HUMOR VIDEO MONTAGES: SOME REFLECTIONS FROM A GENDER PERSPECTIVE

VIDEOMONTAGENS DE HUMOR: REFLEXÕES SOB A PERSPECTIVA DO GÊNERO

MONTAJE DE VIDEO HUMOR: REFLEXIONES BAJO LA PERSPECTIVA DE GÉNERO

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ABSTRACT: This article aims to look at how montage videos constitute a speech genre. In this way, we try to think like this genre was mobilized to construct sense around the ex-president image of Lula. As theoretical and methodological basis, we take the ideas of Mikhail Bakhtin to think about the issue of gender discourse montage videos looking to position ourselves in a more mediatized. We support the gender issue from the notion of scene of enunciation proposed by Dominique Maingueneau.
KEYWORDS: Derision. Political discourse. Speech genre.

RESUMO: Este artigo tem como objetivo observar como videomontagens do *YouTube* se constituem em um gênero do discurso. Desta forma, iremos pensar como esse gênero foi mobilizado para construir sentido em torno da imagem do ex-presidente Lula. Com o embasamento teórico-metodológico da análise do discurso, em especial na questão do gênero videomontagem, na perspectiva bakhtiniana, procuramos posicionarmo-nos sob um viés mais midiatizado, assim como apoiamo-nos na questão do gênero a partir da noção de cena enunciativa proposta por Dominique Maingueneau.
PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Derrisão. Discurso político. Gênero de discurso.

RESUMEN: Este artículo tiene como objetivo observar cómo los videomontajes de YouTube se constituyen en un género de discurso. De esta manera, pensaremos cómo se movilizó este género para construir sentido en torno a la imagen del expresidente Lula. Con la base teórico-metodológica del análisis del discurso, especialmente lo relacionado con el género videomontaje, en la

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perspectiva bakhtiniana, tratamos de posicionarnos bajo un sesgo más mediatizado y nos apoyamos en la cuestión del género a partir de la noción de escena enunciativa propuesta por Dominique Maingueneau.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Burla. Discurso político. Género discursivo.

1 INTRODUCTION

This article aims to investigate how YouTube video mounts constitute a genre of discourse. For this question, we will think about how this genre was mobilized to build meaning around the image of former president Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva promoting the construction of the humor speech. Although it is relevant to evaluate the process of building the image of the former president also in other digital platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, among others, we restrict ourselves in this work, video mounts that were posted on YouTube at the time of the Brazilian presidential elections 2006, but still circulating and receiving comments on their respective pages.

Such multimodal texts, in our view, circulate as pamphleteer discourses – short and violent text that attacks an institution or a known person – distinct from both satire and controversy, however constitutively derisory, which build one writing of the history of Brazilian presidential campaigns quite different from the official history published in the editorials, in the opinion articles, in the political analyses, which circulate in Brazilian newspapers and magazines, for example.

Thus, from the corpus of work analyzed during the research initiation (RUIZ, 2012)[1] and the master's dissertation (ARAÚJO, 2011)[2] which is composed of a set of video montages that circulated on YouTube, we selected one – Lula the illiterate (LULA…, 2006) – to understand how this construction of the genre occurs, through a set of elements - image, sound, and verbal material – that produce, in a certain way, different effects of meanings that can resignify the official discourses, (dis) characterizing the image candidate's politics, making them predominantly negligible.

Our society today is organized around new multimedia technologies in which the diversity of discursivities (oral, written, visual and multimodal) in politics, as well as other modes of meaning production, have radically transformed modalities and sayings of the subjects. These changes are configured not only in the order of language but mainly in the order of the enunciable, constructing a new saying of the other, altering the effects of initial senses, and provoking humor as a result.

Derisively[3] Organized pamphleteer texts produced by a producer subject who circulates them on the digital platform can show what an opinion article or editorial could not say. Otherwise, it would suffer legal sanctions for slander, defamation, and at the same time, contribute to a depoliticization of the politician, a trivialization of public speech in the face of media support.

Thus, as an objective, understanding the nature, role and discursive functioning of these various types of political and communication discursivities, as well as their linguistic and discursive changes, is nowadays essential to know not only the functioning of Brazilian Portuguese in Brazil. Its socio-political component, but also for the understanding of the functioning of the writing of the history of Brazilian politics.

