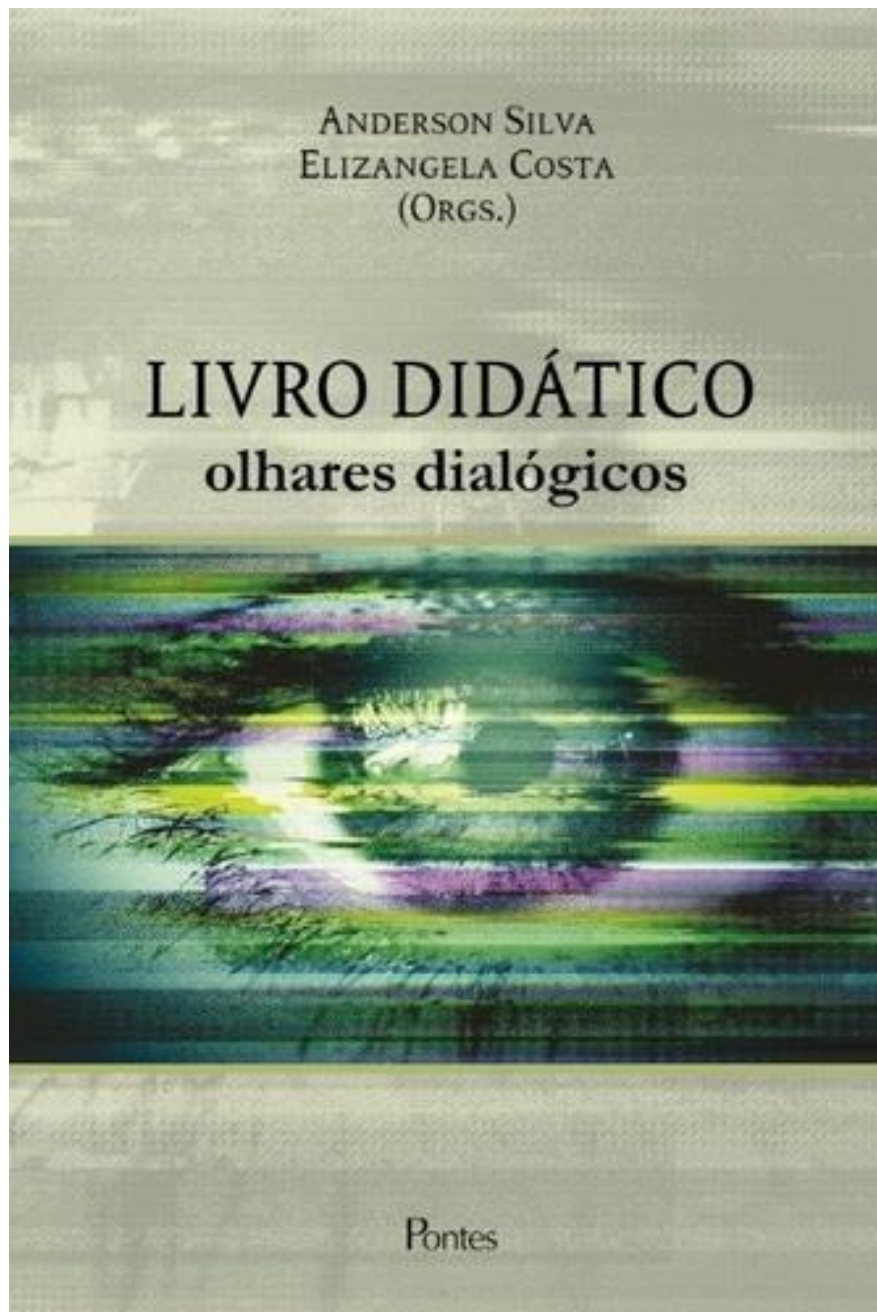


SILVA, A.; COSTA, E. (Orgs.). *Livro didático: olhares dialógicos* [Textbook: Dialogical Views]. Campinas, SP: Pontes Editores, 2017. 169 p.

*Fernanda Taís Brignol Guimarães**



* Centro Universitário Ritter dos Reis – UniRitter, Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil; CAPES/PROSUC, Proc.88887.148376/2017-00; <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9862-5137>; fernandabage@hotmail.com

Dialogical Analysis of Discourse - DAD, based on the writings of the Russian philosopher Mikhail Bakhtin and his Circle (V. Vološinov and P. Medvedev), brings together a complex set of thoughts and ideas concerning language functioning. Due to the diversity of themes and concepts discussed herein, this dialogical analysis can be considered neither purely linguistic, nor purely sociological, but as a philosophy of language.

