

Reflecting on Literacy and Responsiveness in Teacher Education / *Refletindo sobre letramento e responsividade na formação docente*

*Antônio Carlos Santos de Lima**

*Lúcia de Fátima Santos***

*Rita de Cássia Souto Maior****

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to problematize the initial education of teachers at Undergraduate Language Courses. Teachers are considered responsive subjects in the context of research, from the literacy perspective. The study is based on the analysis of the guidelines used by an undergraduate student in writing and reading activities, applied to elementary school students. The concepts of dialogicity and active responsive understanding, along with the concepts of literacy were adopted. We understand that education programs for Portuguese Language teachers, by involving students in research that fosters reflections on teaching practice, allow them to promote tasks focused on writing and reading in connection with social practices. From the analyzed data we have observed that, when the teachers take the position of literacy agents, they are qualified to actively respond to the determinations of contemporary times.

KEYWORDS: Responsiveness; Literacy; Research; Teacher Education

RESUMO

Neste artigo, objetivamos problematizar a formação inicial de professores do curso de Letras como sujeitos responsivos em contexto de pesquisa, dentro da perspectiva do letramento, com base em análise das orientações adotadas por uma graduanda, em atividades de leitura e de escrita desenvolvidas com alunos do ensino fundamental. Para tal, utilizamos os conceitos bakhtinianos de dialogicidade e compreensão responsiva ativa, aliados ao conceito de letramento. Isso por entendermos que a formação do professor de língua portuguesa, a partir da inserção do aluno em pesquisas que reflitam sobre sua prática pedagógica, possibilita a ele promover uma prática de ensino com um enfoque em eventos de escrita e leitura vinculados às práticas sociais. Observamos que, a partir dos dados analisados, quando o professor assume a postura de agente de letramento, ele tem condições de responder ativamente às determinações da contemporaneidade.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Responsividade; Letramento; Pesquisa; Formação de professor

* Instituto Federal de Alagoas – IFAL, Rio Largo, Alagoas, Brazil; professorantoniolima@hotmail.com

** Universidade Federal de Alagoas – UFAL, Maceió, Alagoas, Brazil; lfatima.ufal@gmail.com

*** Universidade Federal de Alagoas – UFAL, Maceió, Alagoas, Brazil; ritasoutomaior@gmail.com

Introduction

The educational demands of society aim to attend to several dimensions of human life, among which are professional qualification, actions in social and political life, enjoyment of cultural and leisure activities, and even humanization, with a view to the harmony of the planet. For all of these dimensions, the use of reading and writing is indispensable, especially if we consider that we live in a society that assigns a great value to reading and writing.¹ In light of that, the role of literacy advances, as reflections of social changes – which determine a new way to understand the presence of writing and reading in discursive practices – demand, firstly, a conception that goes beyond the mere technological acquisition of reading and writing, and that establishes, for example, relationships that bring less conflict between everyday orality and the formal writing presupposed and expected to be learned at school. Secondly, such reflections demand a dialogic comprehension of the production as action for the other² (VOLOŠINOV, 2000).³ This is necessary because modernization of societies (GIDDENS, 1991),⁴ with its technological development and its growing social and political participation, increasingly demands reading and writing skills, as we live, according to Giddens (1990),⁵ under possible “adaptive reactions to the risk profile of modernity” (1990, p.134), i.e., with the *inevitability* of living with dangers” (p.131; emphasis in the original).⁶ It is important to observe such consideration about contemporary times as

¹ Accordingly, it is important to observe the discussions by Gnerre (1998) and by De Certeau (2002). Both criticize the mythical view of writing. De Certeau (2002, p.227) states that “in the last three centuries, learning to write defines initiation par excellence in a capitalist and conquering society. It is its fundamental *practice*” (emphasis in the original). Text in original: “nos últimos três séculos, aprender a escrever define a iniciação por excelência em uma sociedade capitalista e conquistadora. É a sua prática iniciática fundamental”. The translations of the quotes taken from books in Portuguese have been done by the translator of this article, for the purpose of its publication in English.

² Reference in English: BAKHTIN, M. *Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity*. The Problem of the Author. *Art and Answerability*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990, p.187-192: “I do not yet exist in my own axiological world as a contented and self-equivalent positive *given*.” (p.188, emphasis in the original) and “[...] the organizing power in all aesthetic forms is the axiological category of the *other*, enriched by an axiological ‘excess’ of seeing for the purpose of achieving a transgredient consummation” (p.189, emphasis in the original). T.N: Portuguese translation of the work. References consulted by the author are at the end of the paper. The footnotes have the English versions consulted by the translator whenever possible.

³ VOLOŠINOV, V. N. *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*. Trans. Ladislav Matejka and I.R. Titunik. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000.

⁴ T.N: Portuguese translation of the work. References consulted by the author are at the end of the paper. The footnotes have the English versions consulted by the translator whenever possible.

⁵ GIDDENS, A. *The Consequences of Modernity*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990.

⁶ See footnote 5.

not a single action taken by a whole person, not a single concrete ideological formation (a thought, an artistic image, even the content of dreams) can be explained and understood without reference to socioeconomic factors (VOLOŠINOV apud POLLARD, 2008, p.52-53).⁷

Accordingly, literacy is conceived “as a group of social practices that use writing as both a symbolic system and as technology, in specific contexts, for specific objectives” (KLEIMAN, 1995, p.18).⁸ Practices are “patterned by social institutions and power relationships” (BARTON; HAMILTON, 2000, p.8), and are related to the Bakhtinian position of contextual inevitability of the action in a socioeconomic context (POLLARD, 2008). Literacy seen as necessarily lived by men in the practice of language becomes fundamental, as this action is the experience of the completion of the other in me, considering that, in literacy practices, I experience who I am in face of this literate condition that I acquire by viewing the other who has made me.⁹ Hence, among the constructed/acquired social conditions that underlie the act of literacy is the qualification for the labor market as an effective social action of constructing the professional identity and, in this context, teacher education.

