

RELATÓRIO DE PESQUISA

Notes about folk edition on social networks

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ABSTRACT

In this paper, we aim to reflect about the practice that has become a theme of an Instagram page: the rewriting of journalistic news, so that the headline appears erased with red pen, adapting it paradigmatically to the ideological position of its folk editor. Thus, for such, we based ourselves on Almeida's reflections (2021), being used the theoretical-methodological contribution of the French-oriented Discourse Analysis, more specifically of Maingueneau (2008), in an integrative proposal with Folk Linguistics, according to Paveau (2008). Our main results indicated that such folk intervention goes beyond the linguistic field, acting also as a folk judicial intervention.

RESUMO

Neste texto, objetivamos refletir sobre uma prática que se tornou tema de uma página do Instagram: a reescrita de notícias jornalísticas, de modo que a manchete pareça rasurada com caneta vermelha, adequando-a paradigmamente à posição ideológica de seu *folk* editor. Assim, para tal, baseamo-nos nas reflexões de Almeida (2021), sendo usado o aporte teórico-metodológico da Análise do Discurso de orientação francesa, mais especificamente de Maingueneau (2008), em uma proposta integrativa com a Linguística Popular – *Folk Linguistics*, conforme Paveau (2008). Nossos principais resultados indicaram que tal intervenção folk vai além do campo linguístico, atuando também como uma intervenção jurídica *folk*.

ABSTRACT

Folk linguistics. Discourse analysis. Social networks.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Linguística popular. Análise do discurso. Redes sociais.

Introdução

The present study is inscribed in an intersection between the field of *Folk Linguistics* and French-oriented Discourse Analysis, in an integrationist view, proposed by Paveau (2008), and aims to analyze posts on the social network Instagram page "Unleft Pen"¹, which are typically composed of "corrected" headlines and reads according to the ideological position of what we propose here to call *folk* editor. Such practice is not necessarily new in recent years, especially with the advancement and popularization of social media, with many headlines being put out there to gain so much visibility and repercussion that it entails the rewriting of the original news headline. This situation like this was well analyzed in Almeida's study (2021), which guided our first reflections on the theme.

If, on one hand, it is not new that news altered in this way are put into circulation, on the other hand, an institutionalization, let's say, of this practice seems to us to be. Thus, it caught our attention the dedication of an Instagram page for this, which has 258,000 followers and 2,878 posts at the time of writing this text, numbers that can be considered significant.

¹ Available at: <<https://instagram.com/desesquerdizada?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=>>. Accessed on: 06 Sep. 2022.



FIGURE 1 - Print of the publication
 Fonte: Instagram

In that regard, in order to make an analysis cut for the article genre, we elected a post from the page in question. In it, there are rewritings cited as "translations" of posts by political personalities, video comments, among other ways of reconstructing the speech of its Other, especially Brazilians and left-wingers. However, as a criterion for choosing the material, we first selected those that were more recent and that had as a mark the alterations of the headlines and/or reads in red color, simulating a "correction by pen", as the name of this Ig suggests. Then, to represent our reflections in

this article, we selected the one that dealt with a fairly recent pronouncement at a rally made by Lula-PT, given his popularity for the 2022 presidential elections.

Folk Linguistics, as it is known in Brazil, works with metaenunciations, that is, comments on language produced by different categories, ranging from professional linguists, amateur linguists, non-linguistic scientists, ludolinguists, engaged speakers to common speakers, among other categories, who perform descriptive, prescriptive and intervening linguistic practices. The material we elected to analyze suffered linguistic interventions, especially in its lexical choices/paradigmatic axis, and/or was complemented throughout the sentence, which entails not only the change of a semantic field, but also the re-signification of an event, raising discussions that go beyond the field of Linguistics, such as hate speech, aggression against women, abortion, among many others.

In this sense, the underlying issue here is not simply grammatical, lexical, paradigmatic, but also semantic and, above all, ideological. Thus, the news starts to circulate in line with the goals of the Ig Leftist Pen, which describes in its profile bio: "Increase your knowledge of economics and politics, and defeat leftists in discussions."

