

REVIEW ARTICLE

A Bibliometric Analysis of Social Actions Investigated using Discourse-Historical Approach

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ABSTRACT - This study examines the research landscape of social actions investigated using a bibliometric analysis of publications indexed in the Scopus database from 2002 to 2023. VOSviewer was used to visualise and analyse network maps of co-authorship and the co-occurrence of authors' keywords related to DHA. The results reveal that the United Kingdom is a key contributor to DHA research, largely due to the prolific publications of Ruth Wodak, the approach's proponent, from Lancaster University, along with contributions from her former students, Boukala and Forchtner. DHA research has expanded to 59 countries, reflecting its growing influence. However, co-authorship data indicate that research within this field remains largely confined to institutional and geographical boundaries, with collaborations involving only 13 countries. Building upon Reisigl's review of DHA's four phases of development, we present Phase Five (2017-2023) as a period when DHA research expands from evergreen areas (nationalism, national identity, populism, ideology and racism) in political discourse and media discourse into interdisciplinary approaches to investigate contemporary issues in social media discourse. A way forward for DHA research is application of the holistic framework involving analysis of all five discursive strategies to understand how language is used to achieve particular social, political, psychological or linguistic goals instead of selectively focusing on argumentation strategies and topoi/topoi.

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received: 18 August 2024

Revised: 7 April 2025

Accepted: 25 April 2025

Published: 30 April 2025

KEYWORDS

Bibliometric analysis

Critical discourse analysis

Discourse-historical approach

Social action

1.0 INTRODUCTION

DHA is within the broadly defined field of critical discourse analysis (Wodak, 2011). DHA is a critical discourse analysis approach to “demystify” the hegemony [control] of specific discourses [texts] by deciphering the ideologies [beliefs] that establish, perpetuate or fight dominance” (Reisigl & Wodak, 2017, p. 88). Researchers employ DHA to analyse how people use language to gain and maintain power. The analysis is conducted on several levels, from the inconsistencies and dilemmas in the text seen through the language used and interpreted using contextual knowledge and other theories to the social action seen through organised groups or the community taking action to create positive change. Contextual knowledge may include referring to the historical context to understand the motives for particular social actions and how the language used to talk about social action may change over time because of sociopolitical changes. In other words, language is a social practice. The DHA analysis of language as discourse involves investigating verbal interactions with an eye to how they are shaped by, and how they shape, social structures [i.e. power relations, at situational, institutional and social levels] (Fairclough, 1995, as cited in Clarence & Fincham). DHA research has practical applications in improving communication such as producing guidelines to reduce sexist language, or language barriers in organisations.

A full-scale DHA analysis involves five key questions (Richardson & Wodak, 2009). First, it examines referential strategies, focusing on how self and others are linguistically represented in the discourse. Second, it considers predicational strategies, analysing the characteristics attributed to social actors, objects, phenomena, events, processes, and actions within the discourse. Third, it evaluates argumentation strategies used to justify or legitimise specific viewpoints. Fourth, it investigates perspectivisation and framing strategies that influence how referents, attributions and arguments are presented. Finally, it explores mitigation and intensification strategies used in the overt articulation of utterances. DHA analysis often brings “othering” to the fore where differentiation is made between “us” and “them”, such as heterosexuals and LGBTQ+.

1.1 Four Developmental Stages of the DHA approach (Reisigl, 2017)

Reisigl's (2017) publication identified four developmental stages of the DHA approach. The first phase reflects attempts to understand the rhetoric on racism, with reference to antisemitism. This included the examination of the formation of anti-Semitic stereotypes during Kurt Waldheim's 1986 Austrian presidential campaign (Wodak et al., 1990), neo-racism towards foreigners in Austria (Wodak & Matouschek, 1993) and anti-Jewish prejudice in post-war Austria (Wodak, 2011).

In the second phase of development, DHA was applied to understand social action associated with politics (Kader, 2016). Political discourse is often intertwined with media discourse, and researchers analysed naturally occurring interactions in political speeches, focus groups, interviews, political campaigns and the press (Reisigl, 2017). Based on the premise of language as social practice, DHA

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studies showed that the discursive construction of national identities, depicting both similarity and difference, contributes to the political and social exclusion of specific out-groups across diverse contexts and nations (Matouschek et al., 1995).

In the third phase of development of DHA research, the interest in social action associated with politics continued but the focus on racism had moved from antisemitic issues to the European Union (EU). These include racism in political discourses across EU member states (Wodak & Van Dijk, 2000), internal communication within EU organisations (Muntigl et al., 2000), construction of European identities in political speeches (Wodak & Weiss, 2005), Austrian discourse on EU enlargement (Galasinska & Krzyzanowski, 2008), “permanent Austrian neutrality” (Kovács & Wodak, 2003, p.53), and discussions on the role of the German Wehrmacht during World War II (Heer et al., 2008). It becomes evident that deixis, incorporating personal, spatial, and temporal references, stands out as the pivotal linguistic device in these identity discourses (Wodak et al., 2009). Various discursive strategies were skillfully employed to construct narratives of both catastrophes and success stories within the framework of hegemonic politics of the past (Manoschek & Sandner, 2008).

The fourth phase of DHA development took place in the 21st century (Reisigl, 2017), there was a shift from the EU context to right-wing populism and fascist discourses (Wodak & Richardson, 2013). DHA analysis of the press coverage on the EU constitution, integration, discrimination, and migration highlighted differences in semantics, thematic structures, structures of relevance and argumentation by the press of different countries. Systematic reconstruction of fundamental representations of the EU was also going on in the press (Krzyzanowski et al., 2005). The fourth phase of DHA development saw a surge of interest in intertextual and interdiscursive relationships among texts (oral, written and visual) produced by and about individual politicians, parties and social movements (Reinemann et al., 2017).

