


Between common sense and linguistic science: an analysis of comments on an Instagram post by Leandro Karnal about linguistic changes /

Entre o senso comum e a ciência linguística: uma análise de comentários em postagem no Instagram de Leandro karnal sobre mudanças linguísticas

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to analyze the construction of comments by Instagram users on a publication by historian, professor, and writer Leandro Karnal on this social network, using categories of Digital Discourse Analysis (DDA) at the morpholexicological, enunciative, discursive, and semiodiscursive levels, seeking to identify whether a view of language more related to common sense or one more consistent with studies of language science predominates in them. In the post in question, Karnal addresses what he calls the “death” of the Portuguese language, due to linguistic changes in Brazilian Portuguese and new forms of native digital writing. The 34 most liked comments were analyzed using a qualitative and quantitative approach, classifying them according to the typology of digital comments proposed by Marie-Anne Paveau (2021). From these 34 comments, 29 are discursive comments, three are metadiscursive, and two are hybrid (metadiscursive and discursive). It was found that most of the comments agree with the publication, which is closer to a common sense view of language than to the contributions of linguistic science. The results indicate two contributions of the work: one concerns the need for greater dissemination of linguistic research in a dialogue between experts and society. The other is related to a contribution to the analysis of digital texts, realizing that only with a theory that contemplates linguistic and technological elements can one analyze these comments in an unrestricted way.

KEYWORDS: Digital discourse analysis; Digital comments; Scientific dissemination; Linguistic science; Linguistic prejudice.

RESUMO

O intuito desta pesquisa é, a partir de categorias da Análise do Discurso Digital (ADD) nos planos morfolexicológico, enunciativo, discursivo e semiodiscursivo, analisar a construção de comentários de usuários do Instagram em uma publicação do historiador, professor e escritor Leandro Karnal em tal rede social, buscando identificar se neles predomina uma visão de língua mais relacionada ao senso comum ou uma mais condizente com os estudos da ciência da linguagem. Na postagem em questão, Karnal aborda o que chama de “falecimento” da língua portuguesa, em função das mudanças linguísticas no português brasileiro e das novas formas de escrita digital nativa. Analisaram-se, a partir de uma abordagem quali-quantitativa, os 34 comentários mais curtidos, classificando-os conforme a tipologia dos comentários digitais proposto por Marie-Anne Paveau (2021). Desses 34 comentários, 29 são comentários discursivos, três são metadiscursivos e dois são híbridos (metadiscursivo e discursivo). Constatou-se que a maioria dos comentários concorda com a publicação, o que se aproxima mais de uma visão de senso comum de língua do que das contribuições da ciência linguística. Os resultados indicam duas contribuições do trabalho: uma é em relação à necessidade de maior divulgação de pesquisas linguísticas, em um diálogo entre especialistas e sociedade. A outra relaciona-se a uma contribuição para a análise de textos digitais, percebendo-se que somente com uma teoria que contemple elementos linguísticos e tecnológicos pode-se analisar de forma não limitada esses comentários.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Análise do discurso digital; Comentários digitais; Divulgação científica; Ciência linguística; Preconceito linguístico.

1 Introduction

In December 2022, a post by Brazilian historian, professor, and writer Leandro Karnal on the social network Instagram sparked controversy. The post, which discussed the “death” of the Portuguese language, caught the attention of users interested in language and generated more than 62,000 likes and over 2,000 comments, some supporting the author and others criticizing his position. Karnal’s post referred to a possible “death” of the Portuguese language, allegedly caused, among other reasons, by the decreasing use of certain linguistic structures, such as the

pluperfect tense, the regular imperative, and figures of speech. Moreover, according to the post, the use of instant messaging apps and social networks that favor short texts, such as Twitter (now X), would have contributed to this "death."

Statements like these are inconsistent with a view of language as interaction (Koch, 2002) — already well-established in the field of language sciences — and with the findings of numerous linguistic studies that address issues such as linguistic variation (Bagno, 2014, 2007, 1999; Cyrino, 2022; Othero, 2017; Othero & Flores, 2022; Faraco, 2008, 2022) and the characteristics of native digital texts (Paveau, 2017, 2020a, 2020b, 2021; Giering & Pinto, 2021; Cavalcante et al., 2022; Nunes, 2023; Author 1; Author 3; Muniz-Lima, 2024). Both Karnal's post and some of his followers' comments reveal a conception of language as an immutable system of norms, untouched by social influences — a view more aligned with a certain popular common sense¹ about language than with scientific assumptions. Language becomes synonymous with normative grammar, understood, in this case, as "the set of precepts of the excessively conservative and pseudo-purist old tradition²" (Faraco, 2008, p. 24, our translation). Such precepts, therefore, have been transformed into an "ethereal, fixed entity, detached from any historical perspective and hovering sovereignly above the judgment of mere mortals³" (Faraco, 2008, p. 24, our translation).

With the emergence of Web 2.0 and digital social networks, the production of texts written directly on internet-connected devices — the so-called native digital texts⁴ (Paveau, 2021) — increased considerably, including comments, posts, private messages, among others. In this sense, like other social networks, Instagram — a photo and video sharing platform owned by the American company Meta — has been increasingly used as a space for debates on a wide range of topics — political, cultural, social, scientific, and others — reaching diverse audiences.

Given the post in question, adopting an investigative lens toward Karnal's followers' comments — with his Instagram profile having over 5 million followers at the time this article was written — can prompt reflections on users' perceptions about language, linguistic change, and digital writing (Paveau, 2021). These transformations are often perceived negatively by users, highlighting the need for us, as researchers in language sciences, to foster a dialogue about the scientific nature of language with non-specialists. Much like Karnal's post, there are many profiles on social networks — even those belonging to teachers — dedicated to promoting a non-scientific view of language. According to Faraco (2022, p. 25), "There is no shortage of angry voices proclaiming the end times: the decadence, corruption, degradation, and even putrefaction of the

Portuguese language in Brazil, allegedly motivated by the carelessness, sloppiness, and ignorance of its speakers⁵."

