

LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE: SOME DIALOGIC
TRODDEN WAYS*

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In one of Steven Spielberg's films, Indiana Jones (Harrison Ford) remembers that in order to cross a dangerous abyss he should look for solutions within the problems themselves and, as a result, decides to cross it even if there was no bridge whatsoever. Breathless spectators realise that he is so resolute to cross the gap that he will walk on air. However, as soon he takes his first step a bridge is made visible and concrete under his feet. This scene illustrates the main argument of this paper: the gap between language and literature can be filled either by the realisation of its illusiveness or by the construction of an imaginary bridge. I also argue that possibilities vary according to teacher's sense of plausibility (Prabhu, 1990)¹ and I suggest that a dialogic (Bakhtin, 1981)² learning environment can enhance the development of this sense and, consequently, the learner's involvement.

In a recent Conference of English teachers, the gap seemed to have vanished during a literature and language teaching panel: Souza (1997)³ presented a sharp critique arguing that this split is based on a fallacy. Literature is seen as the Beauty which, in itself, carries higher values. Language, accordingly, is seen as the Beast and is associated to lower values. While reality is connected to language, fantasy is linked

Ilha do Desterro	Florianópolis	nº 37	p.073-091	jul./dez. 1999
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to literature. Souza's deconstructs this dichotomy exposing their common basis: "language and literature classrooms are fighting arenas for the sign; in both there is a process which encourages a silent, and dependent learner". Souza's research results demonstrate that, despite the fact that dialogue is the basic pattern of classroom interaction, language is still presented as a stable and normative entity, thus devaluating the learner's contribution. On the other hand, literature teachers who make use of monologues, present literature as an eternal and respectable entity, giving no emphasis to the actual reception of the work of art, thus devaluating the reader's role. In both approaches, learners develop a huge dependence on the teacher. The learner's 'silencing' process is observable through the teaching methodology and not through the teacher's explicit intentions.

Although many language theories have already exposed the instability of language, language teachers continue to believe in its rigidity. Holquist (1990) states that, according to Bakhtin,

at any given point in its history, speakers of a natural language can have the illusion that the meaning of the words they use is stable. But even the stability, which lasts much longer than almost any other human institution, is unstable in the sense that it, too, changes and thus has a history. It is 'conceived', not given.⁴

Despite the fact that literary theory has advanced as far as to doubt the existence of "a" text in the classroom, literature teachers continue to believe in its stability. Fish (1980/1994) states that

while no institution is so universally in force and so perdurable that the meanings it enables will be normal forever, some institutions or forms of life are so widely lived in that for a great many people the meanings they enable seem 'naturally' available and it takes a special effort to see that they are products of circumstances.⁵

Neither Fish nor Bahktin can be accused of 'relativism', for they do not see speakers nor interpreters acting on their own but in accordance with the belief of a community. As such, speakers cannot respond in any idiosyncratic way: their answer encompasses the voice of the other in an institutionalised pattern.

In a recent issue of *Contexturas*⁶ three articles concentrated on the relationship between language and literature. Sônia Zyngier's article tackles the issue under a historical perspective. She argues that, in Brazil, there still is a predominant understanding of English learning as a passport for a promised land and, as such, English teaching is presented as a product to be sold. Textbooks should not contain complex written material but easy marketing-like images, thus practically banning literature from the foreign language classroom.

Zyngier emphasises that it was not like this before. Literature had played a huge role in foreign language teaching when a humanist approach was in vogue, but from the 60's on literature and language have been dissociated. Nevertheless, Zyngier feels that there is a movement now either in England or in the USA, (and I would add that there is a very incipient movement also in Brazil) which intends to re-establish the important role of literature in the classroom through a growing interest in Stylistic Studies and in Rhetoric. Zyngier herself has been developing and implementing some teaching aids for literature teaching in a Brazilian University.⁷ Recent research has come to enlighten a problematic area in Brazilian education: literature teaching. Language teaching has been an overtly and thoroughly debated topic among language teachers. However, this is not the case with literature. Literature teachers are much more involved with content discussion than with methodological questions related to teaching.