Although the Russian philosopher focused his efforts on understanding language by taking the aesthetic work as his object of analysis, his theoretical contribution has been a rich source of linguistic investigation about the most different objects and phenomena, based on which it is possible to understand and/or explain the socio-historical-ideological network that constitutes language in its most varied forms: verbal, visual, sonorous, among others. The concepts of dialogism, polyphony, enunciation and concrete utterance, genres of discourse, carnivalization, architectonics and ideology are just some of the basic themes of the Bakhtinian work, which, according to Sobral (2009, p.106), formulates “more than an aesthetic theory, a theory of culture,” which may well be understood as an “aesthetic-cultural theory” or a “sociological poetry.”¹

It is in this scenario that the collection *Livro didático: olhares dialógicos* [*Textbook: Dialogical Views*] appears. It is organized by Anderson Silva and Elizangela Costa and brings the results of different Master’s and Doctoral research studies² whose theoretical framework was based on the dialogical concept of language. In all, five investigations from different approaches to textbooks are presented. In the book presentation, *Enfrentando o livro didático dentro e fora da sala de aula* [*Facing Textbooks Inside and Outside the Classroom*], Beth Brait outlines each of these studies and points to the importance of publishing academic research so that its results are not restricted to the defense committee members and advisors, remaining only in university libraries in digital or paper format. The desire for the dissemination of these important studies motivated the book’s authors and editors to seek greater visibility of the results of their research, thus allowing them to be known outside the university. According to

¹ In the original: “mais do que uma teoria estética, uma teoria da cultura”; “teoria estético-cultural”; “poética sociológica.”

² The entire research was supervised by Dr. Beth Brait at LAEL/PUC-SP, and the authors were student members of the *Language, Identity and Memory* Research Group/PUC-SP/CNPq.

Brait, this collection “seeks to interconnect textbooks and the dialogical analysis of discourse” (p.13),³ as attested by the description of each study below.

The first study, entitled *Um edital de compra de livro didático e sua arena discursiva* [A Public Call for Textbook Purchase and its Discursive Arena], authored by Maria Tereza Rangel Arruda Campos, presents part of the results from her Master’s thesis, in which she investigates the context of textbook production from a detailed analysis regarding the different voices found in a public call for the purchase of Portuguese language high school textbooks in 2005. Campos focuses, mainly, on the clash of voices that involves literature teaching, taking a dialogical angle at the controversies involved in this issue. The study demonstrates how a document, which tends to be objective - at least that is what we believe they are - can create a discursive arena, filled with voices that complement each other, oppose each other, become controversial. These voices are able to revalue much more than the information necessary for textbook evaluations and purchases. As she indicates, there is a clash of ideologies and interest in the public call, which involves “publishers, teachers, principals, students’ parents, students themselves, academics and the Ministry of Education agents, who establish a lively debate, indicating some important directions for public policies that focus on Brazilian education” (p.37).⁴

The next study, *Um zoom na imagem: verbo-visualidade em livros didáticos* [An Image Zoom: Verbal-Visuality in Textbooks], by Elizangela Costa, presents part of the research developed in her doctoral studies, completed in 2006. From what she calls ‘the first image zoom,’ a metaphor chosen to call data approximation in the search of answers to her research questions, Costa investigates how verbal-visual utterances are approached in Portuguese language textbooks and in what way this approach contributes or not to the development of critical readers. After outlining the dialogical theory of language, the theoretical reference that underpins her research, she addresses issues related to textbooks and the approach adopted by the National Curriculum Parameters for the Portuguese Language (NCPPL). Only then does she analyze verbal-visual utterances in the selected books.

³ In the original: “procura interligar livro didático e análise dialógica do discurso.”

⁴ In the original: “editoras, professores, diretores, pais de alunos, os próprios alunos, acadêmicos e agentes do Ministério da Educação, que estabelecem um debate vivo, o qual coloca em jogo alguns rumos importantes das políticas públicas voltadas à educação brasileira.”

Eight textbooks were analyzed. They are part of two different book collections, namely, *Português: para viver juntos* [*Portuguese: To Live Together*] and *Português: linguagens* [*Portuguese: Languages*]. Costa mapped out not only the visual and verbal-visual discourse genres but also the texts in the textbooks in order to understand their place in the books and how they are mobilized during reading activities. The results revealed a low incidence of verbal-visual genres and the existence of a low diversity of these genres, which is aggravated by the fact that they are rarely found in the reading activities. According to Costa, this scenario can be explained by the fact that the NCPPL do not take into account the study of and the strategies on reading verbal-visual utterances, and that the marketing and production forces, in a way, surpass teaching goals, when the opposite should be seen.