From these initial reflections on the perspective of literacy, the purpose of this paper is to problematize the initial education of teachers of the Undergraduate Language Course, as active responsive subjects in contexts of research. The analysis is based on the observations registered by an undergraduate student of the Language Course, about the teaching and learning process in Portuguese Language classes, at a public elementary school in the city of Maceió. The student's experiences were made into an object of study¹⁰ in her Final School Paper (“Trabalho de Conclusão de Curso”, hereinafter referred to as TCC). Such data support the analysis presented here.

⁷ POLLARD, R. *Dialogue and Desire: Mikhail Bakhtin and the Linguistic Turn in Psychotherapy*. London: Karnac Books Ltd, 2008.

⁸ Text in original: “[...] como um conjunto de práticas sociais que usam a escrita, como sistema simbólico e como tecnologia, em contextos específicos, para objetivos específicos” (KLEIMAN, 1995, p.18).

⁹ According to Bakhtin (1990, p. 35-36; see footnote 2), “one can speak of a human being’s absolute need for the other, for the other’s seeing, remembering, gathering, and unifying self-activity capable of producing his outwardly finished personality”.

¹⁰ The study was developed in the subproject PIBID/Fale, from 2010 to 2014, entitled “A formação inicial dos professores de Língua Portuguesa em contextos de leitura e produção de textos” (“The initial education of teachers of the Portuguese Language, in the context of reading and text production”) and coordinated by Professor Lúcia de Fátima Santos. The analysis presented herein adopted, as object of discussion, the first version of the Final Paper of the Undergraduate Course (TCC) of the student, former PIBID researcher.

The correlation between literacy and responsiveness in teacher education is closely related to the concept of reflexive teacher, which has been, according to Magalhães (2001), a position that became common in research on teacher education, which started in the nineties. In this paper, this conception has grounds on discussions by Pimenta & Ghedin (2002) and Schön (2000). Such conception corresponds to the capacity of teachers to understand their pedagogical practices as moments of critical reflections, in order to, after evaluations, problematize their reality to reconstruct the paths of their actions, in an attempt to redirect the fulfillment of the pedagogical objectives. Or, as stated by Zabala (1998), it also corresponds to the possibility of modifications a teacher makes in a certain aspect of his/her practices, as a response to a practical problem, after proving the efficiency of such practices to solve it. All of that is related to the idea that pedagogical practices need underlying conceptions, which direct and determine the entire work developed in the classroom (SANTOS, 2007). The dialogic construction of the teacher as a social subject is one of the fundamental representations in the teaching actions as developments of literacy practices. Accordingly, several papers, compiled in Kleiman (2001) and in Vóvio; Sito; De Grande (2010), somehow point to the need for the teacher to constitute himself/herself as a reflexive subject: an important question to be considered in the urgent needs for change, observed in Undergraduate Language Courses. According to Kleiman (2001, p.63),

Nobody doubts there is a need to rethink teacher education programs. However, the change must be based on the analysis of literacy practices in the workplace, considering the demands of communication in the classroom.¹¹

We see such demands as representations of the necessary updating of an education program which no longer accepts the atomistic theoretical construction *per si*, but one that assumes, above all, a practical-theoretical construction of effective pedagogical experiences that redirect the comprehensions of other sociabilities, ethical demands, and focuses of studies in contemporary times. In such case, the active

¹¹ Text in original: “Ninguém duvida da necessidade de redefinir os programas de formação de professores; porém a reforma deve estar baseada na análise das práticas de letramento no local do trabalho, levando em consideração as exigências de comunicação na sala de aula” (KLEIMAN, 2001, p.63).

responsive understanding (BAKHTIN, 2007)¹² – of subjects in initial education – stimulates literate responsive practices. This initial education is operated in the theoretical-academic discourses and developed in the research context, from demands resulting from such experiences. We consider that the comprehension of discourses experienced in research contexts, in turn, is determined by the linguistic forms of composition and by the non-verbal elements of the situation (VOLOŠINOV, 2000).¹³ Hence, comprehension takes place as an inherent action of utterance. Bakhtin (2007, p.71)¹⁴ considers that “the speaker ends his utterance in order to relinquish the floor to the other or to make room for the other's active responsive understanding.” Therefore, all moments experienced by the undergraduate student mentioned in this paper, in the PIBID (Institutional Grant Program for Beginning Teachers) study group and in the classroom (where she acted as teacher), compose the dialogic spaces that constituted her inscription as a literacy agent.

The guiding principle of this reflection is the following question: What are the implications of student participation in research, for the process of his/her initial education?

In order to answer this question, let us examine some discussions about literacy and teacher education (KLEIMAN, 1995; 2001; 2006) and about reflections on dialogicity and active responsive understanding (BAKHTIN, 2007; VOLOŠINOV, 2000).¹⁵ We shall identify, in the analyzed *corpus*, the existing relationship between literacy practices and the constitution of the teacher in initial education as a reflexive subject in the process of teaching the mother tongue, from the perspective of responsiveness. We believe that a discussion on theoretical foundations, which arise from literacy practices that guide education programs for teachers of the mother tongue in Undergraduate Language Courses, should be associated with the notion of meaning. They also need to be guided by

objectives of contemporary demands (official documents, evaluation tests, academic studies) foster the re-definition of objectives for schools and, consequently, the re-conduction of meaningful practices

¹²BAKHTIN, M. The Problem of Speech Genres. *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2007.

¹³ See footnote 3.

¹⁴ See footnote 12.

