

# Between strike and locaute: *ethè* in dispute for the place of truth in the ideological scenographies that paralyzed Brazil<sup>a</sup>

## *Entre a greve e o locaute: os ethè em disputa pelo lugar de verdade nas cenografias ideológicas que paralisaram o Brasil*

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### ABSTRACT

The road stoppage that occurred in Brazil in 2018 put in dispute ideological forces that use fear to perpetuate themselves in the collective imagination. In this article, we will emphasize the news that characterized the stoppage as a lockout, as opposed to the strike intended by the category. Our objective is to analyze the media discourse that favored the scenography intended by the government. Studies on belief formation, by Bateson; on emotions, by Damásio (2000) and Ekman (2011); ideology of disconnection, by Taylor; and the semiotic dimension of the Bakhtin Circle (Volóchinov, 2017) are used as theoretical contribution. The French school of discourse analyses by Dominique Maingueneau is the main theoretical framework (2008a, 2008b, 2013). The research is exploratory, bibliographical, with a qualitative approach.

**Keywords:** Communication, ideology, scenography, discursive ethos, political discourse

### RESUMO

A paralisação dos rodoviários no Brasil em 2018 colocou em disputa forças ideológicas que usam o medo para se perpetuarem no imaginário. Neste artigo, daremos ênfase a notícias que caracterizaram a paralisação como um locaute, em contraposição ao cenário de greve pretendido pela categoria. O objetivo é analisar o discurso midiático que favoreceu uma cenografia pretendida pelo governo. Como aporte teórico, são mobilizados estudos sobre formação de crença, de Bateson; emoções, de Damásio e Ekman; ideologia da desconexão, de Taylor; e semiologia, do círculo de Bakhtin. O marco teórico de análise do discurso é o da escola francesa, de Dominique Maingueneau. A pesquisa é do tipo exploratório, bibliográfica, com abordagem qualitativa.

**Palavras-chave:** Comunicação, ideologia, cenografia, ethos discursivo, discurso político

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## INTRODUCTION

**B**ETWEEN MAY 21 and 31 2018, Brazil faced an unprecedented stoppage of basic services triggered by a truckers strike that claimed a reduction in the price of diesel oil. Roads were blocked and the circulation of essential items such as food, cooking gas and fuel was totally compromised. Basic services, such as public transportation and rubbish collection, were hampered. The lack of supply forced the trade to close its doors, causing an estimated loss of almost one hundred billion *reais* in key sectors for the economy. The impact of the losses led economists in the center of the country to lower their projections for increasing the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) from 3% to 2% in 2018 (Silva, 2018). In addition to showing total dependence on road transport, the stoppage also highlighted two words that marked the ideological disputes that still hover in the Brazilian collective imagination today. After all, was the demonstration a *strike*, foreseen in the Federal Constitution, or a *lockout*<sup>1</sup>, a movement considered illegal by the country's legislation? Dispute for the place of truth between these two words created doubts among the population about whether or not to support the movement of road workers. The mutation of *ethè* (Maingueneau, 2013) of the actors involved in the enunciative scenes that were formed in the period, orchestrated by ideologies that use fear as an element of persuasion, placed government, protesters, and the press in a scenario of ideological conflict that further aggravated the moods among sectors of society already troubled by successive post-impeachment events. Other attempts to label the strike as “a request for military intervention” or “the beginning of a communist dictatorship” put the Federal Government, the road workers' unions, and truck drivers into a simulation dispute. In the midst of uncertainty, Brazilian society saw its ability to act, react, and resist an impasse of this magnitude, withering, turning the episode into one of the most striking in the country's political and economic history.

<sup>1</sup> Lockout is a practice prohibited by Brazilian law, in which the employers refuse to give the workers the working tools necessary for their activity. Unlike the strike, which occurs with the stoppage of workers, the lockout is due to the stoppage of employers.

The road stoppage showed that, in addition to being hostage of a precarious and weakened transport system, Brazilian society has fragile support bases for democratic institutions, which are constantly threatened by a rhetoric that uses fear as a mechanism to control collective imagination. This characteristic leads us to revisit aspects of the episode in the light of some knowledge about meaning, emotions, and discourse. For this, one of the numerous symbolic journalistic constructs on the strike will be analyzed, more specifically a report produced by the closed channel broadcaster GloboNews, which sought to portray the motivations of the alleged strike according to the evidence presented by the government that would characterize the strike as being a

lockout. In view of this *corpus*, some questions arise that guide the entire analysis herewith proposed. Did GloboNews use rhetorical strategies to elicit fear, a characteristic of the so-called disconnect ideology (Taylor, 2006)? If so, what scenarios emerge from this interdiscursivity? And what *ethè* are in dispute for the purpose of persuasion and of giving a new meaning to the audience? This work aims to analyze the media discourse around the video, which contributed to the conception of a scenography intended by the government, as opposed to the general strike scenario defended by the unions. As theoretical contribution, studies on the formation of the belief by Bateson (1987) are used, in interface with the studies of emotions by Damásio (2000) and Ekman (2011), anchored in the semiology of Bakhtin's circle (Volóchinov, 2017) and in the concept of disconnection ideology, by Michael Taylor (2006). The main theoretical framework for discourse analysis is that of the French school, especially the categories of scenography and ethos by Dominique Maingueneau (2008a, 2008b, 2013). The research is exploratory, bibliographic, with a qualitative approach.

Based on the aforementioned theoretical contributions, we will begin this article understanding how emotions operate in the construction of meanings and in the formation of ideologies. In the second part, we will conceptualize the ideology of disconnection and its relationship with discursive scenarios that elicit fear. And, finally, we will analyze the *ethè* in dispute in this scenography from the analysis of the corpus already specified.

