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Article:
Newman, J orcid.org/0000-0003-3541-7546 (2020) Critical realism, critical discourse analysis, and the morphogenetic approach. Journal of Critical Realism, 19 (5). pp. 433-455. ISSN 1476-7430

https://doi.org/10.1080/14767430.2020.1758986

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Critical Realism, Critical Discourse Analysis, and the Morphogenetic Approach

Published in the Journal of Critical Realism May 2020

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Jack Newman is an early career researcher and teaching assistant at the University of Leeds. He has published on morphogenetic critical realism in the Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour, defending and modifying the approach. His wider research interests include British politics, conservative ideology, and social policy analysis. He is currently working on a realist framework for the analysis of ontological and epistemological assumptions in political discourse and public policy.

Critical Realism, Critical Discourse Analysis, and the Morphogenetic Approach

Abstract

This paper contributes to the development of a critical realist approach to discourse analysis by combining aspects of 'critical discourse analysis' (CDA) and 'the morphogenetic/morphostatic approach' (M/M). Unlike poststructuralist discourse theory, CDA insists on the maintenance of two distinctions: (i) between discourse and other aspects of social reality; (ii) between structure and agency. However, CDA lacks clarity on these distinctions. M/M, on the other hand, offers a coherent modelling of these distinctions that can underpin the application of CDA. The paper begins by introducing CDA, M/M and the existing literature on critical realist discourse analysis. It then establishes the M/M model of social change within CDA's existing social theory by focusing on 'analytical dualism' and 'social practice'. Finally, the paper locates the concept of discourse within M/M's model of social change by theorising discourse as one of four objective structures of meaning.

Key words: critical realism; critical discourse analysis; morphogenetic approach; realist discourse analysis; Archer; Fairclough.

Introduction

This paper seeks to contribute to the ongoing project of developing a specifically critical realist approach to discourse analysis. This is important not just because critical realist researchers need discourse analysis as part of their methodological toolbox, but also because researchers primarily interested in discourse analysis will find critical realism a valuable underpinning to their work. One of the greatest strengths of a critical realist approach to discourse analysis is that it offers a philosophical foundation for two crucial distinctions: on the one hand, there is the distinction between discourse and other aspects of social reality, and on the other, there is the distinction between the causal power of structures and the causal power of agency. Discourse analysts from

various perspectives often find themselves engaging, willingly or unwillingly, with these two distinctions, sometimes fruitfully and at other times in a theoretical tangle. In whatever way they are approached, those two distinctions have a tendency to present themselves in the course of discourse analysis. By offering a rich body of theory to philosophically ground the two distinctions, critical realism can act as a steady foundation from which to conduct discourse analysis, and can more practically contribute to the clarity of the findings and outputs of research on discourse.

Critical discourse analysis (henceforth CDA) is a label attached to a family of different approaches to social analysis but will, in this paper, refer to the work of Norman Fairclough and his collaborators. Fairclough, especially in collaborations with Lillian Chouliaraki, Bob Jessop, and Andrew Sayer, has developed an *explicitly critical realist* approach to discourse analysis. Because of its wide appeal and its explicit subscription to key tenets of Bhaskar's philosophy, CDA is by far the most influential approach to discourse analysis from a critical realist perspective. However, problematically, CDA fails to offer a clear and coherent model of the two central distinctions outlined in the previous paragraph. With the relationship between discourse and other elements of social reality, CDA offers a great deal of potential in its discussion of social practices, social structures, orders of discourse etc., but it lacks conceptual clarity on this crucial theoretical issue and faces the criticism that the distinction is often lost and confused in CDA-guided research (Banta 2013). With the relationship between structure and agency, CDA explicitly commits to an analytical separation of the two concepts, but it then builds a social theory around the notion of 'social practice' without clearly explaining how structure, practice and agency are related (Flatschart 2016).

The morphogenetic/morphostatic approach (henceforth M/M), primarily associated with Margaret Archer, is one of the most prominent critical realist approaches to modelling social change, and as such offers a clear and systematised approach to the two conceptual distinctions that are so problematic for CDA. M/M works from a tripartite meta-theory in which 'social structure', 'agency', and 'culture' are analytically separated so that they can be modelled in a before-during-after schema. Known as the 'morphogenetic cycle', this model provides an invaluable framework for conducting social research and is backed up by an elaborate theoretical

system based on critical realist philosophy. M/M understands 'culture' to be an objective network of ideas formed in language and enshrined in texts. This 'cultural system' is held to have significant causal power alongside social structure and human agency. Despite this attempt to accord a causal significance to language and ideas, M/M offers very little engagement with the concept of discourse and is notably silent on discourse analysis. Therefore, it is the central argument of this paper that a theoretically coherent and practically applicable approach to critical realist discourse analysis is best developed through the dual deployment of M/M and CDA.

As the first sustained attempt to bring these two theories together, the discussion begins in Section 1 with an overview of the two approaches and an overview of existing literature on critical realist discourse analysis. In Section 2, M/M is positioned within CDA's social theory, so that it replaces some existing problematic poststructuralist tendencies and is integrated with the core CDA concepts of 'discourse' and 'social practice'. Section 3 specifies the place of 'discourse' within M/M's model of social change by developing Archer's concept of 'the cultural system' into the broader concept of 'cultural structure', as the objective structuring of languages, propositions, discourses, and texts. The paper ultimately seeks to offer conceptual clarity so that practitioners of CDA might analyse discourse alongside a clear and coherent model of social change.

Section 1: CDA, M/M and the existing literature

Critical realism has a long history of engagement with the concept of 'discourse' through its exchanges with poststructuralist thought. This can be seen in relation to at least three strands of poststructuralism: Laclau and Mouffe's post-Marxism (e.g. Laclau and Bhaskar 1998, Dean 2004), Derrida's deconstruction (e.g. Norris 1990, Wight 2004), and Foucault's archeology (e.g. Joseph 2004, Elder-Vass 2011). Inevitably, exchanges on the frontier between critical realism and poststructuralism (broadly defined) will require some theoretical engagement with the notion of discourse (again, broadly defined). This is because one of the central disagreements between them is whether, and to what extent, discourse can be distinguished from the non-discursive aspects of social reality. Where poststructuralists argue that all knowledge is discourse and that the reality outside of discourse is so unknowable that it is almost irrelevant to a social analyst,

critical realists argue that knowledge is both a 'discursive' product of human society (the 'transitive dimension') *and also* a reflection of the true nature of reality (the 'intransitive dimension') (Bhaskar 1975; Laclau and Bhaskar 1998).

In many of the encounters with poststructuralism, critical realists have rejected discourse as a poststructuralist concept (e.g. Archer 2000). However, this section will explore the attempts that *have* been made to find a genuinely critical realist foundation for 'discourse' and 'discourse analysis'. Through engagement with the existing literature, it will be shown that a critical realist foundation for discourse analysis ultimately depends on a coherent and consistent approach to two relationships: the relationship between the discursive and non-discursive, and the relationship between structure and agency. This section will conclude by showing that, unlike *existing* critical realist approaches to discourse analysis, M/M offers a coherent and consistent approach to these relationships.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

The most focused discussion on the links between critical realism and discourse analysis comes from within CDA. In this paper, CDA is primarily considered in relation to the works of Norman Fairclough, whose seminal work *Language and Power* ([1989] 2014) explores the role of language and discourse in the constitution of social power relations. Fairclough (2003) offers a guide to the actual conduct of discourse analysis but has repeatedly emphasised that CDA propounds a social theory and not merely a toolbox of methods. CDA initially entailed a Foucauldian inspired social theory in *Discourse and Social Change* (Fairclough 1992) before being rebuilt on a critical realist foundation in *Discourse in Late Modernity* (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999). It is important to note that there are many approaches to discourse analysis and multiple forms of CDA (e.g. Van Dijk 1997a, 1997b), but this paper focusses specifically on Fairclough's CDA because of its explicit subscription to critical realism. Henceforth 'CDA' will be used as shorthand for the work of Fairclough and his collaborators. In one way or another, CDA has been central to most critical realist attempts to theorise discourse and its place in social change.

