

**SCIENTIFIC AND SPONTANEOUS CONCEPTS, PRIMARY
AND SECONDARY GENRES, BEHAVIORAL AND
CRYSTALLIZED IDEOLOGIES: POSSIBLE
INTERRELATIONS AND EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS**
**Conceitos Científicos e Espontâneos, Gêneros Primários e
Secundários, Ideologias do Cotidiano e Historicamente
Cristalizadas: Inter-relações e Implicações Educacionais Possíveis**

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Abstract

Bearing in mind the similarities shared between Vygotsky's theory of learning and development and the Marxist philosophy of language proposed by the Bakhtin circle, this paper aims at establishing a dialogue between the Vygotskian concepts of scientific and spontaneous knowledge and the Bakhtinian ideas concerning primary and secondary genres as well as behavioral and crystallized ideologies.

Since these theoretical constructs share the assumption that consciousness is constituted through interaction with other people in a broad sociohistorical context, I believe that thinking of their interrelations can shed light on the understanding of teaching-learning situations seen, in a sociohistorical purview, as ideological arenas where knowledge is constructed and awareness is raised.

In order to place the dialogue between these Vygotskian and Bakhtinian concepts into a concrete teaching-learning situation, I finalize the discussion with a reflection about the interplay of these conceptions in virtual conversations between a student and me, which are part of a distance course aiming at preparing the pupil for her EFL college entrance examinations.

Keywords: *concepts; genres; ideologies; interaction; other(s).*

Resumo

Levando-se em conta as semelhanças compartilhadas entre a teoria de Vygotsky em relação aos processos de aprendizagem e desenvolvimento e a filosofia marxista da linguagem proposta pelo círculo de Bakhtin, o presente artigo busca estabelecer um diálogo entre as concepções vygotkianas de conceitos científicos e conceitos do cotidiano e as noções bakhtinianas de gêneros primários e secundários e de ideologias do cotidiano e ideologias historicamente cristalizadas.

Visto que esses construtos teóricos compartilham a idéia de que a consciência é constituída na interação com outras pessoas em um amplo contexto sócio-histórico, acredito que pensar nas suas inter-relações pode levar à melhor compreensão de situações de ensino-aprendizagem vistas, em uma perspectiva sócio-histórica, como arenas ideológicas em que o conhecimento é construído e a consciência constituída.

Com o intuito de trazer o diálogo entre esses conceitos vygotkianos e bakhtinianos para uma situação de ensino-aprendizagem concreta, finalizo a discussão com uma reflexão sobre o interjogo dessas concepções em diálogos virtuais entre aluna e professora que integram um curso a distância cujo objetivo foi preparar a aluna para a prova de língua estrangeira que compõe os exames para ingresso na universidade.

Palavras-chave: *conceitos; gêneros; ideologias; interação; outro(s).*

1. Introduction

According to Freitas (1997), the theories of Vygotsky and Bakhtin, in spite of their different purposes¹, dialogue in several aspects. Both theories developed their conceptions from the perspective of a totalizing view of reality in which the human being is depicted and understood within a complex network of social relations. For being contrary to the dichotomies that characterized the psychological and

¹ While Vygotsky's purpose is to develop a historically founded psychology, Bakhtin's focus of interest lies on the construction of a historical and social philosophy of language. (Freitas, 1997).

linguistic studies of their epoch, all of them oscillating between the subjective and objective poles, Vygotsky and Bakhtin developed their theories having in mind the inextricable bonds between *subject* and *object*, proposing a dialectical synthesis determined by culture and history.

Both Vygotsky and Bakhtin propose that consciousness just becomes so in the processes of semiotic mediated social interactions. Thus, in both theories interaction with other(s) in the social world plays a fundamental role since without these *others* we can not penetrate in the chain of language, we are unable to learn and develop higher intellectual functions. In sum, without the *others* our conscience is not formed and we are not constituted as subjects.

Like Freitas (1997), Rojo (2000) agrees that a meaningful dialogue can be established among the concepts defended by Vygotsky's and Bakhtin's theories. The author suggests that the Bakhtinian philosophy of language represents "a good elaboration for the issues of language and discourse crucially involved in the learning process" (Rojo, 2000: 2)². This is so because the theory developed by Bakhtin's circle shares the Vygotskian notion that everything that is characteristically human is constructed by the infant in his/her interpersonal relationships, through his/her insertion and participation in social institutions such as family, school, church and so forth. In these social institutions or spheres, as they are named by Bakhtin, other people's discourses are internalized and in this complex process of internalization they become an integral part of the child's own discourse.

