

CHAPTER 3: THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

If a lion could talk, we could not understand him (Wittgenstein, 1968, p. 223).

The real problem is how to characterize the relationship between micro and macro worlds in general, and in terms of the analysis of particular empirical phenomena (Layder, *op. cit.*, p. 68).

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter addresses the five requirements identified in Chapter 2. The ontology is presented first and then linked to the methodology. In explaining the ontology, elements of Fairclough's ontology of discourse (*op. cit.*) are linked to Layder's (*op. cit.*, pp. 107ff) "multistrategy" approach to researching macro and micro phenomena; Sarangi and Candlin's (*op. cit.*, pp. 368ff) notion of "motivational relevancies"; and Sarangi and Roberts's (*op. cit.*, p. 43) "practical relevance". Together these constructs provide the basis for the five perspectives which constitute the ontology for this study. These in turn are linked to linguistic and social-theoretical resources with which to operationalise them in research. Finally the ontology is linked to Layder's (*op. cit.*) recommendations for grounded social research and Miles and Huberman's (*op. cit.*, pp. 12ff) "interactive" model of data analysis. It is argued that Miles and Huberman's data coding procedures provide a way of investigating interdiscursive relations between data representing the perspectives of the ontology.

3.2 FAIRCLOUGH'S FRAMEWORK FOR CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

In addressing the first requirement identified in Chapter 2, the starting point is Fairclough's framework for critical discourse analysis; specifically, his notions of

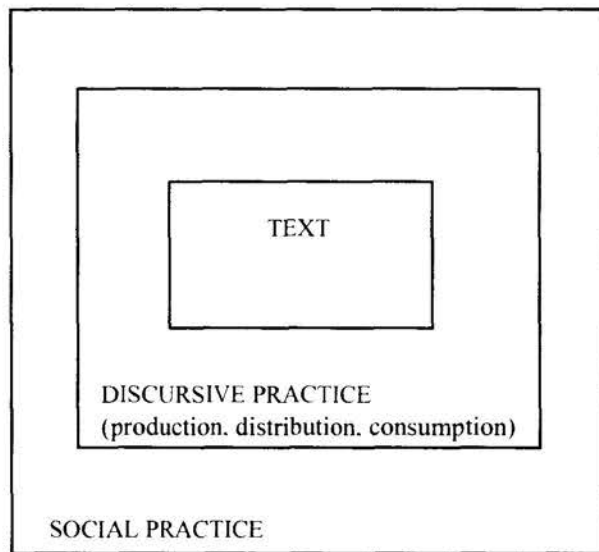
“discursive practice” (op. cit., pp. 72ff), “interdiscursivity” (ibid., pp. 124ff) and the “archive” (p. 227), and his broad methodological recommendations (pp. 225ff). However, due to its orientation to social theory, discussed above, his ontology as a whole has not been incorporated into the theoretical framework developed here.

3.21 Discursive practices, interdiscursivity and the archive

Fairclough’s framework provides an account of discourse according to which, as with Cicourel, discourse both constitutes and is constituted by the micro and macro contexts in which it occurs. Central in this framework are the notions of “discursive practice” (ibid. pp. 72ff) and “interdiscursivity” (pp. 124ff). These two ideas draw together the general features of language and context in an account of how language shapes and is shaped by social practice.

Within the framework, Fairclough (ibid., p. 4) explains any instance of language use as a “discursive event”, which is simultaneously an instance of text, discursive practice and social practice: the “text” is the sample of written or spoken language, “discursive practice” describes the text as it enters into social interaction, and the “social practice” dimension focuses on the social origins and consequences of the discursive event and on how it shapes and is shaped by larger scale social processes. Figure 2 illustrates the three dimensions.

Figure 2: Three dimensional conception of discourse (Fairclough, 1992, p. 73)



These three dimensions are not discrete - as if texts led three separate but concurrent lives. Rather, the three dimensional account of discourse points to the fact that discursive events are instances of socially-situated text, embedded in, and inseparable from, social practice. As Fairclough (*ibid.*) explains,

Any discursive event is seen as simultaneously a piece of text, an instance of discursive practice and an instance of social practice. The 'text' dimension attends to the linguistic analysis of texts, the 'discursive' dimension specifies the processes of text production and interpretation, for example which types of discourses (including 'discourses' in the more social theoretical sense) are drawn upon and how they are combined. The 'social practice' dimension attends to issues of social concern to social analysis such as the institutional and social circumstances of the discursive event and how that changes the shape of the discursive practice, and the constitutive/constructive effects of discourse (p. 4).

A key part of this ontology is the complex inter-relationships between discursive practices, described in his account of “intertextuality” (ibid., pp. 84, 101ff). In explaining the background to this notion, Fairclough (ibid.) draws on the work of Bakhtin (1986) and Kristeva (1986), summarising the intertextual project as involving “the insertion of history (society) into a text and of this text into history” (Kristeva, ibid., p. 39, cited in Fairclough, op. cit., p. 102). Fairclough (op. cit., p. 102) explains that Kristeva here refers to the “historicity of texts”. This describes the ways that texts draw on earlier texts and are in turn drawn upon in later texts. He emphasises that such transformations are always socially situated, and therefore “socially limited and constrained” (ibid.), meaning that intertextual transformations are “more than a stylistic phenomenon” (Candlin & Maley, 1997, p. 204). As such, they not only describe relationships between texts but also shape and are shaped by the social contexts in which they arise. Fairclough (op. cit., p. 102ff.) argues that such intertextual transformations can therefore provide a sensitive barometer of “social and cultural change”.

To yield these insights, however, the notion of intertextuality has to be incorporated with the three dimensional account of discursive events in order to link patterns of language use to larger scale changes in “orders of discourse at various levels – locally within particular institutions, societally, and - in an emergent way – globally” (Fairclough, 1997, p. 11). The phrase “order of discourse” is adopted from Foucault (1981), and refers, within Fairclough’s framework, to the “totality of discursive practices within an institution or society, and the relationships between them” (Fairclough, 1992, p. 43).

Within this framework, then, intertextual relations explain both the ways in which discursive practices are shaped within orders of discourse and in turn shape the social knowledge, or “members’ resources” (ibid., p. 72), which enable competent participation in social life. In this way, individuals are doubly affected by intertextuality, both through

the resources they are able to draw on in social action and the nature of the social practices in which they act. In this sense language when viewed as a social practice is not only “socially shaped, but is socially shaping, or *constitutive*” (Fairclough 1993, p. 134).

In one sense, Fairclough’s (1992, p. 117) account of intertextuality refers to the relations which obtain between discursive events at the level of text, such as the inclusion or mixing of one text within another. However, the form of intertextuality which Fairclough (ibid., p. 118) terms “interdiscursivity” refers to the ways in which discursive practices draw on and enter into larger scale orders of discourse. Interdiscursive relations are evidenced in particular discursive practices by the range of “discourse types” (ibid., p. 232) which constitute them. Fairclough means this to be an open-ended term which includes “genre, activity type, style, or discourse” (ibid.). “Discourse” is the most general discourse type, referring to “a particular way of constructing a subject matter” (ibid., p. 128). What will *count* as a discourse type in a particular study is, however, not determined *a priori*, but will depend on the “point of departure of one’s analysis”²² (ibid., p. 125).

It is the notion of “interdiscursivity” which enables the inclusion within the framework of the potential for orders of discourse to be “colonized”²³ (ibid., p. 207ff) by other orders of discourse, a process which is central to Fairclough’s account of how discourses change (pp. 96-99). In this process, discourse types which advance the interests of dominant groups in society penetrate orders of discourse associated with less powerful groups, constructing their members in ways which advantage the dominant groups. This form of social control, Fairclough (ibid., pp. 87ff) argues, is particularly effective because the constructions it advances through discursive practices are usually unnoticed, being “naturalised” or achieving “the status of common sense”, and are therefore hard to resist.

²² And it is the question of how to operationalise this “point of departure” which, in the ontology proposed in section 3.5, below, is addressed by the ‘analyst’s perspective’.

²³ Fairclough’s (1992, pp. 207ff. 96-99) account of “colonization” is taken up in Chapter 4, Description of the study.

While “discursive practice, “interdiscursivity” and “colonization”, then, model the relationships between the dimensions of discourse and between discursive practices, Fairclough (ibid., p. 227) adapts the term “archive” from Foucault (1989, p. 128) to refer to “the totality of discursive practices... that falls within the domain of the research project”, a usage which emphasises that all data are discursive, and therefore – in Fairclough’s terms – potentially interdiscursively related.

In combination, then, these three notions – “discursive practice”, “interdiscursivity” and the “archive” - offer a response to the implication of Cicourel’s (1982, 1992, 1996) call for “ecological validity” (1982, p. 1ff) that discourse analytical data is socially-situated within “interpenetrating contexts” (1992, p. 309). The value of Fairclough’s account of “interdiscursivity” – and the associated notions of “orders of discourse”, “discourse” and “discourse type” – is that it provides a way of operationalising Cicourel’s (loc. cit.) notion of “interpenetrating contexts”. Like Cicourel’s notion, “interdiscursivity” refers to how communicative contexts – in Fairclough’s case, discursive practices – draw on and enter into each other, and how these interrelations shape and are shaped by other contexts. Combined with the “archive”, “interdiscursivity” emphasises, as Cicourel does, that all data is socially situated and therefore potentially interpenetrating. Both Cicourel and Fairclough emphasise that these relations are central to understanding discourse, and that in investigating discourse the analyst is implicated in multiple contexts along with the participants. For Fairclough (1997) this implication is an unavoidable consequences of his account of intertextuality. He explains that

The intertextuality of a text is open-ended – we cannot claim to exhaust all possible links between a text and other texts, or genres and discourses, and making these links is manifestly interpretive because it depends on our sociocultural positioning and knowledge (p. 10).

The question, then, is how to investigate interdiscursive relations between the dimensions of discourse.

3.22 Fairclough's methodological recommendations

Discourse in Fairclough's sense is not only a component of the social world. He views it both as a component of the social world and a window on that world which can provide insights into how macro social change operates in peoples' everyday lives. However, by integrating the linguistic and social features of discourse, he raises methodological issues which range beyond those addressed in traditional textual analysis, broadening the scope of analysis to include both the micro and macro contexts of which the discourse is a part. This, as foreshadowed above, raises the question of what *methodology* to adopt in investigating discursive practices and interdiscursivity.

Fairclough (1989, 1992) makes two methodological recommendations which are specifically linked to his account of discursive practice and interdiscursivity. The first recommendation concerns the analysis of data, and derives from his (1992, pp. 72ff) integration of linguistic text and socially-situated action in the notion of "discursive practice", and the link between this construct and social theory. Fairclough (1989, p. 26) proposes three stages for the analysis of such situated discourse: *description*, *interpretation* and *explanation*. *Description* involves the analysis of discourse as text; *interpretation* focuses on discourse as discursive practice - in other words, how texts enter into interaction; and *explanation* on discourse as social practice, including the social origins and consequences of discursive practices. These stages are not discrete but, Fairclough (1992, p. 231) argues, "inevitably overlap in practice" and should inform each other.

While it is *possible* to analyse data in this way, the relationship between ontology and methodology in Fairclough's framework restricts each of the three modes of analysis

to data representing one dimension of discourse, thereby pinning the analyst's methodological options to the ontology of discourse. This rules out alternative options; for example, the use of description, interpretation and explanation together on one data set, or in other combinations on different data sets. This prevents the analyst from exploring the full potential of each data set, and the potentially interdiscursive relationships between them. It is argued below that Miles and Huberman's (loc. cit.) "interactive" model of data analysis provides a more flexible way to investigate this potential.

The second recommendation concerns data selection. Fairclough (op. cit., p. 230) recommends that the researcher needs a knowledge of the institution under study so that the corpus of data can be selected from the archive; and the selection and analysis of samples should focus not on the whole of a large corpus of data, but should address "the detailed analysis of a small number of discourse samples". Concerning sampling, he stresses the importance of selecting samples which are significant for the social practice forming the focus of the study, and, to narrow the range of samples chosen, he proposes a preliminary survey of the potential corpus, linked with advice from individuals qualified to provide insights into selection and choice. Such informants might include participants in the study, specialists in relevant and associated disciplines/institutions and others with expert knowledge of the social practice(s) under scrutiny. A further method of selecting samples is to gather data reflecting particular "crucies" or "moments of crisis" (ibid.). In Fairclough's view this latter criterion is especially apt since

Such moments of crisis make visible aspects of practices which might normally be naturalized, and therefore difficult to notice; but they also show change in process, the actual ways in which people deal with the problematization of practice (ibid.).

Although these recommendations are broadly followed in this study, they do not constitute a worked-out methodological procedure for investigating interdiscursivity, nor does he offer any detailed discussion of issues associated with research methodology or references to specific research traditions. The question of how to investigate interdiscursivity is addressed in the final sections of this chapter.

3.3 REQUIREMENTS FOR THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Although the theoretical framework developed here draws on Fairclough's account of "discursive practice", "interdiscursivity" and the "archive", it does not include his framework as a whole. This is because, as explained above, his ontology subordinates participants' perspectives to the macro dimensions of discourse. For the ontology developed here, then, the question arises as to how to situate "discursive practices", "interdiscursivity" and the "archive" within an account of the macro-micro relationship which does not, *a priori*, subordinate either micro or macro dimensions of discourse.

For the theoretical framework developed here, then, there remain the questions of

1. how to situate discursive practices, interdiscursivity and the archive within an account of the macro-micro relationship which does not, *a priori*, subordinate or exclude any of the dimensions of discourse;
2. how motivational relevancies and practical relevance inform the analyst's perspective, and thereby position the analyst in relation to the participants;
3. what methodological traditions to draw on in operationalising the different dimensions of discourse;
4. how to ground the analysis of discourse in data representing all the dimensions of discourse; and

5. how to combine the analyses in drawing conclusions about the discursive practices under scrutiny.

These questions are addressed in turn through the remaining sections of this chapter.

3.4 LAYDER'S GUIDELINES FOR SOCIAL RESEARCH

In responding to the questions, I have drawn on Layder's (op. cit., pp. 107ff) "multistrategy" approach to social research, which he has more recently developed as "adaptive theory" (1998, pp. 132ff). In these and his other recent writings (1994, 1997), he has argued for the inclusion of both macro and micro perspectives in the investigation of social phenomena. His work aims to integrate both ontological and methodological aspects of social research without subordinating either micro or macro social phenomena. His focus on investigating social phenomena using a range of research traditions while keeping both macro and micro aspects of context 'in play' offers considerable potential for discourse analysis (Candlin, 2000, p. xv; Carter & Sealey, 2000²⁴). It is these aspects of his work which are drawn on below.

