

REFRAMING – Univ. Açores (27 e 28 junho 2019)

Good morning to you all, thank you for being here.

The paper I am about to present is part of the work I am pursuing for my PhD thesis in News Translation, aimed at analysing how the speeches delivered by the Catholic Popes before the United Nations General Assembly between 1965 and 2015 were rewritten in the Portuguese press.

For the purpose of this conference, I will present one part of my study, which is essentially a macro analysis, that illustrates how a text – in this case, oral texts – can be reframed by different newspapers, so promoting a particular acknowledgement of the events and of the messages officially delivered.

- I focused on two of the most influential newspapers in Portugal throughout the 50 years of the study: *Diário de Notícias* (DN) and *Jornal de Notícias* (JN) – the former being commonly held as one of the most (if not *the* most) prestigious newspaper since its foundation in the 19th century until today; and the latter being mostly characterized as practicing what is called «popular journalism» (WHICH, using a TRANSLATION expression, we may consider as standing in between the most serious journalistic treatment of the subjects AND the more sensationalistic one)

- As theoretical background, I point out Kinnunen and Koskinen's definition of «agency» as a «willingness and ability to act» (2010: 6), as well as Lakoff and Wehling understanding of «frame» as «structures of ideas that we use to understand the world» (2012: 20) – THESE two concepts, in news translation, refer to the choices pursued by the media when producing the articles AND to the way they reorganize the information, creating a semiotic product of their own.

- Finally, the aim of this research is to identify major tendencies in the REFRAMING of the Popes' speeches, comparing both newspapers synchronically, and, in the end, diachronically.

For the comparison between DN and JN, I found useful to base on the inverted pyramid, which is the structure that tends to be mostly used in the production of written news contents, FOR it provides us a clear image of the **reframing** processes pursued during each of the pontificates.

What I did was to identify the topics selected by DN and JN, among all the issues mentioned by each of the Popes in their respective speeches, presenting them in the exact same order as they were presented to the public – starting by the front page titles until the end of the articles or to the text boxes (whenever they existed).

(I apologise for the fact that the text is quite small, not even fitting properly in the last part of the pyramids, but in the first two pontificates the articles were so long, that I did not manage to present them more concisely – YET, as you will see, it will get easier in the last pontificates)

Looking to the new frames produced about Pope Paul VI's visit:

- We see that **DN** emphasised, on the one hand, the historical character of the papal visit – by calling attention to (right in the front page titles) the accomplishment of a perpetual religious mission, aimed at delivering a good message to all mankind – AND, on the other hand, the notion of brotherhood, by the promotion of peace instead of war (two ideas conveyed by quoting biblical excerpts)
- Then, in the text (disregarding the passages with contextual information), we see a predominance of issues such as:
 - Pilgrimage and importance of the visit
 - AGAIN peace VERSUS war and conflicts / PLUS Brotherhood
 - Negotiation and respectful, truthful relations among States
 - To give help to developing countries
 - AND Spiritual values as being determinant for the modern civilization

- The same reference to the historical meaning of the event was pursued by **JN** in the front page,
- AS WELL AS the promotion of peace – YET, it added another information: that it is Man (not scientific progress) who prevents peace from being effective
- We understand that this argument of the Pope ought to have been taken by the editors of JN as being particularly relevant, given that it was presented again in the first paragraph AND with more details, thus explaining the Pope's argument more clearly.
- In the following paragraphs of the text, JN opted to refer first to:
 - The principles that must guide international relations AND the importance of the UN in the international scene (which, ultimately, is reinforcing the ideas of brotherhood and global peace)
 - **AND ONLY after** to the historicity of the event and the idea of a pilgrimage (therefore, presenting a perspective not as focused on the religious relevancy of the event AND on the spiritual references presented by the Pope, as did DN; BUT on the target of the messages – that is, member-States and how they should behave in order to make it possible a peaceful coexistence mankind)
- **THEN, the other relevant tendencies concern to other topics which were considered by both newspapers:**
 - The need to move forward, forgetting unsuccessful missions in the past, and to improve the organization's work, continuously adapting to the historical circumstances
 - The attribution to developing countries part of the savings gathered by the reduction of nuclear disarmament
 - The need to regain the trust of countries that left the organization or to conquer the trust of those who do not belong to it yet, both of which imply a stronger authority of UN
 - The need to respect human dignity (not just to feed the hungry)
 - AND the presentation of two of the most charismatic sentences pronounced by Paul VI in this assembly:
 - Never again one against the other
 - Never again war, never again war