Starting from the assumption that it is essential in a democratic society for the results of scientific research, in any field, to reach society at large, this article adopts an investigative approach toward the comments on Karnal's post, aiming to understand how users position themselves regarding the supposed "death" of the language. Understanding what social media users think about this topic is the first step towards designing a model of scientific communication about language that is dialogical rather than authoritarian.

Drawing from authors such as Bueno (1985), Calsamiglia (2003), Mora (2003), Fukui (2018), Giering (2016, 2020), Author 1 (2021), Giering & Souza (2013), Nunes (2019), and Zamboni (2001), scientific dissemination here is understood as a recontextualization of scientific knowledge aimed at making scientific content accessible to a broad audience. It differs, therefore, from the dissemination of science in the strict sense, which relates to communication among peers using technical and formal language (Bueno, 1985). Scientific dissemination is not understood as a mere simplification or translation of scientific discourse for a "lay"⁶ audience. Rather, it is part of a broader context of public education, aimed at bringing science closer to everyday life.

According to Costa, Souza, and Mazocco (2010), models of public communication of science can be categorized into two spheres: one involving one-way communication, where the audience is treated merely as passive receivers, and another advocating two-way communication, where the public takes an active role, thus establishing a dialogical relationship. Digital social networks have already proven to be effective spaces for scientific dissemination, particularly in the field of health, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic (Author 1; Author 3; Nunes, 2023). It is urgent that linguistic science also seeks dialogue with non-specialists, beyond communication among peers. Turning an investigative lens toward native digital texts produced on social networks to understand how users express their views on language may be a promising first step.

For the analysis of comments proposed here, it is assumed that using the theoretical and methodological framework of a pre-digital theory of textual-discursive analysis might yield incomplete results. Therefore, this article is grounded in Digital Discourse Analysis (DDA) (Paveau, 2017; 2020a; 2020b; 2021), a theory proposed by French linguist Marie-Anne Paveau, which aims to describe and analyze native digital texts within their production environments,

considering both linguistic and non-linguistic elements. It adopts an ecological perspective, in which the object of study is not limited to linguistic elements alone but comprises a continuum between linguistic material and its production environment. For DDA, discourses are composed inseparably of linguistic and technological-informatic elements (technolinguistic).

Thus, based on DDA categories, this research seeks to answer the following question: what is the predominant view of language and its changes in the comments made by Instagram users regarding Leandro Karnal's post on this topic? In order to address this research question, the following general objective was defined: through DDA categories at the morpholexical, enunciative, discursive, and semiodiscursive levels, analyze users' comments on a post by historian Leandro Karnal, seeking to identify whether these comments predominantly reflect a common-sense view of language or one more aligned with scientific studies in language sciences.

Therefore, this study not only contributes to the analysis of native digital texts but also highlights the importance of promoting, through scientific dissemination efforts, a broader societal recognition of language diversity, the scientific nature of language studies, and, consequently, the fight against linguistic prejudice (Bagno, 2007; Scherre, 2022).

2 Referencial teórico: Análise do Discurso Digital

In this section, we discuss Digital Discourse Analysis (DDA), a theory dedicated to explaining how native internet discourses operate. Paveau (2017, 2020a, 2020b, 2021), in proposing DDA, adopts a non-dualist epistemological conception, one that many fields within the human sciences have already embraced. This position challenges the dualism found in oppositions such as body and spirit, language and world, human and non-human. The author advocates for a symmetrical approach to linguistics, criticizing the practice of doing language science from a logocentric perspective — that is, one that treats as its object of study only phenomena of a purely linguistic nature, maintaining a dual separation between the linguistic and the so-called "extralinguistic."

By symmetrical approach to linguistics, Paveau refers to a conception that grants an equivalent analytical status to both linguistic and non-linguistic elements, the latter referring to the

machine and digital technology. For the author, there is a continuum between linguistic material and its production environments, and it is this continuum that constitutes the object of analysis. DDA emerged to demonstrate that it is possible to conduct research that takes into account linguistic and technological dimensions in an intertwined manner (technodiscursive, technolinguistic), always within an ecological and post-dualist perspective. In Brazil, the author's ideas have been adopted in several studies, including those by Author 1, Nunes and Caldas (2022), Author 3, Author 3, Author 3, Nunes (2023), Author 1, Author 3, among others.

2.1 Characteristics of Native Digital Discourses

According to Paveau (2021), native digital discourses display six characteristics that require analysts to rethink the theoretical and methodological tools of pre-digital discourse analysis. For Paveau (2021), these characteristics are: composition, deslinearization, amplification, relationality, investigability, and unpredictability. Each of these will be explained below (Table 1).

Table 1: Characteristics of Native Digital Discourses

Composition	Native digital texts are inseparably composed, combining linguistic and technological elements, whether in a manifest or non-manifest form. As an example of a manifest form, the author cites hashtags or usernames on Twitter/X. As an example of a non-manifest form, she refers to all online technodiscourses, which require computer programs to exist.
Deslinearization	Digital texts can be deslinearized through links that direct the writereader ⁷ from a source text to a destination text, thus modifying the flow of the discourse.
Amplification	Native digital texts offer a form of expanded enunciation, allowing a writereader to share the text with another person, extend the publication through a comment, or participate in the same production process, as in a collaborative file on an internet-connected text editor.
Relationality	Native digital texts are related in the following ways: with other discourses, by being part of a network; with electronic devices, due to their distinctions, as the features and updates may vary depending on the device used; and with writereaders and writers, since the text depends on how the reader organizes their profile, their browser, and so forth.
Investigability	Native digital discourses present the possibility of not being forgotten and of being retrieved, as users can search for and locate the content they seek. These searches are made possible through metadata.

