

Towards a reform of the United Nations Security Council: A Critical Discourse Analysis of the online reform proposals from Brazil, Germany and Japan

国連安全保障理事会改革に向けて

—ブラジル・ドイツ・日本からのオンライン改革提案の批判的言説分析—

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Abstract

2005年の世界サミットで、ブラジル、ドイツ、日本、インドは、国連安全保障理事会（安保理）の改革を求めるG4というグループを設立した。ブラジル、ドイツ、日本の各外務省は、改革に向けた独自の公式サイトを作成した。これらのページでは、「より代表的で、正当で、効率的な」安保理のための改革の重要性が正当化されている。本稿では、三つのサイトの言説の比較に焦点を当てている。分析は、批判的言説分析のアプローチ、特に Fairclough (2015) の三次元の枠組み、および Bendel Larcher (2015) の画像分析の要約された提案を応用して実行した。

結果として、ブラジルのテキストで短い文が優先されており（ほとんど能動態で）、等位節や表現的なモダリティの出現が多い。それに、多くの主張的な言語行為も見られる。ドイツのテキストは客観的で、ブラジルのテキストのように短い文も優先されているが、最上級や多くの宣言的な言語行為（遂行動詞）の例が見られる。また、Q&A セクションも含まれている。一方、日本のテキストでは、多くの従属節や表現的なモダリティ、宣言的な言語行為の例が提示されている。ドイツのサイトのように、Q&A も含まれている。ブラジルのホームページにある写真は照明強度が不均一で人のいない安保理会議場を示しているが、ドイツのサイトにある写真は人のいる会議場での人間の活動に焦点を当てている。日本のサイトでは図表などの抽象的な画像が表示され、科学的な言説と説論的な効果を生んでいる。

さらに、ブラジル外務省の言説で強調される点は安保理における途上国の代表性の不足や、ブラジルの地域的かつ国際的な重要性、また国連との協力などである。ドイツ外務省と日本外務省の言説で強調される一つの点は両国の経済力や国連への財政負担であり、したがってG4は経済力をもつドイツと日本、発展途上国を代表するブラジルとインドとが組み合わさった戦略的なものと見ることができるだろう。グループの改革提案によって強化されるのは、グローバルに広がる資本主義的な実践である。G4の改革案の問題とはいえ、その言説の説論的な性質や論理的議論などを通じて、読者の間に真実性と信頼性の効果が生み出されており、グループの言説が正当化および規範化されている。

Keywords

Critical Discourse Analysis, United Nations Security Council Reform, G4, Representativeness, Legitimacy
批判的言説分析、国連安保理改革、G4、代表性、正当性

1. Introduction

The Group of Four (G4)⁽¹⁾ is a group formed in 2005 by Brazil, Germany, Japan,

(1) All the information concerning the G4 countries was mainly taken from the three websites of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of Brazil, Germany and Japan, from the G4 Resolution (cf. Resolution A/59/L.64 2005), and the book *Center for UN Reform Education* (2013). Data about the UN and the UNSC were taken from the UN's official site (cf. United Nations), the UNSC's official site (cf. United Nations Security Council) and the UN Charter (cf. United Nations Charter) (see 'References').

and India to reform the United Nations Security Council (hereafter referred to as UNSC). The UNSC consists of five permanent members, the United States of America (USA), the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (UK), the Russian Federation⁽²⁾, the People's Republic of China⁽³⁾ and France, with veto power, as well as ten non-permanent members elected every two years (cf. United Nations Charter, Chapter V, Article 23), without the veto power. These fifteen members of the UNSC represent the 193 members of the United Nations (hereafter referred to as UN) (cf. United Nations, Member States). Arguing that the UNSC has remained largely unchanged since the end of World War II⁽⁴⁾, the G4 countries advocate a reform of the Council and demand permanent seats, in response to the needs of the current times. The G4's reform proposal (cf. Resolution A/59/L.64 2005) suggests other six permanent seats (four seats for the G4, two for Africa) with veto power and four non-permanent seats (one for Africa, one for Asia, one for Eastern Europe, and another one for Latin America) with no veto power on the UNSC.