²⁴ Carter and Sealey (2000) also draw on Layder's work in developing a model of social research (p. 7). While Layder's influence leads to similarities between the rationale for their model and that of the theoretical framework developed here, there are also important differences. Notably, as explained below, the theoretical framework developed here enables the operationalisation of the 'analyst's perspective': is open to the linguistic and social-theoretical preferences of different analysts; provides an account of the *potential* relations between the components of the ontology; and integrates the ontology with a reflexive methodology with which to operationalise it in research. The lack of such features in Carter and Sealey's model leaves them vulnerable to the charge that it does not acknowledge the reflexivity of the research process, including the questions raised by Potter (2000, p. 21) of "how participants' constructions will be dealt with when they are different from those of the researcher" and how language itself is constructed within their model. Potter (ibid., pp. 22-23) argues that these questions arise because within Carter and Sealey's ontology "participants' accounts" are filtered "through the matrix of the researcher's own reality claims", the "ontology... already prejudges the outcome of the analysis", and "ignores the reflexive business of their own text" by not allowing the terms in which the analysis is conducted to be problematised in response to the research process. On the other hand, Fairclough (2000, pp. 25ff) has argued that the four components of their model "need an account their interconnections". As explained in this and the preceding chapter, these are issues which, in responding to Cicourel's (1982, 1992, 1996) challenge, the theoretical framework developed here seeks to address.

3.41 The macro-micro problem

Like Dawe (op. cit.), Layder (1993, pp. 1ff) argues that the macro-micro problem has polarised sociology. However, whereas Dawe focuses on how the problem has divided social theory, Layder argues that it has also polarised methodology. For Layder, it is this 'double division' which makes the macro-micro problem the key issue in sociology. As he puts it

The gap between research and theory is nowhere more evident than in the division between macro and micro forms of sociology. In this respect, social theorists have suggested that the micro-macro problem is the major problem in sociology (ibid., p. 7).

The double division is seen in the way macro- and micro-orientated research differ in their research foci and methodologies. Macro social research focuses on how institutions, and large scale social developments, affect the lives of individuals. This research tends to aim at theory testing, and employ quantitative methods. On the other hand, research into micro social phenomena, such as face-to-face interaction, investigates how individuals perceive and construct "their social environment" (ibid., p. 5). In doing so, such research emphasises qualitative methods, and generally aims at theory building.

This close interrelation of ontology and methodology in macro and micro social research echoes Hak's (loc. cit.) notion of the "methodological imperative", in which methodological resources drive ontological options, and "Researchers trained in multivariate statistical analysis are in search of numerical data sets..... Interpretive researchers seem always to be in search of experiences that could be explored in depth in qualitative interviews" (p. 446). Layder (op. cit., p.7ff) argues that, though these divisions are often blurred in research practice, they point to the need for a theoretical framework

which integrates macro and micro phenomena, and allows the connections between them to be investigated by combining a range of methodologies.

3.42 The research map

The four principal features of the framework Layder (ibid., pp. 2ff) proposes are directly relevant to addressing the five questions to be addressed by the theoretical framework developed for the current study. These features can be summarised as follows:

1. a commitment to the relevance of macro social phenomena to the explanation of local contexts
2. an acceptance of the importance of general social theory as a guide for micro social research.
3. a readiness to adopt and combine insights from a range of research traditions.
4. an adherence to the tenets of an expanded version of grounded theory

The first two features are particularly relevant to questions one and two; the third and fourth features are more closely related to questions three, four and five. The specific relevance of these features to the five questions are explained through the remaining sections of this chapter.

Layder (ibid., p. 72) outlines the first feature using a “Research map” (summarised in Figure 3, below) which Candlin (2000, p. xv) has observed “not only has value for social research as a whole, but, in a modified and disciplinary specific form, has particular applicability to the research agendas of applied linguistics”.

Figure 3: Research map (Layder, 1993, p. 72)

Research element		Research focus
H I S T O R Y	CONTEXT	<i>Macro social organization</i> Values, traditions, forms of social and economic organisation and power relations. For example, legally sanctioned forms of ownership, control and distribution, interlocking directorships, state intervention. As they are implicated in the sector below.
	SETTING	<i>Intermediate social organisation</i> Work: Industrial, military and state bureaucracies, labour markets, hospitals, social work agencies, domestic labour, penal and mental institutions. Non-work: Social organization of leisure activities, sports and social clubs, religious and spiritual organizations.
	SITUATED ACTIVITY	<i>Social activity</i> Face-to-face activity involving symbolic communication by skilled, intentional participants implicated in the above contexts and settings. Focus on emergent meanings, understanding and definitions of the situation as these affect are affected by contexts and settings (above) and subjective dispositions of individuals (below).
	SELF	<i>Self-identity and individual's social experience</i> As these are influenced by the above sectors and as they interact with the unique psychobiography of the individual. Focus on the life-career.

The map divides macro and micro phenomena into four elements: context, setting, situated activity and self. "Context" refers to large scale social phenomena; "situated activity" and "self" refer to the micro level. Between these, Layder adds "setting". This refers to the intermediate, or "meso" level (DiMaggio, op. cit., p. 79), which comprises the institutions in which situated activities occur.

In addition to the four elements, the map also includes history and power. Layder (ibid., p. 13) emphasises that each of the elements has their own histories: they are all stretched over time, but the timescale for each is different. For example, daily routines, a person's lifespan and the duration of institutions typically involve different durations and different degrees of continuity. Similarly, he stresses that power and control will operate in each of the four elements but may operate differently in each one.

The map does not presuppose particular relationships between the elements, their histories and the operations of power. In other words, it does not reflect a particular social orientation but is open to potential relationships between social phenomena. It leaves open for discovery the question of how macro and micro phenomena, and history and power, are interrelated in particular settings. On this point, Layder (ibid.) explains that

Although I have presented the resource map as a set of separable elements with their own properties, I have also continually stressed their interconnected nature in relation to the analysis of specific research problems. In this regard, macro phenomena make no sense unless they are related to the social activities of individuals who reproduce them over time. Conversely, micro phenomena cannot be fully understood by exclusive reference to their internal dynamics so to speak; they have to be seen to be conditioned by circumstances inherited from the past. In other words, micro phenomena have to be understood in relation to the influence of the institutions that provide their wider social context. In this respect, macro and micro phenomena are inextricably bound together through the medium of social activity and thus to assert the priority of the one over the other amounts to a 'phoney war' (Giddens 1984) (pp. 102-103).

3.43 Drawing on the research map

Layder's emphasis on the *potential* relationships between macro and micro phenomena directly addresses the need in this study for an account of the macro-micro relationship which does not, *a priori*, subordinate or exclude any of the dimensions of discourse. As Layder (ibid., p. 8) writes, "Such an approach directly opposes those which assume either that one level can be reduced to, and explained by, the other more 'favoured' level, or can simply be tacked on to the more 'important' focus of analysis".

His treatment of the macro-micro relationship as a matter for discovery leads to the second feature of the multistrategy approach: how he links the map to social theory. He does this by casting social theory as part of the interpretive resources which guide the researcher's decisions. Thus, he (*ibid.*, p. 15) defines theories as "'networks' or 'integrated clusterings' or concepts, propositions and 'world views'". To link social theory in this sense to the research map, Layder (*ibid.*, p. 37) uses the notion of "usefulness", according to which the investigation of the relationships between macro and micro phenomena is not concerned with confirming or disconfirming social theory, but with the "usefulness" of social theory in explaining the relationships between them. As Layder (*ibid.*) explains, "empirical research provides a 'test' of general theory if it illustrates the usefulness of general theory to the understanding of empirical data". Moreover, and again consistent with the requirements for the theoretical framework, Layder (*ibid.*, pp. 107-109) emphasises that the researcher's approach to investigating the relationship between macro and micro phenomena should be open to discovery, loosely held, subject to revision in the light of incoming data and analysis, and open to alternative orientations.

The value of Layder's account of social theory as part of the analyst's interpretive resources for the current study is that it situates social theory within the "motivational relevancies" (Sarangi & Candlin, *loc. cit.*) of the analyst. Furthermore, Layder's (*op. cit.*, p. 37) notion of "usefulness", with its emphasis on a practical orientation to social theory, provides a link between social theory as an interpretive resource and Sarangi and Roberts's (*op. cit.*, p. 43) call, in their account of "practical relevance", to harmonise theory and research in affecting social change. In terms of the ontology developed here, then, the elements of Layder's research map, and its links to methodology, provide a rationale both for including the macro-micro relationship in research and for situating social theory as a resource within the analyst's perspective.

The following sections explain how the ontology developed for this study seeks to explain the dimensions of discourse by combining these aspects of Fairclough's and Layder's work, as well as that of Candlin and Sarangi (op. cit.), Sarangi and Roberts (op. cit.) and Hak (op. cit.).

3.5 OUTLINE OF THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

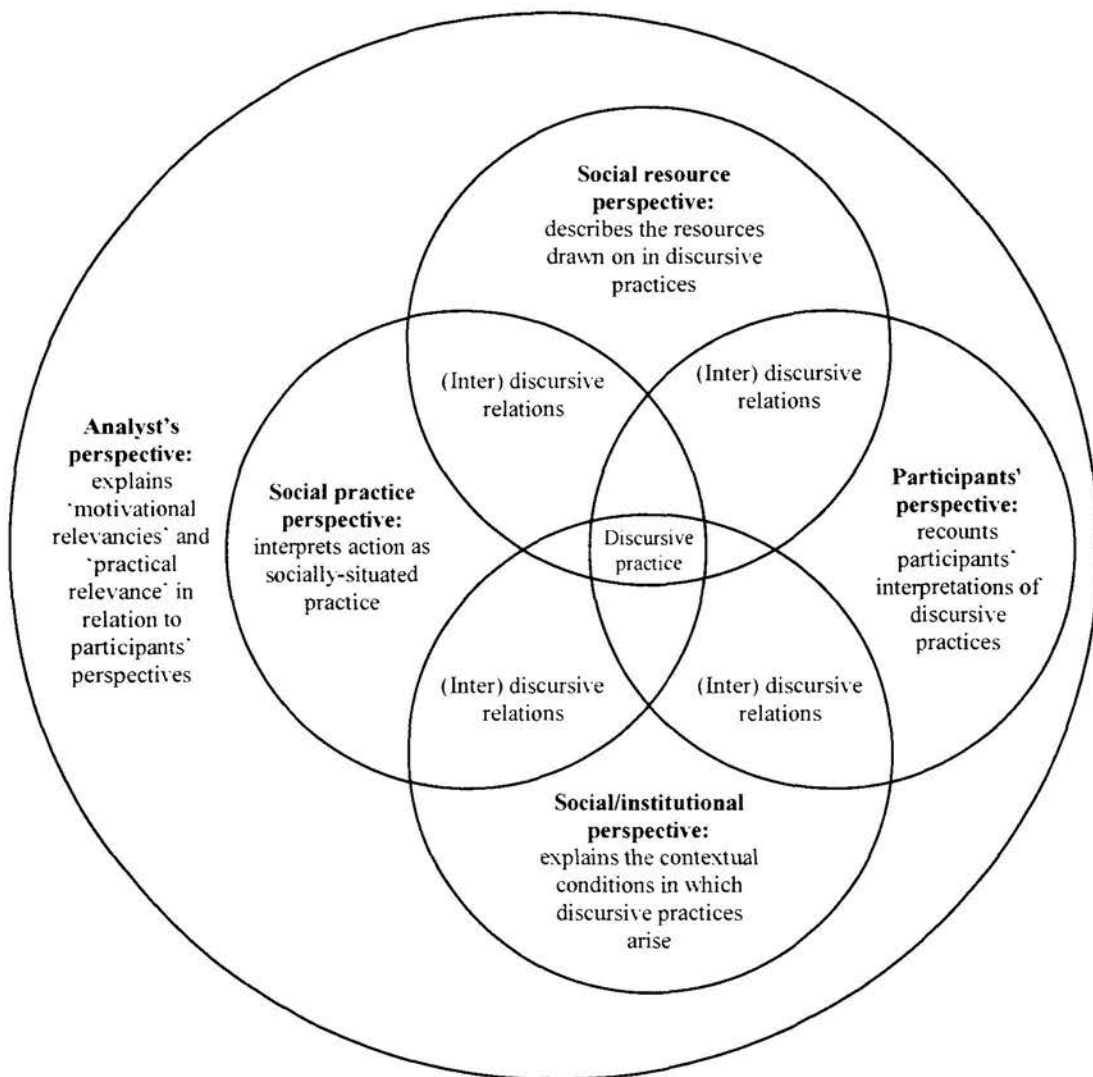
3.51 The ontology

The ontology addresses the first two questions posed for the theoretical framework:

1. how to situate discursive practices, interdiscursivity and the archive within an account of the macro-micro relationship which does not, *a priori*, subordinate or exclude any dimensions of discourse; and
2. how motivational relevancies and practical relevance inform the analyst's perspective, and thereby position the analyst in relation to the participants.

The ontology is illustrated in Figure 4, below, and explained in this and the following sections.

Figure 4: Outline of the ontology



Each of the four overlapping circles represents a different ‘perspective’ on discursive practices. They are called perspectives rather than ‘dimensions’ because ‘perspective’ moves from the metaphor of relations between phenomena in space, implicit in ‘dimensions’ and explained in Chapter 2, to a metaphor evoking different ways of perceiving space itself. This is a metaphor which reflects more accurately Fairclough’s (op. cit., p. 72ff) account of the discursive practice not as a single, bounded entity, nor as a set of relations between discrete entities, but a complex interaction of the textual, the discursive and social resources and processes – displayed by the overlap between the four

perspectives. Consistent with this account, then, the overlapping perspectives do not together constitute the properties of an entity called ‘discursive practice’ about which a single set of true propositions could be established, but rather represent the different ways of understanding and investigating the discursive practice(s) under scrutiny.

The use of ‘perspective’ here also points to the fact that these ways of understanding and investigating discursive events reflect the *analyst’s perspective*. The inclusion of this perspective within the ontology acknowledges that different analysts with particular research purposes, understandings of the research context, orientations to social theory, and distinctive research backgrounds may operationalise the ontology in different ways and give different weightings to the perspectives. The outer circle in Figure 4 reflects Cicourel’s (op. cit.) emphasis on the analyst as socially situated, and thereby accountable for the “ecological validity” (1982, p. 1ff) of the study as a whole. Within Figure 4, this accountability is reflected in the analyst’s need to explain her/his “motivational relevancies” (Sarangi & Candlin, loc. cit.) and “practical relevance” (Sarangi & Roberts, loc. cit.) in relation to the participants’ perspectives and to the study as whole. This requirement provides a way of addressing the second question, above: how motivational relevancies and practical relevance inform the analyst’s perspective, and thereby position the analyst in relation to the participants.

Within the ontology, discursive practices may be investigated from one or more of the perspectives. In other words, the overlapping circles in Figure 4 are like lenses: a single discursive practice can be viewed under one perspective, or at the overlaps between two, three or all four circles. All four circles overlap at the centre. This is where a discursive practice would be placed if scrutinised from all four perspectives. The overlaps between the perspectives would then indicate that the perspectives are combined in the discursive practice. In other words, when centred on a single discursive practice, the overlaps show that the perspectives are *discursively* related.

The framework may also be used to investigate the relationships *between* discursive practices. The overlaps between the circles then emphasise that a discursive practice under scrutiny from one perspective may be *interdiscursively* related to discursive practices viewed from other perspectives.