Reisigl (2017) mapped the phases of development in DHA research till his publication in 2017. However, there appears to be limited comprehensive mapping of the evolution of DHA research in the years following his work. In this paper, the results are the proposed Phase 5, the continuation of the phases of development in DHA.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

For the bibliometric analysis of DHA research, the principle of collecting data is as follows: First, a keyword search was conducted on Scopus database for “Discourse-historical approach” and the publication date filter was set to 2002-December 31, 2023. The search range was the title, keywords and abstract. A limit was not placed on the document type, language and subject area to attain a comprehensive perspective of the DHA research landscape.

In total, 335 document results were extracted and imported to Microsoft Excel 2016. A data cleaning process was conducted. Firstly, the keywords provided by the authors or generated by Scopus were standardised manually to ensure accuracy. It was necessary to merge and consolidate keywords because some might use different English spellings, abbreviations or acronyms, leading to separate counts in the analyses. Other factors considered were capitalisation, punctuation marks, spelling variations and plurality. The merged keywords are as follows:

1. “critical discourse analysis” and “CDA” were merged into “Critical Discourse Analysis”.
2. “Discourse historical approach”, “Discourse-historical approach” and “DHA” were merged into “Discourse-Historical Approach”.
3. “discursive strategy” was merged into “discursive strategies”.

During the second phase of the data cleaning process, a specific concern was addressed regarding affiliations that did not explicitly mention China. To enhance the accuracy and consistency of the dataset, institutions in Hong Kong or Macao were reclassified as part of China. For instance, affiliations like The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Lingnan University, Hong Kong Baptist University, University of Hong Kong, City University of Hong Kong and University of Macau were reclassified under China.

The cleaned dataset was then analysed using Bibliometrix tool. Bibliometrix is an R-tool designed for comprehensive scientific mapping analysis. Moreover, the inclusion of VOSviewer enables construction and visualisation of bibliometric networks, enabling the identification of research trends, analysis of author and collaboration networks, keyword analysis and clustering of related documents (van Eck & Waltman, 2017).

3.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The bibliometric analysis results for DHA trends are reported to address the identified research gap and contribute to the development of the posited fifth phase. These results, which include analyses of subject areas, publication languages, document types, research productivity, distribution of publications by countries, authorship patterns, most globally cited documents, most active source titles and author keyword analysis, serve to map the existing landscape of DHA research. By doing so, they provide insights into current trends, limitations and opportunities that inform the justification and conceptualisation of the proposed fifth phase.

3.1 Subject Area

Publications of studies using DHA are in 13 distinct subject areas (Table 1). The expected areas are in social sciences (53.7%), and arts and humanities (34.1%) but it is surprising that DHA is applicable in the hard sciences such as decision science and environmental science. For instance, Sedlaczek (2017) used DHA to understand how two distinct television programmes deploy social actions to shape public perceptions of climate change, with consumer magazines focusing on economic efficiency and religious programmes

emphasising moral and ethical responsibilities. This distinction highlights the media's role in constructing tailored narratives that cater to specific audience concerns, while often neglecting the complex realities of climate change. The emphasis of DHA on context makes it useful for incorporating knowledge from various fields (Wodak, 2015) to understand how media representations of climate change reflect diverse social actions and perspectives, and how these frames influence public awareness and attitudes toward climate action (Sedlacek, 2017).

Table 1

Subject area of publications on DHA

Subject Area	No of Publications	Percentage (%)
Social Sciences	313	53.7
Arts and Humanities	199	34.1
Psychology	22	3.8
Business, Management and Accounting	14	2.4
Computer Science	11	1.9
Economics, Econometrics and Finance	7	1.2
Physics and Astronomy	5	0.9
Energy	3	0.5
Engineering	3	0.5
Environmental Science	2	0.3
Decision Sciences	1	0.2
Materials Science	1	0.2
Multidisciplinary	1	0.2

Note: The publications have been organised according to the categorisations of their source titles, with certain source titles categorised into more than one subject area.

3.2 Language Used for Publications

Table 2 shows that English stands out as the predominant language of publication (95.8%). The use of English gains visibility for the rhetoric on social actions deconstructed using DHA. Nevertheless, publications in other languages (e.g., Turkish, Polish, German, Czech, Spanish, Portuguese, Persian, Hungarian, Greek and Dutch) show that there are localised issues that may not attract the interest of the international readership and hence are published in these journals.

Table 2

Languages used for publications on DHA

Languages	Number of Publications	Percentage
English	321	95.8
Turkish	2	0.6
Polish	2	0.6
German	2	0.6
Czech	2	0.6
Spanish	1	0.3
Portuguese	1	0.3
Persian	1	0.3
Hungarian	1	0.3
Greek	1	0.3
Dutch	1	0.3
Total	335	100

3.3 Document Type

Out of 335 publications on DHA, 80.6% (270 articles) were in journals, which is expected because journals are usually the avenue for dissemination of the latest findings. However, having 11.6% (39) of publications on DHA in book chapters speaks volumes about the alternative means used by clusters of researchers who get together to publish books to share their findings and ideas with the respective communities of practice. In comparison, there were only 18 reviews, five conference papers and three books.

