Circulation and enunciation: (dis)concordances on norms of participation

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ABSTRACT

The study aims to identify discourse marks (Verón, 2004, 2013) produced by enunciators in a space open to comments by different media, and that deal with the functioning of participation rules, with regulation, and the questioning of such norms. It is understood that society is in the process of mediatization and that there is an increasing circulation emergence. The analysis indicates that distinct complexities span the relation between production and recognition. As Eliseo Verón explains, there is no linearity in the world of meaning. Even though there are norms and protocols to comment pieces, the participants question posting rules and criteria, and yet make their own regulation by telling the other what can and what should be said.

Palavras-chave: Circulation. Participation. Enunciation. Mediatization.

The emergence of a problem[1]

From the understanding that we live in a society in the process of mediatization, following up previous investigations on the emergence of circulation is intended. Both technical and discursive processes complexify the relation between production and recognition. We understand that especially from the contributions of Verón (1997; 2004; 2013), Fausto Neto (2016; 2018), and Braga (2011; 2017).

At this moment, we contemplate enunciations by social actors[2] inscribed in open space by different media for comments about participation status, the functioning of this *locus*, and the questioning of norms and rules of participation. The formation of the space open for comments is understood as a consequence of the increasing complexity of enunciation devices, which are built from discourse flows that are in continuous movement.

Methodologically, discourse fragments were extracted (Verón, 2004; 2013) as produced by different enunciators. Therefore, they were selected initially from observational movements, to then form an analytical device in the face of the central question. As the Argentinian semiologist Eliseo Verón conceptualizes, these signifying pieces are places of investment from different meanings, because they come from a particular locus to become an input that enables the analyst to work on the enunciative activity. Thus, discourse marks left by enunciators on the discursive surface of comments are identified, marks which point to the questioning on the

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1 – The reporting series known as #vazajato presents dialogues from private chats casting doubt from the ethical and legal point of view, on the Lava Jato operation, actions of prosecutor Deltan Dallagnol, of the then judge and current Minister of Justice Sérgio Moro and other authorities. Available at: https://theintercept.com/2019/06/09/editorial-chats-telegram-lava-jato-moro/?comments=1#comments Search on 12 July 2019.

2 – Complete article at: https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/poder/2018/02/folha-deixa-de-publicar-conteudo-no-facebook.shtml. Search on 30 April 2019.

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functioning and management of this environment, as well as enunciations indicating disapproval of what is seen as possible and allowed to be said in this place.

It is understood that the moment the enunciating subjects are inscribed in an open space by the media for participation, they begin to be part of their enunciation device (VERÓN, 2004; 2013). That is to say that all those there inscribed attest that they agree to the terms of use and that they will follow the rules delimited there by specific participation protocols of platforms such as Facebook or Twitter - or of the media system itself (Luhmann, 2005; 2009), such as websites of newspapers, magazines, television channels, radio, blogs, etc. Van Dijck, Poell e De Waal (2018, p. 9) defined "a platform as a programmable architecture designed to organize interactions between users". Van Dijck et al. (2018) understand that the ecosystem of platforms is composed of two different types, the infrastructural and the sectorial, which are in permanent connection. The authors explain that platforms operate through different rationales and business models organization, with content creation, signature, charges, and monetization of user data. They draw attention to the fact that they are supposedly free, because this discourse hides a multiplicity of factors aiming at profit. To widen the authors' vast discussion about the impact of digital platforms on social institutions and the functioning and business models at platforms is not the intention here, but that of mentioning that all data inserted by users are organized through algorithms and interfaces that guide their structure and organization. When joining any platform the user is generally required to agree to its terms of use. In accepting we agree to policies and norms established by owners, and authorize the use of data there inserted.

The media have undergone discourse practice mutations in recent years because of several factors, such as technological development, market pressures, changes in business models and the increasing prominence of the role played by circulation. In previous research (Borelli, 2015, 2016a, 2016b, 2017; Borelli e Dias, 2018) about the reconfiguration of journalistic practices as to the mediatization process in society, clues that there are different demands for opening spaces for participation were identified. These factors can be more structural and contextual - in relation to the mediatization process in society and from the subjects' central role - or even of a marketing nature, since one needs to enunciate that the other is heard and is part of the media enunciation device. It is observed that the fact that the media are open to participation implies guaranteed proximity converted into clicks, possible engagement and into metrics: indexes and data to be shown to advertisers or future investors.