In *Discourse in Late Modernity* (1999), Chouliaraki and Fairclough lay out a social theory for CDA on the basis of a critical realist foundation, explicitly subscribing to the key critical realist tenets of intransitivity (the distinction between knowledge itself and that which knowledge is about) and relational emergence (the belief that emergent entities are *real* because of their unique causal properties). The link between discourse analysis and critical realism is more clearly outlined by Fairclough, Jessop, and Sayer (2002) in their seminal article 'Critical Realism and Semiosis', which insists on the importance of *semiosis* in critical realism. They define semiosis as the "intersubjective production of meaning" (p.40), and highlight the critical realist claim that reasons can be causes. The distinction between 'semiosis' and 'discourse' is discussed below, but for now it suffices to see them as synonyms and note that Fairclough et al (2002) give one of the strongest arguments for the importance of discourse/semiosis in critical realism[1]. The Fairclough-Jessop-Sayer (2002) article was later published as a chapter in Joseph and Robert's *Realism, Discourse and Deconstruction* (2004), an edited work that is to date the most in-depth exploration of 'discourse' from a critical realist perspective. As well as contributing to critical realism's encounters with Derridean and post-Marxist theory, Joseph and Robert's book captures the absolute central issue for critical realist researchers of discourse and social change: "a realist perspective can help us understand the manner in which (non-discursive) social structures are reproduced and transformed through various forms of ideology and discourse" (Joseph and Roberts 2004, 6).

The central difference between critical realist discourse analysis and the various forms of poststructuralist discourse analysis is that the former not only acknowledges the distinction between the 'discursive' and the 'non-discursive' aspects of social reality, but sees its central task as the explanation of the relationship between them. In CDA, Chouliaraki and Fairclough (2010, 1215) insist that it is essential to "keep a constant analytical focus not just upon discourse as such, but on *relations between discourse and other social elements*". The same argument is made by Fairclough et al (2002) and developed by Jones (2004, 43), who embraces CDA's "understanding of how other social structures are maintained and transformed in and through various forms of languages and discourses". Jones offers a particularly lucid summary of CDA's

[1] This framework has been further systematised within Jessop and Sum's 'cultural political economy' approach (see Jessop 2004 and Jessop and Sum 2013).

key elements in his demonstration of its methodological utility for empirical research. In doing so, he highlights CDA's important three-dimensional model, in which researchers must consider three objects of analysis: text, discursive practice, and social practice. Again, we return to the distinction between discourse (text and discursive practice) and non-discourse (social practice). This relationship has remained the central theme in more recent theoretical contributions to critical realist discourse analysis.

Critical realism and discourse analysis

In addition to the work carried out within CDA, a number of other authors have sought to develop critical realist approaches to discourse analysis. This section briefly engages with four of these: firstly, Elder-Vass's incorporation of Foucauldian discourse analysis into his emergentist social theory; secondly, 'critical realist discourse analysis' as developed and applied by Sims-Schouten and Riley (2019; Schouten, Riley, and Willig 2007a and 2007b); thirdly, Banta's (2013) theorisation of discourse as a causal mechanism; fourthly, 'critical realist critical discourse analysis', as outlined by Flatschart (2016). It is notable that these four approaches do not reference one another, indicating the currently fractured nature of critical realist approaches to discourse analysis.

Elder-Vass's (2011) engagement with Foucault sits within his own emergentist social theory (Elder Vass 2010) and in a wider critical realist literature on Foucault. Elder-Vass (2011) adds to the existing attempts to read Foucault from a realist perspective, focusing specifically on his notion of discourse, and arguing that "such an account offers the possibility, above all, of showing how the causal significance of discourse can be reconciled with the causal significance of subjects and that of non-discursive social practices" (Elder-Vass 2011, 144). From this quote, we can see a central concern with understanding the relationship between the discursive and non-discursive. This is a recurring theme running through all critical realist literature on discourse analysis, but Elder-Vass also emphasises the importance of 'subjects' as a third part of this process. By bringing in 'subjects', Elder-Vass invokes a tripartite meta-theory that closely reflects the one that Archer (2013) has developed in M/M. Although Archer and Elder-Vass differ and disagree in numerous important ways, including in their understanding of culture and discourse (Archer and Elder-Vass 2012), such disagreements are beyond the scope of the current

discussion. The emphasis on the importance of the 'subject' or 'agent' is, however, a key contribution from Elder-Vass's realist interpretation of Foucauldian discourse theory.

Sims-Schouten, Riley, and Willig (2007a, 2007b) call for a critical realist approach to discourse in psychology for the central reason that it offers "an analytic focus that includes both the discursive and the non-discursive" (2007a, 102). These authors help specify the distinction by explaining that it exists between "material structures that exist independently of our understanding of them" and "discursive resources and practices that are available to make sense of human experience" (102). A key feature of their argument, which is absent in many other critical realist treatments of discourse, and not clearly specified in CDA, is that understanding discourse relies on clear delineation of the '*non*-discursive'. Sims-Schouten et al (2007a, 106-7) consider discourse as operating alongside three extra-discursive practices: embodied practices, material practices, and institutional practices. However, notably absent is a specifically *critical realist* concept of discourse. The authors instead appeal to poststructuralist notions of 'discourse practice' and Foucauldian discourse analysis (Speer 2007). Implicit in this manoeuvre is the suggestion that critical realism can supply a framework for analysing the extra-discursive, while poststructuralism can provide the framework for discourse analysis. Any move in this direction is clearly untenable because the two approaches contain contradictory ontological commitments to the very relationship between 'discourse' and 'non-discourse'.

Banta (2013) takes the argument forward by directly challenging poststructuralist discourse analysis for its failure to allow for the distinction between discursive and non-discursive mechanisms. Banta (2013, 389-392) outlines a specifically critical realist notion of discourse, which establishes discourses as "intransitive *enough* to be studied as causal objects" (390) on the basis that their relative stability gives them an objective existence, even if this stability "is only accomplished through constant articulations that contribute to its reproduction" (391). Banta then turns to CDA as a methodology for understanding the "dialectic relationship between discourse and society" (392). Although Banta's article convincingly embeds 'discourse' in critical realist philosophy and ultimately finds a great deal of analytical power in CDA, he cites and sides with a number of authors who "point to a disconnect between the methodological foundation of CDA as something that demands an explanation of the discourse-society dialectic,

and the actual success of this in practice" (396). The failure of CDA to convincingly capture this dialectic will be shown in the following section to be based on its appeal to the poststructuralist concept of 'moments'. Where Banta sets out to make the case for critical realist CDA *against* poststructuralist discourse theory, it seems that the weakness he ultimately identifies in CDA is a result of its own poststructuralist heritage.