Table 3

Document type

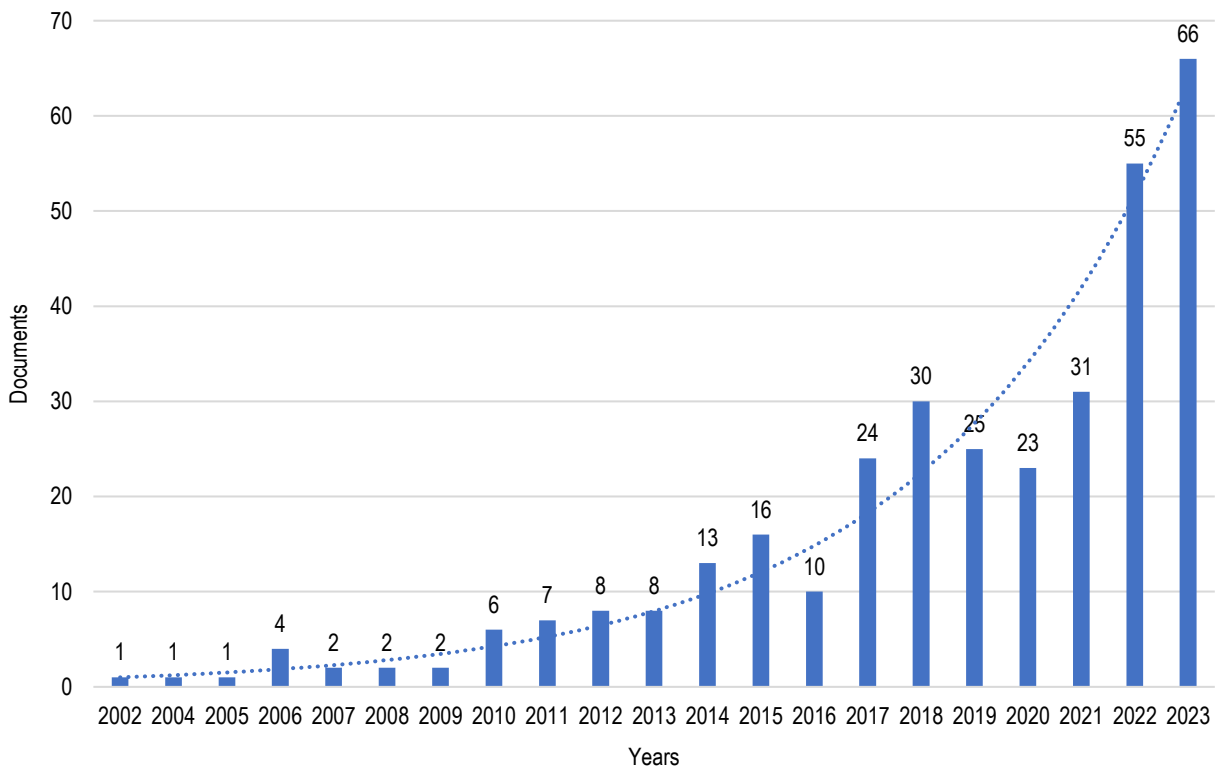
Document Type	Number of Publications	Percentage
Article	270	80.6
Book Chapter	39	11.6
Review	18	5.4
Conference Paper	5	1.5
Book	3	0.9
Total	335	100.0

3.4 Chronological Publication Trend

Figure 1 shows that there was a slow start with only one publication in 2002, that was authored by Wodak and Leeuwen. This is the first Scopus-indexed publication on DHA. However, there is a growing upward trend with 66 publications in 2023. There might be an exponential growth of publications in future as researchers are discovering the potential of this CDA approach to deconstruct hegemonies in social practices.

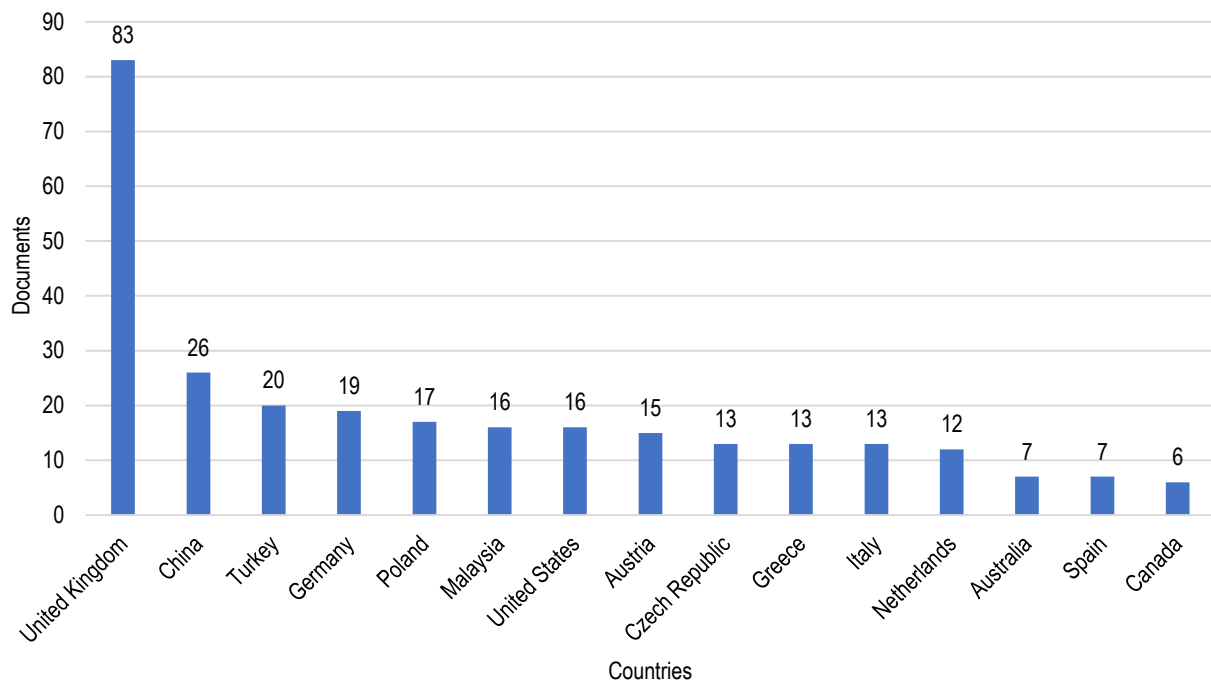
Figure 1

Growth of publication by year on DHA



3.5 Most Productive Countries

Figure 2 shows that the United Kingdom tops the list (83 publications) of countries conducting research using DHA. Interestingly, China and Turkey rank second and third with 26 and 20 publications respectively. The large number of publications from the United Kingdom is expected because of the proponent of DHA, Ruth Wodak. Wodak was the Emeritus Distinguished Professor and Chair of Discourse Studies in the Department of Linguistics and English Language at Lancaster University. She is an Austrian linguist who was born in London. Since 1991, Wodak held the position of a full professor of Applied Linguistics at the University of Vienna, Austria. Her influence on Austrian researchers is evident from 15 publications from Austria. They used DHA to study how discourse reflects power dynamics and how individuals collectively construct them.