In this processuality of an increasing opening of the media to what comes from outside, there are, too, consequences from an ethical point of view, because there is no guarantee that the published content represents good sense and civility. They do not necessarily imply more quality either, whether for the media or to debate themes of public relevance that could represent an advance in the discussion of social problems. A quick look at comment spaces suffices to realize that much of what is said there does not add information to what is being discussed nor has substantial implications for the development of society.

Even though the media enunciate that comments published do not represent the company's opinion, but only that of the one who makes them, they end up having their names bound to comments of prejudiced, disrespectful, homophobic, racist or misogynistic content. That is, in commenting the participant ends up being part of the media enunciation device, which starts carrying discourse marks that are not in accord with its editorial policy.

The fact that the media enable including enunciations to the discourse offered by their own enunciation device (Verón, 2004; 2013) can imply couplings and interpenetration (Luhmann, 2005; 2009), but also irritation to their own functioning. Due to the space and delimitation of this article, it is not our intention to analyze the functioning of the media system itself, but it is understood, based on what the German sociologist defends, that the media constitute a reality of their own[3]. For him, the media speak of themes that are external to them - from other systems - and also produce statements about themselves, in self-referential processes that aim to maintain the system itself and a permanent self-fortification. This process occurs through couplings to other systems, as well as through interpenetrations and, if challenged by the environment and manages to transform irritation into information, the system can strengthen itself and feed other possibilities of functioning.

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3 – Analyzing the media system functioning is not the intention, but one understands that the media comprise a reality itself: they tell of themes external to themselves, of other systems, and also produce enunciation about themselves, in self-referential processes. Referring that concepts worked on by Niklas Luhmann, such as irritation, coupling and interpenetration, inspire propositions elaborated both by Eliseo Verón and by Antonio Fausto Neto is also needed.

Having made this brief mention, it is necessary to refer that propositions elaborated by both Eliseo Verón and Antonio Fausto Neto are inspired by concepts proposed by Niklas Luhmann, such as irritation, coupling and interpenetration. As the theoretical and methodological approach proposed here dialogues with the discursive perspective, society in mediatization and the problem of the emergence of circulation developed by Verón (2004, 2006, 2013) and Fausto Neto (2016, 2018), the analytical focus is on their contributions to the development of the study.

Example of these processes in transformation in the media system are movements to block the readers' participation, such as those from Aljazeera (aljazeera.com) and The Guardian (theguardian.com/uk), which have closed some participation channels since last year. Interrupting activity after a given number of comments or publication time leads to irritations, as occurs at Globo.com or at the G1 portal[4] (g1.globo.com) in some more polemic pieces, or as The Intercept Brasil (theintercept.com/brasil) proceeded, which after publishing on 9 June 2019, a series of investigative reporting calling into question procedures of authorities that acted and act in the Lava Jato task force, closed some spaces for commenting pieces on 23 June 2019[5]. Another case that can be interpreted as irritation in the Luhmannian sense was the announcement of Folha de S. Paulo that they would no longer provide content on Facebook as of 8 April 2018[6]. It was a response to the social media's editorial policy - which began to prioritize posts of friends/family over informative content pages - and according to the newspaper, a defense to professional journalism[7].

In previous research (Borelli, 2015, 2016a, 2016b, 2017; Borelli e Dias, 2018) about interaction processes between newspapers and readers, we find that the media still try to control production processes, in a linear communication model that transmits information from sender to receiver, making projections of who their readers are[8]. However, one observes that discourses in this interaction environment end up following an unexpected course: the news posted by newspapers are shared and commented by readers in multiple temporalities and distinct digital platforms (Van Dijck, Poell e De Waal, 2018). This wide and complex signifying chain sets the scene for constructing different semiosis processes. As Verón (2004; 2013) conceptualizes, there is no causality in the world of meaning.