In promoting the (dis) characterization of former President Lula's political image, the producer uses satirical humor to promote an actual effect, in which he inscribed in a given position contrary to the assumptions defended by the candidate of the Party of Workers (Partido dos Trabalhadores, PT), believes and with this, wishes to pass to their interlocutors.

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[1] FAPESP Process: 2012/02090-4.

[2] FAPESP Process: 2011/09851-8.

[3] Derision can be defined through Simone Bonnafous (2003, p. 35) argumentative perspective as "[…] the association of humor and verbal aggressiveness that characterizes and distinguishes it from pure injury." These are a set of verbal violence such as mockery, jokes, puns, ironic wordplay, etc. aimed at ridiculing something or someone. Unlike the irony that presents itself "subverting the boundary between what is assumed and what is not by the speaker" (MAINGUENEAU, 2005, p. 98) shows a speaker assuming in linguistic materiality what he says in order to disqualify the speaker recipient and his opponent.

The speeches promoted by video mounts are presented not only as transparent but also as a discourse that denounces and warns Internet users/voters about the posture and competence of presidential candidates. To answer our initial question, we will briefly explain the theoretical assumptions that underlie our theoretical path: the gender perspective.

As from two different theoretical perspectives, we start, in the next topic, for the analytical construction of our work taking as a theoretical and methodological foundation the considerations of the philosopher Mikhail Bakhtin developed in his work *Esthetic of verbal creation* (2003), as well as theorizations about of Dominique Maingueneau's (2006) enunciative scene with the aim of observing how video montages are constituted from two distinct theories that thought about gender in distant historical moments. This analytical way undertaken reflects, briefly, the two paths traced by foreign authors about the notion of discourse genres; Our journey allows us to observe the composition of this multimodal genre that circulates in the digital environment and to understand, with it, its process of constitution and circulation of meanings, ratifying it in a discursive genre of video mounts.

2 A LITTLE THEORY...

Beginning his presentation of ideas on the issue of discourse genres in *the Esthetic of verbal creation*, Mikhail Bakhtin (2003) states that where there is human activity, the language will be used, and these forms of use are as diverse as the fields in which they are used. Therefore, language would be constituted by statements that reflect its characteristics through three elements: thematic content, language style, and compositional construction[4] which, inseparable, configure the "[…] relatively stable types of utterances in certain fields of language use," called speech genres (BAKHTIN, 2003, p. 262). The ongoing relationships between individuals open many and innumerable fields that become the stage for the creation of the most diverse types of genres: from the simple dialogue of daily life to official documents of different roles and origins. Consequently, there is such significant heterogeneity in gender studies that it is not possible to delimit its outline.

As stated by Bakhtin (2003), it is imperative in any current study that "[…] the nature of utterance in general and the particularities of the various types of utterances, that is, genres of discourse" are known to carry out an undistorted and well-grounded investigation (2003, p. 265). The video montages in question are inoculated by meanings already predetermined by the speaking subject; thus, the speaker/ Internet user itself can produce by depleting – and controlling – the whole idea that can arise from that genre.

Taking another position in relation to discourse genres, Dominique Maingueneau (2006), in *Scène d'énonciation*, states that in the eyes of Discourse Analysis (AD), in an enunciative aspect, the utterances produced in a discursive process are more than fragments of a natural language discourse or discursive formation; they are also "samples of a certain kind of discourse," which implies that each utterance is linked to a genre that binds to a specific order derived from a "ritual" (MAINGUENEAU, 1997, p. 34). Because of the variety of rituals that exist and each of them is the result of meeting others more, studying the genres of discourse is also an incessant task.

In this sense, it is from the concept of enunciation scene that Maingueneau formulates the gender category; In this manner, he also adds that every scene of enunciation presumes an encompassing scene and a generic scene: the encompassing scene is linked to the type of discourse, that is, to understand a particular text we need to fit into the encompassing scene and thus "[…] 'define the partners' status and a certain spatial temporal framework "(BAKHTIN, 2006, p. 111). However, it is not sufficient to identify the discursive activities and accompanying speech genres. For such, there is a generic scene because the genre of discourse raises a more specific context - "roles, circumstances, material support, purpose" (BAKHTIN, 2006, p. 111). Gender and subgenre then

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[4]. According to Bakhtin (2003), the thematic content is not the subject itself, but it is about the different attributions of meanings and the possible cuts made in relation to the speech genre; The style of language is treated by the author as the choice of the linguistic resources used by the producer in the composition of the genre, whose objective is to reach his interlocutor and, thus, generate a response, that is, "[…] in each field there are and are employed genres that correspond to the specific conditions of a given field; It is to these genres that certain styles correspond (BAKHTIN, 2003, p. 266); and finally, the compositional construction, which according to the Russian author, refers to the structuring of the text or how it is organized in society, if it is recognized and relatively stable. Although such theoretical considerations are quite pertinent, we will not deal with them in our analysis.

define the roles of the participants; the generic scene enables the properties of genres and subgenres that are indicated by the encompassing scene.

