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Lacanian Discourse Analysis

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Abstract

Lacanian Discourse Analysis (LDA) is an approach to the analysis of language, text, and subjectivity in psychological research drawing on the psychoanalytic theory of Jacques Lacan. Emerging within critical discursive psychology in the early 2000s, LDA treats discourse not as the medium through which pre-formed subjects express meanings, but as the condition through which subjects are constituted, divided, and spoken. The approach is grounded in Lacan's account of the unconscious as structured like a language, his tripartite symbolic, imaginary, and real orders, his theory of the signifier and the split subject, and his theory of the four discourses—master, university, hysteric, and analyst—alongside the later capitalist discourse. LDA is anti-methodological in a procedural sense, refusing fixed coding grids in favor of conceptual coordinates configured for the singularity of each analysis. The entry outlines LDA's theoretical foundations, key elements, debates, and applications.

Keywords

Discourse analysis, Lacan, Signifier, Subject, Neoliberal capitalism, Jouissance, Unconscious, Critical psychology, Event Master signifier

Introduction

Lacanian Discourse Analysis (LDA) is one of the most theoretically demanding and philosophically unique approaches to discourse research available in contemporary psychology. It posits that there is

no such thing as an "outside" of the text and that the analyst should not attempt to generate meanings but instead to analyze the structural logic of a text. Within this, what is perhaps most important about a text is precisely what it cannot say: the gaps, contradictions, repetitions, and nonsensical remainders that expose the work of the unconscious in language and the real—or that which resists being pinned down by language—of the subject and of the Other.

LDA occupies a distinctive position within the landscape of discourse analysis in psychology. Discourse analysis encompasses conversation analysis, Foucauldian genealogy, discursive psychology (Potter & Wetherell, 1987), and critical discourse analysis. LDA emerges from within critical discursive psychology—a strand of British critical psychology that Parker (2002) positioned as an alternative to mainstream discursive psychology, one clearly ensconced in the structuralist tradition and oriented toward the analysis of power, ideology, and subjectivity. From within this critical discursive context, LDA radicalizes the project by insisting that the subject of discourse is not a coherent social actor managing linguistic resources, but divided, desiring, and unconsciously determined. LDA is not a technique for identifying rhetorical strategies or subject positions, but a framework for attending to what discourse cannot say, what it fails to close off, what slips through.

The approach takes its theoretical substance from the work of Jacques Lacan (1901–1981), whose "return to Freud" through structural linguistics transformed psychoanalysis into a theory of the subject, language, and social reality. The systematic application of Lacanian theory to discourse analysis crystallized most clearly in Ian Parker's 2005 article "Lacanian Discourse Analysis in Psychology: Seven Theoretical Elements." Subsequent work by David Pavón-Cuéllar (2010), Calum Neill (2013), and the edited collection "Lacan, Discourse, Event" (Parker & Pavón-Cuéllar, 2014) extended the approach. Within these works, an important feature of LDA is that it refuses to supply a tidy procedure for reading texts.

Background and Context

The broader field of discourse analysis from which LDA emerged has its roots in the field of linguistics in the 1950s, although it quickly differentiated itself from linguistics. Whereas linguistics is solely concerned with the system of language, one which can be demonstrated through specific manifestations of discourse, discourse analysis studies discursive manifestations insofar as they are inherently intertwined with human activity and are thus contextually and socially bound. Linguist Zellig Harris (1981) first coined the term "discourse analysis" to delineate the analysis of elements in a text in relation to others with an eye towards "learn[ing] not only *what* the text says," but also "*how* it says it" (p. 107). It is in this way that the researcher can "discover something of the structure of the text" (p. 107). Discourse analysis, then, examines segments of talk, text, or other communicative acts (e.g., interviews, policy documents, media, online posts) as they are embedded in social, cultural, historical, and political contexts. It asks what language is doing (e.g., legitimizing authority, constructing a "problem," positioning subjects) rather than only how it can be meaningfully interpreted. In the present day, discourse analysis as a wider field is not only heterogeneous but also interdisciplinary: it is practiced not only within psychology but also more broadly within the social sciences.