In times of social networks and instantaneous virtual interactions, it is impossible to measure the volume of statements produced by the most diverse subjects. Nor is it possible to predict the reach of these statements and their reverberations, since the web is configured as an accessible and democratic space for the production and circulation of statements, without the need to prove specialized knowledge in a particular area of knowledge in order to position oneself and produce content as one. This practice has been observed by Rosier even before the emergence of the term popular linguistics: "one can [...] observe the presence of what we call the *linguistics of profane speakers* on the Internet, especially in discussion forums [...]" (ROSIER, 2004, p. 70).

These attributes of the network is one of the factors that contribute to making it a very fertile ground for the emergence of the practice of popular linguists, or in Rosier's terms, profane speakers.

This permeability of the network is very similar to the porosity of the categories of popular linguists proposed by Paveau. While traditional vehicles of knowledge diffusion demand from the subject the proof of a knowledge validated by an academy, social networks submit themselves to popular approval. Thus, public opinion, in this space, becomes the guarantor of discourse, validating or not what is published. The amount of followers and likes that the post reaches is configured as a thermometer, which in a way, as in the example of the cut under analysis, ensures the maintenance and permanence of the profile, as well as encourages the feeding of content.

It is important to emphasize that popularity is not synonymous with assertiveness, since there is no filtering of what is broadcasted, and it is precisely because there is no filter that there is protagonism of popular linguists. Thus, social networks are also a fertile ground for the dissemination of fake news.

To go through these spaces as a source of information requires maturity and discernment on the part of the interlocutor, both to accept and refute the statements.

1. Questions about Popular Linguistics

The genesis of science is popular knowledge, therefore, for every consolidated scientific field there is a *folk science* not yet validated by the academy, but which is the domain of the popular classes. Similarly, to admit popular linguistics as a field of study is to recognize linguistics itself, since it arises from ruptures. Following Kuhn's assumption (*apud* Dascal, 1999), every innovation in the sciences in general occurs from a break in a previously stabilized paradigm which, when questioned, loses its hegemony, making room for new questionings, whose conjectures, when stabilized, cause the emergence of another paradigm.

In the meantime, folk linguistics configures itself as a new paradigm. Paveau (2008) systematizes *folk linguistics* by recognizing three positions to be adopted in face of the knowledge of popular linguistics: eliminative, intermediate and integrationist.

In the eliminative view, the fragility of popular linguistics is due to the lack of empirical support, therefore, it does not establish itself as a science. In the intermediate view, although the data are considered, they are not sustained, since they are incomplete as a theory. In the integrationist view, the popular knowledges become the object of study of linguistics. According to Paveau (2008), "folk statements are not necessarily false beliefs to be eliminated from science. They constitute, on the contrary, perceptual, subjective and incomplete knowledges to be integrated into the scientific data of linguistics." Paveau (2018, p. 23) also postulates a typology for popular linguistics in three dimensions: descriptive, prescriptive, and interventionist. For this study, we are interested in the integrationist view and the interventionist dimension.

2. The folk intervention in "Caneta Desesquerdizada"

While speaking at a rally in the Anhangabaú Valley in São Paulo on August 20, 2022, former President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (PT), candidate for the Presidency of the Republic of Brazil, when addressing the topic of the Maria da Penha Law, produced a statement that began to circulate negatively for his campaign. According to CNN's *website*, Lula said in his speech:

We made the Maria da Penha Law. And I said 'a man's hand was made to work, to caress the person he loves and his children. A man's hand was not made to hit a woman. Do you want to hit a woman? Go beat somewhere else, but not inside your house or in Brazil because we can no longer accept this. (CNN, Aug. 22, 2022)

Of the entire speech, the one that went on to circulate as a headline in major media outlets was "Lula: 'Want to beat up on women? Go beat somewhere else'" (CNN, 22 Aug. 2022). Since this is a theme that is typically a left-wing agenda, and Lula is its main representative today, the gaffe, as the journalists referred to it, became a topic of discussion for the opposition. In the newspaper *Folha de S.Paulo*, on August 22, 2022, an article was published with the following headline: "Lula commits a

gaffe about women and expands the list of slips in the campaign". Specifically, a *printout* of the latter was made, edited according to the "rules" of a folk editor, and published on the page Caneta Desesquerdizada, on the same date as the original publication.



