

EDITORIAL

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Comparative analysis of discourses: what are their precursors?*

The purpose of this issue is to bring together articles that advance theoretical and methodological reflections, as well as carry out comparative analysis of discourses in two or more languages / cultures. The comparative analysis was the theme of the I Brazilian-Franco-Russian Colloquium on Discourse Analysis (CBRF-AD). Discourse analysis and comparison: theoretical, methodological and empirical questions” which took place on November 7, 8 and 9, 2017, at the University of São Paulo, in a partnership between the research group Dialogue (CNPq / USP) French research CLESTHIA – ax sens et discours (Université Sorbonne Nouvelle Paris 3) and Górnai University (St. Petersburg). Part of the work gathered in this issue is the result of communications made during the CBRF-AD, which have turned into articles and have undergone rigorous peer evaluation. If, on the one hand, the discipline “Discourse analysis” has a great tradition and repercussion in the horizon of Brazilian linguistics, on the other

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hand, the addition of the adjective “comparative” sums a field of action, at the same time, new and old to the discipline.

The "old" field refers to the existence of numerous works upon discourse analysis that have used comparisons to evidence the operation of discourses. For example, the well-known book by Dominique Maingueneau *Sémantique de la Polemique* (1983) uses clashes to characterize different discursive formations or the texts by Sheila Grillo *The production of the real in printed newspaper genres* (2004) and *Scientific Divulagation: languages, spheres and genders* (2013) compare discourses in different vehicles of communication within the same sphere of the human activity or in dialogue between spheres, in order to evidence discursive functions in controversial relations and / or dialogue. These researches did not intend to found a comparative analysis of discourses, but used methodological procedures of comparison, because, as Posnett (2011 [1986]) points out, one of the founders of comparative literature, the basis of reason and imagination is to operate from individual to individual objectively, with the aid of comparisons and contrasts. According to Posnett, the oldest proposition of logic – the affirmation of a comparison, A is B, or the negation of a comparison, A is not B – is supported by the primitive structure of comparing and contrasting. Therefore, the use of comparisons in several discourse analysis works is, in our opinion, a basic way of constructing the human knowledge through contrasts and similarities, capable of revealing the workings of discourse into interdiscourse; in communication vehicles, dividing a room in the same and in different spheres of human activity, whose approximation is capable of revealing the specificities of each sphere.

The “new” field refers first to the works developed by CLESTHIA researchers – ax sens et discours (Université Sorbonne Nouvelle Paris 3) – who, since the year 2000, have been dedicating to developing a discipline called comparative analysis of discourses to compare / contrast distinct languages / cultures (French / Japanese, German / French, French / Portuguese etc.) (CISLARU, 2006; PUGNIÈRE-SAAVEDRA, F./TRÉGUER-FELTEN, 2013; von MÜNCHOW, 2005, 2017), through concepts of discourse analysis, textual linguistics and theories of enunciation. In particular, the concept of tertium comparationis

formulated by those researchers has been productive to carry out comparisons undertaken by researchers of the Dialogue group (CNPq / USP) (GRILLO, S. VC / GLUSHKOVA, 2016; GRILLO, S. V. C.; HIGACHI, A., 2017). The characteristic trait of this group is to develop a comparative analysis based on concepts and methodological procedures of Bakhtin and his Circle, articulating them to the results of CLESTHIA – *ax sens et discours*.

Mikhail Bakhtin (1895-1975) was a professor of Foreign Literature at the University of Saransk and his research on Dostoevsky's work, François Rabelais's novel and work extensively widely use comparative procedures between literatures from different parts of the world and between Literature and other spheres of culture (the carnival, for example), and this is perhaps one of the reasons for its prestige. Bakhtin's literary analyzes seek to discover the genesis of a literary work of art in the earlier tradition and in life, but at the same time identifies how the writer's creative act supplants that tradition, thereby avoiding both the typological study (of folklore, for example) of anonymous traditions, which have impersonality as their nature, as the creative act detached from their literary origins and from the socio-historical-cultural milieu. In this analytical process, the meaning of works and of a culture is revealed in the temporal and spatial distance between works and cultures. The bonds of a work with others from the past of other cultures guarantee their survival in the great future time.

