

# Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) As A Fast-Emerging Research Paradigm: A Bibliometric Study On CDA Publication Productivity

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## Abstract

**Purpose:** Discourse analysis has gained considerable fame and draws the attention of various researchers to work on it. Therefore, it is significant to recognize the level of research productivity in the field of critical/discourse analysis and to identify the connections and collaborations among the researchers.

**Design/Method/Approach:** The researchers conducted bibliometric analysis and visualization techniques to achieve the research objectives. The data was derived from the Web of Science (WoS) on January 15, 2023, using "Discourse Analysis" as a keyword and adding the years 2001 to 2022 in the software. Resultantly, a total of 4603 citations were retrieved from the database, and after critical evaluation and scrutiny, 4600 citations were finalized for data analysis. The main points explored were authorship, types of publications, authors' collaborations, journal ranking, and current trends. VOSviewer, Biblioshiny, and MS Excel software were used to analyze the data.

**Findings:** Articles are the most published type of documents, and the authors' collaborations are mounting in different geographical locations like the USA, England, Australia, Canada, Spain, Germany, and China. Language, health, policy, media, management, and knowledge are the cutting-edge areas in discourse analysis.

**Originality/value:** The findings of the study reflect the diachronic progress in the field of applied linguistics with respect to its social and cultural aspects. It also highlights sociocultural development and offers valuable insights into the next CL research. This study also illustrates the latest trends in discourse analysis research. Numerous venues emerge for research collaboration among the researchers, and it will benefit novice researchers.

**Keywords:** Discourse analysis; Bibliometric study; Visualization; Publication Ranking.

## 1. Introduction:

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Discourse Analysis (DA) have gained a central position in the field of education and research in various academic disciplines. CDA has enough strength to delineate the relationship between language and its usage<sup>1</sup> [1]. Those who

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use CDA as a research method investigate language with respect to its sociocultural perspective. Besides its sociocultural significance, CDA deals with its relationship among national policies, economy, politics, and educational practices. The research on critical discourse analysis has maintained a continuous momentum in the past few decades as discourse is part and parcel of humans' life. The users do not consider its significance, so it becomes understated and unconscious but in quite a persistent manner [2]. Attitude toward critical discourse analysis is a significant indicator for unleashing language power and understanding how it deals with a specific community's thinking patterns, beliefs, preferences, and social practices ([3]. Thus, it is vital to understand the current status of Discourse Studies in the research world in a systematic and structured way using the latest analytical tools such as Bibliometric Analysis.

Bibliometric Analysis is the most convenient and beneficial analytical tool to assess the historical background as well as present and future trends of publication in specific academics [4]. Bibliometric analysis is a quantitative method used to analyze publications and their citation patterns to evaluate the impact and importance of research output. It is a useful tool for researchers, academic institutions, and funding bodies to assess the impact and relevance of scientific work. Bibliometric analysis has acquired a significant position in evaluating the publication rate from a specific country with respect to its authors by the number of papers published, institution, citation-wise frequency, and the influencing factors [5]. Thus, it involves the use of various bibliometric indicators, such as the number of publications, citations, h-index, impact factor, and others, to quantify the impact and influence of a particular author, journal, or research field. These indicators provide insights into the visibility, productivity, and quality of research output. Bibliometric analysis can be used to identify trends and patterns in research, as well as to compare the performance of different authors, institutions, or countries. It can also be used to identify potential collaborators and to evaluate the impact of funding and policy decisions on the scientific community. As bibliometric analysis provides a valuable tool for assessing the impact and relevance of scientific research, and can help guide decision-making in the scientific community, the same has been used in this study to assess and evaluate the emerging area of research, viz., Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA).

CDA emerged from critical linguistics by Roger Fowler in the 1970s [6]. These social practices have historical backgrounds, and the reproduction and contestation of existing social relations are deeply rooted in those social contexts to serve various interests [6]. The focal questions of CDA are related to interests, e.g. questions about the positioning of texts. It also focuses on whose interests are specifically served by that certain text positioning. It also highlights whose interests are ignored. What would be the consequences of that particular text positioning? All these questions are based on the relationship of discourse with power. Whenever there is an analysis of the implications of discourse with respect to power use and abuse in society, it is called critical discourse analysis [7].

