

Native Language Teaching and Critical Discourse Analysis / *Ensino de língua materna e Análise de Discurso Crítica*

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ABSTRACT

In this paper, we intend to reflect on possible contributions of Critical Discourse Analysis for teaching-learning Portuguese as a native language. Considering a research-action experience with Supervised Internship students of Portuguese language at the University of Brasilia, we discussed some of the paths taken in the training of educators who are capable of critically analyzing discourses that circulate in society; promoting critical linguistic awareness and, above all, reflectively analyzing their own teaching practices.

KEY WORDS: Discourse; Power; Ideology; Native language teaching; Supervised internship practices

RESUMO

Neste trabalho, levantamos reflexões sobre potenciais contribuições da Análise de Discurso Crítica para práticas de ensino-aprendizagem de português como língua materna. Partindo de uma experiência de pesquisa-ação com estudantes de Estágio Supervisionado em Português na Universidade de Brasília, discutimos alguns (des)caminhos na formação de educadores/as capazes de analisar criticamente os discursos que circulam em nossa sociedade, de promover a consciência linguística crítica e, sobretudo, de refletir sobre suas próprias práticas docentes.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Discurso; Poder; Ideologia; Ensino de língua materna; Práticas de estágio supervisionado

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Presentation

This paper¹ addresses key points of critical discourse studies on teaching-learning Portuguese as a native language, especially studies in the field of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) associated with Fairclough (1989, 1992, 2003).

The reflections assembled here originate from three main sources: previous publications; the project “Teaching practices in critical perspective: contributions of discourse studies”, under development in the Linguistics Graduate Program at the University of Brasília; as well as my teaching practices with the subjects Supervised Internship in Portuguese 1 and 2, at the Portuguese Language course. Therefore, the ideas presented in this paper are also, to some extent, the ideas of my collaborative students and advisees – teachers in training.

We reached an impasse during classes and reflections about learning-teaching practices in the critical discourse perspective when confronted with the scarcity of supporting material concerning theories and practices. We have access to excellent research by Brazilian academics about teaching native language in the perspective of Sociolinguistics, Textual Linguistics, French discourse analysis, among other approaches, but there is limited access to academic research concerning the specific contributions of Critical Discourse Analysis for practices in learning-teaching the mother tongue. Because critical discourse studies represent an area of increasing interest within language studies over the years and, moreover, since we have already begun to educate a considerable number of CDA teachers and researchers throughout Brazil, the scarcity of literature on the subject is likely to soon be overcome. The current preliminary research thus strives to contribute towards achieving this goal. The article is organized into three sections: in the first section, we revisit theories that guided critical linguistic studies, such as the works of Bakhtin and Foucault; in the second section, we present general precepts of Critical Discourse Analysis so that, in the third section, we are able to offer reflections, from the experience acquired in Supervised Internship in Portuguese 1 and 2, concerning contributions of the critical field of discourse studies for Portuguese as a native language teaching practices. The article cites accomplishments

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and obstacles encountered by our teachers in training during their mission of taking the discourse perspective of language studies to the classroom.

1 Critical Discourse Analysis Principle(s)

Critical Discourse Analysis is a heterogeneous field of study, within which the British line proposed by Fairclough (1989, 1995, 1992, 2003) and Chouliaraki & Fairclough (1999) was consolidated. This line of CDA has molded the Latin American line and is a scientific trans-disciplinary approach for critical studies of language as social practice. Its transdisciplinary nature is explained by the fact that CDA does not only apply other theories but also crosses epistemological boundaries by operationalizing and transforming theories while aiming towards an ‘explanatory critique’(FAIRCLOUGH, 2003). Thus, CDA is constituted by operationalizing many subjects and studies, among which we highlight, based on Fairclough (2001), the foundational studies of Bakhtin (1973[1929]; 1986[1953]) and Foucault (1977, 2003[1971]).

Though it is crucial not to “reduce a thinker like Bakhtin to a handful of concepts removed from the historical and political context in which they were produced” (GREGOLIN, 2008, p.34), the reader may recognize Bakhtin (1973, 1986) as a proponent of the semiotic theory of ideology and the conception of dialogism in language and a precursor of criticisms against Saussure’s abstract objectivism. According to observations offered by Brait (2008, p.22):

Marxism and the philosophy of language emerge as a type of ‘third way’ within language studies. Both schools of thought in Linguistics, structuralism and classic stylistics, are put in the spotlight (...) as the development towards enunciative and discourse studies is set forth.

