# From Element to Structure:
# Changes in Jacques Lacan's Theory of the Signifier Based on the Unary Trait

**Izabela Loner Santana**
UNICAMP - BR
**Daniel Omar Perez**
UNICAMP – BR

**Abstract**

*The aim of this article is to discuss the changes in the conception of language in Jacques Lacan's teaching based on the transformation of its minimum element, the signifier. We will begin by reconstructing the first definition of the signifier that we find in the* Seminar *of the 1950s with anthropological-linguistic structuralism, approaching its transformation at the beginning of the 1960s with the introduction of the unary trait. In this paper, we will try to extract each comprehension of language that follows or are derived from the different definitions of signifier. Doing so, we will indicate the solidarity between the element and the structure, that is, how the properties of one interfere in the consistency of the other and how, in the change operated by Lacan on the element, a modification is extracted in the structuring of language.*

***Keywords***: Jacques Lacan, Language, Signifier, Unary Trait

**1.**

We can specify Lacan's contribution to psychoanalysis in the passage from the science of nature to the science of language [*langage*]. This was only possible because he centralized language and understood it as a system of forms, laws and rules that offered the conditions of possibility for both the scientificity of psychoanalysis and the experience of the speaker. This system underwent a transformation between the 1950s and 1960s with the limits found in the linguistic-anthropological structuralism's framework, responsible for this transition to language.

Because of its impact, this transformation can be captured on several fronts, but here it will be approached from the minimum element that assembles, structures and organizes language, the signifier. Although it was a linguistic borrowing, even after Lacan's relative criticism of this reference, this concept was not excluded from transmission or research, but was reworked. It was removed from the linguistic field and even from the so-called structuralist field and elevated to a Lacanian concept, maintaining its function as a structuring element of language, modified in its consistency.

To follow this, we will go through the definition of signifier presented in the first decade of Lacan's teaching, together with linguistic-anthropological structuralism. Next, we will discuss the mutations undergone with the introduction of the *unary trait* [*trait unaire*] in the ninth year of the *Seminar* (1961-1962). The difference, previously a relational difference *between* signifiers, is internalized in the very element that structures language and breaks down its unity. Finally, we will go from element to structure, from signifier to language, verifying how the non-structuralist signifier made it possible to elaborate another definition and understanding of language.

**2.**

In his 'return to Freud', Lacan tried to inscribe psychoanalysis into language by taking a detour through linguistics, the science that, at the time, was in 'pilot position' and was responsible for the 'reclassification of the sciences', by a 'revolution in knowledge' (Lacan 2006: 414).

The psychoanalyst extracts the systematic-structural comprehension of language [*langage*] from the linguistics research on languages [*langues*]. In so doing, he understood language [*langage*] as a field and also extracting the necessity to thematize and investigate its structuring unit: for Ferdinand de Saussure the sign (a double-sided element since it is made up of signified and signifier) and for Lacan the signifier.

We must remember that, in Saussure's view, structural research gave linguistics meaning and scientificity by placing language [*langue*] as a determining fact that introduced 'a natural order into a mass that lends itself to no other classification', a principle of classification and ordering in the general and vague facts of language [*langage*], based on its delimited and systematic character (Saussure 1959: 9).

General and vague facts because the language was understood to be 'many-sided and heterogeneous' and, until then, had been presented by linguists physically, physiologically and psychologically, ranging from the individual to the social domain, without any possibility of delimitation or classification. Therefore, it was a non-rigorous object for a science, which 'we cannot put [...] into any category of human facts, for we cannot discover its unity' (*Ib*.).

If language [*langage*] or speech did not guarantee linguistic science neither unity nor the possibility of scientificity and classification, this was only ensured by taking language [*langue*] as 'a system whose parts can and must all be considered in their synchronic solidarity' (87). In other words, linguistic science would only be possible by taking

language [*langue*] as a system that is assembled and functions through the relations of reciprocal differentiation of its elements, the signs, which carry no value in themselves, but only operate negatively, in oppositional comparison to the others.[1]

By introducing this advances of phonology into linguistics, Saussure was able to give it an effective object, the language [*langue*]. Not in a historical or comparative sense — as criticized in the opening of his *Course in general linguistics* —, but in a systematic way that gives unity and consistency.

