

# A Consideration of the Concept of Hegemony in Terms of Critical Discourse Analysis Focusing on Intertextuality and Assumptions

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Abstract

The methodology of critical discourse analysis (CDA) in terms of ‘orientation to difference’, i.e., ‘dialogicality’ based on M. Bakhtin’s theory is referred to in *Analysing Discourse*(2003) written by N. Fairclough, one of the leading theorists in CDA. CDA generally attempts to extract presupposition mainly from news texts by analyzing the way words or phrases are chosen or represented. Referring to the scale of dialogicality, which Fairclough proposed, we attempt to describe how the concept of hegemony is correlated to the production of actual news texts from the social background. The extent of orientation to difference is classified into five phases by drawing upon a notion that any text, even in monologue, assumes intertextuality. The current study examines a recent news text about the controversies of hunting dolphins of Taiji Town, Wakayama Prefecture, Japan. Through this investigation, we discuss the applicability and limitation of CDA, focusing on the concept of hegemony in the scale of dialogicality.

Keywords: CDA, hegemony, dialogicality, intertextuality

## 1. Introduction

In the discipline of social science, particularly in the field of sociological study of power, the term hegemony has frequently been mentioned, but it may not be easy to grasp the main idea of the word, due to the possibility of its multiple interpretation. Although the lexical meaning of the word, whose definition is typically seen in *Oxford English Dictionary*(2nd edition), is described as ‘Leadership, dominance; esp. the leadership or predominant authority of one state of a confederacy or union over the others: originally used in reference to the states of ancient Greece, whence transferred to the German states, and in other modern applications’, it is not always uniformly shared among theorists. Generally, they turn to Antonio Gramsci’s concept of hegemony, ‘the “spontaneous” consent’(Gramsci, 1971:12), instead of conventional versions. This study aims to discuss the concept of hegemony from N. Fairclough’s point of view, who considers dynamics of power, projecting his idea of critical discourse analysis (CDA). Also, through this study with an analysis of actual news texts, I attempt to examine the applicability and limitation of CDA,

highlighting how Fairclough’s use of ‘intertextuality and assumptions’ is related to the concept of hegemony.

Fairclough criticized sociolinguistic way of dealing the relationship between language and society. He notes (1989:1): ‘Linguists and especially those working in sociolinguistics (which is often said to deal with ‘language in its social context’) have had quite a lot to say about language and power, but they have not in my opinion done justice to the rich and complex interrelationships of language and power’. Fairclough considers *text* as ‘the written or spoken language produced in a discursive event’ (1993:138). A *discursive event* is defined as ‘instance of language use, analysed as text, discursive practice, social practice’(ibid.). Finally, *discursive practice* is regarded as ‘the production, distribution and consumption of a text’(ibid.). Fairclough develops a three-dimensional conception of discourse, classifying the realm of discourse into ‘(i) a language text, spoken or written, (ii) discourse practice (text production and text interpretation), (iii) sociocultural practice’. (1995: 97). The second dimension, discourse practice, mediated between text and society, is the most important one because any

actually social event must be transformed into discursive form so that we can grasp what is happening, or reality itself. Hall (1980: 129) writes: A 'raw' historical event cannot, *in that form*, be transmitted by, say, a television newscast. Events can only be signified within the aural-visual forms of the televisual discourse.

The scope of CDA is very large and diverse. Chouliaraki & Fairclough (1999: 6-7) points out: 'the contemporary field of critical analysis of discourse is itself quite diverse (Jorgenson and Phillips 1999). One might reasonably include within it Said's analysis of the discourse of orientalism (Said 1978) which is based upon Foucault's theory of discourse but which, unlike Foucault, also includes as Stubbs (1996) points out, some analysis of texts, though without drawing on any linguistic theory'.. In the meanwhile, CDA are generally based upon linguistic approaches although Fairclough criticized sociolinguistic way as referred previously. Dijk (1993) stresses CDA should deal with the problem such as power abuse, injustice and inequality. But approaches to those problems are not always based upon sociological approaches, especially Michael Foucault's theory of 'discourse'. Dijk states: 'In order to understand how ideology relates to discourse, let me first summarize my discourse theoretical framework, especially since this is somewhat different from others that study both discourse and ideology, such as the more philosophical approach by Foucault'(1998: 193). But Fairclough apparently commits Foucault's theory of 'discourse', referring to the concept of 'orders of discourse'. He writes: 'The stress on interdiscursive relations has important implications for discourse analysis, since it places at the centre of the agenda the investigation of the structuring or articulation of discursive formations in relation to each other within what I shall call, using a Foucaultian term, institutional and societal 'orders of discourse' – the totality of discursive practices within an institution or society, and the relationships between them'(Fairclough, 1992: 43). Throughout this study I attempt to consider the concept of hegemony in terms of CDA, especially focusing upon Fairclough's use of 'intertextuality and assumptions'.