The Bakhtinian basis for a comparative analysis of discourses leads us to two precursors of comparativism: Comparative Language Analysis and Comparative Literature. Since the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, comparative procedures have been employed in the analysis of different languages – with no genetic relationship to one another – with the purpose of creating bilingual dictionaries, general grammars, and substantiating foreign language teaching (KODUKHOV, 1974). Since then, a system of analysis procedures has been developed, used for the discovery of common and specific aspects among the investigated languages, whose productivity depended on an adequate delimitation of similar phenomena.

At the end of the eighteenth century, Wilhelm Humboldt relied on the comparative anatomy model to propose his Comparative Anthropology, which aimed

at confronting the differences in the spiritual organization of different peoples and individuals (Chabrolle-Cerretini, 2014), understood as characters, that is, the modes of production, development, and succession of thoughts, sensations, inclinations and decisions of a nation, group of persons, or epoch. A fundamental principle of Humboldt's anthropology is comparison, since the understanding of the particular can only be grasped through the knowledge of diversity, comparison is an inescapable method. To describe a character, Humboldt proposes to depart from the real facts, which he groups in discourses, actions and exteriorizations in general, in order to arrive at what is less manifest: the internal constitution of character. We conclude that a comparative analysis of discourses is a part of Humboldt's Comparative Anthropology, as it proposes to investigate the manifested culture in discourses in different languages: "Thanks to the variety of languages, the richness of the world and the variety of what we discover on it; at the same time the frontiers of human existence widen for us and new ways of thinking and feeling arise." (Humboldt, 2018, p 203)¹. According to Chabrolle-Cerretini (2014), the guiding thread of Humboldt's comparativism is the understanding and the description of national characters that are particular expressions of mankind. To arrive at the national characters, Humboldt analyzes languages, which are understood as an inner necessity of man developed in specific geographic, historical, social, cultural conditions. Along his work, Humboldt operates the passage from an Anthropology to a Comparative Linguistics.

The conception of language that guides Humboldt's work comprises dialogue as its intrinsic dimension. As we have already pointed out in the introductory essay to the translation of *Marxism and Philosophy of Language* (GRILLO, 2017), language links the individual spirit with the objective spirit: "All speaking – from the simplest kinds onwards – is an attachment of what is individually felt to the common nature of mankind. Nor is it otherwise *with understanding*" (Humboldt, 1988 [1859], 57). Language is the link between men,

¹ Благодаря многообразию языков непосредственно возрастает для нас богатство мира и многообразие того, что мы в нём обнаруживаем; одновременно раздвигаются для нас границы человеческого бытия и новые способы мыслить и чувствовать встают перед нами в определённых и подлинных характерах.»

who understand each other only after they have made sure that they understand each other's words. WALKER (2017) points out that the original dialogical character of language in Humboldt is related both to the way we learn languages and to the way languages develop between a plurality of different tongues (tongues). The variety of languages at the same time reveals the plural ability of human thought to conceive reality and the need to study them comparatively to understand language and humanity. In Humboldt, understanding the diversity and objectivity of language does not imply the renunciation of subjectivity: all humanity has the same language and each person has its own, central aspects to an ethical and political philosophy of human freedom.

In the path of those works, Robert Lado, in *Linguistics Across Cultures*, published in 1957, argues that the comparison between languages and cultures can be effective in the learning-acquisition process of a foreign language. Drawing on the authors of cultural anthropology, the methodology developed by Lado aims at recognizing the differences between linguistic and cultural aspects of the mother's and target languages of the learner. In this context, it is assumed that the culture is structured in systems of standardized behaviours that have the form, meaning and distribution as constitutive units. The forms and meanings would be determined and modified culturally, while the distribution would be related to the cycles of time, space and position in relation to the previous units.

