



## **Racism and verbal violence: textual and socio-cognitive construction of the #SomosTodosMacacos**

### ***Racismo e violência verbal: a construção textual e sociocognitiva da #SomosTodosMacacos***

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**Abstract:** This article aims to discuss verbal violence and racism from the analysis of frames of racism deployed in the #SomosTodosMacacos (“We are all monkeys”) considering the corpus constituted during the doctoral research by Parintins Lima (2019). The corpus consisted of opinion articles published in newspapers, magazines and news portals in Brazil, produced in reaction to the #SomosTodosMacacos published by Brazilian soccer player Neymar Junior, on April 27, 2014 on social networks after his teammate Daniel Alves suffered a racist act in Spain. The methodology consisted of describing, identifying and quantifying the frames of racism emerging in the corpus, identifying the most productive ones and observing their role in constructing the meaning of #SomosTodosMacacos. Our main result reveals that the interpretation of #SomosTodosMacacos as racist is anchored both in stabilized knowledge – textually mobilized as frames – and in social meanings mobilized or constructed in the opinion articles, mainly by associating the statement “Somos todos macacos” with the representation of black people as monkeys, rooted socio-historically in European evolutionism. We concluded that the interpretation of #SomosTodosMacacos as

racist can be based on textual and socio-cognitive constructions of frames of racism, highlighting the violent character of the hashtag.

**Keywords:** racism; verbal violence; text; cognition; hashtag.

**Resumo:** Este texto tem como objetivo discutir a violência verbal e o racismo a partir da análise da mobilização textual de *frames* de racismo na #SomosTodosMacacos em *corpus* de textos constituído na pesquisa de doutorado de Parintins Lima (2019). O *corpus* compõe-se de artigos de opinião publicados em jornais, revistas e portais de notícia do Brasil, produzidos em reação à #SomosTodosMacacos, publicada pelo jogador de futebol brasileiro Neymar Junior, no dia 27 de abril de 2014, nas redes sociais, depois que seu companheiro de equipe Daniel Alves sofreu um ato racista na Espanha. A metodologia consistiu na descrição, na identificação e no levantamento de *frames* de racismo emergentes no *corpus*, identificando os mais produtivos e observando seu papel na construção do sentido da #SomosTodosMacacos. O principal resultado do presente estudo é o de que a interpretação da #SomosTodosMacacos como racista ancora-se tanto em conhecimentos estabilizados e mobilizados textualmente na forma de *frames*, por exemplo, quanto em sentidos mobilizados ou construídos na tessitura textual desenvolvida nos artigos de opinião do *corpus*, principalmente pela associação do enunciado “Somos todos macacos” à representação do negro como macaco, enraizada sócio-historicamente no evolucionismo europeu. Conclui-se que a interpretação da #SomosTodosMacacos como racista pode pautar-se por uma construção textual e sociocognitiva do *frame* de racismo, salientando o caráter violento da *hashtag* analisada.

**Palavras-chave:** racismo; violência verbal; texto; cognição; hashtag.

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## 1 Introduction: verbal violence and racism

Conceptualized by philosophers (ARENDR, 1969; CHAÚÍ, 2018; FOUCAULT, 1975, among others), as well as sociologists (BOURDIEU, 1998; ELIAS, 1989, among others), violence is a routine and systematic object of study within several scientific disciplines in recent decades.

An instrumental notion of violence in the field of sociology, for example, understands it as a social force full of meaning and as having the ability to structure reality to achieve certain objectives (CORRADI, 2009). Racist violence would thus be linked to certain sociopolitical projects

(cf. BETHENCOURT, 2018) that underline not only the most general forms of organizing social life (through wars, genocide, information control by the media, etc.), but also everyday life (by the surveillance of moral rules and conducts, the prescription of the community sphere, ethnic-racial “purification,” etc.). Being a sociopolitical construction, violence has been legitimized or delegitimized by power groups that, among other things, decide what violence is, what it is not and in what circumstances it operates (CALDERÓN, 2018).

A more systematic study of violence or its expression suggests that verbal and nonverbal violence, emerging from socio-historical contingencies (CHAUÍ, 2018), cannot be seen neither in a naturalized way, as if “inherent” to human relations, nor as a mere social “buzz” (cf. SILVA, 2017, p. 130). It also suggests that, although verbal violence may be associated with human phenomena, such as discourtesy or lying, it is distinct from them.

As stated by many scholars of this social phenomenon, violence certainly manipulates and controls human behaviors, among them language. Used in various ways and in different contexts of human sociocultural experience to intimidate, insult, revile, humiliate, defame, threaten, assault, dishonor and coerce people and entire communities, verbal violence has important psychosocial impacts, such as control or restriction of mobility, (in)voluntary isolation, professional limitation, illness and even suicide. As the expression of sexist violence, other forms of violence find in language an important substrate for questioning or confronting the reputation or dignity of others: criticism, insult, confrontation, harassment, use of derogatory language, discursive control of certain moral standards, slander, sarcasm, defamation, humiliating nicknames.

Verbal violence, as other forms of violence, is a concept of fundamental ethical-political importance for understanding human relations, as well as cooperation and communication. Sometimes less evident than physical violence and built on social interaction, this form of violence – which disproportionately affects communities considered to be a “minority” or socially vulnerable – cannot be understood as minor damage doomed to “forgetting” and indulgence.

