

**ORGANIZATION COMMUNICATION: A CRITICAL DISCOURSE
ANALYSIS OF THE INTER-INSTITUTIONAL AGREEMENT FOR
ACADEMIC INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**

**Comunicação organizacional: uma análise crítica do discurso de acordo
interinstitucional para a cooperação internacional acadêmica**

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Abstract: *Up to now, very few business genres have been described, there is a need to investigate more about the genres in this area (Salm, 2000). In order to contribute to this area of research, academic agreements for international cooperation from higher educational institutions were analyzed in order to make a critical study of this particular discourse. The analysis draws on principles of critical discourse analysis, Fairclough's (1992) tri-dimensional model of Critical Discourse Analysis, Halliday's (1994) Functional Grammar, Ramos's (1965) 'Redução Sociológica' and genre studies (Meurer, 1998). Results have shown evidence of the power relation between discourse participants.*

Keywords: *Organizational Communication Analysis; Critical Genre analysis; Power Relation; Cultural Context.*

Resumo: *Atualmente poucos gêneros textuais foram investigados e\ou descritos, há uma grande necessidade de investigar gêneros textuais especialmente os do tipo administrativos (Salm, 2000). O presente estudo investiga acordos acadêmicos de cooperação internacional de várias instituições de ensino superior com o objetivo de desenvolver um estudo crítico acerca desse discurso. O trabalho fundamenta-se na análise crítica do discurso, no modelo tridimensional de Fairclough's (1992), e na gramática sistêmico-funcional de Halliday (1994), na 'Redução Sociológica' (Ramos, 1965) e em estudos de gênero (Meurer, 1998). Os resultados obtidos mostram evidência linguística da relação de poder entre os participantes desse discurso.*

Palavras-Chave: *Análise da Comunicação Organizacional; Análise Crítica do Discurso; Relações de Poder; Contexto Cultural.*

1. Introduction

The process of communication within organizations constitutes a complex of cognitive and social activities that involve different organizational practices ruled over by a super-structural practice. As agents organizationally constituted in a specific organizational culture, the social actors in the organizations behave according to their interpretation and perception of the organizational “reality” (Westwood et al., 2011), which in turn also reflects their beliefs and knowledge.

Thus, the organizational environment becomes an interesting scenario for a reflection about the use of language (Boje, et al., 2004). It becomes important that in making use of language, social actors learn to think critically about how the organizational reality is represented, what roles are being prescribed to them, what power relations are being established, and what organizational changes are being promoted. As well explained by Fairclough (2010) critical discourse analysis can be seen as a methodological tool to study discourse in organizational settings:

“We have, instead, put forward a relational-dialectic conception of discourse that understands context in deliberately contingent and broad terms, as articulations of language with other ‘moments’ of social practice, and defends a purposefully porous and integrationist orientation to research methodology that privileges *trans*-disciplinarity over rigor. It is this conception of discourse, we believe, that renders CDA a powerful critical theoretical and methodological tool in the social sciences, including organizational studies.” (p. 1218)

A very important discursive practice in the twenty-first century, which is related to organizational studies, concerns international agreements between universities, especially because, as stated by Stallivieri (2004, p.45), there has been a significant increase in academic agreements between institutions, governments and Brazilian and foreign universities. Thus, considering that nowadays universities around the world are stimulated to promote international agreements, and that language plays a major role for the enactment of these agreements, the present study examines inter-institutional agreements for academic international cooperation (henceforth STAIC –Scientific and Technological Agreement for International Cooperation).

This paper will discuss *The Inter-institutional Agreement for Academic International Cooperation* as the representation of reality and the representation of its discourse participants. It also tackles on the power relation imbued in the representation of discourse participants, their role prescriptions and their level of commitment in relation to the enactment of the roles prescribed.

