Discussion

Causal cognition and socio-cognition in critical discourse analysis: A reply to Rick Iedema

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1. Introduction

I am responding to Rick Iedema's (2004) extensive review article on my book, 'Critical Discourse Analysis and Language Cognition' (Edinburgh University Press, 2003), referred to mistakenly by Iedema as 'Critical Discourse Analysis and Cognitive Linguistics'. His is a highly selective piece. Such a review is not necessarily problematic if the author also appreciates the overall aims and scope of a work. On the evidence of Iedema's article, this is not the case. Crucially, what is missing is an understanding that the main cognitive focus of my book is different but complementary to the one he is familiar with in CDA. This omission may flow, in part, from Iedema not providing an adequate, accurate summary of the book. His synopsis runs to only three sentences (though for his 'own understandings and uses of CDA', he uses around 900 words!). I will thus spend some time summarising the book.[1] Later, I will address Iedema's misunderstandings.

The key thing I want to do in this space, however, is draw attention to a particular type of cognition that features in part of CDA, as well as highlight problems in the assumptions that CDA holds around this form of cognition. *Socio-cognition* is the type that would seem to relate to the CDA research of Iedema mentioned in his article; socio-cognition is a habitual focus in CDA. Another – *causal cognition* – before my book had been published had not been extensively revisited in CDA since the inception of Critical Linguistics (Fowler, Hodge, Kress, & Trew, 1979; Kress & Hodge, 1979). My book problematises assumptions around causal cognition in Critical Linguistics, particularly with regard to pragmatic inferences generated from

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[1] Given space constraints, my summary is largely untechnical. I refer the reader to O'Halloran (2003) for a more technical perspective.

reading hard news reports which mystify the agency behind an event. Causal cognition, and the demarcation between it and socio-cognition, are key aspects of my book, but are not treated as such in Iedema's review article. Lastly, I will respond to what Iedema says with regard to comments I make on two passages from Michael Halliday's work in systemic functional grammar.

2. Causal-cognitive analysis and socio-cognitive analysis

2.1. Fairclough's framework

My book aligns itself with Norman Fairclough's tripartite framework for doing critical analysis of text and discourse (Fairclough, 1992, 1995, 2001). *Description* involves systematically describing what linguistic features are in a text. *Interpretation* focuses on the relationship between text and interaction. In Fairclough's framework, this is referred to as 'processing analysis' (see Fig. 1), indicating that it is the cognition of text, written and spoken, which is the focus of this stage. 'Processing analysis' is a form of discourse analysis, where discourse refers to the meanings made from a text by a reader or speaker in a particular context.[2] I call this discourse (1) in the book. In *explanation*, CDA explains connections between texts and the wider social and cultural context. Explanation has a focus on a different kind of discourse, the one associated with the work of Foucault—ways of talking and thinking that are bound up with world views associated with those with power. To avoid confusion, I call this discourse (2) in the book.[3]