Both Souza and Zyngier emphasise the pedagogical matters involved in the language-literature dichotomy, and there are also other literature teachers in Brazil who are concerned with the problem. Among recent research focusing on the didactics of L1 literature teaching in Brazil, one may point to that of Bordoni & Aguiar (1993).⁸ One of the

presented results called my attention: poetry is the favourite literary genre of primary students (first graders). It is a remarkable finding, because, as a matter of fact, one of the most heard complaints along high schools corridors is that “poetry is horrible and impossible to read”. These data corroborate some views expressed by artists like the poet Drummond de Andrade who wonders why children, who generally are poets, let it go with age. He insinuates that school is the corrosive element of the poetical instinct of the child.⁹ It is common sense to state that the main school deficiencies are concerned with reading.

To illustrate this critical situation Renato Janine Ribeiro¹⁰ told the myth of Tot, the Egyptian God of Writing. In ancient Egypt, writing was considered either medicine or poison, it all depended on who prescribed it. It is extremely important to pose this question to language-literature teaching: is school prescribing medicine or poison to learners? According to artists such as Drummond, school is prescribing a corrosive acid.

In an attempt to find some safe prescriptions, literature teachers from private and public schools alike look forward to adopting a textbook so they can be kept from danger. Textbooks are not always a poison prescribed for pupils. They can be helpful at many times. The problem is that since no one dies instantly from bad quality textbooks, many teachers do not feel the real need to research their side effects. Textbooks become irreplaceable, answer keys become the only safe place for teachers in the dangerous ocean of literary texts (Cavalcanti & Zanotto, 1994).¹¹ In addition, teachers go through the units of books and through the lessons without any personal involvement whatsoever.

In this sense, textbooks can be compared to methods in language classrooms. Prabhu argues that any example of “really bad teaching” is much more due to the lack of the teacher’s involvement than to methodological choices. Prabhu’s ideas stress his awareness that “different sources may influence different teachers at different extents” but each teacher has a sense of plausibility which is his/her “resulting concept of how learning takes place and how teaching causes or

supports it". Textbooks or methods can be very helpful, but they are there to help not to replace the teacher, and textbooks should be chosen and used in accordance with the teacher's sense of plausibility which always encompasses engagement in the teaching activity. For, as Prabhu puts it,

the greater the teacher's involvement in teaching, the more likely it is that the sense of involvement will convey itself to learners, getting them involved as well and helping to create that elusive but highly regarded condition in the classroom: teacher-learner rapport.¹²

I strongly agree with this assertion and I would like to emphasise that an active and engaged sense of plausibility enables the teacher to be open to changes. It is our belief that language-literature teachers with developed sense of plausibility could help learners to, among other things, get their "poetic instinct" back establishing a new contract (Cicurel, 1980)¹³ with language-literature in which there is room for the learner's voices (McNeil, 1988).¹⁴ A teacher's role should become less and less self-assertive and more and more collaborative. The role of education should be based on more democratic grounds. Of course, this commitment demands a more collaborative and better prepared teacher, for the more students are participating the more the teacher needs to be aware of the infinite possibilities that can be brought together in the classroom.

Dialogism is a key word for this envisaged language-literature learning environment. I use dialogism in Bakhtin's sense, although, as Michael Holquist hastens to say, Bakhtin himself has never used it as such. Very accurately, Holquist (1990) summarises this pervasive idea in the philosopher's work:

Dialogism exploits the nature of language as a modelling system for the nature of existence, and thus is deeply involved

with linguistics; dialogism sees social and ethical values as the means by which the fundamental I/other split articulates itself in the specific situations (...) and in so far as the act of perception is understood as the patterning of a relation, it is a general aesthetics, or it is an architectonics, a science of building.¹⁵

In this sense Bakhtin uses dialogue as a metaphor for the unity of the self and the other. In Psychology, Vygotsky made what Holquist called “the revolutionary decision that tutoring was a necessary aspect of the child’s journey to a ground of a higher consciousness”. Thus, Holquist links Bakhtin’s concept of dialogism and Vygotsky’s zone of proximal development (zoped) for both emphasised social factors and the essential role of education to human development.

Taking a dialogical, Vygotskian position implies taking risks to both sides, i.e., teachers and learners. Some pedagogical procedures can help to diminish the sense of insecurity that arises from the risks that are part of the “untrodden ways”. The teacher’s role in this dialogic pedagogy is simple, and at the same time extremely complex because most of us are addicted to the pervasiveness of the expert’s voice. And to reach a somehow absent and, yet, very active presence is quite a difficult task. In other words, the teacher’s sense of plausibility may be well-developed and activated.

