

The Term *Diversidade* (en. *Diversity*) and Its Displacement on News Portals: from Didactic to Polemical Discourse / *O termo diversidade e seu deslocamento em portais de notícias: do discurso didático ao polêmico*

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ABSTRACT

This article analyzes the polemical and didactic discourses on the materiality of the term *diversidade* [diversity] as it has circulated, from 2006 to 2022, on news portals. Guided theoretically by French Discourse Analysis and methodologically by the tool *AntConc*, the *corpus* indicates a mutation in the dominant meaning effects of the pivot-term as it stops participating in a completive structure such as *diversidade de espécies* [diversity of species] to become an intransitive word. This process involves a transition and coexistence with the structures of *diversidade sexual* [sexual diversity] and *diversidade* (e.g., in the coordinated phrase *diversidade e inclusão* [diversity and inclusion]). The didacticism regarding the description of *diversidade* in biological or environmental terms is replaced by the controversy marked by the topicality of the identity agenda. Maintaining the coexistence of both terms, this article demonstrates that there is an appropriation of the word by the market economy.

KEYWORDS: *AntConc*; Didactic discourse; Polemical discourse; Diversidade/Diversity; Syntax

RESUMO

Este artigo analisa os discursos polêmico e didático na materialidade do termo diversidade tal como circulou, de 2006 a 2022, em portais de notícias. Orientado teoricamente pela Análise do Discurso de linha francesa e metodologicamente pela ferramenta AntConc, o corpus indica uma mutação nos efeitos de sentido dominantes do termo-pivô na medida em que deixa de participar de uma estrutura completiva em diversidade de espécies para se tornar uma palavra intransitiva. Esse processo envolve uma transição e a coexistência com as estruturas diversidade sexual e diversidade e (no sintagma coordenado diversidade e inclusão). O didatismo atinente à descrição de diversidade em termos biológicos ou ambientais cede espaço à polêmica marcada pela

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ordem do dia da agenda identitária. Sem que uma forma apague a outra, este artigo demonstra que há uma apropriação do vocábulo pela economia de mercado.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: AntConc; Discurso didático; Discurso polêmico; Diversidade; Sintaxe

Introduction

The word *diversidade* [diversity] is on the daily agenda. We come across it on social media, television news, and academic discussions. Its constant appearance leads to the naturalization of its importance and, by extension, the naturalization of the possible meanings linked to the lexeme. It can be said that terms like this serve as a thermometer for what is possible to say and think at a given historical moment, for given positions in the social conjuncture.

When we take a closer look at this pivot-term (Jean-Jacques Courtine, 2009) over time, we notice a shift from didactic to polemical discourse that substantially alters the meaning effects related to it, despite the evidence that it is currently a term linked to the identity cause. If we consider *online articles* from the most relevant Brazilian news portals, such as *UOL*, *G1*, and *Veja*, among others, before 2006, there are almost no records of news with an emphasis on this word. The scenario changes when the term begins to proliferate as part of didactic discourse describing *diversidade* from the point of view of Biology and the Environment. From 2013 onwards, with the increased frequency of the phrase *diversidade sexual* [sexual diversity], the emphasis shifted from the natural/biological character of *diversidade* to designating an identity condition. In this last condition, *diversidade* is sometimes accompanied by the word *inclusão* [inclusion].

Based on this alternation of emphasis, this article proposes an analysis of didactic and polemical discourses – with an emphasis on the latter – through the materiality of the term *diversidade* in the light of French Discourse Analysis (hereinafter DA). We aim to describe and interpret the meaning effects of a rupture that replaces the construction *diversidade de* [diversity of] (predominantly articulated by a preposition to the plural noun *espécies* [species] until 2012) with the variations *diversidade sexual*, *diversidade e* [and] (coordinated structure with the noun *inclusão*) and, finally, simply *diversidade* (in the most recent occurrences – from 2017 to 2022), in which it realized intransitively. To

support the morphosyntactic description, we use the X-bar structural representation model introduced within the scope of Generative Theory. To systematize the *corpus*, we used the *AntConc* software as an auxiliary tool for textual research.

1 About Theory and Method: The Term *Diversity* in Online News

Among other ambitions, DA aimed to develop a non-subjective reading device, for which the computer would serve as an auxiliary tool. A critique of this idea can be found in Denise Maldidier: “[...] the device of discourse analysis wants to be a scientific instrument; it is the first model of a reading machine that would tear reading away from subjectivity.”¹

On the one hand, there is a mismatch between theory and practice. At the end of the 1960s, “The theory of discourse, even if the expression does not appear in all letters, is yet to be born.”² On the other hand, despite the later developments in discourse theory, one aspect of analytical practice remained unsurpassed: there is a *corpus* to be built and a “manual” stage inherent to DA. From the generic grouping of texts guided by macro parameters – “thematic regularity” or “discourse objects,” for example – to the final systematization of the *corpus*, there is a sequencing work – without this, there is no “working with materiality” – of discursive sequences (DSs) to be done.

There is a substantial gain in this process of assembling the *corpus* if we use *software* such as *AntConc*,³ which can generate discursive sequences guided by the research question. In this sense, after overcoming some theoretical difficulties, such as DA’s inaugural scientific idealism and the belief in a non-subjective reading, we understand that the role of new technologies as an auxiliary tool in the treatment of the *corpus* should not be overlooked. This does not mean that the use of the *software* will eliminate the equivocality of discourse and interpretation, or that only analysis based on an unequivocal notion of quantitative data would be valid. Without letting ourselves be seduced by the “accuracy of the data,” we understand that

¹ In Portuguese: “[...] o dispositivo da análise do discurso se quer um instrumento científico; ele é o primeiro modelo de uma máquina de ler que arrancaria a leitura da subjetividade” (Maldidier, 2003, p. 21).

² In Portuguese: “A teoria do discurso, ainda que a expressão não figure com todas as letras, está ainda por nascer” (Maldidier, 2003, p. 21).

³ <https://www.laurenceanthony.net/software/antconc/>.

