18   Curricular Proposal of Santa Catarina State: Assessing the Route, Opening Paths

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INTRODUCTION[1]

In this essay I propose a reflexive and evaluative synthesis of prior studies focused on discursive issues related to genres under Bakhtin's philosophical and theoretical approach. The essay's institutional context is the Curricular Proposal of the state of Santa Catarina (1998)[2], a document which establishes philosophical, linguistic and psychological principles, including Vygotsky's notions of historical-cultural psychology related to teaching-learning, and objectives and guidelines for L1 teaching at state schools. I try to summarize and trace relevant theoretical articulations for dealing with language practices related to genres at the school environment and their connections to the social world.

Such an approach is related to the current pedagogical relations based on directives of a political-educational character, which also influence the mediations related to teacher training. In short, this article shall deal with:

(a) the basic document that guides teaching and learning (Curricular Proposal) in the state of Santa Catarina;
(b) the interacting subjects;
(c) the learning tools.

In spite of the proposal's solid theoretical framework and of the numberless successful results obtained in the state of Santa Catarina, difficulties have arisen in several schools, as we cannot avoid the gap between an educational proposal and its corresponding practices. One should also consider the understanding one has of the teaching object—genres—and the didactic unity—the text—which demands from the individuals involved that they improve their practice as interlocutors, as readers, and as writers. In addition to the necessary involvement of teacher training (a training that demands an enormous increase in the teachers' range of knowledge), this issue also involves the conflicting relation between academic researchers and teachers (who, in contrast, are not devoted to research on a regular basis): how do they establish a cooperative mode in which the work of one group can become the knowledge and practice of the other?

These clashes are foreseen by Bakhtinian theory, which offers us a frame to understand how we can overcome such difficulties, and our ethical responsibility

concerning them.

In order to complement and reflect upon the route of the Curricular Proposal (CP) in the state, I raise, as a counterpoint, a synthesis of my personal experience as a consultant to Florianópolis' Municipal Department of Education[3], from October to December 2006. Florianópolis' Curricular Proposal is similar to the state Curricular Proposal in its construction and theoretical basis. Fifty hours were devoted to what came to be known as "Resignifying the Curricular Proposal for the city of Florianópolis." The project sought to complement the basic Proposal (Florianópolis, 1996) by discussion and formulation of a document to advance understanding of genres, and by providing support for the selection of genres for elementary/junior high school (especially from the 5th grade on, since there was another group concerned with primary school literacy).

I shall begin by presenting a synthetic history of the preparation of the state's Curricular Proposal; next, I will propose a general evaluation of the efforts made to implement the directives pointed out in the document (more specific documents were released from 1998 on); after that, I will point out some critical elements and a review of the directives based on the conflicts resulting from its interpretation and the school practice; in addition, I will synthesize the work done by the Municipal Secretary of Education; finally, I will consider some philosophical and theoretical aspects crucial both for researchers and for those who are interacting daily with the students, and for the human relations resulting from this collective work.

Such considerations are based on the assumption that our experiences, from the simplest ones to the more intellectually elaborated, evoke those questions and reflections raised by Bakhtin. More explicitly, I think of Bakhtin's "architectonics of responsibility"—on every ethical act "the responsibility we have for our unique place in existence and for the media through which we relate such a singular event to the rest of the world, which is different from it" (Clark & Holquist, 1998, p. 90)[4]. I think the relationships with *others* need to be shaped into a "coherent performance," without excluding the idea that each one is building, through every act, in every thought, what Bakhtin called the *self*—something that only makes sense in the dimension of otherness.

THE PHILOSOPHICAL AND THEORETICAL MAKINGS OF THE CURRICULAR PROPOSAL OF SANTA CATARINA

The version of the Curricular Proposal under study was elaborated from 1995 to 1997 by a multidisciplinary group, and officially published in 1998[5]. It includes three volumes: curricular disciplines, multidisciplinary themes, and preparation for the teaching profession. The theoretical and methodological frame of the CP articulates a culturally and historically oriented psychology (the one

elaborated by Vygotsky) with a philosophy of language (by Bakhtin) centered on the enunciative event (verbal interaction). The contents are delineated as a set of practices that have as organizing axes *speech/listening, reading/writing* and *linguistic analysis* (Santa Catarina, 1998, p. 73); the *genres* are presented as recurrent enunciations in characteristic situations, associated with social spheres, occurring either in an everyday language register or in a more formal one. In principle, all verbal manifestations occur as a *genre*, even if in a process of formation or transformation, since these genres are marked not only in thematic terms but also in their *organizational* and *stylist* aspects.

A basic premise was that the work with discursive practices would be congruent with the learning conception integrated into the project—a conception of a cultural and historical nature—focusing on the role of social interactions in the formation of superior psychological ones. In such a context it is *mediation*, in learning, that enables each individual to reach the necessary development to behave as a citizen. Thus the teacher holds a key role in the process: it is the teacher who, through his/her planning, creates activities that offer some challenges to the students; who, by guiding them, should always have in mind the goals of his/her work and the intended results; who assesses the student's performance, always challenging them to reach a level of independence. Such a process corresponds to Vygotsky's concept of zone of *proximal development* (1991). In its turn, such a notion deals with the transformation of common sense notions into educational ones[6].