I have chosen some examples of how dialogic teaching could work. What they have in common is the development of a teacher’s sense of plausibility due to an active dialogic learning environment. The first comes from a public junior high school and the second from a private university.

The first example reports on an attempt to bring a canonical book to the public school classroom in such a way that both teachers and students responded not to the mystified aura around the text but rather felt compelled to respond to the recurrent conflicts and themes that accompany the history of the text and compare them with their own.

This is consistent with the assumption of accessibility to literature which implies that one should fight institutionalisation of literature, or rather literature with a capital 'L', due to its responsibility in the lack of readers (McRae, 1991).¹⁶ It also encompasses an attempt to establish a dialogue among teachers from different areas, because, although many speak of interdisciplinary teaching, few have already tried it with more than one different discipline.¹⁷ This experience has Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* as a starting point for dialogue.¹⁸

Once the common grounds on which a History, two Theatre, and seven Foreign Language teachers (English, French, German and Spanish) could develop their pedagogical assumptions had been established, a collaborative project was designed for three groups of 7th graders.¹⁹ For two months 10 teachers from three different areas worked together linked by Shakespeare. This experience has had its beginning in a corridor conversation between the History teacher, who had been concerned with Renaissance issues, such as commercial sailing and the flourishing of capitalism, and one of the English teachers. Sometimes underestimated by researchers, corridor conversations are the most enriching pedagogical space because this usually is the only available time teachers have for sharing pedagogical issues. Overloaded with many teaching hours, teachers take advantage of these seemingly ephemeral dialogues to discuss their own practice. This time the conversation led to a common project.

Mentioning *The Merchant of Venice* as a possible interesting reading for History classes was the password for establishing an excellent opportunity of setting the basis for a shared activity with other teachers at school. Thus the challenge to design a collaborative project work started. The History and the English teachers invited two Theatre teachers to join in. Despite agreeing to participate, they proposed that due to lack of time (they all agreed that only one "bimestre" was available to work it out²⁰), just one scene from the play should be thoroughly worked. After re-reading the play, the group focused on scene III from Act 1 as the most suitable one for this co-ordinated work.

The scene can be summarised as follows: Bassanio, a Venetian bourgeois, needs money to propose to a rich noble woman; Antonio, Bassanio's friend and a prosperous merchant of Venice, is unable to lend him the necessary amount of money, so he suggests that Bassanio borrow the money from Shylock, a rich Jew who lends money for interest and who is despised by Antonio exactly for that practice which is considered non-Christian. Shylock accepts to lend the money to Bassanio since Antonio is bound for it, but he demands a pound of Antonio's flesh as warrant in case Bassanio fails to pay the money back in due time.

The teachers read or re-read the play (some read the summary of the plot; others had the plot told by their own students) but with different purposes in mind. The History teacher decided to work with other scenes from the Portuguese translation (Act 3, scene I, II, III, IV; Act 4, scene I) in the classroom, whereas the Theatre teachers chose the summary of the plot for teaching characters' portrayal and speech intention. Once the English and the Portuguese versions were ready (an English teacher has been made responsible for producing a text both in English and in Portuguese from the chosen scene²¹), the other foreign language teachers (French, German and Spanish) produced their versions based on the Portuguese translation and established their teaching goals and procedures which were concerned at first with text analysis (vocabulary building games, cohesion and coherence recognition mark tasks) and then with dialogue performance (speech patterns, emphasis choice).

The History teacher chose other scenes (Act I, scene I; Act III, scenes I, II, III; Act IV, scene I) from the Portuguese translation which interested her and provided copies for the groups. Some themes which had been previously worked with through different kinds of historical documents could be traced back through those scenes: the economic changes in the Renaissance, and the Christian way of seeing the Other (in this case, the Jews). Reading some scenes from *The Merchant*, the students had the chance to see many of the above referred themes through another type of document. Shakespeare's text came to help the

teacher's procedure which consists mainly in helping the students to build some assumptions about historical problems, formulating working questions and looking for evidence on whatever type of document they have access to. In this case, Shakespeare's scenes raised many intriguing questions which were answered and which raised many others which needed further investigation. Since the History teacher had been working on written documents, literature has been of great help for these hypothesis generation procedures. This theoretical background owes much to Peter Burke (1992)²², who proposes that historians should work in-between the structure and the event and that historians should follow the example of the novelists who tell (hi)stories from different points of view, in an attempt to encompass an individual and a collective point of view.

