

History Textbook: enunciative analysis of indigenous *Ethnogenesis*

Livro de História: análise enunciativa da Etnogênese indígena

BÁRBARA DE SOUZA FREITAS

Doutoranda em Linguística pela Universidade Federal de São Carlos (SP).

E-mail: freitasbarbaras@gmail.com

Resumo: Este artigo tem por objetivo analisar a expressão “reelinização” em enunciados do livro didático de História do Ensino Fundamental II, da coleção Projeto Araribá, e como ela pode sustentar ideias estereotipadas em relação ao indígena no Brasil. Para isso, seleciona-se um recorte desse material referente à situação indígena contemporânea no Brasil e utiliza-se da orientação teórico-metodológica da Semântica do Acontecimento para o estudo do sentido dessa expressão, trabalhando, especificamente, com os conceitos de cena enunciativa; designação; reescrituração; Domínio Semântico de Determinação (DSD); memorável. A análise mostrou que afirmações feitas nos enunciados estudados a respeito do processo de reelinização indígena no Brasil podem sustentar estereótipos comumente atribuídos ao indígena.

Palavras-chave: Livro didático. Indígena. Semântica do Acontecimento.

Abstract: This paper aims to analyze the expression “ethnogenesis” in statements from the History textbooks of Elementary School II, from the Projeto Araribá collection, and verify how it can hold stereotyped ideas about indigenous people in Brazil. For this analysis, a selection of this material referring to the contemporary indigenous situation in Brazil is selected and the theoretical-methodological orientation of the Semantics of the Event is used to study the meaning of this expression, specifically working with the concepts of the enunciative scene; designation; rewriting; Semantic Determination Domain (DSD); memorable. The analysis showed that statements made in the statements studied about the process of indigenous ethnogenesis in Brazil can support stereotypes commonly attributed to the indigenous.

Keywords: Textbook. Indigenous people. Semantics of the Event.

1 INITIALS CONSIDERATION

Textbooks are the most used material in Brazilian schools (BITTENCOURT, 2009) and this made them a common target of studies. These studies investigate the quality of textbooks used in Brazilian public schools and point out some gaps or problems related to the way they discuss ethnic and cultural diversity, as requested by official Brazilian education documents.

Some studies have analyzed History textbooks from the National Textbook Program. This program started in 1985 aiming to organize and represent the Brazilian textbook policy. Besides this program, the government also created a Textbook Guide for Brazilian education in the same year. It is a document that guides teachers to choose textbooks used at schools. Nowadays, this Guide not only guides the choice of the textbooks but also brings criticisms and evaluations of the books that make up the National Textbook Program.

The History Textbook Guide, particularly, is aware of the fragility of some contents and one of them is the topic about indigenous people. For this Guide, topics about indigenous people are still the “most fragile component among the teaching materials approved by the National Textbook Program”¹ (BRASIL, 2016, p. 33), so this content needs more attention from teachers, editors and authors. Although there is a Brazilian law – law 11.645, from March 10, 2008 – that makes mandatory the study about history and culture of indigenous people, teaching materials still have some inadequate approaches about this theme. Some studies (BITTENCOURT, 2009; DOS SANTOS; DOMINGUES, 2017; GANDRA; NOBRE, 2014; FARIA, 1987) show, for example, that some teaching materials present a stereotyped view of indigenous people as well as a limited social role of this people in the contents that they appear. These studies investigate many textbooks and, among them, *Projeto Araribá* (APOLINÁRIO, 2014) stands out because it is not only used in this work, but is usual in this kind of research.

The National Textbook Program approved the *Projeto Araribá* collection many times and many schools have used this collection recently because of its approval at the last edition of the program. There are two reasons to emphasize *Projeto Araribá* in this paper: 1) according to Gandra & Nobre (2014), in 2008, it was the second most acquired collection by the government for Brazilian public schools; 2) although many schools have selected this collection, it has been subject of studies. They pointed out as results a stereotyped view of indigenous people and a silencing of these people in History contents (DOS SANTOS; DOMINGUES, 2017; GANDRA; NOBRE, 2014). Because of these aspects, it became relevant to investigate whether collection *Projeto Araribá* still approached this theme in that way. Therefore, this paper aims to analyze the expression “ethnogenesis” and reflects upon its meaning to see if there are some impacts from this on the image of indigenous people in Brazil.