Beyond the organizing axes referred to above, the contrast and the mutual dependence (dialectical relation) between *language-structure* and *language-event* was established. The *language-structure* dimension comprised the notational (conventional) and grammar studies as a necessary frame for communication; the *language-event* dimension focused on the discursive event, the teaching practices in their multiple goals. The intention of this configuration was to decentralize the teaching of grammar, showing how grammar is already integrated into the discursive production: it is to grammar that one refers when one talks of *reflection* and *linguistic analysis*.

The texts, units of the didactic work, circulate in the discursive communities as genre manifestations, with genres themselves taken as teaching objects. The diversity of genres should also take into consideration the physical medium of the text, that is, those elements that allow texts to circulate: books, newspapers, posters, TV and all kinds of possible mediations. "The mode of transportation and reception of the enunciation conditions the very constitution of the text, models the genre of discourse" (Maingueneau, 2001, p. 72). Thus, the media also allow for the characterization or identification of genres.

One assumes that to work with genres implies knowing the *procedures* em-

ployed in the flow of language, involving the development of specific abilities at school (some individuals teach, other individuals learn): How to produce a chronicle? How to prepare an interview? That implies a methodologically prepared teacher-mediator at the scene, with certain knowledge and abilities.

From Bakhtin's fundamental notions about the pedagogical paths, the main one adopted involves the recognition that there isn't *a* subject-teacher defined once and for all; to believe in a stable identity would be a delusion. All that appears or disappears in social life charges a subjective price in terms of the building of images and functions. The interactional process makes and unmakes objects, beliefs and values all around it.

GENERAL EVALUATION OF THE ROUTE OF THE CURRICULAR PROPOSAL—A CRITICAL REVIEW

In this section I call attention to specific points in the route of the CP, under the perspective of varying approaches and focusing on relevant themes from that document. On the one hand, I focus on research studies that describe cases of success obtained through practices oriented by the Curricular Proposal, on the discourse of the base-document, its structure and assumed function; on the other hand, I focus on how genres are treated as objects for school learning. I resort to that division with the aim to confront perspectives and to extract from them some lessons on social relations. The selected research works comprise a sample of the existing literature about this particular theme.

The Proposal in Practice: genre in school learning

Cardoso (2005) tried to describe and to analyze a pedagogical intervention based on non-school texts (and with non-verbal semioses), the packages of industrialized snacks, a genre that evidently gets around in the context of elementary school students. Having the CP as its background, she used as theoretical framework genre theory and the recent view on literacy.

The author believed that the study of snack packages as original genre vehicles, which circulate in the context of students and teachers, could be fruitful as a pedagogical, communicative and technological tool, in the sense of engaging a bigger interest and participation by the students. In that intervention, oral activities were carried out and a written questionnaire was applied with eleven open questions, answered by the 3rd graders of an elementary/junior high public state school. The questionnaire was part of an activity in the didactic sequence of the course planned, based on the reflections by the researcher produced with the pedagogical team and the teacher of that class.

After analyzing a primer adopted in 2004 by that school, Cardoso observed that

> . . . in what relates to the work with genres and concepts, and the textual activities, the textbooks showed some progress, but still not enough to follow up the rhythm of society's development, of the communicative forms that are produced everyday. (Cardoso, 2005, p. 39)

The results of that experience made evident the increase in the quality of the pedagogical practice, both for teachers and students. In the conclusion of her dissertation the researcher stresses that the work with food packages as communicative pedagogical tools exhibits great potential to help in the literacy process, if its use in the school environment gives attention to the communicative purposes and senses present in the textual material—that is, its multitextuality.

When offering a workshop on text, Maieski (2005) integrated reading and linguistic analysis focusing on an opinion article (from the journalistic sphere) with results beyond what would be expected; the author's didactic proposal elaborated for reading, text production and linguistic analysis follows the directives of the Curricular Proposal of Santa Catarina (CP/SC), and the National Curricular Parameters (Parâmetros Curriculares Nacionais—PCNs). Using the methodology of action research, the author involved 20 elementary school students in an extracurricular activity, along 20 meetings. The students themselves pointed out the characteristics of the newspaper genre by means of analytical reading, moved on to text production and made the linguistic analysis.

Considering the importance of the procedures responsible for the success of that work, I now summarize the steps developed by Maieski (2005, pp. 97-98) for her practice:

(1) Initial assessment about the students' knowledge of the selected genre and their registration on an internet provider;

(2) Distribution of newspapers and magazines for reading and analysis/reflection on the genre;

(3) Discussion of the socio-ideological functions of printed journalism: the appearance of journalism; media corporations; periodicity; publishing

interests; dominant groups in that sphere; political and economic control of the press; social influences over the press; moral and ethical values; genres and their mode of manifestation (persuasion, public opinion formation, silencing, publishing criteria, etc.);

(4) Reading and analysis of articles, integrating the reading/comprehension of the text-enunciation into the reading/analysis of the genre: who writes it, with what ends, to whom it is directed, how the theme appears; from where the authors speak (social place); how the author identifies him/herself; who else speaks through him/her; is the author a member of the newspaper's staff or someone invited by the newspaper; how the author builds the enunciations relative to what has already been said; what the author wants to show/prove/criticize/denounce; what are the author's arguments; what linguistic resources he/she uses; who are the intended interlocutors; who he/she imagines them to be; possible reactions-responses;

(5) Email contacts with newspaper writers whose articles would be read and analyzed;

(6) Discussion of varied themes in order to stimulate the students to take a standpoint and to give an evaluative answer;

(7) Textual production, based on events discussed during the workshop and related to the reality of the participants;

(8) Review, analysis and correction of the texts: readings by the teacher, reading/comprehension with students; assessment of difficulties; linguistic analyses made in pairs and in groups, oral and written; rewriting;

(9) Publishing of the articles.

