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ARTICLES

The Intersubjective Nature of Meaning in Bakhtin and Wittgenstein / *A natureza intersubjetiva do significado em Bakhtin e Wittgenstein*

Mateus Toledo Gonçalves[*]

ABSTRACT
This article aims at comparing the philosophies of language of Bakhtin and Wittgenstein. The main problem to be addressed is how these two authors thought the idea that linguistic meaning necessarily has an intersubjective nature. To this end, the article will address the Wittgensteinian "private language argument," as discussed in *Philosophical Investigations*, particularly in §258, and the Bakhtinian thesis of the "dialogical orientation of discourse," as discussed at the beginning of chapter 2 of *Discourse in the Novel*.
KEYWORDS: Bakhtin; Philosophy; Wittgenstein; Intersubjectivity; Private language

RESUMO
Esse artigo propõe fazer uma comparação entre as filosofias da linguagem de Bakhtin e de Wittgenstein. Em particular, nos interessará a pergunta sobre como esses dois filósofos pensaram a ideia de que o significado linguístico tem necessariamente uma natureza intersubjetiva. Para isso, serão abordados o argumento wittgensteiniano contra a linguagem privada, como discutido nas Investigações filosóficas*, em particular em §258, e a tese bakhtiniana da orientação dialógica do discurso, como discutida no início do capítulo 2 d'*O discurso no romance.
PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Bakhtin; Filosofia; Wittgenstein; Intersubjetividade; Linguagem privada

[*] Universidade Federal do Paraná – UFPR, Programa de Pós-Graduação em Letras, Curitiba, Paraná, Brazil; CAPES/Proc.n.88887.489327/2020-00; https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4555-6649; mateus_tg@hotmail.com

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In his classic biography of Wittgenstein, Ray Monk recounts that in the summer of 1933 the philosopher – at that time already a legendary figure at Cambridge – planned to leave his post in the university and move to Russia to work at a Soviet community farm (Monk, 1990, pp.347-354). The plan, though dramatic, perhaps even intemperate, was also humble in a sense. It was not a positive gesture, a statement (there was no political passion or revolutionary cravings), but there was some sort of earthly resignation. Manual labor was as valuable for him as the work of a philosopher was, but with an ethical advantage – it was simple work, with an unpretentious meaning, free from the presumption philosophy usually carried. Wittgenstein could very well abandon philosophy, the same way he denied his inheritance years earlier, simply because he did not incline for the self-importance philosophy so often attributes to itself. Wittgenstein manages to go to Russia, but his plan fails because the Soviet authorities, struck by the unlikely request, were willing to accept him only as a university professor, and not to work as a peasant on a community farm. Wittgenstein then returns to Cambridge and begins to work in the *Brown Book* – a turning point in his philosophy, and the first systematic application of the Language Games method, a characteristic feature of his mature thinking.

Among others, one person Wittgenstein asked for help in establishing himself in Russia was Nikolai Bakhtin. A man of great scholarship and expansive personality, professor of classical literature and linguistics at the University of Birmingham, Nikolai was one of Wittgenstein's closest friends (Rhees, 1984, pp.12-50). The most famous biographical fact about him, however, is that he was the older brother of the great Russian philosopher and thinker Mikhail Bakhtin. The idea that the brother of an eminent language thinker such as Mikhail might have influenced another great thinker – one of the most important philosophers of language of the twentieth century – seemed fascinating to several commentators. Katerina Clark and Michael Holquist, authors of a well-known biography of Mikhail Bakhtin say, for instance, that Nikolai's conversations with Wittgenstein would have influenced the transformations that Wittgenstein's philosophy underwent in the 1930's, which would later be organized in the *Philosophical*