In the dynamics of everyday life, verbal or nonverbal violence – and its individual or collective effects – can be singled out, analyzed and sometimes socially controlled. In fact, these effects continue to be

noticeable, even if sometimes unpunished, in contemporary societies, even democratic ones. Psychological and economic effects are among those that accentuate the most evident consequences, such as bullying and hindering the access or professional progression of certain social segments and even economic autonomy by reproof or information control, for example.

Social reaction to verbal violence has therefore been varied, with responses constructed by different actors, attitudes, and circumstances, such as identity movements or popular and parliamentary initiatives to fight against misogyny, racism, homophobia, etc. With the development of reflexive practices on the operating mechanisms and impacts of violence, either in the scientific field or in the field of political demands, different forms of verbal violence have been increasingly socially inadmissible or poorly tolerated, even being considered crimes, subjected to law, such as those associated with racism, pedophilia, and homophobia, as well as those configuring gender and class prejudice.

In the scientific field, studies on verbal violence often address public and institutional social experiences that potentially generate violence, such as verbal disputes (discourtesy, misunderstanding, sarcasm, etc.), hate speech on social networks, political and media debates, conflicts emerging in the context of services provided to the population (such as police station, hospital care, PROCON – Brazilian institution for consumer protection), in classrooms, in parliamentary or judicial sessions, in immigration services, in social demonstrations (such as strikes and other public acts, for example). Studies such as these seek to highlight the importance of language in the circulation and perception of violence (cf. FELTES *et al.*, 2015; SILVA, 2017), as well as characterize the interactive dynamics of verbal violence in face-to-face communicative situations (AUGER; MOÏSE, 2004).

Although the relationship between violence and racism is presupposed in different theories and approaches in different fields of scientific knowledge, it is not evident. Violence has often been conceived as a set of symbolic and political practices of understanding the other as devoid of rights and duties, that is, as a non-political being (CHAUÍ, 2018, p. 29-36). Consistent with this sociopolitical emphasis is the idea that violence is historically contextualized and involves dominating, undermining and/or physically and psychosocially attacking certain

collectivities (or individuals belonging to them), such as women, blacks, Jews, older adults, etc. Thus verbal violence can be interpreted as a linguistic (re)construction of socio-historical practices or processes of violence.

Although studies on verbal violence favor contexts in which violence is more linguistically explicit,<sup>1</sup> the relationship between violence and language is not always explicit in nature. Such is the case of our research object: the relationship between verbal violence and racism explicitly or implicitly present in #SomosTodosMacacos (“we are all monkeys”).

The relationship emphasized here between violence and racism is based on the understanding of racism as a socio-historical form of violence, that is, as a type of violence developed in certain societies and cultures (which do not always see it as such), in certain geographical spaces and historical times<sup>2</sup> (antiquity, the Middle Ages or the 19th century, in Europe and in the colonized nations), by certain actors and social forces (Europeans, governments and/or the ruling classes), against certain peoples (Africans and their descendants, blacks, foreigners, Gypsies, indigenous peoples, etc.) and with certain political interests, objectives or projects (colonization, economic exploitation, eugenics, etc.) (cf. BETHENCOURT, 2018; MUNANGA, 2003; REGINALDO, 2018).

There exists, therefore, an ontological complexity to be unraveled in the interactions between language, violence, and racism. As such, this article seeks to contribute to the study of linguistic and socio-cognitive processes involved in verbal violence, singling out some aspects of the interaction between verbal violence, racism, and textually mobilized frames. The attribution of violence and racism to a certain linguistic form

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<sup>1</sup> Here, the terms “explicit” and “implicit” are used as linguistic-textual categories (HANKS, 2008; KOCH, 2004; MARCUSCHI, 2007). Thus, these do not refer here to the theorizations about the implicit violence and racism in human – verbal or nonverbal – actions, for which the current term “subtle” is applied.

<sup>2</sup> There is no consensus among historians on when and where racism emerged. Bethencourt (2018), for example, argues that it emerged in medieval Europe. In Brazil, however, the most established theory in social sciences and history is that it arose with scientific racism and after the abolition of enslaved Africans in the nineteenth century (MUNANGA, 2003; REGINALDO, 2018).

(understood as an emerging textually linguistic category) is mediated by both textual and non-strictly verbal socio-cognitive processes, such as frames, which can be understood, according to Fillmore (1982), as “system of concepts related in such a way that to understand any one of them you have to understand the whole structure in which it fits” (FILLMORE, 1982, p. 111). Frames concern thus a socio-cognitive framework of human experiences; in the case of our research object, they act by activating and mobilizing knowledge and experiences associated with racism, emphasizing or not, in a relatively prominent way, its elements of violence.

Within this study, verbal violence is not necessarily marked by an increase in tension, contextualized by interactive conflict triggers associated with the use of certain speech acts (AUGER; MOÏSE, 2004, p. 294), but by the linguistic and socio-cognitive evocation of certain types of violence, such as racism, not always well understood or identified in everyday life, especially when (re)produced by textual-discursive processes, such as reference and intertextual ones. Such processes are combined in the social action that is the attempt to guide meaning and attention to something in the world (TOMASELLO, 1999, p. 97).