¹⁵ See footnotes 12; 3.

with the language in the classroom (LIMA; SOUTO MAIOR, 2012, p.395).¹⁶

Finally, we consider that observing the dialogicity in the interaction between the teacher – the undergraduate student of the Language Course – and the students of a State public school, enables the revision of guidelines for practices adopted in such courses. According to Bakhtin (1999, p.195),¹⁷ “someone else's words introduced into our own speech assume a new (our own) interpretation and become subject to our evaluation of them; that is, they become double-voiced.”¹⁸ Therefore, next we shall address the notion of literacy from the Bakhtinian perspective of responsiveness, understanding such phenomenon in the plurality of voices involved.

1 Literacy Studies from the Bakhtinian Notion of Responsiveness

According to Kleiman (1995), Soares (1998), Vóvio; Sito; De Grande (2010), among others, studies on literacy in Brazil are still recent, having started in the nineties. As a result, these studies are expanding and still incite the interest of several researchers. We observe that the category is new, and also that the contemporary need for engaging men in context – to which the concept in its most critical sense relates – is a characteristic also constructed in the recent history of conducting contemporary men to the possibility of authorship.

Literacy (or literacies), a multifaceted concept, as suggested by Street (1984), has fostered several discussions. In light of the importance of literacy for the lives of contemporary subjects, the concept has been revised, as only decoding technology did not assure that subjects would become effectively active, i.e., act critically about and reflect on social practices in which they could participate. When they express

¹⁶ Text in original: “[...] objetivos das demandas contemporâneas (documentos oficiais, provas de avaliação, estudos acadêmicos), promovem a redefinição de objetivos para as escolas e, conseqüentemente, a recondução de práticas significativas com a linguagem em sala de aula” (LIMA; SOUTO MAIOR, 2012, p.395).

¹⁷ BAKHTIN, M. *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, Kindle edition, 1999.

¹⁸ Bakhtin studies the discourses in the composition of a literary work, establishing differences and approximations among the three types of discourse: direct referentially oriented discourse, of “naming, informing, expressing, representing” (BAKHTIN, 1999, p.186; see footnote 17); represented or objectified discourse – *obiéktnoie slovo*, whose typical representative, according to the author, is the direct discourse of heroes; and, finally, the double-voiced discourse.

themselves in the events of language, these subjects generate a meaning that correlates what is sensitive to what is intelligible. At that moment, these instances are responsiveness instances, inasmuch as each utterance must be regarded, primarily, “as a *response* to preceding utterances of the given sphere (we understand the word 'response' here in the broadest sense). Each utterance refutes, affirms, supplements, and relies on the others, presupposes them to be known, and somehow takes them into account.” (BAKHTIN, 2007, p.91).¹⁹

As we mentioned earlier, the very concept of literacy goes through modifications due to the relationship established between the concept and the emerging situations in society. The displacement of the concept regroups other notions attached to it, as we shall examine later. According to Street (1984), there have been modifications to the concept of literacy, in a way which is more adequate to the social demands we deem as established in the dialogic relationships of human practices. The concept of literacy, based on the ideas of this author, allowed for “the separation of studies on the social impact of writing, from the studies on the acquisition of reading and writing” (KLEIMAN, 1995, p.15).²⁰ From the former perspective – studies on the social impact of writing –, literacy is understood as the social impact of writing in the lives of the subjects, as stated by Kleiman (1995). From the latter perspective – studies on the acquisition of reading and writing –, we understand that sometimes only the register of the apprehension of the writing techniques is sought. Despite the importance of such register in the collection of information for the effective action of the government on the results, it concealed, and it still does, the condition for qualifying young people and adults in our society, which generates subcategories such as functional illiteracy.

Street's proposal (1984) – of punctually observing the phenomenon of literacy in relation to the objectives on which such phenomenon is based – has given literacy a socially wider dimension. For this author, two models of literacy coexist in the academic environment: one is directed to the individual dimension; the other one is directed to the social dimension. The former has been named autonomous literacy, which we consider, in this study, as single-voiced literacy, resuming the Bakhtinian reflections on dialogicity. The latter – ideological or double-voiced literacy – is one in

¹⁹ See footnote 12.

²⁰Text in original: “[...] separar os estudos sobre o impacto social da escrita dos estudos sobre alfabetização” (KLEIMAN, 1995, p.15).

which subjects are constituted as literate upon the dialogicity of the action of inscribing themselves in the experienced world. In the conception of autonomous literacy, the idea of learning how to read and write is a reductionist process, in which writing is seen as a product that completes itself. Consequently, reading is centered only on the text, and the subject-reader, in turn, does not consider the social-historical context of the textual production. We can understand that, in this sense, dialogic relationships of utterances are not made effective in the actions of teaching how to read and write, as language would be regarded as object. According to Bakhtin (1999, p.183, emphasis in the original),²¹ dialogic communication constitutes the “authentic sphere where language *lives*. The entire life of language, in any area of its use (in everyday life, in business, scholarship, art and so forth), is permeated with dialogic relationships.”

Apart from the problem of reducing the act of reading to the mere decoding of symbols or to an objectified action, without considering the social-historical context of production, the model of autonomous literacy dichotomizes two fundamental process of interaction among subjects: speaking and writing. As stated by Brito (1998), such dichotomy is not solid, as orality and writing supplement each other in interaction, in a multiplicity of situations in which they are inserted, in order for them to perform several daily activities. From such conception of language, subjects construct and reconstruct a number of activities in the dynamicity and instability of social-historical relations (SANTOS, 2007). We shall look into that in the activities proposed by the undergraduate student, in which she “claims” the voice of the subject as social activity and as response of her possible authorship.

