Metapragmatic strategies in the teaching of linguistic variation content in videoclasses

Estratégias metapragmáticas na didatização do conteúdo de variação linguística em videoaula

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ABSTRACT

In Portuguese Language teaching metacommunicative and metalinguistic utterances are prioritized at describing and evaluating the language in use. Thereby, this paper aims to analyze, from the metapragmatic strategies involved in the didacticization processes, the construction of video class discourse about linguistic variation shared on channel social network YouTube, open to the general public. In this research, we consider two axes of theoretical foundation, the first one focused on metapragmatic strategies in utterances (SIGNORINI, 2008; POVINELLI, 2016) and the second one on diversity and linguistic ideologic in Portuguese Language teaching (KROSKRITY, 2004; MOITA LOPES, 2013b; BLOMMAERT, 2014). We developed a hybrid qualitative research, as we used document analysis and netnography, since the audiovisual records of the video class are documents and are inserted in virtuality. The analyzed video class was released on the channel Português com Letícia, having a large number of views in this online space. The data were separated into two categories of analysis, Objective exposure and Content exposure, from which we realized that metapragmatic strategies go unnoticed by the video class producers, noting the development of inattentive approaches to linguistic ideologies that guide the criteria of adequacy of language uses, corroborating the idea of disinterest or

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ignorence in relation to intentional planning that a teaching material has a duty to offer.

KEYWORDS: Didactization; Portuguese Language Teaching; Metapragmatic strategies; Linguistic ideologies; Linguistic variation.

RESUMO
No ensino de Língua Portuguesa, priorizam-se os enunciados metacomunicativos e metalinguísticos voltados a descrever e avaliar a língua em uso. Desse modo, este artigo tem por objetivo analisar, a partir das estratégias metapragmáticas envolvidas nos processos de didatização, a construção do discurso de videoaula sobre variação linguística compartilhada em canal da rede social YouTube, aberto ao público em geral. Nesta pesquisa, consideramos dois eixos de fundamentação teórica, o primeiro voltado às estratégias metapragmáticas em enunciados (SIGNORINI, 2008; POVINELLI, 2016) e o segundo à diversidade e ideologia linguística no ensino de Língua Portuguesa (KROSKRITY, 2004; MOITA LOPES, 2013b; BLOMMAERT, 2014). Desenvolvemos uma pesquisa qualitativa híbrida, porque utilizamos-nos da netnografia e de análise documental, uma vez que os registros audiovisuais da videoaula são documentos e estão inseridos na virtualidade. A videoaula analisada foi divulgada no canal Português com Leticia, possuindo um número amplo de visualizações nesse espaço on-line. Os dados foram separados em duas categorias de análise, a Exposição de objetivo e a Exposição de conteúdo, a partir delas percebemos que as estratégias metapragmáticas passam despercebidas pelos produtores de videoaula, constatando-se o desenvolvimento de abordagens desatentas às ideologias linguísticas que orientam os critérios de adequação dos usos da língua, corroborando com a ideia de desinteresse ou desconhecimento em relação ao planejamento intencional, que um material didático tem o dever de oferecer.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Didatização; Ensino de Língua Portuguesa; Estratégias metapragmáticas; Ideologias linguísticas; Variação linguística.

1 Introduction

For the development of teaching practices of Linguistic/Semiotic Analysis (hereinafter, L/SA) in Portuguese Language (hereinafter, PL) in Basic Education, teachers and teaching materials resort to metalinguistic utterances to deal with the language itself as an object of knowledge. Moreover, to do so, they also employ metapragmatic statements, that is aimed at the pragmatic circumstances that come into play in social interactions. According to Pinto (2019), these are comments that demonstrate rationalizations materialized in language and that allow addressing about it. In view of this, Signorini (2008) explains that in scientific discourse and, in our case, in didactic discourse, there is a greater degree of explicitness through the use of referential and predicative structures.

For the effectiveness of PL teaching, we understand that the use of utterances anchored in metapragmatic strategies, which are considered as linguistic clues of metacomunicative and metalinguistic natures that deal with the configuration of language uses in multiple contexts, is constitutive. In other words, they are statements that make references to the encodings of the context in the language and to the linguistic uses themselves in a situation of interaction (POVINELLI, 2016).

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When linguistic plurality becomes the focus in face-to-face, remote or hybrid classrooms, metapragmatic strategies are instantiated to describe language varieties\(^1\) and their uses from a pedagogical point of view. In other words, their pragmatic dimensions have space, therefore, their meanings and representations in society, as well as the social, cultural and ideological structures (BLOMMAERT, 2014) that the uses of these varieties index. The Common National Curriculum Base (hereinafter, CNBC) emphasizes the importance of recognizing and valuing linguistic diversity, calling attention to a treatment that is capable of critically contemplating not only prestigious but also stigmatized varieties (BRASIL, 2018).

In general, in the statements that materialize metapragmatic strategies, it is possible to perceive the linguistic ideologies that are refracted in the didacticization of PL contents, specifically, of linguistic variation. According to Signorini (2008, p. 119), these ideologies are “cultural systems of ideas or beliefs embodied in practices and articulated by speakers in their rationalizations, justifications and moral and political evaluations of linguistic structure and use”. Through these statements, we detect the presence of a socially situated view of language and its functioning, which can be perceived by the denotative coding of metapragmatic.