CDA is a form of the research methodology employed by various researchers because it deals with language as a part of social and cultural practice. CDA seeks to dig out the power irregularities and structural discrimination that formed, shaped, recognized and strengthened through the use of language [8]. CDA focuses on all those who use discourse and assert enough consideration to the prevailing socio-economic and political situations that would affect the individuals in a particular context.

CDA is a qualitative research method focusing on the relationship between written texts and the power relations concealed in visual expressions. Although CDA has a history of almost half a century, shockingly, only a few studies have been conducted on the bibliometric analysis

of its research productivity. Resultantly, not much is known about the publication trends on CDA, such as regions with the most research productivity in CDA, along with the development in the line of investigation in past decades.

### **Objectives:**

The main purpose of this research study is to highlight the research productivity in CDA covering the period from 2001-2022. The core objectives are:

1. To find out the different types of research publications published on discourse analysis in the world during the year 2000-2022
2. To explore the authorship criteria with subject to published documents, author affiliation
3. To know the country-wise production of scientific publications and collaborations among different countries with Single Country Publications (SCP) and Multiple Country publications (MCP)
4. To rank the productive journals of research publication on discourse analysis
5. To rank the languages in which the documents were published on discourse analysis from 2001 to 2022.
6. To find out the recurrent research trends in discourse analysis.

### **2. Literature Review:**

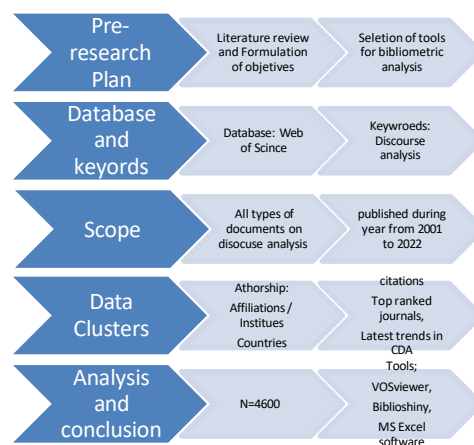
Many studies have been done on "Discourse analysis", "Critical discourse analysis", "Discourse studies", and allied subject areas. The diverse roots of CDA can be traced in vast fields of academia, including sociopsychology, philosophy, anthropology, text linguistics, stylistics, and cognitive science, as well as in applied linguistics and other related fields [9]. Many linguists, analysts and researchers have been doing work in CDA. One of the predecessors to the field of CDA was Mey [10], who has a huge contribution to the theory of pragmatics. Similarly, [11] political discourse is considered to be an influential work that is objective and pragmatic in an approach like those of [12-13]. There are other contributors, such as Waugh [14], whose work is gravely based on rhetorical analysis. Moreover, the diversity of discourse analytical traditions within the field of pragmatics has been explored in which power asymmetries within professional settings occurred, particularly in conversation analysis [15-16]. Another significant problem that has gained eminence in CDA's research is that of dominance and inequality with respect to the placement of groups and individuals in contemporary social and political hierarchies.

The researcher [17] discussed the critical practice of social analysis in discourse studies. CDA contributes majorly to the relationship between discourse and society, focusing on ideologies, power relations, institutions, dominance, social identities, etc. The researcher [18] divided the critical social analysis into two aspects, i.e., normative critique and explanatory critique, to understand its concept. Fairclough [19] argued that language is not a mere linguistic phenomenon; rather, it is a form of social practice dependent on its use by society. By studying CDA analytically, he wanted to develop awareness among people about the exploitation of social relations. The importance of CDA is growing faster in the world due to its multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary nature. It has been used not only in humanities and social sciences but also in the fields of medicine, law, judiciary, social media etc. A new emerging field in CDA is Multimodal critical discourse analysis (MCDA). In their [20] landmark book "Reading Images", gave a systematic and comprehensive discourse of visual designs. They examined various ways a visual image communicates meaning, e.g., by sculpture, photojournalism, fine arts, and kids drawing to textbook illustrations. The researcher wants to check the research productivity of CDA by using an analytical approach, i.e., Bibliometric analysis.

