

For the right and proud to be heterosexual on the Third Sunday of December: an analysis of the bill number 1.672/2011, by Eduardo Cunha

Pelo direito e orgulho de ser heterossexual no terceiro domingo de dezembro: uma análise do projeto de lei número 1.672/2011, de Eduardo Cunha

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Abstract: Studies and discussions about the community of asexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transvestite, transgender, transsexual, queer, intersex and more communities – ALGBTQI+ – raise questions about the cis-heteronormative positioning of/in society, bringing discussions about (a)sexualities and gender identities in order to (dis)build the imposed binarism. In response to these (dis)constructions, conservative sectors of Brazilian society launch bills to “protect” heteronormativity. The corpus of this article is composed of the bill 1.672/2011, by Congressman Eduardo Cunha. The goal is to establish the third Sunday of December as “Heterosexual Pride Day”. When analyzing the discursive sequences of the justification of the bill, it is observed how homosexual and heterosexual identities are constructed in the dimension of citizenship.

Keywords: citizenship; discrimination; discourse; bill; silencing.

Resumo: Os estudos e discussões acerca da comunidade de assexuais, lésbicas, gays, bissexuais, travestis, transgêneros, transexuais, queer, intersexo e mais – ALGBTQI+ – levantam questionamentos a respeito do posicionamento cis-heteronormativo da/na sociedade, trazendo discussões a respeito das (a)sexualidades e identidades de gêneros a fim de (des)construir o binarismo imposto. Como resposta a essas (des)construções, setores conservadores da sociedade brasileira lançam projetos de lei a fim de “proteger” a heteronormatividade. O corpus deste artigo é composto pelo projeto de lei 1.672/2011, do deputado federal Eduardo Cunha. O objetivo desse projeto é estabelecer o terceiro domingo de dezembro como o “Dia do Orgulho Heterossexual”. Ao analisar as sequências discursivas da justificativa do projeto de lei, observa-se como são construídas as identidades homossexuais e heterossexuais na dimensão da cidadania.

Palavras-chave: cidadania; discriminação; discurso; projeto de lei; silenciamento.

Introduction

French Discourse Analysis, introduced in the 1960's by Michel Pêcheux's studies in France, brings up the argument that Linguistics was neglected as a subject, history and

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ideology. This course is based on Linguistics, Historical Materialism, Theory of Discourse and works with discursive runs.

Research done in French Discourse Analysis introduces a relation genre and discourse, because they work with the reality in their historical and political discontinuities: as the issue of feminism (SERAFIM, 2016; LIMA & ZOPPI-FONTANA, 2016; ZOPPI-FONTANA & OLIVEIRA, 2017), the language about genre (GARCIA & SOUSA, 2016; MEDEIROS, 2016; ZOPPI-FONTANA, 2015) and about the LGBT community (DOMINGOS, 2015; FERREIRA-CASSANA, 2006; KRONKA, 2000). The opening for studies of discourse that encompass questions of gender and sexuality, the asexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex and more communities (ALGBTQI+) have become the object of discussion and gained visibility in soap operas, television shows, political speeches etc. These changes result in making diversity more popular among people, seen in the way dress, behave and relate to others. Thus, a disruption of the binary, i.e. a (de/re)construction of the imposition of ALGBTQI+ communities through a cis-heteronormative and sexist vision, that determines which features apply to each gender identity and/or sexual identity, shows that identity is not attached to our sexuality (BUTLER, 2003). This visibility and consequent rupture led heterosexual people to wonder about their own sexual identity and the political issue of pride, because non-heterosexuals and/or non-cisgender people celebrate pride around the world.

This paper aims to discuss the discourse of justification of the bill number 1.672/2011 that “Establishes the ‘Heterosexual Pride Day’ to be celebrated on the third Sunday of December” authored by Eduardo Cunha, Congressman of the Party of the Brazilian Democratic Movement to identify the linguistic mechanisms of the terms heterosexual and homosexual and how they are built into the corpus.

Literature review

French Discourse Analysis in Brazil, based on studies of Michel Pêcheux, is composed by three fields: the path of History, Historical Materialism, in which the history, as well as the language, is not transparent, the subject makes history (ORLANDI, 2006); the path of Linguistics, in which “[...] language is not transparent, but opaque” (MARIANI, 1996:29, translated by me), i.e. it is possible to see the words, but not necessarily in the

way that the speaker thinks it is interpreted, the theory of Syntactic Processes; and, finally, through Subject, in that he is “[...] eccentric, as he is affected by the real language and also by real history, not having control over the way they affect” (ORLANDI, 2013:20, translated by me), that is, the Theory of Discourse.

