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# ANALYSIS OF INTERIM PRESIDENT MICHEL'S INauguration Speech

## TO FEAR

*ANALYSIS OF THE INAUGURATION SPEECH OF INTERIM PRESIDENT MICHEL TO FEAR*

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***Alana de Andrade da Conceição*[1]**
***Aline Kurihara Makiyama*[two]**

**Summary**

This article aims to analyze the different discursive strategies used in Brazilian political discourse. The analysis will be developed based on the postulates of French discourse analysis, mainly the postulates of Charaudeau (2008) and Maingueneau (2008). O*corpus* selected is the inauguration speech of interim President Michel Temer, given on May 12, 2016, after Dilma Rousseff's removal. In our investigation, we considered some of the possible meaning effects of the lexical choices made in Michel Temer's inauguration speech. To support the analysis of the inauguration speech, a historical retrospective was made of the seven constitutions that the Brazilian State had, presenting the sociopolitical and cultural context of each of them, from the first in 1824 to our current one in 1988. Therefore, it intends to contribute to the analysis of Brazilian political discourse and the means of persuasion used by our rulers. As a result, it was possible to analyze the main terms used by interim president Michel Temer during his speech that contributed to the construction of his*ethos*and which resulted in the great influence of his speech on the nation's public opinion and legitimization of his government, after the removal of President Dilma Rousseff.

**Key words**: Political speech; Michel Temer; Discursive Strategies.

**Abstract**

This article aims to analyze the various discursive strategies used in Brazilian political discourse. The analysis will be developed based on the postulates of the French analysis of the discourse, mainly in the postulates of Charaudeau (2008) and Maingueneau (2008). The corpus selected is the inauguration speech of interim President Michel Temer, delivered on May 12, 2016, after the removal of Dilma Rousseff. In our investigation, we consider some of the possible meaning effects of the lexical choices made in Michel Temer's inauguration speech. To support the analysis of the inauguration speech, a historical retrospective of the

[1]Portuguese Language Teacher, Graduated in Vernacular Literature from the State University of Londrina - UEL, Master's student in Language Studies from the State University of Londrina, Postgraduate in Rural Education from Faculdade UNINA. Email:alanaandrade.adv@gmail.com
[two]Portuguese Language Teacher, Graduated in Vernacular Literature from the State University of Londrina - UEL, Postgraduate in Neurolearning from Faculdade UNINA. Email: lih.makiy@gmail.com

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seven constitutions that the Brazilian State had was made, presenting the socio-political and cultural context of each of them, from the first of 1824 to our current 1988. Thus, it is intended to contribute to the analysis of Brazilian political discourse and the means of persuasion used by our rulers. As a result it was possible to analyze the main terms used by interim President Michel Temer during his speech that contributed to the construction of his ethos and that resulted in the great influence of his speech on public opinion of the nation and legitimacy of his government, after the removal of President Dilma Rousseff.
**Keywords:**Political discourse; Michel Temer; Discursive Strategies

**1. Introduction**

Since primitive times, men have always had the need to communicate, as a way of survival and interaction with other people.

Language is a social fact, which had its origins in the need for communication. Language as discourse is interaction, it is a mode of social production, so language allows man to think and act.

Words can be used by politicians to justify imperfections in solving problems or offering promises. In this sense, political discourse is one of the means of presenting aspirations, feelings or expectations of a population by politicians, as well as offering solutions, pointing out directions or offering projects that correspond to a certain context of public life.

In this sense, it must be admitted that language is a power and, according to Charaudeau (2008), perhaps the first power of man.

In political discourse, "it is necessary, therefore, that the politician knows how to inspire confidence, admiration, that is, he knows how to adhere to the ideal image of a leader that is found in the collective imagination of the senses and emotions" (CHARAUDEAU, 2008, p. 80 -81).

