

Journalistic discourse and racial relations: a look at whiteness/ *Discurso jornalístico e as relações raciais: um olhar para a branquitude*

Nayara Dias Ferraz *

I'm graduated in Executive Sciences at Federal University of Viçosa – Viçosa – Minas Gerais State, in 2011. Master degree in Letters at Federal University of Lavras, Lavras, Minas Gerais State in 2021. I have held the position of Administrative Assistant at the Federal University of Viçosa since 2012.

 <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-8671-253X>

Luciana Soares da Silva **

Professor at the Federal University of Lavras. PhD in Portuguese at Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo. Main subjects: discourse analysis.

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5145-8503>

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ABSTRACT

This article seeks to understand how the racial relations are built, structured and characterized inside the journalistic discourse having, as basis, the concept of whiteness. This term refers to the racial domination, in which the dominant group (white), uses their point of view, permeated by the privileges and symbolic power, to qualify all the others different from them. The approach is qualitative, supported by Discourse Analysis (DA), using implied language as a category of analysis. To constitute the corpus, the newspaper Folha de S. Paulo was used, in the period between January and July 2020, with racism as the keyword of the research. As a theoretical framework, conceptualizations about journalistic discourse, racism and whiteness were used. The following results were found in the analysis: it is possible to identify the presence of whiteness discourse in the journalistic field, but in a very subtle way. Within the journalistic discourse, the discussion points out to a silencing about the racial questions and the racism effects.

KEYWORDS: Journalistic Discourse; Racial Relations; Discourse of Whiteness; Racism

RESUMO

Este artigo busca o entendimento de como as relações raciais são construídas, estruturadas e caracterizadas dentro do discurso jornalístico, tomando como base, especialmente, o conceito de branquitude. Esse termo diz respeito à configuração de dominação racial, em que o grupo dominante (branco) utiliza o ponto de vista de sua raça, permeado por seus privilégios e poderes simbólicos, para qualificar todos os outros diferentes de si. A abordagem é de cunho qualitativo, amparado pela Análise do Discurso (AD) e utilizando o subentendido como categoria de análise. Para constituir o corpus foi utilizado o jornal Folha de S. Paulo, no período entre janeiro e julho de 2020,

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 nadiasferraz@gmail.com

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 luciana.silva@ufla.br

com o racismo como palavra-chave da pesquisa. Para constituição do referencial teórico, são abordadas conceituações acerca do discurso jornalístico, do racismo e da branquitude. Os resultados encontrados a partir da análise são: é possível identificar a presença do discurso da branquitude no campo jornalístico, no entanto de forma muito sutil. Dentro do discurso jornalístico, a discussão aponta para um silenciamento das questões raciais e dos efeitos do racismo.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *Discurso jornalístico; Relações Raciais; Discurso da Branquitude; Racismo*

1 Introduction

The racial relations in Brazil have occupied more and more places in discussions in different contexts. Although, in some of them the myth of racial democracy persists and does not allow the discussion about racism, there is the perception of the increasing number of the spaces of discussion and denunciations related to the violence produced by it. This can be noted, mainly, by the visibility given to the cases such as George Floyd, in the United States, and the boy Miguel, in Brazil, which caused questions and manifestations against structural and institutional racism.

In this scenery, we choose the racial relations inside journalistic discourse as study objects, having as basis, especially the concept of whiteness. In that way, we introduce the racial relations into the discursive studies, aiming to review how the racism and the racial tensions emerge from discourse. To this, we based on the studies of Discourse Analysis, hereinafter DA, specially, in the enunciative approach of Maingueneau (2000; 2005; 2011), dialoguing with the studies of discursive semantic in Ducrot (1987), regarding the analysis category of implied, and in the studies of whiteness from Bento (2022;2014) and Cardoso (2010; 2017), emphasizing the racialization of the white subject.

As is indicated by the authors who study racial relations, we understand whiteness as the white racial identity constructed and reconstructed according to the social and historical process. By focusing on the white as study object, we reveal the role of this social subject inside the racial relations and the racism permanence and present the negligence of the studies on the racialization of the white people. The discourse, sets up as the articulation of language and society, in which we recognize the social, historical and ideological conflicts, through linguistic materiality. Maingueneau (2015, p. 15, article author's translation) understands by discourse "a dispersion of texts whose mode of historical inscription allows defining as a space of enunciative regularities". This approach allows recognize the racial relations inside the discursive formation

and, especially in this paper, it indicates traces of the whiteness constitution inside journalistic discourse.

Thus, we first presented the racial relations and the whiteness, after the journalistic discourse and the analysis category, and finally, the corpus and procedures with the analysis.

2 Racism and the place of white people

The racism relates directly with the notion of race. According to Munanga (2003), racism, at the time of construction of this concept, would be essentially a division in human groups, based on physical characteristics that would carry psychological, moral, intellectual and aesthetic attributes, aiming to attribute unequal values. In other words, “it’s a belief in the existence of the races naturally hierarchized by intrinsic relation between the physical and the moral, the physical and the intellect and the physical and the cultural” (MUNANGA, 2003, n.p.). In this way, the racist subject uses these previously discussed relationships to make inferior those who do not belong to the racial group to which he belongs.

Racism is a type of violence that, according to Gomes and Laborne (2018), has as victims certain people that have signs, specifically, the ones that indicate black and African ancestry, that sets them apart from the others. The subject with these features has, into the social racial imaginary, all the negative characteristics built by the racist violence inside the power relations and class struggle.

