

Political Communication Contract on Instagram: A Semiolinguistic Analysis

O contrato de comunicação política no Instagram: uma análise semiolinguística

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ABSTRACT: This article examines the structure of political discourse conveyed on Instagram to infer how the political communication contract is established on this social network platform. This study is theoretical, methodological, and qualitative and based on concepts of Discourse Analysis developed by Charaudeau (1983) within the framework of his Semiolinguistic Theory. To understand the notions of political discourse and political communication contracts with their strategies, we rely on Charaudeau (2018). To understand the particularities of Instagram as a device for the creation and dissemination of political discourse, we looked for a theoretical apparatus in the works of Piovezani Filho (2007), Castells (2021), Charaudeau (2018) and Recuero, Bastos and Zago (2020). In this investigation, we found that the political discourse broadcast on Instagram follows the structure of the political communication contract, but due to technological, cultural and social changes, this discourse has transformed to adapt to the characteristics of the web, a space in which fluidity, creativity, and dynamism are valued. This study concludes that Instagram presents itself as a powerful and important device in political strategy that is capable of reaching many users of these networks and potential voters, combining the structuring characteristics of the political communication contract with strategies inherent to the webspace, which makes Instagram a permanent platform.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE:

Discurso Político;
Contrato de comunicação
política;
Instagram.

RESUMO: Este artigo reflete acerca da estrutura do discurso político veiculado na rede social *Instagram*. Objetiva-se depreender como se estabelece o contrato de comunicação político na rede social digital. O estudo assume um caráter teórico, metodológico e qualitativo, pautado em conceitos da Análise do Discurso, desenvolvidos por Charaudeau (1983) no quadro da sua Teoria Semiolinguística. Para apreender as noções de discurso político e contrato de comunicação política com as suas estratégias amparamo-nos em Charaudeau (2018); a fim de compreender as particularidades do *Instagram* como dispositivo de criação e veiculação do discurso político buscamos aparato teórico nos trabalhos de Piovezani Filho (2007), Castells (2021), Charaudeau (2018) e Recuero, Bastos e Zago (2020). Nessa investigação, verificamos que o discurso político veiculado no *Instagram* segue a estrutura do contrato de comunicação político, porém devido às mudanças tecnológicas, culturais e sociais, sofreu transformações de modo a se adaptar às características da *web*, espaço que preza pela fluidez, criatividade e dinamismo. Conclui-se que o *Instagram* se apresenta como um potente e importante dispositivo na estratégia política, capaz de alcançar grande número de utilizadores dessas redes, eleitores em potencial, unindo as características estruturantes do contrato de comunicação político com estratégias inerentes ao espaço da *web*, o que faz do Instagram um palanque permanente.

INTRODUCTION

Reflecting on how political discourse on social networks is structured is currently a relevant issue, as virtual media is a new resource and its use as a platform of government by political actors is gaining strength, in Brazil, as of the 2018 presidential elections.

Social networks are characterized as a new device for reverberating political discourse. In 2005¹, Patrick Charaudeau published the first edition of the book *Le discours politique. Les masques du pouvoir*, in which he addresses some places where such discourse is aired and specifically associates this with traditional media such as television, newspapers, and magazines. In this sense, we seek to broaden the discussions posed by Patrick Charaudeau when we turn to *Instagram* as a place for creating and disseminating political discourse.

We chose to analyse the social network platform *Instagram* because of the various opportunities for interactions among users that the platform provides. In addition, according to a study published by the Digital Results website, in a survey conducted in February 2023, Instagram was found to be the third most used social network by Brazilians, behind WhatsApp and YouTube.

Given this discussion, this article aims to analyse how the political communication contract is established on the social network platform Instagram. For this purpose, we use the discourse semiolinguistics proposed by Patrick Charaudeau as a theoretical framework.

The questions that guide our investigation are as follows: 1) How is Instagram characterized as a new device that reverberates political discourse? 2) Is the structure of the political communication contract proposed by Patrick Charaudeau maintained in speeches broadcast by *Instagram*?

1. For most of this article, we use the Brazilian translation of the book *Le discours politique. Les masques du pouvoir* (Charaudeau, 2005), titled *Discurso Político* (Charaudeau, 2018), as a reference.

Thus, we seek to contribute to discursive studies to expand the debate about political discourse beyond traditional spaces, since the use of social networks in political campaigns is a worldwide phenomenon involving increasingly refined strategies.