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Investigations (Clark; Holquist, 1984 p.20).[1] Joseph Frank, in his essay "The Voices of Mikhail Bakhtin," will also find fascinating that Bakhtin's older brother might have had a decisive influence on Wittgenstein's thought (Frank, 1990 p.19). Terry Eagleton will also comment on the "profound influence" Nikolai had on Wittgenstein (Eagleton, 1982, no page),[2] but goes further, suggesting that through Nikolai and his relationship with Mikhail, Wittgenstein's thinking was linked, even if indirectly, to that of Mikhail Bakhtin, a hypothesis or premise he will develop in his essay "Wittgenstein's Friends." It is worth quoting the excerpt in which he proposes this initial hypothesis:

> We know, however, that Nikolai came across a copy of Mikhail's work on Dostoevsky in Paris in 1930. We also know that though the brothers never met again after 1918, they had been extraordinarily close as children and were later to contend that they had never encountered anyone else in their lives who had been so important in their development. The two men were influenced by much the same literary and intellectual context. […] Both men were to embark upon careers which took the philosophy of language as their basis, and there are some affinities between Nikolai's essays and lectures and Mikhail's "Discourse and the Novel," surely one of the most superb documents of Marxist literary criticism of the century. By a curious historical quirk, then, it may be that the thought of Ludwig Wittgenstein is indirectly related to the mainstream of Marxist aesthetics (Eagleton, 1982, no page).

More recently, other authors, also intrigued by the connection between Wittgenstein and Bakhtin, have done a more thorough work in articulating their language philosophies. In this direction, Mika Lähteenmäki, in a 2004 article, will mobilize the philosophy of language in *Philosophical Investigations* and articulate it to the dialogical notion of Bakhtinian meaning to think about the concept of "meaning potential" (Lähteenmäki, 2004). In a very recent article, Ken Hirschkop will also compare the language philosophies of these two thinkers and suggest that there would be, in addition to their similarities on a technical-conceptual level, a deep ethical affinity; both philosophies stand against pride and presumption (Hirschkop, 2019).

[1] "He was clearly an extraordinary thinker. His conversations with Wittgenstein were one of the factors influencing the philosopher's shift from the logical positivism of the Tractatus to the more broadly speculative Philosophical Investigations" (Clark; Holquist, 1984, p.20).

[2] "According to all reports, Nikolai Bakhtin was an extraordinary character, passionate, flamboyant and exuberant, and exerted a deep influence on Wittgenstein."

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As it turns out, there is a whole tendency of establishing connections between both scholars and their philosophies, i.e.: Wittgenstein and Bakhtin, in various ways. The idea of this article, however, is to focus on a specific issue, an issue that separates and connects the thoughts of the two philosophers at the same time, namely the problem of how they *think the intersubjective nature of language.*

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At the center of Bakhtin's and Wittgenstein's reflections is the theme of language. But more than that, both authors share a certain insertion in the debate of their time, reacting to an abstract approach of language, and doing so by placing concrete *enunciation* as the effective reality of language, as the basic unit of their investigations. Thus, just as Bakhtin and the Circle (in particular Vološinov) reacted to Saussure's gesture of excluding 'parole' from the domain of his objective science when they placed enunciation, verbal interaction, as the "true center of linguistic reality" (Renfrew, 2015 p.63); Wittgenstein reacted to the approaches of Frege and Russell, his most direct interlocutors, who addressed to language as propositional calculus or an abstract system of signs, when he proposed to reinsert language into a complex of practices, when he invited us to think about language in its real usage, in the context of human activities in which it is always inserted.

Along with the centrality of enunciation is another position also shared by the two thinkers, which is the idea that meaning is inherently intersubjective. Language is, for both, inevitably a social phenomenon. But bringing them closer in such a general way does not say much – there are many ways of saying that "language is social," some being simpler than others, so what really matters is to understand specifically and, in each case, how this overlap between what is social and what is language is conceived, and the radicality and scope of this sort of affirmation.