Almeida (2018) advocates that structural racism is the main kind of racism, in which the social structure itself normalizes the racism in economic, law and familiar relations, making that the racism becomes a rule, not an exception inside the society’s structure.

In this perspective, racism can be a political and historical process. Racism, according to Almeida (2018), can be considered as political process, because the political power holds the society organization, so, also holds the process of racial discrimination. Without this influence, it would not have systematic discrimination of the collectives. Considering this, the reverse racism thesis, that is, racism on the part of the oppressed against the oppressors, is totally unreasonable, because even if a racial minority group were to act in a prejudiced or discriminatory way, it would not be possible for them to impose social disadvantages on the majority group.

Still, according to this author, racism is a historic process, because “the specificity of the structural dynamic of the racism is bound to the peculiarities of each social formation” (ALMEIDA, 2018, p. 42). The racism manifests itself in specific situations, it is connected to the social transformations and it is singular in each society, since each one has its manners of dealing with the economic, political and legal aspects.

So, Almeida (2018), affirms that racism is a process of constitution of subjectivities, since the subjects conscience and the affections are bound to the social practices. Racism can only spread if it creates a rational explanation for racial inequality and there is the constitution of subjects who are not shocked by racial discrimination and violence and who believes that the unequal division of privileges between whites and non-whites is normal, that is, that racism remains hidden within relationships.

In Brazil this reality is concrete. To Gomes and Laborne (2018), the racism in this country has as characteristic to hide behind other questions, such as class, State, vulnerability, poverty, being in the supposed invisibility and asserting itself through the denial of the existence of these actions in national territory. Through this operation, it could be assumed that the causes of unequal treatment, criminality and violence and interdiction to the black population to use rights and social justice would have the origin in other phenomena but racism.

The term racial democracy appeared in the literature in the middle of the 1950, according to Guimarães (2002), and despite this expression being attributed to Gilberto Freyre, is not found in his most relevant works. This myth was created as a way of reducing the accusations against the oppressor as being responsible to the black people situation after the slave abolition and to forge fraternal relation between the different races. At the time, black people were only freed on paper, not being offered any other means of subsistence and possibilities of belonging like those that white people had, that is, access to material and cultural assets, in addition to access to politics.

According to Florestan Fernandes (2008) the myth of racial democracy brought a false conscience of the Brazilian racial reality and with it a serial of “ethnocentric convictions” (FERNANDES, 2008, p. 312): the Brazilian black people would not have problems of social or economics orders; they would not have racial distinctions among Brazilians; the access to material and symbolic assets accumulation would be acquired by all indiscriminately; in the urban and industrial expansion, the black ones would be “satisfied” with their condition and finally the

denial of the existence of problems related to social justice, being transitional the problems faced by the race and it would be overcoming by spontaneous changes.

We see, in fact, that the myth of racial democracy only served to hide the interests of the white racial group that, in addition to not seeing itself within the oppressive relationship of racism, managed to remain in power without facing great difficulties and objection from the black and mestizo groups. Put into blacks mind their own responsibility for their condition and the nonexistence of racial differences collaborated for the creation of a passive condition in part of these groups, undermining at the same time their self-esteem and the possibility of forming groups against the order in vogue.

For Guimarães (2002), the myth of racial democracy is used these days as a key-piece to understand the formation of Brazilian races and the contradictions between what is talked and practiced about racial injury. These contradictions are now studied under the title of *racism*, being that, according to the author, the researcher Roberto da Matta, created in 1981, the expression *Brazilian racism*, after substituted by *cordial racism*, inside the common sense and the journalistic media.

The racism in Brazilian society occurs in the various institutions, such as universities, government, media and inside the family group, being maintained and reproduced, inside the society structure. Van Dijk (2008), inside the perspective of Critical Discourse Analysis, contributes to our discussion arguing that racism is something learned, therefore, is not innate in human being. This learning, in the author's vision, is built inside the discourse, based in the daily conversations, in the books, in the literature, in the articles from the magazines and journals, inside the political speeches, among others. Let's take whiteness in a more specific way amid of discussions about racial issues.

2.1 Whiteness: the whites place

The Brazilian researchers about whiteness, such as Bento (2002; 2014), Cardoso (2010; 2017), among others, have been focusing on the question of the power associated with white identity, place given to it from the cultural and racial hierarchies imposed by colonialism, which had the Other as subordinate. The whiteness constitutes, in that way, as a cultural and social historic construction, in which the white occupies a place of *status*, power and materials and symbolic privileges (SILVA, 2017).

Silva (2017) calls attention to be careful while studying national whiteness. It is not to be seen only within the white/black duality. It must consider “the effects produced by the process of miscegenation and the ideology of whitening” (SILVA, 2017, n.p).

According to Bento (2014, p.25), “in Brazil, whitening is often considered a problem for blacks, who are discontented and uncomfortable with their condition as blacks, seek to identify themselves as whites, mix with them to dilute their racial characteristics”.

As reported by Bento (2014), the whitening was created and sustained by the Brazilian white elite, from the end of XIX century and middle of XX century, from eugenic practices, to develop a new national identity. Therefore, the white group becomes the model of beauty and humanity, being the target of the desire from no-white racial groups and not being so human as the white ones.

