

EXPLORING MULTIMODALITY AND MULTILITERACIES IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITY CONTEXTS FOR STUDENT- TEACHERS OF ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

EXPLORANDO MULTIMODALIDADE E MULTILITETRAMENTOS EM CONTEXTOS DE
UNIVERSIDADES PÚBLICAS PARA PROFESSORES-ESTUDANTES DE INGLÊS COMO
LÍNGUA ADICIONAL

EXPLORANDO LA MULTIMODALIDAD Y LA MULTIALFABETIZACIÓN EN CONTEXTOS DE
UNIVERSIDADES PÚBLICAS PARA PROFESORES-ESTUDIANTES DE INGLÉS COMO IDIOMA
ADICIONAL

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ABSTRACT: In this paper, the three authors, who work with language teacher education, especially English as an additional language in Brazil, discuss two of their projects, aligned with multimodality and multiliteracies, as derived from systemic functional linguistics. The project at the Federal University of Paraíba, entitled *Reading the verbal text and the image in contemporary media*, focuses mainly on Brazilian magazine covers (and their related articles), addressing various issues such as the representation of social movements, of women's identities, masculinities and teachers' identities. The second project, *Critical Genre Analysis and implications for multiliteracies*, carried out at the Federal University of Santa Maria, discusses how the process of producing teaching materials can benefit from critical genre pedagogy (MOTTA-ROTH, 2008a, 2008b) and multiliteracies pedagogy (THE NEW LONDON GROUP, 1996, 2000; COPE; KALANTZIS, 2009). Based on the findings of the projects, we argue that multiliteracies should be viewed as a potentially meaningful process in language teacher education and we hope the projects may contribute to make students aware of the array of meaning-making resources to produce and interpret multimodal texts in society.

KEYWORDS: Teacher Education. English. Multimodality. Multiliteracies. Projects.

RESUMO: Neste artigo, os três autores, que atuam na formação de professores de línguas, especialmente inglês como língua adicional no Brasil, discutem dois de seus projetos, alinhados à multimodalidade e aos multiletramentos, derivados da linguística sistêmico-funcional. O projeto da Universidade Federal da Paraíba, intitulado *Lendo o texto verbal e a imagem na mídia contemporânea*, tem como foco principal as capas de revistas brasileiras (e seus respectivos artigos), abordando diversos temas como a representação dos movimentos sociais, das identidades femininas, masculinidades e identidades de professores/as. O segundo projeto, *Análise crítica de gêneros e implicações para os multiletramentos*, realizado na Universidade Federal de Santa Maria, discute como o processo de produção de materiais didáticos pode se beneficiar da pedagogia crítica dos gêneros (MOTTA-ROTH, 2008a, 2008b) e da pedagogia dos multiletramentos (THE NEW LONDON GROUP, 1996, 2000; COPE; KALANTZIS, 2009). Com base nas conclusões dos projetos, argumentamos que os multiletramentos devem ser vistos como um processo potencialmente significativo na formação de professores/as de línguas e esperamos que os projetos possam contribuir para conscientizar os/as estudantes sobre a gama de recursos de construção de significado para produzir e interpretar textos multimodais na sociedade.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Formação Docente. Inglês. Multimodalidade. Multiletramentos. Projetos.

RESUMEN: En este artículo, los tres autores, que trabajan con la formación de profesores/as de idiomas, especialmente el inglés como lengua adicional en Brasil, discuten dos de sus proyectos, alineados con la multimodalidad y la multialfabetización, derivados de la lingüística sistêmico funcional. El proyecto de la Universidad Federal de Paraíba, titulado *Leyendo el texto verbal y la imagen en los medios contemporáneos*, se centra principalmente en las portadas de revistas brasileñas (y sus artículos relacionados), abordando diversos temas como la representación de los movimientos sociales, de las identidades de las mujeres, las masculinidades. e identidades de profesores/as. El segundo proyecto, *Análisis crítico de género e implicaciones para la multialfabetización*, realizado en la Universidad Federal de Santa Maria, analiza cómo el proceso de producción de materiales didáticos puede beneficiarse de la pedagogía crítica de género (MOTTA-ROTH, 2008a, 2008b) y la pedagogía de la multialfabetización (THE NEW LONDON GROUP, 1996, 2000; COPE; KALANTZIS, 2009). Basándonos en los hallazgos de los proyectos, argumentamos que la multialfabetización debe verse como un proceso potencialmente significativo en la formación del profesorado de idiomas y esperamos que los proyectos puedan contribuir a concienciar a los/as estudiantes sobre la variedad de recursos que crean significado para producir e interpretar textos multimodales en sociedad.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Formación Docente. Inglés. Multimodalidad. Multialfabetización. Proyectos.

1 INTRODUCTION

In this paper, the three authors, who work with language teacher education, specifically English as an additional language in Brazil, discuss their projects in multimodality and multiliteracies, based on systemic functional linguistics (HALLIDAY, 1994; HALLIDAY; MATTHIESSEN, 2014), and the grammar of visual design (KRESS; VAN LEEUWEN, 2006). We understand multimodality as the use and integration of different semiotic resources in the design of a product or event (KRESS; VAN LEEUWEN, 2001), as well as a social semiotic approach to contemporary communication (KRESS, 2010). Multiliteracies, on the other hand, refers to educational practices, more specifically reading and writing practices that involve the use of different semiotic resources, such as films, videos, hypertexts and/or other digital technologies.

The collection of multimodal materials to be used as corpus, as the projects in the present paper show, can become an interesting endeavor because social semiotic studies usually pursue three main goals:

- 1) collect, document and systematically catalogue semiotic resources – including their history;
- 2) investigate how these resources are used in specific historical, cultural and institutional contexts, and how people talk about them in these contexts – plan them, teach them, justify them, critique them, etc.;
- 3) contribute to the discovery and development of new semiotic resources and new uses of existing semiotic resources. (VAN LEEUWEN, 2005 *apud* DJONOV; ZHAO, 2018, p. 2)

A Pedagogy of Multiliteracies (THE NEW LONDON GROUP, 1996, 2000) has emphasized the need for educators to consider the globalized multicultural environments and to look at new forms of producing and interpreting various modes of meaning-making – including the visual and the spatial modes besides verbal language – as a way to empower students in terms of designing their social future. Cope and Kalantzis (2009) and Kalantzis, Cope, Chan and Dalley-Trim (2016) have extended their work to embrace various modes of meaning including spatial, tactile and gestural meanings, among others.

