



REVIEW

# An overview on Digital Discourse Analysis

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## ABSTRACT

This review aims to present an epistemological, theoretical, and methodological overview proposed at the live session entitled *Digital Discourse Analysis by Marie-Anne Paveau: from prediscourses to technodiscourses*.

From the perspective of digital discourse analysis, investigated by Marie-Anne Paveau, the live session proposed to discuss the researchers' concerns about this theoretical proposal. To this end, they divided the session into four aspects: tracking the insertion of Paveau's studies in Brazil and her influence on research groups and published works; the close relations between prediscourses, language, and morals; the characteristics of technodiscourses and digital activism regarding the speaker's density of presence. This discussion becomes extremely relevant given the future publication of the dictionary *A análise do discurso digital – dicionário das formas e das práticas*, which aims to revolutionize the discursive studies.

## RESUMO

Esta resenha objetiva apresentar o apanhado epistemológico, teórico e metodológico proposto na *live* intitulada *Análise do Discurso Digital de Marie-Anne Paveau: dos pré-discursos aos tecnodiscursos*. Sob a perspectiva da *Análise do Discurso Digital*, investigada por Marie-Anne Paveau, a *live* propôs discutir as inquietações dos pesquisadores acerca dessa proposta teórica. Para tanto, estes dividiram a mesa em quatro aspectos: percurso da inserção dos estudos de Paveau no Brasil e sua influência nos grupos de pesquisa e trabalhos publicados; as relações estreitas entre pré-discursos, linguagem e moral; as características dos tecnodiscursos e o militantismo digital quanto à densidade de presença do



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enunciador. Essa discussão se faz extremamente relevante dada a futura publicação do dicionário *A análise do discurso digital – dicionário das formas e das práticas*, o qual se propõe a revolucionar os estudos discursivos.

### KEYWORDS

Digital discourse analysis. Prediscourses. Technodiscourses.

### PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Análise do discurso digital. Pré-discursos. Tecnodiscursos.

This review is part of the event Linguists Online, which consists of a series of live lectures and sessions organized by the Brazilian Association of Linguistics (Abralin), being an important tool for accessing scientific knowledge.

Discourse Analysis (henceforth, DA) is a branch of Linguistics that aims to describe social practices and how this materializes in the uses of language, exercising political, social, and cultural influence on the strata of society. However, the interactions carried out in digital media prove to be fruitful and arouse multiple interests and reflections on how discourses are promoted in the digital native environment.

Entitled *Digital Discourse Analysis proposed by Marie-Anne Paveau*, the live session was moderated by Profa. Dra. Mariana Luz Pessoa de Barros (UFSCar). The main objective of the session was to present Marie-Anne Paveau's epistemological, theoretical, and methodological proposal for the development of a Digital Discourse Analysis (henceforth, DDA). Based on this purpose, Prof. Dr. Roberto Leiser Baronas (UFSCar) starts by presenting a path of the research group with the author's proposal; then, Profa. Dra. Ana Carolina Vilela-Ardenghi (UFMT) highlights the relationships between the collective prediscursive frameworks and language in its overlap with morals; then, Prof. Dr. Roberto Baronas deals with the central characteristics of technodiscourses, and, finally, Profa. Dr. Júlia Lourenço Costa (UFSCar) addresses digital activism, reflecting on the speaker and his/her density of presence. After the speeches, the chat questions are sent by the moderator for the participants' appreciation.

Involved in a poetic tone and, at the same time, firm in his position as an activist, discourse researcher, Baronas discusses the path of insertion of Marie-Anne Paveau's works in Brazil in the last decade, which reverberate in the research groups and, consequently, in works published in Portuguese.

By strengthening relations with the author of the book, Marie-Anne Paveau, the researchers obtained authorization for the translation of the work *L'analyse du discours numérique - dictionnaire des formes et des pratiques*, which will be a turning point in Brazilian discursive studies, advocates Baronas. The path proposed by Baronas, at first, synthesizes one of the objectives of the live session,

Paveau's epistemological and theoretical path and the lines of interest of Brazilian researchers, discussed in depth by Ana Carolina.

Within the theoretical path taken by Ana Carolina about Paveau's vast research, especially the synthesis of the works *Os pré-discursos, sentido, memória e cognição* (2013) and *Linguagem e moral – uma ética das virtudes discursivas*, we highlight some points arranged in the live session by the speaker. Professor Ana Carolina presents, with skill and depth, the concepts of prediscourse and discursive virtues elaborated by Paveau, expanding the limits of DA to other knowledge plans such as distributed cognition, moral, and digital universe.

The researcher resumes what Paveau understands as cognitive dimension: “the knowledge-building processes and its configuration of discourse based on data received by the senses, memory, and social relations” (2013, p. 9). Thus, Paveau proposes a theoretical treatment of aspects such as previous knowledge, shared knowledge, doxa, paying attention to a deeper description, emphasizes the speaker. She also reiterates that, despite conceiving that discourses are based on the nature of shared knowledge and beliefs, such terrain is still mysterious.

