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The Language of War: Lexicon, Metaphor, Discourse
Il linguaggio della guerra: lessico, metafora, discorso

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Discourse, Conflict and Cognition

Construals of the Aimara Protesters' Representation within the Peruvian Press

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ABSTRACT

Within the framework of cognitive linguistics, this article aims to study how the Peruvian press discursively represented the Aimara people and their actions in the context of a protest that resulted in human casualties following the rise to power of Peruvian President Dina Boluarte. In this civil war-like scenario, the article uncovers and highlights two types of hegemonic representations. On the one hand, it analyses how the actions of the Aimara protesters are portrayed from a certain perspective to convey a series of extremely negative evaluations or ideologies. On the other hand, the analysis shows how the Aimara are represented through metaphorical (and metonymical) processes and the implications that socially construct them as violent, criminal, and destructive subjects, among other characterizations, in the eyes of Peruvian society.

Keywords: Aimara; construals; metaphor; Peru; press; representation.

1. INTRODUCTION

After the removal of Pedro Castillo Terrones as the President of Peru by the Congress of the Republic of Peru on 7 December 2022, his vice president, Dina Boluarte, assumed the position a few hours later. This

event followed a year and a half of confrontational stances by Castillo's government towards the legislative power. In fact, all decisions made by the then-president were not well received by the political class, despite the support he received from the populace. It is worth noticing that this was the third attempt to vacate the presidency under Castillo's supposed moral incapacity. In this temporal context (2022), the new president, Dina Boluarte Zegarra, expressed her intention to call for general elections in her first speech, initially showing a willingness to engage in a dialogue. However, when addressing the national representation, she made it clear that she intended to complete the presidential term until 2026. This statement was not well received by the population, especially in the south of the country, where Pedro Castillo's party, *Perú Libre*, had obtained a significant percentage of the votes.

Following the statements made by Dina Boluarte and her intention to remain in office until 2026, a series of demonstrations took place across different parts of the country. These protests involved the blocking of communication routes and mass marches, which led to aggressive and discriminatory rhetoric from the centralist press. The people of Puno participated significantly in the social protests, involving in particular a large number of Aimara farmers. These indigenous farmers, Aimara speakers and mainly from Puno, were demanding the resignation of Dina Boluarte, the reinstatement of former president Castillo, the closure of the Congress, the calling of new general elections, and the formation of a constituent assembly, among other demands. In this socio-political context, the protests became a powerful expression of discontent with the government's policies and a call for fundamental political change.

The conflict escalated on 9 January 2023 when the population was severely repressed by the police and army, resulting in one of the most disproportionate and tragic massacres in recent times (Ramírez 2023). Among the victims were three minors aged between 15 and 17, a paramedic, 11 bystanders who were not involved in the protest, and a police officer, totaling 16 deaths. Security forces used prohibited weaponry to suppress the protests, including long-range weapons such as AKM rifles. Bullets were found lodged in the victims' backs, indicating they sought cover rather than to confront authority. These protests were in solidarity with the 16 killed in Apurímac and Ayacucho on 11 and 15 December 2022 respectively, prompting Aimara and Quechua people to gather in Juliaca, a crucial city for trade and communications. The local Puno media marked this day as pivotal for achieving Boluarte's resignation,

contrasting with the press in Lima, which downplayed the events and intensified local citizen dissatisfaction against the protesters.

In Peru, the critical-discursive study of social tensions, in which various government entities and indigenous populations have intervened, has primarily focused on the representation of social actors of Amazonian origin (Arrunátegui 2010a, 2010b; Lovón 2018). However, the way in which other social actors have been discursively represented within the framework of protests has been neglected in the Peruvian context, as is the case with the Aimara protesters. Therefore, this study provides a first approach to analyze how the Peruvian press has discursively represented the Other of Aimara origin and their actions within the context of the protests. Drawing on the framework of cognitive linguistics (section 2), a series of news articles and oral discourses are analyzed (section 3). Finally, the conclusions are presented (section 5).

