Political Discourse Analysis

A method for advanced students

Isabela Fairclough and Norman Fairclough

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

First published 2012
by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

Simultaneously published in the USA and Canada
by Routledge
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data
Fairclough, Norman, 1941 -
Political discourse analysis / Norman Fairclough and Isabela Fairclough.
p. cm.
1. Discourse analysis—Political aspects. 2. Communication in politics. I. Fairclough, Isabela. II. Title.
P302.77.F35 2012
401'.47 dc23
2011028729

ISBN: 978-0-415-49922-4 (hbk)
ISBN: 978-0-415-49923-1 (pbk)
ISBN: 978-0-203-13788-8 (ebk)

Typeset in Baskerville
by Book Now Ltd, London

MIX
Paper from responsible sources
FSC® C004839
FSC www.fsc.org

Printed and bound in Great Britain by
TJ International Ltd, Padstow, Cornwall

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In this chapter we present an approach to critical discourse analysis (CDA) and discuss its relationship to critical social science and the forms of critique associated with it, and then discuss how the analysis and evaluation of arguments as we have presented it in Chapter 2 can increase the capacity of CDA to pursue its aim of extending critique to discourse. We shall do this by returning to an earlier analysis of part of a speech by Tony Blair (Fairclough 2000a), showing how the analysis is strengthened if we build it around the practical argument which Blair is advancing, asking what aspects of the earlier analysis need to be retained and how they can be connected to the analysis of practical argumentation. We shall discuss in more general terms how analysis of practical argumentation fits in with and contributes to normative and explanatory critique, and we will look at other concepts that CDA works with (imaginaries, political legitimacy, power) from the viewpoint of a theory of argument.

CDA began to develop as a separate field of teaching and research in the 1970s and 1980s (Fowler *et al.* 1979, Fairclough 1989). It subsumes a number of versions and approaches which differ in sometimes major ways (see for example Fairclough and Wodak 1997; Wodak and Meyer 2009; van Dijk 1997a on these differences). The account of CDA which we shall present here does not attempt to cover these differences; it is based upon a particular approach to CDA (Fairclough 1989, 1992, 1995, 2000a, 2003, 2006, 2010; Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999) and especially the more recent versions of this approach.

CDA has sought to extend the critical tradition in social science to include discourse. 'Discourse' is basically social use of language, language in social contexts, although those who use the term tend to be committed to certain more specific claims about the social use of language, e.g. the claim that discourse contributes to the 'construction' of social reality. But there are various understandings of discourse, and ours is built into the particular version of CDA which we present below. CDA has aimed both to change linguistics and other areas of language study by introducing critical perspectives on language, drawn from critical theory in the social sciences, which were previously absent, and to contribute to critical social analysis a focus on discourse which had previously been lacking or underdeveloped. This includes a better understanding of relations between discourse and other elements of social life, including social relations (and relations of power), ideologies, social institutions and organizations, and social identities, and better ways of analysing and researching these relations.

Critical social science

Critical social science differs from other forms of social science in that it aims not only to describe societies and the systems (e.g. political systems), institutions and organizations which

are a part of them but also to evaluate them in terms of ideas of what societies should be like ('the good society') if they are to cultivate the well-being of their members rather than undermine it. Evaluation is linked to a concern to understand possibilities for, as well as obstacles to, changing societies to make them better in such respects.

Critical social science tends to be open to the idea that discourse is part of its concerns and ought to be given more detailed and systematic treatment than it generally has, because it has long recognized the importance of ideas and concepts in social life, which are manifested in discourse (Fairclough and Graham 2002). Social reality is 'conceptually mediated' (Marsden 1999): in addition to social events, social behaviour, social practices, there are always ideas, concepts, representations and indeed theories of them, which are, on the one hand, produced in social life and effects of social life and, on the other hand, have effects on social life, both helping to keep existing forms in existence and helping to change them. So ideas need to be socially explained and social life needs to be explained in part ideationally, in terms of the effects of ideas. And since ideas (concepts, representations, theories) are manifested in particular types and forms of discourse (and different ideas of, say, justice are manifested in different discourses), this claim can be extended to discourse: the types and forms of discourse which exist need to be socially explained and social life needs to be explained in part in terms of the effects of discourse.

Critical social analysis includes critique of particular areas or aspects of social life. Various forms of critique are generally distinguished and these differ in different approaches to critical social analysis. We shall focus upon two fundamental characteristics of critical social analysis – it is *normative*, i.e. it evaluates social beliefs and practices as true or false, beneficial or harmful, etc., and it is *explanatory* – and we will distinguish normative critique and explanatory critique. Normative critique evaluates social realities against the standard of values taken as necessary to a 'good society', which raises the question of what a good society is. One answer is that a good society is one which serves and facilitates human 'well-being'. There are various views of what constitutes well-being; one which has recently been influential defines it in terms of a range of human 'capabilities' – a range of distinctively human abilities that 'exert a moral claim that they should be developed' (Nussbaum 2000: 83). Explanatory critique seeks to explain why social realities are as they are, and how they are sustained or changed. Both types of critique are necessary in critical social research, which starts from judgements that the society or aspect of social life in focus is significantly but avoidably damaging to human well-being in particular respects. But while normative critique is directly concerned with such judgements in evaluating behaviour, actions and social practices as being, for example, just or unjust, fair or exploitative, racist or non-racist, sexist or non-sexist, and beliefs as being true or false, explanatory critique seeks to explain, for example, why and how existing social realities endure despite their damaging effects. Explanatory critique seeks understanding of what makes a given social order work, which is clearly necessary if it is to be changed to enhance human well-being: another aim of critical social science is to identify what might facilitate such change as well as obstruct it. See Sayer (2011) for an account of critique and well-being (including the 'capabilities' approach) along these lines.

Both forms of critique extend to discourse, though differently. Normative critique includes critique of unequal relations of power and forms of domination which are damaging to well-being and which may be manifest in discourse, e.g. in manipulative discourse when it is an integral part of some form of domination. Explanatory critique includes both explanations of particular types and forms of discourse as effects of social causes and explanations of social phenomena such as the establishment, maintenance or change of a social order as partly effects of discourse. An example will make the character of explanatory critique clearer.

It is widely recognized that neo-liberalism was established and accepted through a successful strategy centred initially in universities and think-tanks to change capitalism in a liberal direction, which became a real possibility in the crisis of the 1970s. This strategy included a neo-liberal discourse which has been crucial in the establishment of neo-liberal economies and their endurance despite a series of crises (see for instance Bourdieu and Wacquant 2001). Explanatory critique would seek social explanations of how and why this discourse emerged as part of this strategy and how and why it was relatively successful, and also explanations of the transformations of international capitalism since the 1970s, which include neo-liberal discourse as a causal factor. Part of the concern is with ideologies: with ideas, beliefs and concerns manifest in discourses, as well as enactments of such discourses in practices and genres and inculcations of them in identities and styles (for these terms, see below), which contribute to establishing, sustaining and reproducing social orders and relations of power. In ideology critique, critical social science seeks causal explanations of the normalization, naturalization and institutionalization, as well as pervasiveness and endurance within populations, of particular beliefs and concerns. It seeks to explain them in terms of material and social relations in particular forms of social life, with such questions as: Why do these particular beliefs and concerns endure? Why do they have powerful resonance for many people? Why are they so little challenged? What effects do they have on continuities and changes in social life? This is ideology in its critical sense, tied particularly to the question of how social orders which are significantly detrimental to human well-being can nevertheless endure. It is to be distinguished from ideology in a descriptive sense (Fairclough 2010: 23–83), the understanding of the different positions of political parties and groups, or the different outlooks of individuals or social groups, as so many 'ideologies', a sense which we shall not use in this book.

CDA cannot in itself carry out normative or explanatory critique, but can contribute a focus on discourse and on relations between discourse and other social elements to interdisciplinary critique. And in bringing CDA and argumentation theory and analysis together we are seeking to draw the latter into such interdisciplinary collaboration. How then do the two forms of critique relate to analysis and evaluation of argumentation? The latter amounts neither to normative nor to explanatory social critique, but it offers a particularly effective way of helping CDA to systematically extend these focuses of critique into analysis of texts. It poses critical questions which lead into and contribute to analysis of relations of power and domination manifested in particular bodies of texts, it shows how particular beliefs and concerns shape practical reasoning and, contingently, decisions and actions on matters of social and political importance, and it poses critical questions about how contexts of action, values and goals are represented in the premises of arguments which can feed into critique of ideology.

Critical social science seeks to give an account of the causes of social change. It treats reasons for action as one type of cause. Reasons for action are premises of practical arguments. They are part of the causal powers (Fairclough *et al.* 2004) of people as social agents (i.e. their powers to bring about change). But in addition to agentive causes of social change, there are structural causes and CDA is committed to the aim which characterizes critical social science more generally, of trying to clarify how agentive and structural causes relate to each other, i.e. to clarify the dialectic of structure and agency (Giddens 1984, 1987). For CDA in particular, this aim includes for instance trying to clarify the relationship between the causal effects of 'orders of discourse' (structures of a particular sort, which we will say more about below, see Fairclough 1992, 2003) and of the agency of people as social actors and producers of texts. For instance, in the case of practical reasoning, we have identified

beliefs, desires and values as premises in practical reasoning, but an adequate account of the causes of social change would need to also ask why particular sets of beliefs, desires and values appear in particular instances of practical reasoning, how for instance they may arise from particular groups or classes of people being positioned in particular social-material relations. This moves us from the agency of people involved in practical reasoning towards structural factors and causes. Among people's reasons for action are reasons that express various external (structural, institutional) constraints on what they can do (we have discussed this in Chapter 2). They have duties, obligations, commitments, for instance obligations to abide by rules and laws and to respect the rights of other people. Analysis of practical reasoning offers the advantage of showing how the power of social and institutional structures manifests itself in the reasons for action that people recognize. In our view, *structures constrain (or enable) agency by providing people with reasons for action.*

The analysis and evaluation of practical reasoning will not tell us everything about social change; it will not tell us for instance whether action based on this reasoning will be effective in achieving social change, or what other facts about the world will make it succeed or fail to do so. But it can make a substantive contribution to both normative and explanatory critique (in ways which we explain further on in this chapter). It can, for instance, offer a principled way of criticizing powerful arguments that are not easily challenged, arguments that draw on dominant discourses and ideologies at the expense of an impartial consideration of other interests and perspectives, as being unreasonable, or as being grounded in unreasonable and rationally indefensible values and goals. It can thereby offer a principled way of evaluating normative claims and decisions made on the basis of deliberative practices which may not come up to the standards of rationally persuasive argumentation and thus fall short of an ideal of communicative rationality. This represents a substantive enhancement of the capacity of CDA to undertake critical analysis of texts in politics and other social fields.

Critical discourse analysis

We said above that 'discourse' is basically social use of language in social contexts. But the term is commonly used with different senses, even within our particular approach to CDA. It commonly means (a) signification as an element of the social process; (b) the language associated with a particular social field or practice (e.g. 'political discourse'); (c) a way of construing aspects of the world associated with a particular social perspective (e.g. a 'neo-liberal discourse of globalization'). These different senses are often confused, so it is helpful to use a different term at least for (a). The term 'semiosis' can be used for this most abstract and general sense (Fairclough *et al.* 2004) and this has the further advantage of suggesting that discourse analysis is concerned with various 'semiotic modalities' of which language is only one (others are visual images and 'body language').

Semiosis is a social element, a part or an aspect of social life, which is *dialectically* related to others (Fairclough 2001, 2010). Relations between elements of social life are dialectical in the sense of that, although they are different elements which social analysts would generally find it necessary to differentiate, they are not fully separate from each other. It is easiest to see this in cases of social change such as the transformation of capitalism into neo-liberal capitalism which we referred to above: neo-liberal economies appeared first as neo-liberal ideas and a neo-liberal discourse, which were then (because of the existence of favourable circumstances and conditions) successfully turned into new economic realities, neo-liberal economies.

It would be quite misleading to say that all the systems and practices and activities which constitute neo-liberal economies are just ideas or just a discourse, because they clearly have a partly material character. But on the other hand there is a sense in which they are partly ideas and discourse: their material features are ideas and discourse 'made real', and we can say that they incorporate, or in Harvey's (1996) terminology, 'internalize' neo-liberal ideas and discourse. CDA is not just concerned with the semiotic element of neo-liberal economies, it is concerned with working in an interdisciplinary way (for instance with economists and political economists) to identify and understand the relations between semiotic and material elements. The nature of such relations can vary between institutions and organizations and in different places, and can change over time; it needs to be established through analysis. In the case of political responses to the crisis, although our focus in this book is on analysis of argumentation, from a CDA perspective this would be just one part of interdisciplinary research into relations between: public debate; political decisions (policies, strategies); actions in response to the crisis; economic and broader social outcomes. Such research would centre upon the relations between the semiotic (discourse in the most general sense) and the material. (Note that the term 'dialectical' is predominantly used in this book in the way which we explained in Chapter 2, for one of three major aspects of argument, logical, rhetorical and dialectical, and refers to argumentation and its evaluation as an essentially *dialogical* process. It is important not to confuse these two senses of the term.)

Social life can be conceptualized and analyzed as the interplay between three levels of social reality: social *structures*, *practices* and *events* (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999). Social events are concrete individual instances of things happening, people behaving in certain ways, people acting (including acting by means of language). Social structures are the most abstract of the three, they are structures, systems and mechanism which social scientists postulate as causal forces in terms of which events and practices can be explained. Capitalism, for example, is a social structure (or rather an interconnected set of structures). The relationship between social structure and social events is not seen in this account as a direct one but as mediated by social practices, which are relatively stable and durable (but more open to change than structures) ways of acting, ways of representing and ways of being associated with particular identities. One example is practices of public political discussion and debate in which people debate responses to the crisis. So we can say that structures directly shape practices, and practices directly shape events, but structures do not directly shape events. However, the relations between them are more complex: practices shape but do not determine events, and changes in the character of events can cumulatively lead to changes in practices, which can lead to changes in structures.

Structures, practices and events all have a partly semiotic character. Events in their semiotic aspect are texts, including spoken as well as written texts, electronic texts, and 'multimodal' texts which combine language, image, music, body language, etc. In the case of practices, ways of acting include *genres*; ways of representing include *discourses*; and ways of being include *styles*. Genre, discourse and style are semiotic categories. In distinguishing semiotic aspects of ways of acting, representing and being in these terms we are seeking to identify ways which have a measure of stability over time. Genres are semiotic ways of acting and interacting such as news or job interviews, reports or editorials in newspapers, or advertisements on TV or the internet. Part of doing a job or running a country is interacting semiotically or communicatively in certain ways, and such activities have distinctive sets of genres associated with them. Discourses are ways of representing aspects of the world which can generally be identified with different positions or perspectives of different groups of social actors (e.g. different political parties). Styles are ways of being, social identities, in their

semiotic aspect – for instance, being a successful manager is partly a matter of developing the right style.