## EMOTIONS AND IDEOLOGICAL SIGNS

The disputed beliefs that culminated in the truckers' strike in Brazil require a brief conceptualization of the term ideology. In this work, we treat ideology as a set of beliefs and meanings shared by groups of people that define the filters with which they perceive the world. Theorists of Bakhtin's circle (Volóchinov, 2017) advocated, even at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, everything that is ideological has a meaning. In other words, it connects something perceived outside the subject with an internal experience, lived through a sign. Volóchinov (2017) is categorical in defending that "where there is no sign, there is also no ideology" (p. 91). Any physical object perceptible to the five human senses can be perceived as the image of something that takes on different meanings, while remaining a part of material reality, but refracting or reflecting other realities. Volóchinov comments (2017):



The sign is not only a part of reality, but also reflects and refracts another reality, which is why it is capable of distorting it, being faithful to it, perceiving it from a specific point of view and so on. The categories of ideological assessment (false, true, correct, fair, good, etc.) can be applied to any sign. The ideological field coincides with the field of signs. They can be matched. Where there is a sign there is also ideology. Everything that is ideological has signical significance. (p. 93)

Theorists of Bakhtin's circle came to the understanding that the processes of understanding any ideological phenomenon cannot be carried out without the participation of an inner discourse, in which all manifestations of ideological creation, that is, all other non-verbal signs are involved by the verbal universe, emerge in it and cannot be isolated or separated from it completely. For this reason, they argue that ideologies and socio-political regimes were connected through verbal interactions, elements of analysis of what Marxists call social psychology.

Gregory Bateson (1987), when proposing a dialogical model for the understanding of human communication, knowing that any meaning requires an internal linguistic structure, argues the belief system that directs human thinking is not a rigid system. It is constantly moving, adapting to the environment, making concepts more flexible, but it is based on the deep structures that are formed even in the first years of life, and that will determine capacities, behaviors and reactions. Such structures, which serve as unconscious guidelines, would largely be determined by emotions.

When Gregory Bateson (1987) came across the logical and mathematical work of Bertrand Russel, he formulated what he calls logical levels of learning and change. Robert Dilts (2014) studied the hierarchy of these logical levels and realized the function of each of them consists of synthesizing, organizing, and directing the intentions of the lower level. Therefore, he suggests the existence of a logical structure that determines the functioning of learning and behavioral changes based on a hierarchy of what he called levels of processing and organizing, or neurological levels. There are six levels, where the lowest in hierarchical processing are controlled and determined by the highest levels (Dilts, 2014).

The first level, or the lowest, is related to *reactions* and emotional impulses without any use of reason, often triggered when we encounter unexpected environments or situations. The second level refers to *behaviors* related to habits and conditioning. The third level covers *capacities*, a set of acquired skills that determine what the subject is or is not able to do in his interactions with the world. *Beliefs*, then, constitute the fourth level, which establishes

guidelines for everything that can be true and everything that cannot be true. Above beliefs, Dilts (2014) also mentions two other levels, the fifth being what he calls a *mission*, which defines the subject's identity, giving meaning to life and individuality; and the sixth level, which he calls *vision*, related to the notion of belonging to something greater, to spirituality and to the philosophical questions of humanity, responsible for giving sense to existence (Figure 1).



Figure 1. Neurological levels. Adapted from Dilts (2014).

Any change at a higher level necessarily radiates downwards, precipitating changes also from lower hierarchical levels. As an example, imagine a baby about to be born. His psychic system, still without rational properties, instinctively knows that the body is fed by the umbilical cord (belief/truth) and, therefore, does not yet have the ability to breathe (capacities). Obviously, the habit of breathing does not yet exist (behavior), nor does this baby react to the absence of air (reactions/environment). The abrupt change of environment caused by the birth event causes the baby to deal with an extreme situation. Discomfort of thermal shock activates a set of emotions and sensations that will trigger instinctive and innate organic processes (mission) and, therefore, naturally pre-programmed by the organism that conceived it (vision). The new need to breathe, to feed on oxygen through the air that enters the lungs, makes the newborn begin to perform the movements of inspiration and expiration thirty seconds after delivery (Lent, 2008). Therefore, this entire chain of “traumatic” events will promote a new meaning in the baby’s belief system. Instinctively, the belief that “you must breathe to survive” becomes a guideline rooted in its unconscious. It is this belief that provides the ability to breathe and make the necessary inhalation and exhalation movements so that the air reaches the lungs and oxygen molecules return to feed the bloodstream. In the same way, reactions start to obey this new guideline to establish the



necessary reflexes to this vital process of survival in the new environment in which the small being will exist. The level of beliefs, therefore, would be the connecting bridge that establishes the relationships and modes of interaction of the individual with the environment, determining reactions, behaviors, and learning, following a logic that obeys individual and collective instincts within the subject's cognitive trajectory. In a dialogical way, the environment will act on the subject's beliefs, causing him emotions and provoking diverse reactions, culminating in restructuring and reframing within his constantly moving set of beliefs.

The example of the functioning of neurological levels in a baby is pertinent, as it allows the inference that the hierarchy of neurological levels is operative even before the formation of consciousness and the development of linguistic capacity. What changes when developing language is that the subject is able to assign sentence codes to describe the meanings he gives to the inner and outer universes. That is, it formulates phrases that represent the guidelines to which their psychic system obeys. It is when the belief system replaces the code of guidelines of an instinctive feeling with a set of phrasal constructions whose least unity is the word, which, according to Volóchinov (2017), is the ideological sign par excellence because it is loaded with meanings.