We based this analysis on the concepts of semantics of the event. Eduardo Guimarães founded this theory and developed some concepts, such as enunciative scene, designation, rewriting, and semantic domain of determination, which we essentially use in this work. Next topic is going to explain these and other concepts from the theory.

2 SEMANTICS OF THE EVENT: DISCUSSING CONCEPTS

Semantics of the event is a semantics of the enunciation, which studies meaning in a materialist way, being one of the theories that “do not take language as something

¹ Original text (portuguese version): “componente mais frágil no conjunto de obras didáticas aprovadas pelo PNLD”.

perfectly clear, considering that its relation to the real world is historic”² (GUIMARÃES, 2017, p. 7). For semantics of the event, the comprehension of language is symbolic, that is, words are not directly related to things of the real world but they are related to the way the world means in language.

Considering that semantics of the event is a semantics of the enunciation, we have to define how this theory understands enunciation. Enunciation, according to Guimarães (2018, p. 22), is “an event that produces meaning. In other words, the meaning is set up through enunciation, through the event of language functioning”³. And this event builds itself historically, which means that there is a specific temporality for enunciation. This temporality is not chronological as we commonly call time, this temporality of the enunciation has three important parts, that are: present – the event itself –, future – the possibilities of interpretation –, and past. The past of the enunciation is a “remembrance of other enunciations”⁴ (GUIMARÃES, 2017, p. 17). Thus, this remembrance is called memorable⁵, that is what articulates old enunciations to a new one. In other words, memorable is what brings some new meanings based on enunciations from the past.

This paper analyzes textbooks enunciation and, as we said before, the contents of this material can efface and silence cultures and ethnicities (SILVA; CARVALHO, 2004), which are not part of the hegemonic culture, and it can, in some way, strengthen prejudiced discourses. Therefore, it is necessary to investigate textbooks’ contents as political tools that can diffuse some specific ideas (SILVA; CARVALHO, 2004) which make unfair the approach of contents about ethnicity, religion, and culture. We can discuss this political aspect of the textbook on this theory through the concept of space of enunciation.

According to Guimarães (2017, p. 25), spaces of enunciation are “spaces of functioning of languages, which divide, combine and change themselves on and on for a contest that has no end. Spaces of enunciation are spaces inhabited by speakers that are separated according to their rights to enunciate and the ways they use for it”⁶. Therefore, this space of enunciation is a space characterized by division, by dispute among speakers, which means that this space is a political one, considering politics as a contest that divides real world unequally (GUIMARÃES, 2017). We can consider these political aspects in our object of analysis, textbook, because this is not only a teaching material but a “product from the publishing world, which obey the evolution of the manufacturing techniques and the commercialization from the market logic”⁷

² Original text (portuguese version): “não tomam a linguagem como transparente, considerando que sua relação com o real é histórica”.

³ Original text: “um acontecimento que produz sentido. Ou seja, o sentido se produz pela enunciação, pelo acontecimento de funcionamento da língua”.

⁴ Original text (portuguese version): “rememoração de enunciações”.

⁵ The portuguese word used for this expression in the theory is *memorável*.

⁶ Original text: “espaços de funcionamento de línguas, que se dividem, redividem, se misturam, desfazem, transformam por uma disputa incessante. São espaços ‘habitados’ por falantes, ou seja, por sujeitos divididos por seus direitos ao dizer e aos modos de dizer”

⁷ Original text: “uma mercadoria, um produto do mundo da edição que obedece à evolução das técnicas de fabricação e comercialização pertencentes à lógica do mercado”.

(BITTENCOURT, 2009, p. 71). Thus, the textbook is political and manages what should and what should not be in its contents.