It is important, as with Layder's (op. cit., p. 72) "research map", to reiterate that there is no primacy among the perspectives. Indeed, any data set can be potentially investigated from any of the perspectives. However, how this integration is displayed is also important. Layder's 'layered' representation perhaps has less to commend it iconographically, and perhaps materially, than the Venn diagram. What is required in order to address the "ecological validity" (Cicourel, loc. cit.) issue is that all the perspectives are - potentially at least - active and interactive. The Venn diagram displays readily the potentially discursive and interdiscursive relations between the perspectives and emphasises that no perspective is *a priori* subordinate to any others. Also, the ordering of the perspectives in the Venn diagram does not imply a particular chronological sequence in which to investigate discursive practices but rather the topography of a study, which is thus open to being iterative and exploratory, not linear. The Venn diagram thus emphasises that the perspectives are contingently engaged and 'in play'.

3.511 'Exclusions' from the ontology

It is important to acknowledge at this point in the argument for the ontology a possible objection to it: namely, that by promoting the inclusion of the perspectives and the research traditions associated with them the multi-perspectived framework excludes the separate employment of these perspectives/traditions, or in combinations other than those available within the framework. The force of this point is that it raises the question of how to justify the selection and operationalisation of the framework in relation to these 'exclusions'.

In addressing this question, the key point is that the framework does not argue against the use of the perspectives/traditions in isolation or in alternative combinations *per se* but for the investigation of ‘discourse’ in the sense explained in Chapter 2: that is, an account of discourse which can be drawn on in investigating my understanding, as the analyst, of the kind of problem addressed by this study, a problem which, as described by Cicourel (op. cit.), implicates language, participants and social practices in multiple, interpenetrating contexts.

In this sense, then, the multi-perspectived framework does not exclude particular perspectives or research traditions, but, as argued in the previous section, is designed to enable these to operate in an inherently dynamic combination in which the inclusion or weighting of particular perspectives/traditions will depend on the analyst’s understanding of the problems addressed, and this understanding will in turn depend on how the analyst’s perspective aligns with that of the participants (Sarangi & Candlin, op. cit., p. 379). The challenge which is foregrounded and addressed by the multi-perspectived framework is to achieve purchase on these problems as they are understood by the participants. The priority in selecting and operationalising the framework, then, is to obtain this purchase by whatever means best addresses these problems, not to employ/resort to methods of problem solving associated with *particular* research traditions.

The answer to the question of how to justify the ‘exclusions’ from the framework, then, is that these are warranted not by reference to particular ‘paradigms’ or ‘methods’ but by participants’ understandings of the problems they routinely work with – and how these understandings/problems shape and are in turn shaped by participants’ engagement with the analyst, a point developed further in Chapter 5. The analyst’s perspective.

3.52 Operationalising the perspectives

There remain the questions of

3. what methodological traditions to draw on in operationalising the different perspectives of discourse;
4. how to ground the analysis of discourse in data representing all the perspectives of discourse; and
5. how to combine the analyses in drawing conclusions about the discursive practices under scrutiny.

The answer to the first question aligns with the third feature of Layder's (ibid., pp. 2ff) framework: a readiness to adopt and combine insights from a range of research traditions. In terms of the ontology, these traditions are resources on which the analyst can draw in operationalising the four perspectives.

An issue which needs to be addressed in responding to this question is what Giddens (op. cit., p. 170) has termed the "double hermeneutic". This refers to a problem which results from the relationship between theory, the analyst, and the participants. Giddens argues that any theory used to explain the world of the participants will also have implications for the world of the analyst. This raises two questions for the analyst: how subscribing to a theory affects her/his own research decisions and practices, and how the theory reinterprets the participants' perceptions of their world. As Giddens (ibid.) explains, "Any theoretical scheme in the natural or social sciences is in a sense a form of life in itself, the concepts of which has to be mastered as a mode of practical activity generating specific types of descriptions".

The specific risk posed for the ontology by the double hermeneutic is that by employing theoretical resources to operationalise the perspectives, the analyst may

encounter a conflict between the research decisions and practices implied by the theory and by the “multi-perspectived” (Candlin, 1997, p. vix) framework. This is potentially a problem, if, for example, theoretical resources are adopted to operationalise one perspective which predetermine its relationships with the other perspectives, by, for example, excluding or subordinating them. This risk holds for all of the perspectives because they draw on different theoretical traditions which include distinct – and therefore potentially incompatible – ontologies and methodologies.

This problem is not solved within the ontology; rather, the theoretical framework is designed so that the risks can be managed. As explained above, the relationships between the perspectives remain to be discovered through their operationalisation in research. The adoption of theoretical resources should not, therefore, pre-empt the process of analysis. It is important, then, that the analyst’s theoretical resources are held loosely²⁵, with a preparedness to change them in response to the analysis of data, and to account for them in terms of the analyst’s “motivational relevancies” (Sarangi & Candlin, loc. cit.) and the “practical relevance” (Sarangi & Roberts, loc. cit.) of the study.

How a particular analyst employs her/his resources will depend on the analyst’s own motivational relevancies, and the practical relevance of the study, in combination with the relationships revealed between the perspectives through analysis.²⁶ The following sections identify linguistic and social-theoretical resources as options which can be drawn on in operationalising each of the perspectives, and explain how these can be linked through the process of analysis.

²⁵ The methodological implications of this point are explained in more detail in section 3.53. The process of analysis.

²⁶ The operationalisation of the analyst’s perspective through her/his motivational relevancies and the practical relevance of the current study are explained in Chapter 5. The analyst’s perspective.

3.521 The social resource perspective

Starting at the top of Figure 4, the social resource perspective describes the resources which participants draw on in the discursive practices under scrutiny. The notion of 'resources' is drawn from Fairclough (1989, p. 24), who uses the term "members' resources" to describe the knowledge which informs how people engage in "social practice, including discourse". The perspective thereby acknowledges Hak's (op. cit., pp. 434-435) point that text is only one type of social resource drawn on by participants²⁷. While the perspective includes the range of linguistic and non-linguistic resources highlighted by Hak, the focus here is on how it can be operationalised in the investigation of linguistic resources. This focus is not, however, meant to imply that non-linguistic resources are less relevant to the perspective. As Bourdieu emphasises, the possession of both types of resource is a necessary condition for competent participation in social life, and includes "the differing ways that men and women carry themselves in the world, in their differing postures and laughing, as well as in the more intimate aspects of life" (Thompson, 1991, p. 13). Rather, linguistic resources are the focus here because linguistic communication provides an example "*par excellence*" of "relations of communication" more generally (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 37).

²⁷ By focusing on the resources participants draw on in interaction, this perspective also acknowledges the potential for these resources to "mediate" social action, as described in Scollon's (1998, 2001) "mediated discourse analysis" (MDA). MDA takes social action as its starting point, and views social resources as "cultural tools" (Scollon, 2001, p. 146), significant not in their own right but in so far as they facilitate social action. As Scollon (ibid., p. 145) explains, the "a priori base of MDA... is action, not text (or language or discourse)". The rationale for this emphasis on social action draws on Wertsch's (1991) notion of "mediated action", according to which "human beings are viewed as coming into contact with, and creating their surroundings as well as themselves through the actions in which they engage. Thus action, rather than human beings or the environment considered in isolation, provides the entry point for the analysis" (p. 8). This foregrounding of action casts resources such as "tools and language" (ibid.) as the "mediational means" by which individuals both realise their actions and are socially and psychologically situated by them. Wertsch (ibid., pp. 12-13), drawing on Bakhtin (1981, 1984, 1986), identifies this positioning of social actors not with the construction of their identities as homogeneous entities but as combinations of "voices", a notion taken up in Chapter 7. 'Social action', however, is not taken as the "a priori base" (Scollon, loc. cit.) of the ontology developed here; rather, the *potential* for social resources to stand in a mediating relationship to action underscores the need to include within the ontology a 'social resource' perspective, rather than, for example a 'text' or 'language' perspective.

The investigation of linguistic resources requires an ‘instrumental’ approach to analysing language. I have taken the term “instrumental” from Duranti and Goodwin (op. cit., p. 16), and employ it here to refer to approaches to language analysis which emphasise the relationship between linguistic features of language and the contexts in which it is used. Two influential examples of this approach are systemic functional linguistics and conversational analysis. I argue below that, while each offers a way of operationalising the social resource perspective, their accounts of context do not provide sufficient resources to operationalise the other perspectives.

3.5211 Systemic functional linguistics

Duranti and Goodwin (ibid.) argue that the instrumental view of language is exemplified by Halliday’s systemic functional linguistics (SFL), explaining that it originated with the ethnographic work of Malinowski (1923), who developed the notion of the “context of situation” (pp. 306ff) to describe the social conditions which inform the production and interpretation of meaning. Central to this view is the notion that language has meaning only as a form of social action. These ideas influenced the work of Firth, (1957) and Halliday (1973) in developing linguistic accounts of the relationship between language and context. Although SFL is not *required* for the description of texts within the social resource perspective, of the available models it perhaps best illustrates how an instrumental view of language can be accommodated within the framework.

In developing SFL, Halliday (1978) elaborated the idea that language can be experienced as meaningful “only when functioning in some environment” (p. 28) into a comprehensive account of language as a “social semiotic” (p. 1ff). This envisages language as a “systemic functional grammar” (Halliday, 1985; Halliday & Hasan, 1985): not so much a set of rules but a system of meaningful options, in which multiple functions are discharged simultaneously by any instance of language use. In this system, even the

most delicate selection in the system entails functional relationships between the language selected, the co-text, and relevant aspects of the “context of situation” (Halliday, 1978, p. 28). Viewed in this way, language is seen as a system of meaningful social actions, “a set of socially-constructed resources of behaviour, a ‘meaning potential’” (ibid., p. 34), on which language users draw in creating meaningful texts, the “basic unit of the semantic process” (p. 109).

Allied with this emphasis on texts, SFL enables the investigation of multifunctional relationships both within and between texts, through their textual, interpersonal and representational “metafunctions” (Halliday & Hasan, 1985, pp. 44ff) to the local and broader scale contexts of society and culture. It thus provides a framework for language analysis which is, Young (1991, p. 68) observes, “open at the sociological end”. This potential, Chouliaraki and Fairclough (op. cit., p. 139) explain, has led to its use by critical discourse analysts in order to draw connections between detailed text analysis and sociological understandings of the social context.

However, while providing this potential to operationalise the social resource perspective, SFL alone is insufficient to operationalise the other perspectives. This is because, in the terms of the theoretical framework developed here, SFL presents an ontology in which the social resource perspective is *a priori* prioritised over the other perspectives. This means that it does not acknowledge the *potential* for reflexive relationships between the perspectives. On this point, Young (op. cit., p. 65) has commented that, while latent in systemics, reflexivity was not originally included in the systemic functional framework but “was provided by *the linguist’s* own, non-linguistic theoretical resources, such as the application of the theory of social class”.

More recently, Chouliaraki and Fairclough (op. cit., pp. 142-143) have argued that SFL’s account of the “dialectic between the semiotic and the social” prioritises the “semiotic system” over other aspects of context, and thereby fails to account for how

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“language constitutes part of the “context” for them”. In relation to the argument developed here, the key points they make are that SFL “consistently leans too heavily towards (a) the semiotic as opposed to other moments of the social, and (b) towards the [language] system rather than the instance of text” (ibid., p. 143). The first point is evidenced by the way SFL, in ascribing metafunctions to language *a priori*, prestructures the social context in which language is used (ibid., p. 142). The second point again refers to prestructuring, this time focusing on how the linguistic system prestructures particular instances of texts according to the categories of “register” and “genre” (ibid., p. 143). This prestructuring rules out the potential for “semiotic hybridity” (ibid.) in which particular texts may overlap or in other ways deviate from these categories in response to the social context in which they are produced and interpreted. A consequence of prioritising the linguistic system over the social context in these ways is that “the apparatus of SFL also pushes the analyst to the side of the system” (ibid.). This is because SFL tends to predetermine what counts as relevant in analysis – meaning, in terms of this study, that the analyst’s perspective is subordinated to the social resource perspective.

In terms of the ontology developed here, then, SFL, while offering an instrumental account of language with the potential to operationalise the social resource perspective, undertheorises ‘context’ and therefore does not provide adequate resources to operationalise the other perspectives of the ontology.

3.5212 Conversational analysis

Conversational analysis (CA) developed from ethnomethodology and shares its interest in exploring the reflexive relations between “knowledge”, “situation” and “text” (Schiffrin, 1994, p. 378). Like ethnomethodology, CA envisages these relations as mutually reflexive.

However, CA applies this insight more narrowly by exploring how participants display to each other in language their ongoing understanding of what is going on and at the same time interpret the relevant understandings of others. In doing so, participants attend to the context in which talk occurs. 'Context' here includes the *sequential organisation* of talk, which is the focus of analysis in CA. In explaining the significance of context to CA, Schegloff (1992) explains that

The search for context properly begins with the talk or other conduct being analyzed. That talk or conduct, or what immediately surrounds it, may be understood as displaying which out of that potential infinity of contexts and identities should be treated as relevant and consequential (both by co-participants and by professional analysts) (p. 197).

He emphasises here that, for CA, the organisation of talk provides the only reliable reference point for decisions on what other aspects of context may be relevant.

However, like SFL, CA's orientation to discourse has been noted by a number of commentators to focus on language at the expense of the wider context. Schiffrin (op. cit., p. 378), in commenting on this "ethnomethodological avoidance of premature generalizations", observes that CA, by backgrounding features of context such as the nature of the setting and participants' perspectives, firmly reinforces its claim that "context-as-knowledge and context-as-situation are grounded in – and can only be discovered by – context-as-text". In a similar vein, Cicourel (1981, p. 55) has observed that while researchers interested in "complex group or organisational structures... would not deny the relevance of many of the patterns found in conversational analysis... there are questions about the limits of such findings when larger socio-cultural contexts are included". Consistent with these points, Fairclough (1992, p. 20) has argued that CA

displays “an underdeveloped social orientation”, providing an account of context which is too narrow to allow an explanation of how socially-situated practices are linked to wider social and institutional contexts.

3.5213 Capturing emergent dynamism

Finally, in an argument which is relevant to both SFL and CA, and consistent with Cicourel’s (1982, 1992, 1996) call for “ecological validity” (1982, p. 1), Linell (2001, p. 121) has distinguished between a “structure-in-focus view”, which he identifies with attempts to explain language as “one system”, and a “dynamics-in-focus view”, which emphasises language as part of a “dynamic, only partially shared and fragmentarily known, dialogically constituted world, in which relatively stable features (such as those of language and social representations) are emergent across a series of communicative events”. The point here is that the “structure-in-focus view”, exemplified by the prioritisation of the linguistic system over the social context seen in SFL and CA, produces an ontology which undertheorises these “dynamic” relations between context and the linguistic system. And it is precisely the need to capture these emergent relations which warrants the inclusion of resources to operationalise the other perspectives of the ontology developed here, and their integration with the “interactive” model of data analysis (Miles & Huberman, loc. cit.), explained below.

Though offering the potential to operationalise the social resource perspective, then, the accounts of context offered by systemic functional linguistics and conversational analysis are not sufficient to operationalise the participants’ perspective, the social practice perspective and the social/institutional perspective. Resources for these are outlined below.