This discipline of inset arose in 60’s, in France, at a time when there was a series of strikes protests, riots and demonstrations. Some countries, highlighted France, deviated to the left, on the political issue. In that same decade, feminism and civil movements came up positive to the ALGBTQI+ communities.

It is in this socio-historical context that Michel Pêcheux begins his collaborations. French Discourse Analysis, “[...] reflects critically the relationship between logic, Philosophy and language to build the foundations of discourse analysis in Historical Materialism and proposes a materialistic perspective of language practices in particular the training of discursive processes” (CAZARIN, 1995:3-4, translated by me). French Discourse Analysis, “while a hybrid knowledge area, whose objects refer to the relationship between knowledge and fields of the science of language, Sociology, Social Psychology and History, emerges in the French scene in the late 60’s [...]” (ZANDWAIS, 2011:48, translated by me).

French Discourse Analysis has an eminently political character since it analyzes politically and ideologically oriented discursive practices and their nuances. Therefore, we can say that politics and discourse are inseparable. “When we talk about discourse, therefore, we are reporting from the material aspects to the ideology, namely, in the meeting off language and ideology” (MARIANI, 1996:26, translated by me).

The sense of a discourse is given only when this is inserted between other discourses, that is, with which it comes about and agrees or disagrees, composing a network of discourses that, together and connected by similarity or difference, can provoke senses.

The ideology “[...] is the condition of the constitution of the subject and of the senses” (ORLANDI, 2013:45, translated by me), given that the human being is taken to interpret any symbolic object in order to “clarify” the meaning of words and things.

The meaning of a word erases its material character, causes it to be perceived as something that refers to different discourses. “The words get their senses of discursive formations in their relations” (ORLANDI, 2013:46, translated by me).

In saying certain statements, others are silenced. Understanding that this is a silencing which comes from studies about forms of silence. “[...] there is a way of being in the sense [...]. The words themselves exude quiet” (ORLANDI, 1993:11, translated by me). This means the silence does not speak it means. This silence, however, differs from Ducrot’s conception about the implicit. Unlike the implied meaning, it “appears and sometimes give as superimposed on another meaning. [...] the sense of silence is not something together, overlapped by the intention of the interlocutor: there is a sense in the silence” (ORLANDI, 1993:12, translated by me). That is, through this conception, Orlandi (1993) argues that we need to avoid that presumed silence in order to assign it a metaphorical sense in relation to the meaning.

The silence founder, in the design of Orlandi (1993) does not refer to the lack of sound and/or words. In the words of the author, this is the “principle of all meaning. This silence has to do with the ‘place’ that allows the language to mean” (ORLANDI, 1993:70, translated by me). As that silence is not the absence of sounds, words, this is taken as meaning, like history.

The politics of silence or silencing “[...] is defined by the fact that when you say something erased necessarily other way possible, but in a given discursive situation” (ORLANDI, 1993:75, translated by me). It is subdivided into two forms: the first, as of incorporation, i.e. “you say ‘x’ not to (let) say ‘y’, being this the sense to dispose of what was said. It is the unsaid necessarily deleted” (ORLANDI, 1993:76, translated by me); and the second, called local silence, which is forbidden to say. “This is the quiet in the form, it is a circumscribed policy strategy of policy: is the production of banned” (ORLANDI, 1993:76-77, translated by me).

There was a censorship based on Medicine discourse with a relationship to the Religious discourse about the ALGBTQI+’s relationship. It was made to prove that homosexuality was a disease possible to be healing with psychological therapies (FERRARI, 2005), being also called “homosexuality”. Due to different discourses, homosexuals were considered abnormal, and the word “homosexuality” considered negative.

For many years the silence was imposed to the homosexual, a silence that does not put them just outside the heterosexual society, but he was as a criminal-sinner-sick

subject, from the discourses that could give him direction. And he made no sense if this was not this place already established (SOARES, 2006:20, translated by me).

The human being to be in silence cause a certain “discomfort”: “When someone picks up in silence, rearrange, change the ‘expression’, the gestures. Searches have an expression that ‘speaks’. It is the visibility (readability) that configures and sets up. The language is to assure, unify the sense” (ORLANDI, 1993:36, translated by me). That is, the relationship with the language is important to make the human being visible. The subject does not support the absence of words, need to silence talk, according to the author.