The ideological model of literacy, also proposed by Street (1984), is resumed and defined by Buzato (2007, p.153) as

social, plural and situated practices, which combined orality and writing in different ways, in events of different nature, and whose effects or consequences depend on the type of practice and on the specific purposes they have.²²

²¹ See footnote 17.

²² Text in original: “[...] práticas sociais, plurais e situadas, que combinam oralidade e escrita de formas diferentes em eventos de natureza diferente, e cujos efeitos ou consequências são condicionados pelo tipo de prática e pelas finalidades específicas a que se destinam” (BUZATO, 2007, p.153).

Such literacy perspective contemplates, then, the social demands required by subjects in social actions. Because of that, it also contemplates the idea of a plural literacy or literacies. Plural literacy is anchored in the conception of the ideological model, which does not limit the idea of literacy to writing. Besides, it is not a single-voiced action, as it establishes itself in a dialogic action of responsiveness. From this perspective, “orality and writing always appear to be interwoven. Different linguistic codes/registers and semiotic modalities are mixed, in such a way that the meanings of writing are interactively negotiated, despite the written nature of the text” (BUZATO, 2007, p.152).²³

The concepts of events and literacy practices are associated with the ideological concept of literacy, which imbricates orality and writing. Moreover, the double-voiced or dialogic subject is inserted. The events correspond to all “situations in which writing is an essential part, in order for the situation to make sense, both in relation to the interaction among the participants, and in relation to the interpretative processes and strategies.”²⁴ (KLEIMAN, 1995, p.40). Literacy practices are cultural patterns of reading and writing that people use in specific situations of their daily lives. (BARTON; HAMILTON, 2000). Such actions are incorporated in the practical daily lives of subjects. As stated by Giddens (1990), the daily life in contemporary times reveals a need to move on and to do practical things, and generates a notion of fate as “a feeling that things will take their own course anyway, thus reappear at the core of a world which is supposedly taking rational control of its own affairs” (GIDDENS, 1990, p.133).²⁵

As a consequence, it is relevant to investigate if literacy practices at schools have enabled the participating subjects to explore the potentialities for life in society in an active and responsive way, according to Bakhtinian terms (BAKHTIN, 1999; BAKHTIN, 2007; VOLOŠINOV, 2000).²⁶ Thus, considering that the use of language is consolidated in verbal interaction, which is mediated by the production of meaning

²³ Text in original: “[...] oralidade e escrita aparecem sempre entremeadas, diferentes códigos/ registros linguísticos e modalidades semióticas se misturam, de modo que os sentidos da escrita são negociados interativamente, a despeito da natureza escrita do texto”. (BUZATO, 2007, p.152)

²⁴ Text in original: “as situações em que a escrita constitui parte essencial para fazer sentido da situação, tanto em relação à interação entre os participantes como em relação aos processos e estratégias interpretativas”. (KLEIMAN, 1995, p.40).

²⁵ See footnote 5.

²⁶ See footnotes 17; 12; 3.

effects among the subjects involved in a certain context, the school classroom is a crucial space²⁷ as a literacy agency. The school discourses, therefore, demand meaning effects which suggest reflexive research on such action. We understand that several dialogic orientations are present in the action of developing academic research, in the interactions established in the process of orientation, where the comprehension of the utterance reflects and refracts meanings in the formulation of papers by undergraduate students in the construction of their professional subjectivities. “To understand another person's utterance means to orient oneself with respect to it, to find the proper place for it in the corresponding context” (VOLOŠINOV, 2000, p.102).²⁸

We consider, therefore, that this space of discursive mediation, found in possible research contexts in the academic world, may reveal itself as initiator in teaching practices in the initial teacher education, upon the occasion of the formation of the responsiveness subject. The school/academy is the contextual space from which discourses emerge – discourses which are concomitant with tradition and innovation. Accordingly, in the classroom there is the possibility for the subject to become literate. Furthermore, in the classroom of teacher education programs, such literacy contributes to the constitution of a reflexive and responsive teacher, as he/she can re-experience his/her own meanings²⁹ and pedagogical actions, and reconstruct them in the theoretical-practical reflections of a posture which is accepted to be one of alterity in research. From such perspective, we then present the context in which the study was conducted. We also reflect on methodological actions.

2 Contextualizing the Study

The idea of plural literacy, already mentioned in this article, refers to several specifications of literacy, and it considers the social-historical contexts and the social

²⁷We conceive space as defined by De Certeau (2002, p.202-3). By establishing the difference between place and space, the author states that the place is the order that determines the distribution of elements, which are beside one another, in a proper and stable location; space presupposes mobility, “it is the effect produced by the operations that orient it.”

²⁸ See footnote 3.

²⁹ The Bakhtinian notion of meaning goes beyond the usage of the word in that: “emotion, evaluation, and expression are foreign to the word of language and are born only in the process of its live usage in a concrete utterance, The meaning of a word in itself (unrelated to actual reality) is, as we have already said, out of the range of emotion” (BAKHTIN, 2007, p.87; see footnote 12).

demands stemming from such relationships. It also considers dialogicity and the comprehension connected therewith. As an example, we can mention school literacy, academic literacy, digital literacy, among others. We focus our analysis on school and academic literacies, from the dialogic perspective. We adopt, as object of study, the first version³⁰ of a School Final Paper of an undergraduate student in the Language Course. As the object of study results from school experiences, it is necessary to understand school literacy. According to Bunzen (2010, p.101), it refers to

social-cultural, historical and socially-variable practices, which have a strong relation to the process of formal learning of reading and writing, transmission of knowledge and (re) appropriation of discourses.³¹

