Weblogs: The Screen as a Discursive and Representational Territory

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Abstract—This article intends to be constituted as a reflection about weblogs, while a space - in the screen territory - for the production of educators' speech and scenario of the representations constructed by them. Weblogs are understood not only as cyber diaries, but as an extension of the individual identity of the subjects in the cyberspace and publicizing the representations of self and the world they have. That subjectivity is constituted in a social practice that, in turn, establishes ideology as meanings of reality materialized in discursive practices. Social representation is then a form of socially constructed and shared knowledge, that weaves the construction of a common reality in the social group. So, taking a scenario of weblogs of four literacy teachers, this study aims to identify in the speech – deterritorialized of the school space for the digital world – of these teachers, the characteristics of the subject-teacher there constituted and the representations that reflect and / or refract social features in the voice of these educators in their virtual diaries. Also, during the research I have seeked to understand if to the teachers' speeches is undertaken a practice of meaningful learning or a teaching proposal that aims at the mere transmission of knowledge.

Index Terms—Weblog, Discursive Practices, Social Representations, Literacy Teachers.

I. INTRODUCTION

Searching the understanding of new paradigms of society is to accept the basic premise that humans are social beings, which will constitute themselves as a result of interaction with others [1]. We live in a scenario of great change and accelerated technology advances, where the Internet - more than technology - has been established as a means to structure the communication paradigm of Network Society [2].

In this scenario, the cyberspace is configured as public space [3] , a space of visibility and the appearance where the action and discourse of the subject make sense in building a common ground and where the postmodern subject will constitute his/her world. Postmodern subjects [4] which have no fixed, essential or unchanging identities, which are (trans) formed continuously through social representations, the identification process, through which they project themselves in their identities, which become provisional and variable.

Understanding how to establish the forms of representation of the self - and social identities of the subject in the scenario of the digital world is not set up like an easy task, due, mainly, to the fact that our interpretation is conditioned by our own subjectivity while looking at the other as well as to the form of representation of the subject - other. Within this perspective , this study seeks to understand how the teacher " dialogues " with his/her own speech , trying to determine duality in teaching discourse , looking for possible answers to inquiries resulting from the author's dissertation and other studies in the field of education: pedagogical practice of teaching in the early years of elementary school is committed to meaningful learning , the process by which new information is related to non-arbitrary and substantive ways to the cognitive structure of the learner [5] - or a teaching that aims at the mere transmission of knowledge?

II. WEBLOGS: DISCURSIVE SPACES OF MULTIPLE VOICES

The term weblog was first used by Jorn Barger [6] to define a set of sites that contained web links. Its popularity stemmed from the fact that they allow users to produce their personal diaries, which were published reports of experiences and views on different subjects, as well as personal stories. The weblog or blog is characterized by being, mostly, an individual space for reports of opinion and experience in small text blocks - formatted structurally according to the layout of choice - assembled, usually from single-issue set by its user-creator, which allows the inclusion or not of external reviews of its readers.

The weblog admits adding articles or posts - in varied formats and sizes - that can be arranged in reverse chronological order and divided into sequential [7] links.

In this study the term weblog is employed to define the hypermedia format used by educators in building their virtual diaries, and as an area for the production of discourses.

Speech is the materialization of statements - an unit of discursive communication - from embedded communicative situations in a social practice. In it, the social is organized from a dialogical relationship between the subjects and their speeches. Both act on a socio-historical perspective that emphasizes interaction and considers that all knowledge is always built from the relationship with others [8].

The enunciation is the constitution of an utterance, the real unity of the verbal chain which is constantly evolving, as social relations are also evolving. The statement, a produced utterance, that constitutes speech is an individual act that presupposes a subject. Bakhtin goes on to "treat the utterance as space to say populated at the same time by multiple voices in a reaction with other, putting in a simultaneous relationship's past, present and their historical insurgencies in the enunciation" [9].