The focal topics to investigate are the different types of key research publications worldwide on CDA, authorship criteria, national and international collaborations, productive journals of CDA, the languages in which the research is published and the recent trends in critical discourse analysis from 2001-2022. The researchers aim to trace the progression in the research productivity of CDA across the world, covering the period from 2001-2022.

### 3. Methodology:

While opting for the optimistic approach, the researchers have conducted bibliometric and visualization techniques to achieve the objectives. The data has driven from the Web of Knowledge (WoS) on January 15, 2023, while using the term “Discourse Analysis” in the title field and adding the years 2001 to 2022. The hierarchy of the research activities is shown in Figure 1. The WoS database has been selected for this research because of its comprehensive coverage. It provides access to a vast collection of scholarly literature, including articles, conference proceedings, book chapters etc. WoS covers over 20,000 journals from various disciplines, including science, technology, social sciences, and humanities. It also has high-quality content and gives the options for citation analysis to the researchers. The Web of Knowledge is an imperative database for researchers and scholars looking for updated trends, research and the latest developments in their respective areas and evaluating their work's impact and significance.



**Fig. 1** Steps of bibliometric analysis of critical discourse analysis

A total of 4603 documents were salvaged from the WoS core collection, and after critical evaluation and scrutiny, 4600 were finalized for data analysis. Only three articles were removed from the final dataset as these three articles have very little information that is insufficient for analysis. The data were retrieved, which have details of authors, affiliation, keywords, citations and types of publications. The data have different nodes, each representing an item like author, country, affiliation, keywords etc.

VOSviewer, Biblioshiny, and MS Excel software were used to analyze the data. The purpose of using these visualization softwares was to give a graphical picture of the data which is easy to understand. The VOSviewer is designed by Van Eck and Waltman [21] and is gaining popularity among the researchers of bibliometric studies. “The Biblioshiny was also developed by R Core Team and the R Foundation for statistical computing. The package was built in R, a programming language for statistical computing and graphics [22]. Both visualization software has strengths in visualizing the data, providing science mapping, developing node relations,

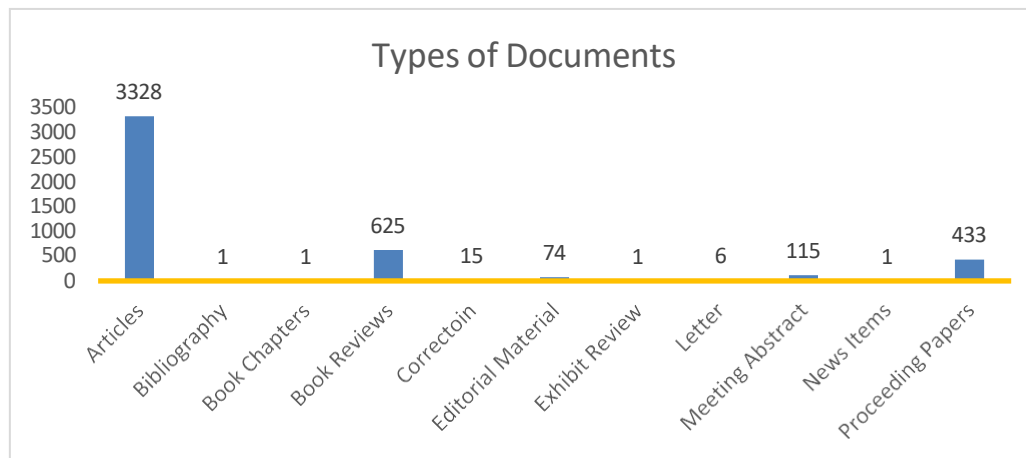
and presenting the result in very apt visual mode. MS. Excel was used to validate the data as the researchers got the data in Excel format for scrutiny and further analysis.