In the second visit, by John Paul II, in 1979:

- Some of the previous options taken by both DN and JN were maintained – especially:
 - The principle of safeguarding peace AND condemning the nuclear arms race
- On the other hand, other issues are new (OR are presented in a different perspective when compared to the articles from 1965) – for instance:
 - The exacerbated materialism, the exploration of the weaker (individuals or countries), social and economic inequalities (mainly among regions of satiety and of hunger in the world), political power abuse, dependence of poor countries towards superpowers
 - The Universal Declaration of Human Rights
 - Specific references to world issues (conflicts in the Middle East in general; the protection of Jerusalem's sacred heritage; and, most of all, the Palestinian question – a subject to which JN attributed greater importance than DN, presenting it in the main title and in the first paragraph.
 - IT is curious that, in what concerns the role and the importance of the UN, this organization is not so much promoted as a bridge between peoples (as we have seen previously), but as the supreme forum for peace and for justice
 - Finally, we also notice a greater emphasis on the human person (rather than in peoples, as happened in the articles about Paul VI) – which is noticeable, for instance, in the predominance of paragraphs about human rights, human dignity, in JPII's recall of the concentration camp of Auschwitz and the reference of war as a denial of human rights

- Such an importance in the Portuguese press to the individual may be related to the fact that Portugal's dictatorship had ended just 5 years before – thus, human rights (such as freedom in general and freedom of speech in particular) were rather important at the time

STILL, despite the several similarities that we can identify between both newspapers, in the whole, the reframing processes pursued lead us to interpret this intervention of Pope John Paul II in different readings:

- In DN, as if it were a renewal of Paul VI's appeal 14 years before, being added to his urgent appeal towards the promotion of global peace the need to safeguard human rights, condemning any kind of torture, oppression, concentration camp in modern societies (which we can infer as an implicit reference to the tensions created by the Cold War period, particularly by the imposition of the Soviet regime over Central and Eastern European countries, among which the Pope's motherland, Poland)
 - o AS WELL AS we see in DN an effort to mention important political and religious personalities – such as the Portuguese Prime-minister (in the front cover) AND (and forgive me if this indication of mine may sound a bit biased, since this is my hometown) the reference to the AZOREAN cardinal D. Humberto Medeiros, in the development of the article) (among other specific references related to the Pope and to the Catholic faith)
- In turn, in JN, right on the front page, the public is lead to read the article and to understand the Pope's intervention in the UN as a cause specifically focused on justice, especially in what concerns the Palestinian people and the Middle East in general (parágrafos iniciais da pirâmide)

In 1995, when Pope John Paul II returned to the United Nations:

The focus of the official speech changed from the individual to nations, with the Pope claiming that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was fundamental to promote each man's rights, but that it was never produced a document regarding the rights of nations in particular – AND this was precisely what **DN** chose as the focus of its news article, presenting it on the main title and in the first three paragraphs.

- On the contrary, JN only referred to the rights of nations in paragraphs 7 and 8, preferring to point out the Pope's appeal towards the transformation of the UN into a moral centre, in which nations not only cooperate and coexist pacifically *with* each other, but they also (and mainly) exist and work *for* each other – thus constituting a **family** of nations.

ALSO, it seems to have been more important to this newspaper to mention the papal arguments about:

- The fear of the future (only conquered by a united effort among member-states)
 - the denial of consumerism in modern societies
 - the duty of rich countries to help the poorest ones + PLUS an explicit mention to extreme poverty
- WHILE in DN, together with the juridical approach, the representation of this official speech was mostly based on the notions of:
 - o Freedom
 - o Justice and ethics
 - o Solidarity
 - o Exploitation, self-benefit, inequality
 - o And, again, peace – even though this time recurring to parallel or contrastive concepts, such as the condemnation of violence or pacifism
 - These differences between both newspapers lead us to...

