

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### 2.0 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the literature that informs the research and that has implications for the findings. It is divided into six main sections where the literature surrounding critical discourse analysis, opinion editorials, ideology, language used in editorials, as well as power and social relations are considered.

First of all, literature **on critical discourse analysis (CDA) in general** is discussed. This is to provide information on the approach of CDA in analyzing discourse genres which is important in this research. Next, overview of the opinion editorials as a discourse is provided. This allows a clearer understanding of this particular genre in responding to the first research question, i.e., *How do the editorials published by the New Straits Times construct the discursive field of teaching of mathematics and science in English*. Following this, is the discussion on **opinion and ideology in opinion editorials**, which is particularly relevant in answering the same research question. In order to answer the second research question, i.e., *How do the various moments of interdiscursivity (i.e pedagogic, political, and perception of national interest) intersect with the discursive field of teaching of mathematics and science in English?*, the literature on **power and social relations in discourse** would be relevant and useful, as it is related to opinion and ideology. Once the discourse of the opinion editorials is made clear, it is appropriate to discuss the literature on **language of opinion editorials** for a better understanding on how language is manipulated in this discourse genre. Last but not least, the

literature on **carrying out critical discourse analysis** would be most useful to guide the researcher on how to carry out the analysis for this research.

The main aim of this research is to show how power in a social institution affects a discourse in the construction of the discursive field of a sensitive issue which is the policy of teaching mathematics and science in English. To fulfill the aim, opinion editorials published in the *News Straits Times*, an English daily are made the centre of discussion.

The editorials from this English daily are analyzed using the framework of critical discourse analysis specifically the Dialectical Relational Approach of Fairclough's (2009). The need to have a systematic analysis of editorials is to allow an indirect view of the ideological frameworks that support the definitions and explanations of the ethnic situation expressed in the editorial, since editorials express or indirectly signal the underlying models and attitudes of the editor(s) (van Dijk, 1989).

## **2.1 Critical Discourse Analysis In General**

Critical discourse analysis or CDA (language use in speech and writing) is seen as a form of social practice and describing discourse as social practice implies a dialectical relationship between a particular discursive event and the situation(s), institution(s) and social structure(s), which frame it (Fairclough and Wodak 1997). For this particular research, the type of discourse analyzed, is the discourse of opinion editorials. Here, opinion editorials are treated as a specific genre within the register of media discourse (O' Halloran 2007). The discursive event under investigation is the policy of teaching mathematics and science in Malaysian schools. This event is seen to be shaped by the writers of the opinion editorials in the institution they are representing (NST). Hence the dialectical relationship would be between the issue discussed and the people who write about it.

Titscher *et al* (2000), using the work of Wodak (1996), summarises the general principles of CDA as follows:

- CDA is concerned with social problems. It is not concerned with language or language use *per se*, but with the linguistic character of social and cultural processes and structures.
- Power-relations have to do with discourse, and CDA studies both power in discourse and power over discourse.
- Society and culture are dialectically related to discourse: society and culture are shaped by discourse, and at the same time constitute discourse. Every single instance of language use reproduces or transforms society and culture, including power relations.
- Language use may be ideological. To determine this it is necessary to analyse texts to investigate their interpretation, reception and social effects.
- Discourses are historical and can only be understood in relation to their context. At a metatheoretical level this corresponds to the approach of Wittgenstein, according to which the meaning of an utterance rests in its usage in a specific situation.
- Discourse analysis is interpretative and explanatory. Critical analysis implies a systematic methodology and a relationship between the text and its social conditions, ideologies and power-relations. (Wodak, 1996: 17-20, cited in Titscher *et al*, 2000: 146)

In seeking to accomplish these goals, CDA investigates, and aims at illustrating, “a relationship between the text and its social conditions, ideologies and power-relations” (Wodak, 1996: 17-20, cited in Titscher *et al*, 2000: 146).