In Bakhtin's view, dialogism - here restricted to the dialogue between discourses - it is the verbal interaction that takes place between enunciator and enunciate, subject to a

dialogic interlocutor's discursive process that is constructed in and through discourse. Dialogism is also understood as a relation between the statements previously made and future statements. The subject, in this view, is set up from the perspective of the other and the community in which he/she operates. Thus, the self is constructed constituting the other and constituted by him/her, considering that all discourse is established on the border between what belongs to oneself and to the other.

There is a "set of other voices that populate the discourse of an individual '[10]. These voices, however, by being incorporated into certain discourse are disconnected from the actual order and create the illusion of one-way, and leads to the individual calling it his/her own ", because the words of a speaker are always infused with the word of others.

Accordingly, no speech is in-flight, either individually or absent of relationships with the already-said speech nor dissociated from its rich context. It is constructed from a dialogical relationship between at least two parties, which, in effect, maintain relations with other partners and with other speeches because dialogism is the ongoing dialogue between different discourses of a society.

It is immersed in the manifold relationships of socio-ideological interaction that the subject is constituted discursively, interacting with other social voices. The linguistic reality is heterogeneous; the subject does not assimilate only one social voice, but many.

Social voices, when referring to speech gifts, manifest themselves as the thoughts of a particular social group. "Voice" in this study is defined as the speaker's awareness in this set, and it's a fundamental characteristic that she/he always carries a judgment value, a worldview. The statement consists of different points of view, ie, through different speakers consciences or voices [11]. "The appropriation of the word of others will have a direct bearing on the meaning of a discourse, which is built from the social and ideological determinations" [12] thus being the "word" of the school teacher impregnated with ideological discourse.

III. DETERRITORIALIZED PRACTICE, IDENTITIES AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF REPRESENTATIONS

The teaching practice is the pedagogical action in the preparation and development of the educational process [13]. It derives from pedagogical knowledge - that is authoritative from theories and acting teacher - and realizes itself while inserted in the social and historically constructed school context, turning the action of teaching into a social practice. It's the teaching practice that produces pedagogical knowledge in the form of conceptions derived from reflections on the action constituting an ideological structure and formation of new beliefs about the teaching process [14]. It should be emphasized that the teacher that privileges certain practices assumes a pedagogical stance that is probably related to assumptions on how learning occurs.

The concept of identity is polysemic, but in regard to this study, identity is understood as "points of temporary attachment to the subject-positions-discursive practices that they construct" [15]. Thus, there is no identity outside the subject, neither subject outside of discourse. This subject is a polyphonic one, crossed by multiple voices, building his/her identity on a discontinuous social move-

ment, marked by ruptures, fragmentations and dislocations [16]. Thus, subjectivity [17] is inserted into a social practice that, in turn, establishes the true meanings of ideology as embodied in discursive practices.

Representation, another basic concept in this study, is the operation through which mind produces mental images, an idea or an object corresponding to an external concept, and it aims at establishing a relationship between consciousness and real [18]. Social representations are always activated and (re) constructed in social life, developed in the processual phenomena of social interaction among individuals. They are "a form of knowledge socially elaborated and shared, taking a practical view and competing for the construction of a common reality to a social group" [19]. It allows for the unveiling of "informational, cognitive, ideological, normative, beliefs, values, attitudes, opinions, pictures, etc..." elements [20].

Based on these concepts, and against the backdrop of the weblog four-literacy teachers, this study aims to identify the discourse on teaching practice - deterritorialized [21] of the school space for the digital world - analyzing how the characteristics of the subject-teacher are constituted there, their conceptions, and social representations that reflect and / or refract the voice of these educators in their virtual diaries, understanding that thinking about the pedagogical practice is not restricted to the school environment.

IV. WHAT DO THEY SAY AND ABOUT WHAT EDUCATORS SILENCE IN THEIR WEBLOGS?

As objects of analysis in this study weblogs of four literacy teachers were used, from were all data was extracted. In order to preserve their identities - even considering the weblog public format - in this article they are called upon fictitious names, as: Carmen, Teresa, Paula and Ana.

The choice of weblogs was taken through Blogger site search [22], also called Google Blog or Blogspot, a free platform for creating weblogs acquired by Google in 2003. The criteria used in this choice were that weblogs have the same year of creation and the teacher was active in the early years of elementary school.