Let's start with Wittgenstein. The best scenario to recognize the way language is imbricated with the social aspect in his philosophy is probably also the most celebrated moment of his work: the private language argument. It is widely understood that this argument begins in §243 of *Philosophical Investigations*:

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> 243. A human being can encourage himself, give himself orders, obey, blame and punish himself; he can ask himself a question and answer it. So one could imagine human beings who spoke only in monologue, who accompanied their activities by talking to themselves. a An explorer who watched them and listened to their talk might succeed in translating their language into ours. (This would enable him to predict these people's actions correctly, for he also hears them making resolutions and decisions.) (Wittgenstein, 2009, p.95e).[3]

The reading difficulty of *Investigations* is very different from that of the Bakhtinian prose. Wittgenstein's diction is commonplace, a down to earth and concrete style, so it is not complicated to understand what he is saying. On the other hand, understanding what he *means* by what he says, finding out what the *point* is, can be trickier. Although not very flourished, the text is airtight because it is very allusive and elliptical. One way to understand what is at stake here, which today would probably be considered a Kripekanian reading (Kripke, 1982), but is inscribed in a longer lineage that probably begins with the interpretation of Rush Rhees (1954), Wittgenstein's student and friend, would be to say that the unexplained background of this discussion is precisely the thesis that interests us, regarding the necessarily social nature of language. Observation 243 states some sort of resistance to this thesis. Wittgenstein offers a naïve question: wouldn't the thesis of the intersubjectivity of meaning be contradicted by the fact that we so often think alone and talk to ourselves? That is, isn't the existence of monologues in tension with the thesis of intersubjective nature of meaning? In an argumentative move that would not be entirely foreign to Bakhtin, Wittgenstein will try to show that when we speak alone, we are not excluding community. When we talk to ourselves, we are engaging in an organized activity, which establishes rules and regularities. There will be criteria so that we can be understood or *translated* by others: a speech is still social even if performed alone. Wittgenstein's point will be, as we shall see, that we can obviously *speak to ourselves*, we can perfectly follow a rule by ourselves, but the very notion of rule (and language) is incompatible with a certain idea of privacy.

The discussion about private language (in the strong sense that §243 wants to establish), however, begins only in the second part of observation 243:

[3] WITTGENSTEIN, L. *Philosophical Investigations/Philosophische Untersuchungen*. Bilingual Edition German/English. Ed. P.M.S. Hacker and Joachim Schulte. Trans. G. E. M. Anscombe, P.M.S. Hacker and Joachim Schulte. Wiley Blackwell, 2009.

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> 243. [...] But is it also conceivable that there be a language in which a person could write down or give voice to his inner experiences a his feelings, moods, and so on a for his own use? —— Well, can't we do so in our ordinary language? a But that is not what I mean. The |89| words of this language are to refer to what only the speaker can know a to his immediate private sensations. So another person cannot understand the language (Wittgenstein, 2009, p.95e.).[4]

Again, Wittgenstein simulates a conversation with a speaker who attacks the thesis that the nature of language is necessarily social, only now from a different bias. The relationship between language and sensations is introduced, which will structure the entire block of observations regarding the possibility of a private language. The interlocutor's argument is that the concept of language of sensations (connected to the inner experiences of a speaker) would contradict the intersubjectivity of meaning thesis. This is a bigger problem than the previous argument, already refuted, because it is not simply pointing out something I can do by myself, such as a monologue, but something much more radical, something only I can access. The idea is that the *sensations are private,* and when we choose, for example, the word "red," although we can perfectly agree on its usage, this red I see, the word reference for me, *only I can see*. There may be general rules on how to apply the word (which basically makes us qualify the same objects with the adjective "red"), but part of that meaning escapes – the word "red," for me, would point out something only I can access (and what is said is that we will never know, from a "phenomenological" point of view, if the red we see is the *same*). It is as if for each speaker the meaning of the word "red" (or the word "pain," for example, since the same process will occur with other sensations) is double sided – there is a shared meaning (which makes us agree on how to use the word) and a private meaning, which relates precisely to this portion of meaning that escapes, and only the speaker can access.[5] We can, as the interlocutor does, imagine a language which has only that private side. At the end of the day, we are left with the question: how to make the intersubjectivity of meaning thesis compatible with the fact that certain words seem to refer to sensations that each of us have private access to, something that seems to be, say, *metaphysically removed from the intersubjective domain?* As Kripke states, the private language argument is applied to the case of sensations precisely because at first glance they would refute Wittgenstein's

[4] For reference, see footnote 3.
[5] In §273, we see that it is as if that private side provides namely the "designation" of the word.