Critical discourse analysis has made the study of language into an interdisciplinary practice which can be exercised by scholars with various backgrounds, including media - it offers the opportunity to adopt a social perspective in the cross-cultural study of media texts (Dellinger, 1995). As Kress (1990) points out, CDA has an overtly political agenda, which serves to set CDA from other kinds of discourse analysis and text linguistics, as well as pragmatics and sociolinguistics. He claims that most forms of discourse analysis aim to provide a better understanding of socio-cultural aspects of texts, but CDA on the other hand, aims to provide accounts of the production, internal structure, and overall organization of texts. One fundamental difference in CDA according to Kress is that CDA aims to provide a critical dimension in its theoretical and descriptive accounts of texts.

The characteristic of CDA is that, it treats language used in a discourse as a type of social practice because texts are produced by "socially situated speakers and writers" whereby as users of language these individuals bring with them different dispositions toward language, which are closely related to social positions (Kress, 1990).

In addition to language structure, ideology also has a role to play in CDA. Kress (1990) stresses that any linguistic form considered in isolation holds no meaning nor does it possess any ideological significance or function and that it always appears as the representative of a system of linguistic terms, which themselves realize discursive and ideological systems.

## 2.2 Opinion Editorials as a Discourse

Opinions may be expressed by language users in many types of discourse, for example in everyday conversations, argumentations and any other discourse in which (dis)agreement is expressed or persuasion is enacted (Antaki, 1994; Billig, 1987; Pomerantz, 1984; van Eemeren, et al., 1987; Wegman, 1994). Every discourse types on the other hand, have their own typical functions among which, is for the purpose of expressing or functioning as persuasive communication, which are expressed in diverse genres such as letters to the editor, complaint letters, political party propaganda, racist pamphlets, and so on (Van Dijk, 1996).

In this section, the literature on opinion editorials as a form of discourse genre (O' Halloran 2007) is discussed. This is vital, as the research needs to inform about what this genre is as a discourse and what the anticipated contents are.

First and foremost, The editorial opinion column in newspapers has been described as a type of “journalistic essay” (Stonecipher 1979:40) where the reader will find the newspaper’s opinions and attitudes on what it considers to be an important topic of the day (Bell 1991, Hodgson 1992, Oktar 2001, Reah 2002, Stonecipher1979). On the other hand, van Dijk (2002: 4) defines editorials as “personal opinion texts about recent events”.

The physical attribute of the editorial has that, it is made distinctive by the textual layout as the column is usually printed in a larger font and enclosed inside panels so that it stands out from the rest of the stories on the page (Fowler 1991, Hodgson 1992, Nel 1994, Seymour-Ure 1998). This is seen by Fowler (1991:208) to have “an important symbolic function” indicating that the opinion section of the newspaper is, in contrast to other news stories, not merely fact. This is the space where the editor gets the opportunity to disseminate the ideology held by the

newspaper, although it is not stated explicitly (Richardson, 2010). It is usually located in the same position every day, clearly identified from other sections of the newspaper (Fowler 1991, Nel 1998, Van Dijk 1996a).

The opinion editorial is a type of opinion discourse which is aimed at making the readers accept new opinions where there are no existing predispositions to be changed (Oskamp, 2005).

They play a role in the formation and change of public opinion, in setting the political agenda, and in influencing social debate, decision making and other forms of social and political action, which means that the producers of discourse formulate presupposed knowledge carefully so that it is taken as commonsense (Fairclough 2001). Although the editorial is considered to be the personal opinion of the writer, these opinions or beliefs, as well as presupposed knowledge, are often, however, based on social opinions. These socially shared beliefs or opinions of a group become shared knowledge (van Dijk 1998) in the form of opinions or mental representation (Farr & Moscovici, 1984; Breakwell & Canter, 1993).

As van Dijk (1996) opined, opinion editorial as a discourse, is generally institutional as it expresses the opinion of 'the' newspaper; hence, it is not personal. This is because the opinions may generally be shared among several editors, or between editors and management, or between editors and other social groups they belong to. Therefore, the editor feels that it is important to realize that whatever specific opinions about specific events are being formulated, they will tend to be derived from social representations, rather than from the personal experiences or opinions of an editor. But how does an editor or sub-editors reflect on various issues in the editorial when they write the piece with their name on? It is unlike the editorial proper that directly establishes the views by the media house. Can we say that they are not part of the institution anymore? In

the existing literature on opinion editorials there is a huge dearth in theorizing this variety of opinion editorial.