This process took place from the moment in which this white elite proclaimed itself as a reference, strengthening the self-esteem of the white group, excluding the others and contributing to the economic, political and social legitimation of this group. At the same time, there was the construction of a negative identity for black people, alienating them from their racial identity, damaging their self-esteem, blaming this group for the discrimination suffered, in order to justify racial inequalities and racism (BENTO, 2014).

As explained by Bento (2014), what draws attention in debates, in research and in the implementation of programs to combat inequalities is the distortion, omission and silencing in relation to the place that white people occupy within racial relations in Brazil. For the author, not reflecting on the role of white people in racial relations is to reiterate the guilt of black people for inequalities arising from race, since only they are studied and problematized.

It is important to note that Bento (2014) studies *silencing* inside social psychology. This concept is different from the discussions proposed by Orlandi (2007), inside the Discourse Analysis. Although both approaches are relevant to our discussion, we choose to rely, in this article, only on the discussion of Bento (2014), to highlight his reflections on whiteness.

For this researcher, what happens is a kind of pact, a tacit agreement between the whites to not recognize themselves as part absolutely essential in the permanence of racial inequalities in Brazil (BENTO, 2014, p.26). There is, by most part of the whites, the recognition that the racial inequality exists, but they don't recognize themselves as part of the problem.

This silence, omission or distortion of the whites place has a strong narcissistic component, of self-preservation, because it comes with a heavy investment to put this group as

reference of human condition (BENTO, 2014, p. 30). The author brings as an example the fact that the media almost always brings as an example of family (or a young person or a child) white subjects, considering this group as a universal pattern.

The white, when trying to hide inside the racial relations, seeks to not have responsibility regarding the racist conjuncture; at the same time, discussing only the black in studies of the racial relations, turn the black as the only involved in the racist structure. It is intended, therefore, to give the black people the responsibility both for their oppression and for their liberation, so that they engage in the anti-racist struggle and guarantee for themselves access to the material and symbolic goods that whiteness has. The white, yet, silencing the black and exclude them from certain areas, as occurs, in occupation of places of power on several sections of the society, in publicities, in the access of certain symbolic goods, for example, cultural spaces and high-quality education, we notice the attempt of maintenance of the self-proclaimed power of the whiteness and their privileges.

For Piza (2014), this silencing towards the white, intensifies the raciality of the black, marks the racial condition of the other:

becomes, in fact, a glass door. It produces the transparency of a universe that is seen as unique, general, and immutable. It is the “others” who must change. It is the “others” who must approach. It is the “others” that are seen, evaluated, named, classified, forgotten (PIZA, 2014, p. 85, authors detachments).

This author argues that the invisibility is not only because of the color. It's more about the great visibility given by the color allied with others phenotypic traces, with social and moral stereotypes to a group and racial neutrality to others. This condition of black people is already well known and studied, but the neutral condition of the ones that have white phenotypic traces is considered natural, as a model of good looking, and social and moral condition, in addition to circulating in different spheres of society with a certain liberty.

We verify from this Piza's findings (2014), that this supposed neutrality, we say supposed, because the whites bring up their raciality when there is a theoretical loss of privileges, demarcates the material and symbolic power place that the whites have in the society. We observe that this “invisibility” allows the white to reach and stay in the highest places in the society without being questioned how the racist structure supported this achievement.

We must be careful with the expressions invisibility and neutrality of the white. In our conception the white is not invisible or neutral. When they are asked, for example, in Brazilian Population Census, what is their skin color, the white recognize as such. In reality, white remains silent and uses its color as a protective shield to avoid participating in racial relations, leaving the black as only responsible to the anti-racist movement. The white only breaks the silence concerning his raciality when there is a supposed loss of privileges, such as happened in the beginning of implementation of racial quotas for admission to College.

According to Cardoso (2017, n.p.), “white has practically all the power, besides the fact that being white is also power”. To him, the white do not renounce the privilege, nor which is considered his space, the one with more power, prestige, symbolic and economic value. This researcher uses, as example, the medical function. This career fascinates, not for the salary, but for the accumulated knowledge to practice this profession. If a black person has this profession, it still causes strangeness in the society due to the white mentality that still predominates, associating this profession to the whites.

Silva (2017) affirms that whiteness is an ideological construct, in which the whites qualify the others different from themselves inside of their own point of view. Being white implies getting material and symbolic advantages and it comes from the unequal distribution of political, economic and social power and of material and symbolic goods. It presents as standard, with a certain neutrality, and the whites can claim their whiteness when what is in the scene is a loss of privilege.

Bento (2002), who turns the focus to the organizations, conceptualizes the whiteness as

(...) a place of racial, economic and political privilege, in which raciality, not named as such, loaded with values, experiences, affective identifications, ends up defining society. Whiteness as the preservation of racial hierarchies, as pacts between equals, finds a particularly fertile territory in Organizations, which are essentially reproductive and conservative. (BENTO, 2002, p. 7).

Considering the concepts that we presented, we found that whiteness is built from the moment in which places of privilege, prestige and power, based on racial division are created and perpetuated in society. In other words, the ones that are white, or who are closest to the white race are the ones who have the places with more prestige on society, facts articulated and reproduced inside the institutions since the Brazilian colonial times, as in Freyre (2006). According to this author, the white sons and lighter mestizos, who were considered men of the

best families (wealthier) and with high intellectual capacity, inherit these advantages that permits them to obtain easy social ascension in nobler careers and marriages with the best families.

