

LANGUAGE EDUCATION AND THE UNIVERSITY

editors

DANIEL DE MELLO FERRAZ
ANA PAULA DUBOC


EDUCAÇÃO LINGÜÍSTICA E A UNIVERSIDADE

fostering
socially-just practices
in undergraduate contexts

VOLUME 1

Language, Culture and Discourse

promovendo práticas
socialmente justas
em contextos de graduação
de ensino superior



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Language, Culture and Discourse

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FOREWORD


Prof. Dr. Fabricio Ono

Universidade Federal de Mato Grosso do Sul

The first thing that came to my mind when I was invited to write the foreword for this book - in a moment Brazil has been facing a disgraceful conjuncture due to many factors such as the coronavirus Pandemic, political polarization and a national (dis)government based on fake news, setbacks and excessive neoliberal purposes to privilege the ones who have power and money, was that: fostering undergraduate students' voices is a meaningful and necessary action which may nurture, not only in the educational field but all sectors of societies, to break with the idea that knowledge is only generated or considered legitimate from above and the book presents political resistance as well.

Taking into account the scenarios caused by the pandemic all over the world, especially in the Brazilian case, in which "pinches" of necropolitics, biopower are daily reaching citizens through discourses and actions from political leaders, increasing crisis and raising extreme positions. Ana Paula Duboc and Daniel Ferraz have once more promoted an onto-epistemological and political action which ratifies their meaningful representation in the contemporary Brazilian critical language education scene, not only for their students, readers, other researchers and teacher educators, but also as great human beings always available and caring with their counterparts. Their attitudes in the educational field are highly connected to what they advocate for and theorize from their sensitivity to see outside bubbles and boxes.

For me, and maybe for many of you who are going to read this volume, it is more common to find academic research in which undergraduate students' voices are represented by a researcher who may be an academic, a master or PhD candidate or by the teacher



educator. The way this book project was conducted gives us the chance to think outside our boxes and (re)think the way we stimulate agency and subjectification in the process of learning for undergraduate students. Culturally and generally speaking, in the Brazilian tradition, according to my meandering experience as a teacher educator, some students come to university still desiring professors to be “knowledge tellers”, anchored in a banking model, as mentioned by Freire (1996). This desire poses a challenge for students to further explore and develop their agency by digging into their subjectivities through life experiences, traumas, feeling and meanings.

As the editors confirm and problematize in the introduction, this volume is a way of representing that there is an emergency in education to highlight studies focused on expanding and building an onto-epistemology grounded on humanization, less hierarchical positions and more distributed power relations, in order to spread seeds of hope and wisdom which may provoke discussions and ways of being more flexible, tolerant, and understanding of dissent. Maybe, their action endorses the infinite responsibility, in a Levinasian optic, in which being a teacher educator corresponds being responsible to the Other, something that comes before anything else.

It is also remarkable to mention that USP has in its tradition the openness to build bridges to the future characterized by innovation and advances in the university environment as stated by the university ethical commitment “the obligation, as a social institution, to promote, through teaching and research, the principles of freedom and justice, human dignity and solidarity (...)”. In this sense, it is mandatory to mention all the struggle made since the 60’s, especially in the University of São Paulo, in order to guarantee an academia based on principles that strengthen relations of its faculty members and students, contributing to the transformation of the university itself – a reform instituted inside out; refuting north American models and establishing a

“reorganization of relationships that presuppose the abolition of anachronistic forms of privileging knowledge, age and the structure of social institutionalized educational roles” (FERNANDES, 1968, p.289).

Furthermore, it is relevant to mention that epistemologies may not be a model, but they should work as a possibility to innovate according to the local, as Dosse’s (1999, p. 352) points out “It is by transgressing the great divisions between practices and theories that science invents. An epistemology is elaborated in the course of this process, but in an experimental form.” Thus, the project of this book is as epistemological as political, an attempt to show how possible it is to work with decolonizing practices, as Sousa Santos (2018) highlights: “An epistemological shift is necessary in order to recover the idea that there are alternatives and indeed to recognize, as the bearers of potential alternatives, the struggles against oppression that continue to be fought in the world.”

In addition, Butler’s perspective on humanization converges to what this book represents besides being a palpable material, but unquestionably an action in–academia which shows a proposal to humanize and expand some limits we still have been facing in much contexts about being and acting with critique:

If the humanities has a future as cultural criticism, and cultural criticism has a task at the present moment, is no doubt to return us to the human where we do not expect to find it, in its frailty and at the limits of its capacity to make sense. We would have to interrogate the emergence and vanishing of the human at the limits of what we can know, what we can hear, what we can see, what we can sense. This might prompt us, affectively, to reinvigorate the intellectual projects of critique, of questioning, of coming to understand the difficulties and demands of cultural translation and dissent, and to create a sense of the public in which oppositional voices are not feared, degraded or dismissed, but valued for the instigation to a sensate democracy they occasionally perform. (BUTLER, P. 151)

This collection of texts gives such a relief in times where we need to be resistant and fight against injustice and attempts to dismantle public education. When I finished the reading, I had myself fed with energy and hope to keep on working as a teacher educator, believing that together we can open windows when doors are kept closed – Decolonial epistemologies open space to subaltern voices (SPIVAK, 1998) which in many other prestigious contexts would never be heard. Related to that, I recall Ono (2017) when he proposed that teacher educators should be available to the unknown, being sensitive to the Other.

The assemblage made with students' texts through the whole collaborative and dialogic process which culminate in this book, it is noticeable an effort to shatter Eurocentric remnants in Latin America academic practices. It is an experimental possibility to amplify voices, practices, perspectives, experiences and knowledges far from paradigms consolidated in colonial onto-epistemologies, but those which are not privileged or considered legitimate – it is an attempt to “unnormalize” what is naturalized. The images which present each chapter are food for thought and can speak for and by themselves. They have life, they are a meaningful representations of the ideas of the chapters. From them, as an omen – a reference to the black bird in Bergman's “Det Sjunde Inseget”, the writers announce -in my interpretation - that readers are going to swim in others' voices and subjectivities. Perhaps, purposely, that may be seen as something that abruptly disturb our comfort zones.

The action proposed by the academic editors reverberates in the present day of the topics discussed, often expensive for our society and, also, not widely discussed on other occasions. Problematizations, reflections, analysis and updated debates permeate all pages, and they are much more than proposing a socially just language educators, but they are part of rhizomatic (DELEUZE & GUATTARI, 1987) problems present in our so called “postmodern” societies. The texts also show the complexity of knowledge (MORIN, 2010), they are not pieces of

thought based on a singular theoretical basis. On the contrary, most of what is done here has been engendered by the connection among diverse theoretical and experiential perspectives.

The way the book was organized also permits to say that similarly to educational issues, discussions start from macro to micro issues, from general to more specific, from “one size fits all” to personal and individual, fulfilling the proposal to humanize education in a genuine initiative. The thematic sections were well organized into four parts of texts: English Language Education; Discourse, Literature and Society; Politics, Power and Discourse; and Race Gender and Sexuality. They reveal and scrutinize issues which may not be out of the academic discussion, but part of educational practices.

All the texts are woven with theoretical basis and examples which became an invitation to deconstruct paradigms and aporias ruled by hegemonic, Eurocentric and colonial perspectives, considering that “Deconstruction is hyper-politicizing (...)it permits us to think the political and think the democratic by granting us the space necessary in order not to be enclosed in the latter.” (DERRIDA, 1996, p. 87-88)

The opportunity to read relevant positionings and reflections contained in this volume, in my humble opinion, will be paramount for those who open it and carefully delight in the words written here. I have learned so much in each page I read in, and I could confirm the thought that a teacher education process should provide more opportunities to listen to other voices, experiences and stories in order to make our praxis more open, flexible and more social justice.

Not being silent to hegemonic structures is a form of guaranteeing that science will keep its role as knowledge source. (HARARI, 2018). We don't know what the future holds among so much polarization, hybrid wars, movements to disassemble public education, but the role of a teacher educator who is engaged and aware of its representation in

the society cannot be denied and vanished. On the contrary, a teacher educator in the complexity of his/her role will inevitably be reference of resistance: creating discursive and theoretical opportunities, legitimizing knowledge other than those which comes top down. Certainly, this book will trigger other similar projects and contribute meaningfully to critical teacher education.



Ana Paula Duboc
Daniel Ferraz



INTRODUCTION: UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS' VOICES IN THE SPOTLIGHT



Concern for humanization leads at once to the recognition of dehumanization, not only as an ontological possibility but as a historical reality. And as an individual perceives the extent of dehumanization, he or she may ask if humanization is a viable possibility.

Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the oppressed*.

We have faced tough times in Brazil: times of pro-fascist alt-right movements which depreciate and threaten democratic values. In this sense Stanovsky (2017, p. 138) reminds us that “The new politics of abuse, cronyism, corruption, cruelty, and violence are also a kind of remix and repetition of the past. They are all things we have seen before under fascism”. Still in the words of the author, “Sadly, far too many seem to greet this abusive remix and repetition with all the pleasurable fondness and charm of nostalgia”. Unfortunately, religious conflicts such as antisemitism and Christianity-as-rule, racism by white supremacists, misogyny and sexism, homophobia and transphobia, indigenous-phobia, and disenfranchisement of the poor are dehumanizing actions being naturalized as something good, positive, and inevitable. For Andreotti et al (2015, p. 24), “The cumulative effect of these and other violences has been what Wynter (2003) describes as the overrepresentation of the White, bourgeois, male, who rationalizes his dominion over those he deems to be irrational, affectable, and inferior (Silva, 2007)”. In Duboc and Ferraz’s terms, these symbolic, economic and cultural violence reveals a trend in which “recent politics and policies at global and local levels seek to find prompt alternatives for complex social problems by recuperating one of the three strategies currently used by nation states”, specially by those in power: “assimilation, expulsion, or extermination (GELLNER, 1983)” (DUBOC; FERRAZ, 2018, p. 233).

Andreotti et al (2015, p. 22), acknowledge that in the context of “current social, economic, environmental, and existential crises, it is increasingly difficult to respond with coherence and consistency to unpredictable, short sighted, and often violent institutional changes,

all of which may be signs of a system resisting its own collapse". Most significantly, the authors remind us that "the frustration that this process generates amongst scholars, students, and activists requires taking stock of a bigger picture to examine how modernity itself has conditioned the responses available to its own violence by naturalizing a grammar (i.e. interlinked ontology, epistemology and metaphysics) that captures and reinscribes our attempts to interrupt and resist it" (Ibid.).

This book is about humanizing education. As Freire outlines on the very first pages of the *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, when teachers and students recognize dehumanization around them, they may start a process of questioning its violence and its force to turn the Other invisible or inexistent. "In times of extremisms, fascisms, neoliberalism, and so many other isms more and more present in many nation states (Brazil included) in the world, how does one acknowledge their own roles within the placement of such isms?" (FERRAZ; MIZAN, 2019, p. 1375). Moreover, what are the roles of education within these contexts, especially in times of political clout, polarization, and violence? Why do schools and universities resemble prisons, to mention a Foucauldian definition? Why, as times goes by, students have to face an ever more serious, bodily static, monolithic, daunting and hierarchical education? How do we humanize education? Many hows and whys.

This book is about fostering socially-just language education. Perhaps the only university educational model known so far has been the inherited European standards of higher education, that is, most undergraduate classes will end up being lecture classes, in which the professor speaks for two or four hours to students who frenetically take notes so that they can repeat all of these notes in the test or in the final paper. With the upgrade from technology, professors are now capable of ensuring more "modern" classes with the use of Powerpoints, which are basically full of texts and some images. Nonetheless classes continue to be lectures, a redesigned chalk-and-

talk. Even though Freire sought to rethink basic education, much of his critique reverberates in university education:

It is not surprising that the banking concept of education regards men as adaptable, manageable beings. The more students work at storing the deposits entrusted to them, the less they develop the critical consciousness which would result from their intervention in the world as transformers of that world. The more completely they accept the passive role imposed on them, the more they tend simply to adapt to the world as it is and to the fragmented view of reality deposited in them (FREIRE, 2005, p. 73).

Obviously, banking education does not refer to every university professor's pedagogy, and perhaps the generalization and universalism conflated here should also be put under scrutiny. Howbeit, in many contexts (e.g. our context at USP), we still hear from students that this is the case: too many lecture classes, very few possibilities for discussion, negotiation, and questionings from students' side. These are the Achille's Heels we try to avoid (these editors-professors included). The more we see university as a place of critique, questioning and wishful thinking, the more we act to keep it as our place of critique:

i) What is critique/critical thinking/critical education after all? Are we (educators) the ones who determine (even if unconsciously) what critique means? Are we aware of our own ignorance and limitations? Is it important to unsettle the idea that we are the ones who provide critical work/education? For Pennycook, Sousa Santos, and Menezes de Souza, these questionings are the first and foremost attitudes of any work within critical perspectives.

ii) When we meet complimentary accounts in most of students' discourses, is it not a matter of pleasing one's professor by saying or writing exactly what she/he wants to hear if we consider that they are usually aware of the play imbued in regulatory evaluative practices? Taking a step further, do we eschew/shun/disregard our students' criticisms? To what extent do we not contradictorily make them echo our own voices in their responses to what they read in our classes? (...)

iv) The fact that students rarely position themselves in relation to their own difficulties and dilemmas reveals a lot about the way we – the educators – have dealt with subjectivities and identities in the classroom. Do we allow the copresence of consensus and dissent in our classes? Do we see conflict, difficulties, dilemmas as productive? (DUBOC; FERRAZ, 2018, p. 244)

We do think these are the questions we should ask ourselves before, during and after each class we teach. By the same token, these are questions to be openly discussed with our students. Understood as something completely different from the traditional teaching and learning language processes (processes which encompass many of the characteristics above), language education means revisiting language teaching by questioning one of its sine qua non conceptualizations: provided that languages are seen as objects (sometimes commodified objects), teaching languages means memorizing bits of language, then forming sentences, then complete texts. When students reach the “fluent”, near “native speaker” level, they are able to communicate and thus can be labelled “proficient”. This is arguably what native speakerism, or the dream to sound like a native North-American or Brit does. Macedo (2019, p. 12) contends that EFL teachers should not “feed the ‘imperialist cultural tradition in its colonial form [which] was meant to undermine peoples’ belief in themselves and make them look to the European cultures, languages and the arts, for a measurement of themselves and their abilities (Ngũgĩ, 1993: 43–44)”.


This book is all about fostering undergraduate students’ voices. By unsettling the idea that “The teacher talks about reality as if it were motionless, static, compartmentalized, and predictable” (FREIRE, 2005, p. 71) by “filling” the students with the contents of his narration (Ibid.), “but rather as someone who endeavors to provoke, encourage, construct, generate, and advance, with others, critical questionings, understandings, knowledges, and actionings; other ways of thinking and of doing *with*” (WALSH; MIGNOLO, 2018, p 83), this book reiterates

time and again that undergraduate students do have their own voices, and even though many still think that students should be given voice, we all know they have always got it. The problem is that education simply tries to eradicate it. Undergraduate students come to us with different and multifaceted ways of looking at society and education, with their own ways of dealing with contemporary conflicts, gender, sexuality, politics, languages and cultures.

Hence, we do defend a decolonial education/ decolonial pedagogy, a pedagogy of the cracks (WALSH; MIGNOLO, 2018) which aims at breaking the “concrete” education, by creating fissures in the traditional-vertical type of educational relations. This decolonial pedagogy comes to terms with students’ critique, positionings and subjectivities. For Walsh and Mignolo (2018), this pedagogy is

(...) considered both dangerous and heretic. In great part this is because it brings to the fore the decolonial otherwise, its social, political, epistemic, and cosmic-existence- based insurgencies, its pedagogies, pedagogizations, and praxis, an otherwise that stands up to the racist myth that inaugurated modernity and the monologue of modern-Western reason (WALSH; MIGNOLO, 2018, p. 90).

Depicted as a decolonial move, this project is a continuation of efforts - by these editors/professors – to emphasize the dialogue between undergraduate education and society. In our first project, entitled *Language education and the university: voicing worldviews and fostering knowledge production in undergraduate context* (FERRAZ; DUBOC, 2019), we voiced productions from Letras-Inglês students of the Federal University of Espírito Santo, where one of us worked as professor and researcher. Having worked at the same university in the past years – Ana at the School of Education and Daniel at the Modern Languages Department, this new project refers to the production of our students from the Letras-Inglês course at the University of São Paulo. Our main outcome has been to reiterate Freire’s pedagogical ideas:



(...) social struggles for Freire are pedagogical settings of learning, unlearning, relearning, reflection, and action. The educational nature of struggle is what interested Freire most, along with the pedagogical practice of working toward individual and collective liberation. This is an engaged pedagogy (WALSH; MIGNOLO, 2018, p. 88).

Thus, the project reflects the compilation of a one-year-pedagogical practice plus a one-year book preparation experienced by these editors and their students in 2018 and 2019. The disciplines, “Topics in Discourse Studies” and “Topics in Language and Culture”, were taught to approximately 120 students. The disciplines aimed at providing students with theoretical and practical knowledge in relation to the following topics: language, culture, discourse, language education, teacher education, and the English language, intertwined with national and international politics, local and global relations, language policies, mass media, social media and cultural studies, arts, cinema, music, and literature.

One of the evaluative items required was the writing of two Response Papers, one in the middle and the other in the end of the term. In these Response Papers students were encouraged to freely write about issues from their personal lives (subjectification), be them their own teaching experiences, family relations, examples from films, songs, or literature, or situations from everyday life. On top of this, students were supposed to connect their personal choices with the texts, authors, concepts, and discussion in classes. After the end of both courses, students were invited to join this book project. We invited students to expand their response papers and turn them into a book chapter. From the approximately 120 invited students, 30 accepted.

The second year of the project started. Briefly speaking, we had four face-to-face meetings so that we could collectively discuss the project and make decisions. In these meetings we talked about the objective of the book; also about academic writing, how to write a chapter, how to

include and analyze data, and how to design the parts of a chapter (title, introduction, sections, conclusion, references). We also decided on the length of each chapter (max. 12 pages with references), the languages to be used (mainly English, with possibilities of inclusion of Portuguese, to be chosen by each author); and the academic format (even though the book is written mostly in English, it was supposed to be published in a Brazilian publishing House, this is why we opted for ABNT).

In the last phase, two more meetings were organized. We then discussed which chapters should be dialoguing within sections. We also decided that each author(s)/chapter(s) would dialogue with each other within sections and within the book. As the reader may realize, each author cites other authors who are part of this book. This intertextual move was really appraised by the students-authors. We also decided that we would collectively write a final chapter together, but this phase was not accomplished provided that the year of 2019 ended, and, in 2020, we were all taken aback with the COVID crisis.

The chapters displayed below reflect how students assemble, interpret, reflect and deepen the knowledge built throughout the many disciplines taken at the university. By taking the premise that a university is marked by a multi-theoretical, multi-perspectival and multi-methodological perspective, in which different approaches, perceptions, values, preferences circulate among professors and students, the chapters do not reflect homogeneity or standardization; on the contrary, what the reader is about to find is a collection of undergraduate students' written production which came to be published in an attempt to foster language knowledge production and voice students' worldviews in a socially-just educational landscape that allowed students to their very processes of subjectification. Concerns with social justice that permeate the whole process refers to the very bottom-up exercise necessary to any decolonial pedagogy. Reframing Walsh and Mignolo's ideas, we do believe that such a project

builds the possibility of relationality and correlation; a space and place of dialoguing, thinking, analyzing, theorizing, and doing in community and in concert with, that encourage alliances, commitments, collaborations, and interculturalizations that cross disciplinary (de)formations, investigative interests, national borders, and racial, ethnic, sexual, and gendered identifications and that extend beyond the classroom and the period of doctoral study (WALSH; MIGNOLO, 2018, p 84).

The first part of the book - *ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION* – starts with a comprehensive text by Isabela Rocha Freire entitled *Daily Discourses and Language Education: the role of criticality in dealing with hegemony*. According to Isabela Freire, emanating mostly from her developing process of interpretation of the courses' references, the chapter succinctly covers the notions of Culture and Collective Memory (1), Hall's notion of "The Other" and How Different Cultures Relate to Each Other (2), Discourse Studies (3), Discourse Analysis (4), Criticism and Criticality (5), and Foucault's Archeology and Genealogy (6). The author hopes "that this experience converts itself into actionable efforts to change the tendencies here observed, but also that this reading result in reflections that effectively lead the public to a greater historical and social self-awareness, besides providing it with an increased interest for the field of Discourse Studies". In this sense, the book starts with a very good overview of concepts presented in both disciplines, thanks Isabela.

The second chapter - *Neoliberalism: an enemy to education?* - Written by Luiza Araujo Cardeal da Costa and Stephanie Liz Barbosa, briefly explores language education in Brazil, aiming to provide a more substantive discussion about language teaching practices that are in progress in the capitalist world. Hence, Cardeal and Liz Barbosa defend the rethinking of teaching practices in favor of critical education, thus denying outdated traditional practices. They leave us with very provocative thoughts and questions: "In this scenario, the student is a client, the teacher is a seller, teaching is capital and education is alienated,

being willing to the logic of the market. Therefore, it is impossible to think of foreign language education in Brazil without relating it to class struggle, because if teaching is under the control of private schools (or companies?), who has access to this teaching?”. Yes, Luiza and Stephanie, who has access to Foreign Languages education in Brazil? What are the roles of public education with regards to languages?


Discourse, society and education was written by Laís Duarte Ramos. The first section presents an overview of Discourse Studies and Discourse Analysis' development; the second one presents her own experience as a student, and finally, the third section describes an episode, this time as a teacher, in which a student complained about her class content and how she reacted to that complaint. She came up with two striking conclusions: “All in all, I cannot become a better teacher without my students. I am the one who can show them how capable they are to learn and use English properly, and although this language seems to be difficult, it goes beyond a system of grammatical rules to be memorized, it is also a matter of context”. Also: “In addition to being looked at as individuals, students should be acquainted with freedom in the classroom environment. Teachers and professors are the ones who have technical knowledge, but it does not prevent them from learning with and from students”. Beautiful chapter, Laís!

Giovanna Dias Jorge, the author of *Should emojis be taught as a new language? Multimodal practices for 21st Century learners* asks: “If these cute smiley faces, dancing girls, farm animals and country flags are a hazard to our society by putting our dearly beloved language at stake, then I must get further into it and ask myself: do they carry enough meaning to substitute entire sentences? And, if so, what is their role in modern education?” Jorge presents us with a brilliant discussion on technologies, mobile phones, digitality, visual literacy, visual language, emojis, discourses, language education and concludes: “As we live in this Cyberculture, let's try to not be threatened by them and, instead,

be welcome to them. What's the point of using "like" in almost every sentence? Zero to none, and yet, it is something that happens all the time. We, as a community of speakers need to be more mindful of our own behavior as "changers" of words, as we are constantly attributing new meanings to old signs. Let's emote a bit more and see how it goes". Yes, Giovanna, totally agreed. Let's emote a little bit more, and free ourselves from normativity.

"Me empresta o cor de pele?" A discussion about representation, language and power, by Kerollyn Tuller da Silva, discusses her experience as an English language teacher for children, of which she states: "Every time a student asks me the "skin color pencil" I give them the brown one, they correct me, of course. From this we can say that whenever one of my students name one specific shade of pink as the "skin color pencil" it is possible to see how the sign is ideological and the meaning behind this, even if they are not conscious about it". In the words of the author, this experience of teaching colors to children completely changed her life, and everything she knew about herself, about education, race and teaching, and concludes: "The stereotypes involving black people in general are not positive, a heritage from slavery and colonialism. The history gave us many racist ideas and those are deeply rooted in Brazilian society. Thus, it is not easy to be represented as a negative all the time, as Mano Brown from Racionais Mcs says on the ghetto anthem *Nego Drama*: "Se ser preto é ruim, ir pra escola pra quê? Se meu instinto é ruim, eu não consigo aprender". It is not only about language and names for a shade of pink, it is about power and representation." Tuller, this chapter was also life transforming for us.


The next chapter is all about memes and discourses. "The chasm between those who question themselves and those who reproduce previously established discourses grows more and more, demonstrating how the selection of information by the subject is relevant and transforms the production of discourses and interactions



between people, in the private or public field. It is increasingly common to hear that we need to “occupy ourselves” in order not to withdraw our focus from what is theoretically most necessary (that is, to make profit) and this would not be astonishing to either Foucault or Bakhtin, as, for the two philosophers, human beings evolve through the production of speeches and dialogues”. These are some of the topics touched by Larissa dos Santos Rocha and João Victor Guimarães Sérgio in their chapter *Digital literacies in contemporary society: the impact of memes in popular culture*. Larissa and João, thanks for bringing memes and digital culture to the fore.

The *second part* of the book - *DISCOURSE, LITERATURE AND SOCIETY* – begins with Maurício da Silva Reis’s *Discourse, literature and society*. The chapter seeks to visit the relations between discourse and literature, and how this relationship can illuminate literature not as something closed in itself, without communication to the outside, in such a way autonomous, but think of literature as a phenomenon of civilization. In order to achieve this, Reis brilliantly analyzes two literary texts: the letter of the song *As Caravanas* by Chico Buarque and the short story *Dama da Noite* by Caio Fernando Abreu. One of his conclusions is: “an interweaving perspective between discourse analysis and literature, shows that “there is a discourse that emerges from within the literary (whether from a poetic voice or from a character-narrator) and that this discourse builds a sharing of the reality of society, its problems and its issues”. Thanks, Maurício, we love Chico and Caio.


Latim, poetry and the law: a Brazilian perspective, by Juliana Curiel Bastos, composes the second chapter of this part. Through very detailed discussion between discourses and law, Bastos inquires: “But how may the law – or rather its language – the *legal language* – reflect the social relations and conflicts in which it is inserted, and to what extent may it constitute a means for the transformation of such social reality? What can the hegemonic legal discourse say about the social



reality in which it takes place? What influence may the legal language have on the social, and to what extent may it be *influenced* by the social? The author concludes that “In times of political and educational crisis such as the ones we are currently going through in Brazil, it is of ultimate importance to think of issues such as access to justice through the law, and of the impacts that an (even) lower-quality educational system – which may result in lower literacy indexes and standards, among other numerous possibilities – may have on the general population’s access to justice and the legal system, and to fight and resist against the reduction of educational rights with the one hand, while fighting to provide marginalized classes greater access to the law, in order to enable them to change it in their favor, with the other, bearing in mind that having access to the *language* of the law may be an important step to achieve this goal”. A very critical chapter designed by Juliana, who is a student of Letras and a lawyer.


Returning to literature and linguistics, Discourse studies and literature in Virginia Woolf’s Orlando, by Vitor Kenzo Kadowaki, discusses Virginia Woolf’s novel *Orlando*, written in 1928. The intent is to demonstrate how two different areas such as Discourse Studies and Literature have both been submitted to notable changes. According to Kadowaki, “Woolf’s work accompanies the life of the character Orlando through many places and times. More than sketching substantial historical transformations, the novel also challenges our very perception of the self, as the character lives more than three centuries and changes his/ her biological sex in a determined moment of the narrative”. Thanks, Vitor, for allowing us to read Woolf’s through your lenses.

Julia Sant’Ana Marques de Oliveira is the author of the text *Myths of women writers and representations of feminist subversion in pop culture: Jane Austen, Virginia Wolf and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie*. This chapter focuses on women writers, by trying to give them back some political dimension and (somehow) control of their own



narratives — even though some of them are dead, it is possible to be fairer and consider possibilities instead of sticking to dusty myths. The pieces considered were made for broad audiences about or around successful women writers of different eras (Jane Austen, Virginia Woolf, and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie). Oliveira rightly concludes that “Like all human beings, women are complex, contradictory, ambiguous. Mythification tries to create a cohesive narrative that often does not exist. A myth is far from the human, unable to represent the past in its complexity or to create new narratives and possibilities for women. If feminist subversion is consistently mythologized and glossed over, the message that persists is that subversion and feminism are only meant for the women that belong to this mythical real — that is none. Therefore, the choice to crystalize women into myths is the choice to discourage subversion and feminism”. Julia, the triad of feminist writers presented by you challenged and expanded feminism in critical and creative ways, thank you.

Jenkins understands that fans are “active producers” and “manipulators of meanings”, and that taking hold of a canonical text to give it new meaning through fan made fiction is a refusal of “authorial authority” and an act of resistance to cultural hierarchy. Our eleventh and twelfth chapters touch the fanfic writing world. *Fandom: producing senses with languages*, by Giovana Ruzon Bueno, aims to discuss the relations between fan/content and fan/fan, focusing in fandom practices and how marginalized people can empower themselves through art and language. Bueno claims that the recognition of fanfics writings as “valuable productions can reconstruct the self-esteem of a person whose existence is constantly denied by multiple sectors of society, creating a comforting reality in which their existence and happiness is not only possible, but also recognized and valued. And this is beautiful”. Samuel Vicente Rede, the author of *Fandom marginalia: using fanfiction to write around the margins of oppressive discourses*, looks at one specific social phenomena that flourished in the heart of participatory



culture, the *fanfictions* and its creative production in the form of *fanfictions*. In a highly politically engaged text, Rede defends diversity through the reading and writing of fanfics: “The rising hostility towards identities such as my own and those of my friends and peers was the theme of many anxious conversations in which we asked ourselves what we could do to protect our subjectivity in times such as these. At first, I thought that writing and drawing my favorite characters as being transgender like me or gay like me was just a fun hobby, but in coming together with online communities full of people who were doing just the same, I understood how we acted out of a desire to see ourselves represented on the fictional works we felt most connected to”. His defense of fanfiction writing can be understood as a defense of all things that we do to keep our own subjectivity that are dismissed as being “useless”, and a “waste of time”. Thanks, Giovanna and Samuel, for bringing fanfics to the fore. They have been excluded from academic discussions, and as you have shown, they are essential and creative tools for young generations to express their subjectivities.

The last chapter of this section, *The contemporary novel and the matter of Queer visibility in the era of neoliberalism*, by Matheus Camargo Jardim, discusses how the cultural industry not only responds but is an effective part of this process. In the first section, the author reviews the Marxist literature; in the second section, he discusses the queer novel in the era of neoliberalism, and concludes that “Neoliberalism promises freedom through individuality but forgets that society institutions exert great oppressive power, encourages individual economic gain while the dominant ideology does everything to maintain the masses under control”. Amazing chapter by Matheus for it critiques neoliberalism in Queer studies, thanks.

Part 3 - POLITICS, POWER AND DISCOURSE starts with “*Canarinho pistola*”: an analysis of the use of the association between the Brazilian Yellow Jersey and far-wing movements that boosted the

election of Bolsonaro, by Pedro Augusto de Oliveira Cuadrado Proença. According to the author, “Today, in Brazil, we are experiencing a democratic elected president with strong shades of authoritarianism, totalitarianism, bigotry and ignorance”. The author goes on to argue on the connections between football, culture, and discourse, by showing that “In our net of culture, Brazilian National Jersey number one (the yellow uniform) has left to be a national symbol and has become a political one, related to far-right nationalists/chauvinists. Consciously or not, protesters have chosen an item that evoked excellence and that helped to cement Brazilian National Identity, when we think about culture in anthropological terms”. Muito obrigado Pedro, for having connected Brazilian football, politics and discourse, really creative and critical.

Rafaella Gobbo Reis da Silva is the author of *Discourse, power, and hegemony: a brief study on the social practices that compose the production of speeches*, which scrutinizes the discourses of social media, by analyzing news reports and documentaries. Then she goes on to argue on discourse, power, control and media. According to her, “Another fact which deals with the idea of lies as contemporary tools of hegemonic power is the movement of disseminating fake news, by business companies (such as Cambridge Analytica), as a way of changing culture through discourse. The dominant groups, consisted in 1% of the world population, are well aware of the importance of culture and discourse, and are aware as well of the fact that if we can change *society* and *discourse*, it is important to change *culture* first”. *The xenophobic discourse: Trump and BREXIT through critical discourse analysis*, by Marina Evangelista, is the third chapter of this section. For Evangelista, “Humanity in treating immigrants is required, that is why we have to be aware of inequalities and biases in discourses”. The chapter aims at analyzing the xenophobic discourses of two governing authorities from powerful economies worldwide: Donald Trump and Theresa May. In other words, the objective is to evaluate how the speech acts of these politicians create an order with the purpose of



mitigating the threat against the immigration issue, trying to exclude immigrants from society. She concludes that “The rise of extreme far-right is a tendency all over Europe, in countries as Italy, Hungary, and Poland, but also here in Brazil and in Latin American countries. Leaders as Donald Trump and Theresa May want to institutionalize fear over people, constructing themselves as saviors on duty of nation and the traditional family. They build through discourse an image of change and hope in an attempt to acquire political support. However, the xenophobic discursive practices can have terrible effects in society”. Still talking about politics, Carolina Fernanda Cunha Campos, Cleiciane de Souza Nascimento, and Giovanna Dias Jorge, the authors of *How does Donald Trump tweet? A study based on Critical Discourse Analysis* briefly discuss the theoretical grounding, with concepts such as power, access and patterns of access, and Discourse Studies. Then, they analyze five selected tweets based on the theoretical background constructed in the first part. In the last part, they state the importance of Critical Discourse Analysis and reaffirm its major role in this interaction pattern change. The authors conclude that “The investigation of those tweets provide us with tools to better understand how people can be reached by short messages, which at first glance may seem to be just simple opinions, but if one looks deeply into it, are clearly a power mechanism that can both be used for good or evil”. Finally, we need to thank Rafaella, Marina, Carolina, Cleiciane and Giovanna for their brilliant discussions on national and international politics, moreover, their critique on xenophobia, media manipulation, power and abuse.

The *fourth part* of the book - *LANGUAGE AND CULTURE* – starts with *O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave: Considerations on Culture and Language after Neoliberalism*, by Herique Reis Fatel. The authors heavily criticizes postmodern theories by connecting them to individuality: “Read me carefully. I do not mean that it is a consciously conveyed and biased process allowed by Postmodern theories. What I am trying to show here is how it has been exacerbated

by younger generations of researchers into thinking that Individuality defines Being and that it is only through the description of individual dispositions that one can understand discourse. By considering that the individual and its characteristics are the most Important factor in the constitution of discourse, poststructuralism sets the pathway for my generation of academics to think by these means. By analyzing the movie “*I, Tonya*”, added with some of his personal experiences, the author concludes that: “Reality can be individual in its content, but it must be objective in its form” (free translation from CHPIET, 2009, [1927], p.173 apud GRILLO, 2017, p.32.)”.

About this chapter we would like to point out that it reveals one of the oldest debates in our field: Linguistics VERSUS Applied linguistics. For obvious reasons we respect this author’s claims. However, it is quite important to deconstruct the link between post-modernity with individuality (something that does not represent postmodernity’s main claims), also to pinpoint the differences between linguistics and applied linguistics. In order to do this, we agree with Macedo (2019, p.8): “The elite binarism is frequently and unwisely divided into what is considered “purely” theoretical linguistics versus applied linguistics, which is, generally speaking, the least valued branch of linguistics studies to the degree that it implicates teaching, which is also hugely devalued by the academic enterprise. The former involves linguists who specialize in linguistic theory and consider themselves “pure” linguists and have little appreciation or tolerance for issues of language pedagogy and the role of language in society, particularly along the lines of gender, class, and race”. (this last three issues, themes of this book). Thanks Fatel, for allowing us to self-critique our own beliefs in relation to postmodernity, and for reminding us that we – linguists and applied linguists - still have a lot to dialogue.

The last part of the book - *Part 5: RACE, GENDER AND SEXUALITY* – begins with the chapter *Yellow peril, Model Monitity and*


Racial Triangulation, by Douglas Yuri Hirata. By focusing on the Asian immigration experience, the chapter shows how the experience of racialization can be understood through the concepts of Yellow Peril and Model Minority and how, using the “racial triangulation” proposed by Kim (1999), through these discourses, the white supremacy prevailed creating a “racial rank” that put Black people in the bottom while “praising” and depolitizing Asian people as the middle one. Hirata concludes that “When looking at the process of Asian racialization in the West, we could see that it is marked with signs of xenophobia, racism and violent discrimination. Throughout the centuries, they were put in a subaltern position that was less or more discriminatory according to the geopolitics and the needs of those in power”. Douglas, this is an amazing discussion, also necessary, for race studies in Brazil usually neglect that Asians suffer a lot when it comes to the spreading of the Yellow peril.

A full cup to closet racists, by Janaina Almeida, is divided into three parts. The first one aims at giving an overview of the social and political context of one of Bolsonaro’s talks. Section two is concerned with the first seconds of the analyzed speech, in which the politician discusses indigenous people pieces of land, designated for them by law. To wrap it up, the final section is concerned with the approach to quilombo communities and the pieces of land designated for them as well, problematizing the type of language that the politician makes use of to describe black people. In order to conclude, Almeida states that “Jair Bolsonaro has not invented racism in the twenty-first century. Racism is a cultural practice which have been internalized for years after black people have started to conquer their due rights and insert themselves into society. However, because of the remanent memory of colonial period, its practice is emerging once again, and the kind of utterance showed herein not only naturalizes it, but legitimizes and endorse its practice. It is the mean through which this outdated cultural element has reconquered its voice”. Janaina, thanks, and thanks for the

courage of writing this well founded critique on national politics and the representative of our Republic.


Identity issues and representation of Black women was written by Camila de Oliveira Melo. Using autoethnography as methodology and textual production, Melo emphasizes politics, arts, humanities and personal experiences by addressing the representation of the identity of black women. In order to work on issues of race and gender, the first section focuses primarily on slavery under Angela Davis's historical interpretation, the second section will deal specifically with stereotyped models of black representation, also from a more historical cultural perspective according to Stuart Hall's observations. The third section presents, from the data, the conditions of black women in the Brazilian context, and a critical analysis of the concept of Black Feminism adopted by Djamila Ribeiro. The author concludes that "Therefore, more than a positioning in a victim condition, the criticisms raised seek to diagnose misogynist and racist practices, drawing attention to more empathetic and awareness raising attitudes. Bring for the university dialogues on the subject, thinking of the institution as a field of teacher training that will need to deal with situations of this diversity in the classroom as educators and instruments of power for their students. This means transforming the classroom into a more horizontal environment in which practices are conditioned to mutual exchange, otherness and, above all, respect for differences". Thanks Camila, for being, like Janaina, courageous enough to expose yourself, at the same time you expose racism, prejudice and discrimination towards blacks in this country.

According to Guets, "In order to write about language, discourse, gender and sexuality from a lesbian perspective, one can be in a thorny task. This is because lesbians are a social minority who have always been in the shadows of the protagonists of the "LGBT" (Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals and Transgenders) (or simply "queer") and the feminist movement, always labeled as aggressive and too radical by both



movements simply because we deny the romantic and affectionate relationship with men and, on account of this, see the relations of power and discourse in totally different ways of people who relate to men. Have you ever seen lesbians in front of a gay parade, for example?” These are some of the issues put forward in *Lesbian discourse as a form of social transformation*, by Raquel de Paula Guets. The author rightly and beautifully claims: “Raising our voices and occupying spaces that do not belong to us (lesbians and other minorities) hegemonically is a way of practicing this social action through discourse. This form of social action, in addition to impacting the lives of all the people who are touched (to a greater or lesser degree), can also act as a breakdown of relations of petrified powers, and thus give birth to a new *episteme* - and not only through the language. With the impact of a discourse, a whole range of people can be persuaded to think and/or move on social action, and in that the discourse also encompasses the occupied spaces, a whole way of dressing, of living, of seeing what was muted or enclosed; it is possible to derive a culture from the *underground* and bring it really to the surface for this new episteme”. A third courageous writing in times of homophobia, thanks Raquel, for bringing lesbian studies to the fore.

More LGBTQIA+ talk. *The power of political discourses: gender and homosexuality in the spotlight*, by Tulio Couto Balestreiro, presents a general view upon Politics. In section two, we’ll follow the discussion upon the concepts of Discourse and Political Discourse, their usage and function in our society, and how they’re being used by the Brazilian politicians. After that, in section three, the author discusses the concepts of gender and homosexuality, and how these subjects have been the main theme for our president to win support, in a negative way, and also, of course, the prejudice itself of our society. Balestreiro concludes: “Our way of doing politics makes it impossible to achieve equality, just as makes it difficult to think of a peaceful ending for our endless battle against prejudice. After all, if we have someone like Bolsonaro who has



a strong locus of enunciation acting upon people's mind who don't have access to knowledge and an education that aims to create critical adults, constantly producing political discourses that aim to depreciate the LGBTQIA+ community, the idea of real peace for gay people seems unbelievable". Tulio, thanks for bringing LGBTQIA+ discussions to the fore. You joined hands with Raquel, this time focusing on male homosexuality and homophobia.

Last, but not least, *A scar that does not cease to throb: beauty and masculinity ideals within the gay male community*, by Lucas Cardoso Miquelon, tackles, in the first section, the place of dissident sexualities, having as theoretical ground the Foucauldian concept of 'genealogy'; the second and third sections of the discussion focus on the masculinity ideals embedded specifically in the gay male community, analysing what sort of impact they produce in gay men and to what extent we comply with them, having Foucault's 'biopower' concept as a starting point. The author concludes that, "I am positive that we must put at stake these regulating forces that curtail the expression of our true selves; we must constantly ask ourselves which path we are eager to follow, making a stand not so that we can conform to ideals (if we do not want to), but to truly exist without having suffocating ties crossed in our hearts. Ultimately, we must be aware, as well as remind ourselves daily, that this is only a scar in a bigger, deeper wound that has not yet ceased to throb. And does it throb. Painstakingly". Painful as it might be, we finally thank Lucas for this blunt discussion against homophobia, from the very outset of gay communities.

It is high time we end this introduction, so that you can choose where to start from. This book is not to be read linearly. We do hope that the reader finds inspiration to question the authors, these editors' proposal, and themselves. We are conspicuously happy with this project. We wanted it to be freely available to everyone. This is why we have chosen a Creative Commons licensing. We also welcome

critiques, suggestions, and dialogues from and about this collaborative work, and here go our emails: danielfe@usp.br, and anaduboc@usp.br. To end, we leave you with a reflection by Macedo (2019):

Simply put, while foreign language teaching programs still have not fully cut the yoke of colonialism that generates linguistic oppression, the colonized speakers are using their language practices to defy and interrogate artificial linguistic borders whose major purpose is to exclude so as to exploit, to devalue, and to dehumanize. This defiance—truly a testimony of what it means to come to voice—is eloquently captured in Alzaldúa’s “tongue of fire!” y con rabia (with anger) which refuses to be “tamed” as it poetically, and with a just ire as Freire would say, denounces the cruel, painful, and inhumane manner in which imperial and colonial powers of the past and the present use the linguistic guillotine to prevent humans from being fully humans (MACEDO, 2019, p. 46).

We do hope you enjoy this reading!

Thank you, Ana Paula and Daniel.

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PART I



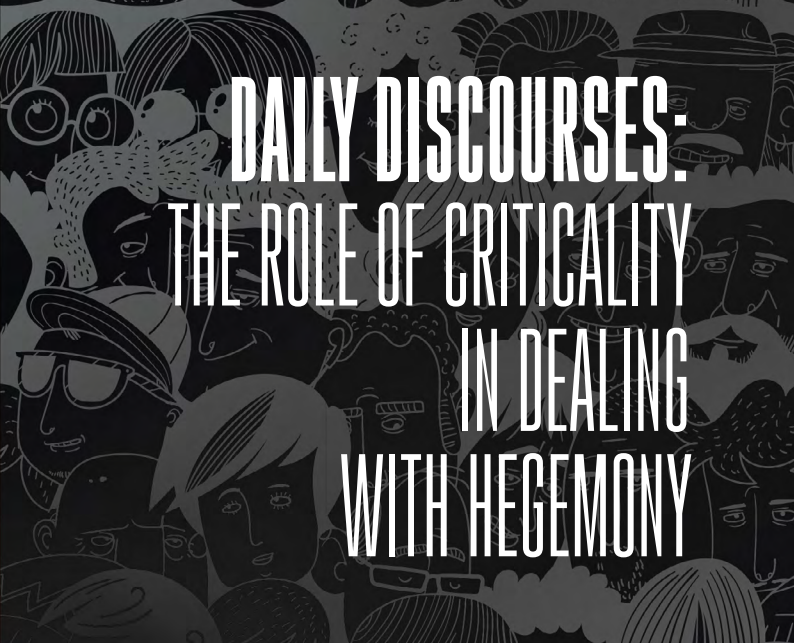
ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION





1

Isabela Rocha Freire



DAILY DISCOURSES: THE ROLE OF CRITICALITY IN DEALING WITH HEGEMONY



Find it estranging even if not very strange / Hard to explain even
if it is the custom / Hard to understand even if it is the rule / [...]
We particularly ask you – / When a thing continually occurs – /
Not on that account to find it natural.

Brecht, *The Exception and the Rule*, 1930.

INTRODUCTION

Hegemony may well be a long-discussed concept among academics, but for most of us it may sound a far cry from any relevant element our daily lives – something best reserved for ideological discussions. The aim of this paper is to briefly discuss how a further and more complete understanding of this notion may improve one's comprehension of the social system into which they are inserted and take part routinely, be it in a conscious or unconscious manner. The following pages hope to tackle a myriad of related topics that were studied during the second semester of 2018 in the classes of Discourse Studies and Topics of Language and Culture, taught by professor Daniel Ferraz at the course of Language and Literature of the Faculty of Philosophy, Language and Literature, and Human Sciences (University of São Paulo). What follows is the end result of our work, emanating mostly from my developing process of interpretation of the courses' bibliography – it succinctly covers in a didactic format, but is not limited to it, the notions of Culture and Collective Memory (1), Hall's notion of "The Other" and How Different Cultures Relate to Each Other (2), Discourse Studies (3), Discourse Analysis (4), Criticism and Criticality (5), and Foucault's Archeology and Genealogy (6). It is the sincere wish of this author that this experience converts itself into actionable efforts to change the tendencies here observed, but also that this reading result in reflections that effectively lead the public to a greater historical and social self-awareness, besides providing it with an increased interest for the field of Discourse Studies.

CULTURE AND COLLECTIVE MEMORY


So much can be classified as culture. We live in a world where culture, in one form or another, is constantly surrounding us: it permeates the way we think and act, it is inherent to our personal identity, it is passed down from generations and blasted through TVs, radios and the Internet. But rarely do we stop to think about what it truly entails. In schools, we are taught the Culture, with a capital C, of other, more prestigious, societies than ours, like those of the Western Europeans or the Ancients, through History, Literature, and Philosophy, and even through our hard sciences, byproducts of that world. However, critical thinking about how this “universal” knowledge is actually a product of, or at least something filtered through the lenses of, those very much localized cultures, seldom reaches the classroom. Instead, two common and apparently contradictory stereotypes are given: culture is either a) all classical art coming from those high-societies, or b) the exotic, present in the rest of the world, and not worth paying serious attention to.

If, in my school years, I heard any discussion that surpassed these two points I must confess that I did not give it a second thought for, in broad terms, that was all the knowledge on this topic I had arrived with at university. I must also confess that my perspective did not change terribly in the first three years of my time there neither, despite studying and reading about profoundly localized literature works, and all sorts of influences of social context, and therefore culture, on language and identity formation. While culture was embroidered into practically every object of study, it was always treated peripherally, never centrally.

The magnitude of this so-far overlooked area of study made itself best known to me when the eight concepts of what culture entails were presented to us in class. Some of them assigned new meanings to

thought-processes I had previously had on a rudimentary level or had heard as the aforementioned stereotypes – singular culture vs. cultures as a plural; Culture with a capital C vs. lowercase culture; culture as materiality or as equal to Nation-State (FERRAZ; COTRIM, 2016) – while others introduced new concepts. Eagleton, in the chapter “Culture in Crisis” of his *The Idea of Culture* (EAGLETON, 2000), covered many of them briefly, as well as some of the history of popular theories around this subject, and referring to his work can help in the process of better fixating these different views.

Another reading that may prove valuable to anyone looking into this area of study is Laraia’s chapter *Cultura Um Conceito Antropológico* (LARAIA, 2001), as it revisits stereotypical views on culture in order to counter them. Its first part focuses on theories such as biological and geographical determinisms by presenting their core concepts through a historical perspective, which progressively shows the contradictions and absurdities contained in those same hypotheses. An example of this can be seen on its very opening pages, when Marcus V. Pollio is quoted saying that the population of the South is more intelligent than that of the North due to the warm climate typical of that region, in opposition to the cold that turned the nordlings into a slower and lazier people (p.14). The irony and fallacy of this theory is made in that way clear from the very beginning of the text, as it is common knowledge how Pollio’s view of the North is now associated with the population of southern and tropical countries. Many other such theories – which we now view as absurd as Jane Elliot’s made-up “scientific study” that claimed blue-eyed people were less intelligent because of the amount of light that entered their eyes– are now equally considered outdated and have been disproved, but persist in the collective memory of several societies. For more on this experiment, registered through the documentary *Blue Eyed* (VERHAAG, 1996), consult Duarte’s chapter “Discourse, society and education” (this volume).



On the power of collective memory, we may refer to Wodak's *Discourse and Racism* (WODAK; REISIGL, 2001), as was brought to my attention by a classmate. Quoting van Dijk, Wodak explains the concept of *semantic memory*, where the “shared beliefs of a society are stored” (p.379) and how, broadly, if that memory has naturalized forms of racism in it, it will be used in the process of “rationalization and justification of discriminatory acts against minority groups”. Racism, as thought by Ruth, is a complex term worth investigating, and it is not limited to race factors, but covers many other discerning characteristics, including differences in culture. The origin of the concept of cultural racism – how one culture is better than another – can be traced back to soon after World War II, and being a relatively new term, one may ask if and how it is connected to the idea of language and culture as a Project of Modernity. When schools and other institutional organizations of recognized value help define and perpetuate which languages are considered proper, which people's History are deemed worth of studying and, like that, which Cultures are worth appreciating, cultural racism continues to be naturalized in a never-ending cycle where criticality may be the only escape.


HALL'S NOTION OF “THE OTHER” AND HOW DIFFERENT CULTURES RELATE TO EACH OTHER

After studying language and culture from a new perspective, it has become quite difficult to me to name what anyone's “culture” is. Knowing that it is possible to describe yourself as a member of more than one culture, it becomes necessary to say that most people are affiliated with several of them, coming together to crucially impact how they view themselves, indeed their identity – all groups to which they may belong

have their own set of common characteristics and habits, and can be described as particular cultures. Neither of those groups, however, are homogeneous and rarely two members of any of them would completely agree on what defines them. Some traits often attributed to Brazilians, for example, say that we are a soccer and “Carnaval” loving amicable people, who are always late for appointments and abhor work; an image that continues to be disseminated among other countries, despite being based more on last century’s government propaganda than the truth.


As mentioned before, practically every culture is comprised of heterogeneous members of different backgrounds, but in spite of possessing such diversity they are linked by at least one common characteristic. Despite the fact that people are usually brought up by common habits and objectives – like living in the same house or getting a bachelor’s degree – more than common ideals and like minds, over time similar psychological traits can develop among members of a group, partially because they are often in contact with each other and in similar situations. For instance, a family who is composed of big movie enthusiasts most likely inherited this characteristic from having many times watched films together, which in turn has an impact on the way they perceive the world; or how students of the same university tend to have similar political positions, resulting from a common education and frequent discussions, and how this influences their opinion on most social matters and current events.

That said, it is also important to think how these cultures relate to each other, seeing how they are neither the only ones in their spectrum nor can stand on their own. Through years of constant reinforcement from various institutions such as the media and the school system, some cultures are now seen as more valuable or “better” than others – like the southeastern states of Brazil in relation to the rest of the country, or the capital city of São Paulo in relation to the rest of the state’s towns. This results in a copying or mirroring movement, where many laws and



projects, among other aspects, are transferred from these “superior” places without consideration for the reality and needs of the states and cities where they are being implemented. This process also occurs in some measure when thinking about foreign cultures, in particular the ones associated with the North American and European societies – perceived as models to be followed in most subjects ranging from personal behavior, art, and fashion, to educational and public safety policies – which leads to a simultaneous idealization of these cultures and a systematic discardment of practically every other in existence, including our own. Because of that, negative stereotypes tend to come to mind when thinking about countries other than the ones belonging to the “First World”, which are, in turn, instantly associated with positive stereotypes, such as being more intelligent and productive, in such a way as to disregard their many factual problems – this process has certainly lead to a more in-depth consumption of their cultural products, like movies, literature and games, which in turn helped shape many people's beliefs, preferences, and habits, going so far as to incentivize the learning of those nations' languages, which slowly added up to a considerable part of their identity.

The strength of such hegemonic cultures and how to position ourselves when confronted with them has been a central topic of study for academics, but it is equally important for pre service teachers, who are presented with the need of dealing with these questions in the practical world of an uneven and diverse classroom. Thinking back about our own experiences and how it felt to be a minority in some moment of our lives can be a useful way to become sensitized to how a student may be feeling – being a minority in a positive way, like the only one to not eat meat or believe in God among friends is a different sensation altogether from being a minority in a hurtful context; like belonging to a working class among richer students, or being one of the few women in what is considered a masculine place. It is important to acknowledge the existence of these scenarios when they occur



and frame them on a positive lighting, so as to incentivize a similar accepting behavior from the students' peers – and more than a didactic tactic, pointing out the benefits of working with a diverse group has its roots on the fact that diversity is an essential pillar for what makes us human . As Hall argues in his “The Spectacle of the ‘Other’” (HALL, 1997), such diversity can incite two opposite reactions in us, hate for the unknown or fascination with the “Other”. While trying to explain why difference matters, Hall mentions four distinct branches of knowledge that have their own convictions on the subject: Linguistics say that difference is “essential to meaning” (p.234); still in the languages area, Hall points out how schools differ from Saussure’s claim that “we only construct meaning through a dialogue with the ‘Other’” (p.235); Anthropology states that “culture depends on giving things meaning by assigning them to different positions within a classificatory system” (p.236); and finally the Psychoanalysis field concludes that “the ‘Other’ is fundamental to the constitution of the self” (p.237). Essentially, without diversity there would be no “Other”, and the construction of meaning and identity as we know would be impossible, since without the strangeness aroused by the Different, the separation of the self from the rest would be inconceivable.

This does not mean, of course, that the “Other” should be converted into “the exotic”. In fact, Geertz (1973) problematizes all matter of generalizations, be it resulted from the search for what is common in “us” or from what is common in the “Other”. “My point is that such generalizations are not to be discovered through a Baconian search for “cultural universals”, he explains, “a kind of public-opinion polling of the world’s peoples in search of a *consensus gentium* that does not in fact exist” (GEERTZ, 1973, p. 40). Generalizations, when applicable, should be discovered from the unbiased observation of reality, not from a standpoint of search for a common englobing characteristic that can be, without fail, found in a specific culture or in the human race in general; since, as mentioned, such a mythic gene

cannot be found outside of ideological preconceptions. With so many heavy and complex aspects in dealing with different cultures, it can seem a daunting task indeed to bring any sort of discussion about it into a stagnated and red-tape-bounded system of schooling. Howbeit, it is vital, perhaps now more than ever, to make an effort to squeeze through the “breaches” of formal education any mention to these questions – managing to make even a single student more receptive to cultures and ways of living different from theirs can result in what will be more likely than not a very constructive butterfly effect.

DISCOURSE STUDIES

What exactly is Discourse? The introduction to *The Discourse Studies Reader* (ANGERMULLER; MAINGUENEAU; WODAK, 2014) speaks briefly about this and, as it seems to be the case with a considerable number of aspects of Discourse Studies, the answer is more akin to *it depends* than a straightforward definition. In a more linguistic line of thought, “discourse” can be best defined when taking into account the context in which the question is asked: “If one distinguishes between discourse and sentence, discourse is considered to be a linguistic unit constituted by a series of sentences” (p. 4); similarly, discourse can also be contrasted with language and text, the first comparison thus resulting in the definition that discourse is the “uses that can be made of language in a specific context” and the second leading to two interpretations: “One discourse corresponds to each text” or “a group of texts from various genres” equals one discourse. In any of these cases discourse can be oral or written and, excluding the comparison with sentences, can even be devoid of words completely. As such, perhaps one of the best and most encompassing definitions is one quoted in class by our professor: discourse is all that can be interpreted.

DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

Discourse Analysis is a subsection of the much broader Discourse Studies field of knowledge, and it is possible to divide it into four separate *schools*, whose origins and peaks of popularity follow more or less a chronological order, which warrants they be called *stages* or *phases* as well – Duarte’s chapter goes into more detail on each of them.

One of the main differences between these four schools is their view on what constitutes their object of study. The discussion of what can be considered discourse is a most central one in the history of DS and definitions can range from typical texts such as well-established literature and written-beforehand famous speeches to non-verbal communication. The first two stages of DA follow the former stance, a more classical view that limits itself to the written word, while the last two adhere to the latter – which is more akin to the statement that “discourse is all that can be interpreted” mentioned before – and embrace the interesting field of Critical DA, that pays a much more closer look to the role of DA within society.


Gee and Handford’s view on discourse, as presented in their introduction to *The Routledge Handbook of Discourse Analysis* (GEE; HANDFORD, 2012), used to seem quite progressive to me. In this short summary of the ideology that would accompany the handbook, they claim that DA should encompass both pragmatics and “the study of ‘texts’” (p.1); that statement being particularly interesting to me, as it was soon followed by how “[...] discourse analysis involves studying language in the context of society, culture, history, institutions, identity formation, politics, power [...]” (p.5). The proposed idea of not only consider grammar but also the context in which it was uttered looked to me almost an equal of the DS’ criticality, but it soon became

clear that Gee and Handford's view on discourse was inseparably intertwined with the written word and verbal expression – a line of thought inherent to the first school of DA, and not at all the only way of studying discourse. By comparing Gee's grammar-attached claims with those in his *An Introduction to Discourse Analysis Theory and Method* (GEE, 2005) I realized that the ideas there contained were distinct from other lines of thought of DS, and where I had only noticed his more practicality-focused style, I now saw as well the particularities of the school he follows.

CRITICISM AND CRITICALITY

Much has been said of criticism and criticality, and therefore it can prove illuminating to take a closer look also into these ideas in order to further our goal of building a solid theoretical base for future practical application. Pennycook's article *Critical and Alternative Directions in Applied Linguistics* (PENNYCOOK, 2010) presents a series of concepts related to this and briefly revisits History to back up his conviction that the field of Linguistics as a whole is in dire need of change. Since the dawn of language studies, much of its focus has been on structure, grammar and similar apparently disconnected from reality subjects, with only recent times bringing the speaker and the context of enunciation to its much-deserved spotlight. Pennycook reflects on how different areas of Linguistics and Social Studies have tried to embrace more reality-tethered and socially responsible approaches throughout time by creating "sub-areas" with the terms "critical" and "applied" (p.16.1) attached to it, only to ultimately resort to the same ideologies and methods behind their nor critical nor applied counterparts.


"Critical and alternative directions for applied linguistics, then, could encompass a renewal of thinking about language that moves



away from the continuing emphasis on structure and system and instead embraces a notion of practice” (p.16.9) – Pennycook broadly sums up the idea that accompanies his article in its conclusion, followed by an interesting table. In it, the author recommends certain works of different writers that could be useful when trying to apply a truly critical way of thinking in diverse areas, such as Discourse Analysis and Pedagogy, among others, followed by a brief summary of what each work provides in terms of orientation. While the intention behind Pennycook’s article and table seem to indeed be that of presenting practical solutions to the outdated approaches of Linguistics and other social sciences, it is interesting to note that despite that, the reading of his text may prove fairly difficult. Perhaps because of its somewhat convoluted language – which seems in keep with the traditional scientific texts that helped build the same outdated views that are here criticized – and short length, the article limits itself to more theoretical points (*we must have a critical mindset*) than actionable proposals (*how to have a critical mindset and what do with it*). However, it is likely that some of the suggested readings presented in his table may provide answers to this problem.

On the other hand, Canagarajah’s *Negotiating Diversity in English Language Teaching: A Tragedy in Four Acts* (CANAGARAJAH, 2016) differs significantly in format from the first text, while still thematizing criticality and further discussing the matter of culture and point of view. The article is essentially a report of Canagarajah’s experience while working with student Kyoko in a “teacher development course”, but puts aside the more traditional format typical of scientific reports, theses, or even news articles – all of which would be suitable – and instead adopts a mix of theater script and narrative.


Among the more intriguing events narrated, we are presented to the academic insecurities of Kyoto, who was not entirely comfortable writing in her L2, despite having as goal to teach English in Japan (Japanese being her L1). Throughout the course, Canagarajah learned



of her difficulties trying to accommodate her native culture with her target language's and how it impacted her performance, subsequently trying to help her develop a more critical view of her own work. Several problems with her L2 writing were identified by the professor, such as a lack of clarity and a deficiency in the use of an "objective and analytical tone", and despite her great personal improvement during the progress of the course, she still received a low grade by the end of it. Canagarajah finalizes his account by reflecting whether, considering her evolution, he had been too harsh with Kyoto, and wondering about the possible negative effects of the grade on her confidence. However, perhaps most important when taking into consideration Pennycook's article on critical approaches, is Canagarajah's change of mind in what constitutes such an approach. When facing a student's work, evaluation should not be solely an act of checking marks off a list of conventions that had to be followed, but making sure the student is developing a critical mind of their own, complete with self-reflexivity. To this end, alternatives to conventional teaching techniques and a critique of the problem of education as a neoliberal product are presented in Costa and Barbosa's chapter "Neoliberalism: An Enemy to Education?" (this volume). Also on this subject, it is worth turning to another enlightening classroom experience as described in Tuller's chapter "Me empresta o cor de pele?" (this volume).

FOUCAULT'S ARCHEOLOGY AND GENEALOGY


It is possible to argue that no single person in recent times has had a more critical mindset than that of philosopher and historian Michel Foucault. Through a constant questioning of the solidity of the political positions all around us, Foucault has questioned everything that makes us *us*, that is to say, our identity, which is based on a set of values, beliefs and perspectives. Through decades of work, he has brought to



his readers' attention a range of polemic subjects like homosexuality, alternative medicine, and madness, by presenting a different side to well-established topics. In very broad terms, his studies point out how much of what we perceive as true and right is actually historical and political constructions. Also, in a similar fashion to Bakhtin's stance on how language is ever-changing and far from fixed – a position that draws from Saussure's view on signs as contextual and not as a given part of reality – one may say that Foucault's work present us the drastic view that what we perceive as reality itself is ever-changing.


In truth, all of these authors seem to have much in common, especially when studied back to back. For Bakhtin, discourse and language are both ideological, in the sense that they are inseparable from the speaker and the historical and social context in which they are uttered; for Fairclough, a somewhat reverse process occurs in which the speaker is inseparable from the discourses that are pronounced by them or around them – discourses so powerful that they shape societal structures – and for Foucault, subjugated knowledges are a product of a system of discourses that establishes a norm and discards anything that deviates from it.

While each author has a different method for studying the formation, maintenance, and flaws of major and commonplace discourses, Foucault's archeology and later his genealogy techniques present an interesting and effective way of showing how today's discourses were historically built and how, despite being heavily naturalized, most, if not all, possess a point of origin – how no, that is not the way it has always been. As he himself tried to summarize in the 70s, even science is not exempt from this system and what is deemed worthy of study is also a discursive construct: “[...] unknown to themselves, the naturalist, economists, and grammarians employed the same rules to define the objects proper to their own study, to form their concepts, and objects of study”, Foucault thus explains that the “level” he “tried to reveal” may be called “archaeological” (p.27).



However, it is known that in everyday life the majority of the population does not possess the means to critically position itself when faced with complex matters in such a way as to realize how much of the news and “facts” that reaches them is discursively composed to serve an interest – unlike Foucault and his readers, this majority is not aware of the dense history which culminates in it. While searching online for examples that showed the absurdity and contradictions that resulted from the sheer force of the Manichean discourses that surround our society in an ever more present way, I began to pay a closer look to a *Facebook* page called “Quebrando o Tabu” (Breaking the Taboo) (2011-present). True to its name, the page constantly brought up articles, news and other posts that criticized age-old problems like homophobia, racism, sexism, corruption, and other extremist views; and despite having to deal, since its beginning, with comments of supporters of those ideas, they were usually in the minority. Having followed the page on a relatively consistent manner for a few years, the increase in amount of such comments was quite notable, and it is no surprise that it coincided with last year’s (2018) electoral period. In a mirroring movement of the increasingly divided Brazilian society, which in turn reflects the discourses of those in power that are supported by the institutionalized media, the sample of the change suffered by a single webpage can show just how fast and alarmingly efficient certain discourses can be in creating this snowball effect. This goes on to show how the importance of social media in contemporary societies is undeniable; (more on another prominent aspect of it can be seen in Jorge’s chapter “Should emojis be taught as a new language? Multimodal practices for 21st century learners”, this volume).

The fact that the prejudiced statements observed in my sample did not go uncontested by a large number of people may result from a series of possibilities that are worth considering. Perhaps because their inspiration and source can be so easily traced back to recent and still present events the process of naturalization that encourages the work



of genealogists like Foucault has not yet set in, enabling a greater part of the population to see the illogicality of these statements; but it is also possible that, had society not began to suffer the slow process of change into a more open-minded and receptive state derived from years of single voices contesting these hegemonic ones, it would not matter how obvious that self-interested source is, since such discourses would be naturalized to the point of no breakage. Whatever the causes that enabled this quick opposition to such obsolete views, it is responses like these that allow us to hope for a future where not just these more obvious claims are contested but the subtle yet constantly present discourses that shape the way we perceive the world as well.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

After our brief exploration of some of the most important concepts in the study of discourse and culture, we have seen how the very notion of culture and the way we perceive it, constantly in comparison with that of others, has been socially and historically constructed. We have also talked about how, if we accept Foucault's genealogy and archeology notions, we are undoubtedly led to the conclusion of how our take on reality has been built through the careful and uneasy relation between subjugated knowledges and voices and the dominant ones. At every moment our beliefs, convictions and resulting habits and actions are molded not only through the ever more present media, but through many other institutionalized means, such as the Educational and Law systems. Our very identities and how we interpret the world are based of this oftentimes unconscious yet constant influences, that are entangled into our societies so deeply that usually we can hardly trace it back to a point of origin. This movement is continually renewed, fueled by contemporary actions just as much as our history. As we acknowledge this system, we are led back to the concept of hegemony.

Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937) has been one of the great names responsible to bringing to the public's attention the idea that just such a system was in place. However, for Gramsci, an important distinction had to be made between different types of hegemony, as Peter Ives explained in the following terms:

[...] regressive forms of hegemony are more top-down, may seek to divide and rule, and may try to impose unity rather than create it. In contrast, progressive forms of hegemony [...] aim to achieve widespread popular support; to build some degree of political and cultural unity, rather than imposing it; and to maintain a dialectical, reciprocal relationship between leaders and citizens so that the new hegemony and its world-view, language, and practices are formulated and brought to predominance with the help and participation of regular citizens, making it more democratic and grass-roots than regressive forms of hegemony (IVES, 2004 apud SWANSON, 2009, p.339).

A fact worth mentioning is how, for Gramsci, the concept of regressive hegemony was closely associated with the authoritative states of his time, like the fascist Italy which he experienced, and progressive hegemony may have been seen as an alternative to that: a positive influence on the population, that would voluntarily gather behind ideals that were freely presented to them. However, in contemporary times and with recent social studies, we are inclined to perceive how "progressive" hegemony may be in fact considered just the more common and imperceptive branch of the system that we have hitherto discussed about, where "regular citizens" help construct and maintain it, not under some specific ideology, but simply out of habit. Raymond Williams expanded this notion by adding different categories to Gramsci's theories: "Williams (1977, 121-7) describes hegemonies that are residual, dominant, and emergent" (IVES, 2009, p.368). These more nuanced divisions may be better suited for contemporary studies, seeing how, as argued by William himself, "the hegemonic has to be seen as more than the simple transmission of an (unchanging)

dominance” (WILLIAMS, 1977 apud ALCALÁ, 2010, p.77); they are described as follows, with the exception of the dominant category, as it has been extensively discussed here as the primary force behind the hegemonic movement:

The residual, by definition, has been effectively formed in the past, but is still active in the cultural process, not only and often not at all as an element of the past, but as an effective element of the present. (WILLIAMS, 1977 apud ALCALÁ, 2010, p.73)

[...] the logic of emergence must attempt [...] to distinguish between those elements which, within a given culture, effectively signal the rise of a new social reality (i.e. those elements which, on account of their actual oppositionality, can be rigorously described as “emergent”), and those which merely indicate “some new phase of the dominant culture”. (Ibid., p.74)

Besides covering the aforementioned hegemonic voices represented through institutions and the government, which the voices of the common public reflect (as exemplified in Section 6, with online discussions on polemic topics) our comprehension on this matter needs to englobe a combination of Gramsci and Williams’ theories. As stated, progressive hegemony is a form of willingly supported *status quo*, be it in a residual format, which we may simplify as the lasting effects of History, for instance, a reverence by the Brazilian population for the so-called “First World” countries, since our history has been constructed by importing their ideas, professionals, laws, fashion, literature etc.; or in an emergent form that is in the midst of constructing a new social reality, like the integration of mobile technology into our lives, but serving in many instances as a way to reinforce the residual formats or as a “new phase of the dominant culture”. Some easily gathered data can confirm the veracity of this movement: for instance, during the week of the fourth of this month (04/04/2019), of the ten films with most theater audience in Brazil, the first five were American; the sixth a collaboration of the USA and Spain; the seventh, one between the USA and the United Kingdom; and just the eighth was a Brazilian production; while the ninth and

tenth were from even less privileged societies according to this logic, as they were Cuban and Argentinian (*Adoro Cinema*, 2019). Another simple example is how the second largest Brazilian musical festival, Lollapalooza, with this year's attendance ranking up to 246 thousand people (*G1*, 2019), counted with, amongst the eight main attractions, a single Brazilian band (SERAPHIM, 2018).

This clearly leads back to our previous discussion in Section 2 on how some cultures and their byproducts can be seen as superior even to one's own, but in a larger scale it is indisputable evidence of how Gramsci's century-old observed organization is still very much in effect. As this author hopes to have shown, this is not limited to apparently harmless audience numbers, but is representative of a much larger scheme with farther reaching consequences. The transition between progressive and regressive hegemonies is a subtle one; if the voices of the former are left uncontested, History has proved just how quickly we can descend into the latter – such a thought may be important to keep in mind in present days but can be even more valuable if transformed into actions.

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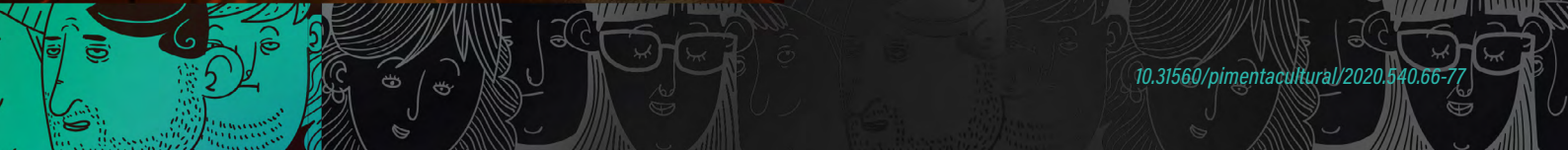


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NEOLIBERALISM: AN ENEMY TO EDUCATION?



Over the past decade, it has become increasingly clear that the school curriculum has become a battleground.

Michael W. Apple

INTRODUCTION

In Brazil, the first project of modern education came up relatively late if compared to the Europeans' project which had emerged at the end of XVIII century, the same context of French Revolution. Only in 1932, with the text "A reconstrução educacional no Brasil: ao povo e ao governo" from *Manifesto dos Pioneiros da Educação Nova*, we had our first national project which aimed to outline Brazilian education's project. Among its purposes, the manifest preached the necessity of secular, gratuity and high quality education. Since then, Brazilian governments have struggled to ensure these stiff challenges, proposed by 26 educators, the manifest's authors, in the end of First Brazilian Republic.

Over the years, we have opened many public schools and public universities. However, nowadays, we face a movement contrary to what was intended with the manifesto of 1932. We are facing a wave of privatization as the result of neoliberal practices, including with regard to education. Thereby, what was originally expected to be gratuity and public, has been depreciated in favour of private schools. Increasingly, education becomes a commodity, once the liberal logic, which extends as governability, proposes an educational model that reaffirms structuralism in school practices. Therefore, the post-structuralism, a movement that opposes this traditional model of language, has no place to apply its ideals and carry out its practices, which seek to break with the passivity and positivism in classroom; rather, it intends to instill in the student a critical sense. Accordingly, the modern education underly assumptions that lie beneath neoliberal discourse, which encourages,

for instance, the *Escola Sem Partido* movement – a project created by the lawyer Miguel Nagib, and transformed into a law project at the request by the son of the current president, Flávio Bolsonaro, in 2014.

Since this is the current context of Brazilian education, it is necessary to go deeper into the relationship that neoliberalism establishes in education. After revealing the harmful consequences of this type of education, this article briefly explores the language education in Brazil, aiming to provide a more substantive discussion about language teaching practices that are in progress in the capitalist market. Therefore, in the following discussion, we suggest the rethinking of teaching practices in favor of post-structuralism, and thus denying outdated traditional practices. As a result, we question the possible implications of the *Escola Sem Partido* discourse, which has been gaining strength in the Brazilian political scenario, in order to instigate debates about Brazilian educational paths and their risks.

NEOLIBERALISM AS DISCOURSE

Firstly, it is necessary to acknowledge the neoliberal concepts in which we propose to discuss. According to Clarke and Morgan (2011), neoliberalism concerns effectiveness and accountability, also in educational scope.

Concomitantly, Pierre Dardot and Christian Laval (2016) reflect on neoliberalism as a rationality that affects both the governmental agenda and the identity discourse that the subject assumes about oneself. Thus, neoliberalism goes beyond an economic ideology, since “it is a normative system that has extended its influence to the whole world, extending the logic of capital to all social relations and all spheres of life” (DARTOT; LAVAL, 2016, p. 8). In other words, in relation to education, the image that education creates about itself is closely linked to the

logic of business, therefore its purposes and goals are subjugated by the same logic of a company: evaluation and competition. More specifically, when we discuss the role of a foreign language education, the idea of English is understood as a necessary tool for a personal investment, for example, career advancement, and competition.

Therefore, in a macro sphere, neoliberal education articulates “a set of measurable standards. [...] to measure student learning and simultaneously to evaluate teacher effectiveness” (CLARKE; MORGAN, 2011, p. 63). It is a discourse operating to ensure the transfer the roles of education to private companies, which are in turn considered the protagonists of the financial market and economic growth. The notions about the educational system as an accessory to the financial market reflects Polanyi’s observation that “the development of the market system would be accompanied by a change in the organization of society itself. All along the line, human society had become an accessory to economic system” (POLANYI, 1944, p. 75).

Nonetheless, this understanding of linguistic education annihilates the purpose of liberating education, in terms of Paulo Freire, and transform education not as a human right, but a product to sell. For that reason, we can conclude that education, including foreign language education, has been growing as a tool and a commodity at the service of the neoliberal agenda (CLARKE; MORGAN, 2011).

NEOLIBERALISM ACTING UPON EDUCATION

The notions of an educational system as an accessory to the financial market reflects Pennycook’s observation, so to speak “the development of the market system would be accompanied by a change in the organization of society itself. All along the line, human society had become an accessory to economic system” (PENNYCOOK; 1994,

p. 75). The consequences of this subordination of private life to the economic system are the requirements of textbooks and certificates of English that aim to standardize, both written and oral form, English used by non-natives. This methodology, based on mass scripts of language teaching, resembles the traditional pedagogical practices which control what teachers and students “should be able to know, say and do” (APPLE, 2001, p.188). It is the private language schools that assume this role of standardizing English, encouraging erasure and prejudices with other linguistic forms, such as Latin English, Black English, etc. Consequently, such conceptions are symptomatic of a superficial and simplistic view of education, based on rational and technical notions about language teaching (CLARKE; MORGAN, 2011).

In this scenario, the student is a client, the teacher is a seller, teaching is a capital and education is alienated, being willing to the logic of the market. Therefore, it is impossible to think of foreign language education in Brazil without relating the class struggle, because if teaching is under the control of private schools (or companies?), who has access to this teaching? The following report, published by one of the most relevant newspapers in Brazil, *Folha De São Paulo*, exemplifies the elitism of English:

Brasil segue estagnado em ranking de proficiência na língua inglesa: Cruzamento de dados do Banco Mundial com o EPI (o índice de proficiência em inglês da EF) mostra que há uma relação clara entre o poder aquisitivo individual e as faixas de proficiência na língua britânica.

Consequently, the concern for performance is based on the search for good evaluation and highlighting in the ranking of schools, demonstrating that education and teaching are not the purposes of schools, but rather schools are a means to distinguish themselves from their competitors; schools wish to get richer.

Thus, education is commodified, and this is dangerous. This arrangement contributes to citizens remain in ignorance for lack of criticality, therefore they are susceptible to developing more violent and manipulable identities due to a lack of criticality.

According to Ferraz (2018), from the philosophies of modernity “decorrem as visões estruturalistas da linguagem, da pós-modernidade, obviamente, decorre o pós-estruturalismo”. The discourses of modernity are connected with the philosophy of neoliberalism, which proposes a depoliticized and banking language teaching, since English is seen as an appendix to the curriculum, as explained earlier.

The discourse of modernity is characterized by the appreciation of positivism, scientism, enlightenment and structuralism, the latter mainly foresees a view of language as fixed and static, which has as a consequence a limited conception of language teaching because it restricts teaching and learning languages to techniques and methods, between right and wrong (FERRAZ, 2018). Thus, “o estruturalismo e o positivismo, que a ciência moderna exige, leva a formas de pesquisa e ensino que buscam o universal, desconsiderando aspectos sociais, históricos e políticos” (MIZAN, 2018, p.228). This idea of teaching, specifically in language teaching, is more related to the instrumentalization of knowledge, that is, methods related to formulas and handouts that aim to develop language skills in students, however, treating the language as an end and not as a means.

These notions based on neoliberalism provide the reproduction of traditional discourses both in private language schools and in regular public schools. This thinking prevails in most language schools in Brazil and maintains traditional teaching, in other words, teaching is based on the transmission of content automatically, without arousing in the student an active action. Therefore, we need to defend the conceptions of critical education, and thus to think of alternatives to traditional education.

AN ALTERNATIVE TO TRADITIONAL EDUCATION

As we argued before, traditionalism in education is a reflection of a neoliberal culture; it establishes barriers for the student's full development of her/his subjectivation process and the constitution of her/his critical thinking. Therefore, it is necessary to emphasize its consequences, because "such views serve to depoliticize language education, detaching it from issues of privilege, power, access, and discrimination and instead portraying it as something" (PENNYCOOK; 1994, p. 38). A pitiful example of this banking education is presented and discussed by Kerollyn Tuller da Silva in her chapter "Me empresta o cor de pele?" (this volume), which reflects on racism discourse in language education and its consequences, mainly for someone's identity. According to our perspective on education, Tuller Silva also reaffirms that "it is important for the margin to know how the system of oppression works, not to take place and become the oppressor but to pervert this system and destroy it, however to achieve this goal the education needs to be *libertadora*" (FREIRE, 1986).

Since these are the results of traditional teaching, it is possible to understand the dangers that this model presents for education, since the practice of teaching aims to be liberating, as Paulo Freire (1996) affirms. Thus, it is necessary that the educational model changes in order to achieve school's main role: to encourage critical students' thinking instead of promoting passive students.

Critical education emerges as one of the possible alternatives to this model, suggesting an interaction between student, content, and teacher that breaks with the traditional models. It suggests that the student becomes an agent in the learning process. In this way, the key to a good quality education - which is essentially liberating - is the agency that the critical school intends to promote. According to Piaget, some goals of education are:

A principal meta da educação é criar homens que sejam capazes de fazer coisas novas não simplesmente repetir o que outras gerações já fizeram. Homens que sejam criadores, inventores, descobridores. A segunda meta da educação é formar mentes que estejam em condições de criticar, verificar e não aceitar tudo que a elas se propõe. (PIAGET, 1982, p.246).

One of the prerequisites for a student to become an agent in the learning process is the deconstruction of the relations of power that prevail today in the interaction between student-teacher. Since the aim of the critical language teacher is to propose a new way of education based on a certain equality among the participants, it is not ideal that this vertical power relation still exists. Therefore, the teacher-student relationship needs to be what Lais Duarte states in her chapter “Discourse, society and education” (also included in this book):

In addition to being looked at as individuals, students should be acquainted with freedom in the classroom environment. Teachers and professors are the ones who have technical knowledge, but it does not prevent them from learning with and from students. There may be a more natural learning process when the classroom hierarchy is converted into a confidence relationship, where students have voice to express their opinions (this volume).

When the educator leaves his place of power and also proposes questioning activities, she/he seeks to form questioning subjects who are aware of their ideologies. In *A Social Theory of Discourse*, Fairclough states:

Subjects are ideologically positioned, but they are also capable of acting creatively to make their own connections between the diverse practices and ideologies to which they are exposed, and to restructure positioning practices and structures (FAIRCLOUGH; 1992, p.91).

For Fiorin (2006), there are two types of consciousness, the Galilean consciousness and Ptolemaic consciousness. According

to the author, the first one is formed by authority's voices and can be classified as monological whereas the second one is formed of internally persuasive voices, being classified as dialogical. The traditional school practices intend to form what would be, for Fiorin, the Galilean consciousness, since students are in many contexts guided by a discourse that is authoritarian. The diversity of discourses, on the other and, would provide the exposure to different practices and ideologies, promoting a plural environment that motivates the constitution of critical thinking.

In this new format, the promotion of critique leads to engagement and vice versa. The criticality of the student is one of the main results that teachers of this proposal for education wish to achieve. It is not an issue of forming a mass of students who will serve as a labor force for a neoliberal labor market.

This is arguably a way to rethinking the use of the English language, so that it reaches new ways of thinking, expressing and acting. Critical education aims to guarantee the process of subjectivation in students that makes her/him able to internalizes the knowledge acquired in the learning process which occurred from her/his agency. Nonetheless, these purposes are being highly threatened by a discourse that is gaining momentum in the current Brazilian scenario.

The project *Escola Sem Partido*, created by Miguel Nagib in 2004 and documented by him in 2014 at the request of Flávio Bolsonaro, affirms that the school's role is to transmit knowledge without an "ideological indoctrination". In other words, the duty of the teacher is merely to convey her/his subject matter without any judgment of value being put into question. At first sight, for many this law project seems valid, but behind this discourse that censors the teacher's autonomy and inhibits student agency, there is a political strategy that aims at the total alienation of the population, starting from basic education.


For Bakhtin/V. N. Volosinov (1973), the interaction between subject, history and society makes every sign ideological because it always carries meanings and social positions. Thus, since discourses carries ideologies and no speech can be considered neutral, the concept of *Escola Sem Partido* is problematic because it is impractical.

The consequences of such a project for society are immeasurable, ranging from the threat to freedom of expression of the teacher to the total alienation of students. Thus, it is inevitable to fight against this project and always question proposals for changes in education which aims at eliminating the teachers who intend to develop critical thinking which, as Foucault (2005) argues, constantly question “their values, their discourses, their perspectives, their actions and themselves”.

CONCLUSION

As a result of our discussion it is possible to perceive that the current neoliberal logic in Brazil, which extends as governability, proposes an educational model that reinforces traditionalism (and neoconservatism) in schools and foreign language teaching. In brief words, by proposing a systematized education without active interaction between the student and the teacher, the logics of neoliberalism, positivism and scientificism encourages projects such as the *Escola Sem Partido* to be supported and implemented. Thus, it becomes urgent to rethink the current (language) education in Brazil. We should stimulate the critical sense of students, making them agents in the teacher-student relationship.

The liberating and critical education, initially proposed by Paulo Freire, brings this dialectic between passivity and agency, in which the agency should be a practice in the classroom and be extended



to the practices of our daily life, because according to this same author “teaching is a creative act, a critical and not a mechanical act” (FREIRE, p.113, 2016). Therefore, it is necessary to review with more attention both the practices that guide the teaching of language in our country and the pedagogical materials elaborated, in order to identify outdated and instrumented models, and propose changes that think the transdisciplinarity of language.

We defend critical education because it proposes the discussion of social issues of race, gender and class, in order to make people more aware, supportive and less violent.

For Rubem Alves, “there are schools that are cages and there are schools that are wings”. Thus, the educator and Brazilian psychoanalyst makes us reflect upon what kind of teaching we wish to promote. What kind of citizen do we want to be? Do we want to blindly reproduce content or appropriate knowledge in a critical way in order to become conscious subjects of our reality? Do we want to live compulsorily or lucid about our own political acts? Do we prefer structuralist teaching to neoliberal molding or a liberating education?

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93

Laís Duarte Ramos



**DISCOURSE,
SOCIETY
AND EDUCATION**

INTRODUCTION


Many academics (ANGERMULLER; MAINGUENEAU; WODAK, 2014; GEE; HANDFORD, 2014) have developed research to reinforce that a discourse goes beyond its sentence level, and it is inextricably linked to context. It means no utterance happens by chance, it is always rooted in some social, historical, or political context.

Wherever there are human beings and communication, there are discourses being produced too, but when we think about the social environment, we tend to perceive classrooms as something external to society, not taking into consideration that before being students, these individuals are citizens, members of families, sometimes they have a religion, and all of these aspects should be relevant when we think of classrooms/students. However, Pennycook goes against the idea of educational environment as an element apart from the society and:

strenuously defends that it is essential to realize that the classroom is also a social domain, in which power relations happen all the time and, for that reason, anything that goes through this context (from the material used to discourses produced) needs to be understood as social and cultural practices that have further implications. (PENNYCOOK, 2001, apud. SILVESTRE; FIGUEREDO; PESSOA, p.129)

Taking into consideration that I am an English teacher and intend to be a professor in the future, this chapter aims to illustrate the relevance of context to discourse analysis and how well contextualized discourses are able to transform the educational environment in a positive way. Another aspect approached is the usefulness of students' voices during the learning process.

The text is divided in three parts. The first section presents an overview of Discourse Studies and Discourse Analysis' development, then which part of this process I agreed the most once I got to know




more about the evolution of discourse studies. I also discuss how scientists developed techniques and different points of view to recognize that discourse is everywhere, in any kind of text, being it written or not. This section will also demonstrate how context and discourse work together, as well as analyse some excerpts of texts, taking into consideration my personal background. The second one discusses an experience of mine as a student, where I analyse through a bakhtinian perspective the discourses of two teachers I had on High school. Finally, in the third section I describe an episode, this time as a teacher, in which a student complained about the class content and how I reacted to that discourse.

DISCOURSE, SOCIETY AND CONTEXT

We can try to understand discourse studies in phases. In the first phase of Discourse Studies as a science, textual production was considered as material for analysis. Pecheux was a very important scientist during what one can call the second phase of DA owing to the relevance of ideology that he added to discourse. In other words, he tried to break the text in order to see not only ideologies but also the political side of language. These features of DA I do not agree with, since I recognize the historical and social aspects as fundamental to make the real meaning of a discourse understandable.

When I got in contact with the third and fourth phases of Discourse Analysis, which are actually are called Critical Discourse Analysis, I could see how the Subject Discourse Studies is part of my everyday life, even if I could not comprehend it at the beginning of the course. During one of the classes, the professor asked us to analyse a song by Criolo, which was a great experience of recognizing reality in a text. I actually had never got in contact with that song before the class



and while talking to my classmates I could notice some references I would not be able to do by myself. Although the professor had given us a technical guide for discourse analysis, but not the critical one, we unconsciously started to look for the social aspect of the song, and I do believe this is a result of our real lives, considering my group was composed by some black people who, like me, who come from poor neighborhoods in São Paulo. Thus, we blacks are used to dealing with the issues approached in the song such as social inequality, urban violence and prejudice against black people.

Gee and Handford (2012) mention the importance of context in understanding and analysing part of a discourse:

It should be clear now that discourse analysis involves studying languages in the context of society, culture, history, institutions, identity formation, politics, power, and all the other things that language helps us to create and which, in turn, render language meaningful, in certain ways and able to accomplish certain proposes. (GEE; HANFORD, 2012, p.5)

This is the conception I consider to be very relevant and reminded me of the “Blue Eyed” documentary by Jane Elliot we saw in class, which is a production that strongly exposes racist actions and attitudes as the North American schoolteacher made use of context to express what she meant. By making white people experience situations that are similar to the ones that black people have been living for the past years, she made them and many other individuals understand how humiliating slavery was and how racial prejudice is still quite present in the North American society.

Given that racism is still present in the world, Wodak & Reisigl mention how the conception of “race” is built in a society:

From a social functional point of view, “race” is a social construction. On the other hand, it has been used as a legitimating ideological tool to oppress and exploit specific

social groups and to deny them access to material, cultural, and political resources, to work, welfare services, housing, and political rights. (WODAK; REISIGL, 2001, p. 373)

Observing Brazil's historical and cultural background, I am able to recognize in our own society the aspects mentioned above. The affirmative actions in Universities for black people are very polemic issues nowadays, and while some people think they are questionable, others think they are essential. My goal is to show how discourse is able to expose the importance of them, especially in our national context.

A Brazilian black singer, Bia Ferreira, has a song named "*Cota não é esmola*", and it is full of social, historical and cultural references, certainly used to make society, maybe the racist part of it, comprehend the importance of racial quota, so she starts by saying:

1. There are many things that people did not tell you at school
2. Affirmative actions are not alms
3. Try being born black in a slum, you would see
4. What happens to black and poor people is not shown on TV.

In line 1 Bia clarifies that in regular schools in our country we do not learn everything we should about how Africans and their descendants were treated, and this may be the reason why part of the citizens consider the affirmative actions as a kind of charity. On the other hand, there is an appealing for real life in line 3, where she balances her discourse with reality; it means line 4 is definitely not true, once TV shows us happy black people working as drivers, housekeepers, and other subjugated occupations.

Personally, I do agree with Bia Fernandes' discourse, because through our whole history black people suffered too much. We were treated like animals, our cultures and families were not respected and,

even after slavery, black individuals faced difficulties to have good jobs, seats at universities or even to have a good life quality. Also it is important to say that most of us live in our poor communities, also called favelas.

Still, Bia Fernandes justifies the value of racial quotas in Brazil by presenting our historical legacy:

They are slaved nations
And murdered cultures
it is the voice that echoes from the drums
come closer
You can also fight
And learn how to respect
Because black people came to make a revolution..


One more time, not only the current context but also the historical background must be taken into consideration while we are looking at this discourse. All in all, the third and the fourth phases of Discourse Studies are considered the most relevant ones by me, due to the importance of History and contexts the scientists added to their analysis: “[...]we have to know about the extraverbal situation[...]. Only if we know all this can we understand the full force of the utterance, understood not just as the word, but as this word with its particular intonation in this particular situation.” (DENTITH, 1995, p. 28). If I were not Brazilian, or at least a person who doesn't know a lot about Brazil's history, I would not be able to understand what Bia meant in her song, provided that it reinforces that discourse is nothing if we are not acquainted with the background of the person who uttered it, as well as the contextual frame in which it was produced, that is the reason why discourse is inextricably linked to context.

THE IMPORTANCE OF A BAKHTINIAN TEACHER

Given the contextual aspects of discourse, this section aims to embrace them through an educational approach, exposing how teachers and professors can and must know deeply their students' background in order to bring them closer to the contents taught in the classroom, which I consider quite relevant as a undergraduate student who is already a teacher and intends to become a professor in the future. Based upon some of Bakhtin's theory, I will describe an example from a real experience of mine to illustrate how a contextualized teacher's discourse was able to change my perception as a student.

During one of the Discourse Studies class, the professor performed a group dynamics called "hand shake", which was divided in two parts. The first part consisted in forming two lines, so the students had to shake right hands with right hands, left hands with left hands, and each time they shook each others' hands, they were supposed to say their own names. During the second part students were supposed to form a circle and give hands, that time the idea was different, once, they still had to shake hands, not with people in front of them, like in the first part, but anyone from the circle, and instead of saying their own names, they should say the other person's, this second part of the dynamics was supposed to be more organic.

The group activity was used as an exemplification of what Bakhtin's studies convey. According to Dentith (1995) Bakhtin states that language is a product of social interaction. As a dynamic thinker Bakhtin proves how language is more than a normative system, that is it alive and changes according to the context. This thought, together with the group activity, reminded me of two teachers I had in High School. I will call them T1 (Teacher 1) and T2 (Teacher 2), to show the relation I could notice between them and the dynamics showed in class.



T1 was my first Portuguese and Literature teacher on High School, and she used to organize her classes in a way that made me feel like there was an intense hierarchy inside the classroom. She sat down in front of the students and read a book full of theoretical concepts about Portuguese grammar and literature, it was a monolog, so I used to take notes as much as I could. I am not questioning how qualified that teacher was, but during her classes I frequently felt as if I only had to memorize every single word she said in order to know all of that by heart by test time.

T2 taught me during the two last years of High School and her classes were completely different from T1's. T2 used to walk through the classroom, make us questions, as well as let the students make questions while she explained the content of classes. As a really shy student, for me, her classes were really essential because she wanted to listen to my voice and encouraged me to make questions; during this process, not only my behavior, but my thoughts on what a good class should be have changed.

Relating both teachers' behaviors to the group dynamics presented in Discourse Studies class, T1 is much more linked with the first part of the activity, in which we just had a more mechanic and linear task to do; as the professor said, this kind of thought composes the discursive structure of the modern traditional education. Within this traditional context, I felt like my mind was limited to think only and exactly about what T1 said and read in classes, so, whenever I had tests, I used to "study" by trying desperately to memorize her words. However,

Bakhtin makes a distinction between language as an object of study for pure linguistics in which solely grammatical and logical relationships between words are studied and from which dialogical relationships are excluded, and language as it appears when dialogical relations (relation between speaking subjects) are included (DENTITH, 1995, p. 31).

Through T1's classes I could not feel able to make any dialogical connection between the content taught and my daily life, not even any historical aspect. T2, on the other hand, was much closer to the second part of the dynamics suggested by the professor, owing to the bigger variety of possible "answers" we had for that; her classes were also linked to this second bakhtinian perspective of language. She used discourse to make me see grammar in my real life context and I was able to comprehend why and when it should be used, as well as the importance of literature for society. I could understand why the authors we were studying had written like that, that they had lived in a specific social context that should be described and criticized by them somehow. From T2's classes I got the ability to recognize the usefulness of making correlations during the learning process she also inspired me to come to USP and start the English and Portuguese Language and Literature course.

As mentioned by Cardeal and Liz (this volume) "[...]it is necessary that the educational model changes in order to achieve school's main role: to encourage questioning students instead of forming passive students, typical of the traditional education". T2's classes transformed me as a student and professional. Being the teacher the one who had the knowledge (according to classroom hierarchy), she could have kept speaking as if students had nothing to contribute in the course of learning, so they should only listen to her, like T1 used to do, notwithstanding through her discourse and actions she made me and my colleagues part of that context.

All in all Bakhtin is a very important theoretician to me, specially as someone who want to become a professor. He was the one who highlighted how language and discourse, when well used, can change education, transforming the educators' role. As Paulo Freire (1998) said, "[...]teaching is not to transfer knowledge but to create the possibilities for the production or construction of knowledge." I do not want to force


knowledge in my students' minds, not even preach what is "wrong" or "right", but I intend to help them build it.

MY EXPERIENCE WITH A CRITICAL STUDENT

Discourse in the educational field is a very attractive subject to me, especially when it is aimed at second language classes. From 2017 to 2019, I have worked as an English instructor at a private university where I was responsible for teaching English workshops to graduation students. The classes were prepared to each course according to the area (health; business; education; engineering; etc.) and supposed to be focused on speaking practice. As I went through this experience, some thoughts came to my mind while I was questioning myself about how a good foreign language teacher should be.

Taking into consideration the Brazilian educational system, especially when it comes to English classes, "[...]people have been led to understand language as something apolitical and ahistorical, apart from the world and as such from relations of power." (PENNYCOOK, 1990, apud. PESSOA; FREITAS, 2012, p.3). More than once, while I was presenting myself and the term syllabus to my students, I saw some sad or angry faces when they were told English workshops would be part of their weekly schedule. As soon as I had opportunities I asked them why those feelings came to their minds, and some of them said things like "teacher, I am not able to memorize all those grammar rules", "English is very difficult", "I had English classes during High School, and it was all about verb to be, I know nothing", "I don't even know how to speak Portuguese".

Being, at the same time, a teacher at a private university and student at a public one, made me understand a little of "both worlds",



especially when it comes to “speaking English”. At the University of São Paulo there are lots of English speakers, actually, most of the students are bilingual, on the other hand, at my job it was “fancy” (according to the students). Well, I have taught individuals who lived in a peripheral areas of São Paulo, students who had to work hard to pay for their (too expensive) undergraduation courses, some of them had two jobs not even having time to sleep, and had never attended an language course before. Given this context, they used to see English speakers as superior, and being a bilingual individual as utopia. The scenario was even more problematic once they were led to believe the English workshops were an opportunity given by the university to improve their curriculums, and here we come across the language “[...]understood as a necessary tool for a personal investment, for example, career advancement [...]” (CARDEAL: LIZ, this volume).

A second language literacy “is not an issue of forming a mass of students who will serve as a labor force for a neoliberal labor market. The purpose, however, is to promote a teaching that goes beyond the principle of memorization and mere transmission of content.” (CARDEAL; LIZ, this volume). Bringing these ideas into my classes was one of my biggest challenges, after all I had adult students who admitted language as a system of rules, apart from any contextual aspects, however, they could not be blamed for that, they have learned this way during their whole lives, but I was there, trying to change something in their minds, as well as changing mine, at the same time.

For Pennycook (1990), language literacy should be rethought in reference to its social, cultural, and political contexts, which means to consider how race, gender, and other categories operate in the classroom as well as to understand the individual as a product of different discourses (PESSOA; FREITAS, 2012, p.3-4).


As an English teacher, I try to recognize the relevance of society and context in the process of meaning building, so I believe that while dealing with a second language, my students’ learning process will

be much more effective if they get to see the content portrayed in their real lives. Every day I challenge myself to think of how can I turn technical categories into something meaningful to them and this leads me to share here a situation in which a student of mine (I will call her Ana) raised her hand and said she completely disliked the class subject that day.

I was teaching a nursing group how to describe physical features, usually an easily understood subject, however, the material used in class was composed of images and the pictures caused my aforementioned student to feel annoyed. The exercise asked them to describe hair and eye colors, notwithstanding there were two white women in the presentation, a ginger, straight haired and blue eyed one, and another who was blond and green eyed.

If we consider that “ideologically, Bakhtin’s group understands language as a convergence place of differences, in which the identity is built by the coexistence with diversity, with the other.” (SILVA apud. SILVESTRE; FIGUEREDO; PESSOA, 2015, p.128), my student was completely right when she argued that those white women could not represent Brazilian people, especially not nurses who go through twelve hours shifts and sometimes go straight to college after working all night long “They don’t even look tired, teacher”, she added. According to her, the images did not represent neither Brazilian women nor real nurses, they looked like foreign, North American or European models.

Teaching vocabulary seems to be a common practice in second language class, “Nevertheless, [...] whatever is said and done in the classroom can be socially and politically understood.” (PENNYCOOK apud. SILVESTRE; FIGUEREDO; PESSOA, 2015, p.129), and it means that there were no problems related to my actions exactly, but to the content of the workshop I was supposed to teach/show them.



As an instructor, the one who, according to society, has the power inside the classroom, I could have just ignored the comment and keep on with the workshop as if Ana's opinion was not important, but instead, I asked her the reasons why she had that opinion. So, instead of muting her by using my power, I showed my willing to accept a divergent conception. According to bell hooks (1994) teachers are not supposed to be dictators, but to give freedom and empowerment to our students, so they can express themselves. That is why I started a brief discussion about the issue raised by Ana, and most of the other students expressed the same opinion. Then, I gave them some extra time to discuss and search for a new vocabulary, and they described each other, this time using the language in a way that made sense to them, speaking about their own physical features. It has been done because "Language is alive and its beating heart rests on its users [...]" (HALLIDAY, 1974; BAKHTIN, 1992; LEITE, 2003 apud. JORGE, 2019).

Not only Ana expressed her opinion, but also when I talked to her at the end of the class she told me about a paper written by her on High School named "A influência da mídia na formação da personalidade dos jovens" in which she criticizes how the media influences teenagers' personality and also creates beauty patterns to be followed that may cause serious psychological problems to the ones who do not fit in them. Taking into consideration our national context, Ana could not see *ginger*; *blond*; or *blue/green* eyes as full hyponyms connections with *physical features*, however, she might had if there were black people and curly hair for example, since she is a fat, black and curly haired woman - who says that she loves herself exactly the way she is.

I must say that the experience with Ana was kind of a challenge to me, but it also contributed a lot for my professional development. In accordance with Bakhtin "I cannot manage without another, I cannot become myself without another; I must find myself in another by finding another in myself" (SILVESTRE; FIGUEREDO; PESSOA, 2015; p.131),

and her complaints made me rethink my own image as a second language instructor, also see, not only her, but all the other students as unique individuals and listen to their voices.

All in all, I cannot become a better teacher without my students. I am the one who can show them how capable they are to learn and use English properly, and although this language seems to be difficult, it goes beyond a system of grammatical rules to be memorized, it is also a matter of context.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Discourses are produced everywhere in social environments, and it is important to keep in mind that classrooms are also social domains, where we encounter people from different realities, beliefs and habits, so it is important to look carefully to it. "Bakhtin's insistence on what is singular, unique, unrepeatable, has its basis on a comprehensive reflection about the existence of a concrete human being," (FARACO, 2009, apud. SILVESTE; FIGUEREDO; PESSOA, p.127). As a teacher, I need to be aware that more than being the leader of a group, I am leading people, and each one of my students is unique, with individual potentials, abilities and qualities.

To educate as the practice of freedom is a way of teaching that anyone can learn. That learning process comes easiest to those of us who also believe that there is an aspect of our vocation that is sacred; who believe that our work is not merely to share information but to share in the intellectual and spiritual growth of our students. (hooks, 1994, p.13)

In addition to being looked at as individuals, students should be acquainted with freedom in the classroom environment. Teachers and professors are the ones who have technical knowledge, but it does

not prevent them from learning with and from students. There may be a more humanizing learning process when the classroom hierarchy is converted into a confidence relationship, where students have voice to express their opinions.

As a language teacher my goal is “the students’ engagement in the discourse so that they can hopefully use it to make ethical choices about the social world which reflects the possibility of refuting any kind of human suffering.” (LOPES, 2012 apud. SILVESTE; FIGUEREDO; PESSOA, p.132). I wish to encourage more students to act like Ana did.

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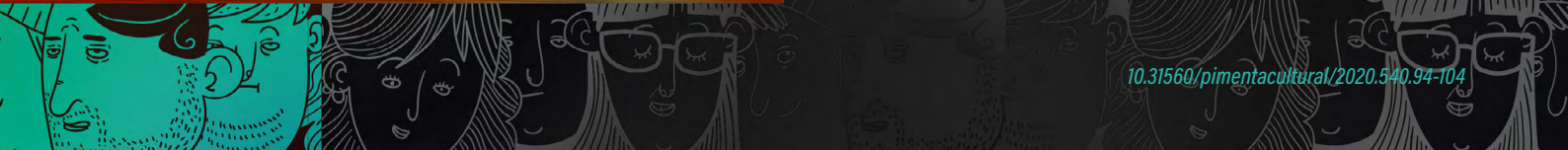


4

Giovanna Dias Jorge



**SHOULD EMOJIS BE TAUGHT
AS A NEW LANGUAGE?
MULTIMODAL PRACTICES
FOR 21ST CENTURY LEARNERS**



Language is as old as consciousness, language is practical consciousness that exists also for other men, and for that reason alone it really exists for me personally as well; language, like consciousness, only arises from the need, the necessity, of intercourse with other men.

Marx & Engels, *The German Philosophy*, 1845-6, p.53.

INTRODUCTION

Created by interface designer Shigetaka Kurita in late 1990s Japan, *emoji* is a junction of the Japanese words for “picture” and “character”. The history of emojis can be traced back to written symbols of ancient Sumerian and Egyptian civilizations who adapted pictographs and ideograms as representations of concepts, developing them into logographic writing systems (DANIELS, 1996).

Although it started out as an exclusive system for Japanese phones, it only truly became a worldwide trend in the mid 2000s, when it was included to Apple’s iPhone and, two years later, to Android systems as a keyboard called Unicode.

Year by year the Unicode keyboard keeps being updated with new emojis – its latest addition being a set of five different skin tones and hair colours for each of them (👩🏻 👩🏼 👩🏽 👩🏾 👩🏿), probably as a response to diversity. We also very recently had new profession-related emojis, with both men and women portraying engineers, teachers, doctors and several other jobs.

With this, emojis have been gaining even more space not only in online chatrooms, but in several other fields, such as helping autistic children recognize emotions through an app on Google Glass, empowering children to communicate abuse to adults via Abused Emojis, being part of education as emotion charts and games and even as part

of marketing campaigns – Domino’s even released an emoji ordering system where, after stating which was your favorite pizza, all you had to do was send a 🍕 and it would be delivered at your door (MERIGO, 2015).

It is safe to say that these pictograms changed the form people communicate and have lately sparked a lot of controversy, especially after the Oxford English Dictionary chose the “Tears of Joy” 😄 emoji as their word of the year in 2015. It is now being regarded as having the potential to kill language once and for all, but so did William Shakespeare back in the Elizabethan age – sorry bro, but emojis are coming for you 😊.

If these cute smiley faces, dancing girls, farm animals and country flags are a hazard to our society by putting our dearly beloved language at stake, then I must get further into it and ask myself: do they carry enough meaning to substitute entire sentences? And, if so, what is their role in modern education?

A SOCIAL PHENOMENON

Just a few paragraphs back I was poking fun at William Shakespeare’s status as a language-murderer due to the fact that he transformed and created new categories for several words during the Elizabethan age and was judged by that matter nonetheless. His contribution to English language is now seen as one of the grandest in literary history, leaving us with words like *premeditated*, *emphasis* and *courtship*, to name a few.

Language is alive and its beating heart rests on its users, who, in turn form a linguistic community responsible for creating its variations. In order to observe the phenomenon of language, the producer of the sound and the receiver must be inserted in the social atmosphere (HALLIDAY, 1974; BAKHTIN, 1992; LEITE, 2003). Usually, new words

tend to be utterances before they are written, but emoji – if they are to be considered words – represent a loophole in this view of language, as they are purely social.

According to the president of Oxford Dictionaries, Caspar Grathwohl:

Traditional alphabet scripts have been struggling to meet the rapid-fire, visually focused demands of 21st Century communication. It's not surprising that a pictographic script like emoji has stepped in to fill those gaps—it's flexible, immediate, and infuses tone beautifully.

This discourse is representative of Oxford Dictionaries' choice of the 😂 emoji as word of the year and reveals to us a new line of thought in academia regarding the cute icons. Images have been a part of effective communication for thousands of years, since cavemen started painting on to depict their routine and daily lives. Society has evolved and, with that, the technology that is verbal communication has too.

Our modern age, though, requires a post-verbal approach to language, as we are now reliant on computers to carry on mostly written messages – sometimes to people halfway across the world – without being able to convey any tone to them. When Grathwohl claims emoji “infuses tone beautifully” what he means is exactly that a message as simple as “I love you.” can become sarcastic 😏, sexy 😘 or just plain cute 🥰 all depending on which emoji you choose to go along with it.

What is important to point out about emojis and their meaning when we are analyzing discourse is that each of the icons have their own names, as matters of accessibility came into play later on and it was decided that, for computer and mobile phone screen readers to become able to translate emoji for the blind, they must each have their nomenclatures defined.

The names are decided based on the simplest description that can be done of each symbol. Take this “👑”, for example; the name

for this emoji is “exploding head” and, though its commonplace usage might not be for a situation where a literal head is exploding, that’s how the software will deal with the image. The intricacies of language are not involved in that decision, and this is why emoji has reached a deeper level, which will be briefly discussed next.

EMOJIS CAN BE METAPHORICAL

Let’s take the “exploding head” emoji, for instance. While the screen reader might put it out like that, its creation was never meant for a literal use, but for a metaphorical one instead. The term “mindblown” is a much better fit if we are considering its use in discourse, and if we had corpora to sustain emoji usage through text messages, I bet we would see “💥” fit this context a lot more often than any other.

Another good example of metaphorical use of emoji is the infamous “eggplant” or “🍆”, which in this case was indeed created for its literal use - say, for depicting a recipe or a meal and is instead used to resemble the phallic form. Following this concept, we also have the “🍑” emoji which has been used to signify “butt” a lot more often ever since Reality TV star Kim Kardashian adopted it to allude to her just as famous behind.

There’s even an emoji etiquette to be followed, as some of the images are more appropriate for an informal conversation with a family member, like “😘”, whereas the “😗”, which is a kiss with no heart, might be better used with acquaintances so as not to cross any lines.

These evidences imply that these pictures have more to them than meets the eye, going deeper into discourse than we might assume. The context defines the usage, and the patterns make each of them more or

less commonplace in virtual environments, relying on the enunciation to be fully understood by a certain group of people.

In effect, the enunciation is the product of the interaction of two individuals organized socially [...] The more immediate social situation and the wider social realm determine completely and, by being so, through its own interior, the structure of enunciation.” (BAKHTIN, 2012, p.116 -117, my translation)

Since they can be used as metaphors, the enunciation presented in emojis depend on a mutual comprehension between “language users”, much like it would if two speakers of different languages tried to communicate in their mother tongue. There are even African-American related emojis, so the social factor has an extremely strong pull on possible linguistic value attributed to the pictograms and its varieties.

They cannot only infuse tone in a conversation, but also truly help out other people communicate in a better, more dynamic way. It is being used for good, and not just by obnoxious teenagers who would probably read this and say “as if! 🙄”. Jokes apart, I really do believe that emojis are not language killers, but language builders. With that in mind, I strongly believe that they can play a really important role in education as part of a multiliterate approach to language learning.

WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM EMOJI?

With new technological advances, society finds itself perceiving the world differently, and their influence in our culture, customs and in the manner we consume content becomes part of what is now called Cyberculture (LEVY, 1997). Cyberculture reflects *l’Universel sans totalité*, a brand new concept when put against orality or even written records, due to the fact that in Cyberculture, we are offered a wide array of information which is interconnected, yet plural.

The interconnection between computers - and lately, mobile phones - in which users are constantly dealing with heterogeneity and excess information has been bulldozing whatever tries to come for it, and that is why education plays a very important role in that discussion. This is owed to the fact that currently, digital technologies are part of the school environment just as much as books and a whiteboard.

Emojis, although not being regarded as a sophisticated technology, still fit within the definition of the term *digital technologies*, as those are regarded as anything that is part of the contemporary process of production, consumption and transformation of information. Apart from that, emojis also allow people to engage with new media and help them to consume digital content on social networks, as well as fit within new expectations of what online socialization should look like nowadays. These interactions lead to blurred lines between traditional and modern production and consumption and most importantly, authorship and readership (VAN DIJK, 2011).

Teaching languages was never an easy task, but during this post-modern era, where social changes are blazing new trails in the realm of education, new methodologies arise and it can be overwhelming to teachers to take all of this in. One of those is the shift from *literacy* as a singular object of study to *literacies* and *multiliteracies*.

When learning a second language, such as English, literacy is a key element. According to Luke and Freebody (1997, p. 9)

Literacy has been perceived as central component of citizenship in the West since the first German campaigns of Reformation, when Luther and colleagues forged the link between universal textual practices, spiritual enlightenment, and membership in the emergent nation-state.

Although literacy is an important reason for the success of ESL teachers, it is undeniable that the shift to multiliteracies has a clear

motive, which is the fact that it suits our learners best at this time. There's a clear shift from the exclusive use of written forms to the mix between written and visual aids inside the classroom. Gunther Kress states that "The former constellation of *medium of book and mode of writing* is giving way, and in many domains has already given way to the new constellation of *medium of screen and mode of image*." (KRESS, 2003 p. 9, italics in original).

Seeing that technology and human beings share an almost symbiotic relationship, it is important for educators to acknowledge this meaning making process— though not entirely – to this new realm of social interactions. Using emoji in the classroom can be an empowering tool to mix written and visual languages. This new constellation needs to be implemented in a healthy way, and in the context of teaching English as a second language (ESL), emoji might serve as a *lingua franca*.

If we take the idea of multiliteracies to heart, it is vital to understand that all images - even seemingly neutral ones such as the emojis - are filled with ideology (CALLOW, 2005). The emoji "🙏", known as "hands pressed together", is used by Christian communities as a symbol of prayer, but for other communities of speakers it can be used as a high-five.

This is an important aspect when using this tool in the classroom, as it is a key element to point out to students the importance of using emojis combined with sentences - and therefore outlining the multimodalities - in order to avoid misunderstandings.

Still within the "🙏" example, if a student uses this emoji on its own in his religious studies Whatsapp group, it will be ambiguous for his peers whether he is meaning "let's pray" and/or "bless you", or "high-five" and/or "heck yeah!". The lack of context here is a good example of why it is important for students to also have some literacy in emojis, as they are probably more well-known than the second language they're


learning, but offer tons of good examples on the importance of context, patterns of usage and frames in any language, as they are an effective yet flawed method of communication.

CONCLUSION

In light of the myriad of arguments explored in this chapter, it is possible to acknowledge that technologies, as an ever growing aspect of our society, cannot be frowned upon as something strictly bad and menacing, but also perceived for its importance, in this case as we speak of advances in communication.

It is therefore likely that in the future emojis and their recognition as language builders will be reason for further studies on their link with education. It definitely has the potential to become a key aspect of multiliteracies, as imagetic devices are already part of a multimodal approach to education and these, in particular, are filled with meaning and receive new nuances, being indeed a clear way of having students understand the phenomenon of language and the ways through which it is being changed everyday.

Their status as educational devices might not be recognized yet, but when we come to think of it, they help bridge the gap between speakers of different languages and serve a good purpose even to the teenagers everyone seems to judge so much over using them in every single chat. What they might be doing is creating effective communication skills which will be bettered by this tool they have at hand, as their discourse is now becoming more infused with feeling and tone, something which emails and ICQ weren't able to do before.



As we live in this Cyberculture, let's try to not be threatened by them and, instead, be welcome to them. What's the point of using "like" in almost every sentence? Zero to none, and yet, it is something that happens all the time. We, as a community of speakers need to be more mindful of our own behavior as "changers" of words, as we are constantly attributing new meanings to old signs. Let's *emote* a bit more and see how it goes.

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Kerollyn Tuller Silva



**“ME EMPRESTA
O COR DE PELE?”:
A DISCUSSION
ABOUT REPRESENTATION,
LANGUAGE AND POWER**



Ora, na medida em que nós negros estamos na lata de lixo da sociedade brasileira, pois assim o determina a lógica da dominação, caberia uma indagação via psicanálise. [...] Por que o negro é isso que a lógica da dominação tenta (e consegue muitas vezes, nós o sabemos) domesticar? [...] Exatamente porque temos sido falados, infantilizados [...], que neste trabalho assumimos nossa própria fala. Ou seja, o lixo vai falar, e numa boa.

(GONZÁLEZ. 1984, p. 225.).

I write from the periphery, not from the Centre.

(KILOMBA, 2010, p. 32)

INTRODUCTION

This chapter intends to develop a discussion caused by the question on the title, which I have been listening since my first year in a regular school, but only realized I could do something about it when I became a Teacher.

Therefore, first of all I would like to highlight some of the researchers and the ideas that helped me to build this discussion. Based on the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), which is “a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced and resisted by text and talk in the social political context” (VAN DIJK, 2015), we are going to show how something apparently so insignificant as a name for a pencil can impact on the way racism acts. Still thinking about CDA and the awareness of the racism as a social practice and ideology manifested through discourse (WODAK, REISIGL, 2015) we can say that analyzing how those racist ideas are produced and reproduced could serve as a tool to destroy it.

Even though we know “the master’s tools will never dismantle the master’s house” (LORDE, 1984) we could think that if the margin takes power of the rules, pervert them and use as a weapon to fight oppression (FOUCAULT, 1979) this could be a way to fight a system of oppression.

Not only analyzing but most importantly speaking for ourselves, we are not trying to be “as good as a white hegemonical researcher”. As a researcher from the margin, I can speak for myself. I am not interested to look like the master, even if we are studying in the same library. Even if geographically speaking we are closer now, I will always speak from the periphery. And I, the *neguinha* will speak.

By taking of my *mask of speechlessness*, I am able to define myself, my ideas, my social practices and release “my mouth”, the mouth here not only as a biological part of a human being, but also as a symbol of speech and enunciation, because the mouth “Within racism it becomes the organ of oppression par excellence; it represents the organ whites want – and need - to control” (KILOMBA, 2010).

The researcher is also a teacher, thus this work it is not only about me and a solo self-discovery journey, but mostly how I used my educational and professional journeys to reflect upon my work and the impact of every lexical choice I do while teaching.

Listening to “me empresta o cor de pele?” so many times caused me a discomfort, but seeing on my work the consequences of this “inoffensive name” brought me here, to research, to question, to bother and disturb.

The following text is a result of my participation on the project “O desafio do ensino da leitura e da escrita: o manejo da heterogeneidade nas salas do 1º ano do Ensino Fundamental” where I had the privilege to work as a researcher and a teacher, my graduation readings with the

life changing subject “Discourse Analysis” and other personal research. And now I “personally” invite the reader to talk and discuss with me.

THE SKIN COLOR PENCIL

Every time a student asks me the “skin color pencil” I give them the brown one, they correct me, of course. From this we can say that whenever one of my student’s name one specific shade of pink as the “skin color pencil” it is possible to see how the sign is ideological and the meaning behind this, even if they are not conscious about it.

As mentioned before, this color name always caused me a discomfort, I was not totally conscious about the origin on this feeling until I became a teacher, until I became a researcher.

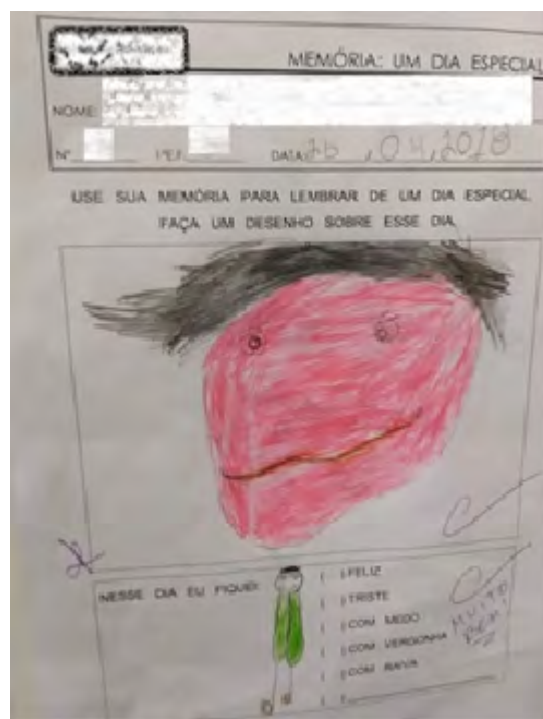
One of my functions as a researcher and Portuguese teacher in the project mentioned before was to work specifically with first-grade students who were struggling with the literacy process; my work was to find something they loved and use this as tool for education.

In that work I had a student that completely changed my life, and everything I knew about myself, education, race and teaching. I will introduce now J., first in a distant “technical” way, then I will talk about a seven-year-old black boy who taught me a lot.

J. in the initial evaluations was able to spell only vowels, still without reading simple or complex words. The student demonstrated poorly directed affection, expressed many of his emotions with aggressive postures and showed difficulty in establishing dialogue for the solution of conflicts. J. usually did not accept or understand the requests of adults at the same time did not demonstrate unavailability for activities and performs them with zeal.

He often used untruths to justify his actions or to blame colleagues, and in many situations of conflict he behaved as a spectator, even when his participation was evident. However, he often showed his affection, was very participative, although in these participations he often appropriated the experiences of his colleagues, which did not necessarily coincide with his reality.

That being said, we decided to work in the construction of identity and the psychological subjectivity through stories that approached his life. After seeing this image, I was sure we had to work on racial representation, the following drawing is a self-portrait of a seven-year-old black boy, about a special day on his life;



I was shocked, indeed, but not surprised provided that I used to draw myself as a blond blue-eyed girl for a long time. Of course, the experiences with structural racism are individual, however, to be aware about how the oppression shows “her face” was essential to work with this delicate topic.

Not only because I am a black woman, but because I am conscious about racism. If we observe closer, it is not exactly the shade of pink that some Brazilian kids named “skin color pencil”, but it is a shade of pink. Not brown, not yellow, pink.

It is necessary to understand language as a social practice in Bakhtinian and Foucauldian terms, and also realize that there is no neutral language, so to speak the word does not speak its own meanings, but can only be translated by means of a socially marked language. If we had a neutral language, my student would not color himself with pink.

J. grew up listening that a specific shade of pink was the “skin color pencil”, without mentioning of course the lack of positive representation of black people on mass media. Nobody needs to tell him he is on the margin; it is not necessary to explain how far from the standard he is; we know.

Bearing this in mind at the time and now reflecting with Chiamanda Achdie’s “The danger of the single story” and the study of the importance narratives based on Aparecida de Jesus Ferreira (2015) based on Critical Race Theory, I suggest that it is urgent we discuss such themes. Van Dijk affirms that

Se o racismo é reproduzido através do discurso e comunicação, nós podemos esperar também que seja o caso das histórias e o contar histórias nas conversas diárias, conversas institucionais, e nas narrativas de novelas, filmes, como as estórias contadas pelos meios de comunicação em forma de notícia (VAN DIJK, 1993, p.123).

The chosen tool for helping J. to develop his reading and writing and to build his identity was to find a story about a boy that looked like him. Self-esteem is not a superficial thing, it is not only about the idea of beauty, but a whole complex set of ideas and practices that impact the way people live by.

How could someone do something positive for himself and develop a mindful mindset if he carries a “sentimento constante de distorção e não pertencimento pautado pela estética que aponta a ausência de beleza e, portanto, de qualidades humanas louváveis?” (BERTH, 2018).

From this on I started to research about stories J. could enjoy, and realized that a black boy as a protagonist it is not something so easy to find. I was lucky to have an amazing team and from this team I was introduced to “*Jeremias*”, a comic about the almost forgotten boy from “Turma da Mônica” created by Maurício de Souza, but with a deeper story developed later by Rafael Calça and Jefferson Costa (2018).

After our first reading I noticed the enthusiasm of the student, at first I felt certain difficulty of telling it, my lack of experience in this format added to the art of the book (much more interesting than my reading at first) and the quick dispersion of J. to any other detail, were some of the factors.

But after the advice from our amazing project pedagogue, I could develop a narrative from the images and the lines on the comic book. I will expose some of the moments which were crucial for our work.

When Jeremias’s teacher gave the protagonist a job as a mason (page 22), J. showed indignation at the “*sarro*” of the characters, and explained to me that without masons we would not have houses, hospitals and schools, I demonstrated my intense agreement with his reflection.

Even though I am a black person and therefore have experienced racism for more than twenty years as an object of oppression, I cannot simply give a ready idea to the student and hope that will solve all his problems. I try to distance myself from the proposal of an “educação bancária” that is, “baseada no pressuposto de que a memorização de informações e sua posterior regurgitação representam uma aquisição de conhecimentos que podem ser depositados, guardados e usados numa data futura” (hooks, p.14).

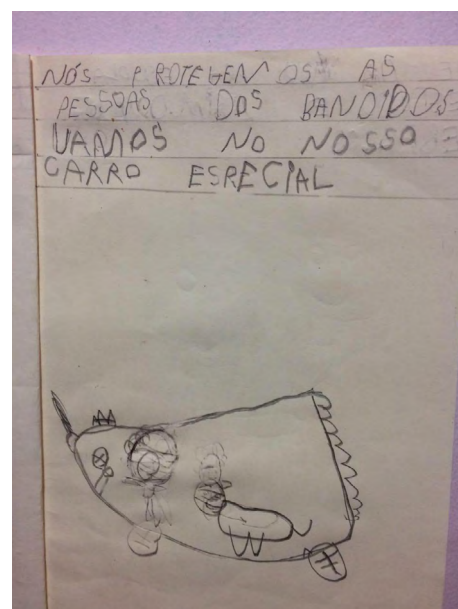
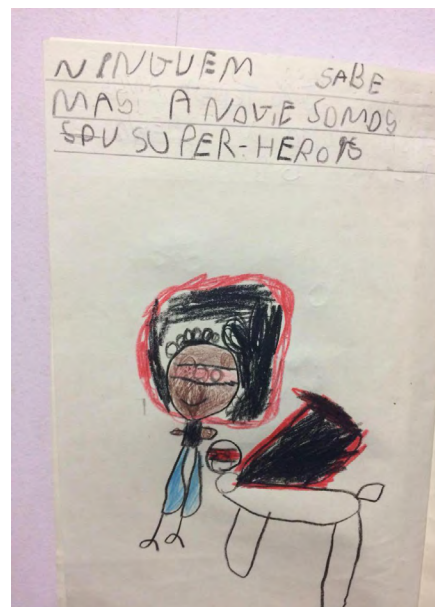
It was a long and hard process, until one day J. told me he wished he was born blond, because the blonds are the coolest, and the blonds are the heroes and blonds are the one with pretty girlfriends. It was the first time he expressed himself as black boy at school, from that I asked him “Mas e o Jeremias aqui? Ele não é legal?” and my answer was another question “E se fosse eu? Dá pra ser o mais legal da história mesmo não sendo loiro?”.


From this conversation I could offer him a chance to write his own story, about him, the way he wanted, as a tool to develop his literacy and also a positive identity. The student was not able to write yet so I offered myself as a helper for this. I will show now some pages of his book named “J. e seus amigos” (J. and his friends), the student is responsible for the script and art, I am only the editor.





SUMÁRIO





Along the process I could understand that my job as a Teacher was not only to show letters, sounds and how they worked together to become words, but also “capacitar cidadãos para gerirem sua própria história” (PORT, 2017). Especially when we talk about a black child who had questions with his identity and self-esteem, the teacher’s speech should always be aware of the impact caused on students.

For example, when we call the pencil in a beige / pink shade of “skin color” we inform students that this is the correct skin pattern. It is obvious that none of the student identifies as pink or beige, however, we know the pattern nearest and farthest from this color.

The stereotypes involving black people in general are not positive, a heritage from slavery and colonialism. The history gave us many racist ideas and those are deeply rooted in Brazilian society. Thus, it is not easy to be represented as a negative all the time, as Mano Brown from Racionais Mcs says on the ghetto anthem *Nego Drama*: “Se ser preto é ruim, ir pra escola pra quê? Se meu instinto é ruim, eu não consigo aprender”. It is not only about language and names for a shade of pink, it is about power and representation.

By choosing not to call the beige or pink shade “skin color” pencil, I am not only changing a lexical choice, I am also fighting against racist ideas that insist on the predominance and superiority of a skin tone. When I tell my students that there is not only one skin-colored pencil I also expose my worldview that involves the multiplicity of colors and cultures and not the overlap of one of them.

CONCLUSION

The process of literacy is shown as a way to empower children. This reflection was essential for me to understand the responsibility of all my

movements in the classroom and to understand that throughout history, writing was connected to power. As Rute Baquero (2012) explains:

Nas civilizações antigas, os escribas detinham o poder da escrita pois o domínio dessa tecnologia era de conhecimento restrito. Esse poder os aproximava das classes dominantes (reis, faraós) que sancionavam as informações que deveriam ser registradas. Assim, poucos tinham o poder – a capacidade de fazer – este registro e, portanto de decifrá-lo (BAQUERO, 2012, p. 174).

Returning to what was mentioned in the introduction, it is important for the margin to know how the system of oppression works, not to take its place and become the oppressor, but to invert this system and destroy it, however to achieve this goal the education needs to be *libertadora* (liberating). (FREIRE, 1986)

Something so “insignificant” as the name we give for a specific shade of pink can expose a lot of how racism acts on the language, and the impact of this name on a black child was exposed.

Nevertheless, this is not only about the black kids, and black people in general. As a teacher I have already received many gifts from my students, most of them love to draw and when the muse is “Teacher Tuller”. The drawings I receive are often colored with the same specific shade of pink. My students draw me, a black teacher, using the shade of pink we were discussing, and when I ask them why my skin is so different on the work of art, they answer me “Porque é o cor de pele”.

With these students I was able to work in another way, on International Children’s book day I brought *Lara’s Black Dolls* by the author mentioned before Aparecida de Jesus Ferreira, a beautiful and delicate work which helped to start the topic. Even if I am teaching a “hegemonic” language to privileged children I am a teacher from the margin, there is nothing that could change that. From this reading we could also use some of the activities and color the drawings based on how they looked, the discussion was very profitable.

The power of meaning impacts every single person, thus if they are non-white they will understand that they are not the “right skin color” and if they are white, they will understand, even if not consciously, that they are the one with the power to decide what a right shade of skin looks like.

That discussion was only possible to happen through the Critical Discourse Analysis way of thinking as Fairclough and Wodak (19997: 271-80) summarized the main tenets of CDA, because racism is a social problem and a power relation manifested by Discourse.

It was also shown how ideological my work and research are, because honestly, neutrality is a myth (what a sad noun, I must say...) what we have to decide is if our ideological base is inclusive or a tool for the maintenance of status quo (FREIRE, 1984).

J.'s drawings were an important source because “CDA also focuses on how *discourse structures* influence mental representations” (VAN DIJK). Therefore, a black boy was using a pink shade for a self-portrait, probably because he was listening since ever that there was one shade of pink named “skin color pencil”. I have the same answer to my students who are totally capable to see me and still use the shade of pink mentioned.

That being said, discussing the name of a shade of pink through Critical Discourse Analyses can highlight how systems of oppression works. As Duarte (this volume) mentions “... no utterance happens by chance, it is always rooted in some social, historical, or political context.” (DUARTE, 2020, this volume) the name of a shade of pink is not an innocent, neutral choice.

Reading beyond this chapter it is possible to find out that even though we connect Racism in Brazil to black people, Racism is much more a “form of control through discourse, sometimes lethal, that

legitimize racial violence and hatred while maintaining the White hegemony." (HIRATA, 2020, this volume). Racism is a lethal tool used to keep non-white people on the margin.

To the oppressor the more divided the marginalized groups are, the better. It is not interesting that we recognize the control mechanisms used by the master. That is exactly the reason why we need to keep on trying. The unique skin color pencil narrative excludes not only black children but also, yellow, brown or red children, in other other every non-white kid. That was my attempt in this chapter. As someone from the margin, I tried to highlight subtle details of my everyday life and explain how racism is manifested discursively, and mostly how I have decided to change this as I became a teacher.