Flatschart (2016) takes forward very similar themes, arguing that "while Fairclough's work is remarkable both analytically and theoretically, it lacks meta-theoretical clarity and remains (implicitly) at odds with CR regarding certain important ontological questions" (22). Flatschart sees the need to develop a *critical realist critical discourse analysis*, and does so by again turning to the central distinction between discourse/semiosis and society, which he clarifies by asking as a two-part question: "what is the unique quality of semiosis as a social structure and how does it relate to other social structures?" (24). While he agrees with Banta and others that CDA's answer to this question is unsatisfactory, Flatschart digs deeper into CDA's meta-theory in order to identify the sources of this weakness. He specifically focusses on CDA's failure to satisfactorily model the interplay between structure and agency, and its problematic positioning of practices and discourses as 'mediating entities' between structure and agency. One of Flatschart's most important observations is that "semiosis is itself a social *structure*, and not only an *activity*" (25), which adds to Banta's (2013) suggestion that discourse has a relative stability and thus an objective existence. Given the extent and depth of Flatschart's engagement with CDA's meta-theory, and his emphasis on the importance of the structure-agency issue, it is surprising that he does not turn to M/M as a solution to CDA's problems.

The Morphogenetic/Morphostatic Approach (M/M)

M/M will primarily be considered in relation to the works of Margaret Archer, whose *Social Origins of Educational Systems* ([1979] 1984) significantly expanded on Walter Buckley's (1967) 'morphogenetic' approach to social theory. The approach was extensively systematised in two landmark works: *Culture and Agency* (Archer [1988] 1996) and *Realist Social Theory* (Archer 1995). In more recent years, Archer (2000; 2003; 2012) has published extensively on reflexivity and the place of agency in social theory, countering those critics who accuse M/M of structuralism (Mutch 2005). Beyond Archer's work, we also need to consider the

contribution of Doug Porpora, whose key articles on structure and culture offer a great deal of conceptual clarity to M/M (Porpora 1989; 1993). In more recent years, Porpora has contributed directly to M/M, in collaboration with Archer (Porpora 2013) and in his broad-scope project to establish morphogenetic critical realism in US sociology (Porpora 2015). Another theorist who will be considered in this paper in relation to M/M is Alistair Mutch (2005), whose work on social practice in M/M is particularly relevant to CDA (Mutch 2017).

In her most influential work on M/M, Archer sets out a foundational premise: "we are simultaneously free and constrained and we also have some awareness of it" (1995, 2). In this foundational premise, two distinctions are captured: firstly, the distinction between the individual and the constraining/enabling/motivating social context, generally known as agency and structure respectively; secondly, the distinction between the reality of our social situation and our awareness of that reality, known as "the material and the ideational aspects of social life" respectively (Archer, 1996, xi). In M/M these two distinctions come together to produce a tripartite meta-theory of 'structure' (S), 'agency' (A), and 'culture' (C) so that "social life comes in a SAC - always and everywhere" (Archer 2013, 5). In order to understand social change, M/M insists on the need to understand how structure, agency, and culture interact over time.

As a departure point, M/M rejects those theories that fail to clearly distinguish these three social elements; for example, it rejects materialist approaches that reduce culture to structure, and it rejects structuration theory for its conflation of structure and agency. In order to ensure that researchers are able to explain the complex interaction between structure, agency, and culture, M/M insists on 'analytical dualism' whereby these overlapping and intertwining aspects of social reality are separated out into a *before*, *during* and *after* schema. Structure and culture "necessarily predate the action(s) which transform" them (Archer 1995, 138), and cultural and structural "elaboration necessarily postdates those actions" (Archer 1995, 168). From these premises, M/M's analytical framework is built around two main models of social change, one depicting *structural* change/stability (Figure 1) and another depicting *cultural* change/stability (Figure 2). In both models, agents undergo conditioning (T1), they react, act, and interact (T2-T3), and the structure/culture is elaborated (T4).

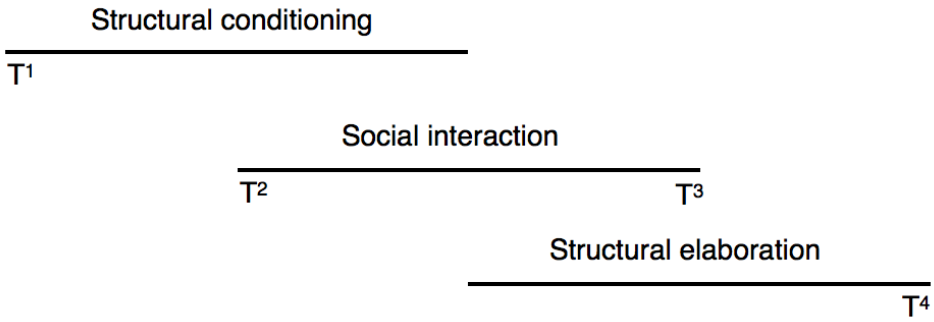

Figure 1. The social/structural morphogenetic cycle

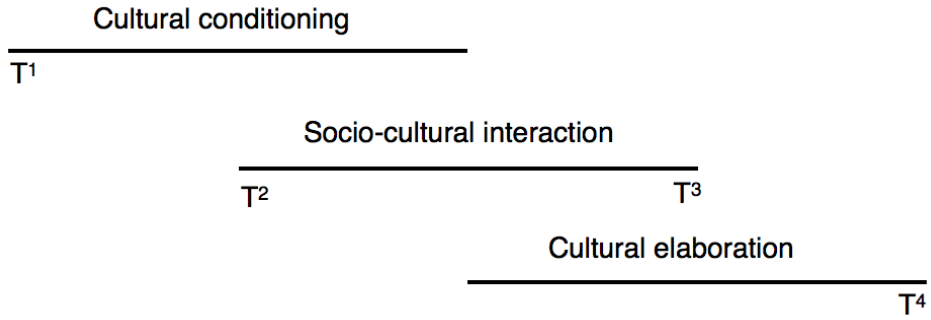

Figure 2. The cultural morphogenetic cycle

In this section, it has become clear that a critical realist notion of discourse needs to offer satisfactory answers to three key questions: (1) what is the relationship between the discursive and extra-discursive?; (2) what is the relationship between structure and agency?; (3) what is the relationship between questions (1) and (2)? M/M sets out to provide answers to these very questions, proposing analytical dualisms between structure, agency, and culture, and modelling their interaction over time. Although discourse could be theorised as an element of M/M's concept of culture (as argued below in Section 3), M/M is notably silent on the concept of discourse and the methodology of discourse analysis. In many of MM's key texts (Archer 1995; 1996; 2000; Porpora 2015), discourse is primarily treated as a poststructuralist concept. Porpora (2015) acknowledges the possibility that a realist theory of discourse might have a place in M/M but does not develop this in any significant detail. To summarise the situation, CDA (and indeed any critical realist approach to discourse analysis) requires, but currently lacks, clear answers to questions (1), (2), and (3); M/M offers clear and elaborate answers to these questions but fails to

offer a critical realist approach to discourse and discourse analysis. Therefore, researchers will find a great deal of utility in their dual deployment.