Within the scope of G4's reform proposal, the Foreign Ministries of Brazil, Germany and Japan have created their own websites⁽⁵⁾ for the UNSC reform. India's Ministry of Foreign Affairs did not create an official website addressing the G4's UNSC reform proposal and is therefore not included in the corpus. In this paper⁽⁶⁾, texts and images on the three sites are analyzed using the approach of the Critical Discourse Analysis (hereafter referred to as CDA). CDA is an interdisciplinary approach that benefits not only from an accurate textual analysis but also from Social Sciences. This approach shows effectively how specific language uses build reality and how reality shapes language as well. It is important to point out, however, that this paper does not seek to propose actions regarding the UNSC reform, but shall be seen as a linguistic approach to the theme. The main focus is investigating how this reality is built, specifically concerning the Brazilian, German and Japanese discourses on the

(2) Formerly the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), until 1991. Among the former USSR countries, only the Russian Federation remains a permanent member of the UNSC. In this paper, the name "Russia" will be used to refer to the Russian Federation.

(3) Formerly the Republic of China, until 1971, when Taiwan (the present Republic of China) was considered not legitimate and the permanent seat at the UNSC was attributed to the People's Republic of China (cf. Resolution A/2758/XXVI 1971), considered only as "China" in the present list of member states on UN's official website (cf. United Nations, Member States). In this paper, the name "China" will be used to refer to the People's Republic of China.

(4) The number of non-permanent members of the UNSC increased once, in 1965, from six to ten.

(5) The Brazilian site for the reform is called *Reformando o Conselho de Segurança das Nações Unidas*, the German site is called *Reform des Sicherheitsrats der Vereinten Nationen*, and the Japanese one is named 国連外交:国連改革—安保理改革 (see 'References').

(6) The present paper shows the results of the author's doctoral thesis.

reform. The present paper is, therefore, not an analysis of G4's discourses, but of the discourses of the three websites regarding the reform.

This research was carried out considering the following guiding questions: How do the Foreign Ministries of the three countries express simultaneously the common goals of the G4 and their specific national interests? Which discursive similarities and differences can be found on the three sites? How does each Ministry of Foreign Affairs explain to the public the importance of the proposed reform? Which themes are discussed and how are they organized on the sites? Which background knowledge and assumptions are reflected in the discourses related to the reform? Which implications and effects are produced in the discourses related to the reform?

2. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

To understand what 'CDA' stands for, it is essential to define what 'discourse' means. The term 'discourse' used in this paper refers primarily to the approach advocated in *Language and Power* by Fairclough (2015). "Discourse is language viewed in a certain way, as a part of the social process (part of social life) which is related to other parts. [...] discourse is language in its relations with other elements in the social process" (Fairclough 2015:7). In Bendel Larcher's (2015:16) definition of the term, "discourse is the social process of understanding how the world is to be interpreted and shaped. Discourse is shaped by material reality and affects it through social practices. Discourse is expressed in concrete texts that represent the knowledge and thinking of a specific time" [own translation from German]⁽⁷⁾.

In this sense, discourse can be understood as the language used in social processes. Discourse is not just a means of representing the world, but also exerting actions on the world and other people, influencing, in the process, the way how reality is perceived. Through discourse, people shape all dimensions of a society's structure that affect them (cf. Fairclough 2001:91). Thus, the function of the CDA is to interpret, evaluate, critique, and explain these discourses (cf. Fairclough 2015:9).

CDA emerged in Europe in the late 1980s as a critical science, being Fairclough one of the most well-known authors in this area. His works are situated in the Marxian tradition and the Cultural Political Economy (cf. Angermüller et al. 2014: 361), focusing mainly on power relations in language. Fairclough (cf. 2001;2015) defines language as a form of social practice. Certain power relations are reproduced

(7) Original in German: „Ein Diskurs ist der gesellschaftliche Prozess der Verständigung darüber, wie die Welt zu deuten und zu gestalten ist. Der Diskurs wird durch die materielle Wirklichkeit geprägt und wirkt durch gesellschaftliche Praktiken auf diese zurück. Der Diskurs äußert sich in konkreten Texten, die das Wissen und Denken einer bestimmten Zeit repräsentieren“ (Bendel Larcher 2015: 16).

or creatively transformed through language. His theory was heavily influenced by Foucault's theories of power, although he has some critics of the philosopher's works, especially for his lack of actual text-based analysis (cf. Fairclough 2001:83). Fairclough sees the linguistic analysis of texts as fundamental to the CDA because it is a material analysis of discourse. With this approach, it becomes possible to explain exactly how discourse can have constructive effects on social reality (cf. Fairclough 2015:45).