Theatre teachers were concerned with the basic elements of the drama: where, who, what. The awareness of these elements is built through games, plays and impromptu daily scenes within minimalist setting and character portrayal. So the chosen scene from *The Merchant* was worked, at first, in terms of problematic situations such as "being short of money, being obliged to ask for money to some friend", "having to decide to help a friend who is short of money", "being obliged to borrow money from an enemy in order to help a friend", "having the opportunity to lend money to an enemy, having to decide what to do if he can't pay the money back in due time". After improvising over the performance possibilities for each situation, students were presented to Shakespeare's options. Next step was to prepare the dramatic elements to be played out.

After two months of hard work, at the History, the Theatre, and the Foreign languages classrooms, the students were ready to perform the scene. On a minimalist setting, the characters were dressed with symbolic clothing pieces and they spoke in four different languages with or without the support of the text (dramatic reading in the last case). Each performance grouped three actors on stage and the language heard varied a lot. We had the opportunity to listen to the scene either in

English, French, Spanish or German, but what was most interesting was to listen to scenes in which each character spoke in a different language. Four foreign languages linked by Shakespeare's text enabled an overt crosslinguistic comparison and contrast. What was seen and heard was much above the expectations. Students were highly motivated, characters had been consistently built, historical context had been internalised and levels of foreign language production had increased in the four languages involved. Furthermore, teachers had developed a strong sense of co-operative work, despite all lack-of-time type of problems encountered throughout the project. I guess that it strongly justifies the desecration of a canonical text at school. In addition, all parts involved positively evaluated the project and it has been implemented, with many suggestions for improvement, in its second year at this moment.²³ There has been a concern to share this teaching practice in broader circles so that other public school teachers from these areas could bring in comments and criticisms. The reported experience contributed to activate a highly developed sense of plausibility among the teachers involved and it reflected a dialogic position towards learning/teaching. This trodden way was not obvious for any of the parts involved. No bridge had been established beforehand. Even among the Foreign Language teachers there has been a remarkable gap. A strong belief in dialogue provided the necessary bridges. However, these bridges are not there forever. They need to be rebuilt each time anew as long as the belief in the gap remains. Once the illusion of the abyss vanishes, we will have a common ground on which we can step together.

Up to this point I have been concerned with language teaching in a public school, but now I would like to explore some of the assumptions mentioned in the introduction concerning dialogism and the role of the teacher in an English as well as in a Foreign Literature²⁴ course at a private University (North-American literature as it was actually called). I will start by taking some of Gerald Graff's²⁵ considerations about his own history as a college literature student.

From a disliking-books-at-an-early-age position and from a blank-panic-in front-of-literature personal history, Gerald Graff develops his idea of how literary criticism should be taught before reading assignments were given. He states that what made literature seem attractive to him was “exposure to critical debates”. Re-telling his own experience of having to read *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* at an undergraduate course, Graff realised that

reading the critics was like picking up where class discussion had left off, and I gained confidence from recognizing that my classmates and I had had thoughts that, however stumbling our expression of them, were not too far from the thoughts of famous published critics.²⁶

Graff’s point is to demolish the idea which considers approaching literature without the literary criticism lens as a primary and innocent experience while considering re-reading for criticism as a secondary corrupting experience. As a reader, Graff felt the need for “a conversation with other readers”. In his case these readers were critical books on the literary work which had been assigned to him. He claims that “reading books with comprehension, making arguments, writing papers, and making comments in a class discussion are *social activities*” (43; author’s emphasis).

What concerns me in Graff’s arguments is 1) the need to interact with other readers; 2) his astonishment in regard to his classmates and his own to the point remarks in the classroom discussion; 3) his idea of reading as a social activity.

