

## **A New Political and Communication Agenda for Political Discourse Analysis: Critical Reflections on Critical Discourse Analysis and Political Discourse Analysis**

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This article advocates using theories and approaches in political communication to advance the agenda of political discourse analysis (PDA) that uses the approaches in critical discourse analysis (CDA). I first review the development in the research of PDA and criticisms against CDA and PDA, along with my reflections on these criticisms. I also discuss how basic concepts and dimensions in political communication can be used to advance PDA. In conclusion, I argue that traditional approaches to PDA center too much on Marxist or post-Marxist conflict theories and on linguistic description and interpretation. They fail to adequately explain political issues as CDA does to social issues. Incorporating theories and approaches in political communication can “demystify” PDA from its status quo toward a discipline that addresses political problems in communication.

*Keywords: critical discourse analysis (CDA), political discourse analysis (PDA), political communication, language, politics, communication*

In this article, I aim to show why and how certain aspects of political communication studies should be used to advance the agenda of political discourse analysis (PDA) so as to address some pressing problems the latter now faces. I do this by reviewing the field of PDA and criticisms of PDA and critical discourse analysis (CDA), as well as by discussing how political communication can be used to address these criticisms and advance PDA away from its current analyst-centered and grammar-pervasive practices toward a politically critical and politically beneficial scholarship.

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### **Political Discourse Analysis: A General Review**

PDA can be viewed more in terms of a research field than a separate scholarly school or branch. In other words, the term *PDA* tends to be a description of the research object (political discourse rather than other types of discourse) within a broader discipline of CDA (van Dijk, 1997). PDA practitioners use various theoretical frameworks and research methods in CDA to decode the power, dominance, ideology, and hegemony in the text and talk of political bodies or politicians. It can be traced back to as early as Aristotle's works on politics, which discuss rhetoric in political speech. His legacy of rhetoric studies has been inherited by researchers in broader areas concerning language and politics, such as Campbell and Jamieson (1990), Snyder and Higgins (1990), Stuckey (1989, 1990), and Windt (1983, 1990 [as cited in van Dijk, 1997]). As CDA develops, considerable research has been done on political discourses in this area, such as Dillon et al. (1990), S. Harris (1991), Maynard (1994), and Seidel (1988 [as cited in van Dijk, 1997]).

The latest and best-established studies in the field include Chilton (2004), Wodak (2009), Charteris-Black (2004, 2005, 2014), and I. Fairclough and Fairclough (2012). Chilton sees language as action, which represents politics as action discursively, and examines how political actors strategically use language to seek cooperation in various types of discourse such as political interviews, parliamentary language, and the discourse concerning foreigners, foreign places, and religion. Wodak, in a similar vein, sees language in political discourse as action, and her work focuses on different subgenres of discursive representation. With the discourse-historical approach (DHA) to CDA that she advocates, this work identifies several dimensions of politics: (1) the frontstage of politics or staged politics that are dimensions of politics we see every day, such as political speeches, campaigns, and the discursive construction of professional identities; (2) the backstage, or the everyday life of politicians; (3) the recontextualization of politics in media; and (4) the power, ideology, legitimation, and hegemony in (mediated) political discourse. Similar to Chilton and Wodak, Fairclough and Fairclough also regard language as action. However, different from Chilton's and Wodak's focus on different genres or subgenres of political discourse, Fairclough and Fairclough adopt an argumentation perspective to see how argumentation and rhetoric are used to facilitate persuasion and manipulation in political discourse, especially in deliberative discourse. Their approach consists of two steps. The first step is the reconstruction of argument, that is, to delineate the claim, goals, values, circumstances, means-goal, and circumstances of the argumentation in discourse. The second step is the evaluation of argument, that is, to discern how power, persuasion, and manipulation are effected in the reconstructed argument of the previous step.

Another scholar, Charteris-Black (2004, 2005, 2014), focuses on metaphor as a way of persuasion in political discourse. Charteris-Black (2004) postulates a framework of critical metaphor analysis (CMA) that consists of three steps of metaphor analysis in political discourse: (1) metaphor identification through close reading to find the "candidate metaphors," which are subsequently examined and filtered by his postulated standards for the eligible metaphor; (2) metaphor interpretation by relating the cognitive and pragmatic factors to the use of metaphor; and (3) metaphor explanation to explain the social role of metaphor in political discourse. Charteris-Black (2005) links metaphor with traditional rhetoric. He illustrates, through case studies of several politicians' speeches, how metaphors are used to strengthen the pathos (the appeal to the audience's emotions) and ethos (the credibility or authority of

the speaker) of political speeches, and how they can build myths (stereotypical patterns or practices in representing the politics of a certain group of people) so as to persuade audiences. In his new work, Charteris-Black (2014) carries forward his approach of CMA. However, in this version of CMA, he adds a new step of contextual analysis before the three stages of analysis mentioned earlier. Furthermore, in this book, he also reviews traditional approaches to rhetoric oratory and discourse and critical approaches to discourse to which both CMA and DHA also belong.