Next, we will clarify how emotional devices act in the meaning of things, and how this meaning will structure beliefs that will crystallize ideology in the dialogical relationships between individuals.

### **Interdiscursivity and simulations of reality**

We live the reality that our brain creates from filtered perceptions of the outside world. That is, there is a selection of information perceived by the five senses. Those that are interesting, according to our beliefs, values, assumptions, among other factors, are simplified to compose our filters, which will manifest themselves through our communicative framework.

Dominique Maingueneau (2008b), in his genesis of discourses, corroborates this perception when he realizes that pure reality, what Plato calls the ideal truth, would be unreachable, because our filters, the result of an interdiscursivity prior to the individual's own existence, act in order to build a simulacrum of the truth, whose perception is manifested by the speech.

This means that interdiscourse precedes discourse, and is governed by a system of global semantic restrictions that manifests itself by the fact that it simultaneously restricts all discursive planes: vocabulary, themes, intertextuality

and enunciation instances. The discourse mentioned here by Maingueneau (2013) is not just a set of texts, but a discursive practice. The system of semantic restrictions makes texts commensurable with the institutional network of a group, which the enunciation, at the same time, supposes and makes possible. This makes discursive practice an intersemiotic practice in which other semiotic domains, such as pictorial, musical, the television, etc., coexist. A discursive formation thus reveals itself as a scheme of correspondence between fields at first sight heteronymous.

The semiotic interdiscursivity that will compose our network of beliefs will be based, according to Peirce (2008), on unconscious emotional motivators that compel us to adhere to certain truths to reach more favorable states of mind. The semiosis process itself, that is, the production of meaning and sense of signs, depends on what Peirce calls “emotional interpretant”, which generates feelings towards the sign. In addition to the energetic interpretant, which corresponds to a reaction of the mind, and the logical interpretant, which concerns the production of a general thought or understanding produced by the sign, the emotional interpretant will outline the meaning and its significance, establishing a specific creed in the psyche of each individual (Colapietro, 2014). Some of the foundations that make up Peirce’s semiotics, added to assumptions already seen in Bateson’s systemic thinking (1987) and Maingueneau’s (2013) interdiscursivity, become more transparent when put in interface with neuroscience studies.

Bandler and Grinder (2004) attest that this process of signification is the principle of what they call anchoring. For them, an anchor is any sensory stimulus capable of eliciting an internal state, automatically, without interference from the critical sense. Such stimuli come to integrate an emotional structure of meaning and memory that can be elicited whenever they are perceived. Similar stimuli tend to elicit similar emotions, supporting a kind of emotional conditioning (Ekman, 2011), as shown in Figure 2.

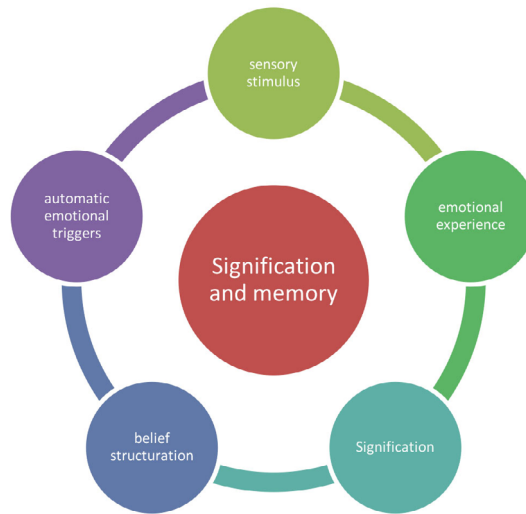


Figure 2. Process of anchoring. Adapted from Antunes Junior (2016, p. 41)

What can be inferred from these notes is that, no matter how rational we consider the arguments that make us defend or choose a certain action or vision of reality, unconsciously there will always be overriding emotional motivations that underlie the ideological construction of the human being. These support choices and are not always accessible to the understanding of our consciousness, precisely because they obey innate or even conditioned programs, which are alien to the critical sense. Peirce (2008) and Bandler and Grinder (2004), therefore, argue meaning is inevitably anchored in emotions and feelings. This perception leads us to the studies of Bakhtin's circle (Volóchinov, 2017), which is based on the premise that where there is a sign, there is an ideology. That school of Russian researchers conceptualizes ideology through a Marxist bias, as a superstructure that prevails in the psychological and operates as a filter to the perception of the world, whose smaller unity would be the sign. "Sign is not only a part of reality, but it also reflects and refracts another reality, being, therefore, able to distort it, be faithful to it, perceive it from a specific point of view and so on" (Volóchinov, 2017, p. 93).

This concept defines the ideological field coincides with the field of signs, and can be equalized, as the character of sign is a common feature of all ideological phenomena. In a more comprehensive understanding of ideology, which sees it as a set of beliefs and values transmitted in the cultural, political, and economic practices of a given society, Volóchinov (2017) argues where there is a sign, there is an ideology. At the same time, he understands ideology is a fact of consciousness, that is, "the outer body of the sign is just a wrapper, just a



technical means for the realization of the internal effect that understanding is” (p. 95). Such understanding occurs in the relationship with other signs, whose previous meanings dialogue with the present sign, thus resulting in new signs and meanings, to which it complements:

Such an ideological chain extends between individual consciences, uniting them, since the sign appears only in the process of interaction between individual consciences. And the individual conscience itself is full of signs. A conscience only exists as such to the extent that it is filled with ideological content, that is, signs, therefore only in the process of social interaction. (Volóchinov, 2017, p. 95)

The relation of ideology – which is constituted of interdiscursivities – with emotions, therefore, crystallizes in social interactions, given that emotions are the mechanisms that put us in states of action for interacting with the environment. It is from the perception of the other’s state of mind, and from the speeches that the other makes or represents in a given context, that emotions are activated and interfere with meaning. For an analytical understanding of the phenomenon that Michael Taylor (2006) calls “ideology of disconnection”, in which our perception of the world is subverted from the moral field to the economic field, we will evoke the concepts of scenography and ethos by Maingueneau (2013), which should guide the analysis of this study. However, it is first necessary to understand how the ideology of disconnection is based on the fear emotion.