In *Language and Power*, Fairclough (cf. 2015:58-59) suggests a three-dimensional framework as a method for CDA. The author calls the first level of analysis 'description', in which texts⁽⁸⁾ are analyzed. The second level of analysis is what he calls 'interpretation', in which the processes of producing and interpreting texts are discussed. Fairclough also calls this process 'interaction', "because the values of textual features only become real, socially operative, if they are embedded in social interaction, where texts are produced and interpreted against a background of common-sense assumptions (part of 'members' resources', MR) which give textual features their values" (Fairclough 2015:154). At the final level comes the 'explanation', i.e. the analysis of the context, meaning the analysis of the social conditions for production and interpretation of texts. This method illustrates how language plays an important role in human activity and how it influences reality and is influenced by this same reality. Therefore, through the study of language use, it is possible to understand which knowledge and power relations exist in a society and how they arise, thus enabling the arising of specific discourses.

Moreover, texts are produced in many different types and forms, which is called 'genre'. Each genre has its characteristics and texts are created according to the rules of a specific genre. When readers look at a text, they automatically recognize the textual genre from its characteristics. Similarly, when one writes a text, one automatically thinks of a specific genre in which the text can be created, such as poetry, scientific text, newspaper news, theater play, etc. This research focuses particularly on texts in the spectrum of political discourse.

According to Fairclough and Fairclough (cf. 2012: 30-34), political discourse can be viewed as deliberative. It means that people in society are led to believe they are participating in a collective decision-making process. However, one of the characteristics of a democratic society is that politicians are elected by the people, so decisions made by politicians are viewed as legitimate since they represent the

(8) 'Text' means not only written text but also what can be called 'multimodal text'. It includes various semiotic modes: natural language (written and spoken), image, video, music, gesture, etc. (cf. Fairclough 2015:8). Kress and Van Leeuwen's *Reading Images: the grammar of visual design* (2006) is an important contribution to CDA.

people. Politicians favor the decisions they think are the best and people believe they somehow also took part in this process, which is an illusion produced by democracy. For this reason, the authors advocate that political discourse is deliberative.

3. Methodology

The three websites for the UNSC reform, created by the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of Brazil, Germany and Japan, were analyzed, specifically the texts and images on the pages where the reform is advocated. The text analysis was conducted based on Fairclough's approach to CDA (cf. 2015:128-176), as previously described. At the level of 'description', vocabulary, grammar, and text structure were analyzed. At the level of 'interpretation', which can also be called 'analysis of discursive practice' (cf. Leschzyk 2016:14), the interaction between texts and social structures, as well as the processes of production and interpretation of texts were observed. Analytical categories such as genre, intertextuality, assumption, and speech act were used. These categories can be considered part of a textual analysis, but they also connect directly with specific situational, institutional and societal contexts, thus being considered apart from textual analysis (cf. Fairclough 2015:166). At the level of 'explanation', which will also be called 'analysis of social practice', the social conditions of production and interpretations of texts were considered. To analyze the context, the background knowledge, the social conditions to the origin of discourses and their effects on society, ideology, and power relations were explained. Since the present paper presents some results of the author's doctoral thesis, not every analytical detail can be shown here, due to the paper's length, but some noteworthy points about the analysis. For a detailed analysis, refer to the author's thesis (see Perez 2022).

Although Fairclough also considers images and other semiotic forms and modes ('multimodality') as part of the text analysis, he focuses on language in his works because he considers it the most important semiotic form (cf. Fairclough 2015:8). In this case, the summarized methods⁽⁹⁾ suggested by Bendel Larcher (cf. 2015: 167-168; 195-197) were applied in this research to analyze the images on the three websites. The author suggests the following analytical categories to consider: 'content and frame', 'perspective', 'composition', 'modality', 'relationship between text and image', and 'visual stereotype'. When it comes to 'content and frame', the images can be analyzed by observing what is being shown and what is being omitted, as well as

(9) Bendel Larcher's (cf. 2015: 127-168; 195-197) method to analyze images is a reunion of various methods used in this area, although a great part of the suggested analytical framework is based on Kress and Van Leeuwen's *Reading Images* (2006).

the focus and the background, also considering the symbolic meanings of the image. ‘Perspective’ has to do with angles (vertical and horizontal) and view orientation. When analyzing the ‘composition’, one can consider what is central in the image and what is around, or even elements on the right or left side, on the upper or lower side, if these elements are vertically, horizontally, or diagonally portrayed, what is being focused, as well as what is being put together or put apart. ‘Modality’ considers colors, lighting, complexity, and intensity of the elements in the image. ‘Relationship between text and image’ applies, naturally, to images that come with texts. At this level of analysis, one can comment on the function of the image, the context in which the text and the image are created, as well as the legends of the images (they can often induce how an image shall be interpreted). Finally, one can analyze the ‘visual stereotypes’ created, which are directly related to specific assumptions, social conditions, and power relations.