Even though the opinion editorials bear the name of the writers, the opinions presented are still bound by the ideology the newspaper upholds as the newspaper works as a whole (Fairclough 2001). This means that, the opinions are not subjected to the personal views of the editors, even though they may be tinged with the editors' beliefs.

The purpose of the editorial (opinion editorial included) is also often to stimulate readers into action, but it is implicitly expressed (Stonecipher 1979). The other function of the editorial is "as an article in the newspaper that gives the opinion of the editor or publisher on a topic or item of news" (Sinclair 1995). In doing so, editorial writers cannot be 'bold' because the newspaper must not appear to be forcing its opinion on the reader (Rystrom 1983). van Dijk (1996a) says that the most significant feature of the opinion discourse is that the opinions are expressed as a series of arguments as some scholars prefer to reduce opinions to their manifestations of beliefs in text or talk.

### **2.3 Opinion Editorial Writers and the Readers**

The editorial in a newspaper, including opinion editorials (op-eds) has a very important and powerful role in shaping public opinion (van Dijk 1996). This is because these editorial writers, who can be occasional writers to the newspaper, regular named writers (syndicated and staff) and also nameless editorial writers (Rosenfeld 2000), decide what events and issues are important and how they should be interpreted (Le 2002). This is due to a few reasons as lined up by Rosenfeld (2000). First and foremost, it is the fact that newspapers are someone's

carefully tended private property. The other reason is the role played by mass-media editors as custodians and mediators of the broader popular culture and political culture alike.

While it is important to understand the genre of opinion editorials, it is equally important to know the opinion writers' background; since they establish a specific relation with readers as they write their pieces. This background includes, mostly, how his or her public image is established among the readers. In journalism, names are news since the newspapers play a double role – one role is to provide information and the other is to capture readers. Hence, editorial writers can be leaders of the country as well as 'power figures' who provide write ups on salient issues (Rosenfield, 2000).

The analysis of the selected editorials needs to take into consideration all the possible contextual factors that could influence the ideological viewpoint of the writer. This viewpoint is ultimately reflected in the editorial as they are hardly *hidden* as Fairclough (1995, 2001) opined; besides the writings may obviously influence the opinions of the reader.

By writing an opinion editorial the author establishes a relation with the readers. Given the exposure that the members of the global village receive today, the readers can be very 'active' and study the editorial to make sense how the piece theorizes their understanding of the phenomenon under discussion. For that reason, the editorial writers must be aware that they may have to address a reader who is highly educated and well informed as well as a reader who may not be. They must also be aware that some readers may have great interest in the messages relayed. For example, with regards to this research, the opinion regarding the education policy of teaching mathematics and science in English, some readers will pay little attention to the editorial's opinions while the others may not. Most probably, readers who have a stake in the



issue of *Bahasa Malaysia* over the English language; besides, the ones who are affected by the policy will pay more attention to the editorial discussing the issue, whereas those who are indifferent about how the education system in Malaysia should be, will pay less attention or none at all.

## **2.4 Opinion and Ideology in Opinion editorials**

This section discusses the concepts of *opinion* and *ideology* and how they relate to *discourse*, specifically to *media discourse*.

### **2.4.1 Opinion**

Discourse, as a communication tool, is considered one of the most important means of expressing opinions and ideologies. The editorial as a genre is considered a type of opinion discourse (van Dijk 1996a). An understanding of *opinion* and what function it serves is important, because it is “by way of” opinions that the relation between ideology and discourse can be understood (van Dijk 1996b:8). van Dijk (1996a&b) believes that an analysis of opinion must incorporate relating society, discourse and cognition. He explains that opinions are located in our minds and are a type of *belief*. He maintains that beliefs or evaluative opinions must be clearly distinguished from knowledge in order to understand the workings of ideology properly (Oskamp 2005, van Dijk 1998 & 2002). van Dijk (1996a&b) explains that opinions are usually regarded as subjective evaluations by which someone thinks as something to be true yet might be regarded as false by someone else.