The constitution of a discursive *corpus* is, in fact, an operation that consists of carrying out, through a material device of a certain form (that is, structured according to a certain plan), hypotheses issued in defining the objectives of a research.⁴

Therefore, there are two stages in DA: the theoretical orientation of the research based on the anti-empiricist and anti-humanist conception of discourse, the subject and history, and the collection, storage, and treatment of DSs in the light of the theoretical question. It is in this last stage – which could only have been done manually, but which we risk articulating with automated processing – that we first turned to the WEB – the circulation of news today takes place predominantly by digital means – and, secondly, to *AntConc*.

Diversidade plays the role of pivot-term, as it ensures the structural and thematic unity of discursive sequences:

The selection in the form of a pivot-term of a discourse theme is, therefore, in fact, a question that aims to identify a determined element in the discourse based on knowledge defined *a priori*. [...] In this way, the constructed *corpus* becomes a model of the discourse and the set of base phrases extracted from the discourse themes (which reflect the assumptions of the analyst's questions) induces a configuration of the content of the discourse, in the form of a certain lexical organization interpreted in terms of ideological configuration: what the pivot-term selection procedures cover is an uncontrolled inference between the analyst's judgments of knowledge and elements of knowledge specific to a given discursive formation.⁵

Initially, we searched for the first ten online articles on www.google.com.br resulting from the search for the pivot-term (Courtine, 2009) *diversidade*. This generated

⁴ In Portuguese: “A constituição de um *corpus* discursivo é, de fato, uma operação que consiste em realizar, por meio de um dispositivo material de uma certa forma (isto é, estruturado conforme um certo plano), hipóteses emitidas na definição dos objetivos de uma pesquisa” (Courtine, 2009, p. 54).

⁵ In Portuguese: “A seleção sob a forma de um termo-pivô de um tema de discurso é, portanto, de fato, uma questão que visa a identificar no discurso um elemento determinado com base em um saber definido *a priori*. [...] Desse modo, o *corpus* construído torna-se modelo do discurso e o conjunto de frases de base extraídas a partir dos temas de discurso (que refletem os pressupostos das questões do analista) induz a uma configuração do conteúdo do discurso, sob a forma de uma certa organização lexical interpretada em termos de configuração ideológica: o que os procedimentos de seleção de termos-pivô recobrem é uma inferência não controlada entre julgamentos de saber do analista e elementos de saber próprios a uma formação discursiva dada” (Courtine, 2009, pp. 155-156).

a total of 170 articles from 2006 to 2022. The search for previous years (2005, 2004, etc.) did not yield any relevant results, which is why the period selected is 2006. To understand the mutation undergone in the transition from didactic discourse (biological diversity) to polemical discourse (identity diversity), we divided the material into three periods, namely 2006 to 2012; 2013 to 2016; and 2017 to 2022. This division was necessary because if the articles were bulk uploaded in the *AntConc* software, the term *diversidade* would appear massively as intransitive or coordinated – in the *diversity and inclusion* structure –, which would mean a distortion insofar as this is only due to the universalization effect generated especially from 2017 on.

Once extracted by *AntConc*, we tracked down the structure with the highest occurrence in the N-Gram parameter in each division of the *corpus*. In fact, until 2012, the form containing the pivot-term *diversidade* followed by the preposition *de* [*of*] plus a term specifying the type of diversity was predominant: *diversidade de* [*diversity of x*].

Ref ⁶ .	Previous context	Pole-word	Later context
2006 2	É claro que não dá para comparar a	diversidade de	espécies do fundo da mina com a que
2006 5	interessante é que essa abrangência ambiental se reflete numa grande	diversidade de	espécies no espaço e no tempo.
2010 5	Segundo pesquisadora, essas regiões são mais ricas em	diversidade de	espécies que certas áreas tropicais
2007 1	Conheça um pouco da	diversidade de	paisagens da Europa em trecho do "Guia Visual
2007 8	Purus-Madeira é quase certamente o dono da maior	diversidade de	vida da Amazônia,
2007 8	As razões para tanta	diversidade de	vida também ainda são misteriosas.
2007 10	ter noção da amplitude de áreas de trabalho e da	diversidade de	ambientes desse profissional das ciências da Terra...
2010 8	A Baía da Ilha Grande abriga imensa	diversidade de	animais e plantas.
2008 6	o fato de que as mãos das mulheres têm maior	diversidade de	bactérias que as dos homens.”.
2010 10	A	diversidade de	compostos químicos presentes nas esponjas coloca esses animais
2009 8	Amazônia tem a maior	diversidade de	doenças tropicais.
2011 3	Banda de Ipanema desfila	diversidade de	estilos e gêneros no Rio Idosos, jovens, crianças,
2012 9	foco de estudo é o levantamento através do inventário da	diversidade de	insetos aquáticos da região, conhecendo a biologia e
2010 10	é feita por meio de simbiose, contando com a imensa	diversidade de	micróbios que vivem dentro das esponjas e são
2010 1	Recife recebeu neste domingo (12) a 9. ^a Parada da	Diversidade de	Pernambuco. Organizada pelo Fórum de Lésbicas, Gays, Bissexuais,

⁶ Each subject is identified by year and number in the whole *corpus* available at <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1t9tH7n922u4VvpYyGdIWgu3cZAUyKJOT/view?usp=sharing>. In the first reference, for example, the reader will turn, in the complete *corpus*, to article 2 (two), from the year 2006, to find the DS “Of course, it is not possible to compare the diversity of species at the bottom of the mine with what...”.

2009 8	Cultura dos povos da floresta ajuda cientistas e encontrarem vegetais.	Diversidade de	plantas e animais pode esconder cura para várias
2006 10	as aves -- concentrado em proteger áreas específicas que têm grande	diversidade de	pássaros -- falhará, porque a mudança climática forçará muitas
2009 5	fácil ir aos brinquedos sem tanta fila ou confusão. A	diversidade de	público, obtida com a manutenção das atrações tradicionais
2010 5	Segundo Lúcia, acreditava-se que, em águas profundas haveria menos	diversidade de	seres vivos, por causa do escuro e do
2007 2		Diversidade de	sotaques dá tom em 'Duas caras' Novela tem
2011 1		Diversidade de	templos e crenças põe DF na rota do
2008 5	cativado de zoológico, uma área bem ampla e com grande	diversidade de	árvores. O bicho-preguiça se alimenta de várias
2012 1	noite desta segunda-feira (10), em São Paulo, o Mister Brasil	Diversidade de 2012.	O catarinense Felipe Zabloski superou os outros 19 candidatos

Table 1. SDs 2006-2012. *Diversidade* – Didactic discourse (Biological diversity). Source: own elaboration.