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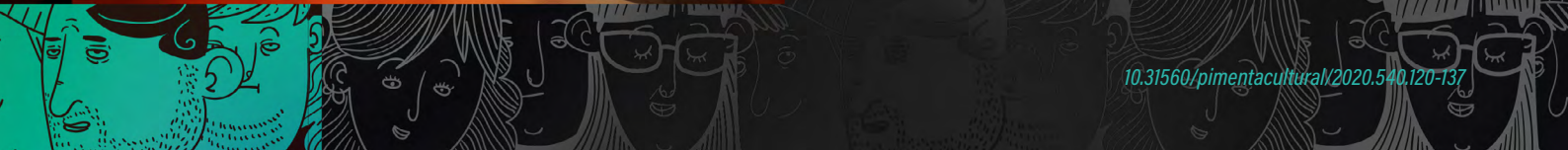


6

Larissa dos Santos Rocha
João Vítor Guimarães Sérgio



DIGITAL LITERACIES IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY: THE IMPACT OF MEMES IN POPULAR CULTURE



INTRODUCTION

If we assume that things in the world really exist, we will have to name and represent them in a way we can organize such things in terms of language. This mediation – between the world and our own point of view – occurs in the most varied forms of language. Considering this power of language and how it builds several comprehensible discourses and following social and language studies by Mikhail Bakhtin and Michel Foucault, this chapter analyzes how discourses are transformed through digital genres in contemporaneity and how they dialogue with the conflicted and contradictory values of the 21st century society. In order to achieve this, six Brazilian 2018 memes will be analyzed and discussed as examples that reflect cultural and political references of a time.

LANGUAGE AS DISCOURSE

For Bakhtin (1973), once an object of the world is placed in language, it is transformed into a sign, which, in turn, points to a reality outside of it being, therefore, ideological. According to Foucault (2009), discourse concerns the “desire of truth” – and, therefore, of power – which connects with the subjectivity, inherent to any kind of human expression. Discourse depends upon historical contexts, upon specific times and places, and that is why Foucault discusses those themes in his works, from madness to sexuality, through subjects as power relations, speech acts and law, amongst others.

As the researcher Paul Gilster suggests, digital literacy can be defined by “the ability to understand and use information in multiple formats from a wide variety of sources when it is presented

via computers” (GILSTER, 1997, p. 20), but also through cellphones – in which uploads and editions can be freely made by those who have access to the software or who knows a bit about those new technology devices.

Beyond editing, abilities as reading and interpreting are previously necessary to establish a relationship with the digital world, its tools and its genres. That being said, it is increasingly important to know how to establish connections between pieces of information, how to filter different kinds of data and how to transform them into knowledge in an organizational system, as the researchers Hafner and Jones point in their book *Understanding Digital Literacies*:

This capacity to link different pieces of data together based on a variety of different relationships, in fact, is one of the most important affordances introduced by digital media. The internet, with its collection of linked web pages, constitutes a kind of natural system of networked associations that has developed organically from the bottom up based on the kinds of relationships people saw between the data they created and encountered on the internet. (HAFNER, 2012, p. 23).

In this context, how can one reconcile so many different worldviews in the same dialogue, since speech is the result of interaction between two or more subjects with different languages, cultures, knowledge and so forth?

For Bakhtin (VOLOSHINOV, 1973) ideology is present in the linguistic sign, because it refers to a meaning found outside the object. Foucault, on the other hand, sees the concept of ideology as the opposition to the “truth” – being, therefore, incapable of establishing a superior position in the midst of a power relationship. For Foucault (2009), the value attributed to words should be the same as the attributed to attitudes, since discourses can become action (not in the sense of hierarchy, considering that actions are superior to the

discourses, but, instead, of both things in the same level transforming – turning into – each other).

Bringing the vision of those two philosophers to contemporaneity – and, hence, to digital media –, it must be borne in mind that, although an importance concerning the discussion about human rights has been minimally diffused from the middle of the twentieth century onwards, conservative waves have gained strength around the world and the giant advancement of technology has made human beings even more immediatist and scattered. With this, culture, arts and especially literature have accompanied the trajectory of Western society, manifesting itself in smaller doses – albeit more frequently – in the discursive formations and social interactions.

Even though more people read, the quality of what is read must be questioned. We pay much more attention to short texts in our cellphones than in long works, and if a series or a book catches our attention, it must go straight to the point, since the main idea is that our time should not be lost. In this scenario, it makes sense that textual genres like the memes grow and gain more and more space in society.

For Bakhtin (VOLOSHINOV, 1973), language is more powerful than reality, not only because the first has more tools and possibilities of arguments to interpret signs but also because it can create more meanings and more knowledge. Language extrapolates reasoning – and although from time to time reality seems to have no limits as well, we only understand reality because it is, as it was said previously, mediated by language.

In this chapter, we take irony as a presupposition of the exclusion of someone as a tool to cause humor in the interlocutor, a subversion of social exclusion of “minorities” which becomes a way of representing the hierarchy present in society by its opposite, as in the “fascist Barbie”

memes, that occupied social networks in Brazil during and after the presidential elections in 2018.

MEMES IN SOCIAL PRACTICES

A meme can be composed by a picture and some subtitle. It establishes a dialogue whose understanding only occurs with the connection between verbal and non-verbal language and usually requires some prior knowledge of the interlocutor in view of its socio-cultural context at that specific historical moment. This digital genre features a different kind of humor that circulates in virtual environments, mainly social media. Thus, it can be seen as a slice of what David Bell, in the first part of his book named *Cyberculture Theorists*, calls cyberculture, a term the author describes as having a “obscure and uncertain” “birthplace and birthdate” (BELL, 2007, p. 7):

For me, cyberculture is a way of thinking about how people and digital technologies interact, how *we live together* – so the suffix ‘culture’ is used in that elastic way that one of the founding fathers of British cultural studies, Raymond Williams (1976), uses it, to talk of *ways of life*. This view of the ‘culture’ in cultural studies is also drawn on by Frow and Morris (2000: 316), who define culture neatly as ‘a network of embedded practices and representations (texts, images, talk, codes of behavior, and the narrative structures organizing these) that shape every aspect of social life’. Cyberculture therefore refers here to ways of life in cyberspace, or ways of life shaped by cyberspace, where cyberspace is a matrix of embedded practices and representations (BELL, 2007, p. 5).

Mememes are cultural because they shape aspects of social life, ways of thinking, and the ideologies of subjects of a community. Thus, mememes are “cyber” because they are located in an online context. They are part of cyberculture because they also represent different ways of

life in a virtual, online, networking environment. Memes are produced and consumed through many intricate and well constructed language creations. As Furtado (2019) points in her thesis about the particularities in memes' discourses:

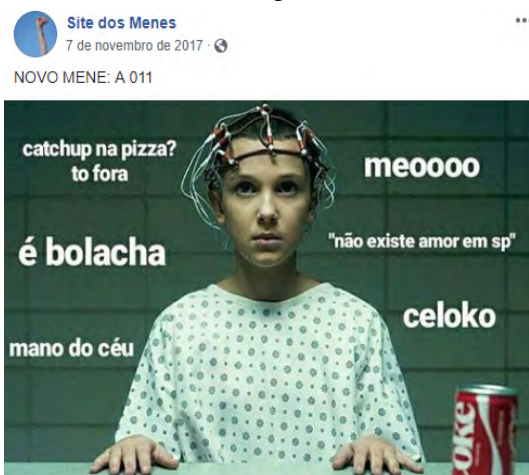
(...) uma nova postura frente às possibilidades enunciativas se manifesta, favorecendo a liquidez discursiva. A maioria destes enunciados mistura o discurso oficial com o não-oficial, dialoga esferas discursivas diferentes, transborda nas redes sociais e possui um caráter carnavalesco que provoca um efeito de sentido risível. (FURTADO, 2019, p. 140).

In order to understand how language functions within these structures, how humor is constituted and, thus, how it is culturally complex, we believe that two of the main aspects of Bakhtin's ideas, approached and discussed by Simon Dentith in his text "Voloshinov and Bakhtin on language", are relevant here: 1) The changeability and adaptability of the sign and 2) the context as a fundamental part of the discourse: "it is not the sameness or identity of language that matters to the speaker but its adaptability to the new situation in which language must take on meaning." (DENTITH, p. 25, 1995).

All the memes chosen in this part of the analysis were taken from a Brazilian Facebook page named "O site dos memes" (Memes' Website). The first of them is called "A 011" and it is composed by a picture with short phrases spread above it and a brief presentation of the new meme, where the name ('A 011) is enunciated. This basic structure will be present in all the chosen memes, except the last one.



Image 1



In the image we can see Eleven, a character from the Netflix's TV show *Stranger Things*. Eleven is called like this because she is a laboratory experiment: she has superpowers and, because of that, the government studies and uses her to spy the Soviets. She is the "experiment" number 11. The context is 70s and 80s United States. So, the image pictures a character named Eleven. But what about the zero before the meme's name? And the phrases on the image?

São Paulo's DDD ("Discagem Direta à Distância", in English something similar to Area Code) is 011. All the phrases distributed along the image are São Paulo's slangs ("meoooo" and "mano do céu") or cultural behaviors (like the preference for the use of the word "bolacha" instead of "biscoito", being this second adopted by Rio de Janeiro speakers, and both of them meaning "cracker"). When numbers are used instead of letters and a zero is located before it, we have a different meaning. So 11 (Eleven) here is one thing, and 011 is another totally different. When we bring these two things together in such an uncommon way, when somebody realized that these two things, with nothing to do with each other, have so similar meanings, the irony is

created. Maybe what makes it funny is this unusual connection between distant things: an Area Code from São Paulo and a laboratory girl with telekinetic superpowers.

Now, relating all these to the two Bakhtinian topics mentioned before: the number 11 (Eleven), the significant, is used to designate two very different signifiers; the meme is funny only for those who a) know who Eleven is; b) recognize 011 as São Paulo's Area Code; and c) are familiarized with some elements from paulista's culture. Probably this meme would not be funny for someone who does not live in Brazil, even not for a Brazilian who doesn't live in São Paulo, or in the Southeast region. In the same way, this joke will not be funny in ten or fifteen years from now. The prerequisites to understand those two exposed references are possible only in Brazilian context and even though *Stranger Things* series is known by millions of people from all over the world as a result of globalization and the expansion of hegemony cultures - São Paulo's Area Code is only known by the "local" ones, namely, Brazilians or, to be more specific, São Paulo residents.

Image 2



The second meme is called “A fada sensata”, something like “The wise fairy” in English. In the image we can see Cinderella and her Fairy Godmother in the moment she is changing her sloppy clothes into beautiful, elegant and fine outfits. However, just like in the 011, here we have many phrases above the image. To understand the relation between those phrases and Cinderella’s image we have to focus our attention a bit in the name of the meme. “Fadas sensata” is a slang used to compliment someone when this person has an agreeable opinion, a “wise” idea. Well, the “wise” part is clear, but what about the “fairy”?

The speaker is not saying that the complimented person has wings, superpowers or a magic wand. It has much more to do with characteristics that we, Brazilian people, associate with a “fairy” image, like kindness, beauty, delicateness, sweetness and so on. We cannot let aside the way how our western Disney culture eyes see fairies. In other cultures, the being can be associated with ugliness, pranks, evil and demons, elements that we tend to see as negative, thus, inappropriate to use as compliment. Differently from the slang, the character in the image is a real fairy, with magic wand and everything. This is related to the reason why the meme is funny.

If we want to call Cinderella’s Grandmother a “wise fairy” she needs to be “wise”. According to the tale, Cinderella must comeback before midnight, the moment when the spells conjured by the Fairy will finish. It may make sense when the tale was written, but nowadays a real good party hardly finishes before midnight. Thus, the “wise fairy” is someone who is conscious about this fact, and will not let her spells finish before 6 am. The meme plays with language when the word “fairy”, which is not literal on the slang “fadas sensata”, refers to a real fairy. Also, the joke is in the dialogic relation pointed out by the meme: if they are calling “wise” a fairy who knows that parties last much more than till midnight, it means that the Fairy Godmother from the tales isn’t, means that she is overpass, old, she is not a suitable part of our modern, 21st century reality.

Now, relating all these ideas with Bakhtin's theory: The word "fairy" is changeable and adaptable because it means differently from culture to culture and because it links two different things: a certain Brazilian slang and Disney's and tales' magical being. "Fada sensata" is a Brazilian slang, and Disney is an American company. Thus, the chance of a non Brazilian person, who doesn't know Disney, doesn't understand the meme is big. The incapacity of understanding is real even if the person just recognizes half of the elements. It is a meme that reflects the way we see fairies and compliments, for example. Thus, it expresses a lot of our cultural thoughts.

Image 3



The last meme to be analyzed in this sociocultural section is named "o homem aranha do interior que saiu jogando teia pela cidade" (in English: "the countryside Spider Man who thrown roof tiles / spider webs all over the town"). First the image: differently from the other two memes introduced in this subchapter, we have no written text above the

image. In the picture we see Spider Man throwing roof tiles in a place that look like a small town. But why is it funny?

The point is in the word “teia”. Like the sign 11 in the first meme and “fada”, in the second, here “teia” has two meanings, and the humor came from the identification of two very different things with the same sign. “Teia” means “spider web”. Then, the association with Spider Man becomes clear. Secondly, and more complicated, “teia” is one pronunciation for “telha” in Portuguese, used commonly for people who live in rural areas and smaller cities. “Telha” means “roof tiles”.

When the meme names itself as “o homem aranha do interior que saiu jogando teia pela cidade” we tend see the situation with strangeness. Spider man throwing spider webs through a city is normal, but not in a rural, small city. After all, he is a hero from New York. But when we understand that “teia”, in Portuguese, means spider web and is a different way to pronounce roof tile, commonly used for rural people, it makes sense. We laugh from the absurd situation and, at the same time, how it makes sense, how two different things are linked through the same sign.

Then, returning to Bakhtin: the word in Portuguese “teia” means (in the meme presented below) two very different things. The way it is used in order to imprint humor is an evidence of the quoted Bakhtinian idea: because we use language everyday it is available to us to manipulate the way we want. A meme like this is possible, it is funny and makes sense because language is flexible, because one single word connects two different things and the speaker. Concerning the context, in order to understand this joke, you have to a) know Spider Man and his powers; b) know that “teia” means both “spider web”, the half related with Spider Man, and “roof tile”, the other half related with the small city in the background and the roof tiles that Spider Man is throwing.

In these three cases, the manner how language is structured reveals a lot of the way cyber users see the world. All of them contain elements of pop culture, the three from United States. In the first we have an area code used to introduce slangs and cultural behaviors from the place where this code is used. In the second, we have a slang that carries, among other things, a way to see a magical being. In the third, we have a regional variation of speaking. Memes are, thus, a complex way one can produce humor. It carries a lot of the contexts where it circulates - place here meaning the internet context and the country, region, physical territory – and, consequently, of the people who make, understand and laugh of it.

MEMES IN SOCIOPOLITICAL CONTEXTS

Considering the 2018 Brazilian context, we analyze here three examples in which memes translated social, political and cultural issues. The first one is part of the series “fascist Barbie” in which the union of the image and the subtitle makes the reader infer that a dialogue between two individuals from different social classes took place before the first shown word.

Image 4



The omitted question (something like “What about your privileges?” or similar) is taken up by the second person in the definition of the central topic (“Privileges?”) and then trying to explain her (Barbie’s, linking to the picture) position in what concerns her lifestyle and what made it possible to enjoy a comfortable and wealthy life. Her explanation assumes that everyone has the same opportunities – everyone should be able to work since their sixteen years old – and ignores the fact that a job vacancy is already a huge opportunity, being impossible to not correlate a previous opportunity to the subsequent ones.

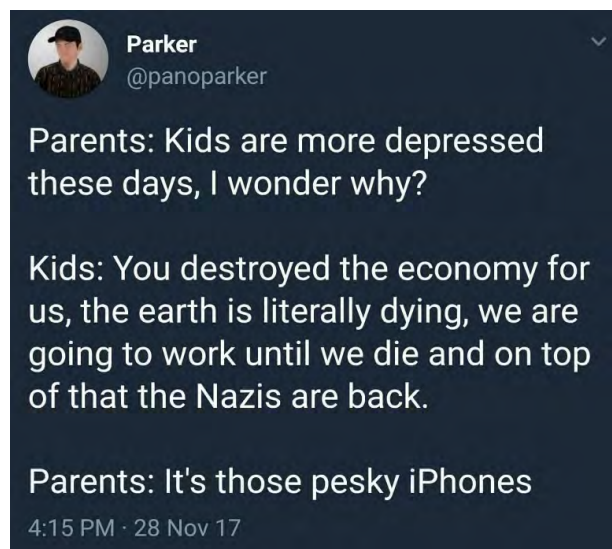
The inequality (especially between people of different races and social classes) and the meritocracy discourse are also some ideas, among others, implied in Barbie’s enunciation as if prerequisites did not exist or had a lower importance than the one that really has in the everyday life. In general, this kind of thinking is established from the inside out, taking into account individual achievements and performances and presupposing the possibility of that for everybody – “if I can, everyone

can, it is a matter of wanting or not”, when actually many other factors, political, economic and social are at stake.

In this case, ideological *and even humanitarian* issues are very evident to the interlocutor, who realizes, immediately, the positioning of the one who created or even transmitted the meme. The humor effect, here, excludes precisely who produce the same kind of discourse as Barbie’s – and generally features same characteristics than hers, both by appearance and attitudes – diminishing their own privileges to find answers to their life consistent with the capitalist system, and hence, “successful”.

The capitalist logic demands that we consume more and more. The competition overlaps the connections and the linear, mechanic and organized thoughts and actions are more stimulated than the empathy, the dialogue and the critical thinking - since in order to survive - we have to undergo the hyper production demanded by the system – regardless of excluding those who did not have access to it.

Image 5



This fifth meme, now featuring an explicit dialogue and no visual content, reflects the generational conflict between parents and children in the contemporary context, considering the increase in suicide and depression, environmental care issues (global warming, water scarcity, etc.) and the political polarity generated by the crisis of democracy, especially after the elections of rulers such as Trump (USA), Brexit (UK), and Putin (Russia), to point out some examples. Parents hold technological advances, relating it to a dissemination of several pieces of information at stratospheric levels, creating connections through a data system that no human being would be able to read, interpret, filter and appropriate this pieces of information to him/herself.

This tension between the “real” and “digital” worlds collaborates to the humor – with traces of acid humor – caused by the meme, visibly favorable to the worldview of the more recent generation, more accustomed to the use of this textual genre to make its social critique and still cause some kind of humor in the interlocutor. The amount of absurd information to which we are subjected hinders connections and prevents us from exercising social activities with the same kind of concentration and attention. Over time, the tendency is less and less to stick to the discourse sustained by the other to preserve our privileges and continue to believe that being successful is equivalent to submitting to the system, although it means a life in a more solitary and individual way.

Image 6

A classe média brasileira falando mal do proletariado

Translate Tweet



The last example compares a frame of Mickey Mouse's toon with the class-consciousness on the part of the Brazilian middle class in the 2018 context, in which most individuals that are part of this class place in groups considered as minorities the responsibility for the economic and political crisis mentioned above, excluding any possibility of guilt by the middle class. Historically, the working class had very little access to many more things. Then, the fear of returning to a lower status and lower amount of money, as it was until the mid-twentieth century, scares and paralyzes what today can be called "the new working class" in Brazil, according to researchers as Marilena Chauí, Vladimir Safatle and many others.

The parallel made by Mickey's meme plays with the fact that both Mickey and the other mouse are animals of the same species, although Mickey himself, when astonishing with someone similar to him, demonstrates his lack of consciousness of his own condition

of belonging to the same species. Comparing with the other memes analyzed in this third part, we can find a similarity in the sense of trying to demonstrate how much the human being, so busy with his physical, material and profitable goals, is not conscious of his own role in the world.

CONCLUSION

The chasm between those who question themselves and those who reproduce previously established discourses grows more, demonstrating how the selection of information by the subject is relevant and transforms the production of discourses and interactions between people, in the private or public field. It is increasingly common to hear that we need to “occupy ourselves” in order not to withdraw our focus from what is theoretically most necessary (that is, to make profit) and this would not be astonishing to either Foucault or Bakhtin, as, for the two philosophers, human beings evolve through the production of discourses and dialogues.

The attitude to construct meanings – since they are not already given or transparent –, shows itself more and more difficult in a plural world with so many possibilities. In this context, it is easier to stick to comfort that is previously established and to believe that the ultimate goal is to fit into these patterns rather than creating our own. However, in order to get away from these patterns and subvert what is already given is one of the several challenges proposed by the philosophy of language in dialogue with contemporaneity.

We studied two spheres in which memes dialogue and translate much of our contemporaneity and the way how 21st century population sees the world. It gets self-evident that many of the human issues, the

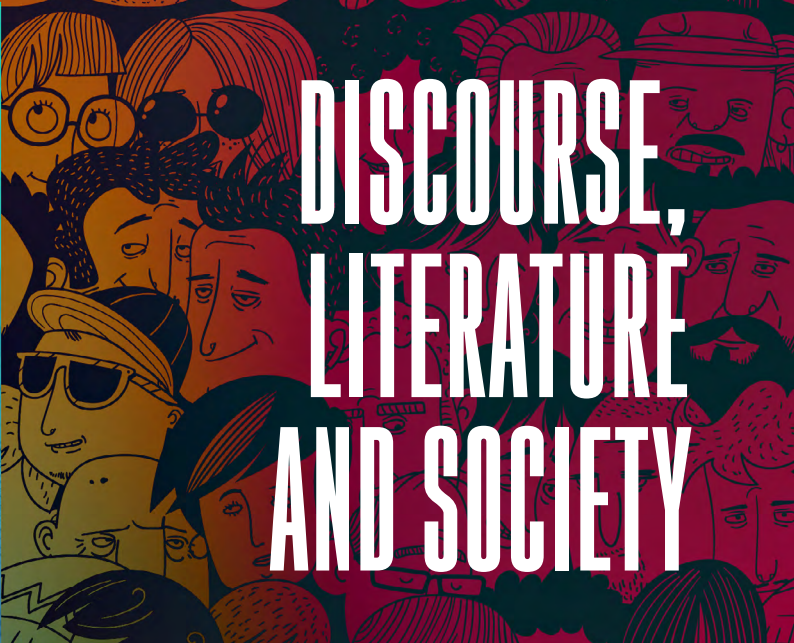
gap between the diversity of subjects and the simultaneity and the coexistence of them in the world are shown in memes. Hence, memes have been constructed and diffused because we need them to share, in a fast and accessible way, all the human complexity of a chaotic and fragmented reality.

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PART 2



DISCOURSE, LITERATURE AND SOCIETY

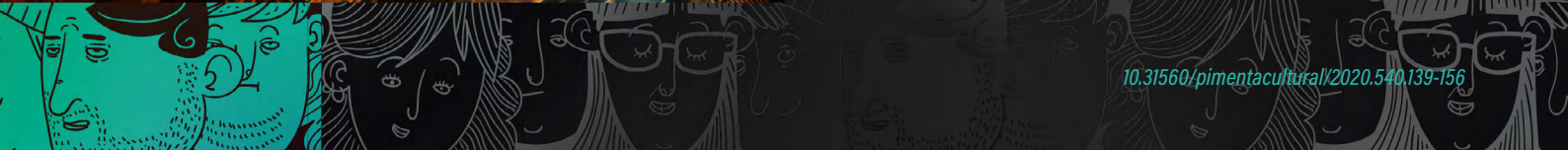




Maurício da Silva Reis



DISCOURSE, LITERATURE AND SOCIETY



INTRODUCTION

Discourse is a mode of action, one of the ways that people use to act in the world and on others. Also, discourse is shaped and constrained by social structure, in other words, Discourse is a practice not just of representing the world, but the signifying the world (reproducing social identities, social relationships, systems of knowledge and belief). Discourse is manifested in language, linguistic forms and all kinds of texts constituting society, culture and history, such as literature.

Jacques Rancière presents that literature is a way of intervening in the sharing of the sensible of reality, that is, it connects what can be said and what is visible, creates a form that relates words and things. At the maximum limit, literature gives order to the mundane or subjective chaos and models the objects of the common world, of our society. Moreover, literature is “an immense fabric of signs (...) the history of a period, a civilization or a society” which is located within a time and space, but it strolls like a spectrum each second of human history.

In these few pages, we intend to think of literature within its interdisciplinary ground, which draws several lines and opens multiple fields of study. Only by thinking about the open field of literary study can we bring it close to our working method: the discourse analysis. The present work will seek the relations between discourse and literature, and how this relationship can illuminate literature not as something closed in itself, without communication to the outside, in such a way autonomous, but think of literature, in the quality already completed by Antonio Candido, “(...) *a literatura, como fenômeno de civilização, depende, para se constituir e caracterizar, do entrelaçamento de vários fatores sociais*” (2014, p.21).

In order to fulfill our purposes, we construct the thought that will be exposed in this article based on several authors that can sustain

each presented point of view. However, our bases are more constructed in the ideas of two thinkers of the twentieth century: Bakhtin and Foucault. Based on these authors and their constructions on the idea of discourse and literature, we will analyze two literary texts in the light of these concepts: the letter of the song *As Caravanas* by Chico Buarque and the short story *Dama da Noite* by Caio Fernando Abreu.

The work is divided into four sections. In the first one, we will explore theories and concepts about the relation between discourse, literature and society. In the second section we will analyze the lyrics of Chico Buarque's *As Caravanas* and observe how the racial denunciation is interspersed in the discourse that the lyric expresses. The third section will attempt to explain how subversive discourse is embodied in the short story *Dama da Noite* of Caio Fernando Abreu. The last section of our article aims to make a conclusion about the relations between discourse and literature returning to some points observed during the article.

CONFLUENCES: DISCOURSE AND LITERATURE


Dominique Maingueneau (2005) argues that considering the literary text in terms of "discourse" is to question the long-standing status of the concept of literature: an art without communication to the outside. According to the author: "*É renunciar ao fantasma da obra em si, em sua dupla acepção: a) a de obra autônoma, b) a de obra enquanto consciência criadora*" (2005, p. 17). This questioning arises when we think what would be a definition of the concept of discourse, taking into account that there is a dialectical relationship between discourse and social structure, that is, the discourse is directed towards the exterior and the exterior models the discourse. There is no possibility of the formation of an autonomous discourse

as if language inhabited a segregated sphere of society. Discourse is entangled with the world and the world is also linked to discourse, as explained by Fairclough (1992):

On the one hand, discourse is shaped and constrained by social structure in the wildest sense and at all levels (...) On the other hand, discourse is socially constitutive. (...) Discourse contributes to the constitution of all those dimensions of social structure which directly or indirectly shape and constraint it (...) (p. 63).

Taking these positions into account, we think that the discursive practice and the linguistic signs that form it are not arbitrarily constituted, but are socially motivated. Specifically, there is a relation between the space of man - where the individual lives in society - with what he produces linguistically, the social also plays a fundamental role in the relationship between individual and language. On this, Bakhtin comments that "in order to observe the phenomenon of language, it is necessary to situate the subjects - emitter and receiver of sound - as well as the sound itself in the social environment" (2002, p.70).

The linguistic phenomenon, the discourse is within a field of pluralities and consists of several layers of genres. Bakhtin, when working on the notion of gender, concludes that every gender establishes an interconnection of language with real life. That is, we always act through genres within a given sphere of activity that implies the use of language in the form of statements, and literature is one of those genres that presupposes a linguistic modeling. Literature as a genre presents itself as a means of apprehending reality, of conceptualizing the world, so literature must communicate, present and create contents through its codes of signs, its verbal matrix, and thus its discursive formation. As a manifestation of language, literary works must be understood "*como enunciados inseridos em determinados gêneros do discurso de determinadas esferas da comunicação humana*".



The discourse that springs from literature must also be understood through a dialogue with history, since it implies effects of meaning arising from the inscription - of the author and reader, not understood as empirical subjects, but as “*posições-sujeito ocupadas no plano discursivo*” - of the subjects and consequently of their speeches in different temporal places and historical partners. Michel Foucault argues that the discourses that emanate from literature must be understood from the questioning of where these literary discourses are located, that is, “who wrote it, when, under what circumstances, or from which project. The meaning given to it, the status or value it recognizes depends on the way in which these questions are answered” (1969, p. 16).

Therefore, to understand literature through the discursive key is necessary to interpret it through its own discursive materiality, “*como realização no plano da língua da relação do homem com o mundo em seus efeitos de sentido (...)*”. Thus, to think of discourse and literature as a joint work is to try to express the feeling of the world of a work that reveals the relations of the individual with the society in which he lives. It is trying to think of the awakening of the literary exterior through the discursive formation of the author, character or narrator.

THE MASK AND THE CRACK

If the Discourse is characterized by the social dimension, social problems are also rooted in discursive practice. This section aims to unveil and try to understand the forms of discourse on racism and social segregation implied in the lyric of the song *As Caravanas* of Chico Buarque.

First of all, the material that will be unleashed here has as its theme something that is placed in the reality: Discrimination and

imprisonment of young blacks who live in communities far from the beaches of southern Rio de Janeiro and that cross the city to enjoy these places. To understand the construction of this material we need to understand what social context they were produced, as an example, on August 28, 2015, the Extra Journal published the following article:


PM aborda ônibus e recolhe adolescentes a caminho das praias da Zona Sul do Rio.

Eram por volta das 14h30m de ontem quando 15 jovens, a maioria da periferia do Rio, se revezavam em um banco para quatro lugares no corredor externo do Centro Integrado de Atendimento à Criança e ao Adolescente (Ciaca), em Laranjeiras, após terem sido recolhidos pela Polícia Militar. O motivo? Estavam indo para as praias da Zona Sul do Rio.

— Tiraram “nós” do ônibus pra sentar no chão sujo e entrar na Kombi. Acham que “nós” é ladrão só porque “nós” é preto — disse X., de 17 anos, morador do Jacaré, na Zona Norte. (...)

Faced with this problem and other issues, Chico Buarque released his thirty-eighth studio album entitled *Caravanas* in 2017. *As Caravanas* is the last song of the album and can be defined as a “*Carioca*” chronicle inspired by the conflicts between police officers and slum boys who are frequently accused of robberies and assaults on the southern beaches. The lyric was composed only by Chico Buarque and begins with the following two stanzas:

É um dia de real grandeza, tudo azul
Um mar turquesa à la Istambul enchendo os olhos
E um sol de torrar os miolos
Quando pinta em Copacabana
A caravana do Arará - do Caxangá, da Chatuba
A caravana do Irajá, o comboio da Penha
Não há barreira que retenha esses estranhos
Suburbanos tipo muçulmanos do Jacarezinho
A caminho do Jardim de Alá - é o bicho, é o buchicho, é a charanga



The lyric begins with defining the verbal time that the story of the lyric is passed: the present indicative. There are also qualifications of that day and the sea, which is *real grandeza, tudo azul, mar turquesa à la Istambul*, that refers to calm and order of a beautiful landscape. This place of clarity is the Copacabana beach (the noblest region of the city of Rio de Janeiro) and it is there where the caravans arrive, coming from the suburbs, where a large part of the poor and black population is concentrated. This opposition between poor and rich, white and black, is more evident in the following verses where the subject says that there is no barrier that can prevent these “*strange*” people to arrive at the beach of Copacabana.

To give more emphasis to the separation of social classes, the subject compares these strangers to Muslims, a comparison that is made by the word *tipo* used as a distinctive characteristic of a certain group: *Muçulmanos do Jacarézinho*. The voice plays with polysemy, putting the muslims who leave their land on account of wars and religious intolerance to immigrate to the regions of Europe, being received with the doors closed and often treated with indifference. At the same time, strangers who come from regions far from the elite zone of Rio de Janeiro are compared to foreigners, different from that land itself. The following two stanzas continue and further evidence of social segregation:

Diz que malocam seus facões e adagas
Em sungas estufadas e calções disformes
Diz que eles têm picas enormes
E seus sacos são granadas
Lá das quebradas da Maré


Com negros torsos nus deixam em polvorosa
A gente ordeira e virtuosa que apela
Pra polícia despachar de volta
O populacho pra favela
Ou pra Benguela, ou pra Guiné

The first point which we highlight is the *diz que* formation that can be understood as rumor, lack of proof of empirical reality. This marking shows a certain knowledge of common sense and reproduces stereotypes, according to Wodak and Reisigl, “discourses may serve to construct collective subjects” (2001, p. 385) which produces, perpetuates and distorts those who are attacked by the speech of a “majority”, as said at the last section, discourse is a mode of action in which people act upon the world and upon each other.

This stereotyped discourse reveals an elite’s view of the suburban and especially of the black people as potential perpetrators of violence. The song makes the horror of a certain group more visible by showing the sexualization and fetishization of blacks and how they may be potential rapists, comparing their inferiors as “grenades”, again, a ironical comparison with another stereotype that the verses explored - the terrorism that Muslims perpetuate.

Faced with this shock caused by the aversion felt by what is different and which in their minds is taken as a threat, the elite decides to *despachar* back the *populacho* (words used that emphasizes the lack of value and opportunity that perpetuates this social layer - poor and black) to the *favela*, Benguela or Guiné (places that were strong sources emitting blacks to become slaves in Brazil, showing that racial and social segregation is a historical problem in Brazilian society) and that the police must withdraw violently the “strangers” of the beach in the south of Rio. The social elite that is in conjunction with the police: two dimensions of society that build alliances and help build a class hegemony that through a discourse of violence and hatred manifest their power that places them apart, segregates social strata and delimits their space of culture and leisure. .

In the last two stanzas the problem of racial violence in the discourse continues:



Sol, a culpa deve ser do sol
Que bate na moleira, o sol
Que estoura as veias, o suor
Que embaça os olhos e a razão
E essa zoeira dentro da prisão
Crioulos empilhados no porão
De caravelas no alto mar

Tem que bater, tem que matar, engrossa a gritaria
Filha do medo, a raiva é mãe da covardia
Ou doido sou eu que escuto vozes
Não há gente tão insana
Nem caravana do Arará

There is a need to have a culprit for all this segregation and racism: the sun that warms and distorts the vision, what actually constitutes an irony because what is guilty is something small and extraneous. At that moment, the subject inserts the images of crowded prisons (one of the problems that Brazil faces is overpopulation inside the prisons) and the cellars of caravels crowded with blacks to be slaves in Brazil. Here is a comparison with the caravans crowded toward the south of Rio de Janeiro, caravels and caravans, past and present, both with the same fate: suffer, feel and be mistreated by those who hold power, money, and culture: the Brazilian elite. The discourse reveals this historical past in which Brazil is undoubtedly still present, in the shadows that stir, showing that racism and segregation have always been part of Brazilian history.

According to Brandão (1995), “those who speak, speak from a locus, and from a recognized institutional right. This discourse - considered the truth, spreads knowledge, and produces power (...)”, also, the analysis of discourse works with the language in the world, with ways of meaning and with individual speaking, considering the production of meanings as part of their lives, whether as subjects or as

members of a given society. Therefore, the individual (the subject of the lyric), does not speak through an abstract place, but of a social place. The conclusion we raise is that the lyrical voice uses a mask with cracks made by the language figures in the music - like irony - and it is through these fissures that the voice manages to critique this mask.

The mask is the discourse, the question is what is this discourse? The ideological discourse of the current Brazilian elites. Ideology understood as proposed by Fairclough (1992):

I shall understand ideologies to be significations/constructions of reality (the physical world, social relations, social identities), which are built into various dimensions of the forms/meanings of discursive practices, and which contribute to the production, reproduction of transformation of relations of domination (...) The ideology embedded in discursive practices are most effective when they become naturalized, and achieve the status of "common sense". (p. 87).

The subject of the lyric is steeped in the discourse of elites, prejudice, racism, and segregation, and are used as a mask by that individual. He wears this disguise and only then is it possible to denounce and bring into focus the social problems that are shadows of a historical past that has not been solved. After all, it is through the fissures that the individual manages to criticize the racist and segregationist discourse of the upper and middle classes. The problem we are facing here is the discourse and the ineducable character of the elites through these people who have always been marginalized throughout Brazilian history, as Wodak and Reisigl (2001) shows:

On the one hand, racist opinions and beliefs are produced and reproduced by means of discourse. discriminatory exclusionary practices are prepared, promulgated, and legitimated through discourse. On other hand, discourse serves to criticize, delegitimize, and argue against racist opinions and practices, that is, to pursue antiracist strategies (p. 372)

The violent discourse of *gente ordeira e virtuosa* becomes even more explicit: the screams of elites who ask, as if it were obligation, *tem que bater, tem que matar* the black and poor, the strangers who “invaded” Copacabana. Also, there is the first presence of an “I”, an individual who turns out to be critical and ironic through the gaps of the mask. An “I” who denounces superior people, who are now *gente tão insana*, so barbarous as to ask for the death of the one who is always strange to the larger society. A racist and segregationist discourse that gains strength and manifests itself every day, no longer in the shadows of Brazilian history, but now with open hearts. A society that increasingly asks for death and has hands dirty with blood from caravels and caravans from Africa to Rio de Janeiro, from foreigners to locally marginalized. Marginalization that occurs when we are on the fringes of society or outside of the Ferris wheel.

THE WOMAN FROM BACKSEATS

Integrating the book *Os dragões não conhecem o paraíso* (1988), the short story *Dama da noite* is authored by Caio Fernando Abreu and has as a plot the dialogue of a woman known as *dama da noite* and a *boy* in some pub of the city of São Paulo, however, what is revealed during the reading of the story is a complex narrative structure, where in fact we have a monologue-dialogue, as we are only following the statements of this woman and the non-exposition of the speech of her interlocutor. That is, the female figure holds the power of the narrative and putting herself as a narrator/character.

One of the ways that Foucault investigates as a product of desire for truth and power is discourse, being it constituted by small units that can be called utterances. Utterances are produced in historically localized speech acts and must be taken in their specific modalities

and in relation to the circumstances in which they arise, thus, “Foucault conceives of a discourse as an ensemble of singular utterances dispersed on the sociohistorical terrain”. Consequently, discourse ends up being conceptualized as the desire for truth and power, which depends on its historical context and which is embedded in relations of power, both at the micro level and at the macro level.

In *The Order of Discourse*, Foucault emphasizes yet another characteristic of discourse: the exclusion and control of certain discourses for the maintenance of a given power. Foucault works on the exclusion of discourse from the other from those who are dangerous to normative society in various themes and social construction. Our proposal will be to outline the discourse of the main character of the story *Dama da Noite* according to the aspects that have been exposed here through the question that the philosophical own does: “*What, then, is so perilous in fact that people speak, and that their discourse proliferates to infinity? Where is the danger in that?*” (1981, p. 52)

One of the many reasons that allow us to ask these questions is the normalization of society: how to control bodies, their behaviors and their sexuality through the power that emerges and boosts their force in discourse. As we saw in Foucault’s *The History of Sexuality, Vol I* (1976), Foucault attempted to sketch how heterosexuality became a norm through the concepts of the bourgeois family and the great religious influence, as a consequence of these moments, all other forms of sexuality were banished through discourses that formed a discursive formation of sexuality resulting in heteronormativism, and the formation of other discourses that establish a hegemonic norm of male, religious, white and invested individual power. Nonetheless, all these norms will be put into play by the subversive and excluded figure who is the main character of the narrative of Caio Fernando Abreu, *a dama da noite*, as we know it, is a prostitute and has complete dominion in the narrative.

Moving on to our analysis, the short story seems to already begin in the middle of some conversation, where we have already legitimated the lady's speech:

Como se eu estivesse por fora do movimento da vida. A vida rolando por aí feito roda-gigante, com todo mundo dentro, e eu aqui parada, pateta, sentada no bar. Sem fazer nada, como se tivesse desaprendido a linguagem dos outros. A linguagem que eles usam para se comunicar quando rodam assim e assim por diante nessa roda-gigante. Você tem um passe para a roda-gigante, uma senha, um código, sei lá. Você fala qualquer coisa tipo bá, por exemplo, então o cara deixa você entrar, sentar e rodar junto com os outros. Mas eu fico sempre do lado de fora. Aqui parada, sem saber a palavra certa, sem conseguir adivinhar. Olhando de fora, a cara cheia, louca de vontade de estar lá, rodando junto com eles nessa roda idiota - tá me entendendo, garotão? (2014, p. 66)

The first lines of the story already startle the reader, we are in the presence of someone who is out of the world's movement, out of order, deviant. This movement of the world is metaphorized in the image of the Ferris wheel that already brings the connotation of the circular, of the uniformization and of the same as the cycle, is always repeated. This cycle of the Ferris wheel can be considered as the social spheres and spheres of power that delimit the space of the individual, and can only enter the cycle of this movement through discourse: *Você fala qualquer coisa tipo bá, por exemplo, então o cara deixa você entrar, sentar e rodar junto com os outros.*

But who is this woman? Why is she marginalized from society? We can draw some conclusions about this in the following excerpts:

(...) Assim: deixa a vida te lavar a alma, antes, então a gente conversa. Deixa você passar dos trinta, trinta e cinco, ir chegando nos quarenta e não casar e nem ter esses monstros que eles chamam de filhos, casa própria nem porra nenhuma. Acordar no meio da tarde, de ressaca, olhar sua cara arrebetada no espelho. Sozinho em casa, sozinho na cidade, sozinho no mundo. Vai doer tanto, menino. (...) (2014, p. 67)

(...) Fissura, estou ficando tonta. Essa roda girando girando sem parar. Olha bem: quem roda nela? As mocinhas que querem casar, os mocinhos a fim de grana pra comprar um carro, os executivinhos a fim de poder e dólares, os casais de saco cheio um do outro, mas segurando umas. Estar fora da roda é não segurar nenhuma, não querer nada. (2014, p. 70)

Through these cuts we can see that in addition to the narrator-protagonist being of the feminine gender, the narrator also articulates the language deliberately, without shame, with heat and insults towards its interlocutor. She talks about sex, uses clumsy words, and has a totally raw way of building her discourse. She is eccentric, strange, defies and provokes the person with whom she converses and undresses the structures of society without disguise.

The gravity of the narrator's discourse is increasingly alarming since it is the production of a woman who had no children, a woman who did not marry, who has no private property and for being a woman alone. All unlike those who are in the wheel and who want the same things do not have personality, according to the narrator's vision, because they are plurified: the girls want to marry, the boys want money, the executives want power, the couples are worn, but do not separate. However, it is the only option we have to be inserted in society: *Quem roda na roda fica contente. Quem não roda se fode.* (p. 67), that is, only by giving the discourses of an individual who is considered "weighted" and "disciplined": wanting to marry, want money, want to be able.

Between the deconstruction and the construction of new images about sexuality and sex, these two aspects of human identity and our personal relationships are increasingly considered a social taboo, placing sex as something sacred and sexuality more and more regulatory framework. On the other hand, the narrator is the woman of the setbacks, she says to her interlocutor: *Você não conhece esse gosto que é o gosto que faz com que a gente fique fora da roda que roda e roda e que se foda rodando sem parar (...)*. Staying off the wheel

is to explore sexuality without shame and without fear, staying off the wheel is to be free to talk about any issues that are stifled by social norms and imposed by a patriarchal discourse.

These questioning and power-insulting discourse, threaten and undermine the social structure of normative power discourses in force because they question and challenge them, questioning what everyone considers to be *normal* and what everyone considers to be *pathological*, discourses against the system of discipline and norm must be excluded and repressed in order to maintain an order of power. Thus, we return to the question that Foucault asks at the beginning of his essay *The Order of Discourse* and which was also present at the beginning of our study: *What, then, is so perilous in fact that people speak, and that their discourse proliferates to infinity? Where is the danger in that?*

The destabilization and fragmentation of a power, an order, a superior discourse. By excluding from the discourse of the different and lowering its marginality, the rule and discipline of society remains intact, and all continue to rise and fall on the Ferris wheel, without even getting dizzy. At the end of the narrative, the day is about to arise and the lady must return to her hiding place:

Está quase amanhecendo, boy. As damas da noite recolhem seu perfume com a luz do dia. Na sombra, sozinhas. envenenam a si próprias com loucas fantasias. (...) Eu vou embora sozinha. Eu tenho um sonho, eu tenho um destino, e se bater o carro e arrebentar a cara toda saindo daqui. continua tudo certo. Fora da roda, montada na minha loucura. Parada pateta ridícula porra-louca solitária venenosa. (...) Dá minha jaqueta, boy, que faz um puta frio lá fora e quando chega essa hora da noite eu me desencanto. Viro outra vez aquilo que sou todo dia, fechada sozinha perdida no meu quarto, longe da roda e de tudo: uma criança assustada. (2014, p. 70 - 71)

The speech of our narrator-character is only transmitted at night in a bar, as the marginality to which it was intended was not only in

his speech, but also in the environments in which it is intended. The individual is excluded and alone, traveling in his fantasies and his questions, looking at the wheel that continues to rotate, which is renewed, changes colors, reaching us in the present day. Minority discourses continue to be excluded and marginalized, they remain out of the wheel in an increasingly conversational and traditional country in the most negative sense of the word. The important thing is to be on the wheel, but the people of setbacks will continue to resist.

CONCLUSION

Finally, some final considerations must be made. In these few pages we aimed at establishing an interweaving perspective between discourse analysis and literature, showing that there is a discourse that emerges from within the literary (whether from a poetic voice or from a character-narrator) and that this discourse builds a sharing of the reality of society, its problems and its issues. When we look at literature observing the discourse that it makes emerge we can affirm one of the most famous arguments of Antonio Candido:

(...) Os valores que a sociedade preconiza, ou os que considera prejudiciais, estão presentes nas diversas manifestações da ficção, da poesia e da ação dramática. A literatura confirma e nega, propõe e denuncia, apoia e combate, fornecendo a possibilidade de vivermos dialeticamente os problemas.” (p. 175)

What we have seen here is that to understand literature while its discursive practice is to enter a dangerous territory: it means to face the constructions made by this discourse and to feel the displacement caused by each linguistic formation, displacement linked with society, with the world, with its problems and inquiries, from the most subjective to the most social. It is to realize that literature questions reality itself.

To understand, lastly, literature in its discursive bias is to investigate, properly, our evil, the horrors that touched and that still touch our world, and especially, that which crosses and destroys the other around us. It “is to feel separated among the teeth / a trickle of blood / in the gums”.

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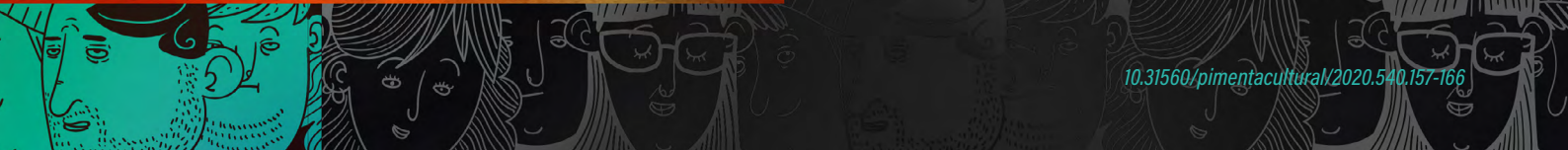


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Juliana Hernandez Curiel Bastos



**LATIN, POETRY
AND THE LAW:
A BRAZILIAN
PERSPECTIVE**



That language and the law are intricately and intimately related may sound like a commonplace, especially in the realm of linguistic and discursive studies; and the close relationship between the law and the *social* reality may not be a surprise at all either. But how may the law – or rather its language – the *legal language* – *reflect* the social relations and conflicts in which it is inserted, and to what extent may it constitute a means for the transformation of such social reality? What can the hegemonic legal discourse say about the social reality in which it takes place? What influence may the legal language have on the social, and to what extent may it be *influenced* by the social?

Considering Fairclough's idea (Fairclough, 1992) that "discursive practice" is manifested in linguistic form by means of texts (in the broad sense of both written and spoken language), the law, as well as legal practice in general, may be understood as forms of discursive practice, and thus as a form of *social* practice which to some extent (a) *represents* the way people act upon the world and upon one another, their social identities, social relationships, systems of knowledge and beliefs, (b) *affects* the way people experience and construe their social identities, social relationships, systems of knowledge and beliefs; and (c) *is affected* by and in constant struggle with the social structure in which it is inserted and by the different – and often conflicting – types of discourse existing within a given social structure.

Historically, those who have been in charge of *producing* legal documents in Brazil – a task officially delegated to public officials themselves (e.g., elected politicians, judges, registrars and so forth), though they often transfer this responsibility to their (legal) advisors, usually lawyers or legal practitioners – tend to belong to an intellectual, economic and political *elite*, a fact which seems to be both a *product* and an *evidence* of the hegemonic power to which our social structure, and particularly our legal system, has been historically subject, as legal discourse has long been used as a means for said elite to maintain its hegemonic power.

A good example in this sense is the great deal of formality contained in legal documents of all sorts and the several bureaucratic mechanisms inherent to the legal practice in Brazil, both of which restrict and prevent other non-elite social groups from having access to the production of legal discourse – and even to a full understanding and to the opportunity of properly interpreting the legal discourse produced by said elite.

From the mere fact that male lawyers are required to wear a suit and tie in order to be allowed into a court room (in a country where the temperature often exceeds 35 °C) and the enormous amount of formal requirements with which a legal practitioner must comply in order to properly prepare and file a lawsuit to the constant use of inverted order in sentences and highly erudite vocabulary in legal documents as common as judicial decisions or public deeds, one could list a myriad of examples of how formality and bureaucracy constitute a highly naturalized part of legal practice and of the (hegemonic) legal discourse in Brazil.

It is true that Brazil, as a civil law country, has a legal system which is based on a *written* legal code (laws, decrees, normative instructions and other legal documents) and which has been historically influenced by the ancient Roman legal system and the European (especially French, as well as Portuguese, of course) legal tradition, from which it may have inherited, among other things, not only the bureaucratic procedures related to the production of legal discourse, but also what I would call a *nostalgic grammar*.

Indeed, still today the use of Latin expressions (e.g., *ab initio*, *ad argumentandum tantum*, *ad hoc*, *a quo*, *ex nunc*, *ex tunc*, *erga omnes*, and a great many others) is very common in legal discourses, especially in academic and judicial texts, particularly those related to criminal and (private) civil law.

In this sense, a search for the expression “a quo” on the STJ website performed on November 06, 2018 and restricted to appellate decisions dated from January 01 to November 06, 2018, has provided 3,116 results, plus two “repetitive” appellate decisions (*acórdãos repetitivos*). Other notable numbers were those resulting from the search for the expressions (i) “ex tunc” which provided 38 results, (ii) “erga omnes”, which provided 22 results; and (iii) “ex nunc”, which provided 15 results.

This is an interesting example of the limits and forms of *appropriation* (Wodak, Maingueneau et. al., 2014) of legal discourse in Brazil, as the language used and the great deal of formality contained in legal documents and functions of all sorts, as well as the several bureaucratic mechanisms inherent to legal practice in Brazil, are all clear examples of how *hegemonic* legal discourse in Brazil restricts and prevents non-elite social groups from having access to legal discourse and to a full understanding thereof, as well as to the opportunity of properly interpreting the legal discourse produced by said elite, which makes these non-elite social groups greatly dependent on the holders of hegemonic legal discourse, who generally belong to the social, economic and intellectual elite.

In this sense, it is also worth pointing out that different *legal discourses* may, depending on the ideology from which they emerge and/or to which they oppose, have different understandings as to, e.g., which utterances, or forms of utterances, are *valid* and which are questionable, and they may establish different relationships between systems of present utterances and the corpus of passed utterances. In Brazil, legal practitioners – e.g., lawyers, judges and lawmakers – still have a tendency to, where acting as holders of legal discourse, write and speak in a very formal, old-fashioned manner, often adopting Latin or Latinized expressions as a form of establishing their status – or, to use a more Foucaultian expression, their *power*.

In fact, considering that, according to the INAF (2018), 29% of the Brazilian population is functionally illiterate, along with the fact that Classical Latin is no longer a mandatory subject in primary or secondary schools in Brazil and that, currently, the teaching of Latin is generally restricted to religious institutions (especially Christian monasteries, seminars, schools and colleges) and literature and language courses in universities, it is not difficult to understand how the use of such expressions (and other such erudite vocabulary and structures) in legal discourse not only reflects the social structure in which such discourse is generally produced and the hegemonic power of which it is a product, but also how it helps perpetuating and maintaining this hegemony by not allowing other social groups to understand, interpret/construe/signify and ultimately participate in the production of legal discourse.

In this regard, it is worth noting that there has been an interesting movement against such formalism and towards a more colloquial and accessible use of language in legal discourse. Examples of this movement are the so-called *poem-sentences* – judicial decisions issued by judges in the form of rhymed verses. Only in 2018, at least two of these have been the subject of news articles published by the specialized website *Migalhas* and by the online version of the daily newspaper *Correio Braziliense* – though many other examples have occurred in the past as well.

Indeed, albeit not hegemonic, there is another class of legal discourse in which simple, more accessible language is preferred to the detriment of formal, more erudite forms of speech and writing:


For the rapporteur of the case, judge Carlos Alberto Alves da Rocha, the legal language presents terms unknown by most of the lay public. 'Citizens often do not understand the language, although they do know that the subject refers to something of their interest,' said Alves in his vote (Consultor Jurídico, 2012).

In this sense, poem-sentences such as the one referred to in the aforementioned article, in addition to surprising the reader by breaking the usual order and format of regular *prose*-sentences, also generally make use of less formal, more accessible terms and constructions, such as colloquial abbreviations, popular expressions typical of the oral language, narrative structures typically used in folkloric storytelling and, of course, rhymes at the end of every other verse.

Also, it is important to mention that, although grammatical aspects such as concordance of gender and number, for instance, are generally much more overlooked in such sentences, this fact does not, nonetheless, constitute an obstacle for the text's understandability.

Thus, legal texts such as these *poem-sentences* may represent a form of resistance against the formal patterns imposed by the hegemonic legal structure and discourse, as they challenge the boundaries between legal discourse and what I would simply call *commoners'* discourse(s) – as well as those between the lyric (in a broad sense) and the legal – by potentially surprising not only their corresponding addressees, but also a great part of the broad social group comprised by those involved in the legal practice, to whom the boundaries between these different (and potentially conflicting) types of discourse tends to be much naturalized and experienced as complementary to one another.

Furthermore, from a *Foucauldian* perspective, it is interesting to analyze what may be deemed as *sayable* in legal discourse – i.e., what are subjects *allowed* to speak of as they act as holders of legal discourse, and from what are said subjects allowed to make legal discourse – what are the acceptable subject-matters of legal discourse? In this sense, *poem-sentences* are often seen as inadequate or improper, as though the judge, by resolving the matter in the form of a poem, were not treating the subject with the necessary care and thoughtfulness.




Indeed, from the justification given to an online newspaper (Correio Forense, 2009) by one of the judges who have *dared* to rule a sentence in verse, it is clear that a certain amount of formality and an established set of rules are expected to be followed for an official judicial sentence to be deemed as a proper form of legal discourse:

The judge does not fear that his attitude will open the way for the population or the legal community to consider him a joker. 'It is really unusual, and it breaches the formal aspect [of a legal sentence]. The law is very serious, very stagnant. So I decided to leave normal standards aside. I take that risk [of not being taken seriously]. It seems that the fellow who lost the case thought it was a joke. But it was not. I judged it seriously, as I believe in all cases. Only the format was different,' said he. (emphasis added).

Cases like these have at times even been challenged in court due to their unusual form, understood as inadequateness or inappropriateness. Although the Brazilian Civil Procedure Code establishes, among other provisions, that the sentence must be given in a clear, objective manner and encompass all of the requests originally made by the plaintiff in their claim, once their requirements are complied with by the corresponding judge, there is no rule or even prevailing judicial understanding preventing a sentence to be given in the form of, say, a poem. In fact, article 489 of Law No. 13,105, of March 16, 2015 (the Brazilian Civil Procedure Code, which regulates Civil proceedings in Brazil), which establishes the essential elements of a sentence, provides that a sentence shall mandatorily contain the following elements:

- i. a report (relatório) containing the names of the relevant parties, the identification of the case, a summary of the relevant request and the corresponding defense, as well as of the main events occurred throughout the proceedings;
- ii. the grounds on which the decision was based, where the judge shall analyze the pertinent questions of fact and law; and

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- iii. the ruling itself, in which the judge shall resolve the main questions submitted by the parties.

Thus, it is clear that the aforementioned legal provision does not in any way refer to the style in which a sentence may be given – e.g., either in verse or in prose –, in such way that, provided that the sentence complies with the requirements imposed by article 489 of the Civil Procedure Code and other applicable regulations, and as long as it meets the purposes intended by the law, it may be given in any style or form – including, although not limited to, in the form of a poem.

Therefore, the fact that Brazilian courts have on occasion understood in this sense, as exemplified in the excerpt transcribed below, extracted from an article dealing with a case involving a poem-sentence (Consultor Jurídico, 2012), is not (or should not be) a surprise:

Disclosing sentences in the form of poetry is not irregular as long as they are well grounded. That was the understanding of the [State] Court of Mato Grosso, when analyzing the complaint against Judge Paulo Martini. In 2011, he delivered sentence in the form of cordel literature [*literatura de cordel*, a popular form of poetry in Brazil, especially in the Northeast region]. For the judges, the fact also did not imply in any administrative penalty (...). (emphasis added).

These cases provide clear evidence that there is not only one single legal discourse, but rather a plurality of legal discourses, which are constantly in conflict and struggling with regard to various issues, including the one referred to above – i.e., which utterances or forms of utterances are appropriate for legal discourse and which are not.

Thus, movements such as the one illustrated by these *poet-judges* may potentially have an impact on the social structure(s) in which legal discourse is inserted and thus may potentially cause different types and degrees of transformations in legal discourse as a social practice. These changes take place where the law (i.e., pieces of legislation) changes in such way as to replace a certain type of hegemonic discourse with

another type of discourse, which may in turn not be hegemonic, at least at the time in which such change takes place. This type of change in legal discourse tends to envisage a broader change not only in order of discourse, but also in the social order – i.e., a change which concerns the way certain social groups experience their own social identities, social relationships and/or systems of knowledge and beliefs.

In times of political and educational crisis such as the ones we are currently going through in Brazil, it is of ultimate importance to think of issues such as access to justice through the law, and of the impacts that an (even) lower-quality educational system – which may result in lower literacy indexes and standards, among other numerous possibilities – may have on the general population’s access to justice and the legal system, and to fight and resist against the reduction of educational rights with the one hand, while fighting to provide marginalized classes greater access to the law, in order to enable them to change it in their favor, with the other, bearing in mind that having access to the *language* of the law may be an important step to achieve this goal.

In this sense, as Kadowaki (2020, this work) puts it:

“According to Gee (2012), discourse (or Discourse, as Fairclough prefers), is strictly related to our everyday activities – and hence, they are adaptable, they can always be submitted to change” (emphasis added)

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9

Vitor Kenzo Kadowaki



**DISCOURSE STUDIES
AND LITERATURE
IN VIRGINIA
WOOLF'S ORLANDO**



This work aims at articulating some general ideas from Discourse Studies with Literature. In order to do that, the chapter will be composed with three parts. The first one will briefly discuss the main topics concerning the way discourse has been studied through time. The second part will center on the differences between writing techniques before the twentieth century and afterwards. Finally, I will try to illustrate the ideas previously shown by introducing some elements found in Virginia Woolf's novel *Orlando*, written in 1928. The idea here is to demonstrate how the patterns of analyzing the components of a certain field of study may change depending on the specific time those studies are taking place. It will be also discussed here how two different areas such as Discourse Studies and Literature have both been submitted to notable changes. As it will be seen, these modifications reflect upon the specific social environment that the authors of that time were writing. The main hypothesis, for now, is that the changes suffered by these two areas are somehow correlated.

When reading *The Discourse Studies Reader*, it is clear to see how difficult it is to define what discourse is, due to its interdisciplinary quality. However, according to Angermuller, Maingueneau and Wodak (2014, p.3), "drawing from the pragmatic idea that language is always used in context, linguistic discourse analysts have been critical of 'pure' linguistic theory". According to this point of view, non-linguistic elements, such as images, would be considered discourse.

It is interesting to notice when studying these different perceptions of reality how they affect the notion and perception of language as well. Structuralism, for instance, works with strict categories and concepts. According to this point of view, only language is discourse. Therefore, there is an authoritarian way of thinking within this school of thought – this explains why Roland Barthes claims that language is fascist, i.e, it doesn't accept anything extra-linguistic. Post-structuralism, on the other hand, regards discourse with its social features. Language now

is more than a mere structure, and the meaning is built with the help of linguistic and extra-linguistic elements. The idea of a binary system, which dictates what is right and wrong, what is good or bad and so on is no longer useful.

Moreover, the way men see the world in post-modernity affects many other realms. Professorship, for instance, is one of them. If we imagine education as a binary system, in which the teacher/professor is the owner of knowledge, and the student an ignorant person who must accept passively everything the former wants to say, then we have a conception of education based on traditionalism; on the other hand, by understanding that meaning and knowledge can be multiple and mutable, the way we teach changes. Of course, there are still some 'rules' we need to take in order to create a peaceful and respectful environment (what Gee calls "social language"); however, that does not mean that the image of an authoritarian teacher who 'knows everything' is needed anymore.

In a general way, the path that Discourse Studies undertook can be summed up by the transformation of a binary system to a more diverse and complex system. Therefore, if Traditional Discourse Analysis was interested in the study of language above the sentence level and the relation between language and context, as Angermuller, Mangueneau and Wodak point out, the French Discourse Analysis changed this idea of Discourse by adding the notion of ideology to understand the (re)production of discourse. One of the authors who studied Discourse regarding this perspective of ideology was Michel Foucault, as he managed to analyse the idea of power relations into discursive practices. According to him (1981, p. 52), "in every society the production of discourse is at once controlled, selected, organised and redistributed" by three main procedures: the forbidden speech (i.e., social taboos that include what we can and cannot say in certain situations); the division of madness (those who are considered mad

have their discourse excluded) and the will to truth. The latter system of discourse exclusion is institutionally shaped in a way that “all that appears to our eyes is a truth conceived as a richness, a fecundity, a gentle and insidiously universal force, and in contrast we are unaware of the will to truth” (FOUCAULT, 1981, p.56). Briefly speaking, it is as if even what we consider as truth was intrinsically related to power and dominant social structures.

Besides the French Discourse Analysis, CDA, which is not exactly a school or approach, but rather a different mode or perspective regarding Discourse Analysis, has a very interesting way of comprehending Discourse, as it “studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context” (DIJK, 2001, p. 352), by trying to understand, among many other things, the notions of social problems, power relations, ideology and history. Thus, it is clear to see how this field of study is not steady, but have been modified and rethought through time. From a more structural perspective in the beginning, Discourse Studies undertook aspects concerning extralinguistic elements, such as history, social structures and ideology.

I would also like to complement these previous topics by adding a personal point of view. According to Gee (2012), discourse (or Discourse, as Fairclough prefers), is strictly related to our everyday activities – and hence, they are adaptable, they can always be submitted to change. What caught my attention the most was how Discourse is embedded in our everyday life, 24 hours a day. It is interesting to notice how we use different patterns of language (the second grammar) in order to adapt ourselves to different social situations and be recognized within them – in other words, to use our different social languages. Because of that, in my point of view, studying Discourse is also studying society as well and, therefore, focusing only on linguistic structures is limited and does not comprise the whole ensemble of the discipline.

A similar route can be retraced when we analyze the history of the novel. As Maurício Reis (this volume) points out, “discourse is manifested in language, linguistic forms and all kinds of texts constituting society, culture and history, such as literature”. Therefore, it is clear to see how the form of a certain period adapts to the historical context the author is living in. According to Eagleton (2007, pp. 65-66), “form and content may be inseparable in experience; but the very fact that we use two different terms here suggests that they are not identical. Literary forms have a history of their own; they are not just the obedient expression of content”. Therefore, the form of the novel (and all other literary genres) have changed through time in consonance with social changes.

When this literary genre first started, the narrator was trustworthy, the narrative was objective and, in a certain way, optimistic (due to the rise of the bourgeoisie). This way of writing can be best understood in Ian Watt's *The Rise of the Novel*. As the author points out, the novel is a modern genre, which means that it carries in its center the notions of individualism and liberalism brought by the French Revolution. In this sense, the writers in the eighteenth century would go against the idea of universalism. According to Watt (1957, p.15), “the plot had to be acted out by particular people in particular circumstances, rather than, as had been common in the past, by general human types against a background primarily determined by the appropriate literary convention”. In order to do that, the writers would accurately describe the ambience and the characters. The time starts to be based on the clocks, rather than a mythic and universal one. Everything in the novel is thus built in order to create realistic features to the reader.

Notwithstanding, when the twentieth century started, the genre was turned upside down: what happened was a complete disbelief in the words of the narrator, a subjective and sometimes non-comprehensible narrative (Virginia Woolf and James Joyce are those who best represent this moment). Therefore, the sense of certitude and

belief in human deed that represented the Modern Age was no longer available in this moment. As Adorno (1993, p.32) points out, there is a sense of “disenchantment of the world”. As a result, the form of the novel changes as well. The narrator is no longer trustworthy. In fact, many of the realistic aspects that composed the novels until then have been threatened. According to Adorno (1993, pp.32, 35):

If the novel wants to remain true to its realistic heritage and tell how things really are, it must abandon a realism that only aids the façade in its work of camouflage by reproducing it. (...) [Moreover,] the literary subject who declares himself free of the conventions of concrete representation acknowledges his own impotence at the same time; he acknowledges the superior strength of the world of things that reappears in the midst of the monologue.

Therefore, the author regards realism as a “façade” whose only objective is to deviate us from reality itself. Erich Auerbach, in this sense, has a similar point of view, as we can retrace in “The Brown Stocking”, a study about Woolf’s *To the Lighthouse*, the same argument concerning this new way of writing:

It is all, then, a matter of the author’s attitude toward the reality of the world he represents. And this attitude differs entirely from that of authors who interpret the actions, situations, and characters of their personages with objective assurance, as was the general practice in earlier times. (AUERBACH, 1953, p.535).

