

INDIGENOUS ETHNOMEDIA: discourse and conflicts of representation of Covid-19 in the CIR's web portal

ETNO MÍDIA INDÍGENA: discurso e conflitos de representação do Covid-19 no Portal do CIR

ETNOMEDIA INDÍGENA: discurso y conflictos de representación de Covid-19 en el portal CIR

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Received: 02.16.2020
Accepted: 03.20.2020.
Published: 04.01.2020.

ABSTRACT:

This research reflects on the ethnomedia practices carried out by the Indigenous Council of Roraima's (CIR) web portal during the Covid-19 pandemic, aiming to understand how the organization constructs meanings about the disease. To this end, we first identified the principles of Indigenous Ethnocommunication, based on Baniwa (2012) and Tupinambá (2016), and then employed the concepts of Representation by Hall (2003) and Soares (2007) and Discourse Analysis by Pêcheux (1997) and Souza (2014) to examine the corpus of study, which consists of 15 textual publications on Covid-19, made by the CIR between March 21 and April 21, 2020.

KEYWORDS: Ethnocommunication; Indigenous Ethnomedia; Indigenous Council of Roraima; Media representations; Covid-19.

Introduction

In December 2019, the means of communication around the world began to alert to the appearance of a series of cases of pneumonia of unknown origin in the Chinese city of Wuhan. It was a new type of coronavirus, later officially called Sars-Cov-2 (Severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2), responsible for the disease called Covid-19.

In the following months, the first cases and deaths outside China started to be officially recorded. Soon, the number of fatalities multiplied, leading countries to close their borders and the WHO (World Health Organization) to declare a pandemic¹.

¹ Organização Mundial da Saúde classifica novo covid-19 como pandemia. Available on: <<https://nacoesunidas.org/organizacao-mundial-da-saude-classifica-novo-coronavirus-como-pandemia/>>. Accessed on: March 20, 2020.

As a measure to hold back the spread of the disease, governments of several countries declared social isolation of their citizens, shutting down all schools, stores and businesses and banning people from circulating in public spaces. In this scenario, few sectors of society continued to function, such as the press, considered one of the essential services for the dissemination of information related to the disease and taking action to preserve social isolation.

In the Brazilian state of Roraima, the first two cases of Covid-19 were confirmed on March 21, 2020. On April 9, the virus had already made its first indigenous victim, a 15-year-old Yanomami teenager². According to the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE), Roraima is the state with the highest amount of self-declared indigenous people in the country proportionally, representing about 11% of the population³.

The significant number of residents of the state who declare themselves native provides valuable clues about the importance of indigenous issues for the region and, as a consequence, the importance of conducting studies on the cultural, social, political, scientific spaces that encompass the matter.

This study considers the media field as the main diffuser of representation matrices. The way these representations are made contributes to the organization of social agents and the resulting update/maintenance of cultural, economic and political positions conformed to the various collectivities (HALL, 2003; SOARES 2007). In this context and in the pursuit of new orders of visibility, indigenous ethnomedia emerges as a tool capable of renewing the existing systems of representation, empowering indigenous peoples with their own voice and discourses (PÊCHEUX, 1997; SOUZA 2014).

For this research, we rely on the ethnomedia practices performed by the Indigenous Council of Roraima's (CIR) web portal, between March 21 and April 21, 2020, during the Covid-19 pandemic, with the purpose of understanding how the organization addresses its communities, builds meaning on the disease (its combat and prevention) and places such representations in the local system of discourse production.

² Índio yanomami de 15 anos morre em Roraima após 6 dias na UTI. Available on: <<https://g1.globo.com/rr/roraima/noticia/2020/04/10/morre-adolescente-yanomami-infectado-pelo-coronavirus-em-roraima.ghtml>>. Accessed on: April 20, 2020.

³ Distribuição Espacial da População Indígena. Available on: <https://indigenas.ibge.gov.br/images/pdf/indigenas/verso_mapa_web.pdf>. Accessed on: June 18, 2018.

Ethnomedia and the principles of ethnocommunication

Before reflecting on the ethnomedia practices carried out by the Indigenous Council of Roraima's (CIR) web portal during the Covid-19 pandemic, it is necessary to consider the essentiality of the work done by the media as one of the fronts in the fight against the pandemic. And, in this sense, to understand the urgent need to address the relationship between indigenous communities and media communication, as well as the representative role of ethnomedia in the construction of these discourses.