## 2. Intertextuality and assumptions

This study, placing reliance on the discussions developed in Fairclough's book *Analysing Discourse* (2003), especially on the chapter 3 whose title is 'Intertextuality and

assumptions', sheds a spotlight on 'difference and dialogicality', in which the relationships between intertextuality and assumptions are described in reference to the idea of difference and dialogicality which originated from Mikhail Bakhtin. Also Julia Kristeva(1986) eventually developed the concept of 'intertextuality', drawing upon Bakhtin's work. Fairclough's literary work I refer to consists of four main parts: PART I Social analysis, discourse analysis, text analysis; PART II Genres and action; PART III Discourses and representations; PART IV Styles and identities. The descriptive title 'Intertextuality and assumptions' is the appellation of chapter 3 of the work and the section 'difference and dialogicality' I deal with in this paper is included in the section. The chapter comprises several other sections such as 'The public sphere', 'Hegemony, universal and particular', 'Intertextuality', 'Assumptions', 'Ideologies and assumptions', 'Other types of assumptions'.

Fairclough(2003:41) simply states the relationships between Intertextuality and assumptions: 'An important contrast between Intertextuality and assumptions is that the former broadly opens difference by bringing other 'voices' into a text, whereas the latter broadly reduces difference by assuming common ground. Or to put it differently, the former accentuates the dialogicality of a text, the dialogue between the voice of the author of a text and other voices, the latter diminishes it'. The key word as well as the key concept is 'voices', which tracks back to Mikhail Bakhtin who develops his own main ideas of carnival, dialogism, polyphony, chronotope. Fairclough (2003:41-2), with the concept of orientation to difference in mind, schematically classifies the extent of such orientation into five levels, proposing the following five scenarios:

- (a) an openness to, acceptance of, recognition of difference; an exploration of difference, as in 'dialogue' in the richest sense of the term;
- (b) an accentuation of difference, conflict, polemic, a struggle over meaning, norms, power;
- (c) an attempt to resolve or overcome difference;
- (d) a bracketing of difference, a focus on commonality, solidarity;
- (e) consensus, a normalization and acceptance of differences of power which brackets or suppresses differences of meaning and norms

Referring to G. Kress, Fairclough (2003) criticized his scope of orientation to difference. Kress (1985) notes that difference is the motor that produces texts, but Fairclough regards Kress's idea as rather limited, arguing that Kress's perspective is only indicating scenario (c) above. Rather, Fairclough (2003:42) places emphasis on 'monological' texts, including written texts. Fairclough (ibid.), quoting Bakhtin's ideas of intertextuality, provides insights into the significance of those five classification of five scenarios as follows:

Texts are inevitably and unavoidably dialogical in the sense that 'any utterance is a link in a very complexly organized chain of other utterances' with which it 'enters into one kind of relation or another' (Bakhtin 1986:69).

According to Bakhtin's theory, any text, be it 'monological' or 'dialogical', appears in itself as a dialogical aspect in one way or another. In other words, any text or utterance belongs to an extensive range from scenario (a) to scenario (e).

Scenario (a), we can recognize, corresponds to a 'carnival' condition, in which any voice can be said or heard with no limitations, leading to freedom of speech in the real sense of the term. The fact that any text is allowed can lead us to the next stage. Scenario (b) shows the situation of conflict which is, as a matter of course, introduced by diverse voices or opinions. In scenario (c), as Kress(1985) observed, difference itself can produce texts where human behaviors of negotiation occur. Scenario (c) seemingly symbolizes a dialogical function. But widespread orientation to difference can be seen in scenarios (d) and (e). CDA deals with these phases, which are implicit or ubiquitously-expressed. CDA with an analysis of linguistic and rhetorical aspects, aims to extract tacit consent or unspoken agreement, which are dominant around us and eventually restrict our way of thinking and acting. As Holquist (1990) puts it, referring to Bakhtin, 'Undialogized language is authoritative or absolute'. Apparently, it may not be possible to identify any voice of others in tacit consent or unspoken agreement, which forces us to take what is going on every day for granted as if there were no ideological power.

I think that hegemony exists in these stages, which are not a static condition but a dynamic one. Therefore, it is not easy to grasp the whole entity of hegemony. Not until we consider the concept of hegemony as a social practice, do we

realize the essential meaning of hegemony. Then, what is the most effective way of exposing such hidden dimension to light? In order to visualize or identify the concept of hegemony, it is important to see the subject from a series of moves, namely from five scenarios we are now discussing. The concept of hegemony doesn't remain static but can be figured out in any process or development.