That said, through Applied Linguistics (hereinafter, LA) in its interdisciplinary aspect (MOITA LOPES, 2006), we emphasize the need to investigate the treatment given to the plurality/heterogeneity of language through the schooled study of variation. To this end, we consider PL video lessons available on social networks\(^2\) as an empirical object, working as a sample of the approach to linguistic and cultural diversity in an online teaching environment. We start, then, with the following question: how is the discourse constructed, based on the metapragmatic strategies involved in the processes of didacticization of linguistic variation content, in video classes on internet channels open to the general public? Thus, we aim to analyze, from the metapragmatic strategies involved in the didactization processes, the construction of the discourse of video classes on linguistic variation in channels open to the general public.

In this way, we follow an approach that considers language as a socially situated reality,

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\(^1\) For Castilho (2019), resulting from dynamics and adaptations to linguistic needs, varieties can be conceived as sets of variations.

\(^2\) As we will see in the section on Methodological Procedures, this social network refers to YouTube, whose access link is: https://www.youtube.com/.

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based on interaction. In this sense, we take the reference of a language based on use, specifically, in the context of teaching AL/S. Seeking to understand video lessons, we studied a teaching material that is the result of our times and made room for an alternative view (MOITA LOPES, 2006) about this PL teaching. This understanding stems from the fact that we see numerically less recurrent data, when compared to studies in the face-to-face language classroom, which constitute the most developed area of AL in Brazil (MOITA LOPES, 2013a).

In order to answer the research question raised, we initially deal with the metapragmatic strategies that manifest linguistically-discursively in utterances, then we discuss linguistic diversity and ideology, indexed by these utterances, and with which we operate in the realization of PL teaching practices. We then present the classifications of our research and summarize the data collection process. Subsequently, after identifying stages of the teaching process, we discussed the construction of the speech of the video classes in the Objective Exposition and Content Exposition. Finally, we present the final considerations and references.

1 Theoretical foundation

1.1 Metapragmatic strategies in utterances

When we focus on metapragmatics as a phenomenon in the materialization of utterances, we highlight the scope with regard to heterogeneous, multiple linguistic behaviors, above all, united by an orienting, evaluative and conditioning capacity of language uses (SIGNORINI, 2008). In this way, we talk about strategies that manifest themselves discursively, that is, they are carried out in the space that opens up in the connection built between language and the world (MAINGUENEAU, 2015), instantiated within language practices situated in relation to social, cultural vectors and ideological.

The strategies are anchored in rules that establish a “linguistic etiquette”, to which the enunciators' discourses are always submitted so that they are considered appropriate, according to Povinelli (2016). Hence arises the notion of adequacy, culturally diffused in the social environment and seen as a constitutive trait of the subject's identification process, as well as of the attribution of values on the other through their uses of language. For Povinelli (2016), speakers who produce oral and written texts, coherent and interpretable in any interlocutory event, that is, in line with the rules of this etiquette, can be heard, while speakers who do not follow it run the risk of silencing.

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Being aware of these strategies, as well as knowing how to use them, means knowing the linguistic rules that come into play under the aegis of etiquette, bringing them to the fore as an object of discourse. In other words, when using these types of utterances that refer to the pragmatic factors that organize communication, the language user can deal with the contextual, social and cultural conditions that involve its uses in the most varied situations. Through these statements, mention is made of the encodings of the context in the language and the linguistic uses themselves. Two outstanding examples correspond to the use of utterances that deal both with uses based on linguistic etiquette and with transgressive uses, in both cases there is a predication about language (SIGNORINI, 2008). In this sense, this type of strategy has metacommunicative and metalinguistic foundations, because it always focuses on communication and the language in use, making them themes in the enunciation.

Signorini (2008) advocates that reflexivity and indexicality are fundamental properties of the metapragmatics of the language in use, through which these strategies materialized in the utterances work. Through reflexivity and indexicality, enunciators can interpret, evaluate and rationalize about their own actions and language practices, as well as the practices performed by the other. This process does not take place from forms whose reflexive meaning is given a priori, but is based on the context of enunciation, from which language and paralanguage structures index frames.3

Signorini (2008) categorizes the typology of these forms that may have a reflexive function into two large groups: the first encompasses linguistic indexical descriptors, such as deictics and intonation, as well as paralinguistic descriptors, such as facial expressions and gesticulation; the second corresponds to references and/or predications about a specific event or about a specific use of the language. When placed in utterances, for Povinelli (2016), these descriptors and references presuppose an act of interlocution harmonized not only with the internal progress of the text (the continuity of the utterance), but also with the external context (the conditions that allow the utterance).

The explicit or implicit encodings of these strategies evoke the indexical/ideological dimension or property, according to Blommaert (2014). Ideologically, the use of metapragmatic strategies recalls (a) the position and place occupied by the enunciator or by the object of the

3 For Charaudeau and Maingueneau (2020), the frames are at the heart of social and ideological constraints that organize the production/reception of utterances.
enunciation in social life, (b) the meanings apprehended in the course of interaction through the context and (c) the linguistic and extralinguistic elements that point to values, beliefs and positions.