Arriving to the 21st century, we see a greater exercise of agency in the Portuguese newspapers:

- This is seen on the options taken on the rewriting of Pope Benedict XVI's speech, in 2008, specifically on all the references of both newspapers to the encounter of the Pope with victims of sexual abuse by Northern-american priests – an event that was not on the papal agenda (as indicated by «unexpected»), that occurred at close doors and, so, we can say that it was deliberately chosen to be presented (maybe to suggest reading)
- Comparing both newspapers, in DN, the emphasis is put on juridical issues – which are, in fact, predominant in this Pope's speech:
 - Multilateral consensus versus decisions by a small part of States
 - The responsibility to protect – by States and, in case they are not able to, by the international community, so that serious threats to human lives can be prevented
 - Again the idea of a family, BUT this time in a humanitarian perspective (while JP II claimed the idea of a family of nations)
 - Justice and the promotion of human dignity
 - AS WELL AS religious subjects, such as:
 - the need to respect religious freedom, using the faithful's experiences towards the common good, not preventing them to be active citizens of their societies
 - Inter-religious dialogue
 - AND the condemnation of scientific progresses which violate the order of Creation (which has been referred by Paul VI, alluding to artificial methods of birth control) (Benedict XVI did not mention any in particular)
- In what concerns JN:
 - The titles suggest that the Pope's speech focused, on the one hand, on human rights – yet, differently from what we have seen in John Paul II, it was associated with the principle of the responsibility to protect (being the idea of safeguarding peoples' lives developed in the first two paragraphs)
 - ON THE other hand, it is suggested a focus on the disapproval of unilateral actions within the international community – HOWEVER, this subject is relegated to a second plan, being the issue of the sexual abuse by members of the US clergy mentioned before (in a contrastive organization of the newspaper's discourse when compared with DN) AND complemented by a brief text, with details about the encounter with the victims.
 - The other subject that JN chose to include in its rewriting of this Pope's speech (but not DN) is his opinions about how the international community should act in order to solve world problems.
- In this way, we may say that, in this pontificate, the reframing processes lead us to consider that

Finally, in 2015, when Pope Francis pronounced his ideals before the representatives of the States, it is also noticeable an exercise of agency stronger than in the first pontificates:

Starting with JN, this is very clear: if Francis was the pontiff who presented the most diversified speech in the General Assembly, this newspaper chose to focus almost entirely on one single issue: the UN's system of financing poor countries.

- This means that, for the readers of this newspaper, the core of this papal speech was profoundly economic, marked by a condemnation of the capitalist system and of the oppression exercised by the superpowers over the weaker nations.
- The only other issue mentioned in this article was the congratulation of the agreement recently reached with Iran about nuclear armament – however, being presented in the bottom of the pyramid, and having the whole text being so concentrated in the previous issue, we can argue that this passage was not that much influential in the reading and understanding of this event.

In contrast, we see in DN a broader diversity of issues, being the emphasis put on:

- Governments' thirst of power – associated to social and economic exclusion
- The worriedness with the environment and its relation to human existence
- The congratulation with (and hope in) the nuclear agreement with Iran, similarly to JN
- The criticism about the so-called ideological colonization, with the promotion of lifestyles contrary to human nature PLUS the necessity of a universal moral law, on the one hand, accepting the natural distinction between man and woman; on the other, respecting life in all stages and dimensions
- AND two topics not included in the titles, such as:
 - The government's duty to provide basic material means to their peoples
 - AND the narcotics trade

-ALL in ALL, (and moving forward to the conclusions):

We can say that AGENCY in the Portuguese press has been an «on-going project», in the sense that if in the first papal visit to the UN headquarters, during Estado Novo, most of the Pope's concerns were conveyed in the news articles of both DN and JN, many in the form of quotations and with an emphasis on the historical importance of the event – to which was probably not indifferent the fact that the Portuguese political regime and the society itself were strongly Catholic.

- Then, all choices and frames of political, juridical, social and economic nature ought to have followed the historical circumstances at each moment of time

- Being noticeable that, in the new millennium, the editorial options were more precise, specific choices – I would argue, PROPER, in the sense that they manifest a stronger «willingness and ability to act», which results in very particular ways of transmitting the very same speeches to the same audience (at least, in general terms) AND, ultimately, influences how readers interpret and acknowledge the events.

- It is true that, in the field of news translation, it is hard to tell which sources were consulted and to identify a source text;
- YET, I believe that the simplest choices a newspaper may do when rewriting any kind of text, concerning any personality or institution, and referring to any kind of subjects IS a sign of agency, thus, even when newspapers consult the same sources, no two (or more) news articles will promote the same interpretation of the texts, precisely because the reframing processes are never entirely alike.

- THANK YOU.