Likewise, the inspiring work carried out by Kress (2003, 2010) and Kress and van Leeuwen (2001, 2006) has contributed to showing us the relevance of examining semiotic resources to produce and interpret meanings in society. These pioneering theoretical insights have motivated other significant studies related to multiliteracies, such as Bezemer and Kress (2016), Heberle (2010, 2015), Kalantzis *et al.* (2016), Rojo (2009), Royce (2007) and Unsworth (2008), for instance.

In contemporary society, our daily lives are marked by a plethora of issues that impact the school experience at different levels in diverse contexts. Among these factors are the development of information and communication digital technologies, the increasing presence of images in different media (books, websites, magazines, etc.), innovative textual practices and new genres in various configurations (BEZERRA, 2016; ROJO, 2012) – all of which influence the concepts of text, school curriculum, the role of the teacher, and student's experience inside and outside the classroom. As described in the Brazilian National Curriculum Parameters – PCN (BRASIL, 1997a, 1997b), the work with multimodal reading plays a preeminent role in the school context, since it enables students to deal with texts not only in language classes but in all other school disciplines.

In response to such demands, different areas of knowledge are mobilized and new interdisciplinary dialogues are established (JEWITT; KRESS, 2008). This epistemological movement has brought forth several achievements, but also new challenges. For instance, from the analysis of different genres (MEURER, 2005) in varied supports, multimodal studies (KRESS; VAN LEEUWEN, 2006; ROYCE, 2007; HEBERLE, 2010; BEZERRA, 2012; SAINT-GEORGES; WEBER, 2013; HENDGES; FLOREK, 2019) have contributed significantly to the understanding of how semiotic resources (VAN LEEUWEN, 2005) besides verbal language construe meanings from their specific affordances. However, there is a perception that such knowledge needs to be presented in more accessible ways for student-teachers and teachers who oftentimes caution against weak connections between theorizations and their everyday classroom experiences.

To illustrate, an integrated multiliteracies project carried out at the Federal University of Santa Catarina entitled *Social practices in contemporary society: multiliteracies, identities and multimodal narratives* (HEBERLE, 2015) investigates videogames, children's pictures books and museum exhibits multimodally. Regarding videogames, studies such as those by Vidal and Heberle (2013), Souza (2016; 2021) and Rodrigues (2019) have shown the relevance of examining visual and verbal meanings in these billion-dollar multimodal narratives. Analysis of children's picture books, on the other hand, focuses on the verbal and visual resources used to portray the characters (participants) and their corresponding actions, as well as the interaction with the players and readers (CONSTANTY, 2018). Museum exhibits, in turn, are investigated in terms of their representational and interactive meanings, related to spatial discourse analysis (see, for example, RAVELLI; MCMURTRIE, 2015; RAVELLI; HEBERLE, 2016; HEBERLE; DE SOUZA; DODL, 2021).

In our projects, analyzing context is a central concern, as we point out throughout the paper. Thus, we understand that the reciprocity between text and context does not apply only to language research and text analysis in the classroom, but also to the process of selecting relevant genres to mediate pedagogical practice.

In the remaining parts of this paper, we report on two multimodal projects for student-teachers of English in two public universities in Brazil. First, we describe and discuss the research results of a project coordinated by Dr. Fábio Bezerra, from the Federal University of Paraíba, entitled *Reading the verbal text and the image in contemporary media*, mainly focusing on Brazilian magazine covers (and their related articles), addressing various issues such as the representation of social movements, women's identities, masculinities and teachers' identities. Then, we present the project *Critical Genre Analysis and implications for multiliteracies*, coordinated by Dr. Roseli Nascimento, carried out at the Federal University of Santa Maria, which has contributed to teacher education focusing on additional languages. We examine how the process of producing teaching materials can benefit from critical genre pedagogy (MOTTA-ROTH, 2008a) and from a pedagogy of multiliteracies (THE NEW LONDON GROUP, 1996, 2000; KALANTZIS *et al.*, 2016).

Since language teachers are, per excellence, the professionals responsible for educating society via (multimodal) texts and discourse, our research objective in this paper is to investigate approaches to bridge the perceived gap between theory about multimodal discourse analysis in the classroom and the lived experiences of student-teachers in two Brazilian undergraduate teacher education programs. In both programs, such objective was pursued by resorting to previous and ongoing analysis of, respectively: 1) Brazilian magazine covers¹¹ (and their related articles), addressing issues such as the representation of social movements, political discourse, masculinities and teachers' identities, and 2) syllabuses related to English as an additional language, addressing the criteria and the steps involved in syllabus design.

2 CRITICAL MULTIMODAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS IN TEACHER EDUCATION AT THE FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF PARAÍBA: REPORTING ON AN ON-GOING PROJECT OF MULTILITERACIES

The interdisciplinary project *Reading the verbal text and the image in contemporary media* has been developed since 2014 with student-teachers in the undergraduate teacher education program of Letters/English at the Federal University of Paraíba (UFPB). The project has explored critical multimodal discourse analysis of Brazilian magazine covers (and their related articles), addressing diverse issues such as the representation of social movements, political discourse, masculinities and teachers' identities.

The decision to create a project that aims to describe and discuss the multimodal construal of relevant themes in the Brazilian context is closely connected to the choice of addressing teacher education from the perspective of a pedagogy of multiliteracies (THE NEW LONDON GROUP, 1996, 2000), since it encompasses two essential multiplicities: multimodal and cultural. In other words, while exploring the multimodal resources used in the texts analyzed in the different studies carried out, the project also addresses the cultural diversity of texts more broadly, including considerations about ideologies, relations of power, social class, sexual orientation, political affiliation, and other markers of difference.

The discussion of the social and ideological implications of multiliteracies practices is paramount, since ideologies, power relations, and (teacher) identities are constructed through the use of language in context, whether verbal or non-verbal. This is especially true in the context of postmodernity, in which “the old identities which stabilized the social world for so long are in decline, giving rise to new identities and fragmenting the modern individual as a unified subject” (HALL, 1992, p. 274). As claimed by Monte Mór and Morgan (2014, p. 31), “[...] the prioritization of a restricted, lingua-centric model of second/foreign language acquisition fails to utilize the social and critical resources that ELT students bring to such settings and that are available for a more socially engaged curriculum in which the dangers of conformity and critique are central concerns”.