Twenty-two articles were produced, which were circulated in a regional newspaper and on the internet. These texts show clear genre characteristics and, as important as that, the activities led the students to perceive texts as enunciations in the net of verbal communication. According to Maieski:

> The work with genre . . . leads the students to write and to position themselves from their social places, as authors of their

> texts. The production of the article (and of other argumentative genres) also allows the student to be an opinion maker . . . . As they position themselves, the students begin to get involved with the facts of their everyday life, not just watching passively what goes around them. (Maieski, 2005, p. 203)

Considering the practical results of his project, the author emphasizes the social function of writing at school, situating the teacher as that "who, above all, guides, and not only 'corrects,' those texts [produced] by the students" (p. 204). In relation to the students, the author observes their concern with the task of writing better, by understanding that rewriting is more than correcting mistakes: in such a task, the author points to the significance of linguistic analysis guided by a teacher with enough knowledge of that genre and of the teaching methodology:

> Linguistic analysis is an activity that, no doubt, leads the students to a more conscious reading of the text selected for reading, and afterwards, of the text produced [by them]. We believe that such a practice influences the textual production, both in relation to the adequacy to the genre and in relation to linguistic and textual aspects. However, such an activity requires a teacher who has some knowledge of the genre with which he/she is going to work in the Portuguese classes. (Maieski, 2005, pp. 204-205)

Luz (2005) worked with the genre *popular stories* in a 5th grade (elementary) class. Initially, the author observed and analyzed activities such as textual production, verifying if the verbal interactions occurring there helped to overcome the students' difficulties. Next, she planned and developed the classes in collaboration with the teacher, creating circumstances in which the students could perceive the significance of the use of language as interaction and human production. The results indicate that the proposal reached its goals: the subsequent textual production showed characteristics of the studied genre, and the students made progress in the understanding of the text as an enunciation in the chain of verbal communication.

The planning of the classes was made during an ongoing teacher training course offered by Luz in 2004. The popular stories produced would be part of an edition to circulate in the school, and which would later be donated to a senior citizen club in the community. Thus, a real audience was previously established. The work included the reading and questioning of a series of stories, followed by

the discussion of the answers and evaluations. The next task was for the students to ask their parents and grandparents about interesting stories they had heard during their lives. After the narration of these stories in class, each student selected one to write it down.

One can see in such a situation the valuing and sharing of the student's social environment. In addition, with the research made by the students themselves, the notion of popular story came to be developed step-by-step. A work was being done in the *zone of proximal development*—that is, learning from challenges.

It was from there that the teacher-mediator began to call attention to the grammatical review of the text, based on what had been previously identified in the notebooks. The activities were mainly focused on those texts produced by the students. The next step was to intervene in the reviewing and rewriting of the texts. There were three versions. Below, I reproduce the first and the last version of the text selected by the author as an example in her work; even if further versions could improve the written production, the differences between the first and the last one are noteworthy.

A bola de Fogo	**The ball of Fire**
Minha vó contou que o pai dela trabalhava até a noite. Um dia quando o pai dela estava vindo do serviço apareceu uma enorme bola de fogo assustadora. Minha avó estava na porta da cozinha quando viu aquela enorme bola de fogo ela correu pra dentro de casa. Minha vó era uma moça bonita mais muito medrosa. O Pai dela era bem gordo por isso; não consegui correr da bola de fogo. A minha avó abriu a porta para o pai dela entrar o nome dele era Pedro. Ele entrou a bola de fogo foi embora e assustou todos que ela via. Minha vó chorou muito. Então eles foram dormir com muito medo. E é isso que minha vó conto até hoje. (VERSION 1)	My granny told me that her father worked till night. One day when her father was coming from work a huge frightening ball of fire appeared. My grandmother was at the kitchen door when she saw that enormous ball of fire she ran into the house. My granny was a pretty girl but a coward. Her Father was very fat; thus he couldn't run from the ball of fire. My grandmother opened the door for her father, his name was Pedro. He went in the ball of fire went away and scared everyone who saw it. My granny cried a lot. Then they went to bed scared. And this is what my granny tells up to this day[7].

A bola de Fogo	The ball of Fire
Era uma vez uma menina chamada Ida. Ela era uma moça muito bonita mais também muito medrosa.	Once upon a time there was a girl called Ida. She was a very pretty girl but very scared.
O seu pai se chamava Pedro. Ele era bem gordo e também medroso.	Her father was called Pedro. He was very fat and also scared.
Um certo dia, Pedro estava voltando da roça era 23:00hs.	One day Pedro was coming back from work it was 11 p.m.
Ele tinha muito medo de vim sozinho á noite.	He was afraid to return alone at night.
Naquela noite, ele estava muito cansado ele tinha trabalhado muito.	That night he was very tired he had worked a lot.
Pedro que tinha uma luz muito forte em cima dele. Era uma enorme bola de fogo. Ele correu muito, mais sua casa era longe. A bola de fogo assustava todos que ela vissem, até os rebanhos de ovelhas. Pedro continuava correndo. Ida, viu seu pai correndo, então logo ela abriu a porta e seu pai entrou. Ele estava muito nervoso então ele disse:	Pedro had a very strong light over him. It was a huge ball of fire. He ran a lot, but his house was far. The ball of fire scared everyone who saw it, even the herd of sheep. Pedro kept running. Ida, saw her father running, so she opened the door quickly and her father went in. He was very excited so he said:
– Por favor minha filha! Não saia à noite sozinha!	"Please my daughter, don't go out alone at night!"
Ida disse:	Ida said:
– ta bom pai!	"Alright father!"
A bola de fogo estava rodiando a casa de Pedro. Então ele teve uma idéia, ele ligou ligou a mangueira e molhou a bola de fogo, ela se apagou e não pode assustar ninguém.	The ball of fire was encircling Pedro's house. So he had an idea. He turned on turned on the hose and wetted the ball of fire, it went off and did not scare anybody else.
(Version 3)	