## **THE IDEOLOGY OF DISCONNECTION AND FEAR SCENOGRAPHS**

Before entering the characteristics that define the disconnection ideology, to have an understanding of some studies about emotions, especially the emotion of fear is important. According to Ekman (2011), no emotion has been studied as much as this, precisely because it is a state of quick decision-making. Interest in this natural state of alert, which is triggered when the organism is faced with a possible situation of discomfort, pain, and, in the last case, annihilation, may be explained by the fact that fear is an emotion that conditioned us to physical and psychic responses that practically determined our way of life today (Damásio, 2000). From sociology to neuroscience, through the sciences of behavior and communication, fear, which manifests itself at the neurological level of reactions (Dilts, 2014), activated through certain enunciative environments or scenes, is the origin of the systems that govern social interaction, both in the West and in the East. Bauman (2009) recalls that modern fears started in what he calls



“individualist consequences of the reduction of state control” (p. 19). That was when an immemorial capacity to establish empathy for the other started to be replaced by artificial ties based on competition. Concern about the constant threat that makes up the competitive environment would, in Bauman’s view, put the world in a spiral of phobias in relation to the other, to what is different and to what is strange. This constant tension, while being the consequence, is the fuel of the fear in society in a cyclical feedback relationship. It pushes us to establish limits and boundaries, to erect walls and barriers, always keeping us away from any opportunity to know more deeply what escapes the comfort zone defined by our network of beliefs.

It is fear that determines how the architecture of cities should be, how we should get around, what we should invest in, what clothes we should wear, and even what behaviors we should adopt. It also determines what political and economic priorities should be, because, in the face of any threat to social security, fear is stimulated in the symbolic narratives and constructs that aim to promote the integration of society. As the truckers’ strike in Brazil in 2018 showed, the fear of running out of fuel, of losing consumption options, in short, the fear of having to adapt to new routines, can generate a multitude of political and commercial profits when faced with security promises. As Bauman (2009) points out,

ersonal security has become very important, perhaps the most necessary selling point for any marketing strategy. The expression “law and order”, now reduced to a promise of personal security, has become a categorical selling point, perhaps the most decisive in political projects and election campaigns. The exposure of threats to personal security is today a determining factor in the war over the audience ratings of the mass media (thus increasing the success of the two uses, political and market, of the fear capital). (p. 55)

Feeling of constant threat in the competitive society capitalized by fear generates two possible routes to the human psyche, two antagonistic routes, which Giddens (1989) defines as a culture of safety and a culture of risk. The first serves to legitimize the new bonds of sociability proposed by the consumer society with science and technology as safe and beneficial paths, instigating adherence to the institutions which produced and are producing the great structures of society. The second is cautious and emphasizes the present and future risks to individuality and collectivity imposed by progress and its probable capacity to undermine existence and leads us to calamities and problems that are difficult to solve, if not to the apocalypse itself, giving new and more dark outlines to archetypal

fears (Bartolli Filho, 2012). In the dynamics of, sometimes, frightening and, sometimes, offering security, the industry and trade in food, medicines, health plans, insurance, and even “faith” are strengthened by constantly developing new products or services that try to remedy what threatens us and causes fear. Advertising often uses fear to develop speeches and create new needs instead of solving existing ones. Based on the fear induced by threats, whether implicit or explicit, the recipient tends to accept the solutions presented, even if it is “due to doubt” (Ferrés, 1998).

This constant stimulation of fear to turn the consumption wheel has brought consequences to globalized and hyper-mediated life, becoming one of the main drivers of what Michael Taylor (2006) calls the ideology of disconnection, or disintegration. This is based on the set of concepts and dogmas perpetuated by capitalism, in which man is apart, disconnected from the other, from nature, and from the whole. Because it is structured in a neoclassical economic theory, this ideology leaves aside everything that makes us human in order to rely on an axiomatic basis structured from the view of an economist. Establishing, therefore, media scenarios that arouse or provoke fear, is part of the mechanisms that trigger the consumption wheel. And commodifying the relationships resulting from this fear leads us to ignore collective feelings in order to prioritize individuality, disconnecting us not only from each other, but from the basic innate instincts of otherness and empathy.

The founding principle of the disconnection ideology begins, therefore, with the insecurity/security dichotomy and overlaps the inconsistencies resulting from this process. Taylor (2006) argues that the ideology of disconnection, the result of the monetization of values and feelings, promotes the commodification of relationships, replacing the strength of values with the strength of the market. To exemplify, he recounts a famous experiment in nurseries carried out in Haifa in 1998, which illustrates the use of economic incentives and sanctions as mediators of human relations. A problem that most daycare centers in that location suffer from, according to the example, is the difficulty in bringing together the children’s parents for class meetings. The economists’ obvious solution was to introduce a fine for latecomers. However, instead of reducing the number of late adults, more parents were late with the fine. Taylor (2006) argues that the introduction of monetary incentives led to a shift from a moral perception to an economic conceptualization of behavior. This happened because, when paying the fine, parents understood that they had “settled” the debt with the daycare center and their children. From this, two conclusions were obvious: the first is that moral motivation can be more powerful than economic; and the second is that commercializing social relations can eliminate



the sense of community and cause an absence of morality, which plays an important role in empathic processes.