We are faced with the age of uncertainty. Meanings formerly constructed by the media as a more linear and causal frame to their enunciation, increasingly take shape by enunciation processes with injunctions from different enunciators. In this context, rapidly, circulation emerges. There are contact and interpenetration zones, and multiple enunciations stemming from different systems, as Fausto Neto (2013; 2016; 2018) argues.

Braga (2011a; 2017) claims that by producing "continuum flows", the digital social media are converted into a stimulus to the conversation of participants in this environment, in which it is hard to establish a point of departure, since every communication episode can bring forth another and so on and so forth. The posting of news

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4 – This projected and idealized reader leads us to Umberto Eco's concept of model reader discussed in Lector In Fabula (1988), that is, the projection of the text's author of who is this other that will read and interpret the text.

5 – Discussing the epistemological status of the concept of public is not the intention at this moment. We use the expression to designate different collectives (individual actors converted into social actors; Verón, 1997; 2004; 2013; and Verón and Boutaud, 2007) that have a relation with the media, be they commenters, readers, followers, likers, advertisers.

6 – In other studies, we are experimenting in the research group "Media circulation and communication strategies", the potential (and limitation) of data extraction and mining tools, such as the lexical analysis software *Iramuteq* (Ratinaud, 2014). We argue that researches carried out by a quantitative approach also needs a qualitative look, as it is often necessary to return to texts, as we problematize in Romero and Borelli (2021).

7 – As said, observation has been made since 2014 in a larger range of media. In addition to the four mentioned, in other researches postings of Diário de Notícias from Portugal and the Brazilians O Globo, O Estadão, The Intercept Brasil, BBC Brasil, El País and Zero Hora were analyzed, but they did not have their signifying reports selected to comprise this analytical device, since the delimitation of the approach proposed implies selection and delimitation guided by the central question – statements that point to disagreements in norms and forms of participation in the open space for comments. In this sense, it is not a sample, but discursive fragments (Verón, 2004). Saying that some comments collected might have been deleted after some time (whether by the commenter himself or by the system regulating them) is also needed. The participants' identities will be preserved and numeral reference to discourse fragments (DF) will be adopted.

8 – Another case should be mentioned, the Portuguese periodical Público. The Portuguese newspaper Público has a singular discursive mechanics in comment space. Commenters have status and participation categories according with their participation, and a team formed by journalists and readers do the management of comments.

by the media might trigger commenters to come on the scene and start producing their enunciations. However, these enunciation movements give rise to different interaction processes in multiple environments (whether from the media or not). In this context, having identified footprints left and captured by previous observations, this paper aims to map and identify enunciations published in the space open to comments and that indicate negotiations, concordances or divergences as to the norms stipulated for participation and its functioning. As Braga (2008, 2011b) argues, the process of methodological theoretical construction is intrinsic to the research process and should not be taken as *a priori* decisions. Then, based on different research carried out in the last eight years, ranging from case studies on specific media coverage to a comparative investigation of the relations between some Brazilian and Portuguese media with their readers, indices were identified that pointed to the status of participation and the functioning of the comments section. So, for this reflection, the choice of significant material to compose the analytical device is supported by the recurrent identification of discursive marks that emanate from different moments of investigation and is justified by the central question: statements that refer to disagreements.

To this end, based on the evidential perspective defended by Eliseo Verón and José Luiz Braga, discursive fragments were chosen and captured from different interactional environments and that give us some clues on the functioning of this complex locus where relations, exchanges and interactions take place in dynamic flows, are chosen. Therefore, this is a qualitative research that analyzes some discourse marks of subjects inscribed in this interaction environment. The article results from one of the stages in the research "Discourse circulation in the context of mediatization of society" developed in the research group "Media circulation and communication strategies".

Circulation and (dis) concordance of meanings

The complexity traversing relations between production and reception has been an object of investigation by many researchers in communication. In this context, Verón (2006) conceived that more than a decade ago, studies about the media found themselves in an apparently confusing situation, due to adjustments made by research on the reception phenomenon in the last century, as of the eighties. "We study reception from whom to whom precisely? Could we continue speaking of receiver, public, audiences, as has been done for years?" (Verón, 2006, p. 2).