It is precisely the indexing of these elements that makes them ideological. For Signorini (2017), this level acts by guiding language practices, since it projects how the utterance should be and how it should not be, and also how its meaning should and should not be. This parameter has its roots in a sociocultural configuration that defines, for example, certain criteria for lexical choices, syntactic formulations, contents and approaches considered appropriate to enter the scene in the enunciation and not others.

It turns out that, when uttering utterances with metapragmatic strategies, speakers also reveal the linguistic ideologies that are indexed when they preach about language. These ideologies, for Blommaert (2014, p. 68), reflect “beliefs, ideas, visions and perceptions about language and communication”. According to Kroskrity (2004), they are configured as a broad set of beliefs, both explicit and implicit, from which language users build models to judge any linguistic uses, such as the label highlighted by Povinelli (2016). Kroskrity (2004) goes on to present the superiority/inferiority pair and the notion of adequacy as analogous cases. Buin and Biondo (2021) also add the example of the right/wrong and standard/non-standard dichotomies, which relate to the judgments materialized in the statements. In the same way that there are multiple crossings in uses, there are also multiple linguistic ideologies with which we operate (KROSKRITY, 2004; MOITA LOPES, 2013b).

According to Moita Lopes (2013b), these ideologies cross not only the uses of participants in the context of everyday interaction, but also the uses of language-by-language scholars and, consequently, by public policy makers who have the theorizing of linguists as a basis. Still for this author, linguistic ideologies do not hold the truth, since they are understandings situated in time and space, therefore, they are conditioned to epistemological and/or sociocultural perspectives.

Measured by metapragmatic statements, linguistic ideologies are manifested through the indexical property (SIGNORINI, 2008) and also influence the description of the sociolinguistic system and school language teaching practices, such as PL. We discuss some of these influences below.

1.2 Diversity and linguistic ideology in PL teaching

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Colonialism exported, on a global scale, the romantic nationalist narrative that a language corresponds to the spirit of a people (WOOLARD, 2012), equating two lines of force: language and nation. Torquato (2021) clarifies that this perspective was used with the objective of generating an effect of belonging to the colony in relation to the metropolis, proclaiming the existence of a territorial and political unity, based on a linguistic ideology whose performance contributed to the formation of national states. Consequently, the language that is associated with the identities of these communities does not correspond to the varieties put to use by socially vulnerable groups, but a linguistic pattern linked to the classes holding power, being naturalized, socially legitimized and homogenized, whose form of acquisition takes place through the process of schooling (TORQUATO, 2021).

Nevertheless, when official documents and policies have this pattern as their core, they are discursively filled by this ideology (WOOLARD, 2012). Despite presenting this common dominator, the documents that guide education in Brazil today recognize the existence of multilingualism and diversity, according to Torquato (2001). In a way, they distance themselves from the propagation of the erasure of linguistic differences (IRVINE; GAL, 2000), that is, from the ideological project promoting the homogenization of language, originated in colonization and driven by colonialism until the present. Considering plurality as inherent to any linguistic system, the BNCC draws attention to the observation of variation in order to reflect on the values socially attributed to prestigious and stigmatized varieties (BRASIL, 2018).

In this document, the discontinuity between linguistic homogenization and heterogenization is due, among other factors, to the influence of variationist sociolinguistics, a theoretical current that, seeking to avoid a glimpse of linguistic-cultural plurality, relies on a linguistic ideology not alien to diversity, conceiving variation internal language as a natural and systematic phenomenon in languages in general (ALKMIM, 2012). In this wake, simplification of the sociolinguistic field is not promoted and differences are not hidden (IRVINE; GAL, 2000). Although they recognize these aspects, Cesário and Votre (2020, p. 146) point out that, in language, “not everything is variation, with a huge number of common elements that are stable”.

With that said, one cannot make use of metapragmatic statements guided by this sociolinguistic principle without bearing in mind the fact that, in language, variation occurs due to different factors, such as geographical or historical issues, but also due to the different degrees of regulation that they affect the uses situated in social relations. In this sense, Camacho (2012) clarifies that speakers do not always express themselves in the same way, as they adhere to certain
contextual situations, which may require greater or lesser formal rigor. The criterion of formality, to which the author draws attention, presupposes a discursive awareness around the linguistic pattern on the part of the language user.

It is, in this sense, that the BNCC, referring to the subject of PL in High School, highlights the concept of appropriation. In doing so, he defends a teaching capable of developing, in the student, the ability to use specific linguistic varieties based on the styles of the discursive genres, as well as to employ the notational aspects (grammatical, in other words) in these genres (BRAZIL, 2018). This means that the development of linguistic behaviors under the scrutiny of etiquette is configured as a goal of schooled language teaching, since it must promote a conscious modeling of language uses through notions such as structural, situational and communicative adequacy. This aspect is precisely the result of ideologies propagated by/in society and that serve as inspirations for the school, specifically for the PL class.

To fulfill the goal of developing this skill, both the teaching materials and the teachers start from metapragmatic strategies, which are mixed with the set of school knowledge that integrates the PL discipline. It is in the language classroom that this knowledge becomes ways of reasoning, acting and evaluating through the use of meta-discourses that circulate in this environment (SIGNORINI, 2006) and that index linguistic ideologies. Coming from sociocultural models developed by writers and language specialists (MOITÁ LOPES, 2013b), these ideologies are perceptions, understandings, points of view about language and language, which act consciously and unconsciously in guiding PL teaching practices. In other words, through the analysis of the strategies embodied in the statements of parameterizing/curricular documents, language teaching materials and teaching discourse, for example, we caught the inherent linguistic ideologies.