Unpredictability	Native digital discourses are reproduced by algorithms and can reach a large number of users. The potential for the viralization of such information is unpredictable, making events unforeseeable.
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Source: prepared by the authors, based on Paveau (2021).

To meet all the demands posed by the digital environment, tools, devices, and linguistic categories capable of explaining this universe are necessary. DDA (Digital Discourse Analysis) emerges to contribute to these needs. Below, we explain the technodiscursive categories proposed by the author that will serve as the foundation for the analyses presented here.

2.2 Technodiscursive Categories

Paveau (2021) proposes several categories of technodiscourses across the morpholexical, enunciative, discursive, and semiodiscursive levels. Table 2 summarizes these categories.

Table 2: Technodiscursive Categories

Morpholexical dimension: technoword and technosign	A technoword is a clickable word, such as a username on Twitter/X or a hashtag — words that lead the writereader to another enunciative situation on the internet. Its clickable technological dimension is manifested, respectively, by the at symbol (@) and the hash symbol (#). The technosign, in turn, is an icon such as a button that can be clicked to like or share content, for example.
Enunciative dimension: reported technodiscourse	It is a sharing operation, through an automated procedure, from a source native digital discourse to a target native digital discourse, such as a retweet. It constitutes a form of digital citation.
Discursive dimension: technogenre of discourse	These are the specific genres of native digital spaces, such as a tweet or a Facebook post.
Semi-discursive dimension: technographism	It is an integrated production of image and verbal text, such as a macro image (a meme).

Source: prepared by the authors, based on Paveau (2021).

2.3 Digital Comments

According to Paveau (2021), online comments are one of the most frequent forms of technodiscourse on the web, appearing in writing spaces such as blogs, digital social networks, websites, and others. The author states that "it can be defined as a secondary technodiscourse, produced within a specific writing space and enunciatively restricted within a connected digital ecosystem⁸" (Paveau, 2021, p. 110).

According to her, digital comments have several characteristics: (a) pseudonymity: the internet user does not need to use their official identity and may use a pseudonym; (b) relationality: comments maintain a more elementary relationship with other discourses; (c) conversationality: comments do not necessarily have openings and closings but are marked by windows; (d) amplification: comments are produced based on a primary technodiscourse, of which they are an extension; (e) publivisibility (publicity and visibility): this refers to how the comment can be seen, either privately or publicly.

Below, the four main types of comments according to the author (2021) will be presented:

Table 3: Typology of Digital Comments

Relational Comment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gesture enunciates • Link comment • Thank-you comment 	A simple, phatic-type relationship with the primary discourse, such as a like, a clapping emoji, a brief thank-you response, or simply a link.
Conversational Comment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discursive comment • Metadiscursive comment • Troll comment 	This case, a more extensive content is presented. We can consider the discursive comment, which expands the content by exploring the functionalities offered by the platform and producing ordinary argumentative and pragmatic discursive forms; the metadiscursive comment, whose main activity is criticizing and correcting the user's writing, pointing out spelling mistakes, typography issues, or the overall quality of the language; and the troll comment, an aggressive and disruptive criticism that causes confusion within the conversation.
Displaced comment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private displaced comment • Public displaced comment 	These are comments reproduced in messaging spaces, intended to request, or present something.
Sharing comment (pseudocomment)	This comment is made at the moment of sharing or as part of a sharing action.

Source: prepared by the authors, based on Paveau (2021).

Just to illustrate some of these categories, we present below a few comments made on Leandro Karnal's post that represent the types of comments identified, based on the classification proposed by the author:

Figure 1: Example of a relational comment — thank-you comment.



Source: Comment made on Leandro Karnal's post (2022). Available on: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CmO5k3DuaKk/>.

In this figure, we find an example of a relational comment, specifically the thank-you comment subtype. This comment is classified as such because the user expresses gratitude for the author's statement, using a clapping hands emoji followed by the verbal text "*Obrigada... Sempre coerente*" ("Thank you... Always coherent"). In addition to the expression of gratitude, a complimentary tone can be observed in the comment, indicating a view of language more aligned with common sense perspectives.

Figure 2: Example of a relational comment with gesture enunciates.



Source: Comment made on Leandro Karnal's post (2022). Available on: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CmO5k3DuaKk/>.

In Figure 2, we find a relational comment, more specifically a gesture enunciate, as it consists of six emojis symbolizing applause for the text published by Leandro Karnal.

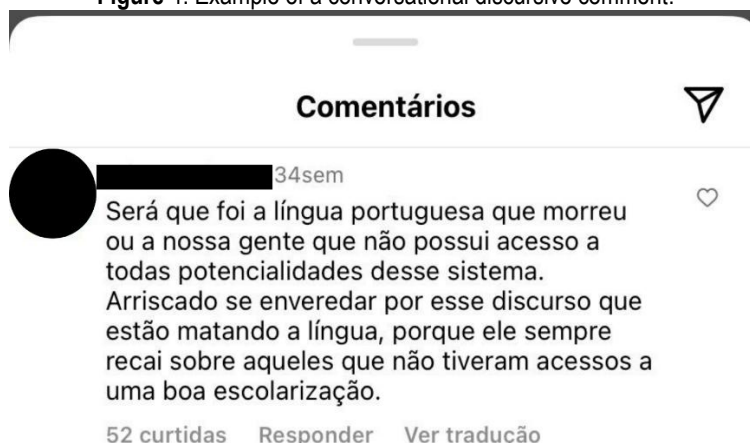
Figure 3: Example of a conversational metadiscursive comment.