Sharing the view that both theories have many aspects in common, being oriented toward a sociohistorical perception of human beings' relationship with reality, my main proposition in this article is that the comprehension of how some specific concepts postulated by Vygotsky and Bakhtin are articulated can shed light on the interpretation and understanding of educational phenomena.

² My translation from the original quotation in Portuguese.

The focus on the possible interrelations that can be figured out between Vygotsky's classification of concepts into spontaneous and scientific and Bakhtin's classification of genres into primary and secondary and of ideology into behavioral and crystallized is justified both by my perception of the several intersections among these ideas, as well as by the belief of their relevance to the comprehension of the knowledge construction processes that takes place in different educational spheres.

1.1. Concepts, genres and ideologies: possible dialogues

In opposition to the psychological paradigms of his epoch, which tended either to view development and learning as two independent processes, to equate both processes to habit formation, or to recognize instruction and maturation as subordinate aspects of development, Vygotsky (1930, 1934) suggests that development and learning are two distinct but interdependent processes, defending the thesis that since instruction brings a considerable shift into development, learning, instead of acting as a slave in service of development, should be in advance to it.

This thesis is central to the construction of the concept of zone of proximal development (henceforth ZPD), which presupposes that, being some reasonable limits established³, a child can perform tasks beyond his/her level of development in cooperation with others. Therefore, it is what the child can do with others' help (his/her proximal level of development) and not what he/she can perform alone (his/her real level of development) that constitutes, for containing the material of future potentialities, the best indicative of his/her development.

Learning plays an extremely important role in Vygotsky's theory and is conceived by him as "a necessary and universal aspect of the

³ By suggesting that instruction precedes development, Vygotsky (1930, 1934) does not mean that a child can solve any problem above his/her level of development in cooperation with others and through the imitation of these others' action. The limits imposed by maturation issues is recognized when he suggests that *with assistance, every child can do more than he can by himself – though only within the limits set by the state of his development* (Vygotsky, 1934: 187).

process of developing culturally organized, specifically human, psychological functions” (Vygotsky, 1930: 90). Although learning begins from the very moment a child is born and takes place in the various social spheres where he/she interacts, the instruction he/she receives at school is essential to the development of various complex psychological processes: deliberate attention, logical memory, abstraction, the ability to compare and to differentiate.

This is so because it is exactly at school that the child gets in touch with the scientific concepts, which, in turn, interact with his/her spontaneous knowledge, ending up changing the nature and structure of the latter. The interaction between scientific and spontaneous concepts is conceived as a very complex process in which both kinds of concepts are closely connected but are thought to evolve under entirely different inner and outer conditions, which implies that the child’s experience of them varies considerably.

While spontaneous concepts are constituted in everyday life in an unsystematic way, the constitution of scientific concepts that takes place at school is systematic from its very beginning. Consequently, so as to introduce the pupil to the hierarchical system of interrelations that characterizes scientific knowledge, the instruction that mediates its construction is always based on the pupil’s awareness in relation to the concepts.

In contrast to what happens to scientific concepts, consciousness of spontaneous concepts is developed much later. The child acquires these concepts much earlier than he/she is able to define them in words or to operate with them at will. That is the reason why Vygotsky emphasizes that:

Scientific concepts, with their hierarchical system of interrelation, seem to be the medium within which awareness and mastery first develop, to be transferred later to the other concepts and other areas of thought. Reflective consciousness comes to the child through the portals of scientific concepts. (Vygotsky, 1934: 171)

This proposition suggests that *reflective consciousness* is first developed in the semiotic mediated interaction with more experienced partners that takes place during the teaching-learning process. As the infant's learning begins a long time before he/she starts school, his/her everyday knowledge spontaneously constructed establishes an uninterrupted interaction with the new scientific concepts⁴, also becoming subject to generalization, abstraction and conscious thinking. It is in this sense that scientific concepts change the structure and nature of spontaneous concepts, making the child conscious of his/her own mental processes.

In spite of the awareness implied in the construction of scientific concepts, they lack the rich content derived from personal experience that characterizes everyday concepts. Although these two conceptual systems seem to develop in reverse directions, the conscious and deliberate character of the first and the experiential character of the second meet and interact in the ZPD, where both of them set the tone for the pupil's potential development.