The fine line between opinions and knowledge is that “the meaning of an *opinion* is dependent upon the opinions which it is countering” (Billig 1991:17). Thus, opinion discourse is considered argumentative because recipients expect opinions to be defended and made plausible

(van Dijk 1996a & b). According to Sornig (1989), persuasive communication requires a change in the style of language (whether lexical choice, syntactic or discursal arrangement etc) used in order to encourage behavioural and opinion change in the recipients. He also points out that it is how things are said to persuade an audience rather than the truth-value of what is said that is important in persuasive communication.

As indicated by van Dijk (1996a & b), opinions can be recognized by the specific grammatical, lexical and stylistic choices, for example opinion markers such as “my opinion is”, or “according to me”. These choices for expressing opinion are regarded as attitudes used “for negotiating our social relationships, by telling our listeners or readers how we feel about things and people (in a word, what our attitudes are)” (Martin & Rose 2003:22). Both Sornig (1989) and van Dijk (1996a&b) agree that opinions are linked closely with emotions and expressing one’s opinion may well be accompanied by strong emotional language.

The editorial as a type of opinion discourse thus aims to persuade the reader to accept new opinions as according to Oskamp (2005) “mass communication is particularly likely to be effective in creating opinions and attitudes on new issues where there are no existing predispositions to be changed”. Along with the opinions, there is also factual knowledge, that is, “presupposed knowledge we have called public knowledge about specific events” and readers need to be familiar with this knowledge in order to understand the text ( van Dijk 2002:4).

Opinions or beliefs, as well as presupposed knowledge, are often, based on social opinions even though the editorial is considered to be the personal opinion of the writer. These socially shared beliefs or opinions of a group become shared knowledge when they are no longer contested (van Dijk 1998).

With regards to the discussion on education policy of teaching mathematics and science in English in the editorials, understanding the concept of opinion and ideology is important. The next section will examine the concept of ideology. By doing so, the two vital concepts in the editorials (opinion and ideology) will be contrasted.

#### **2.4.2 Ideology**

The concept of opinion, is viewed by many including van Dijk (1996b), to be a feature of ideology. By studying the ideologies in editorials the strategies used to legitimate the beliefs of the dominant group can be exposed (Thompson, 1990:60). He identifies five modes each with their own strategies used in discourse to promote ideology, These five modes are *legitimation; dissimulation; unification; fragmentation; and reification*. It is only by exposing the ideologies hidden in texts that readers can be empowered to challenge existing power relations in society. Thompson (1990) sees the study of ideology as a study of ways in which meaning is constructed and conveyed by symbolic forms of various kinds. Researchers studying ideology at the same time, have to bear in mind the variety of theories and theorists that have examined the relation between thought and social reality as all the theories assume that “there are specific historical reasons why people come to feel, reason, desire and imagine as they do” (Wodak and Weiss 2003: 14).

The notion of ideology is introduced as the basis of evaluative social representations and defined as a fairly abstract system of evaluative beliefs, typically shared by a social group, that underlies the attitudes of a group (van Dijk, 1995a). Ideologies are said to be commonly assumed to represent, socially, the major *interests* of a group (Abercrombie, Hill & Turner, 1980, 1990).

The most prominent view of ideology has its roots with Marx and Engels (1879) whose conception links ideology to power, dominance and class conflict. Marx and Engels wanted to understand how minority groups could maintain power and why the majority of people accepted a system that appeared to be in contrast to their own interests (Grossberg et al. 1998). Their theory views ideology as “false consciousness” whereby individuals in society are presented with an illusory view of reality, presented as common sense so that systems of power can be maintained (Billig 1991:4 see also Eagleton 1991, Larrain 1979, Plamenatz 1970, Therborn 1980, van Dijk 1998). Marx and Engels’ theory is intended to expose this illusion and bring down the ruling class.