2. DISCOURSE, COGNITION AND CONSTRUALS

Recognized as a critical approach towards the diverse manifestations of language by speakers, Critical Discourse Studies (CDS) explore the interrelationship between language, power, and ideology. Its purpose is to identify how discourse (re)produces and strengthens ideologies associated with control, abuse of power, and inequality (van Dijk 2001; Wodak 2001). Analyzing these ideologies through linguistic structures requires not only a three-dimensional analysis of discourse encompassing text, discursive practices, and social practices (Fairclough 1992), but also acknowledging the cognitive dimension in individuals who generate it (Domínguez Chenguayen and Malca Belén 2019). Grounded in principles of human cognition, cognitive linguistics provides an explanatory framework that clarifies how ideologies form cognitively in individuals and are then reinforced through the linguistic structures they employ (Hart 2011).

In addition to being shaped and conditioned by the social environment (Fairclough and Wodak 1997, 258), discourse and the discursive construction of ideology are also influenced by cognitive processes (Hart 2015). For instance, conceptualizing protesters as violent, aggressive subjects and promoting them as such in relation to law enforcement forces, as recipients of their violence, entails, in principle, perceiving the participants and recognizing them in a particular scene (Tyler and

Evans 2003; Musolff 2006). In this scene, it is necessary, from a certain perspective, to foreground violent actions and inherently attribute them to specific social actors, e.g., exclusively to the protesters. In this regard, Theiner (2014) suggests that our cognitive abilities invariably filter real-world situations and events, organizing them from a particular perspective, emphasizing certain participants, and assigning them specific roles within discourse. Language thus shows various scenes or frames of experience (Fillmore 1982), and, with them, ways in which we view the world or make it visible (perspective), as well as the entities and events that are foregrounded or profiled within such scenes (Croft and Cruse 2004; Verhagen 2007). These ways of viewing the world and profiling certain types of entities within it also entail specific ideological forms (e.g., viewing citizen disagreement as violent actions, as we will discuss in detail in the analysis section).

In the formation of ideologies through discourse, metaphor has played a central role within CDS (Musolff 2006, 2020). Metaphors in discourse not only reflect conceptualizations, but also actively shape and validate prevailing ideologies (Charteris-Black 2004). For instance, referring to people who express public disagreement as violent or hostile protesters not only involves drawing from the conceptual domain of aggression to express or complement the conceptual domain of protest and its participants, but also implies the transmission of evaluations (ideologies) from one aggressive domain to another that is simply associated with disagreement or dissent. In this case, discursively referring to these protesting individuals as belligerent subjects also means viewing protest as an act of conflict, with its participants portrayed as the main actors in that conflict. Thus, through discourse, metaphor also allows the creation of different scenes, conceptual frames, or situations in which one set of entities, the target domain, is socially seen and accepted as another, the source domain. In other words, metaphor not only enables conceptualization but also the transmission of evaluations and implications, as we will also examine in the analysis section¹.

To critically analyze language structures within the framework of cognitive linguistics entails uncovering how discourse (re)constructs ideologies linked to power relations, social inequality, or injustice. It also involves considering processes of perception and conceptualization,

¹ Although in our analysis we do not constantly address the concept of metonymy, as is the case with metaphor, we also regard metonymy as a cognitive mechanism with ideological implications (Charteris-Black 2004).

addressing how these aspects shape cognition in those who produce and understand ideologies (e.g., metaphors related to protesters). As Villegas (2016) points out, cognitive linguistics strengthens critical discourse studies by focusing not only on descriptive, ideological analysis but also on interpretation, an aspect previously underemphasized. This cognitive approach in CDS represents a significant advancement in explanatory and interpretative adequacy, elucidating the formation of ideologies at a cognitive level through various conceptual operations that are subsequently reflected in speakers' linguistic or discursive production.

3. METHODOLOGY

Regarding the corpus, the data were collected from both print and audiovisual media. This consideration was based on the fact that, in both types of media, events related to the protests were covered, and in particular, the participation of the Aimara population in these protests was frequently reported, both in the city of Puno and in the capital Lima, within the period from December 15, 2022, to late July 2023. As for the print media, news articles from the following newspapers were considered: *La república*, *Perú21*, *El Comercio*, *Infobae*, *La Noticia*, *Convoca*, and *Diario Uno*. In all of these, the Aimara population was the social actor most frequently reported, and the texts collected here amounted to 20. Regarding the audiovisual media, 22 speeches from the following programs were considered: *Canal N*, *Willax*, *RPP*, and *Exitosa*. In total, the corpus was composed of 42 expressions (from texts of news articles and speeches from television and radio programs).