The reference processes mainly encompass the use of reference expressions that, together with other linguistic constructions, such as predicates, contribute to construct discourse objects, that is, “objects whose existence is established discursively, emerging from symbolic and intersubjective practices,” when (re)categorizing the referents (re) activated or referred to by textual constructions (MONDADA; DUBOIS, 2003, p. 35). This is how the #SomosTodosMacacos, once referred to or introduced in the text as a referent, is first categorized in the opinion article *A bananização do racismo* (“the bananization of racism”) by Ana Maria Gonçalves (2014), for example, as an “idea,” but then later recategorized as a “campaign” and “attitude-by Neymar and his father,” thus mobilizing certain frames that also act in constructing a perspective or a cognitive framing of the hashtag.

Intertextual processes, in turn, establish meaning relations between texts by using both certain linguistic forms that refer, allude, or cite a previous text understood as universally known, and polyphonic relations with presumed enunciators, not necessarily present in a specific text (KOCH, 2004; KOCH; BENTES; CAVALCANTE, 2008). We

noticed a strong presence of intertextual forms in the opinion articles that constitute the corpus analyzed here. All articles, as shown in table 1 in the next section, refer to the intertext “We are all monkeys”, especially in the titles such as “We are not all monkeys”, “We are not monkeys”, “We are all bananas” etc.

By analyzing reference and intertextual processes, as well as the frames of racism mobilized by them in the use and reaction to #SomosTodosMacacos, this article aims to reflect on a form of verbal violence based on ethnic-racial prejudice: the association of black people with monkeys, to which statements not always seen as racist, as is the case of “Somos todos macacos”, may align to. The racist representation of black people as monkeys can be understood as an animalized representation of negro that has a particular history, involving certain cultures (European, African, American, Asian, etc.), being part of the genocide of the black community in these societies.

## **2 The opinion articles corpus on #somostodosmacacos**

This paper discusses data and analyses present in the doctoral research by Parintins Lima (2019),<sup>3</sup> focused on intertextual constructions and mobilizations of frames of racism. The main objective of Parintins Lima’s research (2019, p. 18) was to identify and discuss the textual and socio-cognitive construction of racism and anti-racism in opinion articles intertextually related to the publication of #SomosTodosMacacos, on April 27, 2014, by Neymar Junior, when undertaking a controversial anti-racist campaign through his social networks.<sup>4</sup> The corpus analyzed consists of 10 (ten) opinion articles on #SomosTodosMacacos, mobilized

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<sup>3</sup> The work by Parintins Lima (2019) consists of his doctoral thesis conducted at the Institute of Language Studies of the Universidade Estadual de Campinas (IEL-UNICAMP), under supervision of Professor Dr. Edwiges Maria Morato. This study was financed in part by the Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior – Brasil (CAPES) – Finance Code 001.

<sup>4</sup> The controversy over the “Somos Todos Macacos” campaign revolved mainly around the textual-discursive evocation of “monkeys,” a reference used in racist insults to attack black people. A less discussed, but emerging, focus of the controversy refers to the involvement of an advertising agency in the creation of the campaign, which would thus have given less spontaneity to NJ’s action (PARINTINS LIMA, 2019).

widely by social networks and the Brazilian media after being published by the football player Neymar Júnior (hereinafter NJ) who used it (NEYMAR JÚNIOR, 2014) to respond to the racist attack suffered on the European field by his fellow Brazilian team-mate Daniel Alves, whom was thrown a banana during a match in Spain.

These opinion articles were written by commercial and activist press in the week when #SomosTodosMacacos debuted, which received great support from internet users. Parintins Lima (2019) observed that the meanings identified in intertextual forms and reference expressions of reactions to #SomosTodosMacacos found in the corpus are associated with the salience of different elements of the frame of racism, such as the AGENT, the VICTIM, the REACTION TO RACISM, etc., indicating different forms of socio-cognitive construction of this social phenomenon.

For the statement/intertext “Somos todos macacos” of the hashtag to be anchored in certain systems of representation of racism and be an expression of verbal violence, we must understand why racist texts like this are not forcibly uttered by agents of a racial group considered hierarchically superior to that of the victim. Similarly, the victim does not always feel humiliated or explicitly “put in their place.” It is therefore worth asking how the racism in this statement, without the explicit mention of an aggressor and a victim, can escape from being a “subconscious” form of verbal violence. This text discusses precisely this type of subtle verbal violence that erases or conceals the racist content of the statement “Somos todos macacos,” because specifying the confrontation is always advisable against the naturalization of prejudice.

Although it may contain a statement considered racist (BRAGA; SANTOS, 2016; PARINTINS LIMA, 2019; PIRES; WEBER, 2018; SANTANA; BONINI; PRADOS, 2017), #SomosTodosMacacos is not necessarily interpreted as such by readers, social media users or relevant social actors who become aware of it, partly due to the variety of social actors who reacted immediately to the campaign initiated by Neymar Júnior. Thus, we found opinion articles aligned<sup>5</sup> and disaligned (DE

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<sup>5</sup> Alignment can be defined as the textual-discursive construction of affiliation to a given enunciator, idea or intertext (cf. DE COCK; PIZARRO PEDRAZA, 2018, p. 6).



COCK; PIZARRO PEDRAZA, 2018) to the meanings attributed to the hashtag and constructed as relevant to its interpretation.