Figure 2*Most productive countries contributing to DHA research from 2002 to 2023*

China ranks second among productive countries contributing to DHA research, mostly in media discourse (Figure 2). The researchers were interested in how newspapers shape perceptions of China globally. For example, Tang (2023) analysed Chinese diplomatic discourse published in the British press, highlighting how the media constructs China's image to legitimise its worldview on the "rules-based international order." The British press facilitated and, at the same time, constrained the soft-power efforts of Chinese diplomats.

On the other hand, Yu et al. (2024) examined representations of China during COVID-19 by Xinhua News Agency (XNA). The newspaper depicted the country as a victim, a fighter and a cooperative nation, shaping its national image to align with China's diplomatic goals of global solidarity and humanitarianism. Yu et al. (2024) found a strategic shift in China's media diplomacy from cautious to assertive, to influence global perceptions through controlled and purposeful narratives. With China's emergence as an economic superpower to rival the United States in the 2020s (Richter, 2022), it is likely that Chinese researchers will continue to use DHA to deconstruct media representations of China globally.

We traced the second position of China in most productive countries contributing to DHA research from 2002 to 2023 to the role played by Wodak. She initiated a research project to qualitatively understand the social changes in economics, politics and culture taking place in China. It was funded by the Leverhulme Trust, Academic Collaboration - International Network in 2006-2009. Together with Paul Chilton from Lancaster University and Hailong Tian, Wodak published "New Discourses in Contemporary China" in the *Journal of Language and Politics* in 2010. This research initiative spurred other publications among Chinese researchers in the *Journal of Chinese Sociolinguistics* and Beijing: High Education Press, and sparked interest in examining the ways in which language is used to talk about social change in China and how verbal exchange are institutionalised (e.g. in governmental debate) (Cao et al., 2014). The extra attention on China could be rationalised by its unique role in the development and application of DHA within a non-Western context. China's rapid socio-political and economic transformations provide a distinct and complex landscape for discourse analysis, making it an essential focus for understanding how language and power dynamics operate in different cultural and institutional settings. Moreover, the foundational contributions of Ruth Wodak and her collaborative projects have not only elevated China's presence in DHA research but also set a precedent for further studies on discourse and social change in China. This makes China a pivotal case study for exploring the adaptability and global relevance of DHA, particularly in relation to expanding its theoretical and practical scope.

3.6 Most Active Institutions

The data on the most active institutions (Table 4) explains why the United Kingdom is the country leading in DHA research. Out of 158 institutions that published on DHA, Lancaster University leads with 68 publications (20.3%). This is not surprising because Wodak has been in the Department of Linguistics and English Language at Lancaster University since 2004. Wodak previously held the position of a full professor of Applied Linguistics at the University of Vienna, Austria. This explains why the University of Vienna (Universität Wien) was the second most active institution producing 13 publications on DHA (3.9%). Her tenure at both institutions contributes to the collective body of work published on DHA.

As for other countries, China and Germany rank second and fourth in number of publications (Figure 2) but Table 4 shows that the pattern was reversed for most active institutions. Humboldt University of Berlin (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin) in Germany ranked

third while the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, China ranked fourth. The comparison of these two sets of data indicates that in China, researchers from a number of institutions were conducting studies using DHA (e.g., The Hong Kong Polytechnic University and Tianjin Foreign Studies University) but in Germany, the work was probably concentrated in the Humboldt University of Berlin.

Table 4*Most active institutions*

Institution	Country	Number of publications	Percentage
Lancaster University	England	68	20.3
University of Vienna (Universität Wien)	Austria	13	3.9
Humboldt University of Berlin (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin)	Germany	8	2.4
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University	China	7	2.1
Panteion University	Greece	6	1.8
Masaryk University	Czech Republic	6	1.8

Note. The accumulated percentage is less than 100% because the table only includes the top six most active institutions in the field.

3.7 Most Globally Cited Documents

Wodak's influence in the DHA field is confirmed in the analysis of the top 10 most globally cited documents (Table 5). In the top 10 list, Wodak is either a main or co-author in seven of them, indicating significant global impact in the field. Wodak's (2008) publication entitled "Mediation between discourse and society: Assessing cognitive approaches in CDA" (cited 100 times, 5.26 total citations per year) presents DHA as belonging in the broadly defined field of CDA. It is noteworthy that one of the top cited publications is Reisigl's (2017) publication entitled "The discourse-historical approach" (cited 111 times, 13.88 total citations per year), in which Reisigl offers an introduction to DHA for beginners. This may explain the high citations of these two publications.

Table 5*Top 10 most globally cited documents in DHA from 2002-2023*

Author(s)	Year	Title	Total citations	TC per year
Baker P. et. al	2008	A useful methodological synergy? Combining critical discourse analysis and corpus linguistics to examine discourses of refugees and asylum seekers in the UK press	962	56.59
Kreis	2017	The "tweet politics" of President Trump	126	15.75
Rheindorf & Wodak	2018	Borders, fences, and limits—Protecting Austria from refugees: Metadiscursive negotiation of meaning in the current refugee crisis	104	14.86
Reisigl	2017	The discourse-historical approach	111	13.88
Wodak & Boukala	2015	European identities and the revival of nationalism in the European Union: A discourse historical approach	101	10.10
Wodak & Fairclough	2010	Recontextualizing European higher education policies: The cases of Austria and Romania	138	9.20
Hansson	2015	Discursive strategies of blame avoidance in government: A framework for analysis	76	7.60
Krzyżanowski & Wodak	2011	Political strategies and language policies: The European Union Lisbon strategy and its implications for the EU's language and multilingualism policy	95	6.79
Graham P. et. al	2004	A call to arms at the end of history: A discourse-historical analysis of George W. Bush's declaration of war on terror	126	6.00
Wodak	2008	Mediation between discourse and society: Assessing cognitive approaches in CDA	100	5.26

The other publications in the top 10 list are topic specific. One main topic investigated using DHA is media reporting on refugees and asylum seekers (Baker et al., 2008), and the debates between two governing parties on immigration and multiculturalism (Krzyżanowski & Wodak, 2011; Wodak & Boukala, 2015). There was a negative portrayal of refugees and immigrants, with debates focusing on how to best protect Austria from the influx of refugees. Also highly cited were publications on two presidents from the

United States: Trump (Kreis, 2017, “The ‘tweet politics of President Trump”) and George W. Bush (Graham et al., 2004, “A call to arms at the end of history: A discourse-historical analysis of George W. Bush’s declaration of war on terror”). There was right wing populist discourse of a homeland threatened by the dangerous other.