In relation to the analysis, the corpus was examined in two phases. In the first phase, the actions of the protesters reported by the press were analyzed. Here, the analysis began with the evaluation of the verbs used by the national press and how, based on these verbs, certain scenes were recreated in which aggressive or violent actions by the Aimaras were predominantly depicted. In the second phase, the agents of these actions were analyzed. In this case, various terms or forms used to refer to the Aimaras were evaluated, and how, through these forms, certain metaphorical frames were constructed, which involved conceptualizing and portraying them through domains unrelated to the protest itself. In both phases of the study, however, the cognitive analysis involved evaluating lexical aspects in the discourses, such as the use of verbs for actions

and the employment of nouns and adjectives for the representation of the social actors involved, the Aimas. As a result, it was possible to uncover representations not only of their activity but also of the Aimas themselves.

4. THE REPRESENTATION OF THE AIMARA SUBJECT IN THE PERUVIAN PRESS

In this section, the representation of the Aimara social actors involved in the protest and their actions is examined through the lens of cognitive linguistics. First, the actions discursively constructed by the press are analyzed through the processes of perspective and profiling. Secondly, the analysis shows how the press represents the social actors involved in these protests, especially how the protesters are discursively constructed through certain conceptual processes, such as metaphor (and metonymy).

4.1. *The Aimara subject's protest activity within processes of perspective and profiling*

This section illustrates how the Peruvian press offers a series of hegemonic representations around Aimara's activity within the protest framework. These representations are constructed through processes that involve a perspective on the events and, from that perspective, a profiling that brings prominence to certain violent actions – the protesters' – over others that are less aggressive or less focused – the Peruvian state's – as depicted in *Figure 1*.

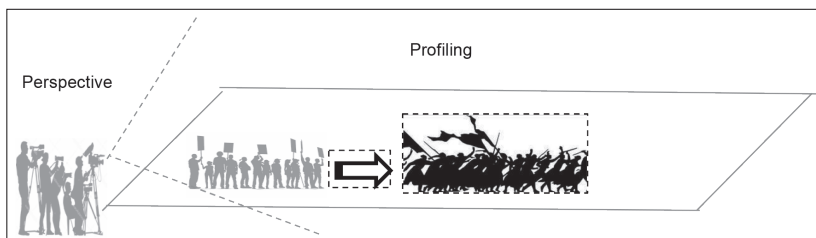


Figure 1. – The focus on the protesters' activity.

In this scene, the Peruvian press prioritizes a series of aspects that focus on a military activity carried out by Aimara protesters. As we will see in this section, the press highlights several contentious issues, such as the violent nature of the protesters' actions, their effects and their numbers. However, it also places the activities of the protesters in the background to highlight the role of the state and its safeguarding efforts.

4.1.1. *Violence in focus*

In the context of the protests during Dina Boluarte's rise to power, various social actors were involved in the demonstrations, including the press, the protesters, and the Peruvian state, typically represented by law enforcement, the National Police of Peru (PNP). However, from the perspective of the Peruvian press, reality was discursively constructed by highlighting the prominence of the protesters, particularly focusing on their actions within a violent framework, as can be read in (1):

- (1) Ciudadanos aimaras de Puno *radicalizaron* sus jornadas de protestas. (*La república*, 21/07/2023)
(Aimara citizens from Puno *have intensified* their demonstration.)

In (1), the Peruvian media emphasizes the violent nature of the Aymara protesters' actions, discursively framing their behavior as extreme, dangerous, and potentially harmful to society. This also shifts attention towards the energetic and irrational nature of their actions, while omitting the legitimate reasons that led to such protest activity or disagreement within this population. By framing these discourses within a war-like context, the Peruvian press thereby delegitimizes the reasons that drive these Peruvians to protest, and begins to discursively construct protest in general as an aggressive activity that unfolds and manifests itself at different moments.

- (2) Los pobladores de la ciudad calcetera *cerraron los principales accesos y salidas*. (*La república*, 08/01/2023)
(The residents of the calcetera city *have blocked the main entrances and exits*.)
- (3) Esto a solo horas de que los enfrentamientos entre *manifestantes violentos intenten tomar el aeropuerto de Juliaca*. (*Perú21*, 10/01/2023)
(This occurred just hours before *violent protesters attempted to seize the Juliaca airport*.)

