

Gender Ideology: an analysis methodology

Jasmine Moreira¹
Maria Rita de Assis César¹

¹Universidade Federal do Paraná (UFPR), Curitiba/PR – Brazil

ABSTRACT – *Gender Ideology: an analysis methodology.* This paper proposes a two-step model for the *inference of discourse on textual databases*. The focus is on *gender ideology* and the action of *EscolasemPartido.org* and the Free Brazil Movement (Movimento Brasil Livre) on social networks, as well as the presence of the debate on the subject in the Chamber of Deputies. The first stage consists of a discourse analysis, made from the contributions of Michel Foucault and Judith Butler. The second stage consists of verifying the materiality of discourse in selected documents, using a topic modeling method based on latent Dirichlet allocation – LDA. It is concluded that the methodology allows one to infer the presence of the discourse of *gender ideology* on social networks, driving its reception by the parliamentary debate.

Keywords: Discourse Inference. Discourse Analysis. Gender Ideology. Escola sem Partido. Social Media.

RESUMO – *Ideologia de Gênero: uma metodologia de análise.* Este artigo propõe um modelo de duas etapas para *inferência do discurso em bases textuais*. Os focos são a *ideologia de gênero* e a ação do *EscolasemPartido.org* e do Movimento Brasil Livre nas redes sociais bem como a presença do debate sobre o tema na Câmara dos Deputados. A primeira etapa consiste em uma análise do discurso, feita a partir das contribuições de Michel Foucault e Judith Butler. A segunda consiste na verificação da materialidade do discurso em documentos selecionados, utilizando um método de modelagem de tópicos baseado na alocação latente de Dirichlet – LDA. Conclui-se que a metodologia permite inferir a presença do discurso da *ideologia de gênero* nas redes sociais, impulsionando a sua recepção pelo debate parlamentar. **Palavras-chave: Inferência do Discurso. Análise do Discurso. Ideologia de Gênero. Escola sem Partido. Mídias Sociais.**

Presentation

We have seen in recent years the rapid increase in the use of social media around the world. This phenomenon became a focus of interest for the social sciences, at least since the 1990s, with the studies of Manuel Castells (1999). What is proposed in this article is to present the testing of a *model of speech inference on a textual databases*, one part of which is composed of one stage of discourse analysis, and the other one of mapping the materiality of statements related to this discourse.

The first stage consists of a discourse analysis created from a given theoretical framing. In this case, the reflections of Michel Foucault and Judith Butler on the sexuality device, biopolitics, and heteronormativity are used as basis. The second stage consists of verifying the presence of the analyzed discourse elements in large textual *corpora*, enabling one to quantify their frequency and intensity.

Specifically, it is intended to quantify the frequency of the *gender ideology discourse*¹, seeking to identify the movement in documents available on the Internet since 2008. This discourse is widespread throughout conservative and fundamentalist groups. This article seeks to explicit the reaction of these groups to the visible advances achieved by social movements and the leading role played by their subjects in the production of scientific knowledge.

Through the voice of religious and political groups, the discourse of *gender ideology* has gathered strength and influenced the drafting of laws directly, especially considering educational planning at national, state, and municipal levels. During the discussions about bill 8.035/2010, which gave rise to law 13.005/2014 (the National Education Plan, or Plano Nacional de Educação, PNE 2014) there was an intense debate involving LGBTI groups, religious, politicians, the academy and the population (Moreira, 2016). At the end of this struggle, due to pressure from ultraconservative wings of society and fundamentalist religious groups, the terms *gender* and *sexual orientation* were suppressed from the text. Based on this decision, the same terms were removed from virtually all state and municipal education plans, with the justification of the *need for symmetry* between the national, state, and municipal levels (Moreira, 2016).

Narratives in Dispute

Michel Foucault demonstrates how political strategies have been defined for the state to act over the social body within capitalism. It shows us the way in which discipline over bodies acted parallel to control over populations in what he called “biopower”. If, on the one hand, there is a power that is formed as an instance of anatomo-politics of bodies – discipline –, on the other hand, there is a power that defines itself as biopolitics of the population – and that is the expression of the State’s power. According to the author:

This bio-power was undoubtedly an indispensable element in the development of capitalism, which could only be guaranteed by the controlled insertion of bodies into the apparatus of production and by the adjustment of populational phenomena to economic processes. However, capitalism required more than that; the growth of both its reinforcement and its usability, as well as its docility, was necessary; it required methods of power capable of escalating in strength, abilities, and life in general, without making it more difficult to subject oneself; if the development of the large State apparatus, such as institutions of power, ensured the maintenance of production relations, the rudiments of anatomical and biopolitics that were created in the late XVIII century as techniques of power and were present at every level of the social body, as well as several very diverse institutions (family, the Army, school, politics, individual medicine or the administration of the communities) have acted at the level of economic processes, of their development, as well as that of forces that are at work during such processes and which sustain them; they acted as well as factors of segregation and creation of social hierarchies, acting over the respective strengths by enforcing relations of domination and effects of hegemony; the adjustment of the accumulation of mankind to that of capital, to the articulation of the growth of human groups for the expansion of the forces of production, and the difference in profit distribution, were partially made possible through the exercise of bio-power with its multiple forms and proceedings. The investment in the living body, its valuation, and the distributive management of its forces were essential at that time (Foucault, 2014, p. 151).

