

## The Ideological Construction of Reality in Discourse

### Abstract

*The main purpose of this paper is to set the floor for a fresh debate vis-à-vis a number of issues pertinent to the theory of ideology and language through a critical survey of some key notions in the critical discourse analysis arena (henceforth CDA). In a broad sense, we will shed light on how ideology articulates in the use of language (both text and talk) and where ideologies, more importantly the skewed ones, are being encoded in language. Special attention will be drawn to ideology and discourse as separate concepts and processes. With reference to Professor Teun A. Van Dijk's socio-cognitive framework, we will argue that the manufacturing of social realities through the selection of specific language structures and rhetorical devices is only one façade of discourse processing. Accordingly, it is crucial to resort to the underlying social and cognitive aspects of discourse production and comprehension to make sense of how discourse is being formulated and loaded with ideological preferences. This would make it possible to deconstruct the implicit ideological ingredients of any given text or talk in the different communicative situations and contexts.*

*Key words: Discourse, Language, Ideology, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)*

### ملخص

إنّ الهدف الأساسي لهذه الدراسة هو أن نفتح مجالاً لنقاش مجدد حول نظرية اللغة و الإيديولوجية من خلال التحليل النقدي لمجموعة من المفاهيم الموظفة في تحليل الخطاب. بعبارة أخرى نودّ أن نبرز تفصل الممارسة اللغوية بالبعد الإيديولوجية و لو كان لكل واحد منهما هوية مفهومية خاصة و إجراءات خاصة كذلك.



## 1. Introduction :

At the outset, it must be stressed that cross-disciplinarity in the study of ideological processes and formulation in the various registers of discourse has been the norm rather than the exception in the last few years. In this paper, there is a fundamental need to establish the reciprocal link between ideology and discourse and explore their constitutive components which, it should be noted, are far from homogeneous. In fact, the connotations attributed to each concept and their intersections are much more complex than it might appear at first glance. The nature of this idiosyncratic intricacy evolved primarily from the continuous contentions over the conceptual and functional meanings of discourse and ideology alike.

Indeed, a number of epistemological questions must be brought to the fore about some basic notions and concepts such as truth, knowledge, reality and logic, inter alia, which are mistakenly taken for granted as common sense assumptions. This is useful precisely because of their relevance to the concept of ideology and ideological formulation in language use. It is not the aim of paper, however, to cover all the notions and the numerous influences that grounded the perspectives related to ideology for this might lead us to an abstract philosophical debate. Hence, the chief purpose is to find out the multiple ways in which explicit and tacit ideological processes function in discourse to impose a particular world view and subsequently undermine others in the structure of language. Professor Michael Billing points out that “the paradox of ideology is a variant of a general paradox of language, for the use of language involves

both autonomy and repetition” (Billing, 1991, p.8). Once again, one has to keep in mind that the other non linguistic aspects of discourse are also an integral part of the context that can not be ignored.

This paper will start with a very brief but succinct survey of the various connotations that were assigned to the notion of ideology by some prominent traditional and modern scholars. Then, it attempts to connect this concept with discourse in general, and at the same time reflecting on the centrality of language in the process of ideological manufacturing and interpretation taking into account the socio-cognitive perspectives of these processes.

## 2. Rethinking the Concept of Ideology :

There exists a lengthy scholarly literature showing that ideology has been handled in a variety of philosophical, economic, and literary studies. This scholarly interest stretched today to cover almost every academic discipline ranging from the analysis of the serious and formal discourses on global and regional politics to the ethnography of speaking. Even the purely technical discourses of the basic sciences whose tools of validations seem to be factual were not exempt from ideological considerations (Gilbert & Mulkay, 1984). Albeit there were numerous self- oriented approaches that attempted to unveil the mechanisms of ideological processing in a variety domains, they were not sufficient to explain the workings of ideology, or at least provided a partial explanation, and were themselves critically unbalanced. It could be said that the underlying rationale of the social sciences disciplines was lacking in its critical foundations and left disputed lacunae. Therefore, the need for a multidisciplinary approach is a requisite to come to a thorough understanding of the mechanisms of ideological representation of *Reality* and the ways in which this latter is constructed in language use.

As previously mentioned, this section of the paper aims to place the notion of ideology within the broader context of its historical development in order to delineate the ambiguous and multiple connotations that have accompanied this concept over more than two hundred years since its first usage. Indeed, tracing the genesis of ideology by stepping back into history will be of particular importance.