Initially, we present the notions of political discourse, political communication contracts and their strategies, as explained by Charaudeau (2018). Subsequently, based on the works of Charaudeau (2018), Castells (2021) and Recuero, Bastos and Zago (2020), we study the characteristics of the Instagram device and then analyse the circulation of political discourse in the aforementioned social network based on Charaudeau (2018) and Piovezani Filho (2007).

1. POLITICAL DISCOURSE

The political phenomenon is the subject of studies from vastly different disciplines; however, none has managed to exhaust its object. A prominent place is reserved for this issue in such areas as philosophy, sociology, social psychology, social anthropology, language sciences, and political sciences, among others. Discourse analysis, since its origins, has been dedicated to analysing political discourse in its social, historical and psychological contexts; thus, the discourse analyst observes different aspects of such discourse, such as the social practice in which it is inscribed, the space of circulation, the power relations that are established, and the association with the linguistic dimension, among other possibilities.

According to Charaudeau (2018, p. 16), political discourse, like all discourse, “is part of a social practice, circulates in a certain public space and has something to do with the power relations that are established there.” He compares political discourse to a game of masks, in which every word uttered in the political field must be considered both for what it says and for what it silences. Notably, the expression “game of masks” does not necessarily mean a dissimulation

or something negative but refers to the multiplicity of social roles that the political subject can assume in the enunciative scenes, that is, the different faces of the self that the political subject can assume in the enunciative scenes or project in speech.

Charaudeau refers to this self-constructed image as ethos. Political discourse is closely tied to the image that the political instance creates of itself in the eyes of the electorate. Thus, ethos emerges as a political strategy, linked to the construction of the enunciator's image through linguistic acts. Charaudeau (2018) explores the concept of ethos in relation to two categories: *ethé* of credibility, which are images grounded in a discourse of reason, and *ethé* of identification, which are connected to a discourse of affection and emotion.

According to Charaudeau (Nead, 2021), the political actor has as the object of his or her speech an idea of what an ideal society could be; for that, he or she acts on a double logic: symbolic logic, which is used to define values and contain ideological systems, and pragmatic logic, in which the politician must show which measures and procedures will be implemented to satisfy the symbolic part. In this way, the political actor establishes a contract of political communication with the voter based on a relationship of collusion. This idea relates to the concept of sociodiscursive imaginaries:

The imaginary is a form of apprehension of the world that is born in the mechanics of social representations, which [...] builds meaning on the objects of the world, the phenomena that are produced, human beings and their behaviors, transforming reality in real significant. (Charaudeau, 2017, p. 578)

For the author, the imaginary can be qualified as social to the extent that it occurs within a domain of social practice, it can also be constituted as socio-discursive given that the hypothesis is created that the symptom of an imaginary is speech. Thus, “imaginaries are engendered

by the discourses that circulate in social groups, organizing themselves into coherent systems of thought, creating values, playing the role of justifying social action and depositing themselves in collective memory.” (Charaudeau, 2017, p. 579). Charaudeau draws on the concept of sociodiscursive imaginaries rather than stereotypes, arguing that the latter carries a connotation of negative judgment, implying preconceived notions about the idea being discussed.

Thus, in political discourse, the political instance based on socio-discursive imaginaries to align with the values and beliefs of the citizenry instance.

2. THE COMMUNICATION CONTRACT AND THE STRATEGIES OF POLITICAL DISCOURSE

Charaudeau (2019) states that every act of language occurs within a specific communication situation, which has its restrictions. The theorist refers to this scheme as the communication contract, which results from the articulation between the linguistic components, internal data, and the situational components characteristic of language exchange, external data.

In the political communication contract, there is the politician who seeks to construct a discourse based on persuasive strategies, that produces the adhesion of the voter and that leads to his or her election to the desired position or in the maintenance of the position obtained; on the other hand, we have the voter, who aims to be heard in his or her claims, criticisms, and desires and whose discourse generates a *doing* on the part of the politician.

Charaudeau (2018) lists three places for the fabrication of political discourse: the place of governance, in which the political instance and its double antagonist, the opposing instance, are found; the place of opinion, in which the citizen instance is located; and the place of mediation, where the media instance exists.