For 2013-2016, the *sexual diversity* structure predominates, and a transitional specialization that prepares the intransitivization of the term *diversidade* as part of the polemical discourse advances. The typical constructions of the DSs extracted from *AntConc* can be found in Table 2 below:

Ref.	Previous context	Pole-word	Later context
2015 1	Ao completar três anos, Museu da	Diversidade Sexual	reedita primeiras exposições.
2015 7	edição do Recifest, festival que vai exibir 33 filmes dedicados à	diversidade sexual	e de gênero.
2016 10	Um tópico é dedicado exclusivamente à	diversidade sexual	e de gênero e à luta contra...
2014 7	Mangueira homenageou	diversidade sexual	em alas e carro.
2016 10	Parentes divergem sobre ensino de temas ligados à	diversidade sexual	em escolas.
2016 9	Falar de	diversidade sexual	é falar sobre igualdade...
2016 9	Segundo Bornier, a discussão sobre	diversidade sexual	é prematura para crianças do 1º e 2º...
2016 10	seriam os instrumentos corretos para decidir se a discussão sobre	diversidade sexual	deve ser feita nas escolas.
2014 6	o Museu da	Diversidade Sexual	ganhará novas instalações e será transferido para...
2014 6	no casarão a gente começa a falar dessa questão da	diversidade sexual,	da comunidade LGBT, contando a história dessa comunidade,
2015 4	apresentar a pluralidade de ser, não só no sentido da	diversidade sexual,	mas da diversidade étnica, social e todas as
2014 6	do Casarão Franco de Mello, futura sede do Museu da	Diversidade Sexual,	na Avenida Paulista. O contemplado receberá um prêmio
2016 10	estadual e municipal de educação, de previsão sobre discussão de	diversidade sexual.	Ao aprovar os planos, as bancadas cristãs conseguiram
2015 4	longa-metragens com objetivo de ampliar o debate sobre a	diversidade sexual.	O encerramento será na Pedra da Cebola, no
2015 7	Recife recebe festival de cinema dedicado à	diversidade sexual	Recifest será realizado de terça (17) a sábado, no
2016 10	Ela desconfia, entretanto, da iniciativa das escolas de falar sobre	diversidade sexual. “	A escola diz que é para ensinar, mas
2013 7	e Saúde, e membros do Conselho Municipal de Atenção a	Diversidade Sexual/	CADS. E no encerramento, no domingo (1º), está

2015 1	Ao completar três anos, Museu da	Diversidade Sexual	reedita primeiras exposições
2015 7	edição do Recifest, festival que vai exibir 33 filmes dedicados à	diversidade sexual	e de gênero. A mostra será realizada no
2016 10	estudantes,” diz o documento. Um tópico é dedicado exclusivamente à	diversidade sexual	e de gênero e à luta contra o
2014 7	fala de diversidade tem beijo gay na dispersão Mangueira homenageou	diversidade sexual	em alas e carro. Escola foi a quarta

Table 2. SDs 2013-2016. *Diversidade sexual* – polemical discourse (Identity diversity). Source: own elaboration.

For the period 2017-2022, the intransitive use of *diversidade* predominates. In the latter case, the appearance oscillates between a stable coordinated nominal construction *diversidade e inclusão* [diversity and inclusion], and another in which *diversidade* functions in isolation with a non-binding immediate subsequent context, such as *diversity and + prep. + N* (*diversity and with reference to the cause* – 2021 5), *diversity and + verb.* (*diversity and reflects* – 2021 9), *diversity and + pron.* (*diversity and that* – 2021 7). It is important to note that even in the most stable structure marked by *diversity and inclusion*, there is no syntactic codependency between the two words, but a discursive functioning that places them in parallel.

Ref.	Previous context	Pole-word	Later context
2020 10	O debate em torno da	diversidade e	inclusão nas organizações vem ganhando espaço nos últimos
2020 10	Para explicar o que é	diversidade e	inclusão nas empresas, de forma geral, a diversidade
2022 4	Encontro promete debater a importância da	diversidade e	inclusão nas empresas
2022 9	Para a organização, esforços e investimentos corporativos, em prol da	diversidade e	inclusão nas organizações, podem fazer enorme diferença não
2020 10		Diversidade e	inclusão nas empresas: por que é importante pensar...
2022 9	Ações de	diversidade e	inclusão no mundo corporativo trazem impactos positivos.
2022 7	Modo escuro Lina Pereira: cantora irá apoiar as práticas de	diversidade e	inclusão da Ambev
2018 3	Eles têm de estar mais preparados, trabalhar as competências de	diversidade e	inclusão e identificar as qualidades que precisam ter
2020 10	e crescimento organizacional, como comenta Beatriz Santa Rita, consultora em	diversidade e	inclusão e sócia fundadora da Diverse, uma empresa
2021 10	Com	diversidade e	inclusão não pode ser diferente,” ressalta. “É importante
2021 10		Diversidade e	inclusão não é moda. É uma tendência que
2020 10	Pensar em	diversidade e	inclusão é também pensar de forma estratégica, agregando
2021 9	”Para Ricardo Sales, um bom profissional de	diversidade e	inclusão é resultado da interação entre três dimensões:
2021 9	Para liderar a pauta de	diversidade e	inclusão dentro de uma empresa, é importante falar