From our perspective, this process of transmitting knowledge, and re-appropriating and producing other discourses, can only take place in a significant way if subjects are active and responsive in social practices, whether or not such practices are school-related. The word is only constituted as utterance when it is laden with meaning and when it is associated to an active attitude (BAKHTIN, 2007, VOLOŠINOV, 2000).³² In teacher education courses, in this paper specifically for Language Courses, this literacy should provide, to future teachers, more than a range of knowledge that goes from the theoretical-methodological choice to evaluation processes. It should also provide the possibility for effective teaching actions, as there seem to be, more often than not, two poles in education programs: theory and method. It is even more serious “when these two poles are mutually excluding, i.e., the 'what' and the 'how' are sought. These two cumulative processes of seeing the learning process simplifies the act in two fields that experience the old poles: theory and practice” (SOUTO MAIOR, 2013a, p.73).³³ Finally, still according to the author, we consider that both elements in the

³⁰We chose the first version because it was still a text with the student's reflections that had not been revised and evaluated by her supervisor. Therefore, from our point of view, it consists in a text in which the reflections of the student about her own practice as a teacher are expressed without evaluations. It has, then, more individual marks.

³¹ Text in original: “[...] práticas socioculturais, histórica e socialmente variáveis, que possuem uma forte relação com os processos de aprendizagem formal da leitura e da escrita, transmissão de conhecimentos e (re) apropriação de discursos” (BUNZEN, 2010, p.101).

³² See footnotes 12; 3.

³³ Text in original: “[...] quando esses dois pólos são excludentes entre si, ou seja, busca-se ou ‘o quê’ ou ‘o como’. A questão é que esses dois processos cumulativos de ver o ensino simplifica o ato em dois campos que vivenciam os velhos: teoria e prática” (SOUTO MAIOR, 2013a, p.73).

teaching process, even if they supplement each other, do not answer more contemporary questions, which are contained in the *Why*. It is in the why that we find the historical and complex incompleteness of the contextualization of knowing. We reflect on this from the discourse perspective, as the didactic discourse is associated with the scientific one; its goal is “transmitting” knowledge to an institutionally defined group, which is introduced in a scientific field. However, in this context, we observe that with

certain elaborations of knowledge about language, another world is created – a parallel world of action, an uninhabited world, constructed by amorphous systems of an essence of mechanical life. Such world, which is not the everyday world, the experienced world, feeds itself and creates links of meanings, which are related to the effective practices by internal connection (SOUTO MAIOR, 2013b, p.36).³⁴

Accordingly, reflections of this literacy can be noticed in the discourses, in practices and in productions of students in teacher education programs. This allows us to identify such reflections, through formal, institutionalized productions, such as the TCC, which is an element of academic literacy. According to Lorgus (2009, p.41), academic literacy is expressed by literacy skills, associated by the structures of values that support them. Hence, the TCC, as a representation of academic literacy, may be used as a discursive genre that reflects this constructed knowledge, which would be associated with a certain sphere of knowledge production in the academy. For instance, in the teacher education course, the TCC can reveal whether or not the guidelines (theoretical, methodological, dialogic) adopted correspond to a perspective of literacy in the education of a reflexive and responsive teacher.

As stated by Lüdke & André (1986), conducting research depends on confrontation among data, on evidence and information collected about a certain subject, and also on the accumulated theoretical knowledge about such subject. Generally, it starts with a case study which arouses the researcher's interest and also limits his/her activity to a certain portion of knowledge, which the researcher commits to construct from a certain moment on. However, in order for this to happen, it is

³⁴ Text in original: “[...] determinadas elaborações de conhecimento sobre a linguagem, cria-se, por vezes, outro mundo de ação paralelo, mundo desabitado, mundo construído por sistemas amorfos de uma essência de vida mecânica. Esse mundo, que não é o do cotidiano, que não é o mundo vivido, se retroalimenta e cria elos de significações que se relacionam às práticas vigentes por sua ligação interna” (SOUTO MAIOR, 2013b, p.36).

necessary for this researcher – this student being qualified – to be literate in the aspects regarding his/her area. That is where school and academic literacies play their role. The reflection of such literacy is presented in the final product – the text –, which informs the types of literacy events to which the students in teacher education courses are exposed, and the implications involved.

Accordingly, the undergraduate student in focus had a privileged situation in comparison with other students, as she began to go through experiences in several literacy events, both in the undergraduate course, as a student, and as a PIBID researcher in educational process. She participated in several different events, oriented by her professor-supervisor, both in the academic sphere (seminars, presentation of papers in congresses, elaboration of essays) and at school (lesson planning, elaboration of pedagogical projects, elaboration of field notes and reports – to be handed in to the PIBID supervisor). Although the focus of the research developed by this student was the production of her final paper (TCC) from theoretical reflections and from expositions to situations/problems, her supervisor did not expose her to knowledge without reflection. The same conduct was adopted by the student with Elementary School students, as presented next in this paper.

3 Analyzing Responsiveness of Teaching Practice

The discussion proposed herein is based on data presented by the Language Course undergraduate student Eduarda³⁵ in her Final Paper (TCC). Such data were taken from the student's experience as a researcher of PIBID (Institutional Grant Program for Beginning Teachers), financed by CAPES. At the Federal University of Alagoas, the subproject developed by the group Letras/Ufal started its activities in 2010, and ever since, has had, as its main focus, the constitution of teachers and students as readers and text producers, from a literacy perspective.³⁶ Therefore, she is a teacher with

³⁵ In order to preserve the identity of the subjects, the names presented in the analysis are fictitious.

³⁶ As already mentioned, the subproject developed from 2010 to 2014 was entitled "A formação inicial dos professores de Língua Portuguesa em contextos de leitura e produção de textos." ("The initial education of teachers of the Portuguese Language, in the context of reading and text production"). In 2014, as a continuance of the previous subproject, another project was approved - "Letramentos e formação de professores no PIBID." ("Literacy and teacher education in PIBID"), in which some proposals of the previous subproject were reexamined.

an initial education according to which reading and writing are conceived as historically situated practices.

