) and to be (relational processes).

Figure Four provides a transitivity table for the Standard Bank's Domestic Promise Plan advertisement, showing transitivity arranged according to three participants: Mrs Lambert, the domestic, Baby Jay. What is interesting here is not that (like Dick and Jane)

Mrs Lambert Activity	*Mrs Lambert* Process	*The domestic* Activity	*The domestic* Process	*Baby Jay* Activity	*Baby Jay* Process
spoke	verbal	stare	mental	is sleeping	behavioural
showed	material	wonder	mental	does not need	mental
told	verbal	will be sleeping	behavioural	has	relational
was putting	material	am	relational		
smiled	behavioural	know	mental		
said	verbal	could take	material (but only with permission)		
said	verbal	worrying	mental		
taken care of	material	turned	material		
give	material	could see	mental		
call	verbal	know	mental		
		know	mental		
		to prepare	material		
		don't know	mental		
		am	relational		

Figure 4. Transitivity processes in the Standard Bank advertisement for its Domestic Promise Plan.

Mrs Lambert is constructed with predominantly material and verbal processes and the domestic worker with largely mental and relational processes. There is nothing intrinsically superior or inferior about material, mental, verbal or relational processes. In this context, however, constructing the domestic worker with few material processes suggests that she is unable to act except with the permission of or in the service of her employer. It is as if agency is granted her by her employer. Her employer, on the other hand, acts and speaks at will. The domestic worker says nothing. She has no overall processes and is caught in a one-way conversation, at the receiving end of Mrs Lambert's speech. What is particularly interesting, however, is the patterned alignment between the domestic worker and the baby. They are the only participants whose processes are mental, behavioural and relational. Thus in the transitivity structure one can see the domestic worker constructed as a baby who needs to be 'taken care of'. The transitivity analysis reveals the infantalisation of human subjects which is the result of paternalism.

Discourses at Work in the Context

How does this pattern of transitivity happen? Should we imagine advertising copy-writers deliberately working out a careful alignment between the transitivity processes selected for the adult worker and for the baby in her care? CDA, which requires that we consider

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the social conditions that affect textual production, can suggest a fruitful line of enquiry. It leads me to hypothesise that the discourse of paternalism/infantalisation continues to exist in South Africa as a resource that is available for text producers to draw on when they write. 'Draw on' suggests conscious volition or deliberate choice. This may in fact be the case—one in which the advertisement writers choose to use a racist/paternalistic discourse. Using a Foucauldian perspective, I would rather argue that as members of a society we are constituted in and by the available discourses and that they speak through us—it is as if the discourse of racist/paternalism chooses the advertisement writers. I base this argument on the transitivity analysis. Transitivity is not as easily visible to producers and readers as other linguistic features because of the complexity of its encoding. Lexical selection in the verb has to be related to syntactic extensions, to participants and to processes. In addition one has to trace the patterns of use across participants. Deconstructive analysis of transitivity is a layered and complex process. It is not something that one can 'see' or 'feel' by just looking carefully at a text. I would argue that because transitivity is less obvious, deeper in the syntax, it suggests less conscious control by the writer and it requires more conscious effort for the reader to analyse it.

Examples of more obvious linguistic selections that are easier to recognise and monitor include the way in which the participants are named (discussed earlier) and the use of the passive construction. In 'It's all been taken care of', the deleted agent is presumably the employer who acts on behalf of her employee without her full consent or understanding, the latter shown by 'Something or other about a retirement policy'. This worker, constructed as unable to take care of herself, is elsewhere in the text shown as capable of performing highly complex and responsible tasks (looking after the employer's sick child and preparing a meal for twelve people). Here one might wish to argue that the advertiser needs to construct the domestic worker as having no agency in order to ensure that the employer, who is more likely to accept that individuals (rather than the State) have to take responsibility for their financial security (the basic premise on which the insurance industry is based), will buy such a policy on behalf of her employee.