I call special attention to the following changes in Version 3: extension and inclusion of paragraphs; description of characters, their situation and their voices; script sophistication; improved syntactic construction and punctuation. These marks imply the work of reader guidance.

Many other research works, not always associated with the directives of the CP/SC[8], have shown that the perspective of working with genres not only leads to a better understanding of the social practices of language, but it also projects didactic experiences that depart from the traditional everyday school path. This is the case, just to point to an example, in the work by Haeser (2005).

In a private high school environment, with contents and methodologies conforming to didactic textbooks turned into printed material, Haeser (2005) successfully conducted a reading and written production experiment (using action research) in a workshop focused on the genre *reader's letter*. Based on Bakhtin, the author suggested a specific didactic elaboration, based on data from the selected genre researched *in sito* (that is, in a newspaper from Santa Catarina). The workshop was carried out along twelve meetings, promoting practices of social use of language (literacy). The results made evident the possibilities for innovative practices at school, working with the text under the perspective of genres.

> The ways one perceives a text involve specific knowledge in relation to what one intends [to do]. If the students can understand and, especially, recognize in the texts the social interactions referred to by the genres, for example, they come to have an innovative relation to what they read. (Haeser, 2005, p. 149)

In a private school, however, one must note that the selected didactic material may make it difficult to follow that path. In public schools the obstacles are usually of a different nature, but even there it is sometimes complicated to make an intervention integrated to the curricular grid.

The Discourse of the Proposal

In this section I present a critical view, produced by two researchers, of the CP discourse.

Dela Justina (2003), in a case study, raises a problem about language teachers that cannot be evaded: that of their poor reading skills. Her goal was to check the gap between the teachers' level of literacy (considering the reading of the Proposal) and those requirements established by the Proposal itself for a pedagogical practice. That research proves to be of fundamental significance, considering the double evaluation made: the teachers' level of literacy and the formulation of the Proposal.

Based on the CP and using questionnaires, interviews and the analysis of the school language course plans as research tools, she concluded that the teachers' level of literacy did not allow them to understand nor to discuss the document related to language teaching in the CP—for example, a basic distinction, that

between genre and type, had not been understood. As a consequence, there was a significant distance between what the CP recommends and what the teacher does and says, making evident the difficulty of promoting the necessary didactic elaborations for pedagogical practices. Considering that there are substantial changes in the notion of language presented by the document in relation to the traditional notion teachers have worked with in the classroom, Dela Justina stresses that

> . . . that fact would be more of a problem than an alternative to increase the quality of language teaching in public schools, since the transformation of the suggested changes in the document into actual practice would depend, fundamentally, on the efficacy of the reading and ulterior writing on the teacher's work planning, something that s/he should carry out based on the Proposal. (2003, p. 12)

But as she pointed out concerning the teachers' literacy problems—blaming those problems partly on their immersion in a school culture in which reading and writing are not linked to social practices—Dela Justina turned back to the elaboration of the official document. The document—that is my interpretation and self-evaluation in what relates to my own participation in the making of that document—did not *address* its audience appropriately: according to her, the document assumed the profile of a homogeneous reader, prepared to read and understand it. Dela Justina, as a subject-researcher, had a "surplus vision" (Bakhtin, 2003) in relation to the group that produced the document, and thus pointed to conceptual gaps and some confusion between associated notions and eventual contradictions.

> Each aspect is discussed more at length, even if, many times, one still adheres to the scientificism characteristic of those more theoretical views, something that might have produced some resistance from the teachers . . . . (pp. 54-55)

> . . . the part that deals with the work with genres is small and insufficient to allow the teacher to decide, with the autonomy that the very document intends to give him/her, what genres are, which ones should be selected, what kind of approach should be employed. There is no clear definition about what is a genre and what is a textual type, which, to use Bakhtin's notion of language, would necessarily demand an ampler debate. (p. 64)

Should one assume that teachers (the case in Dela Justina's study) could not have a satisfactory level of literacy?

> The Curricular Proposal of Santa Catarina cannot be considered simple and easy reading, if compared to the materials mentioned by the teachers in the research as part of their reading habits. However, as it pertains to the teacher's work-sphere, it would not be reasonable to expect that such a material would be similar to magazines or newspapers, which belong to completely different genres. (Dela Justina, 2003, p. 115)

In the making of the CP an adequate level of reader literacy was indeed assumed, but one has to admit that the idea of undergraduate courses forming fully prepared teachers for the classroom is utterly unthinkable: why should an individual teacher be perfectly capacitated *before* the dialogical work of the classroom, a relevant factor in his/her formation? At a different level, and focusing on reading, one must acknowledge another aspect of that issue: what is evident for a researcher/specialist is not necessarily for the subject who experiences the classroom routine or who is still in training.