The field of discourse analysis can be divided into two broad categories: first, those that are influenced by French structuralism, which positions them within socio-cultural, historical, or

ideological discursive structures which go beyond and are determinative of the discourse being analyzed; second, the more Anglo-Saxon perspective within psychology which seeks to clearly define a specific discourse analyzed as if from outside of it, and in a purportedly neutral and objective fashion. The latter approach includes, for instance, Derek Edwards and Jonathan Potter's (1992) discursive psychology which treats psychological phenomena (like memories, attitudes, attributions) as things people *do* in discourse rather than as inner mental states; Michael Billig's (1987) rhetorical psychology is also within this tradition because it uses discourse-analytic tools to foreground argumentation and ideology, analyzing how rhetorical devices (e.g., dilemmas, disclaimers, concessions) are employed to justify positions and manage accountability, including in domains like politics. LDA, on the other hand, hearkens from the French structuralist perspective insofar as it holds that there is no "outside" of discourse and is concerned with how the subject is an effect of discourse but yet possesses a certain kind of agency.

From the structuralist position there emerged Foucauldian discourse analysis (Foucault, 1969/2002) which traces the discursive practices that produce power and generate historically situated, institutionally anchored forms of knowledge; discourse theory, which examines social and institutional phenomena as politically constructed discourses, marked by ideology (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985); deconstruction (Derrida, 1967/1997), which attends to the internal differences of a discursive formation, exposing its contradictions, gaps, and silences and thereby destabilizing binaries and notions of fixed meaning and exposing aporias; and Marxist approaches such as those of Michel Pêcheux and Louis Althusser (Pêcheux, 1969, 1975/1983; Althusser, 1970/2008) which study how ideology exists in communication and how it interpellates individuals, effectively manufacturing their identity and behavior. Parker and Pavón-Cuéllar (2014) identified that, long before the LDA movement began, we might see the first Lacanian discourse analyst as Michel Pêcheux (1969), whose Marxist-structuralist approach to the discursive mechanism of ideology was deeply influenced by Lacanian conceptions of the signifier and the unconscious. The last major approach within the French structuralist tradition of discourse analysis is critical discourse analysis. It focuses on how discursive and non-discursive domains interact, how social relations become discursively institutionalized, and how discourse as a social practice challenges or reproduces existing power relations (Fairclough, 1995).

It is from the broader position of "critical discursive psychology," as described by Parker in his 2002 book, that Lacanian Discourse Analysis emerged. LDA inherits critical discursive psychology's concern with power, ideology, and the constitution of subjects, while introducing a psychoanalytic account of the split subject, the unconscious, discourse, and the real. LDA, then, by virtue of positing a subject and a structural system which is constitutively lacking, adds something distinctive to a mode of inquiry, that is, discourse analysis, which is focused less on the meaning of what is said than on *how* something is articulated with an ear towards the structure of a text.

Lacan's Theory of Language and the Subject

Lacanian psychoanalysis is poised to contribute to discourse analysis insofar as its central feature is the indelible bond between the subject and the order of language, and between the subject and the Other. In Lacanian psychoanalysis, there is no such thing as a purely intrapsychic event, much less an experience of the body which is divorced from the social world. Lacan's various formulations such as "Man's desire is the desire of the Other" (Lacan, 1998a/1973, p. 235), "the unconscious is

structured like a language" (Lacan, 2006b, p. 418), or Lacan's reference to Rimbaud's "I is an other" (2006a) demonstrate how the subject is inextricably linked with and marked by the Other.

Three registers—the imaginary, the symbolic, and the real—structure Lacan's account of human experience and are analytically foundational for LDA. The imaginary is the register of meaning, similarity, and identification—of how the world *appears* to be from our own narcissistic perspective. The symbolic is the rule-governed network of differences that constitutes language and social life. The real is "the impossible" (Lacan, 2007, p. 123); it is that which resists symbolization but yet has effects. As Neill (2013) emphasizes, every text is constitutively incomplete, and it is in attending to what it cannot say that the analyst encounters the real.

The Signifier and the Barred Subject

Lacan defines the subject as a *barred* subject, divided by language and split into conscious and unconscious processes. The barred or split subject is not the subject as defined by Anglo-American psychology—an intentional agent or a subject which can be characterized through traits—but instead refers to a structural position. Lacan describes the subject as an effect of speech or an effect of the link between signifiers, and this situates it in the signifying chain rather than in conscious self-awareness. More simply put, to say that the subject is an effect of speech means that when someone speaks, it has a subjective effect on both the self and the other.

