

## Micro-Paper 22: *Critical Discourse Analysis*

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### Defining the Term

Critical Discourse Analysis (or CDA) is a research methodology that studies human discourse, understood as oral and written interactions with and through language in diverse social settings, to make sense of how people use language and what social and cultural factors appear as most influential. Factors under analysis can range from preference of grammatical structures to sentence construction to the congruence of language use and social settings.

CDA, aligned with some principles of Critical Theory, has a particularly vested interest in discussing issues of power dynamics and the role of language to either empower or marginalize individuals in said settings. For its analysis, CDA draws from elements in linguistics, social semiotics, and literacy. This has turned CDA into a favored methodology for those in areas such as media literacy studies. In the case of language education, there is an existing tradition of CDA to explore issues related to language use in classrooms, teaching, and even the curriculum.

### Connecting it to LSLP

While the lead researcher has used features of CDA for some previous studies, our gaming literacies team has begun to explore how CDA can aid our research on how gamers use English as a resource for victory. Our belief is

that our study of the discourse patterns that will surface in the gaming communities and the play-throughs in which we will observe and participate will enable us to make better sense of how gamers and their communities finds new uses for languages that develop agency. We also believe that including CDA will provide new insights about language appropriation in virtual spaces.

### Expanding Second Language Research

CDA and second language research have a very close relationship. Plenty of studies have discussed issues of inequality in language practices. Once our research community in second languages continues to explore language use in media, out-of-school literacies, and virtual communities, the potential for conducting CDA-based research in our field as a tool for agency will only become stronger.

### References

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