Source: Comment made on Leandro Karnal's post (2022).
Available on: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CmO5k3DuaKk/>.

In Figure 3, we find a conversational metadiscursive comment, as the user states that they do not understand what the post is saying and uses laughing-with-tears emojis. In this comment, the user employs the pejorative term “porra” to express that the text uses difficult language — a usage that occurs with some frequency on social networks.

Figure 4: Example of a conversational discursive comment.



Source: Comment made on Leandro Karnal's post (2022).
Available on: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CmO5k3DuaKk/>.

In Figure 4, we find a conversational discursive comment. This comment addresses the lack of opportunities faced by many people, taking into account that not everyone has access to quality education; therefore, it is a misconception to claim that the Portuguese language has died. Thus, the comment is characterized as discursive because the user argues about the topic, expanding the content and opening space for further debate.

3 Methodology

The methodology of this article is applied, descriptive, bibliographic, and qualitative. According to Prodanov and Freitas (2013, p. 70, our translation), in a qualitative study, “[...] the issues are examined in the environment in which they occur, without any intentional manipulation by the researcher⁹.”

3.1 On methodological challenges in the digital environment

It is essential to highlight that the methodology of a study aiming to investigate native digital texts is always a major challenge. According to Alexandre (2021, p. 32, our translation),

many factors, from different orders, come into play when we speak about scientific studies conducted with data collected from the web: rapidly outdated information, massive data dynamics, algorithmic intervention in the production and reading of texts, as well as the difficulty of compiling corpora. These are only a few aspects, among many others, that confront us with theoretical and methodological challenges regarding the data collected about certain phenomena.¹⁰

Working from a symmetrical perspective requires that we do not isolate only the linguistic element of texts. If we rely solely on pre-digital categories to analyze digital texts, the results may be incomplete and questionable.

Emerit (2016) points out the difficulty of envisioning a corpus that can take into account the ecological perspective, considering three characteristics of native digital content:

a) Instability: refers to the continuous addition of new data, such as new friends, followers, features, etc.;

b) Diversity: relates to the fact that native digital data are multimodal, plurisemiotic, techno-linguistic, and interactive;

c) Incompleteness: refers to the existence of an inaccessible portion of digital data, which Emerit calls the ideodigital corpus. This means that each user navigates through a system that is partially personalized based on their digital traces. Furthermore, there are differences in ecosystems depending on the medium through which the user accesses them.

Paveau (2021, our translation) presents the distinction between language data and observables, both collected and elaborated online. Language data are “the online technolinguistic productions, in all their diversity (discourses, technographs, multimodal productions, etc.).”

¹¹Observables, on the other hand, are constructed through the linguist's reflection, based on epistemological and theoretical-methodological choices. The corpus, therefore, would be a set of observables rather than a simple collection of data. These observables must be situated within their discursive environments and classified according to linguistic categories consistent with the researcher's objectives and hypotheses (Paveau, 2021). The author also proposes a reflection on the main challenge involved in handling native technotexts: relationality — observables are unstable and do not have a fixed form unless they are extracted and stabilized offline.

We recognize, therefore, the difficulties and limitations of a screenshot capture; however, a certain degree of stability is necessary for analysis. Thus, even though it does not replace the original corpus, the screenshot allows for a certain degree of stabilization. We base our methodological choice on Emerit (2016), who, as a way of addressing the methodological challenges of the digital environment, proposes a tree-like representation across six levels. At the first level of analysis are the native digital data, which can only be accessed online (the "place of the corpus"), within their own ecosystem. Analyzing them in their entirety would be impossible. At the second level, there is the digital text containing representations (screenshots) of the selected parts from the "place of the corpus." This provides a certain degree of stabilization that enables the researcher to carry out their work. However, she issues a warning: this is a representation of a selection of specific moments; it is not the place of the corpus itself. The third and fourth levels are dedicated to raw and focused transcriptions, respectively (verbal text), in which the corpora from the second level are broken down into subcorpora. The fifth level presents data prepared for analysis using software tools. The sixth level corresponds to textually pre-analyzed data.

3.2 The generation of the corpus

Dialoguing with Emerit's (2016) reflections, for the generation of the corpus, we followed what Nunes (2023) proposes to call "focused ecological extraction." This involves taking screenshots, but with the awareness that the data analysis must take into account the entire environment in which the technotexts are embedded. All extractions were carried out by the second author of this study, on her computer, on August 17, 2023. We also emphasize that social media data can change at any moment, and that the screenshots reveal information captured at the exact moment of extraction, which may change shortly thereafter. All comments displaying

users' names, even under pseudonyms, will have their identities concealed by a black bar placed over the names in the screenshots.