3.522 The participants' perspective

The participants' perspective reflects Layder's "self" (op. cit., p. 72) in the research map, and meets the need to investigate the subjective experience of participants who are engaged in the discursive practices under scrutiny; to develop what Layder (p. 38) has called "an empathetic understanding of the behaviour of those people being studied". Layder (ibid.) explains that this form of social research is termed a "verstehen" approach and is associated with the work of Blumer (1966). This is a form of ethnography in which the researcher's task is "to describe how the actors themselves act towards the world on the basis of how they see it, and not on the basis of how that appears to the outside observer" (Blumer, ibid., p. 542, cited in Layder, loc. cit.). As Layder (op. cit., pp. 76ff) emphasises, each participant has a "subjective career" which informs the resources they bring to social practices, and therefore the meanings they attach to social interaction and the their responses to it. This is what Layder (ibid., p. 77) terms the "biographical elements of social experience". The aim, then, of the participants' perspective is to recover participant narrations of their perceptions of 'what is going on', specifically in relation to their interpretations of discursive practices. This focus on narratives to operationalise the participants' perspective reflects the recent emergence of interest in narratives both as a source of data and as a mode research (for recent examples, see Mishler, 1997; Georgakopoulou & Goutsos, 2000).

Unless the participants' perspective is included there is a danger, as Cicourel (1992, p. 295) notes, that the analysis will under-emphasise the contribution made by individual actors to the nature of discursive practices. On the other hand, there is also a need to investigate the social practices in which participants engage. This need arises because, as Silverman (op. cit., p. 54) observes, "there is a danger that, if ethnography reduces social life to the definitions of participants, it becomes a purely 'subjectivist' sociology which loses sight of social phenomena". The problem is that, as Garfinkel (op.

cit.) stresses, a large part of the social resources drawn on in interaction goes unrecognised by participants who are unaware of the “obstinately familiar world” (p. 37), with the consequence that “the limits of the social world are not determined by what the participants perceive them to be” (Carter & Sealey, op. cit., p. 9).

This need to acknowledge the limits of participants’ knowledge raises the more general question of the relationship between participants and the micro and macro phenomena which shape and are shaped by their actions. Linell’s (loc. cit.) argument is again relevant here because it reinforces the central point of “ecological validity” (Cicourel, 1982, p. 1ff): namely that, in Linell’s (loc. cit.) terms, both language and participants – and analysts themselves – are situated within a “dialogically constituted” social world, which is precisely not a stable and enduring system which could be grasped as a whole, but “dynamic, only partially shared and fragmentarily known”. To investigate the micro and macro contexts within which participants and their social resources are situated, then, requires resources beyond those provided by the social resource and participants’ perspectives. These resources are the focus of the following sections.

3.523 The social practice perspective

On the opposite side of Figure 4, then, the social practice perspective focuses on how participants produce and reproduce the contexts which give their social resources meaning. This shift in focus from the participants’ perspective to the social practice perspective is explained by Maynard (1989), who observes – in comparing ethnography with ethnomethodology – that

The question that ethnographers have traditionally asked themselves – ‘How do participants see things?’ – has meant in practice the presumption that reality lies outside the words spoken in a particular time and place. The... [alternative]

question – ‘How do participants do things?’ – suggests that the microsocial order can be appreciated more fully by studying how speech and other face-to-face behaviours constitute reality within actual mundane practices (p. 144).

The perspective therefore meets the need to investigate, in Fairclough's words (op. cit., p. 87), “discursive practices... when they become naturalized and achieve the status of ‘common sense’”. Moreover, in contributing to the capacity of the theoretical framework to capture the emergent dynamism identified by Linell (loc. cit.), this perspective reflects what Candlin (2001, p. 2) has described as a “concern with the strategic and dynamic deployment by participants of their discursive resources, often in a co-constructed and collaborative way, in the pursuit of particular professional institutional and personal objectives”. Whereas, then, the participants’ perspective represents the perceptions of participants, the social practice perspective draws more closely on the perceptions of the analyst; it is from this perspective that the ‘naturalised’ features of discursive practices can become apparent. As Hak (op. cit., p. 440) explains “Although these actions are observable to an observer, I assume they are unremarkable, unnoticed, unreported and also unreportable in everyday... life”.

The two research traditions which have exemplified this focus on how micro social reality is constituted are symbolic interactionism and ethnomethodology. Though sharing this interest, their approaches to investigating micro social phenomena differ. These differences arose in response to three “stances” towards everyday life (Douglas, 1971, pp. 13ff). The “*absolutist (or objectivist) stance*” assumed that the social world could be studied as if social participants were objects, “causally determined by forces outside the self”, using “clear and distinct (scientific) formal categories defined in advance” (ibid.). The two other stances are the “*natural stance*” and the “*theoretic stance*”. Douglas (ibid., p. 15) traces the formulation of both stances to Husserl: the “natural stance” is that taken

by people engaged in the taken-for-granted practices of everyday life; the “theoretic stance” is used to study this taken-for-granted world as a “phenomenon”, a highly inductive approach which aims to study practices “on their own terms”, without preformulated categories or assumptions.

3.5231 Symbolic interactionism and ethnomethodology

Douglas (ibid.) argues that these three stances gave rise to two strands in interactionism: behavioural and phenomenological interactionism, which were combined and promoted through the work of Mead (1932, 1934). While both strands take the “natural stance” as their focus, the former echoes the “absolutist stance” by drawing on categories and forms of reasoning from outside the practices under scrutiny, whereas phenomenological interactionism aims to reflect those employed by social actors themselves. According to Douglas (op. cit., p. 17), these two strands have been combined differently in symbolic interactionism, which includes more of the behavioural strand, and ethnomethodology, which emphasises the phenomenological strand. As well as these methodological differences, the two approaches differ in how they explain social practice, differences identified by Coupland (op. cit., p. 10) using his distinction between symbolic interactionism as a “rational action” perspective and ethnomethodology as a “praxis” perspective.

Rational action perspectives explain social behaviour as arising from strategic decision making, a view which Coupland traces to the work of Mead (op. cit.), who emphasised that individuals are rational social actors whose behaviour is shaped by their “understandings of the social implications of their behaviour in specific situations” (Coupland, op. cit., p. 11). The most influential exponent of the rational action perspective has been Goffman, whose work has “had a profound influence on most of the social sciences” (Manning, 1992, p. 6). The value of his work to the social practice perspective

lies in his notion of the "interaction order" (1983, p. 2). This is the domain of "face-to-face" (ibid.) interaction which he explained using his "*two selves* thesis" (Manning, op. cit., p. 44), and later the notion of "frame" (Goffman, 1974, pp. 10ff).

The "*two selves* thesis" refers to the distinction between the self as it *appears* in social situations, the "situated self" (Goffman, 1961, p. 120), or self as a "performed character" (Goffman 1959, p. 245), and the more private self as "performer" (p. 244), whose interests are vested in how the situated self is socially constructed and who drives the behaviours which influence the nature of this construction. This dual account of the self provided Goffman with a way of investigating how participants deploy interactional resources – including language - to (mis) manage their situated selves through the risks encountered in socially-situated practice.

Whereas Goffman's earlier work developed this problematised notion of the self, his later work (1974) might be said to have problematised the notion of face-to-face interaction itself. In this shift, he moved his focus to examine more closely the resources participants use to understand, maintain and manipulate the interaction currently 'in play'. This shift of emphasis is encapsulated by his (ibid., p. 8-9) move from answering the question "What is it that's going on here?" to the focus on the italicised 'it' in "What is *it* that's going on here?". To explain the relationship between the self, other participants and social practice, he developed a range of explanatory ideas, including "frame" (ibid. pp. 10ff), to describe the way in which participants' understandings about what is happening in interaction reflect and contribute to the ongoing definition of the situation.

In contrast to this focus on how social actors strategically manage interaction, social praxis perspectives view interaction as less predictable and emphasise the meanings of social action as "contingent... on the meanings around them and emergent... they surface progressively and incrementally" (Coupland, loc. cit.). The most influential theory of praxis has been Garfinkel's ethnomethodology (ibid., p. 11), which focuses on the

“most basic of all social phenomena: the way in which social order and social organisation are constituted” (Duranti & Goodwin, op. cit., p. 27). In doing so, it addresses the “question of intersubjectivity” (ibid.), the problem of how to explain how competent participants contribute to the creation and maintenance of a mutually understood social world. Ethnomethodology’s answer bases the emergence of ongoing social order on a tightly reflexive relationship between participants’ perspectives, socially-situated practice and social resources. This three-way relationship is, according to Garfinkel (1967, p. 10), created and maintained solely by the concerted actions of social participants. Garfinkel (1991) explains that

the objective reality of social facts, in that, and just how, it is every society's locally, endogenously produced, naturally organised, reflexively accountable, ongoing, practical achievement, being everywhere, always, only exactly and entirely, members' work, with no time out, and with no possibility of evasion, hiding out, passing, postponement, or buy outs, is thereby sociology's fundamental phenomenon (p. 11).

What Garfinkel means is that participants, or “members” (1967, p. 10), drive the creation and maintenance of social order; the fact that the social world appears orderly is therefore the result of a “series of dazzling performances” (Giddens, op. cit., p. 41), achieved through unrelenting involvement by competent members in managing, observing and understanding their engagement in social life. Ethnomethodology in effect, then, constructs social participants as the continuous creators and arbiters of social reality. In accomplishing this, their actions are not determined by *rules* – macro or otherwise. Indeed they could not be, Garfinkel (op. cit., p. 3) argues, because rules cannot specify the

conditions of their own use - they always conclude with a form of "et cetera"; in other words, as Wittgenstein (1968, p. 201) argues, "'obeying a rule' is a practice".

According to Garfinkel (op. cit., p. 53), it is participants' "concerted action" which defines, and is reflexively defined by, social rules, and it is through their actions that participants implement and simultaneously display their expectations about how to go on in every social situation. To do this they employ *methods*. These both *account for*, in that they shape, what is going on and simultaneously act as *accounts of* what is going on, since they communicate participants' understandings of the nature of the situation to other participants. These two senses of accounting are reflexively related to each other because participants' knowledge of how to go on is itself shaped by what they observe others' methods to be (Garfinkel, 1974, p. 17). This point leads to what Giddens (op. cit., p. 46) identifies as "the central postulate of ethnomethodology... that the activities that produce the settings of everyday life are identical with actors' procedures for making these settings intelligible".

While symbolic interactionism and ethnomethodology, then, each provide resources with which to operationalise the social practice perspective, they do not provide a way of investigating social practices within the broader contexts in which they arise. On this point, Giddens (1979, p. 81) has questioned how Goffman's (1983, p. 2) "interaction order" is related to institutions, and Mouzelis (op. cit., p. 17) has observed that it is not connected to larger scale social structures and processes, leaving it without the social-theoretical resources with which to account for the influence of macro social phenomena on interaction. Moreover, Burns (1992, p. 32) has argued that Goffman's point in distinguishing the "interaction order" from other areas of social order was precisely to isolate it from macro social phenomena.

Similarly, ethnomethodology has been criticised for failing to account for the influence of macro phenomena on interaction. Thus, Layder (1994, p. 90) has argued that,

in the explanation of social order as created and recreated on a moment by moment basis through the actions of individuals, “the notion of constraint in social life is considerably underplayed while freedom of choice, the ability to create meaning and pursue purposes are seemingly unhindered by larger structures of domination”. On this point, Alversson and Sköldbberg (2000, p. 41) have observed that ethnomethodology “stops just when it begins to get interesting”. It is this exclusive focus on micro phenomena which, Layder has argued, leads to a “one dimensional vision of society and a form of social analysis that lacks penetration, explanatory power and empirical scope” (loc. cit.). Extending this point to the interactionist tradition more generally, Layder (1993, p. 67) has observed that “what seems to be missing from the interactionist’s analytical scenario is a parallel concern with the wider, structural and macro aspects of social life, as they are implicated in the behavioural phenomena which are their characteristic focus”.

In these ways, then, though providing resources which seek to capture the emergent dynamism of interaction, the interactionist tradition – like SFL and CA – undertheorises context, so raising the need for additional resources with which to operationalise the investigation of the “macro aspects of social life” (ibid.). These are the focus of the next section.

3.524 The social/institutional perspective

The social/institutional perspective meets the need to investigate the institutional and broader social conditions in which the participants’ perspectives arise and their resources are deployed. The inclusion of both a ‘macro’ and ‘meso’ focus within one perspective reflects Layder’s (ibid., p. 99) observation that there is “no rigid dividing line between settings and the wider macro features and processes which provide their context, and there are many social forms which straddle the two”. They differ primarily in their susceptibility

to change: institutions are usually more durable than the social practices, but generally less enduring than macro social structures and processes (ibid., p. 13).

The 'institutional' aspect of the perspective, then, focuses on those more durable features of social organisation which shape and are shaped by the discursive practices under scrutiny – what Layder (ibid., p. 95) calls "the pattern of reproduced social relations that underpins and influences... events". These patterned phenomena include the features of institutions described by Fairclough (1985), who has observed that

Each institution has its own set of speech events, its own differentiated settings and scenes, its cast of participants, and its own norms for their combination – for which members of the cast may participate in which speech events, playing which parts, in which settings, in the pursuit of which topics or goals, for which institutionally recognised purposes (p. 749).

Beyond this, the definition of institution is left open, reflecting Sarangi and Roberts's (op. cit., pp. 4-5) argument that the notion of an 'institution', in their example the "workplace", is itself problematic. They point out that such institutions cannot be defined by their physical setting because the discursive practices which shape and are shaped by the institution may occur beyond its physical boundaries, in private homes and – extending their examples a little – in other institutions, and public places. In addition, their comments imply that what *counts* as an institution and institutional practice in a particular case will vary – and may be disputed – according to whose perspective is invoked and what practices are included as 'institutional'. For example, members of an institution, its clients, and researchers with particular disciplinary and social-theoretical stances may differ in their understanding of what constitutes the 'institution' and 'its practices'.

Moving out from this institutional focus, the ‘social’ aspect of the perspective focuses on the broader history, structures and processes in which the institution is situated, and which may therefore influence – and be influenced by – its practices. In taking this focus, the perspective draws the analyst’s attention to “the large scale, society-wide distribution of resources in relation to the social group that happens to be the focus of analysis” (Layder, op. cit., p. 99). The social focus thereby draws into the perspective what Layder (ibid., p. 63) has termed “metatheories”. These are theoretical frameworks designed to address the broadest issues of sociology, such as “the macro-micro problem and the question of the philosophical basis of social science” (ibid.), and include the work of “general theorists” (ibid.) such as, Giddens, Bourdieu, Foucault, and Habermas – discussed below.

This combined institutional and social focus means that, in moving from the social practice perspective, there is a change in how the analyst’s resources are *relevant* to the analysis of data. Layder (ibid., p. 66) makes this point in relation to the “settings” and “context” levels of his research map, but it also applies to the social/institutional perspective. He explains that

In the analysis of face-to-face encounters it is important to think of the ‘relevance’ of theory as related to the social skills and knowledge of the people involved. However, the more one moves towards an analysis of institutional phenomena, the ‘relevance’ of theory has more to do with its general empirical anchoring. In this context ‘relevance’ applies to the way in which the theory identifies social conditions and resources (and inequalities which stem from them), which inform and empower activity (ibid.).