The disconnection from the dominant ideology, according to Taylor (2006), begins within ourselves, between the parts that constitute our psyche that collapse when they find different and antagonistic ways to develop. When there is a commodification, monetization, or commercialization of values and feelings, the inconsistencies become tolerable for the economic benefit they provide.

As proposed in the introduction to this article, in order to understand in practice how the ideology of disconnection operates in symbolic constructs of the media, we will use the concepts of scenography and ethos by Dominique Maingueneau (2008a, 2008b, 2013), to make a discursive analysis of a report on GloboNews about the truckers strike that paralyzed Brazil in May 2018.

### **ETHÈ IN DISPUTE IN THE SCENOGRAPHY OF FEAR**

When he relates the power of context over statements, Maingueneau (2013) argues every communicative act is asymmetrical, as it is up to those who interpret to reconstruct their meaning through the mobilization of different knowledge, in order to build a context that is not given by the speaker, but that hangs in the discursive scenography. The author recalls any statement consists of three scenes. The encompassing scene, which reveals the type of discourse (journalistic, religious, political etc.); the generic scene, which deals with the discourse genre (in journalism, the interview; in the political, electoral propaganda; in the religious, preaching etc.); and the scenography, which is the institution of a scene that is being validated by the enunciation itself.

Statement pragmatic value, that is, the intention that unites the speaker and the recipient, will require interpretations from both parties, which will constitute dialogical discursive materialities. Such materialities will reveal, in addition to the content of the speech, the personality of the speaker, the ethos behind the statement, with clues about his personality and his psychological profile, as well as the emergence of a subjective instance that plays the role of guarantor of what is said (Amossy, 2011; Maingueneau, 2013).

The theoretical contribution presented here suggests the ideology of disconnection is present in the discursive materialities to be analyzed and is revealed by scenarios built to stimulate fear in the viewer from the emergence of certain *ethè*. These discursive materialities reveal the ideological scenes present in the truckers' strike. The discursive construct to be analyzed is the report "Cade investigates video of 2017 that shows the consequences of a possible truckers' strike" (GloboNews, 2018), aired on May 26, 2018, by "Jornal das Dez" from

the closed channel GloboNews. Although several vehicles, including open TV, showed similar reports, the motivation for the analysis of GloboNews report is due to the fact they brought the most extensive coverage among all the news broadcasting of Rede Globo; and presented, within the encompassing scene of journalism, some varied generic scenes, such as reports, interviews and comments at the end of the journalistic articles, which makes the broadcaster's ideological scenography about the facts of the day clearer.

For this analysis, we interface the methodological procedures of discourse analysis with the concepts of scenography and ethos (Maingueneau, 2008a, 2008b, 2013), based on Bakhtin's concepts of meaning and ideology (Volóchinov, 2017), and on systemic functions of emotions (Damásio, 2000) for the purpose of reframing beliefs (Bateson, 1987; Dilts, 2014). Such interfaces typify this research as exploratory, bibliographic, with a qualitative approach.

We start from the assumption that, according to Maingueneau (2013), the symbolic construct of GloboNews is constituted from a previous interdiscursivity loaded with ideological signs whose symbolic proposition aims to trigger emotional, energetic and logical interpretants (Bandler & Grinder, 2004; Peirce, 2008). The purpose would be to bring about new scenarios that stimulate fear, and from which new *ethè* emerge that would come into dispute for the place of truth in the collective imagination.

## ANALYSIS

The construction of the news of GloboNews under analysis gave rise to the suspicion that the stoppage of truck drivers, which occurred in May 2018, could have spurious motivations, that is, not worthy of the empathy of the interpreting public. After all, if the stoppage was taking place not because of the truck drivers' needs, but to meet the economic interests of employing companies, the motivating factor would no longer be a social issue to become a clash between businessmen in the sector and government. The advertising piece produced by one of the truckers' employers as indicative of a harbinger of the strike, in this case, an institutional video from the Federação de Empresas de Transporte de Cargas of the State of São Paulo (FETCESP, 2017) would be, according to the government, an indication that it was not a strike, but a lockout. Such construction brought up Taylor's dilemma (2006), that the commercialization of human relations deteriorates our moral perception about the other, in which individual and collective well-being is overwhelmed by the numbers of the economy, used to create fanfare and sensation of insecurity (Damásio, 2000). This construct



was presented on the fourth day of the strike, which leads us to understand the interdiscursivities that preceded it.

Increase of the dollar and the price of oil in the international market, which started to serve as daily parameters for fluctuating the price of fuel sold in Brazilian refineries since 2016 (“Truckers’ strike”, 2018), led truckers dissatisfied with the situation to interrupt traffic on highways of at least seventeen states of the Federation on May 21, 2018. Over the following two days, the demonstration gained support and reached 24 States, collapsing some sectors of industry and economy. Effects of the stoppage at that point included a reduction in bus fleets in large cities, lack of fuel, skyrocketing prices at gas stations, cancellation of classes at universities, flights threatened by lack of fuel, empty shelves in supermarkets and centers supply, and production interruption in factories.