- (4) Ciudadanos aimaras *decidieron tomar y bloquear el Puente Internacional* de Ilave en la región de Puno. (*La república*, 21/07/2023)
(Aimara citizens *decided to occupy and block the International Bridge* of Ilave in the Puno region.)

In the context of the protests, the Peruvian press highlights various moments, all of which are intense and closely tied to the violent nature of the demonstrations, such as actions that lead to closing off access points (2) or occupying and blocking locations (3) and (4). This way of representing the protesters' activities tends to question their methods and their conduct in expressing their discontent, thereby casting doubt on the legitimacy of their disagreement. From this perspective, there are also discourses that emphasize not only the action itself but also the entity affected by such actions. This is evident in the following discourses:

- (5) Las ciudades de Puno y Juliaca *se encuentran atacadas por la llegada de manifestantes* del norte y sur de la región. (*Canal N*, 09/2023)
(The cities of Puno and Juliaca are *under attack by protesters* arriving from the north and south of the region.)
- (6) Imágenes confirman que *Aimaras agredieron a miembros del Ejército*. (Willax, 12/03/2023)
(Images confirm that *Aimaras assaulted members of the Army*.)

According to this perspective, Aimara protesters also attack (5) and assault (6). However, in the discursive construction of these realities, the Peruvian press not only considers the social actor performing the action (the Aimara subject) but also the other actor affected by it. In this case, within the protest scene, the press includes the population of Puno and Juliaca as the direct recipients of the attacks (5), and the Army, as in (6). This way, the Peruvian press constructs a reality that narrates the aggressive nature of the Aimara protesters' activities and focuses on such activities as the cause of the breakdown in communication between the Peruvian state and the protesters.

4.1.2. The effect of violence in focus

In the context of the protests, the Peruvian press not only constructs narratives that outline the violent nature of the Aimara subjects but also emphasizes the effects resulting from such actions. This contributes to creating a negative public perception of the protesters and their demands, focusing on the disturbances and havoc caused rather than on

the reasons that motivated their grievances and disagreements with Dina Boluarte's rise to power. This way of framing events and highlighting the consequences by the press can be observed in the following discourse:

- (7) *A mayor pérdida económica se registra en el sector minero, con más de 146 millones de soles, desde que los manifestantes retomaron las protestas.* (RPP, 03/03/23)
(*The greatest economic loss is recorded in the mining sector, with more than 146 million soles, since the protesters resumed their demonstrations.*)

In (7), the press highlights the monetary loss and attributes it to the demonstrations, using the Spanish preposition *desde* (since) and the exact figure of '146 million soles' to establish a proportional relationship: more protests lead to greater economic losses. This holds the protesters accountable and reinforces a negative profile in public opinion, echoed in other media outlets that also employ metaphorical and metonymic strategies.

- (8) *Las protestas en la región Puno han generado una pérdida económica que supera los 295 millones de soles.* (Willax, 03/03/23)
(*The protests in the Puno region have generated an economic loss exceeding 295 million soles.*)
- (9) *Millones de dólares en pérdidas han originado las protestas en el sur.* Una contradicción para quienes piden mayores recursos para sus pueblos. (Willax, 22/01/2023)
(*The protests in the south have caused millions of dollars in losses.* This is a contradiction for those who are demanding more resources for their communities.)
- (10) Puno: 'Paro seco' golpea turismo y educación. Protesta impulsada por la Fenatep, Movadef *causa S/700 millones en pérdidas económicas.* (Perú21, 14/04/2023)
(Puno: 'Dry strike' hits tourism and education. Protest organised by Fenatep, Movadef *causes S/700 million in economic losses.*)

The economic impact is emphasized through the repetition of *pérdida económica* (economic losses) and specific figures quantifying the damage, reinforced by references to authority figures and the duration of the impact as seen in (8). In (9), the press highlights the contradiction and irrationality of the southern and Aimara protesters, who demand more resources but are portrayed as the cause of economic disruption. On the other hand, (8) uses metonymy to generalize all *protestas* (protests) as harmful, focusing only on negative aspects of the Aimara people. In (10), the metaphor *golpea turismo y educación* (hits tourism and education)

suggests a violent assault on economic development. As we will see in (11), this profiling extends not only to the economic realm but also to the loss of human lives:

- (11) *¿Acaso no les duele el alma haber perdido más de 60 personas en esas movilizaciones violentas?* (Exitosa, 04/01/2023)
(Doesn't it ache their souls to have lost more than 60 people in those violent protests?)