Social fields, institutions and organizations are constituted by multiple social practices held together as networks, and the semiotic dimension of such a network is an *order of discourse*, which is a configuration of different genres, different discourses and different styles (Fairclough 2000a). So politics, for example, is a social field constituted by a network of social practices including those associated with activities within political parties, the functioning of parliaments, elections and public spheres in which politicians communicate and interact with citizens. Semiotically, this network of practices includes various genres which, we are arguing, are primarily though not exclusively forms of argumentation and especially practical argumentation, such as parliamentary debate, political interviews on radio and television, and political speeches. It also includes different styles, for instance the styles of political leaders as opposed to the styles of citizens who contribute to public debate, though these will not be given much attention in the book.

The social field of politics also includes discourses which represent in varying ways the many areas and aspects of social life which are focuses of political thought, debate, deliberation and action, corresponding to different positions and perspectives within the political field. For example, there are different political discourses about the economic system and economic and business activity, about the provision of social welfare and protection for citizens, and about international politics and development aid. Sometimes these discourses can be broadly identified with the political right versus the political left – for example we might identify a group of liberal economic discourses which is broadly associated with the right, and socialist (including Marxist) economic discourses broadly associated with the left – but often the positions are more complicated, especially now that the division between left and right is not as clear-cut as it once was. In terms of our concerns in this book, one important difference between arguments is in premises which represent aspects of the crisis in different ways; the lines of action that people argue in favour of or against are of course strongly dependent upon the premises they argue from. If we are to discern politically significant differences in political argumentation over responses to the crisis, we need to be sensitive to significant recurrent differences in how the crisis is represented, which are associated with different discourses. Indeed one output of the analysis might be conclusions about what are the politically significant discourses drawn upon in representing the crisis; these would no doubt include significant families of economic discourses – (neo-)liberal, Keynesian, Marxist, etc. In part, the analyst is recognizing discourses which are already familiar and established in the political field, but the identification of which discourses are significant in debates over political responses to the crisis is a result of the analysis.

Discourses which originate in a particular social field or institution (e.g. neo-liberal economic discourse, which originated within academic economic theory) may be *recontextualized* in others (e.g. in business, the political field or the educational field), or originate in one place or one country and be recontextualized in others. Recontextualization can sometimes be a sort of 'colonization' of one field or institution by another (that would be a way of interpreting the recontextualization of neo-liberal economic discourse in the former socialist countries of eastern Europe after 1989), but it can also sometimes be an 'appropriation' of an external discourse which may be incorporated into the strategies pursued by particular groups of social agents within the recontextualizing field (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999). Often it is both, as it arguably was with neo-liberal discourse in Eastern Europe (Ieţcu 2006a, 2006c). Arguments which are widely drawn upon are elements of discourses, and they too can be recontextualized. An argument can be understood as a process, when the focus is on

someone advancing a particular argument on a particular occasion, but also as a product: in the process of argumentation, over time, certain arguments come to be recurrent and come to achieve the relative durability and stability we associate with practices and discourses. They can be drawn upon by arguers and they can be recontextualized.

Discourses may, under certain conditions, be *operationalized* or 'put into operation', put into practice: they may be *enacted* as new ways of acting and interacting, they may be *inculcated* as new ways of being (new identities), and they may be physically *materialized*, e.g. as new ways of organizing space, for example in architecture. Enactment and inculcation may themselves take semiotic forms: a new management discourse (e.g. the discourse of 'new public management' which has invaded public sector fields like education and health) may be enacted as management procedures which include new genres of interaction between managers and workers, or it may be inculcated as identities which semiotically include the styles of the new type of public managers. We should emphasize that these processes of operationalization are not inevitable, they are contingent possibilities which depend upon a range of factors and conditions, both material and semiotic (Fairclough *et al.* 2004). With respect to our concern with practical argumentation in political responses to the crisis, we would be particularly concerned with the question of which proposed lines of action in arguments are enacted. Practical arguments make judgements about what the best line of action should be, and these can be the basis for decisions, and decisions can be implemented in actions. But not all judgements lead to decisions and actions, and whether they do or not depends upon various conditions, such as the relative power of different social agents or agencies, as well arguers' ability to mobilize support.

Operationalization of discourses may in certain cases be a form of action based upon decisions which in turn are based in practical reasoning. It is possible for individuals to conclude that they should start acting in new ways or change their identities in certain ways, on the basis of beliefs about what the state of the world is and goals of achieving different states of affairs, and to decide to do so and actually do so. But such processes do not always have a purely individual character. In many cases, organizations of various sorts come to such conclusions about changes in ways of acting and identities which, for instance, their employees should undergo (e.g. shop assistants should ask customers 'How has your day been so far?'). This connects practical reasoning with the 'technologization of discourse' discussed in Fairclough (1992): seeking to bring about changes in discourse as part of an attempt to engineer social, cultural or institutional change, applying what Rose and Miller (1989) call 'technologies of government' to discourse.

As we said earlier, CDA works through interdisciplinary cooperation with other areas of critical social science, and the version of CDA we are using has been used in collaboration with various areas and theories (e.g. politics, management, education studies, media studies, cultural studies; and theories of the political field, power, ideology, hegemony, public space, citizenship, instrumental and communicative rationality, capitalism, 'new sociology of capitalism, organizational change, Marxism, critical realism, etc. – see Fairclough 2010 for a range of these), which have more recently included 'cultural political economy' (CPE, Jessop 2004, 2008; Jessop and Sum 2001). CPE claims that economic and political systems, institutions, relations, practices, etc. are socially constructed and that there is a cultural dimension to their social construction which is interpreted in terms of discourse. CPE works with a distinction between structures and strategies, and strategies are seen as coming to the forefront in times of crisis, when existing structures appear not to work adequately, and the different strategies of social agents to transform existing structures in particular directions suddenly proliferate. Strategies have a semiotic dimension: they include 'imaginaries' for future states

of affairs which social agents seek to bring into being, for instance economic imaginaries for ways of operating economically which are different from what exists, and these imaginaries are discourses of a particular sort. Certain imaginaries, certain discourses, will be, in CDA terms, operationalized, put into operation, made material and real, whereas most will not. So apart from the variation and proliferation of strategies and discourses (including imaginaries), a major focus is upon selection and retention, i.e. how some are chosen over others, implemented and institutionalized. CPE has worked especially with the version of CDA that we use, which provides it with the means of handling semiotic issues, whereas CPE offers CDA a way of contextualizing discourse analysis within a version of political economy which handles material and institutional dimensions of political economy as well as the semiotic dimension. We believe that argumentation analysis can make a significant contribution to CPE, by providing a systematic and coherent way of operationalizing the CPE categories of structure and imaginary in analysis of texts (we discuss this in the section on imaginaries below).

Let us now move towards the question of how the analysis and evaluation of argumentation can help CDA to improve the way in which it pursues its aim to extend critique to discourse, by discussing textual analysis within CDA.

Developing CDA's framework for textual analysis. An argumentative perspective on discourses as 'ways of representing reality'

The main publication on textual analysis within the version of CDA we are working with is Fairclough (2003) (see also Fairclough 2004). Textual analysis in CDA comprises (a) interdiscursive analysis, and (b) language analysis. Fairclough (2003) is organized around the distinction between genres, discourses and styles: each has a section of the book devoted to it, and various aspects of analysis of (lexical, grammatical and semantic) features of language are assigned to each section depending on whether they are most relevant to analysis of genres or discourses or styles. Each chapter applies the analytical categories which it deals with to material which bears upon a number of current research themes in the social sciences.

Interdiscursive analysis of a text identifies the genres, discourses and styles that are drawn upon, and mixtures of different genres or different discourses or different styles that it contains, including mixtures that are novel. An example of such a combination in the case of genres would be the various forms of interview (including political interview) on television, which tend to produce many combinations, some novel and some not, of features of interview genres with features of conversational genres. An example of such a combination in the case of discourses is the political discourse of Thatcherism which is analysed in Fairclough (1989/2001) as a 'hybrid' discourse combining elements from other political discourses; the same is true of the political discourse of 'New Labour' in Britain (Fairclough 2000a). This approach rests upon the claims that: texts are shaped but not determined by existing orders of discourse in which genres, discourses and styles are articulated together in relatively established and conventional ways; social agents in producing texts may combine genres and/or discourses and/or styles in unconventional ways; and such innovative combinations can be semiotic aspects of social changes taking place in behaviour and action, which may ultimately be established as changes in social practices and in orders of discourse.

The section on genres in Fairclough (2003) includes a short discussion of arguments with some analysis using Toulmin's (1958) categories of Grounds, Warrant, Backing, Claim,

which is clearly insufficient in the light of the claims we are making in this book. Here we claim that argumentation, and practical argumentation in particular, is the primary activity that is going on in political discourse, and analysis of argumentation can make a major contribution to strengthening textual analysis in CDA. We shall illustrate this contribution by returning to an analysis of part of a speech by Tony Blair which was published in a book on the political discourse of New Labour in Britain (Fairclough 2000a), a book which works with a framework of analysis similar to that in Fairclough (2003). We will provide an analysis of the argument developed in Blair's speech and focus on the critical evaluation of the argument, by addressing the question of *representation*. A considerable amount of research done in CDA involves analysis of representations of social action, actors or various other aspects of the world (analysis of discourses) *without however connecting these representations to agents' action via agents' practical reasoning*. We want to indicate (here and throughout the book) how representations enter as premises in arguments and how arguments based on such representations can be critically evaluated.

Let us first discuss the CDA approach to representation from the point of view of argumentation theory. Here is an extract from a speech which Blair made to the Confederation of British Industry in 1998, which is analysed in Fairclough (2000a: 25–29):

> We all know this is a world of dramatic change. In technology; in trade; in media and communications; in the new global economy refashioning our industries and capital markets. In society; in family structure; in communities; in lifestyles.
>
> Add to this change that sweeps the world, the changes that Britain itself has seen in the 20th century – the end of Empire, the toil of two world wars, the reshaping of our business and employment with the decline of traditional industries – and it is easy to see why national renewal is so important. Talk of modern Britain is not about disowning our past. We are proud of our history. This is simply a recognition of the challenge the modern world poses.
>
> The choice is: to let change overwhelm us, to resist it or equip ourselves to survive and prosper in it. The first leads to a fragmented society. The second is pointless and futile, trying to keep the clock from turning. The only way is surely to analyse the challenge of change and to meet it. When I talk of a third way – between the old-style intervention of the old-left and the laissez-faire of the new right – I do not mean a soggy compromise in the middle. I mean avowing there is a role for Government, for team work and partnership. But it must be a role for today's world. Not about picking winners, state subsidies, heavy regulation; but about education, infrastructure, promoting investment, helping small business and entrepreneurs and fairness. To make Britain more competitive, better at generating wealth, but to do it on a basis that serves the needs of the whole nation – one nation. This is a policy that is unashamedly long-termist.

The analysis of the extract in Fairclough (2000a) focuses on a number of aspects which are important from a critical point of view. All of the issues discussed are to do with how aspects of reality are represented and how representations draw on the discourse of the 'Third Way'. There is no discussion of genre because the book is organized in a way which separates analysis of discourses from analysis of genres, and the extract is not discussed as argumentation. Yet this is a clear example of practical argumentation and the analysis would be more complete and more coherent if analysis of representations were incorporated within analysis of practical argumentation. This is because *ways of representing the world enter as premises into reasoning about what we should do*. Unless we look at arguments, and not just at isolated representations, there is no way of understanding how our beliefs feed into what we do.

The analysis in Fairclough (2000a) focuses on the representation of 'change', more precisely on the representation of the world as involving change. Mainly, the focus is on 'change' as a nominalization, hence on a representation of change as an objective phenomenon that exists in the world, as a fact ('this is a world of dramatic change'). 'Change' is metaphorically represented as a force of nature, like a tidal wave which 'sweeps the world' and can 'overwhelm' us. Its nature is similar to that of time: trying to prevent it is like 'trying to keep the clock from turning'. 'Change' appears as the subject of sentences ('this change that sweeps the word'), as an entity with causal powers (it can 'overwhelm us'), or as an object (something we can seek to 'resist'). But it is not explicitly associated with any human agency: there are no claims in which 'change' is a verb with a human agent as its subject, (e.g. 'Bankers with the support of governments have changed our capital markets'). Apparently, 'change' just happens, it is a fact of life. In addition to 'change', 'the new global economy' is also represented as an existing factual entity which appears as the subjects of sentences (the new global economy is 'refashioning our industries and capital markets').

The approach we advocate in this book would focus on the argument for action that is being made, starting from a description of the context of action and a desirable goal, informed by values. The text illustrates a form of deliberation, an agent reasoning practically, apparently weighing options before arriving at the right course of action. This monological deliberative process is similar to deliberation in a multi-agent context. When we deliberate alone we are supposed, ideally, to think of the strongest objections to a proposal for action, in the same way in which several agents, supporting different proposals, would argue against each other.

As we explain in Chapter 6, deliberation is a genre, an argumentative dialogue type which starts from an open question – *what should I (we) do?* – and then proposes various courses of action, on the basis of an analysis of circumstances and of the goals that agents want to achieve. Each possible course of action is discussed primarily in terms of its consequences for the achievement of the goal or other goals that the agents would not (or should not) want to compromise. Evaluation may involve different perspectives, and these may not always be easy to weigh against one another. Courses of action can also be discussed in terms of whether they are easily achievable or indeed possible from the present circumstances, what constraints on action there are (is there some reason that cannot be overridden?), but the question of possible negative consequences is paramount, because discovery of probable negative consequences may lead agents to reject a tentative proposal.

In terms of the structure of practical argumentation which we proposed in Chapter 2, the first two paragraphs, describing the context of action according to Blair, would be assigned to the circumstantial premises. The main premises that describe the circumstances of action assert that that the world has been changing, Britain has been changing, and change poses a challenge. The claim is in the third paragraph and is signalled by the paragraph opening, 'The choice is' and the list of possible courses of action, namely, 'to let change overwhelm us' (i.e. inaction, doing nothing), 'to resist it' or 'to equip ourselves to survive and prosper'. Blair gives reasons for rejecting the first two options, by pointing to the undesirable consequences of the first and by negatively evaluating the second: 'The first leads to a fragmented society'; the second is 'pointless and futile', it is like 'trying to keep the clock from turning.' The only option that stands up to critical examination is the third: to 'equip' ourselves in view of achieving our goals, also expressed as 'the only way is surely to analyse the challenge of change and meet it'. The goals that this third option makes possible are 'to survive and

prosper'; later on re-expressed as 'making Britain more competitive, better at generating wealth' (goal premise). The goal is said to be a long-term one ('unashamedly long-termist') and based on a concern for 'serving the needs of the whole nation -- one nation' (this is the main value premise allegedly informing the goal and therefore the action; 'fairness' is also mentioned as a value later on). The proposed action (as means), i.e. 'analysing the challenge of change and meeting it', will therefore take us from the existing state of affairs (as problem or 'challenge') to a state of affairs in which we survive and prosper, generate wealth and serve the needs of the whole nation. The claim is initially very general and vague ('analyse the challenge of change and meet it'), but Blair goes on to formulate it in more specific terms: the action he advocates is in fact 'a third way -- between the old-style intervention of the old left and the laissez-faire of the new right'. What this involves, he goes on to explain, is not a 'soggy compromise' but a new role for government: a government that promotes education, infrastructure, investment, helps small business and entrepreneurs and ensures fairness. The goal premise is also expressed as pursuing 'national renewal' and trying to create 'a modern Britain' in paragraph 2. An apparently open choice amongst different actions turns out to be an advocacy of the Third Way as policy (the word 'policy' is used in the last sentence).