There are also researchers who have studied PDA with their own methods. van Dijk, who formulates the cognitive approach to CDA, has also written prolifically on PDA (van Dijk, 1997, 2002a, 2002b, 2003, 2005). van Dijk (1997) sets the tone for his approach to PDA. Similar to Chilton (2004) and Wodak (2009), van Dijk (1997) sees discourse as a form of social action and interaction, while he approaches PDA by looking into several social-cognitive and hierarchical dimensions of discourse structure rather than genres. Another scholar, Shi-xu (1997, 2005, 2013, 2014) advocates using the non-Western cultural approach to discourse (CAD) when analyzing Chinese political discourses. CAD is an approach that focuses on culture, especially non-Western culture, in discourse. He posits that Western discourse theories are not applicable to non-Western discourse, especially to Chinese political discourse, which has been treated as "the other" and marginalized (Shi-xu, 1997, 2005). His works have their strengths in convincingly arguing for more attention to be paid to critical cultural analysis and non-Western discourse, which has been ignored by mainstream CDA research. However, CAD still has much room to develop, which is discussed in Wang (2015).

In summary, PDA generally adopts the approaches in CDA to tease out the power, ideology, and dominance in discourse. Social theories, studies on augmentation, cognitive approaches, metaphor analysis, and cultural studies are drawn on to carry out analysis. The objects of research include political speeches, parliamentary discourse, media discourse, and so on.

### **Inadequacies of CDA and PDA**

As reviewed, PDA grew out of CDA. CDA is an interdisciplinary approach to the study of discourse. It sees language as a form of social practice and aims to investigate how power, ideology, and hegemony are embedded in language. By so doing, it attempts to reveal how language use can reinforce social power. There have been three dominant approaches. The dialectical-relational approach (Fairclough, 1995) proposes that language is in dialectical relationship with social practice. The social order has its semiotic dimension as the discourse order (e.g., style and genre), and they both influence the organization and changes of each other. DHA has its focus on political discourse. The basic analytical unit in DHA is usually the *topos* (plural *topoi*) in discourse based on augmentation theories. The *topos* in DHA refers to "an argument scheme that allows a conclusion to be derived from certain premises" (Charteris-Black, 2014, p. 133). DHA practitioners usually start their analysis by categorizing different *topoi* in discourse and relate them to relevant sociological theories to tease out the ideology and power in discourse. Another approach—the social-cognitive approach—sees ideologies as the "worldviews that constitute social cognition," which is "schematically organized complexes of representations and attitudes with regard to certain aspects of the social world, e.g., the schema . . . whites have about blacks" (van Dijk, 1993, p. 258).

Based on this view on ideology, this approach pays much attention to language processing in relation to the "social cognition." Apart from these branches, new approaches to CDA are emerging. For instance, the study of multimodality<sup>2</sup> has been increasingly oriented toward it (Machin, 2013; Machin & Mayr, 2012; van Leeuwen, 2013; Wang, 2014, 2016a, 2016b).

CDA and PDA have been faced with criticisms about their inadequacies. This section reviews these criticisms and presents my reflections on them and the status quo of CDA and PDA. As mentioned earlier, PDA can be seen as belonging to the broader field of CDA, and it frequently uses CDA methodologies and approaches to carry out research; thus, criticisms of CDA are in effect also criticisms of PDA. In this regard, I do not clearly distinguish between criticisms of these two fields; they are discussed together in the following possibly overlapping aspects.