Through the analysis of such units, which are intrinsically inseparable, Lado judges that it is possible to point out the nature of the recurrence of certain types of errors, misunderstanding or difficulties that affect the acquisition-learning process of the target language. There are cases where the form coincides in languages A and B, but their meanings differ. At other times, as the author shows, the same meaning is given in different forms in each language. Finally, languages can draw on common form and meaning with different distribution. In relation to this last element, Lado points out that the observer of the foreign language can assume that the distribution of one aspect in its native culture is the same or more homogeneous in the culture of the other. In 1958, a year after the appearance of the Lado's study, the researchers Vinay and Darbelnet launched a translation method entitled *Stylistique Comparée du Français et de l'Anglais*. The work is part of the

collection Bibliothèque de Stylistique Comparée, organized by Alfred Malblanc, which also covers other figures aimed at comparing Stylistics and the “value of parts of speech” in French, German, Spanish and English. During a trip from New York to Montreal, the researchers noticed striking linguistic differences on traffic signs of French-speaking and Anglophone provinces. According to them, plaques in English revealed a counseling character “almost paternal and sweetly authoritarian” (p.18). French signs, on the other hand, had long, heavy words, such as ‘mind’ ending adverbs, and phrases that more clearly indicated the effects of transgressing a given traffic rule. This observation led the authors to reflect upon the exercise of translation and ended up considering it as a discipline of comparative nature that relies both on the knowledge of two distinct linguistic structures and on two particular conceptions of the same reality.

Ten years later, in 1968, Alfred Malblanc presented the second book in the collection entitled *Stylistique Comparée du français et de l'Allemand*. In addition to establishing a direct dialogue with Vinay and Darbelnet's earlier work, Malblanc proposed a more detailed reflection on comparative stylistics, based on Humboldt's thinking on the different worldviews of each language, and in the Stylistic Treaty (1951) of the French linguist Charles Bally. In opposition to Internal Stylistics, which would be directed to the study of the intellectual and affective elements within a language, the external or comparative stylistics would be interested in contrasting the specific characteristics of different languages. Research in the field of Comparative Stylistics would be concerned both with the understanding of the correspondence of two linguistic systems and the modes of passage from one to the other (translation), as well as the relationship between their genres and styles. For Malblanc, the relationship between Stylistics and translation is fundamental, because “it is by comparing texts of the same meaning that comparative stylistics proceeds and translation is its principal instrument of exploitation; once constituted, stylistics informs and clarifies, in turn, the translation” (MALBLANC, 1968, p.18). According to the mentioned work, after confronting German and French with regard to lexicon, agency, infrastructure and message, Malblanc concludes that he recognized two large recurring plans of representation. On the one hand, the German revealed to be closer to

the plan of the real and concrete, full of 'words-images' and 'signs-words', with a tendency to move from fact to ideas. On the other hand, French is closer to the plane of comprehension and generalization, composed of 'motivated words' and 'arbitrary words', starting from ideas towards facts.

Another precursor of Bakhtinian compativism seems to us to be the Comparative Literature that emerges as an academic discipline in the nineteenth century, based on “the notion of transversality, whether in relation to the boundaries between nations and languages, or in what concerns the boundaries between areas of knowledge” (COUTINHO, 2011, p.7). It was born from the “Comparative” Sciences in Biology at the beginning of the nineteenth century, with the purpose of “comparing the analogous objects of the same group for purposes regarding classification, but comparing phenomena detached in certain aspects from the group to which they normally belong and are submitted to a confrontation that shows a common character and, with this, suggests a relationship of kinship and development among groups considered strangers until then. (BALDENSPERGER, 2011 [1921]), p. 83-84). In spite of being questionable by most contemporaries, two conceptions and two modes of research guide comparative studies: in one hand, the general literature understood as the investigation of literature without concern for linguistic frontiers and, on the other hand, comparative literature taken as the study of national literatures in relation to each other. Bakhtin's compatriot, Victor Zhirmunsky (2011 [1967]), understands that comparative study within or beyond a national literature is the fundamental principle of historical explanation and literary research. According to Zhirmunsky, international literary movements are partly based on unity and regularity in the social evolution of humanity and partly on their reciprocal cultural and literary relations: “Every great literature has developed its national character in constant interaction with other literatures.” (2011 [1967]), p. 222).