**4. Results and Discussion:**

Considering the study's objectives, the analysis has been made using the VOSviewer, Biblioshiny, and MS Excel software. A total of 4603 scientific publications on ISI Web of Science (previously known as Web of Knowledge), published from 2001 to 2022, were retrieved. After cleaning the data, 4600 documents were finalized for further data analysis. The final analysis process removed the three documents with insufficient information initially put in the "correction" category.

**4.1 Types of Documents**

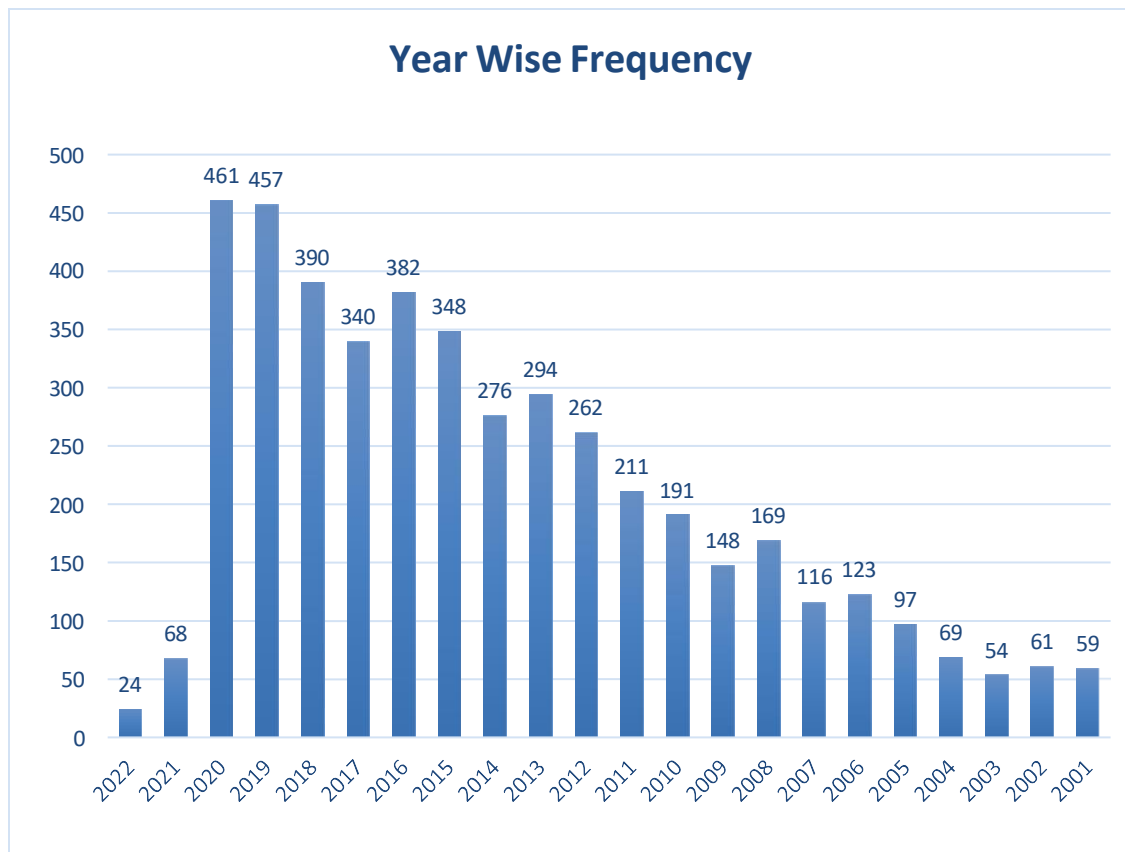
The data in Figure 2 shows that the articles with quantity 3328 are the top-ranked type of documents published by the research in the ISI Web of Knowledge database. The article always attracts the authors due to the multiple advantages like the short publication process, focused research, sharing of the latest knowledge etc. This result also aligns with the previous study [23]. Book Reviews (625) were the second top-ranked type of document, followed by Proceeding Papers (433), Meeting Abstracts (115) and editorial material type have 174 types of scientific publications.



