



A decade of mutiny over unpublished material: representations of a former chief Executive on the 'gay kit'

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ABSTRACT. This descriptive research aims to categorize and analyze the discourses supported by Jair Bolsonaro's Theory of Social Representations, in the 2018 and 2022 electoral periods, about the 'gay kit'. To materialize the objective, we used content analysis through two categories: 'Is it possible to continue discussing this subject? It's disgusting': social representations of a State Deputy and 'We will continue to fight this type of material': fake news in the 2018 electoral campaign. We infer that the representations in decisive moments of democracy have shaped the last years of Brazilian Education in terms of violence against LGBTQIAPN+ students, such as the removal of Programs and Projects, the extinction or dilution of portfolios, the pathologization of homosexuality and its invisibility in public, social and educational policies. Perhaps, when you come across this text, you are facing a new political scenario, perhaps, you find yourself within the same vortex shaped in the last decade. And if you have come this far, it is because such discussions are dear to you. It is up to us, educators and social scientists, based on reified representations, to break through the amalgam of common sense so that we can guarantee basic and fundamental rights such as freedom and equality for the entire LGBTQIAPN+ population, whether in the school context or outside it.

Keywords: social representations; 'gay kit'; LGBTQIAPN+ violence; fake news.

Uma década de amotinação sobre um material não publicado: representações de um ex-chefe do Executivo sobre o 'kit gay'

RESUMO. Esta pesquisa descritiva objetiva categorizar e analisar os discursos sustentados na Teoria das Representações Sociais de Jair Bolsonaro, nos períodos eleitorais de 2018 e 2022, acerca do 'kit gay'. Para materializar o objetivo, recorremos a análise de conteúdo mediante duas categorias: 'Dá pra continuar discutindo esse assunto? Dá nojo': representações sociais de um Deputado Estadual e 'Nós continuaremos combatendo esse tipo de material': *fake news* na campanha eleitoral de 2018. Depreendemos que as representações em momentos decisórios da democracia desenharam os últimos anos da Educação Brasileira no que se refere a violência contra estudantes LGBTQIAPN+, como por exemplo, a destituição de Programas e Projetos, extinção ou diluição de pastas, patologização da homossexualidade e sua invisibilidade em políticas públicas, sociais e educativas. Talvez, ao se deparar com este texto, você esteja diante de um novo cenário político, talvez, se encontre dentro do mesmo vórtice desenhado na última década. E se chegou até aqui é porque tais discussões lhes sejam caras. Resta a nós, educadores e cientistas sociais, com base em representações reificadas irromper a amálgama do senso comum de modo que possamos garantir direitos básicos e péticos como a liberdade e igualdade de toda a população LGBTQIAPN+, seja no contexto escolar, seja fora dele.

Palavras chave: representações sociais; 'kit gay'; violência LGBTQIAPN+; *fake news*.

Una década de motín por material inédito: declaraciones de un ex director ejecutivo sobre el 'kit gay'

RESUMEN. Esta investigación descriptiva tiene como objetivo categorizar y analizar los discursos sostenidos por la Teoría de las Representaciones Sociales de Jair Bolsonaro, en los períodos electorales de 2018 y 2022, sobre el 'kit gay'. Para materializar el objetivo utilizamos el análisis de contenido utilizando dos categorías: '¿Podemos seguir discutiendo este tema? Es repugnante': representaciones sociales de un diputado estatal y 'Seguiremos luchando contra este tipo de material': noticias falsas en la campaña electoral de 2018. Entendemos que las representaciones en momentos de decisión de la democracia configuraron los últimos años de la Educación brasileña en relación con la violencia contra los estudiantes LGBTQIAPN+, como, por ejemplo, la destitución de Programas y Proyectos, la extinción o dilución de

carteras, la patologización de la homosexualidad y su invisibilidad en la vida pública, social y educativo. Quizás, cuando te encuentres con este texto, estés ante un nuevo escenario político, quizás te encuentres dentro del mismo vórtice diseñado en la última década. Y si ha llegado hasta aquí es porque aprecia este tipo de debates. Nos corresponde a nosotros, educadores y científicos sociales, a partir de representaciones cosificadas, romper con la amalgama del sentido común para que podamos garantizar derechos básicos y duraderos como la libertad y la igualdad para toda la población LGBTQIAPN+, ya sea en el contexto escolar o fuera de él.