As a result of this double: encompassing and generic scene is that they decide together "[…] the stable space within which the utterance makes sense, that is, the space of the type and genre of discourse" (MAINGUENEAU, 2006, p.112). However, this kind and kind of discourse can also be imposed by another scene, the scenography that is founded by discourse itself. In other words, we have the discourse that erupts from its scenography in order to establish the enunciation scene that legitimizes it, aiming to convince its recipients – in this case, the video-mounters would be the spectators-netizens - to occupy the place that the scenography indicate. In addition, the scenography supposes two places: that of an enunciator and a co-enunciator that bring a chronography (moment) and a topography (place). Maingueneau (2006, p. 114, emphasis added) summarizes the role of scenography when he says that "it is both the origin and product of discourse".

In essence, we can say that the scene of enunciation that involves the genres of discourse may be imposed by somewhere else or constructed by discourse that evokes a particular frame, given enunciator and co-enunciator. Moreover, this framework that refers to the author is not static, it influences the components of the genre, which also imposes a scenography (MAINGUENEAU, 2006, p. 47).

Each genre of discourse is linked to a generic scene that imposes the actors, the moment, the place; others are associated with a set design that is defined by choice of speech producers. Thus, the generic scene may cover different scenographies, as it is part of the context, while the scenographies are determined by the text.

Finally, we can briefly state that in order to understand better the theoretical-analytical reworking of the discourse genre category undertaken by Maingueneau, it is necessary to consider that, within AD, the issue of enunciative subjectivity, specifically the instances of enunciation of the subject it is seen from the consideration of social places and their implications for the network of discursive places in which speakers are subscribed to utter. Defending that no exteriority can be defined between the subjects and their discourses, the French linguist points out the places and historical-social practices as decisive for the definition of the circumstances in which gender manifests itself since it is a social activity of a particular type.
Based on an articulated conception of language on the assumption of constitutively between the social/historical and the discursive, he defines the enunciation scene by dividing it into three interdependent levels: the encompassing scene, the generic scene, and the scenography. Together they make up a dynamic scenic framework that makes possible the utterance of a particular discourse. Thus, according to Maingueneau (2006), there is a complementarity relationship between the encompassing and generic scenes, which act as regulatory instances of discursivity, defining the type and genre stabilities of discourse: every type is a grouping of genres, and every genre is related to a type. The encompassing and generic scenes configure the scenic framework of discourse, "[…]the stable space within which the statement acquires meaning" (BAKHTIN, 2006, p. 87).

As follows, both theories can both show us the stability that the discourse genre raises so that we can understand it as such, as Bakhtin (2003) teaches us and, at the same time, take the idea of the enunciative scene of contemporary discourse analyst Maingueneau (2006) to account for this set of elements such as image, sound and verbal materiality, brought concomitantly in a dialogical relationship.

3 VIDEO MONTAGE: A DISCURSIVE GENRE?

As already explained, we aim to verify how video montages can be constituted as a genre of discourse and, thus, reflect how this genre was mobilized to build meaning around the image of former President of the Republic, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva. To this end, the video montage selected was Lula, the illiterate, made available in the digital environment, YouTube, at the time of the Brazilian presidential elections of 2006, but still circulating on social networks and receiving comments on its pages at its posting site. Such video montage, in its production, has the function of disqualifying Lula's political figure, that is, the producer, by cutting and bringing to the video different moments of his speech in a televised political debate, (res) meaning the information through

insertions and montages make the internet users/interlocutors laugh, demonstrating the viewer's approval and the sharing of ideas, making the derisory speech producer the winner (MERCIER, 2001).

Precisely, we can say that video montage consists of clippings of an electoral debate in the race for the Presidency of Brazil in 2006 promoted by Rede Bandeirantes (Band) interspersed with slides with statements by the montage producer, with each clipped speech of the debate, a slide appears, and then we hear a bell ringing, as in a *Quiz Show,* because each candidate's "mistake" triggers a bell as a warning.