Roraima is the state with proportionally the highest number of self-declared indigenous inhabitants in the country. However, in the region, the presence of so many native residents does not mean more or better journalistic coverage by the mainstream media regarding indigenous issues. The majority of the media's typical representations of the culture and daily life of indigenous populations are constructions conceived by individuals and/or organizations that are immersed in specific sociocultural contexts that are different from those experienced by communities.

The accuracy of these representations and their relationship with those that are represented is therefore subject to uncertainty. As explained by Renata Machado Tupinambá, ethnomedia expert, screenwriter, speaker, journalist, producer and co-founder of the Yandê Radio⁴, in the online newspaper Brasil de Fato:

Popular belief has been frozen in the idea of an individual known by the generic name of "Indian", as defined by the colonizers since 1500. However, the contemporary reality of the native peoples in these long years of the colonization process is another.⁵

In this model, the discursive dispute and the possible meanings contained in the circulating discourses shape not only the construction of a social imaginary, but also the construction of systems of representation about Indigenous Peoples. In this scenario, in this discursive battlefield, indigenous ethnomedia practices emerge and are consolidated – philosophically oriented, geographically located and politically useful (ARAÚJO and SANTI, 2019).

⁴ The Yandê Radio is a Brazilian indigenous web radio produced and broadcast exclusively by indigenous communicational subjects. Based in Rio de Janeiro, Yandê began streaming on November 11, 2013 aiming to promote the indigenous culture through a traditional lens, while adding the speed and the extent of the Internet. Available on: <<https://radioyande.com/>>. Accessed on: March 20, 2019.

⁵ Etnomídia, uma ferramenta para comunicação dos povos originários (BRASIL DE FATO, 2016, own translation). Available on: <<https://www.brasildefato.com.br/2016/08/11/etnomidia-por-uma-comunicacao-dos-povos-originarios/>>. Accessed on: February 13, 2019.

These hybrid media practices arise from a process of mediatization, in which various fields of society, including here ethnic fields and social movements, adopt the languages and logics of the media (VERÓN, 1997; FAUSTO NETO, 2006).

According to Renata Tupinambá (2016), in a scenario of violence and disputes over territory, the adoption of digital communication tools has enabled native people to be their own interlocutors, allowing them to have their voices heard and to defend themselves, thus proving that tradition and modernity can be allied in preserving their cultures and peoples.

Based on these considerations, the journalist defines the concept of Ethnomedia as "a tool for cultural and ethnic empowerment, through the convergence of various media within an ethno vision. Hence the use of this prefix"⁶, justifies (TUPINAMBÁ, 2016, own translation)⁷.

Denilson Baniwa, also one of the founders of Radio Yandê, in an interview for the website of the 12th Meeting of Traditional Cultures of Chapada dos Veadeiros – ECTCV15, when asked about the journalistic coverage of the mainstream media on indigenous issues, answered: "The mainstream media, because it is mass media, has no interest in creating discussions or questioning in society, so it only shows what makes it money and gives it support to continue feeding its machine"^{8 9}.

Denilson Baniwa's and Renata Tupinambá's thoughts illustrate the possibilities for indigenous peoples to seek their denied protagonism through alternative media, which are processes that start from the appropriation and re-appropriation of logics and tools from the media field. Ethnomedia thus emerges as an alternative for expressing ethnic identity and the political and social autonomy of indigenous peoples.

The use of this means of communication by the indigenous movement can be described as an alternative-popular form of expression that reconfigures the media tools to the needs and interests of their collectivity. In defining ethnomedia, Denilson Baniwa (2012) approaches the concepts of alternative communication studied by Peruzzo (2006), by stating that:

⁶ "uma ferramenta de empoderamento cultural e étnico, por meio da convergência de várias mídias dentro de uma visão etno. Por isso o uso deste prefixo"

⁷ See footnote 5.

⁸ "A grande mídia, por ser de massa, não está interessada em criar debates nem provocações na sociedade, então ela só mostra o que lhe dá dinheiro e apoio para continuar alimentando sua máquina"

⁹ Denilson Baniwa será destaque no XVI ECTCV (BARCELOSNET, 2016, own translation). Available on: <<https://barcelosnet.com/denilsonbaniwa-sera-destaque-no-xvi-encontro-de-culturas-tradicionais-da-chapada-dos-veadeiros/>>. Accessed on: February 13, 2019.

Ethnomedia is the opposite of mass media. While the mass communications media, the culture industry, as defined by the Frankfurt School, are focused on making content standardized, accessible and understandable to everyone, ethnomedia is aimed at a specific audience and has mutable aspects for each culture.¹⁰

Baniwa (2012) also states that the phenomenon related to the emergence of several platforms that focus on ethnicity in content production is called “ethnocommunication”, and stresses that in this construction each people sets its own formats to meet its needs.

