

MEDIA AS POLITICAL ACTOR OF THE PUBLIC SPHERE: A TEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF VEJA MAGAZINE ON CORRUPTION CASES

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- **ABSTRACT:** This paper analyzes the relations between media and politics in texts from *Veja* magazine, a representative of the Brazilian mainstream media, referring to cases of political corruption in the Lula and Dilma's governments. The objective of this article is to identify linguistic-discursive resources mobilized in the production of *Veja* texts reinforcing the belief that its use of language is informative and impartial or it represents the voice of the Brazilian population. In discussing the relationship between the media and the political fields from an antagonistic political perspective, we have seen that the informative nature of *Veja* only takes place insofar as its journalists stance it and construct it as such. Moreover, the fact the discursive representations that *Veja* makes in its texts converge to the identity of the political actors reveals traces of antagonism that directly affect the construction of new identities. The article also leads to the idea that the media has a stake in the political struggle, whether as an adversary or not, but always as a political actor. For this analysis, we have adopted as theoretical-methodological frameworks Jim Martin and Peter White's System of Appraisal, and Chantal Mouffe's social theory of the political and agonistic democracy.
- **KEYWORDS:** Media. Political. Corruption. Appraisal. Agonism. Antagonism.

Introduction

When we consider contexts of language use related to the field of politics and the professional field of journalism and the print media, it is possible to highlight the prominence of contemporary socio-political aspects which, although disconnected at first sight, can be analyzed in convergence, mainly due to the language practices that are presumed and influenced by them, such as proposing a new way of acting and representing social reality. These aspects have been verified by several theorists in

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current works and concern to (I) the formulation, which has been engendered in several decades, but in constant ratification, of a press identity as informative, contrary to an old image that characterized it, from its beginnings until approximately early 20th century, as an opinionated one (THOMPSON, 2002, 2005; MELO, 2005); (II) the character of contemporary political culture, which some sociologists, *mutatis mutandis* and with the most varied nomenclatures ('politics of trust', Thompson (2002), 'subpolitics', Beck (1997), 'life politics' and 'third way', Giddens (1999, 2001)), identify as a 'new politics' – a modern tendency that believes in the disappearance or incompatibility of political interests to be expressed in terms of traditional or clearly defined ideological positions, such as right-wing/left-wing, which could directly influence the growing role of trust and credibility as criteria of judgment to the political field; and (III) the 'current post-political Zeitgeist' (MOUFFE, 2005), an order of discourse that would make possible the emergence of this 'new politics' in believing in a world where political discrimination in *we/they* can be overcome and where partisan conflicts have become things from the past, which would finally allow a rational, universal consensus obtained by dialogue or deliberation in the political field, without exclusion among its participants.

In these three aspects, there is a common point that draws special attention to us and is directly related to the use of language in social practices: (the construal of) *social identities*¹. In the first case, we see the claim by the media for an identity that would support a more reporting and informative character (ANTÃO, 2009), that is the fruit of a journalistic *ethos* concerning to *presenting* the current events in the world rather than to opining and compromising politically to what it reports, otherwise it would be hurting the guiding principles of this actual journalism: neutrality and objectivity. In the second case, there is a substitution both of the evaluation's criteria to the political field and of the representativeness of politicians; with the character of actual political culture, the choices for representatives would no longer be based on their political parties, with their clearly determined ideological programs that represent general interests of classes or groups or social movements, but on the *credibility* and *reliability* of political representatives; in other words, what is at stake now is the identity that political actors would assume to the public, with the moral qualities their images would support with them, as well as the importance they give to deliberations in the public sphere. In the third, the current political spirit would bring the weakening of collective social identities (MOUFFE, 1994, 2005), inasmuch as there would be no alternative

¹ The concept of social identities in this paper is based on the work of Laclau and Mouffe (2001), for whom identity is an attempt of objectivity, always prevented by the antagonistic relations that pass through the discourses in society. The antagonism, for the authors, would be the limit of all social identity, since social relations would be permeated by conflicting discourses that are always in search of redefining the roles of subjects within each discourse. The construal of the social identity of the other is thus a discursive activity, not only social but also political and historical one. It is in social conflicts, antagonistic ones in nature, that the construal of social identities finds either its limit or its force, since this construction is one of the political stages of the struggle of groups and social movements for hegemony in society. In this way, the construal of identities is a political act and denounces the political projects of the social groups in dispute.

to capitalism after the collapse of socialism. Therefore, it makes no sense to think of political desires in terms of political-party conflicts, but to think our interests and values based on rational deliberation in aiming at common good and overcoming traditional identities as expressions of the desires and concerns of social groups.

Underpinning these projects of current social identities is the fact that changes in the forms of conceiving both the role of journalism and the media, and the expression of political representativeness, do not only occur due to internal vicissitudes of journalistic practice and journalistic field, but can also take place in the way they are manifested in the everyday discourses and wider social practices of which (the use of) language forms part. With the objective of identifying how journalistic and political social identities are constructed and proposed in daily practices of language use, once considering both this professional panorama in which impartiality and objectivity are claimed as essential journalistic criteria for the credibility of newspapers and journals in discursive practices, and this 'current post-political *Zeitgeist*', which defends the substitution (as if it were inevitable) of traditional politics based on parties or ideologies by a 'politics of trust' and no more ideological one, we will analyze texts of the magazine *Veja*, from the publishing company Abril, that address political issues, such as corruption, considering that there is a demand for an identity not only for itself, but also for those about whom it speaks or for whom it is addressed.

The choice of the magazine is justified by the fact that it is the first of the national ranking of publications in magazine with greater circulation in the Brazil², which gives visibility to the dissemination of its texts and the propagation of its discourses in everyday social practices. The fact that we analyze texts related to corruption is in turn the result of corruption being evidenced and dealt with in contexts of legitimacy crises of a political system, both of its institutions and of its members, political actors (GOMES, 2013, p. 155), which would leave us with the possibility of analyzing how political actors are represented in daily discursive practices, as in the case of journalistic texts. Moreover, as Filgueiras (2008) warns us, we can understand corruption as the manifestation of institutional problems that are caused by the participants of democratic institutions themselves (politicians, parties, political scientists, specialists, when they are asked to analyze the political situation), and by members of civil society, such as the media, as in the *Veja* here under analysis. Thus, the purpose of this article is to first identify linguistic-discursive resources mobilized in the production of their texts that reinforce or not the defense that their use of language is informative and impartial or they represent the voice of the population, so that we can understand the relation between the use of language and the construction of social identities of journalism (as manifested by *Veja*) when they are dealing with social identities in the field of politics or politicians.

² For more information on publications with a greater national reach, see *Instituto Verificador de Circulação (IVC)*, a Brazilian and official non-profit entity, which is linked to the *International Federation of Audit Bureaux of Circulations (IFABC)* and conducts audits in the Brazilian publishing market regarding the circulation of Brazilian print media. Available at: <https://www.ivcbrasil.org.br/#auditorias>. Access: May 24, 2017.

In addition, we emphasize that the construction of media and journalism identities can also be linked to a broader socio-political panorama, which includes a new political spirit and a new way of doing politics and choosing politicians. So, we will investigate linguistic-discursive forms present in *Veja*'s texts on socio-political events occurring in two moments of great repercussion in the recent national political history: the so-called "Mensalão" scandal, during Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva's government (2003-2010); and the sequence of political events that culminated in the removal, resignation and replacement of ministers in the first year of Dilma Rousseff's government (2011) and that received the name of "Esplanade Crisis"³ in *Veja*.

In order to analyze the linguistic-discursive forms that can either denounce the construction of *Veja* journalistic identity or denote a posture in relation to the postulates of journalistic neutrality and objectivity, we will use the framework of Martin and White (2005) to describe the APPRAISAL System in the use of language. Through the work of Martin and White, we can conceive the evaluations of the producers of the texts/reports as a way of constructing socio-political identities, in two directions : a) to the constitution of an *ethos* of such producers – either by the way they position readers in relation to what they report in their texts/reports, or by the fact that questioning identities in society is also to bring into focus the ideological or evaluative systems that support who evaluates; b) and to the social identity constitution of the socio-political actors mentioned in the texts/reports. This theoretical and methodological framework will therefore help us to analyze the linguistic-discursive forms mobilized by the media for the construction not only of their journalistic identity, but also of the field about which they speak. The analysis mediated by this picture will therefore indicate whether the neutral, impartial and objective posture claimed by the journalistic *ethos* takes place in the texts that the journal produces.

In the following section, in order to better understand the theoretical and political background sustaining this current political *Zeitgeist*, we will talk about the deliberative approaches disseminated in theoretical and social conceptions about politics and politicians. We will discuss how the conflictive and antagonistic dimension of personal, particular, partisan and ideological interests is viewed and mitigated in such approaches, in favor of a public sphere based on communicative rationality and the realization of a rational consensus, so that we can understand how this *Zeitgeist* manifests itself in ways of using language and how it erases or hides the political and antagonistic dimension of the participants of society as political and social actors.