In his philosophical essays on language, Bakhtin (1973, p.94) points to “the basic reality of language” in the social process of verbal interaction. According to the principles of historical materialism, the author designates *enunciation* as a reality of language and as a socio-ideological structure that prioritizes not only language’s *activity*, but also the *indissoluble relationship* that links language and its users. In Marx’s philosophy of language, signs are regarded as material fragments of reality, *Bakhtiniana*, São Paulo, 7 (1): 173-193, Jan./Jun. 2012.

refracting and representing reality, creating particular forms that have the potential to establish, maintain or overcome domination: this notion converges with the current dialectical conception of discourse as (inter)action, identification and representation: “Representation is clearly a semiotic matter, and we can distinguish different discourses, which may represent the same area of the world from different perspectives or positions” (FAIRCLOUGH, 2003, p.25).

For the first time, the function of ‘signs’ was discussed regarding antagonistic class struggles marked by competing social interests. The mutable and evolutionary potential of signs, as well as what makes them vehicles for refracting reality, was presented as the cause and effect of social confrontation. According to the Marxist tradition that focuses on the primacy of class struggle, each new class that takes over the previously dominated class seeks to convey its thoughts and beliefs as being universal. In other words, the dominant class represents these thoughts and beliefs as the only reasonable and universally valid ones. Mainly based on Gramsci’s (1988) understanding of power as hegemony, and on Thompson’s (2002) critical conception of ideology, both guided by Marxist principles, CDA defines “ideology” as “constructions of practices from particular perspectives (and in that sense ‘one-sided’) which ‘iron out’ the contradictions, dilemmas and antagonisms of practices in ways which accord with the interests and projects of domination” (CHOULIARAKI & FAIRCLOUGH, 1999, p.26). Still in light of Bakhtinian principles, the critical approach of discourse studies recognizes *language as an instrument of hegemonic struggle*.

Bakhtin (1986, p.92) presents a dialogic and polyphonic view of language, according to which discourses that are apparently non-dialogic, such as written texts, are always part of a dialogic line which responds to previous discourses and anticipates previous discourses in many forms. Interaction is understood as a polyphonic operation that recaptures former voices of verbal interactions, not merely a single operation among voices of the speaker and the listener: “the expression of an utterance always *responds* to a greater or lesser degree, that is, it expresses the speaker’s attitude toward other’s utterances (...)”. This notion of various voices that articulate in interaction is the key to understanding *language as a space for hegemonic struggle*, because it renders viable studies about social contradictions and power struggles that lead people to select certain resources from the network of choices, both from the semiotic system

(lexicogrammatical system) and from the social system of language (the network of choices of order of discourse, with its relatively stable genres, discourses and styles) and articulate them in certain ways in a set of other possibilities, causing unpredictable effects in the social realm (FAIRCLOUGH, 2003; RAMALHO & RESENDE, 2011, p.45).

Foucault's studies consist of another foundational source of language comprehension as a setting for power struggle. Among other ideas, Foucault's theories that are relevant for CDA concern the *constitutive aspect of discourse; interdependency of discursive practices; the discursive nature of power; the political nature of discourse and the discursive nature of social change*, according to Fairclough (1992).

Foucault (2003, p.10) questions the constitutive function of discourse, by conceiving language as a practice that constitutes the social realm, the social objects and subjects. Analyzing discourse, in this perspective, means to socially and historically specify interdependent discursive formations, as well as rule systems that allow for the occurrence of certain statements in a specific time, place and institution. According to Foucault (2003, p.66), "all critical tasks, questioning instances of control, should simultaneously analyze the discursive regularity with which they are formed; and all genealogical description must take into account the limits that interfere in actual formation". From the idea of social regulation 'of what may or may not be said' in situated practices – which brings into light interdiscursive relations as well as relationships between discursive and not essentially discursive – the fundamental concept of CDA is originated regarding *order of discourse*: the totality of discursive practices within an institution or society and the relationships between them (FAIRCLOUGH, 1989), which we address below. In section 2, we indicate another aspect of dialogue in Foucault's theories.

In Brait's (2008, p.9-10) words, "nobody can honestly claim that Bakhtin had *formally* propounded a discourse theory and/or analysis (...)" ; however, "nobody can deny that Bakhtinian thought currently represents one of the greatest contributions for the study of language (...)", since he was responsible for "the birth of dialogical analysis/theory of discourse." Likewise, one cannot claim that Foucault developed a systematic discourse analysis, with linguistic-discursive text analyses such as the ones we have today in CDA, developed from Critical Linguistics (FOWLER *et al.*, 1979;

HODGE & KRESS, 1993). Nevertheless, these studies prompted the foundations of current critical discourse approaches.