2. Methodology

Data

Ninety-one STAICs were randomly collected from the year 2000 to the year 2002, from different higher educational institutions in Brazil. For the purpose of this work, ten STAICs between Brazilian Federal, State and private institutions and foreign institutions were chosen to constitute the samples for the genre analysis. These agreements, collected from the offices of international affair from Brazilian Universities, are agreements held between Brazilian educational institutions and foreign countries educational institutions. The scientific and technological agreements involve different areas of knowledge, such as languages, Law, Physics, Engineering, Agroforestry, Forestry, Natural Resource Management and Conservation, Rural Sociology, Food Science, Animal Science/Reproduction, Humanities, Environment Engineering, Social Sciences, Administration, Tourism, Catering, International Marketing, Information System in Marketing, International Transportation, International Trade Company Management (import/export), Education, Agrarian Sciences, Oceanography, Health, Public Health, Biologic Sciences and Applied Social Sciences, Arts, Linguistics, Automation, and Computer Science.

For methodological procedures, I look at the lexico-grammatical choices made, both lexical items and grammatical structures (verbs, nouns, and adverbs, modals) selected by the writers to compose and organize their agreements. I concentrate in these items because it is through them that the institutions involved and their academic roles and interpersonal relations are represented. Furthermore, it is also through them that their ideological position and attitude towards these educational practices in higher education is expressed.

More specifically, I draw on Halliday (1994, 2004) system of transitivity. For each category of analysis, the systems of transitivity and modality (Halliday, 1994, and Halliday & Mathiessen, 2004) were used as tools of analysis.

Firstly, transitivity, encoding the ideational metafunction, was used to investigate the processes, participants, and circumstances. Moreover, issues pertaining to the representation of the STAICs were clarified. Specifically, the concept of “role prescriptions” (Giddens, 1984) was used in order to look at the representation of the roles and attributes ascribed to the faculty, students and the staff members of the participating institutions in the different categories of academic activities proposed in the elements of the STAICs. Secondly, I draw on the analysis of modality, which encodes evaluative aspects of the interpersonal metafunction, in order to tackle the interpersonal meanings the participants construe in language to investigate how responsibility is attributed to participants in this social process, i.e., who participates in the enactment of the academic

roles prescribed, how, and why. Giddens (1979, 1984) Structuration Theory concepts of “rules and resources” and “power” (Meurer, 2004) were incorporated to the analysis of modality in order to investigate issues of power relation between and among participants. Finally, I draw on Ramos (1965, 1996) Theory of Sociological Reduction, “the Law of The Subsidiary Character of Foreign Scientific Production” in order to discuss questions related to the ideological implications imbued in this discourse.

3. Theoretical Background

Systemic Functional Grammar (henceforth SFG) interprets language "as a system of meanings, accompanied by forms through which the meanings can be realized" (Halliday, 1994, p.xiv). Hallidayan Systemic Functional Grammar considers language functional because it is used to realize different social functions; it is systemic because it involves networks of choices and options used to create different meanings.

SFG views language as an expression of three different yet interconnected levels: context of situation, semantics and lexicogrammar. It establishes that languages codify the context of situation by means of lexicogrammar. The context of situation consists of field (ongoing social activity), tenor (role relationships involved), and mode (symbolic or rhetorical channel). These categories are linked semantically to the ideational, interpersonal and textual metafunctions, realized through the corresponding systems of lexicogrammar - Transitivity, Mood, and Theme. The field, tenor and mode determine the ideational, interpersonal and textual options of the semantic system, these elements being interconnected.

The clause reflects the language metafunctions and its corresponding feature in context. The lexicogrammatical choices realize functional components of semantics and corresponding semiotic structures of the situation. As stated by Halliday (1994):

"as well as being a mode of action, of giving and demanding goods-&-services and information, the clause is also a mode of reflection, of imposing order on the endless variation and flow of events" (p.106).

The clause stands as "...the central processing unit of a language, where meanings are accepted from different metafunctional inputs and spliced together to form integrated outputs, or meanings" (Halliday, 1994, p. xxxiv).