In a context in which the societies are under mediatization, it is understood that it is no longer possible to look at interaction movements as if they occurred linearly because individual actors organize themselves in collectives and are converted into social actors, as Verón and Boutaud (2007) and Verón (1997; 2004; 2013) argue. Interactions between the media and their public[9] span processualities from both production and from circulation and recognition, while these instances have their frontiers shadowed by couplings.

The differentiation between the media and their audiences is constitutive, because as highlighted by Verón (2013, p.364), the logics that operate in production and recognition are "qualitatively different". Based on an update of studies carried out in the 1980s on scientific production on French television, the semiologist emphasizes that the complexity of mediatization processes and the emergence of circulation challenge researchers to take a broader and more continuous look at their investigations and its results. According to him, "the evolution of the modalities of interpenetration between the logics of the social system and the socio-individual logics cannot be captured in the synchronous "cut" that represents a punctual investigation at a given moment" (Verón, 2013, p.383). This occurs, according to the author, precisely because we are dealing with communicational processes that imply medium to long-term changes.

For Antonio Fausto Neto, the mediatization process generates new relations, of technical and discursive nature, forming "contact zones" (Fausto Neto, 2018) and "pregnancy zones" (Fausto Neto, 2013), which reorganize and reformulate structurally the contact logic between production and recognition, with convergences and divergences (Fausto Neto, 2016). The author considers that interaction processes are formed beyond the activities and "grammars of mass media circulation centers, and make not only an ambience emerge", but also flows, connections and circuits, which end up structuring themselves from singular meaning production conditions (Fausto Neto, 2018, p. 27).

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9 – It is chosen to mention the comment in the body of the text. Original writing is kept even if it has spelling errors, and the enunciators' identity is not mentioned. Discourse fragments are numbered as DF 1, DF 2 and so on. Some words are highlighted to draw attention to the discourse marks of what is said. As sometimes enunciators refer to one another by the name registered and end up revealing their identities, we are going to omit names and use "participant 1, 2, 3" to preserve the enunciators' identity.

In this context of divergence of produced meanings, Verón (2008, p. 149) problematizes the complexity and non-linearity of communication. "Non-linear means that circulation bears bifurcations and, therefore, that the communication circulation is a process that is away from balance". The author claims that greater diffusion represents greater complexity and reminds that differently from what Frankfurtians presupposed - that the technological development and media proliferation would make society more homogeneous -, there are more and more complexities. Every reader produces their own meanings from their experiences with the media. As Verón (2004; 2008; 2013) argues, there will always be dissonance and discordance between production and recognition, therefore the need for studying discourse circulation.

The world of meaning is complex. Discussions over this theme have been recorded in the works of several generations of linguists, semiologists and communicologists. As Verón (2004, p. 216) states, every discourse designs "a field of meaning effects and not one effect and one alone". For him, there is "no linear causality in the world of meaning" (Verón, 2004, p. 216), because the relationship between production and recognition is complex. The notion of circulation, for Verón (2004, p. 54), "tells how the society's meaning investment in signifying materials changes over time".

This is an infinite semiosis process, as argued by the theorists Charles Sanders Pierce, Umberto Eco and Eliseo Verón, in which a signifying material ends up being referent to another and so on, limitlessly. The phenomenon of infinite semiosis reaffirms the fact that enunciation does not occur linearly, because there is resignication, and wider and more diffused connections, and that in the world of meaning there is no causality, but complexity (Verón, 2004; 2013).

Bearing in mind these complexities generated by continuous flow meaning productions, the present study agrees with Braga (2008, 2011b), who affirms that communication is an evidence-based discipline, and that we should identify emerging questions that may be better problematized from initial observation movements for later analysis. The ongoing research is qualitative, and limitations comprised in inferences allowed by the observation of micro situations are known.

From this evidence-based perspective, we relate the concept of semiosis, which represents the "interdiscursive system of production of meaning" (Verón, 2004, p.72), and the fact that communication phenomena can continuously generate clues for producing new meanings. Since 2014, we have observed spaces open for comments

in different media. Therefore, this is a continued observation process, in which discourse fragments are collected in singular times and spaces. In Verón's (2014, p. 73) concept, discourse analyses imply forming a device, "a semiotic tissue fragment 'torn' from the social meaning production flow" (Verón, 2014, p.73). In this way, from a research carried out in the past eight years on the relations between the media and their readers, indices were identified that there are disagreements and questions about the rules and forms of participation imposed by the media.