2 Discourse and power

CDA assumes a critical posture towards social problems related to power and justice which involve the use of language. For this line of critical studies, a language-society relationship is internal and dialectical, which means that “social questions are, in part, questions about discourse”, and vice-versa (CHOULIARAKI & FAIRCLOUGH, 1999, p.vii). Following a more abstract conception, *discourse* – language as social practice – is regarded as an irreducible moment of social life, in constant dialectic articulation with other moments of social practices: *action/interaction; social relations; the material world; people, with their beliefs, values, attitudes, histories.*

When using language (in the wide sense of the word, including sounds, images, acts, etc.) in our situated social practices, we turn to – reproducing and modifying – particular ways of *acting and interacting, representing and identifying (oneself)* by/with discourse. With regards to the specifically discursive aspect, this means that, in situated social practices, we make use of (always reproducing and/or modifying) *discursive genres* (relatively stable forms of acting and interacting), *discourses* (particular ways of representing the world), as well as particular *styles* (particular means of identifying and being).

In sum, the three main dialectical forms that discourse integrates social practices (interacting, representing and being) relate to the three main dialectical meanings of discourse (actional, representational and identificational), constituting the three elements in the orders of discourse (genres, discourses, styles).

Figure 1 – Discourse as social practice²

Main ways in which discourse figures in social practices	Main meanings of discourse	Elements of order of discourse
Ways of (inter)acting	Actional meaning	Genres
Ways of representing	Representational meaning	Discourses
Ways of being	Identificational meaning	Styles

² Based on Ramalho and Resende (2011, p.51).

As debated by Ramalho and Resende (2011, p.51), the understanding of the main dialectical ways in which discourse figures in social practices, tied to the meanings of discourse as well as elements of order of discourse, part of the three great dialectical axes in Foucault: the axis of power, the axis of knowledge, and the axis of ethics³.

Fairclough (2003, p.28) associates the representational meaning to the axis of knowledge, in other words “control over things”. Discourses, particular ways of representing aspects of the world, imply control over things, and knowledge. The actional meaning, in turn, is associated to the power axis, in other words, “relations with others, but also ‘action on others’”. In this perspective, it is understood that discursive genres, as means of acting and relating discursively in social practices, imply relationships with others, but also action on others, and power. Lastly, the identificational meaning associates with the ethics axis, that is, the “relations with oneself”, and the “moral subject”. Styles, ways of identifying oneself, others and aspects of the world, imply social or personal identities, and ethics.

As clarified by Foucault (1984, p. 50),

This does not mean that each of these three areas (relations of control over things, relations of action upon others, relations with oneself) is completely foreign to the others. It is well known that control over things is mediated by relations with others; and relations with others in turn always entail relations with oneself, and vice versa.

For this reason, although genres, discourses and styles, also meanings of discourse, have their specificities, the relationship between them is dialectical in CDA. In other words, each of them internalizes traces of others in a way that they never exclude or are reduced to one. Fairclough (2003, p.29) exemplifies that “particular representations (discourses/knowledge) may be enacted in particular ways of acting and relating (genres/power), and inculcated in particular ways of identifying (styles/ethics)”, and so forth.

³ The three axes (*savoir, pouvoir, subjectivation*) correspond to archeology, genealogy, and analytic hermeneutics.

This partly explains the ontological depth of CDA's scientific approach: texts, as discursual events, materialize aspects of the situated ways of (inter)acting, representing and identifying oneself in social practices. For this reason, it is possible to undergo a critical analysis of potential effects of (meanings of) texts about society; in other words, about ways of acting/interacting, about social relations, about the material world, about people's beliefs, values, attitudes, histories (RAMALHO & RESENDE, 2011; RESENDE & RAMALHO, 2006).

Analyzing text in CDA, which is part of the discourse analysis, is therefore based not only on comprehensions but also in *explanations*, i.e., analyses of empirical material grounded in a particular theoretical framework, with the aim of assessing "how the discourse moment works within social practice, from the point of view of its effects on power struggles and relations of domination" (CHOULIARAKI & FAIRCLOUGH, 1999, p.67)⁴. Thus categories of textual analysis in CDA are empirical materializations of ways of interacting, representing and identifying (oneself) in situated social practices, explained by the critical assumption that texts have "social, political, cognitive, moral and material consequences and effects" (FAIRCLOUGH, 2003, p.14). Genres are, in principle, realized in actional meanings and forms of text (intertextuality, for instance); discourses are, in principle, realized in representational meaning and forms of text (interdiscursivity, for instance); finally, styles are, in principle, realized in identificational meanings and forms of text (metaphors, for instance).

Intertextuality is, in principle, an actional analytical category for being a textual trait molded by genres. Specific genres articulate voices in specific ways. The articulation of voices in text tends to be more disciplinary or more transforming than power struggles. "In texts, the absence, presence, as well as nature of articulation of these other texts, which constitute 'particular voices', allow us to explore discursive practices that exist in society and the relationship between them", as debated in Ramalho and Resende (2011, p.133).