¹¹ Even though the covers analyzed in the studies described are not included, full references are provided at the end of the paper to allow readers to see them online.

In addition to understanding the semiotic features used in a text, a multiliteracies project also emphasizes the discussion of cultural elements that permeate both the production of these texts and their interpretation by various readers (ROJO, 2012). In other words, through the increasing use of verbal and non-verbal textual elements, (multimodal) texts ought to be seen as useful links between the students' previous knowledge and new arenas for the understanding of human experience in different contexts: work, home, school, relationships, travel, etc.

It is evident, therefore, that the work with reading and textual production inside and outside the classroom must consider the changes that take place in the social environment due to the new demands of the post-modern and globalized world (GIDDENS, 1991; BAUMAN, 2000). The extant relationship between knowledge construction and social life needs to be rethought in order to reassess its application in real contexts. In other words, the researcher must “place their work in the world instead of being absorbed by it while not responding to contemporary issues” (MOITA LOPES, 2006, p. 90). In this sense, Kellner and Share (2008, p. 689) advocate media literacy as “an imperative for participatory democracy”.

Closely related to this question is the consideration about the place of the image in teacher education and in the classroom. In pre- and in-service teacher education programs, based on numerous feedbacks from these professionals about working with multimodal texts in the classroom, a lack of specific preparation is perceived. Aiming to propose new dialogues and heuristic experiences with the critical analysis of multimodal discourse in teacher education, student-teachers were selected each year² to assist in the project always addressing a new issue.

As a continuation of the project, every student-teacher involved in research in the previous year had to present the study they helped to conduct, addressing its main results and discussion in different undergraduate teacher education classes. This way, they could also gain more experience reporting on academic studies, and the other students could see how critical multimodal discourse analysis may offer insightful ways of working with multiliteracies in the classroom.

All investigations were based on data collected from the official websites of each publication, where a larger corpus with nearly all previous published issues is available – some of them allowing to see the magazine cover only and others also allowing access to the corresponding articles³. With the emergence of corpus linguistics and the access to large databases of authentic materials online, such types of research seem to offer innovative ideas for exploring ways in which language is used to create representations about our experiences, to forge relationships and to explore how all this information is brought together in multimodal texts in contemporary society.

These studies of multimodal discourse were carried out based on categories of analysis proposed by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) in their grammar of visual design. The selected magazine covers were analyzed in terms of the three dimensions of *representation*, *interaction* and *composition* – with their respective subcategories of analysis. Equally, the results from the multimodal analyses were discussed concerning their social, political, economic and cultural implications based on concepts proposed by Fairclough (2015, 1995) in his three-dimensional model for Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). First, the text was analyzed in its component parts. Then, the discursive practices implicated in/with these texts were interpreted. Finally, the related social practices were explained.

Since the studies carried out dealt with media texts, insights from research on critical media literacies were also used for the overall discussion of the relevance of the results as far as the development of critical readings in contemporary society is concerned. Next is the description of the main objectives and results of all investigations conducted in the project.

In 2014/2015, the first study (see BEZERRA; FAGUNDES, 2018) aimed at investigating the representations of the 2013 Brazilian social movement known as *Free Fare Movement* (FFM), which culminated in street demonstrations about various other political

² We would like to thank the following student-teachers involved in the studies carried out in this project for their important contributions: Julianna Fagundes, José Alves, Ana Flora Rocha e Tammara Oliveira.

³ Up until August 2019, the following are the numbers of published issues of each magazine: *Veja* (2,648), *IstoÉ* (2,590), *Época* (1,102), *Carta Capital* (1,068) and *Mais Jr* (43).

and economic issues troubling Brazilians at that time. Such demonstrations were met with increasingly incommensurate police brutality as the number of protesters kept rising, with protesters and passers-by being indiscriminately beaten up and several journalists wounded.

Against this backdrop, the study mainly aimed at investigating the types of representations created about the FFM in eight covers of the three national news magazines with the highest circulation within the country: *Veja* (2013a, 2013b, 2013c, 2013d), *Época* (2013a, 2013b) and *IstoÉ* (2013a, 2013b). Each cover was analyzed observing the visual and verbal components, as well as the relations between these two semiotic modes. In addition, searching for more macro-textual elements corroborating the multimodal analysis of the covers, each related article was read. Finally, the results of the individual analyses were compared in view of the set of chosen layers of meaning, drawing parallels between the representations and the underlying discourses.

General results are presented in terms of identities, power relations, social practices and ideologies construed in the multimodal texts analyzed. Regarding identities, demonstrators are mostly depicted as young people, whose rebelling actions are construed to appear disproportionate, with depictions of destroyed shop windows, barricades in flames and protesters in masks. As for power relations, there seems to be a preferred choice of those in control of the media to publish news and images representing the demonstrations and those involved in them as illegitimate. By emphasizing a rather partial description of only one portion of the demographic (young people) composing the groups of protesters, the published material ultimately construes a skewed view of the people who actually participated in those protests, which includes elderly citizens, families with their kids, artists, and intellectuals. Such identities and power relations seem to operate to sustain ideologies that either attempt to dictate a rather controlled form of protest in order to avoid actual disruptions in the *status quo* or actually disfavor effective social engagement of the population altogether.

Another important issue is the role construed for the reader regarding the facts conveyed, which is achieved by highlighting an impersonal and distant/detached relationship with the reader – placing the represented participants at a greater distance (*long shot*) and diagonally from the reader (*oblique angle*). In addition, the represented participants in the covers are usually depicted depersonalized⁴, thus preventing the readers from identifying with the protesters as real/ordinary people, which arguably contributes to delegitimizing their actions. These main results served to indicate the perceived goal of these publications to call the protests into question, mainly focusing on their negative aspects, not truly representing the diversity of people involved or addressing the reasons for the uprising in the first place.