The period of data collection occurred from March/2013 August/2013.

Only Ana Teresa and record their academic background in the weblogs, the first holds bachelor's degree in Education with a Postgraduation degree in Interdisciplinary Pedagogical Practices, the second teacher is graduated from Literature.

A. Learning from the perspective of teachers

Considering the reduced space of academicals papers, in this study the analysis is presented until the point of "sayings" teachers related to learning, are considered "sayings": written records and the proposed educational activities, explores in its principal and described aspects of most synthetic form , because of little room for discussion of the data.

In the four weblogs analyzed it was observed, through the discourse of teachers, that teaching practice is related to proposals for interdisciplinary projects organized from generators axes, which apparently seems to show membership of teaching practices guidelines of the National Curriculum Standards [23], to the early years of elementary school.

The environment is a crosscutting theme of interdisciplinary projects for Ana, Teresa and Paula, and diversity was the theme used for Carmen, another recurring topic of the projects are the holidays such as Father's Day, Independence Day, etc..

Besides interdisciplinary projects all weblogs have related to specific areas of knowledge organized in a disciplinary manner, ie, in isolated teaching activities.

There is no presence of records on methodology for evaluation in the school.

We observed the prevalence related to teaching mathematics and English language activities. For the first discipline, methodology is based on education through educational games, for the latter, methodology focuses on teaching activities typically mechanistic, as can be observed (Fig. 1) in excerpts from records.

On the image above, present in Ana and Carmen's weblogs, we can see a predominant feature in the teaching activities of the Portuguese language found in the educators' weblogs.

The activities are decontextualized and do not involve everyday situations, not requiring the student to take a reflective and critical stance on the uses of language by the students.

In the teaching of language, the discourse of educators, apparently, if not back to the practice of literacy, the term literacy is not mentioned, nor discussed in any of weblogs analyzed.

Two other points of analysis are noteworthy: the first refers to the syllabus listed in Ana, Carmen and Teresa's weblogs, which, despite referenced are not affiliated with any planning or methodology. Thus, in direct relation to learning, we emphasize the content to be developed, but no correlation to the development of knowledge and skills of apprentices. The second point relates to activities that are directly related to behavior and development of school values such as friendship, understanding, respect.

Two educators, Carmen and Teresa, have in their weblogs a space devoted to articles about educational theory, more specifically, Piaget's Genetic Epistemology [24].

B. The representations in the discourse in weblogs

In all the weblogs analyzed we observed the recurrent use of adjectives related to the teaching practice, the most recurrent ones were: happiness, hope, paradise, passion. Importantly subjective evaluative adjectives are an evaluative review and reflect the subjectivity of the enunciator, playing with it, worldviews, cultural or ideological [25] value.

Although apparently teaching practice may be the motto of the records in weblogs, there were no references to the schools where these teachers work or to their students, either identified records of the personal lives of educators, a clear decoupling of personal life from work was found.

Regarding the visual appearance of weblogs, the images used are, mostly, intrinsically connected to two themes: the childhood and the teaching profession. The first subject (Fig. 2) is present mainly in children's drawings during play or reading activities. The second is present in drawings of female figures with long hair and trapped, wearing glasses (Fig. 3), features that represent the teaching profession as a female action essentially.

The female figures prevail in all weblogs, as well as the use of templates with background in pink and the use of gif animation images.

Almost entirely the teacher's speech is marked by the use of the first person, as can be observed in the presentation of Teresa (Fig. 4) in her weblogs.