Our search showed that Reisigl published two papers in 2017 with the same title “The Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA)”, one co-authored with Wodak (https://www.researchgate.net/publication/251636976_The_Discourse-Historical_Approach_DHA) and another written solely by Reisigl himself (<https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781315739342.ch3>). The paper that is more highly cited is Reisigl (2017). We could not locate his publications using “Reisigl M”, “Reisigl Martin” in the Scopus database. The search had to be done using “Reisigl” alone. Many of his papers have incomplete data when they were submitted to Scopus, for example, missing abstracts, author keywords and indexed keywords. Another reason why our earlier search could not locate Reisigl’s publications on DHA is the absence of the term “discourse historical approach” from the title, abstract and keywords in some of his papers.

3.8 Most Contributing Authors

Out of the 402 authors who have published on DHA, 20 have achieved a minimum of three publications (Table 6). Wodak leads with a remarkable 33 publications (9.9%) on the linguistic and communicative dimensions of complex societal issues, including populism, nationalism, and right-wing politics. Boukala ranked second with 14 publications (4.2%), while Forchtner ranked third with 10 publications (3.0%).

Table 6

The most productive authors of DHA

Authors	Number of publications	Percentage
Wodak R	33	9.9
Boukala S	14	4.2
Forchtner B	10	3.0
Brusenbauch Meislova M	6	1.8
Krzyzanowski M	4	1.8
Votoupalová M	4	1.2
Bogdanowska-Jakubowska E	3	0.9
Capstick T	3	0.9
Clarke I	3	0.9
Demata M	3	0.9
Dimitrakopoulou D	3	0.9
Helal F	3	0.9
Kwon W	3	0.9
Nartey M	3	0.9
Rheindorf M	3	0.9
Serafis D	3	0.9
Viola L	3	0.9
Yu Y	3	0.9
Zappettini F	3	0.9
Özvatan Ö	3	0.9

Note. The accumulated percentage is less than 100% because the table includes only the top twenty most productive authors in DHA research.

Both Boukala and Forchtner are Wodak’s former postgraduate students. Boukala used DHA to understand the construction of European identities (who is European? Who is not?) and the revival of nationalism in the European Union (Wodak & Boukala, 2015). The context was migration and nationalism in Greece and Europe. Forchtner’s research area is like Wodak, that is, critical discourse studies and political communication related to far-right movements in what country. They published an edited volume, “The Routledge Handbook of Language and Politics” in 2017. The handbook includes genres of political action from speech-making and policy to national anthems and billboards and also socio-political phenomena such as gendered politics and populism.

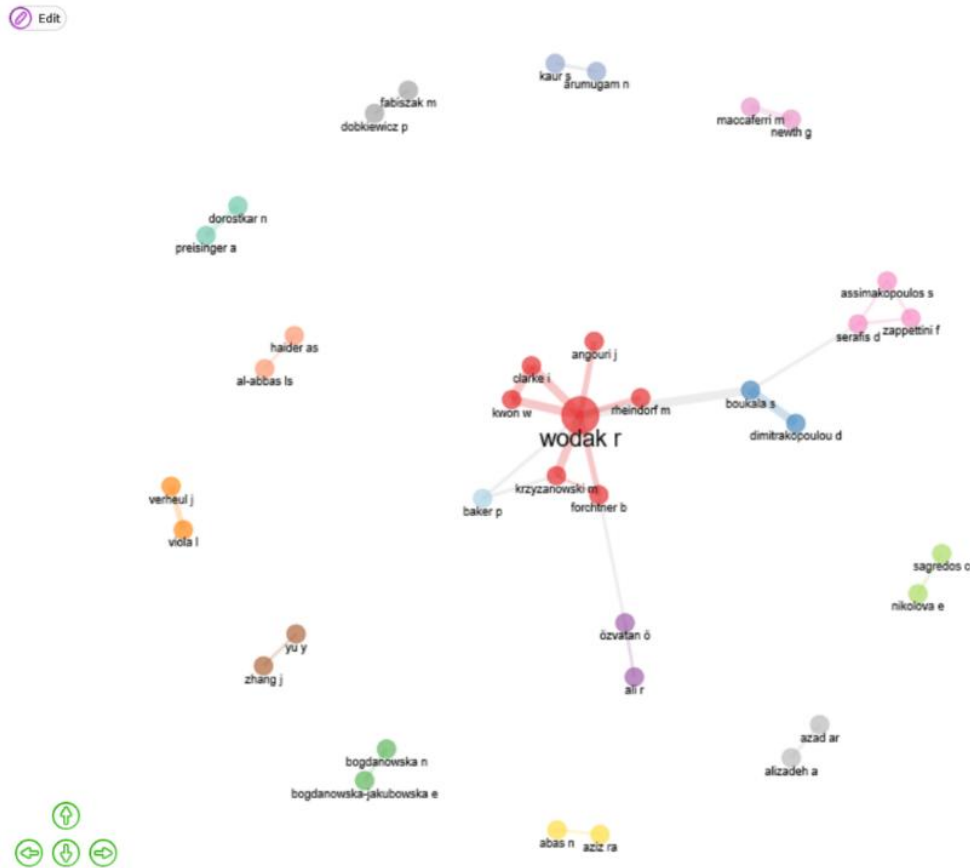
3.9 Collaboration Among Authors

Not surprisingly, Figure 3 reveals that Wodak has collaborated with the second and third prolific authors on DHA, that is, Boukala and Forchtner who were her former postgraduate students. In fact, Wodak has also co-published with Krzyzanowski and two of their co-authored papers are among the top 10 most globally cited documents in DHA from 2002-2023 (Table 5). One publication was methodological (Baker et al., 2008, “Combining critical discourse analysis and corpus linguistics to examine discourses of refugees

and asylum seekers in the UK press”) while the other was on political discourse (Krzyżanowski & Wodak, 2011, “Political strategies and language policies: The European Union Lisbon strategy and its implications for the EU’s language and multilingualism policy”).