A succinct reconstruction of the argument would have to include circumstantial premises, goal premises, value premises and a claim for action. If we look at the speech as deliberation, we would have to indicate what alternative proposals have been considered and why they have been rejected. These elements can be systematized as follows:

Claim (solution)	We should 'analyse the challenge of change and meet it'; 'equip ourselves'; adopt the 'policy' of the 'third way'.
Circumstantial premises (problems)	'This is a world of dramatic change', of 'change that sweeps the world'; there is a 'challenge [of change]' that the 'modern world poses' (these premises are supported by examples of change in different areas). Britain has seen a lot of changes in the 20th century (supported by examples). Change is a challenge that the modern world poses.
Goal premises	Our goals are 'national renewal', a 'modern Britain'. Our goals are to 'survive and prosper'; 'make Britain more competitive, better at generating wealth'.
Value premises	We must achieve our goals 'on a basis that serves the needs of the whole nation -- one nation'. [National unity and a concern for people's needs are relevant values.] A concern for prosperity and survival [implicit in the goals of action] Fairness [underlies the role of government according to the proposed policy]
Means-goal premise	'The only way' of meeting goals starting from current circumstances is by 'analysing the challenge of change and meeting it', i.e. by adopting the 'third way.' [If we adopt the Third Way we will meet our goals / solve the problem.]
Alternative options	The other two options are 'to let change overwhelm us' and 'to resist (change)'.
Addressing alternative options	Alternatives can be rejected on account of negative consequences (a 'fragmented society') or as unreasonable or even irrational ('futile', 'pointless', like 'trying to keep the clock from turning'), i.e. by arguments from negative consequences and argumentation by analogy. [Just as it is futile and pointless to try to keep the clock from turning, so is it futile and pointless to try to resist change.]

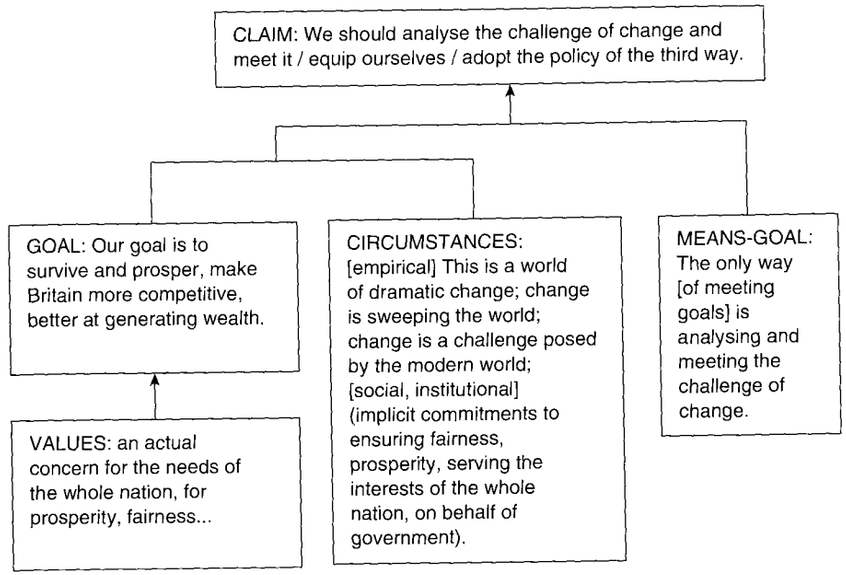

Figure 3.1 Blair's argument for accepting 'the challenge of change'.

The Means-Goal premise expresses a particularly strong relation here: '*if and only if* we adopt the means, can we reach the goals'. It not only says that the advocated means is necessary and sufficient in view of the goal, but also that there is no alternative, that this solution is the only one that will deliver the goals. We explain how such a relationship differs from merely saying 'if we adopt the means, we will reach our goals' in our analysis in Chapter 4.

We can represent the practical argument succinctly as in Figure 3.1. The practical argument is therefore saying that, in the arguer's view, given what the circumstances are and given what our goals are, underlain by our concerns or values, the proposed action or policy is necessary and sufficient to address the circumstances and meet our goals. However, merely reconstructing the argument, while essential, is not enough. Identifying premises and claim correctly gives us a snapshot of the structure of the text, as a prerequisite for evaluation, but does not do justice to the argumentative *process*, to the way it unfolds sequentially, as a process of reasoning, of deliberation. Practical reasoning involves here considering three possibilities for action, i.e. deliberation over possible several courses of action. As we said in Chapter 2, deliberation minimally involves considering what reasons would support *not* doing the action (i.e. a counter-claim), but may also involve other alternatives (doing something else, not just refraining from action). Deliberation can be seen as a procedure for arriving at a common course of action by examining various proposals for action in light of reasons for and against each proposal. Deliberation is a normative model, a genre, and to evaluate an actual argumentation against such a model does not claim of course that particular arguments are *good* instances of deliberation.

As we shall see in Chapter 6, deliberation usually starts with an *open practical question* (*What should we do?*), which is left implicit in Blair's speech. The next stage involves a critical

examination of the *context* of action (in business practice, this can take the form of and analysis of 'strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats', 'feasibility' analyses, etc.). In Blair's speech, this assessment of the context of action takes up the first two paragraphs (the world is swept by change, change is a challenge, etc.). Then, a range of options is *proposed* by the participants, or (when deliberation does not involve several agents, as here) by the arguer. Blair mentions three such possible choices. The next stages (*considering* or *commenting* on proposals and *revising* them) involve a critical discussion of these options, with participants pointing out desirable and undesirable consequences, and constraints on action (what is or is not possible, allowed, required), and may lead to participants revising their proposals or even their goals. Blair gives reasons against the first and second options, and advocates rejecting them in favour of the third option. Choosing the third proposal is advocated (*recommended*) at the next stage. Deliberation involves therefore choosing among proposals or options, in response to an open question, in a particular context of action, after careful and thorough examination of each proposal. A more accurate representation of the argument, including these alternatives and the way in which Blair deals with them, is therefore as in Figure 3.2.

On the surface, Blair's speech can therefore be reconstructed as a report of previous deliberation (where implicit proponents of alternative views are not co-present but their views are addressed, evaluated and rejected). Blair attempts to both justify his proposal in terms of how successfully it will deal with present challenges and enable Britain to achieve desirable goals, and also to show that alternative proposals will not lead to those goals (will have negative consequences that will defeat the goals) or are in other ways are unreasonable, hence unacceptable. Would we want to say that, on the basis of these formal features, this text is a good example of deliberation? If not, why not? As we have seen, deliberation involves the critical examination of options in the light of criticism. It also involves an analysis of the circumstances and may involve a critical discussion of goals and values as well. Deliberation is typically about means, with goals and other premises taken for granted, but if discussion reveals disagreement about goals, agents can decide to deliberate on the goals of action before deliberating about means. The test is whether the proposals being advanced, and the reasons that support them, can withstand systematic critical examination in view of the normative goal of the practice. In argumentation, the goal is to arrive at a reasonable choice 'on the merits', and thus resolve disagreement on a reasonable basis. How is Blair representing the alternative proposals and on what grounds is he rejecting them? How is he defining the context of action and the goals? Would these representations be found rationally acceptable? Has his own proposal, the one that has been adopted, emerged from a process of critical examination in light of its probable consequences?

Many people would probably agree that it is highly implausible that Blair has chosen the third option on the basis of a genuine analysis of the situation and an assessment of several alternatives. Rather, he wants to legitimize a particular policy, and he therefore represents the existing state of affairs, the goals and the alternative arguments in a way which is rhetorically designed to support his preferred conclusion. Consequently, he is not deliberating here in any real sense, weighing several options and choosing one after careful consideration of consequences and means–goal relations. Nor is he reporting a process of deliberation he has previously been involved in. These, however, are psychological claims that can at best be indirectly supported by evidence. What we need is an analytical framework that allows us to evaluate Blair's speech as a practical argument starting from the properties of the text as such. A dialectical theory of argument is capable of doing just that.

Once we look at the practical argumentation developed in this speech as an instance of (or report of) deliberation, we come to realize that the normative structure of the practice,

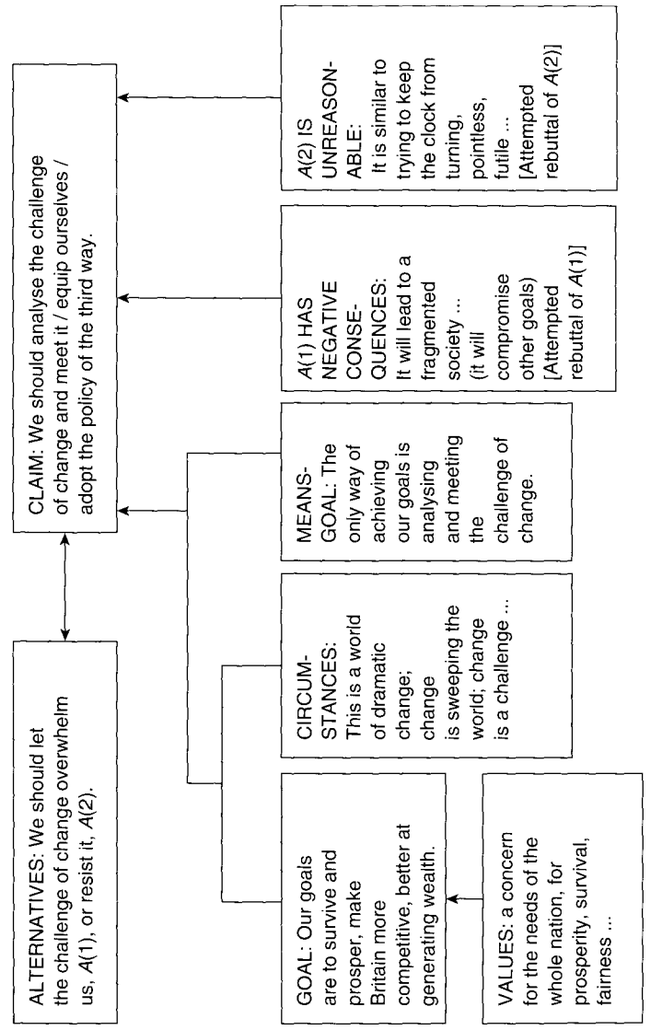

Figure 3.2 Blair's argument for the Third Way. Deliberation over alternatives.

of the genre itself, requires the presence of certain structural features. Are these features present in this particular deliberation or not? As we have said, the structure of deliberation requires the arguer to address alternative options, alternative claims for action. In practical conductive argumentation, as we said in Chapter 2, agents weigh different goals, different means of achieving them, different consequences and values, supporting a proposal for action but also its opposite or alternative proposals, and arrive at a practical judgement on balance. In multi-agent deliberative dialogue, these alternatives or counter-arguments are actually put forward by other participants. In a monological text like this one, the alternatives are represented by the arguer, as the standpoints of other participants that he has to address in order to show that *his conclusion still follows*, after these other arguments have been dealt with.

How are these alternative choices represented? The first choice is described as one in which we 'let change overwhelm' us, i.e. we do nothing and passively concede defeat. The second one involves 'resisting' change, but is 'pointless and futile', it is like 'trying to keep the clock from turning'. The third one involves adaptation and leads to success: 'equip ourselves to survive and prosper'. Given the way Blair represents these alternatives, the 'choice' is really no choice at all. It is obvious that the only reasonable choice is the third one: 'the only way is to analyse the challenge of change and meet it'. But the reason why the claim seems to follow so inevitably from the premises is that the premises have been formulated in such a way as to make the conclusion inevitable.

What is wrong with Blair's alleged weighing of options now becomes clear: *all the options are formulated in ways which favour his own conclusion.* This would not happen in real face-to-face dialogue: the other participants would formulate their arguments in ways that would favour *their own* conclusions, or at least would not prevent their own conclusions from following from their premises. The structure of deliberation provides for the presence of alternative arguments and counter-arguments formulated in terms that advance the rhetorical goals of the participants who advocate them. This may include evaluative terms, metaphors, persuasive definitions (which we explain below), amounting to different ways of representing the context of action, the goals or other reasons. Such counter-arguments and alternative arguments, with their associated claims and premises *formulated in terms that actually lead to those claims*, are absent in this text. Blair is not addressing real alternatives, real options, but his own representations of those alleged alternatives. Consequently, there is no actual deliberation, no actual weighing of alternative options in this text, although there appears to be. Actual deliberation is avoided by representing alternatives in rhetorically convenient ways (in pragma-dialectical terms, we can say that the argument attempts to be rhetorically effective at the expense of being dialectically adequate). Another significant dialectical failure is the absence from Blair's argument of any indication that his own proposal has been critically examined. The way in which the preferred option is formulated does not allow us to suspect any possible negative effects or costs. The argument is thus heavily biased in favour of a foregone conclusion and is a good illustration of typical (and fairly vacuous) New Labour 'spin'.

Representations of the world as persuasive definitions

Let us say a few words about the use of value-laden terms and so-called 'persuasive' (biased) definitions in arguments. Premises containing persuasive definitions ('taxation is theft') are extremely important in argumentation. This is because they direct arguers towards certain conclusions and not others. The same is true for emotive terms. In normal circumstances, it

would be strange to say: 'Jerry is a coward, and is therefore to be admired.' The definition of 'coward', as well as the emotional connotation of the word, contain a negative evaluation that normally suggests a conclusion that is the opposite of the one above. Persuasive definitions are essential in allowing arguers to pursue their rhetorical goals. They are almost always *re-definitions* of terms that already have a definition and are deployed to serve the interest of the definer. They are what Skinner (2002) calls 'rhetorical re-descriptions' of reality.