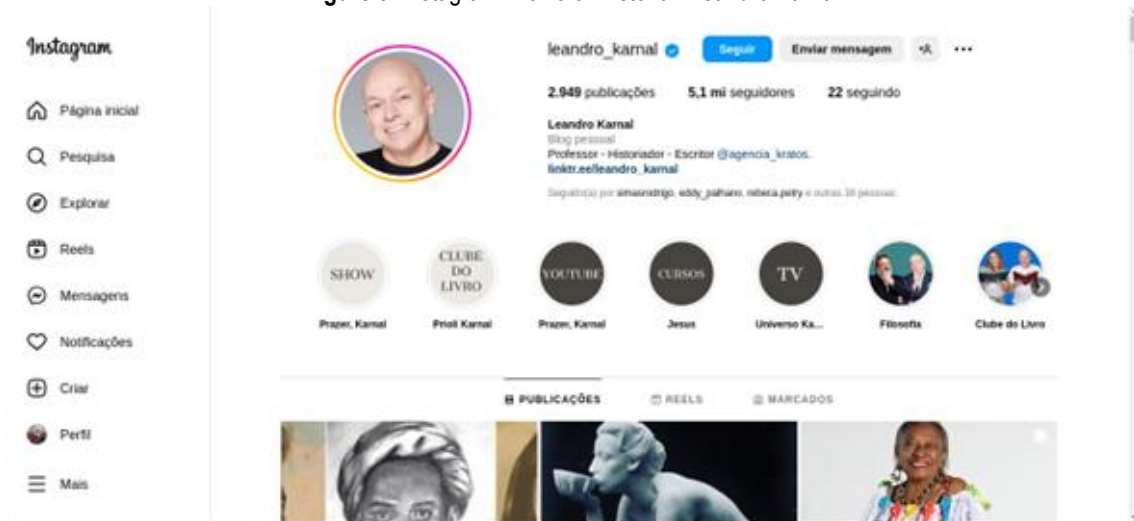
At first, we intended to analyze the 40 most liked comments on Karnal's post; however, we realized that, although more than 2,000 comments had been recorded, the vast majority of them had few or no likes. Thus, due to the previously established criterion of analyzing only comments with more than 15 likes, we opted to analyze the 34 most liked comments. These 34 comments were classified according to the typologies of digital comments proposed by Paveau (2021), incorporating quantitative elements. Then, considering the scope of this article, five comments were selected for qualitative analysis, using the categories from the morpholexical, enunciative, discursive, and semio-discursive levels. The selection criteria for these five comments were as follows: the first was the most liked comment on the post; the second and third exemplify comments that agree with the author; the fourth and fifth represent those that disagree.

It is important to highlight that the methodology of this study may contribute to the ongoing discussions about the methodological approaches used in ADD research, given that studies analyzing native digital texts with a specific methodology are still relatively recent.

3.3 On the Instagram profile of the historian Leandro Karnal

At the time the data for this research were collected, in 2023, the historian, professor, and writer Leandro Karnal had over 5 million followers.

Figure 5: Instagram Profile of Historian Leandro Karnal.



Source: Leandro Karnal's profile in the Instagram ecosystem (2023).
Available on: https://www.instagram.com/leandro_karnal/?hl=pt-br.

Leandro Karnal's profile presents many elements to be analyzed, starting with the username—the technoword @leandro_karnal. Karnal uses his own name for identification on Instagram, as he is a public figure and his name carries significant recognition. He chose to maintain his identity, thereby making it easier for users to find his profile on the platform. The blue symbol next to this technoword indicates that the profile is verified. The numbers below about his name represent, respectively, how many followers Leandro Karnal had at the time, how many accounts he was following, and how many posts he had published on his profile. In addition, there are buttons to follow the profile or to send a message to the historian; a button with the image of a person and a plus sign—a technosign that suggests other profiles to follow, should the screentext-reader click on it. Furthermore, there are the three dots, which open a menu with options such as: *Restrict Profile*, *Block*, *Report Account*, *Account Information*, *Hide Your Story from This User*, *Copy Profile URL*, *Share This Profile*, and the QR code¹².

Instagram does not allow for the use of deslinearization to the same extent as other social media platforms, such as Twitter/X. Therefore, the limited possibilities for deslinearization are generally found in users' bios: it is possible to find links that direct users to other enunciative situations. On Karnal's profile, he describes himself as a professor, historian, and writer, and just below these words, there is a link that leads to the website amazon.com.br. Clicking the link—an

example of the deslinearization feature—directs the screentext-reader to Amazon’s page, which, at the time, was promoting his coauthored book with Luiz Estevam, titled *Preconceito: Uma História* – free translation of *Prejudice: A History*. It is noticeable that he displays the address of another profile, the technoword @agencia_kratos, which redirects to the profile of the Kratos agency—where Karnal shares content related to his lectures, courses, and live presentations. The pink circle around the profile picture indicates that he has published a story that has not yet been viewed. Once opened, the circle turns white (Ferreira, 2023).

The highlighted circles below the biography display the content Karnal chooses to feature on his profile—stories archived by Instagram, which the user can choose to show or hide. Below the highlights, the tabs for posts, Reels, and posts in which the profile owner has been tagged are visible. To the left of the profile picture, there is a shortcut that leads to other Instagram features available to the account owner, such as Home, Search for other profiles, Explore, Reels, Messages, Notifications, Create a post, Profile, and a vertical three-line icon labeled “More,” which offers additional options like Account Settings, Account Activity, among others.

3.4 Leandro Karnal’s Post about the “Death” of the Portuguese Language

Below (Fig. 6) is the image of the post made by Leandro Karnal that is being used for this research.

Figure 6: Post Used in the Research.



Source: Leandro Karnal's Instagram profile (2022). Available on: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CmO5k3DuaKk/>.

In this image displaying the post, we can observe several functions that Instagram offers its users when interacting with a photo: the technosign in the shape of a heart, located below the post, indicates that the user can click to like it; next to it, there is a technosign in the shape of a speech bubble, which allows the screentext-reader to engage with the post by leaving a comment; beside it, there is a technosign in the shape of a paper airplane, which, in addition to sharing the post with other users, also allows the screentext-reader to add the post to their own story, copy the link, and share it across other social media platforms.