According to Auerbach, one of the great examples of English writers who managed to deviate from realistic features is Virginia Woolf. This present work aims at understanding these features by analyzing *Orlando*, written in 1928. What intrigues me the most in this narrative is that not only the structure itself is challenging, as it drifts away all of the literary common patterns we are accustomed to, but also because its plot is defined by a crucial transformation in the character’s life. The analysis of Virginia Woolf’s novel in this paper also tries to ward off many conceptions regarding the author, having in account that, according to


Julia de Oliveira (this volume), some works around Virginia Woolf rely on her depression, “as if challenging and questioning the female condition” would cause terrible dénouements such as suicide. “Woolf was terrific writer who often talked about the female condition and gender issues on her writings.”

To start off, it is important to understand that *Orlando* intrigues the reader right from its very synopsis. Woolf’s work accompanies the life of the character Orlando through many places and times. More than sketching substantial historical transformations, the novel also challenges our very perception of the self, as the character lives more than three centuries and changes his/ her biological sex in a determined moment of the narrative.

As the novel begins, the reader is faced with an assertive sentence: “He – for there could be no doubt about his sex” (WOOLF, 1963, p. 9). Here, the narrator presents the main character, Orlando, by defining him according to a specific characterization – his sex – which we all at first have “no doubt” about. The narrator reinforces this idea, as a similar construction is seen a few pages later: “When the boy, for alas, a boy it must be”. (WOOLF, 1963, p.26).

The first chapter is filled with an ambiance of assertiveness and certitude, as the narrator has this “eager to come at the truth of the matter” (WOOLF, 1963, p.20). The historic moment here is the Elizabethan Age, and these historical facts are crucial for the understanding of the character’s transformation, for “the strategy of rejecting the Victorian and Edwardian literary heritage is a defining feature of modernism” (WHITWORTH, 2000, p. 150).

However, as the chapter advances, traces of the collapse of a stable world start to appear:



Where, for three months and more, there had been solid ice of such thickness that it seemed permanent as stone, and a whole gay city had been stood on its pavement, was now a race of turbulent yellow Waters. (...) The mere look of the water was enough to turn one giddy. All was riot and confusion. (WOOLF, 1963, p.43).

It is as if all of these changes concerning time and space were anticipating the main change of the novel: Orlando's transformation from a man to a woman. Even before this scene, it becomes clear that everything starts getting the smear of disillusion. The character starts to realize that the nature of things were different from what he had thought until then. His heroes, for instance, are completely adverse from the ones he had constructed in his mind: "These, then, were his gods! Half were drunken and all were amorous". (WOOLF, 1963, p.64). The narrator later affirms: "this Nobleman had not only had every experience that life had to offer, but had seen the worthlessness of them all". (WOOLF, 1963, p.68). Traces of the decaying of that previous ordered world are susceptible to be seen.

Moreover, time is questioned, as it starts to be defined by its unprecision: "the task of estimating the length of human life (...) is beyond our capacity." (WOOLF, 1963, p.70). In the same year of Orlando's publication, Cleveland Chase publishes a review where he mentions the fluidity of time, as Virginia shows "of what time, not as a mechanical but as a human element, consists." (CHASE, 1975, p.231). Time is not a precise device, but rather a complex element of our lives that we fail to understand.

Later on, the narrator develops a point of view in which not only time is multiple and hard to be grasped, but also human beings themselves: "For if there are (at a venture) seventy-six different times all ticking in the mind at once, how many different people are there not – Heaven help us – all having lodgement at one time or another in the human spirit?" (WOOLF, 1963, p.217).

What we start to realize in the novel is that nothing is safe from change. Even the way Orlando would write his texts are now not the same: "For it is for the historian of letters to remark that he had changed his style amazingly. His floridity was chastened; his abundance curbed." (WOOLF, 1963, p.79). As time goes by in the novel, not only the main character suffers lots of changes, but also everything that revolves him. These transformations are all historically related, having on account the transformation on his/her writing could be understood, in a broad way, as the transformation on literature itself. If Romanticism is defined by its "floridity" and "abundance", what we see later is the effacement of these procedures.

It is interesting to notice how the main character starts to grow complexity through the novel. As the narrator affirms: "Thus it was in a highly ambiguous condition, uncertain whether she was alive or dead, man or woman, Duke or nonentity, that she posted down to her country seat." (WOOLF, 1963, p.118). And the limits between the sexes are then vanished:

Different though the sexes are, they intermix. In every human being a vacillation from one sex to the other takes place, and often it is only the clothes that keep the male or female likeness, while underneath the sex is the very opposite of what it is above. (WOOLF, 1963, p.133).

Orlando develops a characterization difficult to be described precisely. Recovering Watt (1957, p. 18), "proper names have exactly the same function in social life: they are the verbal expression of the particular identity of each individual person. In literature, however, this function of proper names was first fully established in the novel". However, what happens in Woolf's novel is totally different (not to say opposite), for the name here is not able to yield a singular identity for the character. Orlando cannot be described neither by his/her sex, neither by his/her name. It is as if, rather than a total human being, we saw in this novel the deconstruction of the personality. This aspect

of Woolf's character is directly related to the detachment of the commodification of the self - an idea present in Matheus Camargo's text (this volume) - for the identity in *Orlando* transcends common sense and fixed social structures.

This suggests that stable and fixed categorizations cannot afford to describe the complexity of oneself nor the world that revolves us. Historically speaking, events such as the decay of aristocracy, the ascension of bourgeoisie, industrial capitalism, wars, and so on contribute to destabilize the Victorian building and gives place to a world where nobody is safe from social metamorphosis. This becomes clear in *Orlando* at the end of the chapter 4, when the world seems to be filled with scary images, and "a turbulent welter of cloud covered the city. All was darkness.; all was doubt; all was confusion" (WOOLF, 1963, p.159). If the begging of the novel is centered in the Victorian Age, in a more stable world, what we see now is the destruction of this world.

Finally, it is also interesting to see how Woolf was aware of the methods deployed in her novel, which only reinforces the power and importance of this author. As Susan Dick (2000, p.50) points out,

The short story 'An Unwritten Novel' shows two assumptions concerning the way Woolf reflected upon realism: "First, novelists must be selective. The mid-Victorian novelists (...) 'left out nothing that they knew how to say. Our ambition,' she added provocatively, 'is to put in nothing that need not be there'. Second, the choices novelists make should evolve from a shift of focus so that 'life' is conveyed not only in its external aspect, but as it is experienced.

FINAL OVERVIEW

Therefore, it is possible to articulate Discourse Studies and the History of Literature in a way that both areas changed their

perspectives on approaching their material of work due to (and through) the passing of time. As it has been seen before, in Discourse Studies, the fixed categorizations and the narrowness of material (as only texts were considered discourse) give place to a broader way of regarding what can be considered discourse (images, for instance). In literature, the trustworthy and objective narrator is put aside as a more subjective and fragmentary language emerges. Both Discourse Studies and Literature start aiming at comprehending reality in a more critical way. As Marcuse (1978, p.54) affirms,

Art is committed to that perception of the world which alienates individuals from their functional existence and performance in society. (...) Only in the 'illusory world' do things appear as what they are and what they can be. By virtue of this truth (...) the world is inverted – it is the given reality, the ordinary world which now appears as untrue, as false, as deceptive reality.

In this perspective, even though Marcuse's ideas are not strictly related to Discourse Studies, they show a critical point of view towards our reality, and how art is a tool in order to understand it better – although it does so paradoxically, i.e. by edging away from reality, literature is able to expose it truly. The studies regarding Discourse relate to this as the fixation on linguistic aspects are broadened in order to give space to a more critical point of view. To quote Samuel Rede (this volume), "what fiction gives us is the capacity to look beyond the established meanings of our daily lives, beyond what we consider natural, and ask ourselves: what if things were different?"

Finally, recovering what was seen here by the analysis of Virginia Woolf's *Orlando*, it is clear to see that social instability is expressed not only language-wise, but also by the transformations that the character and society suffer throughout the novel. The main character can no longer be defined by his/her personality and/or sex, as they are always on the brink of changing. Nothing can be understood completely or objectively as the twentieth century approaches. It is as if history

was able to transform even areas of study that, at first sight, could be considered to be so different.

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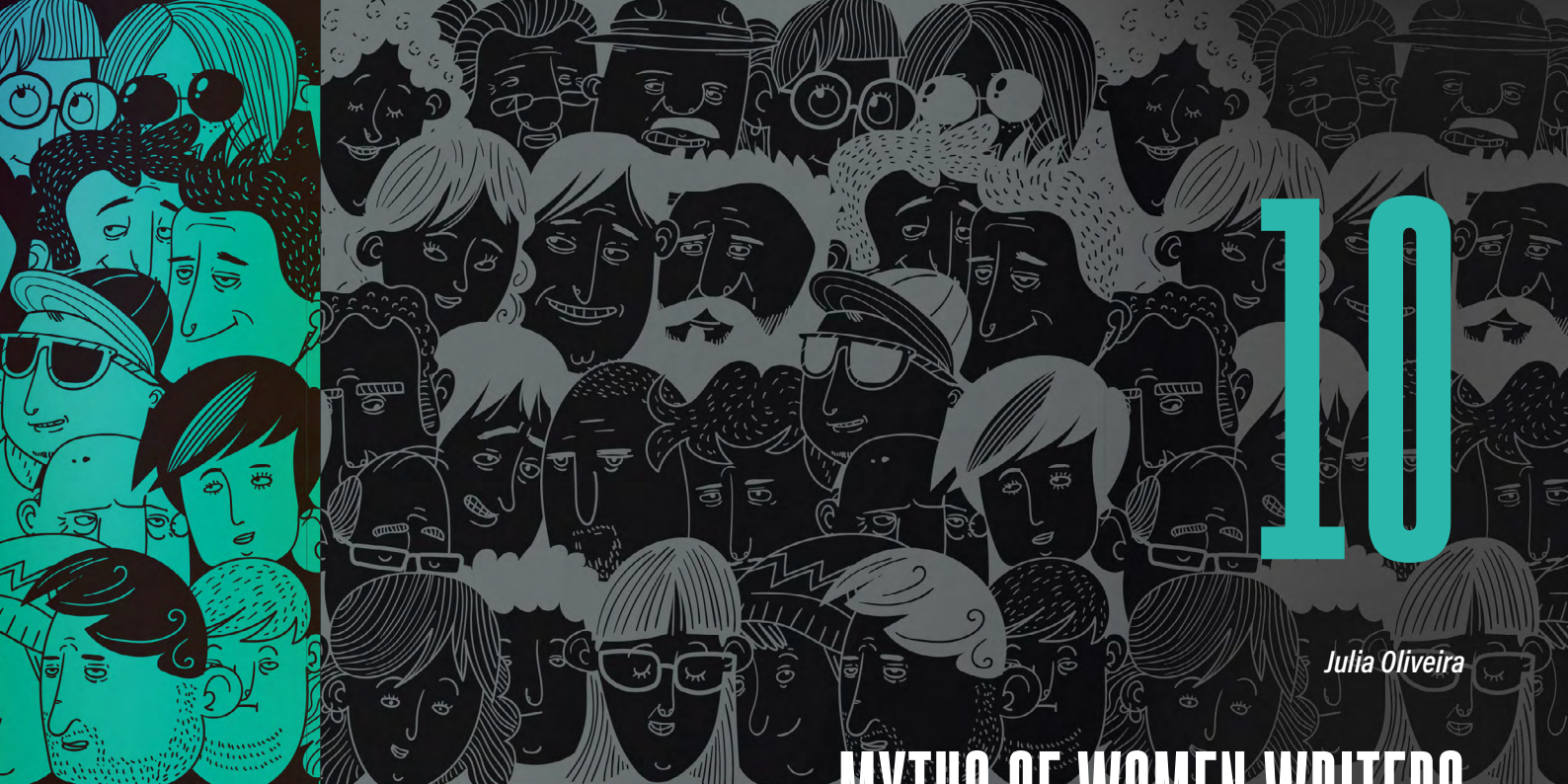
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10

Julia Oliveira




**MYTHS OF WOMEN WRITERS
AND REPRESENTATIONS
OF FEMINIST SUBVERSION
IN POP CULTURE:
JANE AUSTEN, VIRGINIA WOOLF
AND CHIMAMANDA NGOZI ADICHIE**



Throughout History, the discourse on women has been consistently sexist. So consistently to the point they have become myths. And these myths become so solid that even a female researcher can fall in old traps. That is what happened to Hayden Herrera, one of Mexican artist Frida Kahlo's main biographers. According to what art historian Patricia Mayayo says in *Frida Kahlo: Contra el mito* (2008), Herrera's *Frida - Una biografía de Frida Kahlo* (1983) was responsible for consolidating the psychobiographical readings of Frida Kahlo's body of work (because her paintings were interpreted almost as if they were avatar of her own life, ignoring any political complexity), as well as establishing Kahlo's heroine status (because her life is narrated in an epic mode, and there is too much focus on her various illnesses and her dramatic relationship with Diego Rivera).

This matter becomes more serious when the film *Frida* (2002) is written entirely based upon Herrera's book. The film won Oscars, Golden Globes and BAFTAs. It was a success in terms of profitability. A large audience saw it, and learned from the stigmatized view Herrera's psychobiographical narrative originated. Of course, it is great that Kahlo's life and work were spread to the world. However, having large audiences learn about a woman artist through pop culture is a big responsibility. The result can be the perpetuation of a distorted perspective, one that transforms these women in myths and depoliticizes their work and existence.

Myths are long known for being dangerous perpetrators of stereotyped views on women, as Simone de Beauvoir warned in *The Second Sex*: "In concrete reality, women manifest themselves in many different ways; but each of the myths built around woman tries to summarize her as a whole; each is supposed to be unique; the consequence of this is a multiplicity of incompatible myths [...]." (BEAUVOIR, 1949, p. 315-316). Some of these myths are common between female artists and writers, as it is possible to understand from



Mayayo's work (MAYAYO, 2008). Aside from the psychobiographical readings that create an indivisible unity between the artist and her art, or the writer and her text, it is also said that female creativity comes with a price (such as sickness, madness, not having a husband or children). These aspects also lead to the depoliticization of the work, which confiscates the possibility of being seen as subversive — after all, if you are not part of the world (which is the “men’s sphere”, where politics exist), how can you have an opinion against it?

In *Frida Kahlo: contra el mito*, Mayayo chooses to paint a complex picture of Kahlo, taking the universally acknowledged truths with a pinch of salt. She deconstructs what was said about Kahlo (not only by Herrera, but by many others) with a methodology that shows how her mythification was not a homage, but a discourse soaked in sexist perceptions of women artists. Against the psychobiographical discourse, Mayayo says (author's translation): “[...] a biography is not the neutral and objective record of one life, but rather a narrative construction that selects, organizes and interprets achievements, transforming them into a coherent report and providing them meaning.” (MAYAYO, 2008, p. 34) This is very close to Michel Foucault's view of discourse, who believes “the discourse is not the place of eruption of pure subjectivity; [it] is a space of positions and functioning, differentiated for the subjects.” (ANGERMULLER.; FOUCAULT; MAINGUENEAU; WODAK, 2014, p. 104). Thus, if there is no neutrality of discourse, then it is always possible to choose telling narratives that complexify women and give them possibilities instead of perpetuating inaccurate myths.

Michel Foucault believed that “discourse is constituted by the difference between what one might correctly say at a given time (according to the rules of grammar and those of logic) and what is actually said.” (ANGERMULLER.; FOUCAULT; MAINGUENEAU; WODAK, 2014, p. 109). And what Herrera actually said, even though might not have been her intention, reproduces a sexist discourse on

women. No matter is simple enough that it does not deserve a profound look, even with matters that may appear progressive. It is still possible and necessary to revise it.

Inspired by what Mayayo did to Kahlo, this article will focus on women writers instead, and try to give them back some political dimension and (somehow) control of their own narratives — even though some of them are dead, it is possible to be fairer and consider possibilities instead of sticking to dusty myths. The pieces considered were made for broad audiences about or around successful women writers of different eras (Jane Austen, Virginia Woolf, and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie). These specific authors were chosen because their status allows them to have very solid and identifiable myths to analyze, and because their works can be easily linked to feminist subversion (even though it may not be the intention of the author) and the feminist context of their time.

The *first section* will explore how the biopic *Becoming Jane* mashes Jane Austen with the characters she wrote, and even though her trademark irony is mentioned, it is still the outdated view of the novel as a sugary and shallow genre that prevails. The *second section* will meddle with the film *The Hours*, an adaptation of the homonymous book, and show how it paints the picture of an ill and mad Virginia Woolf, in opposition to a caring and pitiable husband, which, in a bigger picture, means the failure of the feminist project. The *third section* will analyze a living writer, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, and her connection to pop star Beyoncé, established by the song “***Flawless”, in which Adichie features with a very explicit pro-feminism discourse. This section will attempt to make a counterpoint with the prior sections, showing what a woman writer who has certain control over her image (and the myth that is under construction) looks like.

JANE AUSTEN AND *BECOMING JANE*

The film *Becoming Jane* (2007), directed by Julian Jarrold, was based on the book *Becoming Jane Austen* (2003), written by Jane Austen scholar Jon Hunter Spence. Although the pieces do not exactly have the intention to inform the spectator or reader about accurate data on Austen's life, on IMDb's website, the film is described as being on the genres of biography, drama, and romance, which is dangerous terrain. The main idea for *Becoming Jane* is fantasizing that *Pride and Prejudice*, her most famous novel, could have been based on her life. This idea of treating the life and work of a woman artist as an inextricable unit has already been discussed in the introduction of this article and proven to be nocive. Dressed as an independent creative will, it is actually a psychobiographical reading of Jane Austen's life, unfair to her intellectual legacy. What prevails of Austen's work in the film are the traits that were a mere reflexion of her time. If her novels were about love and marriage it was because marriage was central to society, and the private life was all a woman was allowed to explore. Austen could never write about the world she did not get to see. What she possessed that other female novelists of her time did not were refined mechanisms that allowed her to criticize society while being accepted by it: irony and perspectival disengagement. The perception of these political and subversive aspects of her work does not appear in the film though. It would not matter if the intention was to objectively tell Jane Austen's life, but this is an ambitious kind of biopic. If it intends to establish connections between her work and life, it would only be fair that everything was considered. This connection is especially unfair because it is precisely the romance that generates most misconceptions about Austen's work — which makes the stories appear shallow just because they talk about their time's subject, when the reality is much more nuanced (author's translation):

Even though they are frequently described as social comedies, her novels overcome this plain definition thanks to the critical, often sarcastic, view with which Austen deals with individual behavior matters in a world where social mobility and luck shifts begin to affect individuals and families decisively. Her work is, actually, the response of a dependent woman to the economic oppression and the patriarchy. From her peripheral observation place - which is determined by both her spacial and social position -, Austen sheds light not only on her own “cognizable community” but also on the English society as a whole (VASCONCELOS, 2014, p. 148-149).

Austen was actually very political, which translates through her word’s piercing irony. Regardless of acknowledging that irony was a trait of her writing style (the Jane Austen character explicitly defends the value of irony at one point), focusing on the non-political aspects of her work to build up her character has the countereffect of ignoring that she had a subversive view on society. Indeed, she was not as explicit on her political content as other English intellectuals of her time, such as Mary Wollstonecraft or Charlotte Smith, but that did not mean she cannot be considered part of this pre-feminist scene, that spoke of the feminine condition in a critical manner. As the feminist movement was not yet a proper movement, and the reality is not always a perfectly cohesive narration, these “cries for emancipation” and social critique did not come without contradiction:


At the same time as they criticized the social strictures and the deficient educational system which was responsible for women’s weaknesses and failings, they were also contained by the bourgeois ideology of femininity, however unconventional they may have been in their private lives. [...] neither Wollstonecraft nor Austen subscribed to the Enlightenment discourses which argued the rationality of men against the irrational nature of women, thus attributing love madness to women and femininity. Without going so far as to defend a reformed society in which men and women would have equal rights, as Wollstonecraft did, Austen presents her own version of the rational woman in the figure of Elizabeth Bennet, the heroine of *Pride and*

Prejudice. [...] Her cast of female characters beautifully illustrates alternative possibilities of female conduct in a society which saw women as passive objects of the male gaze (VASCONCELOS, 2002, p. 321-322).

The film's lack of historical dimension gives the appearance of a frustrated "boy meets girl" love story, with a brief moment of juvenile foolish love madness, which would be the moment where she runs away from her safe marriage proposal to live out of nothing with her beloved. At the end of the film, Jane appears older, encounters the man she loved and could not marry accompanied by his daughter, who is a reader and admirer of hers. It is not clear if Jane chooses to be unmarried or not, or if she is happy being unmarried since it was not considered at the time a happy place for a woman to be. The scene goes on with her making a reading of her writings, which could either be interpreted as she earning enough with her pen skills to make a living or a helpless position where her creativity is the only way she could escape her tragic reality of being an unmarried woman. Given the openness of her fate, and the analysis of the whole film, the scale hangs more to the unfulfillment of the writer. This leads to the depoliticization of the writer since it agrees with "the Enlightenment discourses which argued the rationality of men against the irrational nature of women, thus attributing love madness to women and femininity", mentioned above.

VIRGINIA WOOLF AND *THE HOURS*

The Hours (2002) is a film directed by Stephen Daldry that, like *Becoming Jane*, was based on a book written by Mike Cunningham. The plot revolves around three women, in different times and spaces, connected by Virginia Woolf's novel *Mrs. Dalloway*: one is Woolf herself, portrayed as she writes *Mrs. Dalloway* and suffers from depression, secluded in an English country house and nursed by her husband,



Leonard Woolf, and housemaids; the second one is Laura, a housewife living in the 1950s, mother of one, pregnant and seemingly suffering from depression, who is eagerly reading Mrs. Dalloway; the third is a woman in the early 2000s New York, called Clarissa (which is the first name of Mrs. Dalloway as well), who is setting up a party for an ill poet friend of hers.

What is truly creative and communicates respectfully with Woolf's life and work is the juxtaposition of aesthetics that change for each of the three main characters, wrapped by the minimalist soundtrack by contemporary musician Philip Glass. This is a nod to Woolf's writing style, which is connected to modernist experimentation, to a fragmented language.


Past this point, the theme of depression and its connection to feminism is, in our view, very irresponsibly put together. The film starts and ends with Virginia Woolf's suicide, which frames the film and explicitly points out at what direction the spectator should be looking. All three women seem to have some kind of mental disorder, very likely depression, and all three women are subversive for challenging female stereotypes: Clarissa is married to a woman, and very well-resolved in that matter; Laura abandons her husband and children because she was unhappy being a housewife, and states she never regretted doing so; Woolf was a terrific writer, who often talked about the female condition and gender issues on her writings. This aspect of her writings does not appear much in the film, though. What does appear is that Woolf's illness becomes part of her identity and inventive force, depression, and the helplessness it brings seem to be the source of inspiration to create the helpless character of Clarissa Dalloway, and this reinforces the myth that women's creativity is conditioned to madness. If Woolf's work often delved in the depths of human existence (because it did) it is because she, as an author, decided to do so, and this is giving political dimension to literature, understanding that writing is not the exercise of

venting feelings through words, not a shared diary. If there are feelings involved, they should be seen as mechanisms the author thought would convey a message the best.

Hence, even though there is the recognition of feminist subversion, there is, in parallel, the villainization of feminism effect on women, as if challenging and questioning the female condition would cause suicide (like Woolf), made women abandon their families (like Laura) or have an existential crisis (like Clarissa). A very detailed article that investigates from a post-feminist perspective how biopics from the early 2000s retell the past of women writers says it best how *The Hours* villainizes feminism and its effect on women:

The pre-feminist discourse of female creativity as a form of self-destructive madness is stitched into an equally powerful representation of self-effacing masculine support for women that only post-feminism has now made visible. In all three films [*Iris*, *The Hours* and *Sylvia*] the mise-en-scene of recent history becomes a distracting spectacle that substitutes period artefacts for women's struggles to achieve literary recognition, male control of the literary canon for male support of the lives of women writers, and self-destruction for the tensions which women writers face in reconciling public reputation with domestic responsibility. In articulating the redundancy of feminism through women's success and the destructive consequences of that success, these biopics' rewriting of the public history of authorship therefore also offers a profoundly troubling re-telling of feminism's project (DOLAN.; GORDON.; TINCKNELL., 2009).

As this passage says, the "masculine support for women" is also put in the equation, which a very questionable perspective: the film is impregnated with the male gaze, since it was directed by a man and based on a book written by a man. Leonard Woolf is characterized as an object of pity for having to take care of such a reckless woman that sees his efforts to make her better as imprisonment. This is a weird and incoherent choice to portray Leonard and his relationship with Virginia since both were part of the Bloomsbury group. This was a group of



intellectuals from many areas of art and academia, which took gender equality discussions and horizontal relationships (even relating to class) very seriously — and, as it is reported, quite successfully. Therefore it is unfair to blame their attempts of being a progressive couple on Virginia's feminism, as the film suggests.

Another man that is in the film as the burden of feminism is one of Laura's abandoned child, who at the end is revealed to be Clarissa's friend. He has AIDS, lives in a chaotic place, has a chaotic mind, and is always poking at Clarissa, saying she does not want to deal with her real problems. At the same day Clarissa is planning a party for him, he commits suicide before her eyes. His death is like the long process of emancipation that his mother started, and this is also suggested when he is caught looking at a picture of Laura in a wedding dress.

Even though Woolf did not classify herself as a feminist, she lived the first wave of feminism and was very engaged on gender discussion, perhaps discussions that are progressive even for today. Even though it is clear the attempt to pay homage to *Mrs. Dalloway*, *The Hours* is a distorted interpretation of Woolf's view on gender, connecting feminism not to politics but to mental illness.

CHIMAMANDA NGOZI ADICHIE AND “***FLAWLESS”


The fourth wave of feminism is very connected to social media and pop culture. A big moment for feminism in pop culture happened in 2014, when in the middle of pop star Beyoncé's MTV Video Music Awards concert, lights are down and the voice of Nigerian writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie rises, each word she says being projected in huge dimension on a screen:

We teach girls that they cannot be sexual beings in the way that boys are. We teach girls to shrink themselves, to make themselves smaller. We say to girls: “You can have ambition, but not too much. You should aim to be successful, but not too successful. Otherwise you will threaten the man.” Feminist: a person who believes in the social, political, and economic equality of the sexes.

The screen freezes in the exact moment the word “feminist” is spoken, Beyoncé’s silhouette standing in front of it, like a superheroine. The mythical aura Beyoncé creates for her coming out as feminist was also lent to Chimamanda. Her speech “We should all be feminists”, which was a TED Talk from 2012, was published as a book after the release of the song it originally featured in, “***Flawless”.

People saw it an agreeable deal: Adichie gave Beyoncé the feminist prestige, and Beyoncé gave Adichie visibility. There is so much more to Adichie, to her work, and to feminism that her very publicized speech did not cover. Comparably, a very small swatch of Adichie’s colorful thoughts and skillful writing was sampled, but this small sample gave an enormous feminist prestige to the singer, created a life of its own almost. Adichie claims: “now I get invited to every damned feminist thing in the whole world” (KIENE, 2016). A large number of people started treating her as a “professional feminist”, and her feminist status eclipsed her writer status:

[...] I was shocked about how many requests for an interview I received when that song was released. Literally every major newspaper in the world wanted to speak with me about Beyoncé. I felt such a resentment (laughs loudly). I thought: are books really that unimportant to you? Another thing I hated was that I read everywhere: now people finally know her, thanks to Beyoncé, or: she must be very grateful. I found that disappointing. I thought: I am a writer and I have been for some time and I refuse to perform in this charade that is now apparently expected of me: “Thanks to Beyoncé, my life will never be the same again.” [...] (KIENE, 2016).



Before it all happened, Adichie was a writer. After it all happened, she continued to be a writer. If the ultimate goal of feminism is the equality of the sexes, there is no such thing as an occupation or profession called “feminist”. Treating Chimamanda as a feminist before anything is delegitimize her brilliant work as a writer. In novels and interviews, her biggest reference is the Nigerian culture, she talks about racism and feminism in a progressive, honest and charismatic way, while not making it subtle or using euphemisms. And she does that by herself, she has a name for herself.

Feminism is a way, and feminists are the women who see that way as the only way possible to exist. Through this way, women maintain their individualities and differences. But apparently, that is not how it is seen. In an interview for Dutch newspaper *de Volkskrant*, Adichie stated about Beyoncé: “[...] her type of feminism is not mine, as it is the kind that, at the same time, gives quite a lot of space to the necessity of men.” (KIENE, 2016). Amongst the feminist frenzy the singer and the writer created, their difference of thought is barely mentioned, and that is derogatory to feminism since it excludes the possibility that two women may differ in their acceptions of feminism. Complemented by the overshadowing of the writer by the feminist, these are serious matters that can cause the depoliticization of feminism itself, because this is treating feminism as a trendy label, not as content.

About the “trend” of feminism, Adichie does not buy it. She believes that feminism should be spread, and that in Nigeria “feminism is not that hot” (BROCKERS, 2017) and she would sell more if she said she was not a feminist. She also makes the very important reminder that academic feminism does not reach all. In fact it reaches few. According to her, that is why feminism in pop culture is beneficial to society.

Of course, the interest in feminism is as great for the advance of feminism issues, as it is a great opportunity to make money. That makes it hard to tell if something is a true commitment to the feminist

movement or interest in profits. Adichie features in a Beyoncé song, was the protagonist of a makeup advertisement for retail store Boots, got credit for a Dior T-shirt that says “We Should All Be Feminists”. Either way, Adichie wins. There is subversion in the fact that writers, especially women writers, especially black women writers, historically do not get a lot of money or success, for a few exceptions, unless they bow to stories that are easy to swallow — which is definitely not the case.

We can agree or disagree with her, but we cannot say she does not have control over herself. And, by having control over her image, Adichie demythologizes herself and allows to be mythicized at the same time:

She is a brilliant novelist and a serious thinker, and she is also someone who makes no apology for her own trivial interests. “Life doesn’t always follow ideology,” she says. “You might believe in certain things and life gets in and things just become messy. You know? I think that’s the space that fiction, and having a bit more of an imaginative approach, makes. And that the feminist speaking circuit doesn’t really make room for.” (BROCKERS, 2017).

She demythologizes herself by showing, through the many interviews she has given, she is a complex human being, ambiguous, alive, who may think further and change opinions, who is a feminist but does not agree with every feminist guideline. She also allows being mythicized by partnerships that may not give her full control of her image but will help, according to her point of view, disseminate feminism to wide horizons. And that is what seems to be most important to her.

On the other hand, the feminist status does not help to demythologize Beyoncé. On the contrary, in the VMA concert she stands before the word feminist like a heroine, unreal, distant from reality. There is not a prescription of what is best or what is worse for feminism, as long as it works and women can free themselves from

patriarchal patterns. But one cannot ignore the fact that Beyoncé is first and foremost a popstar. And a popstar is a tricky figure, a mix between human and product, between artist and art. There is obviously a team behind her, studying not only what is best for her image but also what will make the best profits.

Therefore, we can never know for sure what the impact would be if only art and activism mattered. What would the impact be if money was out of question? It is impossible to know and useless to try to imagine. We live in a neoliberal society and that is the truth that surrounds everything. According to Jardim (this volume):

In the age of neoliberalism, people are deceived to think that they are being represented, that diversity, identity and equality are the companies goals, but what neoliberalism does is represent minorities in a single way that reflects its ideology, it distorts and coerces identity in order to shape it inside capitalist consumerism parameters.

So at the same time Beyoncé advocates for equality of the sexes and for sexuality freedom, she participates actively in the perpetration of beauty standards (through her ever flawless looks, clothing and makeup) and in the reification of sex (through the content of many of her songs, the videos, dances and publicitary photos), which is oppressing to every woman. For that, activist bell hooks even calls her a “terrorist” (SIECZKOWSKI, 2014).

So even though Beyoncé standing out for feminism is much better than her not standing out for feminism, that does not make the efforts enough for seeing a true impact on society.

By choosing to portray herself as a myth, Beyoncé and the team behind her put her in a popstar box, exaggerate the power of the image and underestimate the power of the message, therefore stifling the potentiality of feminist subversion through pop culture.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The more time passes, the more crystallized myths seem to get. The further in time adaptations are from the author, the more distorted and inaccurate interpretations appear to be. There is an inability to properly place subversions on their historical context, in a way Austen's disruptions fail to be translated to pop culture in *Becoming Jane*, and Woolf's creative impulses and clinical depression are irresponsibly connected in *The Hours*. Adichie, even though having her writer status overshadowed by her feminist status, demonstrates having a voice over her own image does make a difference. She always skilfully stands up for herself in interviews and chooses what she wants to associate her image with. If she is right or wrong about making money out of it does not matter in this conclusion. What matters is that the audience gets to understand Adichie as a complex woman, not a stigmatized woman.

Mythicizing is simplifying (which is what the *Becoming Jane* and *The Hours* did) and demythologizing is complexifying (which is what Mayayo did). Adichie takes both roads, the mythicizing and demythologizing, and the result is a relatable and necessary example of a woman writer in control of her story and image. Like all human beings, women are complex, contradictory, ambiguous. Mythification tries to create a cohesive narrative that often does not exist. A myth is far from the human, unable to represent the past in its complexity or to create new narratives and possibilities for women. If feminist subversion is consistently mythologized and glossed over, the message that persists is that subversion and feminism are only meant for the woman that belongs to this mythical real — that is none. Therefore, the choice to crystalize women into myths is the choice to discourage subversion and feminism.

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11

Giovanna Ruzon Bueno



FANDOM: PRODUCING SENSES WITHIN LANGUAGES



I could run, of course, but I won't. Where would I run to? All the world's a stage, and I can't escape my monologue.

Johnathan Sims, *The Magnus Archives*.

INTRODUCTION

Every society has its view of reality shaped by the relationships individuals have with each other. We have been using both art and language as mediums to shape and make sense of the world and to show to the other – either as individuals or as communities – how we conceive reality. These dialogues became easier to be created due the spread of the internet, which brought not only a new way to establish connections with the other, but also allowed the creation of new types of art, such as videogames, photomontages and digital art in general.

The internet also democratized the access to artistic content, diminishing the distance between the artist and their fans and consumers. This new medium enabled many artists that otherwise would not reach a wide audience through the traditional ways of making and disseminating art (either as high or mass culture) to thrive. Through the use of the internet, smaller communities are empowered on the subject of art, as it makes the creation and sharing of artistic content much easier.

This chapter aims to discuss the relations between fan/content and fan/fan, focusing in fandom practices and how marginalized people can empower themselves through art and language.

A BRIEF INQUIRE IN FAN RELATIONSHIPS: AFFECTION AND DELUSION

In general lines, everything has a potential to be art. In fact, any human production can be considered art if it shows the use of technique and presents a view of the artist upon a subject. Art is a concept as hard to define as culture, so each society will have a definition of it, but most of the time it gets closer to broad concepts. Art can be a language that follows the history of society and tries to express fragments of it. The idea of shared meanings as postulated by Stuart Hall in *Representation: Cultural representation and signifying practices* can be relevant to this discussion. Since art is also language, the analysis and further interpretation depends on the “shared meanings” that a group have as a community (HALL, 1997). Each individual brings different knowledge and perceptions of the world, but it is always built upon the relationship with the other. This is why different societies can see a cultural object as art while others will not have the same perspective: the meanings shared between the groups are different, so the perspective of world is also different; in other words, these groups have different cultures.

Hall (1997) also recollects the difference between mass culture and high culture, an arbitrary distinction resulted from the traditional definition of culture used to classify the languages and cultures based on status – or the amount of cultural capital (BOURDIEU, 2010) that the interaction with the language brings to the individual. While high culture “is said to embody the ‘best that has been thought and said’ in a society [...] [being] the sum of the great ideas, as represented in the classic works of literature, painting, music and philosophy [...]” (HALL, 1997, p. 2), mass culture “is the use of ‘culture’ to refer to the widely distributed forms of popular music, publishing, art, design and literature, or the activities of leisure-time and entertainment, which make up the everyday lives of the majority of ‘ordinary people’ [...]” (HALL,

1997, p. 2). This distinction is based on the idea of hegemony, often carrying the idea of colonized and colonizer culture, in which the artistic productions – or languages – created by colonized societies have less value than their equivalents from the colonizer ones.

We can only interact with - or consume - art when both parts are inserted in a similar culture, due to the importance of the sharing meanings (HALL, 1997). The degree of identification the individual establishes with the production's content – that can be a book, a TV show, music, webseries or another – varies due to a range of reasons. There is an often occurring phenomenon in colonized societies: even though they share a similar culture to the artistic production - that can be inserted in a globalized hegemonic culture -, the individual may disqualify it due to its origins. The disdain many Brazilians have towards dystopias produced in Brazil does not apply for the same narrative genre produced in the United States, even though both of them usually deals with similar issues, such as the decay of a society and the class struggle within it.

The distinction between high and mass cultures also reflects on how society perceives and portrays those who enjoy these productions. Anne Kustritz (2018, p. 246) points out this issue in the text *Fandom/Fan Cultures*, so to speak the most usual nomenclatures used to describe those who engage with high cultured practices are connoisseur, aficionado, collector and expert, while the people who engage with mass cultured practices are mostly called fans. This difference is also explored by merchandising, and the TV show *Hannibal*, produced by Bryan Fuller, is an example of it. In the show, specifically in “Dolce” – the sixth episode from the third season – Hannibal appears drawing a version of the painting *Primavera*, changing the faces of the characters – garlanded nymph and Zephyrus (MANCINI, 2015, p. 20) – to those of people he personally knew, which could be easily categorized as fanart. However, since the inspiration is representative of high culture, he is just recognized as a connoisseur, as the book *Feeding Hannibal*:

A Connoisseur's Cookbook (POON, 2016) – a production made for the fans of the show – acknowledges. It is also used to raise the value of the show as a cultural capital (BOURDIEU, 2010), making the production be representative of high culture. If this goal is achieved, there is a change in the status of those who are affectionate towards the show: they leave the *fan level*, being inserted in the *connoisseur level*. The word choice is everything but arbitrary.

When a production becomes highly capitalized, the fandom presents itself as an important community and a tool to fight it. Departing from the *Feeding Hannibal: A Connoisseur's Cookbook* example other productions explores different fields in order to raise profit. Creating limited editions of books are becoming a common practice among profitable productions. Often those editions are restricted to American and European markets, which difficult and discourage the purchase of these items when you live outside these areas, due to import duties, shipping costs and the higher risk of losing the package in the process. It is representative: the market recognizes only the hegemonic cultures as profitable, creating a haze in which those who escapes from it cannot be interested in the production. Those editions usually present exclusive content that may add new perspectives about the canon. Some people acknowledge this issue, reproduces these bits of new information, and spread them through the internet, democratizing the access.

Since these editions are made for the English-speaker consumer, most of the time the reproductions do not get a proper translation, which makes it harder for those who does not speak English to access the information. Translation engines can be used, but some language specificities are lost. The same happens with fan productions, even though the range of translations is surprisingly higher when compared with the canon. While we do not see – either official or fan made – Brazilian-Portuguese translations of the *NBC Hannibal* official books nor the *Good Omens* special editions with exclusive content, we might see


some fanfic and fancomic translations, and it seems to be a common practice among other productions and their ulterior fandoms.

Besides the distinction of fans and connoisseurs, there are other subdivisions. Within the group of fans, often called fanbase, appears a quite known subdivision: the fandom. Morrissey explores the distinction between being a fan and being part of a fandom in the excerpt:

Being a “fan” implies an emotional connection between an individual and something, but there are many possible “somethings.” For example, a fan may enjoy a particular film, sports team, or a type of food. With fandom, however, the suffix “-dom” is significant. It signals a broader and shared declaration of affection, a group status, and a space in which one fan’s interests are shared with others (MORRISSEY, 2017, 353).

This group usually brings together those who are marginalized by the general fanbase. Fandom is majorly constituted by women and other minorities, as LGBTQIA+ people and people from other localities besides the hegemonic Europe and North America – that can include Latinos, African and Asian people. This group usually shows a higher engagement with the productions they are affectionate towards, as Matthew Patrick’s lecture at the Campus Party Brasil 2019 suggests, even though his channel has a larger male public, as demographic surveys point out, the engagement with the merchandising and feedback are, most of the time, a characteristic of the female public.

Fandom cannot be perceived as a homogenous group since not every individual will react in the same way towards the production. Nevertheless, it may be seen as a continuum that goes from the “affirmative fandom” – or “as is fandom” – to the “transformative fandom” – or “creative fandom” (KUSTRITZ, 2018; obsession_inc, 2009). The affirmative fandom “treats the cultural object as a closed text of great value and high artistry that must be studied and collected, often with great reverence for the original author’s intentions and authority”



(RUSSO apud KUSTRITZ, 2018). However, transformative fandom “applies to fan practices that treat the cultural object as an open system that can be edited, expanded, and interacted with by anyone, in any way, with equal authority” (KUSTRITZ, 2018). Those who consume the original and the fan works, which I decided to term as “acquisitive fandom”, would fall somewhere in the middle of this continuum, since they might produce little creative work, although supporting those who do so. This type of fandom – from the middle of the continuum to the transformative extremity – navigates through different languages – videos, music, drawings and texts – to reflect upon an established language, the canon, creating new shared meanings as valuable as the original work.

These individuals, who had their identities denied and erased by the society and therefore by the mainstream media just because they belong to cultural minorities, join forces to fight the *status quo* in a very particular way. Fandom reshapes established realities – even though fictional realities – in order to fit their subjectivities and to experience representativeness and belongingness.

RETHINKING ART AND CULTURE THROUGH LANGUAGE

In Brazil we have this very famous quote “se não pode com eles, junte-se a eles”, in which a person or group that cannot win should ally with the winning group or idea – an equivalent to “if you can’t beat them, join them”. Thankfully, many people disagree, allowing us to appreciate wonderful productions. Fandom was born to oppose the concept of hegemony, being a safe place for those who want to go beyond what the established canon can provide. It also gives voice to marginalized individuals, as Rede (this volume) states: “Every day I spend on fandom

accounts on social media, I come across dozens of art pieces and texts that feature marginalized identities that do not exist in the original piece of work on which the fanarts are based.”

Larger productions such as *Harry Potter*, *Star Wars* and *Doctor Who* usually present different fandoms that may or not blend within each other. For monolingual Brazilian fans, it is easier to find other Portuguese speakers to create a transformative fandom that produces exclusively in their language. However, most of the productions are still in the hegemonic English language, which may be a barrier for the flow of information through these groups or a stimulus for the individual to learn a new language. There are many fans using their object of affection – myself included – as a way to learn and develop their English. In fact, it is used as a lingua franca, allowing broader distribution and consumption of fan work through the internet. Still, the exclusive consumption and interaction with hegemonic productions and fandoms may be alienating for some people, which produces an identity that only works in those “online free zones”, detaching themselves from the reality of their local communities – and cultural productions.

Among the entire fan production are the fanfictions: written works in which the universe and characters described in an original production can be explored and expanded by any fan. It is not unusual to see fan works produced by individuals who have English as a second language, in which is often possible to see reminiscences of their mother tongue. The lexicon – for some word made by Portuguese and Spanish L1 speakers, for example, the use of words originated from Latin seems to be more frequent than it is for an English L1 speaker – and the syntactic constructions are some of the clues of it. The transposition of a universe originally produced in English to our mother tongue is more complicated. Even when one works upon translations – especially in the case of books – the transposition of a character’s mannerisms and specificities of the universe is harder to make, causing these productions

to deviate naturally from the original work. This deviance should not be seen negatively, since the work of fans have supposedly made changes in the canon. However, authors who may choose to work more closely to the canon will struggle with it, often standardizing the use of language in dialogues, which makes every character sound the same. Still, there are authors sensible to the community and culture they are inserted in, being capable of bringing some of the mannerisms and specificities of the original work to their mother tongue.

The idea of a Brazilian fandom about Brazilian productions was – and still is – unthinkable for some people, as the interviews I made with some fans point out. The turning point for most of those interviewed was the YouTube show *Choque de Cultura* (2016 - now), created and produced by Tv Quase. Almost every interviewee only had experiences in fandoms of American and British productions, especially *BBC Sherlock* and *Harry Potter*, and was already between the “acquisitive” and “transformative fandoms”. The idea of the superiority of these productions – written and performed in English, the hegemonic language par excellence – was often produced in the relationship with family and friends.

The contact of the participants with a Brazilian production, however, made the perception of locality change for everyone, especially for those who already produced fanfic in those fandoms – regardless in which language they produced – and started to write for this. The language was a major factor for it. One of the writers commented on “Christmas fanfics”, in which the characters are finally allowed to spend the holiday complaining about the hot weather, inconvenient cousins and raisins in the food while eating *rabanadas* or preparing the barbecue. No eggnog, snow or *visgo* in sight. The characters themselves already show peculiar lexicon and phrasal structure in the show, which makes these writers conscious of their own language in order to reproduce these in dialogue – and often in daily life. These


transformative fans are also from minorities, especially women, and this is significant for them. Some of them said they would hardly post analysis and theories in major forums because of their male fellows from their previous fanbases. Morrissey (2016) already discussed the creation of a safe space for these minorities to dialogue, which is the main goal for those first fandoms. The smaller size of the fandom and the supportive position made them much more confident to post their works; in counterpart, the engagement and number of productions were so high that interfered somehow in the canonical narrative.

Since life is never a bed of roses, there are some issues hardly discussed within these groups. As any social nucleus, power relations are still present, in which newer members consume the productions of the older and popular people, which may be troublesome. Most of the productions are produced and consumed with no organized criteria of appreciation or analysis. The creators, once they are worshipped, can get away with very problematic representation. Practical examples are the best to explain this type of situation. A fanfiction writer decides to elect a gay couple as the main characters of their fiction, but because of their reality as anything but a gay person, or little research on the subject, reproduces heteronormative values upon their characters, mimicking postures that are not usual for most gay couples. It is a very problematic debate, since it raises some issues such as “What is heteronormativity?”, “Why queer people cannot be represented like this?”, “How can someone generalize heterosexual and queer people and relationships to say that this kind of representation is not valid?” and so on. Theories about social roles can discuss some of these questions in depth. Undoubtedly, our society constructs different roles that men and women supposedly should follow. Men are supposed to be protective and aggressive – even though this seems to be paradoxical –, honorable, smart and good workers, while women must be fragile, motherly, submissive and silent – this is the reason so many men feel comfortable to interrupt a woman’s speech or to

belittle scientific research in any field of knowledge, as long as it was made by a woman. Subverting these stereotypes is important, but to attribute characteristics of an oppressed group onto only one of the characters within a couple reproduces the same idea of a heterosexual couple. In a queer couple, both of them are part of an oppressed group; showing how, even in different ways, they can reproduce values that are not expected by the hegemonic – which is white, Eurocentric and heterosexual – culture.

Another problem that orbits around the idea of representation is stereotypes. As Jardim (this volume) recollects, some hegemonic productions – in his chapter, a book – are supposedly made to give representativeness to marginalized groups, but often they may reproduce the status quo behavior without questioning it in a satisfactory way. Marginalized groups always suffer with stereotypes and the reproduction of these ideas in mainstream media and spaces may induce some authors to internalize some of these even against their will. If the media presents stereotyped characters and journalists reproduces harmful discourses, as Ferraz (2019, p. 209) states, it is not a surprise to see similar behavior popping up within the fandom. Most of the time they are not conscious of it when they are writing, but once these problems are pointed out, there is the necessity of taking responsibility for the work they produce. Often times these issues go unnoticed, making them harder to be corrected later on, after the writer establishes their own writing – which is quite common for many fanfic writers that produce a lot about the same or similar subjects. Even though this can be an issue for any artist, the fan productions usually get away with them because they are not considered valuable enough to bother anyone, revolving to the idea of high and low – or mass – cultures.

Age gaps can also be troublesome. Larger fandoms, such as *Sherlock* and *Hannibal*, already discussed this issue, but smaller ones hardly acknowledged it. Artists often post about the necessity of



creating separated accounts, one public and other private, to share their work with the appropriate group of people, since the exposition of minors to explicit content or their interaction with them may lead to judicial court. Still, the internet is not a bar: you do not need an ID to use it. If a minor wants to access such content, they will find a way to do so; the artists' sensibility to this issue leads them to find ways to complicate the access. Sadly, this is not the usual position of artists from smaller fandoms. The limited size of the fandom should make the discussion of such issues easier or, at least, more frequent, but it does not seem the case. For the sake of their safety bubble, people tend to avoid such themes.

Even showing very debatable issues, the fandom also reflects an expanded consciousness about the society they are inserted in. There is no way to detach art, language and politics. This is why discussions entitled “unpopular opinions” pop up so frequently in social media: it is the fandom recognizing the flaws of their group and expanding it to the fanbase and the canon creators, reflecting critically about their society. The role of women in front and behind the cameras, the way that minorities are portrayed, the focused merchandising that is alienating to some extent are a few of the issues that can be discussed in those viral posts. This critical view also appears in fan works, in which some creators use the language they are capable to manage to make sense of their fragmented reality, resulting in a very strong shared meaning that bring these people together and make them realize that they are not alone.

AN EXILE GLADLY EMBRACED

Art always was, among other esthetic definitions and purposes, a means to reflect and express different views and subjectivities. Many

authors use it as a way to cope with a crumbling reality, in either a macro sphere – society itself – or a micro sphere – dealing with personal issues. Sometimes these spheres overlap; in fact, as the access to social media grows, it gets harder to draw the lines between individual and society. Narrative becomes an urge and the return to the myth is presented as a way to find a common place where life can grow better and, eventually, make sense.

The perspective on the legitimacy of fandom productions is slowly changing. It is getting usual to see authors, producers and actors – such as Neil Gaiman, Michael Sheen, Brie Larson, Will Smith and Bryan Fuller, just to mention a few names – spreading fanart through their social media, often engaging with headcanons discussions and even praising and recommending fanfictions. It was a sweet surprise to see the *Archive Of Our Own* – a platform created for fan productions, mostly fanfiction and fanart, that hosts millions of works from the most diverse fandoms – winning an Hugo Award for “Best Related Work”. Gradually, these productions and creations are gaining status among exponents of mass culture, which is already a victory for marginalized individuals.

A local fandom about local culture can also be a powerful tool for empowerment of minorities. Some people may have the fandom as the exclusive space in which they feel safe and encouraged to express their thoughts and perform their subjectivities. The stimulation, either from those involved with the “canon” or other fans, is important for any fan that approaches transformative fandom to keep working and developing their artistic techniques – and their individualities. The recognition of its own art and own language as valuable productions can reconstruct the self-esteem of a person whose existence is constantly denied by multiple sectors of society, creating a comforting reality in which their existence and happiness is not only possible, but also recognized and valued. And this is beautiful.

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12

Samuel Vicente Rede



**FANDOM MARGINALIA:
USING FANFICTION TO WRITE
AROUND THE MARGINS
OF OPPRESSIVE DISCOURSES**



INTRODUCTION

According to Fairclough (2013), language is the site of ideological struggle and, also, what is at stake is: should one meaning be imposed on a word or a text and erase all other possible interpretations?. Such stake, he says, is “more than ‘mere words’; it is controlling the contours of the political world, it is legitimizing policy; and it is sustaining power relations” (Ibid, p.75). For Jenkins, the same struggle for the meaning occurs in narratives, in which the meaning given by the author disputes with the ones produced from the same body of text by the readers (JENKINS, 1992). In an era in which technological advancement created what Jenkins refers to as a “participatory culture”, social media enables a more democratic and outspread circulation of meanings by those who do not share the authority of the writer, the consumers of mass entertainment (RECUERO, 2015, p.4/5). This chapter looks at one specific social phenomena that flourished in the heart of participatory culture, the *fandoms* and its creative production in the form of *fan fictions*. Jenkins understands that fans are “active producers” and “manipulators of meanings”, and that taking hold of a canonical text to give it new meaning through fan made fiction is a refusal of “authorial authority” and an act of resistance to cultural hierarchy (JENKINS, 1992, p.18/23). Akin to the struggle for meaning in language, such struggle in narrative defies the legitimacy of traditional cultural hierarchies (Ibid, p.18).

After the 2018 presidential elections in Brazil, the political landscape took a turn to the right with numerous conservative deputies, senators and political parties rising to power through popular vote. A good share of the population had adhered to or, at least, accepted a right-wing ideology that produced a powerful narrative with a mythical figure: a leader to guide the country towards more traditional values, what Duboc and Ferraz call a “revival of homogeneity, normatization,


and universalism” (DUBOC and FERRAZ, 2018, p. 232). I will argue that this proposed return to a supposed set of conservative values of the past is based on the erasure of the diversity of voices brought by mass communication technology that inaugurated such pluralistic age as the one we live in now. I will use Thompson’s work to argue that the process that allowed the rise of politicians which embodied conservative discourse up to the highest stance of Brazilian executive power was triggered by a “moral panic”.

The purpose of this chapter is to explore how seemingly trivial actions such as the writing of fan fiction defy the imposition of singular meanings in language and narrative and can be, therefore, a powerful tool against discourses that erase diversity of thought. For that purpose, the impact of narratives on the construction of one’s identity and relationship to the world will be of major importance and, hopefully, shine a light on what we can do as storytellers during times in which one narrative strives to silence all others.

Section two will provide a quick summary of the political and societal landscape right before the 2018 elections. I will explain the reasoning behind my labelling of the election’s outcome as being the result of a nation-wide “moral panic” towards marginalized groups. Section three will address the impact of narratives in how we perceive ourselves and the world around us. For that, we need to understand how society has language and narrative as sites for dialectical struggle that reflect power relations in between social groups. Finally, in section four we’ll see what fanfiction can teach us about finding our own voices through the reshaping of established language and narrative and how such movement can benefit marginalized groups in their search for identity and meaning in our society.

2018: THE YEAR OF THE MORAL PANIC

All the processes pointed out in the introduction are grounded on historical and social realities. The months that preceded the 2018's elections in Brazil were constituted of a constant, delirious influx of misinformation in the form of “fake news” that aimed at producing a generalized panic that pushed the population to adhere to the far-right ideology of some politicians. It was a textbook case of Thompson's definition of “moral panic”: a sensationalist crusade through mass media that instilled in the masses fear of supposed threats to their established way of life (THOMPSON, 1998, p.1). The ever-present “communist threat” that had figured in right-wing discourses which justified the coup of 1964 by the armed forces came back at full strength, building up on the more imminent anxieties of our society regarding the rising violence and unemployment caused by the economic recession. We had just come out of a political crisis due to corruption scandals that resulted in the impeachment of the former president Dilma Rousseff in 2016, ending the thirteen-year period during which the Worker's Party governed the country. The far-right discourses that began to build a substantial base of followers in the years that ensued took advantage of the economic and political uncertainties of our population to fabricate a narrative that connected those problems to an alleged moral decline, another key characteristic of a moral panic, that attributes the “ills of society to the decline in family values and moral discipline” (THOMPSON, 1998, p.3). Moral panics “take the form of campaigns (crusades)” which “politicians and parts of the media are eager to lead”, they construct an idealized narrative that “looks backwards to a golden age of moral certainties” and propose a “return to a basic set of rules” (Ibid, p.2/4). That took shape in discourses uttered by far-right politicians and their followers that longed for a return to supposedly better times, that being before the Worker's Party first rose to power through popular vote and even



to the years of dictatorship. The causes of this “moral decline” were appointed by such discourses as being originated by “leftist ideology”, such term ended up defining everything that didn’t match with the traditional values the politicians were trying to impose. Fake news that “warned” the population against a supposed “gender ideology” being taught at schools by leftist teachers were shared by thousands of persons via social media.

The reason I believe it’s important to understand how far-right politicians rose to power through the stirring of a moral panic is that moral panics typically take root on idealized traditional and religious values that demonize marginal groups such as youth subcultures (THOMPSON, 1998, p.3/6). If I am to explore how producing narratives in the subculture of fandoms can be a powerful tool for marginalized identities to build their own meaning and identity, I have to be clear about why what I witnessed in 2018’s elections led me to believe such possibility was under threat. Through the democratization of technology and social media, more people were allowed a voice. Fandoms benefitted greatly from the possibility of connecting globally, more than ever before, we get to exchange experiences and expand our horizons not only regarding our favorite fictional pieces but as people who are growing and learning from each other in a pluralistic age (RECUERO, 2015, p.5/6). But what we achieved through diversity is precisely what such totalizing discourses want to take from us: “the rapidity of social change and growing social pluralism creates increasing potential for value conflicts and lifestyle clashes between diverse social groups, which turn to moral enterprise to defend or assert their values against those of the other groups” (THOMPSON, 1998, p.11). Against a totalizing narrative that wishes to consume all others, we have to keep insisting on the power of storytelling to give voice to those who are not represented in the dominant ideologies.

WHOSE TURN IT IS TO SPEAK?: POWER IN LANGUAGE AND NARRATIVE


It is a common experience to finish a book or a movie and feel that we're looking at things with renewed eyes. We have all come across fictional pieces that left us inspired, terrified, confused, validated, happy or sad. Amid this myriad of different emotions and states of mind a story can instill in us, one effect remains the same: that of feeling that something has changed within ourselves and in how we perceive the world around us. We are invited to look at things in a different way because we are being told a story by a voice that is not our own, whether that is the voice of the narrator, of a character, or simply the movement of the camera that will guide our eyes when we look at the screen. We are confronted with alternate realities that cause an impression on us that remains when we return to our own. Sometimes, what was just a shadow produced by a coat hanging in our room at night seems to be a haunting figure after we have watched a ghost movie. Or maybe, after reading a dystopian novel, we feel like we have already heard some of the discourses used by fictitious repressive governments from the mouths of our own real-life political leaders. What fiction gives us is the capacity to look beyond the established meanings of our daily lives, beyond what we consider natural, and ask ourselves: what if things were different?

Both Bruner and White's works helped me to glimpse the magnitude of the part narratives play in the representation of reality and on the construction of the self as I searched for reasons to believe that what we're doing as storytellers mattered and had to matter if we were to pull through difficult times that would challenge our subjectivity. It was certainly reassuring to come across terms such as the "impulse to narrate" that was described as "natural", "transcultural", a solution to the human concern of "fashioning human experience into a form assimilable to structures of meaning" (WHITE, 1980, p.5). More than

accompanying us since our very origins as a civilization, narratives were paramount to its formation since “narratives do accrue, (...) the accruals eventually create something variously called a ‘culture’ or a ‘history’ or, more loosely, a ‘tradition’”, and that permits their “continuity into the present”, which also constructs “a legal system, instruments assuring historical continuity if not legitimacy” (WHITE, 1980, p.18/20). Even on an individual level, we often do the interpretative exercise of looking back at our lives and recounting it to ourselves and others in order to search for our personal meaning and identity, “we seem to have no other way of describing ‘lived time’ save in the form of narrative” (BRUNER, 2004, p.692/693). If the narratives on which we built our society do shape it, the same can be said for us as individuals:

The heart of my argument is this: eventually the culturally shaped cognitive and linguistic processes that guide the self-telling of life narratives achieve the power to structure perceptual experience, to organize a memory, to segment and purpose-build the very “events” of a life. In the end, we become the autobiographical narratives by which we “tell about” our lives (Ibid, p.694).


Confirming that the way in which we structure language and narrative reflects our established social conventions was only the first step towards a more complex understanding of our relationship with language. The premise with which I work, that we have the power to influence those social conventions and not only be defined by it, found its sustaining foundation when I read Fairclough’s *Language in Social Life*. Although we might not be familiarized with the concept of discourse, Fairclough puts it in simple terms so that we are able to identify the influence of discourses in our daily lives as well as realize we also take part in their production. According to the author, *discourse* is “language as social practice determined by social structures”, it is determined by “sets of conventions associated with social institutions”, is shaped by power relations in society and has a dialectical relationship with social structures: it defines them as much as it is defined by them



(FAIRCLOUGH, 2013, p.14). Whatever *text* we come in contact with, that being an article we read on a newspaper or something we're told during a conversation, we interpret it according to social conventions (Ibid, p.16). For example, if we hear something that was already established by many as commonsense, such as "poor people just didn't work hard enough", we might not contest it because our interpretative skills were molded by social conventions that reflect the power imbalances in our society. If we are not aware of the dominant conventions shaped by groups that hold material or symbolical power in our society, we are at risk of naturalizing and repeating such discourses without thinking about who benefits from their message (FAIRCLOUGH, 2013, p.18).

To understand that those who Fairclough calls "powerholders" exert huge influence on the masses with their discourses is important to comprehend how ideologies are formed and how they can constrain the discourses of non-powerful participants to the point of producing "long-term effects on the knowledge and beliefs, social relationships, and social identities of an institution and society" (FAIRCLOUGH, 2013, p.39/62). We can find in Voloshinov's work the basics of such approach to language; basically, it is understood that economic conditions create new elements of reality that are made "socially meaningful", and therefore new forms of ideology and of semiotic expression will be created or reshaped to accommodate such elements (VOLOSHINOV, 1976, p.22/23). Here we can see that only what is deemed socially meaningful gets to be a part of the shared values and ideologies of our society and be manifested through semiotic expression. But, since we have "differently oriented social interests", the sign – and, I will argue, the narrative – becomes "an arena of class struggle" (Ibid, p.23).

Voloshinov's idea of this "social *multiaccentuality* of the social sign", the sign that holds in itself the fight of multiple groups for the meanings of a word or narrative, wouldn't have caught my attention as much as it did if I hadn't spent the months leading to the 2018's



elections witnessing powerful conservative social groups try to erase all diversity of meanings that clashed with their own. One of the most worrying examples of that was far-right politicians' insistent labelling of the Brazilian dictatorship of 1964 not as a *coup d'État* but as a "revolution" made by the armed forces to prevent a supposititious communist uprising. A new version of History, one devoid of any verification, was being forced upon all evidence of politically motivated tortures and murders done by the military, and such version didn't admit any dissent or questioning. The erasure of any diversity was the clear motivation behind the discourses of such politicians and their ever-increasing supporters, that much was clear when teachers began to be called "doctrinaires" for presumably teaching their pupils cultural Marxism agenda, or when marginalized groups were viciously attacked. As it was said by the victorious presidential candidate, "the minorities have to submit to the majority". Voloshinov had summarized and conceptualized in only one paragraph what was to me, a firm believer in our capacity to produce new meanings through language and storytelling, the most unsettling facet of this new imposed discourse:

The very same thing that makes the ideological sign vital and mutable is also, however, that which makes it a refracting and distorting medium. The ruling class strives to impart a supraclass, eternal character to the ideological sign, to extinguish or drive inward the struggle between social value judgements which occurs in it, to make the sign unaccentual (VOLOSHINOV, 1976, p.23).

As I mentioned in section one, a huge effort was made by the far-right politicians to produce a narrative that reinterpreted History in light of their interests and fabricate a mythical savior of a presidential candidate that not by coincidence was called "the Myth". "Narrative becomes a problem", says White, "only when we wish to give *real* events the *form* of a story" (WHITE, 1980, p.8). We are not allowed

to contradict narratives such as these because “the ideological sign in an established, dominant ideology is always somewhat reactionary (...), so accentuating yesterday’s truth as to make it appear today’s” (VOLOSHINOV, 1973, pp.23/24). Looking back at our shared or individual history is always an interpretative task, the issue is not narrativizing the past, but trying to make such narratives pose as “point-of-viewless” fact and deny its nature as a site of struggle (BRUNER, 1991, p.3).

The main stand that I wish to defend in this chapter is that, when narratives become a problem, to narrate is a need. The very *right* to narrate has to do with authority, and when the ones that hold powerful positions in society try to impose one meaning to erase all struggle, the very right to tell a story is at risk, for “since there is no ‘contest’, there is nothing to narrativize” (WHITE, 1980, p.22). The forcibly imposed meaning doesn’t only erase all other possible interpretations of historical events, it can go as far as affecting our identity construction. The discourses of such far-right politicians didn’t bother to mention certain marginalized groups unless they aimed to criticize or attack them. There was a generalized silence surrounding terms associated with the LGBTQ community and, shortly after the elections, they also began to disappear from official governmental texts such as educational leaflets from health campaigns. The way in which we are represented in the discourses around us impact the way we see ourselves and our place in society, it can also make us feel we have no right to produce a narrative to contest the dominant ideology. In the next section, we’ll see how fandoms have always offered a space for marginalized groups to find their voice through fanfiction and why such seemingly unremarkable production is a powerful tool available to anyone who wishes to reclaim their power through stories.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN IT'S NOT CHILD'S PLAY?: THE IMPORTANCE OF FANFICTIONS

If on one hand we have discourses that strive to make the sign “uniaccentual”, on the other we have entire communities that “assert their own right to form interpretations, to offer evaluations and to construct cultural canons”, “fans raid mass culture, claiming its materials for their own use” (JENKINS, 1992, p.18). The question that puts the creative process of elaborating fanfiction in motion is the same one I addressed in the beginning of the last section as being the lingering effect of fiction: what if things were different? Imagining a different outcome to a movie or a different ending to a character from a book seems like a banal task, we do it all the time, we're exploring alternatives and sometimes exploring how those alternatives would play out in our heads. We've all wanted to change something that was already an established cultural product, maybe it was one beloved character we wished we could bring back to life, or a kiss between two characters that we wish had happened, but we don't realize how full of complexity and meaning is that simple exploration of “what could have been”. What we are actually doing is giving ourselves the right to reinterpret established narratives in light of our own subjectivities, resisting “cultural hierarchy” when we build a meaning around our own “cultural experiences” (JENKINS, 1992, p.18). As opposed to a passive acceptance of the texts and discourses we're subjected to, “writing fanfiction involves active participation” (LEHTONEN, 2017, p.106).