We can represent the political communication contract as shown in the diagram below:

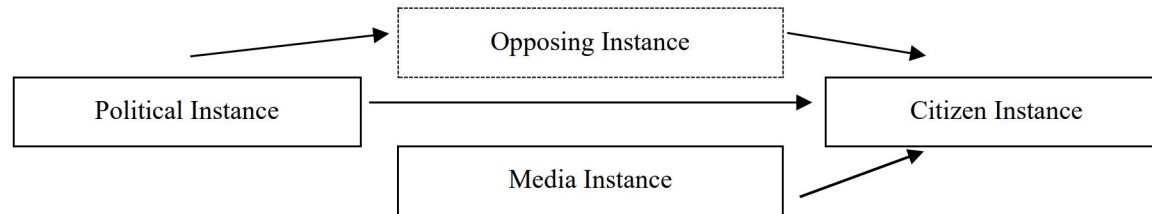


Figure 1 - Political communication contract

Source - Charaudeau (2018, p. 56)

The political instance is the place of governance; the actors are invested in a *power to do*, relative to the power of action and decision, and they also constitute a *power to make people think* relative to manipulation. The opposing instance is in the same place as governance, but in opposition to the former, it wants to ascend to the position of power; therefore, it creates a discourse that aims to generate a clash with the political instance of criticism of the current power.

The citizen instance is outside the governance space but exerts an influence on the political instance, as it produces discourses that are dedicated mainly to questioning the governing power. The citizen instance is not homogeneous, as the community to which it is related has different perceptions of the political instance.

The media instance is also outside governance; it is legitimized in its role as an informer while seeking citizens' and politicians' credibility, as it engages in a co-optation discourse.

Charaudeau (2018) states that, there are different discursive strategies in politics, including legitimacy, credibility and co-option. Legitimacy permeates the recognition of a subject by other subjects; it determines the subject's right to *say* or *do* something. In the political domain, the subject is legitimized to occupy an elective public office as a result of collective acceptance, i.e., by the votes attributed to him or her by the citizen instance. According to Charaudeau

(2018), three types of social imaginaries are at the origin of political legitimacy: affiliation, formation and mandate.

Legitimacy by filiation refers to the notion of the subject belonging to the traditional family of politics; legitimacy by training supposes that the political subject has attended prestigious educational institutions and has obtained prominent places during their academic career; and legitimacy by mandate depends on the popular action of an election.

While legitimacy is based on a *right to say or do*, credibility is determined by a *subject's ability to say or do*; therefore, it is associated with *knowledge*.

To capture the electorate, the politician must construct a discourse that convinces him or her of the relevance of his or her project and that he or she is capable of executing; he or she can do so and must, therefore, make the most people adhere to the policies and values that reverberate in his or her discourse.

Next, we will discuss the discourse established in the context of the web, more specifically, on the social network platform Instagram. We will establish reflections about the device of circulation of political discourse on the Internet and whether such discourse has undergone significant changes from this device.

3. POLITICAL DISCOURSE AND INSTAGRAM DEVICES

We can understand *Instagram* from the concept of media instance, which is one of the means of union between the politician and the voter. Instagram has become a powerful tool for transmitting messages from politicians to the electorate, thus presenting itself as a device that enables political discourse to reach the citizenry.

According to Charaudeau (2018, p. 53), the device can be understood as something “that structures the situation in which language exchanges take place by organizing them according to the places occupied by the exchange partners, the nature of their identity, the relations that are established between them according to a certain purpose”. The study of the device enables the discourse analyst to apprehend the transmission channel of political discourse and, consequently, the broader meaning of the communication situation and of the generated meaning effects, so “the meanings of political discourse are fabricated and even refabricated, simultaneously, by the device of the communication situation and by its actors” (Charaudeau, 2018, p. 53).

Instagram is a network with characteristics typical of web environments, such as multimodality, i.e., the mobilization of several channels: photos, videos, music, and written texts. Instagram has two main interaction resources: the feed, which is characterized by all the publications of the user's profile, in which there is the possibility for another user of the application to like, comment and share; and stories, which are quick publications, photos or short videos that last up to 60 seconds and are available for viewing for 24 hours, with the possibility of liking, commenting and reacting via emojis.

On *Instagram*, content can circulate quickly, given the broad and dynamic nature of the internet, and reach a large audience; therefore, established communication escapes the restrictions imposed by other media, such as face-to-face, newspapers, and television, since a post can go viral and reach millions of users of the social network.

According to Recuero, Bastos and Zago (2020), social media users, when using resources made available by these online platforms, such as “liking” or sharing a publication, accepting

friends, following each other, and tagging a profile in a given post, form networks of relationships, i.e., connections between users are established. Such connections are fertile ground for political strategies, which can make certain content reach a larger electorate more quickly.