First of all, I think that Graff underestimated how influential his classmates’ voices should have been to his own desire to seek for other readers in critical books, and, second, I would like to suggest that had his teacher not allowed the group to speak freely on Huck Finn’s conflict, maybe Graff would have never found his passion for literary criticism. Classmates can be good company for novice literature readers. Group

reading discussion within literature courses has shown to be a possible pedagogical way of fighting against the syndrome that affects so many: namely, an anguishing silent response to literature. A first company that could be provided to panicked readers are those with whom they would certainly sympathise. Teachers' role, in our point of view, would be to cope with the quite unstructured ("stumbling discourse") dialogue about the text and bring into the classroom criticism which can help these readers to pick up where they have left during class discussion.

The fear of literature escalates when we talk about poetry. Group discussion method can, besides enabling mates to feel in a community amongst themselves, help to see poetry, not as a sacred object which can only be approached by authorised people, namely the teacher or the chosen critic, but as a piece of text as any other. Group discussion is also an opportunity to help students exercise their own voices, stumbling or not, on texts. It is also an acknowledgement of reading as a social event, a concrete gathering of a small group of people around a text. In this social event they, of course, will use procedures that are common to social interactions and some which are specific to this phenomenon. I shall not describe in detail how it works. I think it is more enriching to report what connections were made in order to have this procedure in a literature classroom.

I became acquainted with Group Reading through qualitative research methods on reading. The attempt to bring group reading into literature classes was originally stimulated by some introspective research methodology. It is important to clarify that the definition of the introspective method (also called 'verbal report', 'protocol' or 'think-aloud technique') is here considered as a data collecting "procedure which is conducted through a general instruction that asks the respondents to verbalise their thoughts while they are trying to undergo or when they have undergone a task" (Tavares, 1993).²⁷ Later a connection between the origins of introspection in applied linguistics and that of stream-of-consciousness techniques in literature provided the basis for applying the method as a pedagogical tool and as such it

has become an important methodological device to literature reading understanding and teaching.

In Brazil, some scholars support the use of introspection in the classroom routine. A major work which influenced other researchers, although it has not proposed the classroom use of protocols, is Cavalcanti's (1987, 1989).²⁸ Her study focuses on the pragmatic interaction between reader and text and to achieve her objective she used a modified version of the verbal protocols — the pause protocols, in which the subject is asked to report only when s/he notices s/he has made a pause during her/his reading. Scaramucci (1992)²⁹ also uses pause protocols, but this time to probe reading process in English as a Foreign Language concerning readers with low lexical competence. Paschoal (1992)³⁰ studies through group protocols the processes involved in metaphorical comprehension while subjects are reading poetry in Portuguese. Nardi (1993)³¹ also investigates metaphorical expressions understanding through verbal protocols but she uses English narrative texts instead of Brazilian poetry. Following Paschoal's use of group protocols there is also Vieira's (1993; 1997)³² research in which she attempted to observe the reading strategies used by Letras students while reading a poem in an English Literature class. As far as it could be observed the introspective methodology can become a great tool, not only for the English teacher but also for the Literature teacher.

If the stream-of-consciousness gained its fame through literature, it might be fair if one uses the same method to encourage people, especially Letras students, to read a literary text. The influence of William James, and in a sense of Henri Bergson, in the use of introspection as a tool for studying psychological processes brought to my mind the idea of a bridge covering the gap between the two sides of my present interest — Applied Linguistics and the Reading of Literature.

In literature, writers have already acknowledged the importance of conveying the thoughts of their characters as fluid as they are in their minds in order to be able to portray people's mind. Authors have found that to describe the stream-of-consciousness, or rather the flux of

thought of their characters, is a means to enable their readers to understand how mental processes are related to the characters' behaviour.

Now, applied linguists, more specifically second language researchers, are realising that to get to understand and to explain their subjects' behaviour, or rather, to get answers for such questions as how students learn, or why they do not learn, they have to look at personal processes. It seems that introspection is a feasible way and a methodological tool to get nearer to our learner's agendas.

However, some applied linguists have been moving away from it because some believe that the use of introspective methods implies the risk of chaotic research. Too much subjectivity may disturb a still very strong paradigm which supports the idea that empirical or applied research should, whenever possible, be based on controlled experimentation to establish reliability on research results. The subject (the learner, in this behavioristic case) has poor chances to get out of the written script previously prepared by the researcher. Therefore, introspection seems to be a good alternative to broaden our view of what can be considered empirical. Introspection gives an opportunity to enlarge the subjects' role during research on learning environments, for it allows them to create their own narratives on how, for instance, they are making sense out of a text.