2022 4	população negra esbarra em discriminação, diz especialista O Head de	Diversidade e	Inclusão na B3, Alexandre Kiyohara, que também estará
2018 3	“Nas pesquisas,	diversidade e	inclusão passaram a ser estudadas pelo modo como
2022 4		Diversidade e	inclusão tem sido um assunto recorrente nas grandes
2021 7	No entanto, a companhia não abre os projetos de	diversidade e	inclusão, e afirma que “tem a aspiração para
2022 4	e políticas pró-cultura inclusiva; o papel da liderança na	diversidade e	inclusão, entre outros temas. “2023 será o ano de
2021 10	“Neste momento, as empresas se tocaram da importância da	diversidade e	inclusão, mas ainda falta investimento e entender que
2019 7	mostram que, embora as empresas estejam preocupadas com temas como	diversidade e	inclusão, muitas das iniciativas não geram o impacto
2020 10	Cada empresa precisará compreender o seu desafio de	diversidade e	inclusão, se orientar por dados e não fazer
2021 10	71% das empresas ainda não possuem política de	diversidade e	inclusão, segundo levantamento feito pelo Mais Diversidade, referência
2021 9	é tão possível quanto sua dedicação para aprender questões de	diversidade e	inclusão. O caminho clássico é comprar livros e
2022 4	de pessoas negras no grupo para 24%. “Queremos ser referência em	diversidade e	inclusão. O nível de maturidade que alcançamos impactou
2022 9	avanço significativo para a compreensão da abertura das instituições à	diversidade e	inclusão. De 2020 a 2022, mais de 60 mil colaboradores foram
2018 3	O mundo está olhando para isso hoje,	diversidade e	inclusão.
2021 10	que responderam à pesquisa, todas têm alguma ação voltada para	diversidade e	inclusão. Quando a pergunta é sobre a presença
2017 2	as hipóteses alegadas sobre o gênero,” ela afirma que “a	diversidade e	a inclusão são uma parte fundamental dos nossos
2017 3	último final de semana em rede interna da empresa “A	diversidade e	a inclusão são partes fundamentais de nossos valores
2021 3	não apenas à comunidade LGBTQI+. Ele enfatiza o respeito à	diversidade e	a inclusão deste segmento na nossa sociedade,” destacou
2020 2	O objetivo das mudanças, segundo a academia, é incentivar a	diversidade e	a representação equitativa na tela e nos bastidores,
2021 3	SP vai investir R\$ 40 milhões na ampliação do Museu da	Diversidade e	na criação de dois novos museus para entrega
2018 3	Outra empresa que também aposta na	diversidade e	na inclusão é a Natura, gigante brasileira do
2021 9	Mulher branca é maioria como líder de	diversidade e	reflete estrutura empresarial, diz pesquisa.
2020 7	Grupo Companhia das Letras anuncia editor de	diversidade e	ações inclusivas Editora informou que realizará um censo
2018 8	LGBTs em uma empresa é uma forma de abraçar a	diversidade e	buscar um mundo melhor? E o quanto é
2021 5	Flamengo lança camisa em defesa da	diversidade e	com referência à causa LGBTQIA+ Uniforme com bandeira
2018 8	como o Brasil, as pessoas não entendem a importância da	diversidade e	da inclusão.
2018 8	ser benéfica. É o papel das multinacionais, desses grupos de	diversidade e	de pessoas que vivem essa realidade mostrar às
2021 10	das empresas com atuação em Minas Gerais possuem programa de	diversidade e	inclusão 17,6% têm uma gerência ou setor exclusivo para
2022 7	como Linn da Quebrada, é a mais nova Consultora de	Diversidade e	Inclusão (D&I) da fabricante de bebidas.
2017 7	comercial mostra o ponto de vista da empresa, que inclui	diversidade e	inclusão. “Nós lutamos por diversidade, inclusão e igualdade
2021 10		Diversidade e	inclusão: muito além do discurso
2019 1	Natura cria campanha a favor da	diversidade e	internautas promovem boicote
2021 7	“Buscamos mais	diversidade e	isso vai nos ajudar a lidar melhor..

2018 3	Callegaro, sócia da McKinsey Brasil, explica que a relação entre	diversidade e	lucro é percebido no mundo todo e, por
2021 1	é mais uma ferramenta importante para proteger a população, a	diversidade e	os direitos das minorias no Estado de São
2020 7	tarde desta terça-feira (28), a contratação de um editor de	diversidade e	outras ações inclusivas. Entre elas, a realização de
2017 10	nem discutir o tema, não têm políticas que promovam a	diversidade e	retenham esse indivíduo. Não são capazes de trazer
2018 2	Pabllo Vittar encerra 17ª Parada da	Diversidade e	reúne mais de 100 mil em Teresina
2017 3	As sugestões dadas por ele incluem, por exemplo, desmoralizar a	diversidade e	também ampliar a diversidade de pontos de vista — “
2021 8	Danese Mega-Sena The Town Burger King faz campanha pela	diversidade e	é defendido e atacado nas redes sociais Campanha ”
2022 7	a Ambev firmou um compromisso público com o respeito à	diversidade e,	desde então, tem realizado uma série de ações
2022 8	coleção pública de obras de arte do Centro Cultural da	Diversidade e, “	inspirada na música ‘Sangue Latino,’ da banda Secos &

Table 3. SDs 2017-2022. *Diversidade e* – polemical discourse (Identity diversity). Source: own elaboration.

2 *Diversidade* in Didactic and Polemical Discourses: Historical Conditions of a Rupture

In a recent work, João Kogawa and Anderson Salvaterra Magalhães (2024, in press) group a series of studies that problematize the neoliberal paradigm as a generalized grid that circulates and signifies meanings relating to a series of practices and sayings. More recently, a steady proliferation of fetishized words has served not only to legitimate social causes but also to attend to market demands. Today, for certain key terms, there does not seem to be a clear boundary between cause and market. In Portuguese, terms such as *empatia*, *acolhimento*, *gatilho*, *tóxico*, *diversidade*, *(não) ser sobre x* [*empathy*, *welcoming*, *trigger*, *toxic*, *diversity*, *(not) about x*], have become the order of the day in social media posts, newspaper articles, etc. There is a vocabulary in today’s verbal landscape in which the chain of sayings forms conglomerates of *clichés* in which structures stand such as “You need to have empathy,” “The trigger for *x* is...,” “*X* is a toxic person,” “We need talk about diversity” etc.

Marília Amorim (2007) discusses the socio-historical condition of post-modernity, highlighting the emergence of “*Métis* knowledge,” characterized by autonomy in which neither archaic knowledge (*Mythos*) nor scientific knowledge (*Logos*) prevails in society as a means of acquiring knowledge. The emergence of a *new world* brings with it new policies that influence the way we manage and think about what is common to all,

and it is through language that this also occurs. Added to this is the connection that David Harvey (2007)⁷ makes between neoliberalism and the growing demand for universal rights. The author emphasizes the effectiveness of universalism in global issues such as climate change and biodiversity preservation but stresses the difficulties linked to universality when confronted with the variety of political-economic circumstances (human rights) and cultural practices that exist in the world.