Figure 1. Activity teaching Portuguese

Figure 2. Representative image of childhood theme

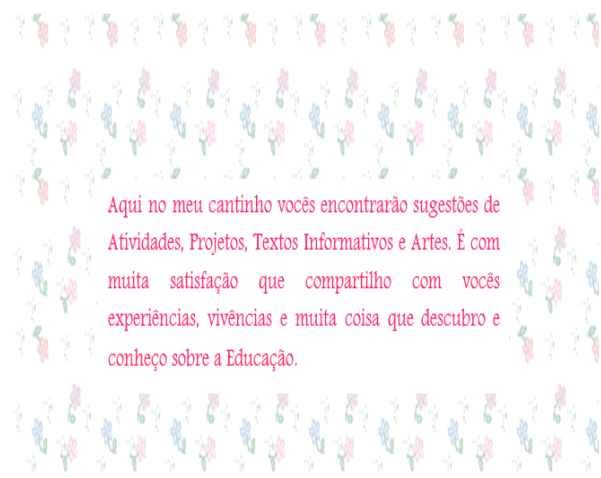Figure 3. Representative picture of the theme educator profession

Figure 4. Print screen of Teresa's weblog

It was possible to identify a high degree of interaction and affection marked in the dialogues between educators and readers of their weblogs, as noted in the records below, excerpts of Ana (Fig. 5) and Teresa's (Fig 6) weblogs.

The interaction with the readers of weblogs is marked by an affectionate language. Readers are, mostly, other educators. Markedly posts from readers are compliments to teaching and claims for teaching materials as exemplified above.

V. CONSIDERATIONS

Cyberspace is the scenario where the postmodern subject will be constituted through the action of narrating about themselves in public space. This chronicle is built inserted into a social practice through the communicative situations that are being established between subjects and discursive practices embodied in producing meanings of reality.

The weblog is an example of deterritorialization discourse and teaching status, a mode of utterance characterized by a set of publicizing themselves and intimacy built with enunciates. The projection spaces of identities in the digital world, the visibilities and sayings about themselves and about the world that are being continually (re) produced according to the new settings are transformed.

This study, by analyzing weblogs educators, reinforced the idea that the space of action and of being a teacher is not restricted to the areas of basic education school or academy where the educator builds part of his/her knowledge. These results show the relevance of research on the relations between discourse and teaching activities in different areas of expertise and communication - the physical space and virtual - and indicates that there is still a long way to go between discourse and practice.

Data analysis identified that the voice of the educator is imbued with value judgments and that his/her speech is validated by the speech of other educators. The relationships that form from the interaction with other educators apparently produce a collaboration network, setting the weblogs as a space for exchanging experiences among teachers.

The discourse analyzed in the speeches apparently reproduces culturally constructed concepts, such as the profession as a female action space, maybe a social representation of how culture still sees the teacher.

Learning is part of a dichotomous context; the speech of the teacher is a reflection of the discourse of educational politics, academic discourse, with the opposition between practice that emerges from the discourse and the action by means of the proposed learning activities. Thus, the teaching discourse is committed to a practice of meaningful learning while teaching methodology emphasizes mechanistic activities.

It's the teaching practice that produces the pedagogical knowledge that this study showed to be related to a proposed training activity aimed at mere transmission of knowledge, not a proposal for significant learning. Learning is only meaningful if there is production of meaning and this activity happens in a historical and cultural context, as it is in society that subjects acquire benchmarks to interpret the experiences and learn to negotiate meanings.

It should be emphasized that this research goal was not to seek other ways if not the reading of its author, nor was
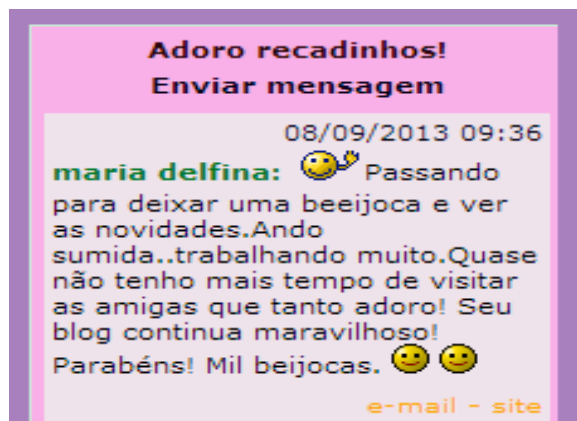

Figure 5.   Representative picture of the theme educator profession

Figure 6.   Representative picture of the theme educator profession

there any objective to investigate the intention of the teachers, but to indicate possible readings of these records from the role of researcher / educator that every teacher should accept.

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