Some researchers point out that CDA centers too much on systemic functional linguistics (SFL).<sup>3</sup> O'Halloran (2003) and Widdowson (1995) critique Fairclough's positioning of SFL as the foundation of CDA. Blommaert (2005) attaches this overemphasis on SFL to the "linguistic bias" (p. 34) in CDA. He contends that SFL, which is "aridly grammatical" (p. 34), has "no monopoly over theories of language" and "far more candidates for critical potential offer themselves than SFL" (p. 35). Jones and Collins (2006) argue against certain "abstract grammatical categories" (p. 41) in SFL frequently used by Fairclough to make political judgment, because

that does not mean that they are in possession of a method of "discourse analysis" capable of supplying unique political and ideological insights; it simply means that they are the owners of a very bad method of arriving at political judgments. (p. 41)

Some think that CDA advocates and perpetuates the Western universalism and neglects the discourse or discourse theories in the third world or the East. This contention has been repeatedly articulated in Shi-xu (1997, 2005, 2013), and is also discussed in Blommaert (2005). CDA can be seen as originating from the "Late Modern, and postindustrial, densely semiotised First-World societies" (Blommaert, 2005, p. 25), and,

there is even less reason to assume that descriptions of such societies can usefully serve as a model for understanding discourse in the world today, for the world is far bigger than Europe and the USA, and substantial differences occur between different societies in this world. (Blommaert, 2005, p. 25)

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<sup>2</sup> *Multimodality* means different modes of semiotic resources that are used in communication, such as visual, verbal, or audio resources.

<sup>3</sup> Systemic functional linguistics is a type of grammar in linguistics that is different from traditional grammar. It is more socially oriented and devises delicate taxonomy of language functions, including experiential (how people perceive or experience the world through language), interpersonal (how people interact with each other and maintain social relationships), and textual (how people organize text) functions of language.

Besides, there are other practical problems concerning whether CDA and PDA can be done in some third-world countries (and even in some first-world countries) where political control is tight and criticism of government is not allowed, as discussed in Talib (1995). Furthermore, there is a provocative view against CDA; that is, CDA does not have its validity and there is no such thing as CDA. Jones (2004, 2007) and Jones and Collins (2006) argue that (1) lay people who are not CDA analysts engage in critical communicative practices. These communicative practices, seen as discourse, do not need orthodox linguistic methodology to effect critical analysis. (2) CDA relies heavily on grammar or linguistic abstraction to critique politics, which is at best "a very bad method" (Jones & Collins, 2006, p. 25) of arriving at political judgment. (3) CDA is premised on the "segregational" (Jones & Collins, 2006, p. 29) view of linguistic science that results in what R. Harris (1981) terms *language myth*. The segregational view of linguistic science posits that

a clear, generally valid line of demarcation can be drawn between linguistic and non-linguistic phenomena and in the consequent attempt to identify and systematise a realm of properly and purely linguistic structures and meanings independently of the actual situated practices of communicative interchange in their empirical complexity. (Jones & Collins, 2006, p. 29)

Jones and Collins (2006) and Jones (2004, 2007) argue that CDA and SFL are based on the segregational view of linguistic science, and purport the "language myth" through which social or political analysis is reduced to abstract linguistic descriptions. Grounded on these contentions, they denounce the validity of CDA, and claim that there is no such thing as CDA.

The aforementioned criticisms against CDA and PDA generally center on two aspects of their inadequacies. The first is concerned with its validity as a scholarship or approach toward social studies and linguistics. The second is concerned with its inadequacies regarding its overemphasis on grammar, especially SFL and some other area-specific issues. In response to these criticisms, first, one needs to establish CDA's validity as an effective approach to social studies; second, one also needs to see how these inadequacies can be resolved and by so doing contribute to its validity as a useful scholarship to social and political studies.

With respect to the arguments of Jones (2004, 2007) and Jones and Collins (2006) against the validity of CDA, there are problems. First, ordinary people, as they argue, do engage in critical practices of communication without the help of critical linguistics. However, this does not mean that critical practices in linguistics cannot facilitate this critical communicative practice. Truly, people sometimes exercise critical thinking in communicative practices without being consciously aware of linguistic rules or grammar, but it cannot be denied that these critical communicative practices unavoidably involve language. CDA consciously brings this unconsciousness to the fore and develops a system of linguistic analysis. The fact that people do not consciously engage in critical linguistic analysis in daily communicative practices cannot be used to refute that the conscious linguistic analysis will benefit their critical communicative awareness, let alone the claim that there is no such thing as CDA. Second, Jones' and Jones and Collins' comments on SFL and CDA as fallacious language myth, which is founded on the segregational view of linguistic science, are unfair. CDA and SFL, far from segregating language and social communication, are intended to see

how social facets in communication are embedded in language. Moreover, as CDA has extended its scope to multimodal recourses, other approaches are emerging, such as multimodal discourse studies, whose scope has extended toward real-world actions rather than merely semiotized actions in traditional discourse and discourse studies. Also, its social interactional approach is based on ethnographical observations rather than grammar. Hence, Jones and Jones and Collins are too hasty to come to the conclusion that there is no such a thing as CDA, which is only based on their critiques on Fairclough's version of CDA. There is actually far more than one version of CDA, and new directions in CDA are still emerging.