Castells (2021, p. 71) states that not all people are included in online social networks, observing, “However, everyone is affected by the processes that occur in the global networks that constitute the social structure. The main activities that shape and control human life in all corners of the planet are organized in global networks [...]”, which comprises the political instance. That is, even those who do not enter these spaces can be influenced by what happens in them, as it has the possibility of becoming news on TV, comments in informal conversations, etc.

Recuero, Bastos and Zago (2020) cite studies by Boyd (2010) in which the author defines several characteristics of online social network spaces: 1) permanence – which means that the interactions performed in the networks remain inscribed there; 2) searchability – as a result of permanence, searchability means that such interactions leave traces and can be recovered; 3) reapplicability – which refers to the reproduction of content; and 4) scalability – which refers to the multiplication of records in social networks obtaining a large reach.

All these characteristics are identified on Instagram, and the publications and interactions remain in cyberspace and can be searched by users, shared, and marked with profiles; thus, the information is reproduced and tends to become visible to other users through scalability.

Notably, such actions can be performed even among users who are not part of the same network of followers but who establish connections among themselves, which can be understood through an algorithm, i.e., it refers to criteria established by the network so that certain content reaches the user. For example, if the user “likes” travel pages or publications, the algorithm in-

dicates content on that topic; if the user “likes” topics or pages about politics, Instagram shows more political content.

Therefore, each profile's engagement plays an important role since the more interactions (likes, shares, comments made, views of the story, etc.) there are on a particular *Instagram* page, the more that content can be suggested to other users, which is why “searchability, i.e., the possibility of information being found also contributes to scalability” (Recuero, Bastos & Zago 2020, p. 31)

These connectivity possibilities have a huge impact on the political scene, with the prospect of exposing content to many more people and speeding up the flow of information. According to Aggio and Reis (2013, p. 160), there are two ways in which political campaigns understand users of online social networks:

one [...] sees them as potential voters – as are those affected by television and radio plays – who need to be convinced to prefer one candidate over the others. Another perspective – as or more important than the previous one – does not define them only by the contribution they can make through voting but by how they can perform actions to amplify campaign efforts to win over new voters. From this perspective, social media users are potential activists or supporters who act as a link between campaigns and other voters who travel through the same platform.

In this sense, Castells (2021, p. 284) states that “The more a campaign can count on the support of ideologically dedicated followers, the more the candidate’s potential appeal will show results at the polls.” There is a great movement of politicians, through *Instagram*, to invite users to participate in their campaigns and to publicize the content they post to share their name and work platform with more people. This finding was identified in the following publication:

Figure 2 - Call to the citizen instance

Source - Screenshot taken by the author on *Instagram* @tabataamaralsp (Amaral, 2022).



As shown in Figure 02, the political subject encourages his followers on the eve of the first round of the 2022 elections to tag the profile of another Instagram user to become acquainted with him. It is a publication aimed at tagging users, making comments and sharing, precisely, to amplify the reach of the Federal Deputy and at the time candidate for reelection, Tabata Amaral, in the aforementioned social network and among potential voters.

Notably, the users of social networks, specifically *Instagram*, the network we are analysing, are not understood only as passive recipients of discourse; rather, political campaigns use strategies to help such network users participate in the political movement, collaborate with the construction of the campaign by making the content viral, engaging publications, tagging other users, etc.

Instagram therefore presents ideal possibilities for political discourse to take place and engage users by making politics visible so that content may spread across the platform. Thus, we will reflect below on the structure of the discourse aired on Instagram, particularly whether the contract and the strategies, as we have studied in the previous sections, remain in the standard model of the political contract or if there are new ways of addressing the citizenry, differentiating discourse delivered in traditional means of dissemination of political discourse such as radio, television, debates, newspapers, etc.

4. THE CIRCULATION OF POLITICAL DISCOURSE ON *INSTAGRAM*

In this section, we reflect on the intersection between political discourse and the social network platform *Instagram*, and to this end, we review previously studied concepts about the political communication contract and strategies. Initially, we recover the places of fabrication of political discourse, of which, according to Charaudeau (2018), there are three: the political instance, with its double antagonist, the adversary instance, the media instance and the citizen instance.

Instagram, which acts as a media instance, establishes itself as the transmission channel of the speech given by the politician to the network users. Political discourse is historically linked to advertising: radio and TV campaigns, the distribution of pamphlets, and the production of slogans. That is, there is a relational basis with the media; however, with social networks, this discourse takes on new forms.