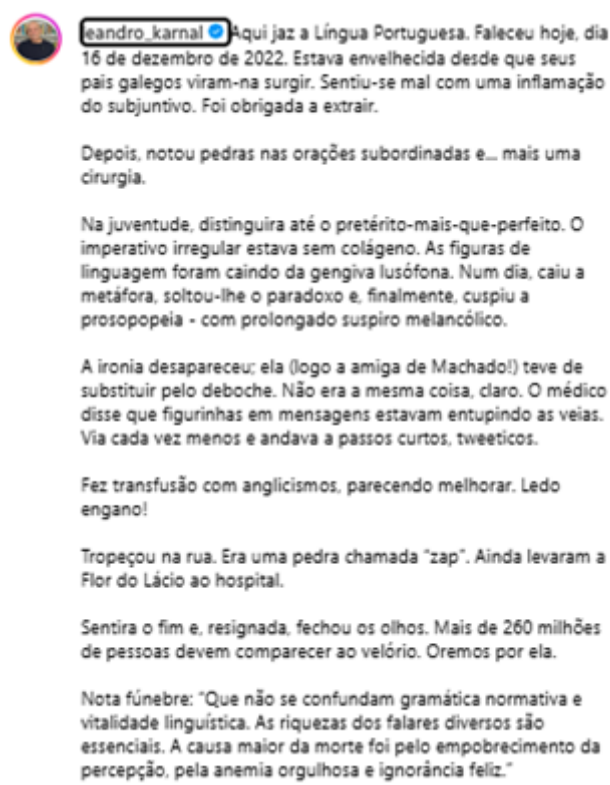
Next to the technosigns Like, Comment, and Share, a flag-shaped technosign is also visible. This indicates the option to save the post. This icon appears in black because the post has been saved; its original color matches that of the icons beside it. The image also shows the number of likes, and below that, there is a space where a comment can be added. Next to it, there is a technosign in the shape of a smiling face, which allows the user to add an emoji. The arrows displayed on the sides of the photo allow navigation to other posts, both older and more recent.

The photo in the post features a stone tombstone bearing a white cross and an epitaph: "Última flor do Lácio" – Olavo Bilac," illustrating the supposed death of the language referenced by Karnal. This tombstone is located in a memorial park cemetery. In the background, other tombstones of supposed deceased individuals appear in the second plane. Leandro Karnal describes the language as dead, associating the causes of its death with grammar: "She had

been aging since her Galician parents witnessed her birth. She felt unwell due to an inflammation of the subjunctive. She was forced to have it extracted¹³.”

For readability purposes only, we reproduce here, in two parts, the full text published in the photo caption:

Figure 7: Photo Caption.



Source: Caption of Leandro Karnal's post (2022). Available on: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CmO5k3DuaKk/>.

4 Analysis and Discussion

Out of the 34 most liked comments, we observed that 24 support the post—that is, they oppose the views promoted by linguistic science and believe that the natural changes in language are a problem leading to the “death” of the language. Five disagree with the author’s position, two do not allow us to determine the stance of their authors, two misunderstood the post, and one both agrees and disagrees, making the comment contradictory.

Below is Table 4, which presents the number of comments generated, the majority of which are discursive comments that expand upon the content, exploring the functionalities offered by the platform and producing discursive forms. An interesting aspect of the research data is the presence of comments that can be classified as hybrid, as they display characteristics of both metadiscursive and discursive comments simultaneously.

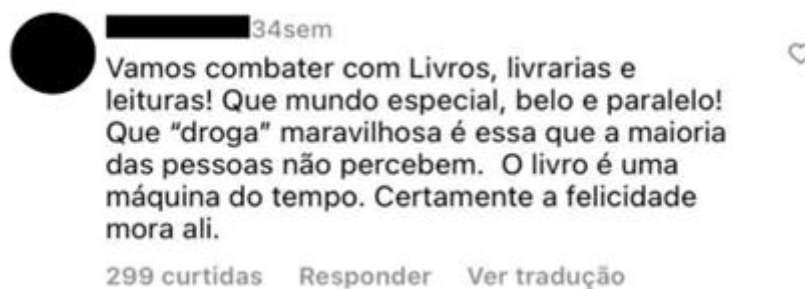
Table 4: Number of Comments Generated.

Discursive Comments	Metadiscursive Comments	Hybrid Comments (Metadiscursive and Discursive)
29	3	2

Source: prepared by the authors.

With a focus on qualitative analysis, five comments will be explored in relation to the categories of the morpholexical, enunciative, discursive, and semio-discursive levels. Below, the five selected comments are presented for qualitative analysis. The selection criteria were as follows: the first comment was chosen for being the most liked; comments two and three were selected because they support the author of the post; comments four and five were selected because they do not support Leandro Karnal.

Figure 8: Comment 1.

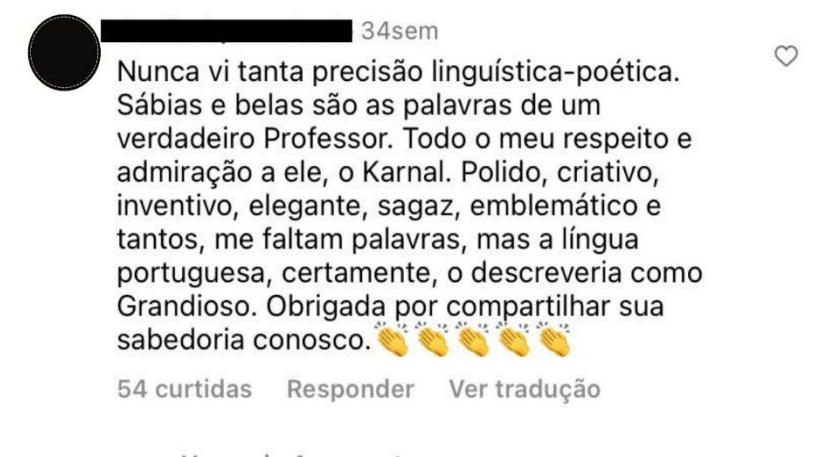


Source: comment on Leandro Karnal's post (2022). Available on: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CmO5k3DuaKk/>