The research corpus consists of texts and images on the three aforementioned websites, specifically the pages dedicated to explaining the needs and benefits of the UNSC reform proposed by the G4 countries. From the Brazilian website (cf. *Reformando o Conselho de Segurança das Nações Unidas*), the following pages were analyzed: the top page, *Brasil e a reforma*, *Glossário*, *A reforma de 1963-65*, and *Seminário “Atuais Desafios à Paz e à Segurança Internacionais” (Nota conceitual do Seminário)* (as of April 24, 2020). From the German website (cf. *Reform des Sicherheitsrats der Vereinten Nationen*), only the top page was considered (as of April 25, 2020), since the other one (there are only two) is focused on the structure of the UNSC. From the Japanese website (cf. 国連外交:国連改革—安保理改革), two pages were analyzed: *なぜ安保理改革が必要か* and *安保理改革 Q&A* (as of April 28, 2020). The full texts and the analyzed images are not included in this paper due to length and copyrights.

4. Results

Through the use of the online tool called *WordClouds* (cf. WordClouds), it was possible to map the most frequently used words in the texts of the three analyzed sites. The texts were copied and pasted onto WordClouds online page and the following charts were generated⁽¹⁰⁾.

(10) The bigger the words’ size, the higher the frequency in which they appear in the analyzed texts. Note: since *WordClouds* do not decode Japanese writing systems (*kanji* ‘ideograms’ and the two syllabaries, *hiragana* and *katakana*), the texts were firstly transliterated into the Latin alphabet, and then copied and pasted onto *WordClouds*.

Not only the analysis of the vocabulary is relevant to the research, but also grammar, text structure, as well as images, are part of the analysis. The results are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: Text and image analysis (cf. Perez 2022)

Brazil	Germany	Japan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High frequency of coordinate clauses • High frequency of expressive modalities • Short sentences (mainly in active voice) • High frequency of assertive speech acts • Large size picture on top of the home page: subjective perception (representation of an empty UNSC Chamber in uneven lighting invites to think about the Council and its function and power) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objective texts focusing on the importance of the reform • Occurrences of superlatives (emphasis on the urgency of the reform) • Short sentences (mainly in active voice) • High frequency of declarative (performative) speech acts • Small size picture in the upper right corner of the home page: objective representation of the UNSC Chamber occupied by its member states' representatives (focus relies on people's activity) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High frequency of subordinate clauses (and conjunctions) • High frequency of modalization (especially expressive modalities) • Occurrence of interrogative sentences (Q&A section and rhetorical questions) • High frequency of declarative (performative) speech acts • Abstract images such as diagrams and charts: typical in scientific discourse (didactic effect)

As can be seen in Table 1, the Brazilian and German texts prioritize the use of short sentences, usually in the active voice, resulting in objective texts, especially the German ones. Coordinate clauses are particularly common in the Brazilian texts. Coordinate clauses are formed by simple sentences with equal weight, whereas the content of subordinate clauses is often backgrounded by the more “informationally prominent” content of the main clause (cf. Fairclough 2015:146). On the other hand, the texts of the Japanese site have long sentences and many subordinate clauses. Conjunctions are therefore widely used (e.g. *しかしながら* ‘nevertheless’, *ひいては* ‘in addition/consequently’, *特に* ‘especially’, *ただし* ‘however’, *のに* ‘although’, *ため* ‘because/for’, etc.). Subordinate clauses result in complex semantic relationships, and subjectivity can be perceived through the use of conjunctions.

Modality is also a strong subjective marker. Many expressive modalities are used in the texts on the Brazilian and Japanese sites. Expressive modalities represent mainly possibility, ability, intention, and desire. However, relational modalities can be more often seen in the German text, expressing the sense of duty, necessity, and urgency. Besides, some occurrences of superlatives can be found in the German text, also highlighting the urgency of the proposed UNSC reform. Modality and other

linguistic features of texts are part of language use and vary according to each culture and how language is used within specific societal, institutional and situational frames. However, because each culture has a way of expressing something, it also results in different forms of arguing and defending a point, intentionally or not.

In terms of image analysis, the three websites present very different results. The picture on the Brazilian homepage is large and is the first element the reader sees when accessing the site, right at the center of the page, generating therefore a greater effect on the reader. In addition, the picture shows an empty UNSC chamber with uneven lighting intensity, which seems to create a dramatic effect, resulting in a subjective impression. The picture on the German website is smaller than the one on the Brazilian homepage and is placed on the upper right side of the page, suggesting that it is merely illustrative. Moreover, the picture portrays the UNSC chamber in use, thus being the focus on human activity, which creates a more objective impression than the picture on the Brazilian homepage. On the other hand, the images analyzed on the Japanese website are abstract ones, such as charts and diagrams. This kind of abstraction is typical of scientific discourse and creates a didactic effect.

