Review:

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Norman Fairclough (2006). Language and Globalization. London and New York: Routledge, 2006, viii + 186 pp, ISBN: 978-0-415-31765-8, £ 18.99

Jan Blommaert (2005). Discourse. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005, xiii + 299 pp, ISBN: 0-521-82817-1, £ 21.99

Abstract: This review discusses two recent approaches to language and globalisation from the theoretical field of discourse analysis. FAIRCLOUGH's monograph *Language and Globalization* discusses a wide range of discourses of globalisation and aims to combine cultural political economy and critical discourse analysis. BLOMMAERT's book is an introduction to the study of discourse, combining an ethnographic approach influenced by American anthropological linguistics and sociolinguistics. Globalisation is integrated into his approach at all levels of analysis as shaping the conditions of language practices in society today. The books offer analyses from different thematic angles and geo-cultural perspectives: while FAIRCLOUGH focuses on the representational quality of language underlying his textual analysis of discourses of globalisation, BLOMMAERT dedicates his analysis to the shaping of linguistic repertoires and the unequal currency of language practices in a globalised world. Both offer interdisciplinary potential for readers from other disciplines of social research who are interested in language-related aspects of globalisation.

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1. Introduction: The Graphic Image of Globaliz/sation

It is revealing that a book about language and globalisation by British academic Norman FAIRCLOUGH and—according to the cover—printed in Great Britain should spell its title *Language and Globalization* thus following American spelling conventions. At the same time, the other book under discussion here—Jan BLOMMAERT, *Discourse*—uses British spelling throughout.[1] Both books are published by British publishing houses—Routledge and Cambridge University Press—which act in the global market of English-language academic publications. Finally, the German author of this review based at the University of Manchester has chosen to write her review in British spelling—for the sake of the argument and as a result of habits after three years of working and living in the UK—even though the templates for this Germany-based journal suggests Microsoft English (U.S.). And perhaps more importantly, she chooses to write her review in English, and not in German or Spanish, the other two options for publications at the *FQS.* [1]

These few observations go to the heart of the subject at hand: language and globalisation. Why does one British publishing house (Routledge) choose American spelling for a book by a British author, while the other British publishing house (Cambridge University Press) uses British spelling for the book by a Belgian author who emphasises his allegiance to American linguistic anthropology by dedicating the book to two outstanding researchers in this field, Dell HYMES and John GUMPERZ. In fact, BLOMMAERT has chosen American spelling for his commentary in the special issue of the Journal of Sociolinguistics on *Sociolinguistics and globalisation* (2003), for which the editor Nikolas COUPLAND seems to have chosen British spelling for the title, but left authors the choice for their own contributions in line with the journal's policy. [2]

The variation between z/s in the spelling of English is the most iconic difference by which many readers recognise American versus British spelling. *Globalization* is thus the more salient graphic image of the buzzword that has been used to describe ongoing social processes. We can think of reasons why Routledge and Cambridge University Press would use the respective spellings: to appeal to a global academic market, to stress a long history as a British publisher, to facilitate hits in internet search engines etc. Be that as it may, the example serves to illustrate why it is important to look at globalisation from the perspective of language studies and vice versa to examine language practices from the point of view of globalisation. Both books do that even if only FAIRCLOUGH uses the catch phrase in his title and exclusively dedicates his monograph to this topic. I have chosen to discuss BLOMMAERT *Discourse: A Critical Introduction*

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1   The situation is more complicated than the simple labels American and British spelling suggest, since the use of "-ise/-isation" coexists with the "z"-variant in Great Britain. The Oxford English Dictionary as an important instance of standardisation favours a semi-etymological approach that suggests using "-ize/-ization" in all cases where Greek etymology is a possible option or where new words have been derived, while using "-ise/-isation" in cases where etymology clearly suggests the latter. The British National Corpus shows that the use of "s" in all these endings is clearly prevalent in Britain and thus stands out against the generalised use of "-ize/-ization" and even "-yze" in American English (cf. discussion in PETERS, 2004, pp.298-299).

alongside, since the author makes the conditions of globalisation an overarching principle that permeates all other aspects of his theoretical approach (BLOMMAERT, 2005, p.15). For the sake of thematic coherence and brevity, I will focus on FAIRCLOUGH's monograph and discuss only those aspects of BLOMMAERT that directly relate to the argument of how we researchers can ask productive questions about language and globalisation. [3]