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considerations on rules and language, they appear as a potentially disruptive counterexample (Kripke, 1982, p.3).

Wittgenstein's attack on the possibility of a private language is quite intricate, it involves a series of arguments.[6] Our interest is in a particular argument, presented in §258:

> 258. Let's imagine the following case. I want to keep a diary about the recurrence of a certain sensation. To this end I associate it with the sign "S" and write this sign in a calendar for every day on which I have the sensation. —— I first want to observe that a definition of the sign cannot be formulated. But all the same, I can give one to myself as a kind of ostensive definition! How? Can I point to the sensation? a Not in the ordinary sense. But I speak, or write the sign down, and at the same time I concentrate my attention on the sensation and so, as it were, point to it inwardly. But what is this ceremony for? For that is all it seems to be! A definition serves to lay down the meaning of a sign, doesn't it? a Well, that is done precisely by concentrating my attention; for in this way I commit to memory the connection between the sign and the sensation. But "I commit it to memory" can only mean: this process brings it about that I remember the connection correctly in the future. But in the present case, I have no criterion of correctness. One would like to say: whatever is going to seem correct to me is correct. And that only means that here we can't talk about 'correct' (Wittgenstein, 2009, pp.98-99e).[7]

This is the main point of the private language argument and deserves a line-by-line commentary. We have an open dialogue between Wittgenstein's position and that of his interlocutor. The interlocutor begins by trying to conceive how private language would work, trying to show how the association between the "S" sign and a certain private sensation would occur. For example, every day the subject feels a specific sensation he can mark the "S" on a calendar. (Note that for the advocates of the notion of private language, only this subject can understand this "S," and not because it is a code that others do not know, but in a strong sense, he is the only one who has access to the meaning of "S"). Wittgenstein responds by noting that in this case, the "S" sign was not defined, that

[6] For the advocate of the private language theory, the point is that when I use the word "pain" (or the word "red," and so on) it seems like a reference to something private, something that each speaker has private access to, but is removed from the public scene. Wittgenstein will attack the conception of nature of sensations and the way it produces an image of the functioning of language (the idea that the word "pain" is the *name* of something, of a certain mental experience), but we will skip this discussion to focus on another part of his argument, which concerns us more – the contrast with Bakhtin, who deals directly with the social inscription of language.

[7] For reference, see footnote 3.

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is, this association between the sensation and the "S" signal is not linguistic in nature. All we have is a letter written on a piece of paper, but it does not turn "S" into the *name* of a sensation, it does not give it meaning. The interlocutor responds by saying that he could give an ostensive definition of the signal. As the ostensive definition is prototypically one in which you point at an object in order to name it, Wittgenstein is skeptical and asks: how could anyone point at a feeling? The interlocutor suggests an alternative, a kind of "mental pointing," in which the signal is noted while focusing on the particular sensation that one wants to name. Wittgenstein's retort will then have a satirical tone: "But what's this ceremony for"? As if pointing out how ridiculous the whole situation was: what can be achieved with such a strange ritual? It is the case of remembering that there is in the observation block from §28 to §38 a whole discussion, which seems presupposed here, about the ostensive definition, which tries to show its complexity, and how much it needs to be linguistically prepared, as it depends on application techniques, a previous practical and institutional context, etc. The immediately preceding observation (§257) has also alluded to that discussion. That way, it is obvious to the reader at this point of the text that this whole ceremony is in vain, it cannot reach its goal. And the irony in Wittgenstein's tone seems to laugh at the emptiness of the attempt. But the interlocutor insists that the gesture of "mentally pointing," focusing your attention on a certain feeling, produces a connection between the "S" sign and the feeling, like some sort of "private ostensive definition." As Peter Hacker will state, the interlocutor is trying to argue that this "mental pointing" could function as a sample, it would be like a "private table," which associates the "S" sign to the sensation (Hacker, 1986, p.267).[8] Wittgenstein's final retort is the defining moment of the argument. Its core idea is that in private language there is a lack of a *criterion of correctness.* That is, the ostensive definition should provide some normativity for the correct use of the "S" sign, but that internal ceremony cannot achieve this and therefore it is not a definition, it did not attribute meaning to the "S" sign. A "mental table" cannot establish a criterion of correctness because it is not independent from the subject who searches it. No rule can be established without external reference, without the appeal of the community. With this "mental table," i.e., an attempt to connect