This will help us to critically scrutinize the serious and fashionable contributions that set the multiple conceptions about ideology which has ostensibly generated a far reaching complexity in the recent postmodern thought.

Originally, the term ideology has been coined by the French rationalist philosopher Destutt de Tracy referring to the ‘science of ideas’, a branch of science which was in sharp contrast to the orthodox metaphysical modes of thinking. While Destutt’s secular intellectual contribution was set to organise the civic life during the de-Christianization of the French society, the work on ideology had been extensive and massively used in a myriad of ways (Barth, 1979). Yet, it was subsequently espoused by the different disciplines of social sciences and humanities just to acquire a variety of meanings and interpretations, which are not necessarily related to one another, leading ultimately to a considerable terminological flexibility and relativism.

The coinage of the term ideology embarked a remarkable flow of an active phase of secularization in the French society during the zenith of the French revolution. Indeed, this movement was already incited by the Enlightenment intellectual and revolutionary spirit of the 1600s and 1700s. *Idéologie*, according to Tracy, was a scientific branch concerned with the study of ideas out of the old fashioned metaphysical and theological bounds. The objective of this discipline, which was based on an empiricist methodology, is to grasp the working of “our intellectual faculties, their principal phenomena, and the more remarkable circumstances of their activities.” (cited in Richards, 1993). Hence, the merits of this orientation touched a myriad of topics in politics, economy, society, morality and religion.

During this turning point in the history of the France, Tracy was driven by political dedication to reduce the hegemony of theological authority and to weed out superstition and irrational thinking that prevailed within the French political elite and society as well. Thus, his critical reviews of the political and economic practices of the French Monarchy and his advocacy of a more liberal society had been widely welcomed abroad, notably by the newly emerging independent republican state of America. Shortly afterwards, Napoleon

Bonaparte came to oppose Destutt and his followers who are being nicknamed by now as the *ideologues*. Subsequently, the term ideology came to acquire a firmly negative connotation. The negativity of the term originates, as Giuliana Garzone and Srikant Sarangi suggest, “in the ways in which the word has been used historically, although this can not be supported with purely linguistic or etymological evidence” (2007, p.13).

Classical Marxism was quintessentially the first comprehensive doctrine that endorsed the concept of ideology as a basic component in defusing its militant anti-capitalist orientation. The Marxist discourse put forth a new radical set of perceptions about economy and political philosophy whereby the term ideology was crucial. It was also frequently used with a firmly pejorative connotation to explicate the Marxist world view with regard to the evolution of capitalism and the subsequent injustices and social distress of the European Industrial Age. Therefore, “ideology” did not simply indicate the ideas of the bourgeoisie class which was a vigorous opponent of what became later known as Communism, but it referred also to a complex process whereby individuals, fundamentally the “alienated” lower classes, were gradually manipulated to accept a world view that runs counter to their own interests and well being. It is worth to point out that the paradox in Marxism which struck at its very foundation is the fact that it is an ideological orientation *per se* just like those endorsed by many other liberal and progressive schools of thought that it criticizes.

Emerging out of left Hegelianism and based on historical and sociological perspectives, the Marxist philosophy was gradually turning into a dogma for the growing working classes of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The German philosopher Karl Marx introduced this doctrine by applying the laws of nature to the changes in society and insisted upon the supremacy of economic factor over the other political and cultural variables. In brief, Karl Marx and his advocates claimed that the bourgeoisie -whose ideology is the dominant one - used misleading categories to manipulate the oppressed labour force and control the societal beliefs, norms and values in order to serve their own in-

terests. The elite class had a firm control of the social institutions in order to preserve the *status quo* of power relations that, of course, serve to maintain their dominance and the subordination of the other classes (Arthur, 1970, p. 64).