However, the central point is the category of prediscourses, which differs from preconstructed ones, and can be defined as a set of collective prediscursive frames (knowledge, beliefs, practices) that give instructions for production and interpretation of the senses in the discourse. It is worth mentioning that such frames are not tied to the individuals or groups in which they are involved, but, as advocated by the notion of distributed cognition, they are disseminated in the material contexts of discursive production.

To illustrate the concept of prediscourse, Vilela-Ardenghi recovers Paveau (2013, p. 20), in which the author analyzes the expression “É Beirute”. In a specific context, the highlighted expression becomes the signifier of chaos and urban destruction, losing the sense of “city” (capital of Lebanon), since such expression recovers a semantic universe in the discursive memory. Paveau questions how a simple first name can bring out such different knowledge. With this, the author emphasizes the essence of prediscourse as an encyclopedic, stereotyped character.

Regarding the second work mentioned, the issue of the ethics of discursive virtues stands out, since, according to Vilela-Ardenghi's reflection, Paveau tries to integrate the ethical parameter into Linguistics by analysing the moral dimension in utterances, underscoring that, from this perspective, there is a fine line between ideological frontiers and, within a society, limits of concepts such as offensive and non-offensive, politically correct and incorrect. These issues are central aspects of ethics and language, which concur with the definition of discursive virtue and can be understood as follows: how adjusted is a discourse to the values shared within the social collective.

Finally, Vilela-Ardenghi clarifies relations between the notion of prediscourses and the ethics of discursive virtues postulated by Paveau, from which we highlight that both do not have explicit marks in the linguistic materiality, owning an indexical character, since they come from our inter-subjective perceptions of the world.

Consequently Baronas stresses the relevance of the discussions undertaken and, while recognizing national researches on digital discourses, says that Paveau is the precursor of DDA with the

publication of the dictionary in which she proposes new concepts, based on French DA to support reflections on the functioning of native discourses on the internet, i.e. technodiscourses, produced within technical devices.

Technodiscourse is defined by its virtual nature and has its particularities regarding relationality and its unique characteristics, such as clickability and unpredictability. Baronas warns of the distance between pre-digital and non-digital discourses from digital discourses and underscores that Paveau does not intend to create another taxonomy, but to understand the relationships between subject, language, machine, and society.

To reflect on these relationships, the author lists six characteristics of the functioning of technodiscourses: composition, de-linearization, expansion, relationality, investigability, and unpredictability. Based on these parameters, Baronas illustrates the functioning of the technodiscourse, resuming discursive productions about the assassinations of Marielle Franco, councilor in Rio de Janeiro, and her driver Anderson Gomes in 2018, from the scenographies of signs, posters, news, and comments on Twitter, displayed on social networks. We emphasize a space of militancy and empathy at the session when Baronas affirms that Marielle's name, in the technodiscursive clashes, constitutes a place of memory, resistance, and reexistence in favor of a more decent society.

Finally, Profa. Dr. Júlia Costa (UFSCar), when dealing with the concept of dualism, discusses the polarization between real (the world of beings and things) and virtual (the world of algorithms), between offline and online, between physical and digital, a kind of global binarism, to think about the notion of subject and speaker based on Marie-Anne Paveau's DDA proposal. The speaker demonstrates that Paveau, by taking possession of a post-dualistic and ecological perspective, pictures digital discourse as an interweaving between man and machine, since technodiscourses are discourses co-constructed with technical implications, distancing from an understanding that the machine would be only a support for the interaction.

In this way, Paveau disapproves of dualism, considering that separating the real and virtual worlds would limit the subject in terms of cognition and perception. However, in Linguistics, these subject / world "renegotiations" imply revisiting the concept of enunciation, says Júlia. In the digital universe, the enunciative coordinates of person, time, and space are converted and adapted. Within this inscription of digital enunciation, Júlia poses some questions, among which the following: "what is the digital speaker: the subject, the machine or their junction?". In Paveau (2017), the digital speaker is expanded, when other "online sayings" are added, such as Facebook comments, and collective, when using shared writing programs, such as Google Docs, exemplifies the speaker.

Júlia focuses on thinking about how the notion of digital speaker is built in opposition to the real-virtual dualism specifically regarding digital militancy and emphasizes how subjects belonging to social movements have established themselves in virtual spaces mainly in the midst of the pandemic scenario, further emphasizing the dualism between limits of the real and the virtual. To exemplify this, Júlia presents some publications calling for digital protests promoted by the National Students Union (UNE) from a series of virtual activities in which the engagement of the digital subject-speaker is essential.

After the speeches of the speakers, the chat questions were arranged, among which, we have selected two. The first is: who is the subject of DDA? Is it a subject subjected to the algorithm while experiencing the illusion of being the master of your virtual choices? Júlia replies that he is not a subject to the algorithm, but that he is interwoven with the machine in a discursive co-construction. The second is: would it be an approximation of DA (regarding Paveau's proposal) with TL? Ana Carolina replies that it would not, considering the theoretical assumptions of both are different. However, she recognizes the possible points of contact between theories.

The live session discussed concepts of language, ethics, morals, prediscourses, and technodiscourses within the epistemological and theoretical-methodological proposal of the discursivist Paveau, a theoretical contribution that tends to positively influence the studies of DA, in addition to generating points of intersection with other strands of Linguistics.

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