Interdiscursivity is, in principle, a representational category linked to particular forms of representing aspects of the world. "Particular discourses associate with particular social realms, interests and projects. It is possible to identify different

⁴ For more details about theoretical-methodological CDA procedures, see Ramalho and Resende (2011); Resende and Ramalho (2006).

discourses, observing different ways of ‘lexicating’ aspects of the world” (RAMALHO & RESENDE, 2011, p.142).

The metaphor is, in principle, an identificational trait of texts, molded by particular styles. According to Lakoff & Johnson (2003), CDA has a broad conception of metaphors as a process of “understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another”. When selecting determined metaphors within a universe of other possibilities, we reveal a certain understanding of reality, identifying it in a particular way. Section 3 comments on a few concrete examples of the empirical achievement of these textual forms and meanings.

This conception of the three main meanings of discourse makes it possible to achieve deeper dialectical relations between social moments (whether essentially semiotic or not). Additionally, it develops the perception not only of the *semiotic system* (the network of choices in the lexicogrammatical system), but also of the *social system of language* (the network of choices in orders of discourse, with its relatively stable genres, discourses and styles) as a potential for make meaning (FAIRCLOUGH, 2003; CHOULIARAKI & FAIRCLOUGH, 1999), as mentioned in Section 1.

The *networks of orders of discourse* compose the *order of discourse social system*, i.e., the “particular combination or configuration of genres, discourses and styles which constitutes the discursal aspect of a network of social practices” and conforms a system that is responsible for the more or less undefined potential of language for meaning (FAIRCLOUGH, 2003, p.220). According to the explanations of Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999, p.151), “it is the dynamism of the order of discourse in generating new articulations of discourses and genres which keeps the language system open”. Conversely, “it is the fixity of the order of discourse that limits the generative power of language by precluding certain connections”. Therefore, new articulations of genres, discourses and styles of different orders of discourse also contribute to the construction of meaning.

Fairclough (2003, p.31) observes that relations of exploitation and domination in late capitalism were fundamentally based on discourse, i.e., on communication networks, which favored temporal and spatially disconnected actions/relations and, consequently, “the enhanced capacity for ‘action at a distance’ (...) therefore facilitating the exercise of power”. As a critical science, CDA is concerned with the ideological

effects – in other words, at the service of domination – that (meanings of) texts may convey upon social relations, actions and interactions, knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, values, identities. Studies by Thompson (2002) have served as a starting point for a transdisciplinary dialogue concerning the manners of discourse act ideologically upon social life.

Unlike neutral conceptions, which characterize ideological phenomena without considering them necessarily deceitful or illusionary, or associated with interests of a particular group, Thompson (1990) conceives ideology as by nature hegemonic and thus inherently negative. *Ideological* meanings necessarily strive for consensus, dissemination of particular interests as if they are universal interests, in order to establish and sustain relations of domination. The author lists a few operational forms of ideology and respective discursal strategies⁵:

- Legitimation: representation of relations of domination as being fair and worthy of support. It is the typical strategy of symbolic construction meant for legitimizing relations of domination are rationalization, universalization and narrativization;
- Dissimulation: concealing, denying or obscuring of relations of domination. This strategy is typical of symbolic construction associated with displacement, euphemizing and trope.
- Unification: symbolic construction of a form of unity that interconnects individuals in a collective identity, regardless of the gulfs that separate them. Two main strategies are related to this form: standardization and symbolization;
- Fragmentation: segmentation of groups or individuals who are capable of challenging dominant forces and interests. These are fragmenting strategies: differentiation and purge of others;
- Reification: representation of transitory, social and historical situations as being permanent, natural and timeless. There are four strategies associated with this form: naturalization; perpetuation; nominalization; passivation.

In native language teaching-learning practices governed by a more critical understanding, language is conceived as social practice, i.e., as an integrating part of social life, inseparable from people (with their beliefs, values, histories, narratives) that act and interact in a material world (socio-cultural and historically situated), establishing social relations in the course of their lives.

In sum, learning-teaching practices of Portuguese as a native language are conceived as socio-culturally situated practices that involve (inter)actions, social

⁵ For more details, see Ramalho and Resende (2011).

relations, people and discourse in a particular material world and, therefore, are practices of (inter)action, construction, distribution and circulation of knowledge, as well as constitution of identities that may contribute to establishing, reproducing and/or overcoming asymmetric power relations. This posture converges with an understanding of literacy as a network of socially constructed practices involving reading and writing, marked by broader social processes, and responsible for reinforcing or questioning values, traditions, relations of power present in social context (STREET, 1984; ROGERS, 2011).