The perspective of appropriation is linked to the teaching of the linguistic pattern, since this variety is required in more monitored contexts of language use, for which society seeks to prepare its students. Kroskity (2004) shows that educational systems are basically concerned with teaching children the standard; but also, in doing so, they run the risk of making them see their language skills as deficient. This is because, in teaching practices, an ideology prevails that favors the exchange or linguistic adaptation of non-standard variants for the standard so that children’s uses are not “imperfect commands” (KROSKRITY, 2004). Also, according to this author, the school can stimulate an ideological conformism, allowing its students to appropriate negative images, about their language (the variety they use in a familiar and friendly context) and also about themselves, presented by the dominant society.

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In the case of Portuguese, according to Pinto (2013), the standard corresponds to the cultured variant, that is, to the language spoken by those who had privileged access to the schooling process, in addition, by those who know how to calibrate it using criteria from the written modality. There is, therefore, a linguistic ideology in which language is understood as a factor of identity, being articulated to the literary model, therefore, a symbol of the national state. This view stems from the colonial perspective of modernity that establishes the language of the European colonizer as a representation of the nation-state (MOITA LOPES, 2013b), while paving the way for linguistic stratification and hierarchy. By stratifying, a unit based on subordination is achieved, which undermines groups that do not employ the standard (KROSKRITY, 2004). Thus, the varieties spoken by indigenous groups are not part of this representation.

According to Pinto (2013), the school describes the language applying a European metalinguistic support, metapragmatically judging as “disagreement” uses that do not correspond to the variety that is being taught. It should be noted that the school often accepts and reproduces this description uncritically. That is why both Kroskrity (2004), Moita Lopes (2013b), and Pinto (2013) draw attention to the passive and unreflective reception of linguistic ideologies. For Pinto (2013), descriptive studies that contribute to the maintenance of the diglossic pair cultured variety/non cultured varieties, absorbed by the school and its curriculum, require a confrontation with the ideological functioning underlying the theoretical constructs and methodologies employed.

Since the 1950s, the theories developed by the linguistic sciences act as guides for teaching Portuguese (SOARES, 2001). We know that scholars’ theories are also crossed by ideologies, since they are situated in a sociocultural and epistemological context, influencing public policies and school practices (MOITA LOPES, 2013b). Therefore, by (re)producing metapragmatic statements when dealing with language, they reveal the nature of the ideas they defend. According to Soares (2001), the curriculum of the PL discipline receives contributions from Sociolinguistics from the 1960s onwards, which leads to a view of language as a social phenomenon/fact, understanding difference as an inherent trait (MARCUSCHI, 2016).

It so happens that, when arriving at the Portuguese classroom, we see a sociolinguistics prevailing that has not overcome the polarization between standard/non-standard and cultured variety/non-learned varieties (SIGNORINI, 2006), dichotomies seen not as theoretical constructs, but as endowments. really. Blommaert (2014) highlights the view of language and language as a set of rules and forms that organize combinations; such rules are part of the study of learners who seek to employ “the norm, the variant of good and correct language” (BLOMMAERT, 2014, p. 72).
Also, for this author, the ideals of prestige motivate acceptance in the social environment by using normative artifacts, which underlie cultural and social finesse (POVINELLI, 2016).

Blommaert (2014) exhorts us to take necessary care on the part of those who take language as an object, since metapragmatic utterances, which they strategically employ in the description of linguistic phenomena, are always endowed with values socially and culturally attributed through mechanisms of power. Often, the PL teacher develops his practice without realizing the ideological thread of his speeches, which can be at the service of social stratification operated by language, colonialist ideals and points of view conceived as truths.

In the following section, we will see the methodological procedures used in the investigation carried out.

2 Methodological procedures

2.1 Research Rankings

Our research was developed in the light of AL, thus, we are theoretically and methodologically linked to this science, as we aim to investigate problems in which language occupies a central position (MOITA LOPES, 2006), in order to achieve an understanding of reality (PAIVA, 2019). By focusing on the metapragmatic strategies in statements related to the teaching of PL instantiated in video classes available virtually, we perform the interpretation of a phenomenon, which categorizes our research as a qualitative approach (CHIZZOTI, 2000).

In addition to the qualitative approach, Paiva (2019) also considers methods as classification characteristics. In this sense, our investigation is hybrid, as we employ two methods in its development due to the virtual nature of our research object – the video class. The first one corresponds to the observation of netnographic inspiration, necessary for the investigation considering the virtuality of the material; the second is document analysis.

With regard to netnographic observation, we conceive netnography as a method in which the researcher enters an online space to observe cultural practices through a technological device (such as a computer and smartphone) (AMARAL et al, 2008). For Chizzoti (2000), in this observation in qualitative research, the subject-observer is an integral part of the process. With regard to document analysis, we consider the video-class genre as a document, because we rely on Le-Goff’s (1997) document-monument perspective, according to which the materials that result from the subjects’ intentions, history and of power forces.

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In this sense, our investigation is qualitative, netnographic and documentary, carried out in LA. In the following subsection, we will see how we proceed in relation to the data collection and systematization processes and the breakdown of analysis categories.

