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Literary Readers' Education: Possible Dialogues between Conceptions of the Bakhtin Circle and Textbook Activities / *Formação de leitores literários: diálogos possíveis entre concepções do Círculo de Bakhtin e atividades de livros didáticos*

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ABSTRACT

This article summons the conceptions of the Bakhtin Circle to redesign literary reading activities proposed in Brazilian textbooks, making them more responsive to contemporary life. It is based on the concepts of *dialogism* and *responsiveness* and evokes such concepts to contribute to the perception of infertile use of the current activity model in the (literary) reader's formation. Besides, it points out possibilities to the elaboration of activities open to the dialogue of students/readers' experiences with literary texts as well as inviting to the expression of the students' active responsive attitudes towards literary reading. The article analyzes an activity based on a Camonian sonnet, which is present in one of the textbooks approved by the National Book and Teaching Material Program (Programa Nacional do Livro Didático - PNLD) 2018, in an attempt to contribute to the *unlearning* of practices regarding the approach to literary reading in school. Finally, the same Camonian sonnet is used to elaborate a set of activities grounded on dialogism and responsiveness.

KEYWORDS: Reader's education; Dialogism; Responsiveness; Textbook activities

RESUMO

Este artigo convoca as concepções do Círculo de Bakhtin para redesenhar atividades de leitura literária propostas em livro didático brasileiro, tornando-as mais responsivas à vida contemporânea. Tem como base os conceitos de dialogismo e de responsividade, evocados para contribuir com a percepção da infecundidade do uso do modelo de atividades vigente na formação de leitores (literários) e para apontar possibilidades na elaboração de atividades abertas ao diálogo das vivências dos alunos/leitores com os textos literários, bem como convidativas à expressão das atitudes responsivas ativas dos alunos frente à leitura literária. Uma atividade baseada em soneto camoniano, presente em livro didático aprovado pelo PNLD 2018, é analisada na tentativa de contribuir com a desaprendizagem de práticas referentes à abordagem da leitura literária na escola. Por fim, o mesmo soneto camoniano é abordado para elaboração de proposta de atividades pautada no dialogismo e na responsividade.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *Formação de leitores; Dialogismo; Responsividade; Atividades didáticas*

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Introduction

While researching on reading and comprehension activities in a textbook for the Brazilian Elementary School (NASCIMENTO, 2016), I was able to confirm that which my very experience with the teaching of reading revealed to me in a very disturbing way. I was able to verify that the pedagogical activities destined to the study of texts are based on a tradition in which language is thought from the perspective of the addresser, as if the whole construction of meanings depended on them alone, and that to the receiver/student belonged the task of decoding and extracting content. Such tradition dialogues with a structuralist, Jakobsonian perspective of language.

Transposing the research onto activities destined to the study of literary texts in High School textbooks did not seem to present a different scenario according to the analysis of the activity developed here. I propose the present study motivated by that scenario and by the intention of understanding the model of teaching of reading that permeated my life as a student and which has always caused me anguish as a professional of language teaching. In this article, I resort to conceptions in the texts from the Bakhtin Circle¹ to dialogue with perceptions from professional practice and research as an attempt to *unlearn* old practices. Therefore, I investigate how the concepts outlined in the Circle can explain and offer possibilities to change a model of reading activities centered on the idea of a passive student/reader. Such passiveness does not fit the reading process, since all understanding is active and responsive, as the concepts of the Circle point out. In addition, I investigate the fact that the current reading activity model is yet centered on the materiality of the text. After all, as Szundy (2014) points out, “it seems fundamental that pedagogical activities and projects extrapolate the materiality of the utterance to place it historically and ideologically” (SZUNDY, 2014, p.18).²

My research is oriented by the notion that “the professional identity of teachers is not something fixed, much less a property, but the space of conflicts, construction and

¹ Name attributed to a group of intellectuals of various formations, “a good part born around the middle of the 1890s, which met regularly from 1919 to 1929” (FARACO, 2009, p.13). The representatives of the Circle who are most interested in this article are Mikhail M Bakhtin and Valentin N. Volóchinov. It is also worth noting that the denomination Bakhtin Circle “was attributed to them later by the scholars of their works, since the group itself did not use it” (FARACO, 2009, p.13).

² Original text: “parece fundamental que atividades e projetos pedagógicos extrapolam a materialidade do enunciado para situá-lo histórica e ideologicamente.”

deconstruction of being and existing ways in the profession” (OLIVEIRA and SZUNDY, 2014, p.188).³ It is in this space of conflicts and anguish that I envisage possibilities of deconstructing a model of teaching of reading that does not favor the formation of literary readers.

I have organized this article to discuss the issues outlined above as follows: Section 1 searches in texts from the Bakhtin Circle grounding that may help in understanding the origins of the model of activity that appears in textbooks. Section 2 discusses concepts of the Circle's philosophy of language. This section has the following subsections: 2.1 – the process of discursive comprehension –, 2.2 – the relationship between responsiveness and dialogism – and 2.3 – the relationship between dialogism and literary works. Section 3 presents an example of literary reading activity in the current textbook, along with a brief review. Section 4 aims to present a set of activities designed for the study of literary texts in textbooks. This proposal is based on responsiveness and dialogism and it ventures into only one of the numerous and complex paths that lie in the elaboration of activities designed for literary texts in textbooks. Section 4 is subdivided into 4.1 – the activities objectives –, 4.2 – activities in a dialogical conception – and 4.3 – a dialogical analysis of the elaborated activities.

1 The Current Model for Reading Comprehension Activities and its Origins

Investigating the origins for the tradition of native language teaching and, more precisely, for the teaching of reading, I seek, in the conceptions of the Bakhtin Circle, for theoretical tools to understand the on-going tradition. In my pursuit, I am aware that the meanings I build during the reading process are based on the integration of the textual material to the material that constitutes my person (past readings, experiences as a teacher, researcher and student, etc.). I also find support in the Circle to realize that the current tradition is based on theories that were of great importance in the development of linguistic studies of the last century. Among these theories, the linguistic conception of Ferdinand de Saussure stands out, because “it can be claimed that the majority of Russian thinkers in linguistics are under the determinative influence of Saussure and his

³ Original text: “a identidade profissional dos professores não é algo fixo, muito menos uma propriedade, e sim o espaço de conflitos, construção e desconstrução de maneiras de ser e de estar na profissão.”

disciples” (VOLOŠINOV, 1973, pp.58-59).⁴ It is noteworthy that, with the intention of placing linguistics as a natural science, an achieved accomplishment, Saussure focused on the scientific and methodological issue of language, setting aside its social facet. Such detachment is not related neither to the author’s ignorance nor his denial of the social issues of language. According to Saussure, language is “both a social product of the faculty of speech and a collection of necessary conventions that have been adopted by a social body to permit individuals to exercise that faculty” (SAUSSURE, 1966, p.9).⁵ Saussure, therefore, recognizes the social facet of language, but chooses not to approach it as the fluid social linguistic characteristics would not fit into the positivist natural sciences.