Speakers emerge in enunciation from this political space we described. Semantics of the event does not comprehend speakers as concrete and physical people. The theory set the speakers into enunciation figures, which arise from different ways of saying something. This division of the enunciation figures is the political agency of speakers. This “makes what we can call an enunciative scene”⁸ (GUIMARÃES, 2018, p. 57). This enunciative scene is a methodological-descriptive category. This category comes from “specific ways to access the word, given the relations between enunciation figures and linguistic forms”⁹ (GUIMARÃES, 2018, p. 31).

There are three types of enunciation figures: speaker, speaker-x, and enunciators¹⁰. According to Guimarães (2017), the speaker represents the origin of the speech, although, in order to be a speaker who can say something, the speaker has to be in a social position¹¹ so it can become a speaker-x, in which “x” is the social position it occupies. Enunciators do not occupy any social position. They merely say the speech. We have some types of enunciators and the most important ones here are:

- (a) Individual enunciator: it works as the origin of the speech, as if it existed besides the enunciation, out of it;
- (b) Generic enunciator: it refers to generic sentences (like proverbs);
- (c) Universal enunciator: it speaks things related to the real world, true things (for example, “every man dies”).

Besides the enunciation figures, the construction of the meaning also depends on relations between expressions in the enunciation and relations between expressions from different enunciations. It is the articulation between expressions that makes linguistic elements mean in enunciation. Articulation is a procedure that enables the construction of meanings in semantic relations (GUIMARÃES, 2011). Thus, a word only means something related to another word in a statement, which means when it is related to another statement in an enunciation or in another one, and so on. That is, “words have a history of enunciation. They are not in a text as a principle without any past”¹² (GUIMARÃES, 2007, p. 81). That past, as we have said, is the memorable of the enunciation. This is the reason why we can appeal to meanings from other enunciations to build the new meaning for an expression in the present. Relations between linguistic forms enable the meanings from an enunciation.

We are going to explain in this topic some of these relations of the enunciation, which are relations of determination, designation, and semantic domain of

⁸ Original text: “produz o que podemos chamar uma cena enunciativa”.

⁹ Original text: “modos específicos de acesso à palavra dadas as relações entre as figuras da enunciação e as formas linguísticas”.

¹⁰ In portuguese, these terms are respectively: *Locutor*, *alocutor-x* and *enunciadores*.

¹¹ Announcers speak not as people, but as the social position that they occupy, for example: teacher, president, mother.

¹² Original text: “as palavras têm sua história de enunciação. Elas não estão em nenhum texto como um princípio sem qualquer passado”.

determination. These concepts are important to understand how we analyze the expression “ethnogenesis”.

Relation of determination happens when some expression connects to another expression in a statement, one characterizing and determining the other. This kind of relation is fundamental for the meaning of the expressions (GUIMARÃES, 2007) and it takes to the process called designation. Designation occurs when relations of determination build the meaning, in other words, “when something is designated, a meaning is built” (GUIMARÃES, 2007, p. 82). Moreover, when we achieve the designation, we have the semantic domain of determination. Semantic domain of determination is the result from the analysis of relations of determination; it shows the meaning of an expression.

Some other important relation to explain here is rewriting. It consists in a procedure in which an expression resays something, constructing a new meaning. In other words, the rewritten element does not mean in the same way as the element that rewrites, even if they are part of a process that resays something previously said (GUIMARÃES, 2009).

Thereby, with the statements from the textbook, we can analyze the relations of determination and rewritings to describe the semantic domain of determination and see how the enunciation forms the meaning of the word “ethnogenesis”. In the next topic, we make a short analysis of the expression, beginning from the identification of relations of determination and rewriting. Then, we discuss the memorable of the enunciation and, lastly, we show the semantic domain of determination.

3 ANALYZING ENUNCIATIVELY: MEANINGS OF “ETHNOGENESIS” IN THE TEXTBOOK

This section brings the analysis of some parts of the textbook from the elementary school collection *Projeto Araribá*. The specific text, which the parts come from, is the chapter “Some balance of contemporary Brazil”. This topic is about problems and improvements that occurred in economic, social and educational aspects of Brazil since 2008. The focus of the analysis is the topic “Indigenous people currently in Brazil”, referring to the situation of indigenous people in the country.