Methodology

From the perspective of French Discourse Analysis, “[...] it is the mode of operation of language, without forgetting that this is not a fully working languages, since it is a part of the conditions of productions, which represent the mechanism to place the protagonists and the object of discourse” (FERREIRA, 2000:29, translated by me).

Considering that “the analysis of discourse aims at completeness ‘horizontal’, in extent, but yes, a completeness ‘vertical’, in depth, considered in relation to the objectives of the analyst” (ORLANDI, 1996:157, translated by me), the corpus of this work consists of the justification of the bill number 1.672/2011 establishing the “Heterosexual Pride Day” to be celebrated on the third Sunday of December.

According to Courtine (2014:54, translated by me): “the establishment of a corpus is discursive, in fact, an operation that is to perform, by means of a material device in a way that odds are issued in the definition of the goals of research”. Through discursive sequences (DS), I show how Eduardo Cunha addresses homosexuality and heterosexuality as part of citizenship.

Eduardo Cunha’s justification

The bill under discussion was written by Congressman, Eduardo Cunha, proposing to establish the “Heterosexual Pride Day” to be celebrated on the third Sunday of December.

DS 1: This proposal aims to protect rights and guarantees to heterosexuals to demonstrate and have the prerogative to be proud of it and not to be discriminated against for it (BRASÍLIA, 2011:1, translated by me).

The author marks in this DS, the objective of this bill: “to protect rights and guarantees” already provided to the heterosexual community. There is also the possibility to think about it, considering the purpose of the bill, that it will soon be forbidden to be heterosexual in Brazil. The possibility of heterosexual people “manifest”, seen as a right and a guarantee, assumes that heterosexual people are running the risk of not being able to get out the street, kissing in public anyway, and off being oppressed; it also works as a positioning against homosexual. The ALGBTQI+ communities do parades, go to the streets asking for rights and mobilizations against prejudice. The author of the bill alludes to actions that the ALGBTQI+ communities already does. It is up to illustrate that in Brazil there was already the “Heterosexual Pride Parade”, being the first to be held on June 17th, 2007 in São Paulo, and was attended by 30 people, and can be interpreted as a response to the ALGBTQI+ communities struggle for equality issue since there is already a “Gay Parade”, according to Folha de São Paulo². Therefore, the point of this first Parade does not move away from the goal of Cunha’s bill, showing the presence of interdiscourse in this DS, related to the discourses of ALGBTQI+ communities. “In this text itself, in its constitution, there are interpretive gestures that show the positions of the subject who produced it. Understanding means to clarify the interpretation of the gestures made by the subject, these gestures are including in the text” (ORLANDI, 2012:171). That is, Cunha uses arguments, positions from ALGBTQI+ communities to justify the creation of the law aimed at heterosexuals.

This constitutive discursive memory, we call interdiscourse. Its face, the directions in which stabilizing senses move. One thing or another the stabilization or processing will depend on the nature of the act of interpretation produced, the position of the subject his/her affiliation to the interdiscourse. In this functioning of interdiscourse, oblivion is fundamental. Because we forgot that the senses can be other (ORLANDI, 2012:171-172, translated by me).

² FOLHA DE SÃO PAULO. *Parada Hétero pede “liberdade” e critica dinheiro público na Parada Gay*. Available on: <<https://bit.ly/2JoiPgH>>. Access: March 16th, 2016.

So, if the bill were approved, the heterosexuals could be proud of what they are, show their sexuality. That way, they could go out on the street, kissing in public, without fear, because the Congressman is working to ensure that heterosexuals are not “discriminated against”. In saying this, Eduardo Cunha assumes this community, based on their sexual orientation, are victims of prejudice, a possible “heterophobia”, meaning that it comes from the discourses on discrimination to gays, which are dead, beaten because of their sexual orientation. “As interdiscourse memory’s historicity, the relationship with exteriority extends, opens to the other directions, disperses, sets in motion” (ORLANDI, 2012:172, translated by me). That is, once again, the Congressman dates to situations that occur/occurred with ALGBTQI+ communities’ members and the back to the heterosexual community.