³ See the Digital Archive of the *Veja*, editions from number 2220, July 2011. Available at: <http://veja.abril.com.br/complemento/acervodigital/index-novo-acervo.html>. Access: May 24, 2017.

The agonistic model of democracy and the critiques to the deliberative approach

Many theorists who use the public sphere concept, in the relevant interface that it establishes among public communication of civil society, the media and politics, see enthusiastically and optimistically the model of deliberative democracy⁴; moreover they stress the importance of a critical reconceptualization to the notion of public sphere in aiming at the realization/effectiveness of an inclusive space of deliberation/public discussion⁵. However, what escapes both the defense of these theorists of the liberal-democratic model and the work of conceptual remodeling of contemporary public sphere's theorists is the comprehension we found in Chantal Mouffe of the ever conflicting and antagonistic dimension of public and political debate. This is fundamental to constructing one of our arguments against the implicit claim of the media here analyzed: that its discourses represent a common interest, from the people, from the nation⁶.

In this way, we will first discuss the deliberative perspective and the criticism to the defense of a sphere of rational deliberation destined to the universal consensus, in emphasizing the loss of the antagonistic and adversarial dimension of the political. Therefore we will follow the indications and arguments present in Chantal Mouffe's works. With Chantal Mouffe's views on dominant democracy models in the Western world and their implications for understanding political-discursive clashes in public spheres of debate, we will understand the need not to camouflage a political stance in political discussions such as those proposed by journalistic texts.

Mouffe⁷ develops her work on contemporary political theory and tries to propose a normative model, not only instrumental or procedural, of democracy, that recognizes the plural and radical dimension of society. The collapse of the Soviet model and hence the growing abandonment (by the democrats around the world) of the paradigm of class struggles have strengthened the idea that there is no alternative to capitalism in the economic sphere nor to democratic liberalism in the political sphere (MOUFFE, 1994, 2005, 2009). This would be the reason for many liberal democrats to argue that the emergence of new political identities that do not represent collectivities would ensure the inevitable exchange of old politics and its

⁴ There are few critical positions on the deliberative model of democracy. In addition to what we will take as a point of support for this paper, we indicate the books by Streck (2002), Cabral Pinto (1994) and Dussel (2007) for a better understanding of the limitations perceived today to the deliberative model of democracy.

⁵ For a general understanding of this discussion, see Avritzer and Costa (2006); Benhabib (1996); Cohen (1996); Gomes (2006); Habermas (1996a, 1996b, 2012); and Maia (2006).

⁶ See VEJA, Letter to the reader, August 3, 2005, edition 1916: "VEJA is not the enemy of certain parties, nor friend of others. The magazine is simply in favor of Brazil. Against those who harm it, those who rob it. The view of the nation." (A FAVOR..., 2005).

⁷ Chantal Mouffe's theoretical assumptions are presented in the work *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* (2001), written with Ernesto Laclau, with whom she reformulated and shares common concepts, through which they sought to rethink Marxism in the light of the intellectual developments of the 20th century, so that a theoretical-epistemological framework could be formed, adequate to socio-political-discursive analyzes of the contemporary social struggles (LACLAU; MOUFFE, 2001).

traditional ideologies and boundaries for universal principles stemming from Law and rational morality.

There would be the attempt by the theoreticians of this new paradigm, such as John Rawls and Jürgen Habermas, to elaborate respectively the necessary procedures for the creation of a deliberative domain where political decisions should be guided by principles such as ‘justice as fairness’ (RAWLS, 1996) and ‘communicative rationality’ (HABERMAS, 2012) to reach a rational and non-exclusionary consensus among deliberative individuals (MOUFFE, 1994, p. 8). Based on this, Mouffe will elaborate a principle that converge towards the formation of a model of democracy that would recognize the political and the plural dimension of the political, at the same time responding to limitations that the deliberative approaches present, such as the ones by Rawls and Habermas.

To incorporate the idea of practical rationality into democratic institutions, Rawls and Habermas give different answers. Rawls (1996) departs from the idea of an *original position* in which individuals, putting aside their differences and idiosyncrasies in social life, are considered free and equal. Then, once leaving aside their particularities and interests, a framework to the exercise of public reason would emerge, in which the performance of the individuals would be based on the understanding that it would be adequate and justifiable. In this way, the legitimacy of individuals’ actions always results from collective decisions among equal and free persons, and these decisions represent the collective only when they arise from the dispositions of choices of all, guided by the assumption that such choices are reasonable for them.

Of course, such conception of exercise of public reason in the decision-making processes admits the existence of the pluralism of values and interests from the individuals. However, as Mouffe (2009, p. 89) emphasizes, Rawls argues that rational consensus will not only be possible in relation to issues which he calls *comprehensive*, from a religious, moral and philosophical nature, but rather a consensus on decisions of political order is possible, since if democratic procedures of deliberation should ensure impartiality, equality, openness and lack of coercion, guided by a conception of justice as fairness shared by all, then these same procedures will guide the deliberation towards general interests legitimized by all. Mouffe (2009) will approach this artifice of Rawls’s deliberative model as an attempt to escape the pluralism of values irremediable in processes of public discussion and deliberation, establishing the centrality of a domain/field in which rational and universal solutions could be formulated.

The way found by Habermas, on the other hand, to establish a public reason in the political decisions will not differ much from that of Rawls and falls even in the same problem pointed out by Mouffe in the strategy of the latter. Habermas (2012), based on his conception of deliberative democracy in his theory of communicative action, will defend a procedural approach in which the recognition by individuals of constraints of the ideal speech situation should eliminate the positions that may or may not be assumed by them, as long as they act according to what he calls *communicative rationality* – a free and rational communication.

Like Rawls and his followers, the Habermasians do not neglect the fact the realization and effectiveness of this ideal speech situation are not simple, since it would be very unlikely that particular demands and desires will be completely suspended, in such a way that actions of individuals perform a universal rationality that will benefit all. Nevertheless, the pluralism of particular demands, desires, and interests is softened in Habermas by means of a strategy implicit in his arguments. He accepts, for example, that there are questions that should be oblivious to political deliberation practices, especially those concerning to existential questions, to decent life; and, on the other hand, there would be conflicts of interest among groups of people that could be resolved only through a compromised action (HABERMAS, 1996b, p. 448). In this way, according to Mouffe, Habermas makes the same separation by Rawls by separating two domains, private one and public one, in order to escape the implications of value pluralism. Mouffe (2009, p. 89) argues that Habermas is intransigent as to the possibility the exchange of arguments is the appropriate procedure for reaching a general interest and reinforces the idea the domain of political decisions can be isolated from the pluralism and is sufficiently neutral for rational solutions to be proposed.

Contrary to these perspectives, Mouffe (2009) proposes not to underestimate the contradictory, paradoxical character of liberal democracy, because it is founded on the tension between two distinct and irreconcilable logics – the one of democracy, with its claims by equality and popular participation, and the one of liberalism, with its defense of individual rights and freedom. Therefore, any attempt to give a final rational solution to the tension is off the table, especially when much of democratic politics is dedicated to the negotiation of this paradox, as well as to the proposition of precarious and contingent solutions. The task is not to escape the pluralism of values, but to confront and dispose of it in a way that is compatible with democratic forms of political practice. Mouffe thus argues that loyalty to democratic regimes and institutions will not come from the replacing a ‘means/ends rationality’, typical one of the aggregative model⁸, for a *deliberative* or *communicative* one, but from the constitution of a set of practices that makes possible the formation of democratic citizens. It is not enough to relegate to an abstract realm the passions and affections (understanding by this the affective forces or bonds that would be at the origin of collective forms of identification), since they play a crucial role in ensuring fidelity to democratic institutions and values.

Thus, it is not with arguments that defend the incorporation of a communicative rationality in the democratic institutions that a loyalty to the democratic values will be guaranteed; but rather with the creation and diffusion of institutions, discourses, and forms of life that feed the identification of social actors with such values. Based on

⁸ Even recognizing the pluralism of values and interests as coextensive with the notion of the people, in the aggregative approach to democracy it was the self-interest of the individuals that guided their actions in the political field, that is, their preferences and interests would be the parameters for the organization of the parties, which would thus offer the arguments from which they would obtain the votes. For a discussion of this aggregative model of democracy, see the classic essay by Schumpeter (2008).

Wittgenstein's criticism to the rationalism, Mouffe argues that there must be agreement on forms of life in order to achieve agreements on opinions to be reached.

The political, the politics and the agonistic pluralism

One of the issues raised in Mouffe's critique of the deliberative model of democracy concerns the belief in the establishment of a field in which political decisions would be based on principles or procedures of rational order. In this field, the antagonism that might arise from the differences of interests or the particularities of each subject could be eradicated by the adoption of appropriate deliberative procedures that would lead to a rational debate in the public sphere, where consensus could finally be reached. However, what such a belief leaves out is that antagonism itself is part of the constitution of any socio-political relation. The deliberative democracy model brings the idea that subjects can share a principle of rationality that would serve to the political decision-making processes, in isolating in a private world their histories, their social, cultural and religious differences, and in believing, therefore, that such idiosyncrasies would have no implications for political agency in the spheres of debate.