Gramsci, conceived of the concept of “hegemony”, which is defined by Abercrombie (1980:115) as “an order in which a certain way of life and thought is dominant, in which one concept of reality is diffused throughout society”. In contrast to Marx, Gramsci’s theory means that instead of seeing the ruling class as imposing its ideologies on the masses through *coercion*, this control is subtly exercised through *consent* by using strategies like persuasion that control the mind (Abercrombie et al. 1980:12, van Dijk 1998).

Althusser (2008) sees ideology as functioning to mould individuals into the role of subject “while at the same time concealing from them their role as agents of the structure”.

Althusser also rejects the Marxist idea that only one class is responsible for the ideological control in a society. He explains that institutions like the mass media, also play a role. According to Althusser (2008) mass media is one of the ideological state apparatuses that indoctrinates the mass into the ruling ideology.

Durkheim (1986), on the other hand, writing from a non-Marxist approach relates

religion with ideology whereby religions, like other institutions including the media, contain rules as to how to think and behave which ultimately become common sense and suppress people into obedience (Abercrombie et al. 1980). In other words, Durkheim sees compliance of the working class people as a result to more of the routine and practice of established rules, like those in religion, than any consent or coercion into a dominant ideology. Ideology is also seen by Durkheim to become important in times of crisis where ideologies that are usually not contested are the focus of debate and reflection

Foucault (1978), whose theory specifically relates to discourse and ideology, believes that it is through discourse that power is enacted in society, and in contrast to Marxist theorists, “who see the media as pawns in the hands of the powerful, Foucault argues that in all spheres of influence in a society a jockeying for power takes place between different discourses” (Macdonald 1995:46). In other words, he believes that ideological power does not only lie with the elite but with all members of society. Hence, it might be possible for the civil society to exert power in dictating the ruling elites. Foucault believes that it is through discourse, like the media, that new ideologies are constructed and contested over in producing our view and way of life (Macdonald 1995).

Taking into consideration opinions found in editorials, according to van Dijk (1996a), they often express ideologies that play an important role “*in the formation and change of public opinion, in setting the political agenda, and influencing social debate, decision making and other forms of social and political action*”. This definition is useful as it directly links the opinions in editorials to their role in changing and sustaining existing ideologies.

Lastly, on ideology, Fairclough's (1995a) focusing specifically on how media discourse represents the world, individuals and groups of people in a particular way asserts that;

The ideological work of media language includes particular ways of representing the world (e.g. particular representations of Arabs, or of the economy), particular constructions of social identities (e.g. the construction in particular ways of scientific experts who feature on radio or television programmes), and particular constructions of social relations (e.g. the construction of relations between politicians and public as simulated relations between people in a shared lifeworld) Fairclough's (1995a: 12).

The discussion on the role of ideology in discourse, particularly media discourse, is necessary to this research. Fairclough (2009) explains the reason why discourse, in particular media discourse, plays such an important role in the reproduction of ideologies. He believes that ideology is most effective in sustaining those in dominant positions, if it is hidden or seen as commonsense. The reason for this is because if one becomes aware that a particular aspect of commonsense is sustaining power inequalities at one's own expense, it ceases to *be* commonsense, and may cease to have the capacity to sustain power inequalities, i.e. to function ideologically" Fairclough (2009:70). In discourse this commonsense is achieved by presenting ideologies as background assumptions or presupposed knowledge and not explicitly foregrounding them as new information.

With ideology, comes power. In the next few sections, power in ideology will be discussed and elaborated since this is the integral part of the research.

## **2.5 Newspaper Ownership**

Most newspapers are under corporate ownerships. Media seems to be under control of large institutions partly because these corporate bodies operate as global market in which smaller

companies are taken over or put out of business by competition (Burton, 2002). Example given by Reah (2002) is the newspaper business in Britain, whereby he pointed out that Britain newspapers have come under fewer and fewer groups. In 1965 there were 11 owning companies who owned 19 national titles. In 1995 there were only 7 companies who owned 21 newspaper titles. This shift in concentration of newspaper into fewer hands of larger corporations, according to Reah, will have a result on press freedom. This will lead to the fact that, fewer institutions will therefore hold ideological dominance over the newspaper audience (Burton 2002).