The clause may be analyzed as representing reality by the investigation of its transitivity system. It is through the ideational function of language that the language user realizes his/her experience of the world (Halliday, 2004). It is how human experience and

knowledge of the world is represented (Fairclough, 1993a, p.136). Also the clause may be analyzed as exchange to show its various interpersonal meaning through the analysis of its mood structures. The interpersonal function is the realization of the language user's attitude, comments, and evaluations. The analysis of the interpersonal function evinces the establishment of human relationships. The textual function is related to the basic text structure and cohesion (Bloor and Bloor, 1995), the relation between sentences in a text, as a meaningful functional-semantic unit, as well as the overall organization.

Critical Discourse Analysis is an interdisciplinary approach to the study of texts which considers "language as social practice" (Fairclough 1989), it seeks to unveil questions related to power and ideology which are so naturally accepted throughout time that they become natural characteristics of discourse. Fairclough (1989, 1995) proposes a tri-dimensional model for the analysis of discourse: text, discursive practices, and social practices. These dimensions are articulated to investigate simultaneously discourse from a textual perspective, as processes of text production, distribution and consumption, and the analysis of discursive events as instances of broader socio-cultural practices. Discourse is then taken not only as grammatical structures but also considers the social, political, economic and cultural aspects of language use.

As mentioned above, the context of situation, namely, field, tenor and mode, are the variables that configure the immediate context where interaction takes place. These are important variables for the analysis of language in use. In this work, the investigation of the immediate context in which language is used in the STAICs is essential; however, broader contextual concerns are also relevant for the analysis of the STAICs.

In Brazil, for instance, a genre research involving the study of the inter-relation of language use and the social context is developed by Meurer (2004) in which he explores aspects of Giddens' structuration theory as tools for the contextualization of discourse analysis endeavours. Meurer concentrates on rules and resources as structuring properties of social life and he illustrates how they may be used as an increment in analyses in Systemic Functional Linguistics and Critical Discourse Analysis.

Meurer analyzes a text by Noam Chomsky "On the Bombings", of September 11, 2001 and discusses aspects of national identities. By the analysis of this text he is able to clearly illustrate the need to rely on some sociological criteria based on some theory of social structure and social change in order to describe the social and cultural context (Hasan 1978, p.35). Meurer (2004, p.86) suggests the term 'intercontextuality' to refer to the various contexts that intermesh to establish and be established by other texts, discourses, and social practices. He concludes that there is no delicate level of analysis available that contributes for the analysis of the relation between language use and its ultimate context of culture, as there is, for instance, in relation to the use of language and its immediate context of use.

He shows in his analysis of the text by Chomsky that the sociological notions used from Structuration theory may provide such a framework in the direction of a more refined analysis of the inter-relation between language use and the broader context of culture. He argues that these notions make possible the analysis of ‘intercontextuality’.

Meurer states that every social practice as well as role prescription is related to structures of legitimation, signification, and domination. He further explains that language itself may often disguise these structures.

For Giddens (1984) there are three dimensions of institutionalized social structure, first, signification relates to shared understanding; second, domination has to do with the social properties like authoritative and allocative resources. And last, legitimation relates to the norms/rules that individuals draw on in justifying their own actions and that of others.

Meurer contends that a means by which one may unveil these structures as they are manifested in texts is by incorporating principles such as the ones proposed by Giddens’s structuration theory, thus contributing to make sense of how social reproduction happens through the investigation of texts.

According to Giddens, structuration is the process whereby duality of structure evolves and is reproduced overtime and space. Agents in their actions constantly produce, reproduce and develop the social structures, which both constrains and enables them to carry on specific social practices.

As stated by Giddens “all structural properties of social systems ...are the medium and outcome of contingently accomplished activities of situated actors” (Giddens, 1984, p.191).