[8] The idea is that the defender of private language, when conflicted about whether a certain sensation was the same as the day before, could use his "mental table" to ensure whether he should mark the "S" in the diary or not. The interlocutor assumes that this "private table" works in the same way as ordinary tables, as a price list in any trade, for example. Resolving the argument, the case is that a "private table" cannot work in the same way as a regular table, because it lacks a criterion of correctness.

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a sensation to a letter by memory, it was not possible to overcome the fact that "the correct will be what seems right to me." There was no norm. The gesture of trying to connect the "S" sign with a feeling via concentration and attention does not have a linguistic nature, so the ceremony is empty, "S" cannot gain any meaning from it.

To say it more clearly, and to summarize the main argument: language is inherently a *normative* activity. If the "S" mark in the diary wants to mean something, wants to be part of a language, then there must be some normativity regulating its use, it should be used correctly or incorrectly. But the main problem with the notion of private language is that it dismantles the distinction between *following a rule* and *assuming that one follows a rule* (Wittgenstein, 2009, p.87-88e, §202).[9] The polarity of right/wrong depends on an independent parameter: if the only available standard is one that ultimately can only establish that "the right is equivalent to what seems right to me," then there is no criteria, only the false appearance of one. There can be no language without an intersubjective reference.

3

In order to understand how the vital link between language and society in Bakhtin is established, one must necessarily go through what he calls the "dialogical orientation of discourse" (Bakhtin, 1981, p.279).[10] The idea of "dialogue" here does not simply mean conversation in its most usual sense. For Bakhtin, the dialogic would be a metaphor, it designates something pervasive in language, the dialogical orientation would be a phenomenon proper "to *any* discourse" (Bakhtin, 1981, p.279).[11] While addressing dialogue through this metaphor, first, one must have in mind that no concrete enunciation, no effective use of language is solitary, i.e., "dialogue" is being opposed to "monologue." It is as if a mundane situation, such as a conversation between two or more people, was understood as a prototypical case that would reveal something general about language, that is, the intersubjective character of meaning. Indeed, even a monologue, in its common sense of someone who simply speaks to you, is a "conversation." It is dialogical in the

[9] For reference, see footnote 3.
[10] BAKHTIN, M. *The Dialogic Imagination*: Four Essays by M. M. Bakhtin Ed. by Michael Holquist. Trans. By Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981.
[11] For reference, see footnote 10.

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technical sense of Bakhtin's philosophy, because it will inevitably reveal *the trait of intersubjectivity present in every discourse.* Thus described, the similarity with Wittgenstein is evident, but, as we shall see, the scope of this statement in Bakhtin is also quite distinct.

This presence of the "other," which is constitutive of all meaning, this inseparable bond between what is social and what is language, receives in Bakhtin's *Discourse in the Novel* the name of "internal dialogism." In this essay, he makes a double characterization of the phenomenon. By reversing Bakhtin's order of exposure, we can say that the first side is its direction to the listener (Bakhtin, 1981, pp.179-181).[12] Once again thinking about the metaphor of dialogue, we can think that, the same way happens in a conversation, which in its usual sense can only be considered as one if the parties minimally take into account what the other says, Bakhtin will generalize this trait and say that, in fact, every discourse is characterized by addressing a listener: "every word is directed toward an answer and cannot escape the profound influence of the answering word that it anticipates" (Bakhtin, 1981, p.280).[13] This trait of addressing a listener (whether present or assumed) would be something internal in the sense that it *constitutes* any enunciation; every discourse is built towards the future (towards the "not yet said"), it is always expecting a response. Every act of talking incorporates in its own constitution this anticipated alterity.