The conception of reading and writing as discursive practices is evident throughout the whole analysis conducted by Eduarda, starting from her interest in the theme she chose to research about: “the ethos of the student considered undisciplined.”³⁷ It is not a theme which is limited to questions that are strictly linguistic. The purpose of her paper is, on the one hand, to observe discursive practices that compose the teaching process in the classroom, and, on the other hand, promote the linguistic-discursive development of students by means of social practice (KLEIMAN, 1995). This concern about correlating questions related to the students' lives with the activities proposed at school permeated the study conducted in the subproject of PIBID/Letras. Eduarda expresses this concern when she justifies her choice and the importance of her study:

Excerpt 1:

Reflecting about this question, it is understood that the students' indiscipline is not random, just like the ethos they assume in the classroom. Such indiscipline may have, as motivation, the guidelines adopted by the teacher and/or coordinator and/or principal of the school, as well as the idea people have about them. [...] Besides, the research may make contributions for us, as future teachers, to reflect on pedagogical practices in the classroom, considering that the constitution of the students' ethos also depends on the method we choose to provide meaningful learning, especially for those students about whom there are no expectations of personal development, due to their behavior. (Eduarda)

In the statement above, Eduarda calls attention to the need for the guidelines she adopts as a teacher to be in harmony with the students' reality. She constitutes herself in alterity. Furthermore, she expresses the will to accomplish something that goes beyond the school context, when she pursues, through her study, to comprehend the indiscipline of some students, so they will not, according to her, “be placed on the margin of society, due to excluding practices, for example, those of selective character.” The teachers' responsibility to promote changes in the students' lives is acknowledged, in a double-voiced or dialogic action. There is also acknowledgment of the teachers' responsibility to construct a pedagogical proposal, in which both he/she and the students can respond

³⁷ Based on the concept by Amossy (2008), the student understands ethos as the image revealed by subjects during the interactive process.

actively to the practices of the classroom. We should notice that the choice of methodology needs to be meaningful so that the learning can occur accordingly. Thus, theory and practice do not constitute two poles, according to Souto Maior (2013a), nor can the teachers' commitment to pedagogical practices be detached from social practices.

We consider that one of the biggest problems to be faced in professional education in general is the discontinuity that persists between professional objectives and social demands, which is a consequence of the exacerbation of one of the elements of the risk profile of contemporary times. According to Giddens (1990, p.133),³⁸ this risk profile propels us towards a sense of “fate” which is: “a vague and generalized sense of trust in distant events, over which one has no control [...]” Such feeling would relieve the subject, as stated by Giddens, from “the burden of engagement,” which promotes, in turn, numbness towards life. We observe that, in the literacy for the reflexive and responsive education, or in the dialogicity literacy, there is a tendency to raise awareness of the subject of his/her context, in a movement that considers the voices of society – exteriorized and apprehended – as ideological material. Consequently, these voices reveal the double-voiced characteristic of situations. When the teacher in education programs assumes the unfinished status of his/her research, he/she also assumes the possibility for authorship of others outside him/her (his/her “others”) who exotopically³⁹ constitute him/her as subject. Eduarda's education in the context of PIBID/Letras seems to be characterized as such.

Moved by the will to construct her pedagogical practice from the observations in the context of her actions, and expressing her will to constitute herself as a responsive subject, Eduarda reports, in several passages of her analysis, the orientations she adopted during the Portuguese Language classes (along with Clara, a researcher who was working with her), so she could understand the reason for the indiscipline of a certain group of students. She dedicated attention to such students, allowing them to express themselves in reading and writing workshops – an active position that was

³⁸ See footnote 5.

³⁹ Exotopy is a concept that permeates all the works and reflections by Bakhtin. It also permeates the Bakhtin Circle. According to the author, “one cannot see even really see one's own exterior and comprehend it as a whole, and no mirrors or photographs can help; our real exterior can be seen and understood only by other people, because they are located outside us in space and because they are *others*” (BAKHTIN, 2007, p.7, emphasis in the original; see footnote 12).

rather different from that which was generally pre-constructed by the school, in that context. However, beforehand she had conducted a meticulous observation of each student, in order to better understand each of them, like her description of the student Ana, in her field notes, during the classes taught by teacher Marta⁴⁰:

Excerpt 2:

The student Ana does not interact with the other students in any way. Sitting at the corner, she has her head down and her arms crossed. Due to her way of speaking (at certain moments), she presents herself as a rude, disobedient, even irreverent. For each question she is asked, she always “brushes me off.” She does not seem interested in changing her behavior in the classroom. She shows indifference, as she does not do the activities (Field note, written by Clara and Eduarda, on June 15th, 2012).

By means of detailed procedure observations, Eduarda attempted to understand the conduct of each student, especially of those who were the subjects of her research. Subjects were conceived as heterogeneous, polyphonic,⁴¹ and, therefore, subjects who presented differentiated responses.

Based on the comprehension of the possible reasons for the students' indiscipline, during the reading and writing workshops, Eduarda and Clara conducted the work, in such a way that all students had the opportunity to actively and responsively participate. They were incited with questions, presented with discussions and stimulated to express themselves orally. Orality, as developed in the reflections herein, was considered fundamental in the process of literacy, which is double-voiced. On one of such occasions, in a workshop whose theme was “That's how I am,” Eduarda asked Ana a question, but Ana reacted with indifference. However, as Eduarda had already adopted an understanding posture towards Ana's attitudes, she presents the following reflection:

Excerpt 3:

As the workshop developed, we noticed that Ana, discreetly, paid attention to the discussions made by the researchers, and also to the moment with music and

⁴⁰ Marta was the teacher of the Portuguese Language in the group where Eduarda and Clara acted as PIBID researchers.