Among the 10 texts that constituted the corpus of his research, Parintins Lima (2019, p. 285) found those who (i) saw #SomosTodosMacacos as anti-racist, (ii) considered it a racist statement and (iii) see its anti-racist intent as questionable. This hashtag is taken up by writers both to denounce racism and to “reverse” locally and performatively the values of racist stigma that equals black people to monkeys (from a negative value to a positive value). According to Parintins Lima (2019, p. 112), as the use of the first plural person “we [...]” indicates generic enunciators, this textual-discursive strategy of “reversing” the stigma value of the monkey analogy leaves “room for interpreting the generic enunciators [‘we’] as constituted by humans in general, evolutionarily (and figuratively) engendered from non-human primate species” (PARINTINS LIMA, 2019, p. 112), allowing to interpret the intertext “Somos todos macacos” by egalitarian frames such as “we are all human” or “we are all equal” and, finally, giving less relevance to the very evocation of the racist representation of blacks as a monkey, alluded mainly by the category “monkeys.” Thus, different forms of racism and anti-racism (egalitarian and differentialist (COSTA, 2006; MUNANGA, 1999), for example) are formed from various symbolic strategies (cf. BOURDIEU, 1989). Due to its subtle textual and socio-cognitive construction of meanings, here the statement “Somos todos macacos” configures an object of analysis around which one can observe the discussion on racism and racist verbal violence in media texts that influence public opinion.

### **3 Main frames and meanings mobilized in the intertextuality to the #somostodosmacacos in the corpus**

Before presenting the survey of frames of racism found in the corpus, we must describe it, even if briefly. The analysis of the frames mobilized in the texts was based on the methodology developed by the COGITES Research Group, “Cognition, Interaction and Signification”<sup>6</sup> (BENTES; FERRARI, 2011; FERRARI, 2018; MARTINS, 2015;

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<sup>6</sup> Information on the COGITES Research Group is available at: <http://cogites.iel.unicamp.br/>. Access on: Jan. 3, 2020.

MORATO, 2010; MORATO, BENTES, 2013; MORATO *et al.*, 2017; PARINTINS LIMA, 2018, 2019) and in the discursive study of frames (ISHIKAWA; MIRANDA, 2017; MIRANDA, BERNARDO, 2013; MORATO, BENTES, 2013; VEREZA, 2013, among others). Regarding the notation and description of frames adopted,<sup>7</sup> we adapted the conventions used by the *FrameNet*<sup>8</sup> and *FrameNet Brasil*<sup>9</sup> projects, as described in previous studies (BENTES; FERRARI, 2011; MIRANDA, BERNARDO, 2013; FERRARI, 2018; ISHIKAWA; MIRANDA, 2017; MARTINS, 2015; MORATO, 2010; MORATO, BENTES, 2013; MORATO *et al.*, 2017; PARINTINS LIMA, 2018, 2019; VEREZA, 2013).

The opinion articles analyzed were:<sup>10</sup>

TABLE 1 – Opinion articles in the corpus

Acronym	Title	Author	Occupation	Media	Media identification	Date of publication	Source
T1	<i>Somos todos macacos</i> “We are all monkeys”	Emir Sader	Political scientist and sociologist	News portal	<i>Carta Maior</i>	04/28/2014	Sader (2014)
T2	<i>#Somos Todos Macacos Coisa Nenhuma</i> “We are not monkeys at all”	Marcos Sacramento	Journalist	News portal	<i>Diário do Centro do Mundo</i>	04/28/2014	Sacramento (2014)
T3	<i>Contra o racismo, nada de bananas, nada de macacos, por favor!</i> “Against racism, no bananas, no monkeys!, please”	Douglas Belchior	Activist and History Teacher	Journal	<i>CartaCapital</i>	04/28/2014	Belchior (2014)

<sup>7</sup> For more details on the conventions for identification, notation and description of frames adopted, see: Morato *et al.* (2017); Morato and Bentes (2013); Miranda and Bernardo (2013); Vereza (2013); Morato (2010); Bentes and Ferrari (2011); Ferrari (2018); Martins (2015); Parintins Lima (2019).

<sup>8</sup> Information about the *FrameNet* project is available at: <https://framenet.icsi.berkeley.edu/fndrupal/frameIndex>. Access on: Feb. 13, 2020.

<sup>9</sup> Information on the *FrameNet Brasil* project is available at: <http://webtool.framenetbr.ufjf.br/index.php/webtool/report/frame/main>. Access on: Feb. 12, 2010.

<sup>10</sup> The analyzed opinion articles are not available in their entirety here to preserve the copyrights of the newspapers, magazines and portals in which they were published.

T4	<i>Não somos macacos</i> “We are not monkeys”	Breiller Pires	Journalist	Journal	<i>Placar</i>	04/28/2014	Pires (2014)
T5	<i>#somostodosbananas</i> “#weareallbananas”	Mirelle Martins	Journalist	News portal	<i>HuffPost Brasil</i>	04/28/2014	Martins (2014)
T6	<i>Somos todos humanos</i> “We are all humans”	Hélio Silva Jr.	Lawyer	Newspaper	<i>Folha de S. Paulo</i>	04/29/2014	Silva Júnior (2014)
T7	<i>Somos todos macacos</i> “We are all monkeys”	Arthur Xexéo	Journalist	Newspaper	<i>O Globo</i>	04/30/2014	Xexéo (2014)
T8	<i>Somos todos macacos?</i> “Are we all monkeys?”	Deivisom Campos	Communication scientist	Newspaper	<i>Zero Hora</i>	04/30/2014	Campos (2014)
T9	<i>A bananização do racismo</i> “The bananization of racism”	Ana Maria Gonçalves	Writer	News portal	<i>Geledés</i>	05/01/2014	Gonçalves (2014)
T10	<i>Racismo não</i> “No racism”	Camila Brandalise	Journalist	Journal	<i>ISTOÉ</i>	05/03/2014	Brandalise (2014)

Source: Parintins Lima, (2019, p. 151).