The construction of both spontaneous and scientific concepts is only possible through the child's participation in the process of verbal interaction with other people held in the diverse spheres of human activities. It is primarily the semiotic mediated character that defines the processes through which concepts are constructed that allows their connection to the Bakhtinian conception of speech genres.

Bakhtin (1953) defines speech genres as the relatively stable type of utterances developed by each sphere in which language is used. Given the great diversity of human activity and the fact that each social sphere has a whole repertoire of utterance types, heterogeneity is an inherent characteristic of speech genres, which develop and change in the same dynamic pace as the social spheres they belong to.

⁴ The concept a child has of a *dog* before and after the contact with the scientific instruction that takes place at school can illustrate this interaction between spontaneous and scientific concepts. Much before going to school, the child spontaneously learns what a dog is by interacting with other people in the social world. Nevertheless, at school this spontaneous concept becomes subject to generalization and abstraction once the same *dog* is defined as a mammal, carnivorous, domesticated wolf of the family Canidae, to which the jackal and fox also belong.

Instead of attempting an exhaustive classification of speech genres, Bakhtin (1953) differentiates them into primary and secondary. Primary speech genres are part of everyday life and result from spontaneous interactions, to which they maintain an implicated relationship, being impossible to grasp their meaning without reference to the immediate context where they are produced. Secondary genres, on the other hand, arise in more complex, developed and organized situations of cultural communication such as artistic, scientific, sociopolitical and so forth.

Based on the definition above, it is possible to suggest that while the Bakhtinian notion of primary speech genres share the same unsystematic, spontaneous and experiential nature as Vygotsky's concept of everyday knowledge, his definition of secondary speech genres has several aspects in common with the idea of scientific concepts. That is because the scientific concepts that are part of school instruction integrate the secondary speech genres and, as such, these concepts have gone through a process of systematization and hierarchization as a result of their sociohistorical crystallization in the sphere of knowledge (Science, History, Geography, Sociology, etc) they belong to.

Another parallel can be drawn in the relationship Bakhtin (1953) establishes between primary and secondary speech genres. Similarly to spontaneous and scientific concepts, primary and secondary speech genres are interrelated in complex ways and, therefore, can not be interpreted as two completely independent categories. It is the primary speech genres that give rise to the secondary ones, losing their immediate relation to the material situation and to the utterances of others and having their nature altered as they become part of more complex genres.

Therefore, it can be proposed that the spontaneous knowledge present in many of the everyday dialogues that constitute the primary speech genres influence activity in more public and organized social spheres (the artistic, the scientific, the political, the academic, etc) where the secondary speech genres come from. Nevertheless, given the complex relations between these conceptions, the influence is always a two-way one, making the opposite also true. This means that spontaneous knowledge and primary genres also receive influence from and are transformed by scientific concepts and secondary genres.

As Bakhtin clearly points out:

The difference between primary and secondary (ideological) genres is very great and fundamental, but this is precisely why the nature of the utterance should be revealed and defined through the analysis of both types. Only then can the definition be adequate to the complex and profound nature of the utterance (and encompass its most important facets). A one-sided orientation toward primary genres inevitably leads to a vulgarization of the entire problem. The very interrelations between primary and secondary genres and the process of the historical formation of the latter shed light on the nature of the utterance (and above all on the complex problem of the interrelations among language, ideology, and world view). (Bakhtin, 1953: 62)

Taking into consideration the fact that the utterance always has an ideological nature in the Marxist philosophy of language proposed by Bakhtin's circle, the notion of ideology is a constitutive part of the concept of speech genres and of the idea of spontaneous and scientific concepts, in the sense that these two conceptual systems feed the countless primary and secondary speech genres.

According to Voloshinov (1929) and Bakhtin (1953), the ideological as well as the dialogical nature of language is related to the fact that every single utterance is linked to other utterances in the complex chain of verbal communication and to the proposition that each utterance is directed towards an active *other* and not a passive listener. This means that the *other(s)* to whom our utterance is directed always take an active responsive attitude toward it, which can be materialized in the form of a non verbal action, an agreement, disagreement and so forth. The speaker expects this active responsive attitude and his/her utterance is oriented by it.