3 Critical Discourse Analysis and native language teaching: reflecting about an experience

Knowledge of these theoretical postulations by teachers in training contributes to a study that is more similar to educational guidelines and evaluations since, as observes Kleiman (2008, p.488), “one of the reasons for the teacher’s uncertainty regarding paradigmatic professional changes (...) is the lack of knowledge (...) of language theories that guide official documents”. For Fairclough (1995, p.221), “discourse analysts have an important auxiliary role to play here in providing critical educators with resources for programmes of ‘critical language awareness’ – programs to develop the capacities of people for language critique, including their capacities for reflexive analysis of the educational process itself”. The project of critical language awareness is, as summarizes Leal (2003, p.142), “to develop awareness as language participates in processes that establish, maintain or transform power relations”.

As Fairclough (1989, p.85) discusses, language (twice an object of work of future teachers) is one of the instruments of power struggle. Ideology (meaning in the service of power) is “most effective when its workings are least visible. If one becomes aware that a particular aspect of common sense is sustaining power relations at one’s own expense, it ceases to be common sense, and may cease to have the capacity to sustain power inequalities, i.e., to function ideologically”.

This implies that, if we uncritically reproduce the common sense, the *status quo* that benefits a minority of the population, ideology continues to contribute to sustain power inequalities. If, on the other hand, we reveal, de-naturalize common sense, in a consistent manner, there is a possibility of restraining, annulling, overcoming its

ideological functioning. In the Brazilian context, it is not hard to note that tradition of teaching ‘Portuguese’ has served, by large extent, to establish and sustain power inequalities founded on the common sense that ‘language boils down to the established norm’, “legitimized by powerful institutions and to which few have access” (KLEIMAN, 2008, p.490).

There has been wide discussion about the fact that social and political matters have been ‘removed’ from the classroom, mainly with the aim of separating “power” from “knowledge” by creating course programs and “contents” centered in allegedly “natural objects of knowledge”, as if knowledge could be “natural” rather than a network of discursive practice, socio-culturally and historically situated human and social creations (FOUCAULT, 2009 [1969]). According to Foucault (2009, p.204), “knowledge” is a “group of elements, formed in a regular manner by a discursive practice, and which are indispensable to the constitution of a science (...)”.

By unveiling that “educational processes and broader social reproductive processes are intimately connected” Mészáros (2008, p.35) states that institutionalized education, especially in the last 150 years, served the purpose of “not only supplying knowledge and manpower that are necessary for the expanding productive machine in the capitalist system”, as well as “generating and transmitting a framework of values that *legitimize* dominant interests, as if there could not be an alternative to society organization”. As an example, the philosopher cites ‘knowledge’ and its discourse practices in history that “had to be entirely manipulated and, in fact, often grossly falsified for this purpose” (MÉSZÁROS, 2008, p.36), but we can also think of the subject ‘Portuguese’ as ‘knowledge’.

Revisiting the ideas of Fairclough (1989) about denaturalization of the hegemonic ideology, critical language awareness can contribute to unveil and denaturalize ideological effects of (inter)actions, representations and identifications that are potentially guided towards projects of domination. Aligned with this idea, Geraldini (2004[1984], p.44) assesses that “we must break the barrier against the access of power, and language is one of the ways to do this. If it functions as a barrier – undoubtedly – it also works to break the barrier”. Accordingly, Cox (2010, p.181) endorses this idea when noting that:

In the current framework, if we wish to train (and not only inform) language teachers with the necessary density in order to implement, in a consequent level, the new course program, we have to make choices. And the basis of our choices would be the teacher's background seen by documents that are governing basic education. What should be the appearance of the Linguistics course that licenses teachers to work in primary and secondary schools?

We agree with the fact that, in the undergraduate Linguistics program, we are no longer able to separate “the Language subjects from the Linguistics subjects. Nowadays, a serious course program can no longer beacon a language study that has been conducted in the fringes of knowledge produced by linguistics” (COX, 2010, p.181). In view of the concern and commitment in contributing to the training of critical educators, i.e., for the (continued) training of native language teachers prepared to critically reflect upon practices, upon knowledge itself, as well as to propose and execute actions that are coherent with critical language awareness, the dynamics of teaching internship spaces for critical reflection and for approaching theory and discourse analysis deem fitting.

The following pages seek to illustrate some of the results in researching discursal studies in the subject Language Licensure, Supervised Internship in Portuguese 1, which focuses on practice-theory reflection and classroom observation, and the subject Supervised Internship in Portuguese 2, which focuses on teaching practice. The dynamic described here constitutes part of the preparatory activities for planning and execution, by Linguistics students, of extension courses in reading comprehension and creative writing for basic education students offered at the University of Brasilia in 2011.

