**CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS (CDA)**

1. **What is Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)**
* The history of ***CDA*** dates back to **1991** when the linguists: ***Teun van Dijk***, ***Norman Fairclough***, ***Ruth Wodak***, ***Gunter Kress*** and ***Theo van Leeuwen*** attended a two-day workshop in Amsterdam where debates on the critical approach to discourse analysis were held. This workshop is significant in the development of ***CDA*** because it was there that discussions on methodologies and approaches to critical discourse analysis among scholars began.
* ***CDA*** is a practically oriented form of ***DA***. It views language as social practice and thus, addresses social problems. It is concerned with analyzing the ways that ideologies and power relations are expressed through language by focusing on how discourse is shaped by existing power relations and on the effects of discourse – whether it serves to reproduce, undermine or transform the existing relations. And analyzing opaque as well as transparent structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power and control as manifested in language.
* ***CDA*** therefore studies lexis and grammar, presuppositions, implicatures, argumentation and coherence among others from the point of view that they could be ideologically invested.
1. **The characteristics of CDA are as follows:**
2. ***Action*** concerns that discourse is observed as the matter that has goals whether it is to influence, debate, persuade, react, etc.
3. ***Context*** confirms that discourse considers the context such as background, situation, event, condition and all of matters outside of the text and other factors which influence the meanings such as language participants, the situation when text is produced and aimed. Discourse should be interpreted in a certain situation and condition.
4. ***History*** places discourse in a specific social context and cannot be understood without concerning the attached context.
5. ***Power*** elaborates that what discourse forms whether spoken or written language is not neutral and natural but it represents a form of power fight.
6. ***Ideology*** focuses on text, conversation, and others are forms of ideological practice. More specifically, CDA focuses on the ways discourse structures enact, confirm, legitimate, reproduce, or challenge relations of power and dominance in society.
7. **Approaches to Critical Discourse Analysis**
* In their pursuit of the critical study of discourse, analysts apply several approaches to the investigation of power relations and dominance in society. Indeed, **Ruth Wodak** has noted that there is no uniformity or common theory formation that determines ***CDA***. However, there are three major models of critical discourse analysis which are adopted by the three of the leading scholars in ***CDA*** research: ***Norman Fairclough***, ***Ruth Wodak*** and ***Teun Van Dijk***. These approaches are known as the ***Socio-Cultural Approach***, the ***Discourse-Historical Approach*** and the ***Socio-Cognitive Approach*** respectively. They essentially have the same idea of critical discourse analysis, but they have distinctive models of analysis. Generally, they analyze how social and political inequalities are manifested in and reproduced through discourse. It is very clear among researchers that only ***Fairclough*** and ***Van Dijk*** who have detailed models of critical discourse analysis.
1. **Principles of Critical Discourse Analysis:**
* Certain principles for critical discourses propounded by **Fairclough and Wodak** which are as under:-
1. **Social and political issues are constructed and reflected in discourse**: Critical discourse analysis addresses social and political issues and examines ways in which these are constructed and reflected in the use of discourse.
2. **Power relations are negotiated and performed through discourse**: This principle suggests that it could be looked at through an analysis of who controls conversational interaction, who allows a person to speak and how they do this.
3. **Discourse reflects and reproduces social relation**: Discourse not only reflects but also produces social relations. Both are established and maintained through the use of discourse.
4. **Ideologies are produced and reflected in the use of discourse:** This includes ways of representing and constructing society such as relation of power, relation based on gender, class ethnicity etc.
* According to ***Van Dijk***, there are principles which govern all approaches to CDA:
1. ***First***, all CDA research focuses on dominance and inequality manifested in social issues, which it hopes to better understand through discourse analysis. In this regard, theories, descriptions, methods and empirical work are employed on the basis of their relevance to whatever sociopolitical issues which they have identified and intend to study.
2. ***Second***, CDA research is usually multidisciplinary in approach. This is due to its preoccupation with the study of social problems, which are naturally complex.
3. ***Third***, complex and highly sophisticated theories are employed for better understanding of power in society. Relevant theoretical issues are usually deployed in the analysis of the complex relationships between dominance and discourse.
4. ***Fourth***, critical discourse analysts explicitly state their sociopolitical point of view, perspectives, principles and aims, both within their discipline and within society at large. This is because their research in CDA is ultimately political and analysts often stand in solidarity with those who suffer most from dominance and inequality. In most cases, their critical targets are the power elites that enact, sustain, legitimate, condone or ignore social inequality and injustice. However, some CDA research also focuses on the discursive resistance of domination.
5. ***Fifth***, research problems in CDA are ‘***real***’ problems, that is, the serious problems that threaten the lives or well-being of many, and not primarily the sometimes petty disciplinary problems of describing discourse structures.
6. ***Sixth***, the success of a CDA research is assessed by its effectiveness and contribution to change in areas of inequality in political discourse, racism, sexism and gender discrimination, media manipulative discourse, etc.