In Brazil, some of the most relevant initiatives are: the Yandê Radio, the Índio Online website and the web portal of the Indigenous Council of Roraima (CIR). These tools act to strengthen and increase the visibility of the fights and identities of indigenous peoples, as a “space for the affirmation of ethnic identities” (EURICH, 2010, p.497).

In its search for new visibility regimes, indigenous ethnomedia combines socio-cultural processes and political aspirations into a specific configuration of communication – in order to project the indigenous person beyond previous, later or outside societies – thus causing discomfort.

To do so, it makes use of ethnicity as an essential component; territoriality as a regulatory element; and recognition as an end (first and last) (ARAÚJO and SANTI, 2019). There, based on the processes of ethnogenesis, indigenous peoples adopt the media tools to construct and manifest their existence and the existence of their ethnic social movement, already in tune with this new format of sociability established by the media field (BARTOLOMÉ, 2006).

The ethnic media tools, as well as indigenous ethnocommunication, then appear as the foundation of the process of constructing not only an identity, but a matrix of shared identification, based on pre-existing or (re)constructed cultural traditions – which are fundamental to support collective actions today.

According to Araújo and Santi (2019), the communication practiced by the Indigenous Peoples Movement – philosophically oriented, geographically located and politically useful – works, therefore, for the consolidation of a new individual, willing to present themselves as a native person and to be recognized as such.

This communication moves in a direction contrary to the acculturation movements and concerns the renewal of ethnic affiliations, which many individuals had

¹⁰ See footnote 5.

often been forced to renounce. It concerns, therefore, the new regimes of political visibility of the indigenous subject and their movements in society (EURICH, 2010).

Ethnocommunication then becomes a necessity and opportunity for indigenous peoples to practice communication in an alternative, non-stereotypical manner that appropriately represents their people's culture, social policies and identity towards the new forms of organization in society. It comes as a mechanism that can provide access to communication for a group historically displaced from the hegemonic context of conventional media (OLIVEIRA, 2014, p. 19).

Representations and media communication

In the first section, we discussed indigenous ethnomedia in the face of movements of appropriation of digital tools and media logic, by the Indigenous Council of Roraima, as an attempt to renew the representativeness and the representations of indigenous communities in the social fabric.

We consider that these initiatives are in accordance with a model of sociability in which various social actors, including Indigenous Peoples, seek to manage their space in the media in an attempt to re-qualify their existence within the social fields. In these attempts, different conceptions under the same reality are structured.

This setting reinforces the action of the media apparatus and its incidence in the forms of organization of society, which finds in representation its focal point. And, it is in this scenario of essential negotiations of meanings and dialogue between them, that conflicts of representation arise (SANTI, 2009).

Soares (2007) points out that the concept of representation has a wide presence in history, being studied in several disciplines of social human sciences and becoming increasingly present in Communication studies. According to him, this width of studies is due to the fact that all human actions can be investigated using this concept.

Soares (2007, p. 47–48) outlines four distinct framings for understanding the concept: a) mental representation; b) social determinants of representations; c) media representations; and, d) distributed representation. In this research, however, we shall only consider the framing related to "media representations".

In "media representations", the meanings are manifested "in a tacit way, as traces or features implicit in narratives of journalism, fiction, publicity and advertising"¹¹

¹¹ "de forma tácita, como vestígios ou traços implícitos em narrativas do jornalismo, da ficção, da publicidade e da propaganda"

(SOARES, 2007, p. 50, own translation). From this perspective, media tools are the technological embodiment of representations in their iconic sense.

The similarity between representation and the one being represented grants an affirmative status, validating certain forms and offering naturalness to certain ways of reading society. For Soares (2007, p. 51), this is a process that helps to “set or to confirm ethnic, social, gender or professional stereotypes”¹². Representing here, though, is a two-way street where both the media and the public work.

With the extensive involvement of social actors in the media field, it is clear that the “media representations” are the most abundant and important in the study of communication. These representations appear in discursive contexts adopting usual forms, with ideologies that are sometimes not very clear, but that help to establish patterns.

Hall (2003), however, defines representations as processes of meaning assignment, organized to designate cultural and social constructs. From this angle, media representations sound like “staged”, with a defined nature and with roles that normalize certain patterns. In this sense, the media is presented as a tool for transposing representational perspectives and patterns (SANTI, 2009, p. 155).