The following Table 2 (see the following page) summarizes the form in which the three websites are organized and the contents of their pages, consequently pointing out the results of their composition.

As can be seen in Table 2, each of the three sites presents a different structure. The Brazilian and Japanese sites have various sections, bringing a large amount of information, and resulting in a very didactic effect. The Brazilian site, for example, not only discusses the reform and its importance, but also provides historical explanations about the negotiations, introduces other reform groups other than G4, gathers informative media articles, official documents and speeches, and summarizes the conference on the reform, held in Brasília in 2013. The Japanese site also includes a discussion on the importance of the reform, especially for Japan, as well as historical information about the UNSC and the negotiations on the reform. The site also details Japan's participation in the UNSC, gathers transcribed speeches and points discussed in meetings and conferences on the reform, as well as official documents. The German site is rather short and has only two sections, resulting to be very objective and focusing clearly on the urgency of the reform. The analyzed text emphasizes the importance of the G4 and its reform proposal, and also explains the structure and composition of the UNSC. The German and Japanese sites also include a Q&A section, suggesting a desire of the respective Ministries of Foreign Affairs to engage with the public and gain confidence and support for the reform. In addition, the texts of these

Table 2: Structure of the sites (cf. Perez 2022)

Brazil (as of April 24 th , 2020)	Germany (as of April 25 th , 2020)	Japan (as of April 28 th , 2020)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various pages on the website (great amount of information, resulting in a didactic function) • No Q&A section • Pages of the site: • Homepage (general info about the reform) • <i>Brasil e a reforma</i> (background information about the history of the reform and Brazil's engagement) • <i>Cronologia das negociações</i> (chronological information about the negotiations) • <i>Glossário</i> (presentation of the groups in favor of the reform) • <i>A reforma de 1963-65</i> (short explanation about the single UNSC reform) • <i>Seminário 'Atuais Desafios à Paz e à Segurança Internacionais'</i> (Seminar held on April 26th, 2013, in Brasília, and focused on the importance of the reform / includes a summary of the event, the main points discussed in the event, and a transcription of the speeches of two ambassadors) • <i>Artigos</i> (media articles about the reform) • <i>Documentos</i> (register of official documents and speeches) • <i>Referências bibliográficas</i> (references to the theme of the reform) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only two pages on the website (objectivity and urgency) • Q&A section (simulation of a dialogue with the reader) • Pages of the site: • Homepage with text named <i>Reform des Sicherheitsrats und der Vereinten Nationen</i> and divided into other three parts (<i>G4: Deutschland, Japan, Indien, Brasilien</i>, in which the group and its reform proposal are presented; the Q&A section; <i>Zum Weiterlesen</i>, in which speeches and official documents are gathered) • <i>Hintergrund: die Mitglieder des Sicherheitsrats der Vereinten Nationen</i> (a page in which the structure of the UNSC, the election of non-permanent members, and an update on the actual composition of the Council are presented) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various pages on the website (great amount of information, resulting in a didactic function) • Q&A section (simulation of a dialogue with the reader) • Pages of the site: • 国連改革とは (国連改革の経緯と現状: background information and present situation of the reform) • 国連安全保障理事会(安保理) とは (divided into two pages: the first one presents mainly the functions and the structure of the UNSC, as well as Japan's engagement in the Council's activities; the second page is a PDF document titled(資料) 国連安全保障理事会 which summarizes the information of the previous page) • 安保理改革とは (divided into three pages: なぜ安保理改革が必要か, in which the main arguments in favor of the reform are presented; Q&A; 安保理改革の経緯と現状, presenting the history and the present situation of the negotiations towards the reform, as well as a chronological list of G4's activities) • 国連改革・安保理改革に関する主要な演説 (transcribed speeches of the representatives of the reform) • 国連改革・安保理改革に関する主な会合 (list of G4's joint press statements and speeches on the reform) • 国連改革に関するパブリックフォーラム (list of UN forums on the reform and summary of the main discussed points) • 過去の記録 (summary of past conferences on the reform)

two countries mention the United Nations Charter. This also suggests that they are seeking support in the UN's greatest official document, legitimizing arguments for the reform (especially the ones in which both countries present themselves as legitimate candidates for a permanent seat on the Council). Furthermore, the three sites include links to various documents related to the reform (e.g. UN resolutions, speeches, joint press statements, etc.).