The third study presented, entitled *Sinais de pontuação: documentos oficiais e livros didáticos em diálogo* [*Punctuation Marks: Official Documents and Textbooks in Dialogue*], is based on Anderson Silva's doctoral dissertation. It demonstrates how the teaching of punctuation marks in textbooks refers to issues related to literacy and authorship. The researcher begins by discussing the Circle's concept of concrete utterances; then, he analyzes grammar teaching (and more specifically, punctuation teaching) recommendations found in Brazilian official documents, which are used as the basis for creating teaching proposals that comprise textbooks. Applying, therefore, dialogic lenses, the researcher conducts a detailed study on punctuation in 16 collections from 2011 to 2013, approved by the National Textbook Program - PNLD of 2010 (Elementary School - Final Years).

Based on the dialogue between official documents and textbooks, Silva concluded that the quality of teaching materials plays an important role in Brazilian education results. In addition, Silva noted that "there are many general guidelines on grammar teaching available, but there is nothing specifically, for example, on punctuation marks" (p.101).⁵ Silva points to a possible solution to the problem, that is, the initiative, through PNE (BRASIL, 2014) at the time, to establish a National Common Base, which would indicate national minimum contents to work as guidelines for the elaboration of new textbook calls and, consequently, textbook proposals.

⁵ In the original: "que há diretrizes mais gerais sobre o ensino da gramática, mas nada sobre conteúdos específicos, caso, por exemplo, dos sinais de pontuação."

The fourth study, entitled *Análise do artigo de opinião em livros didáticos* [Analysis of Opinion Articles in Textbooks], by Isabel Fernandes, presents the results of her Master's thesis. She investigated the displacement of the opinion genre from the journalistic sphere to the school sphere. Based on Bakhtinian concepts – in which genres are used according to their sphere of activity and with specific conditions of production and circulation, according to the purpose of each field/sphere of activity, in terms of thematic content, compositional form and style – Fernandes seeks to understand how this genre (opinion article), circulating in another sphere, is mobilized in teaching materials and in the school environment and what this genre displacement implies for the teaching of Brazilian Portuguese.

To do so, Fernandes conducts a detailed analysis of text production activities in three textbooks, which comprise discourse genre teaching. She concludes that the approach to this genre in the analyzed textbooks and, consequently, in the school sphere, fragments what is inseparable, that is, thematic content, compositional form and style. The study reveals that compositional construction is the center of reading and comprehension activities based on opinion articles, followed by language style and thematic content. For the researcher, it would be more productive to work with opinion articles “as concrete utterances, considered in their entirety, so that the text could be understood in its original sphere” (p.128).⁶ In addition, for Fernandes it is important that textbooks seek to “retrieve the context of production, circulation and reception of reading activities, which starts from the recognition of opinion articles in the journalistic sphere” (p.128).⁷

Finally, the fifth and final study is entitled *Autoria e concepção dialógica de discurso: um livro didático para universitários* [Authorship and the Dialogical Concept of Discourse: A Textbook for University Students]. It presents the results of Cláudia Garcia Cavalcante's doctoral dissertation. Her object of study is the textbook written for university students – PTEU, by Carlos Alberto Faraco and Cristovão Tezza, who are widely recognized as important scholars in Bakhtin and the Circle's oeuvre in Brazil. Based on the Bakhtinian concept of authorship, which distinguishes the author-person

⁶ In the original: “como enunciados concretos, considerados em sua totalidade, de modo que o texto pudesse ser compreendido em sua esfera de origem.”

⁷ In the original: “recuperar o contexto de produção, circulação e recepção nas atividades de leitura, partindo do reconhecimento do artigo de opinião na esfera jornalística.”

(empirical, physical author, to whom the work is attributed) from the author-creator (an axiological position, who architecturally organizes the discursive whole), Cavalcante analyzes the author-creator (Carlos Alberto Faraco and Cristovão Tezza), seeking to investigate whether the author, “a renowned scholar in Bakhtinian studies, promotes, in his textbook, a place for the construction of authorship and contributes to the teaching of writing to college students” (p.133).⁸ The focus of the analysis is Faraco and Tezza’s textbook presentation in two editions: the first in 1992 and the twentieth in 2001, taking into consideration the authors’ understanding of language (as a system), language (as means of communication) and teaching. In order to do so, Cavalcante presents the separate views of both editions, aiming to indicate the position from which the authors speak, that is, their socio-historical positions, acting in the authorial construction of the PTEU textbook.