2. Discourse Analysis as an Interdisciplinary Tool in Social Research

Both authors share the theoretical mode in which they approach language and globalisation: discourse analysis with a strong commitment to social theory. It is this interdisciplinary commitment that makes both books interesting candidates for discussion in the *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*. FAIRCLOUGH is in BLOMMAERT's (2005, p.21) assessment one of the four leading scholars of the school of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and has published important books setting the ground for theoretical discussions in his field such as *Language and Power* (1989), *Discourse and Social Change* (1992), *Media Discourse* (1995). At the heart of CDA is the conviction that discourse is one aspect of social life related to others and is in need of a critical linguistic text analysis in order to understand its contribution to the shaping of social life and the power relations involved in that process (FAIRCLOUGH, 2006, pp.9-10). [4]

In *Language and Globalization,* FAIRCLOUGH (p.27) sets out to combine a version of cultural political economy with critical discourse analysis, as the author explains in the introduction (pp.1-13). FAIRCLOUGH sees a productive link to CDA in the theoretical claim of cultural political economy that economic systems are politically embedded and that both political and economic objects are socially constructed. This social construction is partly a discursive process and thus CDA offers itself as a crucial analytical tool to cover the language-related aspects of the political-economic phenomenon of globalisation. Language-related in FAIR-CLOUGH's approach means what "has been said and written about globalisation" (p.5) and the author distinguishes the following different voices from which he draws his sources: academic analysis, governmental and non-governmental agencies, the media and people in everyday life (p.5). The corpus thus consists of textual material that specifically deals with processes of globalisation. [5]

BLOMMAERT has a different focus and uses his critical introduction to discourse partly to criticise Critical Discourse Analysis in order to establish his own brand of discourse analysis within a tradition of ethnographic research as a competitor to CDA in the quest to link language studies to social theory. He gives a concise if for obvious reasons not completely impartial summary[2] of the developments and merits of CDA in Chapter 2 of *Discourse* (pp.21-38), in which he criticises CDA in three respects: 1) its focus on linguistically available discourse at the cost of neglecting the production and circulation of language as well as its up-take by

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2 From a discourse analytical point of view, one would, of course, argue that a specific subject position is always inscribed in an enunciation and that seemingly objective description is a sign of specific discursive conditions such as for example a subject position that is quasi naturally associated with a certain type of discourse.

different audiences, 2) the focus on first-world societies, 3) the lack of a historical perspective of the development of specific discourses (pp.34-37). The review of FAIRCLOUGH's book will reveal if this critique holds for his latest production in Critical Discourse Analysis. More importantly, it will reveal some theoretical similarities as well as some important differences on the level of analysis in the two approaches to language and globalisation under discussion. [6]

3. FAIRCLOUGH on Language and Globalisation

FAIRCLOUGH's monograph is divided into a methodological part in Chapters 1 and 2, and the empirical Chapters 3 to 7 in which the author analyses different examples of globalisation discourses sometimes grouped around the voices of discourse, sometimes ordered thematically and sometimes geographically. [7]

3.1 Review of the academic literature

Chapter 1 (pp.14-26) contains a review of the academic literature on globalisation in the social sciences. FAIRCLOUGH introduces HELD, McGREW, GOLDBLATT and PERRATON's (1999) distinction between hyperglobalist, sceptical and transformationalist approaches with different perspectives on the scope of globalisation. These range from the view that a developing single global market will displace all political organisation on a national level to the scepticism that anything new at all is happening while the transformationalists assume a position placed in the middle between these two extremes. FAIRCLOUGH then compares the positions with respect to their view on discourse as a structural element of globalisation to underline compatibility with his own approach. [8]

He characterises the objectivist position (usually hyperglobalist) as the approach least inclined to take discursive structures into account. The rhetoricist position is characterised by a specific interest in the strategic use of globalisation discourse to justify unpopular political or economic decisions, while the ideologist position focuses on the strategic use of discourse to maintain a hegemonic position. The latter two are usually associated with sceptical approaches. While FAIRCLOUGH takes great interest in these approaches which often identify the neo-liberal discourse of "globalism" as an ideological discourse in the sense of a distorting representation of reality, he is also at pains to underline the realism in his social constructivist approach, surely as a safeguard against the many critics of discourse analytical approaches. [9]