When S1, or a first signifier, forges a connection with S2 (S1→S2), in which we find Lacan's formula for a signifying act, what is produced is Lacan's definition of the signifier: "a signifier is what represents the subject to another signifier" (Lacan, 2006c/1960, pp. 693–694). When one signifier connects with another, a meaning is produced which always fails to fully represent the subject. When someone engages in a conscious speech act (S1→S2), their words fall short of the mark or they say things that they did not intend to say. As Lacan put it, "[t]he truth…can only be stated via a half-saying [*mi-dire*]" (Lacan, 2007, p. 103). This corresponds to a fundamental distinction between the enunciated and the enunciation—between *what* is said (the statement, the grammatical subject) and the act of saying itself (the enunciation, the subject in the real who disappears in the moment of speaking). The barred subject is constituted by language yet fundamentally alienated by it.

The unconscious is not hidden in a depth below consciousness but is located in this very gap—in the extimacy of language itself, what Lacan called "the discourse of the Other." The subject of the unconscious appears in slips of the tongue and other parapraxes, symptoms, dreams, negations, and in what is said beyond what the "I" or the ego intends. The subject of the unconscious, far from being completely determined by the social order, is a potential site of resistance. This is the case insofar as unconscious desire disrupts, for instance in bungled actions, one's conscious intention to adhere to social norms or obey ideological imperatives.

Lacan's Four Discourses

Although Lacan's understanding of the subject and the social through structural linguistics provides many ways of entering into or employing LDA, perhaps the most obviously ripe for application is Lacan's discourse theory. Throughout his oeuvre, Lacan makes use of mathemes or formulae representative of the structure of the subject in relation to the Other and the social world. Yet it is not until Seminar XVII, *The Other Side of Psychoanalysis* (2007/1991), that Lacan turns more explicitly to discourse. For Lacan, discourse unfolds when someone takes up a position in relation to another, but it does not necessarily rely upon speech acts or particular linguistic content. Discourse, as a formal system of relationships, is determinative of the effects that any particular speech act might have. For instance, if a teenager complains to their parent that they are bored, they will likely receive a very different sort of response (e.g., "Read a book" or "How could you be bored?") than if they speak of their boredom to their analyst (e.g., "You're bored?" as an invitation to explore their complaint).

In Seminar XVII (Lacan, 2007/1991), Lacan makes use of some of his earlier mathemes to depict four fundamental discourses demonstrative of different types of social bond: that of the master, the university, the hysteric, and the analyst. Each discourse figures a way of dealing with what Lacan calls the non-rapport of the sexual relationship (Lacan, 1998b/1975), which has to do with a central kernel of the impossible real being inherent to human relationships with others, with objects, and with the social world. On account of the real, the symbolic cannot fully represent, much less regulate human relationships; Lacan's dictum "there is no sexual relationship" means that there is no symbolic formula or complementary signifier in language that can write a harmonious, fully reciprocal relation between the sexes. Instead, discourse is what we must use to form bonds between people, even if discourse is not entirely within the symbolic; Livio Boni (2014) argues that the four discourses each describe an economy of jouissance in discourse. In relationships, people inevitably mis-encounter each other through fantasy, symptom, and partial objects. Sexuality is structurally marked by non-complementarity, asymmetry, and impossibility rather than natural fit. LDA, therefore, must take into account the nature of the non-rapport of human relationships.

Each of Lacan's four discourses has a common structure comprised of four fixed positions which are connected via a fixed set of directional arrows. The four elements in these four positions rotate in a fixed order when changing discourses. The first discourse, that of the master, begins with a signifying act (S1→S2) in which an agent (S1, which Lacan calls the "master signifier") addresses an other (S2) with a commandment or a proclamation of certainty. What this produces is represented under the bar (as in a mathematical equation depicting division) by object *a*: the remainder, the object-cause of desire and jouissance, and the element that escapes signification. The object *a* fails to provide the desired satisfaction and incites renewed attempts through the cycle of discourse to undo the effects of castration. On the bottom left side of the structure of discourse is the position of truth which is repressed yet motivates the inception of the discourse. In the discourse of the master, in which the agent addresses an other from a position of confidence, its hidden motivation, represented by the barred S, is the fact of one's split subjectivity—the fact that one does not know everything and that, owing to our unconscious and the structure of language, one does not even have control over one's own speech. The other three discourses, arrived at by one counter-clockwise turn of the four elements, also are underpinned by hidden truths: the university, with the S2 of knowledge in the position of agent, covers over that its knowledge rests upon hidden dogmas and assumptions (S1); the hysteric's discourse, with the agent of the barred subject (understood as someone who acknowledges their suffering), represses the object *a* in the form of the truth that all desire rests on a lack that cannot be alleviated; finally, the discourse of the analyst, in which the analyst plays the role

of the irritating object-cause of the analysand's desire to do the work of analysis, is the only discourse which does not believe itself to be the truth, resting as it does upon the bracketing of S2 as knowledge.