It seems plausible, then, to emphasise the fact that ideology, or more specifically the dominant ideology in a given society, is not limited solely to the economic or political spheres, but works also within the societal conventions of the community which are of course deep-seated historical accumulations of cultural modes. It could be noticed that there usually exists a considerable consensus among the members of a specific social grouping to share an instantiated register of cultural values, norms and knowledge through which they perceive and thus interpret things in a peculiar manner which might be substantially different from that of other groups. The socio-cultural dimension of ideologies has been commented on by Professor Claire Kramsch in *Language and Culture* who sought to establish an explicit and direct connection between ideology and culture. She indicated the relevance of the cultural dimension in discourse processing by declaring that:

Discourse communities, constituted, by common purpose, common interests, and beliefs; implicitly share a stock of prior texts and ideological points of view that have developed over time. These in turn encourage among their members common norms of interaction with, interpretation of, texts that may be accepted or rejected by the members of these communities. (1998, p. 62)

In contrast to the traditional Marxist views that viewed ideology with cynicism by linking it with wrong comprehension of reality, mystification and false consciousness, the neo-Marxist critic Raymond Williams took a more positive stand by going beyond the conservative tradition to consider ideology as a “relatively-formal and articulated-system of meanings, values and beliefs, of a kind that can- be abstracted as a ‘worldview’-or ‘class outlook’” (1977, p. 109). Thus, Teun A. Van Dijk espouses a similar view by suggesting that ideologies are neither true, nor false. In brief, he offers a definition which rests on two central assumptions by advocating that any

ideological position is a social, as well as a cognitive representation of an experience (Van Dijk, 1998).

From a neo-Marxist perspective, especially with the works of the Italian Antonio Gramsci, ideology acquired other set of less pejorative meanings. The basic notions within the neo-Marxist paradigm and the ways in which the ideological manoeuvres operate in a society were not considered solely from the ways in which economic relations were distributed as the orthodox Marxists believed. Gramsci stated that the dominant class in a given society does not promote its own ideological beliefs through what he called hegemonic means only, but on how it can “depend in its quest for power on the ‘spontaneous’ consent arising from the masses of the people. This consent is carried by systems and structures of beliefs, values, norms and practices of everyday life which unconsciously legitimate the order of things” (Holub, 1992, p .43).

The ongoing process through which one ideology is privileged among others and, more particularly, the ways in which it is framed and presented becomes a far subtler concern. This is partly because ideology, most of the time, is not to be explicitly expressed and therefore hard to be noticed in discourse. Within an approach based on the perspective of critical linguistics that is heavily drawn from Michael Halliday’s Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG), the British linguist Roger Fowler suggests that there are a variety of linguistic items that express ideology which many people consider to be natural. He argued that “there are always different ways of saying the same thing, and they are not random, accidental alternatives. Differences in expression carry ideological distinctions (and thus differences in representation)” (Fowler, 1991, p.4).

It must be emphasised again that a critical reflection on the ideological construction of realities involves much more than general knowledge about the linguistic categories of language and its lexical or grammatical peculiarities, the cognitive processes through which language is produced by individuals and understood by other recipients is also a vital element. Therefore, it is essential to cast more light on the cognitive and social aspects of ideologies and investigate how they are processed and comprehended by the different actors



in a given context. The aim is to establish - in a more pragmatic and technical way - the link between ideology, language and thought, which would put one in a better position with regard to the overall mechanism that guides the art of persuasion and manipulation in both text and talk.

### 3. The Workings of Ideology in Language Use :

It is fundamental in this paper to expose, albeit briefly, the range of conceptualizations that were assigned to the notion of discourse and how it functions, and of course, to place ideology within the building blocks that form discourse in a particular communicative context. A cluster of pertinent questions are worthy to be under the spotlight: What does it mean 'Discourse'? In particular, how discourse is being ideologically built up and employed? And how does discourse constitute the reality of things and conversely how it is affected by the realities 'out there'? These and other related questions about language and language use are vital and might perhaps need much more space to be fully discussed. It is worth noting that a sketch on other epistemological questions about knowledge, truth, power, dominance and reality, among other things, might also be needed due to their relevance to our topic. For those elements are essential constitutive properties in discourse, they practically show its discursive formulation through the way they are expressed and understood. Yet, the length limitations of our paper would deter us to advance a much detailed consideration of this point which is rather diverse.

One point that should be illustrated is the opaque nature of discourse. Through a quick survey on the existing literature in the critical language theory, it could be abundantly noticed that the term has been defined in a myriad of ways. It was also inclusive of multiple contested views depending on the aspect that is stressed or underestimated by scholars. Other complexities might also arise from the underlying theoretical sources that inform the disciplines concerned with the study of discourse. Thus, the taxonomy of critical language methods reveals a considerable diversity in scope and perspective. However, what is relevant to our concern is to link the structure of

language with the distribution of power relations, and to track images of dominance and the ideological expression of polarized views by means of linguistic and socio-cognitive modes of investigation.