Based on the theoretical and methodological contribution developed by Verón (2004, 2013) and inspired by the contributions made by Braga (2011b, 2008), the corpus was not chosen *a priori* because in the development of the investigation an analytical device was constituted based on the clues and indexes identified in the broader observation process of the comments section. One of the research movements was precisely the observation of discursive recurrences (Verón, 2004, 2013) and the search for evidence to understand more complex communication processes, a movement that would not be possible if methodological decisions were taken *a priori* (Braga, 2011b, 2008).

That said, it is necessary to emphasize that the criteria for collection are not demarcated by editorials or specific themes, or by special coverage, as it focuses on issues related to the functioning of this locus and questions expressed there by the participants of this enunciation device. Then, after understanding its organization, we made a systematic reading of comments produced about very diverse news items was done, and then it was possible to structure, in a second stage, a corpus - an analytical device formed by texts, which for the author establish "empirically, those concrete objects that we take out from the meaning circulation flow and that we have as a point of departure to produce the concept of discourse" (Verón, 2004, p.71). Observations were carried out, and then fragments from different times in open comment spaces (whether in websites or on Facebook profiles) were extracted from the Portuguese newspapers Público and Correio da Manhã, and from Folha de S. Paulo and the G1 portal.

Postings pointing to social actors' enunciation activities rationales in which they question the functioning of the space open to comments, rules and norms of participation, form the corpus. The research aims at identifying some discourse marks produced by participants of this interaction space in their dealing with the evaluation, approval and discordance as to regulation and norms of participation. As Verón (2004) explains, the principle of internal structure in a corpus - a group of texts from the empirical point of

view - deals with the choice of it in relation to a certain homogeneity. However, all text "is a heterogeneous object engaging in multiple readings, placed in the traversing of a plurality of different 'causalities'" (Verón, 2004, p.71). This is, therefore, one reading among many other possible that could be made from other analysts' viewpoints.

Previous studies have investigated discourse fragments of rules, norms and conditions of use and access proposed by different media, and editors from Brazilian newspapers have been interviewed about the functioning of these protocols and terms to understand how this enunciation device and this disciplinary mechanism work. In analyzing terms and conditions of use published by the media, it was observed that rules by which the public get involved with this singular locus are instituted, while penalties are clarified in case of possible violation of these norms (Borelli, 2016a).

The terms will not be analyzed at this moment, because this has already been done in previous research. However, synthetically, there are some common procedures that are reported here from observation and from empirical tests: it is necessary to fill out a registration form before publishing any comment; some comments are posted, and then erased (a posteriori regulation), and some are not published (a priori regulation). Participation in the space for comments is disciplined, watched and organized in a way that there is some kind of regulation, whether a priori or posteriori.

However, there are two-way movements. If there are imposed rules to watch and control participation, there are also possibilities of breaking those rules. Now attention is given to discourse marks left by circulation in this regulated and controlled locus, knowing that this disciplining does not impede enunciation to be formed about the discontent and questioning of these norms, or about the discordance of what is said by the other in this space. For reasons of space, it will not be possible to make a deeper analysis on what participation protocols say and what participants say about them. However, discourse marks pointing to what is said and how discordance is enunciated as to regulation will be described.

It is understood that there are different discourse marks constructed in recognition. As argued by Verón and Boutaud (2007) and Verón (2004; 2013), a same production grammar generates "N" recognition grammars. That is, a same participation protocol presupposes different interpretations by those inscribed in this space. As already explained, Fausto Neto (2016) argues that technological convergence leads to greater divergence in terms of meaning produced.

Some discourse marks of the circulation activity

In analyzing the content of comments questioning participation rules, whether regulations or sanctions for those not complying with them, some recurrences are noted, which are converted into discourse construction themselves to mark out specific points of view about this locus. A first group of discourse marks refers to the questioning of the non-publication of comments, but without specifying the thrust of posted content: "**I've made a comment and it doesn't show. Why?**" (DF 1, Diário de Notícias, Portugal, 4 January 2016) "**G1 is not publishing my comments!!**" (DF 2, G1 portal, Brazil, 24 April 2019).