Section 2: Importing M/M into CDA

This section primarily aims to import M/M into CDA in order to replace CDA's existing treatment of the distinction between the discursive and the extra-discursive, and the distinction between structure and agency. This begins by ensuring CDA's consistent application of 'analytical dualism', the notion that it is necessary to prise apart the emergent layers of critical realist ontology in order to model their interaction over time. Having ensured consistency in this regard, the discussion then moves to the specific place of the M/M cycle within CDA. This is achieved by positioning 'social practices', the central concept of CDA's social theory, within the M/M concept of structure and within the middle element of the M/M cycle. The consistent application of analytical dualism and the importing of the M/M cycle gives CDA a clear and systematic approach to the structure-agency relationship and also offers the basis for a similarly coherent approach to the discursive-extradiscursive relationship. The section concludes with a number of clarifying points about this latter relationship, crucially arguing that discourse can be thought of as a constituent of 'culture' and that culture sits in an emergent chain *in between* 'the material' and 'the social'. This sets the stage for Section 3, where the CDA notion of "discourse" is specifically located within the M/M notion of "culture".

Analytical dualism

The deployment of analytical dualism is an integral prerequisite for the M/M conceptualisation of structure, agency, and culture (Archer 1995), and it offers the potential for a more solid critical realist foundation for CDA. In order to understand analytical dualism, it is necessary to consider the distinction between an 'ontological position' and an 'analytical framework'. An *ontological position* is a set of beliefs about the fundamental nature of reality, including beliefs about one's experience of reality and one's place within it. In the case of both CDA and M/M, the ontological position is a critical realist one. An *analytical framework*, on the other hand, is a set of concepts and theories that can be systematised, communicated, and deployed in empirical research. CDA and M/M can both be seen as analytical frameworks that

rest on a critical realist ontology. However, while M/M maintains coherence between its ontological position and its analytical framework by consistently applying analytical dualism, CDA explicitly ascribes to analytical dualism but fails to apply it consistently and ends up with contradictions between its ontological position and its analytical framework.

M/M subscribes to the critical realist ontological position that structure, agency, and culture are overlapping emergent layers of reality, while simultaneously holding that there is explanatory power in separating them analytically, so that each is treated as a distinct causal entity. Taking this approach allows M/M to maintain a theoretical coherence between its ontological assumptions and its analytical models, while also establishing the potential for those models to be elaborately systematised (Archer 1995; 1996). CDA also claims to approach social analysis using analytical dualism. Fairclough states that he locates 'the analysis of discourse ... within an analytically dualist epistemology' (2005, 916), and he claims to 'take an analytically dualist position ... which distinguishes 'social process' and 'social structure' as ontologically distinct though interconnected facets of the social' (2005, 935). Therefore, in CDA, analytical dualism is not only used to separate structure from process (or 'practice') (Fairclough 2003, 24) but also to separate structure from agency (Fairclough 2003, 22). Indeed, Fairclough identifies Archer's approach as the favoured modelling of the structure-agency relationship in CDA (Fairclough 2003, 22; 2005, 922; Fairclough, Jessop, and Sayer 2002, 30). The references made by Fairclough to the concept of analytical dualism and to Archer's work imply that there is already integration between M/M and CDA on this point but, as we shall see, this is far from the case.

In M/M, analytical dualism involves the separation of intertwined ontological layers, creating analytical separations between culture and structure, culture and agency, and structure and agency (Porpora 2013), producing a tripartite framework of 'social structure', 'cultural system', and 'human agency' (Archer 1995). This approach builds logically from its ontological underpinnings through analytical dualism to its analytical framework. CDA does not achieve this same coherence. Although Fairclough refers his readers to the M/M concept of analytical dualism and to Archer's modelling of structure and agency, it is instead Harvey's (1996) theory of 'moments' that holds a central place in CDA's analytical framework. Harvey (1996) theorises

social processes as having six concurrent 'moments': 'discourse/language; power; social relations; material practices; institutions/rituals; and beliefs/values/desires' (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999, 6). It may initially appear that this six-part meta-theory is just an alternative way of applying analytical dualism, differing from M/M only in the placement of the distinctions. However, the CDA appeal to 'moments' conflates the various aspects of social reality, so that, at a philosophical level, there are tensions with the ontological depths of critical realism, and at an analytical level, the unique causal powers of each entity are no longer discernible.

To demonstrate this, let us consider the following extract from Chouliaraki and Fairclough's discussion of 'moments': 'In so far as these diverse elements of life are brought together into a specific practice, we can call them 'moments' of that practice, and in Harvey's terminology (1996) see each moment as 'internalising' the others without being reducible to them.' (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999, 21). This stands in tension with a critical realist ontology in two ways. Firstly, there is the general characterisation of 'social relations', 'discourse' etc. as 'moments' in a specific practice. To refer to moments of a specific practice rather than underlying causal mechanisms is to reduce those mechanisms to their specific actualisation in particular events. To use McAnulla's (2005, 36) line of argument, this is a form of 'actualism' in which underlying structures are treated as 'descriptive abstractions' that describe events, rather than underlying mechanisms that cause events. As a result, the theory of moments, at least in the form presented in CDA, does not ascribe to the critical realist distinction between the empirical (experienced events), the actual (events that may or may not be experienced), and the real (underlying causal mechanisms that may or may not be realised in events).

Secondly, and more importantly, the suggestion that each moment 'internalises' each other moment is effectively a denial of the notion of layered relational emergence. In the critical realist theory of layered relational emergence, entities are made up of lower-level parts in a specific arrangement; each of those parts are themselves entities made up of lower-level parts in a specific arrangement and so on (Elder-Vass 2010). Chouliaraki and Fairclough ascribe to this view when they recognise Bhaskar's distinctions between the 'physical, chemical, biological,

economic, social, psychological, semiological (and linguistic)', which 'have their own distinctive structures', and 'which have distinctive generative effects on events via their particular mechanisms' (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999, 19). However, this 'vertical' delineation of social reality is not compatible with the 'horizontal' delineation, in which the six 'moments' of social practice *internalise one another* when they are 'articulated' together within practices. Crucially, if each moment internalises every other moment, the commitment to layered emergence is lost, because layered emergence relies on the claim that lower level entities are internal to higher level entities *but not vice versa*.

Even if the six moments were to be interpreted as an analytical device rather than an ontological commitment, the appeal to 'moments' in CDA would represent an analytical conflation, contradicting its claimed adherence to 'an analytically dualist epistemology' (Fairclough 2005, 916). At an ontological level, Bhaskar's critical realism theorises a distinction between closely related ontological layers. At an analytical level, the CDA approach seems to bring those layers together as moments of practice, whereas M/M's analytical dualism prises those layers apart and theorises their interaction over time. Therefore, although CDA and M/M share a critical realist commitment to ontological layers, CDA's appeal to moments takes an approach of *analytical conflation*, unifying the layers in 'practice', which is the opposite of M/M's imposition of *analytical dualisms* between layers.

By replacing the theory of 'moments' with the M/M distinction between cultural system, social structure, and human agency, CDA would avoid contradictions with its critical realist ontology. Furthermore, it would ensure a consistent application of analytical dualism, rather than a confusing combination of analytical dualist commitments and analytical conflationary theories. Finally, it would gain access to M/M's much clearer model of social change within which the role of discourse could be identified. Using the morphogenetic cycle to explain the interaction over time between cultural system, social structure, and agency, would contribute significantly to CDA's attempt to explain discourse in terms of its 'dialectic' with agency and power relations (Fairclough 2014), and ultimately allow it to offer satisfactory answers to the questions raised in the final paragraph of Section 1 (above).