The Saussurian theory focuses on the individual. It describes the language as a product that the individual records in a supposedly passive form. One of Saussure’s main postulates asserts that the production of the message is active, while understanding and receiving are passive (SAUSSURE, 1966).⁶ A brief look at this postulate allows us to understand some of the reasons for a tradition of alleged passivity in which textbooks activities place readers from the earliest years of schooling until the end of elementary schooling by presenting reading comprehension activities focused, mainly, on the reproduction of verbatim written information. According to Vološinov, in *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, this condition of passivity occurs because the “entire position on word meaning and theme is permeated through and through with the false notion of *passive understanding*, the kind of understanding of a word that excludes active response in advance and on principle” (VOLOŠINOV, 1973, p.73, emphasis in original).⁷

Years after the publication of the Saussurian theory, linguistics continued to see the “receiver” as passive in communication models. Jakobson, already mentioned in the introductory section of this article, in writing from the 1950s, places the receiver as the element that decodes the message and mentions that it is based on the code that he understands it:

⁴ VOLOŠINOV, V. *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*. Translated by Ladislav Matejka and I.R.Titunik. Seminar Press, New York, 1973.

⁵ SAUSSURE, F. de. *Course in General Linguistics* (1916). Edited by Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye, Translated by Wade Baskin. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966.

⁶ For reference, see footnote 5.

⁷ For reference, see footnote 4.

A normal communication process operates with an encoder and decoder. The *decoder receives a message*. He knows the code. The message is new to him, but, by virtue of this code, he interprets the message. [...] The receiver understands the message thanks to *his knowledge of the code*. (JAKOBSON, 1971, pp.559-560, emphasis added).⁸

I do not deny that the code is an important element in the understanding process. However, this work considers that the meanings of the text are constructed not only from the code, but also from the experiences and worldviews of those who interpret them. Therefore, there is agentivity in understanding.

Mikhail Bakhtin, in *The Problem of Speech Genres*, also draws attention to the fact that the listener (receiver/reader) is passively represented as the partner of the speaker (enunciator) in the schematic drawings of general linguistics and he points out that, as a result, “the schema distorts the actual picture of speech communication, removing precisely its most essential aspects. The active role of the *other* in the process of speech communication is thus reduced to a minimum” (BAKHTIN, 1986, p.70), emphasis in original).⁹

I consider Vološinov’s and Bakhtin’s notes as possible ways to understand part of the reasons for the passive condition imposed on students in the reading activities presented in didactic materials. However, I am aware that the influence of past linguistic conceptions is only a fragment of the question. Following the texts of the Circle, I cannot distance myself from the social component that pervades all issues related to the use of language. Therefore, I emphasize the social aspect of maintaining power on the hands of certain groups that can be promoted by the teaching of reading based on reproduction and passivity. In agreement with Amorim (2013), I consider that it is “necessary to present the reading process from a socio-technical theoretical framework” (AMORIM, 2013, p.244).¹⁰ According to the author, this perspective in considering texts as percolated by ideological values, allows the “critical approach of these by the reader, who, aware of this fact, can be stimulated to reveal, during the interpretation

⁸ JAKOBSON, R. Results of a Joint Conference of Anthropologists and Linguists (1953). In: JAKOBSON, R. *Selected writers, vol. 2- Word and Language*, The Hague, Mouton, 1971, pp.554-567.

⁹ BAKHTIN, M. The Problem of Speech Genres (1953). In: BAKHTIN, M. *Speech Genres & Other Late Essays*. Translated by Vern W. McGee. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1986, pp.60-102.

¹⁰ Original text: “necessária a apresentação do processo de leitura a partir de um arcabouço teórico sociointeracional.”

itself, the mechanisms of power, the interdiscourses, which constitute the text read” (AMORIM, 2013, pp.244-245).¹¹

The relevance of the perspective mentioned by Amorim relates to the fact that when the majority of the population engages in reading, primarily through school and textbooks, both the overwhelming presence of reproduction activities in these spaces and the non-incentive to express the dialogues established with the texts contribute to form non-critical people regarding the discourses which they access. Thus, discourses derived from voices of authority, such as religion and other groups people take part in, can be incorporated unconditionally. In this sense, knowing that the sign becomes the arena where the class struggle develops (VOLOŠINOV, 1973),¹² the twelve years of elementary education with reading activities centered on the false idea of passivity may contribute for a mistaken view of reading itself. In addition, it can help weakening of the majority of the population in social struggle and resistance. These people as part of a system in which good mastery of written language is essential for knowledge and rights, then, become fragile in the very system they live/survive.

It is regrettable to note that the problems mentioned above concerning school and didactic materials are very similar to those pointed out by Bakhtin in *Stylistics in Teaching Russian Language in Secondary School*, written between 1942-1945. Regarding the analysis of a didactic material of the time, for example, in one of the notes of the Russian edition of Bakhtin’s book, we find that “[...] the exercises in the manual ‘disorient’ both the teacher and the students.”¹³ For this reason, Bakhtin elaborates an article presenting a methodology for stylistic teaching, in which the active role of the students is constant. In the article expressions such as *with the students*, *working with the students*, *with the students we come to the conclusion*, constantly show the importance of the students’ agentivity in the construction of knowledge. In that regard, in the case of stylistic analysis, Bakhtin says “[...] students understand and really enjoy stylistic analyses, even the most subtle and meticulous, as long as they are conducted in a lively manner and *the class members are encouraged to be active*

¹¹ Original text: “abordagem crítica desses pelo leitor, que, ciente de tal fato, pode ser estimulado a desvelar, durante a interpretação propriamente dita, os mecanismos de poder, os interdiscursos, que constituem o texto lido.”

¹² For reference, see footnote 4.

¹³ Brait (2013, p.13) mentions this note in the presentation of the Brazilian edition, called *Questões de estilística no ensino da língua* (BAKHTIN, 2013). In Portuguese: “[...] os exercícios do manual ‘desorientam’ tanto o professor quanto os alunos.”

participants.” (BAKHTIN, 2004, p.23, emphasis added).¹⁴ Transferring this affirmation onto literary reading at school, I consider that making room for the effective and agentive participation of students in the accomplishment of didactic activities can also yield good results.

Considering the exposed, envisaging education as a responsible act (SZUNDY, 2014), I continue using the conceptions from the Bakhtin Circle in order to glimpse concepts of the philosophy of language which are adequate for provoking inspirations to the *de-practicing* of the models used in reading activities present in teaching materials.