The dynamics of social networks globalize these expressions within the framework of surveillance capitalism (Zuboff, 2019) that works through engagement. The more expressions of this type reverberate, the more engagement is produced, whether in the form of like-type reactions or positive and negative comments:

[...] content is a source of behavioral surplus, as is the behavior of the people who provide the content, as are their patterns of connection, communication, and mobility, their thoughts and feelings, and the meta-data expressed in their emoticons, exclamation points, lists, contractions, and salutations (Zuboff, 2019, p. 122).⁸

That is, *news*, *information*, and *disclosed truth* not only satisfy the demand for content but urge the user, in the name of “interactivity” and “co-participation,” to express their interests, desires, beliefs, and opinions. The term *diversidade* has been part of this dynamic since 2006, but a specialization of the neoliberal paradigm based on identity liberalism (Lilla, 2017)⁹ has reconfigured the term’s belonging, which migrated from the columns dedicated to the environment, science, and biology, to the columns of economy and culture. This is the effect of social demand but also reflects the way the market works to capitalize on engagement.

According to Hazan (2006), the repetition of certain words plays on the obliteration of certain meanings due to others. Unconsciously, the saturation of key terms leads to the unreflective incorporation of beliefs in the stability promoted by this neoliberal logic. The recurrent appearance of certain words in the media – especially, for

⁷ HARVEY, David. *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007.

⁸ ZUBOFF, Shoshana. *The Age of Surveillance Capitalism: The Fight for a Human Future at the New Frontier of Power*. New York: PublicAffairs, 2019.

⁹ LILLA, Mark. *The Once and Future Liberal: After Identity Politics*. New York: Harper, 2017.

our purposes, in the journalistic context – should not be interpreted as a commitment to “the truth,” but as a symptom of discursive processes at work.

As a result of post-modernity, the saturation of certain keywords in media vehicles leads to a fetishization of the word, i.e. the word becomes, to a certain extent, a commodity. Companies, educational institutions, and newspapers, for example, rather than selling *products*, *promote x*, where *x* is a buzzword. For this article, we are interested in the meaning effects of the word *diversidade* between the years 2006 and 2022.

The polemical discourse, especially after 2016, has at the same time conditioned the demanding position of identity groups, but also the census of identity to the market. Since *diversidade* ceased to be a lexeme related to the descriptive didactic discourse of the natural sciences, it has been linked to the semantic fields of race, gender, and sex, and from there it has become a business object that captures engagement. By extension, the meaning of “being diverse” carries that of “being democratic” in a neoliberal context which, while on the one hand circulates the effects of a struggle for equality, on the other, fetishizes the term *diversidade* as an attribute by which one must pay.

In his *archaeology of neoliberalism*, Michel Foucault (2008)¹⁰ demonstrates how the transition from classical liberalism of the 18th and 19th centuries to neoliberalism implies the generalization of the notion of company. In this sense, everyone will be seen as a small company and the inclusion of a social type is the expansion of productive forces at the level of individual engagement. Against certain current common sense, this position is far from the conservatism we have seen in Brazil and around the world. In the modern sense, the French philosopher,

To be liberal, therefore, is not at all to be conservative, in the sense of the maintenance of de facto privileges resulting from past legislation. On the contrary, it is to be essentially progressive in the sense of a constant adaptation of the legal order to scientific discoveries, to the progress of economic organization and technique, to changes in the structure of society, and to the requirements of contemporary consciousness (Foucault, 2008, pp. 161-162).¹¹

¹⁰ FOUCAULT, Michel. *The Birth of Biopolitics*. Lectures at the Collège de France, 1978-79. Edited by Michel Sanellart. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.

¹¹ See footnote 10.

Identity agendas, the demand for equality, and the controversial flag for the inclusion of individuals in companies based on identity criteria are not out of alignment with the neoliberal paradigm. On the contrary, it is one of its effects as the mainstream media echoes the argument that diversity is indicative of greater profitable potential, as we will analyze later. *Diversidade* is no longer a descriptive-designative term to become, at the same time, a watchword and a “seal of quality.” This “seal of quality” does not necessarily guarantee a better service offering to the consumer, but it aligns the company with the most recent neoliberal agenda, as much as other labels such as ESG (*Environmental, Social, and Governance*).

In the neoliberal context, the *WEB* – and the mobile devices that guarantee it a prêt-à-porter existence – becomes an almost exclusive place for accessing information, entertainment, and interaction. This operation justifies our choice to collect material on news portals, since traditional media, notably printed newspapers, are increasingly out of use. The syntactic and discursive properties of the term *diversidade* have undergone a metamorphosis over almost two decades, and tracking of this change could only be done – both from the empirical point of view of assembling the *corpus* and from the point of view of pertinence in terms of circulation modes – by following materials available *online*.

The polemical discourse works by silencing the argument that the selection criterion for a job should be the “technical competence of the worker.” This is the fierce battle that the diversity flag needs to overcome. Some linguistic structures adjacent to the pivot-term – in addition to the little emphasis and, at times, silence regarding technical competence – intensify this functioning, such as affirmations of the type *É o papel das multinacionais...* [It is the role of multinationals...]; parallelisms with verbs in the infinitive (*verb. Inf. + x + é + verb. Inf. + y*) as in *Pensar em diversidade e inclusão é também pensar...* [To think about diversity and inclusion is also to think ...] or *Para liderar... é importante falar...* [To lead... it is important to talk...]; prepositional phrases such as *Em favor de* [in favor of], which paraphrase *Em defesa da* [In defense of] etc.; and variations of the deontic modality, as in *tem de estar, precisam ter, não pode ser, é importante + verbo no infinitivo* [must be, must have, cannot be, is important + verb in the infinitive], etc.

The focus of our analysis will then be on the grammatical properties of the noun *diversidade*, insofar as coordination (*diversidade e*) and the absence/presence of a nominal complement (*diversidade*, *diversidade sexual*, *diversidade de*) indicate greater or lesser indexing to polemical discourse. From this perspective, the greater the intransitivity, the closer it is to the polemical, the greater the transitivity, the closer to the didactic.

