

Participation and partnership: a critical discourse
analysis perspective on the dialectics of regulation and
democracy

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Outline

- Introduce + illustrate one version of 'CDA'.
 - Social scientific questions, discourse aspects
 - Discourse in dialectical relations
 - Critical
 - 'Transdisciplinary'

Outline

- Illustration: ‘participation’ (and ‘partnership’).
- Example: ‘citizenship’ in discussions over trials of GM crops.
- Argument:
 - government tends to so limit participation as to make democratic content questionable
 - yet participants can sometimes move in a more democratic direction.
- How can CDA contribute to addressing these issues?

Regulation and Democracy

- Governments in pursuit of more participation: exclusion/alienation, effectiveness
- 'Participation' + 'partnership'
- Metagovernance (hierarchies, markets, networks)
- Regulation + democracy: logics, contradictions, dialectics

Regulation and Democracy

- Democracy: adversarial; subjects/strategies
- Can regulated democracy be democratic?
- Questions of democracy clearly questions of discourse and dialogue
- Methodological concern: CDA for a semiotic point of entry into trans-disciplinary research

Changing states: tendencies towards participation and partnership

- 'Keynesian Welfare National State' > 'Schumpeterian Workfare Post-National Regime':
 - Keynesian > Schumpeterian modes of economic intervention
 - welfarist > workfarist approach to social policy
 - primacy of national scale > post-national framework
 - primacy of the state in compensating for market failures > networked, partnership-based governance mechanisms.
- 'Partnership': 'joined-up government', widening of 'stakeholders', 'communities' and 'users' as stakeholders.
- 'Lisbon Strategy': structural coupling between KBE, 'modernized' European social model, 'open method of coordination'

Changing states: tendencies towards participation and partnership

'What emerged was ... a hybrid model premised on neo-liberalism. This involves new modes of economic and political coordination that aim to promote the EU's competitiveness in the new global economy whilst maintaining (and 'modernizing') the European social model.

In this context, competitiveness and social policy have been redefined in Schumpeterian workfare terms and the tasks of integration and coordination are increasingly seen as multi-level (or multi-scalar) with variable geometries and hence as suited to new forms of partnership and governance.

Changing states: tendencies towards participation and partnership

For EU institutions typically operate less in the manner of a re-scaled, supranational sovereign state apparatus than as a nodal point in an extensive web of meta-governance operations. They have a key role in orchestrating economic and social policy in and across many different scales of action involving a wide range of official, quasi-official, private economic and civil interests'. (Jessop 2006)

Changing states: tendencies towards participation and partnership

- Dialectics of structures + strategies, ‘cultural political economy’ (discourse).
- Lisbon:
 - *strategy* articulates KBE, ‘modernized’ social model, ‘open method of coordination’ as *discourses* (imaginary).
 - *Implementation of strategy* > ‘operationalization’ of discourses (enactment, inculcation, materialization), enactment as genres + inculcation as styles

Summary of a version of CDA

- Dialectical relations, critical, trans-disciplinary
- Discourses, genres styles
- Dialectic between events/texts + practices/orders of discourse
- Intertextuality, interdiscursivity, recontextualization
- CDA and cultural political economy

Field of research

Objects of trans-disciplinary research

- *emergence* of strategies
- contestation between them and establishment of *hegemony*
- *recontextualization* of strategies
- *implementation* of strategies in practices (structures)

Field of research

Objects for CDA as a semiotic point of entry

- *Emergence* of discourses, narratives, imaginaries
- *Hegemony struggle/ contestation* between discourses
- *Recontextualization* of discourses (colonisation/ appropriation dialectic)
- *Operationalization* of discourses: enactment, inculcation, materialization; the “dialectics of discourse” (Harvey 1996),

Participatory events: some notes

- Participants bring different construals of the event/process, expectations about how to proceed and orientations to being a participant, from official sources or experiences.
- They bring different semiotic resources: discourses, genres and styles; intertextual and interdiscursive chains, relations of recontextualization
- 'Pre-constructed' resources are drawn upon + articulated together in potentially innovative, novel, creative, surprising ways.

Participatory events: some notes

- Discourse analysis elucidates dialectic between pre-constructed resources + interactional events; social 'inputs' + interactional outcomes; power of pre-constructions + of situated agency
- Dialectic between regulation + democracy:
 - pre-constructed resources resonate with both regulatory + democratic logics
 - Given the dominance of regulatory logic, we must look to situated agency for the emergence of democratic logic.
- Conflicts + tensions in analytically separable facets of the event: interaction/genres, identity/styles, construals/discourses.

Crop trials

- 'The objective is not to evaluate the effects of the GMHT crops themselves, whose safety has already been approved ... It is to find out whether the herbicide management associated with these GM crops, as compared with that used on the non-GM equivalents, has any effects on some aspects of farmland biodiversity'. (AEBC Crops on trial 2001)
- Legislative context: EU Directives which UK Government uses to justify policy (+depoliticize trials by framing them in law and science, not politics).

Crop trials

- 'Once an applicant has satisfied the requirements set out in the European rules and the release has been found to pose no significant risks to the environment or human health then the applicant has the right to grow that crop. Consents and releases may only be prevented on valid safety grounds supported by sound scientific evidence. ACRE will consider any further evidence submitted by the public that has a bearing on the assessments ACRE has made'. www.defra.gov.uk

Crop trials

- No formal mechanism for public participation
- Public informed after sites are chosen + can make written comments only on safety assessments.
- Local councils can organize public meetings with DEFRA rep, for information not consultation.
- Public participation in unofficial forms, campaigns (2 trials abandoned after public protests).
- But Government does claim that there is 'public involvement'. DEFRA website:

Public Involvement

Public involvement

Q: What is being done to involve people with sites in their locality in the Farm Scale Evaluation programme?