Here, (11) portrays government empathy but implicitly blames the protesters for the deaths. By emphasizing the word 'violent', it highlights only the negative aspect of the protest process and portrays them as 'killers' and a threat, justifying repression against them and invalidating their right to protest. Other news articles also reaffirm these representations:

- (12) *Ninguna de esas muertes la ha provocado ni la ha buscado el Gobierno.* (Exitosa, 04/01/2023)
(None of those deaths were caused or sought by the government.)
- (13) *El fin de semana Puno tuvo que lamentar otro muerto más, esta vez en Ilave. Enardecidos, los aimaras han quemado comisarías, instituciones públicas y edificios privados.* (Convoca, 25/01/2023)
(Over the weekend, Puno had to mourn another death, this time in Ilave. Enraged, the Aimaras have burned police stations, public institutions, and private buildings.)

As seen, the Peruvian press provides representations of protesters as agents who, in addition to causing economic losses, also cause biological losses. In this case, the press constructs a portrayal of protester behavior as capable of ending people's lives.

4.1.3. *The amount in focus*

Along with highlighting the violent nature of the protests and their consequences, the Peruvian media also emphasizes the scale of the demonstrations. This profiling brings about a sense of threat or alarm in society, contributing to generating panic among the population and, overall, disdain towards the protesters as they are perceived as an imminent danger to society. Let's consider the following discourse:

- (14) *Centenares de pobladores Aimaras acordaron viajar este lunes a Puno.* (La república, 08/01/2023)
(Hundreds of Aimara residents agreed to travel to Puno this Monday.)

The example presents the numerical exaggeration implicitly, without giving an exact quantity, but suggesting a large number through the use of *centenares* (hundreds), indicating a significant amount of Aimara people in the protests. The focus on quantity is also confirmed in other excerpts from other Peruvian media outlets:

- (15) *Miles de ciudadanos llegaron a la ciudad de Puno para protestar en contra del Gobierno y exigir la renuncia de Boluarte. Anuncian que la huelga continuará. (La república, 29/07/2023)*
(Thousands of citizens arrived in the city of Puno to protest against the government and demand Boluarte's resignation. They announced that the strike will continue.)
- (16) *Miles de ciudadanos puneños que habían viajado hacia Lima para marchar contra Dina Boluarte volvieron hoy a su región natal. (Exitosa, 22/03/2023)*
(Thousands of citizens from Puno who had travelled to Lima to march against Dina Boluarte returned today to their native region.)

In these articles, the press amplifies the effects of Aimara protests through a perception of exaggerated, undefined quantity, thereby enhancing the perceived impact of the protests with more fear. In (15) and (16), the idea of a large number is indicated through *miles* (thousands), and when combined with words like *protesta* (protest) or *exigir* (demand), they construct an image of a large, discontented group that is non-dialogue-oriented. When linked with phrases like *para marchar* (to march), it highlights their profile as disruptors of public and social order, seen as an uncompromising group. Furthermore, this discursive strategy also concretely specifies a figure that can influence public opinion to emphasize the numerical strength of the Aimara movement, as well as to influence the perception of authorities and the response they should adopt to a protest with a significant number of protesters. See the following discourses:

- (17) *Hasta nueve mil manifestantes llegaron a la ciudad puneña. (El comercio, 11/01/2023)*
(Up to nine thousand protesters arrived in the city of Puno.)
- (18) *Aimaras anuncian que 30 mil dirigentes marcharán a Lima. (La república, 06/01/2023)*
(Aimaras announce that 30,000 leaders will march to Lima.)

In the discourses, the figures provided suggest broad support and organization of the mobilization from various provinces in Puno, even falling

into numerical exaggeration in (18). Thus, it is evident that numerical hyperbole can be made explicit or not, but the effect it aims to convey remains the same: a crowd of dissenting people capable of causing harm, therefore posing a threat that needs to be controlled.

4.1.4. *Violence backgrounded*

The Peruvian press not only highlights the violent nature of Aimara protests but also sometimes hides this aspect with a certain purpose. In other words, the articles analyzed in this section depict a scene where the protesters' activities are overshadowed by the actions of other social actors, such as the Peruvian state. This also leads to polarization, as the actions of certain actors are highlighted to create a positive image of them:

- (19) Frente a estos actos vandálicos, los agentes vienen dispersando a los protestantes con gases lacrimógenos. (Willax, 19/07/2023)
(In response to these acts of vandalism, authorities are dispersing the protesters with tear gas.)