In turn, Mouffe (1994, 2005, 2009) proposes an alternative to such a framework, which she calls *pluralist and radical democracy* or *agonistic pluralism*, in defending that power cannot be removed from public-political deliberation, since it is constitutive of any social relation. One of the mistakes of deliberative democracy theorists is to postulate the availability of a public sphere in which power would have been eliminated and rational consensus would have been produced. According to Mouffe (2009, p. 100):

According to the deliberative approach, the more democratic a society is, the less power would be constitutive of social relations. But if we accept that relations of power are constitutive of the social, then the main question for democratic politics is not how to eliminate power but how to constitute forms of power more compatible with democratic values.

The task here is to assume a sphere of public debate constituted by relations of power, by tensions in order to decide a political order, without ignoring that, with this, there will be exclusion, since to think politics having antagonism as an inescapable condition of its existence always involves to build a *we* as opposed to *they*⁹. Mouffe (1994, 2009) does not deny that consensus can be reached; she just does not agree that this happens without some exclusion. In order to think of consensus or any rational legitimacy, we should not neglect the role of hegemony in the provision of agglutinating

⁹ In fact, this has always been present in the deliberative proposals; the problem was to believe that rational decision was not itself a kind of exclusion, that the more differences were put in suspension, the more rational and reasonable procedures for all would be assumed, the less power would emanate from social relations, the less exclusions would occur.

discourses in public debate. Any political order decided or accepted in the public sphere is the expression of a hegemony, of a disposition of social relations of power among individuals, and, as such, is subject to rearrangements, to new dispositions, since it is always a discursive construction and therefore contingent and precarious one.

If power and legitimacy converge and act perfectly together, this will entail a hegemonic political order. According to Mouffe, a distinction is necessary to understand some of the complexity of the political field, as well as the relation between power, antagonism and discourse. On the one hand, there is the 'political', which concerns an ontological dimension, where, for example, political theory works, preoccupied not with the political facts themselves but with the essence of the political (MOUFFE, 2005, p. 8); in this dimension, Mouffe sees the presence of antagonism as something inherent in human relations established in the political field as well as in any social relations. On the other hand, there is 'politics', which deals with the empirical field of politics, that is, with works of political science concerned with the political agenda, elections, discourses, parties' programs. Politics, therefore, emerges as an always precarious, contingent, historical attempt to tame the antagonistic dimension of politics. The error in the work of several political theorists and scientists, according to Mouffe, was to deny and eliminate this antagonistic dimension of politics and to seek a way individuals could participate in a public sphere of debate without treating each other as enemies, wherewith there would inevitably be exclusions, failing to attend to the common good.

Here, the importance of thinking about the role of available discourses in a public sphere of political debate, such as those from media, for example, has been considered. Politics, manifested by means of discourses in processes of collective deliberation, would always be the attempt to create a unity, an order, in a conflictive context, teeming with the differences and interests of the participants. It would thus be linked to the construction of a *we* by the determination of a *they* (MOUFFE, 2005, p. 101). Contrary to what theorists of deliberative democracy think, it is difficult to reconcile, through dialogue, divergent interests, since they are rather discourses that would sustain the political and social order, each in its own way. The question for democratic politics lies to construct a *they* that does not have to be destroyed by the discourse of the *we* or that is reasonably included in a rational discourse of unity, but that, once having its ideas combated by discourse of *we*, does not have the right to defend them questioned, by treating them always as legitimate opponents. For Mouffe, this is the true spirit of tolerance based on liberal-democratic principles: do not require agreement with the ideas we oppose, nor indifference to the points of view we disagree, but rather to treat those who defend them as legitimate opponents. Thus, democratic politics must face the creation of a vibrant agonistic public sphere of contention in which different hegemonic political discourses can be confronted (MOUFFE, 2005).

Furthermore, with Mouffe's observation of a worldwide tendency in the political field that discredits the articulatory function played by ideologies congregating antagonistically particular political and social interests in favor of the defense of a

non-excluding rational consensus, we see that there is a political environment conducive to a media to be governed by an informative discursive *posture* or by the ideas of impartiality, objectivity – *nodal points*¹⁰ responsible for the constitution of its identity as an informative journalistic media – and to represent itself as advocate of a common interest, of all, or as ‘view from nation’ and from its citizens. Especially when the task of reaching the common good is one of the procedural pillars of the formation of a public sphere of rational deliberation, it is presupposed to leave aside the particular and ethical interests so that the public and moral objectives that benefit all can be reached – conduct that seems to be in the base of impartiality and objectivity.

In short, we could say that an identity of the media as a journalistic press can benefit from such a political context, hegemonized by the apolitical politics of a *third way* for the politics and reinforced by the growing theoretical interest of rational deliberation. With the theoretical and political support of the possibility of a public sphere of debate based on rational principles to guide deliberation, it would be easier to assume that the use of language by the media (here, in the case of this work, by *Véja*) could be more easily considered as informative, and, therefore, that its stance in relation to the reporting, to the representation of events and social actors, in short, in relation to what it says is more committed to the *truth*.

Appraisal System

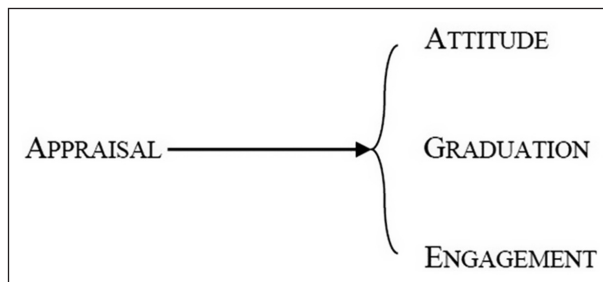
The APPRAISAL system, by Jim R. Martin and Peter R. White (2005), is a methodological reference for this work, because the systematic framework for the APPRAISAL that it offers allows us both to analyze the texts and organize the data based on categories related to the system of APPRAISAL. Martin and White’s systematization of APPRAISAL allows us to identify several important points for the analysis that we intend to do, such as how journalists adopt stances towards the material they present and those with whom they communicate; how journalists approve or disapprove, applaud or criticise that or those to who they refer; how communities of shared feelings and values are construed and what language mechanisms mobilized by journalists to share emotions, tastes and normative assessments; how journalists construe for themselves particular identities; and how they construe for their texts a specific audience (MARTIN; WHITE, 2005). All of these points are of crucial importance for this work, especially since all contribute to achieving the objectives of this work.

¹⁰ Nodal point is a category elaborated by Laclau and Mouffe (2001, p. 112) and, according to the authors, it is thanks to these nodal points that establish positions or articulations that make possible a hegemonic discursive projection. A good example of the function of the nodal points is offered by Prado and Cazeloto (2006, p. 7).

The systems' network of Appraisal

Initially, the APPRAISAL has three domains or three subsystems by which the evaluations can be elaborated, namely (see Figure 1): ATTITUDE, ENGAGEMENT and GRADUATION. In general terms, the ATTITUDE subsystem is related to the field of emotions, especially to our feelings and emotional reactions, our judgments of the behavior of others, and our evaluations of natural or semiotic things or events. The ENGAGEMENT subsystem deals with the creation of attitudes, of positionings, whether for the speaker/writer, the listener/addressee, or the voice game (if there is a differentiation or equivalence between them, if there is a sharing – or openness to the discussion – of values, tastes) around opinions, in discourse. And finally, the GRADUATION subsystem is intended to amplify or reduce the strength of evaluations and to construct scope or periphery for things evaluated.

Figure 1 – Overview of APPRAISAL system

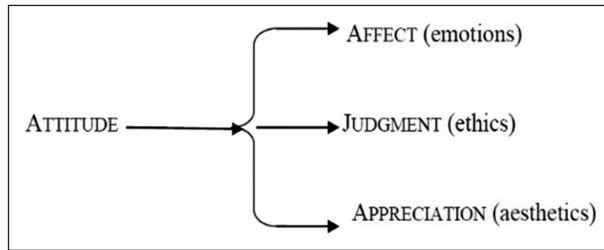


Source: Martin and White (2005, p. 38).

Those of the three subsystems that are most important at first sight are ATTITUDE and ENGAGEMENT, since they are more related to the identification of the feelings journalists have about what they experience and represent in their texts, as well as the resources they use to position themselves and position others with respect to what they write, defend, repudiate and project in their discourses. These aspects are perfectly in line with the objectives of this work and, therefore, have been sufficient to achieve them effectively. Therefore, as a starting point, we will now specify the subsystems of ATTITUDE and ENGAGEMENT.

The ATTITUDE subsystem concerns the field of feelings. For its systematic complexity, ATTITUDE comprises three semantic areas related to emotion, ethics and aesthetics, categorized in the framework of Martin and White (2005) as AFFECT, JUDGMENT and APPRECIATION, respectively, according to the following figure:

Figure 2 – ATTITUDE subsystem



Source: Martin and White (2005, p. 38).