From the psychosocial point of view, we understand that whiteness is placed inside of the configuration of racial domination, in which the dominant group (white) uses their point of view, permeated with their privileges and symbolic power, to qualify all the others different from them. Cardoso (2010), inspired by the Whiteness Critical Studies, developed by Vrom Ware, divides the whiteness into *critical* and *acritical*.

The first refers to a group that criticizes and opposes racism in a public way, not indicating, however, that they behave in the same way in their private life. This group, despite being against racism, still does not reflect about their racial identity. And the second category refers to the groups that do not disapprove racism, including, they do not consider themselves racist individuals, besides, they do not question their white identity. They put themselves in a higher level exactly because of their color and evoke acts of racial injury against the different, as the case of new-Nazi groups.

Considering the psychosocial characteristics of whiteness, it is possible to construct a discursive concept. It is characterized by an oral or written enunciation, that carries inside the values of whiteness and that validates the arguments of superiority defended by the group. The whiteness as a social group, is represented by white subjects (as the blackness is represented by black subjects). However, discursively speaking, a black subject can carry characteristic traces of whiteness, that exalt the privileges and the practice of this social group, denying the existence of the racism, validating the meritocracy and reducing the importance of the actions taken by the activists that fight for racial equity. We observe this fact with greater intensity, especially after the right and extreme right took power, defending the maintenance of traditional values of society, including racism, prejudice and inequalities. So, a black person that defends these discourses pronounced by the right and extreme right, he defends discourses that are aligned with the whiteness values.

3 Journalistic discourse

We approach the journalistic discursive field as the place of interactions between the instances of journalistic production and reception. From this perspective, it is important to situate

it amid the socio-historical conditions to which it is conditioned, above all, highlighting issues that involve the very constitution of this discursive manifestation.

Arbex Jr. (2003) advocates that the big media is a power support column. According to this author, it acts as a source that legitimates the political measures taken by the government, as well the market strategies elaborated by the big corporations and by the financial capital. So, the media

builds consensus, educates perceptions, produces partial “realities” presented as the totality of the world, tells lies, distorts facts, falsifies, mystifies – it acts, in short, as a “party” that, proclaiming itself to be the spokesperson and mirror of “the general interests” of civil society, defends the specific interests of its private owners (ARBEX JR., 2003, p. 20).

According to Marcondes Filho (1989), the dominant group from big corporations seeks through the newspaper owning, beyond the sale of a merchandise itself (composed by information and opinions), soft the imbalance inside the power distribution, and from the political and ideological fights presented inside the journalistic field, transforming the voice, which manifests itself through organized movements or not, of the dominated and dispossessed majority of the population into generic voices and in a quantity, we would say controllable by the press, at the same time giving them an exceptional “amplification”.

According to Cornils (2016), currently, the traditional media, including newspapers, TVs and magazines, no longer have the exclusive power of forming opinions as they used to and are no longer as unquestionable as they were some time ago, even though they are still the main source of the shared news on the internet. However, when it comes to topics that the reader does not have ground knowledge, newspapers are still strong sources of opinion formation (GLOTZ; LANGENBUCHER, 1969, apud MARCONDES FILHO, 1989).

Referring to the matter of mediatic manipulation, Charadeau (2013) affirms that a manipulation only occurs when a first subject or instance has as intention to make a second subject or instance believe in a fact, not necessarily true, and acts in benefit of the first subject, without the second subject realizing it.

In the media, it does not occur in that way, because the primary intention of the media is not to decoy, in fact, it possesses the important paper inside democracy of informing, reporting national and international facts, circulate explanations about the occurrence and promote the debate. Besides, the readers, generally, do not absorb what is in the newspaper in uncritical

passive way, but they are co-responsible for the spectacularization that the media proposes, once reading a newspaper or watching TV, the subject puts himself into the condition of viewer for what the media proposes to display (CHARAUDEAU, 2013).

In addition, this author makes us reflect on the use of images and the potential for media manipulation. It, especially in live TV broadcasts, provides an *impression* of transparency, unlike written language. The image would present the reality as it is, without modifications, presenting faithfully scenes of suffering and pain.

However, the second characteristic of the images comes to tear down the supposed transparency. The image, according to Charaudeau (2013), has the power to evoke personal and collective memories about others past events in the form of other images, an image of rickety people behind of barbed wire, can evoke in the memorys images of concentration fields, even when the event was not personally witnessed. And that destroys the effect of transparency, because, when feeling, interpreting and remembering the facts, we do this, taking in account our own experiences and histories, as in individual place, as in collective.

So, taking of what Charaudeau (2013, p. 256) calls "conscious assemblies", strategies that the media uses to try to soft or to change the public's opinion about determined subject, for example, manipulate an image to cause fear into the population or an attempt to pass an different image that the instance of reception has about a subject, the journalists (or the production instance), do not have a priori a manipulative intention. Media manipulation actually occurs indirectly, within itself, since in order to publicize a fact, it does not make it raw, before it passes for several treatments to be aired with a neutral aspect and without contradictions, in a way to appeal to the feeling (spectacularization) of the target public.

Besides, *journals are vehicles of information that reproduce only one part of reality*, once the journalist and his team consciousness define in advance what to publish and what not to and the detach of the news. It is published an abnormality that is of interest to the journals while speakers of the political chains, as for example, an accident involving drunkenness only will be news if it involves people that represent one of chains that the journal wants to fight against (MARCONDES FILHO, 1989).