But their and also others' comments on CDA and PDA do reveal some issues that badly need addressing, such as those concerning PDA as a linguistic practice that substantially uses grammar, especially SFL, as its approach toward sociological analysis. CDA is essentially multidisciplinary. Past research of CDA and PDA highlights the importance of incorporating theories in sociology into CDA, especially at the stage that Fairclough terms *explanation* (which means analysis of the social and cultural context and system "outside" the text or discourse). Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999, pp. 74–98) have a chapter that introduces these social theories that can be used to extend the agenda of CDA in late modernity. For other approaches to CDA and PDA, for example, in Wodak's (2009) DHA, Bourdieu's "field" theory and Goffman's "backstage–frontstage" theory are drawn on for the analyses of political discourse. These social or sociological theories enable analysts to critically interpret and explain discourse in social constructs, helping to establish the identity of CDA as a socially critical discipline.

However, as late modernity or postmodernity prevail, and as communications technologies and social media develop rapidly, CDA and PDA face new challenges. One major challenge is that CDA should not keep predominantly delving into grammatical analysis. Instead, it should pay more attention to communication, not only in terms of introducing theories in communication into CDA (such as what they did in terms of theories in sociology) but also in terms of the critical analysis of the whole process of discourse production, distribution, and consumption, and above all, the degree to which these critical analyses can reach and connect discourse producers (e.g., editors, reporters), distributors (e.g., media agencies), and consumers (e.g., readers) at large. This, however, is not to assert that grammar is useless in analysis. One contribution of CDA to social sciences is that it shows how language assumes a vital role in social and political processes.<sup>4</sup> Grammar is a good way to bring precision to linguistic analysis. However, the preoccupation with grammatical analysis in all the processes of language use sometimes risks subjectively or excessively interpreting certain ideology, hegemony, and power that are in the analysts' preferences. The very delicate grammatical categories, which are used by the analysts, may be a good way to dissect the linguistic units and reveal how the ideologies are embedded in language. But it remains questionable whether this way of representation can reflect the text producers' (rather than analysts') real intention, and whether it can affect the readers in the same way as the analysts interpret it.

For PDA, not only communication but, in relation to this, also political theories should be highlighted. This is not to say that current practices of PDA stand in opposition to those perspectives and concerns of political studies. Actually, current mainstream studies in PDA, including Chilton (2004), Wodak

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<sup>4</sup> I acknowledge one of *IJoC*'s reviewers for his/her insights on this.

(2009), Charteris-Black (2004, 2005, 2014), and I. Fairclough and Fairclough (2012), do incorporate certain notions in political studies into their analysis. However, these concepts are frequently used as contextual instruments rather than substantial goals or content of discursive practices. In other words, these concepts, rather than theories, are sporadically used to pinpoint the contextual or peripheral factors that might contribute to certain discursive formations (e.g., political arguments, deliberation, parliamentary speeches, and metaphors). Little attention has been paid to how these discursive formations permeate or perpetuate political systems. Specific examples of this are offered in the later section on the new agenda of PDA.

Furthermore, CDA, originating from critical linguistics, which is in turn based on Marxist and post-Marxist theories, frames discourse as an arena glutted with conflicts such as what post-Marxist theorists refer to as ideology, class struggle, hegemony, power, and dominance. CDA, despite its good intention to empower social subjects by revealing social injustice in discourse, predominantly overstates conflicts, which dampens its constructive intention to address social problems. Pertaining to this argument is what has taken place in the scholarship of Marxist and post-Marxist theories. As a backlash to their conflict-theory-oriented traditions, Habermas (1962/1984, 1981/1987, 1962/1989) postulates the theory of communication action and the theory of a public sphere in which rational participants seek consensus through deliberation rather than focusing on domination or struggle. There have been, of course, contentions against both theories of communicative actions and public sphere by referring back to Marxist or post-Marxist theories (e.g., Dahlberg, 2007). Also, in political studies, there are different stances over the relationship between conflict and cooperation in politics, such as the critical policy studies pioneered by Laclau and Chantal Mouffe and their associates. N. Fairclough (2013) also evaluates the common grounds and differences between CDA and critical policy studies.<sup>5</sup> However, CDA has to remain reflexive and socially open (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999) toward other emerging social and political theories that can make it more beneficial and useful to social and political studies. Also, when doing analysis, CDA should be more cautious in perpetuating one type of ideology, hegemony, and power by being critical of another; more important, it should pay more attention to how ideology, power, and hegemony are changing through the interaction of participants and the process of communication. CDA has predominantly stressed its role as a critical social science and advocates liberating social subjects from power, hegemony, and dominance. This is a good and ideal intention, but as mentioned earlier, in countries where political control is tight and criticisms of the government (sometimes even indirect criticisms) are not allowed or even outlawed, PDA faces predicaments. A communication-oriented CDA or PDA that balances this critical side by introducing communication, consensus-building, and focusing on constructive criticalness rather than conflict-driven and conflict-oriented criticalness, as mentioned above, can be a viable means through which PDA can be conducted in these political environments.