Palavras chave: representaciones sociales; 'kit gay'; violencia LGBTQIAPN+; noticias falsas.

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Introduction

The Social Representations – SR – are seen as an 'atmosphere', in relation to the individual or a group, directs postures and behaviors that will serve as justifications in the taking of positions and in the construction of certain discourses. These representations when crystallising into individual and/or collective ideology will be brought to bear to safeguard the particularities of certain social extracts (Moscovici, 2015). This has been the decade, between 2012 and 2022, where former Chief Executive, Jair Messias Bolsonaro, evoked during his term and on the eve of the 2018 and 2022 elections, the notorious 'gay kit'.

The representations of the politician, as well as the group that supported him, on the material, disseminated in the form of fake news or false news, illustrated as a set of concepts and mythical explanations or beliefs, become common sense and begin to compose the repertoire of certain electoral groups, which from then on seek to establish analog relationships of these representations solidified in their ideal with their speeches. These groups, while making seemingly absolute judgments, evoke conditional alternatives, taken as legitimate, or conditionally generic and open. It is in this conditionality that the Social Representation Theory – SRT – allows us to establish analytical criteria to distinguish the cognitions considered absolute from conditional cognitions, at the same time that it allows us to understand the relational dynamics between the cognitive elements of the two systems (Moscovici, 2015; Sá, 1996; Abric, 1998).

These SR lead us to understand the thought systems of those who evoke them, which can be represented by the consensual or reified universe. The universe reified is produced by scientific rigor and demands objectivity, techniques and methodologies recognized by science, not being the case in canvas. The consensual universe or common sense, object of our analysis, has a strong connection with the intellectual conceptions of a certain group and are constituted in social interactions. In this case it is almost possible to observe with the naked eye, the crystallization of these representations in the collective ideology of a portion of Brazilian society, by taking as absolute truth the discourses about the 'gay kit' (Sá, 1996).

In general, we can understand this mediation through two cognitive processes: anchoring and objectification. The first aims to transform something strange and disturbing in our particular system of categories by adjusting it to something familiar and that seems more appropriate to us, that is, explicit how new information is integrated and transformed the already existing information in our mental structure. The second consists in the transformation of abstract images into something concrete, and in the analysis we do here we observe the objectification about the 'gay kit' in the harangues of a former chief Executive and his electorate (Jodelet, 2015; Moscovici, 2015).

Based on these premises, and supported by the SRT, we adapted our study in order to categorize and analyze how were organized the representations, constituted in common sense, of the candidate for the Presidency of the Republic in the electoral period and their projections over time. To materialize our goal, we use content analysis, as assumed by Bardin (2016). Thus, we performed a scan in the world computer network in order to find speeches of said politician in two decision moments of Brazilian democracy that corresponded to the election campaigns of 2018 and 2022. By making inferences in the speeches of the former candidate for chief Executive, we established the following categories of analysis: 'Can we continue discussing this subject? It is disgusting': social representations of a state representative and; "We will continue to combat this type of material': fakes news of the 2018 election campaign".

Starting from these categories we organize our text in sections: in the first we will make a historical journey on the construction of the Kit for Combating and Preventing Homophobia, in the second we use the discursive analysis of the political question, in the following we emphasize the work of the Supreme Electoral Court in fighting fakes news and finally we make considerations about the representations obtained.

The Kit for Combating and Preventing Homophobia

It is necessary to remake a brief historical journey to understand the context in which this material was elaborated and its projection in electoral periods. At first, it is worth drawing the attention of those who read us to the official name of the Project entitled: Kit for Combating and Preventing Homophobia, which had been pejoratively nicknamed 'gay kit', at the time, by the then State Deputy of the city of Rio de Janeiro, Jair Messias Bolsonaro, in the year 2011.