The key to the dialectical approach to persuasive definitions, according to Walton (2007a), lies in *understanding them as arguments*, with a burden of proof attached. They are in fact claims that are open to challenge by the other party, who is expected and should have the opportunity to ask critical questions. They cannot be assumed to be shared, unproblematic commitments at the beginning of argumentation. A reasonable discussion cannot *proceed* from a definition of 'abortion as murder' or of 'capitalism as an unjust system of government that allows the greedy rich to exploit the working poor', but needs to defend these definitions first. If no attempt to critically question and thus test the acceptability of these definitions is made by the participants, if such definitions are put forward or accepted as the one and only possible way of understanding the matters in question, as uncontroversial truth (for instance as definitions which are not normally open to objections, such as *lexical*, *theoretical* or *stipulative* definitions), then the dialogue in question holds the potential for deception and manipulation.[1]

The same observation applies to the use of so-called emotive or loaded terms in an argument, i.e. terms that have a positive or negative emotional connotation as part of their lexical, dictionary meaning ('terrorist' vs. 'freedom-fighter'). Walton cites Bertrand Russell's example: 'I am firm, you are obstinate, he is a pig-headed fool' (Walton 2006: 220). The use of such terms is generally condemned as putting a spin on the argument but, since persuasion is a legitimate function of argumentation, a critical perspective on such choices needs to distinguish between those cases in which loaded terms are used legitimately to defend a particular standpoint, when it is clear that there is also a contrary standpoint in play, and both are open to critical questioning, and those cases in which loaded terms and definitions are used deceptively, as if no other possible viewpoint is possible, as if they were neutral, fact-stating propositions beyond any conceivable doubt.[2]

We have insisted on the question of definitions and evaluative terms from an argumentation theory perspective for the obvious reason that it relates to the CDA view of discourses as ways of representing reality. Premises describing the context or the goals of action are fundamental to practical reasoning, and different people will describe the context and the goal in different ways, depending on how adequate and extensive their knowledge of the facts is, but also depending on their evaluative (including ideological) orientation towards this context and their particular interest in changing it. In assessing the circumstances of action, something may be a 'fact' for someone but not for someone else. The most difficult part of figuring out what to do is often getting to understand the circumstances of action, as a prerequisite to imagining a future state of affairs or a solution, and agents may disagree on the right action partly because they define the context of action in radically different ways and imagine goals in radically different ways, in relation to different and often incompatible values or concerns.

An alternative way of talking about the same difficulty we noted above is in terms of 'framing' the context of action. This 'framing' is often done in terms that serve arguers' rhetorical interests. People's claims for action follow from their own descriptions of the context and may not follow from the ways in which their opponents define the situation. Re-describing or re-framing reality in a rhetorically convenient way is part of a strategy of action. Such situations are frequently discussed in cognitive semantics in the terms originally

proposed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980, 1981) and Lakoff (2002, 2004). Cognitive linguists insist that *metaphors* or *frames* determine how people see or conceive reality, therefore – in our terms – how they conceptualize their goals, their circumstances and consequently, how they act. Analysis of metaphors or frames, we suggest, can be integrated into a theory of practical reasoning, as a special case of practical reasoning in which the premises (or the claim) involve a (metaphorical) definition. (We will return to this discussion briefly in Chapter 4.) The advantage of looking at these phenomena in terms of a theory of practical reasoning is that of seeing how re-framing or re-describing the situation functions within people's plan of action, how it gives people reasons for action and fits within a particular action strategy.

Several representations of the context of action, but also of other parts of the argument in Blair's speech, lend themselves to a discussion in the terms we have sketched above. Definitions, we said, should be seen as incurring a burden of proof, as requiring the arguer to justify the particular equivalence being proposed, in all those cases when the definition is not obviously uncontroversial. What justification is provided for viewing the second alternative, 'resisting change', as 'pointless' and 'futile', similar to 'trying to keep the clock from turning'? Why should we accept these evaluative terms and this metaphorical definition? Are they beyond dispute? Similarly, why should we accept the definition of the circumstances of action in terms of a process of 'change sweeping the world', i.e. as an objective, natural, agentless, inevitable phenomenon, or the definition of change as a 'challenge'? No burden of proof is assumed for these persuasive definitions and evaluative terms, which nevertheless clearly steer the argument in a particular direction and support a particular conclusion. If change was represented as a 'danger' or a 'threat', then maybe we could convincingly argue that we must resist change, but not if change is a 'challenge': if change is indeed a challenge, then this *entails opportunities* that must be taken advantage of. If trying to resist it is like trying to stop time, then again, only the conclusion that we must accept change seems rational. Similarly, who could question the goals of action, if the goals are formulated in terms of a wealthier Britain? Moreover, we are told, these equivalences are something that we all recognize ('this is simply a recognition of the challenge [of change] . . .'); 'we all know' this is what the world is like. Eventually, the argument's conclusion (the third option) will thus follow naturally from these persuasive, rhetorically motivated representations (of 'change' as a positive 'challenge', of alternative options as unreasonable, of goals as wholly uncontroversial and beneficial). It may, however, not have followed from representations formulated in other terms, by other agents, but whatever representations those agents might have used in their arguments, we cannot find out from Blair's speech, although the speech allegedly represents those other agents' views.

Instead of questioning representations in isolation, what we suggest therefore is questioning representations as parts of premises of arguments. The same observations apply to all types of premises in practical arguments and to the claim itself, so we will focus on the circumstantial premise for the sake of simplicity. Does a particular representation of the circumstantial premise withstand critical questioning? Is it for instance rationally acceptable that Britain's 'industries and capital markets' are indeed being 'refashioned' by a type of agentless, objective process of change, beyond human control, analogous to natural phenomena (e.g. a tidal wave)? One might want to question this and suggest that, rather, the changes that have 'refashioned' Britain's financial industry and 'reshaped our business and employment' were a matter of *deliberate* policy, not agentless processes of change, and have turned out to be a major cause of the current crisis. What is the role of human agency in these processes of change? If some of these changes (e.g. the deregulation of capital markets) have been caused by the decisions and actions of political leaders, governments and

businesses, are those agents not responsible for making further decisions and developing further policies which can reverse some of these changes or produce different effects? Can Blair's representation of the circumstances be sufficient to support his argument for action given that he says nothing about the causes of the key changes in trade and capital markets and about their possible impact, i.e. offers no explanation and no justification for them?

To conclude, it is clear that the extract from Blair's speech is an instance of practical argumentation. In not treating it as such, the analysis in Fairclough (2000a) missed what is primary in political discourse: addressing the question of what to do in response to problematic events and circumstances, given certain goals and values. Because, in that analysis, representations of social reality are not seen in their immediate connection to what agents are trying to achieve and to the actions they are advocating as means towards their goals, *critique of representations appears isolated and disconnected from critique of action.* Moreover, orders of discourse (as structures) are not seen in their proper relation to *agency*, because this fundamental insight is absent: that discourses provide agents with premises (i.e. beliefs about the circumstances of action, instrumental beliefs, values and goals) for justifying, criticizing and, on this basis, deciding on action, i.e. *discourses provide reasons for action.*

Normative critique in CDA. An argumentative perspective on manipulation

Let us now move to a more general assessment of how argumentation analysis and evaluation fit into the two forms of critique, normative and explanatory social critique, as they appear in CDA, and what precisely they add to such critique. Two focuses for CDA in the critique of discourse have been manipulation and ideology. We see the former as an issue for normative critique and the latter as an issue for explanatory critique. In this section and the next we discuss these in turn.

Manipulation can be seen as an issue in evaluation of arguments. In the Blair extract we have re-analyzed in this chapter, one of the reasons why the representation of the context of action is not rationally acceptable is that Blair fails to differentiate between changes which are established facts (e.g. the end of the British Empire) and changes which are a matter of decision and open to further decision and revision (e.g. changes in the rules of international trade and in the regulation of capital markets). We might take this as a deliberate deceptive intention, but how can we assert with any confidence that, in conflating two types of changes and thus making them appear equally objective and inevitable, Blair is trying to 'manipulate' the audience? Maybe he is not aware of what he is doing, maybe he is making an 'honest mistake'?

Van Eemeren (2005: xii) argues that 'manipulation in discourse boils down to intentionally deceiving one's addressees by persuading them of something that is foremost in one's own interest through the covert use of communicative devices that are not in agreement with generally acknowledged critical standards of reasonableness' and we agree with him that manipulation is 'always intentional and always covert' and that the arguer is violating the sincerity (responsibility) condition of the speech act of argumentation: a proposition is presented as an acceptable justification of a claim while the arguer does not really *believe* that it constitutes an acceptable justification. Yet, how do we know whether Blair *intended* to deceive or not? How do we know whether he is being *insincere*? In order to give a conclusive answer we would need to have access to Blair's psychological motives, and we do not.

One form of manipulation is *rationalization*, a deceptive argument addressed by Audi (2006) from an epistemological perspective. His discussion is compatible both with the pragma-dialectical speech act approach (referred to above), which points to the *sincerity* or *responsibility* condition of speech acts as a *constitutive* rule, as well as with Habermas's (1984) view of sincerity as a *presupposition* of rational discourse. Audi shows on what grounds we may characterize an instance of practical reasoning as a rationalization and why such an argument fails to meet normative criteria for good argumentation. In a rationalization, the reasons that are ostensibly offered in support of a claim are *not* the reasons that support the claim from the viewpoint of the arguer; the arguer believes the claim for *other* reasons. Rationalizations can be fairly good arguments when considered from an outside, third-person perspective and without any knowledge of the wider context of argumentation and debate. This is why they can be persuasive and achieve their deceptive intent. Often, the claim can be validly inferred from the premises and, if the premises are acceptable, the argument will be sound. The problem is epistemic: from the viewpoint of the arguer, the stated premises do not support the claim. The arguer *knows* that his commitment to the claim is based on *other* reasons, on covert reasons. *For him*, the claim is not inferable from the premises, although it might seem to be inferable for an audience. Let us note that not only arguments but also explanations can be rationalizations, as when a false, insincere reason (in the sense of cause) is provided to explain an action ('I avoided paying tax because the government wastes people's taxes anyway'). In this book we are only dealing with rationalizations that are arguments.[3]

A good example of rationalization was the justification of the Iraq war of 2003 on the grounds of an allegedly well-documented belief that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction (WMDs), that it posed a threat to the world through its connections to global terrorism, as well as on the basis of an alleged desire to bring democracy and freedom to the Iraqi people by freeing them from an oppressive dictatorship. These reasons were put forward by the Blair and Bush administrations as good reasons, sufficient to make the case for war. They were often asserted together in multiple argumentation, i.e. each reason was deemed to be in itself sufficient to justify the claim for action. Opponents of the war denied that these were real reasons or real concerns (and in the case of WMDs, they also denied that this particular premise was true or sufficiently supported by evidence). They argued that the real reasons for going to war were different and had to do with American geostrategic interests and with the UK's commitment to support those interests; briefly, that the public argument was a rationalization, put forward with the intention to deceive and manipulate the public.

In his evidence to the Chilcot Inquiry on Britain's role in the Iraq war, in January 2010, Blair defended himself by claiming that the reasons he gave for going to war were real reasons and that there was sufficient evidence at the time for believing them. He said that, on the basis of the intelligence then available, it was 'beyond doubt' that Iraq was continuing to develop its weapons capability. The intelligence reports he had acted upon were 'absolutely strong enough', 'extensive, detailed and authoritative'. This amounts to saying that the argument, while not being sound, as it later on turned out, was nevertheless rationally persuasive for Blair at the time when it was made, given all the evidence available.

This line of defence has been strongly challenged. One of the members of the public at the Inquiry said in an interview:

> I, like millions of other Britons at the time, suspected Blair was wrong about the threat that Saddam posed. I don't say that now with the luxury of hindsight. All that is different now is that history has proved us right. It is incredible that Tony Blair . . . refuses to accept any possibility that he could have been wrong. He seems to refuse to accept any other interpretation of the intelligence at the time. At one point he was asked about the phrase "beyond doubt". Mr Blair said that he believed the intelligence beyond doubt. But one of the members of the panel shot back "beyond your doubt but was it beyond anyone's doubt?" There was audible applause from the public at this point.[4]

This particular comment highlights an important problem for the evaluation of arguments: an argument can be rationally persuasive for a person even if it is unsound, if the person has good reasons to accept the claim. If, on the basis of reports which I have every reason to consider reliable, I draw a conclusion which seems justified but is in fact (as it later turns out) false, I can only be accused of making an honest mistake. This is in fact how Blair has tried to defend himself, and the question 'was it beyond anyone's doubt?' aims to challenge precisely the legitimacy of this line of defence. In other words, Blair cannot reasonably use the excuse of an honest mistake, as plenty of doubt was voiced *at the time* by MPs and the media, as well as by the weapons inspectors and other authorities, as to whether Iraq actually had any WMDs. There was no reliable evidence at his disposal that could make the argument rationally persuasive for him, either in 2003 or later.

In defending himself along the lines of human fallibility, Blair has tried to persuade his critics that he was not being insincere in his argument for war. He was not manipulating public opinion, he genuinely believed that the premises were true, that Iraq possessed WMDs and had links with Al-Qaeda. The argument, in other words, was not a rationalization. As we have said, the judgement that an argument is a rationalization or that it attempts to manipulate depends upon being able to plausibly claim an intention to deceive, which is not possible simply on the basis of argument analysis. This intention cannot be simply read off an argument and, however strongly we may feel that this is what is going on, judgements of this sort can only be made tentatively. However, they can acquire some confirmation by comparison with other evidence. For example, the arguer may give different reasons for the same claim in private from the ones he has given in an official capacity in public, the sort of discrepancy often revealed by Wikileaks. Or a comparison of arguments in various contexts might indicate a broad strategy or plan of action which the reasons given for the claim do not seem to fit in with. Audiences may draw on their knowledge of the world to assess whether the reasons offered are likely to be sincere or not. For instance, given the 'special' Bush–Blair relationship, Blair's declared commitment to support Bush, or given America's known interests in the Middle East, is it really plausible that these were *not* reasons for action, but that a concern for the Iraqi people was? Such judgements require therefore a broader dialectical context, an extended context of dialogue, across various space–time locales, as well as an understanding of the social and political context of actors – what it is likely that they are trying to do, how what they say is supposed to fit in within their strategies of action.