See below the definitions of the RACISM (super) frame and the main frames connected to it found in the corpus of Parintins Lima’s research (2019). The process of outlining the definition of the RACISM frame consisted, briefly, of the theoretical socio-historical discussion and the observation of dictionary entries in different languages (PARINTINS LIMA, 2019, p. 161-167).

TABLE 2 – RACISM frame definition

Frame	Definition
RACISM	Among HUMAN BEINGS we have at least two RACIALIZED GROUPS established from their PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS. The PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS (morphophenotypic) determine CULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS (behavior, psyche, culture, language, etc.) so we have a DEVALUED RACIAL GROUP, with supposed inferior characteristics (negatively valued, rejected), dominated by the VALUED RACIAL GROUP, with superior characteristics (positively valued, prestigious).

Source: Parintins Lima (2019, p. 164, adapted).

Parintins Lima (2019) identified in the corpus the predominance of elements from the RACISM frame that highlight the representation of racism as a social object or process (recurrence of the element

RACISM) that afflicts certain racialized groups in a hostile and violent way (recurrence of the element VICTIM from the RACISM frame). Thus, in Parintins Lima's data (2019), racism is conceived as a social process ideologically linked to violence, since it highlights the suffering of those who are victimized by racism. It is therefore a particular form of emergence of the RACISM frame, relatively different from that expected by the definition in the table above, seen as more stabilized, from which racism is conceived more as a hierarchical social structure and ethnic domination, and not necessarily as a social (and racial) habitus that causes suffering.

Below we present the definition of the main frames textually and socio-cognitively connected to the RACISM frame in the research corpus:

TABLE 3 – Definition of the main frames connected to the RACISM frame

Frame	Definition
INSULT	The OFFENDING PARTY uses words, images or gestures (INSULT) to verbally attack the OFFENDED PARTY. <sup>11</sup>
EVOLUTIONISM	ANCESTRAL SPECIES generate other SPECIES through the LAWS OF EVOLUTION, during an EVOLUTIONARY TIME PERIOD. CONTEMPORARY SPECIES are considered biologically superior to ANCESTRAL SPECIES. <sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Definition adapted from the frame Cause\_emotion thus defined by the FrameNet project: "An Agent acts to cause an Experiencer to feel a certain emotion." Available at: <https://framenet.icsi.berkeley.edu/fndrupal/frameIndex>. Access on: Jan. 2, 2010.

<sup>12</sup> Definition adapted from one of the meanings found in dictionary entry, previously presented in Parintins Lima (2019, p. 172): "e·vo·lu·ci·o·nis·mo sm [...] 3 FILOSOFIA *Pensamento filosófico do século XIX que explica as transformações e evoluções da natureza, com todos os seres vivos e inanimados, através de uma ordem imanente, previsível e inevitável, que provoca o desenvolvimento em direção a estágios mais avançados e aperfeiçoados.*" Available at: <https://michaelis.uol.com.br/moderno-portugues/busca/portugues-brasileiro/evolucionismo/>. Access on: Jan. 2, 2020.

CIVILIZATION	The CIVILIZED PEOPLE is culturally superior to the EXOGENOUS BARBARIAN PEOPLE. <sup>13</sup>
SLAVERY	A SLAVER PEOPLE subject another ENSLAVED PEOPLE to the situation of SLAVERY, centrally defined by FORCED LABOR, that is, without pay, through the DEPRIVATION OF LIBERTY. <sup>14</sup>

Source: elaborated by the authors.

We can observe that the frames above consist, more or less clearly, of frames of violence, mainly the INSULT frame, which relates to verbal violence. The other frames can also be understood as frames of violence from certain historical points of view, for they consist of historical forms of oppression of one people against another.

To highlight the relationship between verbal violence and racism in the corpus, we present below a summary of the main meanings textually constructed in opinion articles motivated by the publication of #SomosTodosMacacos. These meanings are conceptually framed by certain frames associated with racism, sometimes in coordinated, sometimes entwined, sometimes emphasized (i.e., from instantiating certain properties of the frame, such as RACIAL GROUP, AGENT, VICTIM or other property or frame element). Briefly, the study by Parintins Lima (2019, p. 87-120) points out as the main meanings or interpretative frameworks of the #SomosTodosMacacos:

<sup>13</sup> Definition based on one of the meanings found in dictionary entry: “3 Estágio de desenvolvimento econômico, científico e tecnológico de uma sociedade.” Available at: <https://michaelis.uol.com.br/moderno-portugues/busca/portugues-brasileiro/civilização/>. Access on: Jan. 2, 2020.

<sup>14</sup> Definition based on one of the meanings found in dictionary entry: “2 *Sistema social e econômico fundado na escravização de pessoas; exploração do trabalho escravo; escravagismo, escravatura, escravismo [...].*” Available at: <https://michaelis.uol.com.br/moderno-portugues/busca/portugues-brasileiro/escavidão/>. Access on: Jan. 2, 2020. The element *Privação\_de\_liberdade* (deprivation of liberty) can be designed from the frame *Estar\_em\_cativeiro* (be under captivity), as defined by the FrameNet Brasil project: “A Theme is held captive by an Agent or a Cause,” available at: <http://webtool.framenetbr.ufjf.br/index.php/webtool/report/frame/main>. Access on: Jan. 2, 2020.