Social practice and the M/M cycle

Although there are many different conceptual distinctions in CDA's social theory, the most important for these for conducting discourse analysis is the distinction between the three parts of the analytical process: (i) the analysis of texts; (ii) the analysis of texts within discursive practices; (iii) the analysis of texts and discursive practices within social practices (Fairclough 2003; Jones 2004). It is here that the morphogenetic cycle can be deployed as part of a critical realist approach to discourse analysis. Rather than analysing texts and discourse within 'social practices', we can instead analyse them within 'social morphogenesis'. This will not only provide CDA researchers with a readily applicable model of social change, which is currently absent in CDA's existing social theory, it will also open the potential for a more sophisticated, and more critically realist, understanding of the relationship between structure and agency. This, in turn, lays the foundation for a clearer understanding of the relationship between the discursive and extra-discursive.

In CDA, 'structures' are held to be the long-term, background conditions of social life (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999, 22); they are, 'very abstract entities' (Fairclough 2003, 23). A structure, such as a 'language', 'defines a certain potential, certain possibilities, and excludes others' (Fairclough 2003, 23) but does not specify which potentials or possibilities are actually realised. With this conceptualisation of 'structure', it is unsurprising that CDA sees the need to bridge the gap between structures and events, and hence the need to adopt the notion of 'social practice'. M/M, on the other hand, does not conceptualise structure merely as an abstract background condition of society, and instead puts structures in amongst the day-to-day activity of human life. Archer's (1995) theorisation of social structure includes the high-level 'systems' to which Fairclough (2003) limits his definition, but it also includes institutions, specific organisations, and the particular roles within those organisations. As Porpora (2015) argues, any relation between two social positions is structural, giving social structure a clear role in all human interaction. It is through these various relations that structures condition agential action at all levels, 'from the satisfaction of biologically grounded needs to the Utopian reconstruction of society' (Archer 1995, 198). With this intersection of structure and agency, the M/M approach seems to leave little space for social practice.

Therefore, in explaining events, M/M opts for a more comprehensive concept of social structure, whereas CDA opts for a minimal concept bolstered by the notion of social practice. Despite this theoretical divergence between the two approaches, the possibility of integration comes with Fairclough's reaffirmation of analytical dualism, and his grouping of social practices and social structures on one side of that dualism. He states that 'we can broadly distinguish two causal 'powers' which shape texts: on the one hand, social structures and social practices; on the other hand, social agents, the people involved in social events (Archer 1995; Sayer 2000)' (Fairclough 2003, 22). On this basis, and noting Fairclough's citation of Archer, the M/M concept of 'structure' can be seen to cover the two CDA concepts of 'structure' and 'social practice'. Therefore, in order to bring these approaches together, we can consider a place for social practice within M/M's broader concept of social structure.

Alistair Mutch (2017) provides the theoretical groundwork for this incorporation. Mutch's first step is to clear up an ambiguity between 'practice' as a verb referring to human action, and 'practice' as a noun referring to a particular repeated course of action. It is the latter concept that Mutch incorporates into M/M, arguing that social practices are attached to roles within social structure, either as a prescribed set of rules or as 'responses to the contingent exigencies of the particular position' (2017, 504). Therefore, roles or positions within social structure require the repetition of particular courses of action as inherent features of those roles; these are social practices. Within the repetition of practices, there will be 'small adjustments in performance such that each [performance] is, at one scale, unique' but does not necessarily disturb 'the overall purpose of the routine' (Mutch 2017, 510). Where agents do disturb the social practice at a more fundamental level, changing it or failing to carry it out, they will change the social structure or their position in it, hence producing morphogenesis. Mutch provides a clear place for practices in M/M, but he does not discuss the concept in relation to CDA, so it is necessary to also consider CDA's specific theorisation of practices.

According to Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999, 22), 'practices vary substantially in their nature and complexity' but 'any practice can be characterised in terms of these three aspects': (1) 'they are forms of production of social life'; (2) 'each practice is located within a network of practices'; (3) 'practices always have a reflexive dimension'.

1. To suggest that practices are 'forms of production of social life' is not to suggest that practices are 'means of production' in a Marxist sense, nor in a broader sense 'ways of producing resources'. Instead, practices entail the production and reproduction of the social context. They can therefore be understood as the stabilising and transformative activities undertaken by agents between T2 and T3 of the morphogenetic cycle.
2. With every practice 'located within a network of practices', it is only those activities stabilised through repetition that become practices. Fairclough argues that, once formed, social practices have the causal power to 'define particular ways of acting' (Fairclough 2003, 25), ascribing to them a structural power. The networking of practices reaffirms this structural notion, so that we could use M/M terminology to say that social structures are relations among social roles, or we could use CDA terminology to say that social structures are networks of practices, but both statements have the same meaning.
3. In order to maintain the crucial notion of analytical dualism, it is important to reject the third point, that 'practices always have a reflexive dimension'. It is not the concept of reflexivity that must be rejected, but the suggestion that reflexivity is a dimension of practice. Reflexivity instead needs to be theorised as a unique causal power of *agents*, and practice as an element of social structure, otherwise we stray back towards 'moments of practice' and analytical conflation, which was shown above to contradict critical realism's ontological depth.

Rather than see reflexivity as a property of practices, we can instead turn to Archer's extensive work on agency, in which she theorises agency as a reflexive process that operates as an 'internal conversation' (Archer 2000; 2003; 2012). There is not the space here to do justice to Archer's theory of human agency, but a few key points can be picked out. Firstly, Archer (2000) rejects the poststructuralist view that the human self is entirely constructed by social forces to the extent that agency is a mechanism of societal-discursive forces; similarly, she rejects the modernist view of the human self as a rational calculator that is unaffected by socialisation. Secondly, Archer (2000, 254-5) proposes a "stratified view of 'the subject'" where an individual always has "a *continuous sense of self*" and a "*personal identity*" that are not the product of social discourses. Thirdly, through their internal conversations and in relation to their social and

cultural positioning, individuals are able to develop projects that they seek to implement as 'social actors' (Archer 1995).

Therefore, the CDA concept of practice can be incorporated into M/M, so long as the analytical dualism between structure and agency is consistently applied. Simply put, the morphogenetic cycle can be reimagined as follows: at T1, structures condition agents; between T2 and T3, agents react, act and interact *within social practices*; at T4, structures are changed or maintained. By assuming that agents act within social practices, it is possible to generate a clearer understanding of the effects they have on the social structure. This understanding can come through analysis of the ways in which agents fulfil, modify, or abandon the practices associated with their social roles. These 'roles' could be jobs, positions within families or friendship groups, political positions etc., or they could be positions of relative inequality. Overall, this positioning of social practices within the morphogenetic cycle allows us to specify exactly where the morphogenetic cycle fits into CDA's social theory, and ultimately allows CDA to offer a satisfactory answer to the structure-agency relationship. However, there remains an outstanding problem: Fairclough and Mutch both discuss 'practices' as '*social* practices', which leaves a question about the place of discursive practice. This brings the discussion back to the question of the relationship between the discursive and the extra-discursive, and although M/M has already shed some light on this relationship, a great deal more clarity is needed.