We have illustrated normative critique by an example of manipulation of public opinion and said that it can be discussed as involving rationalization, as a type of defective argument. Viewing manipulation in these terms offers a sounder basis for analysis and evaluation of discourse. Whether or not arguers are sincere or not (as an ethical issue) is only one aspect of normative critique. It corresponds to Habermas's 'truthfulness' criterion as a presupposition of rational discourse. But discourse can also be normatively assessed on the basis of the criteria of truth and normative appropriateness. According to Habermas's (1984) account of normative critique (an account which is explicitly grounded in argumentation), a person who makes an assertion is, in so doing, (implicitly) making a claim that it is valid, in the sense

of being true, and can be defended if necessary. Similarly, a person who proposes a course of action (implicitly) claims that it is valid in the sense of being in accordance with norms for rational action and can be justified if necessary. A 'validity claim' is 'equivalent to an assertion that the conditions of validity of an utterance are fulfilled' (Habermas 1984: 38). The communicative rationality of assertions and proposals depends upon them being 'susceptible to criticism and grounding', and the more they can be defended against criticism, the more rational they are. Validity claims are open to challenge and, when they are challenged, they should be defended in argumentation, which Habermas defines as 'that type of speech in which participants thematize contested validity claims and attempt to vindicate or criticize them through arguments' (Habermas 1984:18). Such validity claims are the claim that a proposition is true (in theoretical argumentation); the claim that an action (or proposed action) is right in the sense of being in accordance with norms of action (practical argumentation), and the claim that the speaker is speaking truthfully or sincerely. Our main concern is with practical argumentation, and the approach we have developed to evaluating practical argumentation through critical questioning is equivalent with the critical questioning of the validity claim to the rightness of the (proposed) action. Questioning the acceptability of premises that claim to represent reality is equivalent with questioning the validity claim to the truth of propositions. Furthermore, as our discussion of rationalization above has illustrated, our approach includes questioning the sincerity of the arguer, which is involved in assessing whether arguments offered for proposed lines of action are rationalizations. This is equivalent with questioning Habermas's third validity claim, 'truthfulness' or sincerity. Overall, the legitimacy of critical questioning is grounded in these validity claims' status as *presuppositions* of rational discourse, or as *constitutive* speech act conditions.

Evaluation of arguments that contributes to normative critique can involve critical questioning of the value premise (its rational acceptability or normative appropriateness) or criticizing the proposed action in view of its consequences on human well-being or on other agents' legitimate goals and other publicly recognized concerns. It thus relates primarily to validity claims to normative appropriateness. Evaluating the properties of deliberation and debate as public space dialogue can also contribute to normative critique. Is such dialogue inclusive and democratic, are people free from influences that might distort the argumentative outcome? The latter issue has been amply addressed in CDA (Fairclough 2000b: 182, 2003: 80), in terms of a normative framework for public space dialogue, and a theory of argumentation can enhance that conception by viewing public space dialogue as essentially argumentative and governed by a dialectical normative conception of good argumentative and deliberative practice.

Explanatory critique in CDA. Critique of ideology and evaluation of argumentative discourse

Let us now come back to the Blair speech analyzed earlier with a focus on explanatory critique and critique of ideology. Can the Blair extract be said to be ideological in any respect? Can we relate such a claim to the analysis of the practical argument as deliberation that we have suggested? In social life, certain arguments come to be recurrent and achieve the relative durability and stability we associate with practices and discourses. They can be drawn upon by arguers, they can be recontextualized, and we can regard them as parts of particular discourses. Let us consider Blair's text once again in the light of these observations.

We have suggested that the goal premise appears initially in paragraph 2, as the goal of achieving 'national renewal' and 'a modern Britain', then in paragraph 3, as 'to survive and prosper' (in a context of 'change'), then as 'to make Britain more competitive, better at generating wealth'. The latter is the most specific formulation of the goal, the only one specific enough to be recognized as a policy, and it is indeed referred to as a 'policy'. These are alternative specifications of the goal of action. It is not clear from the text whether they should be seen as equivalent or as chained together in a sequence of goals, but they are certainly presented as fundamentally compatible, part of a coherent vision. Blair does not make an explicit claim that surviving and prospering in a context of change amounts to (or results from) being more competitive and better at generating wealth, nor does he need to. While some members of his audience, as well as analysts, might raise the question of whether the move from surviving and prospering to being more competitive and better at generating wealth is justified, or whether these goals are self-evidently compatible or indeed equivalent and part of a coherent and uncontroversial vision, it can also be reasonably expected that audiences will accept this move without question, as obvious or just 'common sense'. Why?

We suggest that members of the audience would be recognizing here an argument which Blair is drawing upon and implicitly drawing upon it themselves. Blair is evoking a neoliberal argument, without spelling it out completely. It is present in the focus on promoting competitiveness, in the fact that Blair takes changes in markets which result from self-interested and reversible decisions by business and governmental elites to be no different from changes which are simply facts about the modern world, and in the dismissal of state intervention in the economy. The argument can be summed up as follows: self-regulating markets are the best means of creating wealth and prosperity, which is our goal; government interventions and 'heavy regulation' only prevent them from doing so, and governments should therefore accept the decisions of the markets and not 'interfere', and should restrict themselves to creating conditions for competitiveness; these conditions include removal of government 'interference' in markets in the form of rules and regulations, opening state enterprises to market forces (i.e. privatizing them) and cutting the overall costs of labour including wages and welfare benefits. The state should no longer be a 'welfare state' but a 'competition state' (Jessop 2002).

This argument – and more broadly the discourse which it is a part of – was pervasively drawn upon, constantly repeated and extensively recontextualized during the heyday of neoliberalism (Fairclough 2005). Explanatory critique would seek to explain the emergence of this discourse and arguments associated with it, and the dominant position they came to have in the wake of the crisis of the 1970s, and to explain the subsequent transformation of capitalism in a neo-liberal direction in a way which includes the effects of this discourse. Insofar as this discourse, including this overall argument, can plausibly be shown to have been a causal factor in these changes in capitalism, as well as serving particular interests while presenting them as being in the general interest, they can be regarded as ideological. It is in this sense that we might say that Blair's discourse is includes ideological elements.

What can analysis and evaluation of argumentation contribute to the conclusion that Blair's discourse can be regarded as ideological in this respect? From a dialectical perspective, Blair's moving from 'surviving and prospering' to 'making Britain more competitive' and 'better at generating wealth' can be challenged on various grounds. First, no justification for the move is provided. Second, it can be argued that an exclusive focus on increasing competitiveness and wealth might in fact compromise the goal of 'surviving and prospering', by creating extreme forms of inequality (negative consequences) that might undermine that goal, or by affecting other important goals and concerns (for instance, ecological

sustainability). Third, there are other conceivable ways of 'surviving and prospering' which Blair does not address which may be preferable to the one he offers, such as ensuring that growth and wealth creation are limited to forms which are sustainable both ecologically and economically (e.g. avoiding speculative bubbles which may implode and cause major economic and social damage), and that the wealth created should be fairly distributed and used for socially beneficial purposes. There may be other more legitimate values or concerns (sustainability, equality) that ought to underlie the goals: not any future state-of-affairs in which prosperity is achieved may be a legitimate one, but one in which such prosperity is fairly distributed and ecologically and economically sustainable. Applying analysis and evaluation of argumentation to large samples of public political discourse, broadening the dialectical context (as we put it earlier), could be used to establish whether the exclusive focus on the goal of increasing competitiveness and the capacity for wealth creation to the exclusion of other possible goals is widespread, and whether this understanding of national survival and prosperity is widely taken for granted and allowed to go unchallenged.

The theory of ideology is concerned in general terms with the question of how beliefs and concerns which are associated with the interests of particular social groups come to be general beliefs and concerns, and how they come to have effects on social life. Ideologies are part of the way in which the dominance of dominant social groups is achieved, maintained and renewed through particular directions of social change. The capacity of ideologies to have such effects depends upon them not being recognized as such, being 'naturalized' (Fairclough 1989) as a part of common sense. Explanatory critique aims to explain people's beliefs and concerns as partly due to structural causes affecting their form of social life, and differing according to their positions in social life and the social relations they are positioned within. One aspect of the latter is that, where there are asymmetries of power, beliefs and concerns of dominant social groups which correspond to their own interests can come to be accepted by other social groups, whose interests they do not correspond to, as part of a perceived general interest. Since people may not be conscious of the social origins of their beliefs and concerns, individual decisions and actions can be partly explained as resulting from their own intentions but also partly explained as resulting from structural causes. People's reasons, as we have seen, may be provided by discourses and associated arguments, seen as constitutive parts of such discourses and products of argumentative discursive practices. Social changes, such as changes in the form of capitalism, as well the continuity of existing forms, can be explained in part as the effects of people's social agency, of the decisions they make and the actions they take, but social agency is also structurally constrained, and decisions and actions are partly based upon beliefs and concerns which have structural causes that people may not be conscious of. Insofar as such beliefs and concerns and the discourse they are manifested in have effects on social life, they are ideological.

We can see ideology as one focus within a broader attempt to understand and explain the capacity of discourse to have causal effects on social life, to contribute to changes in social life. Of course, not all beliefs and concerns, and not all discourses are ideological in the sense of supporting certain power interests and many are effects of people's own beliefs and interests rather than transferred effects of those of others. Moreover, social life has a reflexive character and people can come to examine their own beliefs and concerns and those of others and consciously seek to change them. It is increasingly the case in modern societies that the effects of discourse on social life are matters of calculation and design, and that there are people who deliberately aim to produce such effects (see the discussion of 'technologization of discourse' in Fairclough 1992). We said above that the effects of ideologies depend upon them being naturalized, but this does not mean that they are necessarily or even normally

naturalized for everyone: they need to be naturalized for a significant number of people, and for a sufficient number of people, to have these effects. The situation in the heyday of neo-liberalism, in which neo-liberal discourse was widely (though by no means universally) taken for granted as common sense, can in this sense be regarded as a rather remarkable achievement of those architects of neo-liberalism who consciously worked for its realization. So in focusing on ideologies we recognize that the ideological effects of discourse are an aspect of its capacity to have causal effects on social life and that these effects are often intended. We must distinguish the intentional acts of people who seek to promote discourses which might work in an ideological way from the non-intentional character of ideologies, as manifested in the beliefs and actions of people for whom they appear as common sense. Discourses and arguments which correspond to particular interests but are taken for granted by a sufficient number of people as corresponding to a general interest can be effective in ways which those who take them for granted do not intend.

Critical analysis aims to produce explanations of social life which both identify the nature and causes of what is 'wrong' in it and produce knowledge which could (in the right conditions) contribute to 'righting' or at least mitigating these 'wrongs'. But explanations, interpretations, evaluations of social practices (both lay and specialist accounts) already exist within social contexts, because a necessary part of living and acting in particular social circumstances is interpreting and explaining them, and human beings reflexively assess the social activity they participate in. Furthermore, it is a feature of the social world that interpretations and explanations of it can have effects upon it, can transform it in various ways. In our approach to practical argumentation, interpretations and explanations of the crisis, produced by various agents, feature as reasons for acting in one way rather than another in response to the crisis. A critique of some area of social life must therefore be in part a critique of interpretations and explanations of social life and of the practical argumentation in which they feature as premises, as objects of research. It must therefore be in part a critique of (argumentative) discourse.

In analyzing discourses which are part of social life, the critical social analyst is also producing discourse. On what grounds can we say that this discourse is more rationally persuasive than the discourse that is the object of critique? The only basis for claiming superiority is providing explanations which have greater explanatory validity or power and greater predictive power. This is a matter of both quantity – how comprehensive the scope of explanations is – and quality – good explanations must be such that we can defend them and justify them if challenged and they can predict comparatively better what we can expect to happen or to discover in the real world. One aspect of the matter of quantity is the extent to which existing lay and non-lay interpretations and explanations are themselves explained, as well as their effects on social life, in terms of what it is about an area of social life that leads to these interpretations or explanations emerging, becoming dominant and having practical effects on social life (Marsden 1999; Fairclough and Graham 2002). Such interpretations and explanations can be said to be ideological if they can be shown to be in a sense necessary – necessary to establish or keep in place particular relations of power (Bhaskar 1979). A possible case in point is explanations of the crisis which play the 'blame game' in terms of the mistakes or moral flaws of bankers, politicians, regulators, rather than in terms of the (systemic, structural) logic of capitalism or its neo-liberal variety.

From the perspective of explanatory critique, one important question about practical argumentation is how reasons for action (one type of cause) contribute to causing social change, and another is how arguers' reasons for action are shaped by structures. Neither question can be fully addressed through analysis and evaluation of argumentation alone. But

such analysis can make an important contribution to CDA and to interdisciplinary explanatory (and normative) critique. Analysis of argumentation shows, for example, how particular beliefs and concerns shape practical reasoning and, contingently, decisions and actions on matters of social and political importance, and it poses critical questions about how contexts of action, values and goals are represented in the premises of arguments, all of which can feed into critique of ideology. It shows whether argumentation is reasonable or unreasonable in anticipating alternative arguments and dealing with challenges, or in failing to do so, and this can indicate cases where particular representations of circumstances, values or goals seem to be taken as given and beyond question. These may be cases where arguers are drawing upon discourses which have been imposed by powerful social groups (an effect of 'power behind discourse') and which are of ideological significance. Institutional, external reasons are also important from the perspective of explanatory critique. Whether such reasons are drawn from institutional facts associated with status functions and deontic powers, or from ideological discourses which have been imposed and naturalized, they are reasons which are provided by *structures*, based in and shaped by relations of power. As we argue throughout this book (and in more detail later in this chapter), these are obvious cases where structures constrain agency, and the way they do is by providing agents with reasons for actions.

Our approach to argumentation analysis can be integrated within a normative (as opposed to merely descriptive) approach to social science, and particularly within an approach that recognizes 'lay normativity', the evaluative character of people's relation to the world, as a fundamental feature of social life which should be addressed by social scientists (Sayer 2011: 2). In Sayer's view, when social science disregards the fact that we are social beings '*whose relation to the world is one of concern* . . ., as if it were merely an incidental, subjective accompaniment to what happens, it can produce an alienated and alienating view of social life' (original italics). This is a view of values as 'beyond the scope of reason', as a matter of subjective preference, a view which ignores the grounding of values in people's objective capacities for suffering and flourishing. Things matter to people because of what people are, as biological, social and cultural beings. Lay normativity is distinct from analytical, external normativity: as analysts, 'we could just report that some group claims to feel happy or oppressed, but we are also likely to want to know whether their claims are warranted', which we cannot do without 'evaluating their judgements' (ibid.: 2–6). And if our aim is to engage in critical social science, that aim requires not only a normative but also an explanatory standpoint. The social scientist should seek not only to evaluate judgements, beliefs and practices, but also to explain why judgements are made, why beliefs are held, why practices exist, and also to identify cases where they 'help to maintain existing circumstances . . . that support those beliefs' and 'also are likely to be favourable to dominant groups' (ibid.: 220–222).