The other side of this internal dialogicity has precisely the opposite temporal orientation: the enunciation is not only focused on the future, but also on the past. Every discourse is generated "in an atmosphere of the already spoken." (Bakhtin, 1981, p.280)[14] Indeed, it would be possible to say that *the responsiveness of the discourse* has a double temporal orientation: any utterance is an early response, it is linked to the future, to the "not yet said," but it is also a response to a series of previous discourses, growing out of the "already said," positioning itself in relation to it. An enunciation is never primal, original, it can only arise by the inscription in a discursive network that precedes it:

> Indeed, any concrete discourse (utterance) finds the object at which it was directed already as it were overlain with qualifications, open to dispute, charged with value, already enveloped in an obscuring mist—

[12] For reference, see footnote 10.
[13] For reference, see footnote 10.
[14] For reference, see footnote 10.

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> or, on the contrary, by the "light" of alien words that have already been spoken about it. It is entangled, shot through with shared thoughts, points of view, alien value judgements and accents (Bakhtin, 1981, pp.276-277).[15]

The discourse is thus part of a game with multiple social voices and different temporalities, so that in the constitution of each utterance there will always be an internal tension with other utterances, whether it is in sight or not. The discourse is therefore not closed in itself: *it constitutes itself internally turning itself out.* Every utterance is part of a huge web of other utterances and can only be understood through that background. It is placed at the junction of multiple social voices, which perform some sort of broad "social dialogue," so that the field of discourse will be, for Bakhtin, inseparable from the domain of ideology:

> The living utterance, having taken meaning and shape at a particular historical moment in a socially specific environment, cannot fail to brush up against thousands of living dialogic threads, woven by socio-ideological consciousness around the given object of an utterance; it cannot fail to become an active participant in social dialogue. After all, the utterance arises out of this dialogue as a continuation of it and as a rejoinder to it—it does not approach the object from the sidelines (Bakhtin, 1981, pp.276-277).[16]

By now, the differences between Bakhtin and Wittgenstein's conceptions must have already begun to stand out. In fact, even if we look at the generic statement "every meaning is social," it would be approved by both. The way they agree with it, however, would be quite distinct. From a Bakhtinian perspective, to say that any utterance is irreparably social is to refer to the fact that it is part of a tight network of other utterances, and that each utterance participates in an endless social dialogue. In Wittgenstein's philosophy the scope is completely different. He defends the social nature of language with no reference to this broad domain of what is ideological; it is rather a question of stating that speaking a language is an activity that will involve a practical skill which is inherently *normative*, and, in turn, will undoubtedly depend on an intersubjective appeal.

[15] For reference, see footnote 10.
[16] For reference, see footnote 10.

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One way of approaching this difference is thinking that, if in Bakhtin the emphasis is on the *evaluation,*[17] on the idea that any utterance expresses an evaluative attitude and can only do so by positioning itself in a vast and tight social fabric of values. In Wittgenstein's case the emphasis is on the terms *normativity* and *rule,* meaning that speaking a language is a normative activity that depends on the right/wrong polarity; one that can only be constituted intersubjectively.