Lacan, at the beginning of his teaching in the 1950s, found a similar scientific problem and followed a similar path. He took the Freudian concepts of the 'ambiguity of everyday language' (Lacan 2006: 240) and post-Freudian revisionism and gave 'scientific value' (239) and intelligibility to psychoanalytic science, placing psychoanalysis in the field of language [langage]. Language was not understood as an instrument for expressing thoughts or representations, but as a field, a structure, which gave systematization and structurality to the science of the unconscious. Ultimately, this resulted in a coextension between psychoanalysis and the field of language.

By adhering to linguistic-anthropological structuralism, Lacan found in language an order of determination and organization. This allowed him to structurally articulate facts, phenomena and concepts that had previously been poorly founded or co-opted by post-Freudian revisionism, lost in references stemming from biology and the various philosophies of consciousness (see Politzer 1994 and Althusser 1996).

---

[1] [...] in language [*langue*] there are only differences. Even more important: a difference generally implies positive terms between which the difference is set up; but in language [*langue*] there are only differences *without positive terms*. Whether we take the signified or the signifier, language [*langue*] has neither ideas nor sounds that existed before the linguistic system, but only conceptual and phonic differences that have issued from the system (Saussure 1959: 120).

Although guided by the linguistic example, Lacan found structure in another dimension, namely in *langage* and no longer in *langue*. With this, language [*langage*] is no longer formulated as a heteroclite or plural object, not delimitable and not rigorous, but rather the place *par excellence* of structure and systematicity previously bequeathed only to particular languages [*langues*].

Saussure considers particular languages [*langues*] in closed systems in themselves, while Lévi-Strauss presents a structural similarity between independent spheres of different values, symbolic orders that share the same code system, each one being, in its particularity, different from each other. Unlike them, Lacan founded the symbolic dimension as a total structural covering of language, unifying it (Safatle 2006: 115). For this reason, his mobilization of structuralism wasn't just a method of defining the object of study of his science. It was about founding a symbolic dimension, a structural place.

Such a generalization and unification could lead us to think of ultimate structures and all their metaphysical weight as more universal than the particular linguistic and anthropological cases. Lacan, however, took this step not by postulating an ultimate and determining structure, or the place where this instance would be structured, but by investigating it from its element. Lacan started from its unit of structuring and formalization, the signifier. Thus operating from the angle of 'minimal properties that a system attributes to it, a system which itself is reduced to its minimal systemic properties; and to only consider an unspecified system from the point of view of the minimal elements into which it can be divided' (Milner 2021: 64–65), the signifier.

Although Saussure and Lacan have thematized the structuring element, we need to remember that what occupies this function changes from one theory to the other, which is no small difference.

Lacan no longer took the sign as the structuring element, like Saussure, made up of two parts, the concept (signified) and its acoustic image (signifier), but gave primacy to the signifier, isolating it.

**3.**

In the Lacanian text 'The instance of the letter in the unconscious, or reason since Freud', from 1957, we can follow the path in which Lacan introduced the signifier into his teaching. By inverting the signified and signifier, and removing the circular tracing that unified them as sign, he was undoing the 'symmetrical couple' that Saussure deposited between them (Milner 2021: 65). As a consequence, we have the abandonment of a elementary unity of two reciprocal phases by an even more minimal unit: the signifier, which began to determine the effects of signification by associating itself with other signifiers, other minimal structures, no longer making a whole with the other part of the sign, the signified.

Lacan said that 'the algorithm itself is but a pure function of the signifier' (2006: 501). This formula, according to Nancy and Lacoue-Labarthe, would indicate that the signifier itself functions in an algorithmic way, 'according to the algorithmic nature of the algorithm' (1992: 47), through operativity, an oppositional relation between signifiers, which has no meaning whatsoever.