Insofar as discussed above the imperativeness to introduce theories and approaches in political communication into CDA and PDA, I discuss how and in what way political communication can benefit CDA and especially PDA in the next section.

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<sup>5</sup> I acknowledge one of *IJoC*'s reviewers for giving me this insight.

### **New Agenda for PDA Facilitated by Political Communication**

Political communication is a cross-disciplinary field that combines political science and communication studies. van Dijk (1997) argues that PDA practitioners “must show that problems in political science can in principle be studied more completely and sometimes more adequately when it is realized that the issues have an important discursive dimension,” and “such a plea can make an impression only if we have something to sell that political scientists want to buy” (van Dijk, 1997, p. 12). Political studies can facilitate PDA by providing theories and concepts that have discursive dimensions. At the same time, PDA, to achieve its aim to address political problems (as the aim of CDA to address social problems), must incorporate knowledge of the political system that political science is in a good position to “sell.” This “deal” can best be made when mediated by communication studies, which guarantees the common ground of discursive dimensions and their effects on political system. In sum, political communication may advance PDA in terms of both its political and communication agenda, as shown below. Note that both dimensions are in fact closely interrelated; they are divided into two sections only to ensure clear and neat discussion, and the same applies to the subpoints under each section.

#### ***PDA and Its Political Agenda Facilitated by Political Communication***

Before the discussion, it is necessary to clarify the ambivalent but existent distinction between sociology and political science. According to Giddens (2006), sociology is

the study of human social life, groups and societies. . . . The scope of sociology is extremely wide, ranging from the analysis of passing encounters between individuals in the street up to the investigation of world-wide social processes. (p. 4)

The poststructuralist theories such as proposed by Foucault (2012), for example, are fundamental social theories from which CDA originates. In contrast, political science “deals with the theory, organization, government and practice of the state” (Sharma & Sharma, 2000, p. 9). It “begins and ends with the state” (Garner, 1952, p. 9). It is a field of study characterized by “a search for critical understanding of (a) the good political life, (b) significant empirical observations, and (c) wise political and policy judgments” (Riemer & Simon, 1997, p. 40).

In general, sociology is more concerned with social behavior, relationship, and structure at large, and the field of political studies or political science has its focus on different facets of the *state*, such as government, international relationship, policy making, and so forth. It cannot be denied that political science often draws on social theories to formulate its own theories or conduct empirical studies, whereas the ultimate aim should be to reveal the political process, system, or philosophy, rather than a broad discussion of social issues. PDA may find it useful to draw on more theories and methodologies from political science rather than merely from (especially the poststructuralist) social studies.

Specifically, political communication can advance the agenda of PDA in at least three most essential aspects: deliberation, justice, and legitimacy, as discussed below.



*Deliberation*

The issue of deliberation appears frequently in PDA. For example, I. Fairclough and Fairclough (2012) center on deliberative argumentation. However, in this and other works on PDA, deliberation is seen as semiotic action or genre in discourse. Considerable attention has been paid to linguistic principles or discourse strategies such as cooperation, legitimation, rationalization, and so on. These analyses are useful to achieving what traditional CDA advocates, that is, to decode the conflict theory dimensions of power, dominance, and ideology in discourse. However, as a specific area that deals with political discourse, these discourse strategies and linguistic principles should be related to a more specific agenda for PDA (compared with the more general field of CDA), that is, to see how these discursive practices are used to shape and maneuver political processes besides the broader social dimensions and the change or maintenance of political systems. Specifically positioned in the context of deliberation, political discourse analysts should endeavor to answer the following interrelated questions:

- How has deliberation been framed in different types of discourses?
- How and to what extent have these "frames" perpetuated certain versions of deliberation?
- How can the conflict-theory-oriented dimensions such as power, dominance, and ideology, which are decoded by CDA, be further related to the process and changing understanding of deliberation in politics?