2.2 Data collection, systematization and analysis categories

For data collection, we considered the video classes that circulate on the social network YouTube, in view of the high rate of users and teaching materials virtually available for free. From this, we delimited three pedagogical channels, which we called Channel 1, Channel 2 and Channel 3, which correspond to the same investigation in the context of an ongoing master’s research, which deals with PL video classes focused on grammatical contents of the AL axis. Therefore, to contemplate the didacticization of different knowledge, we cut video classes that deal with linguistic variation as data for the investigation discussed in this article.

Subsequently, we detected that only Channel 3 does not include the selected content, while Channel 1 and Channel 2 present 1 video lesson each, totaling 2 video lessons on linguistic variation. On Channel 1, the video lesson lasts 11min48s, 170,506 views and 3 years of circulation on YouTube. On Channel 2, it lasts 57min46s, 54,327 views and 3 years of circulation. Due to the salience of these indices that point to the video class on Channel 1 as the most accessed, we delimited this material as a corpus for the analysis we carried out. In this sense, we align ourselves with Mainguenaud (2015), when he emphasizes that the constitution of a corpus can correspond to the selection of a representative data of a series, which allows us to conceive it as an access to a wider set of configurations.

Considering that the video lesson is an audiovisual teaching material with pedagogical purposes (BARRÉRE, 2014), two tools were needed for data collection. The first one corresponds

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4 An analysis of the Google Play Store, an application that allows the download of software for the Android operating system, reveals that more than 5 billion downloads of the YouTube application were made until July 2021. iOS, Apple’s operating system, does not provide the number of YouTube users from the program download application, the Apple Store. However, it is possible to detect the ratings index, which already exceeds the 3 million mark also in July 2021.

5 Despite not being a purely educational virtual environment, YouTube provides, according to Barrére (2014), video classes, instructional videos and educational videos, reaching about 2,340,000 video classes and 100,700,000 tutorials in Portuguese. This number, despite being fluctuating, reveals the high incidence of materials in this network.

6 Link to Channel 1: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCEDl2m5gow0cca41kpvSfEQ.

7 Link to Channel 2: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCY94vWeQecqdZ7XM9oRG-ug.

8 Link to Channel 3: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC-jDw-Foeyx4NaHkBYpwQ.

9 The number of views, as well as the circulation time of the video classes, were recorded in March 2022.
to the screen capture, through which the graphic interface of the technological device is captured, allowing us to apprehend the visual elements that make up the video class, such as figures and written verbal texts. The second, in turn, concerns the audio transcription, an instrument that makes it possible to reproduce, in the written modality of the language, the content present in the sound plane of the material.

In order to answer the guiding question of the investigation, we determined two categories of analysis, which are configured as steps in the process of teaching PL contents. The first one corresponds to the Exposition of objectives, which comprises the presentation of the purposes to be accomplished with the video lesson, as well as the justifications for the production of the material. The second of them, in turn, corresponds to the Content Exposition, from which the phenomenon of linguistic variation based on exemplification is presented. Let's see next.

3 Metapragmatic strategies in PL video classes

In view of the data clipping made here, for the discussion that we have undertaken, we consider two aspects that relate to the stages of the didactization process. In them we investigate the metapragmatic strategies used to understand discourse, and they are interconnected in a hologrammatic relationship. Depending on the objectives of the video lesson, the first one is based on the presentation of the purposes of the material, corresponding to the category (a) Exposition of objective; from the explanation and exemplification of the content, the second occurs with a view to proving the veracity of certain statements, corresponding to category (b) Exposure of content; both dealt with below.

3.1 Purpose Statement

When identifying the metapragmatic strategies of the statements in the presentation of the objectives of the video class on linguistic variation, we detected the manifestation of a teaching that, despite being considered reflective, proves to be not very productive in the approach given to the content. As an example, Fragment 1, below, refers to a PL video lesson on linguistic variation and corresponds to the transcription of the audio equivalent to 32s, started in 30s and ended in 01min02s. The teacher, responsible for the didactic exposition, in her speech, uses metapragmatic strategies to refer to linguistic reflection. Let's see:
Fragment 1: Audio transcript referring to the initial moments of the video class

1. today's class is super important because it concerns reflection on the language we speak. What do you mean? I mean that currently many of the tests that we take are preferred by examination boards: many questions are related to reflection on the Portuguese language use of what questions is purely grammatical then why this is a very important lesson on linguistic variation.

Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OWkrebosp8Ng&t=27s. Accessed on: 11 Feb. 2022

When referring to the reflection on the language used in the video lesson, we perceive the use of metapragmatic strategies for metalinguistic and metacommunicative purposes, as they seek to explain/describe language and communication through themselves. The understanding of this phenomenon can be reinforced from the image that follows, Figure 1, corresponding to the capture of the screen interface after about 01min32s of the video lesson. In the image, there are two identical titles that mention the content worked in the material and that head the notes available on the screen (aligned to the left, top and bottom, the first in light green, and the second in yellow) “Linguistic variation”. The Figure also allows us to visualize the teacher (in the upper right position) who develops her explanation, using verbal and kinetic oral language (hand movement). Furthermore, in the teaching process, he uses written verbal texts (such as “language is a living instrument of communication”) in white, yellow and light green, inserted in a green background that alludes to the blackboard, a common tool in face-to-face environments. Let’s see.