In 2016-2017, another study (BEZERRA; NETO, 2018) looked at representations of President Dilma Rousseff and Vice-President Michel Temer on the covers of national magazines addressing the impeachment proceedings. The research consisted of critical multimodal discourse analyses of three covers of *Veja* (2015, 2016a, 2016b), with the highest circulation representing a hegemonic discourse, and the other three covers of *Carta Capital* (2016a, 2016b, 2016c), with the highest circulation representing a counter-discourse. The overall goal of the investigation was to describe and discuss the meanings construed about the main political figures involved in those events in/by those multimodal texts, highlighting some dominant and marginal discourses present in that historical moment.

The results obtained mainly show strong ideological content present in both publications. While *Carta Capital* seeks to represent the impeachment as an actual “coup” and Temer as a negative, deceptive and conspiratorial figure, *Veja* chooses to direct its attacks on the figure of then-President Dilma and reinforce the legitimacy of the proceedings. Both publications, therefore, portray the same facts with different emphases and interpretations. The multimodal texts analyzed echo the political positions of the publications, underlining certain meanings by repeating accusations and concealing certain relevant aspects. Such discussion seems to corroborate the results from the previous study regarding the need for more critical readings of media texts, thus underscoring the relevance of the inclusion of experiences with critical multimodal discourse analysis in teacher education proposed in the present project.

⁴ Such depersonalization is achieved by employing one of the following strategies: use of drawings instead of real people (some sort of stick figure), blurred faces or hidden faces/bodies.

In 2017-2018, a third study (BEZERRA; ROCHA, 2020) examined representations of masculinities on covers of the magazine *MaisJR* (2015, 2016a, 2016b, 2016c, 2017a, 2017b), with the highest national circulation in the genre aimed mostly at the LGBT population. Besides the categories of analysis proposed by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006), concepts described in the three-dimensional model of CDA by Fairclough (2015, 1995) and discussions on critical media literacies, this investigation also added theoretical foundations about gender, more specifically about masculinities (CONNELL, 2005; MOITA LOPES, 2006).

The main goal was to identify whether such representations contribute to the maintenance of a hegemonic view of masculinity, or, conversely, they help to deconstruct patterns known in society and propagated by different media in contemporary society. General results showed that the magazine's editorial policy favors the maintenance and dissemination of mostly hegemonic values regarding masculinities, valuing the strong, muscular men with body hair that convey the idea of power through clothing and/or how they behave in the social environment.

Finally, in 2019-2020, another investigation (BEZERRA; OLIVEIRA, 2021) addressed representations of teachers on the covers of four different national magazines with the highest circulation in their respective sectors: *Carta Capital*, *Época*, *Nova Escola* and *Veja*. Considering the impact that multimodal representations about teachers in texts of high circulation may have on the general public, the ways in which such media outlets construe images about these professionals need to be addressed. Such representations may eventually permeate individual and collective discourses, actions and experiences about the role of the teacher and of education as a whole in society, especially in contemporary society where personal, social and professional relationships are increasingly fluid and fragmented (BAUMAN, 2000).

The results unveil representations and discourses about teachers in Brazil that have been disseminated in/by these multimodal texts, thus highlighting the general imagery used to maintain and/or challenge preconceptions about these professionals in different domains. On the one hand, the representations of teachers created by *Veja* have attempted to assign their exclusive responsibility for their students' failure or success. On the other hand, *Carta Capital* and *Nova Escola* have exposed the devaluation of the profession in face of serious socioeconomic issues in Brazil. In general terms, the discussions carried out were markedly relevant considering our country's current alarming political, economic and social landscape where certain discourses have surfaced to question the role of teachers in the classroom in an attempt to control what kinds of issues can be presented and discussed with their students⁵.

Overall, this project has thus far allowed for the understanding of how visual and verbal language can be used to create specific representations of relevant social issues. While part of the results of the three completed studies seem to contribute to deconstructing biased notions of social movements, political figures and gender issues – with occasional representations of the inherent diversity in such matters –, they predominantly reveal how hegemonic discourses can be used to maintain inequitable social relations, oppressing expressions of ideologies, and fixed identities. Such imbalance can be exemplified by the images and discourses created 1) to construe street protests mainly as expressions of vandalism, and 2) to represent masculinity based on a hegemonic notion of manhood – the muscular, tough and overly sexual male.

Aiming to intensify multimodal investigations at Federal University of Paraíba, the research group GEPLAM⁶ was created in 2018. Since then, readings and group discussions with all members have occurred regularly to construct a firm theoretical and methodological foundation for the inter/transdisciplinary undergraduate and postgraduate studies exploring concepts from Systemic Functional Linguistics, Critical Discourse Analysis, Multimodality, Multiliteracies as well as studies on Identity and

⁵ This can be exemplified by the creation of the program "School Without Party" (*Escola sem Partido*), which allegedly represents parents and students who disfavor what they have termed "ideological indoctrination" in schools. In response to these attempts at silencing teachers by restricting what they are allowed to discuss with their students, the national front "School Without Muzzle" (*Escola sem Mordação*) has been created by education workers unions, other labor and student syndicates, and social movements.

⁶ Grupo de Estudos e Pesquisa em Linguística Sistemico-Funcional, Análise Crítica do Discurso e Multimodalidade/Multiletramentos (CNPq) (see dgp.cnpq.br/dgp/espelhogrupo/3241713308813048).

Sexuality. The main goal is to solidify critical multimodal discourse studies as one of the main foundations for research carried out in the context of the undergraduate and post-graduate courses in Language and Linguistics at the Federal University of Paraíba.

3 CRITICAL GENRE ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR MULTILITERACIES: A PROJECT AT THE FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF SANTA MARIA

At the Laboratory of Research and Teaching of Reading and Writing (LabLeR)⁷, Federal University of Santa Maria, the production of teaching materials integrates a cycle of theoretical reflection and pedagogical practice (KURTZ *et al.*, 2000; BEZERRA; NASCIMENTO, 2013). In the project entitled *Critical Genre Analysis and implications for multiliteracies*, we investigate categories and tools that attempt to aid language teachers in initial education to build the path from theory into the design of their own teaching materials (NASCIMENTO, 2017). We advocate that Critical Genre Analysis (MEURER, 2002; MOTTA-ROTH, 2008a, 2008b; MOTTA-ROTH; HEBERLE, 2015) and a Pedagogy of Multiliteracies (THE NEW LONDON GROUP, 2000) contribute to informing the development of classes and teaching materials for English as an Additional Language.