Piovezani Filho (2007², np) cites a metamorphosis of contemporary political discourse, which relates to changes in current political speech, with “transformations of content, expression and circulation”. The author highlights the transformations of political discourse, from a more

2. This article does not have page numbers.

hermetic, standard characteristic, in written format or delivered on podiums, to a more flexible, everyday format, which is increasingly linked to technological advances.

According to Piovezani Filho (2007), the political actor in the communication media is also a voice due to the passage from writing to speech. In this way, the voice is softened in an adaptation to audiovisual language.

Such characteristics are noticed on Instagram; the politician addresses his or her follower, the latter defined as a citizen, with a cordial tone of voice, and it is common to establish routines, such as every morning recording a story saying, “good morning”, “day”, precisely to try to create an image of someone close to this audience; therefore, public speech takes on new forms and metamorphoses itself.

According to Piovezani Filho (2007), the alteration of this body/voice marks a change in the forms of expression and circulation of political discourse. Nowadays, this platform has become the social network. In the 2018 general elections, a then candidate for the Presidency of the Republic, Jair Bolsonaro, was elected to the office, but did not attend most of the debates organised by the television networks. His speeches were delivered via digital media.

Political subjects have had an increasingly greater and more expressive presence on Instagram, since *Instagram* was the social network platform that grew the most in recent years. There are investments in teams of marketers that aim to increase engagement with pages or specifically with the production of publicity materials such as videos, photos, and texts, such that there is regularity and consistency in publications.

However, released content is not limited to campaign data, policy proposals and work agendas, as politicians are also portrayed from a familiar perspective in everyday situations where private and public life are intermingled.

Therefore, the connection between private and public life on social networks, particularly in politics, has the intention of creating a self-image which will lead to an identification on the part of the internet user. The aim is to entice the public through the circulation of imaginaries that refer to politician as a “person of the people”, with traits of simplicity, dedication, appreciation of family, etc.

According to Charaudeau (2018, p. 63), the discourse of the “media instance is found in a dual device: exhibition, which corresponds to its search for credibility, and spectacle, which corresponds to its search for co-option.” In this sense, we perceive such aspects on Instagram, as the politician in a constant movement to be seen, to show his work in the position held, in a search for credibility with the citizen instance, to build an image of himself as one who is viewed as capable of doing by the citizen.

The spectacle device, which seeks to co-opt the voter, is revealed according to an order of dramatization of the speeches delivered; it seeks to touch the emotions of the network users. Thus, the politician makes use of a discourse that triggers a narrative of life, particularly of moments of difficulty and overcoming that are experienced.

Thus, there is a close relationship between politics, the media and the public: *Instagram* (media instance), as one of the most used social networks in the world, is used by politicians (political instance) as a way to disseminate content to influence the opinion of network users (citizen instance).

There is not, therefore, a decharacterization of the political discourse because the structure of the contract and the strategies remain. Changed, which entered social networks and values celerity, which does not fixate for a long time on the contents but values its fluidity and creativity.

5. METHODOLOGY

Our research is supported by a qualitative methodology, in which we examine the semiolinguistic theory of discourse by Patrick Charaudeau to find the theoretical foundations for answering the questions that guide our work.

For this reason, the methodological course of the research, initially, relied on the definition of the political discourse aired on *Instagram* for the constitution of the corpus, given that, as mentioned earlier, this social network is among the three most used by Brazilians, behind only WhatsApp and YouTube. Next, we established the political communication contract as a category of analysis to focus on the instances that permeate it and its role in the political discourse mediated by the social network.

We chose to build our corpus from the *Instagram* page of the Federal Representative for São Paulo, Tabata Amaral, since the congresswoman has great engagement on social networks, with thousands of followers and daily content publications. We, therefore, picked two posts, one from 2021 and the other from 2022, to examine how Tabata Amaral establishes herself as a political figure on the social network and how that status appears in the run-up to the general elections in October 2022, accompanied by an increase in content geared towards the electoral campaign. The messages were posted on 28/10/2021 and 05/09/2022, respectively.

6. ANALYSIS OF POLITICAL DISCOURSE ON INSTAGRAM: THE COMMUNICATION CONTRACT

Tabata Amaral is a Federal Deputy for the state of São Paulo, served as a member of the parliament from February 2019 to January 2023, and was reelected in the general elections of 2022. Currently, her term of office spans the period from February 2023 to January 2027.