The material, the cultural, and the social

For the relationship between the discursive and the extra-discursive to be satisfactorily understood, the concepts themselves need clarifying and reworking. This is best done by working briefly through seven key points.

Firstly, just as 'practice' can be used as a verb referring to human action and as a noun referring to a particular repeated course of action (Mutch 2017), so 'discourse' can be used as a verb referring to the production of meaning and as a noun referring to repeated ways of representing the world (Fairclough 2003). Discourse-as-a-verb can be replaced with 'semiosis', so that, following Fairclough et al (2002), 'semiosis' is the intersubjective production of meaning. Therefore, the term 'discourse' can be reserved to refer to a relatively stable way of

representing reality; this treats discourse as a count noun so that there might be *a discourse* or *multiple discourses* (Fairclough 2003).

Secondly, it should not be assumed that discourse exhausts the "ideational aspects of social life" (Archer, 1996, xi). At this point, we can bring in the M/M notion of culture as the structured totality of everything that is 'capable of being grasped, deciphered, understood or known by someone' (Archer 1996, 104). This structured totality can be labelled 'cultural structure', so that 'discourses' can be seen as ways of representing the world that are attached to positions in the cultural structure, just as *social practices* are attached to positions in the *social* structure. We can therefore think of 'discourses' as '*cultural practices*'. The final section of this paper unpacks this in more detail.

Thirdly, the terms 'non-discourse' and 'extra-discursive' should be abandoned. They have served well so far in this paper as simplifying concepts but they contain within them the problematic assumptions that all that is not discourse can be grouped together. Clearly, for the practical application of discourse analysis, which is already often an unwieldy methodology, it is necessary to make some simplifications. However, even the most simplified approach needs a distinction between the *material* and *social* aspects of reality (Hay 2009). Although M/M also lacks clarity on this distinction (Newman 2019), Archer does acknowledge the importance of "the embodied practices of human beings in the world", which can be distinguished from "social relations" (2000, 121). Therefore, on the one hand, there are material structures and embodied practices (for the sake of neatness, they can be called 'material practices'), and, on the other hand, there are social structures and social practices. This echoes the contribution made by Sim-Schouten, Riley and Willig (2007a) as discussed in Section 1.

Fourthly, it is necessary to acknowledge that cultural structures and cultural practices *are a constituent part of* social structures and social practices. Social relations are objective relations between social positions, but objective relations between social positions can only occur because of rules and ideas at the cultural level (Porpora 2015). Therefore, from a critical realist perspective, it is possible to say that social structures and social practices *emerge from* cultural structures and cultural practices *but are not reducible to them*.

Fifthly, a similar emergent relationship exists with material structures/practices as *a constituent part of* cultural structures/practices. Material structures/practices might be the concern of physicists, chemists, biologists, engineers etc. but their place in social theory cannot be ignored, because it is from these material structures/practices that cultural structures/practices emerge, with their material existence in paper, ink, silicon, sound waves, firing synapsis etc. Despite their material existence, cultural structures/practices are themselves real, with their own properties and causal powers.

Sixthly, it is therefore possible to conceive of three emergent layers: (i) material structures/practices, (ii) cultural structures/practices, and (iii) social structures/practices. From the material emerges the cultural, and from the material and cultural emerges the social (Newman 2019). For each of these elements, the morphogenetic cycle can be applied in order to understand the processes of change over time. As a result, human agency is always retained as an important causal force in these three forms of morphogenesis and the relations between them.

Finally, analysts might direct their research towards material morphogenesis, cultural morphogenesis, and social morphogenesis in various ways, but as discourse analysts are primarily interested in the role of *discourse* in changing *social structures*, the focus should be on the role that *cultural morphogenesis* plays in *social morphogenesis*. This is ultimately how M/M can help practitioners of CDA understand "how other social structures are maintained and transformed in and through various forms of languages and discourses" (Jones 2004, 43). There is still a lot of theoretical work to be done here, but the remainder of this paper will pick up on one key task: specifying the nature of cultural structure and the place of discourse within it.

Section 3: Discourse and cultural structure

In this paper, the term 'cultural structure' has been used in place of M/M's usual terminology 'cultural system' (Archer 1996). This is because Archer's 'cultural system' is only a partial account of the wider cultural context. In M/M, the cultural system is theorised as the global totality of propositional ideas and the necessary logical relations between them all (Archer 1996).

The importance of this propositional system is explored below, but it is uncontroversial to argue that there is *much more* to culture than propositional statements. Some of this 'much more' can be accounted for by CDA concepts, allowing us to find a place for discourse. In CDA, *languages* are theorised as semi-functional systems that have causal power through their rules, *texts* are theorised as particular instances of language-use that have causal power through intertextual references, and *discourses* are theorised as interconnected ways of representing reality that exert causal power through the cultural and social practices of which they are a part (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999; Fairclough 2003). Each of these three elements can be added to Archer's propositional system in order to form a broader notion of *cultural structure*. In summary, the conditioning ideational context within which agents act can be termed 'cultural structure' and it can be thought to comprise at least four elements: the propositional system, language systems, intertextual networks, and orders of discourse. Each of these elements will be considered in turn, allowing for further integration of CDA and M/M, and for the positioning of discourse within the model of social change outlined in the previous section.

The propositional system

In order to achieve the analytical dualism between culture and agency, Archer (1996) theorises a separation between *ideas, knowledge and beliefs* on the one hand, and *the use of ideas* on the other. This approach requires the identification of *a realm of objective meaning*, because 'if analytical dualism is to be sustained, let alone prove fruitful, then we need to be able to ascribe properties to systemic relations themselves and in such a way that they do not collapse into judgements of social actors' (Archer 1996, 105). In order to identify 'objective knowledge', Archer turns to Karl Popper's 'distinction between subjective mental experiences, on the one hand, and objective ideas on the other' (Archer 1996, 105; Popper 1972). The former provides a foundation for Archer's notion of 'socio-cultural interaction', which can be thought of as *agents acting within cultural and social practices.* The latter provides a foundation for her notion of 'the propositional system', which can be thought of as a constituent part of 'cultural structure'. Therefore, the 'propositional system' fundamentally relies on the assumption 'that ideas are real and separable from knowing subjects' (Archer and Elder-Vass 2012, 96).

Building on the premise of 'knowledge or thought in an objective sense' (Popper 1972, 108), M/M's propositional system is composed of 'items of intelligibilia' and the 'logical relations between them' (Archer 1996). Intelligibilia are defined as all items that are 'capable of being grasped, deciphered, understood or known by someone' (Archer 1996, 104). Archer seems to imply that subjective ideas in somebody's head become items of intelligibilia when they enter the 'the multi-media archive' (Archer and Elder-Vass 2012, 101); i.e. when they gain a degree of permanence through human technology (e.g. a book, a computer file, a voice recording etc.). As part of the 'archive', intelligibilia are necessarily expressed through language. Intelligibilia expressed through language take the form of propositional statements, entailing claims about reality broadly defined. Because languages are translatable, propositional statements are also translatable, and can therefore be held to form a single global system (Archer 1996).