⁴¹ Polyphony is defined as “a plurality of independent and unmerged voices and consciousness” (BAKHTIN, M. *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota press, 1984, p.6; emphasis in the original)

reading, related to the theme of the workshop. When she was asked a question, however, the student talked back “Gee, why are you asking me” or “I don’t know. Ask those who know.” She spoke as if she were upset, although she was not. With her words, it was possible to notice that, implicitly, the teacher’s tone was shown through the voice of the student, who put herself in a position of not knowing anything, as there were “those who knew,” i.e., students who were considered disciplined. They were the ones who would know how to answer. Even though the student reacted like that, the researchers did not refrain from bringing her to the discussion. On the contrary, she and the rest of the class were called equally. When she noticed that, Ana seemed surprised, but kept resisting in certain moments, as she did not want her reaction to show.

In this data analysis presented in the TCC, Eduarda acknowledges the importance of insisting, so that Ana would be involved and would show, effectively, a responsive attitude which was different from the one imposed by the school. In light of that, Eduarda and Clara established dialogic spaces with the students. Eduarda constitutes herself by alterity in relation to the dialogic discourses that permeate her actions, as she is determined to enable Ana, as well as the other students who were considered undisciplined, to show another posture as an active subject in that context. According to Bakhtin (1998), “every word is directed toward an answer and cannot escape the profound influence of the answering word that it anticipates” (p.280).⁴² The teacher cannot escape such influence either. Looking into the situation, we notice that Eduarda demonstrates persistence as to the objective to develop a literacy practice, even when students offer resistance, as she states:

Excerpt 4:

When I gave the worksheets to the students, on which they would draw or write, the student [Ana] immediately said she would not do anything. This, however, was not said out loud. It was only said to the researcher Eduarda who, nevertheless, put a blank worksheet on the student’s desk. After a few moments, the student looked at the worksheet several times. Then she started writing. She was one of the last students to hand in the paper. When she did, she said she had decided to do the assignment because she really liked writing.

In this statement, Ana seems to acknowledge that Eduarda is building a differentiated interaction in the group, and she decides to write, fulfilling the purpose

⁴² BAKHTIN, M. Discourse in the Novel. In: _____ *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*. Transl. from Russian by Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1998, p.259-422.

that had been presented for the assignment. She even stated that it was something she enjoyed doing (that was a totally new piece of information, as she had refused to write during teacher Marta's classes). In the text, she discloses a conflicting characterization, veiled by the undisciplined behavior during the classes. Ana then defines herself in the text:

Text 1:

I see myself as a loving person, full of dreams (...). A girl who struggles to get what she wants (...). A girl who has nobody to say how I feel, what I am and how I will change my ways (...) They see me as a complicated girl, full of flaws, full of mistakes (...) I am afraid of being like my father. He was absent in my life, but I don't want to be absent. That is how I see myself. (Ana's account, in the workshop called "That's how I am," on June 20th, 2012).

Eduarda's insistence for Ana to awake for the class participation, and, consequently, for social practices in general, certainly happened only because her posture as a teacher was founded on a dialogic conception of the teaching and learning process. Through such process teachers and student can construct possibilities that are different from those determined by official parameters and guidelines. By violating a concept of reading and writing as reproduction, Eduarda generated conditions for Ana to reflect on her self-discriminatory image. Therefore, in her educational process, she seems to understand that a researcher's responsiveness lies in the acknowledgment that her work reflects and refracts an individual-collective action, which restructures the knowledge of the world, and opens up new forms of knowing and acting in life.

The posture undertaken by Ana reveals the importance of conceptions that supported the teachers' conduct in literacy events. By conceiving each student as a historical subject, constituted by heterogeneous and, sometimes, stigmatizing voices, Eduarda invests in the alternative to transform reading and writing activities into effective spaces of reflection, and she motivates students to produce other stories about themselves. The approach underlying this practice is one in which the researcher considers his/her positions in alterity of the experienced situation, assuming "the other" of research. This other is "another look," it is "the other subject," the "the other way to comprehend." We consider such posture to be necessary in order to think of teaching practices as responsive, in the Undergraduate Language Course.

Final Considerations

The reflections presented by Eduarda in the first version of her TCC allows us to reaffirm the need for changes in the curriculum of Undergraduate Language Courses, so that it will be actually possible to provide beginning students with the responsive learning in literacy environments, even in their initial education. Accordingly, these students can learn to exercise a responsive understanding about their pedagogical actions. In the analysis of the data presented herein, Eduarda shows, in the actions developed with the students, that the pedagogical guidelines, which were centered on a concept of literacy, made a difference in her own education, during her work as a PIBID researcher. With the practice of research, she identifies which discursive activities developed at schools allowed her to activate potentialities to assume a professional conduct, in an active and responsive way, considering the students' will to learn. Two responses presented by her in the PIBID evaluation questionnaires summarize her comprehension about her constitution as subject in her relationship with others, in a continuous process of (re)discoveries, as well as about the development of teaching practices that promote the constitution of meanings for her and for the students, in connection with different social practices. In the 2011 evaluation, she states that the “contact with the students has made me learn new things and find out that I am capable of acting with a differentiated practice (of interaction with students), even if there are a lot of people who do not believe it.” In the 2013 evaluation, she states:

PIBID provides us with an extremely important experience: the initial contact with the classroom, with the students, with the schools, making us reflect on pedagogical practices, and specially on being a teacher, and on the responsibility that this choice entails.

In these statements, it is evident why Eduarda keeps a distance from teaching practices of the Portuguese Language which focus on repetitive, homogenizing grammar content. She chooses teaching practices that are connected with social practices and, therefore, she acts as a literacy agent and is characterized as a teacher with an education that has provided her with conditions to actively respond to the

determinations of contemporary life, due to her insertion in research. It allowed her to correlate theoretical knowledge and pedagogical practices.