**Fig. 2** Types of Scientific Publications, published in Web of Knowledge

**4.2 Year Wise Publication Frequency**

The current study covers the publications published from 2001 to 2022. During this period, 461 publications were published in the year 2020. In 2019, the total number of publications was 457, and in 2018, the publications were 390. The researchers could retrieve data from only 24 publications published in 2022, which is a much smaller quantity of publications than the publications published in other years. The reason may be that the papers are in the publication process but their metadata is available on the website of WoS.



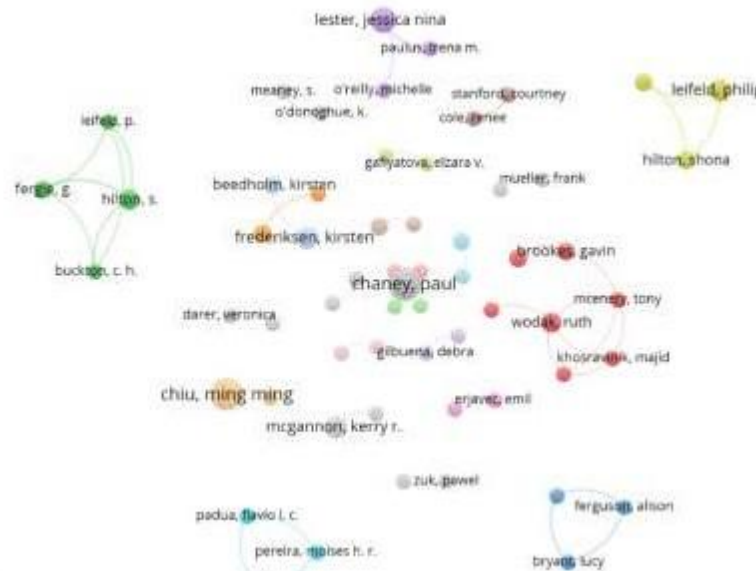
**Fig. 3** Year-wise publication frequency of the published papers in WoS

### 4.3 Authorship:

Authorship of the research production is an important factor in knowing about the different segments like its affiliation, range of publications, citations they got and their geographical locations [24]. A detailed authorship analysis has been made in the following paragraphs.

#### 4.3.1 Scientific Publications and Citation Analysis:

From 2001 to 2022, a total of 4600 articles were published on WoS Database by 1016 researchers. The author Chaney Paul ranked top with his 13 publications during the reported period, and Chiu Ming Ming was the second top author with scientific publications. Mainguenau Dominique contributed with ten publications. The researcher, Khosravinik Majid, is top-ranked due to the 892 citations against the three documents. The Krzyanowski Michal was the second with 753 citations with scientific publications, and Wodak Ruth was ranked at number three with 732 citations with five publications. A total of 20 research publications got more than 100 citations against their research publication published in WoS.



**Fig. 4** Authorship – documents and citations of the publication on discourse analysis

**4.3.2 Author affiliation and citations rate**

As in Figure 5, different institutional clusters can be viewed. The bigger cluster has more articles published by authors from that particular institute. The researchers belong to the University of Lancaster, ranked top with published 47 research documents and got 2237 citations. Cardiff University ranked second with a research publication of 33, but the citations were very low, which is 474. The University of British Columbia researchers published 30 publications with a citation rate of 430. All other organizations/institutes have 29 or less than 20 research publications published in ISI Web Knowledge from 2001-2022. These results are aligned with previous studies [6, 25]