Henry Jenkins' *Textual Poachers* remains paramount to understand “fans and their relationship with culture and media” even almost thirty years after its publishing (RECUERO, 2015, p.3). This study is the main base of my chapter because, despite being one of the firsts to approach the fandom culture, it was surprisingly sensitive to the ways in which fanfiction helped marginalized groups find a voice

of their own. Furthermore, one of the editions I used features a more recent interview with the author and a preface by a Brazilian researcher which covered how the technological evolution of the social media over the last decades impacted the fandoms and democratized access. On a personal level, I felt that most considerations made in the book about creative production in fandoms remain, to this day, accurate and relevant, according to my own experience with fandoms and fanfiction writing. Every day I spend on fandom accounts on social media, I come across dozens of art pieces and texts that feature marginalized identities that do not exist in the original piece of work on which the fanarts are based. For example, fans constantly make LGBTQ couples out of characters that are, in the canonical work, cisgender and heterosexual. I also encounter multiple accounts of people who openly state that their relationship with a fictional character or couple or with the community of fans helped them in their search for individual and social identity. Most of the fans from which I read such moving stories about finding meaning and a sense of belonging in real life due to the creative extrapolation of canonical works are part of marginalized groups, they are LGBTQ, black, neuroatypical, chronically ill, female, the list goes on and on. Every day on fandom confirms Jenkins' argument that "fans construct their cultural and social identity through borrowing and inflecting mass culture images, articulating concerns which often go unvoiced within the dominant media" (JENKINS, 1992, p.23). "Fandom was born to oppose the concept of hegemony, being a safe place for those who want to go beyond what the established canon can provide" (BUENO, 2019, p.4). It is important to understand that the production of those meanings is not something that is restricted to a private hobby with no impact on circulating social discourses, "for most fans, meaning-production is not a solitary or a private process but rather a social and public one" (Ibid, p.77). Since their boom with cultural products such as *Star Trek*, fandoms are largely composed by women, they are also the ones who produce, by far, the majority of fanfiction (Ibid, p.48). Such

information is important to us if we are to understand the history of fanfiction, for its tradition was, right from the start, one of “refocalizing” cultural products usually made by men so that they finally served the interests and reflected the experiences of women and minorities (Ibid, p.172-174). There is a whole chapter in Jenkins’ book dedicated to the particularities of the female reading and re-signifying which, as opposed to the men’s reading, felt more comfortable in extrapolating from the story and challenging the authority of the author, favoring their “own voice”: “the women colonized such stories” (Ibid, p.116/117).

It is not by chance that two of the most significant qualities of fanfiction production – that it occurs in a *community* and it’s highly *transformative* – are repeatedly brought together by Jenkins. There is no real transformative action that occurs isolated from social communication. We can’t even construct meaning or language itself outside of what Voloshinov calls the “social intercourse”. “The reality of sign is wholly a matter determined by that communication” which will impact the whole shared verbal consciousness of a group: “no cultural sign, once taken in and given meaning, remains in isolation: it becomes a part of the unity of the verbally constituted consciousness” (VOLOSHINOV, 1973, p.13/15). You are only able to read this text because we both speak English, we are part of a broad verbal group that is organized under a certain logic and set of references, and that allows us to communicate. It is only in the exchange of meanings that we can produce a new one, for “signs can arise only on *interindividual territory*” (Ibid, p.12). All the time, we are dealing with established meaning systems, and can produce new possibilities. If I ask you to imagine a tree, you’ll instantly understand what I am talking about, but you’ll see it through your own subjective perspective, you may imagine the leaves to be red while I imagine them to be green. The point that I want to make with this example is that it is necessary to work from the established meanings we already have when producing something new.


A criticism often made towards fanfiction is that it can't be used to explore new possibilities, either in form or theme, because it is based on the premises or characters set by a canonical work and, therefore, can't be original. If we agree to this reasoning, it seems a pointless task to defend that fanfiction can contribute to such important matters such as the freedom to defy the cultural establishment since it's bound to reproduce the dominant ideology behind products of mass entertainment. However, any text draws upon already established words and meaning systems, that doesn't mean it can't be ideologically creative (FAIRCLOUGH, 2013, p.78). It is true that "the readers are not *always* resistant; *all resistant* readings are not necessarily progressive readings; the 'people' do not *always* recognize their conditions of alienation and subordination" (JENKINS, 1992, p.35). No production is progressive all the time or breaks with the paradigms that we were exposed to throughout our entire lives. This was all to say that, although fanfiction has a history of subverting dominant ideologies and artistic aesthetics, it also conforms to many established norms (Ibid, p.65). Fan work resists cultural hierarchy in many subtle ways, sometimes simply by being written, something that blurs the line between those who are usually allowed to produce meanings and those who are usually just the receptors, which is also a matter about which groups power in society (COLLINS, 2008, p.286).

I am fully aware that writing fanfiction doesn't sound like a revolutionary act, that it is often dismissed as child's play or a form for authors who can't have any original ideas. What I am hoping to demonstrate in this chapter is that allowing ourselves to play around established meanings is something we do daily, it is a semiotic need. Also, when we push the limits of how much we allow ourselves to explore through established fictional works, that will reflect on our relationship with all the discourses that surround us. Words and ideas that seemed impossible for us to reach because of cultural hierarchy become things that can be claimed just as our favorite narratives. A

“totalizing account” such as the ones uttered by the far-right politicians threatens all the dissident experiences that fight for legitimacy, but when underrepresented identities claim their turn to speak, there’s a transition “to partial, particularized accounts” which do not figure in the top of the cultural hierarchy (JENKINS, 1992, p.4). Fanfiction writers and readers bring to the table their own cultural experiences which are exchanged and appreciated within the fandom, and new meanings are formulated precisely because they flourish inside a community (Ibid, p.18).

If I may wrap things up in a personal note, I think my account can serve as an example among many others of the positive impact fanfiction writing and fan communities can have in one’s life, as well as a justify why I wrote this chapter. I had never thought of the work I and my other fanfiction peers did as being, as Jenkins puts it, *transformative*. That was until I became more aware, though university classes and readings and the increasingly tense political situation in the months prior to the election, that there was an established order of discourses actively working to wipe out marginalized identities such as my own. It wasn’t that I was oblivious to their existence, but I had never before witnessed their full destructive impact on my subjectivity and personal relationships.

The rising hostility towards identities such as my own and those of my friends and peers was the theme of many anxious conversations in which we asked ourselves what we could do to protect our subjectivity in times such as these. At first, I thought that writing and drawing my favorite characters as being transgender like me or gay like me was just a fun hobby, but in coming together with online communities full of people who were doing just the same, I understood how we acted out of a desire to see ourselves represented on the fictional works we felt most connected to. Since we didn’t feel represented in the dominant ideologies of cultural products, we carved our own paths by reclaiming those narratives to ourselves. The problem wasn’t that I couldn’t find




my own voice in the hateful discourses of politicians, it was never there to begin with in the stories and movies I loved the most, and was progressively being silenced inside the most intimate spaces such as my family precisely because they now felt it was allowed, because the discourses emitted by powerful people have very pervasive consequences we sometimes are not aware of.

After the elections' outcome, those who understood they had every reason to fear the rise and naturalization of hate speech – and most of us do, even if we don't know it – were devastated. But the support I received at my University and inside the fandoms made me understand that it wasn't the end of the world. We will keep constructing meanings that do not seem welcome or not even allowed, as we have always done, and that can be executed in a variety of ways, not only by writing fanfiction. My defense of fanfiction writing can be understood as a defense of all things that we do to keep our own subjectivity that are dismissed as being “useless”, and a “waste of time”. Such little things carry way more meaning than we imagine, even if we're the ones doing it, and the impact that it produces on a small community spreads and makes a difference on a much broader sense. If we witnessed words produce such a terrifying, all-consuming effect, that we feared for our own sense of self, the safety of our communities and the democratic bases of our society, we have to ask ourselves: who taught us that our own words are powerless to do the opposite?

CONCLUSION: “NEVER TELL ME THE ODDS”

What I hoped to demonstrate with this chapter was how easily dismissed creative practices can go against powerful discourses. A quick summary of the dominant far-right discourses that rose to power through popular vote in the 2018's Brazilian elections was provided,



as well as some of their consequences to marginalized groups. We then explored how we understand the world and ourselves through narratives, and how our perceptions can vary depending on who we're taught is allowed to speak. On the last part, politics and narrative came together in the very idea that producing fanfiction defies cultural and social hierarchies, and how it can be used as a tool to establish identity and meaning during times in which only one understanding of reality imposes itself on all others. The conclusion was, hopefully, that it is only through education that we can identify discourses that are harmful to the diversity of thought, and that it is only through what feels at the start like meaningless actions that we can plant the seeds of a wave-like effect to counter the rise of hate.

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13

Matheus Camargo Jardim



THE CONTEMPORARY
NOVEL AND THE MATTER
OF QUEER VISIBILITY
IN THE ERA
OF NEOLIBERALISM



INTRODUCTION

We are living in the era of the death of truth. All around the world, sadistic and incompetent governments have risen in the wings of the vulture of hatred and ignorance, spreading fake news and throwing people against each other, turning the masses away from knowledge and reflection. Obeying a neoliberal agenda, the governments squeeze people from one side, making them pay for basic rights such as health and education, while on the other side the free market convinces them they want things they do not need and there is only one way out of their misery: individual economic gain, work hard and you will get a shred of power.

Society has reached its most both ridiculous and oppressive contradiction, but, rather than a simple causality, it seems like an ingenious trap: while the conservative and authoritarian governments tell people how they should live, the market includes everyone “willing” to work and spend their money. Capitalism will attract every marginalized group (niche market) onto its web, promising they are more than welcome when in fact there is not another visible option. Representation, all things considered, has then become one of the most discussed matters, related to identity politics, is a way of bringing awareness to the masses. Therefore, to give visibility to the so-called minorities is an ongoing process of showing that there is not only one way of living.

This chapter will discuss how the cultural industry not only responds but is an effective part of this process. In the first section, I will review the Marxist literature, the basic concepts to understand the movements of society and how the productive forces are aligned to the dominant culture. In the second section, I will discuss the queer novel in the era of neoliberalism. The concept of reification will be used to explain how sexuality is treated as a commodity, since this aspect is


taken from the totality, which means that many novels offer visibility but disregard real struggles to sell a story that revolves around sexuality and archetypal situations.

Considering all the theory elucidation and commentary I will analyze *Simon vs the Homo Sapiens Agenda* (ALBERTALLI, 2015) and demonstrate how it is an example of a neoliberal ideology shaped into a commercial form. My objective is not to determine if visibility under neoliberalism ideology is good or bad, a discussion rather infertile, but to understand as many elements and relations attached to this process as possible, how capitalism dictates all kinds of relations and how it is reflected in literature. One must recognize that the so-called high culture is produced and assigned to those who are privileged, and mass culture consumption is just an effect of economic inequality. To illustrate the differences between a commodified novel and a form that uniquely reorganizes reality to show the reader a totality, I will finish the third section with a brief analysis of *Disgrace* (COETZEE, 2000) and a commentary on realism.

The purpose of this chapter is not only to serve as an attempt to understand what is happening in our society and the implications on art, but as a starting point for further studies to interpret reality and hopefully make some changes.

LITERATURE AND CULTURE INDUSTRY: A MARXIST PERSPECTIVE

Reality is fabricated by those who possess the power of economic production and consequently control the cultural industry, which emerged as an effect of twenty-century capitalism and the social relations originated from this economic system and the liberal ideology.



The Marxist perspective discerns the productive or material forces from nonmaterial manifestations of society, identifying the first as the base and the second as the superstructure. Nevertheless, Raymond Williams (1980, p.31), rethinking these concepts, states that although the consciousness is determined by the social being, the relationship between base and superstructure is not static as it seems, but a dynamic process. In this way, strictly determining the base is to exert pressure and establish limits that could result in an interpretation of the superstructure, therefore art, as a simple mirror reflection of society, when the base is, in fact, a start point to understand cultural processes. What Raymond Williams proposes, as well as other Marxist critics, is to understand the ultimate contradictions produced by the dialectical relation between base and superstructure, and how they mutually affect each other and produce changes all the time.

In order to recognize the effects of the base on the superstructure and vice versa we must look upon the concept of ideology. As Terry Eagleton summarizes (2003, p. 5), the political, religious, ethical, and many others aspects of society are condensed in a superstructure that defines the social consciousness and, therefore, ideology, whose function “is to legitimate the power of the ruling class in society; in the last analysis, the dominant ideas of a society are the ideas of its ruling class.” (EAGLETON, 2003, p. 5). In capitalism, works of art have also become an object of consumption that reflects the ideology of the market, they are sold as commodities that aims to feed the needs of validation engendered by the relation between base and superstructure. Therefore, novels, movies, TV shows and so on, contribute to the system maintenance.

When we center literature in this process, Raymond Williams (1980, p. 45) states that nearly all writing contributes to the dominant culture. Literature is capable of consolidating meaning and values, in every historical period, that transcend common sense, portraying reality

in a single manner that concentrates a totality. "The arts of writing and the arts of creation and performance, over their whole range, are parts of the cultural process in all the different ways (...). They contribute to the effective dominant culture and are a central articulation of it" (WILLIAMS, 1980, p. 45). Williams takes into account the concept of hegemony established by Gramsci, which considers the conflict of residual and emergent forces in society. From that, his conception of literature is an articulation of all the meanings and values from the dominant culture, but also the emergent forces fighting for influence. Within this process, not only by incorporating the dominant culture but also by enabling the process of standardization, stands the cultural industry, in which the real-life experience, and the original forms that could reorganize it, are set aside in favor of repeated forms that prevent the consumer from thinking or moving away from their state of compliance.

According to Adorno (2002, p. 95), those in control of the few centers of production argue that along with the inevitability of standardized forms, once one considers the millions of people inserted in this system, what prevails is the need of the consumers, eager to entertain themselves after an exhausting working day. Adorno states that those who have more economic power over society also assert dominance over technology, therefore, "Technical rationality today is the rationality of domination. It is the compulsive character of a society alienated from itself." (2002, p. 95). From that we can understand, what Raymond Williams believes in is the dynamic relation of base and superstructure, and how the first influences directly in the cultural reality. Media is nothing without technology, and these forces aligned made possible the arise of a new situation called globalization, in which cultural hegemony occurs.

Fredric Jameson (2009) argues that selling culture is the same as selling a lifestyle, and if the latter is homogenous the market easily finds its way into domination. What happens in commercial novels is that they

shape the readers' perceptions of the world based on the ideology of the market, in which your identity is what you consume. This process is also discussed by Jameson (1979, p. 132-133) when he notes that the process of commodification is found in the form of the novel itself, since people read it to know the end and its whole structure, from chapters to paragraphs, it is built to please as the plot is sheer repetitions to gradually give gratifications to the reader who already knows what to expect. Looking back to what Raymond Williams said about the incorporation of the dominant culture, what commercial novels do is embody these values and meanings into their forms without any critical reflection.

When it comes to identity and representation, commercial genres, especially in the last two decades, put aside the real-life struggles and the collective adversities in order to highlight the individuals and their willpower. As Ferraz (2019, p. 204) stated, "The new liberalism talks about free and egalitarian opportunities, but if for some reason the individuals are unable to maintain their positions on the top, they will sink". In the age of neoliberalism, people are deceived to think that they are being represented, that diversity, identity and equality are the companies goals, but what neoliberalism does is represent minorities in a single way that reflects its ideology, it distorts and coerces identity in order to shape it inside capitalist consumerism parameters.

THE QUEER NOVEL IN THE AGE OF NEOLIBERALISM

The concept of literature, according to Raymond Williams (1977, pp. 45-46), is historically ideological, some argue that it is the image of abstract life or yet, a set of values that must be preserved, but, as we have seen, literature articulates residual and emergent forces. The novel ascended with the bourgeois as a way to give artistic

form to its ideology, highlighting the autonomy of the individual. What once began as support ended up as an assessment of bourgeois society; considering that the social-historical content is embodied in the work of art, to see a society with all its contradictions and oppressive forces it is almost inescapable. But when entertainment is the only ambition writers have when the theme is LGBTQIA+ experience, the novel is rather deformed and the final result is the mere commodification of sexual identities.

Instead of criticizing social relations, injustices, heteronormative culture and many other problems produced by capitalism and its hegemonic ideologies through time, the contemporary novel, the one created as a product that reflects mainstream culture elements, sells characters and situations drained of reality, but the one that serves as the formal duplicate of neoliberalism. As Peter Drucker states, “LGBT life in general has been twisted out of shape by neoliberalism.” (2015, p.280). Neglecting any sense of community, it praises the individuals and their personal responsibility to achieve success, that is, possessing power and freedom are both associated and therefore, identity and the privilege to be oneself. Added to this, there is the reification of identity.

Drunker discusses how Lukács critiqued the concept of commodity fetishism through reification, which is “an overarching term for the ways in which relations between human beings are disguised in capitalist societies as relations with, or even between, things.” (2015, p. 55). In a few words, reification is how people take attributes, aspects or activities out of their totality and transform them into a thing by itself, with means and ends, for example, how people value special attributes, such as the “perfect” body. Rosemary Hennessy (2018, p. 103) affirms that the reification of sexual identity is connected to the relationships and forms of consciousness that cooperate with the demands of capitalism, which means sexual identity will be seen as the most profitable way. Adding to that, Fredric Jameson (1979) believes that in

late capitalism everything has become commodities and reification is part of our lives, therefore, he affirms that we should not separate high culture from mass culture in a binary system based on value, but we must consider these categories in a historical and dialectical method, then we will be able to see they are an “interdependent phenomena, as twin and inseparable forms of the fission of aesthetic production under late capitalism.” (JAMESON, 1979, p. 133-134).

Although it is part of the praxis, literary criticism should not be focused on assigning value, to state whether a novel is good or bad based on whether it is from mass or high culture is irrelevant when our objective is to understand what is behind of all that. Even in commercial forms we can find echoes of social-historical matter and analyze the relations with the dominant culture. A dialectical criticism recognizes the contradictions implicated in so-called high culture and mass culture, as well as the goods originated from queer visibility in neoliberalism. As Hennessy affirms:

Cultural visibility can prepare the ground for gay civil rights protection; affirmative images of lesbians and gays in the mainstream media, like the growing legitimation of lesbian and gay studies in the academy, can be empowering for those of us who have lived most of our lives with no validation from the dominant culture (2018, p. 111).

Therefore, one must understand the contradictions originated from neoliberalism provided that - on its surface – it may show equality and progress, which is partially true, but also, in its core, we can see an imprisonment mechanism in which our identities are just a commodity. As Fatel (this volume) stated, “Us, the minorities that have for so long searched for our voices to be heard, fell into the neoliberal trap sold by the Capital to make us nothing more than segregated ghettos”. For this reason, I believe that a Queer Marxist approach is necessary to understand the relations between capitalism and identity and how this


is reflected in culture. The following interpretative analysis will focus on the theory I have discussed so far.

THE NEOLIBERAL PORTRAIT OF SIMON VS THE *HOMO SAPIENS* AGENDA

Simon vs the Homo Sapiens Agenda (Becky Albertalli, 2015) was a cultural phenomenon especially when its adaptation (*Love Simon*, 2018) made millions of dollars and it was praised as a gay-romantic-comedy that gives visibility and allegedly helps teenagers to see themselves represented and, therefore, to have a voice in society. It is a story of a gay teenager who tries to discover who is his secret admirer and at the same time how to tell his parents and friends that he is gay, since he is being blackmailed by a colleague and could be exposed at any moment. The flat characters are put together to act in archetypal situations seen in blockbusters since the ascension of coming of age movies in the eighties, but now this form is renewed with the reification of homosexuality.

YA (Young Adult) is intrinsically a commercial genre that deals with relationships and identity in the teenage universe. Every historical period comes up with its form to give shape to the youth experience, *David Copperfield* (1850) or *The Catcher in the Rye* (1951), although both very popular novels, succeeded not only to entertain but also to embody the movements or social dynamic of their time without completely adhering to the dominant ideology.

According to Eagleton (2003, p. 21), forms are determined by the social-historical content they incorporate in the same way the material forces of society shape the forms of the superstructure, therefore, historical changes revolutionize the forms. When capitalism succeeded



in transforming everything into commodities, the novel and its form did not escape from that, the neoliberal ideology and its entire sense of emptiness became part of the structure of most of YA novels. In *Simon vs the Homo Sapiens Agenda* all the real conflicts, human complexities and any possible problematization of the system are suffocated to give way to sexuality reification and repetitive pop culture references: every single line, paragraph and chapter repeat the formula of consumption, giving the reader the impression that reality is this standardized commodity that they see everywhere. With a close reading, the following paragraph gives us a suitable example of what I have been discussing:


Maybe it would be different if we lived in New York, but I don't know how to be gay in Georgia. We're right outside Atlanta, so I know it could be worse. But Shady Creek isn't exactly a progressive paradise. At school, there are one or two guys who are out, and people definitely give them crap. Not like violent crap. But the word "fag" isn't exactly uncommon. And I guess there are a few lesbian and bisexual girls, but I think it's different for girls. Maybe it's easier. If there's one thing the Tumblr has taught me, it's that a lot of guys consider it hot when a girl is a lesbian (ALBERTALLI, 2015, l. 252).

The narrator-character relates 'gay lifestyle' with life in the big cities. It would be reasonable if he would compare security in his town in Georgia with New York's, because, in fact, being an LGBTQ+ person in small cities is dangerous in many aspects. Nevertheless, he says "I don't know how to be gay in Georgia" (ALBERTALLI, 2015, l. 252), which implies that he has an image of a standard gay identity in his mind and he is preoccupied on acting upon that. Needless to say that every mainstream culture artifact, such as movies or TV shows, reinforces the image of a gay man living in a big city and spending a lot of money: neoliberalism promises happiness and freedom to minorities through consumerism. Thinking about the relations between sexual identity and class, Hennessy says that:

The commodification of gay styles and identities in corporate and academic marketplaces is integrally related to the formation of a postmodern gay/queer subjectivity, ambivalently gender coded and in some instances flagrantly repudiating traditional, hetero, and homo bourgeois culture. Nonetheless, as I have been arguing, to a great extent the construction of a new “homosexual/queer spectacle” perpetuates a class-specific perspective that keeps invisible the capitalist divisions of labor that organize sexuality and in particular lesbian, gay, queer lives. In so doing, queer spectacles often participate in a long history of class regulated visibility (2018, p. 138).

What she is saying, and we can confirm in every queer representation in media, is that capitalism projects its own queer profitable image, turning it into a commodity, a lifestyle that everybody should crave for. We can exemplify how media reinforces this ideology through the well-known reality show produced by Netflix called *Queer Eye* (2018), in which five gay men, who are the image of success, help someone (most often heterosexuals) by transforming their home, the way they look, dress, eat and behave, selling a lifestyle that if you achieve you are successful and happy. It would not be so harmful if it was not the only and inescapable lifestyle that neoliberal media presents. Ferraz (2019, p. 206), when discussing gay couples in advertisements, points out that most discourses “focus only on successful gay men within heterosexual beauty parameters. Therefore, a range of gender/sexual identities that do not fit in these parameters is excluded”. Although some changes have been made in the way the media represents gay men — they are not all exclusively white and masculine anymore —, their identities are still molded inside a heteronormative and consumerist frame that utterly shuts off real queer visibility. Mark Fisher (2014, l. 458) claimed that:

The disarticulation of class from race, gender and sexuality has in fact been central to the success of the neoliberal project – making it seem, grotesquely, as if neoliberalism were in some way a precondition of the gains made in anti-racist, anti-sexist and antiheterosexist struggles.



This disarticulation Fisher discussed can be seen in every queer representation. It is terrifying to see neoliberalism claiming to be responsible for so-called social equality (race, gender and sexuality) when in fact it only segregates more. This disengagement, or alienation that neoliberalism promotes in order to give the fabricated sensation of equality can be seen in the novel's form itself, the continuous movement of pretending that everything is fine when it is not. *Simon* is set in a conservative town but everything that revolves around the protagonist is “progressive”, including his family and friends. He sets his happiness in the acceptance of the people he loves, which undoubtedly occurs without serious conflicts. In order to maintain the minimum quota of reality the novel exposes a bit of a gay teenager experience at Simon's school: “(...) people definitely give them crap. Not like violent crap. But the word ‘fag’ isn't exactly uncommon.” (ALBERTALLI, 2015, l. 252). Many common readers have stated that the novel was written by a heterosexual and therefore was unrealistic or bad. However, her sexual orientation does not determine the quality of her work and ability to give artistic shape to social-historical matter, but this only line reveals her complete disregard for the LGBTQIA+ experience, since any gay teenager fears verbal humiliation almost as the physical one, but the character is alienated from collective experience, unless it is romantic or sexual. Later, when he is exposed, one of the novel's many incongruencies occurs, contradicting the excerpt above, he is very well validated by his school community:

Some people sort of whisper and laugh. And a couple of people randomly give me these huge smiles in the hallway, whatever that means. These two lesbian girls I don't even know come up to me at my locker and hug me and give me their phone numbers. And at least a dozen straight kids make a point of telling me that they support me. One girl even confirms that Jesus still loves me (ALBERTALLI, 2015, l. 2094).

One can argue that his acceptance depends on how he performs masculinity, but the only echo of reality from this excerpt is the girl telling

that Jesus still loves him. These two girls who hugged him may be the same he previously objectified: “If there’s one thing the Tumblr has taught me, it’s that a lot of guys consider it hot when a girl is a lesbian.” (ALBERTALLI, 2015, l. 252). First of all, Tumblr functions in the novel as a tool of general control, it mirrors reality in its own disturbing way that dictates how teenagers act and see the world, mostly because it is where the school gossip blog is set. Simon’s offensive statement is not contradicted by the novel’s form but rather endorsed in the repetition of sexuality reification throughout the narrative. As Guets (this volume) argues, the right to define themselves and be heard is constantly denied to lesbians: “Lesbian silencing and invisibility is something that is engineered from the strongest hegemonic and masculine power structures”. The novel’s excerpt shows us how lesbians are defined through men’s eyes, Simon propagates these views, reproducing patriarchal and heteronormative values. Hennessy explains this process in the following passage:

(...) the organizational structures of gender and desire on which heteronormative identity relies prescribe a double reification of the human capacity for sensation, affect, and social intercourse. Heteronormativity posits a “natural” equation between sex (male or female) and gender (masculine and feminine) and it polices desire according to a gendered asymmetry between sexual subject (e.g., masculine) and object choice (feminine). At the same time, heteronorms reify homosexuality — defining, disciplining the human potential for sensation and social intercourse into an identity that complies with the heteronormative logics of gender and desire, only perversely so (2018, p.100).

Simon, not only in that passage but in the whole novel, adheres to the oppressor’s ideology, the character and the plot define all relationships based on heteronormativity. As Ferraz (2009, p. 209) stated, “the different is accepted in a relationship in which the acceptor/heteronormative subject is superior, while the accepted remains the deviation from the norm, that is, the abject/stranger that causes laughter; the homosexual will always be the one who

depends on the permission of the “normal”/superior”. Criticizing or deconstructing this relationship would be a lot to ask from a character like Simon, but the writer did not make an effort to criticize the status quo, far from it, she incorporated the dominant values and sold it to millions of teenagers around the world, which brings us to the novel’s standardization power. It became very popular in the peripheral countries, such as Brazil, as a result of what I think it is the novel’s hidden main theme: the cultural product you consume becomes your identity, and this gives the reader a sense of belonging and validation, since what Jameson (2009, p. 438) calls “americanization” is an ongoing process in Brazil and many other countries.

The writer does what we can see is an archetypal situation in teenager queer novels or movies, the school dynamics is always the same, and sport and theater establishes a division between masculinity and queerness, but Bram, Simon’s admirer, is a soccer player. Things can change, but not too much. As I have discussed, heteronormativity defines gay relationships, the ‘theater girl’ and the ‘sports boy’ are just adapted into the gay couple, another way of reinforcing how masculinity should be performed. The writer portrays Bram as black and jew, it would be too much if he was also too queer.

But what do we have on the other side? How a novel may possibly distinguish itself from a commodity? Rather than reinforcing the market ideology with plots that are sheer repetition, artists, when they have a commitment to their craft, unveils reality in a unique yet critical way. The form of the novel is nothing but a way to reorganize life and shape historical matter. As Eagleton summarized when he discussed Lukács’ ideas about realism:

In a society where the general and the particular, the conceptual and the sensuous, the social and the individual are increasingly torn apart by the ‘alienations’ of capitalism, the great writer draws these dialectically together into a complex totality. His fiction thus mirrors, in microcosmic form, the complex totality of

society itself. In doing this, great art combats the alienation and fragmentation of capitalist society, projecting a rich, many-sided image of human wholeness (2003, p. 26).

Coetzee is one of many novelists who is able to give form to society's fragmentations and achieve this aspired totality. Set in the post-apartheid South Africa, *Disgrace* (COETZEE, 2000) is a novel that exposes contradictions, injustices and violence, showing the dialectical relations between the old and the new, the city and the country, Europe and Africa. The narrator follows David Lurie, a divorced professor of poetry and communication — the latter's department incorporated the former, a movement seen throughout the whole novel — who is incapable of living in this new world. After being fired from the university for sexual abuse he went to live in the country with Lucy, his only daughter. There, he realizes that the social backwardness unacceptable in the city is the norm in the old country, where patriarchy culture and economy loosely rules. He constantly compares life in South Africa with Europe and his academic research is on Lord Byron, implying a disassociation with his environment.

Once again, my objective is not to prescribe art but investigate forms. *Simon*, through a commercial form, can reveal us a lot about this neoliberal society, but *Disgrace* can expose every inch of capitalism dark core. David Lurie raped his student, but sees the whole process as a romantic chasing; rather than brutal force, he uses manipulation, language, coercion, and, therefore, he indulges himself from any guilt. But then, in the country, he lives with his daughter, who is not only a white woman who owns land, but a lesbian. This combination is atrocious for the people who live there and a rape is plotted to teach her a lesson and compel her to sell her land to her neighbor. The protagonist was shocked with all that savagery and here lies the disgrace: the contradiction in which the hypocritical character sees himself completely lost with his old European moral sense. This is not centered on the individual, it is

not just a particular story, but consolidates a specific collective and historical context. According to Eagleton:

A 'realist' work is rich in a complex, comprehensive set of relations between man, nature and history; and these relations embody and unfold what for Marxism is most 'typical' about a particular phase of history. By the 'typical' Lukács denotes those latent forces in any society which are from a Marxist viewpoint most historically significant and progressive, which lay bare the society's inner structure and dynamic. The task of the realist writer is to flesh out these 'typical' trends and forces in sensuously realized individuals and actions; in doing so he links the individual to the social whole, and informs each concrete particular of social life with the power of the 'world-historical' – the significant movements of history itself (2003, p. 26-27).

David Lurie is not only a man but a whole society in which many contradictions are overlaid. This is not only in the content but in the form, this movement of juxtaposed differences is repeated throughout the novel. Coetzee restructures social-historical experience and gives the reader this totality, where different forces are always fighting.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Neoliberalism promises freedom through individuality but forgets that society institutions exert great oppressive power, it encourages individual economic gain while the dominant ideology does everything to maintain the masses under control. As we have seen, literature can adhere to the neoliberal discourse in which everybody can take a bite and real-life struggles are neglected in order to value commodified forms, making the reader comfortable with the same thing being repeated to nauseating extremes. My objective was to analyze how neoliberalism is attached to commercial genres, especially Young Adult novels, and

how it dictates behavior, because only by understanding and criticizing these relations we can make a change. According to Hennesy:

(...) making visible the connections between forms of identity and capital's historical processes can change the frame through which we might imagine the horizon for change and can perhaps enable us to forge new forms of subjectivity and political alliance that might target for transformation the exploitative, oppressive, and acquisitive relationship neoliberalism protects (2018, p. 109-110).

In conclusion, we must deconstruct the relations fixed by capitalism in order to make real changes. To trade representation with the neoliberal ideology is just another way of imprisonment and propagation of old values masked as new ones.

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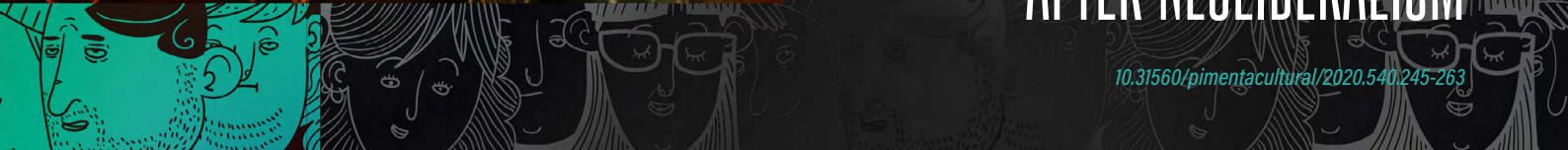
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14

Henrique Fatel

O'ER THE LAND
OF THE FREE AND THE
HOME OF THE BRAVE:
CONSIDERATIONS
ON LANGUAGE AND CULTURE
AFTER NEOLIBERALISM



Irony has penetrated into every language in the Modern Age (...), into every word and form [...].

The Modern Age men does not proclaim, but speaks, that is, speaks through erratas.

Mikhail Bakhtin

INTRODUCTION

It is known and indicated as empirical data that Late Capitalism (as defined by Frederic Jameson in his "*Postmodernism, or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*", especially from the late 20th century onwards, commodified every single one of the aspects of human life: social relations and social habits and practices. Especially Culture. Postmodernity, as a period of time separated from Modernity by a radical epistemological break, carries Neoliberalism and an unseen valorization or an *empowerment* of the 'individual', *lato sensu*, as its cores. This break had effects on the way the hegemonic economic system of our time shapes our constitution as subjects. Mostly through culture, according to Wallace (1993 and 1987), the new order has changed the way these individuals see themselves. The Postmodern subject is not the same as the Modern one. What constitutes the new one is mostly the self-enterprise-driven way of being. According to Dardot e Laval, who also quote Marx:


The neo-liberal subject in the process of being formed, some of whose main features we wish to delineate here, is the correlate of an apparatus of performance and pleasure that is currently the subject of numerous works. [...] Together with urbanization, the commodification of social relations was one of the most potent factors in the 'emancipation' of the individual from traditions, roots, family attachments and personal loyalties. Marx's greatness consisted in showing that the price of subjective liberty was a new form of subjection to the impersonal, uncontrollable laws of capital valorization. Like

the self-owning Lockean subject, the liberal subject might well believe that he enjoyed all his natural faculties, the exercise of his reason and will, and might well proclaim his irreducible autonomy to the world (2014, p.283-286).

Under that premise, it can be observed how the Late 1990's occur to have been the alluded the promise of even more prosperity and individual liberty in the United States, for example. The ones that hadn't been fulfilled in the 1950's were now offered by the Neoliberalism imported from Thatcher. Because Neoliberalism is to be seen as an extrapolation of Liberalism, and the cause of a radical epistemologic *coupure* for the subject that lives under the current string of conditions of Capitalism. Consonant to Dardot & Laval (2014) state that

from the subject via the enterprise to the state, a single discourse makes it possible to connect a definition of man with the way in which he wants to 'make a success' of his life, as well as the way that he must be 'guided', 'encouraged', 'trained', and 'empowered' to achieve his 'objectives'. In other words, neo-liberal rationality produces the subject it requires by deploying the means of governing him so that he really does conduct himself as an entity in a competition, who must maximize his results by exposing himself to risks and taking full responsibility for possible failures. 'Enterprise' is thus the name to be given to self-government in the neoliberal age (*ibidem*, p.290).

Ever since this shift, the epistemology which came to be the hegemonic shows a crescent pre-occupation of their fulfillment and case investigation . Whatever may be the (left/right) wing party one is a part of, the horizons have come to be the same: freedom, and the other ones promised ever since the French revolution. |But it is an individual-centered freedom. It is a post-modern neoliberally-shaped freedom. Less cryptically: ever since our last and greatest horizon in life is becoming *self-made men*, the middle-class civilian has the Other and every other boundary of his being as mere parameter of *consonance* or *dissonance*.



For the same reason, ever since the late 1950's and the early 1960's, which constitute what was, overhastily, the emergence and first establishment, or the very birth of the American ethos - in its most widespread conception and broad depiction, the so-called Emergent and Third World countries are subordinate to the cultural and social values forged in the wombs of *O'er home of the brave/ and land of the free* in post-atomic America that "about the time television first gasped and sucked air, mass-popular U.S. culture became high-art viable as collection of symbols and myth" (WALLACE, 1993, p.168).


The Televisual portrayal of the post-World War II United States assembled "the Eisenhower era and its complacency (...); the sealed self-content of the American small (white, middle-class) town; (...) the conformist (...) ethnocentrism of a prosperous United States" that was being taught nothing but "to consume in the first big boom after the shortages and privations of the war" (JAMESON, 1991, p.279). Nevertheless, it was the forging of a type of Pax Americana and of the hegemonic set of values it needed to function as such. As stated by Medovoi "the fifties represent a subdued moment of political quiescence" and also a "corporate cultural hegemony" produced by a post-war historic alliance of anti-communist liberal intellectuals, technicians, and bureaucrats" (1997, p.256). According to Nancy Fraser (2017), the past few years, or roughly the last decade in America represent another of these moments of political quiescence.

To this quiescence, the role of pop-culture has always been pivotal. Moreover since the eighties. Conspicuously portraying the previous governments and the and the past years already as a sign of some common and youthful American innocence or *naïveté* mass-media-culture was set out to sell capitalism and democracy as not only essentially compatible, but as the keys to the fulfillment of the Nation's inherent potential for economic and social thriving. In order to do so, mainstream entertainment needed to crystallize as standards

the previous set values of individual liberty and originality in opposition to community and communion; an ethnocentric red-scared skepticism, and consumerism as the ultimate proof that the New Liberalism was better than the threatening Communist socialism. In a nutshell, the American virtue became a very specific type of self-centered irony.

Lastly, “since, at least, the eighties, the individualist side of great U.S conversation has” (WALLACE, 1993, p.175) grabbed the middle-class neoliberal subject by the throat and appealed to this mind by offering all the available commodities so as to “help” him “express himself” (ibidem), assert his individuality, “stand out from the crowd” (ibidem). Predictably, by the nineties “The Benthamite subject was the calculating figure of the market and the productive person of industrial organizations. The neoliberal subject is a competitive person, wholly immersed in global competition”. (DARDOT; LAVAL, 2014, op.cit.p.283).

These [recently made] axiomatic values are at the core of the post-modern fields of studies in Linguistics studies – mostly Post-Structuralism. And if Postmodernism is, in a nutshell, the denial or the breaking-off with various of the Modernity Western Philosophy; Post-Structuralism is the denial or the *overcoming* of the Structuralist theories on language. Post-Structuralist theoretic frames ensemble whichever object it may be in strictly sociological and individualized material perspective, lacking an ontological dimension towards the observation of its research objects. Postmodernity is based on the categories of individuality, identity, uniqueness and specialty, and utterly Importance of the Individual (WALLACE, 1993). Thenceforth, Post-structuralism and the new wave of materialism tend to pay an enormous debt to such manifestations. Discourse studies, for example, have opened space for studies that focus on the *bottom-up* (VIOTTI, 2013) aspect of discourse and enunciation, that considers *parole* more than *langue* and emphasizes the importance



of individualities in case-studies. The main point of this essay is that observing the effects of a postmodern posture on Discourse studies, one can rapidly witness how “the demise of structuralism has changed a world’s outlook on language, art, and literary discourses” and see how self-reference/irony has entered scientific and literary discourse, which irony and self-reference unveils a phenomenological individualization of general and systematic processes on one hand, and generalization of individual interpersonal relationships on the other, as a trace of the commodification of intersubjective relationships on Post-Modernity. (Wallace, 1993, pp.168-175)

The most widespread example and common-sense-demeanor of that is how it has become a premise that empirical reality is the most trustful possible key to achieving general abstraction. Certainly, it does matter as a fundamental mean of apprehension of reality, even the more considering a corporeal cognition. In spite of that, it shall be absolutely admitted that “at an outer limit, the sense people have of themselves and their own moment of history may ultimately have nothing whatsoever to do with its reality” (JAMESON, 1991, p.287). Less cryptically: a few *universal* [progressively neoliberal] truths have been accommodated by the middle-class man. Such as how a white person can never fully comprehends what racism is about; how a straight person can never understand what it feels like to experience homophobia; how a man can never understand the ways through which misogyny functions and, ultimately, how one can only fully understand and thus put into linguistic thinking what oneself has been through and/or suffered.

Read me carefully. I do not mean that it is a consciously conveyed and biased process allowed by Postmodern theories. What I am trying to show here is how it has been exacerbated by younger generations of researches into thinking that Individuality defines Being and that it is only through the description of individual dispositions that one can understand discourse. By considering that the individual and

its characteristics are the most Important factor in the constitution of discourse, poststructuralism sets the pathway for my generation of academics to think by these means. Us, the minorities that have for so long searched for our voices to be heard, fell into the neoliberal trap sold by the Capital to make us nothing more than segregated ghettos.

The contemporary meanings around the category of 'Individual' are mostly forged by neoliberal capitalist enunciation and mainstream entertainment diffusion, to shape our teleology into functioning as egotistical and self-spectatorial retrenched and self-absorbed Beings. Its most updated weapon was to say that we should be *empowered* ; that authority is *subjective* ; that Language is whatever one believes it is; that there is no such thing as right or wrong and, most importantly, that our voices do have a place inside this system. After many years of using it, Capitalism has turned our minds to baby-sitting this so-called freedom as if it were the ultimate virtue to be pursued amongst men. When, besides being a narcissistic type of freedom, it gradually keeps and takes from us our Language. That is because Language is communal – and that is Under degree in Literature 101.

Consonant to Bakhtin – one of the main sources of input for post-structuralism:

Everything that concerns me, beginning by my name, comes from the exterior world to my conscious through the mouth of others. [More than that, originally and fundamentally] "I become conscious of myself through others: from them I receive the words, the forms and the tonality for the first formation of a notion of myself." At least in the initial moments of his formation [cognitive and physical] "men's consciousness awakes envolved by the conscious of the other" (BAKHTIN, 2017, p.29).

Isn't it at the exact moment of enunciation – and only then – that the linguistic sign is indeed forged? Isn't it only in communicating that we can see and access ours and others Language? Why then, such a solipsistic *stimmung* has come to be the one of our Time? If one could

hypothesize such answer, it should be considered the role of Cultural Studies in the linguistic analysis – alongside all the aforementioned premises. Thenceforth, I propose the concomitant observation with our discussion of a crude and cabal example on how the last couple of decades represent an enormous but seemingly subtle epistemological [implying cultural and linguistic] *coupure*. Craig Gillespie's film *I, Tonya* (2017) shall provide our discussion with the imminently cultural aspects of this break, through the storyline, whereas the more linguistic ones through the cinematography of it.

Tonya Harding – not the empirical ex-figure skater on which the film is “based”, but the undoubtedly neo-liberal red-neck character and its implied author portrayed cinematographically – is essentially – meaning having as the main compound of her essence – American. “She was totally American!” – to quote the character of her first coach. Not only because she was a red-neck southern girl fond of pop-rock teenager-heavy-metal music but mostly due to the process she goes through during her formational years.


LaVona Harding, the abusive mom who from early on germinates into her child the obsession with succeeding in figure skating and the standardizing of individualism as to be the personal track through which Tonya would achieve that. Before expanding the scenario, is emblematic to notice here the initial moment on the movie, when LaVona calls out on her kid to “stop talking” to a fellow skater, and that it should be Tonya's hindsight that every other skater was her enemy; competitor. Putting it in less condensed and more exemplary terms, the hero in the movie was raised during the very early establishment of the neo-liberal ideology – which Fraser calls by “Clintonism”. Neo-Liberal cosmopolitanism and the financial entrepreneurs of the East coast forged and managed to sell to the late 80's and early 90's youth that, more than never, success aiming Americans needed to be set onto individualism, eagerness and personal success as the ultimate meaning of pleasure – with approval

being the quintessential value to pursue, regardless of any of the choices that'd come with it. Tonya was brought up to "Stand out", not "fit in". And that is paradoxically both why she was totally American and why she failed to establish herself as such, in the eyes of her chosen herd.

This first character setting already tells much about this period of American culture – and as an indirect consequence, Brazilian culture. From early on adulthood, the neo-liberal subject is conditioned to blend [work derived] pain and [work-only affordable] pleasure in one single concept: professional success: In order to forge work-devoted civilians, capitalism managed to set success as a life goal and management and/or "marketing[of one's efficient ego and managerial subjectivity] is an incessant, ubiquitous incitement-to-enjoy, which is all the more effective in that, through the mere possession of the signs and objects of 'success', it promises some impossible ultimate pleasure."(DARDOT; LAVAL, 2014, p.317).

What this *enterprise*-becoming of every human relationship and interaction, our science could have no other outcome but to be turned into a completely individualized and production-driven institution. Throughout my personal experience inside the Academy I have come to watch how my generation tends to be aligned with positions such as "authority does not exist" or "we should breaks every and single one of the taboos" or "language is whatever you think it is and/or whatever I think it is" and a few other tautologies of the same kind. Currently, alongside with a few other theorists, these constitute what I have come to see and perceive as the Neoliberal Postmodern Subject favorite authority debunking academic reference set: Deleuze, Giordano Bruno, Foucault et. al are disposed of whenever anti-science, anti-academy and anti-based thinking cross-dresses as serious and genuine Skepticism.

Because of that, we generalize individual interpersonal enunciative interactions: so, everything I, Henrique Reis Fatel, say is due to me being a *cis-gendered black middle-class gay young adult*



man. Moreover: everything I must say and must think/study/regard as Truth *should be* entangled to these characteristics or better. At the same time, we individualize general and systematic processes: I should see each single white woman with a turban as an example of how Caucasian Imperialist have slandered and stolen African-people cultural and religious symbols. This kind of consciousness results in us blindly admitting that none of us would ever be able to honestly and fully communicate and interface with one another. The individualization of Discourse Studies (a field aligned with Sociolinguistics) has kept a whole generation of linguists from seeing discourse as a shared domain of men's psyche in order to focus on, for example, how LGBT+ communities speak. And more vital than how it could be *individualized*, or what do I think Language should be, is the fact that one unconsciously seeks an intersectional point with the other, so as to generate genuine semiology.

Taking into account that Late Capitalist individualism regards and presents the group as something fearsome, something that can swallow you up, erase you, keep you from 'being noticed'. But [that] (...) functions as a mass of identical featureless eyes." Community, in U.S of A's postmodern era became "both the 'herd' in contrast to which" this subject's "distinctive identity is to be defined, *and* the impassive witnesses whose sight alone can confer distinctive identity" (WALLACE, op.cit. p.176). Growing up at daily doses of exposure to that ideology, the neo-liberal subject was taught to be nothing but a approval seeking exhibitionist. Corollary is the moment when Tonya states that not before performing the "triple axle" on national broadcasted competition did she feel loved, wanted, approved. It was her ultimate pleasure equivalent opium. And after that, she searched more and more, again and again to grasp that *vital* feedback.

Reality has gotten to a point at which the imminent crisis of the neo-liberal subject is not imminent anymore. Because, according to

Ferraz (2015) neoliberalism has, as doxa, the capacity of altering “every social range [of life]” (p.55). It is happening at this day and time, exactly and at a much faster pace than one could foresee. Tonya portrays both this success pursuit and this crisis. She didn’t have any of the necessary credentials to be upraised in Olympic set standing ovations. Confronting that necessity, she talks back at a judge who says that there’s more to figure skating than “just the skating”. Why couldn’t it be just about the skating? Because in fact it never was. The insatiable pursuit of individual success and progressive endorsement of minorities and multi backgrounded civilians was never about improving their self-esteem, or any equivalents. It was only to make sure everybody felt good at being explored and obliged to buy more and more. Persisting in the pursuit of her *red-neck conceived Eldorado*, she kept coming back to an abusive husband, tried to bond with her mom and finally conspired against a fellow competitor, all to show to herd how even more American she could be – had she achieved the Olympic championship. But these credentials being subjectively disruptive to obtain, the woman collapsed.

Alike her, shedding light on the question with the aid of Fraser’s “The end of progressive Liberalism”, we can attest how both new-left and right wings collapsed when they foresaw that Being #1 and finally “making it” was impossible. Depressed and brutally enraged were, just like Tonya, the red-necks that realized that there was no golden pot at the end of the Progressive Liberal Rainbow. On the other hand, new-left is still to make amends with the fact that there is no way out through neoliberal diversity or whatsoever. Mostly because Progressive liberalism, or neo-liberalism, only sold multiculturalism; diversity; empowerment and cetera because it needed to ratify that anyone in favor of their values, their predatory culture and of the Greater American Wealth, “the land of the free and the home of the brave” as claims the nation’s national anthem; anyone in favor of this set could achieve, through merit and personal effort in all possible subjective areas,

success, approving and acclamation from the watching herd. In other words, there's actually no dream, no goal, and no pleasure-as-the-ultimate-perceivable-value driven life, but only the need for the survival of capitalism. Progressive liberalism fell in the trap of accepting the Capital's treats as real endorsement and failed to see it as just approval golden stamps for each percental growth the new-left provided to U.S of A's consumption army.

Tonya's story is undeniably a tale of the collapsing neoliberal subject. Its soundtrack, the characterization of the actors, the fact that it was a real story about a real redneck middle-class sub celebrity *Joe Briefcase* (WALLACE, 1993), it all resonates that. Nevertheless, the pivotal point in the film, for our intention of grasping the structural effects of the Postmodern in the way the contemporary subject communicates, or, in other words, how this boom of pop-culture, self-deprecating irony and cetera came to shape the cognitive texture of men; the sepulchral point for these aims is to focus on the cinematic construction of the movie, its script.

The point of this article is not that the individualism is a sign of the postmodern, moreover considering that "U.S pop culture is just like serious culture in that its central tension has always set the nobility of individualism on one side against the warmth of the communal belonging on the other" (WALLACE, op.cit. p.174). What I mean is that self-referential and passive irony had to be added to the pot as to allow for the passage from an earlier modernity into the postmodern era, which was only made possible by a "radical break or *coupure*" in the previous American cultural tradition: its commodification. As observed by Jameson:

aesthetic production (...) has become integrated into commodity production generally: the frantic economic emergency of producing fresh waves of ever more seeming novel goods (...), at ever greater rates of turnover, (...) assigns an increasingly essential structural function and position to aesthetic innovation"

[in order to seem always and each time brand-new, necessary and consumable, it must carry within its frame] “a new depthlessness, which finds its prolongation (...) in a whole new culture of the image or the simulacrum (1991, pp.5-7)

THE METAPHYSICAL EFFECTS OF THE NEO-LIBERALISM ON LANGUAGE AND AESTHETICS

What distinguishes postmodern literature and audiovisual entertainment “is a further shift from television images as valid objects of literary allusion, to TV and *metawatching* as themselves valid *subjects*.” Certain types of fiction began “to locate its *raison* in its commentary on, response to, a U.S. culture more and more of and for watching, illusion” (WALLACE, 1993, p.169) and other people’s perception of one’s insecurities and hypothetical flaws. It is as if from modern to postmodern fiction, all we have been able to do is to break fourth walls, over and over again. Let’s take as our prime corollary the scene where Tonya, sitting in her kitchen, older than when she was skating, giving an interview to this [pseudo] documentary, starts telling of the times Jeff began beating her:

Picture 1 Facsimile of ROGERS, Steven. *I, Tonya*: Based on irony free, wildly contradictory, totally true interviews with Tonya Harding and Jeff Gillooly. 2017. Available at em: <<http://neonguilds.com/assets/downloads/i-tonya-screenplay.pdf>>. Accessed on: 14 dez. 2018.

TONYA (V.O.)
He was really sweet in the beginning. He was a good kisser. He told me he loved me. And I believed him. But then-

37 INT/EXT. JEFF’S TRUCK - STREET - NIGHT

37

BAM! Jeff pops Tonya in the face. Tonya turns directly to the camera.

TONYA
He started hitting me a few months in.

The blatant way with which this narrative instance called Tonya switch from a voice over to a break of the fourth wall and tells me and you (the viewers) that “he started hitting” her, as if it was a shared secret between us, contains my whole thesis. It reveals a stage of a subject that has become spectatorial and ironically self-referential of his own existence. The amount of individualism culturally taught to Tonya changes how one perceives oneself. Through the telling of her story by means of this *mockumentary*, the Voice Over (V.O) instance of the character start watching herself watching this telling. The whole movie is full of these moments, and they represent indeed a phenomenology of the post-ironic individual absorbed in his own pictoriality:

Picture 2 Facsimile of ROGERS, Steven. *I, Tonya*: Based on irony free, wildly contradictory, totally true interviews with Tonya Harding and Jeff Gillooly. 2017. Disponivel em: <<http://neonguilds.com/assets/downloads/i-tonya-screenplay.pdf>>. Accessed on: 14 dez. 2018.

119 EXT. TONYA'S APARTMENT / JEFF'S TRUCK - NIGHT 119
Tonya runs out SCREAMING.
Jeff reaches the doorway and FIRES.
He fires into the ground near Tonya's feet but a fragment ricochets into her head. BOOM. She goes down hard.
Tenants come out of their apartments. Jeff waves his gun.
JEFF
Get back! Stand back! Everything's fine!
He drags her into his truck and SCREECHES away.

120 INT/EXT. JEFF'S TRUCK - ROADSIDE - NIGHT 120
Tonya, blood gushing from her head, is dazed.
JEFF
You fucking bitch! Look what you did!
Look what you made me do!
POLICE SIRENS are heard telling them to pull over. He does.
JEFF (CONT'D)
I will kill you if you say anything!
Shit!
Then he kisses her. She hits him. A POLICEMAN comes over to Jeff's window.
POLICEMAN'S P.O.V.: Jeff and Tonya sit calmly. Jeff nods at the policeman. Tonya, her head bleeding profusely smiles brightly at the officer.

POLICEMAN
I'm going to need you to get out of
the car.

121 INT/EXT. JEFF'S TRUCK - ROADSIDE - LATER

121

Tonya sits in the truck as Jeff good-naturedly chats with the policeman who pulls 2 guns out of the back seat.

TONYA (V.O.)
Didn't say a thing about the blood!
Took alcohol and 2 guns outta the
truck! Then he just leaves me there
with him which is why I don't trust
the authorities. Or *anyone*. (To the
camera) Jeff can talk his way out
of anything. Never talk to him.

The last line she says in this scene keeps the biggest break of the fourth wall I came to observe in the movie. The pictorial sequence alongside with the complete shift in prosody and point of view gives us facts about the structure of the movie: we have an unreliable narrator (BOOTH, 1983) – nothing too new about that, considering the history of fiction – that keeps trying at all times to prove himself reliable and to put himself close to the viewer by using the greatest social communicational capitals neoliberalism has forged: “irony, poker-faced silence, and fear of the ridicule” (WALLACE, 1993, p.171) alongside with cynicism, more irony and self-deprecation.

The point is that, just as Tonya, the implied author of the movie is pathologically damaged by neoliberalism, and at the same time circumscribed by Postmodernity in its structure. First, it is important to reinforce that what neoliberalism and post-modern progressive culture have as intersection is the focus on the category of the Individual Self against the Community/Group. Narratively and Discoursevely, *I, Tonya*'s filmic narrative is, I'll argue, throughout its whole duration, about itself as a movie. *I, Tonya* is a mockumentary about itself as more or less capable of emulating the features of a Documentary *per se*. That's precisely about what Wallace talks when he states that

the emergence of something called metafiction in the American societies was and is hailed by academic critics as a radical aesthetic, a whole new literary form unshackled from the canonical cinctures of narrative and mimesis and free to plunge into reflexivity and self-conscious meditations on *aboutness*. [...] Metafictionists may have had aesthetic theories ou the bazoo, but they were also sentient citizens of a community that was exchanging an old idea of itself as a ntion of do-ers and be-ers for a new vision of the U.S.A. as an atomized mass of self-conscious watchers and appears (1993, p.161).

Metafiction (WALLACE, 1993) is the new form of consumable culture available on the Neoliberal age, with its postmodern values. The movie is an example because is a mockumentary that refers to itself as a film and as a mockumentary, sometimes, as seen in the clipped scenes. The problem is that “self-reference being just a tiny wrinkled subset of aboutness” (WALLACE, 1987, p.14), meta-fiction changes the way we consume culture and produce language, and the self-reference that characaterizes it is so deeply rooted in our social psyques (WALLACE, 1987) that “language” has been “promoted from mirror to eye, from *organikos* to organic” (WALLACE, 1987, p.13). Memes are an example of this self-reference entering not only academic discourse but social interactions as well. Explaining the characteristics of metafiction would be out of the scope of this essay, but Wallace does so in his “E Unibus Pluram”(1993) and, let it suffice to say that “with this [new form] culture, arts and especially literature accompanied the trajectory of Western society, manifestating itself in smaller [reiiifief] doses” of consumable culture reflected in “discursive formations and social interactions” (ROCHA E SERGIO, 2019, this book).

THE REIFICATION OF THE END OF HISTORY

All in all, the neoliberal subject, spiritually acquiesced and absorbed in the idea that he is an enterprise, as aforementioned by Dardot and Laval (2014) , and that one must seek to stand out and be the center of his herd's attention at all times; this subject has lost any touch with his personal and external reality. This being is an overanalytical subject, cynical towards himself and his peers, and most unbearably: allergic to real affection, sincerity, honesty (WALLACE, 1993, p.181-185). Late Capitalism has taught us to sarcastically laugh at the fact that "The really important kind of freedom involves attention, and awareness, and discipline, and effort, and being able truly to care about other people and to sacrifice for them, over and over, in myriad petty little unsexy ways, every day." (WALLACE, 2005, p.8). That would be the core of *I, Tonya's* hero's construction, as a character.

Now try to imagine how a self-indulgence-driven subjectivity would turn out trying to study something that does not absolutely have to do with Me or You, whatsoever. For one, it can be easily attested that such positions may end in studies that do not go far from a very simplistic way of doing Sociolinguistics. Even the discussion of the pros and cons of all post-structuralism is a symptom of how we are still entrapped in the most particular questions but have not yet come to consider Creoles as natural languages, for example. The absolute rejection of 'abstract objectivism' has pushed Linguistics to languishing. Volóchinov, another great exponent of Discourse Studies, allows 'abstract objectivism' partial validity, and does not fully throw away in the same way postmodern structuralism and *identity* Marxism has come to do. And herein lies the main point of agreement between this who writes and the premises of Bakhtin, directly investigated by his student: he advocates for a dialectic position and regard Saussure's frame as valid, yes, but not able to grasp the totality of the Language system.

And by admitting that, his text presupposes that Materialism doesn't do so as well. Language is at the same time its material and objective occurrence through communication and Discourse establishment, and the abstract patterns of communicational rules that speakers manage to form and draw from it.

By repudiating German Idealism as does Volóchinov, and rejecting Metaphysics and Dialectics as neo-liberal (in the chronological sense of the word) academics feel so comfortable in doing, we are pointing to a market serving Academy and a much more *technized* way of doing Linguistics. If Human sciences, and more specifically Language studies focus only and exclusively on material situations of speech and not at all on the formal systemacity of it we are driving Humanities into a Utilitarian ending and doing news interpretation rather than Linguistics.

At the core of it, "Language is the intermediate not only between men and his mentally conveyed reality, but also between one man and the other. [...]" There is no such thing as a communal and an individual level of it. Nonetheless, it is "from one man to another it is transmitted, first and foremost, everything that plays a role in the composition of the objective content of intellectuality and, secondly, the whole consistency of individuality. [...]" And that is why such a solipsistic endeavor can ultimately turn language into an opaque and completely dysfunctional human trace. "Reality can be individual in its content, but it must be objective in its form" (free translation from CHPIET, 2009, [1927], p.173 apud GRILLO, 2017, p.32.).

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PART 3



POLITICS, POWER AND DISCOURSE



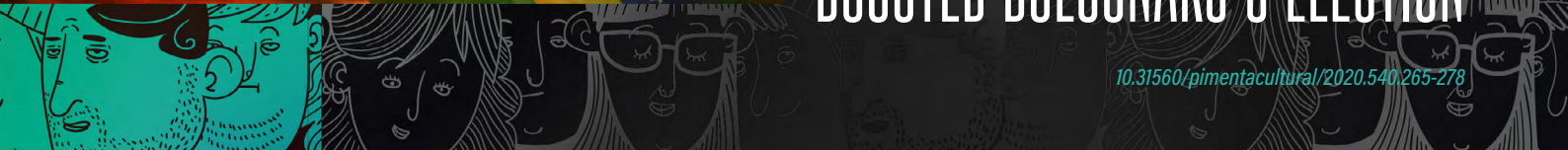


15

Pedro Augusto de Oliveira Cuadrado Proença



CANARINHO PISTOLA:
AN ANALYSIS OF THE USE
OF THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN
THE BRAZILIAN YELLOW JERSEY
AND FAR-WING MOVEMENTS THAT
BOOSTED BOLSONARO'S ELECTION



INTRODUCTION

The use of football for political purposes (mainly by authoritarian governments) is not something new in Brazil or in some places of the world. The strongest image we have might be the deep bond between the Military Dictatorship and the national team, which won the World Cup in 1970, in Mexico. The sport was seen as a paradigm of national identity and, with the success, at Azteca Stadium, the image of the emergence of an unbeatable Brazilian man was created and used by the regime (ANTUNES, 2004, p.289).

In contexts in which democracy is menaced (or does not exist) and there is an uprising of a toxic nationalism, this sport has been used to promote the nation's image. It happened in Brazil during the Military Dictatorship, in Italy when *Squadra Azzurra* won the World Cups of 1934 and 1938 (under Mussolini's regime); in Argentina, in 1978 when the country hosted and won this same tournament (FRANCO JR, 2007).

Today, in Brazil, we are experiencing a democratic elected president with strong shades of authoritarianism, totalitarianism, bigotry and ignorance. Before his election, which he won refusing to attend debates and strongly using social media, like Whatsapp, there were several protests against the Labour Party (Partido dos Trabalhadores, PT, in Portuguese), in which some people required the impeachment of president Dilma Rousseff.

Those protests, which took place in many cities, were organized by sectors of civil society (although we cannot affirm it was a popular movement), received the blessing of certain politicians and happened in rich areas of the cities (like Paulista avenue in São Paulo or Ipanema Beach, in Rio). Police did not reprehend or attack protesters. In addition, some politicians, like Geraldo Alckmin (governor of São Paulo) or Aécio Neves (the senator who lost the presidential election for Dilma Rousseff in 2014) even attended to one of them.

One curious thing about the way those protesters were dressed is that many of them wore the Brazilian Yellow Jersey (better known as “canarinho”, in reference to canaries, a bird who has the same shade of yellow as this vestment). This paper will endeavour to understand how could a national-sportive symbol become a political symbol of an intolerant right. Once culture can be seen as materiality (DUBOC, FERRAZ, 2018, p.228) and is about shared meanings (HALL, 1997) - which circulate visually Rogoff (2002), the meanings this cloth embodied and shared before the protests will be investigated.

However, before elaborating the analysis, a brief history of the contact between football and politics will be presented – in order to better understand how this sport has shaped our identity and has influenced many politicians throughout decades. After the analysis, some words concerning how Bolsonaro has used and might use football in the future will be written.

FOOTBALL, A STATE AFFAIR

The use of football by the Military rule was not the first or the unique example. Back in 1938, in the beginning of Getúlio Vargas’s dictatorship, known as “Estado Novo” (New State, in a free translation), promoted the national football team as one tool of propaganda for the nation (the Head of State greeted the players at the presidential palace before their departure to the World Cup in France), as points Gilberto Agostino:

Concerning football, as the first challenge of the new order instituted, the 1938 World Cup was getting closer. This competition, the most important of all that period, would allow the president a more assertive interaction with this sport. Regarded by New State’s propaganda as the synthesis of Brazilian capacity and originality – people used to say that Brazilian players

had reinvented the British game –, football assumed a crucial function of ideological governmental' values. The presence of black players at the national team was presented as symbol of racial democracy, idea that had been gaining projection during the 1930's, with Gilberto Freyre's thesis. He, an author of a plethora of works on national identity and sports, stated that one of the trumps or the national team was precisely miscegenation, granting Brazilians a game style in all senses original. (AGOSTINO, 2002, p. 143-144).

A few years later, in 1950, when Brazil hosted the World Cup, before the final against Uruguay, it was possible to see several spotlight-seeking politicians trying to obtain a picture with the players who would be world's champion on the next day (FRANCO JR, 2007). Barely did those politicians know that the next day would last almost eight years, because Uruguay defeated Brazil in a crowded Maracanã, 1-2.

But in 1958, on the World Cup in Sweden, when Brazil overcame the host-nation, with a superb 5-2, a wave of optimism in nation's future could be felt around the country. Nelson Rodrigues, a dramaturg and journalist, wrote just two weeks after the tittle, on July 7th of 1958:

Those simple, silly and dumbs will want to suffocate the victory into its strictly sportive limits: illusion! 5-2 outside, against everything and everyone, is a marvellous vital triumph, of all and each of us. From the President to the paper picker, from the Supreme Court Minister to the penniless, all here can perceive the following: it is boring to be Brazilian! Nobody is ashamed of their national condition anymore. (...). The people do not considerate themselves a pooch. Yes, friends: –the Brazilian man has a new image of himself; he regards himself at the generous totality of his immense personal and human virtues. (RODRIGUES, 2007, pp.408-9).

Although exaggerated, this text shows the idea that sportive honour would make our citizens and our country to overcome many of our national problems and be a successful nation. Maybe the construction of Brasília, the optimism of and an industrialization surge

and the easiness in which people could find household appliances helped to cement this perception (SCHWARCZ, STARLING, 2015). The conquer in Sweden also helped, alongside with the success in Chile in 1962 and the two Libertadores won by Santos, to shape the idea that our country had practiced the best football of the planet (FRANCO JR, 2007, p.135).

Once the World Cup of 1962 was mentioned, there is another example of how serious our authorities take football. It is not exaggerated to say that it might be a State affair. After semi-final, when Brazil defeated Chile 4-2, Garrincha was expelled, but Tancredo Neves, prime-minister at that time, sent a letter to the disciplinary commission on behalf of Brazilian population asking to the members to allow the athlete play the final match (FRANCO JR, 2007).