The language that the signifier structures can be taken as an ordered object, with its own laws of operation and articulation, being autonomous, not depending on any external instance to create it or make it work.

> This absence of meaning is due to the autonomous functioning of the algorithmic chain insofar as it is conceived as a chain of differential marks which mark nothing by themselves except their reciprocal positions and the relations

(or combinations) through which a 'meaning' is fabricated (a meaning which is itself not defined by the aim of any content, or signified, whether empirical or true) (Nancy, Lacoue-Labarthe 1992: 47).

Given the composition in units, whether of the sign or the signifier, there is the law of articulation, the combinatory between them, which guarantees that they are not separate atoms, but that they make and function in structure. It should be added that these laws and articulations 'come from nowhere but from the system itself' (Arrivé 1999: 100)[2], without any agent or cause, the thing itself works. In Lacan's words, 'the structure of the signifier is, as is commonly said of language, that it is articulated', which means that 'its units [...] are subject to the twofold condition of being reduced to ultimate differential elements and of combining the latter according to the laws of a closed order' (Lacan 2006: 501). And with this, it is differentially articulated thanks to phonological oppositionality, because 'in the symbolic order every element has value through being opposed to another' (Lacan 1997: 9).

Thus, although the Lacanian signifier has undergone changes compared to the Saussurean, we may consider it to be the 'eponym and epistemological etym' of the linguist's signifier (Arrivé 1999: 73). By maintaining oppositional differentiability and combinatorial articulation, we confirm that there has been conceptual maintenance and not only a borrowing of terms (*Ib*.). This is no understatement, given that it were those properties that supported the status that Lacan gave to his conception of language at the time.

---

[2] Quotations taken from works written in other languages than English have been translated by the authors.

**4.**

This negative and oppositional definition of the signifier, which deepens its unity in the face of Saussure's element (sign), lasted throughout the first decade of Lacan's teaching. In this movement, Lacan was able to completely unify and symbolize language, overcoming the image criticized by Saussure (multiform and non-rigorous) in a systematic consistency.

Language was not only unified and closed in itself (always with all the elements/signifiers in co-presence to co-determine themselves oppositely) but also – and precisely because of such unification and closure – autonomous, self-founded and functioning. This shift allowed Lacan, at the beginning of his teaching, to escape from any reference to a natural or biological prior to language (substantialism, biologicism and organicism criticized in Freud, see Silveira 2007: 43) and from any notion of representation or consciousness.

Regarding the autonomy of the signifying system, in the second year of the *Seminar*, at the end of the December 1st, 1954 lecture, the psychoanalyst commented on the situation of Levistraussian theory at the time. Lacan stated that the anthropologist was 'in the midst of backtracking as regards the very sharp bipartition which he makes between nature and symbol' (Lacan 1991: 35). This performed the function of 'a method which allows him to distinguish between registers [symbolic and imaginary], and by the same token between orders of facts' (*Ib*.). Lévi-Strauss was oscillating because he feared that the autonomy of the symbolic register would bring back to concrete and scientific theorizing something of a transcendence, 'that after we have shown God out of one door, we will bring him back in by the other' (*Ib*.).

Unlike the anthropologist, Lacan deepened the autonomy and the independence of the structure of signifiers (and, with it, of the language and the symbolic) until at least the end of the 1950s. Separating it

more and more from any imaginary, any meaning or sense, transforming it into pure form and, with its laws of articulation, combinatorics and functioning, algebraized this self-functioning language. Lacan defined it as a 'symbolic universe' of pure mathematical form, since it was 'a set of conventions from which you can generate a whole series of consequences, of theorems which follow on from one another, and establish certain structural relations, a law' (34).

In the same academic year, he affirmed that language was a universe, with the 'circulation of speech' and its 'swells', 'to the point of constituting the world of the symbol which makes algebraic', being a structure detached from the activity of the subject, something like a 'symbolic world', something that he even compared to a mechanic functioning (47). This move made it possible to reaffirm the unified (universe) and operative (circulation) character of the field that the signifier set up.