Then, taking what was mentioned above into consideration, how can we grasp the concept of hegemony as the whole process of a social practice? For the purpose of dealing with this question, I proceed to the next section where I attempt to bring out covert assumption in the open by analyzing recent news texts with the use of classification of five scenarios.

### 3. Analysis of actual texts

Taking up one of the news texts about dolphin hunting of Taiji Town, Wakawama Prefecture in Japan, as materials for CDA, focusing on orientation to difference mentioned above. In order not to stay away from the subject of this study, much attention should be paid to our main question: how we can present a viewpoint of analyzing discourse practices themselves rather than proposing an alternative argument against anti dolphin hunting discourses. To put it plainly, this study doesn't attempt to bring up arguments about whether dolphin hunting should be permitted or prohibited. Our goal is to discuss the conditions which enable a certain discourse, for instance, antiwhaling discourses, to be produced in a particular period and in a particular region.

I deal with a news article with the title of 'Broome suspends sister city relationship with Taiji over dolphin slaughter' from *The Australian* on August 23, 2009 (See Table 1.). Before the discussion, I point out five main aspects by analyzing the news material. The details are as follows.

- i) On the sensational headline and lead of the article, an act of dolphin hunting is represented as 'slaughter'.
- ii) The fact that the councilors of the Shire of Broome in West Australia unanimously voted to suspend its sister city relationship with the Japanese whaling port town of Taiji is represented as a good decision, and at the same time, the attitude Broome developed is emphasized as generous. This

proposition is supported by the way some words are chosen in sentence 5, 9, 10. That is to say, in sentence 5, we can find a phrase 'respectfully advise', in sentence 9; 'They've been mindful of the links between ...', in sentence 10; '...open to discussions between the Shire of Broome and Taiji'.

- iii) Reference to 'voices' of third parties is used to make sure that Broome's decision is reasonable and valid, responding to 'world opinion'. Sentence 6 and 7 illustrate this argument: The council's decision comes after a new documentary, *The Cove*, revealed the extent of the slaughter to international viewers (sentence 6); Following the film's release, the council was inundated with letters and emails from Australia and the world urging it to end the relationship (sentence 7). Also, mentioning a third person as an expert in whales, Richard Costin, Broome's act appears to be more authoritative. The way the researcher is quoted is seen both directly and indirectly. Sentence 9 refers to his remarks with the use of direct speech: 'This is a really good decision by the Broome shire. They've been mindful of the links between Broome and Taiji and the establishment of the pearling industry', Mr Costin told *The Australian*. In contrast, sentence 8 reveals indirectly how his opinion about Broome's decision is regarded: Yesterday's decision was welcomed by Broome whale researcher Richard Costin who had threatened to leave the town if the council did not act. These direct and indirect quotations of other 'voices' are deeply entwined with texts the writer produced. The very intertextuality of this news text can be identified in this case.

- iv) On the other hand, Taiji is represented as a town which conducts 'slaughter' of dolphins, implying that dolphin hunting is dreadful and cursed behavior. Such descriptions can be observed throughout the article. In sentence 4, we see an expression with the help of an adjective word 'horrific' and a concrete figure (23,000) stressing how dreadful and serious the act is: 'The suspension will continue for as long as Taiji

continues its horrific slaughter of around 23,000 dolphins a year'. In sentence 5, a straightforward expression, 'killed', can be seen: '...Broome would not be able to continue the sister city relationship while dolphins were killed'. In sentence 6, which is previously mentioned, we recognize that the term, 'slaughter', has a powerful effect of negative representation on Taiji: The council's decision comes after a new documentary, *The Cove*, revealed the extent of the slaughter to international viewers. In sentence 10 and 12, we can identify threatening attitudes of Broome in conditional clauses: 'He said the decision left the door open to discussions between the Shire of Broome and Taiji because the relationship could be resumed if the slaughter stopped (sentence 10)'; The council also agreed to help Taiji establish other industries so that the town could survive economically if it abandoned the hunting of whales and dolphins (sentence 12). In addition, Taiji is represented as a town which makes a stubborn stand and won't listen to what Broome means. Sentence 11 shows this point: 'But he said Taiji was unlikely to act. 'At the end of the day Taiji won't take much notice of what Broome does', he said'.

- v) In sentence 10, we can find the possibility of resolving the issue through dialogue: 'He said the decision left the door open to discussions between the Shire of Broome and Taiji because the relationship could be resumed if the slaughter stopped'.