FIGURE 2 - *Print of the Unleft Pen page on September 06, 2022*
Source: Instagram

In the "edited version", the syntagma "commits gaffe about" was replaced by "defends aggression of", and "list of slips" was also replaced by "hate speech". Thus, in the "new version", we have: "Lula defends aggression against women and expands the list of slips in the campaign". Although, in a digital environment, substitutions are easily made and the previous version "erased", in this case, the correction marks, as historically known in pre-digital, predominate: erasures marking the corrections in red ink/pen, like a teacher correcting and teaching his students. This professorial tone already discursively marks the one who incorrectly says something (in this case, the newspaper Folha de S. Paulo) and the other who, by his superior intellectual capacity, can correct it (the folk editor).

In the headline of the newspaper, a green line highlights the phrase "Want to beat up on women? Go beat somewhere else," acting as a sort of guarantor of the correction made. In the caption of the publication, an explanation for the practice: "We corrected the headline as it would be if it were

another candidate saying the same thing. Thus, the *folk* editor starts not only to republish and/or comment on a news item, but also to contribute to it.

Regarding the French-oriented Discourse Analysis, Maingueneau (2008), in his work *Genesis of Discourse*, elaborates his discourse theory based on seven hypotheses, of which only the first three will be mobilized for this analysis. In the first hypothesis, the author states that discourses are born based on an interdiscourse decentered from the self and inhabited by the "Other". In the case of the interventions of the *folk* editor, his "corrections" are supported by a discourse that aims to criminalize what the PT candidate said; if, for the newspaper, the candidate committed a gaffe, for the *folk* editor he committed a crime, moving from discourse to a criminal act.

The author's second hypothesis concerns the interdiscourse as polemic and polemic as inter-understanding. For Maingueneau, every discourse is constituted by a semantic grid formed by positive semas that are claimed and by negative semas that are rejected. In this hypothesis, the enunciator, by assuming a discursive/ideological position, starts to translate/interpret the Other's enunciation by means of simulacrum, that is, by means of negative semas. Maingueneau (2008) also proposes in this hypothesis the conceptualization of agent-discourse, which is the one that performs the translation; and patient-discourse being the target discourse of the translation. In the case in question, the first text, in relation to the second, presents the patient discourse by replacing the terms "commits gaffe about" by "defends aggression of", and "list of slips" by "hate speech", for example. Thus, Lula is qualified as a criminal, and this translation reveals the *folk* editor's discursive position. In this sense, besides the changes in the linguistic field, there is an action in the legal field. Thus, the polemic and the simulacrum mark not only the preference of vocabulary, choosing such and such a term, but all the elements of a discursivity.

In this sense, the enunciator seeks to "disqualify the opponent by showing that he violates the rules of the game (by lying, producing inaccurate quotes, misinformation, being incompetent, unintelligent, etc. ...)", thus, "to polemicize is, above all, to catch publicly in error, to put the opponent in a situation of infraction in relation to a Law that imposes itself as incontestable" (MAINGUENEAU, 2008, p. 110).

In the *corpus* under analysis, besides the performance in the linguistic field, there is the performance in the legal field, thus, the polemic and the simulacrum not only demarcate vocabulary choices, but all the elements of discursivity. In the meantime, the author then presents the third hypothesis, that of global semantics, which is a system of constraints that regulates all the planes and elements of discursivity: intertextuality, the vocabulary, the themes, the status of the enunciator and the addressee, the enunciative de déixis, the mode of enunciation, and cohesion. However, "alongside these constraints shared by the various members of a field, there is also the specific past that each particular discourse constructs for itself, attributing itself certain affiliations and refusing others" (MAINGUENEAU, 2008, p. 78).