The discourse is constitutively heterogeneous. Even though the heterogeneity cannot be located, it is constitutive. There is no discourse that is “pure”, that is constituted and closes by itself. In this DS you can clearly see the silencing of homophobia because it assumes that heterosexual people are victims of a society that oppresses them. What the Congressman is saying is that the standard has been the homosexuality. Heterosexuality, in a way, is not mentioned, because it is set to something that should be seen as “normal/natural”, so the bill, to ensure the “demonstration” can be linked to the prejudice against homosexuals. Few people need to assert their heterosexuality because the pre-built (PÊCHEUX, 1995) that prevails is that when the person does not claim his/her sexuality (SILVA, 2000), it is assumed that this is different from the other, heterosexual sexualities, it is from the Other that the sexuality is named. In other words, the Congressman makes a “vitimism” from the fact that a person “is heterosexual”, because there is no news or data on the internet to allow heterophobic violence in Brazil in recent years.

As for the bill of Eduardo Cunha, concerning the manifestation of the heterosexual community, which has never been prohibited, as a heterosexual couple can kiss publicly without being overwhelmed by the population in general, considering that this is a more powerful group, reminding that this power is historically constructed, contrary to what occurs with people ALGBTQI+.

It is easy to conclude that in these processes of identities recognition there is at the same time, the attribution of differences. All this implies the

imposition of inequalities, of systems, hierarchies, and is undoubtedly a closely interwoven tapestry of power circulation in society. The recognition of “the other”, that he/she does not share the attributes we possess, is made from the social place we occupy. More broadly, the companies perform these processes and, then, build paths and contours of the borders between those who represent the norm (which are in keeping with their cultural patterns) and those that remain outside its banks (LOURO, 2007:15, translated by me).

The heterosexual population Congressman’s bill will manifest themselves about their sexuality which is considered “natural” and will show the power relations at the expense of non-heterosexual orientations by erasing them and excluding historical ALGBTQI+ movements fought and still fight to become visible in society.

[...] censorship is not a fact of individual consciousness of the subject, but a fact that happens in discursive limits of different discursive formations that are compared. This is a process of identification and relation to the subject’s relations with the speakable. In this perspective, there is no self-censorship. Censorship always puts an “another” in play. It always takes place in the relationship of say and cannot say, say “other” and say the “another”. It’s always about a discursive another, that on censorship, have the function of limit a subject or not allowed to say (ORLANDI, 1993:107-108, translated by me).

This is about the “proud”, since this happens when there is violence against the “different”, the “other” subject. In addition, as there is no data about the “discrimination” suffered by heterosexuals, which is referred in DS 1 of this bill, this could, considering the conditions of production, be interpreted as “victimism”.

DS 2: At the time, these discussions about prejudice against homosexuals, end up creating another type of discrimination against heterosexuals and, furthermore, the stimulation of “gay ideology” outweighs any fight against prejudice (BRASÍLIA, 2011:2, translated by me).

The issue of “stimulation of gay ideology” refers to the “Brasil sem Homofobia” Program, launched in 2004, which aimed to combat violence and prejudice against the ALGBTQI+ communities. The material was to be distributed in schools across the country

by the “Fundo Nacional de Educação Básica”. A controversy, however, prevented it to be distributed. In 2011, shortly before being printed, conservative sectors of society and the National Congress made a campaign against the project, claiming that the “gay-kit”, as it became popularly known the material would be responsible for “encouraging homosexuality (sic) and promiscuity”.

This can also be understood as the idea that being non-heterosexual and/or non-cisgender people can be propagated, disseminated and advocated, so that other people will want to join the homosexuality, as if this was not a social, cultural and subjective construction, but something formally learnt or stimulated. The Congressman does not speak of the “stimulation of hetero ideology”, which indicates that he believes to be something natural, that it is independent of defense or stimulus. “[...] all of this is determined outside of the subject” and “it is more spoken than it speaks” (AUTHIER-REVUZ, 1990:26, translated by me).

DS 3: The goal here is the free manifestation of families of those who respect the sexual options of whoever but want to make their option clear and will not be ashamed of it. Soon the heterosexuals will become the media propaganda to reactionaries, and we cannot have our family being vaunted option with pride (BRASÍLIA, 2011:2, translated by me).