Sentence (1), presented next, is the main sentence in this work:

(1) Government policies, as social programs of income transfer to poor people, including indigenous people, support the process of **ethnogenesis** of many indigenous people. The mobilization of these people, who became important interlocutors of debates about indigenous rights, environmental preservation, sustainable development and land demarcation, also supports this process¹³.

¹³ Original text (Portuguese version taken from the textbook): “Acredita-se que a **reterritorialização** de muitos povos indígenas é favorecida pela existência de políticas públicas, como programas sociais de transferência de renda para a população mais pobre, incluindo os índios, e a mobilização dos próprios indígenas, que se tornaram importantes interlocutores em debates

Before starting the analysis, it is necessary to see another sentence that will help to understand the term ethnogenesis:

(1a) Two factors help to explain the indigenous population increasing in the country: high rate of fecundity and the process known as **ethnogenesis**, which occurs when somebody assumes the identity or the tradition of an ethnicity¹⁴.

Taking sentence (1a), we can say that the part “which occurs when somebody assumes the identity or the tradition of an ethnicity” rewrites by definition the word *ethnogenesis*. This means that this part of the sentence determines *ethnogenesis*.

We also have a rewriting case in sentence (1), in which the parts “government policies” and “mobilization of these people” rewrite by enumeration the expression *ethnogenesis*. These parts designate the expression because the text takes these two things as factors that support ethnogenesis. Still about this sentence, we can affirm that “as social programs of income transfer to poor people, including indigenous people” rewrites by specification the expression “government policies”. Establishing these relations between the expressions, we can conclude that to affirm that “government policies” favor the ethnogenesis process is to say that many indigenous people assume their identities and traditions because it makes them part of the population who integrates the social programs of income transfer. This statement of the textbook can refer to the memorable of stigmatization and stereotypes commonly attributed to indigenous people in Brazil who exercise the right to be part of social programs. Lazy and complacent are some of the stereotypes usually assigned to indigenous people and Brazilians have been reinforcing them¹⁵. Therefore, we can say that, in these analyzed sentences, the process of self-declaration of some identity influenced by social programs designates ethnogenesis. And the statement that affirms that government policies are one of the factors of the indigenous identity self-declaration process brings a stereotyped view about indigenous people.

Besides this stereotype of the sentence, it is unsure about the information given in it. Although it is a textbook and it has a scientific language, there are no references for the information. So we can affirm that the statement does not assure what it says. Therefore, it shows that the statement constitutes a speaker-author, marked, at the same

sobre temas como direitos indígenas, conservação ambiental, desenvolvimento sustentável e demarcação de terras”.

¹⁴ Original text (Portuguese version taken from the textbook): “Dois fatores ajudam a explicar o crescimento da população indígena no país: altas taxas de fecundidade e o processo conhecido como etnogênese ou **reetinização**, que ocorre quando se assume a identidade e as tradições de uma etnia”.

¹⁵ A research by Federal University of Mato Grosso analyzed stereotyped contents from university students about indigenous people. Investigating what students thought about Brazilians’ conception of indigenous people, the results showed that 63,1% answered that Brazilians consider indigenous people to be lazy and 53,6% answered that Brazilians think indigenous people are complacent (Patatas, 2014).

time, by the authority of making the book and by the submission to marketing aspects that mobilize the teaching materials commercialization in Brazil. The sentence also constitutes another enunciation figure, an individual enunciator that appears in the part “as social programs of income transfer to poor people, including indigenous people” because this shows an example of government policy, so it is a specific choice of the author. Besides, this part shows a particular point of view about the theme treated in the enunciation.