In 1970, during the most repressive years of our Military Dictatorship, the title in Mexico crowned a moment of national euphoria, with pharaonic constructions (like Rio-Niterói bridge or Itaipu hydroelectric power plant), full employment, cheap credit. But all these indicators actually disguised a process of deepening of social inequality, which can be demonstrated by the fact that the 80% of Brazilian population (those who were poorer) decreased their participation at social income in 8,7%, however 5% of the population (those who were richer) increased in 9% (NAPOLITANO, 2017, p.164). The cake has never been shared. Despite this, Médici did not hesitate in using the success on football fields to promote the image. Quite curious is the fact that this national team is known as squadron.

After this, when Brazil won the World Cup in 1994 and in 2002, after the victory, the national squad went to Brasília to receive the presidential greet. Furthermore, in several occasions, before the tournament, the head of State received the players to wish them good luck.

Therefore, we can see that many politicians were quite astute to note how important is the sport for many Brazilians. It has helped to build and shape the self-esteem of many people from different generations. Somehow these politicians tried to associate their images with the talented players who wore the national jersey at the World Cups. There is nothing new about it. Our yellow jersey used to be a reason of pride for many Brazilians.

But since 2015 this cloth has been associated with right-wing nationalists who protested against Dilma, celebrated her impeachment and helped to elect Jair Bolsonaro. The newness of this process comes from the fact that, differently from the cases abovementioned, it was a not a movement from a political leader or from the State, but from people (although not popular). How it has happened it is what we are going to endeavour on the next lines.

SHARED AND CONTROVERSIAL MEANINGS

In order to analyse the use of Brazilian jersey in these protests it is fundamental to try to investigate where this cloth is situated in our system of representation (HALL, 1997). It is important to bear in mind that culture is about shared meanings – and these meanings can vary according the historical/political moment (HALL, 1997). Language, according to him, is a privileged space in which we can make sense of things. It is precisely at this sphere that meaning will be produced, consumed, interpreted and exchanged: “In language we produce signs and symbols – whether they are sounds, written words, electronically produced images, musical notes, even objects – to stand for or represent to other people, ideas, concepts and feelings” (HALL, 1997, p.1). Still according to him, culture is about

production and exchange of meanings (p.3). And meaning, according to Irit Rogoff, circulates visually (p.25).

When we say that two people to the same culture it is to say that they interpret the world in a similar way. However, it should not make culture sound seem unitarian, there a plethora of diversity of meanings about any topic (HALL, 1997):

It is by our use of, and what we say, think and feel about them – how we represent them – that we give them a meaning. In part, we give objects, people and events by the frameworks of interpretation which we bring to them. In part, we give things meaning by how we use them (HALL, 1997, p.3).

So the question remains: how Brazilian jersey has become a symbol of prejudicial far-right nationalists or of those brave citizens who fight against corruption (it always depends on the perspective)?

Well, first of all, we should ponder that a national team's jersey is in itself a representative object. Once the national team represents a nation in the sportive sphere, its vestment, by extension, also represents the nation. In Brazil, concerning how serious we take football, it could be considered a national symbol.

So, when a group of people choose this symbol as to represent their indignation, they want two express mainly two concepts: nationalism and excellence. They are working with an anthropological approach to culture, in which they alluding to “whatever is distinctive about the way of life of a people, community, nation or social group” (HALL, 1997, p.2). Football is something that differentiates Brazilians from all other people in the world. It is a distinctive mark not because we are more passionate about this sport than Argentineans, Italians or Germans, but because we are more awarded than all other nations (at least in World Cups, the most important football competition). Consciously or not, they thought

they were evoking, not only a symbol of a sport that has shaped our national identity, but also a sign of merit, triumph and excellence.

Despite the 1-7 against Germany in 2014 World Cup, we are still the country with more titles. In which area we could be better than the rest of the whole world? Not in education or social equity, it is blatantly obvious...

More than a symbol of excellence, it is one of geniality, capability of improvisation, beauty, irreverence and joy. Italian movie director Pier Paolo Pasolini, in 1971, wrote that football was a language and the style of game played in Europe resembled prose, while in South America (mainly in Brazil) was something more similar to poetry (WISNIK, 2008, p.13). So our jersey also alluded to those gifted players (Pelé, Garrincha, Pepe, Didi, Tostão, Jairzinho, Zico, Sócrates, Neymar, etc) who make/made verses with a ball and their feet. Undoubtedly, it was an efficient symbol because a multitude went to the streets with this cloth.

In addition, the colour yellow might evoke another moment on our History: the “Diretas Já”, a campaign for direct elections for president that started in 1983 and became much more intense in 1984. In this movement, people went to the streets wearing yellow t-shirts to demand democracy and the end of Military dictatorship. According to Lilia Schwarcz and Heloisa Starling (2015), this movement “had civic dimension, republican nature and form of party” (p.483). Football was also present. Reinaldo, a striker who played for Atlético Mineiro, Sócrates, Casagrande, Wladimir (all those leaderships of “Democracia Corinthiana”) attended to the meeting. This movement has been associated to liberation of a threatening and nebulous past.

To summarize, there are, mainly, two elements that Brazilian jersey evokes according to the chain of meanings shared by those people: our excellence and gift at football and a mass protest against tyranny.

However, other Brazilians who did not share the same point of view did not accept the meaning protesters wanted to give to Brazilian jersey. Conceiving a different cultural perspective, they satirized the chosen piece of clothing. “People are protesting against corruption with a CBF’s jersey. It is pathetic”. Sentences like this pullulated on social media like Facebook. Those who did not go to the protests, thanks to a conjunctural situation (several denounces of corruption against CBF’s leaderships), could lambast and mock the dressing choice of their rivals.

One quite curious thing of this scenario is that the man created the yellow uniform for the Brazilian National Football Team, Aldyr Garcia Schlee stated, in an interview to the newspaper *El País*, that was a tremendous contradiction wearing that piece of vestment to demand honesty from politicians and in our ordinary lives. He declared: “The ones who protest against Dilma with the jersey of such a corrupt institution like CBF are ignorant. It revolts me. I wish the national team wore a colour completely different from yellow, in order to people do not associate me to it anymore”.

A woman who attended those protests, although aware about the question of corruption at CBF’s high clergy, did not share the same point of view about this item: “Brazilian jersey is much more than CBF. It represents a plethora of gifted players who honoured its colours, a nation five times world champion”.

It is not an exaggeration to say that there is a cultural war concerning this symbol. Many people that support left’s parties stopped wearing this vestment, in order to avoid being confounded with those right-wing protesters. Observing this situation, Luísa dos Anjos, a designer from Belo Horizonte (Minas Gerais) created a cloth with the CBF’s crest, but red. And instead of Nike Brand, there was a hammer and a sickle at right side. She realised that many people were avoiding the uniform because it was related to right-wing and decided to create a cloth that allowed people support the national football team with guilt.

However she received an extrajudicial notification by CBF asking her to remove the name and crest of the institution of the jersey. She did it, and drew a logo with a Brazilian flag and six stars.

For how long Brazilian (yellow) jersey will be associated with far-right nationalist and chauvinist protesters? It is impossible to predict. But, if fascist rhetoric of our president persists, it will take a long time to see this piece of dressing be related merely to the football field.

BOLSONARO AND FOOTBALL

As many authoritarian politicians, Bolsonaro has realized how football can be an important tool of self-promotion. In several occasions, he wore the Brazilian yellow jersey and, in 2018, he delivered the trophy to Palmeiras' players, when the team won the national football league.

However, it seems that, at the National Team, he will not find doors wide open. Before 2019 American Cup, hosted in Brazil, Adenor Leonardo Bacchi, better known as Tite, Brazilian coach, declared in collective interview that he would not meet, by any reasons, the president if Brazil won this tournament). "No, my activity does not mix [with politics]. I don't feel comfortable in making this mixture. I have an opinion [about Bolsonaro delivering the trophy for Palmeiras' players], but I do not want to opine I should not opine".


This statement was motivated by a question from a journalist if he considered appropriated the presence of Jair Bolsonaro at Palmeiras' stadium in 2018. Even having exposed such a loud and clear opinion and despite the fact Tite did not go to Brasilia to meet Bolsonaro, the president did go to Maracanã to meet the coach. More specifically: the Head of State attended to the podium to celebrate with players when Brazil won the American Cup, in 2019. Coherently, Tite did demonstrate

embarrassment and discomfort when receiving presidential greeting. The Brazilian coach kept certain distance and showed some coldness. Differently, right defender Fagner and Doctor Rodrigo Lasmar shouted out several times when the president appeared: “Myth! Myth! Myth!”.

By these actions (delivering both trophies) it is possible to see that Bolsonaro will take advantage of each opportunity he has to use football to promote himself. Even before elections he travelled to several places and wore several jerseys (Botafogo, Fluminense, Flamengo, Sport, Grêmio...). There is also a video that circulates on whatsapp in which he shoots “Vai Curinthia!”. This expression is not translatable, but it is important to bear in mind that it praises Palmeiras’ bitter rival. Before the match against Vitória, it was possible to see banners close to the stadium saying “Malandro é o Bolsonaro, todo ano é campeão” (“Roguish is Bolsonaro, every year he is champion”, in a free translation), and photographs of him wearing jerseys of the clubs abovementioned. Thus, although he claims to be a Palmeiras supporter, he probably will not be ashamed of associating his image with another winner team.

Returning to that fatidic day of Pameiras’ title, it is necessary to emphasise an ironic aspect of Bolsonaro’s presence. In 2015, in an interview newspaper *Opção* (Goiás-GO) he declared that some immigrants (like Haitians, Bolivians, Senegalese and Syrians) were the “escória do mundo” (dregs of the world, in a free translation) and Palmeiras was precisely founded by Italian poor immigrants in the beginning of the 20th century, more precisely on August 26 of 1914. It has been a mass team since its foundation. At the stadium, some people greeted Bolsonaro and other people jeered him. On social media, many texts circulated concerning the contradiction of a club established by immigrants receiving a xenophobic politician.

Some fans refused celebrating the championship for the first time in their lives. Others told that they preferred when Palmeiras made them feel ashamed due to its performance at the pitch. However, for Palmeiras



fans who did not support Bolsonaro there was at least one reason of proud: William “Bigode”. The forward, when received the medal, kissed it, raised his hands to the skies and flatly ignored the elected president. Once culture is about shared meanings and depends on the historical and cultural context, he has quickly become associated with a democrat and a detractor of the politician. He was greeted by many fans. On the following day, he released a statement explaining that he had not seen Bolsonaro, which is something quite improbable for a football player who depends on the vision to score goals.

CONCLUSION AND CHOICE OF A SIDE

In our net of culture, Brazilian National Jersey number one (the yellow uniform) has left to be a national symbol and has become a political one, related to far-right nationalists/chauvinists. Consciously or not, protesters have chosen an item that evoked excellence and that helped to cement Brazilian National Identity, when we think about culture in anthropological terms.

In addition, the multitudes dressed with yellow resembled those Brazilians who attended *Diretas Já*, a very praised movement on Brazilian collective memory, due to the wave of freedom it spread. So probably if we look at pictures from both protests, they would be quite similar. The difference is that, in 2015, it will be possible to see some more details in green (in the Brazilian Jersey) that actually, for some people who were not there, did not represent hope...

Probably, during Bolsonaro’s government, it will remain a political symbol related to totalitarian values. Of course, it might change its shared meaning in the case of a player or a coach clearly and vehemently protest against the president. In the meantime, if it does not happen

Brazil's and Palmeiras' jerseys will remain closed at the wardrobe of many oppositors of the president – including this researcher.

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16

Rafaella Gobbo Reis da Silva



**DISCOURSE, POWER,
AND HEGEMONY:
A BRIEF STUDY ON THE SOCIAL
PRACTICES THAT COMPOSE
THE PRODUCTION OF SPEECHES**

INTRODUCTION

This paper aims to discuss the relations of *discourse* (or productions of speeches) and *power*. Since the first concept is based on social practices (which means it derives from the relations of each society and their standard norms as well as it depends on them), we will explore these conceptions, under the perspective of some authors, such as Norman Fairclough, Simon Dentith, James Paul Gee, Johannes Angermuller, Dominique Maingueneau, Ruth Wodak, Michel Foucault and Teun A. van Dijk. In the first part of this paper, we will scrutinize the discourse theory and how it does not reduce itself to a text. It is important, therefore, to inspect this notion and relate it to today's social practices, such as social media. The internet has brought to stage a new form of social practice which interferes on large social communities, and in this first section we will associate this view of discourse to these new forms of communication.

In the second part of this study, we will connect the theory of Critical Discourse Analyses and Discursive Studies to power. In this specific section, the use of news reports and documentaries will guide our analyses to the notion of discourse related to power aiming only to highlight how this relationship shapes hegemony. This part makes explicit the importance of CDA subscribed in the present time. In other words, some interpretations and investigations about discourse are only possible considering the post-modern historical context, and to exemplify it we will consider the fake news phenomenon in order to question the maintenance of hegemonic power. For that reason, Michel Foucault's theory about power, concerning discursive studies, will be extremely important to understand these relations and phenomena between discourse and power, as well as Teun A. van Dijk's theory.

In the final section of this paper we will explore the notion of discourse to Valentin Voloshinov and the fact language is a social phenomenon.

To emphasize his theory about language and discourse, we will delve into the notion that since language, as a set of norms, is constantly changing, it is correct to say that linguistic interaction is a product of historical and sociological processes. As a consequence, the feminist movement in Brazil, and also in other places, will be taken as an example of social interaction (and also as an anti-hegemonic movement) which began to be nationally recognized after the spread of the feminist ideals through social medias. To summarize, we will analyse the anti-hegemonic discourses related to their historical and sociological contexts, and also consider the effects of conservative discourses on society, using today's facts and news to expand these concepts.

DISCOURSE AS A SOCIAL ACTIVITY

The concept of 'discourse' converges to several theoretical disciplines of the social sciences and humanities:

'Discourse' is used principally in two different ways: (a) in a pragmatic understanding, predominant among linguistic and micro-sociological discourse analysts, which considers discourse as a process or practice of contextualising texts, language in use, the situated production of speech acts or a turn-taking practice; (b) in a socio-historical understanding, preferred by more macrosociological discourse theorists interested in power, for whom 'discourse' refers to an ensemble of verbal and non-verbal practices of large social communities. (ANGERMULLER; MAINGUENEAU; WODAK, p. 3, 2003)

Therefore, *discourse* consists in the study of the performance of 'social activities' – verbal or non-verbal practices of large social communities – or, in other words, discourse is "interested in the practices, rules or mechanisms that can explain how meaning is negotiated between the members of a discourse community" (ANGERMULLER;

MAINGUENEAU; WODAK, p. 3, 2003). It is a mode of action and representation and it is shaped by social structures (FAIRCLOUGH, p. 25, 1992) – by class, by laws, by systems of classification, and so on – and it is possible to suggest that everything is ‘discourse’ since this field considers even non-verbal language a vehicle of *production of speeches* – which means that discursive practices can operate with several types of media.

Thus, discourse is considered a result of the use that is made of language, and that language and its meanings are elements that depend on the situation. For example, if meaning is a product of social practices, we can say it is possible to decode several meanings from several products of social practices – such as advertisements. In this sense, analysing the American commercial advertising from the 1969’s of a cigarette called “Tipalet”, we recognize an extremely sexist content considering the phrase *Blow in her face and she’ll follow you anywhere* and also considering the posture of the protagonists (the woman in a passive inclination and the man in a dominant one). However, the interpretation concerning sexism is only possible if we analyse it *today*; back then, this kind of content was common and scarcely problematized. Consequently, this example illustrates what we are discussing about the *use made of language and its varying meaning depending on the context* (which also means ‘historical context’).

Another example that could illustrate the idea of varying meanings depending on the context is the Brazilian jersey, which has become a symbol of far-right civil-movements, according to Proença (this volume) in his chapter “Canarinho pistola: an analysis of the use of the association between the Brazilian yellow jersey and far-wing movements that helped the election of Bolsonaro”. In this article, the first one in this section, the author discusses the history of soccer related to politics in Brazil, as a tool to promote the nation’s image, and also how the Brazilian jersey is the representative object of the nation itself to the world, working as an anthropological approach to culture.

Post-modernity is the main “trigger” for this type of social science, such as discursive studies, because discourse can be seen not only as a text production with a ‘correct’ or an ‘incorrect’ conception of the world, but as a dialectical and critical kind of reflection upon social practices. Language is no longer apprehended, we could say, as a cemented structure, but as a practice socially constructed which varies on the context/interaction. Language is related to identity (GEE; HANDFORD, p. 32, 2012), since the first one is different depending on the multiple sorts of social identities, and language-in-use is always political – the use of grammar to take a particular perspective reflects the ‘political’ face of language. For instance, are the homeless workers ‘invading’ a property or ‘occupying’ an empty building?

Therefore, discourse inhabits the newspapers’ headlines, e.g. the *QueerMuseu*, the intolerant statements of Jair Bolsonaro, or the ascending digital feminist movement in Brazil with the example of a Facebook page (that became a huge virtual movement which has taken the streets) called *Vamos Juntas?* – they are not limited to a text. Modernity perpetuated the positivist model of thought and of construction of meanings which was simply the reflection of the current *hegemony* (FAIRCLOUGH, p. 47, 1992). The advertisement of cigarette mentioned before could be the representation (or the *ideological mean*) in which hegemony’s power over society is given through this patriarchal and sexist image – the commercial is a sort of an ideological ‘tool’ to the maintenance of hegemony. This explains why the exhibition of the *QueerMuseu* was so aggressively discussed and Jair Bolsonaro is saluted; the first represented minorities – a path against hegemony – and Bolsonaro’s ideological discourse functions as a preserver of hegemony.

DISCOURSE AND POWER

The concept of *discourse* to Critical Discourse Analysis, according to Teun A. van Dijk, is an important tool to many types of *social powers* – such as abusive social power, inequality, dominance etc. It is a fact discourse is based on language and it influences social interaction and structure through many sorts of media, which means CDA is a kind of analytical and critical field to study how discourses act over “recipients” and its consequences (and the varieties of this field are uncountable, since it comprehends perhaps all areas of knowledge). According to Teun A. van Dijk and Norman Fairclough, the main tenets of CDA are: social problems, power relations, discourse inside society and culture, discourse as ideological and historical work, the link between text and society, and discourse as a form of social action. Concerning the relation between the subject and power, regarding Discursive Studies, Michel Foucault says:

When one defines the exercise of power as a mode of action upon the actions of others, when one characterizes these actions by the government of men by other men-in the broadest sense of the term-one includes an important element: freedom. Power is exercised only over free subjects, and only insofar as they are free. By this we mean individual or collective subjects who are faced with a field of possibilities in which several ways of behaving, several reactions and diverse comportments, may be realized (FOUCAULT, p. 788, 1982).

Considering Foucault's statement, it is possible to say that discourse plays an important role even in the practices of communication, because it is bonded to power as the result of the extinguishment of the individual's freedom. That could visibly explain the anti-hegemonic campaign on social medias called “Se fere minha existência, serei resistência” which took place when Jair Messias Bolsonaro won the presidential elections in 2018.

In this sort of analysis, it is important to remind the differences between “microlevel” and “macrolevel”; the first concerns language-use, discourse, verbal interaction, and communication, while the second level is about power, dominance, and inequality between social groups. That said, van Dijk gives an example which deals with the idea of a racist discourse in parliament under the dome of microlevel, and this kind of discourse is disseminated among several social groups. And it is also important to say that when Foucault writes about the question of power, he does not consider slavery a power relationship but a *physical relationship of constraint*, because “man is in chains” (FOUCAULT, p. 790, 1982) – and this kind of constraint is felt even nowadays.

As a result, Vice’s mini-documentary called *Charlottesville: Race and Terror*, for example, exposes a white supremacist neo-Nazi group mobilizing people’s minds in favour of their cause (which consists in anti-Semitism, racism, expulsion of minorities, nationalism, gun carrying ideas etc.). This specific group in the mini-documentary works for the maintenance of its hegemony since they are located in a privileged position in society, and that is the movement of microlevel to macrolevel, because this kind of group reflects the almost inexistent public policies oriented to these vulnerable groups. Also, it is possible to characterize a particular language-use which is shared by the group as a whole as a form to unify such different backgrounds and individuals. Both the language-use and the organization (hierarchically built with the image of a leader and its followers) of this type of group represent the social acts to consolidate their ideology – a very effective way of organization. In other words: “Language users engage in discourse as members of (several) social groups, organizations, or institutions; and conversely, groups thus may act ‘by’ their members” (VAN DIJK, p. 354, 2001).

The next chapter in this book entitled “The xenophobic discourse: Trump and Brexit through Critical Discourse Analysis”, written by Evangelista (this volume), deeply discusses the discriminatory discourses as a common practice of power and ideology; in this sense, the author states that the processes of production and exclusion of discourses are inseparable, which means that hegemonic discourse suppresses other discourses – in a problematic power relation. Evangelista will also relate the concept of “execration discourse” by Donald J. Trump, since the construction of a “national enemy” (the immigrant, who is excluded from the human species) is used by politicians to build themselves as an alternative to social insecurity. – and Trump is a constant “user” of this dangerous discursive tool.

This manifestation of social power functioning through discourse is also seen in *O mito de Bolsonaro: o que pensam e como se organizam seus apoiadores?*, by Vice as well. As the title suggests, such kinds of alt-right groups are based on the common idea of “myth”/“legend” and on a common use of language as well as ideas. Both United States and Brazil, with their alt-right leaders (such as Donald Trump and Jair Messias Bolsonaro), have a legitimized hatred discourse which works over society successfully by “fake news”; it is – even for these pernicious groups – clear that discourse is extremely important to guarantee hegemony against ideology, and that is why fake news developed such important role over American and Brazilian presidential elections.


The last article of this section, called “How does Donald Trump tweet? A study based on Critical Discourse Analysis” by Rodrigues, Campos, Nascimento, and Jorge (this volume), analyses how several of Trump’s tweets illustrate the concept of “synthetic personalization”, quoting authors such as Fairclough and van Dijk. That happens because Trump is a public figure who, instead of posting on official accounts, posts on his personal account, which configures a combination of public and private discursive spheres. In other words, his language

and behaviour create the idea of approximation to the masses, which blurs his actual position of President and a billionaire businessperson. The chapter also explores how this “synthetic personalization” affects people’s thoughts and actions as a mechanism of hegemonic control.

For that matter, van Dijk affirms that a group can only have real power if it is able to control the acts and minds of other groups. That is the types of power vary according to the types of social groups as well as the types of social powers; for example, to exercise such power, professors will be based on knowledge and information, and that is the reason “Escola Sem Partido” is so frightened by the institutions of education – because institutions of education are powerful anti-hegemonic tools that contribute, most of the times, to the reaction against inequality and social injustices, they represent the awakening of individuals to their condition of dominated group.

This political hegemonic movement in particular, similar to Trump and Bolsonaro’s electors, works in favour of dominance, hegemony, and maintenance of privileges, and it is successful in its principal aim since most of Brazilian population find it (this kind of prohibition of knowledge) “natural”. Therefore, the major form of power is the control of discourse, while the fundamental way to reproduce dominance and hegemony is the control of people’s minds. That is why it is impossible to debate with Bolsonaro’s electors, such as family members: if we (people in general) only have a minor control over ideology, it is almost impossible to fight back the amount of lies and offensive “doubts” towards academic research and method.


The control of public discourse is so essential for the success of dominance that it becomes explicit if we analyse the news report of Vox, *Why obvious lies make great propaganda*. Since truth is neither Trump nor Bolsonaro’s concern, telling lies is about power, because it proves that the ones who use this kind of ideological tool of power are not restrained by reality and that everything (even unquestionable



truth, such as the fact the Earth is round, the creationism is not a scientific theory and so on) can be challenged, which highlights the times we are living: a “post-truth” period when everyone screams out their own mirabolic truth. It is a clear demonstration of power because the ones who know the truth have to engage on the lie that is being said, since the truth (for us) is the only guiding light which matters. Another fact which deals with the idea of the lie as a contemporary tool of hegemonic power is the movement of disseminating fake news, by business companies (such as Cambridge Analytica), as a way of changing culture through discourse. The dominant groups, consisted in 1% of the world population, are well aware of the importance of culture and discourse, and are aware as well of the fact that if we can change *society* and *discourse*, it is important to change *culture* first.

HEGEMONIC AND ANTI- HEGEMONIC DISCOURSES

Throughout History, it is possible to see, sometimes more explicitly, the extreme importance of discourse studies in society and inside our inner lives. For Valentin Voloshinov, a Marxist linguist, discourse is a *social phenomenon*, which means that discourse will always relay on the fact that language, specially the signs, will not have perpetual or fixed meanings, because they vary *depending on the speaker*. Signs are charged with “multifarious and conflictual meanings” (DENTITH, p. 23, 1995) and Dentith explains Voloshinov’s idea using the example of the word “socialism” differently understood by a conservative and a socialist, even though they both deal with the same word. An even better example is what women understand by another word such as “feminism”.



Since language is not only a *set of norms* and it is constantly *changing*, it is also correct to affirm language and linguistic interaction as well are *products of historical and sociological processes*. That is why, perhaps, the word “feminist” is the focus of several sorts of polemics among women themselves. The “Ele Não” movement which took place in Brazil, before presidential elections, is a great example of this kind of conflict. Firstly, the movement responded to Jair Bolsonaro’s sexist, homophobic, and intolerant utterances, but then this movement sustained an opposite organized one, the “Ele Sim” movement. It is important to say both political groups were headed by women, and I will briefly analyse what this kind of political event has to do with Valetin Voloshinov/Mikhail Bakhtin, and Michel Foucault’s concepts of discourse.

Voloshinov/Bakhtin has interesting ideas concerning discourse (since his analysis is strongly inclined to the materialist method, and that is a fact I find important if we want to investigate discourse and society), and one of them is, as I pointed before, the idea of language as a ‘social phenomenon’. If we analyse the motivations of the “Ele Não” movement in Brazil, we find solid arguments by these anti-Bolsonaro feminine (and feminist) voters, and the context which the “Ele Não” discourse emerges points out the *language situation* Voloshinov/Bakhtin indicates.

In other words, the political and effervescent moment in which Brazilian women are living now created the necessity of a movement headed by the discourse “Ele Não”. We know who is “ele” in this utterance and we also know why the negative sentence is given, but ten years ago it would be impossible to conceive such idea, because it depends completely on the *sociological* and *historical contexts*. In this way, Voloshinov/Bakhtin affirms: “Language always occurs in situations, so the force of an utterance can never be decided by a mere account of its formal meaning” (VOLOSHINOV/BAKHTIN apud DENDITH, p. 28, 1995).

The Brazilian case demonstrates how important it is to consider the historical and material context of our society to decode all types of discourses which are rising. In Brazilian History, we had never faced this kind of polarization: when all sorts of discourses are competing for the “first place”. Therefore, if we consider the “Ele Não” movement, language in context consists of the studies of *pragmatics* – and in this case sociological pragmatics. All these facts presented show the struggle of discourses in society and how the necessity of interlocution gives birth to new meanings, which configures an attempt to represent what is considered “real”. In this way, “Ele Não” was only possible because of this new phenomenon in the Brazilian political and sociological background.

However, when we think about the responsive movement, “Ele Sim”, we can infer Mikhail Bakhtin’s concepts of *dialogism*. The discursive echo which is visible in this utterance because exposes the fact that enunciation is always motivated by previous discourses; “Ele Sim” was motivated by the “Ele Não” discourse, and the “Ele Não” movement was motivated by Bolsonaro’s discourse and so on. The voices screaming out in both of these political events headed by women of different social backgrounds (but united by one principal discourse) indicate two linguistic forces which language depends on: an unitary centre consisted on a *centripetal force* which provides the notion of national language and a *centrifugal force* towards various languages.


In other words, while there is some kind of attempt to unify the several existences inside those groups (mainly through the unification of discourse), which happens on both sides, there is also the struggle between opposite sides discussing about the same topic/theme, Jair Bolsonaro. For example, women part of “Ele Não” tend to indicate the proliferation of violence validated by the former army captain while women from “Ele Sim” tend to declare that he is a honest politician who will solve the problem of violence in Brazil by legalizing gun carrying;

women from the first political movement contest his political intentions which do not work in favour of the poorest classes of society while women of the second movement defend his meritocratic discourse etc. The centrifugal and centripetal forces are extremely active in these cases of discursive competition, and the fact the protagonists are majoritarian women can illustrate Foucault's question concerning the body.

Foucault conceives of the body as a focus of discursive pressures and it can explain why women, the feminine body, is systematically target of political and social aggressions through History. The feminine body drove the most important discussions in Brazilian presidential elections, and the movements "Ele Não" and "Ele Sim" are the most evident proof of that; most of women belonging to the first group agree that the body of women are subject of domination and oppression, and they see on the figure of Jair Bolsonaro the perpetuation of these kinds of destructions of the body.

However, women from the second group sustain the figure of the "straw feminist", since they see in the feminist discourse a threat based on the "ditadura da baranga". This group in particular defends some ideas that Foucault vehemently condemned, such as assumptions of *essentialism* (for example, the idea of "feminine" or "purity" as inherent behaviours of human condition, but which is challenged and questioned by feminists). According to Ellen Goodman in her essay "Straw Feminist Declares Open Season to Men", the figure of the "straw feminist" is everywhere, from the evil image of Eve in the Bible to the streets burning her bra: "This creature was most helpful for discrediting real feminists but also handy for scaring supporters away. *Whenever a woman stuck up for her rights, she could be asked through narrowing eyes, 'You're not one of those feminists, are you?'*".

As we can report by these several facts, the discursive struggle is so evident, and the echo of the ideas of these authors are so prominent, that is impossible to indicate which one is the victorious



one; the polemic, however, is evident. And, in this case, it is explicit how the feminine body is, once more, the stage of political and discursive forces. The body, central in the discussion of many themes (such as abortion, feminine empowering, beauty standards, independency and so on), is evidently imprinted by history, politics, and many other forces of discourse (generally speaking, feminine body had always been the focus of oppressive and repressive forces from the religious institutions, patriarchy, and institutionalized violence against women's will). The "Ele Não" event, therefore, worked in favour of these empowering causes for women and their bodies. The dialogism is also visible when feminists say "Meu corpo, minhas regras" as well as the language repertoire shared by this specific group of people – even though not every woman defends or uses this sort of language.

On the other hand, again, opposing "Ele Não" rally, "Ele Sim" consists on women (most of them), consciously or not, in favour of the oppressive forces the "Ele Não" movement fights against. In the mini-documentary by The New York Times, *Why Brazilian Women Support Jair Bolsonaro*, there is one moment that perfectly illustrates the differences between these women of opposite movements, which is an utterance spoken by a member of a group called "Mulheres com Bolsonaro": "he protects women so much that he wants chemical castration of paedophiles and rapists, because that is perverted, *it's evil.*" This sentence emphasizes the kind of discussion these women work in favour of; since they are part of a group with similar opinions, it is possible to infer that when she says "it's evil" she (as well as the other members) takes a Manichean point of view when the focus of debate is the oppression against women; apparently, they do not deal with the ideas of "masculine domination" nor "patriarchy", but with ideas of "good" and "evil", of little complexity or research. This aspect takes us back to what was discussed in the course of "Discourse Studies" concerning the contrast of modernity and post-modernity, a system based on "good" and "bad" ideas and also based on one

truth against a system of thought based on many truths which offers dialectical attempts to represent reality.

Discursive studies are extremely important if we try to understand the several sorts of discourse which we are accustomed to (the ones we grow up socialized with and never question), and there are types of discourse that are new to us and we attempt to understand them as well (the ones we find different from our reality but it is our duty to understand since we live in society and society is not limited to our boundaries). Maybe, that is the biggest mistake of conservative groups of society; these self-referential discourses which do not open up for different points of view (and consequently different discourses) are menacing for the kinds of existences which are distinct from it. However, the anti-conservative discourses are gaining space inside public discussions (even in the most hegemonic communication medias) and inside political sphere as well, and it is possible to say this fact could be a glimpse of possible futures that Brazilian society can still provide.

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17

Marina Evangelista



**THE XENOPHOBIC
DISCOURSE:
TRUMP AND BREXIT
THROUGH CRITICAL
DISCOURSE ANALYSIS**



INTRODUCTION


According to Wodak and Reisigl (2001, p. 372), “the starting point of a discourse analytical approach to the complex phenomenon of racism is to realize that racism, as both social practice and ideology, manifests itself discursively”. Exclusionary practices, racist opinions and beliefs are produced, reproduced and legitimated by discourse.

The prejudice against immigrants is a recurring subject through world's history, the most impacting episode evidenced by Nazism in German and their Anti-Semitic politics:

This violence was and continues to be connected to the fact that the unification poses tremendous cultural and economic problems for the Germans and that foreigners provide a comfortable scapegoat for these problems (e.g. that millions of people lost their jobs post-unification) (WODAK; REISIGL, 2001, p. 380).

Nowadays, some people used to think that this kind of racism do not exist anymore, but, unfortunately, it does, due to the rise of extreme far-right governs all over the world. Hence, this chapter aims at analyzing the xenophobic discourses of two governing authorities from powerful economies worldwide: Donald Trump and Theresa May. In other words, the objective is to evaluate how the speech acts of these politicians create an order with the purpose of mitigating the threat against the immigration issue, trying to exclude immigrants from society.

The next section will be dedicated to the literature review to be applied on the paper. The first part of the section will bring the most important concepts and approaches of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Afterward, a more philosophical point of view will be introduced by Michel Foucault (1996) theories relating discourse and power. To conclude, we will bring a psychoanalytic view of xenophobia, through the propositions of Radmila Zygouris (1998).



Having laid out the theoretical framework, analysis of discourses will be made. Through CDA some official discourses from Donald Trump and Theresa May will be deconstructed, in order to verify the elements in discourse that elucidate the prejudice against immigrants and the attempt to blacken them.

Last, but not least, conclusions drawn from the analysis will be presented in the last section of this paper. We will explore the implications of exposed conclusions, highlighting their importance and pointing out future relevant discussions about the topic.

CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

Critical discourse analysis (henceforth CDA) is an interdisciplinary approach to the study of written and oral language that focuses especially on the relations between language and society, and language and power. Building on Wodak and Resigl (2001, p. 2), it is a deeper analysis of discourse, which does not take into account only aspects of linguistics or grammar, but rather discourse as a reflection of the context in which it is produced, and all that it can reveal about the population analyzed. CDA was chosen as the theoretical basis for the current paper because a critical stance towards political discourse can reveal issues and intentions that are hidden and implicit, uncovering power relations in political discourse.

Ideology is an important concept for CDA. According to Wodak and Meyer (2009, p.8), CDA usually aims to unmask ideologies and reveal structures of power that appear as neutral day by day. Likewise, for van Dijk (2009, p. 78-79) ideologies are “fundamental social beliefs that organize and control the social representations of groups and their members.” These dominant ideologies are generally not contested and circulate as absolute truths in society, which can lead to a massification

of public opinion, where everyone thinks in the same way, and there are no alternative ways of thinking.

Another concept that is central to CDA, and also related to ideology, is power. The exercise of power is achieved through “ideological workings of language” (FAIRCLOUGH, 1989, p. 2). That is to say that language is one of the primary means of maintaining social control and power.

Racism goes alongside the concepts of power and ideology. According to van Dijk (2000), it occurs in many ways in our daily lives. One of the common practices is the discriminatory discourse, in which prejudiced statements and ideologically based social representations of certain groups and their members are made, in a pejorative way.

Politicians form one of the elite groups always associated in the process of ideological reproduction and discriminatory discourse, usually with biased claims expressions about minority groups (Ibid, p. 94), as they can control various forms of public discourse, aligned with their own ideologies. This means that dominant discourses are able to shape people's opinions easily, as many beliefs and prejudiced attitudes are derived from interpretations of political discourse (Van Dijk, 1997).

POWER AND DISCOURSE

Michel Foucault (1996) wrote about the order of discourse, making important considerations in which regards its instruments of legitimation and exclusion:

I suppose that in every society the production of discourse is at the same time controlled, selected, organized and redistributed by a number of procedures whose function is to conjure its powers and dangers, to gain mastery over its chance events, to evade its ponderous, formidable materiality” (FOUCAULT, 1996, p. 9).


In addition, the philosopher observes that during daily activities and the constitution of discourse, there are “struggles, victories, injuries, dominations and enslavements, through so many words” (Ibid, p. 8). In other words, we can say that the processes of production and exclusion of discourses are inseparable and they are present in our daily lives, even if we cannot notice them.

Regarding the relation between the subject and power, Gobbo (this volume) affirms that “it is possible to say that discourse plays an important role even in the practices of communication, because it is bonded to power as the result of the extinguishment of the individual’s freedom”.

Building on Foucault's theory about the three great systems of exclusion which forge discourse (1996) we can say that throughout history, the speech of those who hold the power in their hands remains as the truth. Power emerges over dominant discourses and, at the same time, it suppresses other discourses. To complement, as stated by Rodrigues et. al (this volume), “the access to discourse measures the power; given that it is directly related to social dominance; every social group tries to install their strategies to obtain access.”

Foucault explains how, in societies, procedures of exclusion and interdiction are created. There are speeches that are prohibited by the incidence of the taboo object, meaning that not everything could be said, depending on the circumstances, place and, most important, who the speaker is: “anyone cannot speak anything” (FOUCAULT, 1996, p. 9). Depending on where you are from, where you are, and who you are, you are defined and bounded by some expectations and requirements the dominant ones impose to you, in an attempt to maintain the order.

Furthermore, Proença (this volume) uses the concept of culture to show how language produces signs and symbols. According to him, “when we say that two people [belong] to the same culture it is



to say that they interpret the world in a similar way.” That is to say that through language (sounds, written words, electronically produced images, objects) people and cultures are represented as unique, what is, of course a misconception, due to the diversity present in any country. This strategy is usually, building on Foucault (1996), spread by the powerful discourses.

Thereby, by imposing its truth as unique, the dominant discourse creates strategies of inclusion and exclusion according to its interests. The hostility of the dominant discourse is perceived at this point; it demoralizes any other discourse that could mess up the established order, as the immigrants’ discourses, for example. It is through the use of this power through discourse over the excluding minorities that powerful groups maintain their hegemony and disseminate anger in contemporary society.

PSYCHOANALYTIC PERSPECTIVE ABOUT XENOPHOBIA

At this point we will focus on xenophobia under a psychoanalytic bias, through theories of the psychoanalyst Radmila Zygouris (1998). Xenophobia is at first, according to the author (1998, p.194), the fear of the foreigner. The rejection and fear of the unfamiliar becomes possible after the recognition of him/herself, and evolve with the establishment of “us”, after the recognition of the mother. “The native language, the familiar faces, the integration of “us”, restrict the field of the first identifications and support the children to surround the world” (Ibid.). Said otherwise, the fear of the foreigner does not exist from birth, it is constructed through the dichotomy *us x them* in history and social relationships.

Another important concept developed by Zyglouris is that “the new” has always made humans aggressive when they were not ready to welcome it, or when they did not wait for it (1998, p. 202). The more or less fear of the foreigner will depend mostly on family habits, media and the government. From the intimate of “child xenophobia”, or the fear of the unknown, one can then move on to the tragic social of active racism .

According to Zyglouris (1998, p. 203), xenophobia at the individual level transforms itself into active and collective racism when it comes along with the anguish and fear of tomorrow. Likewise, racism emerges in times of social and economic crisis, in which individuals feel insecure about the future. Currently, right-wing politics have achieved power worldwide building themselves as an alternative to social insecurity. One of the strategies created by this politics is the creation of a “national enemy”, the immigrant. For racism to be real in society, apart from personal prejudices or circumstantial antipathies, a discourse is always necessary. Zyglouris calls this *execration discourse*, when through discourse, the elites exclude the foreigner from the human species, as if they were *aliens* (ZYGLOURIS, 1998, p. 204).

It is out of question to see the foreign as a fellow man, a woman, a father, mother, or child. Definitely, the foreign is nominated by the execration discourse as other, that unfits for all identification. You avoid talking to him, call him by name. It is a discourse that comes from above and gives to the immigrant a collective denomination, that can be its ethnicity or its impurity. The foreign, through this form of exclusion, is no longer a person, he/she has no longer a face and a human smile. (ZYGLOURIS, 1998, p. 205-206, translated by the authors)

Hence, the discourse of execration always promises something: the end of misery and better days for the country. To achieve their objective, the dominant discourses create a scapegoat (minority groups in general, as immigrants, LGBTQ+ community, black people etc) and authorize aggressive attitudes against it. As stated by Zyglouris (1998,

p. 205), “the other” must be excluded from the collective nation, as they are not part of the group, almost being classified as “not human”.

Building on Zygoris’ (1998) we can say that a wall is created, in order to separate *we* and *them*, *the known* and *the unknown*. The “us” in the xenophobic discourse do not embrace minority groups. And for the racists it is the natural order of things.

DONALD TRUMP AND THE EXECRATION DISCOURSE

Nowadays, some people used to think that racism does not exist anymore, but unfortunately it does. Through a xenophobic dog whistles political discourse, the prejudice against immigrants was one of the most important subjects in the American presidential campaign of Donald Trump, and it remains today, in many speeches of the actual USA president. Here follows some excerpts from Trump discourses that will be analyzed:

1. “Why are we having all these people from *shithole* countries come here? (...) Why do we need more Haitians? Take *them* out.”
2. “When Mexico sends its people, *they’re* not sending their best. *They’re* not sending you. *They’re* not sending you. *They’re* sending people that have lots of problems, and *they’re* bringing those problems with *us*. *They’re* bringing *drugs*. *They’re* bringing *crime*. *They’re rapists*. And some, I assume, are good people (...) It’s coming from more than Mexico. It’s coming from all over South and Latin America, and it’s coming probably -- probably -- from the Middle East. But we don’t know. Because we have no protection and we have no competence, we don’t know what’s happening. And it’s got to stop and it’s got to stop fast.”

3. “According to federal data, there are at least two million, two million, think of it, *criminal aliens* now inside of *our* country, two million people *criminal aliens*. We will begin moving *them* out day one.”
4. “We have people coming into the country or trying to come in, we’re stopping a lot of them, but we’re taking people out of the country. You wouldn’t believe how *bad* these people are. These aren’t people. These are *animals*.”

We can consider, in all of these excerpts that Trump refers to the immigrants and their countries using depreciative terms, as, *animals*, *aliens*, *criminals*, *shithole*. These terms frame immigrants as different and less than human, reducing an entire country and its people to their immigration status: *illegal*. Not only Mexicans, (his main focus) but all people from South and Latin America, Haiti, Middle East and Africa. That is to say, everyone who is not from the US or Europe is denigrated by this term.

The exclusion from the human being category is one of the most important characteristics of the *execration discourse*, as stated by Zygouris (1998). The pejorative metaphors used by Trump make anti-immigrant sentiments grow up among population, because if they are not human, then people do not have to respect them, and it is common to think that they have the power over the destiny of the foreigner’s body: that is, people think they have the right to kick immigrants out from their country.

In the excerpt (2), one of the most famous and polemic discourses from the USA president, all immigrants are reduced to *drug dealers*, *rapists* and *criminals*. Building on the concept of *execration discourse* (ZYGOURIS, 1998) Trump one more time reduces all the immigrants by a collective denomination, which highlights their “impurity” and “inferiority”. He constructs a negative image of ‘them’/‘they’. The immigrants in his discourse are a synonym of crime and threat for the


Americans citizens that are, on the contrary, usually represented by the pronoun 'us'/we': white, hard-working, virtuous, trusting and often victimized by the current immigration policy. By establishing this 'us' he creates a collective and patriotic feeling among people, and it becomes easier then to identify and accept it, the immigrants represented pejoratively, as criminals because they do not belong to the group.

This discursive strategy *Us x Them* is particularly relevant because it sets Americans to be understood as good people and immigrants to be conceptualized as criminal aggressors. Duboc and Ferraz (2018, p. 230) explain this exclusion strategy used to perpetrate complex and tortuous relations and ethnic violence, as it rejects "the perspective that the world is diverse and represents an enormous enrichment of the human capacities to bestow intelligibility and intentionality to social relations":

The dichotomy "us" (Western, Eurocentric/*USAcentric*) versus "them" (non-European/*USAcentric*, the rest of the world) (...) has been constructed and naturalized in order to separate some epistemologies that sustain "the world of us and them": rich and poor, center and periphery, developed and underdeveloped, North and South, Western and Eastern, civilized and barbarians, high culture and low culture, Christians and non-Christians, modern and primitive. (DUBOC, FERRAZ, 2018, p. 230-231).

Thus, we can state that politicians and people who hold the power in general are responsible to disseminate ideologies (FOUCAULT, 1996; VAN DIJK, 2000), positioning themselves as the saviors in this narrative, who will "make America great again".

No wonder, in his inauguration speech Trump makes clear that: "From this day forward, a new vision will govern... it's going to be only America first, America first". We can perceive here his strategy: the illusion of better times projected in the future, as the Americans will be the only priority (ZYGOURIS, 1998).



To sum up, the use of the term '*criminal aliens*' invokes an image of extraterrestrial beings, foreign, repulsive, threatening. Referring to immigrants as '*animals*' Trump reduces immigrants to a sub-human category, considered a cruel and savage life form, as if they are not worthy of the same rights that "we" are entitled: the foreign is no longer a person. All these strategies are used in order to discriminate immigrants.

More recently, in a speech on immigration, Trump claims that:

5. "there is a growing *humanitarian and security crisis* at our southern border".
6. "Our southern border is a *pipeline for vast quantities of illegal drugs* including meth, heroin, cocaine, and fentanyl. Every week, 300 of our citizens are killed by heroin alone. Ninety percent of which floods across from our southern border. More Americans will die from drugs this year than were killed in the entire Vietnam War."
7. "Some have suggested a barrier is immoral. Then why do wealthy politicians build walls, fences, and gates around their homes? They don't build walls because they hate the people on the outside but because they love the people on the inside. The only thing that is immoral is the politicians to do nothing and *continue to allow more innocent people to be so horribly victimized.*"
8. "This is a choice between *right and wrong, justice and injustice.* This is about whether we fulfill our sacred duty to the American citizens we serve. When I took the oath of office, I swore to protect our country and that is what I will always do so help me God."

Using the same methods as in the other excerpts, Trump continues to create a crisis and a responsible for it: the immigrants. The US citizens are the victims from drug dealers, and immigrants are


blamed for the deaths due to drug addiction over the country. One more time, the dichotomy *us x them* appears, grouping people in categories: you can be right or wrong, there are no other alternative. The president produces his truth and it is the only one possible to guarantee the security of American people.

The concept of *ideology* (WODAK, 2001, 2009; FAIRCLOUGH, 1989, FOUCAULT, 1996) can help to explain how it became possible for Donald Trump to use the pejorative language he has used surrounding immigration issues without facing serious, tangible consequences. As stated before, ideology or ideological formation is set in society through language. Trump's racist discourse structure is based on the power of the dominant group (white, western, male), and people are manipulated to confirm and spread the social representations that are disseminated by the dominant institutions.

Using the strategy of excluding 'them', Trump have heightened fear of immigrants among population. His discourse frames immigrants as dangerous 'others'. Everything considered, language can delineate groups and the ones who have power contribute to spread this dangerous ideology.

POWER IN THERESA MAY'S DISCOURSES

On June 23rd 2016, the British electorate engaged in "one of the largest exercises in democratic decision making that Britain has ever seen" to determine if the country would continue an European Union member or not (GOODWIN; HEATH, 2016). This movement is called Brexit, a combination of the words 'Britain' and 'exit', and the UK voted to leave the European Union. The government supports that the reasons for the leave are focused on economy issues, in order to



stabilize it and build a brighter UK. However, one of the crucial issues in the discussion on the EU and the membership was immigration, and we will analyze the ideological bias that the discourse of the ex-Prime Minister Theresa May carries.

To accomplish this purpose, we selected May's speech to the Conservative Party Conference, in 2015, before the referendum, and then a '*Letter to the nation*', a more recent (November, 2018) attempt to convince citizens of Brexit benefits, after a visible change in public opinion.

In the view of Duboc and Ferraz (2018, p. 232) current political decisions are "founded on segregation and exclusion, either by leaving political and economic unions, such as Brexit, or by building or redesigning walls, as instilled by American President Donald Trump, in North America". In Brexit's case, "the growth of a populist, isolationist, xenophobic and Islamophobic right party" (DUBOC, FERRAZ, 2018, p. 232) contributed a lot to the prompt for the referendum, as an alternative to recuperate the homogeneity and hegemony of the country.

According to Gough (2017) the UK has a hostile behavior with immigrants since the 17th century, the days of colonialism/imperialism. Nowadays, the English dominant groups actively seek to disseminate this discourse, classifying immigrants as the cause of the problems of British population (GOUGH, 2017, p. 368). As described before, politicians form one of the elite groups involved in the process of reproduction of ideology (VAN DIJK, 2000), since they have control over various forms of public discourse. During the Conservative Party Conference, some points of Theresa May's discourse should be highlighted, in order to uncover a hidden racism, although in a less grotesque way than we could notice in Trump's discourse.

Starting her discourse, the British Prime Minister advise that there is a limit to the number of immigrants that each country can receive,

although there are millions of people from poor countries who would love to live in the UK. That means that Britain cannot receive these people. She already classifies who are the immigrants who will suffer with the economic measures: the poor, from poor countries.

9. “There are millions of people in *poorer* countries who would love to live in Britain, and *there is a limit* to the amount of immigration any country can and should take. [...] When immigration is too high, when the pace of change is too fast, it’s *impossible to build a cohesive society*.”

We can conclude that if it is impossible to build a cohesive society with immigrants from poorer countries, then they do not fit the British community. Hereafter, May starts to separate two groups: *British people* x *immigrants*. She points out some arguments to support her thesis:

10. “It’s *difficult for schools and hospitals and core infrastructure* like housing and transport to cope.”
11. “Not all of the consequences can be managed, and doing so for many of them comes at a *high price*. We need to build 210,000 new homes every year to deal with rising demand. We need to find 900,000 new school places by 2024. And there are thousands of people who have been forced out of the labour market, still unable to find a job.”
12. “We know that for people in low-paid jobs, wages are forced down even further while some people are forced out of work altogether. We have to do this for the sake of *our* society and *our* public services – and for the sake of the people whose wages are cut, and whose job security is reduced, when *immigration is too high*.”

We can see here that the immigrants are described as the cause of British public institutions problems. As stated above by Zygoris (1998) and Wodak (2001) a scapegoat is created during tough times. The

presence of the immigrant in UK do not allow the country to develop, as government is spending too much on it. In May's own words, managing the consequences of immigration comes "at a high price", that they are not willing to pay. Besides that, she blames immigrants for unemployment and wage reduction in low-paid jobs, as if the companies that want to explore and take advantage of cheap labor from immigrants do not have any responsibility on it.

Moreover, she argued that there was "almost zero" benefit with immigration, on the contrary of what almost all specialists, that affirm that it is "a formidable engine of economic and demographic growth" (PERI, 2013). The fear of the future makes people think that only without immigrants UK could back to be a great country, social and economically:

13. While there are benefits of selective and controlled immigration, at best the net economic and fiscal effect of *high immigration is close to zero*. So there is no case, in the national interest, for immigration of the scale we have experienced over the last decade."

Here we can move on to the "*Letter for the nation*". Almost three years after the referendum, Theresa May is still promising "a new chapter in the national life" after Brexit, in a public plea to support her deal:

14. "We will take back control of *our* borders, by *putting an end* to the free movement of people once and for all. [...] Instead of an immigration system based on where a person comes from, we will build one based on the *skills and talents* a person has to offer. [...] With Brexit settled, we will be able to focus our energies on the many other important issues facing *us* here at home: keeping *our* economy strong, and making sure every community shares in prosperity; securing *our* NHS for the future, giving every child a great start in life, and building the homes that families need; tackling the burning injustices that hold too many people back, and *building a country for the future that truly works for everyone*".

In the excerpt above we can notice the kind of immigrant that will be welcome in the UK: the brilliant minds, people who have something to offer to country. On the contrary, “the others” are out of the British immigration system, excluded from society. The Prime Minister at the time also calls on the family instinct, an important strategy of the far-right parties. The construction of a great place for British kids will only be possible without the enemy, the foreign, after UK leaves EU.

May’s discourses exclude ‘them’ and was also used to increase the fear of the future if UK does not leave EU. It frames immigrants, as Trump also does, as ‘the others’, that are an obstacle for British people welfare, a danger for the future. Therefore, the prejudice against immigrants grows as political discourses spread this kind of ideology, excluding minority groups from society.

CONCLUSION

The rise of extreme far-right is a tendency all over Europe, in countries as Italy, Hungary, and Poland, but also here in Brazil and in Latin American countries. Leaders as Donald Trump and Theresa May want to institutionalize fear over people, by constructing themselves as saviors on duty of nation and the traditional family. They build through discourse an image of change and hope in an attempt to acquire political support. However, the xenophobic discursive practices can have terrible effects in society.

In this research, we can conclude that CDA allow us to understand discourses from a different point of view, considering social issues, context, ideology and subjectivity as important factors during the analysis, helping us to understand better the social order institutionalized.

We could get a broad picture of the ways in which immigrant groups were represented in discourses by two of the most powerful

country leaders. In addition, through a psychoanalytic point of view of xenophobia, we could understand better the motivations for racism that are expressed by discourse and how it is present in our daily life.

In the future, it would be interesting to study other discourses from Donald Trump, Theresa May, Boris Johnson and other European leaders, to detain more information on discourses in which the immigrants were involved. Another case that would be interesting to explore in future studies is how the execration discourse is reproduced here in Brazil, by our politicians, who have tried to impose their own ideologies, involving other minority groups, as the LGBTQ+ and black community and women.

Critically studying discourses in relation to immigration issues is relevant, as immigration will not end, even with the efforts of eliminating it. Maybe the current situation that they call “immigration crisis” is the normal stage, due to many reasons that will continue to happen worldwide, as for example, the climate change, wars, national conflicts, and so on. Humanity in treating immigrants is required, that is why we have to be aware of inequalities and biases in discourses.

Lastly, I bring here the poem ‘Brutal Kindness’, written by Vanessa de Oliveira Andreotti (DUBOC, 2018, p. 76-79) that brings a profound and very touching message directed to immigrants by a dominant national discourse. This poem exemplifies the current approaches of discourses regarding immigration, and they are, unluckily, so legitimated in contemporary life:

Brutal kindness

We welcome you to our country
Our borders open only to a few
We ask for nothing in return, except
That you recognize the deepest wisdom
That when in Rome you should pay tribute to the Romans

Therefore, you must
speak our language
admire our deeds
adopt our dreams
obey our laws
embrace our values
praise our intelligence
like our food
fulfil our expectations
mimic our behaviour
contribute to our economy
aspire to be like us
commit to serving this country
dedicate your life to our people
and be thankful for our efforts to help you

We offer you unlimited hospitality
We chose you amongst countless others
We ask for nothing in return, except
That you acknowledge the natural exceptionality of our people
Expressed precisely in your inclusion in our society

Therefore, you must
know your place
do as you are told
strive for your best
work twice as hard
feel indebted
show good manners
be clean and organized
get an education
dress appropriately, smell nice
pay your duties
lay low, be happy, focus on positive things
use language that we can understand

entertain us with your culture, when requested
and jump off the balcony, if required

We give you access to the best welfare and education system
We expect you to show us that you truly deserved it
We ask you for nothing in return, except
That you appreciate the privilege of being allowed amongst us

Therefore, under no circumstance,
should you break our trust
complain or communicate disapproval
expose our inadequacies, reveal our contradictions
disclose our insecurities, question our values
challenge our authority or understanding of reality
make up unreasonable accusations
fuel internal dissent
defy our right to distinguish our heroes
remind us of what we choose to deny
speak of the past we want to forget
outperform, outsmart , outshine us
or bite the hands that feed you

We will do everything in our power for you to properly fit in
We are certain you will acknowledge our benevolence
We expect nothing in return, except
Your gratitude and compliance

Therefore, you will not mind when we lovingly
limit your autonomy
mute your conscience
undercut your confidence
interrupt your dreams
place your body and mind under surveillance
and shape your subjectivity into conformity
for your own good

We will give you incredible opportunities
in an incomparable country
We ask for nothing in return, except
...that you salute our openness, altruism and sense of justice
(Andreotti apud DUBOC, 2018, p. 76-79).

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18

*Carolina Campos
Cleiciane de Souza Nascimento
Giovanna Dias Jorge*



HOW DOES DONALD TRUMP TWEET? A STUDY BASED ON CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS





Twitter is a fairly recent social network founded in 2006. The platform is a microblogging network in which users can send short texts and communicate with each other through them – as long as the online conversation takes no longer than 280 characters. It is used by millions of people worldwide, and the president of the United States, Donald J. Trump, is definitely one of the most prominent on the website.

Since before his campaign and the beginning of his presidency in 2017, Trump has been using Twitter as a business platform as well as a means to express his thoughts and feelings on various topics. The latter use of the social network is its most common purpose among people, but for celebrities to express themselves very openly is a rare deed and, for that, Donald Trump's tweets became a popular and, often times controversial, affair.

Because of that, these small texts and their potential meanings have been widely discussed not only in the United States, but also around the globe, especially because Trump is himself an extremely controversial public figure. From his political campaign to his reality show, the media follows his footsteps and, with Twitter being a free, accessible platform to the majority of U.S citizens, people too.

Barack Obama was a trailblazer when it came to online communication, as he was the first president to have an official twitter account - @POTUS (President of the United States) - but Trump took it one step further when he became the first U.S president to tweet from a personal account using his mobile phone, which was prohibited for security reasons, as phones can easily get robbed or hacked.

Donald Trump joined twitter on March 2009, and over the last 10 years, has had over 45.000 messages published in his personal account, which excludes the tweets sent from @POTUS. After he became president elect, his opinionated tweets continued to be sent, reaching an average of 8 per day. Most of his messages follow a simple

structure, beginning with a statement - not necessarily a true one - and ending with a one or two-word exclamation - a buzzword.

Among several scandals since the businessman started his political campaign, the one regarding the wall between Mexico and the United States. During his presidential campaign, one of his main propositions was to build a wall in the border of these two countries, claiming that it was the only way to cease the “huge” opening to illegal migration that had been present for the last couple of years. After his election, this remains a prominent topic in his office, as the wall is being built despite the protests of citizens.

The controversy of this issue resulted in several arguments and, of course, all sorts of tweets coming from the president as a backlash to negative commentaries. In this chapter, our intention is to discuss some of Donald Trump’s infamous thoughts on latinxs, exploring their true meaning and why they became so relevant in today’s political scenario by using Critical Discourse Analysis, especially Teun Van Dijk’s patterns of access.

Thus, the chapter is divided into three parts. In the first one, we briefly discuss the theoretical basis to our analysis, using concepts such as power, access and patterns of access, in addition to Fairclough’s (1993, 1995) contributions to Discourse Studies. Secondly, we shall analyze five selected tweets based on the theoretical background constructed in the first part. In the last part, we intend to state the importance of Critical Discourse Analysis and reaffirming its major role in this interaction pattern change.

VAN DIJK, CDA, IDEOLOGY AND POWER

This section will expand some of the theoretical basis of our following analysis, considering the great contributions made by Teun A. van Dijk, through the perspective of Critical Discourse Analysis and Norman Fairclough, through Discourse Studies regarding his development of a more social approach to analysing language. We would also like to include Jan Blommaert's contributions to understanding the roles of social media, as his studies on Trump's discourse are vital to our analysis.

Van Dijk's (1996) major role in Critical Discourse Analysis comes from the formulation of several key concepts for this perspective. According to Evangelista (this volume), CDA looks for "[...] a deeper analysis of discourse, which does not take into account only aspects of linguistics or grammar, but rather discourse as a reflection of the context in which it is produced, and all that it can reveal about the population analyzed."

The first aspect we would like to introduce, *power*, is the feature of relationship among groups and institutions. *Social power*, the kind studied by CDA, can be defined as

the control exercised by one group or organisation (or its 'members) over the actions and/or the minds of (the members of) another group, thus limiting the freedom of action of the others, or influencing their knowledge, attitudes or ideologies (VAN DIJK, 1996, p.84).

Affecting people's interpretation of the world, it is, in democratic scenarios "[...] persuasive and manipulative rather than coercive (use of force), or incentive, such as the explicit issuing of commands, orders, threats or economic sanctions." (VAN DIJK, 1996, p. 85) The misuse of power can cause inequality, which configures the dominance, a limited

and gradual process that can be beaten with resistance. Moreover, according to the author, “Unless the readers or listeners have access to alternative information, or mental resources to oppose such persuasive messages, the result of such manipulation may be the formation of preferred models of specific situations.” (*ibid.*).

Secondly, it’s important to notice that access to discourse is intrinsic to power structures, given that it is directly related to social dominance, in a way “[...] that more access according to these several participant roles, corresponds with more social power.” (VAN DIJK, 1996, p. 86). Being so, every social group tries to install their strategies to obtain access. However, it is concentrated by the dominant groups and, according to Van Dijk (1996), “[...] except for letters to the editor, the public generally has passive media access only as readers or viewers.” (*ibid.*).

On the other hand, Fairclough (1995), in the Discourse Studies field, argues that letters to the editor consist of a concept called *synthetic personalization*, which is “[...] the simulation of private, face-to-face, person-to-person discourse in public mass-audience discourse - print, radio, television” (p.80).

Van Dijk (1996) develops the concept of access with *patterns of access*, which can be defined as power each ‘role’ in a specific social interaction is. Narrowing it down to our studies of social media and the widespread of information, the author elicits “[...] who has preferential access to journalists, who will be interviewed, quoted and described in news reports, and whose opinions will thus be able to influence the public?” (p. 96) Those patterns are formed by four dimensions: planning, setting, controlling communicative events and scope and audience control.

Trump’s attitude towards Twitter seems to be an example of synthetic personalization and access to mass media discourse. Not

only is he a public figure exposing his opinions from his personal life, represented by his personal account - which is a reduction of the limits between what is private or public, but he is also enabling people to send "letters to the president", because, as previously mentioned, having an account on a social network is enough to make one capable of replying to any statement made by the president, may it be on a positive or negative note.

This represents a change of roles and also a reversal in power relations. For instance, on a tweet, Trump states: "*Everybody is talking about the protesters burning the American flags and proudly waving Mexican flags.*". It is not an official speech or even a tweet from the @POTUS account, so from this sentence as well as the other tweets, readers may wonder if what comes next - "*I want America First - so do voters!*" - is a political opinion or a personal one.

In addition, Donald Trump uses a simple syntactic structure in order to reach all sorts of people. He writes in clear, short, simple language - in fact, with the same grammatical level of a 6th grader - to expose his ideology and how he feels about certain issues. Besides, his use of language creates a contrast between his social position, making him appear closer to the mass than a president or a businessman would be.

In order to understand ideology and its relation to discourse we use Fairclough's (1993) idea that "[...] discursive practices are ideologically invested in so far as they incorporate significations which contribute to sustaining or restructuring power relations" (FAIRCLOUGH, 1993, p. 92). Furthermore, the author also states that "Ideology is located, then, both in structures which constitute the outcome of past events and the conditions for current events, and in events themselves as they reproduce and transform their conditioning structures" (FAIRCLOUGH, 1993, p.72).

Blommaert (2019, p.6) develops the concept of *vox populism*, a specific kind of populism based on the “voice of the people” (*ibid*) which corroborates our discussions. According to him, the sequence of influence might be: “[...] first, I teach you how to talk like me, after which I can claim to talk like you, to represent your voice and turn it into a political, “democratic” program.” (*ibid*) Bearing this concept in mind, Trump is trying to naturalize his discourse and, consequently, his ideologies, through *vox populism*, given that he is easily understood and copied with such a simple syntax.

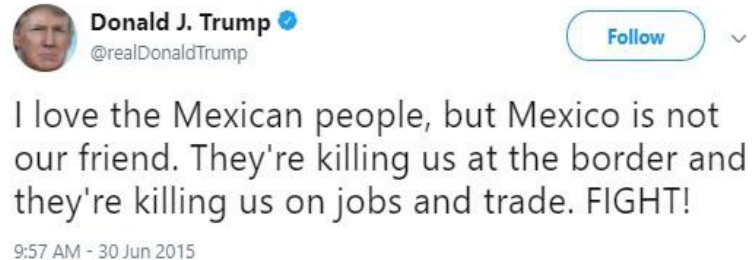
ANALYSING TRUMP’S BEHAVIOUR ON TWITTER

As mentioned in the introduction, this section will deal with five tweets selected from Donald Trump’s personal account between May and July of 2015. Our criteria was to narrow them down to the thematic of his relationship with Mexico and Mexican people. Finally, from the great amount of corpora, we selected five in which it would be possible to identify the theoretical aspects and offer a better representation of such conturbated relationship.

Regarding the tweet “*I love the Mexican people, but Mexico is not our friend. They’re killing us at the border and they’re killing us on jobs and trade. FIGHT!*” (image 1) and having in mind that Teun Van Dijk’s (1996) researches focus is on the control over actions and/or minds that can be a cognitive dimension of control (p.85), it is possible to infer that Trump’s peculiar wording, for example, the way he uses “killing” and “fight” at the same sentence, just after saying that he loves Mexican people, is a sample of his control mechanism. After banning thousands of Mexicans from the U.S, the president of the United States justifies his attitudes by claiming that Mexican people are undermining

the economy without using any sort of euphemism but irony, saying that he “loves the Mexican people”.