- (a) A certain conception of evolutionism, which dates back to 19th century European scientific racism. This meaning is textually evoked in the *hashtag* by use of the category “monkeys” together with images, reference to bananas in the posts of social networks that relayed the *hashtag* and the contexts, events or racist actions involved in them (the racist act suffered by Daniel Alves and other racist acts, especially those that occur in football fields);
- (b) The thesis of equality and/or egalitarianism (racial, in particular), which dates back to the liberal European ideologies born in the Enlightenment. This meaning is linguistically anchored in the predication “somos todos” related to the intertext “We are all equal”;
- (c) Show of solidarity with victims of violence. This meaning is also linguistically anchored in the predication “somos todos”, related to intertexts of the type *Somos todos X* (“We are all X”).<sup>15</sup>

One can consider the first meaning or frame (item i) as the most directly related to the meaning of violence, by licensing the social treatment and socio-cognitive construction of the black population as racially inferior.<sup>16</sup> In the corpus, this meaning is built mainly by mobilizing the frames RACISM, INSULT and EVOLUTIONISM, and is the main historical responsible for the representation of blacks as monkeys – one of the most recurrent racist representations of black people (BRADLEY, 2013; MENDES, 2016; PARINTINS LIMA, 2019).

The representation of black people as monkeys, of evolutionary basis, is also the main focus of the textual and socio-cognitive construction

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<sup>15</sup> The intertexts *Somos todos X* are those that, starting by the construction “Somos todos” (“we are all...”) consist of responsive texts to social events of violence, which afflicted a particular person or collectivity represented by them. Example: “Somos todos Charlie Hebdo”, “Somos todos Guarani-Kaiowá”, “Somos todos Amarildo,” etc. (PARINTINS LIMA, 2019, p. 96).

<sup>16</sup> According to Gould (1991), Evolutionism was also historically linked to the construction of women and children (and other categories socially despised by the male European worldview of that time) as biologically primitive beings.

of the meanings attributed to #SomosTodosMacacos found in the opinion articles analyzed. This expressive representation of blacks as monkeys for framing the statement/intertext “Somos todos macacos” can be pointed out as the most productive in the corpus, in the textual and socio-cognitive dynamics of frames associated with racism, as presented below.

#### **4 Linguistic-conceptual elements of violence in the mobilization of frames of racism in corpus**

In this section, we highlight the predominant “traits” of meaning found by Parintins Lima (2019) in the corpus, relevant here to the discussion on verbal violence and racism, and their relation to mobilizing frames of racism. Item (i) below concerns the relationship between the representation of black people as monkeys and the racist framing of textually introduced linguistic forms in the corpus; item (ii) concerns the predominant role of this representation when framing the statement/intertext “Somos todos macacos” as racist; item (iii) indicates the importance of textually mobilized frames of racism in this framing. The most relevant meanings in the texts are thus:

- (i) Racist representation of black people as monkeys as a fundamental construction for the socio-cognitive anchoring of linguistic forms which, in other circumstances or discursive practices, would not necessarily be considered racist, such as the statement “Somos todos macacos”. In an excerpt from text 2 of the corpus presented in example 2, the textually introduced linguistic form “Calling a person of color as monkey” refers to the statement “Somos todos macacos” relating it to the representation of blacks as monkeys and thus categorizing it as a racist statement;
- (ii) Relevance of representing black people as monkeys when framing the statement/intertext “Somos todos macacos” in the corpus, among other forms of framing, as in the referential expression used in text 8: “maintaining a discourse that dehumanizes black people, which started almost 600 years ago by evolutionist assumptions.” As can be seen in example 1 below, this expression refers to the statement

“Somos todos macacos”, relating it to the representation of blacks as monkeys, alluded to, in turn, by the categorization “a discourse that dehumanizes black people [...]”;

- (iii) Relevance of frames of racism (mainly RACISM, INSULT and EVOLUTIONISM), linked to violence (racist), in framing the statement/intertext “Somos todos macacos” in the corpus (FIGURE 1)<sup>17</sup> mobilized not only by linguistic expressions considered racist (such as “tição” (“coal”) in text 2, example 2), but also by mobilizing knowledge through textual constructions, such as “a nickname”, “dehumanizes black people” and “evolutionist assumptions,” in text 8, example 1.