We think, opposite of Charaudeau (2013), that although the media has not as main purpose the subject manipulation, it can be used to that end. For example, in a dictatorship situation, the media can create behavior in a whole group, by the governmental control,

instructing the matters that can gain emphasis or not, and what can be commented on by society or not.

We have seen that the newspaper does not build its saying alone, in the journalist's figure. In fact, the construction of that saying is much more related to power, than to present the reality in fact of what occurs with the ones outside of this line of influence. We know that in Brazil, power walks hand in hand with color and social class, so, it's possible to infer that the people that are in the position of command of the journal's saying belong, generally, to the groups composed by whiteness.

4 The implied

In view of this panorama of journalistic discourse, it is necessary to focus on the category of analysis selected for the approach to the theme of this research: the implied. Seeking the understanding of this concept, we used the studies of Maingueneau (2000; 2011) and Ducrot (1987), in order to promote a dialogue between perspectives. However, our emphasis is on Maingueneau's studies.

Maingueneau (2011) works with the notion of implied in order to, by another way to look into the statement, search for meanings that are not in the textual surface and that are compatible with the interests of the recipient, respecting the laws of the discourse. Using this another way to look, the reader is being taken to “infer an implicit proposition, denominated *implicature*” (MAINGUENEAU, 2011, p. 33, author's emphasis). Postulating that the discursive laws were respected, the *implied* emerges from the confrontation between the context that a certain statement was done and the statement itself.

To Ducrot (1987, p. 13),

when a linguist declares that a certain statement of the language that is being studied has determined meaning (described with the help of a synonym statement from this same language or from another one), the linguist is often under the impression of registering data, verifying a fact. In reality, the only data that the experience gives concern, not to the statement itself, but to the multiple possible occurrences to this statement, in the many situations that are used (...).

Ducrot (1987) adduces that seeking and assigning a meaning outside the possible occurrences inside a statement, in other words, search for the implied means to formulate

hypotheses beyond the experience and observation. This researcher characterizes the implied from the following points:

- It is something added to the literal sense of the text. This gives the possibility to the enunciator to protect himself behind the literal sense of a statement, once the responsibility of interpretation rests with the co-enunciator.
- The implied says something more in the statement, without saying explicitly, but at the same time, this “more” is there.
- It concerns what the co-enunciator is allowed to conclude from a given statement.

To this researcher, “the implied takes the possibility of being absent inside the statement itself and only appears when a listener, in a posterior moment, reflects about the referred statement” (DUCROT, 1987, p. 20). To find out, the co-enunciator takes from a statement the possible conclusions as discursive procedure, done, according to Maingueneau (2000), with the help of a more or less spontaneous reasoning.

According to Ducrot (1987), the implied is something that is placed beyond the literal sense of the text, that is identified from the reading that is done from a certain text. We know that each co-enunciator carries with him discursive memories that allow to take from a text another sense beyond the one that the author wanted to express, and that senses are not stable, changing with the discourse production conditions.

To Maingueneau (2000), the implieds follow the laws of discourse, even when they violate them. To explain, the author exemplifies as follows: “A: Do you come to Paulo’s house? B: My sister is sick” (MAINGUENEAU, 2000, p. 131). The given answer violates the principle that it may give an appropriate answer to a question. However, in this transgression there is an implied content in the sentence: if the sister is ill, B has to take care of his sister and will not be able to go to Paulo’s house. So, A infers, implies, from the literal sense. This is possible only because the partners believe that the other knows about the discourse laws.

The implieds help to perceive the whiteness discourse, once this discourse does not appear in an explicit way inside the journalistic discourse. It is unveiled from the mobilization of the discursive memory and from the relation established with the discourse’s social and historical conditions. As we will see in the *corpus*.

5 Corpus constitution and analysis

Our approach is qualitative and supported by the DA theory, from where we selected the implied as analysis category. To constitute the analysis' corpus, we selected the journal Folha de S. Paulo, we searched for news using the keyword racism, between January and July, 2020. Among the three texts selected to the masters dissertation, we selected to use in this article, the news that involved the death of a boy called Miguel, in Recife - Pernambuco.

Five years boy that was under the care of his mother's boss dies after fall from a building¹

Woman, who was taking care of the child while the mother was in an external task, is prosecuted by guilty homicide.

June, 4th, 2020, 3:41 p.m. Updated in June, 4th, 2020, at 4:40 p.m

João Valadares - RECIFE

The boy Miguel Otávio Santana da Silva, 5, died after falling from the 9th floor at a residential building in the São José neighborhood, Recife's downtown, while was under the woman's responsibility to whom his mother worked as a housekeeper.

The Civil Police from Pernambuco indicted by guilty homicide the resident of the apartment, Sari Côte Real, who was taking care of the child at the moment of the fall, on Tuesday (2). After paying the bail in the amount of R\$20 thousand, Côte Real was released.

Miguel's mother, Mirtes Renata Souza, worked at the suspect's house and took her son to the workplace because she had no one to leave him with - the schools and day care centers are closed due to the pandemic of new coronavirus.

According to the police investigations, Mirtes had come down to take the family's dog for a walk and left her son under her boss' care. After that, the kid went out of the apartment and took the elevator unaccompanied.