This compositional structure of video montage allows us to say that its producer brings some clippings of Lula's speech in the debate that inscribes him in a position contrary to that of the former president; At the same time, the producer is responsible for inserting other statements that carry an ironic or direct tone about what is being shown; furthermore, these statements alternate with particular clippings consisting of moving or static images of the debate that are interspersed with a bell and sometimes some music. All this configuration engendered by the video producer in a discourse considered as multimodal allows other meanings around the former president's speech to be created to mean (res) it through an ironic (de) characterization, a kind of concealment that provokes satirical humor, that is, that seeks to ridicule it.

From this point of view, it is possible to understand that video montage would be understood as a new genre based on what Bakhtin (2003) proposes since, in order to build it uses the electoral debate, the characteristic elements of a *Quiz Show* and also the statements in slides. That "[…] lose the immediate link with the concrete reality and the real statements of others" to make sense in the construction of statements that arouse controversy, in such a way that the new genre, when born, engages in existing ones – the electoral debate and the question and answer game (BAKHTIN, 2003. p. 263).

The video, for that reason, is organized in order to induce the internet user/spectator to (dis) characterize Lula's political image, highlighting his already crystallized stereotypes in society – of being "dumb," "illiterate," "drunk," among others – besides promoting satirical humor thanks to the insertions and modifications elaborated by the producing subject. In this sense, the video consists of excerpts from the second-round debate with his opponent, then-candidate Geraldo Alckmin (both images of the candidates, for much of the montage, are separated by a central bar), and there are sounds added (like the bell). Most slides contain statements that reverberate the former president's alleged grammatical inaccuracies and the non-use of the standard norm, reaffirming certain already crystallized stereotypes. Such statements inserted in black background slides reverberate the Portuguese "errors" – such as the lack of agreement between subject and predicate, for example –, (res) meaning the senses around their image, generating laughter as a result. Given the compositional structure of the montage and its theme, it is possible to interpret that the producer has the following question: how can a political subject like Lula, who produces so many "mistakes" and "mistakes" in the Portuguese language, assume a position as important as that of President of the Republic?

It is only possible to identify the president's choice of recharacterization by electing his speech as a target because there are antecedent and stereotypical statements such as that he is poorly educated, illiterate, and cannot make the "correct" use of language. These and other discourses, present in the social imagination, perpetuate what common sense says and fertilize the ground on which the idea of disqualifying the candidate is born. For this, the producer of the montage mobilizes a secondary genre, in the Bakhtinian perspective – multiform – composed, basically, by two primary genres: the television electoral debate and the *Quiz Show.* Nevertheless, when watching a *Quiz Show* – quiz game – in general, no one hopes that the player is wrong and disqualified, but preferably that he hits and receives the prize. At various points in the video - for a total of four minutes and forty-one seconds – the meaning is shifted, as with each passage of the former president, the producer inserts a statement that appears after the sound of a bell, creating an expectation around the "mistake," warning. From the first bell in which the slide "missed this one" (00: 08s) opens an expectation opens – every other time that Lula's image appears, we expect him to make the supposed "mistake" or "mistake." The bell that sounds after each speech attests to this "mistake"; so, after two or three utterances, the text is no longer expected, it would not have to enter, it would no longer be essential to show the "error" to make it laugh. So, there is a transfer from the debate genre to the genre of a *Quiz Show.* This builds a kind of memory of expectation.

We observe that, in order for the humor to be realized, the subject must cut and decontextualize Lula's discourse, then insert those he produced at the end of each highlighted passage, which, therefore, may induce comic interpretation and produce laughter in the receiver of speeches (BAKHTIN, 2003). Let's cut it out:
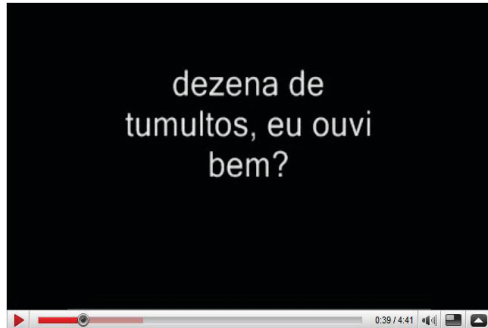