It is in the interpretation stage that my book's focus lies. It mentions two types of processing analysis in the interpretation stage: socio-cognitive discourse (1) analysis and causal-cognitive discourse (1) analysis.
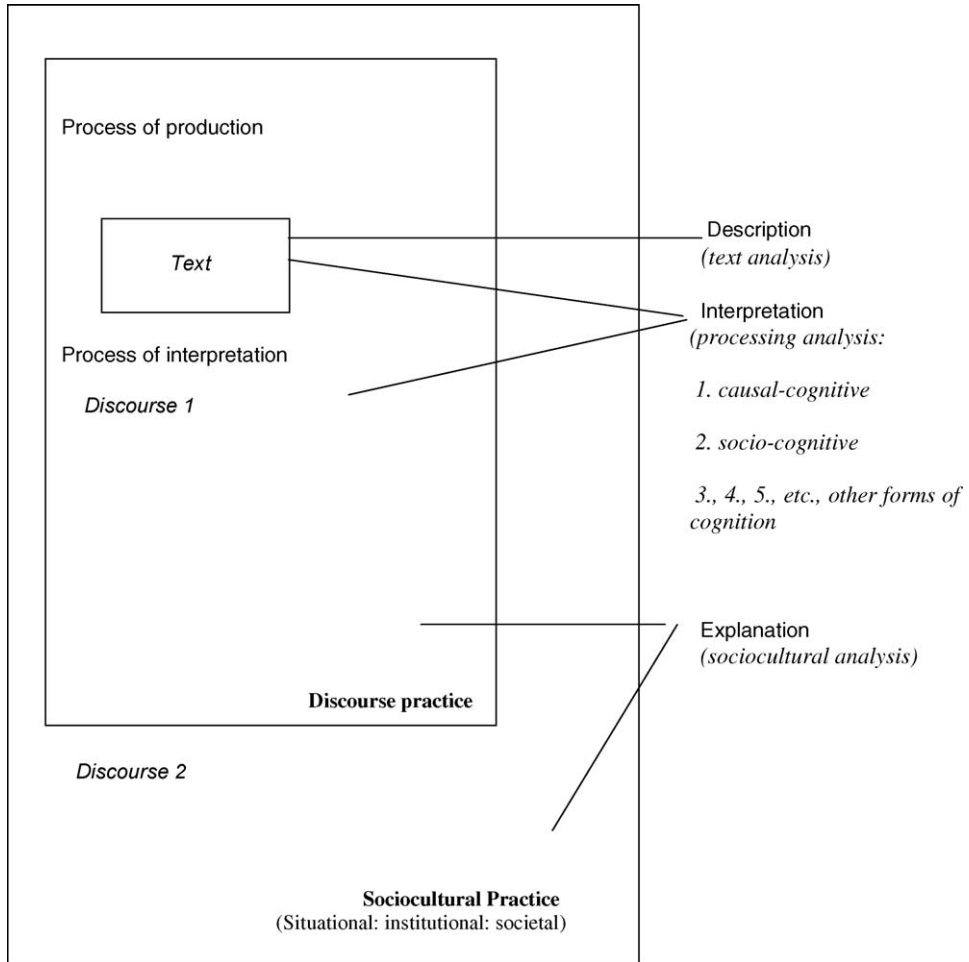
2.2. Socio-cognitive discourse (1) analysis

When CDA explains how wider social and cultural contexts and power relations within them (discourse (2)), might shape the interpretation (discourse (1)) of a text, the focus is on a particular kind of interpretation of text—*socio-cognitive* interpretation (e.g. see Fairclough, 1992).

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[2] The notion of discourse as the interaction between text and context (i.e. discourse 1) is one found in the work of the critical discourse analyst, Norman Fairclough (e.g. Fairclough, 2001) as well as in the work of the CDA critic, Henry Widdowson. In Fairclough's (1996) reply to Widdowson (1995), he acknowledges that his distinction between 'text' and 'discourse' is 'roughly similar to Widdowson's' (Fairclough, 1996: 49). A recent distinction between 'text' and 'discourse' (1) can be found in Widdowson (2004, p. 8):

> '. . . identifying something as a text is not the same as interpreting it. You may recognize intentionality but not know the intention. This is where discourse comes in, and why it needs to be distinguished from text. . . . [W]e achieve meaning by indexical realization, that is to say by using language to engage our extralinguistic reality. Unless it is activated by this contextual connection, the text is inert. It is this activation, this acting of context on code, this indexical conversion of the symbol that I refer to as discourse. Discourse in this view is the pragmatic process of meaning negotiation. Text is its product.'

[3] There is another use of 'discourse' which has some currency in linguistics. 'Discourse' is sometimes used to refer to language which is above the level of the clause or sentence. But, the concept of 'text' covers language which is above the level of clause or sentence. Why is this third definition of 'discourse' needed? Furthermore, there are many texts in everyday life which are below the level of the clause, e.g. 'DANGER', 'EXIT' (see Verdonk, 2002, p. 17). This third definition of 'discourse' would not cover such texts so it not only otiose but misplaced.