For the social/institutional perspective, Layder's point here emphasises that the "*already established* character" (ibid., p. 90) of social practices within institutions and broader social conditions cannot be deduced only from how participants experience and engage in these practices. Rather, any such enquiry also needs to draw on social-theoretical resources which address how institutions and societies are themselves reproduced over time; in other words, how they have "an ongoing life that is identifiable apart from *specific* instances of situated activity" (ibid.). As well as providing a theoretical basis for this stability and continuity, the resources also need to explain how institutions and societies are *produced*; in other words, how social change is possible (ibid.). While making clear that the question of how stability and change interact in particular cases will only be decided through research, Layder (ibid., p. 91) emphasises that the answer will depend on what power relations have been laid down through the history of the institutions and society more generally. This implies the need for social-theoretical resources which account for how power relations are *themselves* produced and reproduced over time.

3.5241 Social theory and contemporary society

The questions, then, of production, reproduction, power relations and history, are the most general which the analyst's social-theoretical resources need to acknowledge in operationalising the social/institutional perspective. More specifically, these resources need to address what Coupland (op. cit., p. 17) has identified as "insistent themes" in contemporary social theory: "globalisation and the transition out of 'high' modernity into late-modernity", and "reflexivity", themes which have been explained in different ways within different social theories.

These theories are linked through their relationships with the social-theoretical traditions associated with Marx and Weber (Giddens et al., 1994, pp. 4ff). The Marxist tradition reflects the "absolutist stance" referred to above (Douglas, op. cit., pp.13ff). This

tradition has viewed the social world as governed by underlying laws and susceptible to methods of investigation analogous to those used in natural science. Giddens et al. (op. cit., pp. 2-3) trace this tradition to the work of Comte, who used the term "positivism" to describe his view of social science as aligned with the more general scientific aim of discovering the general laws which underlie the behaviour of observable phenomena. Influenced by Comte, Marx also viewed society as governed by underlying laws, reflected in Engel's description of Marxism as "scientific socialism" (ibid., p. 3). Marxist explanations of society have reflected this scientific tradition by emphasising its characteristics as the predictable outcomes of – ultimately self-destructive - contradictions in capitalism (ibid., p. 4).

The second tradition is associated with the work of Weber (ibid.). Whereas the first tradition has emphasised social phenomena as objective, in the sense that they exist independent of the perceptions of individuals, Weber emphasised that social life can only be "grasped in terms of its intelligibility" (ibid., p. 2), an emphasis which reflects a "hermeneutic" view, in which "social action depends upon reasons, intentions and meanings" (ibid.). This view of social action as "subjective meaning" (Sarangi, op. cit., p. 37) therefore casts social actions as qualitatively distinct from objects in the natural world. Rather than seeing society as the inexorable working out of underlying contradictions which would end in the collapse of capitalism, Weber emphasised social change as a process of increasing "rationalisation" (Giddens et al., op. cit., p. 5). This involved the proliferation of bureaucratic practices for the standardisation and regulation of social life, whether capitalism or socialism were dominant (ibid.). Weber's concern was in how individual autonomy and values might be protected from these processes (Douglas, op. cit., p. 11).

Giddens et al. (op. cit.) explain that theorists of contemporary society have responded to Marx and Weber's work by adapting and updating their ideas, or by

developing alternative theories. The most influential of these social theorists include Giddens, Bourdieu, Foucault and Habermas²⁸, whose stances on social theory differ from the objectivist and subjectivist traditions by being “integrationist”, meaning that they “in one way or another, *reject* and try to *transcend* the dualisms that define the two” (Coupland, op. cit., p. 15). As foreshadowed in Chapter 2, in attempting to address the macro-micro problem, the integrationist project faces the central challenge in social theory. The difficulties posed by this challenge are reflected in criticisms which have been made of the four theories, outlined below.

3.5242 Key themes in contemporary society

Though the theories developed by Giddens, Bourdieu, Foucault and Habermas are examples of the social-theoretical resources available to the analyst for operationalising the social/institutional perspective, the differences between the theories and the questions which have been raised about them support Coupland’s (ibid., p. 12) recommendation for an “agnostic” approach to social theory. Making a similar point, Sarangi (op. cit., p. 36) has cautioned against seeking a “unified theory of language” or “juxtaposing one theorist against another”, because “Given their intellectual origins and orientations, there are bound to be differences at all levels, not to mention their individual styles of writing (sometimes bordering on incomprehensibility)” (p. 55).

Notwithstanding differences between their theoretical standpoints, however, these theories each acknowledge that “The meaningful character of human action is given above all by its saturation with language: and language is not a property of the individual but of the social collectivity” (Giddens et al., op. cit., p. 3). In doing so, the theories provide alternative ways of employing language as a construct in explaining contemporary society.

²⁸ The terms ‘social theorists’ and ‘theory’ are used here as a convenience, bearing in mind Sarangi’s (2001, p. 29) observation that the terms may be inappropriate because “Foucault is very much

Furthermore, despite their different theoretical orientations, the theories point to themes which are central to understanding contemporary society and therefore to operationalising the social/institutional perspective.

Specifically, the work of Giddens, Bourdieu, Foucault and Habermas highlights how the emergence and increasing domination of new forms of social order – exemplified by the globalisation of markets – is transforming established social practices. From different theoretical standpoints, they explain how this social order is increasingly produced and reproduced through forms of control which operate reflexively through discourse itself, undermining individuals' autonomy by operating through the very practices by which they produce and reproduce their social lives. These discourse-based forms of control are effective precisely because they can operate through taken-for-granted practices – the implication being that those individuals who stand to lose most from these changes are complicit in bringing them about. In this process, the lives of individuals are increasingly characterised by struggles to maintain their existing practices, insecurity and risk²⁹ in social relations, and in their sense of social identity itself. The following sections explain how the social-theoretical resources developed by these four theorists raise and address these themes³⁰.

regarded as a historian" who "focuses on deconstructing such theories... Bourdieu categorically denounces any intellectual labelling of himself..." and "Habermas is more close to the tradition of critical theory".

²⁹ Recent work in discourse analysis (for example, Candlin, 2002; Sarangi & Candlin 2002) has highlighted the social consequences of 'risk' in contemporary social life, focusing on how the transformation of established practices raises new risks and challenges for those whose identities depend on them.

³⁰ Within the ontology developed here, the analyst's selection of social-theoretical resources with which to investigate these key themes, how the resources are combined, and the weight give to them, depend on her/his perceptions of their value in a particular study. In drawing on social theory, then, the analyst's decisions will be informed by what Layder, in the quote above, has termed their "general empirical anchoring" (1993, p. 66). Within the ontology developed here, this "anchoring" is explained in terms of the analyst's perspective, operationalised through the analyst's motivational relevancies and the practical relevance of the study.

Layder (1994, p. 129) explains that, in developing 'structuration theory', Giddens (1979, 1984, 1993) rejects three traditional lines of thought in social theory: the modeling of social enquiry on natural science; the view that social structure exists independent of, but determines, the actions of individuals; and the idea that societies can be analysed as systems independent of social actors' "wants and reasons" (Layder, loc. cit.). On micro social theory, Giddens has argued that, though individual action is essential to the ongoing production of society, the analysis of action should not be limited to the subjective experience of participants because this fails to account for how durable, stable social structures are reproduced over time (Layder, op. cit., p. 131).

Within structuration theory, the macro-micro distinction is explained not as an opposition (ibid., p. 132), in which one side is subordinating or excluded, but as a "duality of structure" (Giddens, 1979, pp. 62ff). This term refers to the relationship between two conceptions of structure: the rules and resources which social actors draw on in interaction – called "structures", and the patterns of social organisation which emerge in interaction – called "systems" (ibid., p. 66). Systems are not only produced, they are reproduced as routine practices: in other words they are relatively stable over time and across space – features exemplified by social institutions, which are "the more enduring features of social life" (Giddens, 1994a, p. 85). The duality of structure, then, integrates macro structures and micro social actions to explain how societies and institutions are both produced and reproduced.

Giddens (ibid., pp. 85ff) argues that these two conceptions of structure are reflexively related: systems shape and are shaped by structures. Social actors themselves create and perpetuate this process through their reflexive monitoring of interaction, with the result that "structure has no existence independent of the knowledge that agents have about what they do in their day-to-day activity" (ibid., p. 87). Giddens (1993, pp. 82ff)

emphasises that this does not mean that social actors *intend* to produce and reproduce social systems. Rather, this is achieved through the “vast variety of tacit modes of awareness and competence” (Giddens 1981, p. 163) they employ in reflexively monitoring interaction – what Giddens (ibid.) terms “practical consciousness”. In so far as social actors are not fully aware of the rules and resources they draw on and the consequences of their actions, their ongoing contribution to the perpetuation of social systems is therefore “not an intended project” (Giddens, 1994a, p. 88). It is this project of structural production and reproduction which Giddens (ibid.) terms “structuration”, and explains as relating “to the *fundamentally recursive character of social life, and... the mutual dependence of structure and agency*” (1979, p. 69).

Giddens’s (ibid., pp. 88ff) explanation of power draws on this account of the relationship between structure and agency. He argues that power operates within the duality of structure as a “transformative capacity” (ibid.), a property of systems which is created and recreated through the resources drawn on in individual actions. All actions reproduce power in this sense because they necessarily involve “intervention in events in the world” (ibid.). Accordingly, power is not one resource among others but “resources are the media through which power is exercised, and structures of domination reproduced” (ibid., p. 91). Consistent with structuration theory as whole, then, power relations are conceptualised here “from below in terms of human agency and patterned social practices, not from above in the guise of large-scale structures and institutions” (Dodd, 1999, p. 188).

Drawing on this theoretical background, Giddens (1994b, 1991) raises the theme of new forms of social order and control, dependant on discourse, operating through social practices and undermining the confidence of individuals in their own social identities and the social order more generally. Social life, he argues, is undergoing profound changes in the transition from modernity to “high modernity” (1991, p. 4), the term he uses to

describe contemporary society. He identifies as characteristic of these changes the “transformation of day-to-day life” (ibid., p. 21) brought about by processes of globalisation, in which temporal and spatial barriers to the influence of the global on the local break down (pp. 14ff), and the emergence of new forms of social control based on “institutional reflexivity” (1994b, pp. 1ff). Mirroring on an institutional scale the way social actors reflexively engage in social practices, institutional reflexivity involves the “concentrated reflexive monitoring” (1991, p. 16) of social life, which, combined with the processes of globalisation, enables the “regularised control of social relations across indefinite time and space” (ibid.) to optimise the capacity of these relations to meet institutional goals. Giddens (ibid., p3ff) has argued that the proliferation of institutional reflexivity is leading to a “risk culture” (p3), involving a decline of confidence in traditional knowledge and social identities as social actors’ assumptions and behaviour become increasingly subject to scrutiny and change. Language, according to Giddens (1991., pp. 23ff), both makes possible and is subject to these changes because it mediates the individual’s experience of social life as “the prime and original means” (p. 23) by which social action can be accomplished across time and space.

As a resource within the social/institutional perspective, structuration theory offers the potential to integrate micro and macro social phenomena and, through the notion of institutional reflexivity, to link social interaction to the themes of contemporary society. This potential, however, has been qualified by criticisms of the theory which have focused on both methodological and ontological questions (Rose, 1996). The former have identified the lack of empirical examples in the theory or guidance on how to operationalise it as a problem for researchers, concerns which have led Hekman to argue that the theory fails “to present a viable epistemology” (1990, cited in Rose, 1996, p. 8). On the other hand, ontological reservations have centred on the conceptualisation of agency and structure. For example, Archer (1996, cited in Rose, loc. cit.) has critiqued the

account of institutions this leads to, arguing that structuration theory cannot provide an answer to the question of why some “forms of social reproduction succeed and become institutionalized, and others do not”. Also focusing on the relationship between agency and structure, Thompson (1984, *op. cit.*, p. 167) has questioned whether “in stressing the enabling character of structure, Giddens does justice to the role of structural constraint”. In making a similar point, Layder (*op. cit.*, p. 140) has argued that the structuration theory has not resolved the macro-micro problem but redefined it. This, according to Layder, leaves the problem in place. His point is that the account of systems as persistent patterns does not adequately explain how institutions influence the actions which create and recreate them (*ibid.*, p. 141). Giddens, he argues, explains institutions as reflexively created by the actions of social actors but underplays “the objective force of structural constraints insofar as he suggests that they only exist in the reasons and motivations of actors” (*ibid.*, p. 145).

3.52422 Bourdieu

In explaining the themes of contemporary society, Bourdieu’s (1991; Bourdieu & Wacquant, *op. cit.*) ‘theory of practice’, like structuration theory, is designed to move beyond the polarising effects of the macro-micro problem. In his response to these oppositions, Bourdieu explains social structures as existing independent of, but reflexively related to, the “world of situated behaviour, whereas Giddens insists that they are simply different aspects of the same thing” (Layder, *op. cit.*, p. 156).

Within the theory of practice, the link between macro and micro phenomena is accomplished through the notion of “habitus” (Bourdieu, 1994b, pp. 95ff), which refers to the dispositions social actors develop and act upon throughout their social lives. These dispositions include the knowledge, values and skills which are prerequisites for engagement in social life and which each person acquires through their own particular

experience. Each person's habitus, then, reflects and, through being enacted in social practices, tends to reproduce particular social conditions. These social conditions form "fields", or areas of "social space", (Bourdieu, 1994a, pp. 112ff) which are differentiated according to how social actors are positioned within them in relation to other actors. In linking the actions of individuals to the social conditions in which they are situated, the habitus operates as the "pivot around which the production and reproduction of society is accomplished" (Layder, op. cit., p. 157).

By reflexively linking social structure and action, the notion of habitus does not, Bourdieu emphasises, subordinate social action to structure; nor does it cast individuals as free to act irrespective of their own dispositions (Bourdieu & Wacquant, op. cit., p. 127-128). Rather, it explains the relationship between the two as "a sort of ontological complicity" (Bourdieu, 1981, p. 306), in which "when habitus encounters a social world of which it is a product, it is like a "fish in water" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, op. cit., p. 127). By this he means that a habitus is synchronised with the social conditions in which it evolves. Thus, when the habitus is "perfectly "adapted" (ibid., p. 129) to a field in this way, the individual is not constrained to act, but acts according to their "practical sense" (Wacquant, 1992, p. 20ff), the facility for recognising and taking appropriate action that each person has in virtue of their particular habitus. The possession of practical sense does not mean that individuals cannot consciously manage their own dispositions: rather that when habitus and field are synchronised the need may not arise. It is more likely to arise at times when habitus is "out of phase" with field (Bourdieu 1994b, p. 107). Bourdieu explains that

The lines of action suggested by habitus may very well be accompanied by strategic calculation of costs and benefits, which tends to carry out at a conscious level the operations that habitus carries out in its own way. Times of crisis, in

which the routine adjustment of subjective and objective structures is brutally disrupted, constitute a class of circumstances when indeed 'rational choice'³¹ may take over, at least among those agents who are in a position to be rational (Bourdieu & Wacquant, op. cit., p. 131).

To explain how dispositions come to be deployed in different fields, Bourdieu (1994a, pp. 112-113) develops the economic metaphor of the "market", central to which is the notion of "capital". The term refers to those properties of habitus and field which affect the power relations between social actors. The four types of capital are "economic", "cultural" and social and "symbolic".