Figure 1: Lula o analfabeto (00:37s)
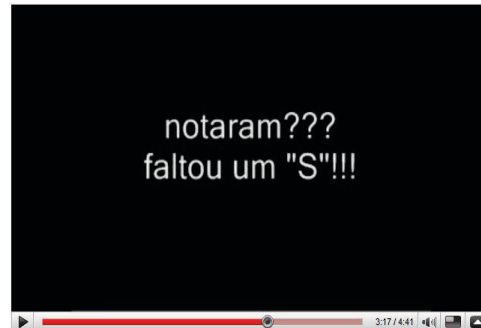**Source:** File collected by the authors

Figure 2: Lula o analfabeto (03:16s)
Source: File collected by the authors

It is salutary to say at this moment that, as much as it targets Lula's speech in the debate, the producer/enunciator subject constructs his saying also in response to what has already been saying about him. We understand what Bakhtin calls the dialogical tones (2003, p. 298) necessary to understand the whole style of a statement. These dialogical tones appear in the video montage when the enunciator asks questions seeking an answer from the viewer (figures 1 and 2), characterizing the way style, expression and meaning are inserted. This is because our ideas are born in the process of interaction, and the reflection on the verbalization of thought is noticeable.

When the utterances and words of the other are inserted into the utterance and stressed as "from the other" - that is, highlighted - reciprocal relationships are established between the introduced discourse of the other and that of the enunciator. "The intonation that isolates the discourse of the other marked by quotation marks in the written discourse is a phenomenon of a special kind: it is a kind of alternation of the discourse subjects transferred into the utterance" (BAKHTIN, 2003, p. 299).

(1)   E2[5]: "every month has dozens of riots"
(2)   E1[6]: a dozen riots, did I hear well? [supposed non-existence of the "s" in dozens] *(00:33s*-00:36s – figure 1)
(3)   E2: "of all gang crimes"
(4)   E1: "have you noticed??? Missed an "S"!!!" [supposedly in the word gang] *(03:12-03:18)*

In the case of the above clipping, this intonation that separates one speech from another is well noticed because it is a video montage – it is as if every time Lula spoke, quotes were opened. These quotes insert a meta-enunciative commentary from the enunciator in relation to his other. However, the limits that establish both discourses are often exceeded. The speaker's speech penetrates these limits and spreads into the other's speech with ironic or outraged tones. With the reading of the transcript, this becomes clear in some passages where the speaker repeats Lula's speech questioning the use of the language: "a dozen riots, did I hear well?" [Supposed no s in dozens].

We know that this evaluative tone around the way the former president uses the language is recurrent and that he can often reflect common sense. Thus, statements are created by taking into account the responsive attitudes of the other – viewers and netizens – and that is why they are produced.

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[5]Seeking to maintain an exclusive analytical position on discourse, we opted to semantically transcribe Lula's first discourse and describe the interpretative orientations of the video producer's discourse, in order not to provoke other possible discourses, since, in many clippings, certain sounds produced by the first enunciator do not seem very clear to us. Thus, we will not focus on the phonetic of the first utterances, keeping the original spelling of the words.

[6]E1Subject producer of video montage; E2: Lula.

We can understand that from the Bakhtinian conception of gender, every genre becomes relatively new when it is always supported by existing ones; there is no birth at random, as very language activity arises from a story, from a root in another genre. Moreover, assuming its three characteristics, it would be possible to state that the Lula video montage the illiterate brought to our reflection has the compositional structure organized by multimodality by encompassing excerpts from an electoral debate, elements of a *Quiz Show*, which bring together verbal and non-verbal materiality. Verbal as sound an image, the theme is the "mistakes" made by a presidential candidate (as we have already noted in the title of the video montage), and finally, the style, as we have shown above, is constructed by resuming the passage where Lula does not use the cultic norm accompanied by a question in an ironic tone, the dialogical tone.