It was in this context that Federal Government announced an agreement, with part of the representatives of the category, to suspend the strike. The deal included, among other points, the promise to meet 12 truck drivers’ demands, including zeroing diesel taxes and lowering fuel prices at refineries by 10% for 30 days. But even after the negotiation, the stoppage of the truck drivers continued, challenging the resolute and appeasing scenography that the Federal Government tried to build.

Events surrounding the truckers’ strike, such as the breach of the agreement signed to end the stoppage, assumed by the category, put in check what Maingueneau (2013) calls the “superior law of discourse” (p. 35, author’s translation), which is the principle of cooperation.

Such a shock created an institutional instability in which the Michel Temer’s government showed little negotiating power to normalize companies and services. This served as a trigger to stir up the emotional climate on social networks, which demonstrated an increase of uncertainty on the part of the population. The scenario no longer allowed verifying the veracity in speeches, where the explicit and the implicit were confused, and the words had multiple meanings (Volóchinov, 2017). The ethos of the then president Michel Temer, while building an image of himself as an effective negotiator, was shaken and passed to that of a president without any control over the situation.

In order to try to get around the situation, a new speech that was already hovering in some press vehicles was endorsed by the high government leadership: the stoppage of the truck drivers would not be an act of strike, but a lockout. One of the arguments used to justify this perception was that the FETCESP video, more than an institutional piece, would have been, according to the argument spread by the government, an indication that the stoppage was premeditated by employers. Such scenography proposed to shift the population’s feeling of disgust

(Damásio, 2000) towards the government towards employers and transport companies. The attempt to reframe the FETCESP video no longer as a defense of the category, but rather as a video that shows implicit threats of paralysis, characterizes what Maingueneau (2013) calls mediaological displacement, when a discourse is displaced from its original media context to be broadcast on another platform. In the case under study, an institutional video produced by a class entity to defend its interests is moved to news broadcasts as proof of the employer's organization behind the strike.

Using validated scenes (Maingueneau, 2013) that accentuate the conspiratorial climate that employers' forces would be behind the strike, and that stimulate fear due to the political and economic instability in which the country found itself (Bartolli Filho, 2012; Damásio, 2000), the report "Cade investigates 2017 video that shows the consequences of a possible truckers strike" (GloboNews, 2018), aired on May 26, 2018, by the "Jornal das Dez" of the paid GloboNews channel, proposed a narrative that favors the government interpretation in relation to the strike. By making use of stereotypes and decontextualizing the FETCESP video, GloboNews' journalistic team becomes the guarantor of the discourse adopted by the Federal Government. In the video, the news anchor, Bete Pacheco (Figure 3), appears with the "J10" backdrop in the background, and announces:

Federal Police is investigating whether businessmen are behind the truck drivers strike, and has already opened 37 inquiries. The Administrative Council for Economic Defense is also investigating a video released by the Federation of Transport Companies of São Paulo. (GloboNews, 2018)

The tone of seriousness of the journalist's speech (Damásio, 2000; Maingueneau, 2013), associated with the quantification of open inquiries to investigate the strike (Taylor, 2006), reveal the ideological guideline of the symbolic construct (Volóchinov, 2017) uses fear stimulation as a strategy of persuasion.

Such incorporation induces the audience to give an *ethos* to its guarantor as an inspector of events, attentive to the vicissitudes of facts, which now intends to rewrite the meanings of the imaginary community of those who share in adhering to the lockout discourse (Maingueneau, 2013). The report then begins with the computer graphics image representing a computer screen on which the FETCESP website appears (Figure 4).



Figure 3. Anchor calls article on investigation by the Administrative Council for Economic Defense (Cade). Image from report of GloboNews (2018).



Figure 4. Computer graphics illustrate FETCESP website. Imagem from report of GloboNews (2018).

Following, images of the meeting between the Federal Government and representatives of road operators signing an agreement. Two captions appear at the bottom of the screen. A smaller one that reads “released by FETCESP” and a larger one with the phrase “Cade investigates a 2017 video that shows the consequences of a possible strike” (Figure 5).





Figure 5. Computer graphics illustrates FETCESP website. Image from report of GloboNews (2018).

The proposed scenography attempts to contextualize the government's movement to solve the problem of the strike, as opposed to the truck drivers' failure to comply with the agreement. There is an attempt to reframe belief (Bateson, 1987; Dilts, 2014) to shift the public's perception of who is responsible for the continuation of the strike. The voice of an off reporter continues the report:

One of the investigated entities is the Federation of Cargo Transport Companies of the State of São Paulo. It is one of those who signed an agreement with the government on Thursday night. In this video, the Federation talks about disappearing with trucks and chaos everywhere, and describes in detail the consequences of a truck stoppage for five days. A situation very similar to the one that ended up happening in the country. (GloboNews, 2018)

The reporter's narrative displaces the initial intention of the video to show a consequence of the devaluation of the road category, to the interpretation desired by the government, that the entity already spoke of "disappearing with trucks and creating chaos everywhere" (GloboNews, 2018). Excerpts from the institutional video are then presented to the viewer; the reporter's voice falls silent as the video gains volume. We perceive music with an intermittent tone, and then a narrator, in a professorial tone, defends the category in the face of what seems to be an implicit complaint by ordinary people about trucks on the roads. The announcer says:

# A

## Between strike and locaute

So trucks are a problem? We will make them disappear for just five days. On the first day, you will realize it was not a good idea. Essential fresh foods sell out in the markets. Letters pile up. Restaurants reduce their menus. Work stops due to lack of materials. And pharmacies run out of drugs. Petrol stations no longer have fuel to sell. In the countryside, productions are spoiling because there is no transportation. Airports are closed, because without fuel, airplanes cannot take off. Garbage piles up all over the city. Industries in various segments are no longer able to produce due to lack of inputs. Now, on the fifth day without trucks, chaos is everywhere. Society collapses. There is no public transport, hospitals and schools. People cannot follow their routine. (GloboNews, 2018)

The speech is accompanied by images that illustrate what is being narrated. Images of trucks on the roads gain a special effect and the trucks disappear. A moving road, in black and white, with speedometers superimposed by computation, and a caption that grows on the screen counting the days without trucks, intersperses with images of supermarket products and letters in the post office, pharmacy shelves where boxes of medicines disappear, and petrol stations closed due to the lack of gasoline (Figure 6).