Within this single global system of propositional statements, every item stands in a necessary relation to every other item in the form of either a *contradiction* or a *complementarity*. Archer mobilises the basic logic that 'nothing can be both p and not-p' (Archer 1996, 109) to justify her claim that the relations between propositional statements are *objective*; she identifies this logical rule as a pre-propositional truth rather than merely another item of intelligibilia (Archer and Elder-Vass 2012). Archer's propositional system is therefore composed of (i) propositional statements, which are held to be intelligibilia that are expressed through language and stored in relatively permanent texts, and (ii) the necessary logical relations between propositional statements, which take the form of contradictions and complementarities, and exist objectively regardless of whether anybody notices their existence.

Fairclough explains that the critical analysis of discourse should focus 'upon its contradictions, via explanatory critique of aspects of the existing reality constituted as dialectical relations between these features of discourses and other social elements' (Fairclough 2014, 16). In other words, we should focus on the contradictions in discourse and their dialectical relations with the non-discursive forces in society. Archer's cultural theory offers a detailed approach to the very project Fairclough describes, with the logical relations in the propositional system taking the form of necessary complementarities, contingent complementarities, necessary contradictions, and contingent contradictions. Each type of logical relation creates a different

'situational logic' and therefore a different conditioning force on individual agents (Archer 1996). Therefore, the explanatory power of Archer's morphogenetic cultural theory can be imported into CDA as a tool for the analysis of contradictions in discourse, a tool that would allow researchers to situate discourse in periods of social change.

Language systems

Written language involves the moving of a pen on a piece of paper or the movement of fingers on a keyboard; these dimensions of cultural practices relate to material structures. Once written, texts have a material existence in paper, ink and silicon. However, language, both in its systems and usage, is a *cultural* entity because it is constituted by its meaning rather than its medium. We can therefore say that language belongs to the cultural realm even if it relies on material structures and practices for its existence. It is therefore important to clarify an ambiguity in CDA (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999), and state that 'touch' and 'sound' are not language systems but are material processes and entities; there are language systems based on touch, such as brail, and language systems based on sound, such as spoken language, but it is the *language* that has meaning, not the material processes themselves.

Before turning to CDA's more substantive claims about language as a structure, it is first necessary to examine the role language plays in M/M. Language is discussed by Archer (1996) primarily in terms of its *translatability*. The translatability of language underpins the argument that the propositional system takes the form of a single international system, in which statements are not lost in translation. Therefore, Archer's position relies on the concept of language to explain the necessary relations between ideas. Intelligibilia only take the form of propositional statements when they are conceived of in language, further demonstrating that language is an essential constituent of the propositional system. However, Archer does not explore the role of language as *conditioning, constituting or expressing* the ideas that form her propositional system, so it is important to turn to CDA to elaborate these points and to establish language as a *causal* constituent of cultural structure.

Building on a critical realist foundation, Chouliaraki and Fairclough argue that although most theories focus on 'either the structural or the actional facet' of language, 'a *dialectic* theory

of language and other semiotic systems is needed to come to grips with [the] properties of discourse' (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999, 47). This dialectic exists between *the language system* and *the social act of language use* (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999), a position that allows us to accommodate the language system as part of cultural structure and language-use as something done by agents. Language, therefore, as with many other elements of social life, is best understood as a dialectic between structure and agency. This is another opportunity to deploy the morphogenetic cycle in CDA so as to explain the dialectic processes of language change. At the structural level, the language system enables and constrains agents in particular ways; for example, many languages enable us to make complex arguments against gender essentialism while simultaneously requiring us to use gendered nouns and pronouns. Agents use language to further a wide variety of projects but, whatever their intentions, agents acting within practices can cause morphogenesis of the language system; certain parts of the system change regularly, while the core elements have a significant tendency towards long-term stability.

Chouliaraki and Fairclough turn to Michael Halliday's system functional linguistics (SFL) as a model for linguistic analysis because it 'has contributed to the task of formulating a theory of language incorporating both the dialectic between the semiotic (including the linguistic) and the non-semiotic social, and the dialectic between structure and action' (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999, 49). These two dialectics offer a point of coherence across CDA, SFL, and M/M because the first, between the semiotic and non-semiotic, can be held to entail the distinctions between the material, cultural, and social, while the second is clearly a restatement of the analytical dualism between structure and agency. In SFL, language is understood in relation to the first distinction by 'arguing that the grammar of language is a network of systems corresponding to the major social functions of language' (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999, 50), whereby language does not simply construct our understanding of reality but also reflects the nature of reality itself. In addition, SFL focuses on the dialectic between text and system, theorising the role of texts as agential creations that hold the potential to change the system from which they are constituted.

Intertextual networks

In CDA, the word 'text' is used very broadly to incorporate 'any actual instance of language in use' (Fairclough 2003, 3), but this definition is clarified in two respects. Firstly, Fairclough explains that 'texts such as television programmes involve not only language but also visual images and sound effects' (Fairclough 2003, 3), suggesting that a text necessarily includes language but can often also include other forms of meaning. The second clarification to the concept of texts is made by Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999) in relation to the distinction between mediated and non-mediated interaction. Non-mediated interaction occurs between people speaking, signing, or touching, whereas *mediated* interaction occurs between people using technologies such as written letters or emails. In CDA, only the latter are considered to be texts. For example, a *transcript* of a conversation is a text, but an (unrecorded) spoken conversation is not (Fairclough 2003). Therefore, Chouliaraki and Fairclough 'understand a text to be a contribution to communicative interaction [...] which is designed in one context with a view to its uptake in others' (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999, 45).

Because any particular use of language becomes a text only when 'a technical medium is used to increase time-space instantiation' (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999, 42), texts are defined in relation to the *material* rather than the *cultural* level, even though they exist in the latter. Unlike the propositional system, which is distinguished by the logical relations between intelligibilia, and unlike language systems, which are distinguished by the relative permanence of language rules, *texts* are distinguished according to their *material* permanence. For example, a book has an existence at the material level as ink on paper while a conversation has an existence at the material level as sound waves, but the difference between them that makes the former a text and the latter not a text is that the former has a greater permanence *at the material level*. Initially, this seems problematic because if a stone carving is more permanent than a book and a book is more permanent than a spoken utterance, there seems to be a scale of permanence rather than a clear distinction. However, this problem is overcome by the specifics of CDA's definition of texts that focusses on the '*increase* [of] time-space instantiation*'* (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999, 42). Non-textual language-use exists only long enough for it to be heard, seen or felt *once*, with the maker and receiver being close enough for the noise, sight, or touch to be transmitted. Texts on the other hand can be 'received' (watched, read, listened to etc.) multiple times, and do not require the presence of the author.

In order to integrate texts with Archer's notion of the propositional system, we can use the concept of 'intertextuality'. Archer's focus on logical contradictions and complementarities is essential for securing the propositional system theoretically, because it demonstrates that every item is necessarily and objectively related to every other item. *Intertextuality is another way in which ideas are objectively structured* and is one that exists alongside the logical networking of ideas. When one proposition or text *references* another, the two are related at the cultural structural level, regardless of whether agents notice the relation. That these relations can exist even in the absence of human observation demonstrates their objective existence. Of course, any intertextual reference had an author at the agential level and, if it is to have any causal influence, it must be noticed by other agents. However, the reference *exists objectively* at the cultural structural level and is one link in a vast network of objective intertextual references.