According to Hall (2003, p. 170, own translation), it is necessary to understand that the systems of representation are plural, present in several social formations, since “ideologies do not work through isolated ideas; but in discursive chains, groupings, semantic fields and Discursive Formations”¹³.

As Hall (2003) states, it is through these different systems of representation that humans experience the world and give meaning to their existence. Given this, the way in which the social and media fields structure reality can be considered an unconscious construction of the representation matrices (SANTI, 2009, p. 35).

Patrick Charaudeau (2007, p. 47, own translation) clarifies that these representations generate discourses based on empirical observations of social exchanges “producing a system of values that is built into a reference norm”¹⁴. Accordingly, Hall (1997) argues that representation is a process through which members of a certain society use language and discourse to produce meaning.

¹² “fixar ou a confirmar estereótipos étnicos, sociais, de gênero ou profissionais”

¹³ “as ideologias não operam através de ideias isoladas; mas em cadeias discursivas, agrupamentos, campos semânticos e Formações Discursivas”

¹⁴ “produzindo-se um sistema de valores que erige em norma de referência”

This definition assumes that things have no meaning by themselves. In other words, we are immersed in certain cultures and societies and we are the ones who make sense of things (HALL, 1997, p. 61).

Discourse Analysis and the heuristic questions

We use Discourse Analysis (DA) – materialist or French – as a methodological tool with the purpose of understanding the place of culture in the process of constructing text. According to Souza (2014), it is a role of Discourse Analysis to reveal the process of creating meaning through language. To clarify the reason for which the meaning is one and not the other.

In the analysis of text – which means any material production that conceives interpretation (news, photographs, videos, audios, silences, etc.) – we seek, through the methodological procedures of DA, to delimit the discursive formations and link them to the ideological formations, so as to understand the standpoint of the subject and the meanings in the textual productions we work with (SOUZA, 2014).

According to DA, every subject of language is ideological, because there is no language without ideology. Therefore, the meanings (socially and historically created) arise from the Ideological Formations (IF). An IF comprises a complex and multifaceted group of behaviors and representations that are related to the conceptions in the world in conflict with each other.

As stated by Souza (2014), ideological formations represent meanings in their primitive condition, with ideology being their raw material. As it is not possible to access ideology without a system of signs that gives it materiality, it needs to organize itself through language in Discursive Formations (DFs).

Discursive Formations are, therefore, manifestations of the Ideological Formations in discourse in a circumstance of unique enunciation. Benetti (2007, p. 112, own translation) explains that the DF “is a kind of region of meanings, surrounded by an interpretative boundary that excludes what would invalidate that meaning”¹⁵. When structured through the DFs, the IF defines, through a selection procedure called Discursive Process, which meanings are possible to be enunciated and which are not.

Once the discursive process is completed, the subject enunciates. The text produced from the enunciative exercise, the visible and material part of language, becomes what is called the Linguistic Surface of discourse (SOUZA, 2014). It is from this

¹⁵ “é uma espécie de região de sentidos, circunscrita por um limite interpretativo que exclui o que invalidaria aquele sentido”

visible surface of language that one can begin to conceptualize the meanings. As Pêcheux states (1988, p. 16, own translation):

We will then call discursive formation what, in a given ideological formation, that is, from a given position at a given conjuncture, determined by the state of class conflict, determines what can and should be said (articulated in the form of a harangue, a sermon, a pamphlet, an exhibition, a program, etc.).

Souza (2014) explains that the subjects have the illusion that they produce meanings in the enunciation, when, in reality, they do not have knowledge or control of this process, this being an activity performed subconsciously. According to the author, the subject even forgets that this process exists, but it does and it happens in the following manner: “[...] meaning is produced by ideology, ideology is organized into discourses, discourses determine the words that will be said”¹⁶ (SOUZA, 2014, p. 25, own translation).

In this investigation, following the postulates of Souza (2014), we try to retrace this path in reverse, seeking in the discourses publicized by the CIR in its web portal and in what are known as “textual markers” – also what was left out of the enunciation – to clarify what is missing in these texts, what they can mean in the discursive process and what are the characteristics of its discourse. This way we are able to identify which DF they integrate and to learn which IF supports their meanings.

These textual marks functioned as entry points for our analysis and were established after a floating reading in which we looked for the main features of the texts to be included or excluded from our corpus of investigation. We started this process from the floating reading of the linguistic surface of the discourse that represents the visible and material part of the analyzed texts. Souza (2014) stresses that the more theoretical ability the researcher has, the better the chances of recognizing these markers.