But, then, a question arises: was this purification sufficient for Lacan's purposes of separating the symbolic structural functioning of language from any external, imaginary and transcendent content? In other words: through this path, taken and subverted from structural linguistics, does the signifier works on its own and grounds itself? What guarantees its unity? What guarantees that it works in one way and not in another? What is the scope of the system that holds all the signifiers present so that each one may be what the others are not? How can we guarantee that each one is present and, with that, each one's position is established? Wouldn't there be more signifiers? Wouldn't it show the contingency and occasionality of each articulation?

The need for articulation and oppositeness in the linguistic structure, which seemed to be self-founded – because it derived directly from the properties of the element that organized it – proved, in the course of teaching, to be alienated in a series of assumptions

about the unity and totality of the signifying whole and signifying element.

Lacan, at the time of the fifth *Seminar*, mainly in the 'logic of castration' that is presented in this (see Lacan 2017), in an attempt to guarantee the  consistency of the symbolic structure of language, resorted some transcendental signifiers that would come to the rescue of the others, such as the *name-of-the-father* and the *phallus*. These would close the structure (the Other) being its limit, making the system possible: we can speak of all the signifiers being present and in a closed system, self-founded and functioning because there are signifiers that are outside this universe, representing it from the outside and supporting it, so we can know that those that combine in opposition are all of them.

This answer, however, couldn't be maintained for much long, as it postulated something outside language to sustain it, failing in its total reduction to the signifier and to support the autonomy, making God (in the paternal and phallic figures) return through the back door. By definition, the signifier is what the others are not in the system of differences. So how could it be at any other level than the structure, other than in constant exchanges with others? If it is self-founded in its functioning, how can it demand another level of guarantee and, if we open it up, what is it and where does this signifier come from?

**5.**

In the ninth *Seminar*, lecture of November 22, 1962, Lacan addressed the question of the signifying chain support.[3] After a detour through

---

[3] Although we are working here with the unary trait, we should not take it as a unique turning point in the teaching, since other concepts and categories were already being modified, such as the very notion of the real, which we will return to in the conclusion, and the critique of the notion of totality. In the 'Remarks on Daniel Lagache's Presentation' published in 1960, but in preparation since 1958, Lacan assumes that he has taken up Lévi-Strauss' notion of structure and added to it the notion of the

the divine figure that in Descartes would guarantee knowledge, he affirmed that, in the signifying chain, it is not any transcendent being that sustains it, but the trait.

> What does that mean if not that we find ourselves there in everything that one can call the battery of the signifier confronted with this single trait, with this *einziger Zug* which we already know, so that if really necessary it could be substituted for all the elements of what constitutes the signifying chain, supports this chain, all by itself and simply by being always the same (lecture of 22/11/1961).

It should be noted that the notion of support (or guarantee) now is not the same as that found with the name-of-the-father, much less that which we may find in Cartesian terms. If these could be compared to God, an extra-symbolic and external point that guaranteed the necessity and possibility of structuring, the trait was introduced from the understanding that self-organization is radical and takes place internally, again, through the minimal element, its sameness and serial repetition.

If the self-foundation and self-functioning of the chain were problematic because they presupposed a guarantee external to the code, the situation gets worse when we realize that this is linked to the notions of totality and unity that are normatively presupposed and not produced as necessary effects of the notion of the signifier.

With the trait, the approach to structure continues through the elementary unit, but this is now only allocated intrasymbolically, since

---

set, avoiding the totality and the predetermination that this would confer on the signifying system, for example (see Lacan 2006: 648).

the trait is what materially supports the chain. As the psychoanalyst said,

> the necessity of this guarantor, of the most simple structural trait, of the unique trait, absolutely depersonalised, may I say, not alone of all subjective content, but even of all variation which goes beyond this single trait, of this trait which is one by being the single trait (lecture of November 11, 1961)

The trait in his materiality takes nothing more than his own unicity. This is an interesting passage because it articulates the guarantee, the unity and the trait, not as something specific, but because it is one and always the same. It can be counted as a mark.