The Government involves local people in the Farm Scale Evaluation (FSE) process by providing both information about the release and an opportunity for the public to comment on the safety assessments that have been made. Copies of the consents for the GM crops involved are sent out to relevant parish councils in England along with information about the release before sowing takes place. The Advisory Committee on Releases to the Environment (ACRE) will consider any representation made by local people on the safety assessments covered by these consents. In addition, DEFRA officials are available, whenever possible, to attend public meetings if called by the parish council.

Public Involvement

- *Involvement* rather than *participation* or *consultation*
- *involve* used transitively with the Government as subject – people don't *get* involved they *are* involved.
- People only represented as actors in *commenting* or *making representations* + even then taking up *opportunity* provided by Government.
- Generic format: lecture + question-and-answer.
- Chairs: rules for question-and-answer eg give name, village/organization, questions via chair, only questions, speak one at a time, don't interrupt. Implicit/explicit hierarchy: locals and outsiders.

Public Involvement

- Speakers: DEFRA, GM company, NGO.
- People did not always stick to the official generic format.
 - Contested genre and genre chain
 - Spoke + demanded recognition as democratic subjects (sometimes collective) with strategies on public affairs (style).
 - contested expertise of experts by challenging *discourses*

Extract 1

- M1 making statements not just asking questions.
- M1 + M2 are working collaboratively.
- M1 + M2 speaking as members of a collective (note *we*).
- M1 interrupts/challenges the official + direct dialogue

Extract 1

- M1 asks for solutions not answers, action not information.
- M1 + M2 claim recognition as subjects in deliberations on official procedure.
- M1 + M2 interweave Genre of open debate with Genre of expert-public interaction. Dialectic between regulation + democracy: democratic logic worked into the regulative form through mixed Genre.

Extract 2

- Hawthorne's questions are element in *arguments*; engages in policy argumentation, using argumentative Genre
- Claims recognition as a subject entitled to own strategy on matters of policy.
- Arguments identify contradictions in policy
- *We*
- Support from audience indicates he speaks for a public.

Extract 2

- Official's response does not answer the question, engage with the argument, deal with policy; reiterates information already given.
- Reasserts official view of crop trial process + tries to recuperate meeting for official genre chain (scientific evaluations, reports, experiment).
- But includes decision-making in the chain ('before any decision is taken as to whether this umm should be allowed to occur on a commercial basis') - construed as consequent upon science.
- Responds to questioner's politicization by depoliticizing the policy decision, locating it in a relationship between science and government.

Extract 3

- Questions are elements in an argument.
- Policy moment consequent upon the scientific results, but then reformulated:
So I think it's important to bear in mind that the FSEs are allowing time for further research and for, consideration, and I think an element in all of this is err also going to be, what the people of this country want. I think that is obviously highly relevant and we have ways [err. we have ways of expressing your views to your representatives
- Rare formulation of how public 'views' enter the genre chain: 'we have ways of expressing your views to your representatives'.
- Scepticism of the audience - 'you are not listening'.

Extract 4

- F1 construes science as needing interpretation and open to public debate.
- Industry spokesman construes science as fact ratified by experts, signed, sealed and delivered over to society.
- Changing the discourse of science can help open up democratic dialogue?
- The questioner 'gets emotional'. NB the habitual official contrast between scientific rationality and 'emotive' public interventions.
- Does not a democratic logic involves passions?

Conclusions

- Public 'involvement' officially envisaged + enforced by chairs is very limited
- Some participants shift meetings towards public deliberation of policy, challenge Government + assert their capacity/right to pursue their own strategies in policy debates as equals
- A democratic logic is imposed with some success within an event/procedure controlled by a regulative logic.

Conclusions

- CDA can contribute to illuminating contradiction + dialectic between regulation and democracy:
 - by analysing genres, and how contradiction + dialectic between regulative and democratic discourses are operationalized in mixing of and struggle over genres as well as styles and discourses;
 - by indicating how different participants intertextualize these events differently, manifest in the recontextualization of different genres, styles and discourses

Conclusions

- Suggests that regulated forms of participation/ partnership may be spaces of dialectic between democracy and regulation and of emergence of democratic moments.
- There are provisos however.
 - Occasions are created + claimed rather than allowed, and amount to contestation of these forms.
 - Significance and impact on decision-making is limited by the complexity of meta-governed forms: procedures articulate elements + regulate their connection, genre chains regulated by principles of recontextualization are filtering devices which often filter out such democratic moments.
 - In this case, although relationship between meeting + preceding stages in the procedure/genre chain is transparent to all participants, its relationship to subsequent stages is opaque (except to officials?)

Conclusions

- Comparison: partnership events in regulation of hospital rebuilding in Australia (ledema).
- Participants are oriented to recontextualization of meetings in a report, regulated by specific recontextualizing principles with filtering effects which eliminate much of the diversity of meetings.
- Points arising:
 - different participants are likely to differ in power partly in their control over + ability to anticipate these future recontextualizations.
 - if there are successes in moving regulative events in a more democratic direction, these may be effectively neutralized through transformations imposed by recontextualizing principles.
- Need to extend analysis from particular sorts of event to chains of events bound together within procedures + genre chains and recontextualizing principles which regulate them.