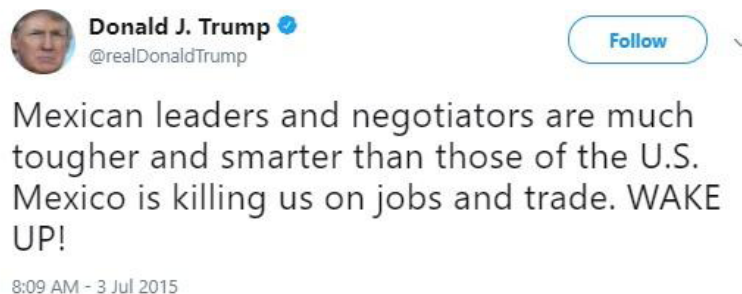
Image 1 - Source: Twitter (2015)



For that matter, Trump makes use of this simple sentence to exhibit his power as the president and the one who can decide whether to reinforce borders or not. It is also important to notice that “fight” is written in capital letters, which in online language could signify screaming, emphasizing his intention to motivate people to agree with him and follow his thoughts.

On “*Mexican leaders and negotiators are much tougher and smarter than those of the U.S. Mexico is killing us on jobs and trade. WAKE UP!*” (Image 2), as in the previous example, Trump exhibits his opinion on how Mexicans are interfering in the life of Americans, but now focusing on the economic field. In the first part of the tweet, the businessman says that the Mexican leaders and negotiators are indeed better than the Americans; he influences his followers to think that the Americans are inferior. Thus, we have here an illustration of Van Dijk’s concept of *power*. As he praises the Mexicans, he assumes a very different position from his current one as President of the U.S.

Image 2 - Source: Twitter (2015)



After that, he mentions once again how “Mexico is killing us on jobs and trade”, the same sentence used on the previous example. He finishes his tweet with the same structure as the one before: a verb - in this case a phrasal verb - written in all capital letters. This use of indicators by the end of some of his tweets are a call to action, a watchword for his citizens.

Moreover, considering that Donald Trump comes from a successful business career that led him to power and fame, one could argue that his marketing strategies are his force and, therefore, also inflict on the way he campaigned during 2016 and how he tweets. The watchwords are a good branding example; a person could see a number of tweets without having the user revealed and accurately pick out Trump’s solely based on the very peculiar way he writes and because of the tagline by the end of each message.

Such *Us x Them* strategy is also noticed by Evangelista (2019) who state that

[...] politicians and people who holds the power in general are responsible to disseminate ideologies (FOUCAULT, 1996; VAN DIJK, 2000), positioning themselves as the saviors in this narrative, who will “make America great again. (EVANGELISTA, this volume).

Thus, the use of watchwords can be a representative characteristic of an intensification of such strategy pointed out by the authors when analysing Trump's discourse from other sources.

Trump's marketing skills are noticeable in the most ironic of all tweets from our corpus: "*Happy #CincoDeMayo! The best taco bowls are made in Trump Tower Grill. I love Hispanics!*" (Image 3). With regards to the previous discussions, Trump always states negative aspects of Mexican people and how these people harm the American society. However, Cinco de Mayo is an intriguing holiday; although it celebrates the victory of Mexicans against France at the Battle of Puebla, it is not an official holiday in Mexico itself. The event is more popular among Mexican-Americans as a way to reinforce and empower their culture in the United States, and this is a clear confrontation to the hegemonic culture.

Image 3 - Source: Twitter (2015)

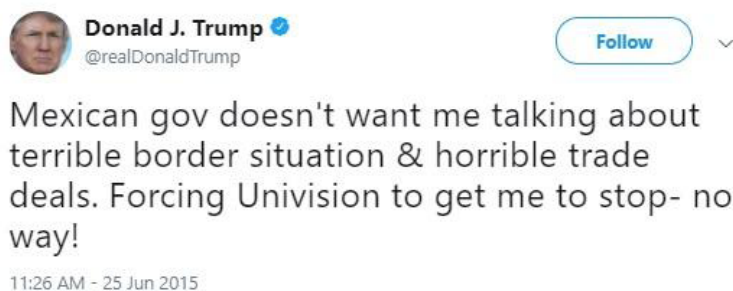


Trump's effort to get along with the Mexicans can be understood as way of constructing alliances in order to extend the influence of his word to a greater audience and hence reinforcing his power over them. As Fairclough (1993) states, "Hegemony is about constructing alliances, and integrating rather than simply dominating subordinate classes, through concessions or through ideological means, to win their consent" (FAIRCLOUGH, 1993, p. 92). Since Trump's discourse, as all discourses in general, is filled with ideology, he uses this apparently friendly approach to get more allies and keep his "enemies" even closer.

When Trump tweets celebrating this date, he is also ironically being "friendly" to hispanics, as well as appropriating their culture by using their holiday and their traditional cuisine in order to promote himself. He uses a stereotype to belittle the Mexican experience and to market his own business - the Trump Tower, while attempting to erase his previous offenses to latinos.

Another example of Trump's hostile approach can be seen on the tweet "*Mexican gov doesn't want me talking about terrible border situation & horrible trade deals. Forcing Univision to get me to stop- no way!*" (Image 4), as Univision, an American broadcast network where all programmes are in Spanish, also represents a resistance. Moreover, the president uses a generalization ("Mexican gov") which conveys the idea of a nation against the president's freedom of speech, a grave crime in a democratic context. Again, the president finishes the statement with a watchword, which in this case clearly states how he responds to the Mexican government's attitude.

Image 4 - Source: Twitter (2015)



According to Teun van Dijk's (1996) work on Patterns of Access, "power abuse is 'enacted', reproduced or legitimized by texts of dominant groups." (p.84). In Donald J. Trump's case, his presidential status and his social rank as a wealthy entrepreneur is what allows him to perform that strategy in the analyzed tweets.

This last tweet "*Everybody is talking about the protesters burning the American flags and proudly waving Mexican flags. I want America First - so do voters!*" (image 5) reinforces Trump's hostile approach to foreign people. After all, he once more clarifies his nationalist ideals and xenophobia. Furthermore, he discards from the all Hispanics and Latinos who are registered to vote from the category of "voters". Trump once again makes extensive use of simple and straightforward sentences, and while he demonstrates his patriotism, he can also appease and persuade the public through his direct speech.

Image 5 - Source: Twitter (2015)



He does not use Twitter as a writing platform, but he “speaks” to his followers instead, creating an even bigger impression that he is an accessible person. Following Van Dijk’s (1996) concepts, we can observe in Trump a goal of influencing his followers, using his *power* to turn them against Latinos. The author states that “when speakers are able to influence the mental models, knowledge, attitudes and eventually even the ideologies of recipients, they may indirectly control their future actions.” (p.89) Then, his position of power is definitely influencing his followers to cultivate a feeling of anger towards the immigrants.

Also, the chief of the White House benefits from his privileged position, where he has great access to different people due to the use of a social platform to create discourse filled with social prejudice. We can also notice that he follows a clear *pattern* concerning the construction of his tweets. First, he uses simple language to reach the majority of American citizens and be easily understood. Then, most of his tweets are composed of three sentences: the first one being a general statement about the topic to be discussed, a second one in which he provides his opinion, and finally the infamous watchwords to conclude his thought and call people to action.

Jan Blommaert (2018) analyses Trump’s tweets comparing them to poetry, so well-crafted are these patterns. According to him, “[...] some of his tweets appear as chunks of discourse that can be spoken by others. [...] they are instructional, showing his followers how to speak like Trump.” (pp. 1,2) Connecting it with the idea mentioned before, every line seems to be thought as a reproduction of his voice, in order to raise the strength of its power.

Donald Trump also exercises his *dominance* in and out of Twitter. While his texts on the social network are a laughing matter to many American citizens, real attitudes are being taken towards the Latino and Mexican communities in the United States; the wall is already being built and several 2nd generation Mexican-Americans who were born in the

country are being banned from their hometowns, having to move to a place they never knew and losing their chance at higher education - the youngsters who are part of the DREAM act.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

In conclusion, through the analysis made in this chapter, it is possible to understand the importance of Critical Discourse Analysis and Teun Van Dijk's theory when it comes to evaluating the influence speech and text may exert on people's thoughts on certain subjects.

The investigation of those tweets provide us with tools to better understand how people can be reached by short messages, which at first glance may seem to be just simple opinions, but if one looks deeply into it, are clearly a power mechanism that can both be used for good or evil. Fairclough (1993) remarks that "[...] people may find it difficult to comprehend that their norm practices could have specific ideological investments." (p.90) In the same way it is not easy to recognize ideology embedded in others' speech.

Finally, the job of the critical discourse analyst is to inspect, in detail, abnormalities and different aspects of speech - like Donald Trump's watchwords - and how they can, in fact, impact people (his followers, in this case) besides establishing the power relations between those whose ideology is widespread and hegemonic and those who are influenced by it. As Fairclough (1995) points out

A critical discourse analysis must aim for constant vigilance about who is using its results for what, and about whether its critique of certain practices is not helping to naturalize other equally but differently ideological practices. (FAIRCLOUGH, 1993, p.83)

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PART 4



RACE, GENDER AND SEXUALITY



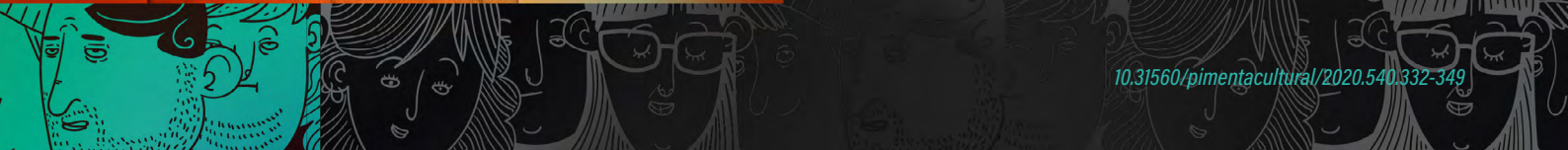



19

Douglas Yuri Hirata



**YELLOW PERIL,
MODEL MINORITY
AND THE RACIAL
TRIANGULATION**





And I think today part of the mission would be to fight against racism and polarization, learn from each other's struggle [...]. We could all fight together and we must not forget our battle cry is that 'They fought for us. Now we must fight for them!'


Kochiyama, 1998.

INTRODUCTION

In our contemporary society, immigration is a frequent topic of discussion and concern. This question has become central and transformed into a problem with catastrophic consequences in some politicians' speeches and actions and in some sections of our society. There are several important examples of this matter in recent international politics - the leave of the UK from the EU and Trump Wall. All these events demonstrate how the matter of immigration can get radical, especially when the immigrants are not white and the authorities' discourses legitimate the dichotomy "us" versus "them" utilizing economic reasoning that is, based, underneath, in racism and xenophobia. However, the concern and negative opinions against non-white immigration are not new.

The Asian (in this paper, referring to Eastern Asians) wave of immigration in the mid-19th and in the early 20th centuries is one of the examples that helps us think about the matter of non-white immigration and white supremacy. Throughout this process, Asians immigrants faced racism and xenophobia. All of this, connected with the geopolitics and ideas (such as eugenics) of that time, constructed a picture of fear and prejudice against Asians that was legitimized by the media and by the authorities


Thus, focusing in the Asian immigration experience, this chapter will show how this experience was racialized through the concepts of



Yellow Peril and Model Minority and how, using the “racial triangulation” proposed by Kim (1999), through these discourses, the white supremacy prevailed creating a “racial rank” that put Black people in the bottom while “praising” and depoliticizing Asian people as the middle one. And how to confront not only prejudice against the Asian community but also racism against the Black community, we have to repel these two concepts in order to create an antiracism solidarity. As Melo (this volume) also points out, this work is “more than a positioning in a victim condition, the criticisms raised seek to diagnose [...] racist practices, drawing attention to more empathetic and conscious attitudes”.


THE NECESSITY FOR CHEAP WORKFORCE – THE CHINESE ALTERNATIVE

One thing that approaches the formation of the sociability of the USA and Brazil is the experience of slavery. Considering the position in the global order of both, the latter being part of capitalism center and the former being part of the outskirts of the system, there was a shared issue between the two that emerged with the end of slavery in both countries – the necessity for cheap workforce in substitution of the enslaved one. The answer was the use of Chinese labor force. Although at first, in the USA, the use of this specific workforce was connected to the then recent exploration of the West Coast (DEZEM, 2005; SHIM, 1988), when California entered the Union “as a free (non-slave)”, the “booming regional economic growth intensified the need for cheap and plentiful labor” (KIM, 1999, p. 108). In Brazil, the first experience with the Chinese was in 1814. D. João VI brought a small quantity of Chinese “farmers” to work at an experimental tea plantation in Brazilian soil. However, according to Dezem (2005), the endeavor was not successful because the workers brought were not indeed farmers;




the soil and climate conditions were not satisfactory and the Chinese labors escaped due to mistreatments. The issue was forgotten as then the enslaved Blacks trafficking was in full force (Ibid, p. 50). After this first contact, unlike the United States that received Asian immigration (especially Chinese) since the middle of the 19th century, Brazilian authorities would only look at this alternative after the prohibition of enslaved trafficking in 1850 when the necessity for the substitution of the enslaved workforce emerged as an issue (DEZEM, 2005). With that, the discussions regarding Asian immigration gained importance in political debate. Although not something concrete in Brazil, the discourses around Asian immigration, here translated to Chinese immigration, were shared between the two countries – the Chinese Question.

In the USA, sino-workers began to arrive after the “Treaty of Wanghia” in 1844 (Ibid.), but the situation they encountered was not friendly. One of the scapegoats of that time West Coast’s economic problems and unemployment, Chinese laborers were “blamed for competing unfairly with white workers” (LEE, 2007, p. 547) and were accused of sending “money made in the United States back to China” (SHIM, 1988, p. 387). In pair with that, the racial argument said they were “unassimilable, inferior and immoral” (LEE, 2007, p. 547). But, the cheap workforce was too much to be ignored, as even East Coast newspaper editors agreed during the middle of the 18th century that the Chinese were not biologically suited for America, but their cheap labor was too good to be ignored (MILLER, 1969, p. 159, apud KIM, 1999, p. 209). In the end, this tension resulted in “a series of excluding laws regarding the *coolies* with the aim of avoiding further social and political participation of this element” (DEZEM, 2005, p. 170), such as the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, result of the increased tension against the Chinese caused by the economic retraction consequence of the Civil War (1861-65), that prohibited the immigration of Chinese for a long period and the Chinese residents in America were forbidden



to acquire American citizenship. One of the sponsors of this Act, John F. Miller, said that “Chinese labors in America have threatened good order of certain districts in this country” (preamble of the Chinese Exclusion Act, apud CHEN, 2012, p. 18) – Chen (2012) explains: as it was considered impossible for Chinese to assimilate American culture and the values of Christianity and the number of Chinese workers was massive, creating a tension regarding employment, the answer was exclusion through legislation. Although in the discussions around immigration, Charles Walcott Brooks, testified that he thought Chinese were better than “Negros” (apud KIM, 1999, p. 110). As Lee (2007, p. 546-547) summarizes the situation: “by the late nineteenth century, the massive immigration of laborers from China directly overlapped with domestic fears about American race, class and gender relations and helped fan the fires of organized anti-Chinese sentiment” which led the Chinese to be characterized as a threat as workers and as a race while being considered superior to Blacks.

Meanwhile in Brazil, the Chinese Question appeared with force after the Rio Branco law and the Agricultural Congress of 1878 in which one of the most debated subjects was, as mentioned above, the lack of workforce for the expanding agriculture. At first, after disregarding the African, the Chinese and local workers categorizing them as “non-manly races and little inclined to work” (DEZEM, 2005, p. 60), the agricultural elites and representatives of the government desired the white, European immigrant to their farms; they were the ideal because besides working, they were supposed to whitewash our “mixed” race. However, the persistence of slavery and the preference of these immigrants for the U.S. and Argentina made the farm owners look for an alternative. This alternative was the Chinese. On the side favorable to this immigrant, along with the argument of abundant and cheap workforce, the sino-worker was characterized as a necessary transitory element between the Black and White races, as a preparation



to the ideal European immigrant, but not desired as a permanent one (Ibid, p. 73). However, on the other side, the racial question prevailed; the Chinese were viewed as “weak”, “depraved”, and “indolent”, “narcotized by the opium” and would bring “physical decadence and moral degradation” (Ibid, p. 75). In the end, as Dezem (2005, p. 108) summarizes, the Chinese Question in Brazil didn’t concretize and became a “ghost question” impossible to be solved. On top of that, this debate, supported by the racist and ethnocentric theories of then, served as the embryo of the stereotype against the Yellow – a danger to the whitewash project of the Brazilian race.

Thus, the North American – dated from the 1860s until its dissolution post-1895 - discourses regarding the Chinese immigration pointed towards the Yellow as a threat to their economy, culture and race, towards a racialized experience that see Asians as the “other”, as something degraded and only needed as cheap and abundant workforce. Therefore, constructing the Yellow, in this case the Chinese, as a peril who will, if temporary, send the country’s fortune to their motherland while stealing jobs or, if permanent, will contaminate the population or be like an “alien” – the White Americans perceived Asians as unassimilable foreigners who “would eventually overtake the nation and wreak social and economic havoc” (FONG, 2002, p. 189, apud KAWAI, 2005, p. 113). In Brazil, as argues Dezem (2005), the fact that the country did not receive Chinese workers contributed to different formulations of the discourses regarding the Yellow and the discussions produced in political debate didn’t resonate in the population. However, the idea of the Asian immigrant as a threat, at least against the whitewashed population desired, and as a cheap workforce worth of being explored despite racial issues was at stake. The yellow peril would enter with force after the eminent coming of “ambassadors of the victorious Japan” in 1907, as we will see ahead.

THE YELLOW PERIL - GEOPOLITICS AND RACISM


The idea of the Yellow Peril is a racial stereotype working with geopolitics background that has been constructed in the West since Medieval times with the threat of Genghis Khan and Mongolian invasion of Europe (KAWAI, 2005). In the 19th century it emerged associated with China aiming mainly to invade it and exploit it (CHEN, 2012). “The Yellow Peril Doctrine” was “an imperial slogan”, an instrument used by European and American potencies with “means to instigate the people into evil business, or excuse to defend themselves” (GOLLWITZER, 1962, p. 8-9, apud CHEN, 2012, p. 6) in the process of invading China. But it was thanks to the German Kaiser, Wilhelm II, in the end of the 19th century, that the term “Yellow Peril” was named and popularized (KAWAI, 2005). In this context, another element was added to the Yellow equation – the Japanese.

The Meiji era (1868-1912) in Japan came with the objective to modernize it, rebuilding its internal structures according to capitalists molds (DEZEM, 2005). Along with this, the desire of being acknowledged by the West and the desire of expansionism were also included. In this context, the first look to Japan by the Occident was in the win against China in the Sino-Japanese war in 1895. This marked the real expansionist of Japan in Asia (Ibid.) and the substitution of China for them as the Eastern potency. In this frame, the German Kaiser, searching for alliances with Russia, announced his hatred against the Yellow race and saw in China’s defeat an opening to a supposed yellow invasion (Ibid.). This was a political tactic, as Wilhelm II appreciated the idea of the Czar being occupied with the Orient, creating a relief for German’s oriental borders (STORRY, G. R., 1968, p. 81 apud Dezem, 2005) in a situation where the balance of power between the potencies was an issue. It was in this context of imperialism, expansionism, of

Yellow threat, and fight for power between the potencies that emerged the war that would settle Japan and its people as a threat – the Russian-Japanese War (1904-1905).

The Japanese victory against the Russian showed the world the first military defeat of a representative of the “White race” against an Eastern country (DEZEM, 2005) – from there the possibility became a reality, Japan presented itself as potency willing to expand its sphere of influence. With this, it can be argued that that the ideas that constituted the “Yellow Peril” discourse through the first half of the 20th century have its genesis in racial and expansionist questions (Ibid.).

Around the same time, in the US, the anti-Yellow movement was fully consolidated and pointing towards the Japanese. Dezem (2005) explains that different from the Chinese, the Japanese immigrant was supported by its own government. This allied with the notion that the Nipponese were ambassadors of Japan, with an education based around nationalist ideas and a religion based on the cult of the emperor, made them the “new Oriental peril”, different from the Chinese. The racial element was present – the Japanese were accused of being unassimilable, they feared a Nipponese invasion in the West Coast (Ibid.) - as well as the economic one – the Japanese were seen as competition by the White, as the “spirit of sacrifice [...] made them subject themselves to extreme conditions, which [...] led them to break strikes for extra salary” (NOGUEIRA, 1973, p. 73 apud DEZEM, 2005, p. 183). On top of that, the literature from that time converged to the idea of a Yellow Peril – a book written by ex-Marine officer and congressman Richmond Pearson Hobson alerted that a Yellow Peril was coming for the West Coast (DEZEM, 2005). It was in this context that suspecting a political character of the Japanese immigration and looking at the conflicts between them and its citizen, the Washington government restricted Nipponese immigration (TAKEUCHI, 2008) – it was the *Gentleman’s Agreement Act* of 1907.



According to Dezem (2005), in Brazil, the series of conflicts won by Japan served to a process of construction/deconstruction of the Japan/Japanese imagery. Unlike other countries, such the USA, who already received large quantities of Asians immigrants, Brazilian's common sense regarding Nippon still revolved around the idea of an exotic country – where the “other” is exalted by their exotic features. The idea of a “yellow peril” only circulated between the authorities. It was not until the coming of Japanese immigrants in 1907 that this idea gained force and recovered the stereotypes used against the Chinese, adapted to the Japanese. The consensus went from “Japanese from Japan” to “Japanese from Japan in Brazil” – in this logic, the new immigrant had to fully integrate and dilute themselves into the local culture, avoiding any cultural pluralism.

This idea was in authorities' discourse since before the beginning of the process. In 1907, Luiz Guimarães Filho, in charge of Brazil's business in Tokyo, warned of the danger of Japanese Immigration. According to Takeuchi (2008), he said that the Japanese was unassimilable, intended to impose their costumes and caused conflicts for not being able to live a Japanese lifestyle. In his opinion, if the Japanese immigration became a reality in Brazil, it would create an “enemy inside our house”, that in the future would be “a danger both to national integrity and to the formation of a white Brazilian population” (TAKEUCHI, 2008, p. 58). For him, the Japanese were a “spy of birth and our enemy by the blood” (LEÃO, 1989, p. 22 apud TAKEUCHI, 2008, p. 58).

This “danger” was later addressed in 1923 by a project of law proposed by Fidélis Reis – the project number 391 of October 22th 1923. It proposed the regulation of immigration to Brazil, forbidding Black immigrants and restraining Yellow immigrants to 5% of individuals from this origin located in each State. To defend his project, the congressman said that the “economical needs were irrelevant before the formation of the Brazilian race and the risk represented by the insertion of an unassimilable element for its moral and culture” (TAKEUCHI, 2008, p.

59). He considered the miscegenation with the Asian not worth from a eugenics point of view, since this element was condemned to remain caged and could be a danger for the nation's future (Ibid.).

The debate of the so-called Japanese danger would return to the spotlight in the National Constituent Assembly in 1933 where the immigration would be one of the themes. There three characters would stand out as the “heroes of the anti-Nippon campaign”- Miguel Couto, Xavier de Oliveira e Artur Neiva (TAKEUCHI, 2008). Utilizing racist and political arguments, the trio wanted to stop Asian immigration. For example, Couto, a doctor, treating Asians immigrants as a disease, tells a parable where an animal, supposedly domestic, exterminate its owner in a fury attack – like the former, the country didn't know the immigrants mentality. Xavier also evokes racial arguments, for him, the Japanese were predisposed to mental diseases, were undesirable and unassimilable. He also says that, following USA's example, Brazil should forbid Asian immigration (TAKEUCHI, 2008). The example Xavier is talking about is the Immigration Act of 1924 – which “prohibited any further Asian immigration by denying admission to all aliens who were ‘ineligible for citizenship’” (LEE, 2007, p. 560).

Following the trend set by the USA with this Act (LEE, 2007), from the Constituent debate, the Miguel Couto Amendment was approved and put in the Federal Constitution of 1934 (TAKEUCHI, 2008). Born from the concern by the authorities and intellectuals with the establishment of the nation, in racial and cultural terms, with the “undesirables” and with the aim to whitewash the Brazilian population, the law stated that “restrictions must be imposed on the entry of immigrants with the objective of ensure the ethnical integration and physical and civil capacity of the immigrant” (Ibid, p. 65). It also stipulated an annual quota for each nationality and prohibited the concentration of immigrants in any part of Brazil's territory. To further expand the racist side of this law, Takeuchi (2008) explains that the quota was only put because it would not affect European immigrants. In fact, the Japanese would be the

most affected, since their immigration process was then recent and the number of immigrants was significant. The racist arguments in the Constituent Assembly and the subsequent law show the endorsement by the State of exclusion and segregation.

The fact that these racist and nationalist arguments were presented in a Constituent Assembly and Arthur Neiva was a member of Vargas' government shed light in the endorsement by the State of exclusion and segregation. Racism against non-White immigrants, in our scope Asian, was not only in discourse, soon it became institutionalized - endorsed and put in the law by the representatives of the State, legitimating the Yellow immigrant, at that time the Japanese, as a group who were taking the lands and expelling the Brazilian as well as "polluting" their race.

One of the crucial points in the Yellow Peril history was the World War II. When Japan's desire to becoming an imperial power clashed with U.S interests in the Asia and Pacific regions, the Yellow Peril concentrated in Japan (KAWAI, 2005). After the attack in Pearl Harbor in 1941, one of the consequences was the Executive Order 9066 signed by the Roosevelt, which suspended Japanese Americans civil rights and put them in concentration camps due to their origins (SHIM, 1998; TAKEUCHI, 2008). In Brazil, the violence was present too. After the rupture of diplomatic relations with the Axis in 1942, the discourse was transformed, accusing Japanese and their descendants of being war spies – the idea of an invasion plot (TAKEUCHI, 2008), as Coaracy (apud NUCCI, 2006, p. 134) says in his book *The Japanese Danger* (1942): "an unassimilable race, physically inferior, morally different from us, passive instrument for an imperialist policy [...] against all American continent".

In the 1950's the eyes turned to China when the communists took over in 1949, fought against the U.S. in the Korean War and "cruelly" mistreated American prisoners (SHIM, 1998). According to Chen (2012), several slogans were proposed such as one to "suppress the expansion of Communism in Asia" – it was the "communist Yellow Peril".

In the 1980's together with a context that included the Model Minority narrative (seen ahead), the image of Asian Americans was affected by the deficit in trading between the United States and Asia – the economic problems were attributed to trade practices with Japan and the “tigers” (South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore) that were considered “unfair” (KAWAI, 2005; SHIM, 1998). A survey conducted in the U.S in 1982 showed that 44 percent of Americans blamed the country's economic problems on competition from Japanese corporations (Espiritu, 1992, p. 138 apud SHIM, 1998, p. 397).

Throughout the history, the Yellow Peril was used mainly as an excuse, a political and cultural instrument, to subjugate and discriminate Asians around the World. As Shimabuko (2016) explains the Yellow Peril is a way to manipulate power and alliances in order to maintain the European-American hegemony – one of the apparatus that the State utilizes to justify imperialists policies. That's why it is mutable, as it depends on the politics conjuncture, “always aiming in favoring the West when assigning the roles of common enemy, very often racialized, to Japan, China and more recently North Korea” (SHIMABUKO, 2016, p. 7). Drinking from geopolitics, racism and the “fascination” with the “other”, the Yellow Peril presents itself as paranoia, a permanent state of plot – a discourse imprisoned with fear – aiming to put the Yellow as a threat to Western (White) socialization and domination. To summarize, it is a form of control through discourse, sometimes lethal, that legitimize racial violence and hatred while maintaining the White hegemony.

THE MODEL MINORITY: RACIAL DISPUTES AS MERITOCRACY

The model minority stereotype is thought to be a discourse constructed by the mainstream media, more specifically by two articles:

“Success story, Japanese-American style” (Petersen, 1966) published in *New York Times Magazine* on January, 1966 and “Success Story of One Minority in U.S.” published in December, 1966 in *U.S News and World Report*. The two articles celebrated Japanese and Chinese Americans as the model minority groups who were serious about education, obedient to the law and possessed close family relations (KAWAI, 2005). According to Shim (1998), the 1965 publication of “The Negro Family: The Case for National Action” written by Moynihan and Lyndon B. Johnson ignited a controversy because attributed the economic subordination of Blacks to their lack of family values. This publication paved the way to the articles cited above. However, not only domestic U.S context contributed for the construction of the model minority stereotype, Japan’s re-emergence as a hegemonic economic power in the 60’s (PALUMBO-LIU, 1999, apud KAWAI, 2005) entered in the making of process of the stereotype.

As Moynihan’s and Johnson’s publication paved the way for the two articles, the latter brought the possibility for the model minority myth to be a counter-response for the demands of the African Americans during the civil rights protests in 1960. Utilizing the Asians as an instrument, the groups in power justified African America’s own economic “failure” with meritocracy and other family values that didn’t shed light to the racial background of both (SHIM 1998; KAWAI 2005). Ignoring the historic context that Asian immigration was not forced like African immigration and that most Asian immigrants were voluntary, the model minority stereotype functions to “[legitimate] status quo social institutions” (NAKAYAMA, 1998, p. 71 apud KAWAI, 2005, p. 114). As Kawai (2005) depicting Asian Americans as the model minority, other racial minorities are downgraded as a “problem”. This produces a colorblind ideology – a “set of norms that obscures continuing patterns of White dominance in the post-civil rights era” (KIM, 1999, p. 116) that “furthers racial power not through the direct articulation of racial differences but rather by obscuring the operation of racial power, protecting it from challenge,

and permitting ongoing racialization via racially coded methods” (KIM, 2000, p. 17 apud KAWAI, 2005, p. 113) – this code being the culture. In other words, the model minority myth served a racist purpose – disguised as meritocracy and “cultural differences”, this narrative obscured historic context to subjugate and put in clash two minorities groups while maintaining the White supremacy. Hiding structural racism putting the issue as an individual one, as a lack of effort while depositing enormous pressure in Asian descendants and stigmatizing them as docile, passive, etc.

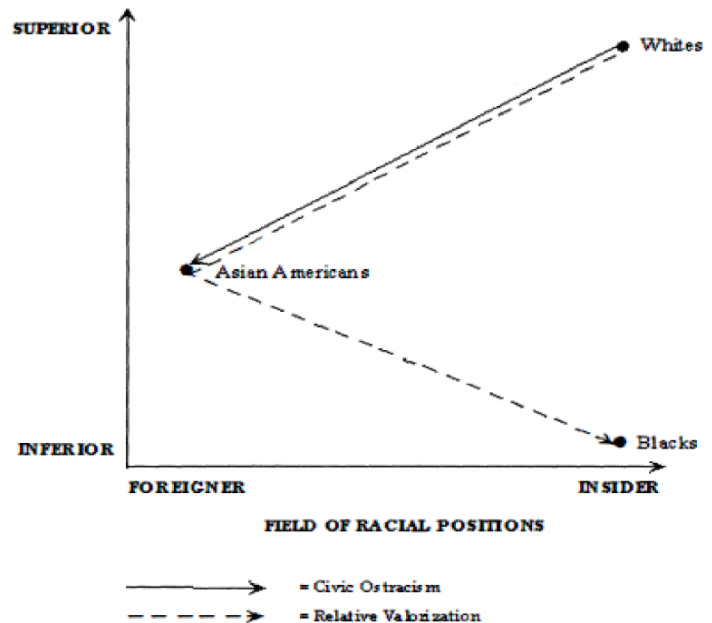
In Brazil, this notion functions perfectly, as Santos e Acevedo (2013) show, mainstream Brazilian media depicts Asian Brazilians as hard-working individuals, mostly in working or impersonal situations, stereotyping this group as a massive square of robotic persons without showing neither the cultural diversity among this group nor expressing their individuality. The problem aggravates when even the maximum authority of the country legitimizes the model minority stereotype – when comparing Asians Brazilians and African Brazilians, Bolsonaro, then in presidential campaign, said: “Has someone saw a Japanese begging? This is because it is a race that has shame”. This show, as Almeida (2019, this work) points out, “how racism reverberates in modern society even one hundred and thirty years after the legal termination of slavery and the supposed idea that there is not superiority among the races”.

RACIAL TRIANGULATION – WHITE, ASIAN AND BLACK


As we have seen, both Yellow Peril and Model Minority discourses were born from geopolitics and racial issues. However, they don't exist separated from one another, since its genesis, the Model Minority stereotype share a dialectic relation with the Yellow Peril one. The racial

triangulation theory (KIM, 1999) helps us in seeing this relationship as well as think about the racialization process Asian individuals went in comparison with Black and White ones.

Kim (1999) proposes that Asian Americans have been racially triangulated vis-à-vis Blacks and Whites. The author explains that this process occurs with two simultaneous, linked processes: “relative valorization” and “civic ostracism”. The first tells about how the “dominant group A (Whites) valorizes subordinate group B (Asian Americans) relative to subordinate group C (Blacks) on cultural and/or racial grounds in order to dominate both groups” (KIM, 1999, p. 107); the second talks how “group A (Whites) constructs subordinate group B (Asian Americans) as immutably foreign and unassimilable with Whites on cultural and/or racial grounds in order to ostracize them from the body politic and civic membership” (Ibid.).



Source: Kim, C. "The Racial Triangulation of Asian Americans," *Politics & Society*, 27 (1), 1999.



Throughout this chapter, we could see diverse examples of this triangulation in action – the Chinese/Japanese Question is one of them. In the Asian immigration process during the 19th and 20th centuries the Yellow element was “praised” for being better than the Black one as well as ostracized for being unassimilable to the Western costumes and a potential invader. After the Civil Rights movement in 1960’s, the logic continues coded as a cultural problem rather than a racial one – Asians Americans are praised for their heritage values and are seen as hard workers and intelligent, opposed to African Americans, seen as lazy and problematic. However, the ostracism continues as this success is linked, not on accident, to “alien” values and the supposedly apoliticalness of Asian Americans.

This theory can be used in Brazil’s context too, sharing the slavery background with the U.S. – as Almeida (2019, this work) explains: “slavery is a constitutive and a collective social memory which Brazil [and here I would include the U.S.] has never overcome and, because of that, keeps repeating its legacy in different ways through the idea of white people superiority” - the racialization of Brazilian Asians occurred from a similar perspective. As we have seen, at the beginning of the Asian immigration process, the Yellow element was considered a transitional one – better than Blacks, but not White -, was considered a better worker – more organized and dedicated. At the same time, the notion of being unassimilable and not suited for the whitewashed project desired by the authorities existed. In contemporary times, this view carries on, as we have seen by Bolsonaro’s declaration, the Model Minority stereotype valorizes Brazilian Asians to the detriment of African Brazilians, in order to subjugate both, as later, the same person utilizes racism to mock an Asian by utilizing the emasculated stereotype . In that sense, the same logic is used: the clash between two ethnical groups considered inferior in order to maintain White supremacy. As Shimabuko (2018) summarizes, the process of racialization of Eastern Asian in Brazil (as well as in the U.S) is ambivalent. It can be utilized to

create terror with the logic of the invader as well as utilized as the model minority to generate clash between ethnic groups.

CONCLUSION

When looking at the process of Asian racialization in the West, we could see that it is marked with signs of xenophobia, racism and violent discrimination. Throughout the centuries, they were put in a subaltern position that was less or more discriminatory according to the geopolitics and the needs of those in power. In this process, Asians were placed in an advantageous position in relation to Blacks, creating a false sense of security, when in reality both groups are subordinate to the Whites.

In this sense, utilizing the stereotypes of the Yellow Peril and Model Minority, the White supremacy maintained its power by putting the Asians in clash with Blacks, creating narratives that lowered both groups. So, in order to break from this chain of power, we, descendants of Asians need to question and refuse being the argument that legitimates racism, we need to see that discourses like the Model Minority stereotype are not real as it ignores historical context and standardizes every one of us. Discourses like that function as a concession that can be taken anytime and be replaced with the logic of fear and danger. Therefore, to truly subjugate racism, we have to be solidary, creating an antiracist solidarity.

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20

Janaina Almeida



**A FULL CUP
TO CLOSET
RACISTS**





The idea of politics is even older than Brazil itself. In its origin, the term *politiké* designated the interest in the common good of those who lived within a *polis* — ancient Greek city-states created by the end of the Homeric Period, in VIII b.C. With the aim of rationalizing the society and organizing the participation of the citizens in the government, it was created the Athenian democracy, the first historic record of politics. By the time it was engendered, politics was deeply bound to democracy. They were both seeking not the maintenance of a single and major power, but rather the division of it, in order to achieve an ideal and fair administration that embraces every social class.

In his work “Politics”, Aristotle expatiates on the principle of the division, defending that “(...) democracy and demos in their truest form are based upon the recognized principle of democratic justice, that all should count for equally; for equality implies that the poor should have more share in the government than the rich.” (p.142) Therefore, in order to be considered good, the government must be fair and equal, fulfilling the needs of those who do not pertain to the highest classes, and embracing them in every decision taken by the Assembly. It hasn't always been like that, though.


In Brazil, the very first notion of politics was an extension of the desire of Portuguese power. As a result of being an exploitation colony of Portugal, the colonialism has caused not only Brazilian's flora, but also its culture, habits and the organizational system to deteriorate. Even when Brazil found settlement, through the Independence process, our first ruler was Portuguese. Furthermore, the greatest and most important decision of Brazilian society, the Abolition of Slavery, was a result of the English' pressure that Brazil was being submitted to. To sum up, Brazilian's early political acts were not effects of the desire of embracing lower classes and minority groups, they were rather attempts of repairing the prevailing power and silencing those who were not part of it. To this governing apparatus with clear cut borders and divisions among the constituent parts of a society, Jacques Rancière denominated *police*.

The politics, thus, is the contrary of *police*. Whilst the first one is comprised of the principal of equality, and therefore, the blending of heterogeneities, the second one is "(...) the order of bodies that defines the allocation of ways of doing, ways of being, and ways of saying, and sees that those bodies are assigned by name to a particular place or task;" (p.29) The *police* is the law. And the only way through which a law is considered political, is when heightened by the principal of equality, seeking the common good of those who live in collectivity. The *police* is the politics applied wrongly, breaking the whole down to several pieces, favoring those who do not need to be any favored.

Through the course of history, and mainly nowadays, it is very common to see *police* acting instead of the politics, and it is so startling that the idea of equality has been dealt with as a utopia. This lack of share and preoccupation with the lowest classes has constantly quietened their voices and erased their existence of the social body. The most striking and notorious example of it is the several number of dictatorships through which different countries have been subdued to, in which a prevailing class spreads its beliefs as the single accepted truth, excluding those who do not agree with it, as well as eradicating those who do not fit it.

The world has very recently entered an era of making heterogeneities visible. Several governments in different countries disseminate the hate towards the "different." Gender, ethnicity and class have all been further segregated by the imposing of limits on what is considerable or not acceptable. Brazil likewise has suffered from constant seizures in its organization and what was once considered immutable is now being questioned.

To give an example of that, the present work is going to date back to a lecture of a well-known politician that has very recently overrun the governmental scenario, and somehow takes us back to the earliest beginnings of Brazilian society due to laggard values regarding



minorities. Laying on the applied linguistics field, and therefore counting on Foucault and Bakhtin studies over discourse, we seek to analyze the grammatical and semantic features of the discourse and how come it is intrinsically related to the ideologies disseminated through the speech. Such study is indispensable to engage a more critical thinking about those who are ruling the society and taking all the decisions in regard of its own behalf — which represents a most-favored social class. In that way, the aim is to clarify the sense of politics being applied differently than what it was originally deemed for, that is to say, to a common good rather than for a specific group of people.

The work is divided in three sections. Section one aims at giving an overview of the social and political context in which the lecture was produced, as well as explaining the social matters analyzed throughout the work. Section two is concerned with the first seconds of the analyzed speech, in which the politician discusses indigenous people pieces of land, designated for them by law. To wrap it up, the final section is concerned with the approach to quilombo communities and the pieces of land designated for them as well, problematizing the type of language that the politician makes use of to describe black people. In this way, the research attempts at creating a more critical thought in regard of the means by which minorities are depicted in ideology-carried discourses, and how such vision harms the social path those have walked in direction to equality.


IT FITS LIKE A GLOVE

In 2017, the Federal Public Ministry filed a legal suit against the, at the time, federal deputy of Rio de Janeiro, Jair Messias Bolsonaro. The grievance was in regard of moral damages to quilombola communities due to the use of an offensive, insulting and discriminative language

to describe the group at a lecture at Clube Hebraica, a Jewish cultural society for sports and entertainment founded in the 50s by a small group of followers of the religion in Brazil. The discourse is not the single one which makes use of biased language when talking about minority groups, expressing a dominant ideology which the politician seeks to disseminate throughout the modern society.

The Brazilian Israelite Confederation, described as a supportive center for plural politics discussions, has invited Jair Bolsonaro to a lecture in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. Whilst the former ceased due to an undersigned of its members, the latter crowded the five hundred seats auditorium in Laranjeira on April 3rd, 2017. Meanwhile, two hundred members of the community were situated outside the club protesting against the visit of the pre candidate for the presidency under the movement “#NãoEmNossoNome”. They pursued, through the use of the hashtag, to have Jewish habits and way of thinking segregated from those spread and supported by the lecture, and whereby their culture suffered such a high oppression not many years back from then.

In the present research, it is fundamental to understand how every act of speech is embedded in a specific point of view as well as a personal ideology and, therefore, takes on a particular meaning according to its context of usage. Fairclough (1992, p.67) characterizes discourse as a form of social, political and ideological practice, which “constitutes, naturalizes, sustains and changes significations of the world from diverse positions in power relations”. It will be shown how Bolsonaro, the author of the discourse studied herein, is reinforcing the hegemonic western ideology of a dominant class — the imposition of a “superior” race that should be in control of society due to the color of its skin — through the usage of the language features he makes use of. Moreover, quoting Gobbo (2019, this work) I’ll attempt to show how “(...) these self-referential discourses which do not open up for different points of view (and consequently different discourses) are menacing for the kinds of existences which are distinct from it.”



Brazilian labor society arose from an enslave-like structure. Slavery was established in Brazil during European colonization and intensified during the implementation of economic liberalism and the subsequent industrial capitalism, which made it move from Colonial to Capitalist and reach a systemic, bloody and predatory level of labor. The labor force was endowed of black people. Marginalized since the beginning and condemned to serve white people, black people have continuously suffered from a fixed postulation of their inferiority, perpetuated in the growing racism they face daily. And, although this racism has been thought to be reaching minor levels recently, it has begun to show its flourishing presence even more after Jair Bolsonaro's presidency candidacy.

The video used to analyse the content was posted seven days after the event itself, by the YouTube channel “*Canal do Afonso: A Tribuna do Antipetismo Fundamentalista*”, as a way of protesting against several years of Labor Party's presidency rule and the economic crisis in which the country found itself. This economic crisis initiated due to a series of wrongly implemented economic policies that led Brazil's gross domestic product to decrease 3,8% in 2015, as well as households and governs consumption and the importation and exploitation level.

It was in that situation with an alarming necessity of recuperation, and in a country in which the elected president had her mandate evoked under the claim of fiscal responsibility crimes, that Jair Bolsonaro found the perfect room and the most suitable argument to put his own ideologies in vogue.

1. Precaution

As aforementioned, the *politics* in its original meaning should be worried about the constituents of a society as a whole, a body compounded by different particles but dealt with as a single portion. Afterall, society is a “supposedly big homogeneity” formed by several

heterogeneities. One among those heterogeneities is the *Racial* subdivision. The idea of racial superiority of white people has entered Brazilian society since its colonization by the Europeans. In that moment it was sealed the black and indigenous people inferiority, as they were extremely harmed by the colonization process. Thinking about that historical debt, the 1988 Constitution has implemented a few measures to secure the survival of these groups, that nowadays do not stand out in numbers.

Bolsonaro, in the lecture presented herein, rests on the idea that everything needed for Brazil to start flourishing again is to make worthwhile commercial partners — for instance, with United States of America, South Korea, Japan and Israel — as well as start to explore what is “ours”, but situated in areas delimited to indigenous tribes and quilombos. According to the candidate, there is an abundance of important minerals for exploitation in such lands that, once harvested, could possibly help to improve Brazil’s economic situation. Albeit, as The Constitution of the Federative Republic of Brazil and The Transitions Constitutional Provisions Act of 1988 recognize and categorize both indigenous and quilombo lands as unwilling and inalienable lands of indispensable collective rights to the mentioned communities, its occupation, possession and the exploitation of its natural wealth are null and void to the government, as follows:

Article. 216, of The Constitution of the Federative Republic of Brazil, in which

§1°. “The Government shall, with the cooperation of the community, promote and protect the Brazilian cultural heritage, by means of inventories, registers, vigilance, monument protection decrees, expropriation and other forms of precaution and preservation.”;

Article 231 of The Constitution of the Federative Republic of Brazil, in which “Indians shall have their social organization, customs, languages, creeds and traditions recognized, as well

as their original rights to the lands they traditionally occupy, it being incumbent upon the Union to demarcate them, protect and ensure respect for all of their property.”;

§4°. The lands referred to in this article are inalienable and indisposable and the rights thereto are not subject to limitation; and

Article 68 of The Transitional Constitutional Provisions Act, in which “Final ownership shall be recognized for the remaining members of the ancient runaway slave communities who are occupying their lands and the State shall grant them the respective title deeds.”

The analysis starting point is at the mentioning of indigenous land. According to the politician “Aqui, apenas, são as reservas indígenas do Brasil. Onde tem uma reserva indígena, tem uma riqueza embaixo dela. Temos que mudar isso daí! Mas nós não temos, hoje em dia, mais autonomia pra mudar isso daí. Entregou-se tanto nossa nação que chegamos a esse ponto. Mas dá pra mudar o nosso país”.

Initially, it should be closely observed the choice of the active voice in “*Temos que mudar isso daí*” instead of the passive voice, as well as the second person plural, *temos*, as conveying thinking content. Things are not simply going to change by themselves: they have to be changed through someone’s action. The person capable of taking the most appropriate action in that specific scenario is the candidate himself. He, however, can not do that alone: he needs electors for that. By using the plural form of the verb and inserting his own person in the discourse, Bolsonaro is bringing interactivity in his discourse, not only instigating his listeners to take part in the process of changing their living reality by an invitation to the partake and constructing an adhesive strength, but he is also developing a closed idea of “nation” in which indigenous and, as it is said further, quilombolas are not included .

However, how come indigenous, the actual first living beings in Brazilian lands, even before Portuguese colonization, are not included

in the idea of nation? In what way has the nation *being so harder given* that white men has no longer under power the possession of the few 12,2% of Brazilian territory designated to those who have being in here longer than any other group? And how that wealthy land can be returned to government ownership — as said in the end of the lecture by the candidate “(...) *não vai ter 1 centímetro demarcado pra reserva indígena ou pra quilombola*” — so that all of its resources might be exploited in order to save Brazilian economy?

It is not clear what the candidate is talking about when he mentions “*entregou-se tanto nossa nação.*” Based on the idea that he considers “nation” as a closed group of people that correspond to his hegemonic view of society, one possible interpretation is that he is talking about the implementation of rights to these minority groups, due to the Federal Constitution of 1988 and its Act. That would only corroborate with the candidate’s narrow mind towards what society has now come to accept but in previous times was not seen with good eyes, but instead as abnormal, such as homosexuals and women in a position of power. By giving these minority groups their due rights, we *have reached this point.*

According to Foucault, discourse analysis should take in account “the law of the existence of the utterance which made them [the discourses] possible; (...) the condition of their singular emergence; their correlation with other events.” (1984, p.105) In other words, the social and political context to which the production was engaged whether than its grammatical and structural features. Those assumptions turn discourse into a subjective desire of communicating what an individual believes to be the truth and thus enabling a huge number of interpretations within the context it is inserted. Even though the specific choice of vocabulary, grammar and the structure of the discourse have been taken in account in this analysis, the focus in here is to transpire how racism reverberates in modern society even one hundred and thirty

years after the legal termination of slavery and the supposed idea that there is not superiority among races.

2. Preservation

Subsequently, the speech mentions that “Isso aqui é só reserva indígena. Tá faltando quilombolas, que é outra brincadeira. Eu fui num quilombola em Eldorado Paulista. Olha, o afrodescendente mais leve lá pesava sete arrobas. Não fazem nada! Eu acho que nem pra procriadores servem mais. Mais de um bilhão de reais por ano gasto com eles.”

First of all, it is important to cover the definition of quilombos. They were, originally, african centers of resistance to colonial slavery, composed by groups of at least three slaves that were able to escape their masters and hide or isolate themselves in a piece of land. Due to the constant repression of the slavery system, these groups weren't able to settle in a single land and, therefore, they were also nomads. Nowadays the definition of quilombo communities is much more political, though: it represents their right to be recognized as a living portion of the society, and the sustenance to reintegrated black people identities not only as a memory or as an extinct slice of what used to be a group. The matter with the modern attribution of quilombos is to show Brazilian society that they are a constituent part of it. They are responsible for its culture and habits, as well as for the formation of its individuals. That they are inserted in the idea of “nation”.

Even though the Transitional Constitutional Provisions Act embrace in its article that “Final title shall be recognized for the remaining members of the former fugitive slave communities who are occupying their lands, and the State shall grant them the respective deeds,” only 10% of the communities formed by descendents of enslaved africans do retain the titles over their lands. Ever since the Act came out, in 1988, only 165 land were regularized by the government, and there is still a

number of 3 thousand quilombo communities and approximately 198 thousand families waiting for the title of their lands.


The quilombo to which the deputy is referring to is unknown. Both because (1) there are eleven quilombos in the region of Eldorado Paulista and he has not made clear which one he have been at, and (2) because the leaders of eight of those certified that they have never heard of Jair Bolsonaro's visit. The oldest quilombo in the region is Ivaporunduva. It was founded during the sixteenth century and occupies over three thousand hectares of land, in which the main sources of income are agricultural, through banana's crop, and tourism. Despite that, they also produce beans and vegetables for their own consumption. The community is formed by eighty families and approximately three hundred and eight people in the whole, including children, adults and elderly.

If we choose not to attain at the wrong usage of the noun *quilombola*, that actually designates "a slave refugee in a quilombo" [who] instead of "the place slave refugees took shelter" [where], — most likely what the candidate was seeking to say in the context — the most important information present in this part of the discourse is the noun "*brincadeira*," used to categorize quilombos — in here with the proper designation — and indigenous reservation. In a jocular tone, Bolsonaro is classifying the support given to the life and maintenance of black and indigenous tribes as mockery, wisecrack, thoroughly dispensable and unnecessary under the eyes of capitalism, which spends "*mais de um bilhão de reais*" yearly with social benefits for its regional production and sustainable development but, even though, receives a minimal or null monetary payback from them. The logic here is that quilombola communities assemble a lazy and obese group of people that "(...) *não fazem nada*" and "*nem pra procriadores servem mais*" and, because they do not constitute an active working class, it is not worth to spend the government's money with them.

There is a maxim of Benjamin Franklin (1748) considered an important lesson to profit, which can be associated with the discourse above mentioned. It is: "Remember, that time is money. He that can earn ten shillings a day by his labor, and goes abroad, or sits idle, one half of that day, though he spends but sixpence during his diversion or idleness, ought not to reckon that the only expense; he has really spent, rather thrown away, five shillings, besides." This is one approach, among others, through which the candidate has proved himself an enlightened capitalist: by saying that Quilombos are not worthy spending the government moneys on because they do not profit.

The final consideration of this analysis concerns the use of the term *arroba* to describe the weight of one specific quilombola. Arroba is an old unit of measurement, originally used by Arabian, that correspond to approximately fifteen kilograms — 14,7kg to be exact, what would lead the "*mais leve*" African descendent in the place to weight 102,9 kilograms. The issue of using this kind of unity to refer to a person is that, once it is commonly applied in agricultural business, mainly to bovine animals or heavy commodities, it implies the dehumanization of black people, as if they corresponded to "things" instead of "people". It is not being interpreted, in here, that such usage would classify quilombolas as merchandise, profitable and tradable people; it does not classify them as people *at all*. Both assumptions, though, date back to times of slavery, in which black people were sold as the main tool for capitalist labor, and therefore were properties of their masters. Being the labor force, they were subdued to a bloody and predatory system, treated as animals (or even worse than that), and forfeited of the most basic necessities. What underlies that precarious condition is the fact that the life expectancy of slaves to surround 19 years old by the end of the XIX century (SCHWARZ, 1995).

The heritage of slavery still reverberates in society. Slavery is a constitutive and a collective social memory which Brazil has never



overcome and, because of that, keeps repeating its legacy in different ways through the idea of white people superiority. It can be seen, for instance, in the racism black people face daily on the streets, on working environments or universities, in the violence committed by police, the sexualization of black woman, and so on. The reason why so many different movements regarding black people rights have come to grow recently — to mention one, the Black Feminism — is due to the necessity of reaffirming them as a constitutive part of society that must have the same opportunities and accesses as white people do, and reminding people that they are not foreigners that should live in the margin, serving and shadowing.

CONCLUSION

Jair Bolsonaro has not invented the racism in the twenty-first century. Racism is a cultural practice which have been internalized for years after black people have started to conquer their due rights and insert themselves into society. However, because of the remanent memory of colonial period, its practice is emerging once again, and the kind of utterance showed herein not only naturalizes it, but legitimizes and endorse its practice. It is the mean through which this outdated cultural element has reconquered its voice. As endorsed by Balestreiro (this volume) “(...) it’s not just about being prejudiced, but freeing prejudice that once was chained in people’s thoughts into flammable discourses all over the country like a wildfire, because as long as *they* are not burning, it’s okay to turn *us* into aches.”

It is important to also mention that the work herein is not concerned in defending the necessity of delimiting the land that belongs to indigenous tribes and quilombos’ descendents. There is much about this matter that could be still expiated on in further works; but those

cultures do not even embrace such thing as living confined in a land with boundaries, once both of them originated as nomads. Quilombos had to move out of their territories due to the constant repression, whereas many indigenous tribes broadened their lands as they got bigger in number. The analysis is concentrated upon the existence of an biased and veiled ideology of superiority among races in which those cultures are put on the bottom of the hierarchy, and that should not be common or acceptable in a country which entitles itself as democratic.

The study of those short fifty three seconds that carries so much information is an attempt at raising people awareness of what should be obvious for everyone: that black and indigenous people are not an ornament, a prop, a remembrance of what one day constituted Brazilian society. They *are* Brazilian society. It is with them that politics should be concerned in the first place, for “poor should have more share in the government than the rich.” Instead, they are being harshly excluded from the idea of nation, and the small but considerable particle of what belongs to them is being required by the state so it can be exploited. Democracy does not seem so appealing when excluding of it the idea of *demos* — people.

According to the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics the majority of the population is composed of blacks and browns that altogether sum around 53,6%. Even though, this number comprises the portion with the highest level of analfabetism, homicides and unemployment, endorsing the fact that there is still a long process ahead to fight discrimination. In Brazil, racism is institutional and to address to black people the way Jair Bolsonaro, who is currently the president of the Republic, did is a harsh setback to the fight they have been through and slows down, if not completely ceases, the slight but significant progress to achieve the status of citizen.

The speech studied herein is not the first one to treat minority groups as margin of the society. Likewise, Jair Bolsonaro is not the

only politician that did so. It is a very common and problematic practice that should not be left any room to happen. As despite of all resistance movements those practices *do* happen, it is our job to oppose to them and open people's eyes to how unacceptable it is to backslide on rights that are Constituent ensured so we can favor capitalist interests. Quoting Theodor Adorno, when talking about the savagery of Auschwitz, "barbarism continues as long as the fundamental conditions that favored that relapse continue largely unchanged."

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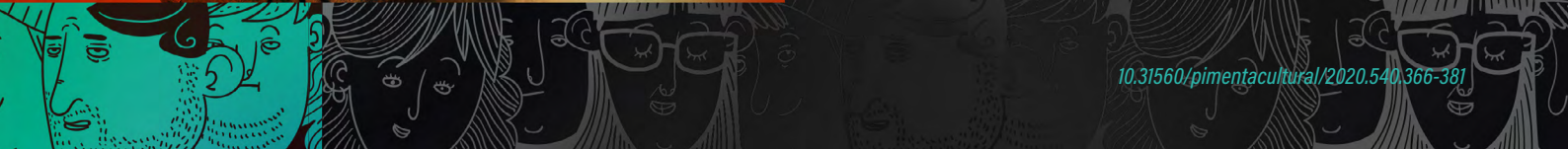


21

Camila de Oliveira Melo



**IDENTITY ISSUES
AND REPRESENTATIONS
OF BLACK WOMEN**



INTRODUCTION

My race awareness came late, after almost a lifetime of neglecting my physical traits and aspects derived from the Afro characteristics. I grew up renouncing my dark skin tone, and hated it when they called me a 'nigger', even if it was more caring for someone in my family. I did not consider myself beautiful, and all my references to beauty were white people, especially the white ones with light eyes and blond hair. Reason why I spent a good part of my life looking for any kind of chemical treatment that promised to make my curly hair the closest I ever saw on television or magazines: straight hair. Since 2016 I have been trying to dismantle all the ideologies that were strongly solved during my identity formation.

As a black woman from the periphery of the city of São Paulo and a student at the best public university in Latin America, I began to question myself. The confrontations came from the two distinct realities that I came to live simultaneously, on the one hand the marginalization and confirmation of stereotypes of violence and crime, while the University of São Paulo allowed me access to topics that I have never had contact before, especially the feminism that is strongly 'impregnated' in the living spaces of the Faculty of Philosophy, Language & Literature and Human Sciences.

Living and growing on the sidelines has also meant growing away from class, gender and race discussions, after all, everything is considered natural: drug trafficking, domestic and police violence, increasingly precocious pregnancies, and neglect of children and adolescent. I wanted to say no, but many stereotypes here are confirmed, unfortunately. I spend the most time of my time at home afraid of being hit by a stray bullet or any act of violence. I am an exception and privileged. I am the first in my house to attend college, for the second

time, and in my family to be the first to enter a public university. I hardly talk to my neighbors and many consider me the snobbish nigga who only studies and does not mingle.

As much as my adolescence was heavily devoted to reading books and magazines I rarely identified with the characters described and with the patterns printed on those pages. Social media contributed essentially to the biggest change I chose to make in September 2017. During my childhood and adolescence *curly hair* meant something ugly and that needed to be tackled. So, from the age of 6 or 7, I went through several heavy hair treatments to make my hair straightened, in an attempt to look a bit more like the models I saw, despite my skin and black features. I suffered bullying at school because of the various racist jokes about my hair and I came to see these jokes as truths, also bringing more meaning to my curly hair: shame, humiliation. I felt inferior to the other girls who wore their hair loose and used certain accessories that once placed in my hair hardly exited without pulling some wires from my head.


I often heard that I should take on my hair, leave them natural, but how do you explain to a child you hardly saw on television, magazines or even characters with curly hair just like hers? In fact it was already difficult to see blacks being portrayed in non-stereotyped roles on television, imagining then having a similar appearance to them.

With access to numerous YouTube channels and Instagram profiles featuring women who highlighted black beauty with natural curly hair, preaching a motivational speech about acceptance. After several teachings about hair and mainly self-esteem I understood the importance of valuing my identity and I abandoned any kind of chemical capillary procedure. Assuming my natural curly hair I was finally proud of my physical features and also representing the symbol of resistance to the patterns that never accepted me.

In the same way these last years have been reflected in the search for books, films and events that brought blackness as the central theme of the racial equality debate, especially in the condition of black women. For me, it was not enough to seek feminism as a whole, but to understand the specificities of race, from authors such as Angela Davis, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, bell hooks and especially the Brazilian Djamilia Ribeiro, who is closer to my reality.

This chapter was inspired by Professor Daniel Ferraz's classes that challenged me to think critically about the notions of discourse and culture in English language teaching. I emphasize these classes since during the topics that I studied in the course of Language and Literature at the University of São Paulo these were the only possibilities in which the methodology adopted by a Professor integrated both teaching and critical analysis in the classroom involving subjects such as politics, arts, humanities and personal experiences. In addition, I also highlight the article *Ethnic-Racial Relations and English Language Education: Against Poisonous Education* (FERRAZ & REZENDE, 2020) contributed to my reflections, mainly by focusing on the racial issues in the basis of children's formation. Similar reflections are also pointed out by K. Tuller Silva, a black woman and her experiences as a teacher and researcher working with children, and the challenges of dealing with racist discourses and the issues of black children's identity in seeing themselves as black in *Me empresta o cor de pele* (this volume).

From this introduction in which I exposed some of my ideological transformations, this chapter aims to address the representation of the identity of black women. In order to work on issues of race and gender, the first section focuses primarily on slavery under Angela Davis's historical interpretation, the second section will deal specifically with stereotyped models of black representation, also from a more historical cultural perspective according to Stuart Hall's observations. The third section presents, from the data, the conditions of black women in



the Brazilian context, and a critical analysis of the concept of Black Feminism adopted by Djamila Ribeiro. And finally, the conclusions from my personal experiences and the theoretical reference worked in this chapter.

THE ROOTS OF SLAVERY

When thinking about the conditions of social identity of black women, a historical revision is necessary to understand the root of the problems faced up to the present day. This means considering the marks of slavery that have plagued Brazilian society for three centuries. For this, taking into account the studies of Angela Davis on the North American slavery we can draw some points of convergence between the two countries.

In her book *Women, Race, and Class*, activist and philosopher Angela Davis traces a historical overview of the central issues of feminism, specifically the foundations and justifications for black feminism.

But women suffered in different ways as well, for they were victims of sexual abuse and other barbarous mistreatment that could only be inflicted on women. Expediency governed the slaveholders' posture toward female slaves: when it was profitable to exploit them as if they were men, they were regarded, in effect, as genderless, but when they could be exploited, punished and repressed in ways suited only for women, they were locked into their exclusively female roles. (DAVIS, 1994, p. 9).

Being a slave woman demanded not only physical efforts to deal with the hard work in the field, but also the household tasks and the exploitation of the body by the masters, who had not only women but also the children who were generated by them, conceived by the miscegenation called rape. In fact the practice of rape was a powerful

weapon used against slave women, because in addition to repressing them it also played the role of corrupting the dignity of women. As a result, there are several cases not only of deliberate miscarriages but also of murdering one's own children as a result of dementia or a way to spare the sufferings of these children as the children of slaves.

In that sense, Angela Davis's meticulous research points to the case of the fugitive slave Margaret Garner. When she was captured, she killed her own daughter and tried to kill herself, and this story inspired the book *BeLoved* by the American author Toni Morrison. That is, the family ideal, common in society, cannot be considered fair to these women, given the difficult conditions of survival available. Their context involved relations of vulnerability and danger, which do not correspond to happiness and fulfillment in motherhood and the gift given to women to bear children, which helps to understand why murdering their own babies was not an isolated action, but a common practice, as Davis examines:

Why were self-imposed abortions and reluctant acts of infanticide such common occurrences during slavery? Not because Black women had discovered solutions to their predicament, but rather because they were desperate. Abortions and infanticides were acts of desperation, motivated not by the biological birth process but by the oppressive conditions of slavery. Most of these women, no doubt, would have expressed their deepest resentment had someone hailed their abortions as a stepping stone toward freedom. (DAVIS, 1994, p. 118)

The end of slavery did not mean that conditions were better, because the suffragist movement dominated by middle-class white women did not recognize black women in this movement. Even because, this same movement did not want the black men, concentrated mainly in the south of the United States, to have more rights than they. The exclusion of black women has been, and continues to be, a slow process in the feminist movement, since struggles for gender equality are not only the biggest concern of black women.

It is important to resort to the past, since the patriarchal system attempts to erase and often distorts the events of slavery, placing the victims as 'villains' and responsible for their own traumas. It is no coincidence that the cultural media, under the dominion of white people, have brought in their pejorative propaganda with images of black people in an animalized and stereotyped way, increasingly reinforcing racial discrimination and acts of violence throughout history. As a result, institutional racism has categorized, marginalized, violated and exterminated people from the color of their skin.

Curious to realize that even the Nigerian writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, one of the great highlights of feminism today, does not have as main argument the black feminism. In her culture the skin color and traits woman phenotypes were never a problem of inequality, but rather the female gender, but only began to realize that there were changes in social behavior when she moved to the United States while she was in college. This traumatic cultural experience resulted in her book *Americanah*, published in 2013 and considered a great representation of black and immigrant women in the contemporary world.

Racism in Brazil has its origins in slavery and non-recognition of the African roots that have come here. The historian Russell G. Hamilton points out that the relations between Brazil and Africa are due to the traffic that has brought about three million captive Africans, resulting in biological, linguistic, social and cultural marks in the Brazilian territory. However, it must be considered that these African roots were perpetuated by racial and social inequalities, with the black population living in greater vulnerability. The colonial process was the consolidated basis of an elite's hegemony of prestige and its cultural values.

This is because when different groups exploit the perception that they are better than the others, and in this sense the ethnocentrism that qualifies the white race as pure and superior, annuls the efforts of those who are born black with several disadvantages. For this reason,

the following section will bring the discussion to an anthropological point of view, from studies conducted by scientist Stuart Hall on the representation of black people in advertising over the years.

STEREOTYPES: A CULTURAL ISSUE

Stereotypes get hold of the few 'simple, vivid, memorable, easily grasped and widely recognized' characteristics about a person, reduce everything about the person to those traits, exaggerate and simplify them, and fix them without change or development to eternity (...). Stereotyping deploys a strategy of 'splitting'. It divides the normal and the acceptable from the abnormal and the unacceptable. It then excludes or expels everything which does not fit, which is different (...). Types are instances which indicate those who live by the rules of society (social types) and those who the rules are designed to exclude (stereotypes) (...). So, another feature of stereotyping is its practice of 'closure' and exclusion. It symbolically fixes boundaries, and excludes everything which does not belong (...). Stereotyping tends to occur where there are gross inequalities of power. Power is usually directed against the subordinate or excluded group. (Hall, 1992, p. 258).