To answer these questions, discourse strategies and linguistic rules should be directed toward the theory of deliberation in political studies. Gutmann and Thompson (2009) discuss the purposes and features and, in relation to them, different types of deliberation in the context of democracy. In their works, deliberation is seen as conducive to democracy despite increasing criticisms made against it. Deliberation is also dynamic, which is only temporarily binding and is subjected to continuing social dialogues (Gutmann & Thompson, 2009). Also, deliberative democracy falls into different types in different practices. It is either instrumental or expressive, procedural or substantive, consensual or pluralist, or it can be a reconciliation or combination of both (Gutmann & Thompson, 2009). Gutmann and Thompson also warn against certain problems with deliberation in its theoretical and practical dimensions, such as redundancy of deliberation and undesirable consequences of deliberation.

Compared with current PDA research on deliberation, it can be found that merely positioning deliberation as a genre or semiotic action is far from adequate to grasp its dynamics and complexity in politics. Even a further step to explain how these actions and (sub)genres embed power, dominance, and ideologies is not enough to bring political changes in politics. It is sure that different types of power, dominance, and ideologies are embedded in the semiotized deliberative genres or actions, whereas the semiotically decoded power, dominance, and ideology are but abstract concepts within the social domain. It cannot be effected in politics until PDA practitioners get to know the political rather than the social semiotic dynamics of deliberation. As said earlier, PDA at its current stage is too much preoccupied with the description, interpretation, and explanation of semiotic and social power, dominance, and ideology, while forgetting the more pertinent political picture concerning deliberation in political discourse.

### *Justice*

Justice is central to all types of political bodies. Unlike deliberation and democracy, which are in origin legacies of Western politics, it is both universal and ahistorical. All types of polities, be they modern Western democratic nation-states, socialist or communist systems, oligarchies, or ancient feudal or even slave systems, claim their legitimacy by referring to justice. Despite its universality as said above, justice in PDA is framed as one of the *topoi* (a unit in argumentation) in Wodak (2009), as value (a parameter in the authors' proposed structure of argument) in I. Fairclough and Fairclough (2012), and seldom dealt with in other works on PDA (e.g., Chilton, 2004). The inadequacy in tracking the semiotic dimensions of justice and further relating these semiotic dimensions with their influences on political reality, in my opinion, lies in linguists' lack of concern with its complexity and dynamics in political studies.

In political communication, justice is seen as universal, but not less salient than power, dominance, and ideology. I. Fairclough and Fairclough (2012, pp. 192–193) briefly touch on Rawls' (1985) conception of justice-as-fairness, Nozick's (1974) conception of justice-as-entitlement, and the popular conception of justice-as-desert. This is the only work in PDA that takes justice in political studies into consideration, although they frame these theories as different value preferences in argumentation and deliberation that remain in social semiotics rather than being connected with political dimensions. Tyler (2000) reviews past psychological research on justice, and argues for procedural justice as against distributive justice. He formulates four elements that are central to a fair procedure: opportunities for participation or voice, the neutrality of the forum, trustworthiness of the authorities, and treatment with dignity and respect. Besley and McComas (2005) review different models in the research of procedural justice, and propose a "framing model" for procedural justice. This model takes into consideration the framing of resources of information, participants' control over the procedures, and relational factors (e.g., being treated with respect, trustworthiness of authorities).

Comparing research on justice in political communication with that in PDA, it can be found that justice in PDA still stays at the stage of linguistic "description" or at best the stage of "interpretation," in Fairclough's terms concerning his version of CDA. Justice in discourse is segregated from justice in political theories and reality, and it is "mystified" as signs and symbols such as embodied by *topoi* in different genres of political discourse and value preference in argumentation. How these discursive representations can be explained by political theories on justice, and how these "descriptions" or "interpretations" and "explanations" can address political problems are scarcely dealt with or even seldom considered. In this sense, PDA needs political theories on justice such as mentioned above to "demystify" its current practice of description, or interpretation at best. That is, justice should not be seen only as abstract *topoi* or value in PDA; its dimensions such as participation, relational, and affective factors in political reality should also be taken care of in relation to their semiotic representations.