As analysts, we distinguish between interpretations of the social world, such as produced by participants, and analyses such as our own. We also distinguish between lay normativity and the external normativity of our analytical approach. In actual argumentative practice (as our analyses in Chapters 4, 5 and 6 will show), the analyst encounters not just participants' arguments but also their analyses and evaluations of other participants' arguments: actual argumentative practice itself has a normative character, in the sense that, as well as arguing, arguers evaluate the arguments of others. Such analyses and evaluations of arguments are sometimes produced by specialists, e.g. economists discussing economic arguments, and sometimes by members of the public with no particular specialist competence in the field at issue. (We illustrate these two situations in Chapters 4 and 5 respectively; both are instances of lay normativity in relation to our analytical approach.) Taking an external, normative perspective, as a CDA practitioner or argumentation theorist, does not intend to disregard lay normativity but makes a deliberate decision to view it against the framework of a particular theoretical model, and thus make evaluative decisions that are systematically motivated. Lay evaluations and analysts' evaluations do not, of course, have a radically different character; one can find lay challenges to arguments corresponding to all of the normative standards associated with the normative model. (Empirical research has shown, for example, that the pragma-dialectical normative model is intersubjectively acceptable to ordinary arguers and consistent with norms of reasonableness that they have already internalized, van Eemeren 2010: 36.) In proposing our own view of the structure and evaluation of practical reasoning, we have tried to contribute to the further specification of the normative framework of a pre-eminently dialectical approach. Such an approach can contribute to explanatory critique in providing a systematic basis for addressing participants' evaluation of each other's arguments, as an aspect of the reflexive assessment of social life, which explanatory critique aims to explain. And it contributes to normative critique by offering a systematic basis for the evaluation of actual argumentation practices from an external normative perspective.

In the last part of this chapter we will discuss the relevance of argumentation theory for understanding two concepts which originate outside CDA but have been significant concerns within this version of CDA (imaginaries and political legitimacy) and the concept of power, which is of fundamental importance for CDA as for any form of critical social science.

Imaginaries as discourses and goal premises

Discourses as ways of representing the world do not only describe what social reality is but also what it should be. The latter corresponds to what social theorists working within Cultural Political Economy (CPE) have called 'imaginaries' (Jessop 2002, 2008). This is an extremely interesting concept but, although CPE incorporates a version of CDA, there has been so far no clear way of working with it as an analytical category in discourse analysis. We think that relating it to a conception of human rationality and of practical reasoning in particular offers such a way.

What is currently said about imaginaries in CPE tends to conflate an important distinction, between discursive (semiotic) representations of the *actual* world, on the one hand, and imaginaries proper, as discursive (semiotic) representations of a possible, *non-actual* (or not-yet-actual) world, on the other. In the account we propose here, we start from the premise that both representations of the actual world and 'imaginaries', as representation of the non-actual, are semiotic in nature, they are discourses. A representation of the economic system currently in place in the UK and a vision of how this economic system might be transformed both stand in relation to the actually existing economy, just as my representations of what my situation is and how I would like it to be both stand in a relationship to the actual world. But they are distinct in what they are used to describe: one is used to represent the *actual world*, the other is used to represent a *future possible world*. It is only the latter discursive representation that is an 'imaginary'.

CPE seems to talk of 'economic imaginaries' or 'imagined economies' as designating both alternative, competing representations of the actually existing economy, and future visions or projects, competing for selection and retention, and eventually capable of more-or-less shaping the actual world. We argue for a clear distinction between these two types of representations. The competing vocabularies in which people talk about the capitalist economy as it

exists today in western states, for instance, are not 'imaginaries' because they aim to describe the actual world. If we were to use 'imaginaries' to cover both senses we would lose a distinction which is clear in the structure of practical reasoning, where these two sorts of semiotic representations always appear as *distinct types of premises*. Imaginaries, as future visions, capable of guiding action, are assigned to the *goal* premise, while semiotic representations of the actual world are assigned to the *circumstantial* premise. This distinction accords perfectly with CPE's acknowledgement of the performative power of imaginaries:

> Imaginaries are . . . creative products of semiotic and material practices with more or less performative power. This is why they have a central role in the struggle not only for 'hearts and minds' but also for the reproduction or transformation of the prevailing structures of exploitation and domination.
>
> (Jessop and Sum 2012: 86)

But it also explains *why* imaginaries have this power: *because they give people reasons for action*, they *are* reasons for action, premises of practical arguments. An explanation of how visions can motivate or inspire action, of how one can move from vision to action and attempt to change the world is only possible if the whole discussion is placed with the framework of a theory of practical reasoning.

Our aims in this section are twofold. First, we want to arrive at a definition of 'imaginaries' as a semiotic construct that can be of real use to the discourse analyst. This will involve an attempt to place 'imaginaries' within a schema for practical reasoning. Second, we want to relate 'imaginaries' to an ontology that is capable of explaining how language can be a form of action and create institutional reality. Let us address the first issue by looking at a text produced by the UK centre-left organization Compass (www.compassonline.org.uk). The text, entitled *Building the Good Society. The Project of the Democratic Left* and used in a printed leaflet during the 2010 national electoral campaign, is signed by Jon Cruddas and Andrea Nahles (no date) and begins as follows:

> Europe is at a turning point. Our banks are not working, businesses are collapsing and unemployment is increasing. The economic wreckage of market failure is spreading across the continent. But this is not just a crisis of capitalism. It is also a failure of democracy and society to regulate and manage the power of the market. (. . .) The future is uncertain and full of threats; before us lie the dangers of climate change, the end of oil and growing social dislocation. But it is also a moment full of opportunities and promise: to revitalise our common purpose and fulfil the European dream of freedom and equality for all. To face these threats and realise this promise demands a new political approach.
>
> On the tenth anniversary of the Blair–Schroeder declaration of a European Third Way, the Democratic Left offers an alternative project: *the good society*. This politics of the good society is about democracy, community and pluralism. It is democratic because only the free participation of each individual can guarantee true freedom and progress. It is collective because it is grounded in the recognition of our interdependency and common interest. And it is pluralist because it knows that from a diversity of political institutions, forms of economic activity and individual cultural identities, society can derive the energy and inventiveness to create a better world.
>
> To achieve a good society based on these values we are committed to:

- restoring the primacy of politics and rejecting the subordination of political to economic interests;
- remaking the relationship between the individual and the state in a democratic partnership;
- creating a democratic state that is accountable and more transparent;
- strengthening our institutions of democracy at all levels including the economy;
- reasserting the interests of the common good, such as education, health and welfare, over the market;
- redistributing the risk, wealth and power associated with class, race and gender to create a more equal society . . .

We can use the account of the structure of practical reasoning in Chapter 2 to identify a number of arguments. The first includes the following premises and claim:

Circumstantial premises	[First paragraph, from] 'Europe is at a turning point. Our banks are not working . . .' [to] 'it is also a moment full of opportunities and promise'. [Circumstances also include the existence of suitable opportunities for action: it is possible for us to do what we want.]
Goal premises	[Our goals are] 'to face these threats and realise this promise'.
Claim	[The goal] 'demands a new political approach', [subsequently defined as the] 'alternative project: the *good society*'.

Up to this point, the argument justifies the need for a new approach to politics and can be represented as in Figure 3.3.

Goal premise	[Our goal is] 'to achieve a good society based on these values'.
Value premises	'This politics of the good society is about democracy, community and pluralism'. [Justification of the acceptability of the value premise:] 'It is democratic because only the free participation of each individual can guarantee true freedom and progress. It is collective because it is grounded in the recognition of our interdependency and common interest. And it is pluralist because it knows that from a diversity of political institutions, forms of economic activity and individual cultural identities, society can derive the energy and inventiveness to create a better world.'
Claim	[This is what we ought to do and we are committed to doing, in view of achieving the goal]: 'restoring the primacy of politics and rejecting the subordination of political to economic interests'; 'remaking the relationship between the individual and the state', etc.

From this point onwards, a new claim is made, which justifies a set of actions designed to turn the project (i.e. the imaginary or vision) of the good society into reality. Achieving the good society is the goal premise, the actions are the means. An extended discussion of the values underlying this project is included at this point (see Figure 3.4):

We have identified two interconnected arguments with two claims. The first claim is that a new political project is required, and is justified in terms of what the context is (crisis, threats but also opportunities) and what the goals are (i.e. to respond to these threats and fulfil possibilities). In the second argument, this political project (the imaginary of the Good Society) is taken as given (not argued for), as a goal of action, and a set of actions is proposed

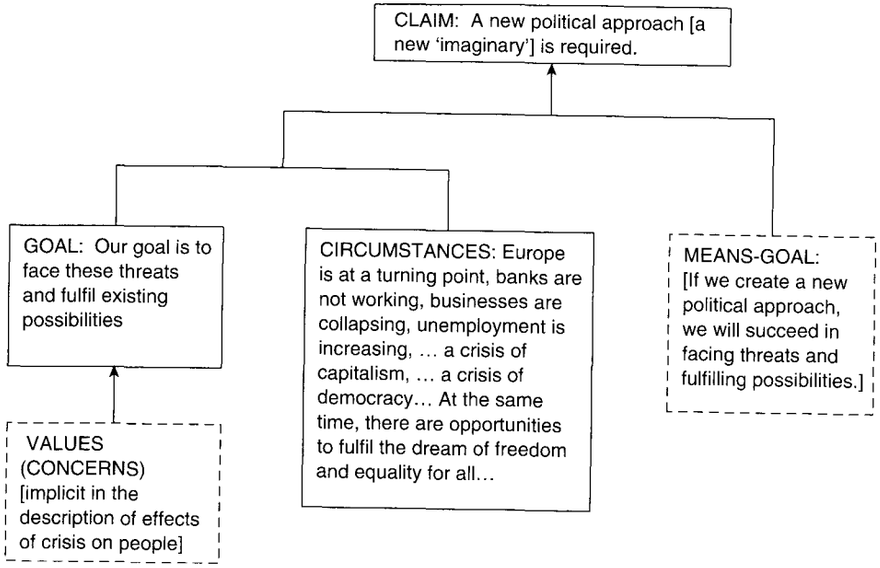

Figure 3.3 Compass: the argument for a new political approach.

as being capable of turning the imaginary of the Good Society into reality (and thereby successfully responding to the circumstances of 'threats' and 'opportunities').

Compass has implicitly engaged in a process of deliberation over what the goals of action ought to be and what actions are required to realize these goals and is here advancing its own political project (proposal) in response to the implicit open question 'what should be done, given the circumstances, in order to meet our shared goals'? However, instead of advancing a specific action or set of actions, as means towards shared goals, uncontroversial goals, Compass is suggesting a redefinition of the goals themselves: we need to develop a new political approach, a new project or vision, a new goal. The text nicely illustrates deliberation both about goals and about means. In other words, before considering what action (as means) will solve current problems, we need to decide whether the goals of action, as we currently understand them, are appropriate. Compass is 'offering an alternative project', the Good Society, as the result of implicit deliberation over goals. (Implicitly, having considered several possible goals, it has concluded that a change of goals is needed in order to solve current problems; adopting *a new goal* is the *means* to solving the problem – Figure 3.3). Subsequently, this project, once identified and put forward, becomes a goal premise from which a specific course of action follows and is proposed in the second argument (Figure 3.4).

We have said that 'imaginaries' (the 'Good Society', the 'Big Society', etc.), function as goal premises in arguments and can thus motivate action. Some imaginaries have been around for a long time, for instance the 'knowledge-based economy'. There seem to be several distinct ways in which we can talk about the 'knowledge-based economy', not all of them in terms of goals. We can say: *Our goal is to achieve a 'knowledge-based economy', therefore we ought to invest more money in education and research.* But we can also say: *The economy of the UK is a*

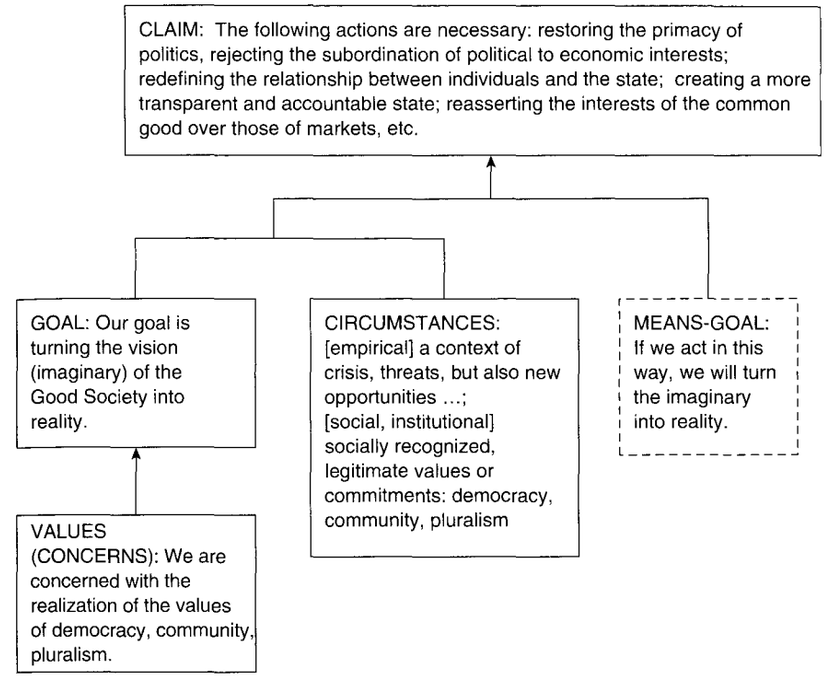

Figure 3.4 Compass: how to turn the imaginary of the Good Society into reality.

'knowledge-based economy', therefore, if our goal is to compete internationally, we ought to invest more money in education and research. In the former example, the imaginary of the knowledge-based economy is clearly a goal. In the latter example, the description of the economy as a knowledge-based economy is taken as a description of what the economy is actually like, therefore as a circumstantial premise, not as a goal to achieve in the future. This seems to contradict our view that imaginaries are (non-actual) goals of action. In order to account for this puzzle, which we think underlies the confusion we mentioned earlier regarding the status of imaginaries, let us briefly refer once more to Searle's social ontology, which we introduced in Chapter 2.

The distinction we have defended so far amounts to one between what is 'imagined' – as in 'imagined community' (Anderson 1991), or as in seeing the state system as an 'imagined political entity' (Jessop 2002) – and what is 'imaginary' (the 'Good Society' imagined by Compass, or the 'Big Society' imagined by the Conservatives). An imagined community is the result of a collective act of imagination, but is nevertheless a community that actually exists, so is 'real' in a sense in which the imaginary of the 'Good Society' is not real, or not real yet. The same goes for other imagined entities or relationships ('marriage' is an imagined relation, but not an 'imaginary' relationship for actually married people). We can relate this distinction to Searle's social ontology and say that imagined entities or relationships of this kind are *institutional* facts and are ontologically subjective but epistemically objective. What we have called 'imagined' but not 'imaginary' (marriage, but also promises, money,

government) are social institutions of various sort. They are created in a process whereby people impose certain so-called status functions on other individuals and objects, followed by collective recognition of those status functions. Status functions are assigned by speech acts of declaration ('*x* counts as *y* in context *c*') and carry deontic powers, i.e. they confer or impose rights, obligations, entitlements, etc. The purpose of assigning them is to regulate relations of power in a society. They hold society together because they give people reasons for action that are independent of their desires (Searle 2010). David Cameron's collectively recognized status as Prime Minister gives other people reasons for acting in accordance with his decisions that are independent of those people's actual desires.