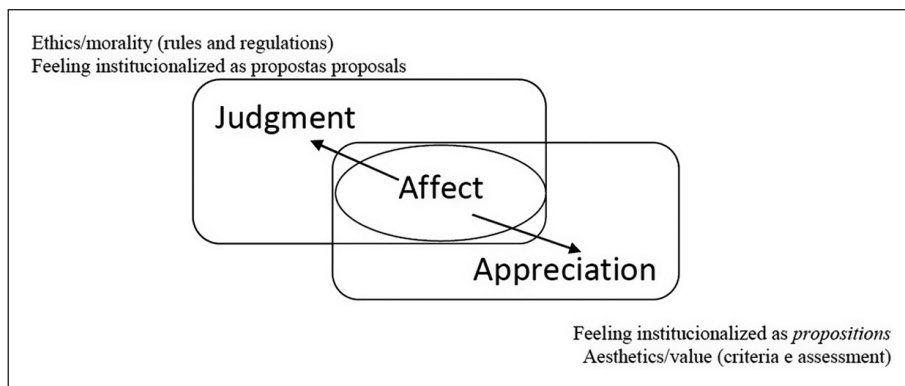
The area of JUDGMENT, in turn, has to do with the attitudes that we have toward the behavior of others, when we express it as admirable or objectionable or we represent as worthy or reprehensible. Evaluations of the behavior of others can be considered as inscribed or grounded by evaluative principles or systems (MARTIN; WHITE, 2005), which would normatively guide how people's attitudes and character can or should be judged, as well as how they behave. As with the area of meanings for AFFECT, JUDGMENT can be analyzed from the point of view of the positive/negative variable, that is, when we represent characteristics of the other that we admire or criticize. Since such evaluations take place in the relationship that we (as evaluators) have with others (as those evaluated), it can be said that the area of JUDGMENT is circumscribed to ethics and morality – to ethics, because, in order to make judgments of this type, we always start from a system of norms or set of principles that allow us to evaluate the way we evaluate; to moral, because, as such judgments are expressed, communicated to someone, we can only do so, publicly, by means of resources that compromise the evaluated person towards the people of their private social life or public law.

According to Martin and White (2005, p. 52), JUDGMENT EVALUATIONS can be divided into two further subsystems: that of *SOCIAL ESTEEM* and that of *SOCIAL SANCTION*. Each subsystem of the JUDGMENT one, in turn, has its specifics as to the choices or resources. The judgments of *SOCIAL ESTEEM* have to do with evaluations of *NORMALITY* (in terms of how normal or unusual someone is), *CAPACITY* (in terms of how capable or incapable someone is) and *TENACITY* (in terms of how firm, resolute or indecisive, insecure someone is). According to the authors, evaluations of this type are essential and critical for the formation and consolidation of social networks of coexistence, such as family, friends, colleagues, etc. But *SOCIAL SANCTION* judgments are entry-level conditions for evaluations that have to do with *VERACITY* (in terms of how truthful, honest or lying, dishonest someone is) and *PROPRIETY* in terms of how fair, ethical, unjust, corrupt, unethical someone is). For Martin and White (2005), evaluations of this type are more directly related to normative judgments, that is to say, they have to do with the observance of religious or legal precepts as examples.

Martin and White's Figure 3 (2005, p. 45) also shows that AFFECT could be at the heart of JUDGMENT and APPRECIATION, which would be AFFECTS more institutionalized,

in terms of norms, rules and regulations supported, for example, by the Church or the State (JUDGMENT), or in terms of criteria and valuations supported by *systems of awards* (APPRECIATION):

Figure 3 – JUDGMENT and APPRECIATION as AFFECT institutionalized



Source: Martin and White (2005, p. 45).

In the Figure 3, even as the JUDGMENT would be related to the evaluation through rules and regulations, that is, to the domain of ethics/morality, the APPRECIATION could be referred to aesthetics, because it is allied to the valuation of things or people.

All these forms of achievement of the ATTITUDE subsystem will be taken for analysis as contributing to a negative, disadvantageous, reprehensible evaluation of the texts' writers, of the social actors cited as involved in the political events or cases of corruption denounced by *Veja* magazine. These attitudinal evaluations can be seen as forms of construction of identities of such social actors, at the same time as they enable the emergence of journalists' identity and the magazine's identity consequently. At the same time, the attitudinal evaluations allow us to regard them as revealing of political and ideological systems or, as Martin and White (2005) say, of socially constituted communities of shared beliefs and attitudes associated with their positions that give support to the axiological posture assumed by the journalists of the magazine in their texts, which would make it possible to identify a discourse or, more precisely, an articulatory practice on the one hand to impugn ideological and politically adversarial identities to the magazine and on the other to advocate both the (inescapably political) position of the latter in relation to adversarial ones, and the projective discourse in their texts.

Engagement subsystem

To think of the subsystem of ENGAGEMENT is to recognize beforehand a context or background of opinions, points of view, and judgments of value with which a voice

always interacts, is responding, agreeing, affirming, disagreeing, denying, refuting¹¹. Thus, Martin and White will regard ENGAGEMENT as concerning the senses that provide the writer with the means by which he can position himself and engage with other voices or alternative positions that are at stake in the immediate or wider communicative context in which he finds himself.

Their framework for the analysis of ENGAGEMENT allows us to characterize, therefore, the different linguistic resources used by the writers to adopt a position or posture in relation to the positions of value that are referenced by their texts and the discursive context, as well as to investigate the rhetorical effects associated with taking positions and to explore what is at stake when one posture is adopted instead of another. The framework also offers the opportunity to check the anticipatory aspects of the text – the signals that the writers/speakers provide as to how they expect those they address to respond to the proposition and the value position it advances (MARTIN; WHITE, 2005, p. 93). In addition, the analysis of the meanings constructed in the Engagement subsystem also allows us to see what positions of value are presented and taken for granted for the audience of the text or what ones are problematic, controversial, or even intended to be questioned, resisted or rejected.

In spite of the dialogical orientation one has upon discursive interactions, it cannot ignore the presence of *categorical* or *bare assertions*. As Martin and White explain (2005, p. 99), such assertions tend to be considered, in traditional semantic literature, as factual, objective, neutral. But when one takes the view that verbal communication takes place in a context constituted by various voices and alternative viewpoints, this type of assertion tends to assume another nuance, different from the way it has been seen by the lens of the conditions of truth, such as is generally seen in this type of literature. Thus, the status of this type of assertion can be analyzed as constructing, in its own way, a given arrangement of voices or alternative viewpoints, by not recognizing them openly. In these cases, we have a communicative context tending to be unilaterally construed by the writer.

Therefore, two possible choices are revealed in the interactions: an **EXPANSION** of the dialogical potential of voices in statements, allowing alternative positions; or its **CONTRACTION**, discouraging the negotiation of the meanings produced in the interactions. In the first case, there is an opening for the negotiation of the meanings conveyed in the text of the writer, opening the margin for discord and questioning. In the second, however, there is the adoption of a monological stand which seeks to produce a character of categorical and absolute truth to what is said, in attempting to erase the impression of relativity or even non-validity of the meanings produced

¹¹ This understanding comes from the notion of dialogism by Valentin Volóchinov (2017), for whom there is no word that is not an answer, that does not bring in itself echoes of other words, of other discourses that preceded it in a given sphere of human activity. This dialogic assumption is important for the understanding of this subsystem, in order to better understand the functional role of the choices via the subsystem of Engagement, especially as regards the way a writer, a journalist for example, positions or search to position the supposed reader in relation to the opinions that he manifests in his texts or that manifest themselves in convergence or divergence to the text(s) he produces.

by the writer. These are the two terms to be chosen in the heteroglossia subsystem in the ENGAGEMENT subsystem. The term heteroglossia, in turn, parallels the term monoglossia: **HETEROGLOSSIA**, for utterances open to negotiation; and **MONOGLOSSIA**, for utterances categorically intransigent to any possibility of negotiation¹². Martin and White (2005, p. 101) say that the ‘taken-for-grantedness’ of categorical or ‘bare’ assertions has the strongly ideological effect of constructing for the text a putative addressee who shares the position of communicated value by the writer, leaving out the question of their non-validity.

The **DIALOGIC CONTRACTION**, as explained above, makes the proposition contained in the voice of the writer one of the different possibilities of positioning, but, unlike when choosing the resources of the dialogic expansion, with the contraction the writer takes a position in total disagreement or in rejection of opposing positions, that is, his formulation defies, avoids or even restricts the focus of alternative positions or voices. As Vian Jr. points out (2010, p. 38), it is worth noting that ‘the resources for contraction give the proposition a highly valid and grounded aspect’, mainly because of the value or rejection or epistemic strength of the voice of others, in order to base the propositions defended.

CONTRACTION, as well as expansion, is a condition of entry into another subsystem, which opens also to two choices: *DISCLAIM* and *PROCLAIM*. **DISCLAIM** is a term for resources through which some alternative is taken to be rejected or supplanted by another, or to be represented as not pertinent to what is spoken in the text. In this category, one will find those lexicogrammatical realisations by means of which some position of value or alternative proposition is evoked in order to be replaced by another or, therefore, to be considered unsustainable. Within this category, there are still two more subtypes, which concern the ways **DISCLAIM** is possible: *deny* and *counter*. With *deny*, one has the move to introduce an alternative position, to recognize it, but after to be rejected, that is, the writer uses other voices to be denied them and then to propose an alternative of his own.