In (19), the focus is on the police or military members, and their actions are portrayed as minimizing the impact of confrontational actions by the Aimara protesters. It can be perceived that the Peruvian state, through its agents, is restoring order – seen as a positive action compared to the negative actions of the *vándalos* (vandal) Aimaras. This makes the protesters appear criminal and places their actions within a framework of chaos and destruction. When analyzed from the perspective of violence, it becomes evident how journalistic discourse not only informs about events but also influences public perception of the legitimacy and morality of the actions of each group involved. Along these lines:

- (20) Las fuerzas del orden tienen como función primordial proteger la vida. (Willax, 16/03/2023)
(Law enforcement's primary function is to protect the lives.)
- (21) Dina Boluarte: “Tenemos que proteger la vida de los 33 millones de peruanos”. (Perú21, 24/01/2023)
(Dina Boluarte: “We have to protect the lives of the 33 million Peruvians”).
- (22) El ministro Vicente Romero felicitó, además, a la PNP por los esfuerzos para contener las violentas manifestaciones. (Willax, 08/06/2023)
(Minister Vicente Romero also praised the National Police for their efforts in containing the violent protests.)

In all these discourses, the activities of the protesters are downplayed by the press to highlight the activities of law enforcement agents, the police, or other representatives of the Peruvian state. In this context, this also serves to legitimize actions against the protesters, such as their dispersal, containment, or any other measures taken under the guise of safeguarding the lives of others, as portrayed in the media.

4.2. The Aimara subject within the framework of metaphorical and metonymic processes

In this section, the way the Peruvian press has portrayed Aimara protesters is revealed through primarily metaphorical and metonymic processes.

4.2.1. The subject within the domain of aggression

This section demonstrates how the Peruvian press constructs hegemonic representations around the social actors involved in the protest, in this case, concerning the Aimaras. These representations metaphorically portray them as aggressive subjects, thereby delegitimizing their demands in society. Some discourses that allow for the textualization of these representations are as follows:

- (23) *Grupo radical, violento*, que quiere convertir en una anarquía la región Puno. (RPP, 26/02/2023)
(*Small radical, violent group*, who want to turn the Puno region into anarchy.)
- (24) *Violentos protestantes* que se ubican en Puno. (Willax, 05/03/2023)
(*Violent protesters* in Puno.)

In (23) and (24), the use of the term *violento* (violent) entails a metaphor where the conceptual domain of aggression is used to project certain aspects, such as violence and its consequences (imminent harm), onto Aimara protesters (for a similar proposal regarding the metaphorical representation of protesters within the Peruvian context, see Domínguez Chenguayen and Malca Belén 2019). That is, through the metaphor AIMARA PROTESTERS ARE AGGRESSIVE SUBJECTS, evaluations from one domain to another are transmitted, legitimizing what is true in one (aggressiveness in a violent subject) for another (the behavior of Aimara subjects as protesters). Other discourses that also stem from this same

conceptual domain of aggression to metaphorically structure protesters include the following:

- (25) *Puno: vándalos* intentan tomar aeropuerto Internacional Inca Manco Cápac. (Willax, 09/02/2023)
(*Puno: vandals* attempt to take over Inca Manco Cápac International Airport.)
- (26) Las comunidades Aymaras han señalado que la jefa de Estado no será bienvenida en la región, pues *Boluarte ha calificado de vándalos*. (Infobae, 27/02/2023)
(The Aymara communities have indicated that the head of state will not be welcomed in the region, as *Boluarte has described the protesters as vandals*.)
- (27) *Los inescrupulosos* arrojaron piedras y palos. (Willax, 09/02/2023)
(*The unscrupulous individuals* threw stones and sticks.)

While in (25) and (26) assessments are conveyed regarding the wild and destructive nature towards the protesters by referring to them through the use of the term *vándalo* (vandal); in (27), Aymara protesters are legitimized as individuals lacking awareness, given their actions are violent and harmful to society. Thus, overall, the conceptual domain of aggression is employed metaphorically to structurally portray the protesters as violent subjects and, as such, convey a series of assessments that construct a negative image of them as aggressors, destroyers, unconscious, etc.