According to *folk* knowledge, the edited statement is clearly an example of an interventionist practice, according to Paveau, acting both in the linguistic and legal fields. Thus, the *folk* editor expands his role to *folk* jurist.

The communication vehicle Folha de São Paulo, whose headline "Lula commits a gaffe about women and expands the list of slips in the campaign", reproduced in the post on Ig's page, characterized as a gaffe the petista's speech, whose possible effect of meaning is an involuntary indiscretion in the saying, common in spontaneous linguistic practices, in which there is no previously prepared text to be read or studied. It is important to note that the verb chosen, "commit", has a relatively strong semantic charge, always associated with infractions considered serious, as in the formulations "commit a crime", or even "commit a sin", "commit an injustice", "commit a mistake". The noun "gaffe", according to the Caldas Aulete dictionary², sounds like something that can be excused, which is reinforced by the term "slips". Therefore, for the Folha de São Paulo vehicle, the consequence of the mistaken choice of terms to communicate would swell the list of bad choices of the candidate in campaign.

However, the *folk* editor who edits the post on the Folha Desesquerdizada page proposes to rewrite the headline by replacing the terms "commits gaffe about women" with "defends aggression of women". To *defend* is not necessarily to become the author of the aggression, but it would be to validate such an act, which is something unacceptable in society. The exchange of the term "gaffe" for "aggression" gives a greater dimension to the statement, changing the effect of meaning produced. From a slip of the tongue, as suggested by Folha de São Paulo, the candidate is now considered a defender of physical attacks on women, since in the script the reference is to this type of aggression (beating women).

3. Final considerations

One of the concepts dear to the French-oriented Discourse Analysis concerns the subject. For AD, the subject is crossed by ideology and, therefore, it is affiliated to one of the discourses that are dispersed and regular in the texts. The profile Caneta Desesquerdizadora claims to be affiliated to the right-wing political conception, whose goal is to "defeat leftists in discussions", according to the explicit statements on the homepage. When rebutting the Folha de São Paulo newspaper publication, the profile Caneta Desesquerdizadora situates its opponent as being affiliated to the left-wing political conception, and that, for this reason, should be defeated. To achieve this, the user must increase his knowledge of economics and politics, and this is possible thanks to the intervention of the folk editor.

Taking as a background the cut for this analysis, the formulation of the second hypothesis, the polemic as inter-incomprehension proposed by Maingueneau, in which the point of tension between subjects is established, the folk editor, represented by the profile Folha Desesquerdizada, acts as the sensor of the communication vehicle Folha de São Paulo, claiming for himself positive semas, such as protection to women, respect, civility, among others; at the same time he attributes to the other negative semas, such as disrespect, aggression, hatred, machismo.

² Available at: <<https://aulete.com.br/gafe>>. Accessed on: 30 Sep. 2022.

The Internet has been conquering a noble space in the field of communication, especially because of the democratization of access to diverse users. On the web, everyone can circulate discourses and make themselves known. Therefore, Linguistics, an area of knowledge in which professionals validated by the academy work, is a language science prone to innovations, since it is dedicated to studying the linguistic interactions of its speakers, as well as the changes they cause. In the same vein, Popular Linguistics is dedicated to analyze and validate the contributions of non-linguists, especially by proposing the integration between popular and academic knowledge.

The performance of a folk editor in a position to confront a media vehicle already consolidated by specialized critics is possible because there is validation, if not by official devices, then by the popular approval represented by the reach of the page.

Additional information

Authors' evaluation and response

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EVALUATOR 1

O artigo apresenta a análise de um post do perfil de Instagram Caneta Desesquerdizadora com o intuito de colocar o sujeito discursivo na posição de um editor Folk no campo linguístico e no campo jurídico. Trata-se de um objeto de relevância para a presente edição temática da revista. Seu título é adequado. O resumo pode ser mais explícito a respeito da metodologia aplicada e deveria indicar explicitamente que o corpus de análise é da página de instagram Caneta Desesquerdizadora.