Another way of questioning regulation is making an evaluation of the type of comment made by arguing on what was said and comparing it with other enunciations, whether to legitimize what it says or to delegitimize what the other posted: "**I've made a sensible comment, serious and honest, and a good question**, then G1 erased it, **but [participant's name]'s comment they leave**, you like fiddling while Rome burns, don't you G1??**" (DF 3, G1 portal, Brazil, 26 April 2019). The conversation around a posteriori regulation continues among commenters through arguments that aim to convince those in this space that the said was legitimate and deserved to be published: "That is true. My **comment disappeared without my saying a curse word**, just because I criticized in a humorous way the research and the reporting" (DF 4, G1 portal, Brazil, 26 April 2019). As proposed by Verón (2004; 2013) and Verón and Boutaud (2007), in the interdiscursive network of the social production of meaning, there are possible ways for interpretation, but also many deviations pointing to the incompleteness and complexity of semiosis.

The participants elaborate their reasons for seeking explanations for the non-publication of their comments. A possible cause pointed out is censorship: "**Globo's censorship** – it works! **You post and your comment disappears**..." (DF 5, G1 portal, Brazil, 26 April 2019). In circulation, censorship can be an attitude of the media controlling this space or even the commenter's, since he is free to erase the enunciation at a later time. The doubt on the regulation origin is explained: "Why was it that [participant's name]'s comment was erased? Was it himself or **some sort of censorship**...? Now I'm intrigued..." (DF 6, Público website, 21 September 2015).

Even though there are protocols to be followed for one to be part of this space, some participants enunciate their discordance or non-understanding of the non-

publication with the explanation that there is censorship. Yet participants show that rules are not being followed and demand a regulation of the a posteriori media system**: "It would be interesting if competent authorities would take a look at these comments"** (DF 7, Público website, Portugal, 19 October 2015). By presupposing that the space is regulated, since, as said, there are specific norms for inscribing into this place, some commenters demand more control. In the participants' evaluation, it is not enough to have an open media enunciation device for those that are not part of it, and there should be moderation and control of what is said there. Faced with the gaps left by the rules of the media themselves, the enunciators take advantage of these slips to express disagreements with the rules in the enunciation device.

If there is any irritation (Luhmann, 2005; 2009) that might undermine the functioning of this system, the participants - in their own way - construct enunciations to manage what can be said in this space. In the observations made, one finds recurrent comments as to the intention of silencing the other and to say what should be said, such as these two sets of conversations between commenters of the Correio da Manhã newspaper webpage, from Portugal, on Facebook. In these discourses, we identify discourse marks that indicate the intention of silencing the other: Participant 1: "**Shut up** would you [name of participant 2]"; Participant 2: "**why shut up** ?!"; Participant 3: "[name of participant 2], I think **it's not worth arguing** with Holy Rollers"; Participant 2: "Yes **I'm leaving this 'debate'**" (DF 8, 4 August 2015). In this second set of discourse fragments, a similar discursive practice occurs between enunciators that request the other to quiet down: Participant 1: "Ms. [participant's name], **you'd better stay quiet** (...)"; Actor 2: "How ignorant this Ms. [participant's name] is **will you be quiet** you really don't know what you're talking about"; Participant 3: "Look the gal came to her senses and **erased the comments...** (DF 9, 3 August 2015). Not accepting the other's opinion and trying to impose yours as a parameter is common action in this place of divergence and of encounters of very heterogeneous discursive grammars that form the discursive practice, as Verón (2004; 2013) explains.

Not giving the other the right to speak is a type of regulation assumed by the participants themselves, who explain what they consider legitimate to be said in this space. Commenters gain a management and control status in asking the other to quiet down and to not express his opinion the way he did, but to be quiet. Some ask the other to leave this place and suggest another space where he should go to: "Folha is not an ideological pamphlet, sir, and it shows the facts as they are. Wanna read pamphlets? **Go read Antagonista. There you will feel at home**" (DF 10, website of Folha de S. Paulo, 23 April 2019). As Fausto Neto (2016; 2018) states, circulation makes not only dissonance emerge between production and recognition, but also interaction practices that point to complexity, interpenetration and divergence.