Furthermore, author collaboration appears to be influenced by institutional and geographical factors. Researchers from the same country tend to collaborate such as Sagredos and Nikolova in the United Kingdom, Dimitrakopoulou and Boukala in Greece, Zhang and Yu in China, as well as Al-Abbas and Haider in Jordan. Collaborations within the same institutions are also frequent, such as Azad and Alizadeh from Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Iran, as well as Dobkiewicz, Chmiel, and Fabiszak from Adam Mickiewicz University, Poland.

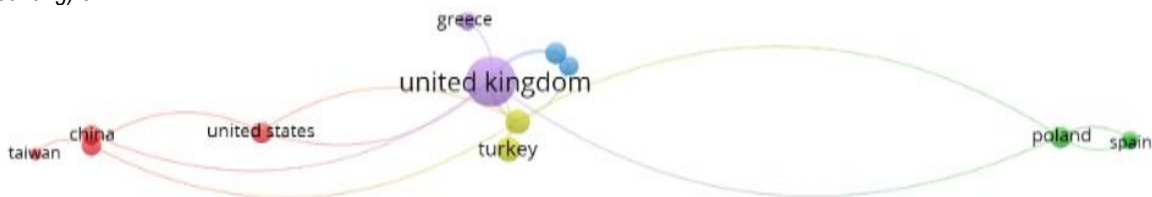
Figure 3
Collaboration among authors



3.10 Collaboration Among Countries

Researchers from 59 countries published on DHA but cross-country collaboration was limited to 13 countries, mostly among postgraduate students of either Reisigl or Wodak. Figure 3 shows the network visualisation map of the authors based on the countries they are affiliated with. In VOSviewer, larger nodes and thicker or differently coloured links signify stronger and more frequent collaboration. In this analysis, only countries with more than five articles and citations were taken into account. Based on the fractional counting method, the analysis shows that researchers in the United Kingdom have a strong and extensive co-authorship network with Greece (indicated by a purple node), Austria (indicated by a blue node) and Turkey (indicated by a yellow node). Sometimes the collaboration in publications takes the form of postgraduate students such as Forchtner, Slavickora and Boukala (in the United Kingdom) and Reisigl, de Cillia, Krzyzanowski, and Rheindorf (in Austria), all of whom were previously supervised by Wodak.

Figure 4
Network visualisation map of the co-authorship based on countries that have a minimum of five documents and citations (fractional counting) on DHA



3.11 Most Active Source Titles

Because of the research interests of the pioneers of DHA, the leading journal is Journal of Language and Politics (30 publications, 8.9% of the research output), as shown in Table 7. Wodak and Forchtner publish on language and politics, bridging multiple social science disciplines, including communication, linguistics, discourse studies, political science, sociology and psychology (John Benjamin Publishing Company, n.d.). Coming in second in productive source titles is Discourse and Society (27 publications, 8.1%). Both journals have a h-index of above 10 but h-index of the other journals are below 10, showing less citations. Among the journals on the periphery but still in the top 10 productive source titles are Gema Online Journal of Language Studies (h-index of 2) is a Malaysian journal while Uluslararası İlişkiler (h-index of 1) is published by the International Relations Council of Turkey (IRCT).

Table 7

Top 10 most productive source titles

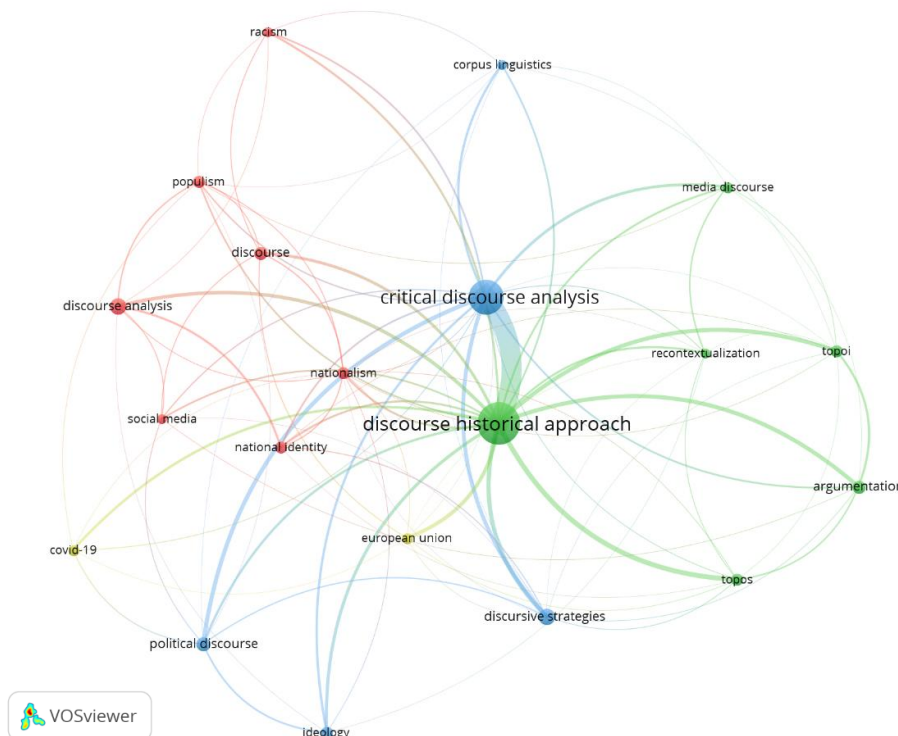
Source titles	Number of publications	Percentage	Total citation	H index
Journal of Language and Politics	30	8.9	562	12
Discourse and Society	27	8.1	1675	16
Critical Discourse Studies	21	6.3	401	8
Discourse and Communication	9	2.7	91	5
Discourse Approaches to Politics Society and Culture	7	2.1	18	3
Journal of Language Aggression and Conflict	5	1.5	42	3
Gema Online Journal of Language Studies	4	1.2	14	2
Discourse Studies	3	0.9	196	3
Journal of Contemporary European Studies	3	0.9	4	3
Uluslararası İlişkiler	3	0.9	4	1