Dimensions of discourse   *Dimensions of discourse analysis*

Fig. 1. Based on the figure in Fairclough (1995, p. 98), with some additions. Used with the permission of Pearson Education Ltd.

Socio-cognitive interpretation in CDA is thus usually rooted in a Foucauldian perspective. In doing socio-cognitive analysis, however, CDA does not always draw on cognitive theory.[4] 'Cognitive' in 'socio-cognitive' may just refer to socially situated 'understandings'. Iedema's own research into health care seems to me to be socio-cognitive since he looks at how clinicians 'understand, organize and communicate their work' (p. 414) and how 'some professionals succeed in structuring the terms of the debate over what is 'good care' and in doing so exclude others' (p. 416). From what Iedema writes about his perspective on the mind in relation to 'sit-

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[4] van Dijk is one critical discourse analyst who does draw on cognitive theory in socio-cognitive analysis (e.g. van Dijk, 2002). See also the section on 'socio-cognitive studies' in Fairclough and Wodak (1997).

uated social-dialogical practice' (p. 415), socio-cognition would indeed appear to be his main cognitive focus. I would not want to dispute that this is a valid perspective. Far from it. But if it is the only one taken in CDA in relation to the mind, it limits CDA.[5] While I discuss socio-cognition (and my book has implications for ascertaining what kinds of socio-cognitive inferences are more likely to be made by 'non-critical readers'), it is not a central aspect of the book.

2.3. Causal-cognitive discourse (1) analysis

A central focus of my book is the role of causal cognition in the interpretation stage of CDA. This is a form of cognition which is relevant to how readers make pragmatic inferences around causal relations signalled in texts. Since I have a pragmatic focus I am more interested in causal relations which are implied rather than explicit. (The kinds of pragmatic inference my book looks at are usually referred to as implicatures: Grice, 1975; Sperber & Wilson, 1995). The main type of text I look at is hard news (reports of conflicts, disasters, disputes, etc.). In a critical analysis of implied causal relations in hard news, our reading can be guided by certain questions: who was responsible for an action?; what was their goal?; what were the results of an action? And so on. But that is in *analysis*, a procedure which requires much effort. What of reading for gist, the kind of reading which can characterise a 'non-critical reader' who is not expending as much effort? As I show in my book, such a reader is only likely to make certain causal inferences at the expense of others. It is in the inferences that this reader does *not* make that mystification can arise with regard to implied causal relations in hard news texts. In other words, news texts can be configured so that the non-critical reader may end up with a mystifying mental representation of the agency involved in the event being reported, due to the low amount of effort they invest. To show this systematically for hard news, I build a model of a low effort gist reader – *the idealised reader* – from a combination of compatible elements from four cognitive paradigms which emerged in the 1980s and 1990s: cognitive linguistics, connectionism, psycholinguistic work on inference generation; Sperber and Wilson's (1995) relevance theory from pragmatics. My perspective is on inferences which are dependent on a contextual condition, i.e. how much cognitive effort is invested in reading. This is another reason why I am interested in pragmatic inferences, as opposed to semantic inferences, since the latter are not dependent on contextual conditions for their generation.[6]

My book is concerned with the processing principles behind the way that readers automatically process information in hard news text with regard to what is causally relevant, principles which

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[5] Causal cognition and Foucauldian socio-cognition are not the only approaches to mental explanation in CDA. The CD analyst, Paul Chilton, shows how insights from evolutionary psychology can be used in an analysis of racist discourse (see Chilton, 2005). I have used evolutionary psychology myself in a critical discourse analysis of a newspaper website, which campaigned for parents to be given information about sex offenders (see O'Halloran, 2005).