Before running for the public office of Federal Deputy, Amaral was already known by the Brazilian media for the good results she obtained in the Brazilian Mathematical Olympiads for Public Schools (OBMEP). A fact that resulted in her receiving a scholarship to a private school. Throughout his studies in basic education, he won numerous medals in mathematics and science competitions and integrated Brazilian teams in international contests. After receiving a scholarship from six American universities, she chose to study political science and astrophysics at Harvard University in the United States.

Amaral has high engagement on Instagram/2022, and the pos-telection date reached 790 thousand followers, an increase of 126 thousand followers in just over five months.

Upon reflection, we note that the increase in followers on the social network resulted from strategies that make her profile suggested by the algorithm to the platform's users. One of these strategies is the frequency of content production, as the posting frequency is almost daily; moreover, on some days, there are three publications in the parliamentarian's feed. Another strategy is posting material with updated content, which addresses topics and events of the day, a fact that highlights the profile, since many users use social networks to stay informed.

Therefore, such strategies enable the profile to have a broader reach, and its publications to have scalability; that is, they can go viral on the web and meet users' needs for information and those of politicians for engagement. Therefore, there is a need to nurture each content follower and make him or her engage with publications, whether by commenting, liking or sharing. The political figure needs to be seen, it cannot be forgotten, as Castells states (2021, p. 247), "Messages, organizations and leaders that do not have a presence in the media do not exist in the public mind", hence the need for a high amount of publications in the feed and daily content in the stories.

Figure 3 - A big dream³

Source - Screenshot taken by the author on *Instagram* @tabataamaralsp (Amaral, 2021)

3. English translation: "My greatest dream is that one day Brazil will have the best public schools in the world! With the support of many people, I had numerous opportunities in education, such as participating in Knowledge Olympiads, and I realized that education transforms lives. Today, in politics, I fight every day to ensure that everyone has the same opportunities in education that I had. The recognition we earned together at the 2021 Congress in Focus Award inspires me tremendously to keep working on this mission. Today's #TBT, or #ThrowbackThursday, is a reminder that our dream is big, but with you by my side, it is possible!" (Amaral, 2021).

In the following image, posted on Instagram on 28/10/2021, the parliamentarian is sharing some details of her private life with the public:



Figure 3 shows what Charaudeau (2018) calls the publicising the private, i.e., there is an occupation of the public space by the private. References to politicians' private lives are found in the public scene. In the publication, there is a collage, a combination of photos of two moments in Amaral's life: in the top image, we see the parliamentarian as a teenager, awarded several medals, which recalls the prizes she received as a student and participant in maths and science Olympiads. In the second image, below, Amaral is honoured with the recognition certificates for the Congress in Focus Award 2021.

The Congress in Focus Award is decided based on a vote by the internet public, journalists and a specialised jury, which evaluates and elects the best parliamentarians according to the stipulated categories. In the picture, Amaral holds several certificates, which leads us to infer that she was elected one of the best parliamentarians in different categories.

According to Charaudeau (2018), in the political field, different discursive strategies to the choices that subjects make in the act of language to achieve a certain objective; i.e. legitimacy, credibility, and capture.

The enunciator establishes a fundraising strategy linked to a universe of values and beliefs, i.e. the sociodiscursive imaginaries, in which it aims to reach its recipient. The capture is supported by an enticing attitude associated with emotion, which acts as a support of identification before the recipient by triggering facts of private life, using moments of adolescence, awards received. In this way, a comparison is established between the previous experience and the enunciator's current public life as winner of different categories of the Congress in Focus Award.

The image is associated with the verbal discourse conveyed alongside the photos. In the first utterance, a capture strategy is identified. The enunciator says, “*O meu grande sonho é que um dia o Brasil tenha a melhor escola pública do mundo!*” (“My big dream is that one day Brazil will have the best public school in the world!”) The aim is to entice the citizenry to support their government project, in the image of the politician who will fight for the improvement of Brazilian public education, but for that, they need the vote of the electorate, a fact that stands out at the end of the speech, with the statement, “our dream is great, but with you by my side, it is possible.”

The enunciator involves the addressee in the pursuit of this dream by using the possessive pronoun “*nosso*” (“**Our**”) (“*nosso sonho é grande, mas, com vocês ao meu lado, ele é possível!*”/ “Our dream is big, but with you by my side, it is possible!”), making it a dream that is said to be shared between the two. The enunciator would be able to perform this action because they create for themselves an image of someone who, from a young age, has been awarded, committed to education and recognized for their work.