The widely held mechanistic view within the linguistic orthodoxy that views discourse as ‘language above the sentence’ level, an ordered sequence of well-formed sentences is not sufficient to unravel the intricate processes of ideological manufacturing that form the various genres of discourse. We tend to incorporate other basic contextual elements, the social and cognitive aspects in particular that have previously been alluded to in defining the notion of ideology. Hence, the link between discourse and ideology and the practical implications of what is ideological discourse and how it works, from within this outlook, could be projected more clearly at the level of discourse analysis.

The intellectual contributions of the French philosopher Michel Foucault in social theory and discourse analysis are amongst the most cited up to date due to their seminal value from various perspectives.

Yet, critics have always complained the lack of comprehensive methodology within the Foucauldian theorization. In a much quoted sentence, Foucault defines discourses as being the “practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak” (Foucault, 1972, p.49). Paraphrasing this statement might lead us to a colossal discussion of the philosophical roots that had an influence on Foucault’s theory. However, the main point that this statement refers to is the constructivist and discursive nature of discourse upon which knowledge, meaning and representation, among other things, are based on. The explicit correlation established between discourse, knowledge and power, as Stuart Hall suggests, has made ‘the constructivist theory of meaning and representation’ more rationally acceptable. He further comments that “it rescued representation from the clutches of a purely formal theory and gave it a historical, practical and ‘worldly’ context of operation” (Wetherell, 2001, p.75). Many subsequent theorists and scholars have followed the same line of argument in their analytical paradigms. Van Dijk states that “discourse is not simply an isolated textual or dialogic structure. Rather it is a complex communicative event that also embodies a social

context, featuring participants (and their properties) as well as production and reception processes” (Van Dijk, 1988, p. 2). It follows that the linguistic, the social and cognitive aspects are all deemed necessary to engage in a multidimensional critical analysis. Norman Fairclough adds that discourse is “a practice not just of representing the world, but of signifying the world, constituting and constructing the world in meaning” (Fairclough, 1992, p. 64).

It is a common fact amongst contemporary linguists that the critical study of discourse and ideology requires references to the social aspects of language use i.e. how language is affected by society and vice versa. Indeed, the relationship between society and discourse is multidimensional. At a broad theoretical level, language use is seen by most, if not all, discourse analysts as both a social practice and a social process that is heavily dependent upon the social institutions and contexts. Professor Thomas M. Holtgraves declares that “the very fundamentals of language use are intertwined with social concerns; an understanding of how language is both produced and comprehended will require a consideration of its social dimensions” (2002, p.4). In mundane terms, our use of language in the various communicative situations is determined and also shaped, to a considerable degree, by the social context in which it operates. Diane Macdonnell declares that “discourses differ with the kinds of institutions and social practices in which they take shape” (1986, p.1). For example, the language used by both the jury members and students at the oral defense of a thesis must be in conformity with the standards and tradition known within the academic context for there is often a general formality constraint. The order and distribution of power within this context make the jury members in supreme position of authority in proportion to students and therefore determine their use of language. Diane Macdonnell goes on to argue that discourses differ also “with the positions of those who speak and those whom they address” (1986, p.1).

Practically speaking, those contextual formalities play the role of conventional constraints that guide the type of discourse of the participants at the academic setting. Academics, politicians, journalists and likewise are arguably expected to be under the continuous pres-

sure of a cluster of social conditions that determine the overall structural features of their discourse. Yet, Professor Van Dijk endorsed a different view in relation to the impact of the social variables on discourse by claiming the fact that there is no direct influence of the social structures on the structure of discourse. But rather it is what he calls “mental models” of the respective individual actors which define the properties of context (Van Dijk, 2008). Another important façade is the cognitive perspective of language use which constitutes a further fundamental supplement in this respect for it relates directly to the functions and features of discourse and ideology. The bevy of ideas informing this view comes in essence from the findings of cognitive psychology and cognitive linguistics.

It is a truism that language production and comprehension is bound up with highly complex cognitive processes. So far, cognitive disciplines provided a number of insights on how exactly the human mind processes information, thought and knowledge and finally assign them particular interpretation through the use of language. Indeed questions about the relationships between language and thought need much more space and a deep reflection that far exceed the limits of this paper. However, it is quite useful to broadly establish the bond between the social and cognitive aspects of language use through references to the findings of the previously mentioned disciplines.