According to Souza (2014), discourse analysis should consist of the circumscription of the concept-analysis, as well as the selection, interpretation and analysis of the object of study by using heuristic questions. After the floating reading of the materials for their identification, we begin the second moment of analysis, by delimiting the concept-analysis.

¹⁶ “[...] o sentido é produzido pela ideologia, a ideologia se organiza em discursos, os discursos determinam as palavras que serão ditas”

In our research, the concept-analysis that we identified relates to the very object of the investigation – Covid-19. With it we seek to learn how the texts of our corpus (which are understood as theoretical instruments of discourse) have constructed meanings regarding the pandemic.

By defining the concept-analysis, it is possible to see in the material who has something to say about the topic, which helps to identify in the texts their main enunciators. In this stage, we gathered as a corpus of study (by saturation and depletion) 15 texts about the novel coronavirus published in the CIR's web portal between March 21 and April 21. Next, we organized the publications through Discursive Sequences (DSs) to highlight the textual markers that support the Discursive Formations (DFs) that are manifestations of certain perspectives or Ideological Formation (IF) by means of the discourse.

As suggested by Souza (2014), we defined such corpus, the DSs, DFs and IF, collectively, in the process of describing and analyzing the materials. We defined them as we moved the materials that could be included/excluded in the research and, therefore, such movings were also part of the analysis movement.

After delimiting the corpus, we began the activity of decoding and interpreting the chosen texts. At this point, a second reading of the materials was essential to improve our perception of the catalogued elements and their discourses. Along with this second analytical reading, we triggered the three heuristic questions of Souza (2014) – namely: 1. What is the concept-analysis present in the text? 2. How does the text build the concept-analysis? 3. To which discourse does the concept-analysis belong in the way the text constructs it? – with the intention of further clarifying the meanings present in the discourses of the selected texts.

It is worth noting that the first question found its answer in the first moment of analysis based on the definition of the concept-analysis. With the second question, we begin our search for a meaning to the concept-analysis during the actual movement of interpretation of the text. We continue to describe and decode the corpus until we saturate this meaning, then we move on to the third question. By means of this question we seek to identify the meaning constructed in the discourse to clarify the exercise of ideology in the process of textualization (SOUZA, 2014).

It is important to mention that the selection of the analyzed texts focused on giving voice to the Indigenous Council of Roraima, as the CIR is the largest institutional representation of the Indigenous Peoples to the state. We should also point out that we have chosen the texts of the CIR's web portal as a field of research, excluding from the

analysis materials available in other communication products managed by the Council. Furthermore, the choice of the web page was due to the easier access of the official information disclosed in this medium, when compared to other sources.

Regarding the analysis period, we selected as time frame texts published between March 21 and April 21 (a one-month period since the confirmation of the first two cases of the novel coronavirus in Roraima).

Throughout this time, there were 15 publications related to the novel coronavirus on the CIR's web portal, from which only two posts were selected, the first of which was a note of condolence for the death of the indigenous Yanomami teenager caused by the Covid-19, and the second one was a note of clarification about the closure of access to the indigenous communities. From the material available at the CIR's web portal, we chose only the textualized informative content, originally written and published by the CIR, excluding photographs, interviews, opinion articles and texts that have been republished from other sources.

For the organization of the analysis process, we will follow the guidelines provided by Benetti (2016), calling Discursive Sequence (DS) the excerpts taken for analysis and using them in the answers to the heuristic questions.

The results and attempts at answers

It is important to remember that the (possible) answers that we proceed with this investigation are guided by the principles of Indigenous Ethnocommunication, based on Baniwa (2012) and Tupinambá (2016); by the principles of Representation as per Hall (2003) and Soares (2007); and by the postulates of the Discourse Analysis by Pêcheux (1997) and Souza (2014).

When engaging in Indigenous Ethnocommunications, we need to keep in mind that, according to Araújo and Santi (2019), it is characterized by ethnicity, territoriality and the need for recognition. As for the Representation and the Media Representation, we must be aware that, according to Hall (2003) and Soares (2007), we address processes of meaning attribution that establish, confirm or normalize certain patterns, stereotypes or socio-cultural constructs. And, when engaging in Discourse Theory; we ought to remember, according to Hall (1997) and Charaudeau (2007), that representations produce discourses which use language to generate meanings.