The objective of this article is to carry out an analysis of interim president Michel Temer's inauguration speech, seeking to identify the various linguistic strategies that contributed to the construction of his*ethos*, as well as observing the means by which he tries not only to preserve these created images, but also to develop a critique, in an attempt to demonstrate to his audience the image of "ruin" of the removed government, of the "chaos" of the current Brazilian State and so on. justify his interim government and the measures proposed by him. For Maingueneau (2008:17), "*ethos*it is a socially evaluated behavior, which cannot be apprehended outside of a situation of precise communication, itself integrated into a certain socio-historical situation".

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In this way, it will be possible to understand how language works in political discourse that preaches the idea of social well-being, so desired by everyone.

## 2 Political Speech

For Charadeau (2008), the subject, when producing his speech, assumes a historical and social position, thus highlighting his ideological formation. Political discourse has persuasion as one of its main aspects. In this way, rhetorical resources and linguistic procedures are used as means of persuasion, in an attempt to be elected to a public position through popular voting (political right), or, as in the case under analysis, to communicate to the nation a government interim during a process of*impeachment*.

Political rights refer to the right to participate in the political process as a whole, the right to universal suffrage and periodic, free, secret and equal voting – achievements that are of great value to our people. The right to universal suffrage is characterized by the possibility that citizens have to vote and be voted for.

In this line of reasoning, the constructive criticism presented by Charaudeau (2008: 78) regarding the way we exercise our right to universal suffrage stands out. For the author, “we have difficulty accepting that in a democracy people vote for a politician more because of his or her image and some catchphrases he or she utters than because of his or her political program”.

It is emphasized that our way of exercising democracy (often voting for the image and not for the proposed political program) is closely linked to the power of persuasion exercised through political discourse.

From this perspective, discourse is one of the “instances in which ideological materiality is characterized, that is, it is one of the material aspects of the 'material existence' of ideologies”. (BRANDÃO, 1998, p. 37).

With regard to the construction of the*ethos*, in political discourse the “act of arguing constitutes a kind of operation that aims to make the listener not only aware of the speaker’s image of the referent, but mainly for the listener to accept his image” (OSAKABE, 1999, p. 93).

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For Charaudeau (2008), political discourse is a performance in which reason and passion oscillate. In this situation, mixing the*logos*,*ethos*It is*patho*s, with the aim of building the image (*ethos*) of the politician.

It can be seen from the foundations proposed by Charaudeau (2008) that the politician in his speech is the voice of everyone in his voice, using persuasion and his image (*ethos*) to convince everyone of your proposals, making them adhere to your values.

Charaudeau's (2008) starting point is that political discourse is inseparable from political action, which justifies being an object of study. The politician must construct a double discursive identity for himself.

Finally, it is important to highlight that according to Charaudeau (2008), action is motivated by the language that guides it and gives it meaning. Thus, there is no politics without discourse and, in this sense, it is the communication situation that makes discourse political.

## 3 Socio-historical context of Brazilian politics

In the 2010 Brazilian presidential elections, the first president was elected: Dilma Rousseff, from the PT (Workers' Party), with 56.05% of the votes. This result was obtained through the support of former president Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva.

Michel Temer, from PMDB (Brazilian Democratic Movement Party), was chosen as vice-president on the same ticket, due to an alliance formed between PT and PMDB and his experience in the political scene. Deputy for six terms, president of the Chamber three times and president of his party for 11 years, Temer graduated in Law from USP in 1963. He holds a doctorate in Law from PUC, collaborated with the construction of the Constitution from 1988 and has published books, such as “Elements of Constitutional Law”, “Constitution and Politics” and “Democracy and Citizenship”.

Dilma's first term was marked by continuing the work of social inclusion and reducing inequalities. The positive result earned him re-election in 2014 with 51.64% of the votes.

On the other hand, the economy has suffered a slowdown since 2013 and public sector debt has increased. Therefore, the government was unable to close public accounts. In an attempt to remedy the problem, the president signed supplementary decrees

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budget without authorization from Congress and also carried out “fiscal scams”, which constitutes a crime regulated in Complementary Law No. 101.