Bourdieu (1986, p. 243) explains that "*economic capital*" refers to those properties which are "immediately and directly convertible into money", and which are, for example, supported by "property rights". Both "cultural" and "social" capital refer to properties which may, "on certain conditions" (ibid.) be converted into economic capital, conditions which depend on the value of the different forms of capital in the market, explained below. "*Cultural capital*" (ibid.) refers to properties, such as "educational qualifications", which both distinguish carriers as advantaged in their access to capital and enable them to be so; and "*social capital*" (ibid.) refers to the social "obligations" and "connections" the carrier gains access to and is inducted into through "membership in a group" (p. 248), such as a family, union, profession or other source of "collectively-owned capital" (p. 249). The

³¹ "Rational choice" here refers to the construction of choice promoted by "rational choice theory" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, op. cit., pp. 123, 125), a construction according to which the action of an individual can be judged 'rational' or 'irrational' in virtue of the extent to which it "stands in an optimizing relationship to the desires and beliefs of the agent" (Elster, 1994, p. 121). As explained below in relation to Bourdieu's critique of the related notion of "individual rationality" (op. cit., p. 94), he criticises this construction of choice for ignoring the connection between choice and habitus, and thereby contributing to the legitimisation of "neoliberal discourse". The ironic use of "rational" in the quote reflects Bourdieu's argument (Bourdieu & Wacquant, op. cit., pp. 125ff) that "rational choice theory" only appears persuasive when there is no conflict between the habitus of those making the choices and the dominant field within which they make them, which, within the policies advanced by neoliberal discourse, is the economic field. As Bourdieu (ibid., p. 123) argues, such theorisations of social action are based on an "imaginary anthropology..." which

fourth type, “symbolic capital” (Bourdieu 1994a, p. 112) is typically manifested as “prestige, reputation, fame etc”. This is the form taken by the other three types of capital “when they are perceived and recognised as legitimate” (ibid.): that is, when they become established in society as valuable in virtue of their perceived capacity to improve people’s “life chances” (Postone, LiPuma, & Calhoun, 1993, p. 5).

Because people’s “life chances” depend on the amount and kinds of capital they have, they tend to “strive to maximise their capital” (ibid.). However, Thompson (1984, p. 51) explains that the “value” of the capital which individuals hold and seek varies according to its distribution and scarcity. Thus, within the theory of practice,

social agents are not ‘particles’ that are mechanically pushed and pulled about by external forces. They are rather bearers of capitals and, depending on their trajectory and on the position they occupy in the field by virtue of their endowment... in capital, they have a propensity to orient themselves actively either toward the preservation of the distribution of capital or toward the subversion of this distribution (Bourdieu & Wacquant, op. cit., p. 108-9).

It is, then, the interplay between the forms of capital a person brings to a field in the form of habitus – their “assets” (Bourdieu, loc. cit.), and the distribution of capital within the field which positions the person within the social space, thereby determining their power to accumulate further capital, and therefore their power in relation to other social actors in the field. The different forms of capital, then, “like trumps in a game of cards, are powers which define the chances of profit in a given field” (ibid.).

“...seeks to found action, whether ‘economic’ or not, on the intentional choice of an actor who is himself or herself economically and socially unconditioned”.

Bourdieu (ibid., p. 113) explains that, in the competition to acquire capital, power is exerted in struggles between individuals who, collectively, form “classes”. These are not necessarily organised groups but comprise individuals who share a similar habitus, strive to maximise their capital within similar fields, and who therefore “have every chance of having similar dispositions and interests, and thus of producing similar practices and adopting similar stances” (ibid.). This coincidence of interests within classes creates struggle between them, as each class competes to acquire the available capital.

A key stake in these struggles are “*common sense*” (ibid., p. 117) perceptions of the social world, which include social actors’ “sense of what one can and cannot allow oneself” (ibid.). To control this “sense of one’s place... represents a formidable social power” (ibid.) because it brings the power to manipulate how social classes understand the outcomes they can legitimately seek within the market, and thereby to manipulate the existence of classes themselves. As a consequence, “Classes and other antagonistic social collectives are continually engaged in a struggle to impose the definition of the world that is most congruent with their particular interests” (Wacquant, op. cit., p. 14).

Bourdieu (1991, p. 51) describes the form of power used in these struggle over definitions as “symbolic power” and the resulting manipulation of classes as “symbolic violence”. Again raising the theme of discourse as central to the operations of control, symbolic power involves the use of language by different classes within the “linguistic market” (Bourdieu 1993, pp. 78ff). Here, linguistic competence is conceived as “linguistic capital”, which is both a medium through which power is exerted and a stake in the struggles between groups (Bourdieu 1991, p. 55). As with the other forms of capital, linguistic capital is an unevenly distributed asset, with more valuable forms accruing to those who already have greater assets (ibid., p. 81). The linguistic market is therefore “not equal” because “certain producers and products start out with privilege” (ibid.). Symbolic power is particularly effective when it operates through the dominant – and therefore most

valuable – language in the field. As the most desirable linguistic capital, the dominant language is accepted as the “legitimate” (ibid., p. 50) language by those in the field. Its dominance is therefore “invisible to social actors precisely because it presupposes the complicity of those who suffer most from its effects” (Thompson, op. cit., p. 58). The exercise of symbolic power is consolidated and extended by institutions because symbolic violence is “built into the institution itself” (ibid., pp. 56-57) through “institutional mechanisms... which tend to fix the value accorded to different products, to allocate these products differentially and to inculcate a belief in their value” (p. 24).

In applying the theory of practice to contemporary society, Bourdieu, like Giddens, raises the themes of new forms of social order and control, operating reflexively through social practices to produce and reproduce inequality, risk and insecurity. Bourdieu has focused on those “classes” (1994a, p. 113) who are subject to symbolic violence, investigating how symbolic power operates in education (see, for example, Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977), and in relation to the broader social consequences of globalisation, neoliberal economics (Bourdieu, 1998a; 1999), and consumer culture (Bourdieu, 1984). Among the trends which Bourdieu has identified is the increasing “unification of the market” (1991, p. 50), “a process of unification of both the production and circulation of economic and cultural goods” which “entails the progressive obsolescence of the earlier mode of production of the habitus and its products” (ibid.).

According to Bourdieu, this process is being driven by those whose interests are served by the current dominant “neoliberal discourse” (1998a, p. 95). Central to this discourse is the construction of social action as driven by “individual rationality” (ibid., p. 94) – a view of the individual which, in “bracketing off the economic and social conditions of rational dispositions” (pp. 94-95), ignores the relations between individual action and social structure highlighted by the theory of practice.

Like Giddens, Bourdieu identifies the human cost of these changes as rising levels of risk, arguing that the distorted account of social life presented by neoliberalism is proceeding on a global scale to legitimise a culture of insecurity and fear among those who stand to lose from neoliberal economic policies (ibid., p. 98). Like Giddens, Bourdieu also identifies these increasing levels of risk to be reflexively reproduced through social practices. However, drawing on his account of class, Bourdieu explains these trends as resulting from struggles between those classes which have a habitus synchronised with this emerging neoliberal social order and those who lack the habitus to access the forms of capital which are valuable within it, and are thereby caught in a cycle of disadvantage in which the value of their habitus is reduced as other classes come to dominate the market (see, for example, Bourdieu, *op. cit.*, pp. 42-43).

In terms of its value for operationalising the social institutional perspective, the theory of practice offers a framework with which to explain how social production and reproduction shape and are shaped by the resources individuals bring to and employ in social practices, the group memberships they thereby acquire, and their differing capacities to compete for scarce social and material resources in efforts to improve their “life chances” (Postone et al, *loc. cit.*). Also to be acknowledged, however, are criticisms of the theory of practice, which have focused on the account of social structures and power. Layder (*op. cit.*, p. 157) has argued that the “fate” of social structures “is pretty much the same as in structuration theory”. This is because the link provided by the notion of habitus over-emphasises “the way in which habitus ties together the influences and effects of agency and structure” (ibid.), making it difficult to understand how structures can exert influence independent of the actions which produce them. Because of this, Layder (ibid.) argues, it is hard to “unpack and assess the relative impact of structures on action and action on structures in different historical and empirical circumstances”. Jenkins (1992, p. 123), has made a similar point, observing that the account of power and

institutions is underdeveloped. As the theory stands, Jenkins (ibid.) argues, power is “treated almost as a natural force”, whereas there is a need to account for the “sources of power” which lie behind the use of symbolic power. Parallel to this is a need to account for how institutions develop and influence individual actions and fields, including the extent to which fields are “institutionally *constituted*” (ibid.).

3.52423 Foucault

Unlike Giddens and Bourdieu, Foucault does not identify the themes of contemporary society by explaining how social structure and individuals’ actions are *linked* in the production and reproduction of society. Rather, he reconceptualises them as products of *discourse* (Layder, op. cit., p. 94ff), within which knowledge, power, and truth are conceived as socio-historical constructions (Duranti & Goodwin, op. cit., p. 31). In this account, Foucault rejects both macro social theories which explain power as sourced in classes or other social entities, and the subjectivist tradition, with its emphasis on social actors’ reasons, motives and perceptions as the basis of social organisation (Layder, loc. cit.).

While Foucault uses ‘discourse’ in a range of ways (Sarangi, op. cit., p. 49), this outline follows Sarangi (ibid.) in focusing on Foucault’s explanation of discourse as referring not to language, interaction or a corpus of texts but to a particular combination of knowledge and social practice, composed of “statements” (Foucault, 1989, p. 117). Foucault does not identify a “statement” with any *particular* kind or unit of communication, explaining that “It is not in itself a unit, but a function that cuts across a domain of structures and possible unities, and which reveals them, with concrete contents, in time and space” (ibid., p. 87). The examples of statements he (ibid., p. 82) provides include not only verbal utterances but a classificatory table of botanical species, an accounts book, a graph, and a growth curve. A sentence or series of signs only qualifies as

a statement if it occupies a place in an “enunciative field” (ibid., p. 99), which is a network of statements associated with a particular “discursive formation” (p. 38).

It is discursive formations which account for the organisation of discourse; they are its “rules of formation” (ibid.). These are the systems of rules which make it possible for certain statements but not others to occur at particular times and places, thus fulfilling what Foucault terms the “enunciative function” (ibid., p. 115). This function is divided into four types (ibid., p. 116), including rules for the formation of objects, subject positions and concepts. Within this framework, social actors are *products* of the rules of formation governing the creation of the “positions of the subject” (ibid., pp. 50ff) in relation to objects, concepts and other subjects. Individuals are thereby dissolved into a set of possible positions in discourse, not accountable for discourse but produced within it, spread across a shifting network of locations in discourse, termed “enunciative modalities” (ibid.), determined by rules of formation. It is the relationships between statements, regulated by rules of formation, which define the particular discourses in which subjects are positioned, including “clinical discourse, economic discourse, the discourse of natural history, psychiatric discourse” (ibid., p. 108). However, while “discourse” describes these large scale organisations of statements, statements also aggregate in smaller groups, forming “discursive practices” (ibid., p. 117), within which individuals engage and are themselves constructed.

Within this framework, then, the social actor, as the source of meaningful action in the subjectivist tradition, is displaced by a social subject constructed in discourse (Layder, op. cit., p. 96). It is this construction of the social subject in discourse which informs Foucault’s (1979, 1980, 1981) account of contemporary society, in which, as with Giddens and Bourdieu, social life is characterised by forms of control which operate through discourse itself to control individuals’ autonomy and social identity. Foucault (1981, p. 52ff) develops this account of social control by integrating the discursive exclusions and

constructions associated with the enunciative function with a particular account of how power operates in society. Power on this account takes on the decentralised ubiquity of discourse, operating in a “capillary” (Foucault, 1980, p. 96) way through the most mundane and delicate aspects of social life. It is not sourced in a particular class, group or institution but operates “at the lowest extremities of the social body in everyday social practices” (Fraser, 1989, p. 18). Foucault’s account of power, then, rejects the possibility of its having a central location, source or being possessed by social actors, and thereby denies the traditional Marxist version of power as a product of class struggle and the operations of the state (Layder, *op. cit.*, p. 103).

Again recalling the theme of social control operating through discourse itself, and to which people subordinate themselves, Foucault (1979) has argued that power in this decentralised sense characterises contemporary society by operating not in visible, top-down ways but rather through less visible – and therefore more effective – systems of “disciplinary power” (p. 182). These circulate through discursive practices themselves, both constraining the social options of participants and at the same time enabling their actions to be surveilled. People who engage in these practices thereby submit to their own regulation, and perpetuate their own self-regulation. As Foucault (*ibid.*) observes,

He who is subjected to a field of visibility, and who knows it, assumes responsibility for the constraints of power; he makes them play spontaneously upon himself; he inscribes in himself the power relations in which he simultaneously plays both roles; he becomes the principle of his own subjection (p. 202).

In terms of the social/institutional perspective, though Foucault’s account discourse and society provides a framework for conceptualising how discourse and power

are implicated in the construction of knowledge, identities and relationships, the lack of an account of social production and reproduction raises questions about how to employ the account in research. On this point, Dodd (op. cit., pp. 102-103) has questioned Foucault's notions of the decentred subject and power, arguing that these are difficult to operationalise in social research because at no stage in the analysis of society is power exercised "by, or over, an agent"; instead, "agents" are themselves products of power operating through discourse. Dodd (ibid., p. 103) argues that "It is one thing to argue that power permeates all social relations. It is quite another to argue that everything in society is *defined* by power" because this creates an account of power which is too broad to be of use in explaining social relations. Layder (op. cit.) makes a related point. Though acknowledging the importance of Foucault's work in drawing attention to the operations of power in "the finest capillaries of society" (ibid., p. 107), he argues that Foucault's account cannot explain why power comes to be distributed in particular ways. This problem has led to criticism that Foucault under-emphasises the "'macro' features of power" (ibid., p. 108): specifically, the ways in which institutions and the state constrain individual action. Moreover, Layder (ibid., p. 107) argues that this recognition is not possible because Foucault specifically rules out the sort of "totalising" social theory which such recognition presupposes.

3.52424 Habermas

In developing his 'theory of communicative action' (Habermas, 1981/1984, 1985/1987), Habermas critiques and draws on major theories in social theory and philosophy, reconstructing them into a "grand or 'totalising' theory" (Layder, loc. cit.) of the kind Foucault rejects. Whereas Foucault's account of discourse emphasises society as diverse, shifting and beyond the control of rational social actors, Habermas's theory is critical, emphasising the value of reason for the explanation and improvement of contemporary

society (Dodd, op. cit., pp. 105-106; Layder, op. cit., p. 187). Moreover, as Layder (op. cit., p. 188) explains, in contrast to Giddens, Habermas emphasises both the importance of subjective meanings to the reproduction of society, and the “‘objectivity’ of systems”. On the other hand, in relation to Marx and Weber, Habermas “seeks to broaden both Marx’s understanding of the forces of production and Weber’s interpretation of the process of rationalisation” (Dodd, op. cit., p. 107).