This comment falls under the conversational-discursive type, meaning that it expands the topic by using the platform's potentialities, producing a more extensive, verbally argumentative form—different from a relational comment, which establishes a more factual sense connection. It is worth noting that this was the most liked comment, with 299 likes. The user believes that reading is the path to ensuring that the Portuguese language does not die. Therefore, it is

necessary to introduce people to bookstores, books, and reading, as happiness is found in these things. We can thus observe that the user agrees with the author's position and identifies reading as a way to "combat" the variation and new forms of digital writing criticized by Karnal. This comment was written using only verbal text, with no non-verbal elements. No technoword was inserted.

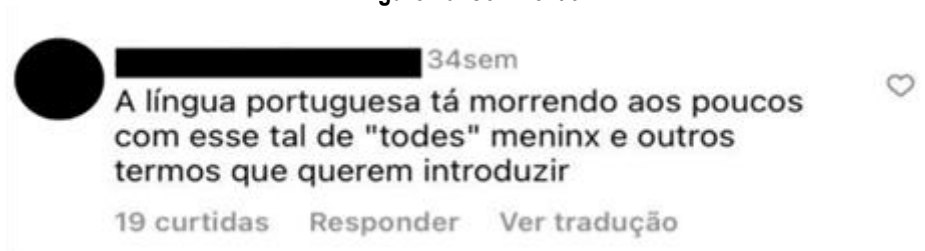
Figure 9: Comment 2.



Source: comment on Leandro Karnal's post (2022). Available on:
<https://www.instagram.com/p/CmO5k3DuaKk/>.

This comment is hybrid, combining metadiscursive elements (praising the text) and discursive elements (thanking Leandro Karnal, similar to a gratitude comment, but in a more extensive form, not limited to a simple, factual relationship). The author uses a clapping hands emoji to highlight the excellence of the text. The user agrees with the author's opinion and praises his words and intellect, thanking him for sharing his knowledge. Thus, we observe a comment aligned with a conception of language that views it as a "homogeneous, pure, and static" entity, as stated by Faraco (2022, p. 43). By praising the author's "linguistic-poetic precision"—characteristics that, in the user's view, should be intrinsic to a "true Professor"—and by calling him "Grandiose," we see that the comment's author is approaching a common-sense view of language.

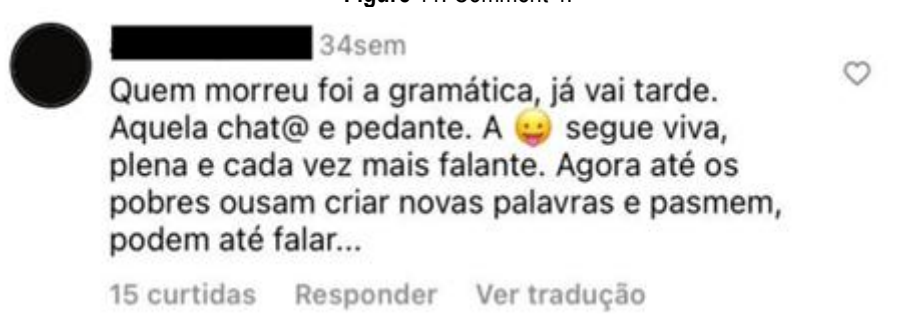
Figure 10: Comment 3.



Source: comment on Leandro Karnal's post (2022). Available on: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CmO5k3DuaKk/>.

This conversational-discursive comment expands on the content and develops an argument about the topic. This user addresses the issue of “neutral” language (Barbosa Filho; Othello, 2022) as the main cause of the death of the Portuguese language. The “neutral” pronoun is an inclusive way of referring to non-binary individuals, those who do not identify exclusively with the male or female gender. For this reason, the topic has become widely debated. Many people do not accept the inclusion of this pronoun, believing that the use of the indefinite pronouns “todos” or “todas” is sufficient for communication. It is worth noting that this comment, which expresses concern over the “death” of the language, ironically makes use of an informal digital writing style, as seen in “*tá morrendo*” – freely translated to *it’s dying* - which is precisely the type of usage criticized by Karnal.

Figure 11: Comment 4.

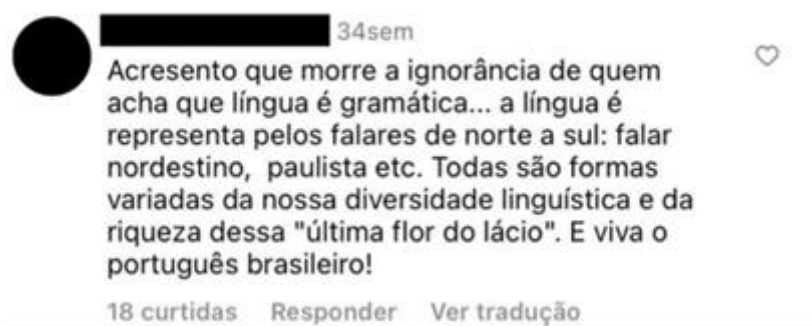


Source: comment on Leandro Karnal's post (2022). Available on: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CmO5k3DuaKk/>.