Language, Discourse, and the Meaning Effects of *Diversidade* in Online Media

The transition from didactic to polemical discourse must be understood in relative terms. In this article, we are not arguing that the new ways of signifying the term *diversidade* exclude the previous ones, i.e. the fact that diversity is increasingly a “business” matter, does not mean that issues pertinent to biological diversity have disappeared or are becoming less important. What we diagnosed in the analysis, in terms of dominance, is a significant rupture in which the pivot-term starts to be appropriated by polemical discourse in online media. According to Dubois:

Didactic discourse “informs,” that is, it formulates assertions that are not opposed to other assertions; there is no confrontation. [...] didactic discourses do not contain ameliorative or pejorative factors in the system of lexical connotations found in polemical discourses.¹²

Given this definition, how to understand online media material as a realization of didactic discourse? Let’s start with the dominant structure in the *AntConc N-Gram* parameter, namely, the one that generated the *diversidade* structure as the most significant result. Regarding the description of its grammatical status, the word *diversidade* belongs to the category of feminine nouns. Semantically, it describes a quality of what is different, diverse, and varied. Morphologically, it is a complex word, whose structure is decomposed into the adjectival base *diverso* [diverse] and one of the suffixes that form

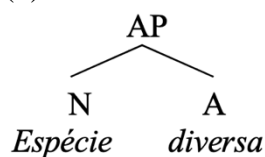
¹² In Portuguese: “O discurso didático “informa,” isto é, formula asserções que não se opõem a outras asserções; não há confronto. [...] os discursos didáticos não comportam fatores melhorativos ou pejorativos no sistema de conotações lexicais que se acha nos discursos polêmicos” (Dubois, 1997, p. 109).

abstract nouns in Portuguese – *dade*. In this way, the word *diversidade* can be described synchronously as a deadjectival noun.

In other words, in its derivational structure, the noun *diversidade* contains the adjective *diverso*, a predicate that denotes a property that, as a rule, is attributed to an argument carried out by a noun. Thus, *diverso* is a predicate, which denotes quality attributed to a noun, as in the following adjectival phrases examples. To explain such syntactic structural properties shared by the examples in (1), we use the descriptive tools provided by the X-Bar theory (Chomsky, 1970; Kornai; Pullum, 1990; Mito Et Al, 2013). In (2) we observe an adjectival phrase,¹³ whose head is an adjective (A, the semantic predicated and the syntactic head of the structure), which takes a nominal argument as a specifier (N, Noun).

- | | | |
|--------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| (1) a. | Espécie diversa. | [Diverse species] |
| b. | Ambiente diverso. | [Diverse environment] |
| c. | Sexo diverso. | [Diverse sex] |
| d. | Genes diversos. | [Diverse genes] |

(2)

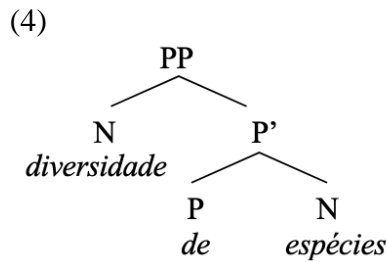


With the formation of the adjectival noun *diversidade*, the possibility of the syntactic structure of direct modification is eliminated, in which the noun is directly modified by the adjective. Therefore, there comes a need to add more functional layers to relate the semantic property of what is diverse to the referent, through the presence of a functional preposition, such as *de* [of], or through the addition of another relational suffix that forms adjectives, such as *-al* or *-ico*, as seen in the examples in (3).

- | | | |
|--------|------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| (3) a. | Diversidade <i>de</i> espécies. | [diversity of species] |
| b. | Diversidade <i>de</i> ambiente/ambiental | (diversity of environment/environmental diversity) |

¹³ AP, from the English *Adjectival Phrase*.

This complex structure, in which there is a semantic complementation of the word *diversidade* by morphosyntactic devices, especially by the adjunction of prepositional phrases,¹⁴ represented below in (4), (e.g., *de espécies*, *de ambiente*), underlies the functioning of this word in didactic discourse (see *Table 1*).



In this scenario, there is a structural solidarity between term and complement typical of biological knowledge which, through its didactic-explanatory function, teaches, describes, and informs about entities in the natural world. In other words, the more complex the linguistic structure, the closer it is to the didactic discourse in our sample. Historically, this occurs fundamentally in the first temporal axis of our *corpus*, i.e., in the SDs extracted from 2006 to 2012. In fact, in contrast to what happens later, the appropriation of *diversidade* by didactic discourse is a way of adding a pedagogic nature under the aegis of informativity. We are interpellated by “Hey, this exists! Look how rich the world is!” We do not claim, therefore, that ideology is absent in these statements; what we argue is that this type of “technical ideology” is a symptom of the emphasis on the natural world. That is, the cut itself indicates a socio-historical sensibility different from the one that will be presented after 2012 when *diversidade* will move into the realm of polemical discourse. In this sense, the DSs in *Table 1* are marked by the “ideal of things to be known” (Pêcheux, 1997, 639-640),¹⁵ that is, by the obvious desirable and indispensable. Hence the recurrence of verbs such as reflect, know, and shelter, as well as constative structures centered on the verb to be. More than that, in contrast to the

¹⁴ PP, from English *Prepositional Phrase*.

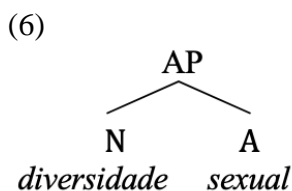
¹⁵ In Portuguese: “ideal das coisas a saber.”

polemical discourse, there is a notable absence of slogans and incitement to action, as described below.

Dubois states that polemical discourse “[...] is thus built on opposing assertions, denial of the other’s statement; as an incitement to action, it also includes an important number of *performatives* (let’s go, let’s do it, etc.)”¹⁶ In our *corpus*, *Table 2* indicates a transition, i.e., a phase of “more attenuated controversy,” in which the linguistic structure still has a space filled on the right. We are already in the scope of polemical discourse, but in its “attenuated phase,” which lasts from 2013 to 2016 (*Table 2*).