3.12 Author Keyword Analysis

Finally, an idea of the current and future directions of research in DHA is deduced from the network visualisation maps of the co-occurrence of the author's keywords (Figure 5) and the time map of the co-occurrence of the author's keywords (Figure 6). For the network visualisation map of co-occurrence generated by VOSviewer, the unit of analysis was set as author keywords and a fractional counting method was employed. A minimum threshold of five occurrences for keywords was set, 42 keywords met the threshold. However, 20 of the most significant keywords were selected to provide clearer results. Colour groups keywords into clusters, with circle and font sizes denoting keyword prominence and thicker connecting lines signifying stronger relationships.

Figure 5

Network visualisation map of co-occurrence of author's keywords related to the DHA

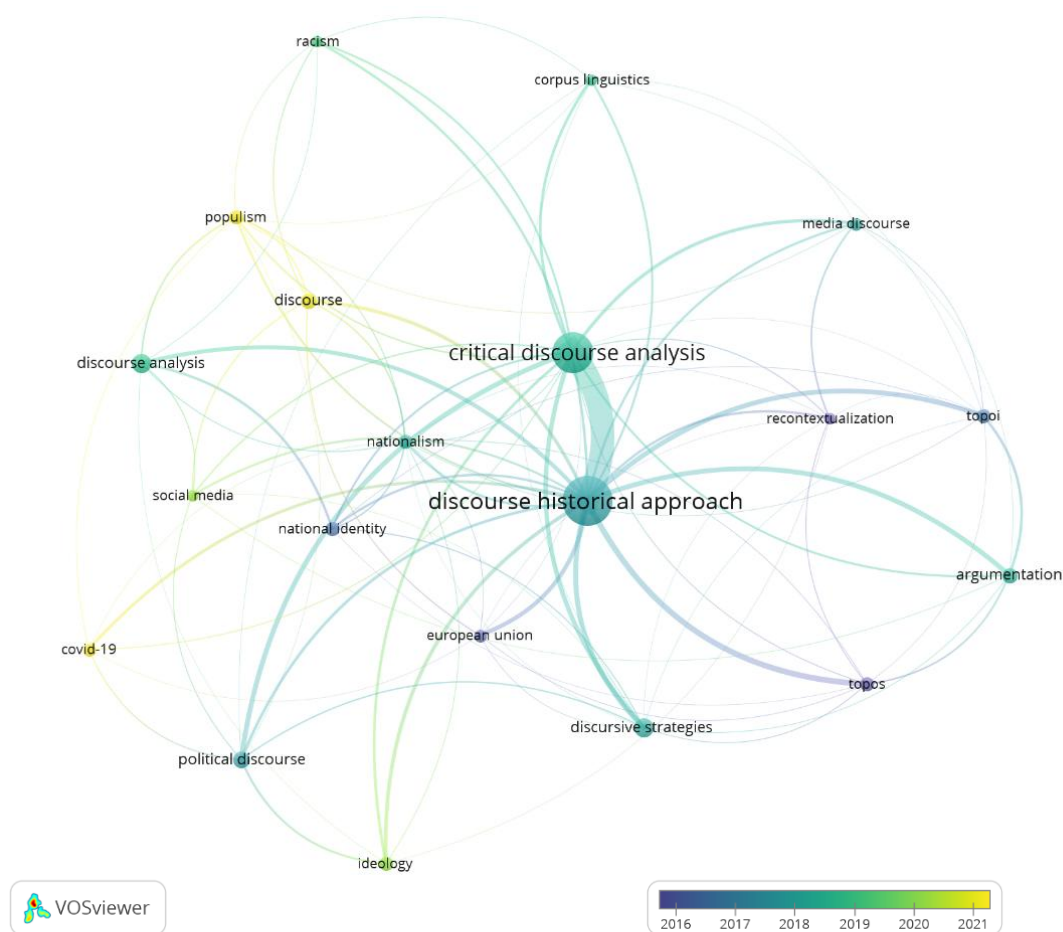


The author keyword analysis identified 1146 keywords within the dataset. It is expected that the search term DHA is the most frequent keyword (green circle), strongly associated with “critical discourse analysis” (blue circle). The five discursive strategies of DHA are nomination strategy, predication strategy, argumentation strategy, perspectivisation, as well as mitigation and intensification strategies (Reisigl & Wodak, 2017). Figure 5 shows a tendency to conduct analysis of argumentation strategy. The extensive research on topoi/topos, especially in media discourse, could be driven by their essential role as rhetorical themes that offer insights into politicians’ goals, ideologies and audience manipulation tactics (Zhang et al., 2022). For instance, Austria’s ultra-right winger, Jörg Haider Haider, used the topoi of definition, authority, and efficiency to persuade viewers of his argumentation and construct his party’s actions as both impactful and responsible (Wodak & Iedema, 2004). The concept of topoi has been employed across various political dimensions, including speeches, right-wing populist rhetoric, identity politics, politics of the past, organisational politics (Wodak, 2015).

The red circles reflect the key research areas where DHA is applied: corpus linguistics, nationalism, populism and racism. For instance, Dobkiewicz et al., (2023) incorporated DHA and experimental approach to investigate ideological shifts in interpreting, exploring the modulation of ideologically loaded language in political discourse. Meanwhile, Samaie and Malmir (2017) integrated corpus linguistics and DHA to study how the discursive strategies are used to represent Islam and Muslims in US news media stories. The results of the study also include a visualisation of time map showing the co-occurrence of keywords related to the DHA. As shown in Figure 6, dark purple represents older data, green denotes moderately recent data and yellow indicates the most recent information.