### *Legitimacy*

Legitimacy has its semiotic counterpart in CDA: legitimation. van Leeuwen (2007), for example, discusses four resources of legitimation: authorization (legitimation by referring to authorities), moral evaluation (legitimation by referring to morality), rationalization (legitimation by referring to certain

rhetoric strategies), and mythopoesis (legitimation conveyed through narratives on past successful experiences). Compared with deliberation and justice, political theories of legitimacy are discussed in more detail in the three main works of PDA mentioned earlier. However, when it comes to the analysis, PDA falls into the same pit as in the case of the former two concepts; that is, political legitimacy is segregated from semiotic legitimation. In other words, it remains unclear how legitimizing or legitimating strategies in CDA can be related to different conceptions of legitimacy in politics, such as reviewed in Zelditch (2001). Do these semiotic strategies contribute to a conflict-theory-oriented or consensus-theory-oriented view of legitimacy, or to a combination of both (Zelditch, 2001)? Besides, there are alternative views on legitimacy that deviate from the Western-democratic traditions, as discussed in Tan (2010) on the political legitimacy in Singapore, which is seen to be gained through pragmatic secularism and civil religion.

However, this is not to advocate lumping together the discursive legitimizing strategies and political legitimacy to forge a hybridity of PDA and political communication. What is central to the argument is consistent with what was discussed in previous sections: PDA must be demystified from signs and symbols and try to explain political reality by referring to political studies, as what CDA does to sociological theories.

#### ***PDA and Its Communication Agenda Facilitated by Political Communication***

For the communication dimensions of political communication in relation to PDA, I briefly discuss three most important and basic aspects that can contribute to the new agenda of PDA.

##### *Framing and Agenda Setting*

Framing and agenda setting should have been well fitted into CDA and PDA, most importantly, because they share quite similar origins with those of certain concepts in CDA, such as the notions of perspectivation (Wodak, 2009), representation, recontextualization, and epistemic community, which are coined by van Dijk (2005) for his cognitive approach to CDA.

In political communication, Scheufele (2000) distinguishes between framing and agenda-setting by tracing their respective theoretical origins and empirical applications. According to Scheufele, agenda-setting is theoretically premised on cognitive conceptions, such as memory traces, construct of attitude accessibility, and a memory-based model of information processing; by contrast, framing is premised on social or sociological conceptions of attribution theory and Goffman's frame analysis. Simon and Xenos (2000) discuss how elite discourse affects framing and public deliberation by examining media coverage of a strike by Teamsters Union against United Parcel Services. Druckman and Nelson (2003) turn their attention to more banal settings of citizens' conversations: They conducted experiments to examine "how interpersonal conversations affect prior framing effects" (p. 729).

By presenting research in PDA and political communication on framing, agenda-setting, and other similar concepts, I would like to show some common concerns that are pursued with different approaches in both areas. For example, both examine the power and dominance effected by the framing of elite discourse in different contexts (e.g., group activities such as strikes, or individual interactions and

conversations). The key difference lies in that whereas political communication pays more attention to framing effects on deliberation, or in Austin's (1962) terms, the "perlocutionary effects" of discourse, PDA and CDA are more interested in "here-and-now" framing, representation or recontextualization in discourse as manifested by linguistic usage and discourse strategies. An optimal way is to combine both approaches so as not only to prevent political communication from neglecting the detailed discursive representation of framing, but also (for PDA) to take its perlocutionary and political effects into consideration so as to keep to its agenda to address political problems.

### *Mediatization*

Mediatization in political communication is a more dynamic and slippery notion in political communication than in CDA. I discuss two interrelated aspects of mediatization that are still undergoing debates in political communication. Because mediatization is closely related to the concept of mediation, I also (have to) touch on the latter in the following discussion. Although both mediatization and mediation belong to what Altheide and Snow (1979) term *media logic*, they are very different notions. According to Couldry (2008), mediatization refers to a single and linear media logic that is "simultaneously transforming the whole of social space at once" (p. 376). By contrast, mediation is seen as emphasizing the "heterogeneity of the transformations across a complex and divided social space" (Couldry, 2008, p. 376). Altheide (2013) defines *mediation* as "the impact of media logic and form of any medium involved in the communication process that is part of an ecology of communication that joins information technology and communication (media) formats with the time and place of activities"; *mediatization* is defined as "the process by which this (mediation) takes place, including the institutionalization and blending of media forms" (Altheide, 2013, p. 226).