Resuming our historical delineation, we note that the Multiannual Plan from 2004 to 2007, taking into account the damage caused by homophobia in the LGBTQIAPN+ community (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioners, Intersex, Asexual, Allies, Pansexual, Polysexual, Non-Binary and more), defined in the sphere of the *Human Rights Right of All Program*, the Elaboration of the Plan to Combat Discrimination against Homosexuals (Ministry of Health, 2004).

Considering the guidelines provided in the Plan, it was entrusted to the Special Secretariat for Human Rights to design the 'Brazil without Homophobia Program - Program to Combat Violence and Discrimination against LGBT people and Promotion of Citizenship for Homosexuals. The guiding objectives of the Program were based on the promotion of citizenship and human rights, equalization of rights, combating violence and discrimination against LGBTQIAPN+ (Oliveira Júnior, 2013).

With an extensive agenda, the 'Brazil without Homophobia Program' established specific actions in the area of Education, stage for future conservative clashes. Seeking to contemplate these guidelines, the Federal Government aimed to promote strategies that contributed to the creation of the 'School Project without Homophobia'.

In 2009, the initial kick-off was given in the solidification of the Project School Without Homophobia, through the development and publication of teaching materials to be distributed in the Public High School Network throughout the country, strategy designed, elaborated and executed through a coalition of Non-governmental Organizations representing the LGBTQIAPN+ Movement and the Ministry of Education and Culture - MEC. It was in this context that the preparation of a teaching material which was attributed to the nickname of Combat and Prevention of Homophobia Kit, widely disseminated by agents contrary to its distribution, as 'gay kit' (Fernandes, 2011).

Developed and elaborated over two years, the Kit provided for the distribution, in the second half of 2011, of a set of teaching materials for the Public High School Network, including: Boletins (Bulletins Escola sem Homofobia), Cover letter for education professionals, School without Homophobia Notebook - still currently available in the world network of computers and audiovisual resources with 05 short videos: Fear of what? Doll in the Backpack, Torpedo, Finding Bianca and Probability (Oliveira Júnior, 2013).

The dispute about the material began in the initial presentation of the Kit, promoted by André Lázaro, who at that time held the position of Secretary of the Ministry of Education, causing mistrust as to the purpose and intentionality of its content.

[...]. Just to tell a story to the difficulty in one of the teaching materials, the films, had a kiss on the mouth, and we were, a lesbian kiss on the mouth, and we spent three months discussing how far it had gone, how far the tongue went in [laughs] [...] (Representative..., 2022).

What we saw from that moment was a frantic movement of conservative political benches and civil society positioning themselves contrary to the distribution of the Kit. The relationship between the State and the NGOs involved in the elaboration of the Project became tense at this time, especially with those dealing with gender studies, sexuality, combating LGBTQIAPN+phobia and school. The reception of the proposal of the Combating and Preventing Homophobia Kit by sectors related to religious fundamentalism, during the seminar 'School without Homophobia' in the Chamber of Deputies of the National Congress, was permeated by controversy, resistance and LGBTQIAPN + explicit phobia (Fernandes, 2011; Grespan & Goellner, 2011).

Thus, in 2010, legislative chambers were transformed into arenas of repudiation to the project. Politicians often approached the press asking for support from civil society to contain the distribution of the material and this, in turn, distributed through the worldwide computer network fake news and countless manifestos of suspension of the Kit. Among the fake news predominated the discourse that the Federal Government was financing homosexual practices in children and adolescents (Fernandes, 2011; Mello et al., 2012).

In the epicenter of these clashes, gained visibility the figure of Jair Messias Bolsonaro, then Federal Deputy of Rio de Janeiro, either for his extremism with LGBTQIAPN + phobic bias, or by the distribution of the 'Anti-

Gay Booklet', a discursive move that acquired quorum and quickly began to circulate in the most distinct media instances, calling attention to the supposed dangers that pedagogical material would provoke in education and in Brazilian society (Brandão & Santana, 2011; Grespan & Goellner, 2011).

"Can we continue discussing this subject? It is disgusting": social representations of a state representative

The speech broadcast by *TV Câmara*, on November 30, 2010, delivered by Deputy Jair Bolsonaro, caused outrage in the LGBTQIAPN+ community, NGOs and MEC, primarily for its prejudiced, sexist, heteronormative character, of incitement to violence and devoid of any human respect, as well as for their profound ignorance of the content that comprised the Kit for Combating and Preventing Homophobia. Moreover, it incited a considerable portion of society to repudiate the material without even knowing it.