Cavalcante’s results reveal that Faraco and Tezza’s textbook fulfills the objective of “distancing itself from frequent and common photocopied handouts” (p.160),⁹ which, as she points out, “in the authors’ view, are ineffective due to the lack of a consistent theoretical-methodological positioning on the concept of language (as a system), language (as means of communication) and teaching” (p.160).¹⁰ PTEU, as revealed by Cavalcante’s analysis, “has a participant addressee who is not only taken into account during the construction of this teaching utterance but also participates responsibly in the dialogue, through linguistic marks throughout the text” (p.162).¹¹ In addition, as Brait points out, “the text, as a teaching object, is presented as one of the most relevant topics, revealing a concept of text as a ‘discursive reality’” (p.15).¹²

Livro didático: olhares dialógicos [Textbook: Dialogical Views] is an important book that undoubtedly brings valuable contributions to those dedicated to studying language and who seek to understand how connecting dialogic theory and teaching is possible, since Bakhtin’s studies were not properly concerned with pedagogical

⁸ In the original: “comprovadamente bakhtiniano em sua obra teórica, promove, com seu livro didático, um espaço de construção de autoria e contribui para o ensino da escrita de estudantes universitários.”

⁹ In the original: “desvincular das tão frequentes e comuns apostilas xerocadas.”

¹⁰ In the original: “na visão do autor, mostravam-se ineficientes pela falta de um posicionamento teórico-metodológico consistente acerca do conceito de língua, linguagem e ensino.”

¹¹ In the original: “possui um destinatário participante que não apenas é levado em consideração na construção desse enunciado didático como participa do diálogo responsivamente por meio de marcas linguísticas ao longo do texto.”

¹² In the original: “o objeto de ensino texto é apresentado como um dos tópicos mais relevantes, revelando uma noção de texto como ‘realidade discursiva.’”

questions, but with a language philosophy. Using his complex thinking and understanding how to mobilize it in a productive manner regarding the analysis of teaching materials is not a simple task. This is what the five researchers in this collection do masterfully, choosing the textbook as the object of their investigations and casting a dialogical eye over different aspects that involve this object, which, as Brait warns, “has been produced in profusion in Brazil and, sometimes, without the results that Education would, in principle, expect of them” (p.7).¹³

In *Livro didático: olhares dialógicos* [*Textbook: Dialogical Views*] readers will find important answers to questions that, although are constantly debated in the Brazilian education scenario, have not yet been answered. This is, for example, the case of the approach given to specific contents, such as punctuation marks, or the approach to genre, as evidenced in studies on verbal-visual genres and opinion articles. In addition, they also encounter unimagined issues, due to the complexity of this context, as revealed by the study on the arena of voices found in a simple public call for textbook purchase, or the issue of authorship in the production of a textbook for university students written by authors considered important exponents of Bakhtin’s work in Brazil. Reading these texts will trigger readers’ curiosity to further their understanding of these studies in their entirety. In addition, in the case of researchers, who are always eager for answers, this allows them to understand a little of each research, thus helping them to make choices about the reading that may bring greater contributions to the solution of their own research problems.

The idea of collecting academic research studies for publication is a productive way to disclose important scientific discoveries, which can contribute significantly to society. However, as we know, they often remain within university walls. This is pointed out by Brait, when she begins the textbook presentation with the question, “How many dissertations and theses, which have taken years of research by their authors and advisors, lie forgotten on library shelves, whether virtual or not, whose only readers are the defense committee members?” (p.7).¹⁴ Therefore, the book reviewed herein is a proposal for this sad reality to cease to exist and for academic research to

¹³ In the original: “tem sido produzido em profusão no Brasil e, por vezes, sem os resultados que em princípio a Educação esperaria dele.”

¹⁴ In the original: “Quantas dissertações e teses, que consumiram anos de pesquisa de seus autores e orientadores, jazem esquecidas nas prateleiras das bibliotecas, virtuais ou não, sem ter mais que os componentes da banca de defesa como leitores?”

become more visible and fulfill its social role. *Livro didático: olhares dialógicos* [Textbook: Dialogical Views] lays the groundwork for other graduate research collections, and we hope that they can contribute enormously to the development of other scientific studies and to the dissemination of these studies inside and outside the academic world.

REFERENCES

SOBRAL, A. *Do dialogismo ao gênero: as bases do pensamento do círculo de Bakhtin*. Campinas, SP: Mercado de Letras, 2009.

Translated by Rachel Ann Hauser-Davis - rachel.hauser.davis@gmail.com

Received January 26, 2018

Accepted August 18, 2018