Intent on working through guidance and supervision, we instigated teachers in training to appeal to discursal and socio-interactional theories studied in Internship 1 in order to plan and execute, in Internship 2, extension courses consisting of 4 in-class meetings lasting 4 hours each. The main goal was to work with practices of language use-reflection-use, recommended by educational guidelines and conducting didactic transposition of the theories studied. The path was strewn with many successes and many failures, which, in this case, are an integral part of the development of autonomous and emancipating practice of the critical teacher in training.

The experience discussed below was conducted with students of Internship 2 and was based on field work by the same students in the previous semester. During the

observation stage, which occurred in the first semester of 2011, the following activity program was collected. A 50-minute Portuguese class was administered to eighth grade students in a traditional private school in Brasilia. The material is this:

Partido Alto

Cássia Eller/Chico Buarque

<http://letras.terra.com.br/cassia-eller/64179/wold>

Deus é um cara gozador (God is a joker)	Vou correr o mundo afora (I'm gonna circle the)
Adora brincadeira (He loves a good prank)	Dar uma canjica (Test my luck)
Pois pra me jogar no mundo (Because to throw me in the world)	Que é pra ver se alguém se embala (To see if anyone is moved)
Tinha o mundo inteiro (He could've chosen any part)	Ao ronco da cuíca (By the sound of my cuíca)
Mas achou muito engraçado (But thought it amusing)	(Um abraço pra aquele que fica, meu irmão) (My respects to those who stay, my brother)
Me botar cabreiro (To make little me)	Deus me deu mãos de veludo (God gave me hands of velvet)
Na barriga da miséria (Dirt poor)	Pra fazer carícia (To make caresses)
Eu nasci brasileiro (I was born Brazilian)	Deus me deu muitas saudades (God gave me lots of nostalgia)
(Eu sou do Rio de Janeiro) (I'm from Rio de Janeiro)	E muita preguiça (And lots of laziness)
Diz que deu (They say He gave)	Deus me deu pernas compridas (God gave me long legs)
Diz que dá (He gives)	E muita malícia (And lots of guile)
Diz que Deus dará (They say God will give)	Pra correr atrás de bola (To run after the ball)
Não vou duvidar, oh nega (I don't doubt it, honey)	E fugir da polícia (And run from the police)
E se Deus não dá (And if God doesn't give)	(Um dia ainda sou notícia) (One day you'll see me in the news)
Como é que vai ficar, oh, nega? (How's it gonna be, oh honey?)	Deus me fez um cara fraco, desdentado e feio (God made me weak, toothless and ugly)
“a Deus dará”, “a Deus dará” (“God will give”)	Pele e osso, simplesmente (Just skin and bones)
Diz que deu (They say He gave),	Quase sem recheio (Almost no filling)
Diz que dá (He gives)	Mas se alguém me desafia (But if someone challenges me)
Diz que Deus dará (Say that God will give)	E bota a mãe no meio (Or insults my mother)
Não vou duvidar, oh nega (I don't doubt it, honey)	Eu dou porrada a três por quatro (I'll kick his ass)
E se Deus negar (And if God refuses)	E nem me despenteio (Without even messing my hair)
eu vou me indignar e chega (I will resent it and that's enough)	(Porque eu já tô de saco cheio) (Because I'm fed up already)
Deus dará, Deus dará (God will give, God will give)	
Jesus Cristo ainda me paga (Christ will pay for this)	
Um dia ainda me explica (One day he'll have to explain)	
Como é que pôs no mundo (How he put into the world)	
Essa pobre titica (This poor little shit)	

1. Indicate the predication of the verb give in each of the following clauses:

- “Deus dará” (God will give)
 - “Deus me deu mão de veludo” (God gave me velvet hands)
- What type of predication is found in “Deus me fez um cara fraco” (God made me weak)?
 - In the excerpt “Deus é um cara gozador, adora brincadeira/Pois pra me jogar no mundo, tinha o mundo inteiro” (God is a joker, loves a prank/

Because to throw me in the world, He could've chosen any part of the world), a verb is employed with a different meaning than according to the norm. Identify it, make the necessary replacement, and classify the subject of the verb.

4. In the construction “Diz que deu, diz que dá/Diz que Deus dará” (Say that He gave, say that He gives/Say that God will give), what is the subject of “diz” (gives)? Was this verb employed correctly? Justify your answer.

It is worth highlighting that the material was collected in a school in Brasilia and was used by the teacher from that school. The internship student collected the activity, which was then discussed in one of our reflection workshops during Internship 1¹.