The first change to be observed is the drop in the frequency of structures with prepositions. Where we used to read, due to the functioning of didactic discourse, *diversidade de genes, espécies*, [diversity of genes, species...], etc., we now read *diversidade sexual* [sexual diversity]. With this mutation, effects of incitement to action, appeal to duty, ideal, and, to a certain extent, morality emerges. However, this still happens in the order of mention. The time for *diversidade sexual* is still discreet, informative, and not very desiderative. As an illustration, look at the structures with complex adjectives (e.g., *sexual, genético*, etc.) that function as predicates that take the noun *diversity* as a specifier, represented in (6).

- (5) a. Diversidade sexual [sexual diversity]
 b. Diversidade genética [genetic diversity].



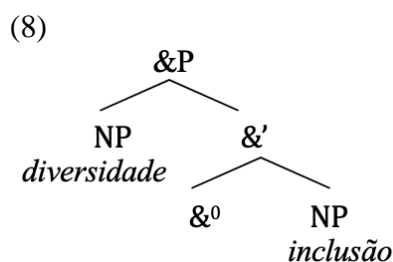
In *Table 2*, what is presented is the “simple mention” as something that is in the order of the day. *O museu* reedita as primeiras exposições, Um tópico é dedicado à diversidade sexual, Mangueira homenageia diversidade sexual... [The museum *reissues the first exhibitions*, *A topic is dedicated to sexual diversity*, *Mangueira pays homage to*

¹⁶ In Portuguese: “[...] é assim construído sobre asserções opostas, negação do enunciado do outro; como incitação à ação, ele comporta também um número importante de *performativos* (vamos, façamos etc.)” (Dubois, 1997, p. 109)

sexual diversity...] etc. Despite this, a fundamental shift has already been made in this set of transition sayings: *diversidade* left the universe of the “natural world” and migrated to the social world. The emphasis is no longer on fauna and flora, but on identities and how identities were inserted into the corporate world. Along with the fall of the preposition, we diagnose the first phase of displacement.

In the transition to the polemical period (*Table 3*, above), there is total a drop in the use of the complex internal syntactic structure associated with the word *diversidade* and a consequent increase in coordinative use – *diversidade e X* [diversity and X] – or use that we call intransitive. In this scenario, *diversidade* occupies the head of a nominal phrase and is often coordinated with another nominal phrase, usually headed by the also morphologically complex noun *inclusão* (*incluir* > *inclusão*; [include > inclusion]. We represent the head of the coordinated sentence structure by the & symbol. The intransitive use, which does not require any syntactic complementation or adjunction, is the result of a type of semantic-discursive incorporation: the complement, adjunct, or specifier of the term *diversidade* is always a pre-constructed argument linked to the identity agenda (sex, gender, etc.).

(7) *Diversidade e inclusão* [diversity and inclusion]



The most recent specialization of the polemical discourse around *diversidade* therefore plays with two structures. Despite the difference, in both, we infer the independence and the autonomy that the term now has from a syntactic point of view. In the first, *diversidade* presents itself in the stable coordinated form *diversidade e inclusão*. Although, syntactically, this coordination is not mandatory – which indicates, in polemical discourse, the intransitive functioning of the noun –, discursively, the coordination implies a meaning effect of reinforcement and precision. It is admitted, in

this structure, that *diversidade, tout court*, demands vectorization, that is, a direction that goes beyond the simple recognition of what is diverse.

Something is needed concerning the term *diversidade*, and this is precisely where the completeness of the polemic resides. If in *diversidade sexual*, we still see remnants of an “informativity ideology” coming from the biological sphere, in this case, it hardly appears at all. The debate is mobilized (the debate around diversity and inclusion) and it becomes important to *explain what diversity and inclusion is in corporations, think about it, and diversity and inclusion actions are necessary in the corporate world*. They also need to *be better prepared and work on diversity and inclusion skills*. They talk about what a *good diversity and inclusion professional should be, how companies have finally recognized the importance of diversity and inclusion*, and how *the world is looking at this today*.

The polemical discourse reaches the peak of its appropriation of the term when it makes it independent of any connection. The level of ideological saturation coincides with the absolutization of *diversidade* by the pre-constructed idea that “everyone knows that it cannot be anything other than the social identity status”¹⁷ from which the word derives its meaning: *Flamengo lança camisa em defesa da diversidade; Natura cria campanha a favor da diversidade; ... a relação entre diversidade e lucro é percebida no mundo inteiro; ...não têm políticas que promovam a diversidade, campanha pela diversidade, compromisso público com a respeito à diversidade* [Flamengo launches shirt in defense of diversity; Natura creates campaign in favor of diversity; ... the relationship between diversity and profit is perceived throughout the world; ...they do not have policies that promote diversity, campaign for diversity, public commitment to respect diversity].

The tone becomes that of a slogan, an incitement to action, given that *diversidade* is “what everyone knows” and what “we must all fight for.”¹⁸ This is not out of the market; it is an imposition, a demand, and the very reason for *being diverse*. The intransitivity of *diversidade* is the symptom of neoliberal appropriation, not its critique.

Treating *everything* as a commodity, according to sociologist David Harvey (2007), reflects an *ethic* that sees the market as a guide for all human actions. In this way,

¹⁷ In Portuguese: “todo mundo sabe isso que não pode ser outra coisa que não o estatuto social identitário.”