Meurer (ibid) further argues that it is imperative to uncover the pathways by which certain social practices get reproduced. The investigation of genres should account for all these aspects of the inter-relation between language use and the context of situation and of culture.

Meurer (2004, p.86-95) draws on sociological notions from Giddens (1979/1984) Structuration theory such as “role prescriptions”, “rules and resources”, as “an initial route towards a more delicate analysis of the interconnections between the broader context of culture and language use”.

Specifically in this work, I draw on Giddens notions of “role prescriptions”, “rules” and “resources” to analyze the representation of the roles prescribed to the discourse participants in their categories of academic activities and their effective participation in the enactment of these roles, as well as the notion of “power” proposed by Meurer (2004) to analyze the power relations between and among discourse participants. I also draw on Ramos’s (1965) socio political Theory of Sociological Reduction, specifically, the law entitled “The Subsidiary Character of Foreign Scientific Production” in order to explain the present sociology of the Brazilian universities faced

with the dominating influences of foreign Universities. It provides political and historical basis to explain the ideological implications imbued in the discourse of the STAICs and contributes to explain how this practice may contribute to reproduce the subsidiary character of the scientific production of Brazil. Likewise, it provides a socio-political explanation for the fact that there is an asymmetrical relation between the participants of this discourse.

4. Analysis and Discussion

The STAICs constitute interactions that are public documents in the realm of administrative law, characterized by the legitimacy of information in relation to scientific, technological and cultural agreements for international cooperation among different types of educational organizations. The mode of discourse of the STAICs is characterized as a constitutive, graphic, written text. All the agreements must be in written form.

They govern (formalize) the academic international cooperation between institutions for the purposes of encouraging academic activities such as the exchange of scientific and technological knowledge through categories of academic activities, which may involve joint research projects, joint organization of courses, seminars and conferences, exchange of academic materials, and exchange of faculty, students and staff members.

In the STAICs language is used to govern and establish the terms and conditions for the development of inter-institutional international academic, scientific, technological and cultural cooperation between and among the participating educational organizations. Through the lexicogrammatical units in the STAICs it is possible to consider aspects such as who participates in the cooperation, what the objectives of the cooperation are, what scientific, cultural, academic projects and programs of activities shall be developed through the cooperation, which also include the rights, obligations and privileges conferred upon students and professors participating in these programs, the duration of the cooperation, and who will be involved in the coordination and assessment of the projects. Next, we look at how reality is represented in these agreements.

4.1 The Inter-institutional Agreement for Academic International Cooperation: The representation of reality

According to Halliday & Matthiessen (2004), “material processes” refer to the doings of an entity. In relation to the STAICs, the proposals for academic activities may be represented by actions of doing. According to Halliday (1985, 1994), the participants

in the material processes are called “Actors” or “Agent” of the action. The “Goal” is the participant to whom the process aims at.

According to Halliday & Matthiessen (2004) in a material process, “the Actor is the one that does the deed – that is, the one that brings about change.” (p.179). In the STAICs, the Actor may be exemplified by:

Example: Either university may initiate proposals for activities under this Agreement through the contact persons indicated in article 3.0.

As can be seen through the example above, the reality is being represented in the STAIC through the lexicogrammatical features as follows: ‘either university’ is the Actor of the process, ‘initiate’ the material process, ‘proposals for activities’ is the goal, and ‘under this Agreement through the contact persons indicated in article 3.0’ is the angle circumstance.

But, how are these discourse participants represented in this discourse? Next, we discuss about the Inter-institutional Agreement for Academic International Cooperation and how Discourse Participants are constituted by and through this text.