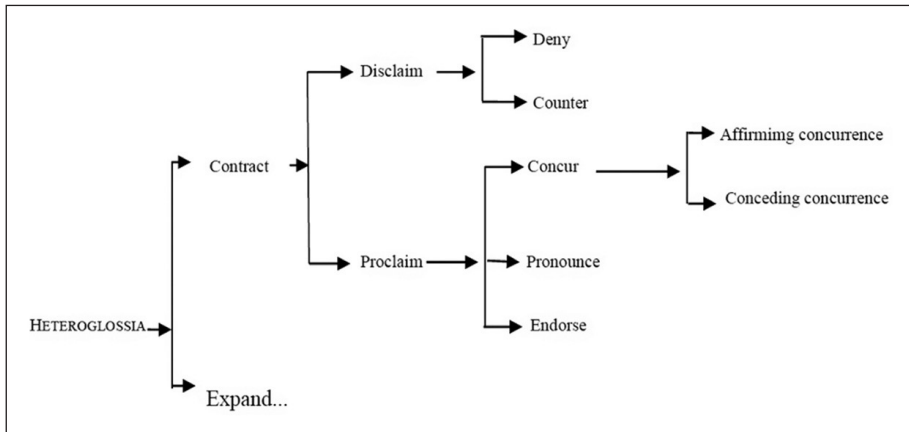
As to the discussion of mechanisms of dialogic contraction, such as *deny*, Martin and White (2005, p. 119) also point out the possible relations between writer and audience that *deny* promotes. In one case, with the use of this feature, the writer may be starting from the assumption that the audience somehow shares or is susceptible to the voices, propositions or values that the denied voice would represent, in construing an audience that need to be convinced or informed of something else about it. In another case, *deny* can be directed at the audience itself, thus assuming the writer the stand of someone who has sufficient knowledge about the subject under discussion, which

¹² The monoglossal posture is different from the heteroglossal choice that was called the **CONTRACTION** above. This latter recognizes and demonstrates (and even cites) that there are other voices, other positions, other values, besides those that are being defended in the text or context, although the stance taken in this case is that of restricting alternative positions, which reduces the dialogical potential of the text. **MONOGLOSSIA**, however, shows no recognition of a dialogical background, constituted by other voices, nor does it refer to other possibly existing voices, as if, in fact, to use a term of Mikhail Bakhtin (2015) for similar cases, an Adamic voice, primeval one, without anchoring itself in another voice.

would allow him to deny the voices or propositions brought to the text. The second type of **DISCLAIM** is **counter**, which refers to resources that present a proposition or voice to be supplanted by another, that of the writer. Thus, the writer uses another voice, but does not defend what is deduced from it, breaking, with the alternative it offers, a probable expectation created by the audience during the reading of the first position/voice.

In relation to the second type of dialogic contraction, the **PROCLAIM**, there are those resources that limit the reach of other voices, rather than directly reject the opposite position. This type of contraction is still entered for three other subtypes, which allow the proclamation: *CONCUR*, *PRONOUNCE* and *ENDORSE*. **CONCURRENCE** concerns features that show the writer as one who agrees or has the same knowledge of another, usually the addressee, but he either draws the strength of his proposition or grounds it on the basis of common sense, that is, using of arguments commonly validated or accepted by all or by his audience. In this case, the way the writer produces his text puts (or presupposes) both the addressee in a tacit alignment relation and the proposition he advocates in question is taken as given. Thus, the effectiveness of a sharing of the value or belief promoted by the writer is high, because he bases his proposition on a universally accepted way, thus excluding or strongly compromising any disclaim that may arise. The **CONCURRENCE** can be further detailed in two other subtypes: **AFFIRMING CONCURRENCE** and **CONCEDING CONCURRENCE**. **ENDORSEMENT**, in turn, refers to the resources through which the writer, using voices and propositions external to his text, will construe his as valid or undeniable, that is, the writer uses sources, facts, events to validate his opinion. Finally, in the **PRONOUNCEMENT**, the resources are always related to the emphasis on something that the writer wants to give, trying to eliminate any resistance that the addressee can offer to the one who is exposed and thus desiring to seek a solidarity with what he says. As Martin and White (2005) point out, the emphasis implies the presence of some resistance to the voice that is expressed or to the propositions and values asserted in the text. An endurance can be manifested, for example, by the audience, through which solidarity in relation to the writer will be threatened, but often he/she will use other resources so that the alignment between the two is reestablished; or by a third voice, with which, contrary to the previous example, solidarity will be construed and reinforced, since the writer presents himself as agreeing with the addressee in relation to the third position. This strategy, according to Martin and White (2005, p. 130), is commonly explored in journalistic commentary or political rhetoric (below, the systems network of dialogic contraction).

Figure 4 – Systems network of paradigmatic options of DIALOGIC CONTRACTION



Source: Martin and White (2005, p. 134).

Monoglossal choices, for example, can be associated with the construction of an informative and investigative (demystifying) identity of the magazine *Veja*; the use of attitudinal lexicon, in turn, with the construction of the identities of the other; and the use of heteroglossic arguments, finally, with the construction both of those identities (with the weakening of those that were previously supposed), and of shared communities of (political-ideological) belief and values, which could favor the formation of articulatory practices around nodal points such as the ‘struggle against corruption’. Hence the importance we attach to the linguistic categories from the discussion of the APPRAISAL System by Jim Martin and Peter White (2005), especially those that demonstrate ATTITUDE and ENGAGEMENT in language, as we have discussed, by allowing us to see how the media, in the case of the *Veja* magazine, constitutes itself and the others or exhibits the identity of self and others by the way it says when it says what it says.

Engagement and Attitude with the audience as a proposal of a discourse

In this section, we will present two texts¹³ that paradigmatically give us an understanding of how this ‘universal’, at the same time ‘rational’, posture occurs. Lower, we have a Letter to the Reader, published on August 3, 2005, approximately

¹³ The choice of these texts was due to the fact they were related to two moments in the political history of the two PT (Partido dos Trabalhadores) governments, by Lula and Dilma Rousseff, and constituted what was conventionally called, on the one hand, ‘Mensalão scandal’ (in the Lula administration) and, on the other, what *Veja* called the ‘crisis of the Esplanade’ (during Dilma’s mandate), in the latter case in a reference to several political events that occurred in the first year of Dilma government, involving her ministers. From a corpus of 30 texts, belonging to a research developed by us (GOMES, 2013), we decided to use here, given the space, only two texts, the most significant in terms of data of what we described as engagers with the audience and proponents of an underlying political discourse in the voices of the *Veja*, despite its supposedly impartial and apolitical stance.

two months after the release of a video by *Veja* showing a director of the Post Office receiving and explaining the bribe that came to his board¹⁴.

The Letter to the Reader is somewhat exemplary as to the depoliticized, objective and impartial posture of *Veja* magazine. This is because it is clearly stated alongside who is represented by it, whom it addresses and for what reason. The antagonistic and at the same time constative attitude of the magazine finds its *raison d'être* in claiming for itself an identity of an impartial journalistic vehicle, in the service of all, as if its interests were not ideological, social and political, as well as aiming at a common interest that represented the desires of all, of the nation (see the last sentence of the Letter to the Reader).

In the Letter to the Reader, we find this universal attitude of the magazine. This is a strategic form of engaging with the audience. Taking itself as the representative of the nation, *Veja* is transformed in an agent representative of all; it hides in a homogenization of a *we all*. Its discourse, therefore, is presented as an articulation and condensation of the interests of Brazilians. And, engaging everyone in the magazine's struggle against corruption, all those who ratify its significance, who endorse its representation of reality, agree with the way *Veja* signifies social events and actors. Corruption, in this case, appears as a guiding element, as a nodal point that congregates the nation around the discourse of *Veja*, at least to all those who are against those who do evil to the country. In the analyzed texts, corruption plays a preponderant moral role, since it bears the indignation that would manifest itself in society, but with the aid of discourses that not only testify it, but that rather direct the look, the understanding, the way to envisage social and political reality – in short, with a discourse which supposedly belongs to all.

Let's look at the text:

IN FAVOR OF BRAZIL

'The press is the view of the nation. Through it, the nation accompanies what goes on near to it and far from it, it sees what makes it bad, it investigates what hid from it and what conspires against it, it harvests what evades or steals from it, it perceives where it is targeted, or it stain it, it measures what is restrict from it, or destroy it, it watches over what interests it, and it takes care of what threatens it'. Rui Barbosa's phrase, which is always worth mentioning, unfolds with beauty what is the journalistic mission *par excellence* – to inspect the power for the good of the country, regardless of who won it. It is this mission that *Veja* carries out week after week, since it was released in September

¹⁴ It was through this video that several events and revelations followed resulting in the outbreak of what in the media was known as the *Mensalão scandal*. From this point on, a discursive game of fixation and removal of evidence that impugned and redefined the identities of the political actors involved in the cases announced as belonging to the *Mensalão scandal*.