Although this active responsive attitude is more clearly noticed within the rejoinders of a dialogue, every single utterance, including all the complex genres such as the literary and scientific ones, is oriented toward an addressee, having, consequently, a dialogical character. Like the rejoinders of an everyday dialogue, secondary genres produced by

literary, educational, sociopolitical spheres are oriented toward an active response, *which can assume various forms: educational influence on the readers, persuasion of them, critical responses, influence on followers and successors, and so on.* (Bakhtin, 1953: 76)

As both addresser and addressee construct their utterances from a specific situation and are, at the same time, part of a broad sociohistorical context, the structure of the utterance is determined both by the immediate situation and the broader social milieu. Based on the assumption that it is in the process of social interaction that our consciousness is filled with ideological content and constituted as such, Voloshinov (1929) suggests that every apprehension, no matter how simple it may be, is subject to ideological evaluation, reflecting and refracting a reality outside itself.

Each field of ideological creativity reflects and refracts reality in its own way, having a distinct function in the unity of social life. The aggregate of life experiences and the outward expression linked to it is referred to by Voloshinov (1929) as *behavioral ideologies*, whereas the heterogeneous set of utterances originating from the more complex and structured activities of the artistic, scientific, political and religious spheres are placed within the limits of what the author classifies as *established ideological systems*, which are considered to be crystallizations of *behavioral ideology*.

It seems to me that once more the Bakhtinian conception of speech genres and the Vygotskian notion of concepts can be brought to the dialogue so that relations with the idea of *behavioral ideology* and *established ideological system* can be inferred. In this sense, scientific concepts and secondary speech genres, having both gone through a process of historical crystallization, integrate the *established ideological systems*. Primary speech genres and spontaneous concepts, in turn, are part of *the behavioral ideology*, given the fact that they are not organized in a historically crystallized system due to their origin in more private spheres of everyday life. Therefore, it is possible to propose that, being part of the complex link in the chain of utterances, all these concepts are closely and complexly related and a two-way influence can be established among them.

By seeking to understand the complex problem of interrelations between language, ideology and world view, the sociohistorical conception of language proposed by the circle of Bakhtin can enhance the comprehension of the interpsychological process of knowledge construction that takes place in classroom interactions interpreted through a Vygotskian perspective. Thus, the dialogue between Vygotsky's and Bakhtin's assumptions allows that the teaching-learning process be disclosed both in its *socioconstructive* and *ideological* aspects, providing a deeper and more complex understanding of the educational phenomenon in focus.

Bearing these possible dialogues in mind, I present a brief reflection on the interplay among the concepts discussed above in a real teaching-learning situation. The short analysis to be presented concentrates on the interrelations between the conceptions of concepts, genres and ideologies in the creation of potential zones of development for the socioconstruction of knowledge in the situation focused.

2. The interplay between everyday and crystallized knowledge in conversations mediated by MSN⁵

The two excerpts of dialogue used to discuss the interplay between everyday and crystallized knowledge are part of a series of interactions between a student and me mediated by the chat program MSN. The dialogues in MSN were part of a distance course that focused on the development of reading skills in English so as to prepare the student for her college entrance examinations. Given the importance of both the immediate situation and the broader social context to interpret interactions through a sociohistorical perspective, I present below some relevant characteristics of the particular teaching-learning situation and of the participants involved in it.

⁵ MSN is a popular software by Microsoft that allows two or more people who are connected on the Internet to exchange instant messages in a virtual space.

The idea of having reading comprehension lessons came from the fact that the pupil, Carol, had not achieved good results in the English test in a competitive college entrance examination from a public university in Brazil. The data discussed below was collected in the first semester of 2004 while I was doing part of my PHD research in England.

Based on the fact that the English tests of most college entrance examinations in Brazil focus mainly on the candidate's skill of reading and interpreting texts in the target language, the participants decided that the course would concentrate on the development of reading strategies that could help Carol succeed in these examinations.

During the negotiation of the course content in an encounter in MSN, it was established that I would send Carol one reading comprehension task every week and that we would have weekly chats on MSN to discuss her answers to that specific task or issues related to the next week task. In addition to these weekly chats, it was also argued that e-mail exchanges would be the means of communication to be used in case of any doubts concerning the task.

Besides teacher and student, the two participants in the interaction are also sisters. Thus, the very close relationship between them as well as the shared knowledge about each other's lives exercise considerable influence not only on the tone of the dialogue, but also on the configuration of the whole course.