The economic crisis and corruption scandals (such as the Petrolão scheme and the dismemberment of Operation Lava Jato) generated demonstrations and popular pressure. The discontent of parliamentarians began the process of*impeachment*against Dilma, who was immediately removed from her role. As a result, Michel Temer temporarily took over as interim president. His first official speech is our object of analysis.

**4 Analysis of Interim President Michel Temer’s inauguration speech**

The speech analyzed in this study was given by interim president Michel Temer on May 12, 2016. Below is a list of the most frequent and impactful terms in the interim president's speech:

**Quchurchyard 01:**Terms with greater frequency and impact in Michel Te's inauguration speech mer

| **Terms with greater frequency and impact in Michel Temer's inauguration speech** |
|---|
| a) My friends - seven times |
| b) Constitution – eleven times |
| c) Here – twice |
| d) Trust – three times |
| e) Government of national salvation – once |

**Source:**Authors

We will analyze each of the words previously mentioned by the AD theory, demonstrating what each one brings as a reference to the discourse.

The expression “My friends” comes right at the beginning of the speech, as a way of “calling” / “greeting” the Brazilian people, appearing seven times during the speech. Trying to demonstrate proximity, it is used as a way of bringing the president who gives the speech closer to the people, placing him in the position of friend to those who listen to him.

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In this way, from the beginning of the speech we have the construction of the*ethos*of the president, in the sense of forming the image of a friend of the Brazilian people.

In a speech in which nothing is innocent, the use of the term “My friends” connotes a rapprochement between the dominant (president who gives the speech) and the dominated (Brazilian people who heard the speech).

It is appropriate at this point to draw a parallel between the forms of enunciation of the outgoing president Dilma Rousseff and those used by interim president Michel Temer. In her speeches to the Brazilian nation, Dilma Rousseff began her speech by calling the people “Brazilians”; Michel Temer uses the term “My friends”.

It appears from the analysis of the terms that Dilma Rousseff used the terms “Brazilians and Brazilians” because she was a president elected through direct elections, thus demonstrating her respect for the Brazilian people who elected her.

Temer, on the other hand, for assuming the government due to Dilma's removal due to the *impeachment*, used the term “My friends” in the construction of his speech to gain the charisma of the Brazilian population, seeking to emphasize the legality of his government.

Regarding the term “constitution”, it appears eleven times during the speech given by Michel Temer. Due to the great influence and importance of this word, we must make some explanations about it. According to the Portuguese language dictionary (SILVEIRA BUENO, 1996, p.160), the following is the definition of the word Constitution:

> CONSTITUTION (ui), sf Organization; body complexion; set of hereditary or acquired morphophysiopathological characters of an individual;**fundamental law that regulates the rights and duties of the citizen in relation to the State** . (emphasis added)

According to the legal dictionary (GUIMARÃES, 2009: 80), constitution is defined as follows:

> CONSTITUTION -**Law that underpins and organizes the functions of the State.** Aristotle defined it simply as the*ordering of State powers.* Rodrigo Octávio conceptualizes it as a*body of rules and principles in accordance with which the public powers of the State are normally exercised and individual freedoms and rights ensured*. To individual rights are added the rights*social* or*collectives*, of great repercussion in modern Public Law. In countries with a rigid Constitution, it is not permitted to change it by any law; only *constitutional amendments*can change the Constitution, as happens with ours, in light of articles 59, I, and 60. (emphasis added)

Based on the definitions set out above, the constitution is understood as the law fundamental legal organization of people in their essential elements.

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Because it is the word with the most incidence during the analyzed speech and its relevance, below is more explicit information about the Brazilian constitutions.

4.1 The Constitutions of Brazil

Since its independence, Brazil has had seven Constitutions: those of 1824, 1891, 1934, 1937, 1946, 1967 and 1988.

**Constitution of 1824**

It came into force two years after the Independence of Brazil, modeled on European liberal monarchies, in particular Restoration France. Its most striking effect was the establishment of a fourth power, the moderator, above the Executive, Legislative and Judiciary: “The moderating power is the key to the entire political organization and is delegated privately to the Emperor [...] so that he incessantly watches over on maintaining the independence, balance and harmony of the most political powers”.