The teachers in training who, before the discussion started, were already aware of the richness of the lyrics and the reductionism belonging to a structuralist approach of the list of questions (albeit elaborated from a text), initiated group reflections in order to indicate problems in the type of class and to suggest possible ways of tackling discursive aspects from these lyrics. Among other problems and limitations verified in the activity, the Linguistics students indicated: (i) the text as a pretext to address the rules of normative grammar (questions 3 and 4), contributing to distinguish what is “right” (legitimate) from “wrong”; (ii) the use of text to stimulate memorization of terminologies and classifications from traditional grammar (questions 1 and 2), which could be done without the text, since it is only used in small units and not in its entirety; the utter inconsideration (according to field notes presented in the final report) of the feelings triggered by the meaning of the lyrics or the multimodal composition of the song, etc.

The teachers in training raised, among other possibilities that tackled discursive aspects in the classroom, didactic sequences that contemplated:

- Research about the types of Brazilian popular music, with focus on particular origins and characteristics of the samba subgenre “*samba de partido alto*”;
- Listening to music and exploring rhythms that contribute to build meaning in the multimodal genre (i.e., that fuses different forms of representation – written, sound);
- Research and elaboration of synthesis reports of the history of Rio de Janeiro, including the historical trajectory until today and the formation (‘apartheid’) of impoverished communities;
- Discussion, collective review, rewrite and propagation of synthesis report;
- Reading of argumentative texts (readers’ comments, opinion pieces, news editorials) and exploration of composition, style, theme, genre.
- Research about income distribution and social inequalities in the student’s community. Writing, collective review, rewriting and sending reader letters in defense of a point of view concerning the subject;
- Reading workshops in order to work on anticipation exercises, inferences about daily life of the narrator of lyrics;

¹ Translator’s note: The literal translation of this song is attempt to clarify the content to the reader and therefore fails in conveying the appropriate structure and rhyme.

- Research and analysis of proverbial expressions, popular idioms and respective ideological disciplinary meanings, especially the reification of poverty in the origin of the popular expression “Deus dará” (God will give), which attributes the state’s responsibility in providing health, education, food and habitation for all citizens to a supernatural entity;
- Analyzing relations, from the reflection above, with the “type of predication of the verb *give* in the clause ‘Deus me deu mão de veludo’ (God gave me velvet hands)” (question 1 of reproduced activity) and with the “type of predication found in ‘Deus me fez um cara fraco, desdentado e feio’ (God made me weak, toothless and ugly)” (question 2), in which the agent responsible for malnourishment (‘fraqueza’ – weakness) and lack of access to health services (‘toothless’) are attributed to a supernatural being;
- Still connected to the analysis above, reflections about possible discourses (interdiscursivity) that reproduce and disseminate ideologies that reify poverty and social inequality;
- Research and exploration of particular characteristics of crime news, allied with reflections on voices (intertextuality) and discourses (interdiscursivity) in news articles that foment fragmentation/purge of others, creating public ‘enemies’ who ‘threaten the established order’;
- Exploring the oral-written continuum in the lyrics and identification of traits of linguistic variation of social genre, age, geographic region, layer, or social group, which can be richer than merely “making the appropriate replacement of the verb in the norm and classifying the subject of the verb” (question 3 of the reproduced activity);
- Reflection on the creation of ‘symbols of unity’ that ideologically “unify” Brazilians (samba, soccer, laziness, bravado, valiancy, carnival), exploring intertextual relations in the text;
- Analysis of other voices and discourses/order of discourse that compose the text, as alludes “the construction “Diz que deu, diz que dá/Diz que Deus dará” (They say He gave, say He gives/Say that God will give) (question 4 of the reproduced activity), which can be associated with discourses that legitimate asymmetrical power relations;
- Exploring the irony built in the song based on the lack of combination between the apparent meaning and the situational context and interlocutor assumptions about the narrator’s beliefs and values, which can only be inferred by considering the social context as a constitutive factor of the meaning;
- Analyzing meanings, in intertextual and interdiscursive relations, that dissimulate serious acute social problems by means of euphemism/metaphor (Na barriga da miséria (Dirt poor)/ Eu nasci brasileiro (I was born Brazilian)/Deus me deu mãos de veludo (God gave me hands of velvet)/Pra fazer carícia (To make caresses)/Deus me deu muitas saudades (God gave me lots of nostalgia)/E muita preguiça (And lots of laziness);
- Analyzing effects of the meaning of lexical selections such as “negar” (negate), “me indignar” (resent), instead of other possibilities such as “rejeitar, recusar, repudiar”

(reject, refuse, repudiate) and “me irritar, me decepcionar, me revoltar, me enfurecer” (get annoyed, become disappointed, rebel, become furious), observing the increasing or decreasing level of positive or negative assessment, and so forth.