With these terms established, we proceed to the analysis of the first selected text¹⁷, which was published on the CIR's web portal on April 10, 2020, approximately 20 days after the confirmation of the first two cases of Covid-19 in Roraima and only one day after the first confirmed death of an indigenous person of the Yanomami ethnicity in the state. The publication was a note of condolence and, in general terms, mourned the death of the 15-year-old native young man.

After the floating reading of the text, we chose to describe and explain that the meaning of the concept-analysis as previously defined, "Covid-19", is notably constructed by the article – this was what justified its inclusion in the corpus of analysis. Then, we used the second heuristic question to identify in the text its syntactic textual markers. For organizational purposes, we named these textual markers as Discursive Sequences (DSs) (SOUZA, 2014).

In our reading, the main Discursive Sequences taken from the first text, which answer the second heuristic question were the following: "we reaffirm our commitment to fight for a quality and efficient assistance"¹⁸ (DS01), "We will continue our path in the fight for the indigenous communities of Roraima to have proper healthcare"¹⁹ (DS02) and "we are together in this fight for life and in the fight against the coronavirus"²⁰ (DS03).

Through the interpretation exercise, these textual markers lead us to a certain concept of "Covid-19" perceived, through DS01, as part of a resistance strategy and a historical process of struggles and accomplishments waged by traditional leaderships. This is a meaning that becomes clearer in DS02 and DS03, in which the concept-analysis begins to take the shape of a movement of fighting for political opportunities and guaranteeing indigenous constitutional rights, essential in the current organization of communities in the state of Roraima.

These elements clearly demonstrate how the principles of Ethnocommunication, developed by Araújo and Santi (2019) – ethnicity, territoriality and recognition – act in a mutual and interdependent way in the media products of the CIR, which becomes

¹⁷ Nota de pesar. Available on: <<http://cir.org.br/2020/04/10/nota-de-pesar/>>. Accessed on: April 15, 2020.

¹⁸ "reafirmamos nosso compromisso de lutar por uma assistência de qualidade e eficiência" (own translation)

¹⁹ "Continuaremos nossa trajetória de luta para que as comunidades indígenas de Roraima tenham uma saúde digna" (own translation)

²⁰ "estamos juntos nessa luta pela vida e no combate ao Corona vírus" (own translation)

evident when the text (even a note of condolence) invokes the commitment, struggles, trajectory and battles historically experienced by indigenous peoples.

The second text selected²¹ was published on April 16, 2020, twenty-six days after the confirmation of the first cases in the state. The article was entitled "I.T. RSS leaders disclose a note of clarification about the reports of the Tabatinga community closure". The text is a statement of repudiation that clarifies the terms of the access closure to the indigenous communities of Roraima with the purpose of avoiding the spread of the novel coronavirus among the native people of the region.

Firstly, we carried out the floating reading to reassure that the concept-analysis "Covid-19" is indeed addressed in the material. Afterwards, using the second heuristic question, we asked ourselves how the text constructs the meaning of the concept-analysis (SOUZA, 2014). That is, among the several possible definitions due to the polysemy that is typical of languages, how Covid-19 is represented in the text.

Some markers stand out, as we can see: "the communities monitor their traditional territories"²² (DS04), "because so far the DSEI/East (Special Indigenous Sanitary District) and the municipality itself are not prepared or capable of attending"²³ (DS05) and "Our surveillance is not clandestine nor illegal because it is a right protected by the Federal Constitution"²⁴ (DS06).

In addition to the simultaneous promotion of the principles of Ethnocommunication identified by Araújo and Santi (2019), the conflicts of representation (SANTI, 2009) summoned in the text (a statement of repudiation) – which emerge through the manifest discourses, formatted by the (media) representation built by the CIR's web portal on the issue (CHARAUDEAU, 2007) – become evident at this point. The media tools here also act as technological embodiment of representations (SOARES, 2007); as staging of a predefined nature (HALL, 2003); and/or as tools to transpose representational perspectives and patterns (SANTI, 2009).

The selected discursive markers, in paraphrasal relation, clearly indicate a Discursive Formation (DF) that presents Covid-19 as a tragic symbol facing the extreme

²¹ Lideranças da T.I RSS tornam pública nota de esclarecimento sobre as denúncias no bloqueio da comunidade Tabatinga. Available on: <<http://cir.org.br/2020/04/16/liderancas-da-t-i-rss-torna-publico-a-nota-de-esclarecimento-sobre-as-denuncia-no-bloquei-na-comunidade-tabatinga/>>. Accessed on: April 15, 2020.