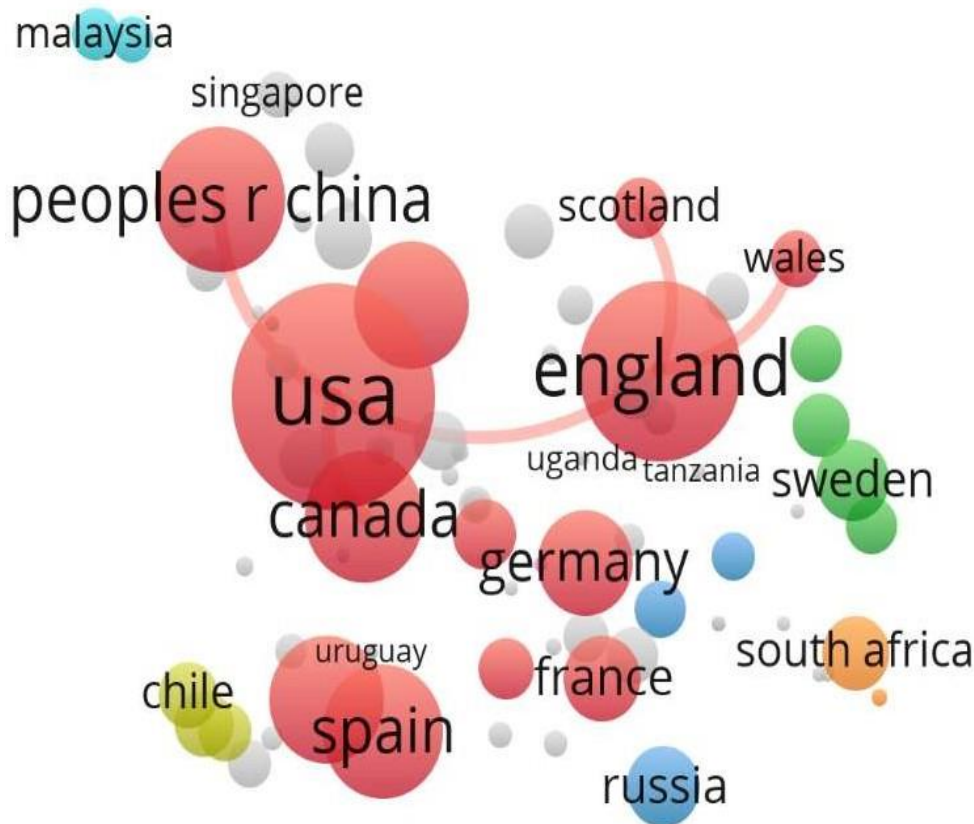
**Fig 5** Author affiliation and citation rate of the publication on discourse analysis

**4.3.3 Author, countries, and citation analysis:**

As shown in Figure 6, the authors who belong to the United States of America ranked top with published 773 (16.80%) documents and got 10724 citations from 2001 to 2022. The United Kingdom was the top 2 ranked country that published 500 (10.87%) articles with 9595



citations. The authors belong to the Peoples' Republic of China and published 318 (6.913%) scientific publications with 934 citations. The researchers consider the country which belongs to the first author of the scientific publications.



**Fig. 6** Author, countries, and citations details of the publication on discourse analysis

#### 4.4 Productive Countries and International Collaboration

The bibliometric analysis of discourse analysis got the attention of researchers from different countries around the globe. The data in Table 1 shows that the developed countries have larger research productions as compared to the developing or under-developed countries. The United States of America, with research documents 773, got the top-ranked country in the world. The Single Country Publication (SCP) of the USA was 664, and the Multiple Countries Publication (MCP) was 49 with 0.15 frequencies. England published 500 articles with a ratio of 10.87%, SCP was 451, and MCP was 49 papers. England was ranked second, followed by the Peoples' Republic of China, Spain, Canada, Brazil, Australia, Germany, France, and Russia. The result of this study is slightly different from the previous study [23]. The reason may be the research scope, the applicant of the formula to determine the top-ranked productive country etc.