Other images of trucks on roads and petrol stations taken from the FETCESP video continue to run, while the reporter reports off again: “Still in the video, the Federation says the objective was to enhance road transport in Brazil” (GloboNews, 2018). The voice of the announcer of the FETCESP institutional video then returns over images of car drivers with smiles and making affirmative gestures with their heads, saying the following: “We often complain about cargo vehicles on the roads and in the cities, but we forget they are the cells that transport everything that is vital to having the life we are used to” (GloboNews, 2018). The FETCESP video gives the narrator a teacher *ethos* (Maingueneau, 2008a), explanatory, in which he tries to demonstrate the consequences of an absence of trucks on the roads. In the original video, the threat of shortages of essential items for life in society is still an element of stimulating fear (Damásio, 2000; Ekman, 2011), as well as offering a speech that tries to show that trucks are not a problem but the solution. This intention, however, takes on a threatening tone in the argumentative re-reading intended by the government and incorporated by the GloboNews story. The reporter’s voice, then, returns over the image of a document, in which the phrase “FETCESP clarifies it does not support or encourage any kind of stoppage of road freight transport activities” (Figure 7).



Figure 6. Report shows excerpts from the FETCESP video. Image from report of GloboNews (2018).

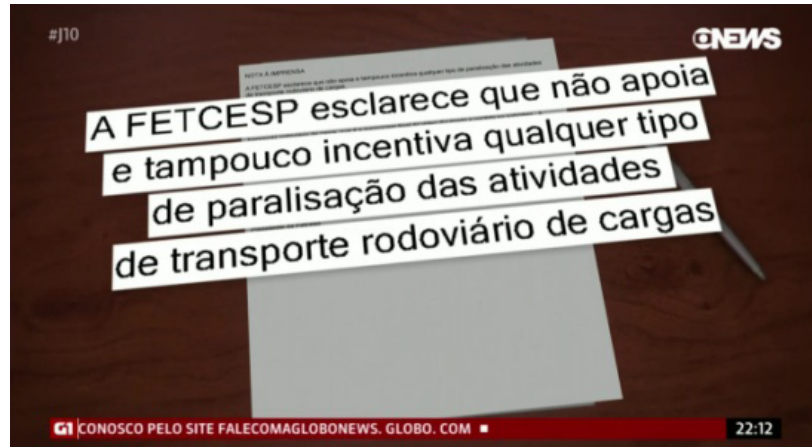


Figure 7. Clarification from FETCESP. Image from report of GloboNews (2018).

This image is transposed by a graphic illustration of a computer screen, which shows the FETCESP website. A graphic effect highlights the institutional video mentioned in the report, while the reporter narrates:

In view of the repercussions, now, in a note, FETCESP says that it does not support or encourage any kind of stoppage of road cargo transportation activities, and that the video is from May last year. On the Federation website, the material is highlighted, with the title “meet the new FETCESP film”. *Cade* is investigating whether there was coordinated action. (GloboNews, 2018)

The report again shows images of *Cade*'s building, replaced in sequence by the image of the institution's general superintendent, Alexandre Cordeiro (Figure 8), who states in the video: “There are several facts that have occurred and that come to strengthen the process of investigation. This video, he at least suggests that, if the conduct really occurred, the agents knew exactly the consequences of their actions” (GloboNews, 2018).

Cordeiro then assumes the role of guarantor of the government's conspiracy speech. The image of *Cade*'s superintendent gives way to the passage of the reporter who authored the video, Camila Bomfim (Figure 9), who informs:

The government says it is convinced there was a lockout, that is, the participation of businessmen in the strike, which is prohibited by law. The government minister, Carlos Marun, announced suspicious businessmen are being investigated, but did not name them. And he also said that the Federal Police has even made arrest requests that are being analyzed by the judiciary. (GloboNews, 2018)



Figure 8. Cade's superintent Alexandre Cordeiro. Image from report of GloboNews (2018).



Figure 9. Reporter Camila Bomfim. Image from report of GloboNews (2018).

The reporter's image then gives way to the image of the Minister of the Government Secretariat, Carlos Marun, who is standing in a pulpit where a panel with the Federal Government logo is seen in the background and, to the left of the screen, a Brazilian flag (Figure 10). Marun says: "There are inquiries. Some of these investigations have already justified the opening of investigations, and... ah... some of these investigations have already provided a solid basis, even for the arrest of (sic)... the arrest of some of these... aaah... suspects" (GloboNews, 2018).



Figure 10. Minister of the Government Secretariat, Carlos Marun. Image from report of GloboNews (2018).

Marun's image then gives way to images of the Minister of Public Security, Raul Jungmann (Figure 11), covered by the reporter's narration, which follows: "Now, in the evening, the Minister of Public Security said there was criminal support from businessmen, and that suspects will pay for it" (GloboNews, 2018). To what Raul Jungmann himself complements in testimony: "A criminal movement on the part of you, owners of large companies that, exactly, do not allow, do not engage, do not release your drivers. On the contrary, you know, they support you to stay (sic) paralyzed" (GloboNews, 2018).