On the other hand, as we set out to think at the beginning of this work, another perspective on the notion of gender, in contemporary times, is that of Maingueneau (2006), which starts from the notion of an enunciative scene composed of three intertwined levels: the encompassing scene, the scene generic and the scenography. In Lula, the illiterate are faced with the encompassing scene of the humor speech, while the generic scene, which has a close relationship with the encompassing scene, is composed of the video montage genre, that is, an electoral debate interspersed with slides that carry the humor speech. Thus, the encompassing and generic scenes compose the scenic framework that enables the emergence of the discourse of opposition to the candidate Lula, the interspersed utterances produce meaning about the political subject and deconstruct him through the use of language. In addition, to convince viewers-netizens and make them laugh, the video montage in question breaks the stage design of the *Quiz Show*, the quiz game that, in this case, has as its conductor the producer of the montage, Lula as a candidate for the award (to be elected President of the Republic) and the spectators would be the voters, all situated at the time of the game that implies a television studio setting and sound features, such as the bell, to mark errors and hit the questions made.

Given the above, we note that both the perspective of Maingueneau (2006) and Bakhtinian theory (2003) can think of gender, each focusing on what is dearest to it; In some ways, they even complement each other because they think discourse in different ways. We emphasize that we do not take one over the other. Bakhtin (2003) is the forerunner in discourse studies on this theme, while Professor Maingueneau (2006) proposes to think about the notion of gender from another enunciative point of view on how to focus on new media.

In Lula the illiterate, the construction of meanings around Lula's social and political image occurs through the joining of sounds, images and verbal materiality, thus constituting a vital digital genre that, amidst the constitution of discourses in the interdiscourse, contrary scorn discourses reverberate in its formulation, that is, it is possible to find distinct discursive formations capable of producing dysphoric (or unfavorable) meanings about Lula's image, (re) updating already established and crystallized meanings in society in general, around his political figure: "illiterate," "poorly educated," among others.

Besides, finally, we cannot fail to point out a paradox in the discursive construction of this video montage. Throughout the video, the producer lists the different Portuguese "mistakes" made by the then-candidate Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, imposing, in a way, the prestige of the standard norm, which supposedly the literate candidates – which is not the case with Lula – could enjoy, since the effect of meaning that is built by the assembly is that he, PT candidate, be "dumb." Also, when we look at the title of the video, we see the producer himself incurs a grammatical "error," contradicting himself in relation to the standard normative model that he defends when he does not meet the scoring rule, such as Lula illiterate, for example.

4 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

After this brief reflection on the discourse genre category, we consider that digital video montage is a genre because it was possible to describe and interpret the elements that constitute it as a discourse genre, taking into account characteristics that work imbricated, that is, they are syncretic texts that demand more resources for analysis and description when combining the verbal and nonverbal. These are the multimodal discourses that direct the meaning they aim for. In the case of video montage, the objective is to disqualify Lula's image (political man) through derisive humor.

Thus, we can say that this way of (re) signifying the meaning (of the television debate) first through another distinct one contributes to these "new" discourses being taken as pamphleteer speeches, that is, short and violent texts that attack an institution or a known person. Hence, these pamphleteers texts can contribute to the construction of the history of Brazilian presidential campaigns quite distinct from the official history published in editorials, opinion articles, political analyzes, which circulate in Brazilian newspapers and magazines, e. g. thanks to the way the Electronic media support, YouTube, is constituted. Thus, these pamphleteers texts, being derisively organized, say what an opinion article or editorial could not say, under penalty of legal sanction for slander, defamation, etc., but can also contribute to a depoliticization of the politician, a trivialization of public speech. Such montages would be responsible for the propagation of an "acceptable" satirical humor precisely because it is part of a humorous genre of promotion of laughter, under the promise that those who do not accept such comedy, derisive – dissimulation would have no critical sense.

By pamphleteer, we mean the speech that violently attacks a person or an institution and circulates in the most diverse media, especially in social networks such as cartoons, caricatures, photomontages, video montages, among others. Such pamphleteer discursive practice, apart from not being circulated only in times of society's ethical or moral crisis, cannot be seen only as a seasonal phenomenon since it still receives comments on its pages. We believe that like journalistic discourse, pamphleteering discourse also performs historiographic operations, that is to say, it also helps to produce a history of the present through the mobilization of linguistic-discursive and imagetic mechanisms (DE CERTEAU, 2000). Such pamphleteer practice enables new meanings to be brought to the thread of speech, (re) affirming or (re) establishing memories and sayings already crystallized around the figure of Lula.

Therefore, one cannot analyze a given discourse - derisory discourse, for example - without raising the meanings that (co-) exist at the intersection of these different materialities, a discourse tied to an image can produce a sense that detached from the image would not exist. Addressing discourse genres is an incessant task because, with each click, we can have a new genre forming, so our conclusive ideas make room for other works from this one.

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