Having delineated the problem that triggered this teaching-learning situation and the context where it took place, I start a brief analysis of two excerpts of dialogues between Carol and me with the purpose of reflecting on how the Bakhtinian and Vygotskian conceptions already presented can shed light on the understanding of the knowledge construction process in focus.

In the excerpt transcribed below⁶, Paula (the teacher) discusses with Carol (the pupil) the notion of speech genres. The notion had already been introduced in a reading comprehension task aimed at making the

⁶ The dialogues, originally in Portuguese, were translated into English for the present paper.

pupil use her previous knowledge to identify the speech genres of several kinds of texts. The task was composed by texts belonging to different speech genres – advertisements, news, recipes – and written in languages other than Portuguese or English. After a brief description on the notion of speech genre, the pupil is asked to identify the genre and answer some specific question about each text.

The main purpose of the task was showing Carol that she could rely on her previous knowledge about the structure of a specific speech genre to gather meaningful information from texts even if they were written in languages she had never studied before. The excerpt of interaction analyzed below took place after Carol had done this task and portrays her encounter with Paula to discuss the results of it.

The dialogue between the two of them in this particular interaction portrays a situation where everyday ideologies and concepts interact with crystallized ideologies and scientific concepts in the construction of the notion of speech genres, which integrates the arena of crystallized ideological systems.

Excerpt 1: on the notion of speech genres.

¹ Paula says:

have you heard of or do you imagine what speech genres are... it's a notion I describe in the exercise... since you'll have to identify to which speech genre each text belongs to.

² Paula says:

if you don' know... you can "guess"... this is a valid strategy too.

³ Carol says:

oh yeah.... I've heard of it... don't worry, if I don't know, I'll really guess!!! just kidding!!!

⁴ Paula says:

I say what it is in the exercise... I'm suggesting that you guess now!

- ⁵ Carol says:
ah yeah....ah, is it about what the text expresses and in which way?!?!
- ⁶ Paula says:
nice try, almost got it... let's do like that... I paste the definition I give in the exercise and we talk about what you understood. Okay?
- ⁷ Carol says:
all right.
- ⁸ Paula says:
there it goes.
- ⁹ Paula says:
We use language in the most varied social spheres: family, school, church, work, Internet, etc, to accomplish different aims. These different aims are accomplished in each of these spheres through the great diversity of speech genres that can be found in each of them.
- ¹⁰ Paula says:
In the educational sphere, for instance, some typical speech genres are: summary, questionnaire, seminar and so forth. In the Internet, we could think of e-mail, advertisement, news and an infinity of other genres.
- ¹¹ Paula says:
In college entrance examinations, which integrate the educational sphere, genres like articles, news, cartoons, etc are used to evaluate the candidate's capacity of interpreting texts in his mother tongue or in a foreign language.
- ¹² Paula says:
As many speech genres are part of our everyday life, we are able to identify the genre to which a text belongs (if it is an e-mail, a recipe, an instruction manual, a poem, an article, etc) just by "accessing" our world knowledge.

¹³ Paula says:

It's over. I had to paste it in four parts to work out!

¹⁴ Carol says:

well, I understood everything.

¹⁵ Paula says:

What is speech genre, then?

¹⁶ Carol says:

it is possible to say that it is the form a text is composed and to which purposes.

¹⁷ Paula says:

yes, it is exactly this. For example, a recipe of any dish is a speech genre whose purpose is to trigger an action such as making a cake, a meat, a sandwich or whatever.

¹⁸ Paula says:

news are also speech genres... what would be the purpose of the genre news?

¹⁹ Carol says:

inform people about a determined subject or fact that happened.

²⁰ Paula says:

great... you got the idea and the main concept for the accomplishment of the next task. good student!

²¹ Carol says:

that's good!!!!

²² Paula says:

knowing the purpose of a determined genre and the characteristic of the spheres where it can be found (literary, journalistic, educational – all those are social spheres) is fundamental to interpret it and to be able to produce it (in case you have to write some news, an essay, etc).

²³ Carol says:

it is true... I wonder what would happen if I read some news and took it as the recipe of a cake?!?!