It is also known, even considering the courses of ongoing teacher education, that *reading* problems can persist, and that *writing* is not common in the teachers' routine, which should be a regulating factor of their own development and identification. Their role in the work environment is often that of *transmitters* of discourses and materials, even if these materials have been "selected" by others. At the end of the day, the prerogative of these teachers as educators is frustrated; their "mediation" is restricted to the task of mediating, without much reflection, official contents and materials prepared by someone else—basically what one has in textbooks. That can be verified, for instance, in Ferreira's (2000) research, conducted directly with teacher trainers.

Similarly to Dela Justina (2003), Prudêncio (2004) analyzes the CP in its discursive network and sociopolitical character, and stresses the clash between the pedagogical and the scientific discourse. The author also analyzes an (exemplary) text of discipline planning, showing the conflicts between the two documents, evidencing the distance between the two authors of these texts. The explanation for such a conflict is the clash between the functioning of the pedagogical discourse—circulating at school for specific practices—and that of the scientific discourse, here represented by the curricular document. Prudêncio concludes that the imaginary from which the authors[9] build the CP's subject-reader— again, it is a question of how to *address* the document's audience—is not that of the real reader, that is, teachers who do not belong to the scientific community,

but of an ideal subject-reader member of the scientific community itself. Interpellated by the pedagogical discourse, the real-reader is unaware of that process of knowledge building. That, according to the author, would explain the inability of real teachers to give meaning to the Proposal's text.

Such aspects of Prudêncio's position (that perspective of the *other*) have the advantage of forcing a change of view and a detachment from the document (which is made easier, in this case, by the chronological distance from its production), simplifying its reevaluation. Prudêncio's comment reminds one of a passage by Bakhtin (2003), in which he speaks about genres and intimate styles, observing that they "base themselves on the maximal interior proximity of the speaker to the addressee of the discourse (at most, in the fusion of the two)" (p. 304). This makes clear how the speaker's style depends on how much he/she understands his/her addressee. In spite of the fact that no official document uses an intimate, informal style, Prudêncio (as well as Dela Justina) is calling attention to the excessive distance between the voice of the Curricular Proposal and the real-readers, the teachers, who end up by becoming secondary readers of something that was not addressed originally to them, and which does not seem to have anything to do with their realities.

The Curricular Proposal and the Teachers' Discourse

This section presents some research studies that provide evidence, from the teachers' discourse, of problems related to their familiarity with the Proposal and their difficulties in breaking away from their pedagogical routines.

Bonetti's work (2003), without focusing her analysis on the official document itself, aimed at verifying the level of knowledge, understanding, acceptance and applicability of the Curricular Proposal among Portuguese teachers (in this case, 12 subjects who answered a questionnaire), in addition to investigating if the CP was contributing to a reorientation of Portuguese teaching in elementary/junior high school.

Again the results indicated that the majority of the teachers did not have the necessary knowledge of the CP in order to follow its directives and to carry out the changes suggested by the document. The author concluded that it is necessary to create opportunities for studying and clarifying the document, as a way to assure ongoing teacher training, as proposed by the document itself.

Magnanti (2003), in order to investigate the theoretical-practical consistency of the epistemological and methodological principles found in the document, opted for hearing the evaluation of the Portuguese teachers themselves, who were following, satisfactorily or not, the directives of the CP. In order to collect the data, a questionnaire was used (with 40 teachers from 6 schools), an interview (with 3 teachers), and the observation of their practice (3 teachers). When

looking at the data from a discursive perspective, a conflict becomes evident: the teachers' voices point to antagonistic discursive formations in theoretical terms and in the relation of theory to practice: the sociointeractionist discourse (the one they have been exposed to more recently) was mixed with images from a Positivist tradition, indicating a contradictory situation in which a democratic approach clashes with a hierarchical one. One should consider that even though the CP is the result of a work conducted under the approval of a governmental institution, it presents internal contradictions, working as a proposal not yet thoroughly recognized amid the traditional educational regulations. However, that research study showed that the teachers did contemplate the possibility of a rupture, of building educational projects according to the directives set out in the CP. The contradictory textualization of the discursive material analyzed has also allowed for a deep reflection of the researcher about her own work.

Luz (2005) reports on an 80-hour teacher education course offered by her, in 2004, for 31 elementary/junior high school teachers. The objective was to study the text (chapter) referring to the Portuguese language in the CP in order to make possible its pedagogical application. Six teachers had never attended an ongoing teacher education course, and only thirteen out of the twenty nine remaining Portuguese teachers had attended at least one. She carried out an assessment of the teachers' understanding of the terms *text* and *reading*. The majority wrote that text is structure, or a mechanism for the reproduction of ideas and for expressing ideas. Only one expressed the concept adopted by the CP; six mentioned the ability to translate and assimilate messages. In terms of the notion of reading there was a notable inversion: 22 expressed the notion proposed by the CP; six mentioned the ability to translate and to assimilate messages. In each case, three did not answer.