2 The Circle’s Language Philosophy

First, it is important to point out that the entire philosophy of the Circle is based on relations. Therefore, the *self* only exists in opposition to the *other*. More than this, the self is constituted from the other, that is, in the relations establish to one another. About this relationship, in *Toward a Philosophy of the Act*, Bakhtin outlines concepts that will be resumed throughout the work of the Circle, making way to show that the dialogic relations constitute all the events that involve the Being. According to the author, “Even if I know a given person thoroughly, and I also know myself, I still have to grasp the truth of our interrelationship, the truth of the unitary and unique event which links us and in which we are participants” (BAKHTIN, 1993, p.17).¹⁵

In Bakhtin’s words, it is possible to perceive that the philosophy of the Circle is based on architectonics of alterity that assumes *relation* as an important principle. It is through relations that one becomes aware of oneself, of others and aware of the events. Therefore, what I see is not an event itself, but my interpretation of that event. The relationship that I establish with the event is charged with my worldview or by the frames (Butler, 2015) I use to create a framework for that event. The same happens in the construction of meanings during the communicative discourse, in which the utterances refract more than they reflect reality (VOLOŠINOV, 1973).¹⁶ Therefore, the Circle's philosophy of language, based on the relations of otherness, is important to treat

¹⁴ BAKHTIN, M. Stylistics in Teaching Russian Language in Secondary School (1942-45). *Journal of Russian and East European Psychology*. vol. 42, no. 6, November–December 2004, pp.12–49.

¹⁵ BAKHTIN, M. *Toward a Philosophy of the Act* (1920-24). Translation and notes by Vadim Liapunov. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1993.

¹⁶ For reference, see footnote 4.

the approach (or non-approach) of text/reader/social world interaction in textbook activities.

Given that importance, sections 2.1 and 2.2 are devoted to discussing concepts of the Circle's philosophy of language.

2.1 The Architectonics of Otherness and the Process of Discursive Comprehension

In *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, Vološinov points out the correlation between self/other and the production of meanings in the use of language. In this work, the author stresses that “the word is oriented toward an addressee, toward who that addressee might be: a fellow-member or not of the same social group, of higher or lower standing (the addressee’s hierarchical status), someone connected with the speaker by close social ties (father) brother, husband, and so on) or not” (VOLOŠINOV, 1973, p.85).¹⁷ In demonstrating the importance of the self/other relation in the constitution of the word, Vološinov consolidates a philosophy of the language that comprehends the process of interaction that occurs in the discursive act. In order to that, he says:

In point of fact, word is a two-sided act. It is determined equally by whose word it is and for whom it is meant. As word, it is precisely the product of the reciprocal relationship between speaker and listener, addresser and addressee. Each and every word expresses the “one” in relation to the “other” (VOLOŠINOV, 1973, p.86, emphasis in original).¹⁸

As the word bridges the *self* to the *other*, meaning is not in the word itself, but in the relation that encompasses the *self*, the *word* and the *other*, that is, in the whole context that involves the discursive interaction. The set of words “it is hot,” for example, depending on the context in which it is inserted, might mean an attempt to start conversation, a request to open a window, etc. Therefore, considering the comprehension of the others’ word, the members of the Circle defend that the utterance is the element of study which allows the comprehension about verbal discourse. “Linguistic form is merely an abstractly extractable factor of the dynamic whole of

¹⁷ For reference, see footnote 4.

¹⁸ For reference, see footnote 4.

speech performance-of the utterance” (VOLOŠINOV, 1973, p.79).¹⁹ Therefore, in the philosophy of the Circle, the linguistic form is only a *signal* with potential to mean. It is only the *sign* (ideological, inserted in a context) that can foster understanding. We understand, for example, *bread* and *wine* as Christ’s *body* and *blood* in the Christian sacrament because of their insertion in a given context and the ideological layers that characterizes all signs.

Therefore, by establishing the distinction between signal and sign, Vološinov shows us that the passive reception of a message corresponds only to an initial stage process, the stage of recognition of a signal (sonorous, gestural, graphic, among others).

The process of understanding is on no account to be confused with the process of recognition. These are thoroughly different processes. Only a sign can be understood; what is recognized is a signal. A signal is an internally fixed, singular thing that does not in fact stand for anything else, or reflect or refract anything, but is simply a technical means for indicating this or that object (some definite, fixed object) or this or that action (likewise definite and fixed) (VOLOŠINOV, 1973, p.68).²⁰

In the passage above, the author shows that the recognition of the signal is part of the understanding process, but does not complete it. Understanding goes beyond the recognition of the signal and only occurs with the capture of the ideological sign. Therefore, the study of the isolated word cannot be enough to comprehend the whole dynamics of the discursive process, since “the meaning of a word is determined entirely by its context. In fact, there are as many meanings of a word as there are contexts of its usage” (VOLOŠINOV, 1973, p.79).²¹

Transposing the notion that there are several meanings for a word, depending on its context, onto the act of generating meanings during the act of reading, we conclude that the meaning of a text is not only in the thread formed by words that compose the textual fabric. It also depends on the context in which the web/text is inserted. In this context, the reader will play an important role in the construction of meanings. Therefore, the members of the Circle show us that *all understanding is active*.

¹⁹ For reference, see footnote 4.

²⁰ For reference, see footnote 4.

²¹ For reference, see footnote 4.

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. For each word of the utterance that we are in process of understanding, we, as it were, lay down a set of our own answering words. (VOLOŠINOV, 1973, p.102).²²

By adding our responsive layers, we translate the utterance into active contexts that make sense within our conceptions of the world and existence, or, as Butler (2015) points out, within frameworks for the construction of meanings. This way, the *active responsive attitude* is an important part of every understanding. According to Fiorin (2009), “the last²³ operation of the reading process is the active responsive attitude, i.e., the reader’s response. It depends on the consciousness that is built up in social communication, that is, in society, in history” (FIORIN, 2009, p.55).²⁴ Therefore, we are not only passive recipients of the message, but we are an integral part of its construction. In addressing the subject of comprehension, in the text *The Problem of Speech Genres*, Bakhtin states:

Any understanding is imbued with response and necessarily elicits it in one form or another: *the listener becomes the speaker*. [...] Sooner or later what is heard and actively understood will find its response in the subsequent speech or behavior of the listener. [...] *Everything we have said here also pertains to written and read speech, with the appropriate adjustments and additions*. (BAKHTIN, 1986, pp.68-69, emphasis added).²⁵

If all understanding is imbued with response, responsiveness is therefore a constituent principle of understanding. The production of inferences²⁶ and the generation of meanings occur through interaction with linguistic material and this is where the responsive attitude lies. Constructing meaning for linguistic material, the receiver/reader can agree, disagree, choose to verbalize a response, choose not to

²² For reference, see footnote 4.

²³ It is worth noting that the process of understanding cannot be divided into steps, or, in case of division, the steps occur simultaneously. Fiorin (2009), when mentioning the responsive attitude as the last stage of comprehension, refers to the psychophysiological facet of the process.