However, even though some ask for the silencing of the other because of what he says, others question official sources and call for more participation by the exposure of elaborations of one's own. "As you can see, the world's boring... full of half-assed critics vomiting fiddlesticks about what is or isn't straitlaced **as if the almost 8 billion people in the world didn't have opinions of their own**" (DF 11, G1 portal, Brazil, 26 April 2019). The commenter seeks a stimulus to conversation in his own way, and demands that circulation be strengthened so that communication flows move forward (Braga, 2011a, 2017). Thus, from this specific example one can infer that the conversation does not need to continue in this specific locus. It can spread into distinct digital platforms and into daily life in face-to-face interactions.

The open space for comments is by the very circulation activity nature, a place of enunciation of exchanges, discussions, differences and divergences. Tension is also present in the relationship between participants - be they the media or enunciators that leave their opinions there.

An ongoing problem

As referred previously, this reflection is part of one of the investigation movements ongoing since 2014, which deals with the complexity of discursive circulation in a context of society under mediatization. The emergence of circulation puts the classic and linear relation between production and reception to rest and challenges us to look at a media environment different from that in which the field of communication was established. It challenges us to look at two poles as distinct as they are distant.

From the methodological point of view, it is worth making an observation about the evidentiary perspective, from which we dialogue with Verón (2004, 2013) and Braga (2008, 2011b). As said in different passages throughout the text, it is understood that the process of methodological and theoretical construction is intrinsic to the investigation process and should not be taken as *a priori* decisions, as the last author highlights. Therefore, from the collection of comments made in the last eight

years on the participation of the public in spaces opened by the media (for different researches, case studies), some recurrences were identified in relation to the questioning of such rules. These indices challenged the proposition of a specific reflection for such work. In this way, the choice of the examples presented here is justified by the indexes and not *a priori* and denotes that the construction of scientific knowledge is a continuous, relative, unfinished process and in permanent process.
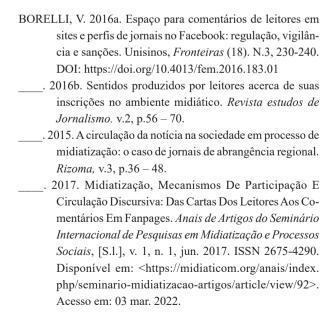
We agree with Braga (2017) when he said that subjects involved in interaction processes end up developing more or less reiterated connection actions. Throughout the observations made in the last seven years, a certain recurrence at some interaction practices has been noted: comments about the theme topic proposed by the media and that expand by means of exchange, cooperation and conversation (Rodrigues, 2001); enunciations with no relation with the theme topic proposed and that indicate political polarization, incivility and intolerance; postings out of the context proposed and that aim at advertising some service, disseminating chain letters, campaigns, etc.; comments highlighting the media's editorial project, which question what the report is, which tell whether it is or not a news item, in addition to those that are an object of the present paper and that question the functioning in this locus and norms of participation: the rules, the commenters' charter and what can and should be said. The clues extracted from the discursive fragments listed here, point to different regulation tactics beyond what is predetermined by the media.

The great majority of terms of use published by the media highlights that they do not approve any form of discrimination, however the space's regulation does not manage to curb enunciations as to incivility. Thus, even though the media specifies civility rules to publish comments, much of what is posted has racist, misogynous, prejudiced content, and others. Therefore, there is no guarantee that what is said is effectively fulfilled, because although it enunciates that rules of coexistence must be respected, the media system cannot manage these processes. Many meanings are adrift, follow unexpected flows and, as seen, the very participants of the enunciation device make sanctions by saying what can and should be said, and ask for more control from the media system and respect to what is there said.

In this sense, the intention is to widen, timely, the study of a problem, the fact that discursive practices developed in this locus are in an environment in which polarity, intolerance, and incivility prevail. Overall, many divergences are observed, despite the media regulation and the proposal that this can be a place of conversation and exchange. Such singular interpretations stem from the fact that they are distinct interpretations to what is said, since in recognition there are multiple grammars. However, some enunciations make us question if we effectively live in a democratic society where civility and the exercise of citizenship should rule interaction relationships between social actors.

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