It was precisely at this level of linguistic selection that it was possible earlier in the article to suggest that the writer was conscious of avoiding old apartheid-speak. In addition, the apparent ambiguity in the selection of pronouns suggests that the text does not have a stable addressee. These linguistic selections provide intimations that this text is complex and shifting rather than simply being locked in to old discourses. But text analysis alone cannot take us far enough and we need to bring the other dimensions of discourse analysis into focus.

Interpretation: analysing the processes of production and reception

Fairclough refers to the situational context and the intertextual context as central to the process of interpretation. In terms of the situational context it is useful to ask questions about time and place. Could this text have been produced earlier than 1994? Is it simply an old apartheid text? Could this text have been produced outside South Africa? What contextual factors influenced the production and interpretation of this text?

We have already seen how the advertisement constructs retirement policies and relatedly the provision of pensions within a discourse of employer goodwill and not within a discourse of workers' rights. The new labour statutes, notably the Basic Conditions of Employment Act 3 of 1981, were only extended to domestic workers in 1994 (the year in which this text was produced). These statutes provide domestic workers

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with some protection against unfair labour practices for the first time. They require contracts, lay down the number of hours that an employee can be expected to work and they legislate for overtime pay. What is not included are a minimum wage and conditions of service. That there is no legislated right to a pension from one's employer is what is relevant to the discussion in this paper. Although the discourse of goodwill ties the advertisement to a discourse of paternalism, what is new is the idea that domestic workers should have improved conditions of service. I can therefore hypothesise that there were no equivalent advertisements in the 1980s as financial security for domestic workers in their old age was not yet on the social agenda. This advertisement shows an awareness on the part of the Standard Bank that there is now a whole new market for its policies which could not previously be tapped. This notion of provision is possibly a first step in the direction of entitlement and is certainly an idea around which a union could mobilise its members. These hypotheses provide the basis for interesting research questions. When did such advertisements first appear? Is the 1994 date of the new labour statutes and this policy coincidental or deliberate? How will the issue of pensions for domestic workers change over time? Will pensions ever become a legal obligation on the part of employers?

The Standard Bank becomes an obvious place to look for additional data in terms of the intertextual context. Bingo! The bank has a brochure for this Domestic Promise Plan (still available from the bank in 1997) and there is a great deal of intertextual similarity between it and the advertisement under discussion. In the brochure the visual text of the woman is repeated, but this time the shot is less close up, she is facing to the right, and the burglar bars are extended so that they no longer form a cross. Her youth and the possibility of 'promise' are established by comparison with the visual on the front cover of the brochure, in extreme close-up, of a much older man holding his or her face with both hands in a symbolic gesture of hopeless despair. In the brochure there is no ambiguity about the addressee; it is unequivocally the employer as can be seen from the following quotations from the brochure.

> How often do we consider that the unemployment benefits, medical aid and pension schemes which we take for granted from our employers are not available to our domestic staff? (p. 3)
>
> Your employee will become the sole owner of his/her Domestic Promise Plan. (p. 5)
>
> Why not give your employee peace of mind about retirement? Simply complete the attached application form and mail it in the envelope provided. (p. 8)

In the brochure there is a great deal of hybridity in the lexicalisation. Workers are referred to as 'domestic staff', 'your employee', 'your domestic', 'maid', 'gardener'. Most references are to the reader as an 'employer' and to domestic staff as 'employees'. That this new market for insurance policies is tied to changes in the situational context is made explicit by six pages in the brochure (as many as for information on the policy itself) which 'gives an overview of the new legislation applying to your domestic employees—formulated for your interest' (p. 9). This includes information about salaries and wages, hours of work, meal intervals, annual leave, sick leave, overtime, Sunday work, public holidays, termination of employment and what you as an employer need to do (pp. 10–14). Buying your worker a Domestic Promise Plan is thus textually linked to the new conditions of service for domestic workers and to post-apartheid labour conditions. In case this alienates prospective policy purchasers, the Standard Bank distances itself

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from this legislation in the closing sentence of the brochure: 'For now the most important thing is not to over-react. Good working relationships, founded on fairness and honesty, will endure in spite of legislation' (p. 14).