REFERENCES

BAKHTIN, M. O discurso no romance. In: BAKHTIN, M. *Questões de literatura e de estética. A teoria do romance*. 4. ed. Trad. Aurora Fornoni, José Pereira Jr et al. São Paulo: UNESP: Hucitec, 1998, p.71-210.

_____. O autor e a personagem na atividade estética. In: BAKHTIN, M. *Estética da criação verbal*. 4. ed. Trad. Paulo Bezerra. São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 2003, p.3-193.

_____. Os gêneros do discurso. BAKHTIN, M. *Estética da criação verbal*. 4. ed. Trad. Paulo Bezerra. São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 2003, p.261-306.

_____. Os estudos literários hoje. BAKHTIN, M. *Estética da criação verbal*. 4. ed. Trad. Paulo Bezerra. São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 2003, p.359-366.

_____. *Problemas da poética de Dostoiévski*. 3. ed. Trad. Paulo Bezerra. Rio de Janeiro: Forense Universitária, 2005.

_____. *O Freudismo: um esboço crítico*. Trad. Paulo Bezerra. São Paulo: Perspectiva, 2007.

BAKHTIN, M. (VOLOCHÍNOV, V. N.). *Marxismo e filosofia da linguagem. Problemas fundamentais do método sociológico na ciência da linguagem*. 11. ed. Trad. Michel Lahud e Yara Frateschi Vieira. São Paulo: Hucitec, 2004.

BARTON, D., HAMILTON, M. *Situated Literacies: Reading and Writing in Context*. London: Routledge, 2000.

BRITO, P. L. *Leitor interdito*. In: MARINHO, M. *Leituras do professor*. Campinas: Mercado de Letras, 1998.

BUZATO, M. K. *Entre a fronteira e a periferia: linguagem e letramento na inclusão digital*. Instituto de Estudos da Linguagem. Campinas: Unicamp, 2007 [Tese de doutorado].

DE CERTEAU, M. *A invenção do cotidiano: Artes de fazer*. Petrópolis: Vozes, 2002.

GIDDENS, A. *As consequências da Modernidade*. São Paulo: Editora UNESP, 1991.

GNERRE, M. *Linguagem, escrita e poder*. 4. ed. São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 1998.

KLEIMAN, A. Modelos de letramento e as práticas de alfabetização na escola. In: KLEIMAN, A. (org.). *Os significados do letramento: uma nova perspectiva sobre a prática social da escrita*. Campinas: Mercado de Letras, 1995.

KLEIMAN, A. Letramento e formação do professor: quais as práticas e exigências no local de trabalho? In: KLEIMAN, A. *A formação do professor: perspectivas da linguística aplicada*. Campinas: Mercado de Letras, 2001.

KLEIMAN, A. Processos identitários na formação profissional: o professor como agente de letramento. In: CORRÊA, M. L. G. e BOCH, F. (orgs.). *Ensino de língua: representação e letramento*. Campinas: Mercado de Letras, 2006.

- LIMA, A. C. S. de e SOUTO MAIOR, R. de C. *Responsividade e discursos envolventes: observando o ensino e aprendizagem de Língua Portuguesa*. In: *Eutomia* (Recife), v. 2, p.394-413, 2012.
- LORGUS, A. L. *O TCC como reflexo do letramento acadêmico dos alunos de graduação em Design da Universidade Regional de Blumenau*. Programa de Pós-graduação em Educação da Universidade Regional de Blumenau, 2009. [Dissertação de mestrado].
- LÜDKE, M. & ANDRÉ, M. E. D. A. *A pesquisa em educação: abordagens qualitativas*. São Paulo: EPU, 1986.
- PIMENTA, S. G.; GHEDIN, E. (orgs.). *Professor reflexivo no Brasil: gênese e crítica de um conceito*. São Paulo: Cortez, 2002.
- MAGALHÃES, L. Modelos de educação continuada: os diferentes sentidos na formação reflexiva do professor. In KLEIMAN A. *A formação do professor: perspectivas da linguística aplicada*. Campinas: Mercado de letras, 2001.
- SANTOS, L. de F. *Produção de textos na universidade: em busca de atitudes ativas e táticas*. 2007. 250 f. (Doutorado em Linguística) Universidade Federal de Alagoas, Maceió.
- SCHÖN, D. *Educando o profissional reflexivo: um novo design para o ensino e a aprendizagem*. Porto Alegre: Artes Médicas, 2000.
- SOARES, M. *Letramento: um tema em três gêneros*. Belo Horizonte: Autêntica, 1998.
- SOUTO MAIOR, R. de C. Conversando com a Professora Rita Souto Maior. In: Kleber Aparecido da Silva; Rodrigo Camargo Aragão (Orgs.). *Conversas com formadores de professores de línguas: avanços e desafios*. São Paulo: Pontes, 2013a.
- SOUTO MAIOR, R. de C. Pensamento bakhtiniano nos estudos da linguagem: a ação do pesquisador como ato responsável. *Revista Polifonia* (UFMT) v. 20, p.31-53, 2013b.
- STREET, Brian. *Literacy in Theory and Practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984.
- VÓVIO, C., SITO, L. e DE GRANDE, P. (orgs.). *Letramentos: rupturas, deslocamentos e repercussões em Linguística Aplicada*. Campinas: Mercado de Letras, 2010.
- ZABALA, A. *A prática educativa: como ensinar*. Porto Alegre: Artmed, 1998.

Translated by Raquel D'Elboux Couto Nunes – rdelbouxnunes@gmail.com

*Received April 28, 2014
Accepted October 30, 2014*