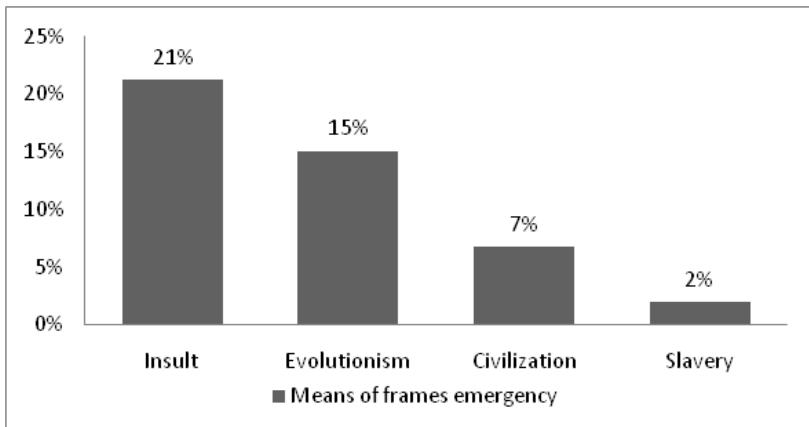
The relevance of the representation of black people as monkeys in the corpus (items i and ii above) may have been motivated by the very publishing context of #SomosTodosMacacos: the racist act suffered by Daniel Alves (DA), in which fans threw him bananas during a football match in Spain. In the corpus, the relevance of the representation of blacks as monkeys is framed mainly by the frames INSULT and EVOLUTIONALISM. Thus, regarding the reference to #SomosTodosMacacos, the texts analyzed focus mainly on the coordinated evocation of this representation as an insult and its relationship with evolutionism, as suggested by the argumentative orientation of the texts when the main frame, RACISM, is mobilized. Comparing the means of mobilization of the frames linked to the RACISM frame in the corpus (FIGURE 1), one can also infer this trend of coordinated mobilization of meanings of insult and evolutionism when mobilizing the representation of black people as monkeys:

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<sup>17</sup> We understand here that the quantitative relevance shown by the graph in Figure 1 suggests a qualitative relevance (MIRANDA; BERNARDO, 2013, p. 87), also indicated in the analytical comments on the examples presented.



FIGURE 1 – Means of emergence of frames connected to the Racism frame in the corpus



Source: elaborated by the authors.

We considered that each frame mobilization corresponds to each referential expression that evokes knowledge organized in frames. Regarding these numbers, we found 793 mobilizations of 07 frames of racism, among which those presented above and previously defined were the most frequent. To have an idea of the absolute data, we found between  $n=45$  (text 8) and  $n=167$  (text 9) mobilizations of frames of racism in each text. Below there are examples of the frames discussed in items i, ii and iii.

As can be seen in the following excerpt, extracted from text 8, entitled *Somos todos macacos?* (“Are we all monkeys?”), by the journalism professor Deivison Campos, published in the newspaper *Zero Hora*, Porto Alegre (RS) (CAMPOS, 2014, n. p.), the representation of black people as monkeys socio-cognitively guides the meaning of the statement “Somos todos macacos”. In this excerpt, the frames RACISM and EVOLUTIONISM are mobilized together and intertwined (cf. VEREZA, 2013) to frame the statement “Somos todos macacos” referred to in the title in the form of inquiry/questioning. The interpretative and argumentative framing of the statement by mobilizing these frames is made more explicit by the referential expression “maintaining a discourse that dehumanizes black people, which started almost 600 years ago by evolutionist assumptions.” This referential expression alludes to the

previous one, “The argument used by the campaign launched by Neymar” which, in turn, also refers to the intertextually questioning title “Are we all monkeys?”:

### Example 1

<b>Text 8:</b>	Somos todos macacos?
<b>Date of publication</b>	April 30, 2014
<b>Media:</b>	Newspaper <i>Zero Hora</i>
<b>Author:</b>	Devisom Campos
[...]	[...]
§2/6 <sup>18</sup>	The argument used by the campaign launched by Neymar, proposed by an advertising agency, and which had great repercussion on the networks is not enough, because this is not a nickname that people can “catch on.” <sup>19</sup> Rather, it is <u>maintaining a discourse that dehumanizes black people, which started almost 600 years ago by evolutionist assumptions.</u>

In the corpus of the research, one can also observe the framing of #SomosTodosMacacos by the referential construction of the representation of black people as monkeys, as in example 2 below. Here, the intertext “Somos todos macacos,” referred to by the title “#Somos todos macacos coisa nenhuma” (“We are not monkeys at all”), is categorized by the nominalized verbal expression “Calling a colored person a monkey”, which mobilizes the INSULT frame.

The INSULT frame is mobilized by the racist expression “tição”, but also, and mainly, by referring to the underlined linguistic expression of representing black people as monkeys, “Calling a colored person a monkey”, recategorized as “one of the most common and cruel slurs”

<sup>18</sup> The notation “§2/6” indicates that the excerpt was extracted from paragraph 2 among the 6 paragraphs of the article (PARINTINS LIMA, 2019).

<sup>19</sup> The argument here is that assuming oneself as a monkey could circumvent being offended by the racist categorization (the “nickname”) and, therefore, could be a form of reaction to racist insults.

and predicted, further on, by “It is heavy and full of subtexts, different from ‘tição’ [“coal”], for example, which alludes only to the skin color”.

The connection between the frames INSULT and EVOLUTIONISM can be identified in the recategorization of “monkey” as “an animal that, although similar to humans, is a few steps below on the evolutionary scale.” These referential expressions and predications thus collaborate, in this example, to frame the intertext “Somos todos macacos” as racist, by mobilizing the INSULT and EVOLUTIONISM frames.