It thus simultaneously promotes and undercuts this legislation. The text locates itself in contradictory positions, so that the bank can have it both ways. This accounts for the other signs of textual hybridity.

Textual Hybridity

Hybridity is a fruitful area for CDA to investigate because it is here that the different interests are played out. Of the many different discourses available in the society to be drawn from, different texts privilege different ones. The privileging of discourses works to serve particular interests.

For example, in South Africa there are different discourses of ageing. In many African communities old people are respected and valued; the extended family system provides young people with a measure of security for their old age (albeit tied to a system of patriarchal rights and obligations). This is not to suggest that people who work should not have financial rights on retirement. It does, however, raise questions about whether a domestic worker is likely to stand at the window worrying about her old age (rather than, say, how she will pay her children's school fees or afford to buy a house). These concerns seem to arise more from Western discourses of ageing, in a culture that venerates youth and associates old age with redundancy and insecurity. The reference to the woman wondering 'what happens when baby Jay doesn't need me anymore', although not a reference to her own baby, is clearly drawn from a discourse of ageing which relates to the nuclear family and the 'empty nest' syndrome not really experienced in extended families where old people often care for their own grandchildren and other young children. Researchers can learn to analyse the interests at work in the privileging and backgrounding of different discourses. In this text it is clear that a Western discourse of ageing is more likely to sell retirement policies.

Explanation: social analysis

Volosinov says that:

> ... the inner dialectic quality of the sign comes out fully in the open in times of social crises or revolutionary changes. In the ordinary conditions of life, the contradiction embedded in every ideological sign cannot emerge fully because the ideological sign in an established, dominant ideology is always somewhat reactionary and tries, as it were, to stabilize the preceding factor in the dialectical flux of the social generative process, so accentuating yesterday's truth as to make it appear today's. (1973, p. 24)

South Africa is in just such a period of revolutionary changes. The sign is clearly unstable. It is interesting to note that the signifiers are constantly shifting. 'Squatter camps', terminology used to signify the illegality and the impermanence of shack settlements, are now referred to as 'informal settlements', with the root word 'settle' implying a recognition of permanence. Mandela's household staff

> ... consists of 61 cleaners, three food service aides, eight household aides, a general foreman, a storekeeper, three household managers, one guest house

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> manager, two household supervisors and two household controllers. (*Weekly Mail and Guardian*, March 1996, p. 8)

He appears to have no domestic workers.

When the sign is unstable it is possible to see the workings of ideology. Ideology is at its most powerful when it is invisible, when discourses have been naturalised and become part of our everyday common sense. This is what results in writers using a discourse of paternalism unconsciously, because it is available. By being there, it and the other available discourses constitute our identities and our constructions of the world. In a time of change, new discourses become available offering us new subject positions from which to speak and read the world. The conditions of text production and text reception are gradually transformed.

If this explanation is correct then the analysis of this text leads to really interesting possibilities for further critical discourse analysis. The text analysis has generated a hypothesis that hybridity, in which pre-transformation and post-transformation discourses appear simultaneously in texts, is a feature of South African discourse in the 1990s. This suggests further research in which one could track the development of this hybridity across texts over a period of time until the society stabilises. One could begin to ascertain whether the hybridity is widespread or tied to specific genres or specific text producers. It might even be possible to watch the formation of a new discursive hegemony that replaces the old.

The starting point for this article was text analysis. It has led to the formulation of new research questions, the starting point for which is in the processes of production and reception, and the socio-historical conditions which govern them. But in the same way that textual analysis brought us to this new beginning, to these new questions, this enquiry will require a return to text analysis. The researcher will need to describe and interpret the new texts that the research questions lead to. The strength of CDA is that the different dimensions of analysis that it offers provide the means both for producing research questions and for analysing data. As such, it is an extremely important research tool.

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NOTES

1. I am grateful to my 1996 AELS 3 students for this observation.
2. How much future financial security one can buy for R30 per month is also an important question. The small amount raises some questions about whether or not Mrs Lambert is correct in telling her worker that she 'can stop worrying'.

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