Foucault argues that the old policy of alliance between family and State was gradually replaced by what he called the sexuality device, creating a dynamic of control of bodies and populations through various institutions, especially the school. In order to ensure a certain level of homeostasis, it was necessary to align the sexuality demanded by the State with that present within the family. As an unfolding of this movement, the school has become essential for the reproduction of a hegemonic sexuality aligned with economic interests, acting so that individuals are trained according to established norms.

In recent decades, the school has become one of the most important themes of gender studies, which interpret it as an institution built on a notion of *natural gender*. For Judith Butler, this naturalization of the gender is a reflection of the idea of a *normal sexuality* (Butler, 1999), which establishes regulatory rules for human institutions and for the body itself. The effects of this regulation are perceived in terms of inclusion and exclusion, which can occur with greater or lesser intensity, depending on the *degree of abjection* of individuals, as defined by the author:

The *abject* designates what was expelled from the body, discarded as excrement, literally turned into the 'Other'.

It seems to be an expulsion of foreign elements, but it is precisely through this expulsion that strangeness is established. The construction of the 'not me' as abject establishes the limits of the body, which are also the first contours of the subject (Butler, 1999, p. 169).

In this sense, the abject becomes necessary for the definition of the standard itself. The author points out the existence of a heteronormativity that acts in various directions, present in institutions through the legislation, the organization of physical spaces, and the roles and behaviors related to each gender. Heteronormativity is characterized as an exercise of power that normalizes and defines hegemonic identities. Those defined as cisgender and heterosexual are naturalized and become the reference of sexual normality, whereas the others become abject (Butler, 1999). In this scenario, the school is not just another regulated space, but an institution of reproduction of the hegemonic model of sexuality. Consequently, it promotes the exclusion of all those identities read as *cis-straight divergent*.

In the Brazilian scenario, it is to be observed a large mobilization of religious and conservative groups supported by other sectors of civil society. There is great concern regarding the effects of education on the development of male and female students. Their main demands are focused precisely on the rescue of standardized models for society and the individual, which have recently been questioned and deconstructed by the human sciences and social movements.

The project of power now being presented seems to be against the recent achievements of feminist groups, LGBTIs, black people, indigenous people, and other subalternized populations. These achievements are very recent and take place in many fields, and education is the one drawing most attention of fundamentalists and conservatives. The school has become diverse: women, black people, gays, lesbians, transvestites, and so many other people who were previously labeled have been circulating through its hallways. The school accepted other models of sexuality, became more democratic, critical; it has changed the fragile homeostasis and, therefore, became dangerous in the eyes of these groups, especially in universities.

Faced with this framework, in foucauldian terms, it is possible to witness a dispute for the establishment of certain biopolitical models that is currently being held in the field of discourse, with its main focus on education. Trying to delineate such models leads us to the conclusion that they are diffuse, since they aggregate the demands of various groups. However, it is possible to observe a certain polarization with regard to the demands of social movements and the academy as opposed to those of the fundamentalist and conservative movements. If, on the one hand, one seeks to break with the reproduction of a heteronormative model present in the school, on the other hand, one seeks its integral rescue and the consequent abjection produced by it.

If discourse is the central element in the development of this clash, it is necessary to define it in order to continue our analysis. Fou-

cault deals with the concept of discourse in his work *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, of 1969, in which he states:

We shall call discourse a group of statements in so far as they belong to the same discursive formation; it does not form a rhetorical or formal unity, endlessly repeatable, whose appearance or use in history might be indicated (and, if necessary, explained); it is made up of a limited number of statements for which a group of conditions of existence can be defined. (Foucault, 2008, p. 132). [TRADUÇÃO RETIRADA DE https://monoskop.org/images/9/90/Foucault_Michel_Archaeology_of_Knowledge.pdf]

It should be noticed that the statement is fundamental for this definition, as well as for many other definitions of discourse that permeate the author's work (Fischer, 2001). That is, in order to be able to characterize a discourse, it is necessary to understand its connection with its statements, allowing it to exist. Fischer argues that this function is exercised transversely over units such as phrase, proposition, or act of language, "[...] crossing the domain of structures and possible units" (Fischer, 2001, p. 201). This transversality, however, does not mean that the statements are independent of the signs; on the contrary, they rely on them for their realization. In the words of Foucault himself (2008, p. 130):

In examining the statement, what we have discovered is a function that has a bearing on groups of signs, which is identified neither with grammatical 'acceptability' nor with logical correctness, and which requires a referential in order to realize itself (which is not exactly a fact, a state of things, or even an object, but a principle of differentiation); a subject (not the speaking consciousness, not the author of the formulation, but a position that may be filled in certain conditions by various individuals); an associated field (which is not the real context of the formulation, the situation in which it was articulated, but a domain of coexistence for other statements); a materiality (which is not only the substance or support of the articulation, but a status, rules of transcription, possibilities of use and re-use)

For this work, we are interested in mapping a certain set of statements related to the discourse of *gender ideology*, according to the four elements that compose them: the referential, the subject, the associated field, and materiality. It is important to point out that this discourse is not fully represented by the statements analyzed here; instead, these are part of a great enunciative field that has been gaining strength in recent years.