Therefore, although sentence (1) does not make an explicit reference to stereotypes or even prejudice about indigenous people, it subtly reinforces a stereotyped idea related to indigenous people when it justifies the increasing of this population from ethnogenesis. In other words, when the textbook affirms that many people assume indigenous identity influenced by the government policies to assist indigenous communities, it supports a wrong and stereotyped idea about indigenous people in Brazil and undermines the indigenous struggle for space in society.

4 FINALS CONSIDERATION

From an analysis based on concepts of semantics of the event, it was possible to see how, in the same enunciation, different perspectives about a same theme may be built due to the ways of saying that are constituted in it. The textbook aimed to inform about the situation of indigenous communities in Brazil; however, the analysis of the relations between expressions showed how an apparently objective and impartial discourse reveals meanings that can, in some way, reinforce stigmatization and even prejudice about some people, in this case, indigenous people.

Having the textbook as one of the most used materials and as reference of teaching material in Brazilian schools, researches that evaluate the quality of these books and point out issues of contents that can produce stereotypes or ideas that injure ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity are really important. These researches can help to improve teaching materials and to raise awareness about the issues in the contents of this kind of material.

REFERENCES

APOLINÁRIO, Maria Raquel. **Projeto Araribá: história**. 4. ed., São Paulo: Moderna, 2014.

BITTENCOURT, C. **O saber histórico na sala de aula**. 11. ed. 2ª reimpressão. São Paulo: Contexto, 2009. (Repensando o Ensino).

BRASIL. Ministério da Educação. **PNLD 2017: história – Ensino Fundamental anos finais**. Brasília, DF: Ministério da Educação, Secretaria de Educação Básica, 2016. 140p. Disponível em: <http://www.fn.de.gov.br/component/k2/item/8813-guia-pnld-2017>.

DOS SANTOS, M. A. L.; DOMINGUES, A. C. B. G. Representações visuais dos indígenas no livro didático de história: estereótipos e colonialidade, **Educação Básica Revista**, 3(2): 253-272, 2017.

FARIA, A. L. G. **Ideologia no livro didático**. São Paulo: Cortez: Autores Associados, 1987. (Coleção polêmicas do nosso tempo).

GANDRA, E. Á.; NOBRE, F. N. A temática indígena no ensino de História do Brasil: uma análise da coleção didática Projeto Araribá (2008-2013), **Revista do Lhiste-Laboratório de Ensino de História e Educação**, 1 (1), 2014. Disponível em: <https://www.seer.ufrgs.br/revistadolhiste/article/view/48309>.

GUIMARÃES, E. **Semântica: enunciação e sentido**. Campinas, SP: Pontes Editores, 2018.

GUIMARÃES, E. Domínio semântico de determinação. *In*: GUIMARÃES, Eduardo; MOLLICA, Maria Cecília (org.). **A Palavra: forma e sentido**. Campinas: Pontes Editores, RG Editores, 2007.

GUIMARÃES, E. A enumeração: funcionamento enunciativo e sentido, **Cadernos de Estudos Linguísticos**, 51(1): 49-68, 2009. Disponível em: <https://periodicos.sbu.unicamp.br/ojs/index.php/cel/article/view/8637219>

GUIMARÃES, E. **Análise de texto: procedimentos, análises, ensino**. Campinas, Editora RG, 2011.

Guimarães, E. **Semântica do acontecimento: um estudo enunciativo da designação**. 4. ed. Campinas, SP: Pontes Editores, 2017.

PATATAS, L. D. A. C. **Preconceito, identidade e representações sociais: relações intergrupais de estudantes indígenas e não indígenas no ambiente acadêmico**. 2014. Tese (Doutorado em Psicologia Social) – Programa de Pós-Graduação em Psicologia Social, Universidade Federal da Paraíba, João Pessoa. Disponível em: <https://repositorio.ufpb.br/jspui/handle/tede/6980>.

Silva, R. D.; CARVALHO, M. D. A. O livro didático como instrumento de difusão de ideologias e o papel do professor intelectual transformador. *In*: **Atas do III Encontro de Pesquisa em Educação da UFPI/II Congresso Internacional em Educação**. Universidade Federal do Piauí, 2004. p. 1-11.