Figure 1: Reproduction of video lesson image on linguistic variation

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Fragment 1 reveals that the video lesson is based on goals of a metapragmatic nature, since it allows for a reflection on the language that, for the teacher, is constituted as “super important” (cf. line 1), emphasizing the relevance of the didactical training carried out from the following statement: “today's class is super important because it concerns reflection on the language we speak” (cf. lines 1 and 2). We infer, then, that the central element of his exposition will be the use of a strategy based on a predication on the uses of language (SIGNORINI, 2008). Thus, by using the metapragmatic statement “the language we speak” (cf. line 2), the teacher aims to build an approximation between the contents to be taught and the language used by Internet-students – their viewers.

The teacher, when using this statement, reveals the linguistic ideology that guides her speech in the video class, as well as her perspective on the teaching objects in the Portuguese class. These ideologies consist of views about language produced by specialized or non-specialized meta-discourses (KROSKRITY, 2004; MOITA LOPES, 2013b; BLOMMAERT, 2014). In the case of Fragment 1, it concerns an idea of language as a human instrument of interaction put into action by speakers and, also, as a social phenomenon susceptible to variation (MARCUSCHI, 2016), “class on linguistic variation” (cf. line 6). As we have seen in this fragment, for the teacher, the video lesson is configured as important, because it takes as its object the “language we speak” (cf. line 2), that is, it considers the language put to use in the multiple language practices.

On the other hand, the same statement makes room for questioning what kind of language is the object of teaching when considering “purely grammatical/is issues” (cf. line 5). Kroskrity (2004) sheds light to illuminate the understanding of this issue by stating that the ideology of standard language – based on writing, homogeneous, abstract and representative of the identity of the nation-state – is behind contemporary educational practices. We infer, from this statement, that the teacher underlies the existence of a language that we do not speak – a plastered pattern, little changeable, devoid of an accent, in other words, for Pinto (2013), an “invented” Portuguese – and which, precisely, comes to the fore through the teaching of grammar. This perception is in line with the reflective teaching perspective that the teacher claims to defend when she addresses “issues more related to reflection on the uses of the Portuguese language” (cf. lines 4 and 5).

However, in the presentation of her justification, right after indicating the purpose of the video class, paradoxically, the teacher reveals her adherence to a less reflective configuration of
the language.

This happens because the established focus is made with view, not to the development of awareness from the relationships established between language uses and social contexts (SIGNORINI, 2008), nor to the apprehension of linguistic etiquette (POVINELLI, 2016), much less through the teaching of variety. socially stratified prestige (BLOMMAERT, 2014) to be used proficiently in more monitored contexts, but for being in accordance with other requirements. These requirements are the result of school exams applied by elementary school teachers, “currently many of the tests that many teachers take at school” (cf. lines 2 and 3), as well as, from the high-range selective exams, “many boards examiners prefer questions more related to reflection on the uses of the Portuguese language” (cf. lines 4 and 5), both (re)produce meta-discourses crossed by linguistic ideologies.

It seems to us that the teaching of content approaches the fulfillment of a demand from the audience, configured as a new instance of prescription for teaching work when carried out in video classes. This means that the “teachers at the college” (cf. line 3) and the “examiner boards” (cf. line 4), motivated by this linguistic ideology, require a metapragmatic look at language. It turns out that the approach to this material offers a more classificatory, “historical”, “regional”, “social” and “stylistic” view (cf. Figure 1), than actually reflective. For Moita Lopes (2021), the reflexivity of metapragmatic discourse goes beyond the metalinguistic level, being materialized by flows of texts that discursively allow us to redescribe not only our social practices, but also who we are.

As it is aligned with large-scale exams, the teacher’s discourse emits the same beliefs about the language as those responsible for these assessments, which means that the same linguistic ideology is repeated. In the video lesson, the approach to the content and the exams mentioned express a perception from meta-discourses originating from variationist linguistics and sociolinguistics, according to which variation is a phenomenon inherent to any language, allowing it to undergo changes of different natures. According to Figure 1, the variation takes place “over time; according to region, age, level of education and even in different contexts” (cf. Figure 1), which reveals the dynamics of language both in a diachronic and synchronic perspective, since language is “a living instrument of communication” (cf. Figure 1).

This time, making reflective teaching praxis means going beyond taxonomic limits to reach broader, deeper levels that contemplate language in its interactional, political, social, ideological and historical dimensions, in other words, “as social action, that is, situated in space/time and of a relational and political-ideological nature” (SIGNORINI, 2008, p.121). In this sense, it is necessary...
to move forward in relation to the position highlighted by the concept of language with which the video class operates, “language is a living instrument of communication, because of this, it changes over time; varies according to region, age, level of education and even different contexts” (cf. Figure 1), as it does not include such dimensions.

According to Fragment 1 and Figure 1, the metapragmatic statements reveal an explanation that goes beyond a critical exercise (BLOMMAERT, 2014), promoting incipient didactics in the dictates of reflexivity on language. Despite employing strategies based on approaching the content and trying to achieve such reflexivity through predication, the discourse reveals the construction of an unsatisfactory didactics, because when reproducing, as truths, knowledge from linguistics and sociolinguistics, it does not contemplate the inherent limitations to theorization itself, disregarding, for example, the process of social stratification. Thus, the objective is to enable more recognition of linguistic differences and less recognition of social, cultural and ideological factors that generate different linguistic varieties. Thus, it is in line with Krokrysty’s (2004) perspective, according to which teaching practices are guided by ideological conformity when they naively accept linguistic descriptions that see these differences as natural.