The last part of the introductory chapter is dedicated to the social constructivist position with which he has explicitly associated himself in line with his commitment to Critical Discourse Analysis. FAIRCLOUGH points out a number of inspirations for his own approach, such as the importance of agents, the simplification strategies of globalisation discourse, the changes of scale and processes of rescaling, the social construction of space-times, deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation, cultural hybridity. Most of these aspects will be interpreted in the framework of Critical Discourse Analysis and used in his analysis, but are not systematically developed in this book. [10]

3.2 Critical Discourse Analysis and Cultural Political Economy

In Chapter 2, FAIRCLOUGH introduces his own theoretical framework for which he combines Cultural Political Economy (as in JESSOP, 2004 or in JESSOP & SUM, 2001)—one of the social sciences approaches to globalisation discussed in Chapter 1—with his version of Critical Discourse Analysis. He distinguishes social structures, social practices and social events as different levels of abstraction, where social structures represent the long-term social conditions, social events are instances of social life and social practices are institutionalised ways of doing things. All these levels of social life have semiotic moments which constitute their discursive aspect. At the level of social practices, FAIRCLOUGH sees orders of discourse at work which are constituted by discourse, genres and styles. While discourse relates to the function of representation, genre relates to the level of communicative action and style to a way of being, thus characterising identity aspects. FAIRCLOUGH argues that a detailed textual analysis is necessary to determine how different levels of semiotic expression interact to constitute orders of discourse and how these interact with other aspects of social practice. [11]

The specific theoretical challenge of globalisation is addressed by adding the concepts of scale and rescaling and the resulting processes of recontextualisation. In other words, the crucial aspect of globalisation is not homogenisation, but changes in the frame of reference which leads to an active engagement and reinterpretation of floating entities and practices in their new contexts. [12]

3.3 Discourses of globalisation and their textual analyses

Chapters 3 to 7 are dedicated to textual analyses of globalisation discourses, which draw on a wide range of countries and topics. To reach this breadth, FAIRCLOUGH draws partly on his own research and partly on studies by others. He starts out in Chapter 3 *Discourses on globalization* (pp.39-63) by analysing texts produced by public agents (governmental and non-governmental) who draw on different discourses of globalisation. This serves to introduce the reader to the, in FAIRCLOUGH's view, dominant neo-liberal discourse of globalism and some alternative views. FAIRCLOUGH concludes the chapter by showing the close relation between the discourse of globalism and of the knowledge-based economy (KBE), which he analyses in more depth in Chapter 4. [13]

Chapter 4 *Re-scaling the nation-state* (pp.64-96) also deals largely with public agencies and takes the example Romania's transition after the collapse of the Soviet Union and in preparation of its recent entry into the European Union to illustrate the effects of rescaling. Analysing documents relating to the reform of higher education and the Bologna process, FAIRCLOUGH shows how different scales operate in this context: the global discourse of the knowledge-based economy, the Bologna reform of higher education within the EU and national university structures in Romania. The focus is on the ensuing interdiscursive relations and the actual implementations of different elements of these knowledge discourses on the ground in Romania. [14]

Chapter 5 *The media, mediation and globalization* (pp.97-120) is dedicated to the analysis of the media as another voice of globalisation and the mass media as the prime location through which the debate over globalisation is mediated. FAIRCLOUGH discusses three examples to argue for a "partial constitution of a 'global public'" (p.97) through the mass media. The first two examples are Romanian again and show the effect of rescaling in the case of political branding and the construction of women's gender identity in the Romanian edition of the magazine *Cosmopolitan.* In both cases, global media strategies or products are analysed in their recontextualisation for a specific market. The final example consists of an analysis of 9/11 in terms of representation of distant suffering on TV and argues that in the case of 9/11 an initial "void of meaning" (p.116) was quickly filled with a discourse that allowed only a narrow moral interpretation of the events. [15]

Chapter 6 (pp.120-139) is focused on *Globalization from below* taking examples of "people in everyday life" reacting to globalisation. In one example, FAIRCLOUGH shows the appropriation of globalist economic discourse by unemployed workers in the North East of England. In the second example, he analyses how local actors in Hungary draw on globalisation discourse in a struggle over the construction of a waste incineration plant by a foreign investor. The final case is about foreign investment in an environment-sensitive industry in Thailand and has the extra dimension of a global non-governmental agency and their interaction with local actors which is shown to add complexity to the circulation and appropriation of globalisation discourses in a campaign against the construction of a coal-powered power station. [16]