FLORIANÓPOLIS' CURRICULAR PROPOSAL—AN EXPERIMENT WITH GENRES

Against his background of positive and negative experiences based on the Curricular Proposals with Santa Catarina, at the end of 2006 I became a consultant for Florianópolis' Municipal Department of Education, for both Portuguese and foreign language teachers. My work attempted to overcome the kinds of difficulties discussed above in order to support teachers in more successfully implementing the CP of Santa Catarina and Florianopolis. I chose to present it here because a simpler context (involving a small number of individuals) dealing with the same thematic (the training of teachers with similar theoretical backgrounds) allowed me to make a fruitful comparison to the work developed by the state of Santa Catarina, which helped me in my own research at UNISUL

to make observations and point out ruptures and flaws, as well as offer a general orientation for an educational policy and its eventual contrast[10].

Thus, similar to the State curricular document, the local proposal (Florianópolis 1996), published in 1996 under a left-wing administration[11], developed the fundamentals that make the two proposals similar in general lines.

The theoretical material on genres proposed by Bakhtin was elaborated along the development of the work to supplement the Curricular Proposal of Florianópolis and to help teachers to better understand the pertinent concepts. We discussed the significance of language in the life of communities and its heteroglossia; the principle of dialogism; the relations between enunciation/text; and the characterization of genres, stressing their ideological nature.

In order to guide the understanding of genre functions and the subsequent description and analysis of the genres to be selected, as well as the suggested didactic activities, I have used part of the dissertation by Barbosa (2001). Following Bakhtin's terminology, the methodological path suggested by her was the following:

(a) characterization of the sphere in which a genre circulates;
(b) study of the social-history of genre development, whenever possible;
(c) characterization of the context of production of the selected texts;
(d) analysis of the thematic content;
(e) analysis of the compositional construction;
(f) analysis of genre style;
(g) analysis of the author's style, whenever it was the case.

In order to show how to describe and analyze genres, the author presents a synthetic table referring to a corpus of the genre news—in this case, printed news, which is found in large newspapers—elaborated with the help of elementary school teachers. The analysis presents a considerable level of didactic elaboration (Barbosa, 2001, cap. 4). One can see that by observing the wide range of the approaches to the text, characterized not only by its visible organization but also by its emergence in the discursive context and in the wider-ranging elements of its institutional production (in a specific field).

To work with the teachers in Florianópolis, my work map included an attempt to suggest activities, which could be developed using examples of genres—integrating as much as possible oral tasks, reading, text production and linguistic analysis.

In addition, while taking into consideration a practice initiated by teachers in previous preparation activities, I explored to some extent the process of *didac-*

tization of genres, proposed by the Geneva Group (Schneuwly & Dolz, 2004). This process consists in preparing didactic sequences related to social activities and genres aiming at transforming them in taught and learned knowledge—in our case, it was centered on the knowledge of genres in two dimensions: social and linguistic-discursive. At that stage, I also tried to make explicit how the work involving Vygotsky's learning theory would function, especially the key-concept of *zone of proximal development* (ZPD). The work with these teachers included a stage for experimenting with the elaborated didactic sequence, and also a stage for preparing didactic materials.

Barbosa (2001, p. 218) suggests the organization of two types of data banks, based on the teachers' work: one set would provide the school with descriptions and analyses of genres (including hypertexts) to be used directly by the teachers, while the other would be the didactic materials for the students. Such a concern has its justification, not only because it has already been included in the curricular proposals but also because of the need to link curricular contents to social practices, thematizing the many forms of language that everyday mediatic cultural products make use of: images, sound, movement, colors, etc.

Were there drawbacks along that path? Yes, there always are: in the relations we made within the teachers' community there was clearly good will, knowledge improvement and successful experiences, but also lack of hope, indifference and resistance. Within such a scene, when we face the national level of academic exams, which makes clear the general failure of the educational project for the country, we ask ourselves: what is our share in it?

The following section is an initial reflection on that question. The problems faced by the implementation of Santa Catarina's and Florianópolis' Curricular Proposals are similar, with the only difference that, in the case of the city of Florianópolis, the number of teachers is small, which facilitates the meetings and the understanding of these problems. On the other hand, some successful experiences have been carried out by MA and doctoral students, and deserve to be presented here. Understandably, their contact with the schools, even when they are not members of the school staff, allows for the socialization of knowledge and stimulates an investment on an alternative pedagogical proposal. I have observed that a considerable part of the success hangs on how the researcher or teacher acts towards and *with* the school teachers, and on how he/she reflects about the relations between scientific and pedagogical knowledge. This leads to the question of responsibility for the actions taken by the researchers in order to put his/her work in practice.

The following section is a reflection on this issue. In it, based on Bakhtin (2003), I deal with the notion of ethics in the social spheres under discussion here, its consequences and the notions related to it.

RECONSIDERING THE THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The reflection I propose, given the partial conclusions presented above, is less related to genres and their immediate context in school than to the episte-mological, historical and ideological senses entailed by the work with genres. This essay is about attitudes considered in terms of the very relations implied by the production, understanding and treatment of the thematized knowledge, in the ample social fabric, which brings us researchers closer to political and educational contexts as specialists who collaborate in the creation of educational policies. It is about understanding *where* we are, *from where* we speak and *how* we do it and *with whom*, grounded on what we believe we have learned from Bakhtin's philosophy of language, with his aesthetics and his architectonics—in sum, grounded on what we believe to have been his orientation for social life, including and privileging the school context. In order to undertake such an evaluation I need to present a few notions.