Figure 6

Visualisation of time map on co-occurrence of author’s keywords related to the DHA



The co-occurrences of keywords are similar to Figure 5, but the time map reveals that DHA has been recently used to examine COVID-19 communication (yellow nodes). For instance, Wodak (2021) conducted a comparative and qualitative DHA of governmental crisis communication in Austria, Germany, France, Hungary, and Sweden during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown. Her study focused on key speeches and press conferences by government leaders, aiming to deconstruct various discursive strategies employed to announce and legitimise restrictive measures in response to the pandemic. Zhang et al. (2022) employed a combination of the DHA and a multimodal perspective to investigate how the Chinese state-run news agency People’s Daily discursively justifies the crisis and shapes collective identity on TikTok. Blasio and Selva (2021) analysed the interplay between the performance and concept of statehood and the personalisation of leadership amid the COVID-19 pandemic, mapping the evolving notion of statehood by examining the emotional repertoire and themes conveyed in the government’s crisis communication. The role of social media in discourse studies has gained particular significance from 2020 onwards, largely influenced by the onset of the global COVID-19 pandemic during that period (light green node).

Apart from that, the use of DHA in discourse analysis, media discourse and political discourse has stayed evergreen since the days when Wodak first published on right-wing politics, racism, discrimination and exclusion. DHA is the main framework for studies on rhetorics on populism (Cecen, 2022; Krzyżanowski & Ekström, 2022; Maccaferri & Newth, 2022). For example, Svirchevskii and Fomin (2023) investigated how German left- and right-wing populist parties, “Die Linke” and “Alternative für Deutschland” constructed discursive images of both the present and desired states of Europe. Additionally, Alekseev (2021) found that European populist radical right parties, specifically *Rassemblement National* and *Prawo i Sprawiedliwość*, used references to rights and freedom in electoral speeches by Marine Le Pen and Jarosław Kaczyński. Meislová’s (2021) analysis of key narratives used in the 2016 British EU referendum campaign showed that the language of both the Remain and Leave camps reflected elements of both populist and technocratic discourses.

Building upon Reisigl’s (2017) review of DHA’s four phases of development, we posit a description of developments in Phase Five in 2017-2023. Nationalism, national identity, populism, ideology and racism are evergreen areas in political discourse and media discourse. However, researchers have begun to adopt interdisciplinary approaches to investigate contemporary issues in social media platforms such as TikTok (Xi, 2023; Zhang et al., 2022), Instagram (Ghaffari, 2020), Twitter (Erdogan-Ozturk & Isik-Guler, 2020) and Facebook, (Ali, 2023; Gruber et al., 2023; Lucchesi & Romania, 2023). Examples of contemporary issues currently of interest are genocism and antisemitism because of war conflicts. There may be more cross-country collaborations with access provided by information communication technology, beyond Austria and the European Union (Wodak, 2020, 2022).

Phase Five of DHA research is characterised by a predominant focus on argumentation strategies and *topoi/topos* based on author keyword analysis. A way forward for DHA research is return to the holistic framework requiring analysis of all five discursive strategies. The five discursive strategies are situated across various levels of linguistic organisation and complexity (Reisigl & Wodak, 2001). Omitting any level during analysis will limit insights on how discourse shapes and is shaped by social actions. For instance, “predications can already be contained in nominations, that nominations as well as predications enter as relevant elements in argumentations or speech acts that form the network of an argumentation and that intensification as well as mitigation operate upon illocutionary act” (Reisigl, 2014, p. 91). Focusing on only argumentation may limit insights. The analysis of all five categories of discursive strategies in DHA is no doubt tedious and skill-intensive. However, it is necessary for DHA research to offer insights that are originally envisioned by the early proponents of DHA, which is to understand how language is used to achieve particular social, political, psychological or linguistic goal (Reisigl & Wodak, 2017).

5.0 CONCLUSION

The bibliometric analysis, encompassing 335 documents retrieved from the Scopus database for 2002-2023, has yielded substantial insights into social actions investigated using DHA. The analysis of yearly publications reveals that the DHA publications show a consistent upward trend. The most prolific scholarly output is from Lancaster University, where researchers like Wodak, El Naggar, Culpeper, Semino, and Nikolova are based. This is why the most productive country is the United Kingdom with 83 publications, mainly due to Wodak’s work. Our analysis revealed that DHA research expanded into 59 countries, mainly because of Wodak’s postgraduate students returning to their home country and continuing the DHA research. Nevertheless, the co-authorship data show that DHA research has largely stayed within institutional and geographical confines, as seen by collaborations involving only 13 countries.

Journal is the main avenue for publication of DHA research compared to books and conferences, and these reputable journals will continue to attract publications with novel findings. The bibliometric analysis shows that the *Journal of Language and Politics* has the highest publication count, but DHA research published in *Discourse and Society* has more visibility. *Discourse and Society* has a slightly lower publication count than *Journal of Language and Politics* but has an exceptionally high h-index of 16.

While the current study has yielded significant results on the research trends in the DHA research, the Scopus database was from “the apex of the publishing pyramid” (Hyland & Jiang, 2021, p. 10). This implies that Scopus focuses on high-quality, peer-reviewed publications, capturing the most influential research but potentially overlooking contributions from less prominent or regionally focused sources. The dataset encompasses 402 authors, but only the top 10 authors and source titles were scrutinised. Another limitation is the use of Scopus. For example, Reisigl, who has made significant contributions to the development of the DHA, is noticeably absent from the Scopus dataset due to the non-indexing of some of his works, despite their extensive citations. To address these limitations, future studies should explore comparisons across multiple indexing services, such as Web of Science (WOS), Google Scholar, and Dimensions, to ensure a more inclusive understanding of DHA research trends. Future research should also explore longitudinal trends, collaboration networks and interdisciplinary connections to deepen the understanding of the approach’s development and impact.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study was not supported by any grants from funding bodies in the public, private, or not-for-profit sectors.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION

Yeo Jiin Yih (Conceptualisation, Methodology, Validation, Formal analysis, Software, Visualisation, Writing - original draft)

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