The police analyzed the images from the condominium intern circuit and verified that the owner of the apartment allowed the 5 years old child to get into the elevator alone, which can be characterized as negligence.

The police chief Ramon Teixeira, who presides over the inquiry, affirmed that the boy first tried to get out from the apartment, and the woman called his attention. In a new try, reported the police chief, the child returned to the elevator and nothing was done to prevent it.

The investigators affirm that the images from the intern circuit show the woman observing the boy entering into the elevator in the 5th floor and register the moment when she pressed the button to the roof.

Still, according to the video, in the presence of Côte Real, Miguel pressed the buttons to the 7th and 9th floors. The elevator door then closes and he goes up, alone, first until the 7th floor, without getting off from the elevator, then to the 9th floor.

After leaving the elevator, Miguel climbed in a box that had the air conditioners' condensators. After that, in an accidental way, according to the investigations, the fall occurred, because the place was not properly protected.

¹ Available in <https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/cotidiano/2020/06/menino-de-5-anos-que-estava-aos-cuidados-da-patroa-da-mae-morre-apos-cair-de-predio.shtml> access in August 10th, 2020. Article author's translation.

The boy fell from about 114,9 feet high. To get to the box that faced the outside of the building, he climbed about 393,8 feet.

The investigators affirm that, at this moment, the boy was shouting for his mother, who was walking the dog in the avenue in front of the Pier Duarte Coelho building, more known in Recife as Twins Towers.

“The resident had the legal responsibility under that circumstance. The child remained and was under her responsibility. She had the power and duty to take care of the child and ultimately prevent the tragic outcome that came from a tragedy,” said the police chief.

Later, in an interview to Rede Globo, the boy's mother said she entrusted her son to her boss and she would not have the patience to take him off from the elevator.

Mirtes said that she went down to take a walk with the dog for a short period of time. If it were the other way around, I would not have the right to pay the bail. It is a life that is gone for lack of patience. We can't leave a child alone inside the elevator, she said.

When she was coming back from the walk, Mirtes was alerted by the doorman that someone fell from the building. When arriving at the place, she saw her son seriously injured on the floor.

Miguel was sent to a public hospital in Recife, but did not resist the injuries. The burial of the child's body took place in the afternoon of this Thursday (4).

Despite of the recommendation of social isolation imposed by the pandemic - Recife has more than 15.900 cases registered of the illness and 1.120 deaths, and Pernambuco has one of the most serious conditions in the country - Mirtes continued working at Sari Côte Real's home, First-Lady in the city of Tamandaré, on the south coast of Pernambuco.

The Côte Real's husband, the mayor Sérgio Hacker (PSB), announced in April that was infected by the new coronavirus.

During the press conference carried out on Wednesday (3), the Civil Police had not released the resident's name, claiming that due to the abuse of authority law, the identities of criminal suspects are omitted.

Until this Thursday afternoon, Sari and Sérgio Hacker had not commented on the matter. (FOLHA DE S. PAULO ONLINE, 2020).

The news is about the death of the boy Miguel Otávio Santana, with only five years old, after falling down from the 9th floor of a residential building. The boy was under the responsibility of Sari Côte Real, First-Lady, for whom the boy's mother, Mirtes Renata de Souza, worked. The scenario that the news takes place is a luxury residential complex in Recife, where lives the mayor, the First-Lady and their kids and where Mrs. Mirtes worked as a housekeeper, even during the COVID 19 pandemic. At the time of the accident, the boy's mother was walking the family dog and left the kid under the care of the owner of the house.

The enunciator characterizes the responsible for the homicide as *boss* already in the news title, and the mother as *housekeeper* in the news' first paragraph.

Five years boy that was under the care of his *mothers' boss* dies after fall from a building (FOLHA DE S. PAULO, 2020, our detachments)

The boy Miguel Otávio Santana da Silva, 5, died after falling from the 9th floor at a residential building in the São José neighborhood, Recife's downtown, while was under the woman's responsibility to whom his mother worked as a *housekeeper*. (FOLHA DE S. PAULO, 2020, our detachments)

We highlight the ways of treatment that the enunciator used to identify the subjects involved, in terms of occupation, using the expressions already crystallized in the national vocabulary and we verify that in the *Great Dictionary Houaiss*² gives to us the following definitions to employer, feminine and masculine definitions, and housekeeper synonyms, that we consider important to present to this analysis.

Boss: feminine noun. 1 the wife of the boss, the owner of a business, a service; 2 the housewife; 3 woman who runs certain establishments or services; 4 intrans. married woman, in relation to her husband; wife. Etymology: Latin, *patrōna,ae* in the sense of 'protector, *former lady of a freedman*, defender', fem. from *patrōnus,i* in the sense of 'patron, protector of commoners, defender'; Patron: masculine noun. (...) 1.4 *the owner of the house, taken in relation to servants; Sir, maid*(...). (HOUAISS, 2021, article author's translation)

Housekeeper: feminine noun. 1 woman who holds any job 1.1 B woman who employs herself in domestic services; *maid*. Synonyms: *boi*, *colomi*, *colomim*, *continuous*, *servant*, *curumi*, *curumim*, *oenophore*, *familiar*, *servant*, *employee*, *lackey*, *leco*, *boy*, *page*, *boy*, *sergeant*, *thirty-year-old servant* (...)(HOUAISS, 2021, our detachment, article author's translation).