Continuing the issues addressed in the first section on the influences of the past in the present, one realizes that with the historical transformations, the notions of culture also had to observe, rethink and question the supremacy of one culture to the detriment of others. In *The Spectacle of the Other*, Jamaican cultural theorist and sociologist Stuart Hall develops his critiques with respect to representation, or rather what he calls the secret fascination of otherness, which results in the action of stereotyping black people in certain models. This text fits into the elaboration of the thought lines of this chapter since Hall is concerned with comparing whether repertoires of representation around difference have changed or remained intact in contemporary society.

From a historical perspective, the author uses visual images, since they have different meanings and impacts of a written text. Turning to black models in sports and the idea of strength, masculinity, also end up adopting binary feelings while also reinforcing sexuality and animalization. Examples are advertising in magazines, a vehicle of great circulation, and how they described these sportsmen, increasingly reaffirming stereotypes.

In a profound way, Stuart Hall turns to the roots in an attempt to understand the racializing of the 'other', therefore, he considers slave traffic during the sixteenth century, secondly colonization on the African continent, and post World War II that resulted in immigration of people from the third world to Europe and North America. That is, in all these moments there is more than an encounter, but a clash of different cultures, but in a way that there is no alterity, since the culture and the identity of the Africans always has been despised, even going through a process of assimilation of the culture that was being colonized.

It is noted that the notion of civilization and barbarism, savagery, or even the fear of the unknown remains to this day. Brazil, which for a long time was colonized, often for not having the same Eurocentric customs and traits is seen by outsiders with the same characteristics of centuries past. This means that the prejudiced and racist perspective remains, still being the European model to be won, devaluing our culture, which even within our country is not something unique: we are the sum of different cultures that builds a nation: something that does not is limited to specific type of person.

The cinema is another means of disseminating the racist ideas considered as the only truth not questionable and acceptable by its viewers. Stuart Hall also dwells on American films that until the 1950s were made of racist mechanisms to represent blacks, such as black maids, with their bodies emphasizing their breasts and buttocks, lips and curly hair.



Understanding the various layers that involve the processes of representation is a prime exercise in disentangling skewed perspectives on a particular race. Even because, issues of black identity are strongly intertwined with the culture of hatred that is so present in the daily experiences of black people. Since the Ku Klux Klan movement of white hegemony and pure race in the United States, the mass incarceration of the black population within a system that marginalizes them by financing weapons and drugs, mass incarceration and the extermination of black youth are practical still common.

In the case of women, it is representation of their bodies, in Brazil essentially in the time of Carnival in which they are exposed naked in large media vehicles. And much more: the difficulty of access to higher education on account of pregnancy, the abandonment of their partners, the lack of icenics and safety conditions in public transport, the long distances they have to travel every day to work as cleaners in the homes of rich white women. Prejudice with their curly hair and few opportunities in the labor market that guarantee them stability. And especially, domestic violence and cases of femicide. Therefore, the next section aims specifically to address the conditions of black women in Brazilian urban centers and their daily struggle to survive in the face of so many threats that harm their lives as black women.

THE NEED FOR BLACK FEMINISM

According to the Map of Violence, released in 2015, with a rate of 4.8 murders in 100,000 women, Brazil is among the countries with the highest rate of female homicides: it ranks fifth in a ranking of 83 nations. The following data show that “the number of white homicides falls from 1,747 victims in 2003 to 1,576 in 2013; this represents a 9.8% drop in the total number of homicides in the period. Black homicides

increased 54.2% in the same period, from 1,864 to 2,875 victims". And even though:

Nos diversos Mapas da Violência em que abordamos a questão da incidência da raça/cor na violência letal, para o conjunto da população, concluímos que: a. Com poucas exceções geográficas, a população negra é vítima prioritária da violência homicida no País. b. As taxas de homicídio da população branca tendem, historicamente, a cair, enquanto aumentam as taxas de mortalidade entre os negros. c. Por esse motivo, nos últimos anos, o índice de vitimização da população negra cresceu de forma drástica. (MAPA DA VIOLÊNCIA, 2015).

From the alarming data of the Mapa da Violência, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women - UN Women published in 2016 the *Diretrizes Nacionais do Femicídio*, which deals with legal aspects of the subject, including Law No. 11.340 / 2006 - Lei Maria da Penha, for instance, a major milestone in the fight against crimes committed against women. The document also strongly considered the issue of race and class, based on institutional racism that massacred black people, which reiterates the need not to erase the racism of history, but to revise it, since its consequences have justified the situations of those who have for generations been being massacred violently:

Assim como se observa o racismo institucional como obstáculo para que as mulheres negras tenham acesso à justiça, o preconceito e a discriminação contra minorias étnicas também afeta e cria obstáculos para a universalização do acesso à justiça para as mulheres e agrava a situação de vulnerabilidade social em que se encontram. (DIRETRIZES NACIONAIS DO FEMINICÍDIO, 2016).

This type of action, in addition to the feminist institutes that seek to think, discuss public policies in favor of black women, such as Geledés and Brazilian philosopher Djamila Ribeiro, in order to reduce the vulnerable conditions in which they are willing. And perhaps these

movements, by their very origin, are a response and application of the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDS), by questioning the hegemonic discourses that do not cherish the human rights of the groups that suffer the most.

Djamila Ribeiro proposes the idea of 'Black Feminism', not as a way of separating the feminist movement, but critically thinking about how the generalized models do not represent the majority of the black and mainly peripheral women of the country, who has more worrying causes because of the roots of slavery, which today have resulted in a racist system in various field, and to black women who are placed in situations of greater social vulnerability. As a researcher and militant, for her, thinking black feminisms is thinking about democratic projects, which include security, mobility, housing, health, and day care for the children of these women, as well as events with the practice of conversations among this group, as a support channel, educating people about these issues and perspectives.

The book *Quem tem medo do feminismo negro?* brings together several chronicles that have been published in *Carta Capital Magazine* and in these chronicles we can note the questions of Djamila Ribeiro on issues so naturalized by the media, as an instrument of power and a spreading of discourses reproducing and constructing society. For the author it is unacceptable that for so long and even today the figure of *Globeleza* is so naturalized and accepted, exposing the body of the black woman as an idealized fantasy of carnival. Moreover, to see that racist society devalues and humiliates black women in all professional spheres, being "recognized" only for the exhibition of their body.

Globo TV that has hegemony in the television open all over the world, and ends up holding the power should think about its responsibility for the speeches that that it realizes from its programs. In her soap operas, for example, black women are rarely placed in the limelight. Thinking of a protagonism that leaves the clichés of subalternization and


the stereotypes of the sexualization of the black female body, actresses such as Taís Araújo, Sharon Menezes and Erika Januza are few names out of the standards, and all suffered from widespread racism. There is still a lot of representativeness and respect.

CONCLUSIONS

Consider an analogy to traffic in an intersection, coming and going in all four directions. Discrimination, like traffic through an intersection, may flow in one direction, and it may flow in another. If an accident happens in an intersection, it can be caused by cars traveling from any number of directions and, sometimes, from all of them. Similarly, if a Black woman is harmed because she is in the intersection, her injury could result from sex discrimination or race discrimination. (CRENSHAW, 1989).

Based on the idea of intersectionality, I intended to structure this chapter so that I could address my experiences, then address the roots of slavery, to point out cultural stereotypes, and to finally diagnose the situation of Brazilian black women. This intersectional bias about race, gender, and class is a concept punctuated by both authors Angela Davis and Djamila Ribeiro I mentioned throughout these pages, but essentially by Kimberle Crenshaw. In her article *Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics* the author strongly criticizes theories and practices that do not consider the different and multiple strands that black women are subjected to and overwhelmed:

Black women sometimes experience discrimination in ways similar to white women's experiences; sometimes they share very similar experiences with Black men. Yet often they experience double-discrimination-the combined effects of practices which discriminate on the basis of race, and on the basis of sex. And sometimes, they experience discrimination as Black women-not the sum of race and sex discrimination, but as Black women.



Black women's experiences are much broader than the general categories that discrimination discourse provides. Yet the continued insistence that Black women's demands and needs be filtered through categorical analyses that completely obscure their experiences guarantees that their needs will seldom be addressed. (CRENSHAW, 1989).

Therefore, more than a positioning in a victim condition, the criticisms raised seek to diagnose misogynist and racist practices, drawing attention to more empathetic and awareness raising attitudes. Bring for the university dialogues on the subject, thinking of the institution as a field of teacher training that will need to deal with situations of this diversity in the classroom as educators and instruments of power for their students. This means transforming the classroom into a more horizontal environment in which practices are conditioned to mutual exchange, otherness and, above all, respect for differences. This dream, perhaps utopian, would undermine the problems of self-acceptance and identity for children and young people who both suffer and end up nourishing the feeling of anger either by themselves or by the colleague who does not have the physical traits similar to his own.

If I had an environment in school, where I spent most of my development, maybe my racial awareness would be better worked out and I would not feel so out of place and despised for being black, and so on with other passing children or have already suffered from racial discrimination, especially girls who can use their natural hair without suffering from the social pressure to keep them in a certain pattern that does not represent them. But still, to work on the awareness, discourse and culture of men who come to respect the woman's body, not using it as her property, and so perhaps with a new posture the black women of the future will live longer than their previous generations victims of the vulnerability of slavery the past and domestic violence in the present.

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22

Raquel de Paula Guets



**LESBIAN DISCOURSE
AS A FORM OF SOCIAL
TRANSFORMATION**



INTRODUCTION

To write about language, discourse, gender and sexuality from a lesbian perspective can be a thorny task. This is because lesbians are a social minority who have always been in the shadows of the protagonists of the “LGBT” (Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals and Transgenders) (or simply “queer”) and the feminist movement, always labeled as aggressive and too radical by both movements simply because we deny the romantic and affectionate relationship with men and, on account of this, see the relations of power and discourse in totally different ways of people who relate to men. Have you ever seen lesbians in front of a gay parade, for example? The “showcase” of the LGBT movement is always the “gay behavior” of males who are in and leading the movement, which entangle problems with the lesbians who do not recognize themselves in this or who try to fit in this deformed representation of themselves. There seems to be no room for lesbians to define themselves and gain visibility, to have their demands heard by everyone. Lesbian silencing and invisibility is something that is engineered from the strongest hegemonic and masculine power structures, such as patriarchy and compulsory heterosexuality, which are just what lesbians refuse to be part of.

Defining what it is to be a lesbian goes far beyond the sexual and romantic issues of an individual female. Laura Arnés (2018) delineate and define what a lesbian subject is:

The term lesbian implies at least three meanings: first, it would seem to refer to an ontological state of the lesbian being; secondly, it is constructed in relation to sex or sexuality, eroticism or desire among women; Finally, from the emergence in the 1970s of feminist anthropology and lesbian feminism, the word lesbian will mark an ethico-political state that has emancipatory implications, makes reference to liberating and contestatory policies, and becomes an essential term for destabilize the - until that moment - seemingly unquestionable continuity of the woman category. (ARNÉS, 2018, p.5, our translation).

With the term lesbian defined is of utmost importance for understanding throughout this text because it is from this assumption that will be developed the questions and the following findings that take stock of what I've been thinking since the first experience that inspired me to write this chapter.

In the first section ("Social transformation through discourse") there will be some of my first thoughts about postmodernity, modernity and the construction of meaning and how it is related to social practices in the context and the game of differences; the second section ("Lesbian discourse as a form of social transformation") there will be some of the questions and findings that is a part of the "thorny task" for writing about lesbians and how to transform the lesbian discourse in a social action inside contexts that exclude this group of women; and the third and last section aims to provide lesbian visibility with some statistics about lesbocide (the death of lesbians as a consequence of lesbophobia) in Brazil and the reasons to care about what lesbians are speaking of. All of these topics are very little discussed and the main purpose of this paper is to expose all of these issues from a lesbian perspective so that the reader can reflect on Critical Discourse Analysis, social transformation and the leading role of lesbian women in all of this.

SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION THROUGH DISCOURSE

First of all, this paper was inspired on the text "(Pós) modernidade, (pós) estruturalismo e educação linguística: construindo sentidos, ensejando transformações" written by my Professor Daniel Ferraz in 2019, in which I read during a class taught by him, specifically part 4. This part basically addresses the differences between modernity and postmodernity, as well as the

current clashes of currents academic thinking such as structuralism and poststructuralism, for example. Structuralism, a framework of modernity, tends to keep the elements under analysis as static (signified x signifier, for example), giving no scope for interpretations and analyzes that take into account the differences of these concepts in different contexts, which is defended by poststructuralism. For post-structuralist theorists (Bakhtin, Derrida, Foucault, etc.),

a construção de sentidos via estruturalismo prevê caminhos unívocos e fixos (língua e linguagem são significadas por meio da relação estática entre significante e significado) ao passo que a construção de sentidos sob as perspectivas do pós-estruturalismo é vista como algo que não escapa ao jogo das diferenças (língua e linguagem nunca são unívocas e fixas, pois, a cada contexto, significam algo inteiramente novo) (FERRAZ, p. 26, 2019).

Post-structuralism seems to be a symptom of the society advances: while structuralism deals with binary signs, post-structuralism breaks binarism to give way to multiple meanings of the same sign; no longer if it is “this” or “that”, but what is “this in that”. It is the dynamism of language being carried forward, what particularly strikes me is the way it has been expanded in such a way that it also touches on social structures. Thinking about Intersectional Theory and the second and third waves of Feminism, the “game of differences” is clear: and today, popularly in the fields of activism and on the internet, much is said about these games of differences. Interesting how this is in language, in a now increasingly postmodern society. All this seems to configure the symptoms of postmodernity, in fact, as we gradually leave the binarisms behind, which gives even more way to Discursive Studies (DS), thinking that DS considers meaning as a product of social practices. And in these social practices are included the studies on gender and sexuality in which more and more space is gained in the Academy and also among people in general. These social practices are being expressed directly in the language and in people’s speech as, for example, the “Politically

correct” language , a subject that is generating many debates in several countries of several different languages.

Thinking and reflecting about the social practices present in speech and language is something intrinsically linked to my political subject and political awareness, mainly because I am a lesbian who denies femininity - and I can see the difference when someone out of my circle of friends calls me or another lesbian a “sapatão” (similar to dyke in English) and when some friend calls me that. In different contexts, this word can offend me while in others the word is simply another way to say a girl is a lesbian. It’s a word that initially was an offense but in order to somehow appropriate this word and take away the stigma of cursing, the lesbians gave this word a “stigma of pride” (a process called *metonymy* in Semantics), but this is not valid in all contexts. When someone out of my circle of friends says the word “sapatão” to refer to me or another girl I feel uncomfortable, especially if it’s said in a “bad mood”. This is impregnated in my speech because when I raise my voice and say “I am a dyke”, instead of letting all the internalized lesbophobia consume me, I put it out and by assuming this, I also put myself as a subjective self that is proud of what I am, especially when in the company of other lesbians. Nowadays there are events, arts, bands with the word “sapatão” to refer to a “lesbian culture”. Society has changed and, along with it, the social practices produces and changes the meanings of a single word.

With binary systems being sidelined and minorities appropriating terms that once were offensive to re-creating a culture of empowerment and acceptance, language works as a kind of fundamental tool not only for messaging, but primarily as an articulation of power, claiming rights and “corrections” in the discourses of the dominant classes, and in this, the concept of *context* and *game of differences* is all about. In this way, the CDA (Critical Discourse Analysis) comes not to simply study the discourses that are consolidated or are being formed, but

to explain the discourses in terms of properties of social interaction and especially social structure, more specifically, CDA focuses on the ways discourse structures enact, confirm, legitimate, reproduce, or challenge relations of power and dominance in society (TANNEN; HAMILTON; SCHIFFRIN, 2015, p. 353).

How can a group of lesbians, a minority even within another (social) minority that is the women, use a term that was once offensive (“dyke”) as a way of raising their own voices? How does this change and construction of new words to a “subaltern” point of view challenge the relations of power and domination in society, which is predominantly male and heteronormative?

LESBIAN DISCOURSE AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

These new ways to view and talk about the world as a critic to new possibilities to live the world and to change it is something very intrinsic to the language and to the discourse. The Critical Discourse Analysis is an interdisciplinary approach inside the Discourse Studies that views language as a form of social practice more than just words, phrases and speech. Fairclough and Wodak summarize the main tenets of CDA, basically saying that:

(...) CDA addresses social problems; sets that power relations are discursive; discourse constitutes society and culture; discourse does ideological work; discourse is historical; the link between text and society is mediated; discourse analysis is interpretative and explanatory and at last but not least, *discourse is a form of social action* (1997, p. 271-280).

And this is basically what a minority does when it appropriates a term from the dominant classes to identify themselves or when they

create a new term to ascend, to “culturalize” their place in society: *social action*. The binarism loses its place for plurality and its various axes, and the CDA bridges the petrified micro and macro linguistic approaches that are still ingrained by society - that is, an analysis of the power that dominant groups have in its hegemony, like having the rules, norms, habits, laws, science, the media, politics and language. Van Dijk (2001) explains that the hegemony of the dominant classes does not always make those who belong to this classes abuse their power. The power is so socially intrinsic in mind and speech, in how people see the world, that privileged people do not even perceive homophobic, lesbophobic or racist speech in their discourses and opinions, that is, hegemony is so powerful that it blinds the privileged classes, and not just them, for once they have power over the pillars of the pattern of mind and language/discourse. All groups are directly affected by this discourse in the form of reproducing it. Freud has already studied this in 1905 in his book “Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious” (and, of course, in another approach) how much this form of discourse (jokes) faithfully reflects the unconscious formed by the prejudice that the hegemony of the dominant classes can inject in people’s minds.


When lesbian women decide to go against the hegemonic discourses, a “counter-discourse” is born, but it is important to make clear “that access to specific forms of discourse, e.g those of politics, the media, or science is itself a power resource” (Van Dijk, 2001). These forms of discourse have more legitimacy in order to control people’s minds in a way that people care less about other forms of discourse. If a group of lesbians tells their coming out stories, for example, their speech will be delegitimized as just personal experiences that have nothing to do with any kind of social or structural oppression. But if an relevant academic professor gives an interview to some sort of far-reaching newspaper with data and a speech backed by famous and relevant theorists about coming out stories and how this relates to social oppression, the impact of the speech will be totally different -

especially if it is a white, heterosexual man speaking (we can clearly see the concept of *context* here).

So when I, a lesbian woman who denies femininity, come up with a speech against the pillars of hegemony and say that, yes, I am a dyke, and present the same speech as the super important academic man talking about lesbophobia and homophobia, in addition to misogyny and sexism with touches of personal experiences, the niches of the dominant classes will probably repudiated it - but other lesbian women, other minorities, and even people of the dominant classes will be impacted by my discourse (in a good or in a bad way, whatever), since *Discourse is a form of social action*. This is why we need to speak it up.

Raising our voices and occupying spaces that do not belong to us (lesbians and other minorities) hegemonically is a way of practicing this social action through discourse. This form of social action, in addition to impacting the lives of all the people who are touched (to a greater or lesser degree), can also act as a breakdown of relations of petrified powers, and thus give birth to a new *episteme* - and not only through the language. With the impact of a discourse, a whole range of people can be persuaded to think and/or move on social action, and in that the discourse also encompasses the occupied spaces, a whole way of dressing, of living, of seeing what was muted or enclosed; it is possible to derive a culture from the *underground* and bring it really to the surface for this new episteme. When it comes to a discourse about sexuality, especially homosexuality, this is of the utmost importance, since in Foucault's sexuality studies he states that sexuality ceased to be something public to become something private (in a punitive way).

Homosexual people, when having a piece of the hegemonic power of speech and discourse for manifestations of our ideas, therefore, makes this punitive way of keeping sexuality cloistered between four walls break and, along with it, a piece of oppression. When I say out loud that I am a *sapatão*, I am not just coming out of the closet (because



I have never actually been there), but I am saying that the power of discourse is also mine; when I deny femininity and I stop shaving, for example, and I do not lock myself in four walls, so I'm saying that my existence matters not only for me, but for others like me and even for people belonging to the dominating classes who would finally see us, once *everything is political* - and therefore all my actions (how I speak, how I dress, how I behave, etc.) are within the political spectrum, all the time inserted in the war of powers. It's not as simple as it sounds, of course. Inside the idea that everything is political, it is also important not to forget that the *personal is political* too. This is a concept of radical and lesbian feminists politics created in 1960/70 (the second wave of Feminism). Jeffreys (2002) explains that

This phrase has two interrelated meanings. It means that the political power structures of the 'public' world are reflected in the private world. Thus, for woman in particular, the 'private' world of heterosexuality is not a real of personal security, a haven from a heartless world, but an intimate realm in which their work is extracted and their bodies, sexuality and emotions are constrained and exploited for the benefits of individual men and the male supremacist political system (...) But the phrase has a complementary meaning, which is that the 'public' world of male power, the world of corporations, militaries and parliaments is founded upon this private subordination. (JEFFREYS, 2002, p.146).

To reflect on social practices of discourse and lesbianity is also to talk about the lesbian feminists of the well-known second wave of Feminism. It was these women (Sheila Jeffreys, Linda Bellos and Adrienne Rich, just to give some strong examples) who "inaugurated" the lesbian visibility within feminism and the world and questioned the speeches of heterosexual (women who somehow relate to men) who was undoubtedly injected with the ideology of a heterocentered world (especially in UK and in US). These women who are heterosexual or who interact with men in a sexual and romantic way and, more importantly, who care about male approval in the social realm were defined as "man-

identified women”, while women who exclusively deal with women in the sexual and affective field (lesbians) and women who are not lesbians but who were protesting for the freedom of male domination were defined “woman-identified women”, a concept that bell hooks in *Feminism is for Everybody* (2000) explains in a (better and) very didactic way:

In the early stages of feminist movement we used the phrase ‘woman-identified woman’ or ‘man-identified woman’ to distinguish between those activists who did not choose lesbianism but who did choose to be woman-identified, meaning their ontological existence did not depend on male affirmation. Male-identified females were those who dropped feminist principles in a flash if they interfered with romantic heterosexual concerns. They were the females who also supported men more than women, who could always see things from the male perspective (HOOKS, 2000, p. 95).

The anglophone lesbian feminism also tried to produce a few changes of English words (remember politically correct language?), for example the change of “history” to “herstory”, “woman” to “wimmin”, placing human females out of the male reference completely. Lesbian feminists were (and they actually are) as separatists of the feminist movement and, more precisely, of the gay (or queer) movement of which they were part at the time without ever letting go of the idea that the personal is political. This social practice of lesbian feminism is based on the materialist theory to seek the greater goal that is to free all women from male subordination, and stands as the counterpoint of liberal politics that are present in both liberal feminism that aims for an equality in the field of the public (forgetting to transform the personal as well) as in the gay/queer movement.

One of the biggest issues of lesbian feminism with the queer movement is the fact that the LGBT activism does not really care about the lesbian in reality - moreover, it was necessary to change the place of the “L” (in what used to be GLBT) to give more visibility to lesbians, a purely symbolic measure because it is not what actually happened.

The “LGBT” movement places lesbians as gay-like, “or attain some equality alongside gay men, with the privileges that heterosexual men derive from their dominance” (SHEFFREYS, 2002), without the desire to change internally (the personal) and externally (the public) system that is done entirely to the advantage of men and, worse, by placing lesbians in a place close to male as if being a lesbian was separable from being female. The desire for equity that queer politics, with men at the forefront of the movement, is the desire for equity to be a “recognized citizen,” ie, the desire for equity with heterosexual (and white) man - the desire to be equal to the oppressor and to be inserted in the hegemonic politics of the oppressor without questioning this hegemony, without a social practice, without a social action that aims for a complete change of that system. After all, we can not forget that gay males are still males and, as such beings imbued with the social place of privilege they possess, do not intend (consciously or unconsciously) to break the structures of male hegemony. It is as if they appropriate the discourse not to question and make other people question the heterocentered and masculine system for a mobilization, but only to request the missing pieces to be part of this system leaving behind the women and, of course, the lesbians. “The gay demand for equality with straight men’s sexual freedom depends equally upon the woman’s subordination” (JEFFREYS, *ibid.*). At this point, Jeffreys denounces not only the protagonism of gay men but also their sexual freedom, which involves, for example, the fact that they can buy “rent bellies” to have children, that is, that freedom is still dependent on the subordination of women, which lesbian feminists repudiate. The sexual freedom of gay men also involves the methods of sexual protection created only for sexual intercourse involving a penis (or not, such as AIDS, for example; however, the AIDS protection campaigns is always about sexual intercourse involving a penis). Lesbians do not have any type of method to protect themselves sexually, and just a few studies show what are the most common diseases to be transmissible in lesbian

sex. In addition to fighting machismo, misogyny and lesbophobia of the “normal world”, lesbians also need to fight against lesbophobia within movements that should embrace them and not exclude them. Lesbian feminism welcomes these women and becomes a union that aims to this social transformation.

LESBIAN VISIBILITY AND VULNERABILITY

These issues about the queer movement and the feminist movement when it comes to lesbian living and protagonism have been a subject of considerable debate for a considerable time and that is why a large part of lesbian feminists consider themselves to be “separatist” from these movements in order to own spaces of coexistence, of self-representation and experience. In the Brazilian context, the hate directed at lesbians (lesbophobia) is so strong that it is estimated that “there was an increase of more than 237% in the number of cases (of lesbocide) from 2014 to 2017 and 80% in relation to the same period of the previous year” (PERES, SOARES and DIAS, 2018). The number is scary and living in the skin of a lesbian (especially a lesbian who denies femininity) is even more frightening, because according to the *Dossiê sobre lesbocídio no Brasil*, 55% of non-feminized lesbians died between the years 2014 and 2017 which means that the hate directed at lesbians who escape the norm stipulated by the roles and patterns of gender and sexuality are in a situation of even greater vulnerability. Also, it is interesting to note that the *Dossiê sobre lesbocídio no Brasil* is an initiative that started entirely from lesbians, since the feminist movement and the queer movement never looked at us in any other way besides “appendices”, not showing any kind of concern with our well-being and how vulnerable we are. It is usually the lesbians who begin to study themselves in all spheres of power (Arts, Science, the media, and also the Academy), although the queer movement has advanced a great


deal in discussions and awareness of rights and needs of the group; but all these advances have been focused only on men and people who relate to men within queer politics. Arnés (2018) reinforces this problem and adds the context of Latin America:

It is true that the visibility of homosexuality constitutes a phenomenon of the present that also affects academic production. I also recognize that, in this century, dissident sexualities make their entry into critical discourse by introducing a conflict in the field of representation. However, even that conscious theory/ critique of problems related to sexual differences - ie queer, gay and/or feminist - continues to perpetuate the lesbian's "symbolic murder" (LAURETIS, 2000, p.19). Thus, over the last few years, in the field of Latin American and Latin American literary theory and criticism - and specifically in Argentina - a greater number of analyzes on male homosexuality and the aesthetics they support have proliferated. However, studies about the lesbian and its literary representations remain almost negligible. (ARNÉS, 2018, p.8, our translation).

The idea of union that feminism and queer preach is beautiful and even works at various points in theory, however it is important to come to the fore how this idea is excluding lesbian women who are literally dying without any support, without any attention. This statistic about lesbocide is impregnated with the scorn of the queer and feminist activists within lesbophobic and misogynistic world. It is explicitly stated why it is so important to lesbians to speak, to create their own cultural spaces and (most important) to hear what lesbians is claiming for.

CONCLUSION

Since society is a social structure created by cultural forces in constant transformation - totally breaking the modern idea of binarisms - and that everything is political (including the personal), it is very dangerous to walk through the game of differences even when



you are part of a minority. All these “lesbian critic” about queer and feminist theories and movements is an example of it. Being part of these cultural and political forces that “bombard” us throughout our training as an individual turn us to be also involved in a process of male, white and heterosexual domination and this can be impregnated in our discourse and in our bodies too - and this is what an example of Foucault (1987) said about how the body itself is invested by the relations of power. From this perspective, the queer, the feminists and the lesbian existence itself, within the new episteme in which the body, the public and the personal is also political, makes it easy to reproduce the hegemonic discourse by the excluded-included minorities, when there is no class, race, gender and sexuality (as something also hit by this suffocating oppression) consciousness.

And that is why resistance and visibility through discourse work together to implant this seed of consciousness into all those susceptible to the impact of socially raised discourse; through personal experiences and the mastery of the tools of power that belong, hegemonically, to the dominant class of men, whites and heterosexuals - the media, Academy, the press, the science. It is necessary to speak, but not simply to speak. It is necessary to speak to ascend. It is necessary to speak for a change. It is necessary to speak to revolutionize. And that is why discourse is so powerful.

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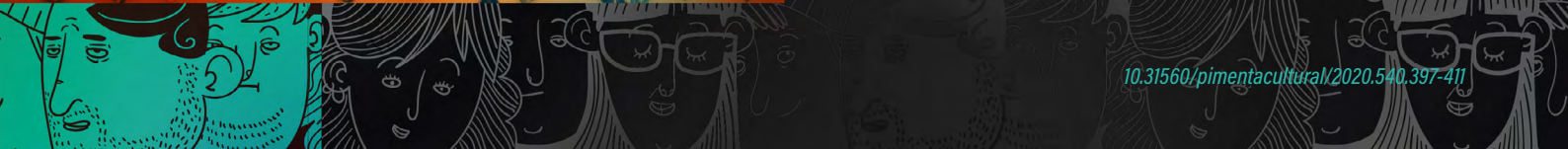


23

Tulio Couto Balestreiro



**THE POWER
OF POLITICAL DISCOURSES:
FOCUS ON GENDER
AND HOMOSEXUALITY**



INTRODUCTION

The elections of 2018 brought out some of the wildest thoughts that were present in people's mind about the hybrid knowledges (such as gender and homosexuality); which moved to the center of the human studies of post-modernity. It's clear now, more than ever, that we still live in a conservative society because people's mind is conservative. Thus, by verbalizing their thoughts upon what our culture should be like or stand for, they maintain their conservative values on the center of our culture's gears; which in this scenario, either we're moved by them or we fight them.

These verbalizations have been produced mainly by politicians who seek to find people that share similar ideologies and also to provoke and feed their hate eagerness. Therefore, it's crucial to understand that discourse does not only represent but also construct the world. And because of it, politicians, along with the conservative people, are trying to reaffirm their culture of hate and nonacceptance by producing discourses that stand for and represent their idea of a utopic society; as Almeida (2020, p. 3) commented previously on this book, "every act of speech is embedded in a specific point of view as well as a personal ideology and, therefore, takes on a particular meaning according to its context of usage". And Fairclough (1992, p.67) characterizes discourse as a form of social, political and ideological practice, which "constitutes, naturalizes, sustains and changes significations of the world from diverse positions in power relations."

The main ideology used in this political context has its roots on religion, by characterizing homosexuality in our society as a sin. And this is an internal phenomenon as it is external; which means it is present inside the families as it is outside the society, as Ferraz (2016, p. 190) stated on his article about the subject "Some studies about gender and

education (LOURO, 1997; MOTT, 2007; JUNQUEIRA, 2009; GARCIA, 2009) indicate that the relation between education, sexuality and homosexuality has to do with the religious and family traditions. These traditions have produced a very specific prejudice, homophobia.”. Furthermore, when the politicians are not using their personal religious beliefs to argue about homosexuality, they usually use biological arguments, or socially based, characterizing homosexuality as a crime against nature, or a waste of the social roles of male and female figures.

So, as a language education student, and having a profound interest in discourse analysis combined with the political situation that we’re in (in which only certain ideologies are allowed to be spoken out loud without the risk of being massacred) my attempt in this chapter is to discuss a possible countermeasure for all of you that are feeling lost, vulnerable or powerless, just as I am, within this political context we’re in.

With that being said, what we can do as a “counter group” (and what I’ll try to do in this chapter) is to work on a critique of the political discourses upon gender and homosexuality produced currently; to discuss what’s the ideology behind them, how they model and affect society, who is producing them and why, and how to produce countermeasures for such dangerous discourses.

In section one, I’ll present a general view upon Politics, why it is still necessary in our society, how it should work and how it actually does. In section two, we’ll follow the discussion upon the concepts of Discourse and Political Discourse, their usage and function in our society, and how they’re being used by the Brazilian politicians. After that, in section three, I’ll discuss the concepts of gender and homosexuality, the different views that are directed to them, how these subjects have been the main theme for our president to win support, in a negative way, and also, of course, the prejudice itself of our society. And finally, before the conclusion, in section four, I’ll present my idea of countermeasure


for these political discourses that have been attacking the LGBTQIA+ community which is quite obvious, however still taken for granted here in Brazil, but more on that later.

POLITICS

Why do we need politics anyway? Wouldn't it be better if we just get rid of all politicians and start over with another kind of society management? Why do we feel like we're stuck with it? My theory is that maybe it's because it still didn't fulfill our wish for equality; After all, that's simply what most of us want to attain in our society as political agents and human beings. And because of that search, we're going through these months by arguing and fighting against anyone, from our closest friends to the most unknown individuals. Sadly, sometimes this feels like an endless battle (and a hopeless one).

Equality (or the lack of it) is the main responsible for the whole political gear of our society; which means, it's attached to political thinking, strategies, ideologies, political parties, and everything that causes political conflicts, just like Rancière affirms, "nothing is political itself for the political only happens by means of a principle that does not belong to it: equality" (1999, p. 33). In our way of doing politics, the politicians usually seek to please and privilege one group of people or social class (people that share their ideologies) causing social and economic inequalities. Therefore, we must fight for a world in which equality is within political practices. And in this utopic world that we must achieve, perhaps only then this *politics of the contrast (in which we're divided basically in two social and political groups)* would dissolve.

If we were in this utopic world, we could eliminate something that has been a part of our reality for a long time: the political parties.



For better or for worse, we've been insisting on taking sides when it comes to politics not just for a matter of what's right or wrong, but to empower ourselves in these times of darkness. That's what Camila Fonseca critiques when she talks about how Bachiete and Bandeira (2015) both explain the categorization of the culture through a "deaf identity", which is "to affirm that you belong to a specific group of people with defined identities could strengthen the group" (FONSECA, 2016, p.7). That's something we can witness currently when we think about how someone that has such extreme opinions on fundamental subjects could win the higher place of power of our country; well, because he had people with the same ideology, gathering themselves as a group, providing him the power, which created segregation and stereotypes through their hate speech, pushing those with opposite ideologies away into a counter group, formed by people that also absorb strength from each other in order to fight back. Argo, here we have two binary and opposite groups of forces fighting for extreme opposite ideologies.

Therefore, through that strategy of gathering a specific group and using their inner hate to empower himself, Jair Bolsonaro could access their social claims, and confirm what people really wanted for the country, specially when it comes to LGBTQIA+ people. Therefore, he was able to become this believable, trustworthy figure that would wipe out of society whatever people wanted him to. Thus, the accomplishment of the power to manipulate and make people believe in whatever he'd say was conquered by the language expressions of his ideology, which were the same as his people, as in Wilson (2001, p. 401) "if one could manipulate or limit what was possible in language, one could manipulate or limit what was possible in thought". That's how he could make people think whatever he'd say was the truth, or the right thing to say, no matter how aggressive or outrages his discourses were.

DISCOURSE/POLITICAL DISCOURSE

The truth and false in our society are determined by the most powerful locus of enunciation, it doesn't matter if they are indeed in position of the truth or not; that's the origin of what we now call "fake news". Fake news was and it has been such a powerful instrument for Jair Bolsonaro because he could manipulate people and make them believe in whoever he was pointing at as the enemy, the disgusting, the thing they must exclude. And that's because fake or not, they are still a type of discourse, since discourse "is regulated by a set of rules which lead to the distribution and circulation of certain utterances and statements" (MILLS, 2003, p. 54); and what was more in circulation than the fake news during the last elections?

One example of using fake news to maintain the conservative hegemony of ideas in this country is the so called "kit gay". This is the nickname the conservative politicians, including Bolsonaro, gave to the project called "Escola sem Homofobia", created in 2011. This project was meant to be a guide for teachers to introduce subjects in their classes such as queer studies, diversity, sexuality and prejudice. It's a very enlighten, complete and rich material that was targeted as a tool to transform kids into gays. The power of these fake discourses towards the project was so strong that it was never printed or distributed.

Bolsonaro's locus of enunciation contains his ideological, historical and social context, hence it has a profound impact "on the people, the nation, the language, the beliefs, and behavior" (FONSECA, 2016, P. 5) of people. Therefore, when it comes to him, it's not just about being prejudiced, but freeing prejudice that once was chained in people's thoughts and transforming it into flammable discourses all over the country like a wildfire, because as long as *they* are not burning, it's okay to turn *us* into aches, so when it comes to his main goal, as

Silva (2020, p. 4) commented previously on this book “Bolsonaro’s ideological discourse functions as a preserver of hegemony.”

However, since discourse does not only produce power but “also undermines it and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart it” (FOUCAULT 1978, p. 100-101), I like to believe that from the aches we will rise, by creating countermeasures, questioning contradictory acts and discourses, studying, teaching, exposing fogged lies and fake news to our students, friends and families, and most importantly, by being a class of resistance.

As resistance in a political context of duels between discourses like we’re living in, it’s important to pinpoint the weakest spot of the opponent’s discourse in order to know how to disarm it; in this case, the manipulation through the well known as “fake news” based upon the relatable Bolsonaro’s ideology, it is both the strongest and weakest characteristic, since “Politicians seem to want to hide the negative within particular formulation such that the population may not see the truth or the horror before them”. (WILSON, 2001, p. 400).


However, even knowing that fake news was the spot to hit on with arguments, the resistance couldn’t reach people that were feeling like they needed someone fresh and new the way that he could, because we failed in sharing knowledge with the specific targets of his. Also, for us, fake news are the weakest and most embarrassing part of his strategy, but for his voters it’s exactly what made the difference and convinced all of them; as Silva (2020, p. 7) said previously on this book “Both United States and Brazil, with their alt-right leaders (such as Donald Trump and Jair Messias Bolsonaro), have a legitimized hatred discourse which works over society successfully by “fake news”; it is – even for these pernicious groups – clear that discourse is extremely important to guarantee hegemony athwart ideology.”

If someone have the power to say that it is okay to beat up a homosexual son to correct him and get away with it (discourse), people who have the same ideology will believe they can say and do the same and also get away with it, because it's their truth (manipulation of thought and actions). Therefore, Bolsonaro's discourses are not just words, but a wide distribution of green cards to anything he wants people to believe it's right; and as we can see, it works, because language and discourse are *that* powerful, as Silva commented in this book "Language is related to identity (GEE; HANDFORD, p. 32, 2012), since the first one is different depending on the multiple sorts of social identities, and language-in-use is always political."

GENDER AND SEXUALITY

Many stereotypes and prejudices our society possess nowadays come from the binary mistaken idea people have about gender and sexuality, in which people often mistake the two of them. I, hereby, promise to explain gender and sexuality based on my own idea of how they should be seen as. Gender is not about just being a straight man or a woman, but it's how each one of us define ourselves as a person; our identity. Which means that a binary culture is not enough to include a trans guy, for example (a woman who has a transitioning process to a guy) because it doesn't matter if the woman was gay or straight before the circumcision, it's not about who she wants to go to bed with, but who she wants to go to bed as.

This is not about environment or influences, hence the famous case of David Reimer (1965-2004), which Dawson mentioned in his book "Born as a boy and called Bruce, Reimer was accidentally castrated on a circumcision that went wrong, and then raised as a girl. However, David has always identified himself as a man, suggesting that gender cannot be apprehended – our identity is born with us" (2015, p. 48).




While sexuality is how you like to use the human body to achieve pleasure. Argo, homosexuality is when a person provides and achieves pleasure by interacting with someone of the same sex as he/she is. Dawson complements on this subject saying that “we have too little control over our sexual desires or gender, even if we have control over our identity. However you choose to identify yourself, though, nobody can ever say that your feelings are a choice” (2015, p. 49).

Connecting these queer studies to politics, perhaps the most powerful strategy here is not to find something that people want you to support, but to find something that people hate and feed it with hateful promises, by saying that you’ll take actions against it, for example. When it comes to hate towards homosexuality, it’s usual for us to witness, here and there, religious, gender related, and biological discourses. Bolsonaro did found it as one source of power to win the elections, but his hate comes from years before, back in 2002, when he had the nerve to say that “if I see two men kissing on the street, I’ll beat them up”, and that’s because of the amplified hate towards the performative sexuality; which is, simply put, how you portrait your sexuality to the world.

The so called “faggots” are the first target to be beaten up by people like Bolsonaro. They’re in the front line of the cause, they’re the ones who have the nerve to shout back as loud as it’s necessary, even when the same community that they represent so proudly sometimes let them down by opening space to a sexist point of view. Therefore, back in 2002, something that was naturalized in ancient societies such as the Greek one, was still something that should be corrected by whatever means necessary.

Have things improved since then? Fourteen years later, Bolsonaro said that “the son starts to be like this... little gay one, gets beaten up and change his behavior (...) we need to take actions!” claiming that homosexuality must be detected early in life, whenever children present opposite behaviors than their gender’s expectations, and must be



corrected through the same violence that the adult gay deserves; thus, for him, there's no boundaries. That's one of the biggest sources of homophobia; to defend the reproductive role of the men as if it should be in sync with sexuality, and make any other kind of behavior a detour. That thought is not only cruel, but also entirely wrong, for the normative role of the sexual organ is nothing but an invention of humanity searching for survival; as Freud has shown that "all of the sexual choices respond to unconscious determination searching for the fulfillment of the desire, in which there's no space for anything that could be called normal sexuality or much less natural one" (CECCARELLI, 2012, p. 110).

This subject was already present in Bolsonaro's discourses five years earlier, back in 2011, specifically during an interview in which he was answering some people's questions. Back to the son's behavior subject from earlier, he said in the interview that "if I can change an aggressive or disrespectful behavior of a son, why couldn't I change the effeminate one with the same attitude? *Homosexuality* is a behavior and not a genetic issue." This is an assumption that it is a behavior, that we're not born with it, and so we should stick to our gender roles of man and woman, and not to crossover them. But, as Foucault said, "The danger part of imagining the existence of a biologism is that this could legitimate dangerous normative attitudes to sexuality, stigmatizing some behaviors as natural and others as detour or antinatural" (FOUCAULT, 1982). And moreover, if he'd have studied a little bit of pedagogy (or of any social subject as the matter of fact) he'd know that a violent respond to a violent behavior doesn't do nothing but making it worse.

Not only philosophy fights against the geniality of our president's discourses but also "there's nothing in the matter of psyche in which the subject could find himself as male or female (...) whatever it must be done, as man or woman, the human being must learn always, bit by bit, from the other" (LACAN, 1973, p. 228-229). Therefore, it is through language interaction between subjects within the same context of reality

that it was decided what a man and a woman should do or say, and these paradigms were used as source of power and manipulation by Bolsonaro. Although these same paradigms have been contested by the ones that agree that psychologically we are not born with a role to play but we're imposed to these roles by biological, social or religious reasons. Politicians use those paradigms to push us into the marginalized social areas; As Bolsonaro said still in 2011, "These people have nothing to offer."

Strong political statements like that one said by someone who is in a position of power causes a profound image of truthfulness. In other words, "those in position of authority who are seen to be "experts" are those who can speak the truth" (MILLS, 2003, p. 59), and as much as expert is not the right adjective to describe our president, in my humble opinion, still people seem to believe in any fake statement that comes out of his mouth, or any hateful opinion. Although, in fact we really won't have anything to offer if they keep murdering us.

EDUCATION

How can we battle against such an effective strategy then? My hint is quite obvious: Education. That's how you fight discourses based on ignorance and hate; by educating our people and introducing them to the concept of critique. By teaching language, we can create a safe place for discussion and exchange of knowledge that it's hard to find outside a classroom, as Camila Oliveira Fonseca mentioned that "To Bakhtin, people transform themselves, shaping up through communication. They carry the voices of all their experiences of life, in which make them historical and ideological subjects" (FONSECA, 2016, p. 8), so there's no better way of changing thought than through an exchange of ideologies in a healthy place, provided by

a teacher or professor who shares Bakhtin's idea. After all, as Ferraz (2016, p. 195) states on his article "We think that it is up to us, educators, to problematize the inclusion or exclusion of these themes. It is up to us to discuss the interpretations and the epistemologies in which our pre-service teachers rely on."

In Brazil, we tried to do that through the "Escola sem Homofobia" project, in which each teacher would receive a guide book full of history, definitions, explanations, introductory texts, suggestions, activities, and everything else a teacher should be educated with, about the LGBTQIA+ community, in order to teach not only about gender, sexuality and identity, but also tolerance and respect to their students; including materials such as comic strips and video files. However, this material was turn down by the federal government due to the pressure made by conservative groups and religious politicians at the Nacional Congress.

How can we do it, then, when LGBTQIA+ studies are not a part of the formal curriculum of middle-school, high-school and college education? As a teacher, a good start is to deconstruct social ideas related to roles of genders, such as boys' and girls' colors, games, toys, costumes, clothes and even hairdos. And, as professors, we can inspire our students to discuss the effect that language has in the world, how it defines and influences all the time, and make them convince each other of their own opinions and ideologies, and then, making a parallel to how the same thing happens on a bigger scale such as in our political scenario, for example. Within this proposed discussions, the queer studies can be included.

But, we must be sure that they feel like owners of the process of learning and owners of the future of our nation, and we can do that by creating an environment that makes them feel like each voice of the group matters and can deeply contribute to the discussion. That's the main important learning strategy, since "because of the unwritten regulations on who can speak during a lecture (...) if a student is

called upon to speak by the lecturer she or he may well feel nervous or self-conscious and find speaking difficult” (MILLS, 2003, p. 61). Therefore, we must end the rarefaction effect (which is the limitation placed on who can speak authoritatively) presented in a classroom in order to open space to the student to be the most important subject in the process of learning.

And we must not underestimate the students, as Ferraz (2016 p. 197) stated on his article, after doing a research with his students about the matter here presented, “it is possible to connect and discuss linguistic teaching to themes that are relevant to pre-service teachers. The future educators of this research are prepared to discuss such themes in their classes. They signal new educational times.”

To wrap it up, no one better than Foucault to help me prove that language education can be a profound tool to critique, question and disarm such political, ideological, and discriminatory discourses from politicians in general, as he said “any system of education is a political way of maintaining or modifying the appropriation of discourses, along with the knowledges and powers which they carry” (FOUCAULT, 1981, P. 64).

CONCLUSION

Our way of doing politics makes it impossible to achieve equality, just as makes it difficult to think of a peaceful ending for our endless battle against prejudice. After all, if we have someone like Bolsonaro who has a strong locus of enunciation acting upon people’s mind who don’t have access to knowledge and an education that aims to create critical adults, constantly producing political discourses that aim to depreciate the LGBTQIA+ community, the idea of real peace for gay people seems unbelievable.

Our unconscious dictates our deepest sexual desires as unlabeled thoughts, that, however, gains such depreciative designation by our ideological view of a binary society, when psychologically, we're all just subjects seeking pleasure.

Therefore, we must not only try to change ignorant minds, but to prepare the youngest ones to become critical thinkers, so we can guarantee a future more equal for all of us.

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24

Lucas Cardoso Miquelon



**A SCAR THAT DOES NOT
CEASE TO THROB:
BEAUTY AND MASCULINITY
IDEALS WITHIN
THE GAY MALE COMMUNITY**



FIRST THOUGHTS

A body lies naked on the asphalt. A mannequin, its limbs roughly jumbled up: how ephemeral it is, however solid its materiality is. Not made from the image but the desire of its creator, it does not speak, does not feel, does not breathe: a fragile but powerful shape; an idea. An ideal.

Raymond Williams (1989) argues that

Every human society has its own shape, its own purposes, its own meanings. Every human society expresses these, in institutions, and in arts and learning. The making of a society is the finding of common meanings and directions, and its growth is an active debate and amendment under the pressures of experience, contact, and discovery, writing themselves into the land. (WILLIAMS, 1989, p. 93)

If “the making of a society is the finding of common meanings and directions”, I wonder what is constitutive of these “common meaning and directions”. Certainly and unquestionably, we live in an immensely diverse, plural world. But I question myself daily: are we all equally allowed to express our subjectivity fully? Do we receive the same ink to write ourselves “into the land”? Ultimately, who are the ones who hold the power to establish the “common meanings and directions”?

Power. Perhaps, the entire discussion should revolve if not entirely at least crucially around this very concept, for those who hold the power get to choose whether the ink from which one shall write oneself into the land springs from pigment or blood. But is there all to it? Or: whose blood is this? Surely, such question does not have a straightforward, single answer, since it depends: the blood running through the lands across the world may belong to several beings; several beings who throughout history have systematically lost their right to simply express their subjectivities as they are – some of them being the LGBTIA+ people

who exist and resist in a hostile society which treats us as abnormalities in a world of normalities.

Having said that, I shall henceforth have an approach to this text which tackles, in the first section, the place of dissident sexualities, having as theoretical ground the Foucauldian concept of 'genealogy', so that I can pave the way for the second and third sections of the discussion: the masculinity ideals embedded specifically in the gay male community, analysing what sort of impact they produce in gay men and to what extent we comply with them, having Foucault's 'biopower' concept as a starting point.

THE PLACE, THE MARGIN

As Foucault (1971) observes, there is always a truth trying to come up and that the desire of truth is something we all have when we produce discourse, which means to say truth is not objective – hence, it depends on who is saying. It should be noted, hence, that it is I who is saying: a LGBTIA+ person, writing a text on the grounds of my experience and voicing my desire of truth.

Nevertheless, one should not disguise the fact that in order for one to properly engender their desire of truth, an understanding of the historical context in which such discourse is encapsulated is paramount. It is after doing so that one may better acknowledge and trace the processes involved in the making of this context – which entails the concept of genealogy.

According to Garland (2014),

“Genealogy” was, for Foucault, a method of writing critical history: a way of using historical materials to bring about a “revaluing of values” in the present day. Genealogical analysis traces how

contemporary practices and institutions emerged out of specific struggles, conflicts, alliances, and exercises of power, many of which are nowadays forgotten. (GARLAND, 2014, p. 372)

This is not to say that the aim of the 'genealogical process' is to investigate the origins of what has been established; It aims, instead,

to trace the erratic and discontinuous process whereby the past became the present: an often aleatory path of descent and emergence that suggests the contingency of the present and the openness of the future. Genealogy is, in that sense, "effective history" because its intent is to problematize the present by revealing the power relations upon which it depends and the contingent processes that have brought it into being. (ibidem, p. 372)

That is to say that as far as genealogical processes are concerned, History is not seen from a linear perspective, for it is the circulation of a problem that is of interest: the aim is not to develop the history of a period, but the history of a problem. Foucault, in his first volume of *History of Sexuality* (1978), seeks to understand when the sexual conduct became object of moral solicitude, given sexual practices and morality have not always been established as of collective compromise.

He argues that until the end of 18th century there were three codes that governed sexual practices, determining what would be licit or illicit: "canonical law, the Christian pastoral, and civil law." (FOUCAULT, 1978, p. 37)

Vieira (2009), on the same note, observes that

In the end of 19th century, mostly due to the emergence of a new medical-scientific discourse focused on the study and classification of pathologies; there springs up a new species: the 'homosexual'. First investigations sought to identify the manifestations and causes of homosexuality aiming to standardise sexual life; a programme, part of the hygienist movement dedicated to the control and regulation of urban life. (VIEIRA, 2009, p. 490, *my translation*)

Those who did not fit such mould ended up being stuck in a place of “perversion”, persecuted and punished by laws, and oftentimes treated as creatures dominated by vice and consequently imprisoned. This is why Foucault (1978) claims that the homosexual in the 19th century becomes nothing but a “personage”:

[...] a past, a case history, and a childhood, in addition to being a type of life, a life form, and a morphology, with an indiscreet anatomy and possibly a mysterious physiology. Nothing that went into his total composition was unaffected by his sexuality. It was everywhere present in him: at the root of all his actions because it was their insidious and indefinitely active principle; written immodestly on his face and body because it was a secret that always gave itself away. It was consubstantial with him, less as a habitual sin than as a singular nature. (FOUCAULT, 1978, p. 43)

Considering that (1) to homosexuality was given a wrapping of perversion and abnormality; (2) the homosexual existence was narrowed down to being a sexuality and a sexuality only, and (3) the sexual practices followed strict, clearly determined rules of conduct, I cannot help thinking that to have a sexuality that is not in accordance to the norm is therefore to place such sexuality in a position of revolution. I may go even further and say that the existence of non-normative sexualities ultimately puts at stake the power of the established norm, shaking is alleged and fragile truth – and that is why our existences cause disquiet.

Being homosexual - and to a greater extent, LGBTIA+, is by default the questioning of the hegemony of the bourgeoisie heteronormativity that has not only been imposed but has also been dictating what ought to be normal and what ought to be marginal, creating boundaries on the bodies of those who dare to cross them and labelling these very same bodies as diseased and ill-suited.

Guets (2019, this work) dialogues with this matter in her *Lesbian discourse as a form of social transformation*, stating that

Homosexual people, when having a piece of the hegemonic power of speech and discourse for manifestations of our ideas, therefore, makes this punitive way of keeping sexuality cloistered between four walls break and, along with it, a piece of oppression. When I say out loud that I am a *sapatão*, I am not just coming out of the closet (because I have never actually been there), but I am saying that the power of discourse is also mine. (GUETS, 2019, this work)

Embracing her being as a *sapatão* is not only questioning the hegemony of heteronormativity; it is, more importantly, breaking away from the chains of silencing and marginality – mainly for lesbians, who, as she denounces, have always been marginalised even within both LGBTIA+ and feminist movements.

Such claim leads the discussion to what seems to me a necessary matter: surely, progress has been made as far as LGBTIA+ rights are concerned. But one should not lose sight of something that is symptomatic – which rights are gay men aiming at?

Seffner (2011) points out that

The persistent fight for the acknowledgment of already existent rights, usually upheld by identities and consolidated lifestyles, clearly leads us to discriminate other ways of being and existing, shaped historically throughout LGBT individuals' journey. Thus, being gay, for instance, which for so long had been seen as a critical portrait of masculine heterosexual life, nowadays seeks to fit clearly hegemonic attributes of masculinity. (SEFFNER, 2011, p. 66, *my translation*)

We have fought for so long to be noticed, so that we could afterwards be heard. But what message have we got across? What sort of flag have we waved? I am certainly not willing to infer that we should not voice our concerns so that we can strike a chord as far as

our rights, as citizens, are concerned. What should be noted, however, is the fact that we must pay close attention to what we advocate, and if what we advocate is merely a reproduction of “consolidated lifestyles” that ultimately causes us to reject any other form of existences within our own community. In the hopes of being accepted and respected, we should not make other subjectivities, formed after decades of resistance, invisible.

Bearing this in mind and on the grounds of the last statement that I, in the following section, shall better develop the points raised here, having as a starting point the concept of ‘biopower’.

CONTROLLING BODIES, SILENCING EXISTENCES

Michel Foucault was a philosopher dedicated not only to shed light on the notion of what power is, but he also adds his own thinking to the discussion, perceiving the working of power not as something limited to the binarism of those who hold it and those who comply to it.

Camilo and Furtado (2016) observe that

For him, power is always associated to some kind of power. Exercising power becomes possible by means of knowledge that serves as instrument and justification. For the sake of truth, authoritarian practices of segregation, monitoring, control of bodies and desire are legitimised and enabled. (CAMILO; FURTADO, 2016, p. 35, *my translation*)

These “authoritarian practices of segregation” are the core of what he shall name ‘biopower’ or, as he defines in *Security, Territory, Population* (2007),


[...] a number of phenomena that seem to me to be quite significant, namely, the set of mechanisms through which the basic biological features of the human species became the object of a political strategy, of a general strategy of power, or, in other words, how, starting from the eighteenth century, modern western societies took on board the fundamental biological fact that human beings are a species. (FOUCAULT, 2007, p. 16)

This process of transforming bodies into tools of control and monitoring has its own shape in Souza (2009) who argues that it is the 'sexual body' that is regulated politically, which means to say that it bears the process of reification and economic exploitation. The relation of power, then, is no longer direct, manifesting itself in such metamorphosed way that those bodies being regulated do not seem to fully comprehend the control over their own subjectivities, now reified and submissive – or, as Foucault (1980) puts it, “we find a new mode of investment which presents itself no longer in the form of control by repression but that of control by stimulation. ‘Get undressed - but be slim, good-looking, tanned!’”. (FOUCAULT, 1980, p. 57)

Mota (2012), in his ethnographic study on how homosexuality has been constructed throughout the lives of old gay men, also recognises that

In order to override the perception of their inferiority, they will attempt to define themselves as someone who express acceptability, for scarcely do they know how others will perceive them or accept them in terms of the stigma which is imposed on them. (MOTA, 2012, p. 207, *my translation*)

Indeed, the idea of having a body considered perfect jibes with what both Mota (2011) and Seffner (2011) comment: it is through the attainment of a masculinity epitome that an alleged acceptability of the homosexual man is made up – that is, *in spite of* being gay, he carries traits that *compensate* his “issue”, being then allowed entry in the privileged heterosexual world.



What I propose is that the gay male may have been subject to the aforementioned forces, namely 'biopower', reproducing and internalising controlling tools within the gay community towards society in general so that they be accepted; so that the 'perversion' label, so long imposed, be ripped off from their now fragile and regulated bodies. It is with all this discussion in mind that I shall question, in the following section, the increasingly marching of gay men towards hegemonic standards of masculinity and beauty.

MIRROR, MIRROR, ON THE SCREEN, THE DIVERSITY UNSEEN

According to a survey carried out in 2008 by Datafolha, a Brazilian polling institute, during a LGBT parade, 76% of the interviewed endorse fully or partially the idea that there are homosexuals who have "extravagant traits", which could to their minds gas up the prejudice against gay people. Among the interviewed, 44,6% prefer "more masculine" partners, whereas 1,9% are more into "feminine" partners.

It is Sergio Carrara (2008) who scrutinises the data above, questioning in the end of his analysis whether only virile, discrete, and well-mannered homosexuals are allowed entrance to 'Paradise'. Not only is the question emblematic; combining it with the survey results, the rhetorical yet on-point interrogation echoes deep within us and denounces an even deeper issue.

Pereira and Ayrosa (2012) investigate how the possession of body is used to face the stigma of homosexual identity. They observe that

The body this group desires is not simply the body of others, but their own body, for this body which is desired is the reflexion of their own, that is, the body of a masculine, heterosexual,

dominant man. Having a body with traits that reinforce this kind of masculinity is resisting the stigma which disqualifies them, since it associates them to the 'non-man', to someone who violates the heteronormative roles assigned to men. Thus, a way of resisting the stereotype would be the making of a body which externalises all the male masculinity, distancing gay men from the stereotype of being an outsider to both masculine and feminine. (PEREIRA; AYROSA, 2012, p. 298, *my translation*)

Having physical traits that reinforce the hegemonic ideal of masculinity may therefore be a way of not only conforming but also breaking away from the stigma of being gay in a society where the latter is considered inappropriate.

However, not only is it curious to think that in the attempt of "resisting to the stereotype", one may actually produce another one; if one bear in mind what I have exposed so far, mainly considering the concept of 'biopower', one may soon realise that the individuals themselves are not the only ones responsible for trying to have their existences disassociated to the disqualifying stigma of being gay. The media, here specifically represented by TV series and films, are the main agents of the perpetuation of beauty standards – not to mention standards of desire, putting aside and consequently segregating bodies who do not conform to the norm.

Logo TV, an American television channel which is known for having several LGBT shows and programmes, carried out a survey on its website in 2013, asking the readers to name their favourite gay or bisexual male TV characters of all time. More than thirty thousand people took part in the voting, and the results were as it follows: out of fifty characters ranked, only seven were men of colour; only one was over the age of forty; and only one character - out of fifty, I must accentuate - was fat.

One should call to mind what I have been discussing all thoroughly: if our bodies are regulated and an ideal of what we should be has been established, it is not surprising to come across such result. In order for the poll to have a different pattern, a different standard in the media should have been delineated. If there are not enough fat or men of colour gay characters being effectively portrayed - which, in turn, leads us to the discussion of intersectionalities, viewers cannot be expected to vote for fat or black gay characters as their favourite.

This is not to undermine or boil down the discussion to a lack of representation in the media. On the contrary, it denounces a complex and intricate thread of relations of power and consumerism: having accepted that society, from a macro view, and the mainstream media, from a micro view, wield power over our subjectivities, imposing never-ending stimuli of how we should act, which bodies we should desire and ultimately who we should be, it is almost as if we were not expected to consume cultural products that offer a far cry from the standard. The demand for other kinds of existences becomes, for this reason, insufficient for TV producers to invest money in, on the grounds that such kind of production will be disregarded and consequently (or more importantly) not lucrative.

Lopes (2008) also tackles this issue, pointing out that

Both feminist and gay, lesbian, and transgender studies have a first movement of criticising stereotyped social representations, silences and oppressions. [...] Such concern leads to the questioning of culture and art not because the latter are creators, but because they reaffirm or criticise clichés of gender and sexual orientation representations. Given its impact, Hollywood films become their main target, followed by television, given its hegemonic role in the increasingly transnational cultural industry. (LOPES, 2008, p. 65, *my translation*)

Once again, the outcome of 'biopower' takes place: when Lopes (2008) argues that culture and art may be used not as creators, but reproducers, he is denouncing the power these institutions have to

reaffirm and reinforce clichés and ideas. He also points out that, if the claim for social representation initially allows a sort of confrontation with regulating forces, so that the misrepresentation of groups be shrunk, this same strategy may lead to the very opposite scenario, with new stereotypes being (re)produced and idealised (Ibidem, p. 66), as I proposed earlier.

In a similar vein, Ferraz (2019), in connecting neoliberalism, mass media and homosexuality, questions the so-called acceptance of homosexuality in Brazilian society. He argues that the fact homosexuality is being depicted in soap operas may be seen as closely related to the increasing of audience ratings and ultimately to profiting. Hence,

“the different is accepted, provided that the subject that accepts, who is heteronormative, be superior, whereas the accepted one remains being the deviant, the object/weird who is laughable; the homosexual will always be subordinate to the “normal”/superior one. (FERRAZ, 2019, p. 209, *my translation*)

Linking Ferraz (2019) and Lopes (2008), it is feasible to observe that, although it is true that gay and lesbian characters are portrayed in mass media products, these characters are subordinate to heteronormative forces that reaffirm several “clichés of gender and sexual orientation representations”. Likewise, it is noteworthy to think that when the gay characters are not governed by the rules Ferraz (2019) presents – the place of “object/weird who is laughable”, they are still governed by technologies of control and regulations, which will define certain beauty and masculinity standards which they must comply to so that they be accepted by the heteronormative subjects.

Having said that, I decided to investigate, having my experience as a gay man who happens to be a film lover, which types of gay characters are portrayed in gay feature-length films I have watched throughout my life that focus on the development of a romantic and/or sexual affair between the characters, following the discussion brought

up here. I have also made use of Rotten Tomatoes' "200 Best LGBT movies of all time" and Esquire's "The 50 Best LGBTQ Movies Ever Made" lists, so that I could have a more structured material other than my subjective experience to support my choices.

Despite preparing myself beforehand for what awaited me, my bewilderment was not any less real: the similarity of the 36 films gathered, released between 1987 (*Maurice*) and 2018 (*Hard Paint*), as far as beauty standards are concerned, is unquestionable. The predominance of white actors whose physical traits conform to an acceptable norm may be seen in the gathered scenes below:



The only exceptions that should be noticed are the 2011 film *Romeos*, which portrays the relationship between a gay trans man and a gay cis man, and the 2017 Brazilian film *Electric Body*, written and directed by Marcelo Caetano. The film accompanies its characters – stripped of the social regulations that incarcerate desire – in their journey towards new life and sexual experiences. The ease with which


these people are portrayed represents a necessary and inspiring breath of fresh air.

Another important aspect that cannot be overlooked is the fact that the only films containing men of colour are the ones released after 2016: *Moonlight*; *Electric Body*; *Love, Simon*, and *Hard Paint* – and, out of the four, the only one representing characters who do not conform to the idealised male body is *Electric Body*.

Although truly acknowledging that this very small sample of films does not represent the totality of gay characters depicted, the mere exercise of struggling to think of films portraying gay characters who are not in accordance to standards of masculinity and beauty may be an evidence of how gay male bodies are represented on the screen, which dialogues directly with what Lopes brings up and ultimately materialises the functioning of regulating forces that act upon subjectivities, denoting which kind of performativity is more accepted and which ought to be ostracised and silenced.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS AND FUTURE CHALLENGES

My intention in writing this paper was to offer a first glimpse, an introductory account of a much more complex discussion: tackling the issue of gay male ideals is to inevitably bring about questions of colour, age, bodies, desire and expressions of sexuality that I consciously did not deepen, but that are in no way less essential to the bigger picture. The idea was to pave the way for things whose questioning should and must be acknowledged, so that a better understanding of the engendering of the shapes in which our society now stands takes place.



Having Foucault as my theoretical foundation, I used his concepts of 'genealogy' and 'biopower' to dig on how the imposition of rules and regulating forces towards the gay male community harasses the true exercise of our subjectivities. I also aimed at calling attention to the fact that we must share an eagle-eye regarding the role of mainstream media, as well as capitalism, as forces that should not be taken for granted, and whose influence on the making of our desire is unequivocal. In order for me to properly discuss these matters, I made use of statistics and films, in the hopes of shedding light on the issue of masculinity and body standards portrayed on the screen.

Finally, I am positive that we must put at stake these regulating forces that curtail the expression of our true selves; we must constantly ask ourselves which path we are eager to follow, making a stand not so that we can conform to ideals (if we do not want to), but to truly exist without having suffocating ties crossed in our hearts. Ultimately, we must be aware, as well as remind ourselves daily, that this is only a scar in a bigger, deeper wound that has not yet ceased to throb. And does it throb. Painstakingly.

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