When Eduardo Cunha says something concerning the family in justification of a law on the “hetero pride”, he makes an association between heterosexuality and the ability to start a family, causing a silence of other forms of families, leading to a deletion of these, and therefore to a decrease of his visibility in the struggle for rights. “[...] the otherness is a constitutive part of the say that limits and regulates the discourse always crossed by ‘others’ discourses. That is how you do the necessary linguistic relationship with the ideological: the senses have no owners” (ORLANDI, 1993:139, translated by me). This discursive formation also relates to Religious discourse, commented on the analysis of DS above, about the creation of humans according to the vision of God. Remembering that homosexual couples can generate biological children, being one of the members, a trans person. For example: a cis gay man and a trans gay man; a cis lesbian woman and a trans lesbian woman. It is possible to notice the “respect” you have regarding the non-heterosexual, however, again, seeing this as a choice.

Unlike discourses that suggest that balances to homosexuality, as seen in the DS the Congressman proposes, as a way to fight prejudice, fight for the right to declare your

heterosexuality and not be ashamed of it, using, therefore, terms used by ALGBTQI+ activists, like there is an oppression against heterosexuals.

The negotiations that the speaker sets between its own discourse and the discourse of the other is the movement that changes what you say through your marks and that who assumes a responsive attitude, towards Bakhtinian, the discourse is built by crossing other discourses (COSTA, 2014:60, translated by me).

In this sense, Cunha puts the “gay ideology”, by suggesting that the heterosexual community suffers by imposing an ideology that worships only homosexual pride. In this way, the Congressman makes use of discourse in which non-heterosexuals and/or non-cis people feel embarrassed due to heteronormative discourse, “reversing” the solution. Once again, he causes a silencing to homosexuals, or even makes a mockery of the struggle for these rights and freedom to express their identity, he disqualifies this fight.

The discursive formations are seen in the background of the bill of the Congressman concerning the “oblivion” (PÊCHEUX, 1995) of discourses delivered by ALGBTQI+ activists in every DS analyzed. Cunha speaks about the family in order to enhance the “traditional” model: man + woman = children, bringing the issue of reproduction by way of argument, but also reaffirming how taboo the issue of sex for pleasure which the “traditional” family takes to the house (FOUCAULT, 1988).

Conclusion

To support the analysis of the justification of the bill from the perspective of French Discourse Analysis, the “[...] researcher affiliated with discourse analysis is not out of history, of the symbolic or ideology. He puts himself in a position that allows offset to observe the process of production of senses and their conditions” (SOARES, 2006:12, translated by me).

It is seen that in the justification of the bill reviewed on the creation of the “Heterosexual Pride Day”, taking into account the subject who wrote it is positions and the people who “bet” (CHARAUDEAU, 2008) in the politicians about the ideas for the acts of language it is possible to you propose the following equation: bill + heterosexual =

prejudice against non-heterosexual people, because the justification criticizes the ALGBTQI+ communities.

The homosexual subject, in the justification of the stereotypical bill:

[...] the stereotype, like the cliché, depends on the interpretative calculation of the alocutor and his encyclopedic knowledge. For the analysis of discourse, it constitutes, with the topoi or common places, one of the forms adopted by the doxa, or set of shared beliefs and opinions that underlie communication and authorize verbal interaction. This commonsense knowledge, which includes the evidence of exchange partners [...] varies according to the time and culture. It appears in the light of ideology for certain currents that exercise the ideological analysis of discourses – the stereotype is thus related to the pre-constructed [...] (CHARAUDEAU & MAINGUENEAU, 2014:215-216, translated by me).

In Cunha's bill, discursive formations related to law, religion and medicine were observed. It is noted that these discourses are intertwined during all the justifications referring to their positions on the theme. In other words, through medical-religious discourse, they justify the creation of the “Heterosexual Pride Day”.

It is constructed as the one who should feel satisfied with anonymity, be happy in a relationship confining it to private environments, namely, the discourse of justification of this bill sets up a hierarchical relationship between heterosexuals x homosexuals.

When the congressman speaks of the rights of the homosexual community, as if they were privileges suggests that, with the creation of the law, the heterosexual community would have its rights guaranteed. Thinking of “Heterosexual Pride Day” as a “response” to “Diversity Parade” and “Gay Pride Day”, it is inferable that since the ALGBTQI+ community has a day for them, the heterosexual community has the right to one day for itself as well. Considering the conditions of production and the position of the subject, this is “equality”. However, Cunha “forgot”, and this forgetfulness has no relation to the neurological capacity (PÊCHEUX, 1995) that the Parade of Diversity and the “LGBT Pride Day” are symbolic milestones against the prejudice suffered by the ALGBTQI+ community.

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