In the analysis of the biopolitical dispute over the school space, previous studies point to the establishment of *moral panic*² in Brazil, starting at the end of the last decade. At that time, MEC (the Brazilian Ministry of Education) produced supporting material to address sexual and gender diversity for the so-called School without Homophobia.

The set was produced in 2010, and consisted of videos, newsletters, and booklets dealing with issues related to sexuality and the fight against homophobia. There was a violent reaction from conservative and fundamentalist sectors of society, which pejoratively dubbed the material *gay kit*. According to Maria Rita de Assis César and André de Macedo Duarte (2017):

If we think in terms of a genealogy of our recent moral panic, it began with the controversies surrounding the 'gay kit' and continued with the introduction in the national debate of the notion of 'gender ideology', giving continuity to the moral panic.

Following began the discussions about PL 8035/2010, which gave rise to the National Education Plan of 2014 (Brazil, 2014). Taking advantage of the panic generated from the *gay kit*, the so-called *Evangelical Parliamentary Front*, as well as other Conservative MPs, exerted political pressure until gender and sexual orientation were removed from the document. We now have an important fact, the incorporation of the term *gender ideology*³ into the conservative/fundamentalist discourse. What is in progress is a semantic dispute in which such groups appropriate and reassign meaning to terms originally used by social movements and the academy, as can be seen in this online publication of the Liberal Institute:

Gender ideology is nothing more than the denial that sex is defined at birth, with the assertion that sexuality is a social construct according to which one would choose what one wants to be. It is also implemented in language, with the negation of gender in words, with the substitution of the letters o and a (which define gender inflections in Portuguese) for the letter x; to give an example, the word 'menino', Portuguese for 'boy', or its variation in the feminine, which would be the word 'menina', become meninx, aiming at neutrality. Gender ideology actually has its origins in the ideas of the fathers of communism, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. Marx and Engels understood that the origin of all systems of oppression that would then develop were in the submission of women to men through the family, as well as in the family institution itself. If this submission were to be a consequence of human biology, there would be nothing that could be done. However, in the book 'The Origin of the Family, Private property and the State', the last book written by Marx and finished by Engels, these authors claim that the family is not the result of human biology, but of social oppression produced by the accumulation of wealth among the first farming peoples. They did not use the term gender, which had not yet been invented, but came quite close (Viana, 2015, online).

From the academic point of view, this text may seem strange and mistaken, but in the dispute for meanings it is precisely intended to present another narrative to that offered by the Academy. Thinking in terms of enunciation, the reference deals with the presentation of *gen-*

der ideology as an instrument of communism for the destruction of the family, since the authors Marx and Engels, the fathers of communism, claim that in the family institution lies the origin of all systems of oppression. The statement, present in other texts, presents us with a diffuse subject: communism. This is a strategy of discourse that has created a position that was to be occupied by any group advocating policies tending to the left: human rights, LGBTI rights, women's rights, as well as those of all other subalternized populations, and, more recently, research groups, faculty, research production, and everything else that is related to gender and sexuality in the academy.

This opens the way for the coexistence of an declarative field that carries out the discourse of *gender ideology*. The materiality of these statements is based on the reaffirmation of hegemonic sexuality, while at the same time assigning to feminist and LGBTI demands, as well as to gender studies, the status of moral deviation and especially of threat to *children, family, and society*.

With these statements being presented to the general public, fundamentalist and conservative groups obtain political support, gather power, and undertake their moral crusade. They then establish a network of power aimed at fighting the reconfiguration of forces sparked by the academy and social movements in institutions in the field of sexuality. As Howard Becker States (2008, p. 160):

With the establishment of rule-imposing organizations, the crusade becomes institutionalized. What began as a campaign to convince the world of the moral necessity of a rule finally becomes an organization dedicated to its imposition. Just as radical political movements become organized political parties, and vigorous evangelical sects become moderate religious denominations, the final result of the moral crusade is a police force.