¹⁸ In Portuguese: “isso que todo mundo sabe” e pelo que “todos devemos lutar.”

the delimitation of the limits of commodification varies between societies and generates controversies on specific points, for example, the illegality of certain drugs and the legalization or decriminalization and regulation of the trade in sexual favors. Harvey points out that pornography is widely protected as

The divide between neoliberals and neoconservatives partially reflects a difference as to where the lines are drawn. The neoconservatives typically blame ‘liberals,’ ‘Hollywood,’ or even ‘postmodernists’ for what they see as the dissolution and immorality of the social order, rather than the corporate capitalists (like Rupert Murdoch) who actually do most of the damage by foisting all manner of sexually charged if not salacious material upon the world and who continually flaunt their pervasive preference for short-term over long-term commitments in their endless pursuit of profit (Harvey, 2007, pp. 164-165).¹⁹

Diversidade, from a neoliberal perspective, emerged in the 2010s as an ethical issue imposed on and encouraged by the corporate world, especially from a marketing perspective, and can be considered under the aegis of a moral effect. *Diversidade* becomes immune to questioning when inscribed in the media universe, as it manifests itself discursively (in the case of polemical discourse) as something widely accepted – its acceptance means, in certain contexts, being a *boa pessoa, um bom cidadão* [good person, a good citizen] –, almost a universally recognized truth. To commodify *diversidade*, therefore, means transforming it into a product that generates profits within business dynamics. The company uses the idea of *representation* and market *diversidade* as part of its advertising strategy, whilst maintaining an ongoing commitment to the market. In practice, this supposed “social commitment” ends up being absorbed by the market itself. There is a “[...] own dynamic, a strong performative character: the more it is spoken, the more what it defends – without ever expressing it clearly – takes place.”²⁰ Comparing *diversity* with *multiculturalism* Hazan defines the term as “a nebula in which it is easy to get lost.”²¹ In the case of the object analyzed here, this is raised by the polemical discourse, in which the divergence between technical competence and the promotion of

¹⁹ For reference, see footnote 7.

²⁰ In French: “[...] dynamique propre, un caractère performatif qui fait sa force: plus elle est parlée et plus ce qu’elle défend – sans jamais l’exprimer clairement – a lieu” (Hazan, 2006, p. 21).

²¹ In French: “[...] une nebuleuse où il est facile s’égarer” (Hazan, 2006, p. 47).

diversidade as a criterion for selection, indicates the activation of different perspectives. This is the tension imbricated in the term *diversidade* in Portuguese.

Conclusion

Diversidade is a pivot-term whose media mobilization, more intensely since 2017, associates the idea of “being diverse” with the notion of “being democratic, being fair and equal.” In the current neoliberal scenario, this operation creates ambiguous effects between promoting the fight for equality and the fetishization of the word as a marketable attribute.

In the online articles, the term was dislocated from the biological field to the socio-identity field. In fact, in the period from 2006 to 2012, didactic discourse frames *diversidade* as a descriptive-designative word for the natural world. In the *corpus*, from 2013 onwards, the dominant form of the term integrates the phrase *diversidade sexual* and we see the transition from didactic to polemical discourse. In the latter, *diversidade* will increasingly acquire the effect of a slogan and a “seal of quality.”

The intransitivization of the deadjectival noun *diversidade* in the analyzed *corpus* is the hallmark of a greater specialization of polemical discourse, while transitivity, historically marked by occurrences in the period from 2006 to 2012, characterizes the didactic discourse. The shift from biological didacticism (2006-2012) to the identity polemic (2014-2022) reflects a change in discourse, which moves from the natural world to the social world in the insertion of identity in the corporate environment signified in the media. This discursive process reaches its peak in the ideological saturation of *diversidade*, perceived in the universalization effect linked to social identity status.

As a result of this change, we conclude that neoliberalism and the growing demand for universal rights globalize certain issues that can be diagnosed in the light of a list of keywords of which *diversidade* is part. If, on the one hand, this indicates a move towards the fight for equity, on the other, it also indicates the generalization of market laws to insist on certain terms. Being for diversity is not just “being fair” or “egalitarian”; It is also about entering the contemporary neoliberal order that fetishizes and makes

certain truths unreflective to the detriment of others in the buzzwords and clichés of the order of the day.

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English version

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Research Data and Other Materials Availability

The contents underlying the research text are included in the manuscript.

Statement of Author's Contribution

The paper entitled “The Term *Diversidade* [Diversity] and its Displacement on News Portals: from Didactic to Controversial Discourse” was written by the following authors and their respective contributions are detailed in sequence:

- 1) João Kogawa: full writing of the first version in its discursive aspects based on a three-page outline prepared by the author Débora Kogawa. The entire conception of the text within the framework of French Discourse Analysis is the responsibility of this author. Furthermore, the systematization of the corpus in *AntConc*, which resulted in tables 1, 2, and 3 of the paper, also included his participation.
- 2) Débora Kogawa: writing of the initial proposal draft (three initial pages). Systematization of the corpus in *AntConc*, in discussion with the first author. Insertion of the discussion on neoliberalism in the light of Amorim, Hazan, and Harvey.
- 3) Indaiá de Santana Bassani: responsible for the critical reading of the text and the formal-analytic treatment of linguistic materiality in the light of the X-bar theory. Of the three authors, she is the only one who has training in Generative Grammar to provide this type of treatment. We understand that this partnership is productive, precisely because Linguistics is one of the privileged fields of interest for Pêcheux and his group and is also, often, the blind spot of many works in AD today.

Reviews

Due to the commitment assumed by Bakhtiniana. Revista de Estudos do Discurso [Bakhtiniana. Journal of Discourse Studies] to Open Science, this journal only publishes reviews that have been authorized by all involved.

Review I

Original and high-quality paper. Rigorous work on constituting the *corpus* and analyzing it in terms of French Discourse Analysis. The interpretation draws on contemporary cultural theorists and consistently interweaves the ideas of these authors with the results obtained in the analysis. APPROVED

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Reviewed on May 09, 2024.

Review II

The article “The Term *Diversidade* [Diversity] and its Displacement on News Portals: from Didactic to Controversial Discourse” presents a deep and meticulous analysis of the semantic evolution of the term *diversidade* over a significant period, from 2006 to 2022, on news portals. The title is particularly effective in clearly conveying the focus of the research, while the abstract provides a comprehensive and thought-provoking overview of the study’s content and methodology. The structure of the study is well-designed, guiding the reader logically from the introduction to the final considerations. The theoretical choice of French-style Discourse Analysis and the use of the AntConc tool are justified and applied consistently throughout the text, which strengthens the credibility of the research. The data analysis is careful and insightful, revealing not only the change in discourses around the term *diversidade* but also its complex relationship with identity issues and the market economy. This work not only offers an original contribution to the field of linguistic studies but also raises pertinent and stimulating questions for future research. The clarity and correctness of the language, combined with theoretical and methodological soundness, guarantee the quality and impact of the paper. Therefore, I recommend the paper be accepted for publication in the *Bakhtiniana* journal, which will certainly enrich the academic debate on the topic.

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