Once researchers give room for learners' thoughts to come into the research itself, there may be a change in the established roles. Taking the literature comparison again, one may think of Virginia Woolf, one of the greatest English stream-of-consciousness writers. It is interesting to realise how she gives up the attempt to reproduce external reality and instead of this, looks for techniques which should evoke the irrational feeling of this reality.³³ Furthermore, she refuses to tell her characters' lives from an omniscient position; she tries to let them speak by themselves even if their speech is incoherent or loose due to free associations which are not always clear. Applied linguistics researchers now, as stream-of-consciousness literature writers then, try to capture

the thoughts as they occur in search of describing the processes they undergo while learning. In other words, as omniscient narrators silenced to get characters to speak for themselves, so the researchers could give subjects a chance of telling their own version of how they learn a foreign language or how they read.

Introspection in second language research gives teachers and learners a feedback on how input is being processed during a learning event. In other words, the results of learner strategy research can go back to the classroom in terms of consciousness awareness; that is, teachers can enable students to attend to conscious strategies that they may not be used to. However, these strategies may help them to become better learners. They can also help the researcher interested in the reading of literature as well.

As I have tried to demonstrate, the gap between language and literature can be crossed either by an interdisciplinary approach involving different areas working with the same text or by interdisciplinary approach involving different research areas using a methodological device which can also be used as a pedagogical tool. These trodden ways are possible bridges to cross the gap while it exists. However, in a near future I hope language/literature teaching and research will be working on common grounds so that the direction (roads always diverge) of the steps becomes our main concern.

Notes

- * The present paper has been carefully read by Vera Guimarães to whom I am indebted. The remaining flaws are all mine.
- 1 N. S. Prabhu, "There is no best method – Why?", *Tesol Quarterly*, 24. 2 (Summer 1990): 161-176.
- 2 M. M. Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays by M. M. Bakhtin*, ed. Michael Holquist, trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1981).

- 3 Speech held in PUC-SP, June 1997, during IV JELI (Jornada dos Professores de Língua Inglesa).
- 4 M. Holquist, *Dialogism. Bakhtin and His World*, (London & New York: Routledge, 1990), p. 148.
- 5 S. Fish, "Is there a text in this class?", *Falling into Theory. Conflicting Views on Reading Literature*, ed. David H. Richter (Boston: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1994), p. 229.
- 6 *Contexturas. Ensino crítico de língua inglesa*, 6 (1997). This periodical is held by APLIESP, Associação dos Professores de Língua Inglesa de São Paulo. Three volumes have already been published since 1992. The presence of articles debating literature in a language journal illustrates the changes mentioned by Zyngier. In this issue see S. Zyngier, "No 'playground' da linguagem", pp. 11-20; L. P. Z. de Izarra, "Transitando pelas fronteiras da narrativa", pp.2-28; and M. C. B. Paro, "O ensino de literatura estrangeira na universidade: uma experiência pedagógica", pp.29-38.
- 7 In the same track is the work of Izabel Brandão at Universidade Federal de Alagoas.
- 8 M. G. Bordoni; V Aguiar (org.) *Literatura: A Formação do Leitor. Alternativas metodológicas* (Porto Alegre: Mercado Aberto, 1993).
- 9 Apud Averbuck "A poesia e a escola", p. 65-67 in R. Zilbermann (org.), *A leitura e o ensino de literatura*, (São Paulo: Contexto: 1993). Drummond was known for his scepticism towards the type of interview he was obliged to give to students whose teachers considered him the last great Brazilian poet alive. The problem is that the poet felt as if he had already died during these interviews. He eventually died in 1987.
- 10 Speech held on COLE (Congresso de Leitura do Brasil) at Unicamp, São Paulo, in 1993.
- 11 M. Cavancanti; M. Zanotto "Introspection in Applied linguistics: Meta-Research on verbal protocols", in Leila Barbara; Mike Scott (orgs.) *Reflections on Language Learning* (Clevedon: Multilingual Matters 1994), pp. 148-156.
- 12 Prabhu, op. cit., p. 173.
- 13 F. Cicurel *Parole sur Parole*, (Paris: Clé International, 1985).