[6] I use the modifier 'pragmatic' in 'pragmatic inferences' since not all inferences are pragmatic ones. Some may be semantic, i.e. not dependent on context. Inferences that are relevant to Halliday's functional grammar are semantic ones. For example, semantic role assignment (participant role assignment in Hallidayan linguistics) in the following sentence involves inferences in assigning AGENT (ACTOR) and AFFECTED (GOAL) to the relevant sentence constituents and then making an inferential link between these semantic roles:

The child was rescued by the fireman.

can be regarded as universal since they relate to the 'hardwiring' of our human neurophysiology; all four cognitive paradigms carry the presumption of universality and generalisability. Now of course when people read news text, a socio-cognitive perspective will be highly relevant too. But different methods in discourse analysis will have their respective, valid zones of application. Since I use the idealised reader to highlight whether absences from a text are likely to be conveyed into the discourse (1) of a gist reader, and thus result in causal mystification of the events being described, the focus of the idealised reader:

> '. . . is then principally on what is *absent* from hard news text rather than what the reader *brings to* the news text in terms of their social-situatedness.'   O'Halloran (2003, p. 218)

Social-situatedness is, then, not a feature of the idealised reader model. Another reason social-situatedness is not a feature is because the contextual variable of the idealised reader model is a non-social-situated one: the amount of cognitive effort that someone decides for themselves to invest in reading hard news. Since this is a non-social-situated variable, this means that one can, on the basis of the idealised reader model, widely generalise the type of causal inferences not likely to be made in the cognition of hard news text by a low effort investing (non-critical) reader. A socio-cognitive perspective naturally does not offer the same kind of generalisability of inferences not made in reading a particular hard news text since social-situatedness is so variable. Another difference is that, while a causal-cognitive perspective on hard news, in being non-social-situated, is not time-bound, a socio-cognitive analysis of hard news is time-bound. This can create a problem since:

> . . . the longer empirical socio-cognitive investigation takes place after the appearance of the news article, the more likely subjects may activate, as being relevant, general background knowledge which was acquired *subsequent* to the appearance of the news article . . . Clearly, this leads to misleading results.   (O'Halloran, 2003, p. 218)

However, the time-bound nature of a hard news story can be circumvented if the empirically oriented socio-cognitive focus is on how readers engage with representations in many news texts of a particular *topic* over a period of time such as 'sexual harassment' (Christie, 1998) or 'poverty' (Meinhof & Richardson, 1994). So, given these different zones of valid application for causal-cognitive and socio-cognitive analyses with regard to hard news, and their different aims and scopes, I see these foci as complementary (O'Halloran, 2003, p. 259). Any research method in discourse (1) analysis is ultimately only a partial understanding of discourse (1), since cognition is so complex. Using complementary perspectives is, then, desirable since it helps to offset this partiality. There is also the possibility that a socio-cognitive focus and a causal-cognitive focus can be combined. I indicate this in my conclusion (O'Halloran, 2003, pp. 258–259) since such an enterprise was way beyond the scope of my book.

One of the reasons I constructed the idealised reader model is that empirical psycholinguistic, causal-cognitive analysis of hard news is so difficult and cumbersome to achieve (O'Halloran, 2003, pp. 219–220). While this reader model is idealised, it is, all the same, informed by consensus empirical work in psycholinguistics, and is compatible with elements from three other cognitive paradigms. This affords it validity in highlighting how the low effort gist reader is likely to make fewer pragmatic inferences, in understanding causal relations in hard news, than the high effort investing analyst. The idealised reader model thus helps the critical discourse analyst avoid over-interpreting a text from the perspective of the non-critical gist reader. In contrast, socio-cognitive analysis in CDA is not always empirically informed, does not always take account of the contextual conditions of target readers of the text under scrutiny, and thus may wrongly

assume that the critical discourse analyst is replicating the reading perspective of target readers (see Widdowson, 2004, pp. 147–164).[7]

3. Critical linguistics, symbolism and causal mystification analysis

The origin for causal mystification analysis in CDA is the seminal 1970s' work of Kress and Hodge (1979) and Fowler et al. (1979), which initiated Critical Linguistics. Here is an example of analysis of mystifying causes in a hard news text in Trew (1979, pp. 98–99):