The chain is materially supported by the traits that are inscribed, as in the counting sticks of serial hunting, which are 'the repetition of the apparently identical that there is created' (lecture of February 28, 1962). The chain is not sustained by any agent or subject, but by the fact that the traits are written in series one after the other, regardless of their qualities.

If difference was already on the scene in signifier oppositionality, with the introduction of the trait we see a new difference emerging, one that doesn't occur *between* the signifiers in systemic articulation, but in *each* signifier. In this sense, Lacan said that each trait is different from the others not because they function positively as different, 'but because the signifying difference is distinct from anything that refers to qualitative difference [...] by the fact that the signifier as such serves to connote difference in the pure state' (lecture of December 06, 1961). This can be complemented by the fact that 'it is *qua* pure difference that the unit, in its signifying function, structures itself, constitutes itself' (lecture of November 29, 1961).

To be 'pure difference' is to bring negativity to the center of the signifier, no longer in the relation of one to the others, but in the very consistency of each of them. They are not differentiated externally, in a system that guarantees everyone and, therefore, each one, but in themselves, being nothing more than pure difference. It is no longer a question of the oppositional difference, but of the absolute difference that structures the signifier and, with it, the symbolic with the trait being what marks this difference.

There is a shift from a differential model in which the difference is given under a background of positivity (the required presence of all the signifiers unified together), places guaranteed by the transcendental of the closed system, to a differential model that is constituted, in its elements, of differences. Using Lacan's examples: each hunt does not presuppose all the others so they can be compared and differentiated. This implied the collection as already given, with something qualitative still remaining for differentiation, even if it was formal, even if it was phonetic (in signifier's case), which opposed one occurrence to another. It also presupposed that each occurrence was a unity formed in itself which only then, in a system, entered into negative comparison and, in this, took its place.

It doesn't form a closed and synchronic system, but an open and serial one, with the series, the line of sticks one after the other, being what articulates and allows the place of signifier to be defined.

With the precision of the signifier and starting from the trait, Lacan subverted the very identity of the signifier itself or, in other words, its unity. With this new understanding,

> It is therefore no longer possible for the phrase 'the signifier
> is what all the others are not' to remain consistent in the
> psychoanalytic field because this sentence immediately
> implies the existence of a closed system within which the

elements only define themselves reciprocally. But we must insist: only insofar as 'all' continues to refer, as in the Saussurian origin of the principle of intrasystemic oppositivity, to a closed set (Silveira 2007: 207).

In other words, although Saussure proposed unity to approach and structure the system, it presupposed the whole, the 'all'. Oppositional negativity depended on a background of positivities and presences in order to function as negativity. It is not a radical negativity, something that in itself is nothing or a difference and simply operates. But an understanding of negativity on the level that Lacan described in 'The Purloined Letter Seminar' with the image of the library: as the 'file of a volume when it is lost in the library' (Lacan 2006: 25). A book that can be taken, even if it is absent, not because of its intrinsic properties, because of its content, but because it has a predetermined place in an already given system.

The elementary unity that structured language depended on a totality, just as every totality depends on a unity. As Lacan said in the ninith academic year:

unity and totality at once solidary, linked to the other in this relationship that one could call a relationship of inclusion, totality being totality with respect to units, but unity being what founds totality [...] (lecture of March 07, 1962).

Here we can see how the question of the minimum unit necessarily led to the question of the signifying totality, if we presuppose the properties given to it within the horizon of linguistic-psychoanalytic structuralism and how this leads to the transcendence discussed above. From the unity of the minimum element (signifier) to the totality of the

system (language). How can we conceive of a self-functioning and founding language with such a presupposition?

Lacan was facing a serious problem: trying to avoid a total approach to structure, he approached it through its unity. But unity itself led to totality in its closed version, full of compromises and norms. How to get out of this? By radicalizing difference. Therefore, it seemed necessary to reformulate the signifier, the notion of the minimum element, questioning its own unity as an element.