Chapter 7 on *Globalization, war and terrorism* (pp.140-161) analyses the discourse of the "war on terror" and its relation to the discourse of globalisation. FAIRCLOUGH identifies as overarching discursive strategies a Manichean world view that justifies new measures against terrorism with the new forms of threats it poses to democracy. He sees this discourse partly as a continuation of the economic discourse of globalism, which in his view ultimately serves to secure US hegemony. [17]

4. BLOMMAERT on Language and Globalisation

BLOMMAERT's *Discourse* is an introduction to the study of discourse which uses globalisation as a theoretical lens to take a fresh look at language in society and its relation to other social practices. He organises the book around theoretical notions and avoids a strict separation of theory and analysis interweaving one with the other as he proceeds in his argument. [18]

4.1 Subject position and theoretical mode

The introduction (pp.1-20) is dedicated to a positioning of the author, where he places himself firmly in the tradition of ethnographic research, adopting a discourse analytical approach with inspirations from American anthropological linguistics and sociolinguistics. After a discussion and evaluation of Critical

Discourse Analysis in Chapter 2 (pp.21-38) BLOMMAERT proceeds to build his own approach around topics of wider interest to researchers in other disciplines of social research. They comprise the following in their order of appearance from Chapter 3-8: Text and context, Language and inequality, Choice and determination, History and process, Ideology, and Identity. He concludes the book with a discussion of the relevance of discourse for the social sciences at large. [19]

The way BLOMMAERT integrates globalisation pervasively into his account of discourse analysis is through the notion of space. Like FAIRCLOUGH, he uses FOUCAULT's notion of orders of discourse to describe the systematicity with which discourses are structured. He complements the macro-level orders of discourse, which, using KROSKRITY's (2000) term (BLOMMAERT, p.102), he calls *regimes of language*, with the notion of indexicality and indexical orders. The latter refer to the embedding of language variation at the micro-level in social norms and values that are invoked by linguistic differences in addition to the denotational level of an utterance. To this spatial construct of social signification he adds the level of historicity as a system of layered simultaneity, by which BLOMMAERT means the up-take of discourse by different speakers and larger audiences according to the historical layers of meaning that are present for different discourses at the moment of interpretation. [20]

This complex theoretical space developed through the course of the book is constantly interrogated from the angle of globalisation. In other words, for each concept BLOMMAERT discusses, he foregrounds the implications of what it means that some language varieties and discourses acquire global currency. But he argues that the local varieties have to be equally analysed from the angle of globalisation. What happens if they are lifted out of their usual context? How is their value affected by a global variety entering their space? And how are local systems affected by other local varieties entering their system through the global flow of people and their linguistic repertoires typical for globalisation? [21]

4.2 Examples of analysis

I shall illustrate some questions analysed by BLOMMAERT to show the focus of his research agenda. In the chapter on *Choice and determination* (pp.98-124), BLOMMAERT analyses the possibilities of and constraints on what can be said and understood at a certain moment in space and time. He takes the example of documents produced within the Belgium asylum procedure by an asylum seeker who had claimed to be from Burundi, and analyses their structure and the deployment of multimodal literacy practices which are used to create a document able to pass the test of giving credit to the truthfulness of the asylum seeker's claim. BLOMMAERT (p.107) shows how these texts are structured, how they relate to local Burundese practices and how they clearly mark their author as sub-elite. He then compares these textual practices to the different criteria for coherence, correctness and truthfulness in Western Europe that make the up-take of these literacy practices, which BLOMMAERT calls heterography, in this different discursive space highly problematic if not impossible. [22]

In the chapter on *Identity* (pp.203-232), BLOMMAERT argues, in line with recent trends in interactional sociolinguistics (cf. for example ECKERT, 2005), that linguistic variation is not just a reflection of social or ethnic groups, but that identity is a more complex interaction of the use of linguistic repertoires as well as other social practices and should thus be seen in more constructivist terms. He gives an example that, again, shows the implications of globalisation on micro-level linguistic practices by analysing the interaction of a DJ with audience participants on a university radio channel in Cape Town, South Africa. The DJ can be heard (or, rather, read in the transcript) to switch between different varieties: Standard English, Black English, Rasta Slang and Township English. The analysis reveals a highly complex interaction of local and global varieties with different values attached to them and shows how the South African DJ draws on them systematically and creatively in his performance of linguistic identity. [23]