The result of the movement of these actors is the institutionalization of this police force. We observe the reaffirmation of women and LGBTI population exclusion practices, as well as the resumption of sexual essentialism⁴ and abjection. Fundamentalist and conservative groups began to act in the fields of politics, human rights, in the academy, and above all in the school space, reiterating what Gayle Rubin (2003, p. 22) calls sexual legislation:

Sexual legislation is the most rigid instrument of sexual stratification and erotic persecution. The state intervenes in sexual behavior at a level that would not be tolerated in other areas of social life. Many people are not aware of the extent of sexual legislation, the quantity and quality of illegal sexual behavior, and the punitive nature of legal sanctions. [...] thus there is a tremendous amount of variation in the laws applicable to any given place. In addition, the strengthening of sexual laws varies dramatically according to the local political climate.

In the field of education, the materiality of discursive statements is given precisely through the institutionalization of a moral crusade and the strengthening of sexual legislation, led by the hands of various actors. One of the main ones is the informal association known as *EscolasemPartido.org* – ESP (from Escola Sem Partido, or “School Without Party”). Claiming to combat an alleged *left-wing ideological indoctrination* in schools, the association calls on parents to oppose *gender ideology*. The speech is evident when we understand that this *fight* seeks to block academic production, bills, and the action of social movements and individuals defending issues related to gender equality and respect for sexual diversity.

Using scientific language, the association takes up the idea of a sexual essentialism, which characterizes *cis-straight-divergent* expressions of sexuality as states of mental confusion or illness that could be transmitted to children:

[...] it is urgent to combat the gender ideology that, with the notion of gender equality and the encouragement of homoparental relationships, puts at risk the sexual differences that have a structuring function in the mental development of the child. The great damage caused by gender ideology consists in subverting the social roles attributed to each sex, which reaffirm and consolidate sexual identity. This damage goes far beyond a deviation from heterosexual desires, from bodily aesthetics, or even from revolution of customs. It actually comes to the brink of deliberate mental confusion.

The teacher is also a representative of the law of culture for the child; he is a substitute for the father, an accessory in the formation of the Superego. Hence, the responsibility to educate is not only part of the realm of political militancy that puts at risk the healthy development of the child. Now, just as it is not necessary to require a child to run before the crawling phase, a child should not be expected to understand and assimilate homosexuality at a time when it is still building his sexual identity through the elaboration of gender differences (Soares, 2017, online).

Here we have a new statement whose reference point deals with the defense of the child against the political-ideological militancy of teachers⁵, reinforcing the healthy development of their sexual identity. Note that the word *healthy* in the quotation carries with it the idea of naturality, that is, it refers to the heteronormative pattern of sexuality. Contrary to the previous statement, the subject here is well-defined; it is the teacher, especially the one responsible for the education of children, that ends up in a position of being threatened. It is at this point that the statement connects to the enunciative field of the discourse of *gender ideology*, in the need to defend the child and the family from an imminent danger commanded by a stealthy and powerful enemy whose aim is to subvert the social roles associated with each sex and produce mental confusion in society.

Regarding the materiality of this statement, it occurs through the strong performance of ESP and its physical and virtual presence in the spaces of political and legislative discussion, as well as the continuous production of news and texts. The association provides models of draft bills and decrees for the federal, state, and municipal levels. At the time this paper was being written, several Brazilian municipalities were in the process of discussing and voting on such projects. Although unconstitutional, these documents clearly illustrate the search for the rescue of a heteronormative cis pattern:

Art. 1 This law establishes, within the framework of the municipal education system, on the basis of Articles 23, item I, 30, items I and II, and 227, caption, of the Federal Constitution, the 'School Without Party Program', in accordance with the following principles:

[...]

II – political, ideological, and religious neutrality of the state;

[...]

VIII – the right of parents to the religious and moral education of their children, guaranteed by the American Convention on Human Rights.

Art. 2 The public authorities will not interfere in the process of sexual maturation of students, nor will they allow any form of dogmatism or proselytism in addressing gender issues.

[...]

Art. 9 The provisions of this law shall apply, insofar as appropriate:

I – to educational policies and planning;

II – to the curricular content;

III – to the pedagogical projects of schools;

IV – to teaching and education materials;

V – to assessments for admission to higher education;

VI – to the competition for admission to the teaching profession;

VII – to institutions of higher education, bearing in mind the provisions of Art. 207 of the Federal Constitution (EscolaSemPartido, 2018, online).

Article 9 of the document expresses another statement: it is the State's obligation to guarantee religious and moral freedom, as well as to supervise and control all activities related to education at all levels, preventing any approaches regarding gender and sexuality. Contrary to what is written, the position reserved for the State in this statement is to promote hegemonic sexuality, which the ESP seeks to rescue. The dispute for a biopolitical model, therefore, takes place in the clashes for the control of educational policies, curricula, and pedagogical practices.