This led to a revision of the necessity and closure of the chain: another difference between the father's guarantee and the trait's guarantee is that the trait only supports functioning and self-foundation, but not any transcendental law of functioning, nor any higher point of determination (transcendental, extra-symbolic signifier). The transcendental is internalized and language itself gives its conditions of existence and functioning, radically.

The signifying series occurs not as a totality with a set already given, but with each occurrence of the trait. Its serial chain can only be extracted retroactively [*après-coup*] when already given through repetition. The set of signifiers is not given, but is constructed without each one depending on it to be inscribed.

To point out the contingency and incompleteness of the chain, of the symbolic that is structured in it, is to question the need for the law as transcendental and normative. This opens up space for issues that Lacan worked on in more detail afterwards, such as contingency itself as the origin of necessity of discourse (see Lacan 2019, lecture of January 19, 1972) and the real that determines language (see Lacan 2019: 11).

As a result, if we previously accepted the need for symbolic structuring over language as complete, we now see a gap opening up between the code or language and symbolic structuring. That is the case not due to there being something that belongs to language that

cannot be structured by the laws of the signifier, but because the signifier itself is not one, is not an unity. Therefore, it cannot unify the space it organizes by not being under a transcendental guarantee figure. With this, we can see the end of the coextension between language and symbolic.

**6.**

If a structural approach in psychoanalysis depended on a minimum element, how did it remain after the critique of its unity? We have already seen above how the non-unitary signifiers are linked, articulated serially, even as pure differences. But in order to understand how Lacan continued to work on the minimal non-unitary element to structure his conception of language, let's look at other points in the ninth *Seminar*.

Alongside the presentation of the trait in his teaching, Lacan introduced the theory of sets to discuss the question of the unity of the signifier and the trait. For him, the starting point in this theory is given by the function of the element. To be an element in a set is to be something that is not determinable by any attributive logic, but which dissociates, disarticulates in a 'definitive manner the predicate from the attribute' (Lacan 2019: 167).

Here we can understand the previously ambiguous difference between unity and element. The unit was linked to a determined totality; the element, to a structure, to a set of articulated signifiers. The latter does not depend on the qualification or attribute of the signifier, on being what the others are not, or even on the sound differentiability that opposes one signifier to another and determines their positions. The element participates in a set in which what counts is the distinctive unity of being an element, unlike the attributive logic in which an individual participates in an attribute, in the constitution of

a class, defined by the predicates and the unity they can receive (Lacan 2019: 167).

We thus see the emergence of a new understanding and organization of the *langagière* universe, in solidarity with the trait: Lacan defined the signifier with the trait and affirmed that its unity, as pure difference, should not be understood as a unifying operation, correlated with totality (lecture of February 28, 1962) that is diluted in a background of positivities, as it was if the sign.

The 'distinctive unit' of the trait is different of the 'unifying unit' of the 'the One, the big 1 which dominates all thinking from Plato to Kant, the One which for Kant, *qua* synthetic function, is the very model of what in every *a priori* category brings with it, he says, the function of a norm, to be understood as a universal rule' (lecture of February 21, 1962). Against this, Lacan proposed the *unicity* of the signifier in a 'process of increasing simplification' (lecture of February 21, 1962) that marks the difference of the signifier in itself because of the breakdown of the unity previously guaranteed by the presupposed whole and the fact that it needs to be something, even if formal or phonic, in order to enter into opposition.

The unifying one, as one of the class, as mentioned above, is solidified from the universal and the logic of predicates, assuming a previously existing collection (all the signifiers in copresence) that can be classified. The universe has always been given, even if assembled in oppositional differentiations, and is therefore normative. Thinking of the signifier before the trait, it may not be a positive with considerable properties and qualities, but it can be allocated and specified by being part of a whole. In this, it is a unifying unit, which articulates and is articulated in a whole. But there is the other signifier, that of unicity, which is also that one of the countable, of the serial that is made by repeating itself independently of any previously given collection, of any totality.