These representations, according to Moscovici (2015) are seen as an 'atmosphere', in relation to the person or group; specific of our society. This knowledge, when shared by a politician, as it is the case, served to refer positions and construction of certain conducts of a considerable portion of the population. In this sense, it is worth reproducing discursive excerpts from the politician in the legislative session described by Oliveira Júnior (2013, p. 89, our emphasis).

[...] I want to deal with a subject here that in my opinion for me, which in twenty years of Congress is the biggest scandal that I have come across [...]. Attention parents of students of six, seven, eight, nine and ten years of public school. Attention parents, your children will receive next year at school a kit. This kit with the title 'Fight against homophobia', but in fact it is a stimulus to homosexuality. It is an incentive to promiscuity, that is, in this kit, contain DVDs with two stories [...] that your seven-year-old son will watch next year, if we do not take a measure here now. First story: a boy of about fourteen years old, named Ricardo, goes to the bathroom to make 'pipi', looks to the side and his classmate is also doing and he falls in love with this colleague [...] and so he resolves to overcome bullying and assume his homosexuality. This boys of seven, eight, nine, ten years will watch next year. Well ahead to the scene of the film: when the teacher calls Ricardo in class he revolts, gay ways, with his tricks and talks like this, babbles, Bianca. My name is Bianca. And this film at the end gives the following moral lesson: this behavior of Ricardo or Bianca, then it becomes an exemplary behavior for the other students. Then there is another filmete: of the two lesbian girls also about 13 years old, dating and the great discussion of this Minority Human Rights Commission, I hate to refer to this Commission, deals with the lesbian kiss of two girls. Attention parents, your daughter of seven, eight, nine, ten years, will watch next year this filmete, which is already being bid. And the great discussion of our Minority Human Rights Commission is the depth of one girl's tongue had to get into the other girl's mouth. Can we continue discussing this subject? It's disgusting. These gays, lesbians want us to take as an example of behavior their promiscuity. This is an extremely serious thing [...] we cannot submit to the derision of society. This kit for six thousand schools, for children from seven to twelve years will be distributed next year in all public schools in Brazil, it is a shame [...] this story of homophobia is a cover story to entice the kids and especially those they think have homosexual tendencies [...] repeat seven, eight, nine ten years. [...] if a boy has a deviant behavior, from a young age, he must be directed to the right path, even if it is with a slap. They accuse me of being violent, but I'm not promiscuous, I'm not a scoundrel with the Brazilian families [...].

The 'moral panic' was established and what we saw in the sequence was a succession of confrontations promoted in the press, civil society, social networks, which disseminated a series of misinformation about this material and the campaign of the Ministry of Education and Culture (Furlani, 2011).

The speech against the material was evoked numerous times by the deputy in subsequent years, as for example, in an interview granted to the site *UOL Notícias* in 2011.

I have nothing against the sexual choices of anyone. Since November last year I entered alone, still in isolation in the house [Chamber of Deputies], hitting the gay kit that the MEC together with LGBT will distribute this year to 6000 public schools of the first degree, a teaching material with posters, Booklets and movies that for me are pornographic films for the children of the first grade showing there. Their intention is to combat homophobia, but the boy of the first grade watching films like Finding Bianca, you can understand, lesbian kiss, and doll in the backpack and two more there, you are actually stimulating homosexuality opening the doors for pedophilia. No Gay Kit at schools! (Bolsonaro, 2011).

Since the conception of the Kit for Combating and Preventing Homophobia, its purposes were very clear in specifying that the material would be distributed to the country's high schools and according to the data from the National Survey by Household Sample (PNAD - *Pesquisa Nacional por Amostra de Domicílios*) and the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE), held at the time, 50.9% of young people aged 15 to 17

years were in high school (Oliveira Júnior, 2013). After the training to work with the kit, educators would have free will to use, modify, delete and add content according to need and convenience.