Critical Genre Analysis (CGA) (MEURER, 2002; MOTTA-ROTH, 2008a, 2008b) departs from the notion that texts materialize the activities that we carry out in the various contexts of human experience and are permeated by discourses of several orders (MOTTA-ROTH, 2008b). When designing teaching materials oriented by CGA, it is crucial to define what to teach in terms of genre. By way of illustration, if we are to teach how citizens express an opinion on a topic or issue previously reported in the media, we may select a letter to the editor. If we are to teach how current events can be reported in online media by using images as the featured medium, we may choose an online news gallery⁸ (CAPLE; KNOX, 2017).

Also crucial in CGA is a critical perspective towards selected genres. We consider that “[t]exts are sites of struggle in that they show traces of different discourses and ideologies contending and struggling for dominance” (WODAK; MEYER, 2008, p. 11). Comparison of competing discourses in similar genres and/or topics (experiential meanings) usually provides pedagogical examples for an initial analysis. To exemplify, we may identify two standpoints on the Israeli-Palestinian crisis⁹ as encoded in the headline of the online news gallery and in the news report by Morris and Balousha (2018). While the first headline presumes a tension between two national groups (Palestinian-Israeli tensions rise) and indicates Palestinians as tangentially accountable for it (as protesters clash with soldiers), the second construes Israelis as unequivocal agents of an extremely negative action inflicted on the others (Israelis kill more than 50 Palestinians). The task of the analyst/teacher is to demystify such discourses by describing and explaining how language encodes (and often naturalizes) ideologies in order “[...] to produce enlightenment and emancipation” (WODAK; MEYER, 2008, p. 10).

From a Pedagogy of Multiliteracies (THE NEW LONDON GROUP, 1996; 2000), we draw on two arguments. First, the increasing multiplicity and integration of representational resources and new communication media are reshaping the way we use language. Take, for instance, the online news gallery, which draws on existing practices of reporting (e.g. news images with headlines, captions, and sometimes leads), and yet has unique features (e.g. large numbers of images as featured medium of a story) (CAPLE; KNOX, 2017). Second, “dealing with linguistic differences and cultural differences has become central” (THE NEW LONDON GROUP, 2000, p. 6) in education. Effective citizenship and productive work require that we interact effectively using multiple discourses, communication patterns, and institutional demands.

Context investigation is a central concern in CGA. We believe that “learning a language equates with analyzing discourse” (MOTTA-ROTH, 2008a, p. 374); consequently, “both for research purposes and for teaching purposes, the representations about the situation of language use are a point of departure for any intervention” (MOTTA-ROTH, 2008a, p. 374). Likewise, we also see

⁷ LabLeR was founded and coordinated until recently by Professor Desirée Motta-Roth and has contributed to strengthening the development of pre-service and in-service language teacher education at the Federal University of Santa Maria and its region.

⁸ For example: Palestinian-Israeli (2015).

⁹ Events from May 2018 surrounding the opening of a U.S. Embassy in Jerusalem.

the intricate link between text and context for the design of pedagogical materials. Thus, the first step we take in the process of producing pedagogical materials at LabLeR is a needs analysis. In this step, student-teachers are stimulated to devise instruments to collect systematic information about their immediate teaching context with the aim of informing their decisions regarding the syllabus.

Needs analysis is widely recognized as a viable instrument in Applied Linguistics (HUTCHINSON; WATERS, 1988), but it assumes a critical role in teacher education programs. The data collected in the needs analysis guide all the subsequent phases of pedagogical material design and implementation, starting with the definition of the syllabus focus.

In our project, systematic data collection from the teaching context orients course syllabus design. It contributes to reducing the pressure of student-teachers' lack of experience by establishing parameters for the syllabus. These parameters range from concrete information concerning the context of production of the teaching process (proficiency level, language skills, institutional guidelines), and the context of consumption of the textbook (profile of the target audience, language background and proficiency), to information regarding needs and interests in terms of spheres –academic, professional, general –and genres¹⁰. In a CGA-oriented program, a needs analysis must be aimed at revealing the repertoire of genres the target audience is familiarized with and those they need or wish to engage with. If data collection does not render specific genres, the analyst should, at least, identify the social spheres in which the target audience needs or wishes to participate. With these contextual parameters in mind, we can set out to discuss syllabus design oriented by CGA.

3.1 LANGUAGE IN CRITICAL GENRE ANALYSIS: A BRIEF REVIEW BEFORE SYLLABUS DESIGN

As previously suggested, in CGA¹¹, “the analysis of linguistic and rhetorical elements of the text (as in traditional Genre Analysis) is combined with the analysis of ideological elements of context (as in Critical Discourse Analysis)” (MOTTA-ROTH, 2008a, p. 370). It thus “lends itself to an analysis that is simultaneously detailed, since it explains and locates linguistic elements in time and space, and problematizing, since it denaturalizes values that are laid” (MOTTA-ROTH, 2008a, p. 370) in the text.

By adopting the concept of stratification from Systemic Functional Linguistics (HALLIDAY, 1978; MARTIN, 1992), we believe that meaning is made in layers or communicative planes, conventionally represented by concentric circles. These planes involve the most concrete and perceptible ones, such as Graphology, Phonology and Lexicogrammar, and the most abstract and less tangible ones, such as Register and Genre. For critical genre analysts (MOTTA-ROTH, 2008a, 2008b, based on MARTIN, 1992, p. 496), a sixth layer, the plane of Discourse, is added to the model to account for the ideological aspects of texts (Fig. 1).

¹⁰ For examples on how to build instruments for needs analysis and how to define parameters from them, please refer to Nascimento (2017).

¹¹ A syncretism of Critical Discourse Analysis, Genre Analysis and Systemic Functional Linguistics.