4.2.2. *The Aymara subject within the domain of delinquency*

The conceptual domain of delinquency is also employed by the Peruvian press to metaphorically frame the protesters. That is, through the metaphor AIMARA PEOPLE ARE LAWBREAKERS, these subjects are conceptualized in various ways, conveying different assessments with these forms. The following discourses, for instance, illustrate some evaluations:

- (28) Algunos piquetes que *unos facinerosos* habían colocado en el lugar. (Willax, 24/02/2023)
(Some picket lines *that criminals* had placed in the area.)
- (29) Phillip Butters sobre marchas: “No son manifestantes. Son *subversivos* entrenados con armas para matar”. (Willax, 13/12/2022)
(Phillip Butters on marches: “They are not protesters. *They are subversives* trained with weapons to kill”.)

- (30) Boluarte ha calificado de “vándalos, *terroristas*, mineros ilegales y contrabandistas” a los manifestantes. (*Infobae*, 27/02/2023)
(Boluarte has described the protesters as “vandals, *terrorists*, illegal miners, and smugglers”.)

In these speeches, the Aymaras are conceptualized as criminals. In (28), the criminal nature is projected onto the protester through the use of the term *facineroso*, while in (29) and (30), the protester is discursively portrayed as someone who commits crimes within the framework of terror. At this point, the Aymaras are depicted as individuals who instill fear in society. Similar to these speeches, there are other discourses in which the Peruvian press also promotes them as criminals. However, in these other scenes, the protesters are conceptualized as a specific type or class of criminal:

- (31) *Puno está secuestrada*. (*Willax*, 02/03/2023)
(*Puno is held hostage*.)
- (32) Minera San Rafael de *Puno secuestrada* por dirigentes. (*La Noticia*, 01/03/2023)
(*San Rafael Mining in Puno kidnapped by leaders*.)
- (33) *La población de la región “está secuestrada” por los grupos que persisten en las protestas*. (*Diario Uno*, 10/03/2023)
(*The population of the region “is held hostage” by the groups persisting in the protests*.)

Here, Aymara protesters are metaphorically constructed as individuals who deprive others of their freedom. Within the context of these discourses, phrases like “Puno está secuestrada” or “Puno secuestrada” convey these types of assessments, where the protesters, beyond being considered mere criminals by the press, are also portrayed as individuals who hold others captive. At this point, in addition to the metaphor AIMARA PROTESTERS ARE KIDNAPPERS, a metonymy is used where the place of residence is employed to refer to the people who live there. That is, through the metonymy THE PLACE FOR THE PEOPLE, the Peruvian press suggests that the entity being held captive is not the place itself, Puno, but the individuals residing there. Thus, when the discourse promotes the idea that Puno is kidnapped, it actually intends to convey that the people residing in Puno are being held against their will by the protesters.

There are other discourses in which, within the context of crime, the Peruvian press metaphorically portrays protesters as murderers:

- (34) *Ni las más de 15 muertes en Juliaca a causa de la violencia en las manifestaciones* han evitado que los delincuentes hagan destrozos en la ciudad. (Perú21, 10/01/2023)
(Even more than 15 deaths in Juliaca due to violence during protests have not prevented criminals from causing havoc in the city.)
- (35) Un trágico 9 de enero: todo lo que ocurrió en *una violenta jornada de protestas* en Puno que dejó al menos 17 fallecidos. (El comercio, 11/01/2023)
(A tragic January 9th: everything that happened during a violent day of protests in Puno that left at least 17 dead.)
- (36) Otra lamentable *pérdida humana* se registra a causa de las violentas protestas. (Perú21, 09/01/2023)
(Another tragic loss of human life is recorded due to the violent protests.)

In (34), (35), and (36), through the metaphor THE AIMARA PROTESTERS ARE MURDERERS, the Peruvian press conceptualizes protesters as responsible for the deaths of other Peruvians. In these discourses, this is evident because they associate loss of life, deaths, with the protests of the Aimaras. That is, a kind of cause-effect relationship is established where the cause is the protests themselves and the effect is the deaths resulting from these protests. An interesting aspect, however, lies in how this association is fully established. In this case, a metonymic process is observed where the real cause is not the protest events themselves, but those who originate them, namely the Aimaras as protesters (THE PROTESTS FOR THE PROTESTERS). Thus, the press indirectly refers to protesters as the cause of the deaths by stating that these are consequences of the protests carried out.