Regarding the analysis of discursive practice, analytical categories such as speech acts, intertextuality, assumptions, and genre were observed and interpreted. Various cases of assertive speech acts can be found in the Brazilian texts. In particular, the verb *defender* 'to defend [e.g. an argument]' appears frequently. On the other hand, in German and Japanese discourse, declarative (or performative) speech acts are more common. Declarative speech acts are performative verbs that express decisions or actions that directly affect reality.

Concerning intertextuality, the texts on each of the three websites refer to a variety of documents, speeches and hyperlinks. These documents include official UN documents such as Resolutions and the UN Charter. The Japanese texts also offer the option of sharing them via e-mail or on social media, expressing the wish to bring the topic to public discussion. They also mention the Constitution of Japan, assuring the Japanese people that the government proposes a reform under the principles and limitations expressed in the Constitution.

Among the assumptions identified in each text, one is especially present on the three websites: the presupposition that the actual UNSC is not representative, legitimate and efficient. Some logical arguments are also pointed out, appealing to what Van Leeuwen calls 'rationalization' – "legitimation by reference to the goals and uses of institutionalized social action and to the knowledges that society has constructed to endow them with cognitive validity" (Van Leeuwen 2008:106). In the case of the Brazilian texts, it is pointed out, that the majority of the UN member states agree that reform is needed, thus it should be done. It is also mentioned that the same five UNSC permanent members keep unchanged, while the original 51 UN member states increased to 193, which means therefore a lack of representativeness. Brazil also advocates its pertinence as a permanent member of the UNSC due to its international engagement, economic solidity, democratic stability, population size, geographic spread, and regional relevance.

On the other hand, the German texts also point out logical arguments, but mainly defending its right as a permanent member due to its financial contribution to the UN. The country also advocates its position referring to its engagement in the UN

and the world, as well as to the claim that its international partners ask for more German influence in the UNSC. The German government also assumes that people should question a permanent seat only for Germany instead of one for the European Union. Against this possibility, Germany points out that the EU is not a country, thus it could not have a seat in the Council. Furthermore, the country mentions a possible regional opposition by France and the United Kingdom, which are already permanent members.

In the Japanese texts, some logical arguments such as the country's contributions to the UN as a reason for a permanent seat in the UNSC were also identified. In addition, Japan criticizes the lack of representativeness for Asia and Africa by pointing out that Asia holds more than half of the world population, while Africa has more than a quarter of all UN member states. Nevertheless, the UNSC has only three seats for Asia (China and two non-permanent seats), and no seat for Africa (save the three non-permanent ones). Another noteworthy point is the presence of a Q&A section on the German and Japanese websites, which presupposes possible questions that people might have regarding the theme of the reform.

Concerning genre, these websites belong to the sphere of political discourse, which can be defined as 'deliberative', according to Fairclough and Fairclough (cf. 2012: 30-34). More about this concept is discussed in the following part of this paper when the analysis of social practice is presented. Regarding the textual genre, it differs according to the many sections into which the sites are divided. It also depends on the aims of each section. The German and Japanese sites include a Q&A, for example, with texts organized into questions and answers. One noteworthy point regarding the texts from the three websites is the fact that argumentation is not only produced and structured in typical argumentative texts, which can be assumed in the political field, but also through descriptive and narrative texts. The Brazilian site includes a section that presents the single reform of the UNSC in 1965, for example. This text is structured as a narrative text, but it is also a way of arguing and defending a point (e.g. it is explained that this single reform resulted in merely four new non-permanent seats). Also the simple act of describing the organization and composition of the UNSC is also a way of criticizing the disparity between the number of UNSC seats and the number of UN member states.

Regarding the analysis of social practice, some points related to legitimacy and representativeness, national interests, globalization, and the notion of 'deliberative discourse' are particularly worth noting. As mentioned before in the present paper, a common point among the three countries' statements is that the current UNSC

lacks representativeness, legitimacy and effectiveness. Also, another argument that is used is that the G4's proposed reform is legitimized by the approval and support of the majority of the UN members. Particularly, Brazil and Japan strengthen their arguments by defending the lack of representativeness in the UNSC through a process of rationalization (cf. Van Leeuwen 2008: 105). According to the two countries, the UN had 51 members in 1945, while the UNSC had only five permanent members. Today, the same five permanent members represent the 193 members of the UN. According to the Brazilian and Japanese texts, this can be seen as evidence of the lack of representativeness in the present UNSC.