By starting the dialogue asking Carol if she knows what speech genres are and suggesting that guessing is a valid strategy, Paula (1 and 2) is trying to make the student rely on her previous knowledge to define the scientific concept that will be introduced in a future task. From the very beginning of the dialogue, the crystallized ideology in which the teaching practice is founded can be grasped. Thus, the first question: *have you heard or do you imagine what speech genres are...* already reflects the teacher's crystallized ideology that the awareness of the notion of speech genres is important to develop reading skills. It is this ideology that mediates Paula's whole participation in the conversation, being explicitly declared in rejoinder 22, in which she states that *knowing the purpose of a determined genre and the characteristics of the spheres where it can be found is fundamental to interpret and to be able to produce it (the genre).*

Based on Voloshinov's (1929) conception that every utterance refracts a reality external to its immediate situation, it is possible to suggest that the ideological content of Paula's utterances refracts her participation in a determined academic sphere and, consequently, the crystallized ideologies complexly evoked by the constant dialogue and conflict among all the different scientific concepts that circulate in this sphere.

Besides reflecting the Bakhtinian sociohistorical conception of language, Paula's utterances also reveal a teaching-learning process fed by some sociointeractional principles. In a Vygotskian sense, the interaction is seen as the space where zones of development are created for the learner's potential development. In the ZPD in which the concept of speech genres is constructed, the pupil's everyday knowledge, which is in her real level of development, engage in dialogue with the new scientific concept negotiated in the proximal level of development with the assistance of a more expert partner.

In this zone where the concept of speech genres is constructed, Carol is asked to define the concept twice. Although her first definition (5) is solely based on her previous knowledge, the second one (16) is mediated by a crystallized ideological system, once the definition provided by the teacher in the task is brought to the body of the dialogue.

In fact, the second definition can be interpreted as a reconstruction of the first one mediated by the understanding of the scientific concept. Therefore, being primarily regarded as *what the text expresses and in which way*, speech genres are secondly defined as *the form a text is composed and to which purposes*. The initial focus on the theme, topic is transferred to the compositional structure and to the purposes of a given genre.

Regarding the pupil's contribution as a meaningful one, Paula (17 e 18) expands the meaning of Carol's definition of speech genres by providing further examples. The purpose of an everyday primary genre, recipe, is mentioned as a way of consolidating the pupil's previous utterance (16) and of asking for a definition concerning the purpose of news, which belong to the scope of secondary genres. Carol's everyday experience concerning news as well as her likely contact with these genres in other educational spheres are reflected in her utterance (19), which is meaningfully incorporated into the dialogue to provide the grounds for the fulfillment of the next task.

In the process of meaning negotiation observed in this interaction, the formal character of scientific knowledge is permeated by the more informal and relaxed tone characteristic of family dialogues, revealing the level of intimacy between the two participants. It is probably their close relationship that makes the participants at ease to turn to irony once in a while.

Some ironic comments can be noticed when Carol (3) ironically emphasizes her complete ignorance concerning the notion of speech genres, assuming she will really have to guess as suggested by Paula (2), and in the pupil's response to Paula's (22) utterance on the importance of knowing the purpose of speech genres, to which Carol (23) promptly agrees by saying: *it is true... I wonder what would happen if I read some news and took it as the recipe of a cake?!?*. It is probably the fact that Paula sees Carol not only as a student, but also as her sister that makes her, as a teacher and older sister, comfortable to make comments such as *nice try, almost got it...* (6), *good student!* (20). Given the shared knowledge the participants have about each other, these comments are particularly welcome to bring spontaneity into the grounds of scientificity.

A very similar phenomenon can be observed in another MSN encounter in which the participants are talking about Carol's answers to a task developed based on news about an American basketball player who is retiring from the courts.

Excerpt 2: dialogue based on the task about the news.

¹ Paula says:

In exercise 4 a, you translated the cognate national into nacional, perfect, of course, but you classified the word as a noun... I suggest that you take a look where this word appears in the text and try to think of another morphologic category... justifying the change, of course!

² Carol says:

it be an adjective?

³ Paula says:

I think you did a basket – as the text is about basketball! The question is why is it an adjective and not a noun?

⁴ Carol says:

I believe that it is because the word aimed at widening the player's quality.

⁵ Paula says:

it is practically this... it comes before player: national player and, therefore, it is qualifying the noun player. What does it show on the order of adjectives in English?

⁶ Carol says:

that the adjectives come before nouns.

⁷ Paula says:

exactly... this is not usually the rule in Portuguese. Knowing the word order in a sentence is also an important strategy to interpret texts.

⁸ Carol says:

ah yeah... I didn't remember this to answer the question...