### Example 2

<b>Text 2:</b>	#Somos Todos Macacos Coisa Nenhuma
<b>Date of publication</b>	April 28, 2014
<b>Media:</b>	News portal <i>Diário do Centro do Mundo</i>
<b>Author:</b>	Marcos Sacramento
[...]	[...]
§3/6	<u>Calling a person of color as a monkey is one of the most common and cruel slurs.</u> It places black people in a subaltern position in relation to white people, by alluding to <u>an animal that although similar to humans, is a few steps below on the evolutionary scale.</u> It is <u>heavy and full of subtexts, different from “tição” [“coal”], for example, which alludes only to the skin color.</u>

In this example, as in the previous one, one can attest to the textual and socio-cognitive construction of the intertext “Somos todos macacos” by referential expressions and predications that mobilize frames linked to racism. These frames, in turn, frame this statement to relate it meaningfully to the stigmatizing, racist and evolutionist sense of the representation of black people as monkeys. The validity of the observations in items (i), (ii) and (iii) presented previously in this section is thus confirmed: the racist representation of black people as monkeys as a fundamental socio-cognitive construction for framing linguistic expressions that are not necessarily interpreted as racist (“Somos todos macacos”, for example) (item i); the relevance of the representation of black people as monkeys when framing the intertext “Somos todos

macacos” in the corpus (item ii); and the relevance of frames linked to violence in the corpus by racist verbal expressions and other textual constructions that mobilize these frames of racism (item iii).

Thus, in the corpus, the framing of #SomosTodosMacacos as a racist statement is anchored, in part, in textually organized knowledge mobilized by the RACISM, INSULT and EVOLUTIONONISM frames (PARINTINS LIMA, 2019, p. 151), as can be observed in the textual-discursive constructions analyzed.

## 5 Final Considerations

To reveal what language itself does not always make explicit, this article sought to observe the textual and socio-cognitive relation between racism and verbal violence. We observed that such relation is a dynamic one, shown both in the intertextual alignments and disalignments to the #SomosTodosMacacos, and in the frames that, in a coordinated and entwined manner, act to conceptualize racism and defend anti-racist theses and reasonings.

The relation between racism and verbal violence is characterized not only by the ambivalent adherence to the inclusive performativity of the hashtag (as occurs when defending the thesis that we are all monkeys because we are all human – black or not –, with the same evolutionary history), but also by what is absent or silenced in it: the colossal social inequality, the heterogeneity of human phylogeny, the varying degree of reflection on racist and anti-racist representations in one’s own or others’ statements.

The data presented here point, as the article has tried to show, to a more insidious type of verbal violence (that is, that which does not present itself as such), which ends up reinforcing the hypothesis of a new racism, a so-called *subtle* racism, which is not intended to be racist (LEACH, 2005; WHITEHEAD, 2018), and to a “symbolic violence,” which also does not present itself as such (BOURDIEU, 1977, p. 192).

The textual and socio-cognitive analysis of the opinion articles that reacted to #SomosTodosMacacos indicates that not only the association between black people and monkeys, but the statement “Somos todos macacos” itself, for mobilizing both racist and anti-racist

frames, exist in the sphere of verbal violence, constituting one of the most recurrent racist slurs: that of the black person as a monkey.

The analysis also points to the emergence of textual-discursive practices to contain linguistic forms considered politically incorrect, such as racist ones. This is somehow indicative of the presence of a discursive reflexivity, that is, of a:

[...] recognition of a whole set of shared and collectivized knowledge around Brazilian racism and its forms of manifestation and containment, even if this knowledge is unequally distributed and is currently at the center of political-ideological disputes (MORATO; BENTES, 2017, p.14)

This recognition referred to by the authors indicates that the textual-discursive practices of (re)constructing the socio-cognitive stability of the RACISM frame, by emphasizing the constitutive elements of violence, become fundamental so that we have social meaning in confronting it, in identifying the situational production context of the statements and in the public reaction to them.

If, on the one hand, the social perception of verbal violence linked to racism has increased in recent times and acts as “a fundamental political strategy of postmodern societies” (MORATO; BENTES, 2017, p. 14), racist practices, on the other hand, have been raising. According to the 2018 Atlas of Violence (CERQUEIRA *et al.*, 2018), prepared by IPEA [Brazilian Institute of Applied Economic Research] and the Brazilian Public Security Forum, physical violence in Brazil is essentially racial: “71.5% of the people who are murdered every year in the country are black or brown. If deaths caused by police forces are considered, 76.6% of the victims are black” (LEONE, 2019, n. p.).

Based on these data, the importance of studies such as this by Parintins Lima (2019) and of many others is the collaboration for the explanation and analytical detailing of the linguistic and conceptual bases of racism, always anchored in human experiences. As Morato (2018, p. 175) states, “it is undeniable that the knowledge of processes to which it (language) refers to or builds leaves room for epistemic changes and for a more dynamic composition of forces in the social game.” The visibility of racism and the essential violence that moves and characterizes it, as well as its communication to the academic community or not, is thus

a condition for fighting against it and participates in the struggle to overcome it.

Importantly, current policies of racial inclusion and reparation still need to be strengthened, expanded, and perfected if Brazil is to overcome the violence of the structural racism that characterizes it, partly due to its naturalization, based, for example, on the fundamental reluctance to admit its existence. As Guilherme Azevedo states, racism is closely associated with violence: “Racism is naturalized in society long before state intervention and has been perpetuated” (AZEVEDO apud SANTOS, 2018, n. p.). Such reasoning points to the need for increased social reflection on racism, even among those who hold anti-racist positions or adhere to non-racist discourses and practices: “We don’t look at racial violence the same way we look at violence as a whole. It is not the focus of Criminal law, nor of public security policy, nor of the media”, Azevedo continues (AZEVEDO apud SANTOS, 2018, n. p.). Identifying the verbal subtleties of racism in the most different contexts and social practices can contribute to identify, analyze and overcome this type of violence.

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