As discussed by Piovezani Filho (2007), the political subject uses data from private life to create strategies associated with public life to entice the citizenry and establish possible connections, common desires, and shared principles of an ideal society, which will become a reality by voting in favour of this politician

On 05/09/2022, Amaral published the post “*Quem é Tabata?*” (“Who is Tabata?”) as shown below:



Figure 4 shows the establishment of a political communication contract, which operates from a specific circumstance, i.e., the 2022 election, in which the enunciator, as a political instance, seeks to win the vote of the citizen instance and be re-elected to the office of Federal Deputy. We can represent the scheme of the political communication contract as follows:

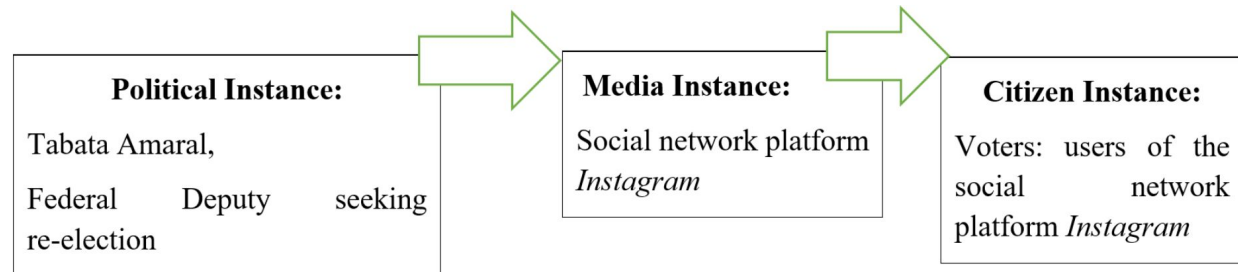
Figure 4 - Who is Tabata?⁴

Source - Screenshot taken by the author on *Instagram* @tabataamaral (Amaral, 2022)

4. English translation: “Who is Tabata? Best Congresswoman awarded by the Prêmio Congresso em Foco / Education activist / Listed among the 100 most influential women in the world by BBC 100 Women / Graduated in Political Science and Astrophysics from Harvard / Ranked among the 100 most influential parliamentarians according to DIAP / Recognized as one of the most influential young people in Brazil by Forbes Under 30”. “The journey so far has been incredible./From Vila Missionária to Harvard, from Harvard to Brasília. / It was through books, great teachers, opportunities, and a deep desire to change things that I made it here./ When I share a bit more about who I am in a post like this, it’s so you can see that many amazing things have already happened, but there’s still so much more ahead—and I need you in this election./ Let’s go together, because here is a different story! #Tabata4040”.

Figure 5 - The political communication contract on Instagram

Source - Own elaboration.



This is how a political campaign is established. In this campaign, the political instance, represented by Amaral in search of re-election to the position of Federal Deputy, reaches the citizen instance, represented by the social network's users and voters, through the instance. On Instagram, a call for votes is expressed in the statement, "I need you in these elections", as shown in the verbal text that complements the image.

Amaral is entitled to ask for a vote, and there is a right to say or do something to address the citizenry as a candidate for re-election; her numerical identification as a candidate is provided just below her image and at the end of the verbal speech.

In the credibility strategies, which are associated with knowledge, the ability to say or do something, the enunciator resorts to the awards received and outstanding recognitions – "*Melhor deputada pelo prêmio Congresso em Foco*" ("Best deputy by the Congress in Focus award"), "*Entre as 100 mulheres mais influentes do mundo pela BBC100 Women*" ("Among the 100 most influential women in the world by BBC 100 women"), "*Entre os 100 parlamentares mais influentes segundo o DIAP*" ("Among the 100 most influential parliamentarians, according to DIAP") and "*Entre os jovens mais influentes do Brasil pela Forbes Under 30*" ("Among the most influential young people in Brazil by Forbes Under 30") – as a way to persuade the citizenry of her ability to occupy a seat in the Chamber of Deputies.

The enunciator also draws on her training and experience in the educational field – “*Formada em ciência política e astrofísica por Harvard*” (“bachelor’s in political science and astrophysics from Harvard”) and “*Ativista pela educação*” (“Activist for education”) – in the text next to the image in which she mentions her trajectory: “It was through books, good teachers, opportunities and a strong desire to change things that got me here.” Therefore, the enunciator aims to build their credibility with the citizenry by resorting to their awards, and recognition of work and academic career.