As we deal with texts (configured as genres) we find ourselves facing questions that Bakhtin faced every day in his studies: if every word is a bilateral act and if only through it we can make meaning, then what regulates the way mean-ings are shared within the context of language in each utterance? In the play of enunciation, vocabulary and grammar pre-exist each individual utterance, working as constraining elements (which, as such, allow a minimal framing for inter-understanding), but they occur to us in complex and singular contexts (in a multi-threaded net). The effect over the interlocutors is specific, in the same way that it is specific for the utterer him/herself (and I insist on that).

> The role of the *others*, for the person who builds the enunciation, is exceptionally large, as we already know. We have already said that these others, for whom my thought becomes for the first time a real thought (and, as such, also to myself), are not passive listeners, but active participants in the discursive communication. (Bakhtin, 2003, p. 301)

Here I am reconsidering the issue of the effects of utterances over the listen-ers/readers *and over the person who utters the utterance*, projected by its radically human dimension and its relevance in the role we play as researchers imbued with the significance of pedagogical practices, as well as trying to influence the (conflicting) pedagogical inter-relations between researchers and teachers.

As evident as the concepts we use routinely may seem to us, both in talking and in writing, the look that returns to the "same" words—always already said, written, revisited—suggests that we never know too well how far the *theme*, with the meanings that we also recreate, can take us, because within the singular con-

text it is always about another sliding meaning, and because it is about a "self" which is constantly trying to signify itself.

It is by projecting such a background that I try to think of what is to come, in this area, during the subsequent stages of tasks framed within an ampler methodology (thinking about an "architectonics," under Bakhtin's perspective).

Our desire to say, the idea of an *address* for the uttered word, is substantial and deserves reflection at all levels of exchange: from the solitary research through the discussions we conduct in social practices and beyond: such an understanding becomes a fundamental content for dealing responsibly with the variety of texts (the genres) that we want students to handle appropriately. In fact, it is about the practical understanding of how subjectivity is built, the awareness that the "self" only builds itself in partnership with otherness.

The paradox of our political, economical and social situation lies in inducing one to think subjectively that the "self" can only subsist and win if he/she keeps the other in a subservient position. Even if we try to avoid it, the first reaction of many teachers to our arrival as researchers, consultants, "people from the academy," is influenced by the image of a poorly disguised hierarchy.

What we want to say is always in search of and demands an interpretation, which represents a move to a view of dialogue as understanding (a search for agreement). And here it is worth saying that our "intention" as writers/speakers can only be thought of as relative, since the "self," for Bakhtin, is always a function of an "us." Vygostsky (1991), too, insisted that consciousness only awakes after life in society, mediated by language—and self-consciousness, in its turn, corresponds to a more sophisticated level of reflexivity, of social maturity. Well now, dispersion is a reality: the apprehension and (re)construction of the *theme* in the communicative play may diverge largely from the intent of the utterance. And with that I can address the intention brought to the scene in the utterance of the CP and its counterpoint, which is the active response of its direct readers: the teachers.

Heteroglossia, a phenomenon of the dialogical order in Bakhtin's view, results from forces functioning in each communicative "encounter": the "same" and the different face each other. There are forces that align themselves to centralize meaning, leading to an inevitable structuring; there are other forces that feed the necessary diversity and dispersion by keeping open paths to the contextual, fluctuating world. Stratification and diversity compose heteroglossia—complementary moves among the demands of structuring, the floating and change of meanings. In that *continuum*, what connects them is the struggle between canonization and heteroglossia[12]. If meaning is always limited by contexts, contexts are unlimited. "The name of such non-limitation is 'heteroglossia'" (Clark & Holquist, 1998, p. 239).

In this field, each speaker/writer tries with some effort to make him/herself understood and to convince, to be accepted as a member of a community, to find an answer for his/her acts, and not just a lack of response. One tries, consciously or not, to work his/her *ethos* in order to obtain a self-satisfying reply.

A cornerstone in Bakhtin's philosophy, the concept of heteroglossia became also fundamental as a function of life itself (Clark & Holquist, 1998, p. 286). In the play between the trend to fixate and to disperse a society can harbor both the conservative and the tolerant in terms of language, with many overtones between these two extremes. This gives us an idea of how much such concepts and their practical understanding can weigh in pedagogical terms for all of the involved—beginning with ourselves.

How we create authorship is one of the facets of heteroglossia:

> We operate from a point of view and we mold values as forms. The way we do it is the medium through which we articulate what we are amid the heteroglossia of ideological possibilities open to us at any given moment. Bakhtin considers the values not as an abstract axiology, but as a practical work of construction. (Clark & Holquist, 1998, p. 37)

I want to associate the issue of authorship with the concept of superaddressee—the so- called "third," as Bakhtin explains (2003, pp. 379-380)—a kind of assurance that the effort to be understood is worthwhile. It is worth believing in that third, if to make sense is something that is only possible in a linguistic community, even if the danger of misunderstanding is always there. The superaddressee, beyond the *I* and the *you*, is something like a *him/her* (a third person) capable of understanding correctly what we are saying—that is, that entity who followed our *intention*, our will-to-say[13]. It is here that the intelligibility of saying, the idealized mode of communication, is safeguarded. It is also here, I think, that our delusion of the clearness of saying emerges: every enunciation unfolds as if there were a third character witnessing everything and understanding it all. He/she is "invisibly present."