We saw, according to the definitions, that the expression boss (in feminine) takes us back to its origin to the *lady of a freedman*, *sir*, *master* and maid to *maid-servant*, *servant*. These expressions can activate our discursive memory, taking us back to the colonial relations, where in the one side, there was the boss, owner of the big house, white miss, and in the other, servants, freed from the slavery era, black or mestizas, and the first one depended on the second for practically everything inside the manor-house. We noticed that these expressions presented in our history are recovered in the journalistic discourse by the expressions *boss* and *housekeeper*. They crystallize reminiscences of a racial superiority from the point that puts the other in inferiority, leading us to identify, already in the title of the news, the whiteness discourse.

Recovering the racial reminiscences presented in the expressions boss and housekeeper, identified in the previous paragraph, we obtain as an effect of meaning the characterization of the happened from the perspective of racism. As previously exposed, structural racism normalizes the racism present inside the society structures through the social

² Online version

practices. Starting from the colonial relations crystallized into society memories of a white miss with her black servant, the structural racism normalizes the fact that the boss, inside the society discursive memory, be imagined as white, and dependent, even inside a pandemic context, of her housekeeper, rescued by interdiscursive relations as black. This discursive memory is confirmed by the phenotypic characteristics presented in the photos of the involved subjects on the news.

During all the news we noticed the repetition of expressions to nominate the involved subjects as we can see in the table below.

Table 1 - Ways of treatment of the subjects along the news

| Designation of Mrs. Sari Côte Real | How many times does it appear? | Designation of Mrs. Mirtes Renata Souza | How many times does it appear? |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| Boss | Three | Mother | Four |
| Woman | Three | Mirtes | Four |
| Sari Côte Real | Three | Housekeeper | One |
| Resident | Three | Miguels mother | One |
| Côte Real | Two | Mirtes Renata Souza | One |
| Suspect | One | Boy's mother | One |
| Owner of the apartment | One | | |
| First-lady | One | | |
| Sari, referring to her and her husband at the same time to not repeat the last name (Sari and Sérgio Hacker) | One | | |

Source: From the author (2021)

We already saw, inside the discursive studies, that language is not a group of signs chosen only to express a thought. So, the different marks of treatment that we find along the text do not serve only to avoid repeating the terms and maintain the textual cohesion. In discourse, the language is a way of social production, and the expression choices do not come from neutral choices, they manifest the ideology defended by the subject.

So, confronting these manners to identify the subjects presented in the text, it is possible to observe by these terms most prominent deference on the part of the enunciator regarding Sari Côte Real, including, treating her as boss or just by her last name, but never only by the first name. At the same time, we do not see this same way of treatment regarding Mirtes Renata Souza, that, during the text, is treated by the first name, in an informal way, or just mother. Thus, from the said previously highlighted and from tab. 1, we notice that the manner that the enunciator chooses to treat each one of the involved subjects points out the places that each subject occupies.

We notice the attribution of certain power to the white woman, even by the fact of being First-Lady, power position that she occupies, identified only in the last paragraphs, but already marked during all the text, by the designations that reveal power, as pointed in Tab. 1. The opposite occurs with the black woman, who in the first paragraph is identified as *mother* and *housekeeper*, this last one being a job that is not seen as having power by a good part of society, and giving the effect that, in the enunciators point of view, it is not necessary designate differently the subject that occupies a position outside from the power zone. Then, we observe that on the one side is the boss' power place, white woman, and on the other the place considered subordinate occupied by the housekeeper, mother, black woman. The designations, thus, discursively establish the power relations and the social places that each one of the women occupies.

As we already studied in the theoretical part, just with the fact of being white, a subject has symbolic and material advantages, and they are fruit from the unequal distribution of political, economic and social power and material and symbolic assets. Therefore, from the designations that the enunciator uses to characterize the involves subjects, evidencing the places occupied by them, the white womans superiority, first-lady and boss, in opposition to the subordination from the black woman, mother, housekeeper we note a symbolic advantage to the first one. Thus, inside the news it is possible to identify, in an implied way, the power of whiteness.

We can identify the implied in the direct discourse highlighted in the following excerpt:

(...)The Civil Police from Pernambuco indicted by guilty homicide the resident of the apartment, Sai Côte Real, who was taking care of the child at the moment of the fall, on Tuesday (2). *After paying the bail in the amount of R\$20 thousand*, Côte Real was released. (...) (FOLHA DE S. PAULO, 2020, ours detachments)

Mirtes said that she went down to take a walk with the dog for a short period of time. *If it were the other way around, I would not have the right to pay the bail. It is a life that is gone for lack of patience. We cant leave a child alone inside the elevator, said.* (FOLHA DE S. PAULO, 2020, our detachments)

Mrs. Mirtes does not directly express that the incident has links with the racial relations already crystallized in the country, when she says: “If it were the other way around, I would not have the right to pay the bail [...]”. However, by this enunciation, we verify her acknowledgment about the social place that she occupies and the discrepant relationship in relation to the social place that Sarí Côrte Real occupies. If she were responsible for what happened, part of society would not agree that she should pay the bail, even if she had the conditions to do so, and would condemn her for the act. The racism is not explicit in the excerpt, but it is implied, giving the mobilization of our discursive memory that recapture the relation boss-housekeeper, heir to the slave-owning and racist relationship that constituted the history of Brazil between the enslaved black woman and the white lady.