To better understand this difference, it is worth commenting one of Bakhtin's best-known images, which he applies to explain internal dialogism of speech:

> If we imagine the *intention* of such a word, that is, its *directionality toward the object*, (emphasis in original) in the form of a ray of light, then the living and unrepeatable play of colors and light on the facets of the image that it constructs can be explained as the spectral dispersion of the ray-word, not within the object itself (as would be the case in the play of an image-as-trope, in poetic speech taken in the narrow sense, in an ―autotelic word), but rather as its spectral dispersion in an atmosphere filled with the alien words, value judgments and accents through which the ray passes on its way toward the object; the social atmosphere of the word, the atmosphere that surrounds the object, makes the facets of the image sparkle (Bakhtin, 1981, p.277).[18]

Bakhtin uses a metaphor to convey his philosophical position. Light is, as we know, traditionally a metaphor for knowledge. What is at stake here is the way Bakhtinian philosophy thinks about the secular philosophical problem regarding the relationship between language and reality. The center of an image has a ray of light shining upon an object being refracted by the environment. Bakhtin's entire emphasis is on this notion of *refraction.* Discourse is a ray of light that can only be directed to reality, crossing this heterogeneous space, made of multiple voices and values, and being refracted by it. From this image we can state at least two points. An epistemological point – for Bakhtin every attempt to know the world will involve refraction and, therefore, the ways of directing to the world will be as numerous as the refractions. In this sense, it is an anti-absolutist position, not different from the Wittgensteinian perspective. Then there is also a linguistic point – which interests us more directly because it synthesizes our discussion in an image.

[17] It is worth referencing the work of Faraco, that has an entire interpretation placing axiology at the core of the Bakhtinian philosophy, which would be, for him, "the great foundation of Bakhtin's philosophical project" (FARACO, 2017, p.48).
[18] For reference, see footnote 10.

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That is, every utterance undergoes social mediation, and is socially refracted. In this image, the intersubjectivity of language lies in *refraction*, in the atmosphere of voices and values and how it effects the trajectory of light.

If we want to use the same Bakhtinian image to think about Wittgenstein, the emphasis would be different; it would no longer be on refraction. Bakhtin wants to emphasize the relations of tension between the utterances, the inevitable overlapping of speech within other discourses. Wittgenstein, as we have already noted, is not interested in the ideological field. Without denying the existence of the social mediation investigated by Bakhtin, Wittgenstein's philosophy is investigating another instance of interconnection between the social and the language. It is as if the intersubjectivity that interests him is reflected in the light itself and not in its refracted path. Even if it were possible to imagine a speech that was not crossed by other discourses, even if we imagined a circumstance in which the medium had zero refraction index, still, for Wittgenstein, any meaning would depend on an intersubjective appeal. The mythical Adam could even find a world not yet valued, as Bakhtin speculated, but for Wittgenstein, without Eve's presence, he would not be able to say anything about it.[19]

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[19] Bakhtin, of course, did not believe in the existence of an Adamic language, his point with the image was to distinguish language from the dominance of the myth of language in the historical world. However, without really intending to make a scholarly comment on this excerpt, it seems to me this example can be used to highlight the different way in which language and the social spheres are intertwined in the philosophies of Bakhtin and Wittgenstein.

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Translated by Isabel Ferreira – isabel.dcferreira@gmail.com

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REVIEWS

Review I

The article goes so far as to indicate that its objective is to establish a comparison between Bakhtin's and Wittgenstein's philosophies of language, but it does not address the distinct view of language that the two thinkers have, nor their respective philosophical lineages. However, it immediately delimits its objective, restricting it to problematizing "the intersubjective nature of linguistic meaning" in both domains. In this way, as much as the aforementioned reflections may still be missed, the text presented is consistent, as well as tasty. The approximation/confrontation between the two thinkers contributes to the problematization of Bakhtin's philosophical place. And because of that, we definitely recommend its publication. We only suggest a change in the last lines of the article, which

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recover, with a certain humor, Bakhtin's mention of the word adamic. As is well known, Bakhtin uses the image to distinguish language in the domain of myth from language in the historical world with which he is concerned. The way in which the article takes advantage of Bakhtin's words to confront him with Wittgenstein, although it gives an attractive finish to the text, certainly distorts the reflection!

Renata Coelho Marchezan – https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7453-1734; renata_marchezan@uol.com.br; Universidade Estadual de São Paulo – UNESP, Araraquara, São Paulo, Brazil.

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