4.2 The Inter-institutional Agreement for Academic International Cooperation: the representation of Discourse Participants

According to the macro orientations by Unesco (www.unesco.org) about the new trends for higher education in the 21st century, educational institutions must draw on strategies for their internationalization that involve different modalities of actions, starting with an internalization policy, which shows the academic cooperation as its underpinnings. Academic activities such as exchange of students, professors and managers, the insertion of international cooperation networks, and collaborative research projects are the means by which international cooperation should become effective (Stallivieri, 2004). The social participants in the STAIC’s are expected to cooperate jointly in terms of the development of the academic categories of activities proposed in these cooperation. In the example of a STAIC below, the nominal groups realizing the actors involved in the cooperation are:

Example: The State University of Central West, Paraná of Brazil and the University of North Texas of the United States of America wish to enter into exchanges, with a view to their mutual enrichment on the scientific, academic and cultural levels.

The University of Central West, Brazil and the University of North Texas, USA are the main actors or social participants in the cooperation, which is aligned with Stallivieri's (2004) view that in an agreement of cooperation, the protagonists or actors must be officially recognized.

Professors and students from institutions all over the world with different cultural backgrounds are eligible to participate in the agreements. In this example, the Brazilian University and the American University characterize the participating universities, and therefore, the main participants of this discourse.

Different agreements foresee different academic working plans that involve the prescription of pre-established roles to students and professors and staff members of the participating universities in the various academic cooperation programs of the academic agreements.

Example: In the case of specific projects that require this type of support, the Universities in agreement will present proposals concerning national and international financial agencies.

In the example above, the Actor "the Universities in agreement" are ascribed the responsibility to propose the sources of finance for the cooperation, realized here by the material process "present" and the Goal 'proposals concerning national or international financial agencies'; in the circumstance of contingency (condition) "in case of specific project that require this type of support" (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p.262). So, the role of presenter of alternative sources of resources to develop the cooperation is a responsibility delegated and entrusted to the participating universities in mutual agreement.

But do institutional texts prescribe organizational roles to its discourse participants? It is about role prescription and power relations imbued in organizational texts that we discuss next.

4.3 Power Relations: the representation of discourse participants, their role prescriptions and their level of commitment in relation to the enactment of the roles prescribed.

The approach used in order to analyze organizational texts draws on Critical Discourse Analysis, and more specifically on the notion that besides creating and recreating representations, forms of knowledge and beliefs, texts may reflect, constitute, challenge, and transform different types of relationships between and among individuals in an organization. These organizational relationships are the result of the interpersonal

connections, dependencies and intertwining in which the participants in a specific discursive event get involved in (Meurer, 2008- my translation).

As defined by Giddens (2007, p.118) “role prescriptions are, thus, privileges or rights and duties or responsibilities associated with specific social/organizational identities, that is, categories or typifications” “made on the bases of some definite social criterion or criteria: occupation, kin relation, age-grade”. The STAICs, as an organizational text, presuppose that each participating University be assigned certain academic roles, i.e., that the participating universities are assigned duties, obligations, or given some rights in order to fulfill the clauses in the academic agreements. For instance, the participating universities may be assigned the role of developing joint research, exchanging students and professors, exchange of published materials as shown in the examples below:

Example: The institutions, under the auspices of this Agreement, may jointly sponsor conferences, short courses, regular courses, seminars and symposia, as well as exchange publications and other didactic and research materials.

In the examples above, both participating universities, i.e., Brazilian and/or foreign university are specified as responsible for sponsoring the cooperative programs of academic activities. The participating institutions are ascribed roles related to financing the participation of their members in the proposed categories of academic activities, which assign the universities responsibility towards attaining resources. The enactment of these roles in agreement is an essential requirement for the development and implementation of the cooperation proposed in the selected STAICS.

Another example of the roles prescribed to the universities in the STAICs is:

Example: In case of specific projects that require this kind of support, the Universities in agreement, separately or jointly, will present proposals concerning national or international financial agencies.