Comment 4 is discursive and uses humor in its statement to refer to grammar. It employs the @ symbol to lessen the intensity of the offensive term “chata” (“boring”), partly because the platform discourages the use of profane language, and users often find ways to circumvent such restrictions. An iconic representation of a face with its tongue sticking out was used, replacing the

word "língua" ("tongue/language"), thus referring to the Portuguese language—a typical feature of native digital writing. In this comment, the author disagrees with Karnal by aligning with a conception of language more consistent with the foundations of linguistic science and the contributions of variationist research, affirming that the language remains alive and that new words continue to be created. On the other hand, grammar is seen here as synonymous with normative grammar—a pseudo-purist, conservative perspective. Grammar is described as “boring” and “pedantic” and is considered dead, not as one of the varieties of language used in more highly monitored speaking situations.

Figure 12: Comment 5.



Source: comment on Leandro Karnal's post (2022). Available on: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CmO5k3DuaKk/>.

This conversational-discursive comment expands the content of the original post by presenting the user's opinion on the subject. This comment disagrees with Leandro Karnal, as the user believes that language is represented by its speakers. The user criticizes the author of the post, stating that what is actually dying is the ignorance of those who think that language is solely grammar. Thus, we observe that this comment aligns with variationist theories, which view language as a set of linguistic varieties and not solely or exclusively as synonymous with normative grammar.

We can observe that the six characteristics proposed by Marie-Anne Paveau for understanding native digital texts are materialized in these five comments. Composition, which inseparably connects linguistic and technological elements, can be seen through hyperlinks or technowords—in the case of the comments analyzed here, it appears in the user's handle, which is a clickable word. Deslinearization is found in the user's pseudonym itself, as clicking on the handle redirects the screentext-reader to the user's profile. Expansion allows the screentext-

reader to broaden their comment, enabling other users, beyond the initial speaker, to participate in the construction of the text. Relationality exists because the discourses are connected to one another by being part of a network and are also connected to the screentext-readers and writers who collectively construct the meaning of the discourse. Investigability is manifested because comments cannot be forgotten due to metadata that enables searching and locating the desired content, especially in a public post.

Finally, unpredictability makes the comments inherently unpredictable; it is impossible to foresee their reach. In a public figure's post, this unpredictability is even greater, allowing more people to access, like, and comment, and the user cannot anticipate the number of likes and/or comments their initial post might receive. By analyzing these five comments, we can generally identify two opposing positions, which provide elements for a discussion on the need for greater dialogue between language scientists and society: on one side, users who reproduce ideas representative of a certain common sense; on the other, those who align themselves with the principles advocated by linguistic science.

In the first case are those users who agree with Karnal (the majority), a position that runs counter to scientific research, which conceives language as a form of interaction and views linguistic change as a natural process in any language. By attributing the “death” of the language to the decline in the use of certain structures among speakers—due to people's ignorance and to native digital writing in social media and instant messaging apps—the conception of language that emerges is one of language as a representation of thought (“those who do not think well, do not speak/write well”), rather than a view of language as interactional and dialogical, in which “subjects are seen as social actors/builders” (Koch, 2002), a perspective widely disseminated by linguists. In the second case are users who advocate for a conception of language more consistent with the principles promoted by linguistic science, which recognizes language as an interactive activity and considers it a living phenomenon. These comments are more aligned with what Faraco (2022, p. 43) asserts: “all linguistic reality is organized, heterogeneous, hybrid, and ever-changing¹⁴.”

We do not know whether these comments, which are more aligned with linguistic science, were made by specialists or non-specialists. What we can affirm is that they were in the minority among the comments analyzed, and this fact is significant: it is urgent that we, as language scholars, consider establishing a broader dialogue so that common-sense views do not

prevail—especially because such thinking is exclusionary and prejudiced, particularly toward segments of the population that do not have access to a high level of education.

A view grounded in common sense, as problematized in this article, tends to value only the linguistic variety associated with standard language and the literate elite. This perspective disregards the fundamental principles of linguistic science, which recognizes language as a set of varieties. Thus, screentext-readers, even when well-intentioned, may act as “grammar correctors” not only on social media but in all interactional contexts, which can lead to linguistic prejudice (Bagno, 1999, 2007, 2014). It is important that the knowledge produced by linguistics be brought closer to society as a whole, in an effort to popularize science and promote the deconstruction of certain myths, fostering a less prejudiced and exclusionary perspective. This approximation between science and society is essential for the recognition of language as a space of variation.

5 Final Considerations

This research aimed to understand and analyze the comments on a post by Leandro Karnal about linguistic changes, observing what people say on this topic within the digital context of the social media platform Instagram. For the analysis of the comments, we used the theory of DDA (Digital Discourse Analysis), proposed by Marie-Anne Paveau, which explains the functioning of native digital texts.

The study presented a technodiscursive approach to the comments on a post by Leandro Karnal within the Instagram ecosystem. Accordingly, 34 comments were selected and analyzed based on the typology of comments proposed by Paveau. Among these 34 comments, the majority supported the author's statement, expressing the belief that the Portuguese language is “dying” due to its evolution—a perspective that contrasts with what linguistic research says about language. In addition to observations on linguistic prejudice, the comments were analyzed following the categories proposed by DDDA. As a result, it was observed that, beyond discursive and metadiscursive comments, hybrid comments were also identified—comments that combine both discursive and metadiscursive elements, reflecting the idea that everything is interconnected.

This study offers two main contributions. The first relates to the field of linguistic research dissemination. It is essential that we invest in fostering dialogue between linguistic science and

society so that, not only on social media but in society as a whole, more people can understand the difference between common sense and scientific research findings in the field. The second point concerns a contribution to textual-discursive analysis within the realm of digital texts. Only through a theory that encompasses both linguistic and technological elements can these comments be analyzed without limitation. The analysis revealed comments that present a typology distinct from those previously proposed, indicating the need for further research on comment typologies, as these categories often tend to overlap.

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