It has been advocated by the social scientists and cognitive psychologists that the cognitive processing of language is also social. According to Norman Fairclough, the underlying basis of the cognitive processes that guide language production and understanding are socially conditioned. He declares that “they are socially generated, and their nature is dependent on the social relations and struggles out of which they were generated” (2001, p. 20). Indeed, questions about what forms our conceptual knowledge about the social world and the pivotal role of such relativist knowledge in making sense of our discourses and ultimately our realities are essential. The roots of what is nowadays labeled as the “Social Construction of Reality Theory” can be traced back to the philosophical doctrines of the nineteenth century, notably in Marxism. This theory states that hu-

mans' perceived reality is primarily the outcome of their interaction with each other. In the course of time, the negotiation of beliefs, attitudes and ideas circulating in a group community might become common sense knowledge and could be institutionalized signaling then a transfer from a subjective interpretation of reality to an objective perception of it.

The modern founding fathers of this theory Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann claim that reality is "a quality appertaining to phenomena that we recognize as having a being independent of our own volition (we cannot 'wish them away')( Berger & Luckmann, 1966,p.1). The process of this truly subjective construction of reality is materialized and considerably shaped by the actual use of language which influences people's consciousness and unconsciousness as well. "Language is capable of transcending the reality of everyday life altogether. It can refer to experiences pertaining to finite provinces of meaning, and it can span discrete spheres of reality" (p.54). Nelson Phillips and Cynthia Hardy further clarify that "social reality is produced and made real through discourses, and social interactions can not be fully understood without reference to the discourses that give them meaning" (Phillips & Hardy, 2002, p. 3). It follows that Discourse is not a mere sequence of structures or lists of words that form, from a grammatically point of view, a correct piece of writing or speech, but rather a meaningful piece of writing or speech where knowledge, power, ideologies and other related elements are embedded and reinforced within a given context.

#### **4. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) :**

It is not surprising that the linguistically oriented and later on cross-disciplinary approaches of discourse analysis have become influential when the other orthodox philosophical and rhetoric based methods receded. The classical Marxist and neo-Marxist narratives, for example, have become pointedly insufficient to provide a comprehensive critique of the postmodern realities. Thus, the implications and the tremendous impact of the linguistic theory of structuralism, and more significantly the poststructuralist tendencies, paved the way for new perspectives of critical investigation. It is certainly

within this changing intellectual atmosphere that the first foundations of CDA were laid down.

A seminal contribution in the linguistic realm was embarked by the late 1970s at the University of East Anglia. A team of scholars (Roger Fowler, Bob Hodge, Gunther Kress and Tony Trewlaid) gave a pragmatic touch to the efforts done in this direction by suggesting a number of descriptive tools of linguistics in the analysis of discourse.

Within a text-based approach, it was advocated that the correlation between the form of language and its content is not arbitrary i.e. the choice made by writers/speakers of the lexical items and the grammatical structures is usually ideologically oriented. As a matter of fact, the careful description of words, clauses, sentences and their grammatical structures in a given text would enable us to deconstruct the encoded meaning and omniscient ideology that lie behind this cohesive structure of language. Critical Linguistics (CL) as defined by Roger Fowler, one of its founders, is an “instrumental’ linguistics looking beyond the formal structure of language as an abstract system, towards the practical interaction of language and context” (Caldas-Coulthard & Coulthard 1996, p.10). Obviously, the instrumentality of this approach and the systematic way of text treatment had a remarkable imprint in the study of ideological representations. What is clear, however, is that the other contextual components of text were relatively ignored, or at least relegated to a secondary position. Namely, CL had tightly focussed on the linguistic aspects of the text (the systematic analysis of vocabulary choices and grammar structures by means of inductive and deductive measurement) and paid less attention to the implications of the other sociolinguistic and cognitive factors.

The second distinguished phase which is being nicknamed as Critical Discourse Analysis was associated with scholars like Norman Fairclough, Ruth Wodak and Teun A. Van Dijk. Michael Halliday’s SFG has been said to be the basis of CL and the various contemporary orientations of critical discourse methods that came later on.