Where do 'imaginaries' fit within this social ontology, in our view? We have said that imaginaries belong to the goal premise in arguments for action, and that this premise motivates action. Given these goals (visions, projects), whose realization we want, and given the circumstances we are in, the following type of action is recommended. But what would the consequences be of talking about these visions *as if they were reality?* What would follow if, instead of being the goal premise, the vision were to shift to the circumstantial premise, the one that claims to represent how reality is, as in the example we gave above, involving the knowledge-based economy?

The suggestion we are advancing here is the following. The 'performative' power of the 'imaginary' has to do with a shift in its place within the argument: from the goal premise to the circumstantial premise. The mechanism is the following: the arguer is performing a status-function declaration which represents the 'imaginary' as 'actual' and he attempts to get it collectively recognized as a factual representation. How does such an 'imaginary', represented as actual fact, differ from an 'imaginary' which functions as a goal premise? In the following way: the 'imaginary' as goal can motivate and guide action, being a reason for action, but it has no deontic powers. No system of rights, duties, obligations, authority follows from it as long as it is represented as non-actual, i.e. as long as it stays in the goal premise. However, representing the 'vision' as institutional *reality*, instituting it by declaration and trying to get it collectively recognized, *can*, if this recognition is successful, eventually shape reality. An institutional reality that is collectively recognized assigns deontic powers to people and gives them reasons for action. The 'performative' power of an 'imaginary' has to do with whether or not, in practical reasoning over action, in relevant contexts (having to do with persons, settings, procedures, etc. – which themselves must have the appropriate status functions), the 'imaginary' is collectively recognized as (institutional) fact (e.g. enshrined in new regulations, laws, discourses and genres, etc.), generating a deontic system, and thus enabling and constraining human action. The success of this collective recognition has to do both with how the vision resonates with various audiences (whether it is taken up, accepted, whether it manages to persuade) – and this is partly to do with its intrinsic qualities (such as the quality of the argument in its favour) – but also has to do what has been called in CDA (Fairclough 1989) the *power behind discourse*. It depends on whether the vision is supported by groups of people who have the power to decide and impose it as a view of what the world is.

In the speech by Blair that we analyzed earlier, 'the new global economy' is an imaginary (an imagined economy) that is being treated as fact (as part of the objective, empirical context of action). In so doing, in representing goals as facts, Blair is arguably advancing the interests of particular agents and organizations. The achievement of these interests depends on collective recognition (e.g. in laws, contracts, etc.) of a certain imagined economy as the way the economy is. As we have said, whether or not a representation achieves collective recognition depends on a variety of factors, partly having to do with the arguments that support it, partly with power issues independent of those arguments. This is precisely where the

value of Searle's ontology lies, in seeing status functions, including the very possibility of assigning them by declaration, as the vehicles of power. Being able (i.e. having the power resources) to declare that a certain imaginary is a fact and to enforce its collective recognition and the recognition of its deontic powers is one of the manifestations of power in society.

Besides imaginaries, other significant concepts used in social science could be viewed from an argumentative perspective. The understanding of the structure of practical arguments that we propose in this book, and particularly of the value premise, and its relation to how people formulate goals and represent the circumstances of action, could (we suggest) be particularly relevant to the perspective of the 'moral economy', as developed in social science by Sayer (1999, 2000, 2007, etc.). The concept refers to the moral dimensions of economic and social systems and a focus on practical arguments would offer a clear discourse-analytical understanding of the way in which moral values (fairness, equality, justice, greed, thrift, etc.) underlie and legitimize action: they motivate (are reasons for) action because they are premises in practical arguments. We are not exploring this connection in an explicit way in this book; an early attempt to link moral economy with argumentation was made in Ieţcu (2006b, 2006c).

Legitimation: an argumentative perspective

In CDA (Fairclough 2003 included), the concepts of 'legitimation' and 'legitimacy' have been used in a very broad and undefined sense. Any reason offered in support of an action, *any justification*, has sometimes been regarded as an example of legitimation (van Leeuwen 2007; van Leeuwen and Wodak 1999; Wodak *et al.* 1999). We suggest, however, that legitimation is not quite the same thing as justification, it has a narrower scope than justification, it is a particular type of justification. We often speak of legitimation in connection with courses of action: we ought to do *x* (or action *x* is legitimate) because it conforms to certain norms or values that we adhere to. Most often we speak of legitimation in connection with power (or sources of authority in general), e.g. a system of power may be considered legitimate or may legitimize itself (and its actions) because it has resulted, for instance, from free democratic elections, or because it conforms to tradition or custom, or because it accords with widely shared values and beliefs. In all these cases, the justification involved in legitimation seems to have one particularity, namely to invoke *publicly shared* and *publicly justifiable*, and sometimes even highly formalized, codified, institutional systems of beliefs, values and norms, in virtue of which the action proposed is considered legitimate. Justifications of action which do not invoke such shared systems of rules or shared norms cannot be properly said to be legitimations. We are *justifying* a claim to action both in saying 'MPs shouldn't fiddle their expenses because they are breaking the law' *and* 'MPs shouldn't fiddle their expenses because they could end up in prison', but only the reason used in the former example (they are breaking the law) indicates that the action is not legitimate; the latter only says that, in view of their interests, i.e. prudentially, they shouldn't fiddle their expenses. In referring to the law we are invoking a *second* level of justification: adhering to the law itself is a reason that can be publicly justified. We take this understanding of legitimation as involving a multi-layered structure of justification from political theory (Beetham 1991) – see Ieţcu-Fairclough (2008).

A widely referred-to theoretical statement on legitimation in CDA is an article in *Discourse and Communication* by Theo van Leeuwen (2007). A lot of empirical research has drawn on this framework, which is why we want to discuss it briefly here. According to van Leeuwen (2007), legitimation involves an answer to the spoken or unspoken question 'Why should we do this?' or 'Why should we do this in this way?' On this basis, he distinguishes four major

categories of legitimation: (a) authorization; (b) moral evaluation; (c) rationalization; and (d) mythopoesis. For instance, we should do *x* because experts advise it (authorization), because it is the honest thing to do (moral evaluation), because it is useful or effective (instrumental rationalization), etc. (Note that 'rationalization' is not used here to mean what it means in argumentation theory, a defective argument, but a type of legitimation based on a 'rational' reason, such as utility or factual truth.)

Van Leeuwen correctly identifies the type of reasoning that underlies legitimizing statements as being of the form 'we ought to do *x* because of *y*', in response to the implicit question 'why should we do *x*'?, or 'why should we do *x* in this way'? However, he does not relate legitimation to argumentation. Argumentation is hardly mentioned at all, with the effect that the exact nature of legitimation remains a mystery. More importantly, the typology does not capture the crucial fact that judgements of legitimacy are always *in relation to* a background of norms, beliefs and values that are *themselves* 'legitimate' in some sense, i.e. they can be publicly justified, they are 'worthy' of being collectively recognized. When we say 'we should do *x* because it is useful', we would not be able to legitimize the action if the reason, utility, were not in itself considered a good thing. As we have said, there are two distinct levels of justification involved: a justification of action in virtue of some reason and a justification of that reason in virtue of a publicly recognized system of norms, values, beliefs.

In addition, legitimation is not distinguished from explanation. Many of van Leeuwen's examples are in fact explanations, yet legitimation can only be related to argumentation, because it is only in arguments (not in explanations) that we are giving reasons in support of a *controversial* proposition that stands in need of justification. By contrast, in explanation, the proposition that is being explained, the *explanandum*, is *already* accepted as a fact, and therefore, logically, cannot be justified (or *legitimized*) by the *explanans* (instead, it is the *explanans* that can be controversial). Van Leeuwen's framework does not capture the inherent link between legitimation and argumentation (nor the existence of more than one level of argumentative justification) but has, nevertheless, an insightful starting point and indicates (if only implicitly) some of the values, norms or criteria that are used in public justification (moral, utilitarian, instrumental) and some of the argumentative schemes involved in public justification (argumentation from authority, practical arguments from consequence or from moral values, and so on).[5]

In political theory, unlike in discourse analysis, legitimation is widely seen as an argumentative process involving the public exchange of reasons, or public deliberation. As we said in Chapter 1, according to a purely proceduralist conception of democratic legitimacy, democratic decisions are legitimate when they result from fair procedure (correct voting procedure in which every citizen has had a say). Decisions emerging from such procedures are legitimate, whatever the quality of the outcome. Thus, people who disagree with a decision and consider it wrong would have to recognize it as legitimate as long as it has resulted from fair procedure. Other conceptions of democratic legitimacy (Peter 2010; Swift 2006) think that a purely procedural view is insufficient: the epistemic quality of the outcome is also important (i.e. is it a reasonable decision?). Deliberative democracy involves a public exchange of reasons and thus generates new knowledge and a better understanding of social problems. It is therefore likely to lead to decisions that are also *good* decisions, not merely decisions that are legitimate in procedural terms.

According to one type of views on political legitimacy, the epistemic value of deliberative decision-making arises precisely from its procedural features. A decision will be better depending on how fair and inclusive the procedure has been, on how thoroughly the reasons and proposals advanced have been subjected to criticism. Conceptions of this sort argue for

combining procedural features with features that refer to the *quality* of outcomes of democratic decision-making. These mixed, 'rational proceduralist' conceptions of democratic legitimacy (Peter 2008) are underlain by a concern that the fairness of the democratic decision-making process is not sufficient to establish the legitimacy of its outcomes, as fair procedures (e.g. majority vote) may sometimes lead to irrational or undesirable outcomes. The ideal outcome, on this view, is a *rationally justified decision* – a decision everyone has reasons to endorse. If conducted in accordance with the norms that define it, democratic deliberation is capable of reaching such rationally justified decisions (Peter 2010).

The 'rational proceduralist' conception is most congenial to a dialectical theory of argumentation. The normative frameworks of dialectical theories are designed to distinguish between reasonable and unreasonable argumentation. In the form of critical questions or rules of argumentative conduct, they specify procedural conditions that have to be met by reasonable arguers and arguments. In pragma-dialectics (van Eemeren and Grootendorst 2004, van Eemeren 2010), the dialectical procedure – as we understand it – is so designed as to produce a reasonable, rationally acceptable outcome as a result of the *discussion procedure*. In other words, methodically following the procedure will deliver reasonable decisions or reasonable beliefs. If the objective is to resolve disagreement in a reasonable way, as in pragma-dialectics, the procedure is designed to avoid obstacles to resolution or 'false' resolutions. The constraints imposed on the quality of the outcome by the procedure itself are, on this view, sufficiently high to prevent unreasonable outcomes. (Let us reiterate that disagreement resolution is a normative orientation of argumentative activity; it does not follow that agreement is always reached or that it is always possible. Depending on institutional context, specific activity types will not be deficient if they fail to result in disagreement resolution amongst all participants – see Chapter 6 for the case of parliamentary debate.)

Political theorists who adopt a substantive view of democratic legitimacy (Cohen 1998) advocate looking not just at the quality of the procedure but at the quality (rational acceptability) of the reasons adduced in favour of a certain choice. It is only by going beyond merely procedural legitimacy that decisions arrived at by deliberation can have a cognitive, epistemic dimension, can be the 'right' solutions to problems (however fallible and revisable these 'right' solutions may be). A deliberative decision will be reasonable insofar as the arguments that justify it will take into consideration in an optimal way the relevant aspects of the problem, think through the consequences of various proposals, subject possible solutions to critical questioning, answer objections and counter-arguments. What this means is that, in political deliberation, 'normatively legitimate outcomes must satisfy standards of reasonable argumentation' (Rheg 2009: 13). If such standards are met, deliberation will stand a better chance of delivering an outcome that is both procedurally and substantively legitimate, an outcome that is rationally persuasive by virtue of having withstood a process of critical testing. To say that public deliberation should satisfy standards of argumentative reasonableness is not to say that individual participants, as individuals, must satisfy such standards: deliberative reasonableness is a collective product emerging from dialogue amongst individuals.

An essential distinction is drawn in political philosophy between legitimacy and perceived legitimacy (Swift 2006: 220). A political regime may be perceived as legitimate without being in fact legitimate: perceived legitimacy could be resting on false beliefs that would not stand up to critical examination. Political theorists also speak about a descriptive (empirical) and a normative conception of legitimacy. All discussions of legitimacy go back to Weber (1978), who understood legitimacy in the descriptive sense: power is legitimate if people *believe* it to be legitimate. Other theorists, however, insist on 'good reasons': there must be some 'reasonable consensus' (Rawls 1993), or 'rationally motivated agreement' or 'rational consensus'

(Habermas 1984, 1996a), some normative basis for judgements of legitimacy, beyond what people happen to believe. According to Habermas, '*legitimacy means a political order's worthiness to be recognized*'; it says that 'there are good arguments for a political order to be recognized as right and just' (Habermas 1996c: 248). A normative claim is legitimate if it is the object of an agreement among all parties, as free and equal, at the end of a process of deliberation that is free from deception and the distorting constraints of power, and thus embodies the general, public interest (Habermas 1996b, 1996c). For Beetham, a given power relationship is not legitimate because people believe in its legitimacy, but because it can be argumentatively justified and defended as being in accordance with established rules (norms, values) and these rules can themselves be publicly justified. (In addition, for him, there has to be evidence of consent) (Beetham 1991: 11).

We can reformulate the above views as saying that legitimation is a type of argumentative justification, public justification, in which an action can be justified in terms of reasons and those reasons can themselves be justified as collectively accepted and recognized (as 'worthy of being recognized'). A particular kind of the latter reasons, Searle (2010) would say, are the duties, rights, obligations, commitments, moral values and norms that agents (individuals, the state or the political system) are bound by.

Power as a source of agents' reasons for action

Finally, we want to say a few words about power, an ever-present concern in CDA, and the way in which (in our view) it connects to analyses of argumentation. The main reason is to dispel a persistent confusion which can be formulated as follows: decisions in politics are *not* taken by means of argumentation, but are determined by power, hence the study of argumentation in politics is a useless enterprise. This objection rests on a fundamental misunderstanding which we can answer as follows. Political discourse is fundamentally argumentative in nature, and in particular it is almost always a case of practical argumentation (with other types of argumentation and other genres subsumed to and embedded within practical argument). However, not all argumentation is reasonable and very often political decisions are made not on the strength of the better argument but on the basis of other reasons. One such reason is power. *Power provides agents with reasons for action*: reasons to obey legitimate authority, or reasons to avoid or seek particular outcomes; reasons that are legitimate or reasons that are only perceived as legitimate (as a consequence of the ability of systems of power to naturalize values and beliefs that have not been critically examined). Briefly, power *is* a reason in practical arguments, which is why the study of power in politics cannot be divorced from the study of arguments and decision-making on the basis of arguments.