In addition, we saw in the theoretical part that in Brazil, race and class are linked concepts and, in our country, the blacks belong, in majority, to the lower class, while the whites are in the middle and the higher classes. In view of this, we can affirm that in the majority the black ones dont have financial conditions to pay a bail, even more so in such high value as shown in this news. So, Mrs. Mirtes’ enunciate gives to us an effect of meaning that the own law has the trajectory marked by the whiteness, because inside of our reality the right to pay the bail belongs to the white, once they have the economic ways to do that.

At the same time that we verify this acknowledgment in the excerpt referring to Mrs Mirtes’ speech, we find a distance from the enunciator regarding the racial question that is pointed out in the direct speech that he used, by the own journalistic discourse characteristics being presented in a close way, free from contradictions and polemics. Giving the responsibility of the discourse to another subject, the enunciator excuses himself of giving a direct opinion about the occurrence, although he marks using this direct speech, the adhesion to the given speech that if the situation was really in the other way around the situation would have another end.

Besides this acknowledgment in the mothers speech, we have another implied, that is related to another part in the news, presented below:

According to the police investigations, Mirtes had come down to take the family dog for a walk and left her son under her boss' care. *After that, the kid*

went out of the apartment and took the elevator unaccompanied. (FOLHA DE S. PAULO, 2020, our detachments)

This excerpt allows us to imply that the child would be responsible for his own action, of leaving the apartment, get into the elevator searching for the mother, going on the opposite direction to the implications of the news, which stem from the information that Mrs. Sarí Côrte Real was indicted for manslaughter. The mother's speech in which she points out that "*We can't leave a child alone inside the elevator*", changes the possibility to interpret the implied from the excerpt above. In fact, the child did not decide by herself, in a conscious and mature way, but *was left alone* in the elevator.

Besides, we can recapture the silencing in Bento's psychosocial view (2002, 2014). Inside the news, we identify the silence of the involved parties, as in the following excerpt:

Until this Thursday afternoon, Sari and Sérgio Hacker had not commented on the matter³. (FOLHA DE S. PAULO, 2020)

The excerpt brings in the surface that the involved parties had not spoken until that moment, having as possible effect of meaning a way of protection, once they are important public people.

Is at this point in which we verify the whiteness crossing the journalistic discourse in this news. The whiteness discourse is a latent discourse inside the news, we can notice it by the enunciator's choice in describing the subjects, inside the discourses, and at the black subject acknowledging, indirectly, the whiteness behind the laws. However, not bringing discussion of these facts to the news, using specialists of the racial causes, make this discussion walk in the shadows, in a hidden way through the society, collaborating to the racial silencing discussed by Bento (2002; 2014).

Besides, inside this problematic of racial relations and the racial silencing, the silence of these subjects leads to an effect of meaning that they did make an option to not give a meaning to what happened, leading to a decrease in the importance of the case, compounded by putting a price on the loss of a black life. ("After paying the bail in the amount of R\$20 thousand, Côrte Real was released"). To not discuss about of what happened, brings back the asymmetry between the white subjects, bosses and the housekeeper and her son, black subjects, because making the option to not say anything, takes the responsibility for what happened to the boy's

³ Few days later Sarí Côrte Real gave an interview on TV

mother of having taken the child to work and leaving it in the care of someone other than the mother.

The enunciator chooses not to problematize the reported situation. The journal seeks to maintain the impartiality as maximum possible, avoiding the emission of opinions in a direct way and drying the facts, to accomplish the main objective, that is to sell, to the bigger public possible, which ones are not always involved in the racial causes.

Under the attempt of impartiality, the enunciator chooses not questioning the silence of these white subjects, not discuss in any way about the racist relation evident in this situation, or talk about the racial relations, nor seek to present arguments from scholars and/or activists of racial causes to endorse the racism that is inside of the reported, making explicit the structural racism that still inside our society.

Final considerations

From the analyzed *corpus*, we verify the presence of the whiteness discourse inside of journalistic discourse, in a very subtle, implied way. This identification is possible given the choices made by the enunciator, based on ideological restrictions, of the expressions used.

We also verified that these same enunciators leave silenced the fact that they are events based on racism, choosing only to expose the news, in a way that leaves a supposed objectivity in evidence, since they only narrate the facts that occurred, thus fulfilling the objective of selling a newspaper, leaving in silence the discussions about the racial relations that are presented in the episode, to avoid any speech that provokes confrontations or discussions and the news becomes as objective as possible.

Inside the news, the whiteness discourse presents itself in a latent way, once we can see in the enunciators choices, made from the ideological restrictions, the highlighting of the white subject, making the black being an irrelevant data. What stands silenced inside the news is the lack of discussion about the whites racial privileges or even about racial relations and racism and the impact on society. Not to bring these questions to the newspaper, even in a short way, the enunciator puts these discussions to marginality. This is due to the very characteristics of journalistic discourse, as discussed above, of remaining impartial as much as possible.

In addition to the characteristics of journalistic discourse, the newspaper as an institution maintains and reproduces racism and the whiteness privileges, given its main characteristic

already studied in theory. The newspaper does not build its saying alone, only in the figures of journalists and columnists, who can be white or black. The construction of this saying is much more related to power, since the newspaper is composed by a political and economic conglomerate, composed by the power holders inside society, a group constituted largely by whiteness and who do not want other source of information to take away their monopoly.

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