Control over the media is always connected with power and there is a constant struggle amongst such “media mongers”. This is because, these powerful owners want to obtain positions of power and domination that far exceed their opponents so as to have the greatest influence in society rather than seeking economic gain (Sorlin 1994:110). These newspaper owners are seen to “have the power to influence the content of the newspaper, its political stance and its editorial perspective” (Reah 2002:8, Fowler 1991). An example given by Burton (2002:78) is what the owner of *The Daily Telegraph* has to say about the power he possesses in controlling the content of his newspaper, “What is the point in running a newspaper if you have absolutely no say?”.

With regards to this study, the newspaper used for data collection (*News Straits Times*) is Malaysia's oldest newspaper still in print. It was founded as *The Straits Times* in 1845, and was reestablished as the *New Straits Times* in 1965 which at that time was Malaysia's only broadsheet format English language newspaper. On January 31, 1973, *The New Straits Times Press (Malaysia) Berhad* (NSTP) was converted into a public company ([www.nstp.com.my/Corporate/nstp/aboutus/aboutHstory.htm](http://www.nstp.com.my/Corporate/nstp/aboutus/aboutHstory.htm)).

Today, *New Straits Times* is part of Media Prima group of companies which is owned by the dominant political party, UMNO. Media Prima Berhad (Media Prima), a company listed on the Main Board of Bursa Malaysia, is Malaysia's leading integrated media investment group. It currently owns 100% equity interest in Malaysian broadcasting (TV3, 8TV, ntv7 and TV9) apart from three radio networks (Fly FM, Hot FM and One FM). In addition, Media Prima now owns 89.6% equity interest in The New Straits Times Press (Malaysia) (NSTP) Berhad, one of Malaysia's largest publishing groups ([www.mediaprima.com.my](http://www.mediaprima.com.my)).

Currently, Umno owns 43% in NSTP through its investment arm Media Prima Bhd. The ruling party also controls all private free to air TV stations, namely, TV3, Ntv7, 8TV and Channel 9 through Media Prima. This ownership has led the newspaper and its sister publications and TV channels to operate as representatives for the government ([thestar.com.my/new/story.asp?file=/2007/1/9/nation/](http://thestar.com.my/new/story.asp?file=/2007/1/9/nation/)).

## **2.6 Power and Social Relations in Discourse**

In relation to power and social relations, Fairclough (2009:43-68) argues that there is “power *behind* discourse” and “power *in* discourse”. The power *behind* discourse is defined as to be related to those who have control over (re) production of discourse types and who are able to control access to discourse (i.e powerful institutions, such as government or the press, are able to control access to discourse ; like the editorial) and what types of discourse are produced. Power *in* discourse, on the other hand is defined as to be related to how those in dominant positions in society can constrain the discourse types in their interest in order to maintain power. The example given is, the newspaper owner and the editorial writer have this power to control what the reader is exposed to. Those who hold dominant positions constantly are seen to have to reassert their position of power because those who are not in power may attempt to seize power. Fairclough sees this as the social struggle that is found in discourse.



Chomsky (1989:8), in relations to power and social relations points out that “furthermore”, those who occupy managerial positions in the media or gain status within them as commentators, belong to the same privileged elites, and might be expected to share the perceptions, aspirations, and attitudes of their associates, reflecting their own class interests as well”. Therefore, the media, according to Chomsky (1989), will naturally reflect the ideological interests and perspectives of those in powerful positions, i.e. the elite.

Power, according to van Dijk (1995) is directly exercised and expressed through differential access to various genres, contents, and styles of discourse and could be analyzed more systematically in terms of the forms of (re)production of discourse, namely, those of material production, articulation, distribution, and influence. On the other hand, mass media organizations and their corporate owners are seen to control both the financial and the technological production conditions of discourse, for instance those of the newspaper, television, printing business, as well as the telecommunication and computer industries (Becker, Hedebro,& Paldán, 1986; Mattelart, 1979; Schiller, 1973).

Titscher *et al* (2000: 151) suggest that when tackling CDA, “Questions of power are of central interest” since “power and ideologies may have an effect on each of the contextual levels” of production, consumption and understanding of discourse.