Although it treated Catholicism as the country's official religion, it provided for freedom of “domestic worship” for all faiths. For a slave-owning and undynamic society, he textually discriminated against the “freed” (freed slaves) and only granted the right to vote and be voted for to the richest.

Some excerpts from the Charter are unimaginable today. “The Person of the Emperor is inviolable and sacred: he is subject to no responsibility,” says one of them.

**Constitution of 1891**

Republican in spirit and influenced by positivism, the 1891 Constitution made no mention of God in its preamble. He abolished the death penalty, established federalism, expanded the right to vote (the right to vote continued to be reserved for the agrarian elite) and instituted a four-year term for President of the Republic.

It was the first Charter in the country to record the formula “All are equal before the law”. Its main sources of inspiration are the American Constitution and, for the federalism model, the Argentine one.

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**Constitution of 1934**

In July 1932, São Paulo rebelled against the provisional government of Getúlio Vargas, installed one year and nine months earlier, to demand the return of constitutional order. The "Constitutionalist Revolution" (for Paulistas) or "Counterrevolution" (for Getulistas) was crushed, but Vargas, until then hesitant, would end up giving in to pressure to convene it the following year in a new Constituent Assembly.

The text was influenced by the German Constitution of the Weimar Republic. It established universal and secret voting, the minimum wage and the eight-hour day and, for the first time, guaranteed women the right to participate in elections.

**Constitution of 1937**

The 1937 Charter is the founding milestone of the Estado Novo. It was written under the influence of fascism and nicknamed "Polish", due to its similarities with the authoritarian Constitution of Poland of 1935. It centralized powers, extended the presidential term to six years, reintroduced the death penalty and eliminated the right to strike. Through it, Vargas began to appoint governors and accumulated powers to interfere in the Judiciary.

**Constitution of 1946**

The victory of the allies in World War II exposed the contradiction of the Estado Novo: in Europe, the dictatorship of Getúlio Vargas had strengthened the front against fascism; in Brazil, it was based on a Charter inspired by that regime. Cornered, Getúlio handed over his position in 1945.

The following year, the country gained a new Constitution, which would provide a democratic respite for 18 years. The new legal framework, promulgated under the presidency of Eurico Gaspar Dutra (who had been Getúlio's Minister of War), took over several points from the 1934 Charter, reassuring free expression and individual rights.

## 1967 Constitution

Three years after the 1964 coup, the military sponsored a new Constitution, burying the democratic provisions of the 1946 Charter. The text restricted party organization, concentrated powers in the Executive, imposed indirect elections for president and reestablished the death penalty.

The legal framework of the military dictatorship would be amended in the following years by successive decrees: 13 more institutional acts, 67 complementary acts and 27 amendments. The most notorious, AI-5, decreed in 1968, suspended the most basic guarantees, such as the right to

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*habeas corpus*. It was revoked ten years later, in 1978. The 1967 Charter would last another ten years.

## 1988 Constitution

The dictatorship had already fallen and, after the presidency of five military officers, the country once again had a civilian at the head of the government: José Sarney. The legal framework that would free the country from authoritarian rubble was missing. On February 1, 1987, a Sunday, the Constituent Assembly was installed, which would be presided over by Ulysses Guimarães.

On October 5, 1988, a Wednesday, the new Charter was promulgated. To ward off the specter of the military regime, the text gained a strong "guarantee" accent, establishing broad political and press freedom, reestablishing the balance between powers and establishing individual rights.

But in addition to the fundamental guarantees, the text listed a series of rights that are difficult to get off the ground. Having given in to harassment from the most diverse interest groups, it turned out to be prolix, ambiguous, paternalistic and, especially in the economic field, clumsy, which required dozens of patches. It is certainly not the ideal Constitution. But not even its critics question its legitimacy. For better or worse, the text provided the longest uninterrupted period of democracy that our country has ever gone through.

It is not the case, therefore, to give in to the temptation of renovating it in large blocks, much less of tearing down the entire building. It is a case of debugging it, according to the mechanisms it foresees.