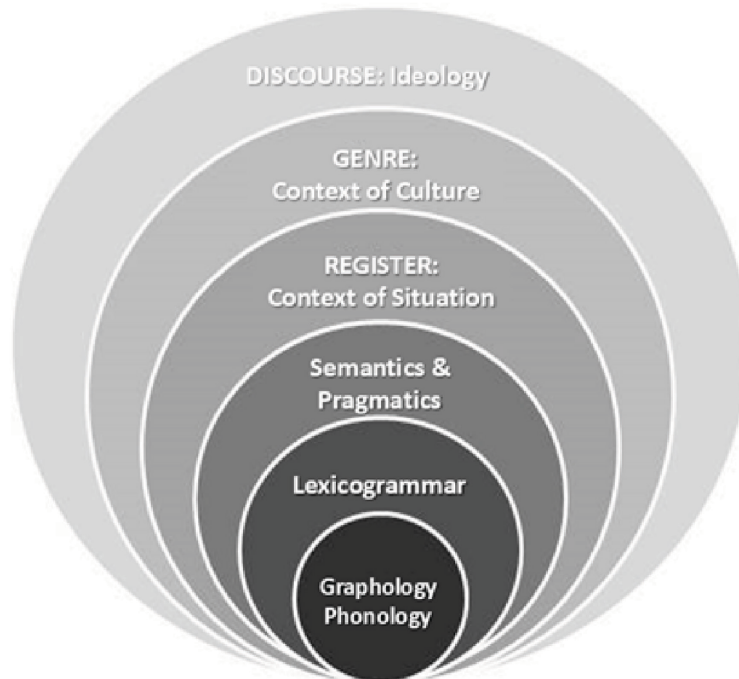


Figure 1: Communicative planes in Critical Genre Analysis

Source: Adapted from Motta-Roth (2008a).

We briefly explain each plane and illustrate how they operate in a multimodal text (Fig. 2) that features in a workshop of our project¹². We argue that failing to interpret meaning at each layer of the text may impair its overall meaning-making.

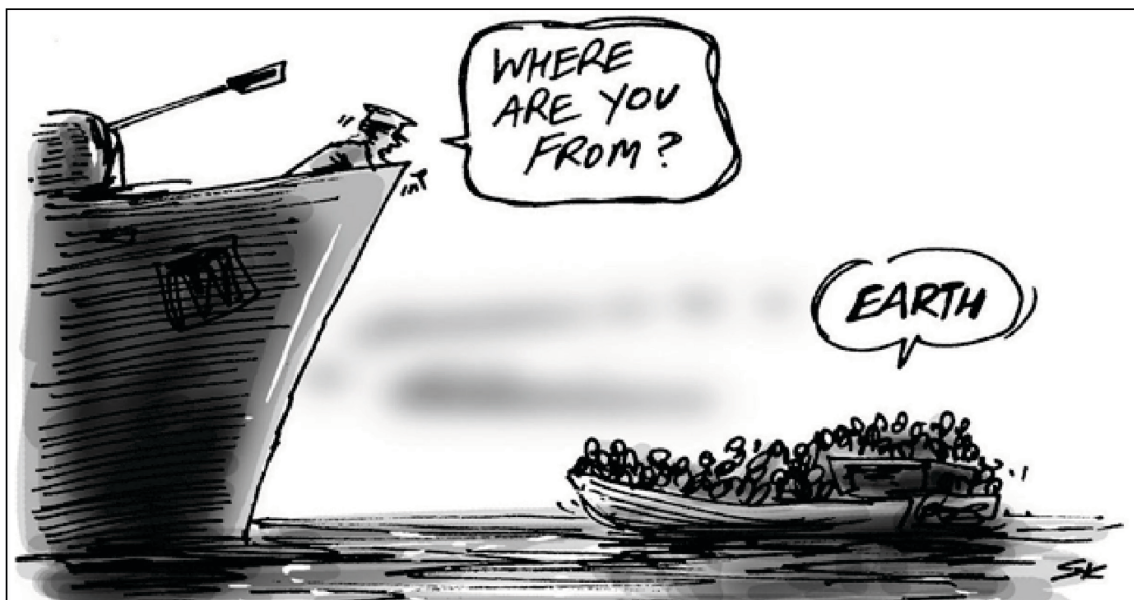


Figure 2: Editorial cartoon by Simon Kneebone (2015) on the migrant crisis¹³

Source: Kneebone (2015).

The most concrete plane of meaning is Graphology or Phonology. In Figure 2, for example, the casual and clean font style adopted in the verbal interaction is accompanied by the bold face type in the speech balloon on the right. It indicates added volume or pitch of voice, most likely as an extra effort by the small boat travelers to be heard from far below.

¹² In one of the workshops in the project, student-teachers are challenged to design a syllabus and an EAL lesson for adult beginners using the cartoon either as a nuclear text or as complementary language input.

¹³ For contextual information, see Champion (2015). We thank Simon Kneebone for allowing us to reprint the image.

The plane of Lexicogrammar concerns the choices in terms of lexicon and grammatical structure mobilized in the text. In Figure 2, the choice of interrogative mood realizes a Wh-question (Mood) about a circumstantial Attribute of origin/nationality (Transitivity).

The plane of Semantics and Pragmatics¹⁴ involves a) the domain of human experience construed in the text (experiential meanings); 2) the speech roles and power relations projected (interpersonal meanings); and 3) the values attributed to text components according to how they are arranged in the text (textual meanings). In Figure 2, the character on the left demands the identity (domain of being) of those on the right, who comply by giving information (declarative mood). However, instead of national identity, the response refers to planetary origin, which provokes readers and implies further layers of meaning.

In Register (Context of Situation), we observe the extent to which immediate institutional context is manifested in the text in terms of Field (what), Tenor (who) and Mode (how). In Figure 2, Register interpretation depends on multiliteracies¹⁵ since the Field of migration is realized predominantly by visual resources – two vessels in the sea, one fragile and overcrowded boat with faceless humans, denoting the usual traveling conditions of migrants, in contrast with the large and imposing ship from which migrants are inspected. As for Tenor, the visual attributes of the character on the left - dressed in a uniform, from an equipped ship, symbolizes an officer (social role) in a position of authority to demand the information (see Interpersonal meanings above) from many crammed travelers in a small boat. Moreover, the relative location of the officer on the ship (looking down on) suggests power over the migrants. In Mode, we can observe that the message is realized graphically (channel), but simulates a spoken interaction (medium), and both images and verbiage are constitutive (language role).

In the layer of Genre (Context of Culture), we are concerned with identifying the social activity, manifested as oral, written or multimodal texts, that is recognized by its function in a given culture. In this sense, Figure 2 shows an editorial cartoon, a visual/verbal text in which the cartoonist combines artistic skill, hyperbole and satire in order to question authority and draw attention to a current social ill: migration crisis. The non-compliant response by migrants (Earth) is the satirical key of this cartoon since it challenges the legitimacy of the intervention by the officer and leads us to the next level of meaning, that of Discourse.