The claim for a so-called “reflective” treatment is the result of the need to identify itself as opposed to language teaching in its most traditional stage, which is essentially based on rules of a grammatical nature, “they prefer questions more related to reflection on the uses of language”. Portuguese than it is/purely grammatical questions” (cf. lines 4 and 5). The position of rejection of more conservative practices is in line with the recommendations of parameterizing/curricular documents, such as the BNCC, and the academic influence on basic education. In this way, the video class takes an ideological position in relation to the language based on knowledge from sociolinguistics, but maintains a teaching perspective anchored in reproduction. Therefore, reflection exists, but as a synonym for identification/recognition and, therefore, application through application/exemplification, as we will see in the following subsection.

3.2 Content Exposure

The video lesson, to which we are focused, in order to classify the phenomenon of linguistic variation with a view to didacticizing the content, uses four classes: “historical”, “regional”, “social” and “stylistic” (cf. Figure 1). In this discussion, we cut out the approach given to stylistic variation, because it corresponds to the category that gains the most time in the lecture of the exposing
teacher, equivalent to 2min35s of 11min49s, that is, about 22% of the total duration of screen time.
Regarding the stylistic variation, Fragment 2, below, presents the transcription of the audio that
starts after 2min34s of the video-class exhibition has elapsed, and totals approximately 58s.

Fragment 2: Audio transcript referring to social linguistic variation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>there is even a variation in different contexts for example a single person she</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>can speak differently in a certain context can speak different in another context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I, for example, when I'm here recording a class for you, I talk in a way when I'm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>with my family I I say otherwise, sometimes we get confused a little bit way or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>other of speaking in one place or another more generally we are: do this</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>adaptation of the language according to the context and:: that's it, right? the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>language is this living instrument and that it is changing there is no 'right or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>wrong' there is 'right or wrong' according to each communication context that is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>why this issue is so important linguistic variation because because it concerns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>to something / right? the language that we use every day all the time and that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>many times this variation we don't even notice...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OWkrebsp8Ng&t=27s. Accessed on: 11 Feb. 2022

Fragment 2 demonstrates the materialization of metapragmatic strategies in the
construction of the didactic discourse used in the exposition of content in the video class, in view
of the linguistic variation in situations with a greater or lesser degree of monitoring. To this end, the
speaker makes a predication about language from statements essentially based on the ideology of
the contextual adequacy of the language, such as: “there is even a variation in different contexts,
for example, a single person can speak differently in a given context”. may speak differently in
another context” (cf. lines 1 and 2). Based on an example, the excerpt illustrates awareness of the
rules of linguistic etiquette, allowing, through them, a reflection both on oneself and on the other,
since the enunciator indetermines the subject about whom one speaks “a single person” (cf. line 1).

Next, the lecturer goes on, strategically, using the example: “when I'm here recording a
class for you, I speak in one way” (cf. line 3). This utterance manifests a reflection activity based
on metalanguage and metacommunication about a specific use of the language (SIGNORINI,
2008), in this case, about the linguistic variety used by the teacher in the video class. The speaker
warns about the need to observe in order to maintain the order established by etiquette
(POVINELLI, 2016) and by sociolinguistic regulation (SIGNORINI, 2006). However, she does not
even mention the factors, much less their nature, that produce this regulatory process to which the
exhibitor submits in the development of the material. Moving away, also in the exposition of content,
from reflective teaching practices.

In this orbit, the statement, “sometimes we confuse a little bit one way or another of speaking in one place or another” (cf. lines 4 and 5), considers the disruption of the process of regulation of the sociolinguistic order (SIGNORINI, 2006), that is, an opposition to the monitoring rules and criteria. These rules are conventions of a social, ideological and political nature, which, aware of linguistic differences, elect as representation the variety employed by the socially dominant group. For Krokskity (2004), these differences in the uses of language are seen as inadequacies from a view ordered in and by the social hierarchy – the variants with which the poorest strata, which are at the base of the socioeconomic pyramid, operate are inadequate. In this bias, for the exhibitor, it is not only necessary to know how to use standard Portuguese, but also not to “confuse” in order to maintain the previously established order.

The teacher views the disruption of this order negatively, therefore, she considers it the result of a “confusion” to be avoided, euphemism for “error”, later confirmed, “there is ‘right or wrong’” (cf. line 8). This split, highlighted in the video lesson, transgresses the linguistic etiquette, which, for Povinelli (2016), dictates who should be submitted, as well as the criteria that define what is or is not appropriate for a given context. Also in this excerpt, the teacher recognizes the existence of this label that governs uses in multiple contexts, when she emphasizes that the different variations of the language can be used in different places, “in one place or another” (cf. line 5).

Socially, culturally and ideologically, we know that, in situations such as a class, “when I'm here recording a class” (cf. line 3), the use of a specific variation of the language, standard Portuguese, is recommended. It is believed that this variant corresponds to a better language, both as an object and as a teaching instrument, mentioned by the exhibitor and reinforced in the reproduced image (cf. Figure 1), because it is the language used by the dominant layer (KROKRISTY, 2004). That is, the so-called legitimate language (SIGNORINI, 2006), to be preserved and passed on as schooled knowledge to new generations.