²⁴ Original text: “a última operação do processo de leitura é a atitude responsiva ativa, ou seja, a resposta do leitor. Esta depende de sua consciência que se constrói na comunicação social, ou seja, na sociedade, na história.”

²⁵ For reference, see footnote 9.

²⁶ Understanding as in Dell'Isolla (2001): Inference is a cognitive process that generates new semantic information from previous semantic information, in a given context. Original text: “Inferência é um processo cognitivo que gera uma informação semântica nova, a partir de uma informação semântica anterior, em um determinado contexto.”

express a verbal response, etc. Even incomprehension can be considered a responsive attitude to a given utterance. According to the Circle's definition of understanding, the agentivity of all the involved in the discursive process must always be considered. It is a constituent part of the process.

In approaching comprehension, including the comprehension of literary texts, based on the concepts of responsiveness and agentivity, we see no point in didactic activities based on an idea of passivity, in which there is no room for students to express their readings and to recognize themselves as agents in the practice of literary reading.

The principle of agentivity of all involved in discourse construction is present as a basic element in the texts of the Circle's philosophy. In *Freudianism: A Marxist Critique*, for example, Bakhtin and Vološinov²⁷ state: "not a single instance of verbal utterance can be reckoned exclusively to its utterer account. Every utterance is *the product of interaction between speaker* and the product of the broader context of the whole complex *social situation* in which the utterance emerges" (BAKHTIN and VOLOSHINOV, 1976, p.79, emphasis in original).²⁸ That is why "any true understanding is dialogic in nature" (VOLOŠINOV, 1973, p.102).²⁹ Its origin lies in the dialogue between the world of the object to be known, for example the verbalized utterance, and the world of the cognizant subject, of their social being. The next section, therefore, turns to the discussion of the concepts of dialogism and responsiveness.

2.2 Dialogism and Responsiveness

The concept of dialogism goes beyond the interaction between the participants of the discursive event. Although it seems to be monological, every utterance is dialogic because

Each utterance is filled with echoes and reverberations of other utterances to which it is related by the communality of the sphere of speech communication. Every 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

²⁷ According to Faraco (2009) and Grillo (2017), the text *Freudianism: A Marxist Critique* was originally published under the name of Vološinov. However, I choose to refer to the texts cited here following the authorship attributed to them in the edition of the translation addressed.

²⁸ BAKHTIN, M./VOLOSHINOV V. *Freudianism: A Marxist Critique*. Trans. I. R. Titunik. New York: Academic Press, 1976.

²⁹ For reference, see footnote 4.

refutes, affirms, supplements, and relies on the others, presupposes them to be known, and somehow takes them into account (BAKHTIN, 1986, p.91, emphasis in original).³⁰

The Circle's philosophy, always based on the self/other relation, shows that any utterance is always impregnated with other people's speeches. In enunciating, I take into account discourses which I have already interacted with and which constitute the way I construct the world and I frame the theme I enunciate. From this perspective, no utterance is totally original and individual; it is always in relation to other discourses. The originality/individuality is in the way of inserting the utterance into an unrepeatable context.

In addition to dialogical relations with antecedent discourses, dialogism is also based on relations with discourses produced after the utterance, since

the utterance is constructed while taking into account possible responsive reactions, for whose sake, in essence, it is actually created. [...] From the very beginning, the speaker expects a response from them, an active responsive understanding. The entire utterance is constructed, as it were, in anticipation of encountering this response. (BAKHTIN, 1986, p.94).³¹

Therefore, any given enunciation is oriented towards a response, even if it is an agreement, replication, accomplishment of a task, silencing before the utterance, etc. That is, for every utterance, there is always a presumed responsive attitude, and the presumption of such an attitude may even shape the utterance. By assuming that his utterance can be understood as a disapproval, for example, the enunciator can modify his linguistic choices, his intonation and even refrain from enunciating altogether. Although an utterance is not intended to be expressed to another person, there is always a presumed social audience that is formed by the notion the enunciator has about other people and that will influence the construction of the utterance.

Thus, the utterance is dialogical in every way. It is dialogical in its projection forward, that is, in the dialogue that it establishes in advance and in essence in relation to utterances produced after its enunciation; and it is dialogical in its formation, because it is generated from previous discourses that motivate and ground it. Note that:

³⁰ For reference, see footnote 9.

³¹ For reference, see footnote 9.

Although they differ in their essentials and give rise to varying stylistic effects in discourse, the dialogical relationship toward an alien word within the object and the relationship toward an alien word in the anticipated answer of the listener can, nevertheless, be very tightly interwoven with each other, becoming almost indistinguishable during stylistic analyses (BAKHTIN, 1981, p.283).³²

Therefore, the distinction between the forms of internal dialogic of discourse is only an abstraction for understanding the phenomena inherent in the discursive process. In practice, dialogism occurs in an interlaced and indissoluble way.

However, in order to concentrate on the approach to comprehension of literary texts in textbook activities, this article shall focus on the dialogism that is based on the reader's active responsive attitude, that is, on the dialogue that is established between both worlds, the text's and the reader's, for understanding. Before that, some considerations about the Circle's postulates regarding dialogism and literary works are necessary. *How does dialogism become present within literary works?*

2.3 Dialogism and Literary Works

In addition to the internal dialogism already mentioned that is a constituent of all discourse, it is important to emphasize that the literary discourse is part of one of the spheres the Circle calls *the established ideological systems*. Such systems as art, morality, law, religions, etc. are formed from crystallization of the daily life experiences (*behavioral ideology*): “that atmosphere of unsystematized and unfixed inner and outer speech which endows our every instance of behavior and action and our every ‘conscious’ state with meaning” (VOLOŠINOV, 1973, p.91).³³ This way, the fluid daily experiences are crystallized and constitute official ideologies that “exert a powerful influence back upon behavioral ideology, normally setting its tone” (VOLOŠINOV, 1973, p.91).³⁴ This uninterrupted dialogical movement is constitutive of literary works and their comprehension can only exist if such relation is considered, which means that a literary work is never completely finished, it will be continually re-signified according to the daily context ideology in which it is inserted. That is why the same work, if

³² BAKHTIN, M. Discourse in the Novel. In: BAKHTIN, M. *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays* by M.M. Bakhtin. Edited by Michael Holquist and translated by Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1981, pp.259-422.

³³ For reference, see footnote 4.