²² "as comunidades fazem monitoramento dos seus territórios tradicionais" (own translation)

²³ "porque até o momento o DSEI/Leste (Distrito Sanitário Especial Indígena) e o próprio município não estão preparados ou têm condições de atender" (own translation)

²⁴ "A nossa vigilância não é clandestina e nem ilegal porque é um direito amparado pela Constituição Federal" (own translation)

vulnerability in which the indigenous peoples find themselves when confronted with health-related issues. Furthermore, these markers construct meanings and make apparent some of the necessary autonomous strategies of resistance carried out by the indigenous populations of the country, exposing the chronic sanitary problems that these communities have always faced and reinforcing the importance of the fight for the guarantee of the rights already conquered and for further advances in these segments.

From checking the textual markers (DSs), from the construction of the concept-analysis of the interpreted texts, and from the outlining of the main Discursive Formation, we can finally pursue the Ideological Formation (IF) called upon and the answers concerning the third heuristic question to identify to which discourse the discursive object belongs in the way the text constructs (SOUZA, 2014).

To this end, we have chosen to redo the third heuristic question including some specific elements related to the studied topic. With this re-arrangement, we can enunciate it as follows: what discourse represents the “Covid-19” pandemic as a symbol of health vulnerability for the indigenous populations in the State of Roraima and, concurrently, as a moment of fight for guarantees and constitutional rights related to health, defense and autonomy of their identity and territories?

We understand that the answer to this question can be found in the context of an Ideological Formation that aggregates the discourse of the Social Determinants of Health (SDH) and the discourse of the Indigenate, even if these have as a background the ethnic issue.

But what would be the discourse of the SDH? According to the National Commission on the Social Determinants of Health (2006), SDH are the social, economic, cultural and ethnic/racial factors that influence the health and the risk factors of a population. According to this Commission, these factors deal mainly with inequalities resulting from the social conditions in which people live, exposing certain social groups to greater risk of vulnerability at the expense of others.

A recent study by demographer Marta Azevedo et al. (2020) published by the Brazilian Association of Population Studies (Abep) considers the SDH in the analysis of vulnerability of the indigenous populations in the country towards the pandemic of the novel coronavirus. According to the research, indigenous peoples are among the populations at greatest risk due to Covid-19 in the country, because of the social and historical vulnerability to which they are subjected. Among the factors that account for these vulnerabilities are mainly the poor state of the system for indigenous health care,

the distance of the indigenous communities from centers with an Intensive Care Unit (ICU), the lack of basic sanitation, and others.

The discourse of the Indigenate refers historically to the reconfiguration of the indigenous territories even under Portuguese Law, when the Royal Decree of April 1, 1680, ratified by the Law of July 6, 1775, established the principle that the indigenous peoples are the original owners of their lands, with their right to them always being reserved (QUEIROZ, 2013).

According to Mendes Júnior (1912), the reasoning behind the Indigenate Right is that the native people were the first inhabitants, what constitute a birth right. That is, an original right of the indigenous people to their traditionally occupied territory and prior to the creation of the Brazilian State, thus prevailing over all other property titles.

The discourse of the Indigenate is responsible for offering the parameters for what would later become consolidated in the Federal Constitution of 1988, which reserved a whole chapter about the indigenous lands traditionally occupied by the native peoples. Acknowledging the right to land as a birth right and as specific to the subject who is a member of that community.

According to Silva (2014), the Indigenate is in fact put into practice through the conception of permanent possession, which is not regulated by civil law, thus being declaratory and a guarantee for the future. Accordingly, the Federal Government is responsible for proceeding with delimiting territory, as established by Article 67 of the Transitional Provisions Act of our Constitution.

Another important factor about the Indigenate discourse is that, according to the Constitution, indigenous territory is defined by occupation and not by delimitation. In this way, the Federal Government must use anthropological parameters for recognition, such as the criteria of a community's organization, its practices, customs and ethnicity.

The issue of ethnic recognition is therefore the basis of the Indigenate discourse since, in addition to being used as a form of socio-political organization by the groups to which it is relevant, it is also used for the achievement and claim of collective political opportunities assured to ethnic groups by the law (BARTOLOMÉ, 2006).

The discourses of the Social Determinants of Health (SDH) and the Indigenate, responsible for determining the representations of "Covid-19" made by the CIR's web portal, are part of an Ideological Formation that has as its principle, first, the fact that ethnic groups are more vulnerable in relation to health care issues and, second, the principle of being original inhabitants of the land, determining the prevalence of this

right to their descendants for their continuity as peoples of pre-Columbian ethnic identity relations.