The brief discussion carried out in this article reveals that there are countless possibilities and an enormous potential for work guided by the critical discourse perspective in teaching Portuguese as a native language; however, the adaptation and transformation process of deeply-rooted traditional practices is unsurprisingly not easy. According to the reports submitted by teachers in training, many mishaps and obstacles must first be overcome. The effort to employ research-action practices between universities and the community is laborious, and practice has shown the need for universities to reach out to the community, rather than vice-versa, despite all types of hardships encountered to accomplish this type of project. Report 1 describes an emblematic example of this perception pointed out by teachers in training who participated in supervised internship activities:

Report (1)

The opportunity of an out-of-school course favored greater self-assurance and real teaching practice, *considering the situation that students face when searching for a school for work experience*. The course led to intense production and reflection and the background material has excellent quality. *However, students from private schools dominated the classroom. There were very few poor students*. Maybe the divulgation should have been more assertive or transportation was difficult for these students. I notice, therefore, that courses like these should prioritize the underprivileged population, which has less access to literacy practices, seeing that its exposure interferes with the acquisition of competences.

Another difficulty is that, on the one hand, teachers in training are not well received in regular schools, according to Report 1; on the other hand, teachers in training rightly point out that extension courses do not offer a “real” outlook of school life, as we illustrate with Report 2:

Report (2)

In relation to my learning process, the course worked as a self-knowledge tool. I was able to reaffirm my fondness for teaching and my passion for the Portuguese language. *Because it was an extension course, I understand that the students' background is not what is typically found in the common classroom*.

Another impasse often raised by the future teachers is the reality shock related to the fact that Portuguese language education is entirely oriented towards approval in public university entrance exams, according to Report 3:

Report (3)

Due to the dynamic [of the presentation], I was able to get a better idea of the class's reality, and the *first thing I noticed was the fact that the students were extremely worried about the university entrance exams and their future*, since many of them drew a book, or something similar, to represent the phase they were going through in life. This point had not been raised when I prepared the classes (consequently, I did not ask them what subject they wanted to major in during my first class) and my focus was not to aid them in that specific point, but rather in a more general aspect of four abilities: reading, writing, speaking, listening, and reflecting about language.

But that was a shortcoming that I sought to remedy in the following classes. *Of course, in no way did the classes become a preparatory course for the entrance exams, but this aspect started to be a part of the class. In fact, when I said that the course was not guided towards the entrance exams, there was a certain degree of disappointment.*

This is a recurrent complaint in workshops and internship reports: the constraints from the institutions, from family members, that make it difficult to institute innovative teaching practices of Portuguese as a native language. However, we must recall that selective processes for university admittance has suffered important changes in recent years in order to meet the discursual perspective of national education guidelines.

The recurrent difficulties of a more pedagogical nature concern the obstacles imposed by a tradition of expositive classes that “follow the textbook”, as illustrates Report 4:

Report (4)

An aspect that I disliked was that the classes seemed kind of repetitive, with a similar structure, and even texts had very similar genres. I don't know how I could prepare classes in a way that would correspond to the aim of the course, but *the way everything happened seemed somewhat superficial and I don't know if we left the canonic scheme of school classes.* The little textbook [prepared as support material by teachers in training] helps, but, to a certain degree, it restricts, because if we do not go through everything that is propounded, it causes a bad feeling. *It seemed like there was too many scheduled activities and, for this reason, it was impossible to delve deep, to properly “masticate” texts and ideas.*

Even when they were able to organize their classes, prepare and employ support material as they pleased, the future teachers ended up, as they found, elaborating a “little textbook” that they followed from beginning to end of classes, and that did not offer them much diversity in terms of dynamics, reading, activities, discourse genres.

Final Considerations

In lieu of formerly indicating literacy projects (“set of activities that originate from a real interest in student life and whose accomplishment involves the use of reading-writing”, according to Kleiman, 2008, p.509) as an (almost) ready solution, the internship activities lead the student to reflectively recognize that action, the real social practice, must precede ‘content’. The perception that internship practice makes sense and warmly involves future teachers because they are immersed and engaged in a research-action project shows them that a path for their own teaching practice is parting from language use-reflection-use projects, and not repetitive and disciplinary “little textbooks”.

As Suassuna (2011, p.133) correctly observes, the teacher’s knowledge “must serve less the transmission and expectations of course program contents and serve more a process of discussion, questioning, formulation of hypotheses and pedagogic systemizations”. In this space for reflection provided by internship activities, guided towards a discursual and transforming perspective, the teachers in training realize that there is no “perfect recipe”; that decency is a research effort, of criticism, discussion, doubt, formulation and reformulation of situated interventions that prove to be effective for the development of awareness that language does not only serve to communicate, but also to segregate, to legitimize differences, to universalize interests that favor a minority and penalize the majority.

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