The non-mandatory approach of the theme is clear during the presentation of the material in the groups of training multipliers proposed by the School Without Homophobia Project: "[...] would serve to subsidize multipliers and teachers who would have autonomy to adapt it according to age, with the regions and with the ability of both the students and the educators themselves, to deepen that theme and promote a discussion" (Paulinha, 2011).

As said above, the representations of a legislator or legislator, as a representative figure of a portion of the population, reverberates in the positions taken and can change the course of the history of a nation. It was what happened in the subsequent period where, the then President of Brazil Dilma Rousseff, in 2011, before the condition to which she found herself exposed, even without having followed the videos, agreed that the visual material was inappropriate to be presented to children and young people and that the material would advertise 'sexual option'. Thus, it remained the governing authority the option of suspending all anti-homophobia productions that were being edited by MEC, specifically, the Kit for Combating and Preventing Homophobia (Grespan & Goellner, 2011).

A project extensively studied, expensive, articulated with the most distinct spheres was being sheltered at that time, this process that Oliveira Júnior and Maio (2015) called 'culture of unscheduling' based on conservatism that plagues the country.

We have followed the diffusion of religious discourses that advocate the imposition of values, of beliefs and traditions restricted to the universe of the heterosexual norm that impact directly on the performance of the Federal Government aimed at formulating public policies to combat prejudice and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity in the areas of education and health (Oliveira Júnior & Maio, 2015, p. 15).

In view of this, two scenarios remained evident: the prevalence of 'morality and good manners' promoted by conservative political parties and the weakening of the LGBTQIAPN+ movement, because such conduct "[...] unfolds in the violation of rights and cause the most distinct social damages, by withdrawing from the act of living the free exercise of different ways of being and feeling human" (Oliveira Júnior & Maio, 2015, p. 16). However, the demarcation of a hegemonic conduct was not enough and what we saw in the sequence is what follows in the following sections.

"We will continue fighting this type of material": fake news in the 2018 election campaign.

In mid-2013, we saw the mobilization of the extreme right in order to promote Jair Bolsonaro to the Federal Government. Acquired robustness political-religious representations, employed in the subversion of people who would be enemies of the 'traditional Brazilian family' and who would try to destroy it through the 'homosexuality' of children, sexual debauchery and other elements. The protectionist discourse of 'children of the homeland', 'children of the nation' and the pathologization of homosexuality under the argument of child care (Vilela & Libardi, 2019).

The presidential campaign was leveraged by the frequent use of fake news, through posts and videos that circulated at the speed of light on social networks such as Youtube, Facebook, WhatsApp and Twitter. Among the false disclosures, there was a discursive resumption regarding the 'gay kit', this time with more intensity, new clothes and added other subterfuges (Maranhão Filho et al., 2018; Maracci, 2019).

It is worth mentioning an interview given by the presidential candidate to *Jornal Nacional*, when he exhibited the book *Aparelho Sexual e Cia*, claiming that the material was an integral part of the Kit for Combating and Preventing Homophobia. The video of this interview is no longer available on the world computer network, we use the analysis of the content of a video published by the then Federal Deputy, Joice Hasselmann, one of the great supporters of the candidate's speech, on the eve of the 2018 presidential elections, entitled: "The gay-kit book was distributed in public school libraries as a gift".

[...] this book actually stimulates children early for sex and even more opens the doors of pedophilia. [...] The publishers who sell educational material to the government, on the part of the government, it requires that they, as a gift, provide this type of material. Why? The Ministry of Education poses 'isento'. It has nothing to do with that, but this book did come in a large part of the libraries of elementary schools throughout Brazil. It was a director who gave me and I checked that he arrived in several places. And *O Globo* say that was not part of the gay kit, at least the *Globe* agrees that there was such a gay kit, with another name, *Escola sem Homofobia*. [...] According to the MEC is

saying now, they are lying, because this will go to the elementary school library. From the sixth grade the first and second grade children also have access. What matters is that they want to legalize pedophilia. They want to sexualize our children early. It is a scoli do with Education in Brazil (Hasselmann, 2018, our emphasis).