In the example above, the social Actors participating in the STAIC is realized by the nominal group “Universities in agreement”. From systemic functional grammar, we see that the verb group “will present”, contains the modal verb will and the verb *present*, seen here as a verb of doing of action, called in SFG material process, which indicates that the universities have an obligation to come up with, in a near future, alternatives where to seek financial support, realized by the goal “proposals” concerning national or international financial agencies.

In the case of the examples above, both participating universities are represented in the STAICs as being equally committed to the enactment of the roles proposed as realized by the choices of the deontic modality *-will*.

Likewise, the universities are linguistically represented as having the same responsibilities towards the enactment of their prescribed roles, i.e., they will participate equally of the joint research projects as well as in the exchange of other academic activities, and they are also equally indebted to provide the necessary funds in order to enact these roles. So, there is a symmetrical relation between the participating universities in terms of power relation in regard to the level of commitment towards the enactment of the prescribed roles.

However, this linguistic representation and symmetry of power relation represented linguistically in and by the text, may not conform to the reality for which it is meant. There may be a mismatch between the reality represented linguistically in the text and the unfolding of this activity in the real organizational world. The language used in texts may often obscure and/or hide things (Meurer, 2008), or often drive readers to believe that what is linguistically represented in texts are not to be challenged or questioned in any way.

But as well explained by Atkins (2002) even the most obvious things in the use of language should be taken to scrutiny, for “the exposure of things hidden is important, as they are not obvious for the people involved and therefore cannot be fought against”.

In STAIC’s, for instance, the participating universities are portrayed as equally committed to attain the necessary resources for the implementation of the cooperation. However, in real practice, there are different issues at stake, issues related to the fact that in Brazil, for instance, resources for this type of institutional cooperation and cooperation networks are scarce and difficult to be obtained (Stallivieri, 2004). Even though in the present government newly programs have been successfully created such as “Science without Borders” in www.cienciasemfronteiras.gov.br/web/csf/o-programa (accessed on May 1st, 2014), which is a program sponsored by the Ministry of Education in Brazil which subsidizes both graduate and undergraduate exchange programs, they contemplate very restricted areas, such as technological, health and land sciences, leaving out areas such as the humanities, for instance, illegible to participate.

It is also important to state that the percentage of research developed by The US universities is higher than that developed by Brazilian universities, i.e., “75% percent of all the research in the world is developed by the United States and Great Britain” (Motta-Roth, 2002:104). Furthermore, according to Globo in <http://g1.globo.com/jornal-hoje/noticia/2014/01/cresce-o-numero-de-brasileiros-que-fizeram-intercambio-para-estudar.html> (accessed on May 25th, 2014) in 2014 the number of exchange students leaving Brazil to study abroad was five times higher than 2003, amounting to 175

thousand students who participated in exchange programs in English speaking countries such as Canada, The United States and England.

In relation to the amount of research developed in Brazilian Universities, according to the Brazilian Ministry of Science and Technology, Brazil invests USD 24,2 billion annually in research and development, meanwhile the United States invests USD 398,2 billion in research and development¹.

It becomes easy to conclude, then, that the US universities may dispose of more availability of resources to invest in research and development.

As can be seen, even if the relation between the participating Universities in the examples taken from the STAIC may be linguistically represented as a symmetrical one, in fact it is not, due to, among other reasons, lack of resources on behalf of some Universities to enact the academic roles prescribed to them.

It is important that while analyzing an organizational text, analysts keep in mind that power is supported by forms of ideology, which contributes to maintain relations of domination. These forms of ideologies may be often veiled up through the use of language in any context, including the organizational one (Fairclough, 1995, 2005, 2013).

According to Fairclough (1995, p.17), [...] by tying ideology to power, one alludes to asymmetrical relations of power, to domination. In terms of analysis of the lexicogrammar of the STAICs, the hidden relation of domination established through the apparent symmetrical relation of power portrayed and represented by the equal level of commitment of the participating universities towards the enactment of the proposed academic and administrative financial roles, shown through the linguistic representation of the text, contributes to background the ideological loads. It backgrounds issues related to power and prestige of the foreign universities.