Exercising power is also associated with hegemony. Hegemony may be described as the process in which a ruling class persuades all other classes to accept its rule and their subordination (Gramsci, 1971/ 2007). Put in another way, hegemony meant leadership rather than domination” (Cox, 2004: 311). A successful hegemony means getting the subordinate classes consent to the leadership of the ruling class and the dominance of their institutions and values. When successful, the ruling class can implant its values with the minimum of force since

the ruled agree to the power and political legitimacy of the rulers (Gramsci, 2007).

A hegemonic ruling class is achieved: first, by the ruling class taking into consideration “the interests and tendencies of the groups over which hegemony is to be exercised” and second, any concessions to public demands should be publicized in order to ‘demonstrate’ the ruling class’ probity and hence their moral and political leadership and lastly, third, hegemony is maintained by the ruling class teaching their ideas and their values in the general public, particularly their central claim to political legitimacy (Gramsci, 2007: 161).

The work of mainstream journalists mediates the relationship between ruling class ideology and news content (Murdock, 1984) and supports the hegemony by naturalising, or taking for granted, the inequalities of contemporary capitalism (Gitlin, 1979). In short, the current practices of journalism play an essential role in maintaining the class authority within the political system.

On power relations Fairclough (2003) defines power as the ‘producers’ exercising power over consumers in that they have sole-producing rights and can therefore determine what is included and excluded, how events are represented and even the subject positions of their audiences. The ‘producers’ according to him is perhaps the journalist (who is well known to be working under editorial control) or it could be the newspaper itself.

Fairclough’s (2003) study on the British media reveals that the balance sources and perspectives and ideology are overwhelmingly in favour of existing power-holders. He sees the media power relations as relations of a *mediated* sort between power-holders and the mass of the population whereby the mediated relations of power include the most fundamental relations which is the class relations. Fairclough (2003) sees media to be operating as means for the

expression and reproduction of the power of the dominant class which is described as a *hidden* power, since the power is implicit in the practices of the media rather than being explicit.

## **2.7 Language of Opinion Editorials**

To understand opinion editorials as a discourse, it is also important to understand how the editorials are written because the analysis of the selected editorials in Chapter 4 needs to take into consideration all the possible linguistic manifestations of contextual factors that could influence the ideological viewpoint of the writer reflected in the editorial written.

Language is both a medium for communication and a social practice among other practices (Chouliaraki & Fairclough 1999) that construct reality. The social practice of language includes editorials as a specific 'moment' (Laclau 1990, Lihua 2009) that contributes in constructing reality in a specific way often by shaping opinions and disseminating ideologies.

The writers of opinion editorials as language users, not only construct models of events they talk *about*, but also of the communicative events in which they participate (Van Dijk, 1996a). This would imply that people do not 'have' opinions before they start talking about them, and that opinions only are context-bound and constructed as part of discourse itself (Billig, 1991; Harre & Stearns, 1995; Potter & Wetherell, 1987, 1988). When people talk (the writers), they represent the knowledge and opinions they have about themselves and each other, in various communicative and social roles, as well as about the setting, circumstances, intentions, goals, purposes, and other properties of the context (which are also subjective) (Van Dijk, 1995).

Language used in the opinion editorials may reflect the writers' emotions, for example, when expressing ideological points of views in the form of arguments (van Dijk' 1996). Thus, when opinions are considered as mental representations this means that they are dealt with as

cognitive representations, but without excluding the role of emotions in their formation, change and use (Frijda, 1987; Ortony, Clore & Collins, 1988). The study of numerous argumentative fallacies has shown that powerful arguers may manipulate their audiences by making self-serving arguments more explicit and prominent, whereas other arguments may be left implicit (van Dijk 1999). Strategic argumentation as a major means of manipulating the minds of the recipients use specific lexical item, rhetorical devices, and so on (Kahane, 1971; Windisch, 1990; van Eemeren and Grootendorst, 1992). van Dijk (1992) referred to the analysis of the argumentation strategies of British press editorials on the ‘riots’ of 1985 to show how the racist ideologies of right-wing tabloid editors were revealed by their attribution of the violence to the criminal nature of young male Carribeans.