As suggested previously, Discourse¹⁶ gives us access to the ideologies, that is, views of how things work or should work (NASCIMENTO, 2017) that are encoded in texts and often taken as natural.

Discourse can be understood as the use of language that is socially determined, creates senses, reflects the ideological perspective and influences the society and culture to which it belongs, making it possible the maintenance (or change) of social relations. In this sense, discourse can be understood as constituting and being constituted by society and culture, since it simultaneously plays a part in them, acts over them, conditioning them and constraining them. (SCHERER, et al., 2014, based on FAIRCLOUGH, 1992)

In Figure 2, the cartoonist expresses his criticism towards the usual approach to migrants by officials from developed countries. This is indexed by the lexical choice 'Earth' given by migrants, which defies nationality as a norm and offers an alternative response to the issue: we "are all humans on a small planet, trying to hang on".

After indicating how each communicative plane can be accessed and contributes to the overall meaning making of a text, the next step is to demonstrate how this theoretical approach has been recontextualized into a syllabus that orients the design of teaching materials in English as an Additional Language (EAL) in our project.

¹⁴ Discourse Semantics in Systemic Functional Linguistics.

¹⁵ The analysis here is merely exploratory. Visual meanings are constitutive of cartoons and operate in all of the six communicative planes.

¹⁶ We shall capitalize the term Discourse, Register, Semantics and Pragmatics, Lexicogrammar, Graphology and Phonology when used as analytical categories for language following Systemic Functional Linguistics conventions (HALLIDAY, 1978; MARTIN, 1992).

3.2 SYLLABUS DESIGN IN CGA: MAPPING THE LAYERS OF MEANINGS FOR A COURSE OF ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE (EAL)

A syllabus is a statement of content and its grading serves as the basis for planning courses of various kinds (NUNAN, 1988). Among the widely known types of syllabuses are the structural, the notional-functional and the task-based. What seems to define each type is “some unit around which to organize lessons and teaching materials” (LONG; CROOKES, 1991, p. 5), which, in turn, derives from a theory of language and of language learning.

In our project, we propose syllabus design oriented by CGA. Figure 3 illustrates how the language stratification can be recontextualized into a syllabus composed of six columns: Discourse, Notions, Genres, Registers, Speech Acts, and Lexicogrammar and Phonology/Graphology, which approximately reflect the six communicative planes in CGA. The organization in strata not only indicates the contents to be taught¹⁷, but a hierarchy for such contents.

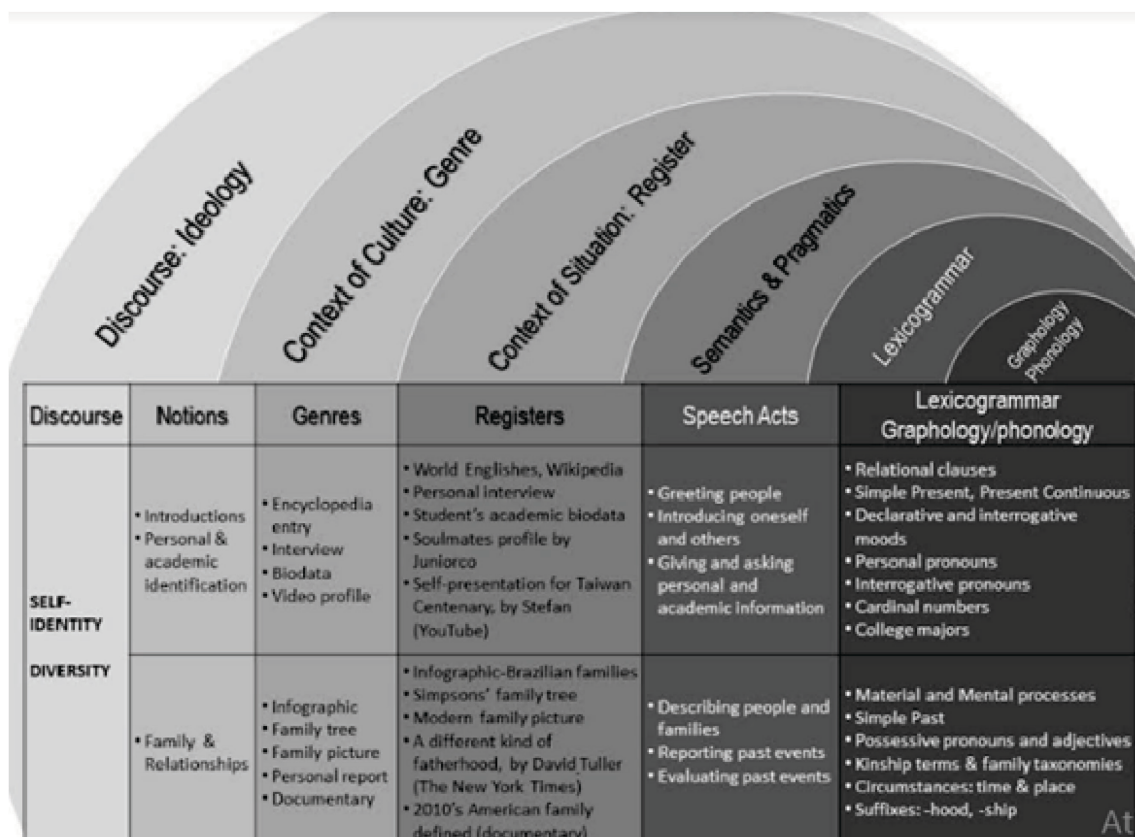


Figure 3: From communicative planes to a CGA-based syllabus

Source: Adapted from Motta-Roth (2012).

As we align “learning a language” with “analyzing discourse” (MOTTA-ROTH, 2008a, p. 374), in this project, discourse is viewed as “a mode of social practice that is both structured by society and, at the same time, contributes to structuring that same society” (COTS, 2006, p. 339). From these tenets, we derive two criteria to start syllabus design: we use Genre as the unit of language from which other units derive; and we select genre samples based on Discourse. For example, Figure 2 brings a text that was selected using the criterion of Genre (editorial cartoon) and of Discourse (human rights above national identities).