LDA based on the four discourses thus allows for a description of the structural underpinnings and assumptions of everyday interactions, political speech, university or organizational rhetoric, the processes and failures of psychotherapy, and so on. Within this, as Parker notes (2005), the four discourses are resources for reading subject positions, knowledge, and power; these discourses are one of the seven elements that, according to Parker, constitute the theoretical core of LDA. Neill (2013) offered one of the more practical of introductions to engaging in LDA, and he did so with the four discourses as analytic matrices, demonstrating how each of its four elements can be read in texts, with the real operating as the limit of any analysis. Valeria Tolis' (2023), "A Method for Change: Lacanian Discourse Analysis — A Glimpse into Climate Policy," is the most methodologically explicit application of the four discourses in an empirical policy domain. She maps EU energy efficiency discourse onto the university discourse, identifies the concealed master signifier (i.e., economic competitiveness), and locates sites where the hysterical challenge—the epistemic demand for a genuinely complex systems approach—can be detected but is structurally constrained.

Discourse of the Capitalist

A few years after the introduction of his discourse theory, Lacan developed the controversial fifth discourse (1972): the discourse of the capitalist. It is not accepted as canon by some Lacanian theorists on account of its subversion of the fixed structural formula of discourse (Vanheule, 2016). Lacan dubbed the capitalist discourse the contemporary substitute for the master's discourse in the wake of the decline of the authoritarian father figure and in the dawning of neoliberal capitalism. The agent in this discourse is the suffering split subject who, instead of turning to another, turns to the semblance of the lost object *a* (in the form of the S1) for the solution to their suffering, but this product, diagnosis, drug, or experience inevitably not only fails to solve the agent's suffering but also produces unsettling surplus jouissance that intensifies the original discontent. The ideology inherent to capitalism, in certain instances fueled by advertising, is what produces various touted solutions (S1), such as shelf organizers in lieu of being able to afford a bigger home, to the very suffering it creates. As a perversion of the master's discourse, although the figure of the master is hidden from the position of agent in the discourse of the capitalist, the master in the form of the structure of neoliberal capitalism is that which silently pulls the strings. In other words, in capitalistic society, we believe we have the freedom to order this or that product or to choose this or that lifestyle, but yet the system of capitalism, with its inherent inequalities, is inescapably powerful, being constitutive of our very selves.

Nestor Braunstein (2014) developed Lacan's capitalist discourse still further, and argued that there are three forms of the master that can differently structure the master's discourse: (a) the classic master with his counterpart, the slave; (b) the capitalist master who puts knowledge into play and has his partner in the proletarian; and (c) the impersonal master of the markets (of the "market discourse"), who acts through instrumental servomechanisms—that is, the instruments and prosthetic extensions through which human beings in every culture and epoch have extended their capacities—and whose counterpart is the subject foreclosed by science. The discourse of the

markets, Braunstein argues, works precisely through servomechanisms: it bribes subjects with a quota of pleasure, a *plus-de-jouir*, converting passivity into imaginary mastery over ever more prodigious technological apparatus. Braunstein argues that these modalities of the discourse of the master are successive and have emerged in three different historical periods, but today they coincide and subsist in one and the same epoch. The unconscious, however, cannot be fully absorbed into the order of the market. Those who do write about the capitalist discourse often view it as an important way to engage in socio-political analysis (Alemán, 2024; McGowan, 2016; Pavón-Cuéllar, 2010; Swales, 2022; Tomšič, 2015). Beyond theoretical writings that engage with political questions, however, there has been little concrete application of the discourse of the capitalist in LDA.

Seven Elements of LDA

LDA, as Parker articulates it, always begins with a concrete piece of textual material (e.g., an interview, a document, a policy text). Beyond this, it is worth noting that there are lots of ways within Lacanian theory to attend to discourse and thus many ways to engage in LDA. With this openness in mind, early on in the emergence of LDA as a method, Parker (2005) offered seven elements that constitute the theoretical core of LDA. These do not add up to a procedure to be applied mechanically but instead sensitizing concepts that orient the analyst toward features of text that other approaches tend to overlook.