> Eleven Africans were shot dead and 15 wounded when Rhodesian police opened fire on a rioting crowd of about 2,000 in the African Highfield township of Salisbury this afternoon.
> (The Times 2 June 1975)

> 'Not only is it [The Times report] in the passive, but the syntactic agent is deleted ('11 Africans were shot dead by . . .') **and is identified only weakly by implication** through the temporal conjunction with the police opening fire . . .'   [my bold]

In Trew's analysis, implicitly the cognition of sentences and the inference drawn are separate. This implicit assumption of mental representation echoes the approach to modelling cognitive processes known as *symbolism*. Symbolism characterises the first wave of artificial intelligence (e.g. Turing, von Neumann) which emerged after the second world war, which in turn was influenced by logical empiricist philosophers in the early twentieth century such as Russell, (the early) Wittgenstein and Carnap. In symbolism, inferences are separate from and succeed the processing of structured symbols. Syntactic/semantic representation has priority in symbolism and this can be seen in Trew's assumption that the inference is weak. As I indicate in my book, the Critical Linguistic approach to mystification carries other related, implicit symbolic assumptions of mental representation. This is understandable, since in the 1970s, the four non-symbolic cognitive paradigms, which form the basis of the idealised reader model, had yet to emerge. I show how these four paradigms question assumptions of cognition and mental representation in Critical Linguistics with regard to mystification analysis of causal relations in hard news texts. This is because in these paradigms, elements of processing are not serial but holistically simultaneous; moreover, text is seen as a *cue* of cognition and a *trace* of the cognition of the speaker/writer. In fact, from the perspective of the idealised reader model, the inference Trew refers to is not 'weak' in mental representation since human beings are geared automatically to seek causal relevance from informational cues.

In my book, I treat Critical Linguistics as one part of CDA, in line with the perspective of two principal figures in CDA, Norman Fairclough and Ruth Wodak (O'Halloran, 2003, p. 12). In Fairclough and Wodak (1997), CDA is not a unitary enterprise since it consists of: Critical Linguistics, Socio-Cognitive Studies, Social Semiotics, Sociocultural Change and Change in Discourse, Discourse-Historical Method, Lesartenanalyse, Duisburg School and French Discourse Analysis. These sub-enterprises of CDA feed into one another. For example, there are 'Critical Linguistic moments' in Fairclough's book, *Language and Power* (2001), when he focuses on mystifying causal relations in hard news text. When I draw attention to problems in CDA in my book, I am principally highlighting the problematic symbolic assumptions of mental representation

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[7] I am not including Rick Iedema here since the socio-cognitive research he conducts, as reported in Iedema (2004), is empirically oriented.

in: (i) the original texts of Critical Linguistics, and (ii) where Critical Linguistic analysis of causal mystification continues to take place in CDA.

4. Iedema's framing

By now it should be clear that the scope of my book – causal cognition in the interpretation stage in relation to mystification in hard news reading – is only one specific part of CDA. Below is the extent of Iedema's synopsis of my book in his 4500 words article:

> 'Kieran O'Halloran's book talks about the principles of critical discourse analysis (CDA) and relates these principles to cognitive endeavours emanating from connectionism and cognitive linguistics.' (p. 413)

> 'The book's main argument is that CDA does not take account of the kinds of findings produced by cognitive linguistics endeavours over the last two decades, and that CDA works with impoverished notions of interpretation and cognition. Examples are cited from the 'CDA' literature to argue that claims about what readers will understand from reading particular kinds of linguistic phenomena are flawed due to inadequate assumptions about readers' mental workings and inclinations.' (p. 415)