Comparative Literature presents three main interrelated orientations that can illuminate different approaches to comparative discourse analysis. The first establishes as purpose the examination of the influences of a literature or culture one to another, through the study of sources, of critical fortune, of reputation, of myth. This approach is important for Grillo's work regarding the comparison between

Brazilian and Russian Linguistics, influenced by authors such as Ferdinand de Saussure and Wilhelm Humboldt. The second seeks to investigate two civilizations, two distinct psychologies, in order to reveal the originality of each people: “The nature of the history of Comparative Literature is (...) to penetrate into the essence of individual literary phenomena by comparing similar phenomena; unravel the laws that are responsible for similarities as well as for the differences. “ (BETZ, 2011 [1973], 56). Von Münchow’s (2005, 2011) researches’ compare the German and the French discursive cultures in a close perspective. Finally, the third conceptualizes it as “a method of enlarging the perspective of approaching isolated literary works (...) so that movements and tendencies can be discerned in the different national cultures and that relations between Literature and other spheres of human activity. “ (ALDRIDGE, 2011 [1969], 272). By means of this definition, we realize that Bakhtin’s works which compare the literary and scientific spheres, Literature and life are inserted in this perspective as well. A question already posed in the context of Comparative Literature (WEISSTEIN, 2011 [1973]) is the criterion for defining the comparative analysis of discourses: political-historical or linguistic. With this, we want to draw attention to the issue: statements in Portuguese (linguistic criteria) produced in Brazil, Mozambique and Portugal (political-historical criteria), for example, would be characterized as comparative analysis? Our current position is that the two criteria go hand in hand and must be considered simultaneously, since the Portuguese language of the aforementioned countries tend to acquire linguistic autonomy (presently, it is spoken as European and Brazilian Portuguese, for example) and cultural as a result of political and historical factors.

This thematic issue of Revista *Linha d'Água* brings together 8 articles dedicated to the theme of comparison in discourse analysis. The studies presented here are based on different theoretical and methodological foundations and offer different perspectives of the comparative exercise, being it between genres of the same language / culture (chronic versus autobiography); (Brazilian and Russian, Brazilian and American, or Brazilian and French), or even between utterances of the same genre and language, but from different countries (Brazil and Portugal).

The first article, developed by Daniela Nienkötter Sardá, is entitled *The Philosophy in Brazilian and French High School: an intercultural comparison of textbooks and official texts of education*. The author's proposal is to comparatively analyze the didactic books of philosophy in Brazil and in France, together with speeches of official texts of the Ministries of Education of each country. In general, Sardá observes many similarities in the organization of philosophy taught in both countries: both are compulsory subjects that are part of a centralized curriculum, both have a thematic approach (as opposed to a possible historical approach) and both are part of the evaluations system of their respective national exams. An important difference lies on the fact that, in Brazil, the discipline does not yet have guaranteed stability in the curriculum, while in France the discussion revolves around the anticipation of the subject in the elementary school grading. The author concludes that the unshakable character of philosophy as a school subject in France is due to various strengthening mechanisms, such as the existence of associations and unions that struggle for its permanence and expansion. In addition, the greater solidity of the area contributes to the fact that the French textbooks are more homogeneous and less prone to reformulation, which allows the creation of more didactic tools to accompany the students, such as the creation of lists of authors and notions.

In the following article, *Comparative Stylistic Analysis of the Genre Abstract: a case study in scientific publications in Brazil and Russia*, Maria Glushkova and Raphael Bessa Ferreira propose a stylistic analysis of the academic abstract genre in the Brazilian and in the Russian scientific spheres. In dialogue with Bakhtin's Circle theory, the authors first trace the course of stylistics in Brazil and then develop the main ideas of the school of Russian functional stylistics. In addition to presenting a comparative analysis of the corpus, consisting of abstracts of scientific journal articles, the authors invest on the comparison of stylistics as a discipline in both countries. In Brazil, style studies were based on the German tradition, seen in the works of Said Ali, in French theorists – who also inspired the collection *Bibliothèque de stylistique comparée* de MALBLANC (1968) – such as Bally, Cressot, Marouzeau, Guiraud, and Riffaterre, in the texts of Matoso Câmara Jr., and the works of Mikhail Bakhtin that deal with the genres of discourse. In the

Russian context, two stylistic projects were developed in parallel: the Bakhtinian conception and the functional school; among the main scholars were Rógova K.A. (Saint Petersburg), Solgánik G.Ia. (Moscow), Kójina M.N., Kotiúrova M.P. and Salimovski V.A. (Pierm). The article advances in its reflection, revealing that in Russia the studies on scientific or academic style are well consolidated, whereas in Brazil there is an abundance of works on the scientific genre. From the analysis, Glushkova and Bessa conclude that there are more convergences than divergences in the styles of scientific abstracts in the two countries, such as the inclination to the non-categorical character of scientific discourse, the deletion of spacetime and subjects, generalization and presence of great stylistic diversity.