We shall begin with the standard distinction between 'power to' and 'power over', then move on to a discussion of theories of power drawing particularly on Lukes (2005). We shall also return to a distinction in Fairclough (1989) between 'power in discourse' and 'power behind discourse'. We shall then discuss Searle's (2010) view of power, which is of particular interest for the question of how power factors enter as reasons (premises) in practical argumentation.

'Power to' is a general human capacity to bring about change, to act in ways that bring about changes in reality. Both individuals and collectivities (e.g. governments) have this capacity, and it is important to see it as a *capacity* and not reduce it to its exercise: the capacity exists whether or not it is exercised and whatever means of power (wealth, military force, etc.) may be used in exercising it. 'Power over' is a specific form of 'power to': someone's

capacity to cause, undergo or resist change may include (and be increased by) their power over other people. 'Power over' is an asymmetrical relation between people, and having power over others means being able to get them to do what you want them to do, to get them to do things which they otherwise would not do (Lukes 2005: 69–74).

Lukes advances a 'radical' view of power (in the sense of 'power over') as a 'three-dimensional' view in contrast to 'one-dimensional' and 'two-dimensional' views. In the one-dimensional view, power over others is a matter being able to prevail over them in decision-making. The two-dimensional view is an advance over the one-dimensional view in that it sees power (over) as not only the capacity to prevail in decision-making, but also the capacity to limit the scope of decision-making to exclude issues whose airing would be detrimental to those who have power. Both views focus on behaviour, conscious decision-making and conflict. The three-dimensional view criticizes both of these views for their restricted focus on observable behaviour and decision-making. Not all cases of exclusion of potential issues from the political agenda can be seen as effects of conscious, individual, intentional decisions: the 'bias of the system' can be mobilized and reinforced in ways that are not consciously intended by agents. This 'bias' is in fact not as much the product of a series of individually chosen acts, but rather of the 'socially structured and culturally patterned behaviour of groups, and practices of institutions' (Lukes 2005: 25–26). The third dimension adds therefore the (non-intentional) effects of group behaviour, institutional practices and systems in limiting the scope of decision-making. Moreover, overt conflict is not essential to power: power may be exercised over others by shaping or determining their preferences or perceived needs in such ways that conflict does not arise. Lukes's third dimension of power refers therefore to cases of domination where people are subject to domination and acquiesce in that domination, either by actively adopting the beliefs and values that oppress them, or simply by being resigned to them. It thus introduces a distinction between subjective interests and *real* interests, and the possibility that people may be unaware of their real interests (Lukes 2005: 27–29). What is of particular relevance to us in our book is the connection with ideology which suggests itself here. To speak about the third dimension of power, Lukes says, is to speak of 'interests imputed to and unrecognized' by social actors, of the 'power to mislead' people about what is in their interest, distort their judgement, for instance by 'naturalizing what could be otherwise' (Lukes 2005: 146, 149).

Discourse and power was the central theme of Fairclough (1989), where a distinction was drawn between 'power in discourse' and 'power behind discourse'. 'Power in discourse' is a matter of some people exercising 'power over' others in discourse. This can take various forms. It includes powerful participants controlling and constraining the contributions of less powerful participants and can sometimes amount to a form of coercion. An example would be the power of producers of newspaper articles or television programmes to determine what is included and excluded, how events are represented, and thus potentially affect how audiences see aspects of the world and act towards them. The idea of 'power behind discourse' is that orders of discourse, the semiotic aspect of social practices, emerge and are sustained or changed within particular (asymmetrical) relations of power and through the application of power. 'Power behind discourse' is consistent with Lukes's radical 'three-dimensional' view of power, but not with the other two views. It is an aspect of 'power over', which Lukes defines in strong terms as 'the ability to constrain the choices of others, coercing them or securing their compliance, by impeding them from living as their own nature and judgement dictate' (Lukes 2005: 85). In his terms, the 'inculcation and policing' of social practices (and concepts, norms, roles, etc.) – which would in

our view include orders of discourse – is part of the 'mechanisms' of domination (Lukes 2005: 101).

In our treatment of external reasons in practical argumentation, we have adopted Searle's account of desire-independent reasons as based on institutional facts, status functions and deontic powers. A common way to exercise power, according to Searle, is 'to give people reasons for actions that they would not otherwise have'. There are various possibilities here, according to him, and one is to exercise power by getting the subject to *want* something that he would not have wanted, for instance by presenting a limited range of options as the only ones available so that the subject is not aware of alternatives (Searle 2010:146–147). Searle argues that 'all political power is a matter of status functions, and for that reason all political power is deontic power': it involves rights, duties, obligations, authorizations, permissions, privileges, authority and so on. A characteristic feature of deontic powers is that they do not have to involve the use or threat of force. If I make a promise to you, as Searle explains, then you have a deontic power over me, because I have created a binding reason on myself for acting according to my promise and you can expect me to do so. I can be held responsible for breaking the promise precisely because undertaking a commitment to do the action I promised to do is a *constitutive* rule of the act of promising. However, given agents' freedom, i.e. their capacity and motivation to break the rules, the political power of the state is also backed by force (Searle 2010: 148).[6]

Deontic powers are cases in which the power exercised consists of a certain type of *reasons for action*, i.e. reasons that are independent of what people's actual desires and inclinations are, reasons that people *have*, in an objective sense, whatever their actual motivations might be. Searle suggests that 'the entire system of status functions is a system of providing desire-independent reasons for acting' and the system works because it provides people with reasons for action that they recognize and accept. A political system that did not have the capacity to create desire-independent reasons would collapse, given agents' freedom (Searle 2010: 139–141). People do recognize the binding force of obligations, duties, commitments, moral norms: in a shop, most people have a desire-independent reason not to steal the merchandise, a reason which goes beyond the merely prudential reason (desire) of not getting caught and arrested. The threat of force is often (and in this case, always) in the background, as a potential deterrent, but the point is that it is not because of this reason that most people refrain from stealing.

Power can give people prudential reasons for action (they do not steal because they do not want to be arrested: the threat of violence is a prudential reason) but crucially it gives them desire-independent reasons: people accept or recognize a certain institutional arrangement. Here, Searle says, the question of how institutional reality is *legitimized* is crucial, as institutions work only to the extent they are recognized or accepted, and people must think there is some ground, some good reason, for accepting that institution. Most institutions are taken for granted, and no justification is demanded or offered, but institutions can also be challenged (Searle 2010: 140). Earlier in this chapter we said this recognition depends on a process of public justification. This, we may add, opens up the space for manipulation (which Searle does not discuss). We can see it as an attempt to provide people with reasons that they would otherwise not have, possibly with reasons that would in fact not be in their interests and would not be *rationally* persuasive for them, although they might be quite effective in actually persuading them. We can regard the massive public relations industry which serves government, businesses, and other types of institutions, seeking to win support for particular policies and influence public opinion, as being involved in a continuous effort to secure the necessary acceptance of status functions, to create the *perception* of legitimacy.

To sum up, to exert power over an agent is to give him reasons for action that he would otherwise not have. Such reasons can be either prudential (when people obey authority to avoid violence) or deontic, when people recognize and accept their external (moral, institutional) force. Acting in accordance with an order given by someone in a position of authority, or with institutional rules and norms, when action is prompted by recognition or acceptance of status functions, involves deontic reasons. Because deontic reasons presuppose acceptance or recognition, the questions of how acceptance is achieved or whether it is justified or not, are essential questions. Agents might be induced to perceive as legitimate social arrangements which cannot withstand a process of public justification. The type of power involved in this process, in the naturalization of beliefs and values which would not, if critically examined, survive scrutiny, is Lukes's third type of power: the ideological power of systems.

Finally, let us say a few words about the relationship between power and legitimacy in light of our remarks above, and in relation to our proposal (in Chapter 2) for the structure or practical reasoning. Politicians commonly include amongst reasons for proposed actions objective, desire-independent reasons of the sort which, according to Searle, are based upon status functions and deontic powers. An example (which anticipates a discussion in Chapter 4) is arguing that 'we should do *A* because it is fair', where achieving a fair outcome is one of the arguer's goals, a motive or reason for acting in a certain way, but also, at the same time, *a socially recognized commitment that the agent has and therefore is expected to act in accordance with.* Being fair is widely recognized as an obligation that the government or politicians have, a commitment they are bound by as a consequence of holding political positions and as a necessary condition for the legitimacy of government policy, decision or action. It is a desire-independent reason that is binding on political agents in virtue of their status function and is independent on whether they want or not to act fairly. In giving a reason of this sort, a politician is seeking to claim legitimacy for the action proposed. As we suggested in the section on legitimation, giving a reason can legitimize, rather than just merely justify, a proposed action only if there is also a further reason for that reason, a reason that can be publicly defended: 'we should do *A* because it is fair, and fairness is a publicly shared value to which we are *committed*', i.e. we have an *obligation* or *duty* to be fair. The fact that politicians generally give reasons of this sort suggests that their power to pursue a proposed line of action depends upon their ability to legitimize it and thereby persuade audiences to accept it in virtue of the audience's recognition of the legitimacy of the underlying value. An appeal to fairness can legitimize political action because fairness is a publicly justifiable or publicly recognized, legitimate value. In addition, its invocation suggests that the politician is one who honours the (institutional, objective) obligation attaching to his status function.

Conclusion

Our main objective in this chapter has been to argue that the analysis and evaluation of argumentation can increase the capacity of CDA to pursue its aim of extending forms of critique familiar in critical social science to discourse and texts. We began by presenting our approach to CDA and discussing its relationship to critical social science and to normative and explanatory critique. We then carried out a reanalysis of part of a speech by Tony Blair which was originally analysed in Fairclough (2000a), with the objective of showing that it is an example of practical argumentation, that analysing it as such significantly strengthens the original analysis, and that the critical force of the analysis of representations (e.g. the representation of 'change') which was really the sole concern of the latter is substantially increased

when we recognize that these representations are part of the premises of the practical arguments and analyse them as such, rather than analysing them in isolation, as has often happened in CDA (including in Fairclough 2000a). We suggested that an analysis of persuasive definitions and evaluative terms in various premises, as well as a normative framework for analyzing deliberation, can provide a clearer understanding of what is going on in this speech: rhetorically motivated representations (including metaphors or particular ways of 'framing') should not be seen as isolated features of the text but as having an argumentative function of steering the argument towards a certain conclusion and precluding other conclusion from being arrived at.

We then moved to a more general discussion of how analysis and evaluation of argumentation can contribute to normative and explanatory critique and to critique of manipulation and ideology. Regarding normative critique, we suggested that examining argumentation can provide a sounder basis for analysis of manipulation in discourse and we illustrated this with an analysis of rationalization as a normatively defective argument. In subsequent chapters we will address other argumentative issues that can feed into normative critique, such as argumentation based on false premises, or on unacceptable values and goals, or on inadequate deliberation. Regarding explanatory critique, we noted that, in arguing, people draw on different discourses in the way they represent premises and claims. Such selections are linked to the diverse interests and social positions (e.g. positions in relations of power) of particular groups of social agents, and give rise to the sort of critical questions about discourse which CDA characteristically addresses (about domination, manipulation and ideologies). Deliberation that restricts consideration of alternatives or represents alternative actions in ways which make them seem unreasonable (illustrated by Blair's speech), and thus unreasonably steers the argument towards one possible conclusion, can be regarded as ideological if it is geared to supporting certain power interests.

We continued with a discussion of two concepts that have tended to figure prominently within CDA and critical social science (imaginaries and political legitimacy), claiming that they can be more adequately dealt with in CDA than they have been hitherto if we see them as essentially involving argumentation. We suggested that imaginaries are in fact goal premises in arguments. Goals are the 'motivational' premises of practical arguments and this is why imaginaries or visions can motivate and inspire action. We also suggested that imaginaries can have performative power, or can transform the world, when they are collectively recognized as representations of *actual*, not merely possible states of affairs, thus acquiring an associated deontology from which various practical consequences follow. As for legitimation, it is inherently an argumentative practice and is different from ordinary justification in the sense of involving a double level of justification; certainly it is different from explanation, with which it is persistently confused. As regards power, we have suggested how discussions of 'power in discourse' or 'power behind discourse' can be related to a theory of practical reasoning. Power itself is a reason for action, or more specifically, it provides agents with (either self-interested or deontic) reasons for action. For instance, in providing agents with reasons to want what they would otherwise not want, or obscuring the existence of various alternative possibilities for action, power manifests itself as ideology.

4 The economic crisis in the UK

Strategies and arguments

In this and the following three chapters we shall move to analysis of practical argumentation in political responses to the crisis, beginning with a corpus of policy-making texts, the British Pre-Budget and Budget Reports, delivered annually to the House of Commons by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. We are offering a detailed analysis of two of these: the November 2008 Pre-Budget Report delivered by Alistair Darling, Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Labour government led by Gordon Brown, and the June 2010 Emergency Budget Report delivered by George Osborne, Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Coalition government (Conservatives and Liberal Democrats) which was elected in May 2010 and is led by David Cameron. These reports mark significant stages in the development of UK government strategy for responding to the crisis. The Labour government's strategy was to try to reduce the depth of the recession by stimulating the economy (and 'allowing borrowing to rise' for this purpose), whereas the Coalition's strategy is to try to create conditions for private-sector-led growth by taking rapid measures to cut the budget deficit, primarily through reducing public spending. We shall carry out an analysis and evaluation of these reports using the approach introduced in Chapter 2. From the perspective of critical social analysis and CDA, it is more illuminating to take as our object of analysis and evaluation not just the reports themselves, but also reactions to and evaluations of the reports by other participants in the public debate over government strategy. We will therefore also look at how the arguments of Alistair Darling and George Osborne were evaluated in various contexts by politicians, economists and journalists (economic and political commentators). This focus is of course necessarily selective and represents only a section (though a significant one) of (mainly elite) opinion. In Chapter 5 we will analyse a comments thread in the *Guardian* which represents a section of lay opinion.

Budget and Pre-Budget Reports

In Labour governments between 1997 and 2010, the Chancellor of the Exchequer (on behalf of the Treasury) presented two major economic forecasts to Parliament: a Pre-Budget Report (PBR) in autumn and a Budget Report in spring. Both these reports came as an extended full text and a shorter speech in Parliament and in what follows we will refer to the speeches, not the full reports. Both the full texts and speeches of the Budget and Pre-Budget Reports for 1997–2010, as well as the current government's Budget speeches and full texts, together with the recent Spending Review, are available at http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/. (The practice of having a PBR, in addition to the Budget Report, was abolished by the current government in 2010.)

We have analysed the 2008 PBR in two earlier papers (Fairclough and Fairclough 2010, 2011a) and we will offer a revised analysis in this chapter. In the latter paper we also gave an