Furthermore, according to Krokskity (2004), the standard language is commodified and presented as a resource that enables participation in capitalist society. In this way, the statement, “we confuse a little bit one way or another of speaking in one place or another” (cf. lines 4 and 5), is produced in the tension of disapproval generated by the transgression.

This same fragment puts us in front of what Blommaert (2014) called “evaluative qualifications” about language, through which a differentiation is made “between languages that are good for one thing, but bad for others” (BLOmmaERT, 2014, p.72). These evaluations are
nothing but materializations of the metapragmatic discourse in the teacher's statements, “when I'm here recording a class” (cf. line 3) and “when I'm with my family” (cf. lines 3 and 4), that are supported by a linguistic ideology based on the perception that there are proper or “good” variations for the domestic environment, on the other hand, “bad” variations for teaching contexts, whose space is reserved for a specific variant, standard Portuguese. This standard Portuguese is, exactly, the set of forms modeled, calibrated and shaped by metapragmatics of an institutional nature (SIGNORINI, 2008).

The statements, “when I'm here recording a class” (cf. line 3) and “when I'm with my family” (cf. lines 3 and 4), index the social position occupied by the enunciator, as a subject endowed with knowledge educated/institutionalized, spokesperson authorized to teach it. This means that the teacher, by knowing how to calibrate her uses, promoting an “adaptation of the language according to the context” (cf. line 6) since “there is 'right or wrong'” (cf. line 8), positioning herself if in the select group of subjects endowed with this ability, the professors themselves. By associating the forms and structures of standard Portuguese, these subjects, symbolically, are part of a so-called more intelligent group (BUIN; BIONDO, 2021), since they are proficient in the “best language”, that is, in the language of the different layers. dominant.

In this wake, we see an ideology of linguistic hierarchy prevailing, according to which standard Portuguese, free of slips, occupies the top of the pyramid, alongside the ruling class. This perception of language reverberates in the dichotomizations announced by Buin and Biondo (2021), as the right and wrong pair: “language is this living instrument and that it changes, there is no 'right or wrong' according to each communication context” (cf. lines 7 and 8). For Signorini (2006), dichotomizations must be overcome, because there is no way to separate them, since the boundaries that connect them are fluid and not delimitable. Discourses of this nature can, of course, contribute not only to maintaining the hierarchy, but also to silencing those who form and are the base of the pyramid, but who do not dominate the monitoring criteria instantiated by standard Portuguese.

The statements in this fragment make visible the metapragmatic and discursive strategies that reverberate linguistic ideologies in this online teaching practice. We verified that the use of these strategies both in the Exposition of objectives and in the Exposition of content, is still at a superficial level anchored in the level of identification and categorization of linguistic phenomena, not reaching deeper points of reflection. Meanwhile, the dimension of the indexical/ideological property, inherent to the social practices of language, is not contemplated.

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The discussion presented in this subsection, as well as in the previous one, detected a valid attempt to theoretically shift the axis of linguistic/semiotic analysis of grammar teaching practices, in a more traditional aspect, to a study of language and its variation process. As we can see, despite the rupture established with the adoption of new theorizations (the case of variationist sociolinguistics), the same ideological roots basically remain that also support the more conservative LP teaching - such as the ideologies of adequacy, correction and hierarchy.

Final considerations

When dealing with metapragmatic strategies in statements in the teaching of LP in video classes, we had the difficult task of building bridges that would unite our research object to the theory, largely coming from linguistic anthropology (KROSKRITY, 2004; BLOMMAERT, 2014); POVINELLI, 2016). From this objective, we conclude that the strategies are unnoticed by the producers of didactic-digital materials, being used inattentive to the linguistic ideologies that guide both theorizations and uses of the language based on the notion of adequacy, for example. Thus, in view of the theoretical perspective highlighted, the producers seem to demonstrate a lack of knowledge in intentional planning, an essential step for any materials produced with pedagogical purposes, whether circulating online or in print.

Furthermore, our analysis pointed to the need to problematize what is understood by reflection, which is one of the properties of the linguistic-discursive process with a metapragmatic function (SIGNORINI, 2008). We noticed that the reflexivity mentioned by the teacher is close to the reproduction of knowledge, however, not coming from grammar in its most traditional aspect, but coming from a sociolinguistics that does not consider the ideological and political dimensions inherent to the language. The uses of utterances, based on metapragmatic strategies, index a discourse that is based on non-neutral practices, but affiliated with linguistic ideologies that allow us to apprehend perceptions about language, as well as about PL teaching.

We do not demand the suppression of the content of linguistic variation from our curricula, as well as the notions of adequacy, but we are in favor of a teaching that denaturalizes the standards and etiquette to which we are subjected, exposing them as ideological, social and cultural. A critical awakening to these calibration criteria on the part of teachers is essential, so that they do not develop naïve approaches in their teaching contexts, but are attentive to linguistic
ideologies that are often diluted in the contents treated in the classes and in the didactic materials. whether they are digital or not. And, as for students, as pointed out by Signorini (2008), it is essential to “properly” employ one variety or another in multiple contexts, but it is also crucial that they know how to describe social rules, identifying the criteria of power that regulate and condition.

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