On the other hand, the three countries present different discourses and introduce their arguments for the right of a permanent seat in the UNSC while protecting their national interests. Brazil uses arguments such as its international engagement, financial solidity, democratic stability, large population, and geographical extension, along with its status as a regional power. Moreover, Brazil is not only a member of the G4 but also of the L69. This group (Resolution A/61/L.69 2007) represents developing countries and also seeks the reform of the UNSC. As such, Brazil's participation in the G4, together with the great economic powers of Germany and Japan, as well as in the L69, representing the developing countries, strengthens Brazil's international influence and relevance. In the case of Germany, two pointed reasons for its right as a permanent member of the UNSC is the country's financial contribution to the UN and its high commitment to the realization of the UN's fundamental goals (e.g. deploying troops for international peacekeeping, protecting human rights, and co-operating for sustainable development, climate protection, disarmament, and humanitarian aid). The German Ministry of Foreign Affairs also argues that its international partners keep demanding that Germany increase its influence on the UNSC. Like Germany, Japan also points out its great financial burden to the UN as an important factor for its right as a permanent member of the UNSC. Other pointed reasons for the country's profits as a permanent member are the opportunity to strengthen its ability to disseminate peace diplomacy, realizing its national interests in the UNSC, acquiring influence and a position to contribute to the international community, and increasing access to high-quality information.

By comparing the discourses of the three countries, it is possible to notice differences, although they are together representing the G4 as a group with common interests. Brazil's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, for example, emphasizes the lack of representation of developing countries in the UNSC, as well as Brazil's regional and international relevance, not to mention its engagement and cooperation within the UN

activities. On the other side, German's and Japan's Ministries of Foreign Affairs seem to focus on their status as world economic powers and major UN budget contributors, which are pointed to as an important factor for their right as legitimate permanent members in the UNSC. Nevertheless, as Hassler (2013:96) points out, "whereas those with financial and military muscle have the potential to threaten others to get their own way, poorer members protest that Council seats must not be 'for sale'."

The matter of economic power leads to another relevant point identified in the analysis: the 'globalization of discourse' and the 'discourse of globalization', as called by Fairclough (cf. 2015: 241-243). The author points out that, in terms of 'globalization of discourse', "what people see worldwide is predominantly 'North Atlantic' discourses of advertising, news, politics, sport, fashion, and so on" (ibid.:241). This means globalization of a 'North Atlantic' way of life. On the other hand, the author also speaks of a 'discourse of globalization'. Those who benefit economically from a global economy are increasingly trying to take advantage of the idea of a global market, which can be achieved also through discourses that normalize this globalizing practice. In this sense, the economy seems to be seen as decisive for resolutions directed towards international peace and security, especially in Germany's and Japan's discourses. This strengthens the division of the world between developing and developed countries, putting national interests ahead of common interests such as peace and security, which should be prioritized. From the perspective of globalization, the creation of the G4 group could thus be seen as strategic. Brazil and India are included in the group as representatives of the developing countries, while Japan and Germany contribute with their status as economic powers (cf. Hassler 2013:140). Furthermore, since no common official website was created for the G4, it can be said that each member of the G4 puts its national interests ahead of the group's common interests.

Another noteworthy point is the fact that political discourse can be seen as 'deliberative'. According to Fairclough and Fairclough (cf. 2012: 30-34), political discourse can be said to be deliberative because people are led to think they also take part in the collective decision-making process, common in democracies. It occurs because, in such democracies, politicians are elected by the people, thus representing them. Governmental measures and decisions are, in this sense, interpreted as legitimate, since they theoretically represent the voice of the people. However, this idea of directly taking part in collective decision-making processes is an illusion of democratic systems. People are led to think that a certain political decision or measure is the best one, while other possible options are often excluded from political

discourses, when not profitable. This means of manipulation is, therefore, very effective, in the sense that political discourse reproduces a dominating practice and guarantees its success. When it comes to the discourses of Brazil, Germany and Japan regarding the reform of the UNSC, the mere existence of websites made to offer context for the reform and to argue in favor of it indicates that the three countries seek legitimation for their discourses. As an example, on the Brazilian page, the following statement can be found: “The reform of the UNSC is urgent and needs to be discussed not only in international offices and conferences but also in universities, in the press, in parliaments – in short, by society in general” ⁽¹¹⁾ (cf. *Reformando o Conselho de Segurança das Nações Unidas*). It suggests the participation of society in general in supporting the G4’s reform proposal. The German and Japanese sites bring simulated dialogues with the readers in their Q&A sections. This can also be interpreted as a means to justify and normalize discourses through direct communication with society. A Q&A section does not necessarily bring questions made by the public, but questions created by the Ministries of Foreign Affairs as a presupposed interest of the public. Therefore, the illusion of taking part in a decision-making process can be accepted as legitimate by people, even though they do not necessarily directly participate in it.