Table 1: Top 10 productive countries along with their international collaboration

Country	Documents	Citations	% (N-4600)	SCP	MCP	Freq	MCP_Ratio
USA	773	10724	16.80	664	49	0.155	0.06
ENGLAND	500	9595	10.87	451	49	0.108	0.09



PEOPLES R CHINA	318	934	6.91	242	76	0.076	0.02
SPAIN	271	1544	5.89	226	45	0.068	0.06
CANADA	260	3002	5.65	221	16	0.052	0.06
BRAZIL	247	433	5.37	220	14	0.051	0.06
AUSTRALIA	245	3476	5.33	178	26	0.044	0.12
GERMANY	174	1456	3.78	165	25	0.041	0.13
FRANCE	114	772	2.48	98	16	0.034	0.10
RUSSIA	101	161	2.20	92	4	0.021	0.04

SCP=Single country Publication, MCP=Multiple Country Publication

This study also finds out the international collaboration among the countries. With reference to Figure 6, only those countries with a minimum of 3 articles in WoS were included. The data showed that the USA is the top-ranked country with 773 publications and 10724 citations. England was ranked at 2 with 500 publications and 6565 citations, followed by China with 318 publications and 934 citations, Spain with 271 publications and 1544 citations, Canada with 260 publications and 3002 citations, and Australia published 245 documents and got 3476 citations. The data also revealed 29 clusters within 102 countries. These clusters showed international collaborations among researchers from different countries. The People's Republic of China has the highest collaborative authorship (MCP=76), followed by the USA (MCP=49) and England (MCP=49), Spain (MCP=45), Australia (MCP=26) and Germany (MCP=25).

Country Collaboration Map



**Fig.7** Network visualization map of international collaboration

#### 4.5 Productive Journals

A total of 2350 journals published 4600 different types of scientific publications on the ISI Web of Knowledge platform. The journal's title, "Discourse Society", is the top-ranked journal that published 100 (2.17) documents with the keyword "discourse analysis" from 2001 to 2022. The discourse studies ranked at two, which published 71 documents with 1.57% on "discourse analysis" during the reported period. The other top-ranked journals are "Critical Discourse Study", "Journal of Language and Politics", "Discourse Communication", "International Journal of English Linguistics", "Advances in Social Science Education and Humanities Research", "Journal of Pragmatics", "Language in Society", and "Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences".

Table 2: Top-ranked journals as per record count

Publication Titles	Record Count	% of 4,600
DISCOURSE SOCIETY	100	2.174
DISCOURSE STUDIES	71	1.543
CRITICAL DISCOURSE STUDIES	54	1.174
JOURNAL OF LANGUAGE AND POLITICS	46	1.000
DISCOURSE COMMUNICATION	41	0.891
INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ENGLISH LINGUISTICS	40	0.870
ADVANCES IN SOCIAL SCIENCE EDUCATION AND HUMANITIES RESEARCH	31	0.674
JOURNAL OF PRAGMATICS	31	0.674
LANGUAGE IN SOCIETY	24	0.522
PROCEDIA SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES	24	0.522

#### 4.6 Research Trends in Discourse Analysis

The trends can be visualized through the keywords of any published document. Therefore, cutting-edge topics can be determined by the frequency of the keywords. The more frequency of the keyword means it is gaining popularity among researchers of the particular field. With 101 frequencies, the language got a top-ranked trend from 2001 to 2022. The trend of "language" got its peak in 2013, then in 2016, and finally in 2019. The second trend was "politics", with 99 publications during the reported period. "Health" got ranked 3 (86), followed by "policy" (82), "Media" (69), "Management" (55), "Science; Knowledge"; Work (47), and "care" (45). All other trends got the attention of 35 or below researchers.