In functional proposals in general, textbooks tend to focus on exploring the functions of language rather than on building up the communicative event realized by the text (TICKS, 2006). In our project, we focus on texts that realize authentic social activities. By exposing learners to genre exemplars that preserve their original textual features, we increase the potential for learners to retrieve the context to which they belong and give them social significance. By exposing learners to authentic, non-pasteurized texts, we also

¹⁷ These contents will be preferably circumscribed to the spheres and genres of interest and need by target audience as indicated in the needs analysis.

allow access to the “ideologically determined ways of talking and writing about persons, places, events or phenomena” (COTS, 2006, p. 339). Thus, placing Discourse as the first column in the syllabus compromises syllabus designers and teachers towards educating for the sociological role language plays in the maintenance or transformation of society.

The column of Notions, traditionally adopted in notional-functional syllabuses to account for the concepts and situations selected for language teaching (NUNAN, 1988; LONG; CROOKES, 1991), has a double function in our syllabus. It grounds the highly abstract layer of Discourse to specific subject matters and it also orients the subdivision of the syllabus, at the horizontal axis, around topics or spheres (for example, cultural, academic) that correspond to course units.

The Genre column indicates the status we assign to genres as “the structuring nexus” (MOTTA-ROTH, 2008b, p. 246) of our culture and to language learning as mastering the language associated with a set of recognized and highly valued social activities. In our syllabus, genres work both as a methodological tool for teacher education and as a language to be learned.

The Register column signals that social activities are conditioned by the immediate institutional contexts in which they occur. Without Register, it would be impossible to find examples of recognizable human activities (MARTIN, 2001, p. 160). To fill in the Register column the syllabus designer needs to identify one exemplar of a Genre. The 2015 text by Simon Kneebone on migration, for instance, is a specific manifestation of the general category editorial cartoon.

The inclusion of a column for Speech Acts in the syllabus hierarchy implies that the engagement in social activities is realized via language acts. In notional-functional syllabuses, they “may be described as the communicative purposes for which we use language” (NUNAN, 1988, p. 35). In our syllabus, such purposes are tightly connected to the communicative purpose that defines the genre as well as those that unfold as its stages and/or rhetorical moves. We may also specify the speech functions directly associated with Register. For example, in the editorial cartoon of Figure 2, the speech functions of giving and demanding personal information regarding origin.

Structural syllabuses are oriented by the system of the language. Contents are selected and arranged according to the criterion of grammatical progression, from the simplest to the most grammatically complex elements (NUNAN, 1988, p. 28). In the CGA-based syllabus, Lexicogrammar and Graphology/phonology are conceived as meaning-making resources that are functionally mobilized in contexts. Thus, in our syllabus, this layer of meaning-making occupies the last column, signaling that choices of vocabulary and grammatical structure (and phonology/graphology) should not be taught primarily according to their intrinsic complexity but according to their communicative and social relevance to the given social actors. From this principle, we suggest that the editorial cartoon on migration could be included in the syllabus of a course aimed at beginners up to advanced EAL learners since the intrinsic complexity is not the structure of the language or of the image but the contextual and sociological meanings it entails. Pedagogical adequacy would depend on the activities developed from the cartoon.

In this part of the paper, we discussed how CGA (MEURER, 2002; MOTTA-ROTH, 2008a, 2008b) and a Pedagogy of Multiliteracies (THE NEW LONDON GROUP, 1996, 2000) can orient the development of tools for the teaching of EAL. Within these approaches, a needs analysis provides access to concrete data from the teaching context contributing to (1) reducing the pressure on teachers in initial education; (2) increasing the potential of the syllabus to meet the needs and interests of the target audience; and (3) developing pedagogical literacies in teacher education programs.

We have then reviewed and demonstrated how language stratification can be recontextualized to the design of a CGA-oriented syllabus (MOTTA-ROTH, 2012; SCHERER *et al.*, 2014) that is organized primarily around Genres and Discourses rather than departing from lexicogrammar. We hypothesize that one of our biggest challenges in language education in the Brazilian context may not be lexicogrammatical competence but an awareness of how language promotes or hinders social insertion (MOTTA-ROTH, 2006, p. 160).

4 SOME CONCLUSIONS

In this paper, we have shown how two multimodal projects applied to the education of student-teachers of English as an additional language may contribute to their professional development in terms of allowing them to perceive the role of different semiotic resources used in contemporary communication. It seems that the projects reported here, aligned with Kress and van Leeuwen's work, have attempted to explore the use and meaning-making potentials of semiotic resources and how these resources interact to create meaning multimodally.

The project entitled *Reading the verbal text and the image in contemporary media* at the Federal University of Paraíba emphasizes critical multimodal reading in teacher education in times when discourses are consistently reinforced and/or challenged to cope with pressing issues, such as corruption, social injustice, political intolerance and gender violence. If our goal as teacher educators is in nuce to assist student-teachers, and their students, towards the development of a critical stance in reading their worlds (FREIRE, 2017[1981]), the choice of exploring the affordances of critical multimodal discourse analysis may prove truly valuable, especially when considering the potential and challenges posed by digital information and communication technologies (BEZERRA, 2021).

Regarding the project *Critical Genre Analysis and implications for multiliteracies* at the Federal University of Santa Maria, it seems that the ability to evaluate and to develop teaching materials that are adequate to specific contexts is one of the pivotal literacies to the education of language teachers. Such literacies can be conceived in terms of levels of complexity. A first level involves the mobilization by the teacher of knowledge, abilities, and criteria to review and to select (a) textbook(s) from those available and also produced by other authors. A second level pertains to a set of theories, abilities and methodologies undertaken by the language teacher so that s/he becomes the investigator, developer and reviewer of his/her own knowledge and practice (TICKS, 2006; VIAN JR, 2011). In that sense, we hope to add to previous research (HEBERLE, 2000; MEURER, 2002; TICKS, 2006; MOTTA,-ROTH, 2008b) in their effort to qualify the teaching of English in Brazil.

Our main hope is that both projects reported here may trigger actions and research towards a critical stance regarding the affordances of semiotic resources in social practices and how the use of these resources may offer alternatives for relevant educational practices.

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Received on September 27, 2021. Approved on June 07, 2022.