In the current historical and political context that we are experiencing with the removal of President Dilma through the process of*impeachment*, what is the meaning, in the inauguration speech of interim president Michel Temer, of the enunciation of the term "constitution"?

We seek to answer this question by analyzing the word and the historical context of all the constitutions that the Brazilian state has had since the empire, observing in detail what the constitution was like in all its seven editions.

From then on, we were able to observe the great importance of the constitution as a law fundamental that regulates the rights and duties of citizens in relation to the State, together with its great relevance for the constitutional order of our country (which has already experienced an empire, a period of military regime and now, democratic presidentialism).

On the other hand, we observe that through the enunciation "constitution", we have the construction of the*ethos*of the interim president being built and reinforced to demonstrate to the

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Brazilian people that he has the "qualification" and knowledge to be a good and ethical president for Brazil, as well as to reinforce the expression (also used by him) of "government of national salvation", which is in line with the term "constitution" – both complement each other.

What we can observe is that the word "constitution" has never been used so much in a speech, contributing to the construction of the*ethos*of President Temer.

During his speech, Temer also declares: "*None of these reforms will alter the rights acquired by Brazilian citizens (...). When they ask me to do something, I will do it like Dutra, what does the book say? The little book is the Federal Constitution*".

In context, Eurico Gaspar Dutra was the 16th President of Brazil, through direct elections in 1945, assuming the presidency on January 31, 1946. In the same year, the fifth Constitution was promulgated, the content of which changed the mandate from six to five years presidential. Dutra accepted the change, without expressing any dissatisfaction. His acquired right to possession was maintained, however, there was a change in the term of office.

Then the interim president says: "*There are controversial issues, my friends, such as labor and social security reform. (...) its objective is to pay pensions and create jobs. Therefore, to guarantee payment. The pursuit of sustainability is guaranteed to ensure the future*".

He states that he will carry out labor and social security reforms and that acquired rights will not be changed. However, he does not identify what these changes will be, using ideological and rhetorical words and, thus, leaving implicit what will actually be changed.

Another term that has great significance for AD is "here", which appears twice. This impact occurs because it indicates today; time and place in which the interim president gave his speech.

It is emphasized that the expression "here" demarcates the historical moment experienced by all Brazilians and which will be studied by future generations. Thus, the statement remains the same – however, the statement will never be repeated, even if uttered at another time.

Another word that is repeated is "trust", appearing three times during the speech and with an ideological nature of formation of the*ethos*of its speaker.

Temer begins his speech by highlighting the word "trust" to ingrain in the minds of his listeners that he has government skills and that the right path

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for our country is your government. In his proposals and reforms mentioned, without specification, he uses persuasion and formal language to induce people to believe in the figure proposed by his*ethos*.

Another significant statement is the expression “government of national salvation”, which appears only once in the speech, but due to its strength, it causes a great impact on the listener.

Placing himself in the enunciative scene as “savior of the country”, the interim president reinforces his self-image and gives more strength to his thesis of governmental legitimacy of the provisional government. It all turns out to be a game of well-crafted words in order to persuade the listening public.

**Final considerations**

With the preparation of this article, it was possible to analyze the main terms used by interim president Michel Temer during his speech that contributed to the construction of his*ethos*discursive.

The country's economic recession, unemployment, outdated wages, among other factors, contributed considerably to the population's discontent. Given the current scenario presented to us, several popular demonstrations were triggered, culminating in the process of*impeachment*which removed President Dilma, in the rise of Temer to the presidency and the analyzed statement.

When we conceptualize the*ethos*, we identified the different persuasion strategies used in its construction, as well as the means by which this image is preserved. The reform proposals are mentioned during the speech amid beautiful and moving words. There is an enunciation of approach to the Brazilian people with the aim of “earning” / “conquering” the trust of Brazilians, as well as creating the “air” of legitimizing the government.

Finally, it is worth highlighting that, in the present study, not all aspects relating to AD could be explored. But, as far as the*ethos*of the interim president, we can observe his great influence within the analyzed speech.

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