As a capture strategy, we have in Amaral the figure of a young woman, and it is for such audiences (young people and women) that she directs her discourse. The image in the corpus depicts Amaral smiling and making a gesture by joining the tips of the thumb and index fingers. This gesture is inspired by K-pop stars (Bicker 2018), a musical genre of South Korean origin composed primarily of young people. It symbolizes the heart in South Korea, and K-pop musicians thank fans with such a sign. The pose went viral and became the favorite posture for photos (selfies). K-pop is a musical with huge popularity on the Internet, meaning that it is not restricted to South Korea but is known all over the world.

The enunciator, when making a publication with an image of herself performing such a gesture, is attentive to the mainstream narrative; therefore, she creates content that aims to generate identification with the younger audience, who are social network users.

In the last utterance of the text published next to the image, the speaker addresses the women: “*Vamos juntas que aqui é outra história! #Tabata4040*” (“Let’s go together, because here is a different story!#Tabata4040”) is a way of calling the women “*Vamos juntas*”. From the marking of the feminine in the Portuguese text, there is an attempt to engage other women

in politics. In addition, the enunciator places herself as a representative of these social classes, young people and women; therefore, she uses capture strategies with these audiences.

In this last statement, the junction of the three instances linked to the political communication contract can be seen. This last statement shows the merging of the three instances involved in the communication contract. Firstly, the political instance is represented by the candidate for re-election to the position of federal deputy, Tabata Amaral. As we can see from her statement, 'here is a different story', she appeals to the opposing instance by stating that her story is unlike that of other politicians. Next, we have the second instance, comprised of women and young people; in other words, the citizen instance; and finally, the media instance, which broadcasts the political discourse.

By analysing the posts, we can see how the contract of political communication develops on Instagram while preserving its structuring characteristics. Although the platform is online, the essence of the contract endures as we can identify the three instances (political, media and citizen) and the communication strategies: legitimacy, credibility, and co-optation. However, as previously discussed, the enactment of the discourse has undergone some metamorphoses to suit the web environment. For example, the widespread use of private life mingled with public life in posts created to draw the politician closer to the citizen.

For Castells (2021, p. 251):

Although in democracy, electoral campaigns are truly decisive moments, it is the permanent process of information and dissemination of images relevant to politics that shapes the public mind in a way that is difficult to change during moments of heightened attention, unless an event occurs. or truly dramatic message occurs close to the moment of decision making.

Consequently, we infer that the Instagram platform is permanently updated, fed daily and attentive to current affairs highlighted in different media. In addition, Instagram provides a platform that brings together the public and private spheres of politicians' lives in a way that is magnified by the online media's characteristics. It features fast-moving discourses that fluidly combine image, sound and verbal text. It also has huge potential for multiplying content, and discourse reverberates with greater speed and reach. These features help explain the considerable growth in Tabata Amaral's followers over the five months, as already pointed out, as well as the current electoral period.

CONCLUSION

Through this study, we sought to analyse how the political communication contract is established on the social network platform Instagram. We found that technological, social and cultural transformations boosted the need for rapid information and greater dynamism in the circulation of content. These factors contributed to taking the political discourse to social networks, and Instagram presented itself as a new device that made this reverberate. According to Maingueneau (2002, p. 61), discursive genres it characterized as “communication devices.” In this context, he explains that discursive genres have specific characteristics: they define the roles to be reinforced by both the enunciator and co-enunciator, are associated with a predetermined time and space, manifest through a supporting material medium, and are tied to a particular textual organization. Then, we suggest that the Instagram's political post constitutes a discursive genre, which is modulated by the device, according to the characteristics of these virtual spaces.

After analysing the operation of the Instagram device and the characteristics of the political discourses conveyed therein based on the works of Piovezani Filho (2007) and Charaudeau (2018), we were able to verify that the structure of the communication contract of political discourse (political, citizen and mediatic instance and its strategies) is maintained when expressed in the aforementioned social network; however, there is a metamorphosis in how this discourse circulates and the content is constructed to meet the characteristics of the web. The enunciator projects a format of publications that can go viral, and have the potential to reach many users while meeting the characteristics of timeliness and fluidity, typical of the digital environment.

Thus, we found that the discourses uttered by politicians on *Instagram* have features that point to characteristics of persuasion and seduction, to co-opt the citizenry, according to the strategies constituting the political communication contract. The *Instagram* device allows for a continuous platform, that is, it constitutes a permanent political arena, which is not only highlighted in electoral periods but also guarantees political spectacle.

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