1968. During the military dictatorship, when the magazine was born, the control of the power of the press was hampered by censorship, this when it not completely prevented. Once democracy reinstated, the gag was replaced – so much the better – by the scream of inspected ones. ‘The press is partial’; ‘It is necessary to control the press’: these are the phrases that usually punctuate the plainsong of those who are caught red-handed in power.

In the case of *Veja*, the most heard plainsong is that it is ‘partial’. There are those who sing it now, because the magazine makes an extensive and in-depth coverage of scandals that put in question the Lula government. As if overly proven facts were an inconsequential gossip. As if *Veja* were antipetista. Nothing further from the truth. The magazine is not nor has ever been, an enemy of political forces. It was not antiCollor when it denounced the scheme of PC Farias treasurer; it was not antitucano at a time when the Fernando Henrique Cardoso government was tarnished by corruption schemes. *Veja* is not the enemy of certain political parties nor friend of others. The magazine is simply in favor of Brazil. It is against those who mistreat it, those who steal it. The view of the nation. (A FAVOR..., 2005, p.09).¹⁵

The text begins with an engagement with the voice of another. It is the voice of someone who has social and political prestige in Brazil. At least, that is the image that many people have often imputed to Rui Barbosa and to his political discourse, which contains excellent rhetoric and exemplifies the manliness of his character. The voice of Rui Barbosa serves here as an **ENDORSE** of what will be defended by the magazine: the fact that *Veja* is at the service of all, and not against certain political parties. The recontextualization of Rui Barbosa’s voice could not be more perfect. It emerges as

¹⁵ **A FAVOR DO BRASIL**

“A imprensa é a vista da nação. Por ela é que a nação acompanha o que lhe passa ao perto e ao longe, enxerga o que lhe malfazem, devassa o que lhe ocultam e tramam, colhe o que lhe sonegam, ou roubam, percebe onde lhe alvejam, ou nodoam, mede o que lhe cerceiam, ou destroem, vela pelo que lhe interessa, e se acautela do que a ameaça.” A frase de Rui Barbosa, que vale sempre citar, desdobra com beleza aquela que é a missão jornalística por excelência – a de fiscalizar o poder, independentemente de quem o tenha conquistado, pelo bem do país. É essa missão que VEJA leva a cabo semana após semana, desde que foi lançada, em setembro de 1968. Durante a ditadura militar, na vigência da qual a revista nasceu, a fiscalização do poder da imprensa era dificultada, quando não completamente impedida, pela censura. Democracia reinstaurada, à mordaça substituiu-se – tanto melhor – a grita dos fiscalizados. “A imprensa é parcial!”; “É preciso controlar a imprensa”: tais são as frases que costumam pontuar o cantochão dos que, no poder, são apanhados com a boca na botija.

No caso de VEJA, o cantochão mais ouvido é que ela é “parcial”. Há quem o entoe agora, por causa da cobertura extensa e aprofundada que a revista faz dos escândalos que colocam em xeque o governo Lula. Como se fatos sobejamente provados fossem um diz-que-diz inconsequente. Como se VEJA fosse antipetista. Nada mais longe da verdade. A revista não é, nem nunca foi, inimiga de forças políticas. Não era anti-Collor quando denunciou o esquema do tesoureiro PC Farias; não era antitucana nos momentos em que o governo Fernando Henrique Cardoso foi maculado por esquemas de corrupção. VEJA não é inimiga de certos partidos políticos nem amiga de outros. A revista é, simplesmente, a favor do Brasil. Contra os que lhe malfazem, os que lhe roubam. A vista da nação. (A FAVOR..., 2005, p.09).

a force that defends the magazine against accusations that it was being submitted by uncovering cases of mistreatment and misuse of the public institutions, as well as by reinforcing how the role of the magazine should be: to monitor the power for the good of the country. This proposition of the magazine is against a voice without specific attribution, which would question its function (*‘for the sake of the country, regardless of who won it’*). Next, we have an evaluation (**ATTITUDE - JUDGMENT - SOCIAL ESTEEM - TENACITY - POSITIVE**) of the magazine itself as to its activity, in affirming that it pursues, ‘week after week’, the objective of the press so well defended by Rui Barbosa, since its foundation as a magazine in 1968, a despite of so many obstacles that tried to prevent its task, just as in a dictatorship with censorship and in a democracy with ‘the scream of inspected ones’.

In the excerpt “‘The press is partial’; ‘It is necessary to control the press’”: these are the phrases that usually punctuate the plainsong of those who are caught red-handed in power”, we have an interesting use of resources from HETEROGLOSSIA. We find the mention of other voices that contribute to the construction of the magazine’s own identity and that would underestimate the epistemic validity of everything it proposes with its speeches/texts (‘The press is partial’; ‘It is necessary to control the press’). Although it inaugurates the possibility of questioning or disagreement about what these voices propose, which is typical of a DIALOGUE EXPANSION, what we perceive is that the guidance given next by the voice of the magazine does not tend to negotiate the meanings of these others, but rather denies them in such a way that they are refuted in function of the moral values guiding *Veja*’s intentions when exposing those who are ‘caught red-handed’, that is, those who are caught stealing public money by the denunciations of *Veja*. In addition, when we consider what is said immediately before (‘During the military dictatorship, when the magazine was born, the control of the power of the press was difficult, if not completely impeded, by the censorship. Once democracy reinstated, the gag was replaced – so much the better – by the scream of inspected ones’.) we see that the posture of *Veja* is to reduce the ideological potential of these other voices competitors, in eliminating any resistance or in alignment that the reader can offer to what is exposed.

In the discussion on the choice of CONTRACTION by PRONOUNCEMENT, the presence of some resistance to the voice expressed (in the case, to *Veja*) or the assertions and values asserted, especially of voices of third parties, collaborates with an alignment with the audience that puts it as if it were on the side of the Magazine’s voices, as if it has been positioning itself against those who squander the money of the population. In this case, we have as the resource of ENGAGEMENT - HETEROGLOSSIA - CONTRACTION - PROCLAIM - PRONOUNCEMENT whereby the magazine presents those phrases that would often be heard when its journalistic activity is criticized for seeking the good of all. In this case, the attribution is not done against someone specific, but rather against those who have been accused of committing irregularities in power. This attribution has its esteem reduced, even if not specific to someone, but to those who are in error with the State. It does not invalidate at any moment the activity of *Veja* for supervising the

power, but rather builds solidarity with the reader, represented as the population whose money is stolen by politicians.

The fact that *Veja* is judged *partial*, for example, is attributed to people who were bothered by journalistic activity of magazine ('There are those who sing it now, because the magazine makes an extensive and in-depth coverage of the scandals that put in question the Lula government'). If a little further up the magazine states that 'the scream' concerning to 'partiality' comes from those who were caught in reprehensible acts ('caught red-handed'), then there is an orientation as to who may be declaiming its partiality in this moment: people involved in the "Mensalão" scandal. The **TENACITY** of certain phrases attributed to the journalistic posture of the magazine only further credits the positive value it has before the activities that it carries out in the national journalistic and political scenario. In this way, the magazine construes the image of itself as that of a reliable someone, who practices its craft for the good of all, as it is evident at the end of the text.

The following sentence is a counter-affirmation against those who criticize the magazine's performance: 'As if overly proven facts were an inconsequential gossip'. Here, the magazine puts the facts at its side, 'overly proven facts', that is, it places itself as a vehicle that is on the side of truth, which, therefore, there would not be those who shouted against. Here the **CONCEDING CONCURRENCE** of the proposition 'In the case of *Veja*, the most heard plainsong is that it is "partial"' finds its denouement, its counter-affirmation, in the form of another proposition based on 'overly proven facts', that is, we have an **ENGAGEMENT - HETEROGLOSSIA - CONTRACTION - PROCLAIM - ENDORSEMENT**. So, one can see the consequence that the image claimed for the magazine is supported not by what it wants and says, but by what is 'proven' by 'facts'. This is what makes the ethos of *impartial* commonly attributed to informational journalism to be so well justified and validated, especially when the facts lose their factual and contingent dimension, in order to assume the character of own reality. Instead of being seen as a way of envisaging the reality, the facts become incontestable aspects of it. Thus, the magazine draws the strength both of *impartial* identity and of its propositions from the certainty of *the* objectivity, and not from the relativity of its subjectivity. It eliminates here at first sight the resistance of voices that would contradict what the magazine presents. Hence the recalcitrant power that even the next sentence would entail ('As if VEJA were antipetista') loses its own validity.

The **CONTRACTION** of voices of others (**ENGAGEMENT - HETEROGLOSSIA - CONTRACTION - DISCLAIM - DENY**) is the *par excellence* resource of the journalists of *Veja*. And this is evident in the following sentences: 'Nothing further from the truth. The magazine is not, nor has ever been, an enemy of political forces. It was not antiCollor when it denounced the scheme of PC Farias treasurer; it was not antiTucano at a time when the Fernando Henrique Cardoso government was tainted by corruption schemes'. Here there is the use of propositions as a resource for **ATTITUDE - JUDGMENT - SOCIAL SANCTION - PROPERTY**, mainly because it puts the magazine as someone next to the truth, and not to the lie; as someone at the service of the nation, and not of private interests.