Where is the mention of pragmatic inference generation, the particular focus on causal cognition and hard news, the idealised reader and low effort expenditure in reading? None of these is mentioned in Iedema's review article even though they are crucial to my book. The mention of 'cognitive linguistics endeavours' in the second quotation is curious. I have said that Iedema mistakenly refers to my book as 'Critical Discourse Analysis and Cognitive Linguistics'. On p. 418, puzzlingly he says 'the work emanating from within Hallidayan linguistics could be of great interest and importance to cognitive linguistics'. On the same page, he takes issue with me for not doing something which would have been to 'his discipline's benefit'. Iedema seems, then, to categorise me as a cognitive linguist. But at no point in the book do I say I am such a thing. I would not call myself a cognitive linguist since: (i) my book involves application only of cognitive linguistics; (ii) I only apply certain aspects of cognitive linguistics in CDA, e.g. the notion of basic-level categorisation but not conceptual metaphor theory. In any case, there are *four* (non-symbolic) paradigms drawn on in the book, not just cognitive linguistics, each with chapter-length treatments and applications. Nowhere in the review does Iedema mention this fact.

In the first quotation above, Iedema frames me as talking about 'the principles of CDA', as though I were dealing with CDA generally. He does something similar when he says:

> 'I am less sure about whether CD analysis can be characterized as 'mystification analysis' …' (p. 416)

However, I most certainly do not say this and nor do I deal with CDA generally:

> 'Although my focus is only on one part of CDA – mystification analysis in its interpretation stage – I often use the term CDA to refer to practitioners who have been involved in such analysis. Let me be clear that this use of the reference term CDA is only for the sake of convenience. I am certainly *not* dealing with the whole of CDA.' O'Halloran (2003, p. 5)

And because I do not deal with the whole of CDA, this is why I do not claim CDA generally is symbolic which Iedema (pp. 417, 418) misreads me as doing. I only claim one part of it is, i.e. the causal-cognitive focus on language mystification in Critical Linguistics.

Iedema also frames my book as not understanding the relationship between Critical Linguistics and CDA. For Iedema, Critical Linguistics and CDA are 'epistemically' separate. This is true if what is being referred to is their respective social-theoretical bases. But, as the reader will know by now, social theory/social-situatedness is not my focus. Since (i) as my book shows, Critical Linguistics is still being used in CDA (often with explicit citation of Fowler et al., 1979; Kress & Hodge, 1979); (ii) on Fairclough and Wodak's (1997) outlook, Critical Linguistics is part of CDA, I am warranted in treating Critical Linguistics as being part of CDA. And because I treat Critical Linguistics as such, I do not 'equate' it with CDA as Iedema implies I do (p. 416). Iedema (p. 414) actually cites Fairclough and Wodak (1997) as containing CDA's 'explicit statements of purpose' so one might expect him to know what Fairclough and Wodak signal about the relationship of Critical Linguistics to CDA. He also indicates (p. 417) 'socially-sensitive' thinkers I should have taken account of (e.g. Heidegger) but as far as I can see they do not have direct relevance for causal cognition, mystification analysis and pragmatic inference generation. And if they do, then Iedema needs to say how. The book is criticised for neglecting 'Foucault', 'power' and 'practice'. I do mention these in relation to socio-cognition, but do not sustain treatment of them since socio-cognition is not a central focus of mine.[8]

What in effect Iedema does is read the book though a socio-cognitive lens. This makes it seem that I am at fault in not dealing extensively with social-situated CDA principles and concepts, as well as socially-sensitive theorists, when none of these is directly relevant to the book's causal-cognitive focus. Iedema's piece is like a review from an art critic who, in only 'doing' representational art, criticises an abstract artist for painting portraits which do not look like people.