This project receives full support from the Free Brazil Movement (MBL, from the Portuguese "Movimento Brasil Livre"), an entity that, in its own words, "[...] aims to mobilize citizens in favor of a more free, prosperous, and fairer society" (MBL, 2014, online). Among MBL's policy proposals available on its website is the "[...] presentation of the 'School

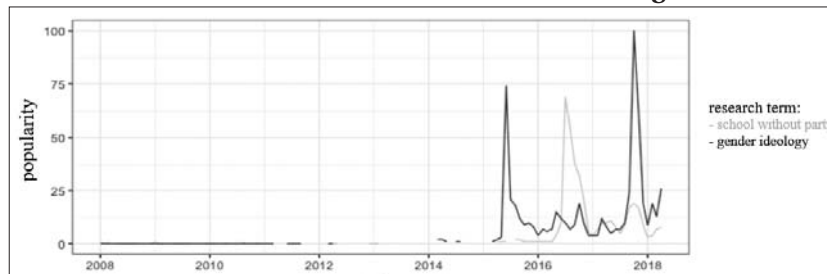
Without Party' bill in state and municipal legislatures" (MBL, 2015, online).

Social media, Legislation, and Speech

Once characterized the discourse of *gender ideology* and the objectives of ESP, it is possible to return to the question of its presence in social networks and legislation, that is, the materiality of the various statements that compose it. There is a certain consensus around the idea that these networks are having a deep impact on public opinion, promoting political support for conservative and fundamentalist individuals and groups. However, it would be a risky task to try to establish any cause and effect relationship.

This is due to the highly dynamic and complex nature of the organization and mobilization of people in these networks. One may sense that social media performs an informative, binding, and catalyzing function, but it would be very difficult to determine the extent to which this happens. In this analysis lies another problem: that of determining the level of action of other vehicles and communication institutions⁶ on social behavior in these media. It is not up to this article to answer such questions, as our analysis will be restricted to posts made on social media, especially on Facebook, and to documents from the Chamber of Deputies' Open Data System.

Chart 1 – Term Research Trends in Google



Source: Prepared by the authors.

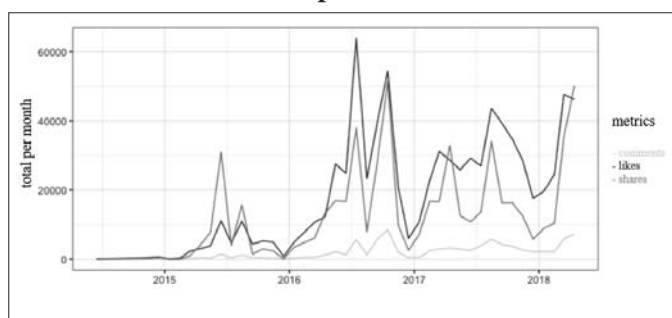
With this goal in mind, it was necessary to choose a set of tools that would enable the tracking down of statements of the *gender ideology* discourse. An exploratory analysis may be set in motion using the Google trend⁷ search data (2018) shown in Chart 1. The tool does not provide us with absolute numbers. This means that the value of 100 indicates the peak popularity of a search term, that is, it indicates the moment of its greatest demand. The other values are, therefore, calculated in relation to that peak.

Although the term *gender ideology* originated in 1998, the chart points to a quick growth of interest in the subject starting only on the first semester of 2015. This hints at the presence of actors who, for some reason, gave the topic a boost on the Internet. Interest in the subject

began in 2014, a year coincident with discussions about the PNE. That year, there was a discreet increase in searches concentrated in the first semester. After sanctioning of the law 13.005/2014, on June 25 of that year, the chart identifies a loss of interest in the topic.

In 2015 began the discussions of the State and Municipal Education Plans. At that time, several actors took action and the term became more visible and requested on social networks and search engines. It should be noted that at that time the debate gained a non-existent capilarity during the proceedings for the 2014 PNE. Reaching the states and municipalities, it allowed for a more active participation of civil society at the local level. In a more assertive way, these actors assume the role of *drivers of discourse*, in that they create a flow of support of the statements' materiality, which can be verified through posts, pieces of news, and documents. Going back to Chart 1, it turns out that the interest in the topic has expanded substantially from 2015 on. Chart 1 also presents the search statistics for the term *school without party*. In this case, there is also an increase of interest, but only from 2016.

Chart 2 – ESP posts on Facebook

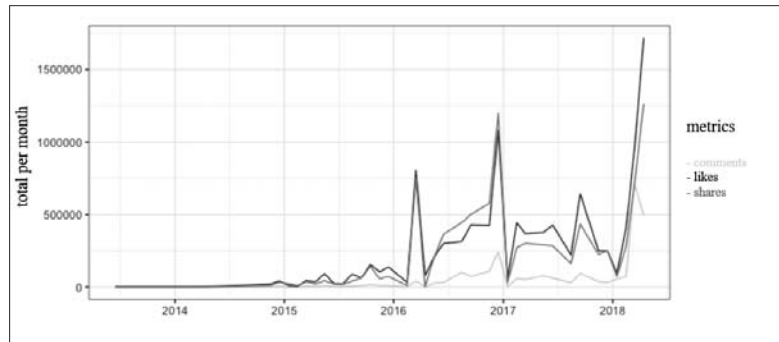


Source: Prepared by the authors.