This moment, which became paradigmatic in the election campaign, helps us to understand the permanence and relevance of the 'gay kit' as a political actor, in a controversy that has dragged on for years, but that, served as a trigger to project the figure of the presidential on the national scene and trace its conservatism as digital of his election campaign, since, his political trajectory was ridiculous and his proposals for the development of the nation parcas, as reference his speech (Maracci, 2019, p. 36)

We will fight, or rather we will continue to fight this kind of material for our children, because our children have to be respected in the classroom. The message I give to you father to you mother [...] let's see what the kids carry in their backpack and if it has as a small arrival in the library especially in those public that is to reach the son of the poor, ie, the government [...] does not have any regard for your child in class, they want them in an increasingly early form to present themselves for sex. We are together, Brazil is ours, together, we will get there and rule the destination of this great nation [...].

In addition to this interview, there were countless references to the kit on the eve of the presidential election, sometimes walking between parody and disinformation. What the representations about gay kit show is a lie that, supported by elements that refer to the destabilization of a sexuality taken as normal, disorganizes the senses and makes a 'news' become a collective representation. More than destabilizing sexuality, these representations added elements that promoted the success of its propagation (Moscovici, 2015; Vilela & Libardi, 2019).

A clear example of this spread can be seen in the pejorative tone attributed to the Kit for Combating and Preventing Homophobia, nicknamed 'Gay Kit', which conveyed the slanderous and distorted representation of a true work developed by the MEC and non-governmental entities. This idea was assimilated and incorporated into the speeches of his electoral group. With these representations internalized in the collective corollary, in 2018, with 55.13% said politician, was elected to hold the position of President of Brazil (Moscovici, 2015; Maracci, 2019; Feitosa, 2021). With the successful action of these conservative groups, parallel to many other events, was given the political context or, in conceptual terms, the relational structures that would make it possible to change the political regime and the correlation of forces in different subsystems of public policies, among them those associated with the LGBTQIAPN+ Movement, that suffered a gradual process of dehydration in their structures caused by the withdrawal of the guidelines for Human Rights of the LGBTQIAPN+ Community (Moscovici, 2015; Romancini, 2018; Maracci, 2019; Feitosa, 2021).

A decade of clash and already worn by this debate we wonder if the discussions on the Kit for Combating and Preventing Homophobia have run out? Obviously the answer is no. Just do a quick search in the database of Google Scholar, using the descriptor 'gay kit', to come across approximately 2800 scientific papers that involve this theme, because, contrary to what we might think, this subject was not exhausted with the rise of the deputy to the Presidency of the Republic.

The 'gay kit candidate': the resurgence of this discourse in the 2022 election campaign

Candidate for re-election in 2022, with former President Luís Inácio Lula da Silva as his opponent, the then President of the Republic Bolsonaro tries to resurrect the 'gay kit', said an article published by *Revista Veja* (Marques, 2022). *O Globo* newspaper published a report entitled: 'Fake news about 'gay kit' back in circulation a month and a half before the election.

The first article said that Bolsonaro posted a message about a kit to be distributed by his government with emphasis on family literature, with content aimed at strengthening family ties. Taking advantage of the moment evoked in a veiled way the material that he had criticized so much in 2018.

Unlike previous governments, the kit currently distributed is another: delivery of the material *Programa Conta Para Mim*. Educational content that encourages the strengthening of family ties and children's literacy (personal speech) (*O Globo*, 2022).

People ideologically '*bolsonaristas*' understood the message of the chief Executive and as a maneuver mass they echoed their ideologies: "This is content for children, not the one that the '*Partido das Trevas*' (Party of

Darkness, free translation) wanted to distribute to our children, that such kit [...]," wrote an internet user in the comments of the report.

Veja online published that, the federal deputy Eduardo Bolsonaro (PL-SP), son of the then President of the Republic shared a video on Instagram where he shows a child in possession of the book *Aparelho Sexual e Cia - Um guia inusitado para crianças descoladas*, the same his father used in the 2018 election campaign. The video was accompanied by the following caption: 'Attention!!!! This is not hate speech or any other implication of the moment. These are just facts! I believe that our children do not deserve this kind of indoctrination!', posted the parliamentarian with hashtags #PTnunçamais and #ideologiadegeneração.

It was clear that at the time of the election campaign, the Executive representative presented a moderate speech in relation to the 'gay kit', this is due to two reasons. The first refers to what Coutinho et al. (2018, p. 167) mention:

[...] during our conversations [...] we are urged to express ourselves on certain matters, seeking explanations, making judgments and taking positions. Through these interactions we create consensual universe and thus, new representations are produced and communicated, leaving simple opinions and becoming true theories of common sense, [...] schematic constructions that aim to account for the complexity of the object, facilitate communication and guide behaviors. These theories help forge the group identity and the individual's sense of belonging to the group.

At this moment it is evident that the President no longer needs to do the 'dirty service', because his children and voters understand and reverb their representations even before half words. The second factor is due to the incessant work of the Superior Electoral Court – TSE (*Tribunal Superior Eleitoral*), which, since 2018, has sought to combat and eradicate the fake news disseminated in Bolsonaro's election campaigns, as we will see in the following section.

TSE is the highest body of the Electoral Justice, which has a fundamental role in maintaining Brazilian democracy through joint actions with the Regional Electoral Courts (TREs – *Tribunais Regionais Eleitorais*), bodies responsible for the administration and organization of the electoral process of states and municipalities. According to the Electoral Code (Law n. 4.737, 1965), the Court is composed of seven ministers: three from the Federal Supreme Court, two from the Superior Court of Justice and two from lawyers with outstanding legal knowledge and moral integrity. Each minister is elected for one biennium and may be reappointed only once. This rotation is based on the principle of maintaining the non-partisan character of the courts and guaranteeing the independence of elections (Law n. 4,737, 1965).

Highlighted the organization and competence of the TSE, it is necessary to make a step back and an advance in time highlighting the electoral campaigns of Bolsonaro, 2018 and 2022. News published by *Jornal Estadão* and reproduced on the UOL website, on October 16, 2018 highlights that the Minister of the TSE, Carlos Horbach, determined the removal of a set of contents posted on social networks such as Facebook and YouTube, where the then presidable made criticisms of the book *Aparelho Sexual e Cia*, and explicitly reiterated that the material was an integral part of the 'gay kit' to be distributed in the early years of basic education of public schools, at the time when Fernando Haddad (PT) was at the head of the Ministry of Education, recalling that this was his opponent in the 2018 election campaign (Moura, 2018).

Moura (2018) emphasized the speech of minister Horbach

[...] is equally notorious the fact that the project '*Escola sem Homofobia*' was not executed by the Ministry of Education, which leads to the conclusion that it did not provide, in fact, the distribution of teaching material related to it. Thus, the dissemination of misinformation that the book in question was distributed by MEC generates disinformation in the electoral period, to the detriment of political debate, which recommends the removal of content with such content.

The same fake news resurfaced in 2022, according to the UOL Notícias website. A video posted on Facebook was accompanied by a caption that falsely reiterated that the book, mentioned in the 2018 presidential campaign, was an integral part of the 'gay kit' and that the material had been distributed in public schools (Santiago, 2022).

The complete transcript of the caption accompanying the video is essential for understanding how much Jair Bolsonaro's statements, made in 2018, reverberated over time and solidified the representations of an electorate mass.

In Camaçari, Bahia. A 'teacher' uses inappropriate and unauthorized material inducing the eroticization and sexualization of children. A father discovers this, becomes outraged, and goes to complain. The scoundrel herself films it without any embarrassment or fear of reprisals, even though she is committing a crime against the child and

against the family, this is the playbook of Haddad's "gay kit," which was not released due to societal pressure through the National Congress. The father should go to the police station to file a complaint for the 'teacher's' inappropriate conduct. In the classroom, the teacher does not have freedom of expression, but academic freedom based on a pre-established program for a captive audience. This should reach the Ministry of Education and the Federal Public Prosecutor's Office. Oh, if it were me and my daughter, it wouldn't end well. (Santiago, 2022, emphasis added)

On September 6, 2022, the TSE again ordered the suspension of the dissemination and removal of fake news associated with the 'gay kit,' including the video whose speech was reproduced and cited above. In her statement, Minister Maria Claudia Bucchianeri, of the TSE, highlighted:

[...] we seek, in the context of provisional urgent protection, is the removal of a video with speeches by President Jair Bolsonaro in which the previous PT governments are accused of allegedly distributing, in public schools, through the Ministry of Education, the book *Sexual Apparatus and Co. – An unusual guide for cool kids*, a 'primer that would teach children how to have sex', an initiative supposedly included in what came to be called the 'Gay Kit' (Superior Electoral Court, 2022, p. 4, emphasis added).