5. Evaluation

There are some discursive similarities between FAIRCLOUGH's and BLOMMAERT's approaches, which is not surprising given the fact that they both approach globalisation from a discourse analytical perspective. The emphasis on spatial relations and their rescaling is one parallel, as is an emphasis on the importance of the mechanism of recontextualisation that affects the widely circulating discourses and language practices. [24]

5.1 Discourse of globalisation

There is, however, an important difference between the two approaches which makes them more complementary than competing for the same research object, although one might argue that the battles over the relevant object of research are the fiercest. FAIRCLOUGH focuses on the different discourses of globalisation mostly from a political-economic perspective and offers a tool to analyse their semiotic aspects. This makes for an analysis on a macro-level of relatively large orders of discourse held together rather loosely by the phenomenon of globalisation. His monograph zooms in on a number of interesting sites where globalisation discourse is at work and begins to explain how it works for different agents and in different countries. [25]

That also means that FAIRCLOUGH addresses the circulation of discourse at this macro-level of analysis. He suggests a longer-term perspective when identifying the discourse on terrorism as a continuation of globalism discourse, but the brevity of the chapters does not allow for a more detailed analysis of this relation. What is however not called into question, are the material conditions of language in relation to globalisation. Instead it seems that FAIRCLOUGH takes the semiotic ability of language and its workings in the construction of discourse too much for granted, which leads him to apply his version of critical discourse analysis to a new type of discourse with the minor changes discussed. [26]

5.2 Language in society under the conditions of globalisation

In BLOMMAERT's approach, it is not the globalisation discourse that is the object of research, but globalisation is examined in its implications for language use. In other words, the focus of research is language as a social practice and how it changes under the changing social conditions of globalisation. The author approaches this language use on the micro-level through the analysis of linguistic repertoires and on the macro-level through the analysis of language ideologies. The attention BLOMMAERT gives to the specificities of different language use on a micro-level is probably due to his grounding in American linguistic anthropology and sociolinguistics and leads to a stronger focus on the different linguistic repertoires that regulate people's access to certain ways of signifying depending on their subject position and the specific context of utterance. This focus on people's access to linguistics repertoires as well as their respective currency in different contexts emphasises the relation of language practices to social inequality that is crucial to BLOMMAERT's analysis. [27]

5.3 Geographical mappings and representation of languages

Finally, the books clearly have different geographic foci partly due to the researchers' own fields of expertise. While FAIRCLOUGH includes examples from the USA, Asia, Western Europe and two more recent entry countries to the EU (Romania and Hungary), BLOMMAERT focuses on examples from Africa and Western Europe. Both books, however, have few examples in languages other than English. FAIRCLOUGH uses one short text in Romanian to illustrate the use of globalised English words such as *outsourcing* and *competition*. All other examples were either produced in English or have been reproduced directly in translation without display of the original and without mentioning that a translation has probably taken place (cf. the data in Chapter 6). BLOMMAERT uses the documents produced in the asylum procedure with the written parts in Swahili with some vernacular French and English added (cf. p.117). He specifically discusses the problem of translating these documents into Dutch (p.107) as requested by the officials and also discusses the interplay of the different languages reproducing the examples in the original and giving an English translation in an appendix (pp.246-250). There is another example of a series of documents written in Dutch and translated by BLOMMAERT into English, as the author remarks in a footnote (p.176, 244). They are used in the chapter on *Ideology* to illustrate his claim that we should understand ideologies not as single, coherent positions, but rather as a combination of different ideological elements. Apparently, the author does not feel the need here to discuss the translation of the data. All other examples in BLOMMAERT's book are English-language examples, even if they represent a more diverse range of language use. These language practices surely have a direct relation to the topic of language and globalisation in that they give a glimpse at the conditions of production and circulation of academic research in the era of globalisation where the integration of foreign-language material, particularly in text books, is a liability for the marketing of an academic book. [28]

6. Conclusion

Both books discussed in this review are timely interventions in framing research questions pertaining to the field of language and globalisation. FAIRCLOUGH's book offers a macro-analysis with a particular focus on political-economic conditions of globalisation, and particularly the display of a range of future research possibilities will be interesting to its readers. As a minus, one can't fail to mention that it seems written in haste, maybe to bring the book out on a fast-lived market. BLOMMAERT's introduction to discourse on the other hand offers researchers from other areas of social research the particular view from language studies on topics (not least globalisation) that are central to their work as well, while it succeeds in forging the author's work of the past few years into a thought-provoking framework for language studies as social research. [29]

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