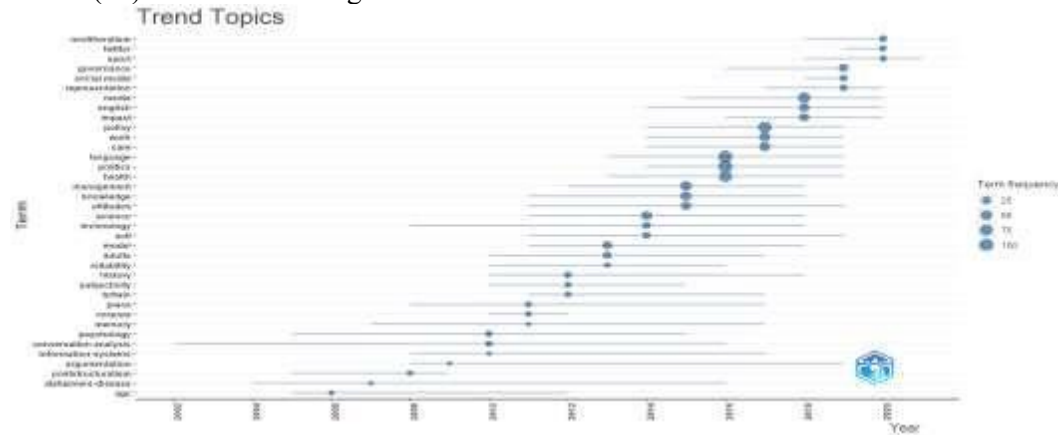


Fig 8 Research trends in discourse analysis

#### 5. Conclusion, Implication, Limitations and Recommendations

The findings of this study showed a rapid increase in publications over the years. The type "Article" got popular in the research of discourse analysis. There are multiple reasons for the majority of publications of this type, i.e., the quick publication process, increased research ranking in terms of impact factor, sharing of latest knowledge etc. The institute located in developed countries produced more publications as compared to other countries. This result also concluded that the subject area "Discourse analysis" is gaining popularity among those countries like Australia, Canada, Spain, Germany and the Peoples Republic of China. The results also show an increase in international collaboration among countries, which is getting a global understanding of the phenomena. Due to available sources for networking and linkages,

international collaboration is gaining popularity. In a few years, the research on discourse analysis is also gauging the attention of the researchers. Many areas, like language, health, policy, media management, knowledge etc., are doing research projects in this field.

The results of this study can be beneficial for those who want to conduct discourse analysis in their respective field. Researchers who want to explore the phenomena at the international level can also find opportunities for collaboration at the global level. The cutting-edge areas will also guide researchers to work in the latest areas and with the latest tools. The results of this research will also help new researchers to know the application of visualization tools in bibliometric studies.

This research has some limitations like the data was driven from one database (WoS) while using the terms "discourse analysis", "discourse studies", and "bibliometric analysis of discourse analysis", but there might be a chance that the article could not be retrieved which do not have given these keywords. The data range of this study was from 2001 to 2022, and the results may differ from the other studies if the range under study is changed. For this study, the authors apply three software/applications, i.e. VOSviewer, Biblioshiny, and MS Excel software. The data manipulates through these softwares may present different results. In this case, the authors validated the results with the actual data that is being driven from the WoS database.

Future research may include the vast range of publication years to explore the phenomena in detail. This study only used one database to get the dataset of this research. Future researchers should compare this data with another database like Scopus. Multiple visualization tools are available, but only two are used in this research. Future researchers validate this research while using other tools. The scope of this study was to know the types of publications, authorship, country-wise production of research documents, ranking of research journals in the context of discourse analysis, and to find out the current research trends. In a nutshell, many areas are still left, like the co-occurrence of keywords, cited references, the impact of authors in the context of h-Index and impact factor etc., which should be addressed in future research.

### **Statements and Declarations**

#### **Competing Interests:**

The authors/researchers hereby professed no budding conflict of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

#### **Data Availability Statement**

Raw data for all tables and figures, added in the text are not publicly available due to access restrictions. The data is only available to registered subscribers of the database i.e. <https://access.clarivate.com/login?app=wos&alternative=true&shibShireURL=https://www.webofknowledge.com/&shibReturnURL=https://www.webofknowledge.com/&roaming=true>

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