The article *Comparative analysis of blogs of scientific divulgation in Portuguese: the scientific discovery in perspective* of Flávia Sílvia Machado shows how the comparative analysis of statements of two variants of the same language, Brazilian Portuguese and Portuguese from Portugal, can reveal differences motivated by political and historical contexts. Thus, the author responds to the question posed by WEISSTEIN (2011 [1973]) regarding the adoption of linguistic and historical-political criteria for comparative analysis. Through the concept of a verbal ideological sign – word – developed by Bakhtin and the Circle, the author shows how the senses of the "discovery" sign in Brazilian and Portuguese dictionaries are updated in blogs statements of scientific popularization in Brazil and Portugal, through which the different historical, political and social contexts are reflected and refracted.

Urbano Cavalcante Filho, in the article entitled *Compositional construction in scientific dissemination statements: a dialogical-comparative analysis of Ciência Hoje and La Recherche* aims at establishing a theoretical-methodological convergence between Discourse Analysis of Discourse, from a Bakhtinian perspective, and Comparative Analysis of Discourse, developed by the researchers of CLESTHIA, with the purpose of analyzing the compositional form of statements of scientific divulgation of the journals *Ciência Hoje* (Brazil) and *La Recherche* (France). As the element of comparison, Cavalcante chose the discursive genre report of scientific popularization. As a result, the author can identify similarities and differences between the two publications. Among the convergences is the fact that the

compositional constructions of the French and Brazilian statements started from the same "formal model" of information distribution. As for the differences, the magazine *Ciência Hoje* presented more information in advance about the report to the reader regarding La Recherche. This way, the French publication seems to whet the curiosity of its readers in relation to its reporting.

In *Genres on Facebook: a Comparative analysis of speeches in English-speaking and Portuguese-speaking scientific divulgation*, Artur Daniel Ramos Modolo proposes a quantitative and a qualitative analysis of the responsive forms found in the social network Facebook namely, enjoy, share and comment. The author is also based on the principles of the Bakhtin Circle theory and on the works published by the group CLESTHIA – *ax sens et discours* (VON MÜNCHOW and RAKOTONOELINA, 2006) to elect gender as a category of comparison. The study aims to investigate the frequency and popularity of some genres as well as differences and similarities between the Portuguese and English posts regarding the use of the responsive tools on the pages of Cosmos (Australia), New Scientist (UK), Scientific American (United States of America), Galileo and Superinteressante (Brazil). Among the identified genres, the article was the most productive in all the pages of selected scientific magazines, while the advertising genres were the ones that showed the least. One of the contributions of the study was to understand that tannings reduce responsiveness because they seem to simplify verbal interaction among users. The author also pointed out that the statements are made up of characteristics of different spheres of human activity and that proximity in the treatment given to the reader, when compared to the scientific article of the academic sphere, it is something common in the scientific dissemination of discursive cultures. Humor and the use of videos have proved to be effective in engaging the presumed audience with responsive tools. At the quantitative level, the results revealed the presence of a heterogeneous public, whose responsive behavior is quite varied in all the studied countries. What changes, in this case, are the cultural references used to capture the reader.

Gustavo Ximenes Cunha and Tatiana Emediato Corrêa contribute to this issue with the article entitled *The construction of images of themselves as an enunciative phenomenon: a comparative study of Brazilian and French testimonials published*

in Marie Claire magazine. As a theoretical basis, the authors mobilize the concepts of the Rabatel Point of View Theory, inserted in the field of the analysis of the interactionist discourse, to understand the way Brazilian and French narrators represent the viewpoints of different enunciators. Considering the peculiarities and contexts of the subjects portrayed in the two journals, Cunha and Corrêa identified significant similarities in the construction of the image of the successful woman, in tune with the profile of the presumed reader of the publication, consisting of white, middle class, professionally active women, with purchasing power and highly educated. In the analyzed testimonials, both narrators construct for themselves images of entrepreneurial women and, even using different strategies, they are inserted in the same set of values linked to the world of work. