

# The journalist's identity in the social media: discursive practices and subjectification

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**ABSTRACT.** Current essay analyzes the materialization of media discursive practices which give identity to the journalist as a subject. The discursive event of such production is investigated within the context of the voting held at the Brazilian Federal Court of Justice on the 17<sup>th</sup> June 2009 which ruled on the non-obligatory of a journalist university diploma to warrant the profession. Since it is an event beyond the casual range, it enhances the rise and transformation of knowledge in society and in new forms of power. Enunciation sequences in six articles published by the magazines *Veja* and *IstoÉ* and by the newspapers *Folha de S. Paulo on-line* and *O Estado de São Paulo* are analyzed. Foregrounded on the French Discourse Analysis (DA), especially on Michel Foucault's theoretical presuppositions, the journalists' identity is built on notions of the freedom of speech and of the press. Further, in the enunciations, the 'ability myth', as an innate and/or acquired factor received through experience in the exercise of the profession, also produces effects on identity.

**Keywords:** discourse analysis, discursive event, subjectivity, journalism.

**RESUMO. A identidade do jornalista na mídia: as práticas discursivas e a subjetificação.** Neste artigo, buscamos compreender como se materializam as práticas discursivas midiáticas que produzem identidades do sujeito jornalista, considerando-se como acontecimento discursivo dessa produção a votação do Supremo Tribunal Federal, realizada em 17 de junho de 2009, que decidiu pela não obrigatoriedade do diploma de Jornalismo para o exercício da profissão. Trata-se de um acontecimento que foge à rede casual, promovendo o surgimento e a transformação dos saberes em nossa sociedade e em novas formas de exercício de poder. A análise apresentada incide sobre algumas sequências enunciativas presentes em seis matérias produzidas pelas revistas *Veja* e *IstoÉ* e pelos jornais *Folha on-line* e *O Estadão*. Sob o mirante da Análise de Discurso de linha francesa (AD), especialmente de pressupostos teóricos desenvolvidos por Michel Foucault, observamos que a identidade do jornalista é construída em torno da ideia de liberdade de informação e de expressão. Além desse aspecto, nos enunciados, o mito do "dom", como algo inato e/ou adquirido pela experiência no exercício da profissão, também produz efeitos sobre essa identidade.

**Palavras-chave:** análise de discurso, acontecimento discursivo, subjetividade, jornalismo.

## Introduction

By eight votes against one the Brazilian Federal Court of Justice decided on the 17<sup>th</sup> June 2009 that the journalist's university diploma was not mandatory for the exercise of the profession. The Hon. Marco Aurélio was the sole court member who defended the prerequisite as obligatory. Chairperson Hon. Gilmar Mendes and the court ministers Carmem Lúcia, Ricardo Lewandowski, Eros Grau, Carlos Ayres Britto, Cezar Peluso, Ellen Gracie and Celso de Mello voted against mandatory university diploma.

In current essay the above decision is analyzed as an event since it modifies the legislation on Journalism and allows people without a university degree in journalism the full exercise of their

profession. It also establishes a factor with regard to what is and is not allowed. It is a rare event since it is not usual that professions undergo such drastic modifications, extensive to all professionals. It is a rare occasion in which the Federal Court of Justice meets to decide whether a university degree is required for the exercise of a profession.

Although the decision is the result of many discussions on the subject, it reveals the return of a destabilizing factor due to the ups and downs of decisions by several courts. Brazilian society was not fully aware that discussions on the incompatibility of a university degree and the exercise of Journalism existed. Since the 17<sup>th</sup> June 2009 the media broadcasted the event and the information extended itself to a greater number of people, or rather, a great number of

repercussions appeared. The event became notorious and discussions on the fact itself were undertaken. Reports, coverage, footage, protests, articles, declarations, special reports, debates and charges in several communication and social media proliferated and, due to the above, other discourses could be formulated, produced and published. According to Possenti (2006, p. 95), it is “an excellent example of a ‘fact’ which becomes an event – it returns on the agenda, it is revised, analyzed, specified, detailed and correlated to another similar fact or to some facts which became similar”.

The importance of the relationship between memory and history is enhanced and this fact allows the remembrance of other discourses and other events that should be repeated and frequently re-signified. Interdiscursive and intertextual relationships “are designed, different stances materialize and positions repeat or renew themselves” (POSSENTI, 2006, p. 95).

The historical and discursive event questions the materialization forms of the social media’s discursive practice which objectify / subjectify the journalist as subject, especially after the Federal Court’s decision. The media is in the limelight of the analysis described since it (re)produces knowledge in its several fields and disseminates truth regimes and subjectification processes.

The enunciation sequences are, therefore, described and interpreted to understand how the materialization of identity discursive practices on the journalist as subject occurs<sup>1</sup>. The enunciations studied were retrieved from subject matters published in four newspapers: the editorial *Qualidade sem diploma* from the magazine *Veja* of the 24<sup>th</sup> June 2009; the editorial *Jornalista sem diploma* from the newspaper *O Estado de S. Paulo* of the 20<sup>th</sup> June 2009; the news report *Diploma decorativo* from the weekly *Isto É* of the 24<sup>th</sup> June 2009; and the news *Maioria dos ministros do STF vota contra a exigência de diploma de jornalista* from the newspaper *Folha on-line* of the 17<sup>th</sup> June 2009; the news *STF derruba diploma para jornalista* from the newspaper *O Estado de S. Paulo* of the 18<sup>th</sup> June 2009; and the report analysis *Professores de jornalismo comentam fim da exigência do diploma*, from the daily newspaper *O Estado de S. Paulo* of the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2009.

### Discursive regulations

Foregrounded on the theses by Foucault (2008a), the type of discourse analysis employed in this paper

rejects the belief that from a certain point of time and space everybody will have the same thought and, taking into account surface differences, will say the same thing. In other words, a great discourse crisscrossed in all directions will be thus produced. The great units called “epochs” are discarded and replaced by “enunciation periods” which “articulate themselves during concept time, in theoretical phases, in formalization stages and in the steps of linguistic evolution, without being confused with them” (FOUCAULT, 2008a, p. 167).

Current paper will thus be involved with the concept of discourse given by Foucault (2008a), or rather, “a set of enunciations based on the same discursive formation; [...] constituted by a limited number of enunciations for which a set of existence conditions may be defined” (FOUCAULT, 2008a, p. 133).

Discourse is a “practice”, a “fragment of history”, a unit and even a discontinuity in this history. Since history imposes limits, cuts, transformations and specific modes of discourse temporality, it does not deal with the marking of its abrupt emergence within the complicities of time.

According to Veyne (1998), Foucault’s central thesis and its originality is that the object is related with what was the “doing” in a determined historical moment; therefore, “doing”, the practice, is not explained by “what is done”. Consequently, taking “discourse” as practice comprises the understanding of a “material” universe. History is only a story narrated by people and labeled as the “truth”, and the historical struggle is about these truths. Defining “practice”, Veyne (1998) writes

[...] practice is not some mysterious agency, some substratum of history, some hidden engine: it is what people do (the word says just what it means). Its practice is somewhat ‘hidden’, and if we may, provisionally, call it the ‘hidden part of an iceberg’, this is due to the fact that it shares almost the totality of our behavior and of universal history [author’s italics] (VEYNE, 1998, p. 248).

According to Veyne (1998), grammars and practices exist under a conscious discourse that makes the subject believe that things are and are not. There are silences, gaps, lacunae, called “drapery” by the author, in all things said. Consequently, objects are co-related to practices and all practice depends on its transformation. In fact, according to Foucault (2008a), everything is history and all depends on all. “Instead of a world made of subjects or of objects and their dialectics, [...] there are structures [relationships, practices] that lend their objective faces to matter” (VEYNE, 1998, p. 275).

<sup>1</sup>Theoretical notes, treatment of discursive corpus and discussions in current paper are produced as from *corpora* selected from a wider research undertaken within the context of the dissertation by Dorne (2011).

According to the above, it may be stated that the enunciations under analysis are discursive practices since they construct discourses and truth regimes about the journalists' identity. For instance, discourses on this subject made possible the decision of the Federal Court to dispense the journalist's university degree as an obligatory factor for the exercise of journalism. Discourse is actually exercised as 'practice'.

The enunciation, another item in the theory of Foucault (2008a) is a guideline. What is its status? According to the above author, the enunciation is neither a structure nor a unit but a function of existence in which "the domain of structure and possible unities" intercross. This function allows its appearance in concrete contents in time and space. Describing the enunciation is the description of conditions that permit the undertaking of the function which required a referential, a subject position, an associated field and a material support – items that make possible a specific existence to a series of signs.

Within such a perspective, things said by people do not simply arise by the laws of thought or through circumstances, neither by the signalization of verbal performances, the result of the state of the spirit or of things, but through a web of relationships which characterizes the discursive level. Foucault calls this an "archive". According to Foucault (2008a), the archive does not group everything said in a "single" discourse. It is rather the very principle of the differentiation of discourses in their multiple existence and duration. The archive triggers the emergence of many enunciations under the shape of regular events, of things offered for treatment and manipulation.

The origin of a discourse about the journalist is not dealt with in this discussion; rather, it is a description (questioning) of what was said, the enunciation's function that is exercised, the discursive formation to which this type of discourse belongs, the general system of the archive to which it is subjected, since "archeology describes discourses as practice specified in the element of the archive" (FOUCAULT, 2008a, p. 49).

### **Knowledge and power: inscribing a regime of truth(s)**

Since no dissociation exists between knowledge production and power analytics, the social media, besides being a producer and disseminator of information, are also a means by which power is exercised. A question may be asked: "Who has the right to speak within the media?" Certainly not anyone can do it at any time.

The discussion on power by Foucault is above all an enhancement as to the degree the exercise of power, linked to discourses that originated after a judicial decision, directly affects the subjects. Owing to this decision (which is also a type of power exercise) many people who did not have a degree in journalism started to work as journalists, many Brazilian university courses in Journalism started revising their curricula and not a few students have abandoned the Journalism Course or have refrained from enrolling.

According to Machado (2008), Foucault does not mention a unitary or global element called power, but "diverse, heterogeneous forms, constantly transforming themselves" (MACHADO, 2008, p. 10). Power is not an 'object' or a 'natural object' but a historically constructed 'social practice'. Power is thus exercised "concretely and in detail, with its own specificities, techniques and strategies" (FOUCAULT, 2008b, p. 6), enhancing "the fine meshes of the web of power" within the general function of its mechanisms and not merely in its economic significance.

Power is a web of mechanisms and devices in which all are immersed and from which no one escapes. No outside limits or borders exist (MACHADO, 2008). Consequently, power cannot be conceived as a "thing", an object which one has or does not have; it is something that is exercised and functions.

Foucault (2008b) underscores that power is not merely related to the notion of 'repression' and to law. In fact, it has no juridical trait. If the opposite is true, the concept will not be able to account for power production:

What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it doesn't weigh on us as a force that says no, but that it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasures, forms knowledge, produces discourse. It needs to be considered as a productive network which runs through the whole social body much more than as a negative instance whose function is repression (FOUCAULT, 2008b, p. 8).

Such notion of power provides the current object of analysis with the characteristics of an "event". It is a power that says 'yes' to the exercise of Journalism without the need of any university degree in the field.

### **Analysis: Identity(ies) – media discursive practices in the objectification / subjectification of the journalist as subject**

Foregrounded on the above-mentioned theory, the strategies used by media discursive practices that

fabricate the journalist as object and subject of media discourses are discussed. The belief in the alleged 'unity' and 'completeness' of the journalistic text is corroborated in the editorials published by *Veja* and *Estadão*. This fact lies in their stance with no space for questioning and/or reflection, and thus gives visibility to the materialization of the power effects linked to the enunciations. Foucault (2009) remarks that one is dealing with one group of procedures that allows the control of discourse, or rather, the principle of rarefaction. The restriction traits of an editorial and who may or should speak through it require that its functioning conditions are taken into account. These conditions impose on the enunciators a certain amount of rules to be complied with, since "none shall enter the order of discourse if they do not satisfy certain requirements or if they are not qualified to do so from the outset" (FOUCAULT, 2009, p. 37).

The functioning of this principle lies in the titles of the two editorials and of the report of the weekly *IstoÉ*: (1) "Quality without a university diploma" (QUALITY..., 2009, p. 12-13), (2) "Journalist without a university diploma" (JOURNALIST..., 2009) and (3) "Diploma as an ornament" (PATI; MARQUES, 2009, p. 80).

The verbal construction of the titles avoids verbs. In fact, they are noun syntagmata that immediately show the stance of the subject who speaks on the event. In other words, the stance is textured by the arguments built throughout the texts.

A parallel may be drawn between the titles' textual construction of the two editorials (excerpts 1 and 2): "Journalist" (excerpt 2) of the *Veja* editorial fills the same place as "Quality" (excerpt 1) of the *Estadão* editorial. Both are linked to the characterization "without a university diploma", or rather, a quality journalistic activity does not discard a university diploma. A counterpoint with "Quality with a university diploma" and "Journalist with a university diploma" may be made from the same titles. So that a discourse may be sustained, it has to denote another one to which it is opposite, or which it tries to annul or silence. If the reality of language is taken into account (the impossibility to meet up with all meanings), the "other" discourse ("Journalist with a university diploma"), albeit not marked or written in current enunciation, echoes and produces meaning within it. It is the principle of contradiction within the same discourse: sometimes the notion of "quality" is linked to the requirement of a university diploma and sometimes it is not. The title demonstrates that the "university diploma" is not a proof of quality. In fact, people without any university diploma may do the same thing as those who has.

The title of the report from the weekly *IstoÉ* (excerpt 3) featuring "Diploma as an ornament" is reviewed taking into consideration the construction of such meaning. Since there is no need for a university diploma for the exercise of the journalist profession, this "object" is merely ornamental and questions the very process of knowledge construction in higher education and not merely the final product (the university diploma). The first rule is thus shown: specifically in the case of journalists, higher education for the exercise of their profession is consequently made relative. Journalists are thus characterized as professionals who do not need a university diploma for the exercise of their profession with quality. Therefore, the profession, and thus the professional, is disassociated from a regulatory document.

The constant use of verbs and adjectives in the editorials appear regularly in the six enunciations. This is mainly due to the fact that this type of construction is proper to the genre, although it appears with somewhat less intensity in the report of the weekly *IstoÉ* and in the articles in the *Estadão* and in the *Folha on-line*. The text of the weekly *Veja* starts as follows: "The Federal Supreme Court 'swept away' from Brazilian law an inheritance from the time of the military dictatorship: the required journalist university diploma for the exercise of the profession" (QUALITY..., 2009, p. 12, our mark).

The verb "sweep" may mean clean, take off the dirt. In other words, the exigency of a journalist diploma would be dirt that should be swept away from Brazilian legislation. The text itself connotes that the exigency is seen as an "excrecence", as something "ridiculous", corroborating the meaning that the requirement to obtain a journalist diploma would be unnecessary, and, therefore, in need of being extirpated.

The editorial from the *Estadão* starts as follows: "Finally', after so many years of debate, the Federal Supreme Court provided a 'definite solution' to the issue on the obligatory status of a conclusion certificate emitted by a Social Communication faculty so that the journalist activity may be exercised" (JOURNALIST..., 2009, our marks).

The adverb "finally" enhances that something was long overdue but, at last, it occurred. The meaning that what occurred could not have been different and that which has been expected for ages has now been fulfilled is naturalized. The term "definite solution" denotes the power of the Federal Supreme Court. Such power cannot be annulled and reminds one of the many decisions taken at lower courts which sometimes suspended the need for a diploma and sometimes required it. There is

no other alternative at present for more discussions on the subject matter since no other different decision can be taken.

The mark of authority and the sign of the "truth" constructed by the text are shown by the editorials and journalistic matter which refer to Hon. Gilmar Mendes's position as spokesperson, who, explicitly in the editorials, agrees with the position of the journalistic firms. Nevertheless, as is proper to the journalistic discourse, the voice of the "other" is required in journalistic matters so that the voice of the journalist may be (re)affirmed and (con)firmed. The "erasure of other voices is also required so that this voice acquires the status of irrefutable truth". The name of the Hon. Gilmar Mendes is present in five out of the six enunciations under analysis. "When he defended the end of this excrescence, the case spokesperson, minister Gilmar Mendes, said that it was an attempt [...]" (QUALITY..., 2009, p. 12); "However, when voting, the spokesperson of the process, minister Gilmar Mendes, insisted that [...]" (PATI; MARQUES, 2009, p. 80).

The continuous reference to the argument of the minister triggers one of the procedures of discourse control, the "commentary", analyzed by Foucault (2009) in the following terms:

To summarize, it may be supposed that there is regularly in society a sort of unevenness among discourses: the discourses that are 'said' in daily life and in exchanges, which pass away with the activity that emitted them; and there are discourses that lie at the origin of a certain number of new speech acts that retake them, transform them or speak about them, or rather, the discourses which definitely are emitted, beyond their formulation, remain emitted and are still to be emitted (FOUCAULT, 2009, p. 22).

The spokesperson Gilmar Mendes's speech is repeated in all the enunciations under analysis, in contrast to the other ministers' speeches which are only scantily mentioned. Consequently, Mendes's speech represents the institution called Federal Supreme Court, as if the decision taken by this higher court of justice belongs to him alone and is retaken, transformed, remembered and appropriated by the media's discourse, and echoes what "has been said". It may thus be stated that, although journalistic material employs Mendes's voice as one of the 'sources' of information, the opinions are not the journalistic institution's. Since they are a commentary, they fall into an inescapable paradox, or rather, in Foucault's words: "to say for the first time that which has already been said, and repeat without respite that which has never been said" (FOUCAULT, 2009, p. 25). The journalistic discourse is constructed through the other's voice.

The voices that should be emitted or silenced are thus determined. The editorial by *Veja* brings forth the following quote by the Hon. Gilmar Mendes: "Journalists' are people who professionally 'dedicate' themselves to the full exercise of the 'freedom of speech'. Journalism and the freedom of speech, however, are overlying activities by their own nature and should not be conceived and dealt with separately" (QUALITY..., 2009, p. 12, our marks).

The editorial published by the *Estadão* also refers to the same quote by the Hon. Gilmar Mendes, with an addition by the same spokesperson: "'Journalism' is the manifestation and 'diffusion of thought and information'" (JOURNALIST..., 2009, our marks).

With the exception of the article published in the *Estadão* titled "Professors of the Journalism Course comment on the non-requirement of a university diploma", the other three enunciations and the other two mentioned above refer to the same speech of the minister in their textual construction. The importance that the social media give to the minister's speech in which journalism is correlated to liberty of speech and information should be underscored. According to Foucault (2007) in *The Order of Things*:

[...] things and words are different factors [...] since at present no primordial word, no absolutely first one, exists, by which the infinite movement of discourse is founded and restricted; from now onwards language will grow without a beginning, without a territory and without any promise (FOUCAULT, 2007, p. 59-61).

Consequently, words do not carry any meaning, as if they were merely used and employed by people. Words make sense through the relationship of the subject with its object, through values, traits, classifications and others, which the subject imposes on the object. The discourse that journalism is synonymous with liberty of speech is thus constructed and there is no other way of conceiving this activity. 'Words' and 'things' are so welded together that a bar is built against the production of any other meaning attached to the words. A discursive memory on journalism – what has been said at other times and in other places – is activated and it imposes itself as the practice of the objective and neutral truth in which the opinion should be deliberately placed in its proper spaces with justifying arguments.

Accordingly, the journalist's identity is manufactured by and within discourse. As Hall (2009) remarks, an intrinsic characteristic is apposed to it so that it would not be any other or different. It is mandatory that the journalist, as subject, should

be under the aegis of the concepts of liberty of speech and information. If journalists have to defend this type of freedom so that they could be journalists and if this liberty is restricted when the university diploma is required, at this very moment a discourse is fabricated, or rather, all journalists should be against the requirement of a university diploma for the exercise of their profession. The journalist is simultaneously objectified and subjectified by media practices at this very instance: to work as a journalist is to be a subject that fights for and defends freedom of speech and information.

Since the above discourse is constructed layer by layer and by relationships of approximation and distancing, instances of silencing the discourse of the other may be seen in the enunciations. The editorials from *Veja* and *Estadão* are revealing: (1) “Besides going against a constitutional right, it ‘impairs’ people only trained in other fields of knowledge to manifest their knowledge and thoughts by means of the journalistic activities” (QUALITY..., 2009, p. 12, our mark); (2) “the Hon. Gilmar Mendes associated freedom of speech and communication, which is warranted by the Constitution in various articles, – with the typical underlining of a society that has been under censure by an authoritarian regime – and the exercise of the journalistic activity ‘without any type’ of control, restriction or condition imposed by the State” (JOURNALIST..., 2009, our mark).

It should be emphasized that editorials should insert in their discourses the support of tools proper to the juridical discourse, namely, the Constitution. It may be verified that in discursive construction there is a constant need to seek in pre-established fields – the juridical one, in the instance under investigation – the tools that warrant the discourse’s truth and authority. The Brazilian Constitution was thus evoked to (re)state that it cannot be denied that the requirement of a university diploma, in a way or another, goes against the Constitution. Discourse, therefore, imposes the idea that the diploma is a form of ‘control’, ‘restriction’ or ‘condition’ used by the State to impair the practice of quality and authentic journalism.

The quality “logically stabilizable” is verified when further analysis is undertaken with regard to the text of the *Estadão*: (3) “Without any doubt this association agrees with the basic principle that rules the freedom of the press in contemporary democracies” (JOURNALIST..., 2009).

The term “without any doubt” confers the status of an irrefutable truth (which cannot be otherwise) to the editorial of the *Estadão*. The other three journalistic texts also mention the incompatibility of

the university degree and the Brazilian Constitution produced by the Hon. Gilmar Mendes. The other’s discourse is thus employed and the responsibility is transferred to the information sources of the journalistic matter.

Nevertheless, it may be observed, particularly in the editorials, that the statement on the mandatory status of the diploma goes against the Constitution is the opinion of the newspaper which inscribes a uniquely possible interpretation to that which it defends through the construction of the text (the unit and the closure idea). Silencing may be observed in the enunciation, namely the impairment of people with a diploma in other fields of knowledge to empress their knowledge and opinions through journalism, as may be inferred from excerpt 1.

As many (albeit not all) people know, special spaces exist in journalism for contributors with specific knowledge. These spaces are generally occupied by professionals of other fields of knowledge different from that of information. This is the case of authors of articles, essays, chronicles and short stories. The above ‘collaborators’ occupy these spaces to express their opinions on several themes relevant to society. In fact, they are capable of discussing them with in-depth knowledge. Although there is the interview genre in which the journalist asks questions and handles its course, the interviewed person gives information and explications, or rather, another voice is present besides the journalist’s. The information within these spaces should be silenced so that no refutation is extant to invalidate the constructed discourse.

In contrast to the editorials, the journalistic matter on the subject in the magazine *IstoÉ*, in the *Folha on-line* and in the daily *Estadão* revealed other sources of information against the decision of the Federal Supreme Court. *IstoÉ* presented the opinion of Sergio Murillo de Andrade, president of the Brazilian Federation of Journalists (Fenaj): “The Federal Supreme Court’s stance is a terrible blow to the quality of journalistic information and to the journalists’ association” (PATI; MARQUES, 2009, p. 80).

In the last paragraph on the matter the *Folha on-line* enhanced the contrary vote of the Hon. Marco Aurélio against the non-mandatory stance of the diploma: “The only minister who was in favor of the obligatory status of the diploma, Hon. Marco Aurélio Mello, said that the journalist should have techniques for interviews, reports and research” (FALCÃO, 2009).

The daily *Estadão* published the opinion of Marcos Crispa who coordinates the Journalism Course of the PUC in São Paulo, Brazil: “[...] Marcos Crispa defines the Supreme Court’s

decision as a 'disaster'. According to the author, it was a regression. 'The non-mandatory status of the diploma will damage the quality of information. The market will become a lawless land, especially in the big cities where the political and economical influence of powerful firms is extremely relevant' (BIZZOTTO, 2009).

The erasure and silencing of opposite opinions is a more serious matter in the editorials since they do not report explicitly any of the many voices against the Supreme Court's decision. Analyzing the Hon. Gilmar Mendes's phrase in *IstoÉ*, there is another rule in the enunciations investigated: (1) "only professions which demand scientific knowledge should be regulated" (PATI; MARQUES, 2009, p. 80).

With the exception of the daily *Estadão* with regard to university professors commenting on the Supreme Court's decision, the other enunciations mentioned the comparison between the journalist and the kitchen chef made by the Hon. Gilmar Mendes, given below: (2) "Mendes compared the journalist's profession to that of the kitchen chef. 'An 'excellent kitchen chef' may have a diploma in a Cooking Faculty, but this fact does not demand that every meal should be prepared by a professional enrolled because of a diploma received by the faculty concerned'" (FALCÃO, 2009, our mark); (3) "An 'excellent kitchen chef' may have a diploma in a Cooking Faculty, but this fact does not demand that every meal should be prepared by a professional enrolled because of a diploma received by the faculty concerned', argued Mendes" (GALLUCCI, 2009, our mark).

The minister's voice becomes thus a constituting factor of the enunciations of the newspapers and magazines that appropriated it. It should be emphasized that the two editorials did not publish the entire speech of the minister but merely that section which confirmed the arguments and thus corroborated the process of convincing the reader and the process of constructing the journalist's identity.

When the opinion of Hon. Gilmar Mendes become assimilated by the two editorials and reminded of in the journalistic matter, the comparison of the 'journalist with a kitchen chef' should be borne in mind. The two professions are placed side by side as if they dealt and worked with the same object and within the same environment. In the text given by *IstoÉ*, Hon. Gilmar Mendes states that a diploma in Journalism is not required since the profession does not demand "scientific knowledge". A historical and social deconstruction should be undertaken to give meaning to the

comparison. In fact, whereas the prime matter of the journalist consists of news and information, the instruments of the kitchen chef comprise food, meals, desserts, utensils and other items.

The 'talent' of the kitchen chef (the term itself presupposes that chefs do not need any higher education or anything equivalent for the exercise of their professions) is also attributed to the journalist. This means that journalism is a 'talent' and thus it is not learned in faculty courses since it does not require any "scientific knowledge" (excerpt 1). The 'talent' issue brings out two possibilities: the innate factor (to have a trend towards something) or that acquired by experience. When 'talent' is taken as an innate factor, both the journalist and the kitchen chef are born with the trend for the exercise of their respective profession. When 'talent' is taken as experience, both activities are learned by the very exercise of the profession. The comparison above may have a further meaning: information is compared to food. Working with information and the consequences derived from this exercise would be equivalent to working with food: a mistake in information would produce the same harm to society as does a badly prepared meal.

Further, another rule in the enunciations analyzed may also be observed, as the following excerpts show: "[...] if the exigency of a diploma, made mandatory by a law published by the erstwhile Brazilian military regime, was already something of an anachronism when emitted, thenceforth the technological evolution in communication conferred to it a useless and ineffective trait" (JOURNALIST..., 2009); "The decree is a residue of the military dictatorship's authoritarianism which intended to control all information and to keep away intellectuals and thinkers from the press", said Hon. Lewandowski" (FALCÃO, 2009).

Constructed discourse links the 'Brazilian dictatorial regime' to the 'decree' established by the politicians of that period. This implies that everything that is a product of such fusion can only be harmful to society. Lack of freedom of speech and the obligation to have a diploma, and thus, the military regime, are linked. This relationship is a statement that the exigency of a university degree in Journalism is a negative factor.

The effort to mention only the last dictatorial regime in Brazil erases all the other discourses enforced at the time. According to Lage (2002), during the 1910s and 1920s professional press people began to replace the communication or public relations people, who were specifically concerned with publicity and advertisements. During this period the journalist, a much more

distant professional than the advertisement broker, started to seek qualifications at university level in courses on Journalism and to get rid of extremely common distortions in information and news. Zucoloto (2002) corroborates Lage's opinion and explains that during the I Brazilian Congress of Journalists in Rio de Janeiro in 1918 a decision was taken to establish a specifically university course for the training and formation of professionals in Journalism. Zucoloto (2002) states that during the Congress, "the journalists aired their concern about quality formation of the journalist and manifested the need for a degree in Journalism" (ZUCOLOTO, 2002, p. 40). This specific discourse is silenced and erased in both editorials investigated. The latter merely wanted to establish a relationship between the military regime and the lack of liberty of the press so that the elimination of the mandatory diploma could be justified.

The link mentioned above is still extant in the text published by *Veja*, as the following sentence shows: "When democracy in Brazil was reintroduced, the obligation became a political pressure instrument on independent newspapers, magazines and radios by trade unions" (QUALITY..., 2009, p. 13).

The obligation to obtain a degree in Journalism would be an "antidemocratic" stance and thus not proper to the current democracy process which Brazilian society is experiencing. The term "pressure instrument" may be questioned. The editorial fails to give any explanation with regard to "pressure", which may be interpreted as "control" or "questioning" to what has thenceforth been produced by the press. Among the many possible ones, one meaning may be that which is being exacted is not a good thing. Neither is it a good thing to be under pressure to have journalists with a university degree.

Another way to materialize media discursive practices that objectify/subjectify the journalist occurs when the discourse that 'every citizen who would like to give information is a journalist', is constructed. The subjectification process is mandatory and may be seen in the following excerpts: "Henceforth, 'every Brazilian' may be a 'journalist' [our italics]" (PATI; MARQUES, 2009, p. 80); "The non-obligation brings Brazil to the level of other nations in which journalism comprises, without any restrictions, 'all those' who, within the environment of the social media, have found the best way to 'share what they have learned' in economics, science, law, arts, fashion and sports" (QUALITY..., 2009, p. 13).

The above discourses activate the subjects' identification process with the journalist's

constructed identity and inscribe all subjects that write and publish on news, including those outside the institutional and acknowledged spheres of journalism.

A specific meaning is obtained in these enunciations, namely, that only through the extinction of the exigency of a diploma in Journalism that professionals in other fields of knowledge are able to exercise their opinion in Journalism. The erasure of other opinions in journalism may be observed: actually and during many years these professionals have already expressed their opinion. If one could say that the identity of a journalist did not include collaborators, henceforth these are also interpellated as subjects since they publish their opinion in the social media.

The discursive elements of these enunciations show that the construction of the identity of the diploma-less journalist is foregrounded in globalization and in the logic of the capitalist market. Sometimes a university formation is required, albeit not mandatory: although the social media acknowledge the importance of training in the exercise of journalism, its arguments are based on freedom of speech and information, 'talent', experience, knowledge in other fields, it considers optional the degree in Journalism.

A contradiction is thus established: training untied to a specific diploma in Journalism. All subjects trained in diverse fields of knowledge, even though they do not have the theoretical and practical issues on social communication in their curriculum, may exercise Journalism if they so desire. The identity of a journalist who prior to the Court's decision was marked by difference with regard to professionals in other fields of knowledge, may now congregate these areas and absorb them.

It may be remarked that truth requires 'competition' in all relationships, institutions and spheres within current society. The idea that quality is linked to competition is established. This component should now be activated since historically it functions so that the enunciations may take the 'truth' mark. Foucault remarks "[...] we do not find ourselves in the truth if we refrain from obeying the rules of a discursive 'police' which we should reactivate in each of our discourses" (FOUCAULT, 2009, p. 35). Change is thus justified as a necessity when the faculties of Journalism question their curriculum guidelines and the work they have developed with regard to the market reserve. A discourse is thus constructed that goes back to objects and concepts inserted within the "truth in its own epoch" (FOUCAULT, 2009, p. 35). There is a generalizing treatment in the



enunciations under analysis: universities have not trained good professionals to work within the journalistic labor market and thus they launched professionals trained in other areas of knowledge.

### Final considerations

The six enunciations analyzed, taken from sequences which were described and interpreted from the perspective of the enunciation as a function, insert themselves within a system of enunciability ('archive') in which the social media have an extremely important role. Through its disseminated discourses it gradually objectifies and subjectifies the journalist. When discourse is considered a practice (FOUCAULT, 2008a), these constructed identities reveal how subjects see not only themselves but the other and the way a certain type of government over oneself and over the other is exercised (NAVARRO, 2008). It may be observed that at all instances there is an objectification of the subject (he is the object about which one speaks) and the subjectification of this same subject (he is the subject to which something is attributed).

It follows that individuals are subjected to discourse and should accept the fact by positioning themselves and being positioned by the different spheres of society. This process comprises relationships of identification and representation established by the discourse's producing stance on the subject who are objects of such subjectification practices – journalists.

The social media discourse shows that the construction of identity constitutes power (HALL, 2009). The consequences of this discursive event and its assimilation by the media have already been reported, mainly by the announcement of a public consultation to discuss the revision of curriculum guidelines of the Course in Journalism and by the decrease of students in such courses. We thus agree with Gregolin (2003) when she states that, according to Foucault, struggles in contemporary society are about identity and that the main cause of these struggles is the exercise of power within daily life.

The above analyses show that the construction of the identity of the diploma-less journalist is inserted within a given discursive order with certain possible conditions for its appearance. Historical and social conditions make possible that these discursive and identity practices in our era are exercised and others are not. A discursive event – the Supreme Court's decision – constructs and fabricates the identity (identities) of the journalist by silencing others.

The journalist's objectification and subjectification are not the only ones extant but are

constantly occurring with so many others in the power hierarchy. Since identity is constructed in and by discourse, a management exists between the enunciators that promote different concepts of the world, the enunciated who interpret these concepts to acknowledge them or not, and the subjects.

The comprehension of identity's construction phenomenon in current society is of paramount importance since it is related to the way history is (re)narrated by people, how the lowest powers are exercised and how the movements/transformations of different fields of knowledge occur. The social media are currently the big identity agency telling society which 'subject-position' should be taken/occupied and, consequently, (re)affirming the practice of significance linked to power relationships that determine who may and/or should be included or excluded (WOODWARD, 2009). According to Silva (2009), it must be understood that identities are not simply defined but are imposed within a hierarchical stance where they are disputed day by day.

As stated by Silva (2009), if identities are never neutral (where differentiation exists, there is also a struggle for power), the investigation on the social media discourse is, in the first place, a return to issues that interpellate people from time immemorial: "Who am I? What may I be? Who would I like to be?" (WOODWARD, 2009, p. 17).

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