In explaining how forms of social control are emerging in contemporary society which operate through discourse to threaten established practices and thereby increase individuals’ insecurity, Habermas’s analysis of society draws on a “critique of reason” itself (Braaten, 1991, p. 114), in which he argues that contemporary society has evolved through a process of increasing “rationalization” (p. 4). Habermas, however, differs from Weber in arguing that this process involves the interplay between two distinct dimensions of social life, each associated with a different kind of rationality. Dodd (op. cit., pp. 108ff) explains that the two dimensions are the “system” and the “lifeworld”: system corresponds to “instrumental” reason, the lifeworld to “communicative” reason.

Instrumental reason underlies the economic, technical and administrative systems of society; communicative reason is associated with education and family life, and underlies the achievement of mutual understanding and consensus in interaction (ibid.). Layder (op. cit., p. 189) explains that each type of rationality corresponds to a particular type of action: instrumental rationality to “strategic action”, communicative rationality to “communicative action”.

These forms of action each produce and reproduce a distinct kind of social integration. Strategic action is “*ethically neutral*” (Braaten, op. cit., p. 83), meaning that it is not concerned with the values or understandings of particular individuals. Rather, it contributes to the integration of society by servicing the economic and administrative goals associated with the system. On the other hand, by engaging in communicative

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action, people promote the integration of society by increasing the level of understanding between members of the lifeworld. They achieve this by putting forward and debating the truth or falsity of each others' "validity claims" (Layder, op. cit., p. 190), assertions of their views which they support "in various recognised ways" (ibid.). It is through the notion of validity claims that Habermas links the lifeworld and system. There are three kinds of validity claim, each informed by a different kind of rationality and reflecting a different "world" (ibid., pp. 192-93): there are validity claims based on the objective world of systems, the social world of negotiated understandings, and the subjective world of the individual's perceptions. By being drawn on in communicative action, these three worlds are each produced and reproduced in the different kinds of social integration (ibid., p. 93).

It is through this double account of rationality, Braaten (op. cit., p. 83ff) explains, that Habermas traces both the themes of contemporary society and the potential for their solution. The central problems have been created by the rise of market economies, and the growth of systems to perpetuate them (ibid.). These developments have led to the "decoupling" (ibid., p. 84) of system and lifeworld, and the "colonization" (p. 89) of the life world by system. Habermas argues that "It is characteristic of modern societies that the system, organised on the basis of relationships governed by ethically neutral regulations, has disengaged from the consensual basis of the lifeworld" (ibid., p. 83). This separation has occurred because individuals have been willing to turn away from their relationships within the lifeworld to pursue goals "unrelated to their particular experiences, dispositions and goals" (ibid., p. 84). In doing so, their actions become integrated within the system in the pursuit of goals they may not be aware of (ibid., p. 85). Driving this decoupling in contemporary societies are systems associated with the power and money of market economies, operating through "political and economic forces and institutions" (Layder, op. cit., p. 195).

Braaten (op. cit., p. 88ff) explains that “*colonization of the lifeworld*” (p. 89) occurs when actions which “inherently belong to the lifeworld” (p. 88) become assimilated into systems, and are converted in the process into strategic action designed to meet system goals. In this conversion, communication is replaced by non-linguist forms of transaction, such as money (ibid., p. 93). This reorientation of actions away from the lifeworld towards the system leads to “systematic distortions of communication, as the fluid processes of cultural value formation are replaced by fixed, noncommunicative bureaucratic procedures” (ibid., p. 89). The separation and domination of systems promotes the growth of “expert systems”, such as politics and economics, which make areas of knowledge the preserve of specialists and therefore more difficult for people to assert and dispute as validity claims in their everyday lives (Layder, op. cit., p. 194). Examples of colonisation include the pressure on educational, medical, and age care institutions to view their goal as maintaining commercial viability by selling products to the public rather than as meeting the public’s right to services.

The broader economic and social consequences of colonisation include “legitimation crisis” (Braaten, loc. cit.), which occurs in welfare states when the system is “caught in a vicious circle” (ibid.) in which it fails to protect the social and cultural stability of the lifeworld from the effects of colonisation by the system itself, leading to the breakdown of both the lifeworld and system – a situation exemplified by the affects of the market economy on the administration of public services, which threaten both the “partnership between the administrative and economic systems” (ibid.) and the stability of the lifeworld.

The means of reinvigorating the lifeworld, Habermas argues, lies in the notion of communicative action itself. The *possibility* of mutual understanding based on agreement about validity claims is, argues Habermas, a precondition of any communication, and therefore an assumption which people necessarily share in engaging in communicative

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action (Braaten, *ibid.*, pp. 26-27). This assumption is “normative” (Bernstein, 1995, p. 50): in the absence of distortions induced by systems, it guides individuals towards what Habermas terms the “ideal speech situation” (*ibid.*), in which participants are “motivated solely by the desire to reach a consensus about the truth of statements and the validity of norms” (pp. 50-51). To realise this situation, participants need to develop “communicative competence” (Braaten, *op. cit.*, p. 22ff). This is the ability to distinguish between and draw on the objective, intersubjective and subjective worlds in making and negotiating the truth of validity claims (*ibid.*). This competence, combined with the normative pull of the ideal speech situation, would enable people to secure, on a rational basis, the lifeworld from colonisation by systems (Layder, *op. cit.*, pp. 196ff).

As a resource for operationalising the social/institutional perspective, the theory of communicative action provides an extensive framework for investigating the key themes of contemporary society. However, Habermas’s framework presents the challenge, like the others included here, of operationalising his constructs in research. On this point, Braaten (*op. cit.*, p. 91) has observed that there is a serious difficulty in assessing Habermas’s claims about contemporary society because of “ambiguities... concerning what, in the actual world, counts as a part of system, what as a part of lifeworld, and thus what counts as an instance of the colonisation of the lifeworld”. Similarly, Dodd (*op. cit.*, p. 122) has argued that, although the theory requires systems to “operate autonomously from the lifeworld” and their associated forms of rationality and action to be separated, these distinctions are not sustainable in practice. In addition, Dodd (*ibid.*, pp. 123-124) has questioned whether Habermas has established the normative value of the ideal speech situation, arguing that the ideal speech situation can only be a *description*, and that it cannot be deemed normative without making a circular assumption that the kind of interaction it describes has value. In summarising criticisms of the theory, Layder (*op. cit.*, p. 203) observes that, while it acknowledges distinctions between social structures and

individual actions, the account of the relationships between them – including power relations - is not sufficiently developed to “trace the empirical dimensions of the problem” and needs “more specification in an empirical sense”.

3.5243 Implications for operationalising the social/institutional perspective

From different theoretical standpoints, then, the work of these theorists highlights the themes to be addressed in operationalising the social/institutional perspective. Specifically, they focus attention on the processes by which increasingly dominant forms of social order are produced and reproduced – exemplified by the increasing globalisation of markets and the rise of neoliberal economics. As the four theorists make clear, the expansion of this new social order entails the spread of new social practices and the displacement or reorientation of existing ones, a process which, operating through social practices themselves, increases the risks people face in managing their lives while simultaneously undermining their ability to do so. It is these themes, then, which characterise the context of this study, and emerge through it as central in shaping the professional practices of ELICOS teachers.

These, then, are the components of the ontology and resources with which they may be operationalised in research. There remains, however, the question of how to operationalise the ontology in research. This is the focus of the remaining sections of this chapter.

3.53 The process of analysis

The two remaining questions to be addressed by the theoretical framework concern the process of analysis. These are

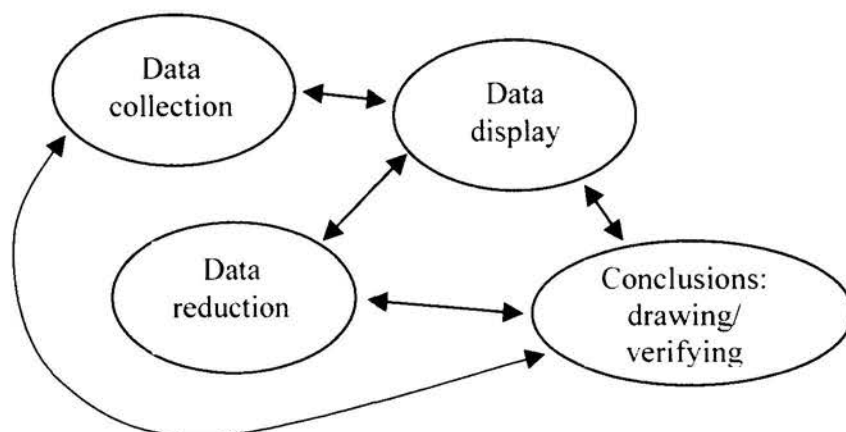
4. how to ground the investigation of discourse in data representing all the perspectives of discourse; and
5. how to combine the analyses in drawing conclusions about the discursive practices under scrutiny.

In addressing these questions, the theoretical framework draws on the fourth feature of Layder's (1993) multistrategy approach: his recommendation to draw on an expanded version of grounded theory, which, he (p. 137) has argued, provides explicit procedures with which to discover connections between the elements in his research map. To make these connections, he advocates using grounded theory-based coding typologies to link macro and micro levels of the investigation (*ibid.*, p. 139). Also drawn on here is Cicourel's (1992) emphasis – explained above - on the accountability of the researcher for meeting the need for “ecological validity” (Cicourel, 1982, p. 1ff), according to which the researcher is obliged to make explicit the knowledge which led to the inclusion and exclusion of data, analytical procedures and findings.

3.531 The interactive model of data analysis

To operationalise the ontology in research, data from the various perspectives are analysed using the grounded coding procedures recommended by Miles and Huberman (*op. cit.*, pp. 55ff), and following their “interactive” model of data analysis (pp. 12ff). The interactive model is represented in Figure 5, below.

Figure 5: Components of data analysis: Interactive model
(Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 12)



The diagram emphasises Miles and Huberman's view that data analysis should not be viewed as a linear series of steps, or a process isolated from the rest of a study, but should be a "continuous, iterative enterprise" (ibid., p. 12) which mobilises all aspects of the research design. This broad notion of data analysis includes the notion of "data reduction" (ibid.), which refers to the whole process of selecting, simplifying and transforming data to the point where conclusions are drawn and data displays made. The processes of drawing conclusions and displaying analysed data inform each other, and feed back into how ongoing data reduction and collection are conducted. The analysis proceeds until the codes have become "saturated" (ibid. p. 62), the term used by Glaser and Strauss (1967, op. cit., p. 62) to describe the stage in the analysis when incoming data cease to yield new codes. Within the theoretical framework developed here, 'data analysis' is used both in Miles and Huberman's broad sense, and in the narrower sense of data coding.

The value of this model of data analysis for the theoretical framework is that it offers a principled way of combining the findings of different data sets to investigate interdiscursive relationships between the perspectives. Thus, the patterns generating by the coding of data sets representing different perspectives can be compared to seek correlations between them, and such correlations can suggest interdiscursive relationships

between the perspectives³². The advantage of seeking evidence of interdiscursive relations based on correlations between patterns in differently coded data sets is that it offers a way of grounding the investigation of interdiscursivity in systematic, transparent procedures for data analysis, an aim which is very much in line with Cicourel's (1992) call for accountability in discourse analysis.

It is important also to clarify that the grounded theory-based research envisaged here differs from ethnography not only in its approach to data analysis but also in data selection. Citing Glaser and Strauss (1971., p. 183), Layder (op. cit., p. 44) explains that "the researcher interested in developing grounded theory is "an active sampler of theoretically relevant data", rather than "an ethnographer trying to get the fullest data on a group". By "theoretically relevant", Glaser and Strauss mean theory to be understood as "a constant and flexible accompaniment to the incremental collection of data and the unfolding nature of the research" (op. cit., p. 45, cited in Layder, loc. cit.). The implication for the use of the interactive model in the theoretical framework is that, consistent with Fairclough's (1992, pp. 225ff) recommendations on methodology, data selection is informed by the analyst's resources in identifying a small number of samples which are significant for the social practice under scrutiny, as well as being informed by the ongoing, iterative process of data analysis itself.

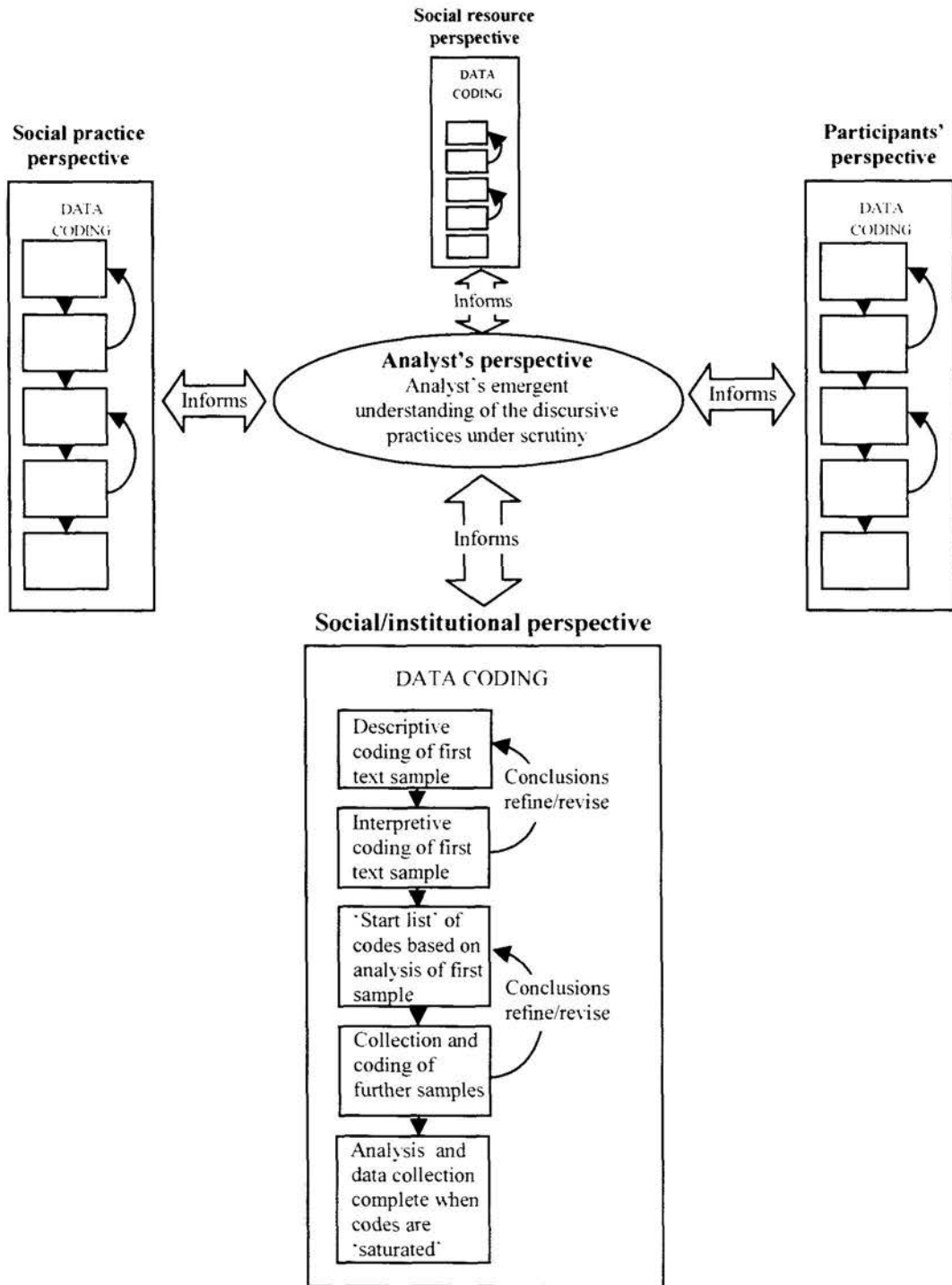
Miles and Huberman's model is characterised by a systematic and, as far as possible, inductive approach to the analysis of data. It includes systematic procedures for data analysis while at the same time allowing the analysis to evolve in response to the data. As Miles and Huberman (op. cit.) state

³² This method of combining the findings from different data sets is taken up in more detail in Chapter 4. Description of the study.