In addition, it reinforces its tenacious character in the persecution and denunciation of those who fill Brazil with opprobrium, not because of political and partisan differences with respect to the denounced, but rather because of a civic, integrity, virtuous and republican duty that puts it at the side of the nation, of good government, and not of evildoers.

What we perceive from the analysis of this Letter to the Reader is that the magazine builds at various times a conciliation between itself and its audience, in establishing an alignment that, on the one hand, puts the reader as a solidary to the magazine's proposals and, on the other, Magazine and reader together against the government and the corrupt practices that emerge from it. This leads us to formulate two conclusions on political and partial role present in the linguistic-discursive choices of the *Veja*'s text. First, the claim to a neutral, objective, and universal posture is constant and sustained as it manages to contract the force of ideas and propositions conflicting with the *Veja*'s interests of impartiality. Secondly, the constant presence of lexical-grammatical features of ENGAGEMENT shows that the implicit struggle to differentiate itself from all those against whom the *Veja* and the aligned audience are erected is symptomatic of a political and ideological struggle that does not go away even with the attempt to construct an identity representative of the collective good. To show itself as advocate of a common interest, of all, or as 'the view of the Nation' and its citizens, is the procedural *modus operandi* of the idea of a public sphere of rational deliberation, in which political and ideological interests are private on behalf of the collective good of the nation so that the public and moral objectives that benefit all can be achieved.

However, the recurrent presence of linguistic-discourse resources of ATTITUDE reveals a second conclusion that undermines the idea of separating particular and ideological interests in the linguistic forms mobilized by the magazine. The very presence of attitudinal evaluations of JUDGMENT denounces the value system, the interests that underlie or guide the way in which it represents the political actors in question, inasmuch as it compromises those against which *Veja* places itself in moral and juridical terms ('*It is against those who mistreat it, those who steal it*', in evaluations that touch on the dimension of SOCIAL SANCTION, OF PROPRIETY). This demonstrates that there is a political discourse and proposal to support it and guide it to itself your audience. Far from the principles of a rational, deliberative democracy, concerned with consensus and communicative rationality, this means that the magazine is guided by political and particular issues in its representations. For example, the fact the FHC government has been 'tarnished' by corruption schemes, but the Lula administration has been plagued by 'overly proven facts' that 'put in check' the government, also demonstrates an evaluative aspect of *Veja* when undertaking its criticisms on certain politicians at a given historical moment. Therefore, it marks the argumentative and evaluative orientation present in its attitudinal evaluations, albeit surreptitiously denied, for being against all those who steal and mistreat the nation. This shows that political guidelines and decisions can not be isolated from value and ideological pluralism as the advocates of deliberative democracy propose, or that they are politically neutral

enough for rational solutions to be proposed to the detriment of values, policies and ideologies. Thus, it is evident that the idea of a journalistic identity that would support a more newsworthy, more informative, less oriented to opinion and politically committed to what it reports, is construed as an attempt to deny political and ideological values, and as the political actor of the public sphere.

Let's see another report on the period of the scandals involving Rousseff's ministers. It was published on October 26, 2011, in edition 2240, and was signed by Otávio Cabral and Laura Diniz. The report is written almost in its entirety by verifications, with little recourse to other voices. When these are mobilized, they are only to reinforce the main theses of journalists that are still able to construe and align the audience as someone who is in perfect agreement with everything they say. In addition, they draw the reality of events in their own way by the endorsement of the data, facts and voices of experts. The central theme of the report is about corruption.

REVENGE AGAINST CORRUPTS

Brazilians are becoming indignant at corruption, evil that consumes for a year the money that would be sufficient to end the misery in the country.

Guy Fawkes' white mask, with mustache and black goatee, used by the lonely punisher of *V for Vendetta*, has become the symbol of protesters occupying the squares of major cities around the world in protest against the economic crisis. In Brazil, where the situation of the economy still has no resemblance to the turbulence of the rich countries, the same mask has come to decorate anti-corruption demonstrations. In his indignation against the totalitarian regime that dominates England in 2020, the masked V blew Parliament sky-high. Here, in a democratic regime, no one in sound mind would defend the explosion of institutions. But there are plenty of reasons to get angry and take to the streets demanding a reformation of politics and politicians.. Brazilians are exposed almost daily by the press - and especially by this magazine - to reports that reveal shameful practices of corruption at all levels of government. As it is said in the interior of Brazil, when it comes to finding wrongdoings in the official universe, there 'for every hoeing a worm'. Each of these scandalous cases provokes an outbreak of indignation in good men, but, as soon as new denunciations appear, honest people are led to redirect indignation to another target and, after all, they feel lost and helpless. *Veja* proposes to examine in this report the phenomenon of corruption in its completeness, especially analyzing the losses that the constant robbery of our money causes in each one of us.

[...].

The indignation against corruption has gained strength in recent months, when President Dilma Rousseff dismissed four ministers involved in irregularities. The last one was Orlando Silva, Minister of Sports. The president's steadfastness helped the population to become aware of the scandal of the mass misappropriation of public money. Now we must urgently take the next step, which is to staunch the bleeding of the national wealth - because the current mechanisms of prevention and punishment of corruption are not working.
[...]. (CABRAL; DINIZ, 2011, p.76).¹⁶

This text is predominantly MONOGLOSSIC. There is of course the presence of other voices in the text, but, as we can see, they are only to reinforce and endorse what journalists advocate. Let's look at the beginning. The assumptions of the sentences are that the audience knows and even shares the facts to which the journalists report. All the more curious is that all the indignation that motivates, for example, the masked protesters in Brazil to take to the streets to demand '*reformation of politics and politicians*' finds its support and encouragement in the magazine itself ('*Brazilians are exposed almost daily by the press – and especially by this magazine – to reports that reveal shameful practices of corruption at all levels of government*'), which gives the impression that the magazine is continually denouncing '*shameful practices of corruption at all levels of government*' and only it is that it has, at least in the first moment, placed itself against these 'shameful' practices.

We need to take into account that the context in which the report emerges is that of the series of scandals and dismissals involving the upper echelon of the Dilma's government. It is very suggestive because the shameful practices mentioned come

¹⁶ A VINGANÇA CONTRA OS CORRUPOTOS

Brasileiros começam a se indignar com a corrupção, mal que consome por ano o dinheiro que seria suficiente para acabar com a miséria no país.

A máscara branca com bigode e cavanhaque negros de Guy Fawkes, usada pelo justiceiro solitário do filme V de Vingança, tornou-se o símbolo dos manifestantes que ocupam as praças das principais cidades do mundo em protestos contra a crise econômica. No Brasil, onde a situação da economia ainda não guarda semelhança com a turbulência dos países ricos, a mesma máscara passou a decorar as manifestações contra a corrupção. Em sua indignação contra o regime totalitário que domina a Inglaterra em 2020, o mascarado V manda pelos ares o Parlamento. Por aqui, em um regime democrático, ninguém com juízo pode defender a explosão das instituições. Mas motivos para se indignar e sair às ruas a exigir a reforma da política e dos políticos não faltam. Os brasileiros são expostos quase todos os dias pela imprensa - e, em especial, por esta revista - a reportagens que revelam vergonhosas práticas de corrupção em todos os níveis de governo. Como se diz no interior do Brasil, em matéria de encontrar malfeitos no universo oficial, é "cada enxadada, uma minhoca". Cada um desses casos escandalosos provoca um surto de indignação nos homens de bem - mas, como logo aparecem novas denúncias, as pessoas honestas são levadas a redirecionar a indignação para outro alvo e, ao fim e ao cabo, todos se sentem perdidos e desamparados. VEJA se propõe, nesta reportagem, a examinar o fenômeno da corrupção em sua completude, analisando especialmente os malefícios que o roubo constante do nosso dinheiro provoca em cada um de nós.

[...]

A indignação com a corrupção ganhou força nos últimos meses, com a demissão pela presidente Dilma Rousseff de quatro ministros envolvidos em irregularidades. O último pilhado foi Orlando Silva, do Esporte. A atitude firme da presidente ajudou a despenar a população para o descalabro do desvio em massa do dinheiro do povo. Agora é preciso dar urgentemente o passo seguinte, que é estancar a sangria da riqueza nacional - pois os atuais mecanismos de prevenção e punição da corrupção não estão funcionando. [...]. (CABRAL; DINIZ, 2011, p.76).

from this government and its frequent exposure and revelation by the press, but *'especially by this magazine'* become the cornerstone of the general indignation that has led the Brazilians to manifest themselves in the streets. In this sense, it is evident that *Veja* elects the government in question as the maximum expression of the corruption and indignation of the Brazilian population, to whom the writers address themselves and with whom they share the general feeling of indignation. It is as if the then cases of corruption in the Ministries Esplanade were the fuse, the the last straw that overflowed the limit of the pusillanimity of the Brazilians. However, as it is said in the excerpt *'Each of these scandalous cases provokes an outbreak of indignation in good men, but, as soon as new denunciations appear, honest people are led to redirect indignation to another target and, after all, they feel lost and helpless'*, the indignation that exists does not seem represent the reaction of all Brazilians, but rather that of those who can not support so much exposure to *'shameful practices'*, that is to say, the *'good men'*, *'honest people'*. The relevance of emphasizing this comes from the high degree of alignment that is done by the journalists with the audience, in order to be included among the *'good men'* who are indignant against daily corruption at *'at all levels of government'*. All these excerpts reveal lexical-grammatical choices of ENGAGEMENT - HETEROGLOSSIA - CONTRACTION - PROCLAIM - ENDORSE, since they compromise the audience with what has been said in the text through ENDORSE.