³⁴ For reference, see footnote 4.

moved temporally or geographically, can gain new meanings: its interpretation occurs in contact with the consciousness of its receivers, and it matches a new context in this consciousness. According to the Circle's philosophy, this is where the richness and vivacity of a work lies:

Only to the degree that a work can enter into that kind of integral, organic association with the behavioral ideology of a given period is it viable for that period (and of course, for a given social group). Outside its connection with behavioral ideology it ceases to exist, since it ceases to be experienced as something ideologically meaningful. (VOLOŠINOV, 1973, p.91).³⁵

If the literary work is no longer alive, if there is no connection with the daily context ideology, the pedagogical activities which aim to approach the literary text in the classroom, without addressing the connection that students establish between the text and their everyday experiences, can contribute to the death of what is literary in the text, thus transforming the moment of reading and everything that relates to it in a non-significant, tiring and frustrating object. Hence, I advocate for activities that enable the expression of students' active responsive attitudes, an expression that involves the relationship between their experiences and the text.

Unfortunately, as already mentioned, the understanding of language is thought from the point of view of the addresser, regardless of its constitutive dialogical relations. Concerning the literary text, as it can be predicted, there is no change in scenario. In his analysis of dialogism, the tradition of studying literary texts in the philosophy of language and the linguistic studies of his time, Bakhtin pointed out, in the text *Discourse in the Novel*:

Dialogue is studied merely as a compositional form in the structuring of speech, but the internal dialogism of the word (which occurs in a monologic utterance as well as in a rejoinder), the dialogism that penetrates its entire structure, all its semantic and expressive layers, is almost entirely ignored (BAKHTIN, 1981, p.279).³⁶

Thus, the dialogical relations with the *other's* discourse were ignored by the fields destined to study and to think literary works. Approaches were limited to the structural dialogue or to the one related to the exchange of positions between

³⁵ For reference, see footnote 4.

³⁶ For reference, see footnote 32.

enunciator/receiver in the schemes of linguistics. The internal dialogism resulting from the struggle between the voices that constituted the discourse was not addressed, a fact that, as I intend to demonstrate in the next section, still seems to occur in the reading activities analyzed here.

3 Example of Literary Reading Activity in Textbook

As an example of what this article discusses, I present an activity found in the textbook *Língua Portuguesa: linguagem e interação* [*Portuguese Language: Language and Interaction*]. The textbook is for the second year of high school and was approved by PNLD³⁷ 2018.

The choice of this material relates to the collection's title. The word *interaction* interested me as I believe in the need for pedagogical materials that encompass the interaction between student-object of teaching/learning in the process of knowledge construction and agency. Such interaction, from a socio-historical perspective, should encompass the micro and macro contexts in which the object and the participants in the teaching-learning process are inserted.

From the material selected, I highlight an activity from the initial chapter of the second volume. According to the teacher's manual, "in volume 2, the initial chapter introduces the study of literature, which will continue through this volume and extend into volume 3" (FARACO; MOURA; MARUJO JÚNIOR, 2016, p.341).³⁸ This information motivated the selection of an activity in the initial chapter of the second volume.

On the page of the activities (p.23),³⁹ there is a brief contextualization about Camões and about lyrical poetry. Next, there is the command for the student to read a Camonian sonnet⁴⁰ and answer the following questions (Figure I). In the teacher's book,

³⁷ The PNLD is a Brazilian program for the evaluation and distribution of textbooks for students of basic education in public schools. The program occurs every three years.

³⁸ Original text: "no volume 2, o capítulo inicial introduz o estudo da literatura, que vai prosseguir por esse volume e se estender até o volume 3."

³⁹ I attach the image related to the activities page at the end of this article.

⁴⁰ In Portuguese: "Amor é fogo que arde sem se ver;/ É ferida que dói e não se sente;/ É um contentamento descontente;/ É dor que desatina sem doer;/ É um não querer mais que bem querer;/ É solitário andar por entre a gente;/ É nunca contentar-se de contente;/ É cuidar que se ganha em se perder;/ É querer estar preso por vontade;/ É servir a quem vence, o vencedor;/ É ter com quem nos mata lealdade./ Mas como causar pode seu favor/ Nos corações humanos amizade,/ se tão contrário a si é o mesmo Amor?" (CAMÕES, 1975, p.181 *apud* FARACO, MOURA and MARUJO JÚNIOR, 2016, p.23).

there is information that the content can be worked in an interdisciplinary way and the teacher is instructed to refer to the manual that appears at the end of the volume. By consulting the manual, it is possible to verify the orientation that the subject can be developed in an interdisciplinary way and there is the suggestion of the Portuguese-History integration. However, further clarification about this integration is not offered.

Camões e a poesia lírica

Houve, no século XVI, uma expressiva produção de poemas líricos. Camões é o grande nome na poesia lírica, em que trata de temas universais como o amor, o sofrimento, a morte, a força do destino, a desarmonia do mundo.

4. Leia um soneto camoniano e responda às questões que seguem.
 Este assunto pode ser desenvolvido de forma interdisciplinar. Veja nas Orientações Específicas do Manual do Professor as relações interdisciplinares sugeridas.

TEXTO 11

Amor é fogo que arde sem se ver;
 É ferida que dói e não se sente;
 É um contentamento descontente;
 É dor que **desatina** sem doer;

5. É um não querer mais que bem querer;
 É solitário andar por entre a gente;
 É nunca contentar-se de contente;
 É **cuidar** que se ganha em se perder;

É querer estar preso por vontade;
 10. É servir a quem vence, o vencedor;
 É ter com quem nos mata lealdade.

Mas como causar pode seu favor
 Nos corações humanos amizade,
 se tão contrário a si é o mesmo Amor?

CAMÕES, Luís Vaz de. Sonetos. Sintra: Publicações Europa-América, 1975. p. 181.

cuidar: julgar; supor.
desatinar: enlouquecer.

4. a) Trata-se de uma composição em forma fixa, constituída de dois quaternos e dois tercetos.
 4. c) Analise as respostas. O texto é praticamente todo constituído de antíteses. Comente com os alunos o paradoxo em "contentamento descontente".
 4. d) Espere-se que os alunos identifiquem, além de rimas e alterações (especialmente os versos 10 e 11), a anáfora do verbo, ser nos três primeiros versos.

4. a) Ajude os alunos a perceber o emprego de antíteses e paradoxos como resultado da impossibilidade de definir o amor. Abaixo, farei que ocupe com grande parte dos textos literários que giram em torno da definição do amor. Se considerar adequado, remeta-os à letra de Fernando um pedaço, canção de Djavan em que se nota a mesma impossibilidade. Leia a letra dessa canção nas Orientações Específicas do Manual do Professor.

a) O texto lido é um soneto. Em seu caderno, justifique essa afirmação.
 b) Qual parece ser o objetivo do eu lírico desse poema? Defina o amor.
 c) Identifique antíteses no texto lido e copie-as no caderno.
 d) Releia o poema e identifique os recursos que, em sua opinião, são responsáveis pelo ritmo do texto.
 e) Releia:
 É servir a quem vence, o vencedor;
 É ter com quem nos mata lealdade. (versos 10 e 11)

- Escreva no caderno esses versos na ordem direta e explique o sentido de cada um deles. É o vencedor servir a quem daquele que vence, ou seja, é o vencedor servir ao vencido. É ter lealdade com quem nos mata, ou seja, ser leal ao inimigo.
- Em sua opinião, o amor é mesmo capaz de causar sensações tão contraditórias em quem ama? Resposta pessoal.