Quanto aos métodos, nos parece que a análise das estratégias de marcação discursiva se beneficiaria da ampliação do corpus de análise, por meio da exposição de mais de uma postagem do perfil de instagram selecionado, considerando que o artigo descreve a prática da folk edição como uma prática de linguística popular. Isso serviria para uma compreensão mais ampla do fenômeno enquanto um exercício de linguística popular, especialmente porque o perfil de instagram referido tem postagens de folk edição mas também postagens de tuítes autorais e curadoria de conteúdos.

Nos parece que a seção 2, A intervenção folk na Caneta Desesquerdizada, poderia focar mais na interlocução com as ferramentas de análise da Linguística Folk em específico, justificando a presença no artigo neste volume temático.

Chamamos a atenção para a limitação da bibliografia com que o artigo dialoga: apresenta poucas referências teóricas e não articula com outros artigos científicos que problematizam o fenômeno das canetas de edição. Convém expor com mais clareza as reflexões presentes no texto da autora (Almeida (2021)), para que fique explícito o ponto de partida tomado pelo presente artigo. Não foram apresentadas as referências completas para Almeida (2021) e Rosier (2004).

Registramos artigos outros que versam sobre o mesmo tema e que poderiam situar e enriquecer o diálogo, ainda que as autoras optem por uma linha de análise distinta destes:

- Duarte, C. R., & da Silva, F. V. (2018). A discórdia das canetas: um estudo do ethos em páginas de cunho político no Facebook. *Letras De Hoje*, 53(3), 363-373. <https://doi.org/10.15448/1984-7726.2018.3.30549>
- Dalmonte, E., & de Queiroz, C. C. (2018). As canetas corretoras e o jornalismo em tempos de redes sociais. *Revista Mídia E Cotidiano*, 12(3), 223-244. <https://doi.org/10.22409/ppgmc.v12i3.27112>

Revisões pontuais:

- Padronizar o nome usado para se referir ao perfil “Caneta Esquerdizadora”, ao invés de “caneta desesquerdizada”, “Folha Desesquerdizada”;
- Revisar períodos incompletos (p. 2; p. 4);
- Indicar o endereço eletrônico da fonte de todos os prints utilizados no artigo;
- Revisar enunciados demasiadamente vagos como “Em tempos de redes sociais e interações virtuais instantâneas, é impossível mensurar o volume de enunciados produzidos pelo mais diversos sujeitos.” à não se pode mensurar o volume de enunciados independentemente do desenvolvimento tecnológico recente
- Substituir “Assim, na “nova versão”, temos: “Lula defende agressão de mulheres e amplia lista de escorregões na campanha”” por “Assim, na “nova versão”, temos: “Lula defende agressão de mulheres e amplia DISCURSO DE ÓDIO na campanha””
- Desenvolver mais a correlação entre a Folha como quem diz incorretamente e o editor folk como corretor intelectualmente superior, apresentada em passante na p. 7;
- Deletar o trecho repetido “revela a posição” na p. 8;
- Desenvolver mais a pertinência da citação de Maingueneau (2008, p. 110) apresentada na página 8, no sentido de explicitar o modo como o perfil em análise busca retratar o jornalismo tradicional como flagrado “publicamente em erro” e as consequências discursivas desse movimento.

EVALUATOR 2

O artigo está claro e traz contribuições para a Linguística Popular, sendo relevante para os estudos do discurso. O título está adequado à proposta do artigo, além de ser intrigante e motivar a leitura. Algumas sugestões foram realizadas em forma de comentário e estão no arquivo anexo, sendo grande parte estruturais do artigo e, dessa forma, fáceis de resolver. Outros comentários são alguns questionamentos que julguei importantes antes da entrega final.

Conflict of interest

The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

Research protocol and pre-registration

In evaluating the routes proposed by Equator Network, I consider none of them relevant to the current research. We also inform that the research developed has not been pre-registered in an independent institutional repository.

Data Availability Statement

Data sharing does not apply to this article, as no new data was created or analyzed in this study.

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