

15 YEARS OF DTA, ONLINE SEMINAR, DECEMBER 9, 2022

Fifteen years have passed since the article *Bringing Discourse Theory Into Media Studies* by Nico Carpentier and Benjamin de Cleen was published in the *Journal of Language and Politics*. The *15 years of DTA* (Discourse Theoretical Analysis) online event thus reflected the development and current status quo of Discourse Theory (DT).

The Post-Marxist discourse interpretation of Discourse Theory (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985), which brought together the discourse's ontology, political identity theory, as well as democratic theory (Mouffe, 1997, p. 18; Carpentier & De Cleen, 2008), holds the political as the primary. The interpretation has thus remained a long time within the realm of political theory in rethinking political democratic development.

Carpentier and De Cleen through the article however demonstrated the possibility to apply Laclau and Mouffe's Discourse Theory to other disciplines since the political encompasses all the social. The pair of authors opened the event by explaining their need for a dialog between discourse and media studies but also to connect discourse theory and methodology by re-articulation of DT into DTA, since the former's abstract nature lacked methodological guidelines.

Their introduction was followed by interventions by six researchers. Michal Krzyzanowski, the editor of the *Journal Language and Politics*, a key platform for DT research, opened with a question of potential re-contextualization of how to further analyze change through discourse considering recent developments of populism. Krzyzanowski mentioned the recent rapid change of discourse into a much more conceptual abstract mode and the consequent lack of theoretical and analytical language.

Nicolina Montesano mentioned the value of DT in her research of the Podemos political movement, the social movement of eco villages, or education – social justice in primary schools, where she used participatory research. Discourse theory enabled her to evaluate existing interpretations through text: how processes are being shaped, reconstructed and contested and to view the issues of power and emancipation of others. She added her view of the recent change of Laclau and Mouffe's primacy of the political to the primacy of markets and nature as becoming strong agents in the neoliberal era.

Kiril Filimonov and Yiming Chen, focused on media discourses and practices, and noted the importance of the subject position in DTA. Filimonov through alternative Russian media and Chen in the context of Chinese journalistic

professional identity, identified the fluidity, contingency and rigidity of identifications in media professional identity in the Chinese and Russian contexts.

Vaia Doudaki and Yianis Mylonas have used DTA to unpack ideological and cultural aspects of news making, to analyze media content and coverage to study how ideology and hegemony is being reproduced through media.

Lastly, David Howarth, focused on the methodological and ontological aspects of DT, questioned the exclusive focus of discourse on society, which might cause researchers to primarily focus on the national level and to omit the local, global dynamics. In the context of new forms of aggressive nationalism, the challenge might thus be to meld the macro and micro approaches in DTA and to re-contextualize some of the theory's core concepts, such as hegemony, into new methodology research strategies within new emerging contexts.

By outlining concrete issues of hegemony, power and change with the use of Discourse Theory's key concepts and its' methods within the 15 years of Discourse Theoretical Analysis' evolution, the event not only celebrated a milestone anniversary of the article's publication but also reflected and questioned how society and the role of scholars have changed.

REFERENCES

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