The ultimate power of field research lies in the researcher's emerging map of what is going on and why. So any method that will force more differentiation and integration of that map, while remaining flexible, is a good idea. Coding, working through iterative cycles of induction and deduction to power the analysis, can accomplish these goals (p. 65).

Within the theoretical framework developed for the current study, this iterative focus means that the collection and analysis of data both drives and is continually informed by the analyst's emergent understanding of the discursive practices under scrutiny. This iterative and continuous process is captured in Figure 6, below. The following section explains the data coding process common to the four perspectives, displayed in detail in Figure 6 under the 'Social/institutional perspective'.

Figure 6: Process of analysis



3.532 Data coding

According to Miles and Huberman (*ibid.*, pp. 55ff) methods of generating codes differ in the extent to which the codes are brought to the analysis or derived from the data itself. They term the former "a priori" and the latter "inductive" (*ibid.*, p. 61), a distinction which

in practice does not reflect a difference in kind but rather degree: all coding is informed to some extent by assumptions which the researcher brings to the study prior to data collection and analysis, processes which are “inescapably selective” (p. 56). In Figure 6, the researcher’s selecting and synthesising role is indicated by the central circle, in which the analyst’s perspective is shown to inform and be informed by her/his emerging understanding of the discursive practices under scrutiny. A risk here is that, as Cicourel (op. cit., p. 295) observes, this selecting and synthesising role can be “self-serving”, shaped as it is by the analyst’s tacit knowledge and personal orientation towards the perspectives in the model. Within the theoretical framework developed here, then, a check on the analyst’s grounds for selecting and synthesising is provided within the ontology (Figure 4). Here the analyst is required to explain how “motivational relevancies” (Sarangi & Candlin, loc. cit.) and “practical relevance” (Sarangi & Roberts, op. cit., p. 43) inform the analyst’s perspective, and thereby position the analyst in relation to the participants’ perspective. This points to a reflexive relationship between the analyst’s perspective and the research process in which the analyst’s perspective may evolve in response to data analysis just as the analysis evolves in response to the analyst’s perspective.³³ This relationship also highlights the researcher’s ongoing accountability for maintaining the quality of the research: the question of what ‘quality’ means within the theoretical framework is taken up below.

Consistent with the requirement for a grounded approach to data analysis in the theoretical framework, the specific challenge posed for the analyst by Miles and Huberman (op. cit., p. 56) is “to be explicitly mindful of the purposes of your study and of the conceptual lenses you are training on it - while allowing yourself to be open to and reeducated by things you didn’t know about or expect to find”. In order to address this

³³ This reflexivity is taken up in more detail in Chapter 5, The analyst’s perspective.

need to remain open to ‘surprises’, the approach to coding represented in Figure 6 is “inductive” (ibid., p. 61), employing procedures designed to allow codes to emerge progressively during analysis. This offers the advantage of greater sensitivity to unexpected features of the data and reduces the danger that the researcher will “force-fit the data into preexisting codes” (ibid., p. 62). There remains, however, the question of what these “codes” are and of how the coding procedures reduce this danger.

Miles and Huberman (ibid., p. 57) explain that codes are “tags or labels for assigning units of meaning to the descriptive or inferential information compiled during the study”. They distinguish between descriptive and interpretive codes. Descriptive codes involve little interpretation but rather the attribution of “a class of phenomena to a segment of text” (ibid.). Interpretive codes typically draw together descriptively coded extracts of text into larger patterns, which may themselves be drawn together to form “pattern” codes which are “even more inferential and explanatory” (ibid.). In Figure 6, interpretive codes are generated from the emergent understanding of ‘what is going on’, an understanding which is continually informed by the different perspectives from which the data is viewed. The processes of generating descriptive and interpretive codes are not discrete stages in the analysis. Rather, the processes of descriptive and interpretive coding inform each other. A putative understanding of ‘what is going on’ stimulates the first pass over the data, in which provisional descriptive codes are assigned. As descriptive coding progresses the understanding which informed the first pass over the data is revised and refined. This understanding in turn feeds back into the choice of descriptive codes.

The process of developing codes is therefore iterative and incremental, as the researcher continually revises and refines emergent impressions which are gradually reinforced as coding progresses. As Miles and Huberman (ibid., p. 63) observe, the resultant coding system is “not a catalogue of disjointed descriptors or a set of logically

related units and subunits but rather a conceptual web, including larger meanings and their constitutive characteristics”.

As explained above, this coding framework offers greater flexibility than Fairclough’s (1989, p. 29, 1992, p. 231) mapping of description, interpretation and explanation onto his ontology of discourse. To reflect this flexibility, the data coding sequences shown under each perspective in Figure 6 do not each represent a different data set; rather, one data set could be analysed from one or more perspectives, reflecting the fact that, as explained above, within the ontology it is possible for one or more discursive practices to be viewed from one or more perspectives. Whatever combination is used, the descriptive and interpretive coding of the data representing the discursive practice(s) are informed by the perspective(s) from which it is viewed.

The procedure for the analysis of data are the same for each perspective. It involves first choosing one text as a “typical case” (Miles & Huberman, op. cit., p. 28), a text which at first sight appears to exhibit characteristic features of the type of text collected. As the choice of the typical case is made prior to analysis the decision may be based on only a preliminary acquaintance with the data and informed by the analyst’s particular perspective on its significance to the study. While the text chosen may later be revealed to possess features uncharacteristic of the texts under scrutiny, its value lies in providing a *starting point* for the analysis.

The next step is to analyse this first text (Text 1. below) in order to generate a provisional “start list” (ibid., p. 58) of codes which will serve as the basis for the analysis of further texts. The procedures for developing a start list can be summarised as follows:

- Text 1 is read with a view to identifying point in the text where it appears that ‘something is happening here’.

- These points in the text are labelled with a provisional descriptive code while a running record is kept in “marginal remarks” (ibid., p. 66) of observations which may assist in the development of descriptive and interpretive codes. The marginal remarks may draw on knowledge of the wider context of which the text is a part. At this stage in the study this knowledge is largely confined to the “members’ resources” (Fairclough, 1989, p. 24) of the researcher.
- 3. The descriptive coding and noting of emerging impressions is continued until text 1 is completely coded.
- 4. Each code is then returned to and refined/checked in the light of the coding categories and marginal remarks which have emerged during the first pass over the text.
- 5. All the coded segments of text are extracted and grouped together using the codes as headings.
- By organising and reorganising the extracts within each code, patterns are sought which may illuminate the significance of the coded extracts. When an apparently salient pattern emerges, it is labelled as a subcategory of the original code. The process of classifying and reclassifying may itself lead to revisions in the original coding system and in the marginal remarks.
- Drawing on the marginal remarks and insights gained from the allocation of descriptive codes, interpretive codes are assigned to the clustered patterns of descriptively coded data.

- The resultant “start list” (Miles & Huberman., op. cit., p. 58) of descriptive and interpretive codes represents an analytical *entree* into the texts under scrutiny. It provides both a coherent coding system which can be extended and refined through its application to further texts and a means of directing further data collection. As Miles and Huberman (ibid., p. 64) state “Coding is not just something you do to ‘get the data ready for analysis’, but... something that drives ongoing data collection”.

The analysis of further texts involves the same recursive, exploratory approach, in which the evolving list of codes is loosely held and open to revision and refinement as the analysis proceeds. Glaser and Strauss (1967) summarise this process as follows

Although this method of generating theory is a continuously growing process - each stage after a time is transformed into the next - earlier stages do remain in operation simultaneously throughout the analysis and each provides continuous development to its successive stage until the analysis is terminated (p. 105).

The procedures involved in the continual recycling of new insights back into previously coded material are described by Lincoln and Guba (1985, cited in Miles & Huberman, op. cit., p. 62). The procedures include

- “filling in”: adding new codes, reconstructing a coherent scheme as new insights emerge and new ways of looking at the data set emerge.
- “extension”: returning to materials coded earlier and interrogating them in a new way, with a new theme, construct, or relationship.

➤ “bridging”: seeing new or previously not understood relationships within units of a given category (that relationship will itself have a name, and may call for a new configuration of the categories)

➤ “surfacing”: identifying new categories

As more texts are analysed new codes may appear, some codes may prove unworkable, and others may require further refinement through subcoding. In this process, the appearance or absence of codes may itself be significant and point to distinctions within and between the data sets. As explained above, the analysis proceeds until the codes are “saturated” (Glaser & Strauss, *op. cit.*, p. 62), meaning that incoming data cease to yield new codes.

These, then, are the processes of analysis which enable the operationalisation of the theoretical framework in research, and thereby address the final requirements set for the theoretical framework in Chapter 2. Beyond these requirements, however, there remains the question of how to evaluate the *quality* of research which employs the theoretical framework.

3.533 Evaluation

As explained in Chapter 2, Cicourel’s (*op. cit.*) call for accountability includes both the need to acknowledge the ecological validity of research *and* its quality, a need which is addressed in the theoretical framework using Miles and Huberman’s (*op. cit.*, p. 277ff) account of “goodness” in qualitative research. Like Cicourel, Miles and Huberman make clear that research quality is a complex notion, incorporating issues of ontology, methodology, methods, and the perceptions of researchers, participants and readers.

The value of “goodness” to the theoretical framework is twofold. First, it offers a broad ‘fit’ with the “interactive” model of data analysis (ibid., pp. 12ff), a fit by which Miles and Huberman (p. 281) seek to address the “unappealing double bind” that “Qualitative studies cannot be verified because researchers don’t report clearly on their methodology, and they don’t report clearly on their methodology because there are no shared conventions for doing so”. Second, consistent with the openness of the ontology to the preferences of different researchers, Miles and Huberman (ibid., p. 278) emphasise that “goodness” is not intended to advance a particular epistemological position in social research³⁴ or to be taken as “‘rules’ to be stiffly applied”. Rather, they (ibid., p. 277) argue that it includes an eclectic, “overlapping” combination of criteria based on research into the views of a “wide range of qualitative researchers”, without “trying to straighten out all of the thorny problems involved”. Thus, notwithstanding that fact that epistemological “battles in this domain have been extensive” (ibid.) and that validity and reliability have had an uneasy history in qualitative research, the notion of “goodness” aims to address the “problem of quality, of trustworthiness, of authenticity of findings” which “will not go away” (ibid.).

Miles and Huberman (ibid., pp. 278-280) identify five areas of “goodness”, for each of which they provide a list of “relevant queries” with which to evaluate the quality of a study. The five areas are introduced below, and are explained, along with the queries, in more detail in Chapter 9, Conclusions, evaluation and implications. The headings of each of the five areas reflect the findings which emerged through Miles and Huberman’s own research into how qualitative researchers’ understand “goodness” in research (ibid., p. 277).

³⁴ Miles and Huberman (1994, p. 277) do however acknowledge that this notion of “goodness” in research is incompatible with the view, associated with interpretivist research, that there is no “matter of fact” but only interpretations, and that evaluation criteria, by extension, are “not responsive to the contingent contextual, personally interpretive nature of any qualitative study”.

3.5331 External reliability/objectivity/confirmability

This refers to how clearly the conclusions are related to the rest of the study. A study scores high here if the relationships between the conclusions, methods and procedures, and background information such as the researcher's assumptions and values, and alternative theories and methods, are made explicit to the reader (ibid., p. 278). Underpinning these requirements is the need for a clear "audit trail" (ibid.) of the study to document how it was conducted, which in turn draws in the question of whether it could be replicated by others.

3.5332 Internal reliability/dependability/auditability

This concerns the consistency with which the design of the study is implemented in addressing the research question. Included here is the question of whether the research design is appropriate to the research question; whether constructs are employed consistently through the study; and whether the findings from different data sets contribute in a coherent way to the aims of the study (ibid.).

3.5333 Internal validity/credibility/authenticity

Miles and Huberman (ibid., pp. 278-279) explain that this area acknowledges the complexity of the notion of "truth value" by focusing on the different types of *understanding* which may be promoted by a study; the ways in which the researcher influences the setting being studied; notions of "plausibility" and "adequacy"; and how the study employs strategies of "checking, questioning and theorizing" to select between competing explanations. Validity in this broad sense is enhanced if the concepts used are coherently connected; triangulation or other methods are used to converge the findings from the analysis of different data sets; predictions are made and confirmed; plausible descriptions of contexts are provided; and areas of uncertainty are identified.

3.5334 External validity/transferability/fittingness

This area concerns the “generalisability” (ibid., p. 279) of a study; that is, how far its findings are relevant to contexts which lie beyond the particular context which forms the focus of the study. Miles and Huberman (ibid.) make clear that there are numerous ways in which findings can be generalised, that “the process is far from mechanical”, and that the notion of generalisability itself can be variously understood. The questions relevant to this area include how data is sampled and described, and whether the study provides examples of comparable cases, identifies threats to generalisability, makes clear the relationship between the findings and prior theory, and makes explicit how emergent theory is relevant to other contexts.

3.5335 Utilisation/application/action orientation

This area focuses on “what the study does for its participants and researched – and for its consumers”³⁵ (ibid., 280), what Kvale (1989a, cited in Miles & Huberman, loc. cit.) has termed “pragmatic validity”. This is a broad notion, which includes the ethical questions of benefit and harm as well as the ways in which a study evaluates the research subjects and setting. While Miles and Huberman (loc. cit.) note that pragmatic validity has been a particular concern in critical research, with its emancipatory interest, and in evaluative research, they cite Kvale (op. cit.) in arguing that it is important for all research as an “essential addition to more traditional views of ‘goodness’”. Within the theoretical framework developed for the current study, this requirement is addressed within the ‘analyst’s perspective’ explained in Chapters 3 and 5.

³⁵ This area of evaluation reflects the aim of the current study “not just to do research *on* subjects but *on and for* subjects” (Cameron et al., 1992, p. 15)

3.6 SUMMARY OF THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Taken as a whole, then, the theoretical framework developed here aims to provide an integrated, interdiscursively-oriented ontology/methodology which meets the key elements of Cicourel's challenge (op. cit.). In doing so, the framework seeks to acknowledge in an accountable, grounded way the interpenetration of texts, contexts and participant/analyst perspectives. In terms of methodology, the framework aims to acknowledge the reflexivity of the research process, within an inductive, flexible methodology which enables a "critical, but open, methodological stance" in order to "understand social life from the inside, while striving to make sociolinguistic description and explanation socially relevant" Sarangi and Candlin (op. cit., p. 383).

The next chapter explains how the theoretical framework is operationalised in addressing the research question which is the focus of this study.