⁹ Paula says:

in the same exercise, you translated retiring into *retirando*⁷ – verb. This time, although the morphologic category is correct, the translation isn't appropriate. In fact this word is not a cognate. I suggest that you look at your answer to question 2 for a more suitable translation.

¹⁰ Carol says:

then it must be *se aposentando*⁸.

¹¹ Paula says:

that's it! apart from these two little problems, you certainly understood the text much better than me... I don't have the least idea of what reboot or assistance mean and, even less idea of what the numbers that come before both of them stand for!

¹² Carol says:

well... the number before them is the average of points in all the games!!!

¹³ Paula says:

how ignorant I am!

¹⁴ Paula says:

how did your knowledge about basketball help in the text comprehension?

¹⁵ Carol says:

a considerable part of the words used are similar in the whole world... this made it easier.

⁷ Retirando is the Portuguese word for leaving. In this case, the student meant the player mentioned in the news was leaving the basketball courts.

⁸ Aposentando in Portuguese means retiring in English.

When choosing a topic to design a task that aimed at developing further comprehension about the genre news, the selection of a text about basketball was not a matter of chance. This choice is related to an extraverbal situation, also depicting the fact that a great amount of spontaneous knowledge about each other's lives is shared between the participants. Knowing that Carol is a professional basketball player, Paula chose this specific text so that the learner's considerable knowledge about the topic could be used to accomplish the task proposed.

By assuming her complete lack of knowledge concerning basketball and therefore, her disadvantage towards the pupil, Paula (11 and 13) seeks to increase Carol's confidence as well as raise her awareness on the importance of one's previous knowledge as a strategy to interpret texts. This purpose is confirmed by Paula's utterance in rejoinder 14, in which she directly questions Carol about the usefulness of her previous knowledge to accomplish the tasks proposed. In this case, both the pupil's scientific and everyday concepts about basketball constructed in her daily practical activity as a player and the teacher's crystallized ideology on how these concepts can be used to foster the development of reading skills in a foreign language contribute to the creation of zones of potential development in the interaction.

The way Paula interacts with Carol reflects the crystallized ideology, also linked to her participation in a specific academic sphere, that learning should focus on what the pupil can accomplish with the help of others and not on his/her failures. By giving Carol some clues on how to find out the solution to the problems found in her answers, Paula (1 and 9) focuses on the learner's proximal level of development. Thus, the student's inappropriate answers are meaningfully brought to the teaching-learning process to create zones for potential achievements.

3. Concluding remarks

The analysis carried out above reinforces my initial proposition that the understanding of the complex interrelations among the Vygotskian notion of spontaneous and scientific concepts and the Bakhtinian conception of genres (primary and secondary) and ideologies

(behavioral and crystallized) can lead to a deeper comprehension concerning the construction of knowledge in specific teaching-learning interactions.

In the two excerpts of interaction discussed, a two-way influence can be noticed in the interplay between spontaneous and scientific knowledge. Although the objects in construction belong to the scope of scientific concepts, being, in consequence, part of a crystallized ideological system, the understanding about these objects is meaningfully raised through the participants' spontaneous knowledge. On the other hand, the scientific concepts in development also change the nature of the everyday knowledge in the sense that concepts that were spontaneously constituted in daily life become objects of conceptualization and reflection in the teaching-learning process.

Besides, it was also realized that an awareness of extraverbal contexts, that is, of the broad social milieu, was crucial to reflect on the educational phenomenon in focus. Therefore, both the considerable amount of knowledge shared between the two participants and the participation of each one in diverse social spheres, which accounts for the diversity of their behavioral and crystallized ideologies, exercise a dynamic influence on the dialogue between them.

This paper aimed at addressing the possible dialogues between Vygotsky's and Bakhtin's theories by focusing on three of their conceptions: those of concepts, genres and ideologies. In this sense, the analysis carried out portrays ways in which the concepts of Vygotsky and Bakhtin can interrelate to shed light on a pedagogical situation that takes place in a virtual sphere that neither Vygotsky nor Bakhtin could possibly have conceived of in the time their theories were designed.

The discussion presented reinforces the ideas proposed by Freitas and Rojo that meaningful interrelations can be established between the two theories. Nevertheless, given the complex nature of both theories, it is essential that dialogues as the one proposed by this paper are carried on in further studies so that deeper reflections can be achieved.

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