The lacunae left by CL led to much criticism by linguists and social theorists alike. Amongst the most salient criticism that was addressed is the fact that with its focus on close linguistic and textual

analysis, CL did not account for the interpretation of text by the respective interlocutors i.e. how the recipient actors that are involved in a given communicative situation understand and interpret the text (Fairclough, 1995). Suggesting that the target audience would, more or less, understand the message as it is intended by the sender and in the same way is partially true and not wholly acceptable. Modern scholars of discourse studies notably within the Foucauldian framework and the works of Norman Fairclough and Van Dijk had embraced the social and cognitive perspectives of language use at both the institutional and personal levels. The integration of non linguistic aspects of discourse did in fact extend the scope and methods of CL to be consistently intermingled with other social sciences, sociology and cognitive psychology in particular. Thus, the outcome of this unavoidable convergence brought to the fore new horizons of inquiry and generated varied interpretations about the function of language in society.

It is to be acknowledged that the escalating academic interest in discourse studies and CDA in particular has reflected a growth of this discipline within the social sciences and humanities. Yet, there is no doubt that it still receives ongoing waves of criticism and value judgments from experts and scholars. Moreover, the subsequent refinements and developments in other related social sciences must bring a fresh influence and a call for updating the large amount of theoretical insights that have already been endorsed and implemented within discourse studies landscape. To make things more complicated, the eclectic selection of the analytical toolkit from the different social disciplines might also pose another methodological dilemma.

Yet, the major, and perhaps most perplexing criticism, that has been raised about the validity of CDA as being an unbalanced “referee” was the claim about its avowedly political engagement. Whilst there could be no clear cut answer to such a key concern that has been posed by many academics, CDA enterprise seems without doubt to be amongst the most comprehensive and practical frameworks for the analysis of discourse structures and processes thanks to its systematic and cross-disciplinary nature. CDA is also equipped with a variety of analytical tools and pragmatic techniques which

would make the findings of analysis to be founded on a more rigid ground, at least in proportion to the other self-oriented and autonomous approaches. Without doubt, the cross-disciplinary theoretical underpinning of CDA is likely to reduce the degree of uncertainty and pitfalls in terms of analysis. One thing that might be worth mentioning here in passing is that the mechanism followed in the analysis of the various types of discourses might slightly differ from one type to another due to the heterogeneity of their textual and inter-textual properties, aims and thus structural compositions. Therefore, the examination of the news discourse, for example, will be bound to certain parameters that might not be adopted vis-à-vis the analysis of the academic or political discourses.

## 5. Conclusion :

Put succinctly, it has been abundantly obvious that ideology is a nebulous concept that had been moulded by the controversial debates of the European Enlightenment. In the course of time it embodied newly fabricated connotations that were strategically exploited in the political and social transformations that followed. From Des-tutt de Tracy, Karl Marx and lately Michel Foucault to the contemporary discourse scholars and researchers, the notion of ideology was in a continuous metamorphosis that interfered with and responded to various political and economic realities of each era. Unlike the Marxist and poststructuralist theoretical approaches, the problem oriented and cross-disciplinary nature of the CDA tradition has produced more objective and instrumental perspectives in the analysis of discourse processing. Therefore, it would be pragmatically useful to implement its methods and strategies in any serious investigation on how the ideological discourses are formulated, spelled out and reproduced in society.

Throughout this brief consideration of the multiple understandings of *idéologie*, and how it emerged historically, we attempted to surpass the philosophical constraints and lacunae that surround the use of term in the academic sphere. Thus, it has been suggested in many occasions that the construction of discourse is strategically carried out with the intention of achieving some pragmatic goals by the respective writers or speakers. This process involves varying dis-



cursive patterns of persuasion and manipulation, inter alia. Most, if not all, kinds of discourse result from the intricate management of a matrix of ideologies by individuals and social groups. The cluster of these ideologies will by the end mirror their own socio-cultural belonging, beliefs and the ways in which they justify their attitudes and thoughts vis-à-vis the various events in their social environment. That is to say, the identification of the members of a given group community, ethnic, religious, professional and so on, is revealed through their *discoursal* behaviors which show their shared stock of knowledge about themselves and the ‘Others’.

Last but not least, it must be highlighted that the recipients of the message should also be incorporated for they are an integral factor in the communicative situation. Hence, we strongly advocate that it is not sufficient to decipher the ideological components of text or talk with critical linguistic tools, but also to take into account the interpretation of those messages and ideologies by the respective audiences. This will by no means involve direct references to socio-cognitive modes of inquiry.

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