4.2.3. *The Aimara subject within the domain of natural disasters*

One way in which the Peruvian press conceptualizes and thus displays the discursive construction of protesters is by also considering them within the framework of natural disasters. Through this, a series of ideologies and evaluations are also conveyed.

- (37) *Aimaras se movilizan a Lima para nueva ola de manifestaciones.* (Canal N, 27/02/2023)
(Aimaras are mobilizing to Lima for a new wave of protests.)

In this case, the press metaphorically conceptualizes them as natural disasters through the use of the term *ola* (wave). Thus, the metaphor

THE AIMARA PROTESTERS ARE NATURAL DISASTERS brings about a series of implications; among them, the idea of them being seen as entities that also generate destruction and threaten society. Through such discourses, society is influenced to reject the protests, to censor them, and potentially to arrest those who promote such demonstrations. There are other discourses that also portray protesters as natural disasters:

(38) *Una ola de manifestaciones se aproxima. (Infobae, 12/07/2023)*
(*A wave of protests is approaching.*)

(39) *Dina Boluarte enfrentará nueva ola de protestas. (Infobae, 12/07/2023)*
(*Dina Boluarte will face a new wave of protests.*)

These discourses also configure a metaphorical scene in which protesters are portrayed by the press as detrimental entities. An additional aspect to consider is that this way of conceiving them not only dehumanizes them, focusing on them as harmful and destructive entities, but also hides and omits the causes that lead them to generate such protests in disagreement with the Peruvian state. Thus, on one hand, negative evaluations are promoted through these metaphors, while on the other hand, aspects related to their motivations for protesting are obscured and neglected.

4.2.4. *The Aimara subject within the domain of confusion*

This section highlights how Aimara protesters are also discursively constructed within the conceptual domain of confusion. Metaphorically, it is assumed that these demonstrators are, in fact, confused subjects. A first example is presented below:

(40) *Quiénes asisten a las marchas exigiendo su renuncia quizá no están seguros de sus motivaciones. (RPP, 26/02/2023)*
(*Who attend the marches demanding her resignation may not be sure of their motivations.*)

In (40), the press, by metaphorically portraying the protesting subject as confused (i.e., AIMARA PEOPLE ARE CONFUSED SUBJECTS), shifts the focus towards their bewilderment and potential error, thereby undermining the legitimacy of the reasons why these subjects, the Aimara protesters, disagree with the Peruvian state. Discursively, this can be observed in the use of the Spanish adverb *quizá* and the phrase *no están seguros*, which serves to relativize the motives behind the Aimara protests. Other discourses that reaffirm this scene of confusion are presented below:

- (41) “Quizá están marchando porque están reclamando más agua, más desagüe, más colegios, más hospitales”. (RPP, 28/02/2023)
(“Perhaps they are marching because they are demanding more water, more sewage systems, more schools, more hospitals”).
- (42) *Quienes asisten a las marchas* quizá no están seguros de sus motivaciones. (RPP, 26/02/2023)
(*Those attending the marches* may not be sure of their motivations.)

In both discourses, not only are the reasons for the protests delegitimized and the protesters portrayed as confused individuals who don't know what they are demanding, but also the focus is shifted particularly towards the demand for basic services like water, sewage, among others. In this way, the Peruvian press promotes the idea that Aimara protesters are actually demanding benefits for their communities or services that are needed in those communities. Consequently, this creates a negative image of the protests, the protesters themselves, and the true reasons behind their marches to express dissent.

5. CONCLUSIONS

At the end of the analysis, it is possible to point out that the Peruvian press constructed a series of hegemonic representations around the Aimara people and their actions within the framework of protests. These representations were introduced through various conceptual processes such as perspective, profiling, metaphor, and metonymy. They also brought with them a set of extremely negative assessments or beliefs about these Peruvians. Among these were their violent nature, the effects of their violence, the alarming quantity of them, and their conceptualization as aggressive subjects, criminals, disturbed (or confused) individuals, and even as structural entities (natural disasters). In this way, the press constructed a discursive reality of the protest and its involved social actors based on a perspective of events, a particular profiling, and conceptualizing them through certain conceptual domains with profound ideological implications or hegemonic beliefs.

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