5. Halliday's systemic functional grammar and critical linguistics

In its focus on mystifying language, Critical Linguistics has drawn since the 1970s on aspects of Michael Halliday's systemic functional grammar. Halliday's ideational metafunction, since this relates to language and representation and thus causal mystification analysis, has been particularly relevant for Critical Linguistics. I thus have some focus on the ideational metafunction. In doing so, I highlight implicit symbolic assumptions in quotations from two key 1970s' works (Halliday, 1971, 1978) on this metafunction. In turn, this helps to explain the symbolic assumptions of mental representation in Kress and Hodge (1979) and Fowler et al. (1979). With reference to these quotations, Iedema (p. 418) argues I make:

> '... quite unexpected claims about Halliday's views ("For Halliday language 'embodies' or 'encodes' a person's cognition"   [O'Halloran, 2003], p. 80...)'.

However, in not citing the sources for the quotations from Halliday, he gives the misleading impression that 'encodes' and 'embodies' are my words rather than Halliday's.

Halliday's grammar is unconcerned with pragmatic inference generation, i.e. a main focus of my book. So, I do not dwell on Halliday. Surprisingly, my relatively very small focus on Halliday seems to have had something of a 'butterfly effect' given the volume of Hallidayan perspectives and references, not to mention quotations Iedema produces to show Halliday is non-symbolic. However, these do not refer explicitly to Halliday's ideational metafunction, nor do they refer

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[8] I am accused of neglecting discussion of 'politics'. In the last substantive chapter, in an extensive analysis via the idealised reader model, I show how a hard news text about an eco-protest is likely to be mystifying about the aims of the protest, in low effort reading. Obviously the analysis has 'political' ramifications even if I do not use the term.

directly to the passages from Halliday I highlight. Logically, both of these are needed if Iedema is to rebut the claims I make. It may be that Halliday uses non-symbolic perspectives for other foci. But, using extracts from, and citations to, other writings from Halliday will not transform the passages I cite from Halliday (1971, 1978), on the ideational metafunction, into non-symbolic ones.

Perhaps, though, Halliday no longer holds implicit symbolic attitudes as regards the ideational metafunction. Let me find out if this is the case by probing a recent perspective on the ideational metafunction, and from another key work, one now in its 3rd edition:

> 'It is clear that language does – as we put it – **construe** human experience. It names things, thus construing them into categories; and then, typically, goes further and construes the categories into taxonomies, often using more names for doing so. So we have *houses* and *cottages* and *garages* and *sheds*, which are all kinds of *building*; *strolling* and *stepping* and *marching and pacing*, which are all kinds of *walking*; *in*, *on*, *under*, *around* as relative locations and so on . . . More powerfully still, these elements are configured into complex grammatical patterns like *marched out of the house*; the figures can be built up into sequences related by time, cause and the like – there is no facet of human experience which cannot be transformed into meaning. In other words, language provides a **theory** of human experience, and certain of the resources of the lexicogrammar of every language are dedicated to that function. We call it the **ideational** metafunction . . .'
>
> Halliday and Matthiessen (2004, p. 29)

Halliday and Matthiessen say that 'there is no facet of human experience which cannot be transformed into meaning'. 'Human experience' would not only include sensory experience but how we understand our sensory experience in line with what we consider relevant to the context. After listening to shouting coming from our neighbours' house, we may infer that when we hear or see the husband has 'marched out of the house' that a marital quarrel has occurred. In relation to the same context, if the husband were reporting to us in an email that he 'marched out of the house', we might infer that his choice of 'marched' indicated he was upset. And what do Halliday and Matthiessen mean by 'meaning'? With their scope of 'human experience', they might seem to be dealing with meaning in a very general sense. In fact, with their taxonomic focus on categorisation, they are only referring to semantic meaning. In contrast, a pragmatic meaning perspective on categorisation would seek to indicate how the semantic potential of categories is actualised differently though the generation of inferences which are relevant to the particular context. Indeed, given the rich variety of possible contexts, a potentially large number of inferences in discourse (1) can be drawn from the *same* lexical/lexicogrammatical symbols. So, other contexts will lead to different inferences being generated from the utterance 'marched out of the house'. There is then an implicit symbolic assumption on the part of Halliday and Matthiessen, in the quotation above, that structured linguistic symbols (e.g. 'marched out of the house') have close mental analogues ('experience'). This is what the philosopher of mind, Andy Clark, refers to as 'gross internalism' (Clark, 1996, pp. 1–2).[9] It is in their taking a semantico-syntactic perspective only, and thus ignoring a pragmatic, relevance-driven, inferential perspective, which accounts for why Halliday's outlook in the quotation above is still implicitly symbolic as regards the ideational