Observing the activity of the *escolasempartidooficial* page on Facebook, as presented in chart 2, it can be noticed that the number of posts grows from the first semester of 2015. In 2016 the posts increase in number, as well as their views. By the end of April 2018 the page had 168,000 followers, 1,662 posts having reached peaks of more than 60,000 *likes* and 50,000 shares. This points to something very important: the fact that the number of likes is greater than that of sharing strengthens the hypothesis that there are echoes in society for what is said by ESP on its page.

Considering the support expressed by Movimento Brasil Livre – MBL – to the *School Without Party* bill, it is interesting to monitor its action as well, as exposed in chart 3. The *mblivre* Facebook page counted, until the end of April 2018, 2.7 million followers. 2,816 posts have been made since the end of 2014, only 36 of them making direct mention of ESP.

Graph 3 – MBL posts on Facebook



Source: Prepared by the authors.

The next step was the extraction of measurements related to the frequency and simultaneous occurrence of words in the text (lexico-metric analysis). To this end, we have developed software capable of carrying out such measurements. The main question is how these data can indicate whether a group, individual, or institution is driving a particular discourse. Max Reinert (2008) discovered that by repeatedly applying such methods on similar *corpora*, we perceive the emergence of *lexical worlds*⁸ composed of content that tend to stabilize. That is, different sets of documents, dealing with the same theme, tend to present the same occurrences of words.

In more technical terms, a simplified model of statistical representation is sufficient to highlight, at least in the analysis of a certain textual corpus, a tendency of vocabulary to be distributed on stabilized lexical worlds. There is, therefore, a probability that one will find similar worlds during the analyses of very diverse *corpora* regarding content, size, and production conditions. Although it is not possible to affirm anything without a solid theoretical basis, the existence of similar worlds in different corpora can be used as an indicator in an analysis process.

Based on correspondence factor analysis, Max Reinert developed the descending hierarchical classification (DHC), which detects the major lexical worlds present in a corpus (Reinert, 1987). These tools are available free of charge on software IRaMuTeQ – *Interface de R pour les Analyses Multidimensionnelles de Textes et de Questionnaires* – R Interface for Multidimensional Analysis of Texts and Questionnaires (Ratinaud; Marchand, 2012). As the name describes, the software is an interface to R, an open source programming language developed by statisticians. In addition to being very widespread, R also has an integrated environment, which allows for the performance of several analyses, as it counts with a large community of developers.

Although IRaMuTeQ is easy to handle, it requires a thorough preparation of the *corpus* for the analysis to be successful (Camargo; Justo, 2013). In addition, processing is sensitive to large *corpora*, which

can take hours and make exploratory analysis difficult. Thus, although the concept of lexical worlds is useful, its verification becomes difficult when dealing with thousands (or millions) of documents. With that in mind, we chose to explore the documents used as source in this research making use of another technique, that of topic modeling⁹.

More recently, the growing interest in textual production in digital media has given rise to text mining techniques, which seek precisely to extract information from large *corpora*. We often have in hand collections of documents, such as social media posts, news, or articles, that we would like to classify in groups in order to perform an analysis. Topic modeling is an unsupervised (automatic) classification method that can be applied to such documents. It resembles the statistical methods of grouping numerical data, finding groups even when one is not sure what one is looking for, and thereby reaffirming the need for theoretical reasoning for carrying out the analysis of the results.

The latent Dirichlet allocation (LDA) is a widespread method for this kind of modeling. It treats each document as a mixture of topics and each topic as a mixture of words. This allows documents to overlap each other in terms of content, rather than being separated into diverse groups, which is closer to natural language and enables one to capture the transversality of topics. Without going into the mathematics behind the method, it can be understood by means of two principles:

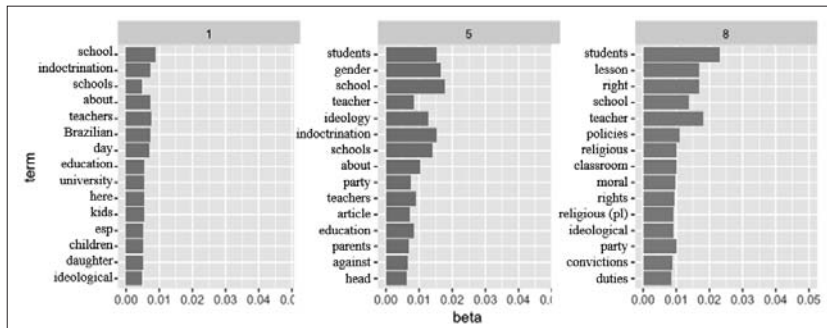
- a) Every document is a mixture of topics. We imagine that each document can contain words from various topics in specific proportions. For example, in a model of two topics, one could say that Document 1 is 90% about Topic A and 10% about topic B, while Document 2 is 30% about Topic A and 70% about topic B.
- b) Every topic is a mixture of words. For instance, one could imagine a model of two American news topics, with one topic for 'politics' and another for 'entertainment'. The most common words in the political topic may be 'president', 'Congress', and 'government'. Whereas the topic of entertainment may be composed of words such as 'movies', 'television', and 'actor'. It is important to notice that words can be shared between topics; a word like "budget" may appear in both equally (Silge; Robinson, 2017, p. 90).