According to the Minister, the issue was already known to the Court, and it had been established, both for the 2018 and 2022 elections, that such content, in addition to being false, was misinformation, providing sufficient grounds for its removal. We share the Minister's words, reiterating that "[...] a bleak and extremely serious scenario emerges that reinforces biased behaviors, fake news and disinformation, which must be rejected, given the harmful potential of using this technique within the political-electoral field" (Superior Electoral Court, 2022, p. 4).

In both election periods, the publishing house responsible for the Kit for Combating and Preventing Homophobia, as well as the Ministry of Education and Culture, the *Partido dos Trabalhadores*, and the organizations involved in planning the Kit for Combating and Preventing Homophobia, jointly denied, through various communication channels, that the book '*Aparelho Sexual e Cia.*' was not delivered to Basic Education schools, nor was it an integral part of the Kit.

What was presented in the dissemination of these fake news stories aligns with what Vilela and Libardi (2019) state: that it is not enough for legal authorities to reject the false content of messages produced in the last two presidential campaigns. Instilling panic by resorting to sexual threats is to employ the power to empty the population's capacity for cognition and rational judgment of facts during periods of scrutiny.

These representations are organized around a central core, which simultaneously determines their meaning and internal organization, and a peripheral system that promotes the interface between concrete reality and the central system. In this sense, the elements of the central core are more difficult to modify, as they crystallize and sustain the objects produced or consumed and the communications established by figures of authority and defense (Abric, 1998; Moscovici, 2015).

That being said, it seems to us that in the last decade the falsehoods surrounding the "gay kit" have merged into the collective imagination in an almost unbreakable way, and what we saw on social media on the eve of the elections was a reproduction of the discourse projected by the person who occupied the Presidency of the Republic and the Chamber of Deputies of Rio de Janeiro in previous times.

(In)conclusive thoughts

The duality that can be read in the title of this section makes us walk by two lines of reasoning: the first is that we are ending this text based on the materialization of the objective proposed for it and the second, much more complex, evidences that the last decade was insufficient to exhaust the discussions around the notorious 'gay kit' and that, although a joint force is designed in order to eradicate the fakes news, representations on the material findif crystallized in the collective imagination of a significant portion of the Brazilian population. Representations these built and based on the consensual discourse, which found echo in the voice of a political group, which have dragged and will probably drag for many years.

The purpose of the discussions proposed here is not about the intentionality, content or quality of the Kit for Combating and Preventing Homophobia, since the material was packed even before its distribution, a fact that makes it unknown to much of the population. What we aimed to refer was how the consensual representations of a former president were organized, appointed as 'representative of the people' and his projections over time in the constitution of a collective idea and that, even denied or rejected by competent bodies, becomes evoked as absolute truth.

These representations put in fake news designed the last years of Brazilian education with regard to violence inflicted on LGBTQIAPN+ students. The rise of conservatism to the highest position in the legislature deposed programs and projects that aimed to combat and eradicate prejudice against these people. Pastes that had this scope were diluted in other pastes or extinguished. In addition, we are faced with a Common National Curriculum Base – BNCC (*Base Nacional Comum Curricular*), which does not make any reference to sexual diversity or gender studies. As a result, we observed an increasing process of pathologization of homosexuality that acquired aggravating forum by promoting the invisibility of this group in public, social and educational policies.

Perhaps, dear reader, when coming across this text, you are facing a new political scenario, maybe within the same vortex drawn in the last decade. And if you have come this far, it is because such discussions are valuable for you. It remains for us, educators and social scientists, based on reified representations, to break out the amalgam of common sense so that we can guarantee basic and fundamental rights such as freedom and equality of the entire LGBTQIAPN+ population, whether in the school context or outside it.

Data availability

Not applicable

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