After the speech by the Minister of Public Security, images from the Federal Police headquarters in Brasilia were sequenced to cover a new intervention by the reporter, who ends the report: "So far 37 inquiries have been opened by the Federal Police in 25 states" (GloboNews, 2018).

The ministers' speeches as government spokesmen carry a supervisory *ethos* and show a certain hardening with the road workers. There is an attempt to attribute the failure of negotiations with the categories to hidden forces represented by FETCESP and the institutional video produced by it. It is implicit the construction intends to classify the manifestation of the truck drivers as something immoral, criminal, which aims at objectives of merely economic gain, highlighting the assumptions that guide Taylor's disconnection ideology (2006).

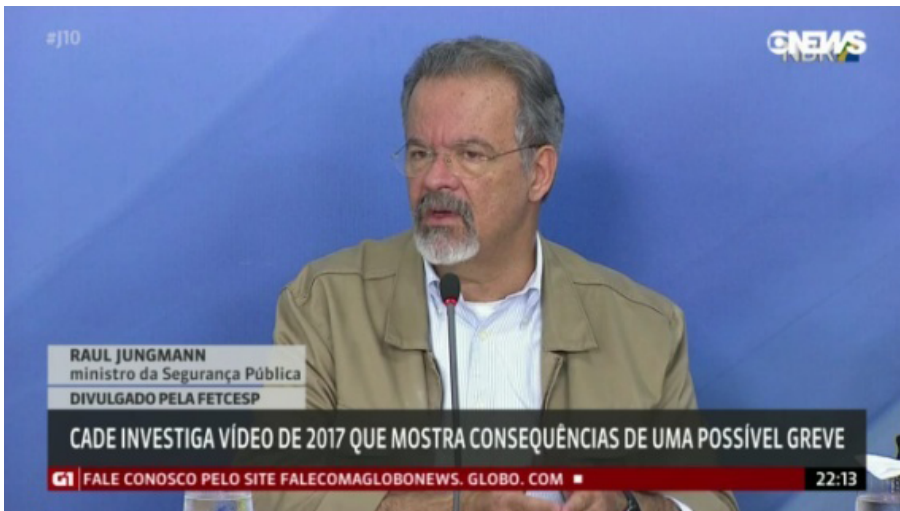


Figure 11. Minister of Public Security Raul Jungmann. Image from report of GloboNews (2018).

With the end of the report, the newspaper anchor returns to the video and shares the screen with commentator Gerson Camarotti, who appears on a screen in the newspaper's studio (Figure 12). Camarotti is invited to comment on the video, and his speech endorses the government's conspiracy view, as in the excerpts where it says

You have a whole schedule there ... almost an effect ... it is ... of psychological terrorism in the country. You have it there on the first day, as it would be, the second day, the third day, the fourth day, the fifth day. And everything happened and we are already on the sixth day. (GloboNews, 2018)

In another excerpt, the commentator adds: "So, you have there not only entities but also big businessmen, and the government, we just saw in the report, in fact, there is a conviction that this mobilization has come here so strongly, exactly for business support" (GloboNews, 2018). Camarotti uses the *ethos* of commentator on politics and economics in television news to validate the scene proposed by the Federal Government.



Figure 12. Gerson Camarotti comments the report. Image from report of GloboNews (2018).

Such enunciative displacement reveals the premise of Taylor's disconnection ideology (2006), when it stimulates the force of morality on the economic interests of road sector entrepreneurs, in an attempt to displace road workers from the role of victims of a price policy, considered by them as abusive, for the role of villains responsible for the chaos resulting from the strike. At the same time, an attempt at reframing is implicit (Bateson, 1987; Dilts, 2014; Peirce, 2008) regarding the responsibility of the Federal Government in relation to the pricing policy applied by Petrobras, which caused the price of diesel oil to rise, a factor that originated the first protests of the truck drivers.

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

After revisiting concepts about the processes of signification, and how this signification structures beliefs that will coexist and interact with the ideological laden collective imaginary, we take as basis some principles of disconnection ideology (Taylor, 2006) as our north to identify it in discursive constructions of GloboNews coverage about the truckers' strike. Using elements from Maingueneau's discourse analysis (2008a, 2008b, 2013), with regard to scenography and *ethos*, we found the GloboNews report directs the perception that the discursive *ethos* of the actors involved in the media construct is supported by enunciative scenarios that stimulate fear to generate public adherence to the *ethè* in dispute. In a way, the analyzed journalistic construction works to re-signify the paralysis of truck drivers from a source



of power, in this case the Federal Government, to the point of being classified, even if implicitly, as conspiratorial, which is accepted without objection or questioning by the news builders, something that does not correspond to the journalist's discursive *ethos*.

The case shows us the ideology of disconnection is the engine of the speeches of the guarantors and of the actors invited to the enunciative scene, often resorting to numbers, often resorting to morality, so that their interests are perceived as legitimate by the viewer.

The conspiratorial tone that the stoppages were orchestrated by employers is present throughout the report, in the speech of the journalist, in the speech of the Ministers and agents investigating the case, and in the speech of the commentator who endorses the conclusion of the Federal Government as a validated scene. Theoretical entanglements proposed in this article, therefore, give rise to the understanding that adherence to *ethos*, enunciation scenes, and ideologies is permeated by attempts at emotional stimuli that will be determinant in the subjects' signification processes. ■

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