Final remarks

On April 9, Covid-19 made its first indigenous victim in Roraima. He was a 15-year-old Yanomami teenager who lived in a community in the region of the Uraricoera River, an area invaded by small-scale miners (a possible vector for transmitting the disease) in the municipality of Alto Alegre, located in the northern part of the state²⁵. The young man, however, was not only a victim of the disease, but also of an ineffective healthcare system that, only after much persistence, successive hospital stays and a period in the ICU, decided to perform the test for the disease.

However, it was late and Alvanei Xirixana was in a critical condition and deceased as a victim of the invasion of his territory, the disrespect for his identity and the absence and inefficiency of local public services.

Throughout this study, we sought to understand the ethnomedia practices carried out by the Indigenous Council of Roraima (CIR) as a space of fight and resistance towards the Covid-19 pandemic. In this respect, we demonstrated in this research the essential need to consider the relationship between indigenous communities and media communication and the representative role of ethnomedia in the construction of discourses.

This said, we confirmed that the CIR's web portal stands in this field using the principles of Indigenous Ethnocommunication in its search for new visibility regimes, combining ethical-philosophical, geographic-territorial and ethno-political aspirations. To this end, indigenous peoples appropriate the media tools to manifest the existence of other ethnic discourses, even if using the form of visibility provided by the media field. This is the tool that is closest at hand.

Therefore, through Discourse Analysis, we can really understand how this appropriation occurs and what its logics of internal organization of discourses and its intentions are. Based on this, we can see that the CIR uses media tools to establish in its web portal a communication that demonstrates its functionality as a device for contact and mobilization of different ethnic groups and communities in the region. Moreover, this expression of communication is also responsible for providing a voice and

²⁵ Ministério da Saúde registra primeiro caso de Covid-19 em Yanomami (AMAZÔNIA REAL, 2020). Available on: <<https://amazoniareal.com.br/ministerio-da-saude-registra-primeiro-caso-de-covid-19-em-yanomami/?>>. Accessed on: April 20, 2020.

presenting the Indigenous Peoples Movement's own representations – which come from the very subjects represented to produce its discourses (CHARAUDEAU, 2007).

To summarize, the most important aspect of this research is the perception that in the scenario of representational and discursive conflict (SANTI, 2009), the ethnomedia practices performed by the CIR arise and grow stronger out of a historical context characterized by fight and resistance, being geographically located and ideologically oriented (ARAÚJO and SANTI, 2019).

Thus, we cannot overlook the fact that, when seeking new representation devices, the media discourses of the CIR relate the specific socio-cultural context of the natives and their political pretensions to a specific communicational arrangement that uses ethnicity as an indispensable element for solidarity among groups that are in struggle and have a common cause – distinguished, in this case, by the attainment of basic rights to the existence, survival, delimitation and official approval of indigenous territories.

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RESUMEN

Esta investigación reflexiona sobre las prácticas etnomediáticas llevadas a cabo por el portal del Consejo Indígena de Roraima (CIR) durante la pandemia de Covid-19, para comprender cómo la organización construye significados sobre la enfermedad. Para esto, primero identificamos los principios de la Etnocomunicación Indígena, comenzando con Baniwa (2012) y Tupinambá (2016), y luego empleamos la conceptualización de la Representación con Hall (2003) y Soares (2007) y el Análisis del Discurso de Pêcheux (1997) y Souza (2014) para examinar el corpus de estudio, que contó con 15 publicaciones textuales sobre Covid-19, realizadas por el CIR entre el 21 de marzo y el 21 de abril de 2020.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Etnocomunicación; Etnomedia indígena; Consejo Indígena de Roraima; Representaciones mediáticas; Covid-19.

RESUMO:

A presente pesquisa reflete sobre as práticas etnomidiáticas levadas a cabo pelo portal do Conselho Indígena de Roraima (CIR) durante a pandemia do Covid-19, a fim de entender como a organização constrói sentidos sobre a doença. Para isso, primeiro identificamos os princípios da Etnocomunicação Indígena, a partir de Baniwa (2012) e Tupinambá (2016), para depois empregar a conceituação de Representação de Hall (2003) e Soares (2007) e a Análise de Discurso de Pêcheux (1997) e Souza (2014) para examinar o corpus de estudo, constituído por 15 publicações textuais sobre o Covid-19, realizadas pelo CIR entre 21 de março e 21 de abril de 2020.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Etnocomunicação; Etnomídia Indígena; Conselho Indígena de Roraima; Representações midiáticas; Covid-19.