HISTÓRIA DA LINGUAGEM 23

Figure 1: FARACO; MOURA; MARUJO JÚNIOR, 2016, p.23

In English: "Love is a fire that burns, but is never seen;/ a wound that hurts, but is never perceived;/ a pleasure that starts a pain that's unrelieved;/ a pain that maddens without any pain; a serene/ desire for nothing, but wishing her only the best;/ a lonely passage through the crowd; the resentment/ of never being content with one's contentment;/ a caring that gains only when losing; an obsessed/ desire to be bound, for love, in jail;/ a capitulation to the one you've conquered yourself;/ a devotion/ to your own assassin every single day./ So how can Love conform, without fail,/ every captive human heart, if Love itself/ is so contradictory in every possible way?" (CAMÕES, 2005, pp.44-45). The English version can be read in the book *Luis de Camões, Selected Sonnets: A Bilingual Edition*. Ed. and trans. William Baer. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005.

The poem appears on the left side of the page, with two words highlighted in orange: *maddens* and *caring*. Next to the poem, there is a box with the meaning of these two words (*maddens*: to make mad / *caring*: to judge, to suppose). A beautiful picture appears next to the poem, provoking the construction of meanings, not only for the picture itself, but also for the poem to which it is attached.

Before the activities that are organized in commands from letter *a* to letter *e*, the teacher's book orients the teacher to highlight for the students the use of antitheses and paradoxes in the text and, if he so wishes, to use a song by Djavan. Such orientation seems to be an attempt to direct the teacher's work to the intertextuality between the poem and another text or other art form, in this case, a song. Although it is possible to question whether Djavan's song is the closest option to the reality of the students to whom the book is intended, the suggestion of intertextuality seems interesting to me, since it can provoke the dialogue and the interaction between reading the poem and other readings.

Regarding the activities that follow the reading, unfortunately the guidelines mentioned above are not addressed. The questions address only the base text. Let us see, in detail, each one of them:

The question of the letter *a*, "The text read is a sonnet. In your notebook, justify this statement"⁴¹ does not require reading the text to be answered. After all, the task already states that the text is a sonnet. Then, what it asks for is the expression of knowledge about the structural organization of this type of poem.

Item *b*, "What seems to be the goal of the persona of this poem?",⁴² despite requesting a student's judgment about the goal of the persona, by not requesting a justification to support the answer, leaves it very vague and personal, preventing the demonstration of interaction with the text. The student could, for example, respond that the aim of the persona seems to be to vent a feeling; reflect on love; seek an explanation for what he/she feels; etc. These responses, which are consistent with reading the poem and different from the response suggested in the teacher's book as feedback, are anchored in the integration between the poem or parts of it and the life experiences of each reader. It is, therefore, an open question and it can elicit different answers. I consider this a kind of question important for working with the literary text, because it

⁴¹ Original text: "O texto lido é um soneto. Em seu caderno, justifique essa afirmação."

⁴² Original text: "Qual parece ser o objetivo do eu lírico desse poema?"

allows the expression of meanings constructed in contact with the text. However, I realize the need for this type of question to be accompanied by another, requesting a justification that directs the student to explain the paths taken to arrive at the given answer. The request for a justification, written in such a way as to guide the student to explain how he arrived at a given answer, can allow the teacher and the student him/herself to condensate the response and the process that generated it, preventing answers without criteria.

The item of the letter *c*, “Identify antitheses in the text read and copy them in your notebook.”⁴³ addresses very important language resources for the construction of the poem. As put in the orientations of the teacher’s book, the use of antitheses and paradoxes in the text contributes to the construction of the meaning about the difficulty existing in the attempt to define love. Unfortunately, the question does not raise this level of understanding on the figures of speech present in the text, it arrives only at a first stage of the process that is the identification and location of antitheses.

Letter *d* “Reread the poem and identify the resources that, in your opinion, are responsible for the rhythm of the text.”⁴⁴ also addresses the identification of resources used for structuring of the poem. It can be observed in the suggestion of response in the teacher’s book: “Students are expected to identify, in addition to rhymes and alliterations (especially the phonemes / d / e / t /, the anaphora (the verb “to be” in the first three stanzas).”⁴⁵

Finally, the letter *e* highlights two verses of the poem: *a capitulation to the one you’ve conquered yourself;/ a devotion to your own assassin every single day*⁴⁶ and is subdivided into two commands. The first one says “Write in the notebook these verses in direct order and explain the meaning of each one of them.” The feedback from the teacher’s book suggests “It is the winner to serve whom (the one who) wins, that is, it is the winner to serve the vanquished. / It is to have loyalty to those who kill us, that is, to be loyal to the enemy.”⁴⁷ The organization of verses in the direct order might clarify

⁴³ Original text: “Identifique antíteses no texto lido e copie-as no seu caderno.”

⁴⁴ Original text: “Releia o poema e identifique os recursos que, em sua opinião, são responsáveis pelo ritmo do texto.”

⁴⁵ Original text: “Espera-se que os alunos identifiquem, além de rimas e alterações (especialmente os fonemas /d/ e /t/, a anáfora (o verbo ser nas três primeiras estrofes).”

⁴⁶ Corresponding verses in the English version of the poem. Original verses: “É servir a quem vence, o vencedor;/ É ter com quem nos mata lealdade.”

⁴⁷ Original text: “É o vencedor servir a quem (aquele que) vence, ou seja, é o vencedor servir ao vencido. / É ter lealdade com quem nos mata, ou seja, ser leal ao inimigo.”

their meaning and the requested explanation seems productive too. However, adjusting the order of verses of a literary text may also imply a disfigurement of the poem. The inversion of structures and the apparent confusion arising from the paradoxes in the sonnet in question, for example, are a rich source for the construction of meanings. Moreover, there seems to be a lack of relationship between the meanings constructed from the verses in themselves and the poem as a whole.

The second command in letter *e* says: “In your opinion, is love even capable of causing feelings so contradictory in who loves?”⁴⁸ This is a personal response and little depends on the reading of the poem addressed in the activities, as can be proven in the suggestion of the teacher’s book. Hence, the question points to an answer without criteria.

Summarizing the analysis of the activity, the reading of an important literary text is developed in a thematic scope that seems to be consistent with the interests of the students for whom the material is designed. The activity might then contribute to the awakening of interest for literary reading. However, the questions posed after reading do not allow students to express their readings and connections with the text, which may lead to a lack of interest by students in doing reading activities.