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[9] One of the non-symbolic paradigms I draw on in my book, connectionism, is characterised for Clark (1996) by 'gross descriptivism'; common-sense constructs such as 'proposition', 'sentence', etc. are just handy 'descriptions' of mental activity. In 'gross descriptivism', there are no neat analogues to common-sense constructs.

metafunction. Saying that 'language' –, i.e. that which we take our bearings from in the making of pragmatic inferences relevant to our contexts – 'is a theory of human experience' is akin to saying a map is a theory of how we make a journey.

I should stress that finding an implicit symbolic assumption in the quotation above does not invalidate Halliday's grammar with regard to the ideational metafunction. (Indeed, I am a user of 'An Introduction to Functional Grammar'.) What it does is to help us see very clearly where its valid zone of application lies with regard to the meaning analysis of texts. Halliday's grammar is valuable as a descriptive tool in allowing systematic articulation of the 'angle of telling' of texts (e.g. through analysis of transitivity patterns), something which may not be so visible otherwise. In relation to my Critical Linguistic focus, it is thus very useful for seeing how a news text might be positioning its readers semantically. But a Hallidayan semantico-syntactic description of a news text's meaning is not the same as the reader's 'experience' of a text's meaning. How readers take their bearings from the semantic positioning of a news text in the making of pragmatic inferences, either causal-cognitively or socio-cognitively, will vary in accordance with contextual variables, e.g. the amount of effort they invest in processing; their reading purpose; the discourses (2) they inhabit. And once we properly understand what the valid zone of application is for an analytical tool, we are better placed to see where complementary methods can be introduced. For example, Hallidayan functional analysis of hard news text can be complemented by a causal-cognitive perspective on the discourse (1) likely to be made from a hard news by a gist reader (O'Halloran, 2003, p. 260).

6. Conclusion

When a CD analyst examines a text without any empirically grounded sense that someone reading for gist will be investing much less effort than an analyst, and thus producing fewer pragmatic inferences, this is problematic. Furthermore, when a CD analyst examines a text to see how readers might connect with the positioning of the text, this is also problematic if it is done without any empirically grounded sense of how target readers might do this. My recent work recognises these as key issues for CDA and that, as a result, it is important for CDA to seek to check over-interpretation of a text from the perspective of the target audience through, for example, corpora analysis (see O'Halloran, in press; O'Halloran & Coffin, 2004); combining APPRAISAL[10] and corpora analysis (see Coffin & O'Halloran, 2005, 2006); drawing on evolutionary psychology (see O'Halloran, 2005).

Iedema says my book's 'tone' has 'an axe to grind'. But what really is my 'axe to grind' as regards principal figures in my book such as Norman Fairclough and Gunther Kress? Fairclough has drawn on Critical Linguistics in analysis of linguistic mystification but has not sought to make a contribution to it. His major contribution to CDA has been to explicating sociocultural change and change in discourse, i.e. in the explanation stage rather than the part of the interpretation stage I focus on. I am explicit about looking at the work of Gunther Kress et al. from an 'understanding' perspective since its symbolicism would have seemed natural when the Critical Linguistics books were written in the 1970s (O'Halloran, 2003, p. 2). Essentially, all my book does is seek to ground, and thereby to improve, the Critical Linguistic focus on mystification and causal relations in compatible elements from contemporary theories of cognition. I explicitly state that my book aims to be 'an enrichment of the interpretation stage' of CDA, one which is 'constructive' and 'positive in spirit' (O'Halloran, 2003, pp. 5, 198).

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[10] See for example Martin and White (2005).

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