The first of Parker's elements concerns the formal qualities of text. A Lacanian reading focuses on form over content—on the organization of signifiers as such, their patterns of recurrence, relationships of substitution and combination, and points of condensation and displacement. The second concerns the anchoring of representation. Lacan accounts for the provisional fixing of meaning through the concept of the *point de capiton* (quilting point)—master signifiers (S1) that anchor chains of knowledge (S2) retroactively, not prospectively. A master signifier produces an authoritative meaning which goes unquestioned. In the discourse-analytical context, terms like "security," "the market," "evidence-based practice," or even "empathy" (Swales, 2022) function as master signifiers whose authority is asserted through repetition rather than argument. The third element concerns agency and determination. The barred subject is constituted through language but is also the singular enunciating act that realizes it in a specific historical moment. The LDA researcher reads discourse not only for structural positions but for the way individual subjects inhabit, resist, or shift those positions. It is therefore not only cultural critique that can be accomplished by LDA, but also gesturing towards emancipatory possibilities.

Parker's fourth core element of LDA concerns the role of knowledge (S2)—not the transparent representation of reality but a particular organization of signifiers that forecloses certain questions while authorizing others. The fifth element identifies positions in language through Lacan's formalization of four discourses, as previously discussed. The sixth element centers on deadlocks of perspective, and highlighting rather than seeking to smooth them over. This is the territory of the real as it appears in discourse as moments of incoherence, impossibility, and non-sense—what Neill (2013) calls "breaking the text," allowing the text to reveal its own impossibility. The seventh element concerns reflexivity and interpretation: the researcher is always already implicated in discourse, and never positioned outside it. There is no metalanguage, and the act of analysis is itself a discursive event that constitutes its object. To imagine that one could understand the meaning of a text would be to reduce it to the imaginary order and to see oneself as outside of the text. Neither

does the interpretation of a text in LDA seek to produce meaning nor does it aim to explain the intrapsychic world of individuals. Instead, as Parker put it, the "task of an analyst is to work on 'the line of the Symbolic' (working within the domain of the text), and to open up the text by disrupting and disorganizing it so that its functions become clearer, including its functions us" (2014). An aim of LDA, therefore, is to work in the discourse of the analyst, acknowledging the knowledge (S2, in the position of truth in that discourse) that underpins the theory and to name the master signifiers of a text. As Parker points out. in such an act of nomination that occurs in LDA, what is named is reproduced and transformed rather than "discovered" (ibid., 2014).

Debates and Challenges

A fundamental tension runs through LDA: it draws on a psychoanalytic theory developed in the context of a two-person clinical encounter and attempts to apply it to texts and discursive practices not produced in that context. Lacan's own resistance to psychology and psychologization was categorical. Parker (2005) acknowledged this tension explicitly, transforming it into a methodological principle: a Lacanian approach to discourse must remain accountable to the impossibility of its own claim, must read texts with an awareness that it is constituting the object it claims to find, and must hold its interpretations lightly. LDA is most rigorous when alert to the difference between psychoanalytic interpretation in the clinic and analysis of a text. When the text in question is interviews, in practice this can be challenging indeed.

Perhaps the biggest challenge of LDA, however, is also arguably its strength: it resists the demand for a fixed procedure, insisting on conceptual coordinates that must be configured for the singularity of each analysis. In this vein, the 27 chapters of *Lacan, Discourse, Event* (2014)—which reach no shared conclusions on what "discourse" and "event" mean—are not a failure of coherence but a principled reflection of this commitment. If the Lacanian subject is irreducibly divided, constituted through language rather than prior to it, and if meaning is produced through difference and deferral rather than residing in signs as stable content, then no algorithmic procedure can be specified in advance that would be adequate to read what discourse does to and through subjects. A fixed grid would itself enact the logic of the university discourse—presenting knowledge (S2) as neutral, total, and applicable, concealing the barred subject behind methodological authority.

What is more, because interpretation in LDA is not retrieval of hidden meaning but an intervention in the text, it constitutes its object retroactively. This means that the same text will yield different, non-competing readings depending on the analyst's position, and that this plurality is structurally necessary rather than a failure of rigor or a lack of inter-rater reliability. Neill's (2013) notion of "failing better"—borrowed from Beckett—accepts that interpretation always distorts its object, that any reading misses something, and that this is the condition of engaged reading rather than a methodological deficiency. The analyst's task is not to arrive at the correct reading but to read in a way that remains open to the text's resistance, its refusal to be fully closed by interpretation.