It should be noted that the activity is part of the initial chapter of the second volume in the collection. According to the teacher’s manual, concepts and notions are presented in the initial chapter through activities that can be used as a starting point at the beginning of the school year. Thus, “given the ‘initial’ character, this chapter does not exhaust or deepen the notions and concepts presented” (FARACO; MOURA; MARUXO JÚNIOR, 2016, p.341).⁴⁹ However, the purpose of the initial chapter is not to deepen literary questions which should foster activities turned to demonstrate the readings that result from the contact of the students with the text in question. This would raise interest and motivation to engage in other readings and literary activities.

Given the issues raised in our brief analysis, in the next section I make some considerations concerning a set of reading activities based on dialogism and on the demand for the expression of the students’ active responsive attitudes.

⁴⁸ Original text: “Em sua opinião, o amor é mesmo capaz de causar sensações tão contraditórias em quem ama?”

⁴⁹ Original text: “dado o caráter ‘inicial’, esse capítulo não esgota nem aprofunda as noções e conceitos apresentados.”

4 Reading Activities Based on the Student's/Reader's Responsive Attitude

This section is divided into three parts. The first presents information that guided the elaboration of the activities. The second presents the activities themselves. In the third, our analysis aids the reflection on how the concepts of the Bakhtin Circle are present in the activities.

4.1 The Activities' Objectives

In order to foster the dialogue between the activities proposed here and the activities analyzed in section 3, our material is based on the same Camonian sonnet. The activities aims are the same of the textbook initial chapter. These objectives, as already mentioned, are included in the teacher's manual. They intend to “present concepts through activities that the teacher can use as a starting point for the work at the beginning of the school year” and “introduce the study of literature which will continue through volume 2 and extend through volume 3” (FARACO; MOURA; MARUXO JÚNIOR, 2016, p.341).⁵⁰

Considering these objectives and the concepts of dialogism and responsiveness, the activities are designed to provoke a more dialogic approach to literary reading in High School teaching materials. Therefore, the concepts outlined by the Circle as well as the discussions found in the text *Dialogismo como procedimento no ensino de literatura* [Dialogism as a Procedure in Teaching Literature], from *Ensino de literatura: uma proposta dialógica para o trabalho com literatura* [Teaching Literature: a Dialogical Proposal for Work with Literature] (CEREJA, 2005) guided the elaboration of our proposal.

The activities were elaborated in the following way: the responsiveness is approached through the request for the inferences made by the students based on the literary text. The students' responsive attitudes are requested to express connections established with other texts or art forms as well. Then, the base text is taken as the starting point for a movement of diachronic reading, projecting the reading forward in the timeline, re-signifying it according to the context of the reader. The dialogism, in

⁵⁰ Original text: “apresentar conceitos e noções por meio de atividades que o professor poderá utilizar como ponto de partida para o trabalho no início do ano letivo” and “introduzir o estudo da literatura que vai prosseguir pelo volume 2 e se estender pelo volume 3.”

turn, is approached not only through the dialogue between text and reader but also through the relation between the text and other external elements (relation with another form of art or another language, relation with the historical-social context of production and relation with the historical-social context of the student/reader). The search for thematic intersection points (CEREJA, 2005) between the poem and other texts or forms of cultural expression is thus used as strategy.

4.2 Literary Reading Activities in a Dialogical Conception

Camões and lyrical poetry

Let us read one of the poems written by Camoes, a great poet from the 16th Century lyric poetry. Before reading the text, perform the following tasks:

A - Try to present a definition for the theme of *love*, answering the question *What is love?*

B - Was it easy for you to come up with a definition for this topic? Why?

Now read the Camonian sonnet and do the activities:

Amor

Love is a fire that burns, but is never seen;
a wound that hurts, but is never perceived;
a pleasure that starts a pain that's unrelieved;
a pain that maddens without any pain;
a serene desire for nothing, but wishing her only the best;
a lonely passage through the crowd;
the resentment of never being content with one's contentment;
a caring that gains only when losing;
an obsessed desire to be bound, for love, in jail;
a capitulation to the one you've conquered yourself;
a devotion to your own assassin every single day.
So how can Love conform, without fail,
every captive human heart, if Love itself
is so contradictory in every possible way?

1 - In a single word, explain what the theme of the poem read is:⁵¹

2 - Regarding the theme you identified, what seems to be the purpose of the persona in this poem? Which elements of the text made you reach this conclusion?

⁵¹ I choose not to present suggestions for expected answers, as usually happens in teacher's manuals. Otherwise, I present in the next section a detail and analysis of the issues. In this analysis, possible answers are commented.

3 - Notice that the poem begins and ends with the word *love*. Which meanings can you make from it?

4 - Consider the verse “a pain that *maddens* without any pain.”

a) Knowing that the noun *madness* means insanity, mental illness, lunacy, distraction, what meaning did you make out of the verb “maddens” in the verse?

b) Which information from the text and/or your world knowledge did you use to construct this meaning for the verb?

c) Express your understanding of the verse in question. What does it mean to you in the context of the poem?

5 - Antitheses and paradoxes are present in most verses of the poem. What does this mean for the poem’s subject? Why?

6 - When reading a text, we establish dialogues between the reading and our experiences.

a) Name a song, a movie, a book, etc., in which the theme addressed in the poem appears.

b) Compare the artistic manifestation offered in response to the previous item with the poem. Which one arouses your emotions the most? Why?

7 - Camões wrote this poem in the sixteenth century.

a) What could have happened to the persona to motivate the writing of this poem?

b) Would it be possible for the same thing to happen to a person nowadays? Why?

c) Based on your previous answers, discuss why the poem by Camões continues to raise people’s awareness nowadays.

d) Camões expressed the persona feelings through a sonnet. If the same situation that inspired the construction of the sonnet happened to a person nowadays, what genres could they use to express their feelings? Why?

8 - Consider love in the present time and take up the definition of love you wrote before reading the text. After reading the poem, does your definition of love remain the same or did something change? Why?

4.3 A Zoom in the Activities: Visualizing the Concepts of the Circle

This section proposes to *adjust our lenses* to view the elaborated questions in detail in an attempt to envisage their underlying concepts.

The two pre-reading activities intend to bring the theme to be discussed to the recent memory of the student/reader, making them seek in their own world knowledge important information to dialogue with the text. The questions also serve as basis for the post-reading activities. Thus, by asking students to try to define what love is, activity A urges them to accomplish a task that seems to happen in the text that follows. Activity B, on the other hand, questions the level of difficulty for the definition presented to point that defining love can be a difficult task for some people. Although students might

answer that it was easy for them to present the definition requested, the question already presupposes the existence of such difficulty. Following the activities of activating prior knowledge, the poem is presented.