#### 4. Further discussion

Returning to five scenarios about 'difference and dialogicality' previously described, I attempt to enter into further discussion on how these phases of five scenarios are respectively related to each text in the news article. The sequential examination is shown as follows.

Analysis of the news article in relation to scenario (a) :  
No text in the news discourse corresponds to the dimension of scenario (a): an openness to, acceptance of, recognition of difference. In other words, we can not find any 'voices' from

inhabitants of Taiji. In reality, there should be any possibility of opinions in favor of dolphin hunting in Taiji which are based on their customs and cultures. Meanwhile, some people in the town may have an opposite idea that they should abandon hunting dolphins. Such actually diversifying voices are hidden or suppressed in the news discourse, so that we have no opportunity to notice their existence of 'their voices'.

Analysis of the news article in relation to scenario (b) :

In the first place, the fact that there is no stage of scenario (a) does not lead to scenario (b): an accentuation of difference, conflict, polemic, a struggle over meaning, norms, power. As we cannot figure out any single voice expressed by residents in Taiji or around its neighborhood, it is impossible to identify any specific difference or conflict in the news discourse. That is to say, no discussion facing individual viewpoints from people in Taiji can not be found.

Analysis of the news article in relation to scenario (c) :

As with scenario (b), no trace of scenario (c) is seen in the news text. Where there is no sign of difference, an attempt to resolve or overcome 'difference' cannot occur.

Analysis of the news article in relation to scenario (d):

Examining the whole text, it is obviously assumed that hunting dolphins is a cruel act. This presupposition makes diversities, especially cultural diversities invisible. We cannot deny that it is impossible for human beings to live and survive without anything to eat. Also we cannot avoid the fact that eating itself, in principle, means taking a life, namely, 'killing' living things. Taking a life from any creatures, whether they are fish, birds, mammals, or plants, is 'cruel'. Whether killing or hunting a particular creature and regarding it as food can be debatable in a certain cultural situation. This kind of question may be discussed and described from a viewpoint of cultural anthropology. Of course, I am not in a position to discuss the right and wrong of hunting dolphins, nor do I intend to be involved in ethical or moral issues. Instead, I consistently maintain that I am engaged in a study of analyzing discourses which are produced in a specific place and in a certain times. What I am most interested in is how such discourses can be produced or reproduced in a particular condition. My work is to describe the very condition.

As mentioned before, scenario (d) shows a bracketing of difference, a focus on commonality, solidarity. A bracketing of difference refers to keeping other voices unheard, meant to suppress other points of view. Other opinions or another way of thinking are obscured in the whole discourse, which reproduces each text resulting in reinforcing the orders of the discourse under a particular condition. In the end, through this process, the concept of commonality or solidarity is supposed to be focused. The production of commonality or solidarity cannot be accomplished unless there is any process of deleting difference or voices of others. CDA is concentrated on revealing the very process by the use of linguistic and sociological analyses of the way those texts appear.

Considering the assumption assumed in the news text we discuss now, we can understand the reason why those words of 'slaughter', 'cruel', 'kill', are chosen as a means of giving negative representations to an act of hunting dolphins. Also, this kind of text can contribute to the formation of a certain discourse in which an act of killing *intellectual* mammals including dolphins and whales is never forgivable.

Analysis of the news article in relation to scenario (e):

Finally, we reach the least dialogical stage of scenario (e): consensus, a normalization and acceptance of differences of power which brackets or suppresses differences of meaning and norms. This phase is highly invisible. Most people are not conscious of its function and even its existence. In fact, the dimension of scenario (e) might be beyond the reach of CDA. Between scenario (d) and scenario (e), is there a wide gap, which is not so much a quantitative distance as qualitative one. In the field of analyzing texts within the scope of scenario (d), spotlighting on which words are chosen is very effective to expose the hidden assumption to light. The discussion of what kinds of words are used to place *others* in a negative position is, to be sure, one of successful approaches to CDA.