Rhetorical items are found to be aplenty in the editorials as specific ‘rhetorical structures of discourse’ like semantic ‘figures’ of metaphors, and semantic operations of rhetoric, such as hyperbole, understatement, and irony among others. These rhetorical devices may be effects of form of ideological control, having a closer relation to underlying models and social beliefs (van Dijk, 1999). The example given is, racist, sexist and other inegalitarian ideologies, may be expressed by derogating lexical items referring to minorities or women and also by humiliating metaphors that belittle, marginalize or dehumanize the ‘others’. Specific examples are like Nazi being associated to Jews, communists and other ethnic and social minorities with dirty animals (e.g., rats and cockroaches) (Ehlich, 1989). Examples taken from the British conservative press in 1995 (van Dijk, 1991a) :

- 1) Snoopers (*Daily Telegraph*, 1<sup>st</sup> August, Editorial)
- 2) Unscrupulous or feather-brained observers (*Daily Telegraph*, 30<sup>th</sup> September)
- 3) The multi-nonsense brigade (*Daily Telegraph*, 11 January)

4) Left-wing crackpots (*Sun*, 7 September)

5) Unleashing pack of Government snoopers (*Sun*, 16 October)

van Dijk (1999) shows elsewhere that both in graphical and phonological surface structures, as well as in syntactic and semantic structures, there are similar patterns and strategies of expression and management of 'mental models' in the editorials. Mental models are models constructed from perception, imagination, or the comprehension of discourse (Laird, 1983). It is also discovered by van Dijk (1999) that self-serving information is emphasized whereas, the converse is dis-preferred. Surface structure is discovered to underline important or prominent beliefs, whereas syntactic organization may express and convey the role of the organization.

The knowledge for analyzing the micro aspects of the language of opinion editorials is seen very essential as this would help in understanding the texts in its microcosm to carry out a critical discourse analysis on the editorial.

## **2.8 Carrying out Critical Discourse Analysis**

In this last part of the literature review the examination of ideas surrounding ways of carrying out CDA is examined.

Language, never appears by itself, instead, it always appears as the representative of a system of linguistic terms, which themselves realize discursive and ideological systems (Kress, 1996). To give an analogy, the text is like an iceberg of information, and it is really only the tip which is actually expressed in words and sentences. The rest is assumed to be supplied by the knowledge scripts and models of the media users, and therefore usually left unsaid (Dellinger, 1995).

For CDA, language is not powerful on its own – it gains power by the use powerful people make of it (Wodak, 1997). She said that this explains why CDA emphasizes the need for interdisciplinary work in order to gain a proper understanding of how language functions in constituting and transmitting knowledge, in organizing social institutions or in exercising power.

van Dijk (1995) stresses the need to carry out what he quotes as the analysis of the implicit since it is very useful in the study of underlying ideologies. This is because, to him ideological opinions are not always expressed in a very explicit way. He believes that they are very often implied, presupposed, hidden, denied or taken for granted therefore it is necessary to examine more systematically the *semantic* structure of the text for various forms of implications, indirectness or denial.

To van Dijk (1995) , there is no one standard way to do critical discourse analysis of editorials or other types of texts or talks. He lined up a few practical suggestions in carrying out a critical discourse analysis;

- a. Examine the context of the discourse
- b. Analyze which groups, power relations and conflicts are involved
- c. Look for positive and negative opinions
- d. Spell out the presupposed and the implied,
- e. Examine all formal structures that (de)emphasize polarized group opinions.
- f. Look for expressions in the text that refer to the interests or identity of the group the author belongs to.

Apart from the outline given, van Dijk (1995) says that it is important to have at least some knowledge of the ‘facts’ about the historical, political or social background of a conflict,

main participants, the grounds of the conflict and preceding positions and arguments because any serious ideological analysis is not possible without it.

## **2.9 Conclusion**

This chapter discussed literature on discourse analysis, which would expectantly equip this research with adequate tools to analyze the phenomenon under study. Previous literature shows how editorial discourse as a news-genre is an effect of power, ideology and the political economy of the media.