- 14 C. McNeil "Logging the Interpretive Act: Dialogue in the Literature Lesson", *College Teaching*, 37.3 (1988), pp.86-90.
- 15 Holquist, op. cit., p. 33.
- 16 J. McRae. *Literature with a Small 'l'*, (London: Macmillan, 1991). See also M., Short.(ed.) *Reading, Analysing and Teaching Literature* (London: Longman, 1989).
- 17 See A. Kleiman. *Oficina de leitura: teoria e prática*, (Campinas: Pontes/Ed. Unicamp, 1993), p. 26 and M. Short (ed.). *Reading, Analysing and Teaching Literature* (London: Longman, 1989), p. 4.
- 18 I have presented a report of this experience in XII JELI, PUC, São Paulo, June 1997, and I have also discussed some of the background issues of this experience in I ECCL, UFSC, Florianópolis, August 1997.
- 19 This experience was held at Colégio de Aplicação (UFSC) in Florianópolis. I'd like to thank all the teachers who participated on the project: Arlete Zimmermann, Celina Arruda, Cynthia Valente, Inês Lucena, Ivonete Sousa, José Alvim, Julio Dias, Márcia Marchi, Marise Köerich, Sandra Mahfuz and Vera Guimarães, who have contributed to this article with their reflective teaching both in the 1996 and 1997 experience.
- 20 It is important to notice that the conversation took place in February which is the allowed period for planning at school and that the one "bimestre" available was the period each teacher considered feasible to devote to the project. As we had to devise the whole set of classroom procedures to be employed the first two "bimestres" were used for producing teaching aids and the like. In addition, the History teacher was supposed to start the discussion of the background issues in the third "bimestre" while the other teachers were supposed to start with their groups only in the fourth (and last) "bimestre".
- 21 This re-writing has demanded a lot of work due to some restraints which I have described elsewhere (see "Preparing Shakespeare to School: an Experience at Colégio de Aplicação" in *Shakespeare's Studies Newsletter*, 1996). In this article I focus on translation decisions, but, here, I can summarize some of the actual restraints. I had a scene with 45 entries and 178 lines written in a sixteenth century English to change into a 30-entry and 50-line modern text aimed at post-beginners of English as a foreign language at a public school in Brazil. First of all, the reason why I decided to work with a maximum of 30 entries was concerned with the Theatre

teacher's advice based on a long experience with teenagers. Secondly, I supposed that a dialogue with more than 50 lines could be quite long to be worked by the language teachers in the classroom. And last, but not least, I had to adapt the language, without missing the idea of the scene, to fit our students' level of comprehension and oral production.

- 22 P. Burke. *A escrita da história* (São Paulo: Ed. Unesp, 1992).
- 23 It is worthwhile mentioning that some students reported to have bought an adapted version of the play during a school book fair. Most importantly: they had made the positive "marketing" of the activity to their 6th grade peers to the extent that teachers have suffered pressure to start the activity earlier in the following year.
- 24 See Zyngier, "Introduzindo literatura estrangeira: o papel do professor e a conscientização literária", in *Contexturas 2* (1994) pp.29-30 for a discussion of this term.
- 25 G. Graff. "Disliking Books at an early age". in *Falling into Theory. Conflicting Views on Reading Literature*, ed. David H. Richter (Boston: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1994), pp. 36-44.
- 26 Op. cit., p. 38.
- 27 K. Tavares. "O uso da introspecção: Da técnica de pesquisa para o ensino de leitura" (UFRJ, M.A Dissertation, 1993).
- 28 M. Cavalcanti, "Investigating FL Reading Performance through Pause Protocols". in C. Faerch & G. Kasper (eds.) *Introspection in Second Language Research* (Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, 1987), pp. 230-250. M. Cavalcanti. *Interação leitor-texto: Aspectos de uma interpretação pragmática* (Campinas: Editora da UNICAMP, 1989).
- 29 M. Scaramucci "A construção do sentido na leitura em inglês como língua estrangeira: algumas implicações para o ensino", *Intercâmbio* (São Paulo: PUC-SP, 1992), pp. 227-237.
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