5. Conclusion

The results of the analysis show that there are many differences in the discourses of Brazil, Germany and Japan regarding the reform of the UNSC. Although the G4 proposes a reform that attends to the common interest of these three countries (and India), many of the arguments identified on the three analyzed websites tend to prioritize the national interest of these countries. The Brazilian discourse expresses a greater concern with the representation of the developing world and Brazil sees itself as a country of great regional influence and international engagement, which could justify the right to a permanent seat in the UNSC. The German and Japanese discourses, on the other hand, seem to focus more on the countries’ economic power, since both Ministries of Foreign Affairs constantly emphasize their financial burden to the UN, suggesting that economic powers should be a good reason for having them as permanent members.

Therefore, it is possible to say that the G4 reform proposal strengthens a globalizing capitalist practice, even though the proposal justifies the need for the

(11) Translated from the original in Portuguese: *A reforma do Conselho de Segurança é urgente e precisa ser debatida não somente em gabinetes e conferências internacionais, mas também nas universidades, na imprensa, em parlamentos – enfim, pela sociedade em geral.*

reform to turn the UNSC more representative, legitimate and efficient. Nevertheless, considering the issue of the veto power of permanent members of the UNSC, which the G4 is also aiming for, one should point out that creating new seats with veto power can also lead to a greater impasse in dealing with urgent international issues than it already does. The actual five permanent members often seem to have problems agreeing with each other on matters of international importance, and they usually let their national interests show clearly. Thus, bringing new members with veto power can only just reproduce the lack of representativity, efficiency, and concrete actions to deal with urgent matters regarding international peace and security, which is the main function of the UNSC. However, the analyzed texts indicate that each Ministry of Foreign Affairs keeps seeking the support of the population and the media to put the reform into practice, being the websites an extra tool to justify and normalize their discourses. The didactic nature of these websites, identified by some characteristics such as using logical arguments, offering historical background, bringing exact information with numbers, simulating a conversation with the population through the Q&A sections, or using abstract diagrams and charts, ends up creating effects of truth and reliability among readers, common to scientific discourse. This practice helps to justify and normalize these discourses regarding the need and relevance of the G4 reform proposal to the UNSC.

As mentioned before, this paper is based on the results of the author's doctoral thesis. The analysis of the websites was conducted in the first half of the year 2020. Therefore, since one of the characteristics of websites is to be constantly updated, the results of this research do not consider the sites' updates after the first half of 2020, although the three of them were naturally updated since then. In particular, the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs' website dedicated to the UNSC reform was extensively updated in 2022, bringing new texts and a completely new layout. Before that, the last update had been made in 2016, reflecting, thus, the confused political scenario created after the impeachment of former President Dilma Rousseff – also evidencing the negligence of President Jair Bolsonaro's government regarding the UN activities and Brazil's engagement in these activities. Moreover, Brazil is joining the UNSC for the eleventh time⁽¹²⁾ as a non-permanent member in 2022 and 2023, which explains the update of the website after all these years. The same occurred to the German site, greatly updated at the end of 2020 due to the country's participation in the Council in 2019 and 2020. The Japanese website was greatly changed in the second half of 2020 and 2021, being constantly updated.

(12) See <https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/content/countries-elected-members>.

Furthermore, this research does not seek to propose actions regarding the UNSC reform but shall be seen as a linguistic approach to the theme. The main focus is investigating how Brazilian, German and Japanese discourses build this reality – India is not included in the research since it does not have a specific website dedicated to the UNSC reform. As the results indicate, the G4 countries propose a reform which intends to be more representative and legitimate. Nevertheless, the analysis of the individual arguments of Brazil, Germany and Japan shows that the G4's reform proposal only perpetuates the lack of representativeness and legitimacy. This analysis of each website highlights the national interests above the idea of a true representative and legitimate UNSC, which justifies the Critical approach to the corpus.

As a potential future continuation of this research, one possibility is to analyze all sections of the three websites. Alternatively, it is also possible to carry out a Discourse Analysis regarding all the G4 countries: Brazil, Germany, Japan, and India (e.g. analysis of speeches of the G4 foreign ministers and/or G4 joint press statements, as well as an analysis of UN official documents regarding the reform proposals). Furthermore, the analysis of public opinion about the UNSC reform and the reform processes can also be a fruitful research. In any case, a linguistic and discursive analysis of this theme can only mean an important contribution to this theme, as it will help to better comprehend the various dimensions of the UNSC reform.

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