As explained by van Dijk (1998, p. 187):

...universities and the whole system of education are among the most complex, elaborate and pervasive ideological institutions, [...] Geared mainly [...] towards the reproduction of the dominant ideology of society. The structures, strategies, and practices of these social institutions need not only be oriented by practical reasons of organization, efficiency, the distribution of roles or resources or the attainment of goals. They may also reflect and facilitate ideological concerns. Lessons, textbooks, exams, assignments, corrections and sanctions in educational institutions, thus, may be organized partly by

¹ In <http://www.uece.br/incubaece/index.php/noticias/14-lista-de-noticias/231-investimento-do-brasil-em-pesquisa-e-1545-menor-do-que-nos-eua> (accessed May 18th 2014)

ideologically based aims to teach and inculcate “the right things”, including the right ideologies in the first place.

This is true not only of lessons, textbooks, exams, etc, but it is also true in relation to the STAICS as they constitute higher education organizational practices.

According to van Dijk (1998, p.209) below:

Finally, within the vast field of the social actions being accomplished in or by discourse, we find a number of interaction strategies that express, indicate, reflect or construct specific social relations between participants, and which therefore are ideologically relevant. It is especially at this level of analysis that social position, power, and control of social members may be exercised, opposed, mitigated or emphasized. [...]among many other ways text and talk may be controlled. In all these forms of control, it is the social position of participants, and more generally the ideologically based interpretation of context that is thus being enacted, expressed or constructed in talk.

The investigation of the participation of the universities in the STAICs reveals much about the participants social positioning, their beliefs and the power relations existing between these groups. Among them are the facts that foreign universities, unlike the Brazilian universities, may have more resources available to invest in science and technology. They have more scientific and technological development as they may dispose of more available resources to invest in research development.

Last but not least, the cultural, political, and historical aspects imbued in texts are complementary aspects to consider while analyzing organizational texts. It is about some of these aspects that we dwell upon next.

5. The cultural, historical and political dimension imbued in organizational texts: the Law of the Subsidiary Character of the Foreign Scientific Production

Organizational texts reflect organizational practices and the language used in these texts may hide crucial information about these practices. As shown earlier, the language used in organizational texts may not always conform to the organizational practices that they represent. This way, text analysts are expected to consider the cultural, historical, political and social aspects of texts as complementary dimensions to the linguistic representation of meaning while approaching the analysis of an organizational text.

In relation to the STAICs, for instance, it is important that analysts consider information related to the cultural, historical and political contexts involved in organizational texts. For example, in a recent lecture at a course administered by

Associação Nacional dos Dirigentes das Instituições Federais de Ensino Superior (ANDIFES), Isabel Canto² has explained the historical colonial context in which the cooperation between Universities in developed countries and those in development ones occurred. Canto claims that the relation between researchers in Latin America and those of developed countries is centered in the so-called historical context of colonialism.

She further explains that Brazilians go abroad to learn while foreigners come to Brazil to teach and for research purposes, which corroborates to explain the asymmetry of power of the academic roles enacted in these cooperation as shown above.

As suggested by Halliday (1978, p.35) context should be described 'based on some theory of social structure and social change. However, he adds that in order to describe context it becomes necessary not simply to provide a "social" account of language, but a "sociological" one that draws on concepts from sociological theories.

In the analysis of this particular text, Ramos's (1965) socio political Theory of Sociological Reduction, specifically, the law entitled 'The Subsidiary Character of Foreign Scientific Production' is used in order to explain the present sociology of the Brazilian universities faced with the dominating influences of foreign Universities.

Ramos sociological reduction was directed to intellectuals, particularly the social scientists, and his primary concern was to develop a method/ methodology which served as proposal for a national sociology in a context of imperialistic domination and of an autonomous project of national capitalism.