Another important change in this new configuration based on the trait is the increasing distance between the signifier and the sign, because the trait is the 'essence of the signifier through which it is distinguished from the sign' (lecture of December 06, 1961), where it separates itself from meaning and significance by being pure trait and difference. A further step in the de-imaginarization of the code, radicalizing its autonomy without resorting to any transcendent or divine figure.

## 7.

Finally, to conclude, let's emphasize that at the beginning of his teaching, by resorting to the structuring unit (signifier), Lacan was able to escape the totalizing and imaginary approaches of structure. This strategy, however, did not free him at the time from the imaginarization that resisted beyond all senses and meanings: the imaginary consistency imprinted on the ideals of unity and totality, and in this he neglected, at least until the early 1960s, 'the weight of the imaginary [...] in the production of the consistency of sociolinguistic structure', in other words, 'he neglected the impossibility of a transcendental Symbolic Universe' (Safatle 2001-2002). Because he understood the minimum element as a unity that was defined differentially, by oppositions that require a positive and given background.

The real, which appeared at the beginning of teaching as an external absolute expunged by the symbolization that was intended to be total, reappears at the heart of the unity/unicity of structuring, in the signifying institution itself. This 'creates its own space', the symbolic universe, by being the articulator of the structure. But in this, 'something else gets added to it', something is parasitic on it, 'it is not produced by the signifying gesture, but together with and 'on top of' it'. Because 'the emergence of the signifier is not reducible to, or

exhausted by, the symbolic' (Zupančič 2017: 40) but, when established, it opens an internal space to the real, at the very nucleus of the signifier.

Language also becomes determined by the real (Lacan 2019: 11) and not only by the symbolic law, not because something escapes it, but because it is not founded on any transcendent necessity. With the fall of its unifying unity and its totality of elements, the symbolic, its structure opens up without any transcendental or metalinguistic point of correction.

## References

Althusser, L. (1996). *Writings on Psychoanalysis: Freud and Lacan*. New York / Sussex: Columbia University Press.

Arrivé, M. (1999). *Linguagem e psicanálise, linguística e inconsciente: Freud, Saussure, Pichon, Lacan.* Rio de Janeiro: Zahar.

Lacan, J. (2006). *Ecrits: the first complete edition in English.* New York: W. W. Norton & Co.

Lacan, J. (1991). *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, book 2: The Ego in Freud's Theory and in the Technique of Psychoanalysis (1954-1955).* New York: W. W. Norton & Co.

Lacan, J. (1997). *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, book 3: The Psychoses (1955-1956).* New York: W. W. Norton & Co.

Lacan, J. (2017). *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, book 5: Formations of the Unconscious* (1957-1958). Cambridge: Polity Press.

Lacan, J. *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, book 9: Identification (1961-1962)*. Translated by Cormac Gallagher from unedited French typescripts for private use only.

Lacan, J. (2019). *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, book 19: …or Worse (1971-1972)*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Milner, J.-C. (2021) *A Search for Clarity. Science and Philosophy in Lacan's Oeuvre.* Translated by Ed Pluth. Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press.

Nancy, J.; Lacoue-Labarthe, P. (1992). *The title of the letter: a reading of Lacan.* Albany: State University of New York Press.

Politzer, G. (1994). *Critique of the Foundations of Psychology: The Psychology of Psychoanalysis.* Duquesne University Press.

Safatle, V. (2006). *A paixão do negativo: Lacan e a dialética*. São Paulo : Unesp.

Safatle, V. (2001-2002). *Écrire les impossibles.* [Online] Avaliable: https://www.geocities.ws/vladimirsafatle/vladi035.htm (last accessed: 6/11/2024).

Saussure, F. (1959). *Course in General Linguistics*. New York: Philosophical Library.

Silveira, L. (2007). *Determinação versus subjetividade: apropriação e ultrapassagem do estruturalismo pela psicanálise lacaniana*. (doctoral thesis) UFSCar, São Carlos, 2007.

Zupančič, A. (2017). *What is sex?* Cambridge; London: MIT Press.