But, in scenario (e), what is concerned primarily with is 'society' itself. We cannot avoid the following question: what is on earth society? The question is destined to assume an epistemological and ontological character, which seems to be more than CDA can handle because CDA is fundamentally based on linguistic approaches. In view of this point, I attempt to present a perspective on scenario (e). This study adopts the position that I regard 'society' or 'social

custom' as dynamic entities, which appear static but are actually supported by individual practices. Society, which apparently seems solid, can be considered full of changes in progress now. I think this can be discussed from the viewpoint of what M. Foucault considered, stressing the relationship between knowledge and power. In fact, Foucault's concept of 'discourse' should be adapted to the discussion of scenario (e). Such concept includes the scope of the field which conducts an inquiry into power relations. Then, there is concern that the dimension of 'discourse' of CDA is totally different from that of Foucaultian term of 'discourse' even though Fairclough's theory of CDA is partly incorporated by reference to M. Foucault. In Fairclough's work, there seems to be no satisfactory discussion on 'orders of discourse' which can even refuse to be discussed in the discipline of linguistics. This is the confusing point we should be conscious of. Unless we pay any attention to the conceptual difference between 'discourse' which CDA deals with and Foucaultian discourse, we might fall into halfway work that doesn't satisfy the sociological interest of theorists.

So, what attitude should CDA take toward the dimension of scenario (e), or the realm of sociocultural practice? Is CDA supposed to abandon investigating the relationship between language and society beyond the reach of CDA? I want to attempt to answer these questions by spotlighting the concept of 'hegemony'. Hegemony is, I suppose, a kind of negotiating process in a conflict of interests. Individual interests among people in the world are represented as their own utterance, words, or 'voices'. Observing these various expressions of interests means finding out actual texts in which we can see texts corresponding to scenario (a), (b), and (c) whose stages include voices of *others*. The most important approach, here, is to describe the process where each stage of scenario (a), (b), and (c) is transformed into scenario (d) and (e). In other words, we should discuss how dialogicality is disappearing and instead assumptions are getting predominant. This approach requires us to be committed to a new perspective of study: focusing on description about how as times change a certain discourse is to be replaced by another discourse, i.e., about any possible condition which produces or reproduces a particular dominant discourse that regulates our way of thinking and our sense of values through daily discourse practices. In the news text of this study, we could not identify the process of scenario (c). In the scenario (c), we can

observe hegemonic struggles emerge. What is necessary is to gather a number of textual materials in which we can find any traces of voices from *others*. This approach promotes us to pay much attention to the dynamic aspect of discourse practices instead of regarding visual texts as static. What is more, we need to examine and discuss the diachronic change of predominant discourses. Conscious of these spatially and temporally extended phases of actual discourses, we can avoid a superficial analysis, still more we can stay away from the risk of being trapped into textual determinism.

## 5. Conclusion

Let me summarize the main points that have been made in this paper. Throughout this paper we have discussed the concept of hegemony focusing on the scale of dialogicality by investigating the way a certain sense of value is represented in the actual news text. With the help of CDA all we could identify as visual traces is some expressions of an act of dolphin hunting, which emerge in the stage of scenario (d). As a result, there are two approaches left: one is to inquire into the dimension of scenario (e); the other is to find out other texts in which any negotiation of diverse ideas can be observed, and to examine how a certain discourse is getting predominant or ignored as times change. The latter approach requires much time and energy because we have to examine a great number of textual materials over the ages even though we are interested in a particular issue. In order to make CDA valuable, it is necessary to pay much attention to sociological approaches about power relations. Furthermore, we need to be conscious of the possibility and limit of CDA. CDA should not be used as a convenient tool to criticize any contents of texts so as to avoid a superficial analysis.

**Table 1** The whole news texts for analysis

1	Broome suspends sister city relationship with Taiji over dolphin slaughter
2	The Shire of Broome has bowed to international pressure and voted to suspend ties with a Japanese city that annually slaughters thousands of dolphins
3	At an emergency meeting held yesterday, councillors unanimously voted to suspend its sister city relationship with the Japanese whaling port town of Taiji.
4	The suspension will continue for as long as Taiji continues its horrific slaughter of around 23,000 dolphins a year.
5	The council said it would 'respectfully advise' Taiji that Broome would not be able to continue the sister city relationship while dolphins were killed.
6	The council's decision comes after a new documentary, <i>The Cove</i> , revealed the extent of the slaughter to international viewers.
7	Following the film's release, the council was inundated with letters and emails from Australia and the world urging it to end the relationship.
8	Yesterday's decision was welcomed by Broome whale researcher Richard Costin who had threatened to leave the town if the council did not act.
9	'This is a really good decision by the Broome shire. They've been mindful of the links between Broome and Taiji and the establishment of the pearling industry', Mr Costin told <i>The Australian</i> .
10	He said the decision left the door open to discussions between the Shire of Broome and Taiji because the relationship could be resumed if the slaughter stopped.
11	But he said Taiji was unlikely to act. 'At the end of the day Taiji won't take much notice of what Broome does', he said.
12	The council also agreed to help Taiji establish other industries so that the town could survive economically if it abandoned the hunting of whales and dolphins.

Each numerical character (1-12) before sentences indicates its sentence number.

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