A lot of the sentences of the journalists in this first paragraph is made no reference to other voices. There are no competing voices nor other voices that endorse that of journalists. The only case of an external voice is the proverb, the popular saying, used here as an endorsement of journalists' own thesis that there is the plague of corruption at all levels of government ([there is] *'for every hoeing a worm'*). All the rest is taken as a given, but no presence of a presupposition, as if tacitly all who read knew the text was about, because the predominance is a narrativization of events. Precisely this absence of voice provides this character of first narrative, of inaugural word of the universe construed around the subject of the corruption. In this case, as journalists generalize indignation as a reaction of all good Brazilians, the audience is thus led to share both the statement made by journalists and the very feeling they attribute to it in the representation of the reaction as indignation, as well as behavior to take to the streets in defense of the political reform and in the struggle against corruption. In addition, there is no real differentiation to clarify who is actually included in category *'good men'* (which further reinforces the tacit alignment provision of Brazilians with narration of journalists).

In the case of the last sentence of the first paragraph (*'VEJA proposes to examine in this report the phenomenon of corruption in its completeness, in analyzing especially the losses that the constant robbery of our money causes in each one of us'*), we find one more time this theorizing attitude of the magazine, which offers a description of reality, in manifesting its essence. Here, there is the use of a scientific strategy, in showing, if not the first cause, at least the unfoldings and the links between one event and another. A minimal but reliable understanding is offered as an apprehension of

the reality of the events that constitute the current political conjuncture, as well as the reaction of its spectators, the Brazilians, among whom we, the audience. In addition, the choice of lexical items ('our money', 'in each one of us') which includes both journalists and the audience is important for establishing alignment and agreement with the reader-audience.

In the case of the third paragraph, the most relevant fact in the journalists' voices is the deontological, ordering and imperative character present in the last sentence ('*Now we must urgently take the next step, which is to staunch the bleeding of the national wealth - because the current mechanisms of prevention and punishment of corruption are not working.*'), which proposes as an order '*to staunch the bleeding of the national wealth - because the current mechanisms of prevention and punishment of corruption are not working*', instead of suggesting while theorizing the Brazilian political situation. We have in this excerpt the reduction of the positivity of the attitude taken by Dilma, and even quoted by the journalists, in saying that '*The president's steadfastness helped the population to make aware of the debacle of the mass misappropriation of the public money*'. Instead of the positive endorsement, what immediately appears is an ENGAGEMENT - HETEROGLOSSIA - CONTRACTION - PROCLAIM - CONCEDED CONCURRENCE, which only agrees with Dilma's attitude, if the next step of modifying the current anti-corruption mechanisms is given.

The most notorious feature of this second text is that the magazine is clearly blunt with the ruling government, something that is perceived by the monoglossic majority position of sentences. This demonstrates that the conflicting antagonistic content of political discussions does not hide nor erase in function of claiming an exempt position or of aligning itself with a position possibly compromised with the audience. It should also be added to this the fact that such an antagonistic posture, based predominantly on monoglossic grammatical choices, denies or contracts competing voices when they appear. This allows us to draw the following conclusions: (i) the neutral and objective journalism identity of the magazine is part of a communicative rationality project (to represent the good of all and to speak of reality as it is) that benefits from an idea of non-ideological, non-adversarial political participation, focused on the pursuit of a pretended universal consensus; (ii) there is a divergent discourse that engages its audience against the government in question, but in the name of a fight against corruption, and that builds a common political and ideological space with the *Veja* for this audience. It is in this sense that the magazine becomes a political actor, even if it denies this action. It ties in itself the indignation that erupts in society, with the aid of a speech both morally and politically antagonistic to that of the government in question. Therefore, it has an inescapably political, intervening attitude that acts by antagonizing all that this government represents.

Final considerations

In seeking to understand the use of the language of the media in reference to politics, we have seen that the informative character of *Veja* is realized only to the extent that its journalists position themselves and construct their identities through the linguistic-discursive resources mobilized in the production of their texts and discourses, by reinforcing the belief that the use of language in its discursive representations is impartial and universal. But lastly what is perceived is that the linguistic-discursive choices of an attitudinal and engaging order reinforce thus that the magazine presents antagonistic political and ideological positions and values to base its evaluations and representations not only on politics itself, but mainly on the political group then in power: the PT government.

The way *Veja* journalists represent social identities in their discourse is based exclusively on a mode of elaboration and proposal that is anchored by discursive strategies that give it the character of truth. In addition, this gives evidence of a truthfulness in its propositions, in placing the legal-moral sanction of truthfulness and honesty on their side and those who are with it the truth. In the analysis, we find the fact that these discursive representations that *Veja*, in the voice of their journalists, makes in its texts converge onto the identity of the political actors, which reveals marks of antagonism that directly affect the impugnation and the construction of political identities and that denounce its inescapably plural and political dimension, particular and ideological. These marks are carried out in the form of attitudinal evaluations and contractions of alternative propositional voices that both construct identities of Lula and Dilma's government members in a demeaning way, and still commit them morally and legally to the audience by proposing that their governments are beset by scandals and by dishonest and criminal schemes.

This antagonism in the voice of the *Veja*'s journalists was an important point to argue that, first, their use of language is not informative and, secondly, their propositions challenge counterexpectatively the very legitimacy both of the identities of social actors at stake and the political and ideological alternative they represent to the social world. Thus, we perceive that corruption is evaluated in juridical-moral terms, in such a way that the impugnation and disapproval of the political actors become only the natural and legitimate consequence of it, all this thanks to the way corruption is represented in the mediatic texts.

Since *Veja* thus refuses to discuss issues of the political sphere in clearly political terms and treats such issues by political bias, even denied that it is, it escapes from manifesting itself as a political actor as well. Through its discourses, it interferes in the domain about which it speaks, in generating consequences that go far beyond simply informing. We also conclude that the treatment of corruption and the approach by magazine of the Lula and Dilma's governments assume ideological, political, and institutional dimensions that are delegitimizing, especially when they are thematized outside the systemic world of state administration and law. This becomes a central and

recursive point for representations socio-political struggles to order and narrate reality in a particular way. Thus, the political *Zeitgeist* who has been defending a policy of trust in the place of a clearly ideological policy does not materialize with the isolation of ideological and conflicting issues in the practices of using language in connection with the political field. Rather it manifests itself even more ideologically and politically in *Veja*'s texts, since the writers often take on an opposing and antagonistic position by building a *we* with audience in contrast to *they* - the Lula and Dilma's governments – insofar as they ideologically and politically delegitimize the politicians and governments in question. Therefore, it cannot be admitted that *Veja*, as a representative of a hegemonic media and journalism, is far from or exempt from participating as a political actor in the public sphere when it approaches and deals with the political field, even claiming an impartial and neutral posture. This posture is always constructed in antagonism and in the detriment of the identity that it elaborates with linguistic-discursive forms for the other, especially for the Lula and Dilma's governments.

GOMES, E.; ALENCAR, C. A mídia como ator político: uma análise de textos da revista veja sobre casos de corrupção política. *Alfa*, São Paulo, v. 63, n.1, p.87-117, 2019.

- *RESUMO: Este trabalho analisa as relações entre mídia e política em textos de uma representante da grande mídia impressa brasileira, a revista Veja, referentes a casos de corrupção política nos governos Lula e Dilma. O objetivo é identificar recursos linguístico-discursivos mobilizados na produção de seus textos que reforcem a defesa de que seu uso da linguagem é informativo e imparcial ou de que representam a voz da população. Ao discutir a relação entre o campo midiático e campo político sob uma perspectiva antagônica do político, vimos que o caráter informativo de Veja só se realiza na medida em que seus jornalistas se posicionam e a constroem enquanto tal. Além disso, o fato de as representações discursivas que Veja faz em seus textos convergirem para a identidade dos atores políticos revela marcas de antagonismo que incidem diretamente na construção de novas identidades. O artigo também leva à ideia de que a mídia tem participação no embate político, seja como um adversário, ou não, mas sempre como um ator político. Para essa análise, adotaram-se como referenciais teórico-metodológicos o Sistema da AVALIATIVIDADE, de Jim Martin e Peter White, e a teoria social de Chantal Mouffe sobre o político e democracia agonística.*
- *PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Mídia. Político. Corrupção. Avaliatividade. Agonismo. Antagonismo.*

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