Mazzoleni and Schulz (1999), focusing on mediatization in political communication, see mediation as a neutral concept that involves how media mediate between political actors (e.g., between government and public sphere) by "intervening, conveying, or reconciling between different actors, collectives, or institutions" (p. 249). Mediatization in political communication is seen as the practice through which "politics increasingly has been molded by communication patterns" (Mazzoleni & Schulz, 1999, p. 249). Thus, mediatized politics is politics that loses its autonomy and is increasingly dependent on media. Mediation and mediatization in PDA and CDA are frequently treated as discursive practices that embody social ideology rather than political realities in communication. For example, in Forchtner, Krzyzanowski, and Wodak (2013), mediatization or mediated politics is shown through traditional and new genres of campaign discourse and a variety of multimodal means. And they are directed to the hegemony or biased representations against Muslims or foreigners. However, how these discursive patterns and practices, along with the decoded power and hegemony in relation to them, exert influences on the political practices of mediatization is left unexplored.

### *New Media, the Fragmentation Debate, Online Activism, Polarization, and Other Issues*

As new media prevail and new communication technologies develop with unprecedented speed, political discourse is taking on a far more diverse look than ever. Discourse of online activism mediated by new media, for example, is also taking on new forms that are totally different from traditional ones.

Pertaining to the advent of new media, especially social media, it is hotly debated that whether they have resulted in fragmentation of the public sphere into groups of "like-minded" individuals, which leads to insulated "deliberative enclaves" (Dahlberg, 2007). Also, some of these "enclaves" that produce counterdiscourse are developing into activist or extremist groups (Dahlberg, 2007). As such, these conflicts between discourse boundaries may contribute to the polarization of social subjects.

As discussed above, I present several issues that are happening in contemporary politics and communication. They have been well taken care of or are hotly debated in political communication, such as Dahlberg's (2007) discussion on fragmentation; Baum and Groeling's (2008), Prior's (2013), and Stroud's (2010) research on polarization; and Bennett and Segerberg's (2012) study on online activism. Nonetheless, these issues have seldom been explored in PDA, despite their importance in political reality, which do have their semiotic or linguistic dimensions reflected in discourse (e.g., Dahlberg, 2007) and thus need to be considered by PDA.

### **Conclusion**

In this article, I have advocated that PDA should take on a new political-communication-oriented agenda. I first reviewed the development of PDA, which is seen as a subfield of CDA. After this, a general review of the criticisms against CDA was provided, followed by my own reflections on these criticisms and CDA itself. Although I argue for the validity of CDA and PDA, I am not satisfied with the status quo that they have been predominantly resting on the "conflict" conventions that are inherited from its predecessors such as Marxist and post-Marxist theories. Furthermore, PDA as a particular approach to studies on political discourse should pay more attention to the political facets (processes, system, and theories) "in" and "out of" the discourse rather than merely adopting the socially or sociologically oriented approaches in CDA. It would also be useful to adopt theories and approaches in communication studies to advance this agenda, as it can help link the processes and participants in discourse production, distribution, and consumption. This can help PDA deviate from its grammar- and analyst-centered tradition to become a politically useful scholarship. Political communication can also shed new light on CDA and PDA by introducing the cooperation and consensus facets of political studies to both fields. I also discussed how several interrelated concepts or dimensions in political communication can be used to advance the agenda of PDA so as to demystify it away from the "conflict" conventions of CDA and the linguistic-description/interpretation-centered tradition toward a discipline that can explain political issues in communication and address political problems. These fundamental concepts or dimensions include deliberation, justice, legitimacy, framing, mediatization, the fragmentation debate, online activism, and polarization in new media. Through the discussion, it can be found that although some of these concepts have been used in PDA, they have been predominantly restricted within the semiotic dimensions and lack concerns with their dynamics in politics. I suggest that CDA and PDA have more dialogue with the political and communication theories, hence enriching the agenda of CDA and making them more beneficial to politics.

Although I advocate a new political and communication agenda for CDA, I do not deny the great contributions that the traditional CDA and PDA have made to the fields of linguistics and social studies; neither do I attempt to use political studies or political communication to negate social studies or

traditional CDA and PDA. What I have tried to do is to shed some new light on both areas of PDA and political communication in the following ways. First, I aimed to let PDA practitioners be aware of PDA's academic identity as an interdisciplinary approach toward language, sociology, and the very important but neglected area of politics. Second, I also intended to intrigue those scholars in political communication, or at least let them know that PDA, as an interdisciplinary approach toward language, discourse, and politics, can play a role in political communication studies when further explored.

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