Nevertheless, after the foundational LDA texts in the early 2000s up to the publication of the edited collection by Parker and Pavón-Cuéllar (2014), there have been relatively few published works using LDA. Those that do, however, inasmuch as they have shared their particular methodological approach (e.g., Swales et al., 2020; Tolis, 2023), will hopefully demystify LDA and lead to further engagements with it. LDA's anti-methodological commitment should not preclude systematic

application, but in practice researchers tend to want a well-established methodological procedure, as do the journals that consider publishing their work.

Possibilities

LDA's most immediate applied possibility lies in its extension to domains where the intersection of discourse, power, and suffering is most acute and where conventional discourse-analytic frameworks reach their explanatory limits. The broader tradition of psychosocial research that Frosh and others have developed all point toward a rich agenda for LDA in the study of how institutional and ideological discourses produce subjects who suffer in ways they cannot fully articulate. The concept of the capitalist discourse, still underused in applied LDA, opens particularly urgent territory: the structural analysis of how contemporary institutions—from psychiatric nosology to self-management pedagogies to digital platform culture—promise subjects access to satisfaction while systematically producing its deferral. Where conventional critical psychology identifies neoliberal ideology as a distorting influence, LDA can name the formal structure of that distortion and, crucially, ask what discourse might interrupt it. Given Braunstein's development of the discourse of the market and its dependence on servomechanisms, LDA might be utilized to analyze technoscientific discourse and AI. The capitalist discourse's foreclosure of the subject maps suggestively onto the way large language models and recommendation systems operate. The discourse of the analyst—not as a clinical technique but as an analytical and political posture—remains LDA's most powerful resource for thinking about what emancipatory practice in psychology might look like.

LDA also carries significant possibilities for theoretical development at the intersection of psychoanalysis and political thought—a terrain that Lacan himself opened and has seen rich developments in subsequent theoretical works, but that applied discourse analysis has been slow to follow. LDA could be a major methodological tool within a genuinely psychoanalytic political psychology—one that could account for how subjects are bound to their oppression, how master signifiers organize political identification, and how the real of antagonism irrupts into apparently stable discursive formations. LDA aligns well with liberation psychoanalysis and decolonial psychology. In this vein, another central concept in LDA operates to position it as crucial to such endeavors: the concept of the event. As it is variously theorized across the chapters of Parker and Pavón-Cuéllar (2014), draws on Alain Badiou's (2005) ontology of the event, offers a specifically Lacanian vocabulary for theorizing political transformation: not as the effect of rational deliberation or consciousness-raising but as the *après-coup* restructuring of a subject's relation to the master signifiers that have constituted them. The event names that which exceeds and disrupts discourse—an act, a surprise, a rupture that the symbolic order must retroactively attempt to absorb and re-inscribe. The event, in this sense, is something that takes form within the symbolic "after the event"—and this incorporation alters the event as an irruption of the real. The concept extends LDA's scope beyond "pure" discourse in the form of individual texts or interview data: it enables analysis of political events, legal proceedings, historical turning points, and social movements, wherever the question of structural rupture and retroactive constitution is at stake. LDA's attunement to the event allows for inquiry into how change becomes possible where discourse appears to foreclose it.

Finally, the future of LDA may depend on its capacity to cultivate methodological accessibility without sacrificing theoretical rigor—a tension that Tolis's (2023) operationalization and Swales et

al.'s (2020) selective deployment both address, though in different registers. The publication of further applied studies that make their analytical decisions transparent—showing how the seven elements were configured for a particular corpus, why certain Lacanian concepts were foregrounded and others bracketed, and how the reflexive position of the researcher was held and interrogated—would go some way toward demystifying LDA for researchers encountering it for the first time. This is not a concession to positivism but a response to LDA's own seventh element: if the researcher is always already implicated in the discourse they analyze, then making that implication legible is itself part of the analytical act. A generation of researchers trained in both the theoretical depth and the reflexive positionality that LDA demands—knowing, as Neill (2013) put it, how to fail better—would position LDA not merely as one theoretically complex tradition within critical discursive psychology but as an indispensable orientation for any psychology that takes seriously the question of what language does to, through, and against those who speak it.

Cross-References

- Artificial Intelligence
- Capitalism
- Deconstruction
- Discursive Psychology
- Ideology
- Language
- Liberation Psychoanalysis
- Linguistics
- Neoliberal Ideology
- Neoliberalism
- Positivism
- Poststructuralism
- Psychologism
- Qualitative Psychology
- Repression
- Subjectivity
- The Other

Competing Interest Declaration

The author(s) has no competing interests to declare that are relevant to the content of this manuscript.

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