Bakhtin explains how this "third" works in the context of understanding and interpretation. Understanding implies evaluation and surpasses the simple reproduction or repetition: it is active and creative. The third is thought of as an "objective position," analogous to a scientific knowledge, where the *I* and the *you* are neutralized, where they become replaceable:

> . . . and that is only possible and justifiable in situations and in the solution to questions to which the integral and unique personality

of man is not made necessary, that is, where man, so to speak, spe-
cializes himself, expressing only part of his personality separated
from the whole, where he does not act as *himself*, but as "an engi-
neer," as "a physicist," etc. (Bakhtin, 2003, p. 380)

It is here that the problems of *audience* and *address* in scientific discourse un-
fold. In other words, the discourse that should be directed to the teachers who
we think and wish we are training. The superaddressee, idealized to function
well in certain conditions, is not reached nor visualized by the concrete commu-
nity to which we address ourselves—and that is apparently a paradox. We might
be addressing our discourse to an abstract *teacher*, a third—talking *about the
teacher* and not *to the teacher*—asking for understanding and acceptance, before
any kind of negotiation[14], and that with the best of intentions. It is as if we were
trying to juggle two relatively clashing guidelines.

To sum up, in the final section of this essay I will reopen a few questions.

EVALUATING THE ROUTE—OPENING PATHS

I have tried to reflect, along the directives of educational-political character,
about the following pedagogical issues:

(a) the basic document that guides teaching and learning—in order to syn-
 thesize the its critiques and rethink the proposal;
(b) the interacting subjects—to reflect on processes and conflicts;
(c) the learning tools—to verify their pertinence.

All attitudes and actions taken in the past in connection with those issues
that link the theoretical and the pedagogical order give considerable weight to
the assessment of the results of works and to the concurrent reflections, which
emerged within the process itself, to raise new questions, especially about the
ruptures that we have let arise. At the end of each route (a collective experience,
a chat, a course, a job consultancy), there remains something unfinished (there
is no end) and the need to invest in the continued education—not merely for
the teachers who are our target public today, but for the emergent "we" that was
detected, and for each "I" that manifested him/herself in the utterances (voices,
intonations, evaluations).

The best proposal in the world is still not a substantial political investment
if it comes down to documents that cannot trigger the necessary drive to keep
the discussion going. The materials that we prepare in the institutional context
reflect much more than an educational policy—they bring the sign of the values
we were imbued of; and certainly the way they *address* a specific audience is a

social practice. That is why we always wait for a response. "From the start the utterer awaits their answer [from the addressees], awaits a responsive understanding" (Bakhtin, 2003, p. 301). However, we are not always capable of looking at our addressees from the right perspective.

Questions similar to the ones that were detected among the readers of the CP and by the self-evaluation procedures carried out by research studies appear in a number of works dealing with the National Curricular Parameters. This similarity makes it possible to better accept that an official text can become unreadable for its target public—in this case the teachers—a negative factor being the lack of knowledge of the theoretical sources for intertextual reconstruction of the text's meanings. That is what Silva (2006, p. 237), for example, stresses, and that is why the author points to the need to "reflect on the textual processes when circulating knowledge produced and discussed within the academic sphere among a non-specialized public" (p. 237).

Such a rethinking of the route assumes a permanent negotiation, a dialogical articulation—I see this as an ethical act of evaluation and responsibility within the set of social relations that mark us as subjects relatively situated towards others—"thy neighbors."

NOTES

[1] This paper was originally written in Portuguese and translated into English by Fernando S. Vugman, PhD.

[2] Santa Catarina is one of the states in the South Region of Brazil.

[3] Florianópolis is the capital of the state of Santa Catarina.

[4] The material quoted here is for the most part translated from Portuguese.

[5] Another substantial document was published in 2005, focusing on "thematic studies." However, it is not a review of the fundaments and methodology of the CP, but a "consolidation." In that case, the intent was to present alternatives to "(re)elaborate the systematized knowledge of the prior versions of the Curricular Proposal of Santa Catarina, which still demanded to be developed and applied in pedagogical practice, exerting the fundamental role of the School." (Santa Catarina, 2005, p. 15). The introduction of the new document advocates "a new school to the world," which should be in tune with the new information and communication technologies.

[6] One should remember that the activities cannot have a mechanical character, for mere entertainment; they must be significant in their mode of organization, in any field: in that of language it is essential to take into consideration their social functions (Moll, 1996).

[7] These translations try to reproduce the grammatical, stylistic and orthographical errors in the text, though absolute precision is impossible.

⁸ Many interventions circulate within restricted contexts, and are not formally reported.

⁹ The official author is the Secretaria de Estado da Educação (State Secretary of Education).

¹⁰ Reciprocally, those studies undertaken in order to plan the state Proposal and the works carried out on the Proposal were relevant to the debate at the municipal level. My participation in the elaboration of both documents (the state and the local one) had, of course, some influence in the process.

¹¹ Sérgio José Grando (Communist Party) was Mayor of Florianópolis from 1993 to 1996.

¹² One of the facets of heteroglossia is the pure and simple mixture of different languages, cultures and class groups, or dialects, or modes of speaking, or records.

¹³ Such an entity can acquire a concrete identity depending on the time and culture (God—as it happens in Descartes' philosophy—absolute truth, good judgment, the people, science, etc.).

¹⁴ Analogously, those students who must produce a school *dissertation* may be in a process of assimilation by a homogenized figure named *student* (Furlanetto, 2006, p. 540).

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