Defining the number of topics in a *corpus* is a complex issue. Even though there are mathematical methods for its calculation, it is not always possible to achieve a good representation. Intuitively, the more diverse the subjects present in a *corpus*, the greater the number of topics. One can imagine this number as a magnifying glass that brings our vision closer or away, showing more or less details. The ideal point is the one that allows one to see latent topics sharply. The theoretical frame and the discursive analysis can give out good clues for finding the best fit.

Having defined the analysis tools, one can try to infer the presence of the *gender ideology discourse* on ESP's Facebook page. The 1662

posts made from the end of 2014 until 30 April 2018 were analyzed. We chose not to convert words to their radical, since plural and genres could be of interest. The number of topics was adjusted to 10, being selected the ones numbered 1, 5, and 8, which provided a good view of the topics, according to Chart 4. In the vertical axis, the words belonging to each topic are identified. In the horizontal axis, the beta coefficient is presented, stating the probability of a word occurring in a specific topic. It is a measure proportional to the variety of corpus subjects; the more topics in a *corpus*, the lower the coefficients. In the analysis of the topics, we will identify the most beta words and associate them with the discourse of *gender ideology*.

Chart 4 – Topics of ESP posts on Facebook

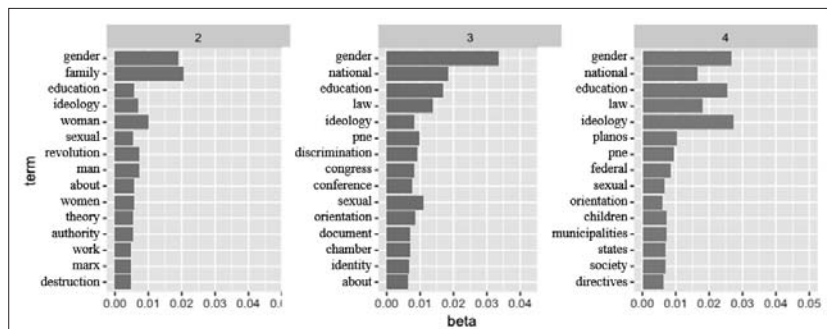


Source: Prepared by the authors.

Looking at Chart 4, it can be inferred that topic 1 deals with the statement of ideological indoctrination made by teachers in schools. It is interesting to notice that the topic also features other terms, such as *education and university*, constant targets of ESP attacks. Topic 5 seems to be the richest in terms of a statement related to *gender ideology*. It deals with school, gender, and student issues, bringing the words indoctrination and ideology to the fore. Topic 8 is the most complex to interpret, but it only takes one reading of ESP's draft bills to verify that it refers to the wording of Article 9 of ESP's federal bill draft, which deals with the obligation of the state to guarantee religious and moral freedom.

It is important to say that the omitted topics presented the same general information, with small variations that can be interesting for future studies. We realized then that it is possible to infer a marked presence of *gender ideology discourse* in the posts of ESP. This allows us to classify it as the driver of this discourse on social networks, although it is not the only one.

Chart 5 – Topics of Examined Documents



Source: Prepared by the authors.

The same technique was used to classify and analyze a set of documents circulating in the Chamber of Deputies, as shown in Chart 5. They were extracted via the open data system¹⁰. In order to facilitate this analysis, the criterion of the presence of the term *gender ideology* in the text was adopted. This decision led to the exclusion of some documents dealing with the matter indirectly. On the other hand, it allowed for a clearer view of the incorporation of the statements into the texts. For this article, 17 documents containing this term were analyzed, 14 of which also containing the term education. The number of topics was adjusted to 5, and those numbered 2, 3, and 4 were selected due to their greater representativeness, according to Chart 5.

Topic 2 deals with gender and family, and the word ideology is highlighted again. But what draws attention is the presence of the words revolution, Marx, and destruction, which refer to the statement of the *destruction of the family by Marxism or communism*. Topic 3 deals with the gender issue in national education, especially PNE 2014. The words ideology, identity, gender, orientation, and sexual orientation refer to the debate around the presence of the terms gender and sexual orientation in the document, which is connected to the statement of ideological indoctrination in schools. Topic 4 deals explicitly with *gender ideology* in National Education. PNE is present once again, as well as the concern about the plans of municipalities and states. Here, the words society and children deserve attention, because they are part of the statement regarding the protection of the family, children, and society.

The topic analysis shows good results in observing the main themes present in social media, newspapers, documents, audio and video transcripts, as well as in other textual resources. The use of topic analysis as presented in this paper demonstrates that the technique can help in composing a framework of tools for an analysis of the discourse, enabling one to infer the presence of discursive statements and, why not, of discourse itself in large textual *corpora*.