The task of sociological reduction faced with an institutionalized pattern of sociological knowledge ascending in Brazil would be to unveil the real problems in the Brazilian society focused on the values and perceptions defined by Brazilian national identity. According to Ramos, it was not enough to import forms of knowledge outside from the Brazilian culture because this practice would result in a subaltern and alienated condition contrary to the very existence of the Brazilian society.

According to Ramos, science has a universal aspiration and it may look at problems inflicted upon different societies, but the fact that science has a universal postulation does not eliminate local, regional, or national particulars. The sociological reduction does not oppose to the transposition of concepts and fundamental categories to sociological knowledge, but would require that they be submitted to selective criteria. These imported concepts and categories, according to Ramos' sociological reduction ought to be reinterpreted from the perspective of the national culture, so as to adequate them properly to its local content specificities.

The sociological reduction implies neither isolationism nor romantic exaltation of the local, either regional or national. It does not intend to oppose to the practice of

² In http://cienciaecultura.bvs.br/scielo.php?pid=S0009-7252004000100007&script=sci_arttext (accessed on April 23rd 2014)

transplantations, but rather wishes to submit them to refined selection criteria (Ramos, 1996, p. 73)

In relation to the sociology of the Brazilian Universities, Ramos (1965) criticizes, from a socio political perspective, the beliefs of the Brazilian intellectual layer, as he explains that:

The “prestige effect” as put by Ramos (1965) may contribute to explain the naïve behavior of Brazilian intellectual layer who values the foreign scientific production.

As mentioned previously, this fact is explained as belonging to a cultural phenomenon. For Ramos (ibid) this is a phenomenon that belongs to the dominion of the sociology of fashion. For him, it is the practice of the reduction that converts the sociologist from consumer (collector) of ideas into producer of ideas. In his conception, the foreign sociological production, for the sociologist that fundamentals his/her speculation in social practice, should not suit as paradigm or model, but merely as a subsidy (p. 128)(my free translation).

Ramos Sociological reduction provides political and historical basis to explain the ideological implications imbued in the discourse of the STAICs and contributes to explain how this practice may contribute to reproduce the belief that foreign scientific production must continue to be imported due to its status quo. Unless Brazilian intellectuals critically assimilate the subsidiary character of the foreign scientific production, the transposition of science will have been impaired. Likewise, Ramos theory may also contribute to provide a socio-political explanation for the fact that there is an asymmetrical relation of power between the participants of the discourse of the STAICS. As formerly alleged, it backgrounds issues related to the power and prestige of the foreign universities on the Brazilian culture by means of an (a) critical scientific attitude.

6. Conclusion

All these dimensions, namely, text analysis, the processing analysis, and social/cultural analysis are necessary to be considered while analyzing an organizational text in order to obtain a thorough comprehension. To know the workings of language is important for everyone in any context, including, of course, business people, professors and students in general. Understanding how language works means becoming more aware of how language use constitutes a form of social/organizational practice. Language use creates and is created by larger social structures. It has the power to create our identities, determine what we do and what can be done. Moreover, a large amount of what we know, who we are professionally, our interpersonal relationships at work, and our lives are constituted through language. As mentioned throughout this paper, becoming critically aware of texts may contribute to a better understanding of the organizational surroundings, including, organizational structuring, interpersonal relations, power

relations, organizational culture, and organizational change. Its major relevance is the fact that it provides agents from different organizations an efficient tool to look at communication from a rather critical perspective, which may empower them to make better conscious decisions in the organizational settings.

This article illustrates the analysis of The Inter-institutional Agreement for Academic International Cooperation, focusing on how the language used in organizational settings represents reality, prescribes roles to discourse participants and establishes power relations between and among discourse participants, thus being a recipient for dominating ideologies. It has illustrated how organizational texts may be approached from a critical genre/discourse analytic perspective. Future research in the area of critical genre analysis is needed that looks into different text types with an in depth at different textual aspects.

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