After reading, activity number 1 aims at the expression of responsiveness. It enquires after the student's perception on the subject of the poem. The second question, linked to the first, seeks the externalization of the reader's impressions of the objectives of the persona in regard to the theme. Different answers might rise from this enquiry, since, as we know, the reading of a text is only a refraction of it. Therefore, question 2 is accompanied by another one in which it is shown that textual elements served as a starting point for the construction of an answer. Thus, if the student chooses, for example, to respond that the purpose of the persona seems to be *to define* or *explain what love is*, they can support their answer by showing the many uses that the persona makes of the indefinite article "a" to show that love is an indefinite feeling and they are trying to *define* it. It is also possible for the student to construct the sense in relation to the theme of love by saying that the persona intends *to vent because of an ill-matched love*. In that case, they could justify their response by displaying words from the poem that demonstrate unpleasant feelings such as *wound, pain, lonely passage (a wound that hurts...; a pain that maddens...; a lonely passage through the crowd)*. They could, then, justify that if the persona was loving and being loved, they would probably not make such choices for their poem, but only use words that refer to pleasant feelings.

As observed, many coherent readings are likely to emerge from reading a literary text because it involves the ideological values that make up human language. In questions as that in number 2 from the original text-book questions – which I consider to be very important for approaching the literary text because of the rich potential for different readings –, not requesting a justification might lead the teacher to misunderstand the answer, and worse, lead the student to answer without becoming aware of why they built that reply. That is so because the inferential process of relating information from the text to the universe of the reader occurs automatically, one hardly ever realizes this process and pays attention only to the result. Therefore, it is important for the school to always encourage students to think on how they reach a certain thought, knowledge or speech. This focus on the process of knowledge construction⁵²

⁵² The focus on the process of knowledge construction is related to studies on metacognition and metacognitive development, such as Flavell (1979), Griffith, and Ruan (2008). In the case of the agency *Bakhtiniana*, São Paulo, 15 (1): 131-158, Jan./March 2020.

and not on its product should be the great task of the school and, in the case of native language classes, the understanding of the cognitive processes involved in the use of language.

The third question addresses the construction of meanings from the structure of the text, aiming at the realization that the generation of meanings in a poem may not only involve the semantic content of the words, but also the way of organizing them in the text. Therefore, the question directs the pupil's attention to the fact that the poem begins and ends with the word 'love', which can generate the understanding that this *feeling permeates the whole life of the persona, that love is in everything and at all time, that is, from the beginning to the end*, etc. The student's responsive attitude is therefore also achieved from the structural organization of the text once attention to the lexical choice and their arrangement in the text can be important components to the richness of the literary text.

The activities in item 4 intend to show the student their active role in reading, that is, the responsible act imbricated in reading. Therefore, item *a* addresses the construction of meaning through word formation. The student needs to seek in their prior knowledge of the language the key to generate meaning for the verbal form *maddens* having been provided with the meaning of the noun *madness*. That key is the suffix to the word *mad*. Item *b* directs the student's attention to their rationale for the answer, that is, to the fact that the meaning was constructed based on their knowledge of the language. This type of question is very important because it enables awareness of the construction of meanings and it also shows the student that their knowledge is responsible for that process. Item *c* extends the request for the expression of meaning constructed at the level of the word onto the level of the verse in the context of the poem.

Activity 5 addresses the construction of meanings from the poem's structure. The objective is not the understanding of the figures of speech (antithesis or paradox), but the perception of how the structure of poem, based on such figures, collaborates significantly with the whole text. As shown in the texts of the Circle, the meaning of an utterance lies in the whole enunciative context and not only in the signals used. Thus, the expression of what students constructed by paying attention to the use of the

of processes involved in the use of language, studies in metalinguistic development, as in Gerhardt (2016).

antitheses and paradoxes is requested and followed by the justification of their answer, since it is known that the meanings also depend on the information that students bring into the dialogue with the text.

The items in activity 6 deal with dialogism from the perspective of the relationship between the text read and other artistic manifestations that are part of the universe/context of the reader. A thematic intersection is used in item *a* as strategy for the student to express their perception about another form of artistic manifestation in which the same theme is approached. Item *b* requests the comparison between the poem and the other art form mentioned.

The activities in number 7 drive the student's attention to the time period when the poem was written. Item *a* asks the student to try imagining what might have motivated the writing of the poem. It is a very open question and greatly dependent on the relation between: 1) the meaning the student constructed for the poem; 2) the world knowledge on the theme and the context of the time. Item *b* is linked to *a* as it moves the theme of the poem to the present day, because the literary work remains alive in a society due to its possibility of entering "into that kind of integral, organic association with the behavioral ideology of a given period" (VOLOŠINOV, 1973, p.91).⁵³ These two questions, therefore, address the diachronic movement as a possibility for interpreting possible motives that inspired the poem. Item *c*, in turn, aims at the dialogue with the previous answers and with the subject of the text, leading the student to express their understanding of why a poem written five centuries ago continues with the potential to raise awareness. Finally, letter *d* seeks, once again, to move the reading forward by drawing attention to genres, making possible the expression of the interaction between the poem and the genres of the student's daily sphere.

Finally, activity 8 dialogues with the activity carried out before reading, about the attempt to define *what love is*. This last activity draws the student's attention to the fact that literary reading may have the potential to contribute to transform people's perceptions about subjects of their lives, such as love. Even if the student answers that after reading the poem their definition of love has not changed, that simple question leads to the understanding that changes through reading are possible.

⁵³ For reference, see note 4.

Considerations (Not Final, because Every Utterance is a Link in a Discursive Chain)

This article demonstrates my responsive attitudes to some of the texts from the Bakhtin Circle. These attitudes rise from the dialogue that I established between the conceptions outlined by the Circle and my context as a researcher and teacher of literary reading. Such responsive attitudes aim to trace possible paths to understand the origins of the model of activities designed for the literary text in textbooks as well as to demonstrate the infertility of using such model of activities. Furthermore, based on the concepts of *dialogism* and *responsiveness*, our objective was to elaborate reading activities that were open to dialogue with the students' experiences and to the multiple readings that can emerge from the contact with the literary text.

I emphasize that the choices made to elaborate the activities in this article refract only one of the possibilities for destabilizing of crystallized models in the literary reading activities. The proposed activities here, far from perfect, try to be an act of rebellion by a teacher-researcher who seeks to redesign literary reading activities proposed in textbooks, making them more responsive to contemporary life. It is an attempt to unlearn to learn. Thus, through the unlearning of the use of activities that stimulate the imprisonment of the senses that the students construct in the contact with literature, this article aims at the researches that intend dialogical practices of literary reading. As Fiorin points out, "reading, in a dialogical conception, is building freedom for the soul" (FIORIN, 2009, p 57).⁵⁴

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⁵⁴ Original text: "ler, numa concepção dialógica, é construir liberdade para a alma."

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