Conclusion

The model of *inference of discourse on textual databases* proposed in the article proved effective. Through its use, it was possible to identify the discourse of *gender ideology* and map its presence in Facebook posts and in a set of documents from the Chamber of Deputies. The analysis of the number of posts and views demonstrates ESP's great power of action, both isolated and in association with MBL. It was also possible to characterize ESP as a driver of the discourse of *gender ideology* on social networks. There was no intention of mapping other drivers, but this can be done by simply replicating the analysis in other *corpora*.

From the analysis of the documents, it can be noted that the resumption of a hegemonic model of sexuality and a biopolitical model are part of ESP's agenda. Its action has been quite coordinated and its members have been able to drive their demands coupled with society, while also guiding the legislative power. At the beginning of the writing of this article, the bill called School Without Party Program was on the ballot in the Federal District, in 15 capitals, and in more than 80 municipalities (Rocha, 2017). This fact points to the great political capitalization of ESP and to the propagation and multiplication of statements that carry out the discourse of *gender ideology*.

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Notes

- 1 The first reference to the idea of ideology linked to the concept of gender appears in 1998, at the episcopal conference of Peru, in a note titled *La ideología de género: sus peligros y alcances*. The document is divided into eleven topics and, throughout its sixteen pages, it discusses the existence of a human nature originated in a completely unchangeable natural law, created by God and scientifically proven by biology. It tries to demonstrate how the "[... proponents of a gender ideology]" promote the destruction of family, education, culture and, above all, religion] (César; Duarte; 2017, online).
- 2 Moral panic rarely alleviates a real problem, as it is focused on chimeras and significant. They take the existing discursive structure in which victims are invented to justify the treatment of "vices" as crimes. The criminalization of harmless behaviors, such as homosexuality, prostitution, obscenity, or recreational drug use is rationalized by representing them as threats to health and safety, women and children, national security, the family, or civilization itself. Even when the activity is perceived as harmless, it can be banned by the claim of "leading" to something ostensibly wrong [...] Large and powerful buildings were built on such ghosts. Generally the outbreak resulting from moral panic is preceded by an intensification of such excluding representations (Rubin, 2003, p.32).
- 3 The genealogy of gender ideology in Brazil is analyzed by Maria Rita de Assis César and André de Macedo Duarte (2017).

- 4 Such an axiom is sexual essentialism – the idea that sex is a natural force that exists preceding social life and shapes institutions. Sexual essentialism is incorporated into the popular knowledge of Western societies, which regard sex as eternally unchangeable, a-social, and trans-historical. Dominated by medicine, psychiatry, and psychology for over a century, the academic study of sex has been reproducing essentialism. These fields have classified sex as the property of individuals. Maybe it is inherent to hormones or to the psyche. Maybe it is built physiologically or psychologically. However, among these ethno-scientific categories, sexuality has no history and has no significant social determinants (Rubin, 2003, p.10).
- 5 In order to understand the unfolding of this type of statement, I recommend the reading of the interview with Professor Fernando Penna entitled *On hatred toward the teacher* (Penna, 2015).
- 6 We may take as an example the news, soap operas, and religious content present on public and private television channels, which exercise great power over the discussions taking place on social networks.
- 7 Search trend data can be obtained via the Google Trends tool. However, we chose to develop a script in R language for the capture and generation of charts.
- 8 Notre hypothèse principale consiste justement à considérer le vocabulaire d'un énoncé particulier comme une trace pertinente de ce [un] point de vue il est à la fois la trace d'un lieu référentiel et d'une activité cohérente du sujet-énonciateur. Nous appelons mondes lexicaux, les traces les plus prégnantes de ces activités dans le lexique (Reinert, 1993).
- 9 For this work, a topic analysis tool in R language was developed using Dirichlet's latent allocation method.
- 10 The Chamber of Deputies' Open Data System is quite limited as a search tool. For this analysis, our own collection software was developed in R language. It is able to access, convert to text format, and save locally all the information present in the system.

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Jasmine Moreira is a researcher at the Research Laboratory on Gender, Body and Subjectivity in Education - Labin, PPGE, UFPR. PhD student and Master in Education from UFPR, graduated in Electrical Industrial Engineering from Federal Technological University of Paraná (2004), MBA in Project Management from FGV / ISAE and The George Washington University (GWU).

ORCID: <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-3744-9528>

E-mail: jasmine.moreira.2013@gmail.com

Maria Rita de Assis César holds a PhD in Education from the State University of Campinas - UNICAMP (2004). CNPq / PQ2 Research Productivity Fellow. Associate Professor IV of the Department of Teaching Theory and Practice - DTPEN/Education Sector of the Federal University of Paraná - UFPR and Professor of PPGE/UFPR. Coordinator of LABIN - Research Laboratory on body, gender and subjectivity in Education (CNPq/UFPR).

ORCID: <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-5843-2899>

E-mail: mritacesar@yahoo.com.br

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