Orders of discourse

In CDA, 'discourse' has two meanings. Firstly, it is used to refer to a mode of action, specifically the use of language as a social practice (Fairclough 1992). Secondly, it is used to refer to a particular way of representing the world (Fairclough 2003). The distinction between these two meanings is akin to Mutch's (2017) distinction between practices as agential actions and practices as relatively stable ways of acting. Indeed, Fairclough (2003) makes just such a connection between discourses and practices, considering them as equivalents for the cultural and social levels. As with practice, Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999) emphasise the dual meaning of discourse as a constructive ambiguity that helps to overcome the structure-agency problem. However, with this paper having already rejected the analytical conflation of structure and agency, and followed Mutch's structural notion of practice, CDA's constructive ambiguity must be disambiguated. A 'discourse' can be held to refer to a particular way of representing the world and can therefore be theorised as a feature of cultural structure. With regards to the first definition, 'discourse as the use of language', we can instead apply the term 'semiosis' as something that agents do when they produce meaning (Fairclough, Jessop, and Sayer 2002). Because this current section is focused on cultural *structure*, we will put semiosis to one side and focus on discourses as relatively stable ways of representing.

Just as social practices are relatively stable ways of acting that are attached to particular roles in the social structure, so discourses are relatively stable ways of representing that are *attached to beliefs in the cultural structure*. While Archer is right to emphasise the importance of 'propositional statements' and the logical relations between them, it is *also* important to emphasise that the making and believing of propositional statements necessarily entails particular discourses; i.e. particular ways of representing. These representations are inevitable features of propositions that are established through patterns of language and other internal relations of texts (Fairclough 2003). Therefore, any believer of a particular propositional statement will necessarily require and use discourses as part of their belief. As with practices, there is a degree of minor variation within which the belief can still be maintained, but any significant shift in discourses will lead to a change or a loss of the belief.

Just as propositional statements are structured by logical relations, and languages are structured by systems of rules, and texts by intertextual relations, so discourses are also structured. Chouliaraki and Fairclough define 'orders of discourse' as the 'structuring of semiotic diversity' and argue that it is 'a potential which any discourse only selectively draws upon and dialectically reworks', 'analogous to the language system' (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999, 58). Following the approach taken with regards to social practices in the previous section, 'orders of discourse' can be thought of as *a feature of cultural structure* and not as some combination of structure and agency. Chouliaraki and Fairclough base 'orders of discourse' (1999, 59) on the notion of *interdiscursivity*. In this sense, 'orders of discourse' refers to the structured network of discourses, their hybridisation, colonisation, appropriation, interaction and juxtapositioning.

These processes are the structural consequence of agents creating and interpreting texts. Interdiscursivity can therefore be created, changed and maintained through the intentional and unintentional agential interaction with texts. By bringing the notion of discourse into M/M, it is possible to avoid the potential criticism that, because ideas rely on interpretation, they cannot exist objectively. This is because orders of discourse exist at the structural level, constraining and enabling the potential interpretation of any particular propositional statement; discourses are more malleable than intelligibilia but they are located at the structural level due to their relative stability and objective causal power (Banta 2013). While it is important to counterbalance M/M

with a central role for discourse in the creation, constitution and interpretation of ideas, we must not follow Chouliaraki and Fairclough in their notion of a cultural structure composed of nothing more than discourse and language. Archer's insistence on the importance of propositional statements must be maintained against a purely representative and communicative notion of the cultural dimension.

Cultural structure

In this section four elements of cultural structure have been outlined in order to specify the place of discourse in social change. This relatively brief overview has only been able to offer a limited level of detail, so it has instead sought to link together concepts that are more thoroughly outlined in M/M and CDA; readers can turn to those sources for further theoretical underpinnings. However, although relatively light on detail given the weight of the concepts, this section has sought to offer theoretical *clarity,* and to this end, it will conclude with a glossary.

Intelligibilia: Every item that resides in a text and is 'capable of being grasped, deciphered, understood or known by someone' (Archer 1996, 104). They primarily take the form of propositional statements that entail some claim about the nature of reality.

Propositional system: The international structuring of all intelligibilia according to their logical relations, which can take the form of necessary complementarities, contingent complementarities, necessary contradictions, and contingent contradictions.

Language system: A set of malleable but relatively stable rules governing the production of meaning.

Text: Intelligibilia, discourses, and language produced through 'a technical medium [that] is used to increase time-space instantiation' (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999, 42).

Intertextual networks: The networking together of texts according to their explicit references to one another. This could also potentially include implicit references or 'assumptions' (Fairclough 2003), but more theoretical work is required here.

Discourse: A relatively stable way of using language to represent reality.

Orders of discourse: The structuring of different discourses according to relations of hybridisation, colonisation, appropriation, interaction and juxtapositioning (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999).

Semiosis: The intersubjective production of meaning (Fairclough, Jessop, and Sayer 2002).

Cultural structure: Objectively structured meaning, including the propositional system, language systems, intertextual networks, and orders of discourse. There are other aspects of cultural structure not theorised in this paper, including music and images.

Cultural morphogenesis: The processes through which cultural structure is changed or reproduced by agents acting within cultural and social practices.

Conclusion

This paper has considered the place of discourse within a critical realist approach to social change, providing crucial theoretical foundations for critical realist discourse analysis. It has done so by bringing together CDA and M/M. Although CDA is by far the most widely used critical realist approach to discourse analysis, it is built on an unsatisfactory understanding of two key relationships: the relationship between discourse and other aspects of social reality, and the relationship between structure and agency. This is particularly problematic given that these two relationships are the defining difference between critical realist and poststructuralist approaches to discourse analysis. The central task of M/M is to provide a systematic modelling of these relationships that can be used as a framework for empirical research. M/M thus offers a readily applicable model of social change that considers the interaction over time between cultural structure, social structure, and human agency. Although this model of social change is potentially very useful to discourse analysts, it has rarely been used for this purpose because M/M is notably silent on discourse and discourse analysis. Therefore, the theoretical integration

of CDA and M/M is a crucial step in the ongoing project to develop a critical realist approach to discourse analysis.

The theoretical integration of CDA and M/M undertaken in this paper does not represent a comprehensive unity. Instead it has involved the linking together of concepts and models so that discourse can be positioned within an M/M approach to social change, and an M/M approach to social change can be positioned within CDA's broader approach to analysis. To this end, it has been argued that 'analytical dualism' must be consistently applied in CDA, and that practitioners of CDA can use the M/M cycle to analyse 'social practice'. Specifically, distinctions were drawn between social structure (as objective relations between social positions), social practices (relatively stable ways of acting attached to social positions), and agency (the unique causal power of the human agent). In order to specify the place of discourse within this model, distinctions were also drawn between three emergent layers: the material (the natural and physical aspects of reality), the cultural (the semiotic and ideational aspects of reality), and the social (the relational and organisational aspects of reality). Each can be thought to have a structure with associated practices, and each can be changed and maintained by human agents. Discourses, as relatively stable ways of representing reality, are cultural practices that are networked together as part of cultural structure. Thought of in this way, discourses can be included in the M/M model of social change, which can in turn be included within CDA. This combination provides an ontologically coherent and analytically powerful approach to critical realist discourse analysis.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to all those at the International Association for Critical Realism Conference 2019 who provided feedback on this paper. Thank you to Nord Sovik for a very fruitful and ongoing exchange of ideas. And an extra special thanks to Jenny Pinder for giving many hours towards the editing of my work.

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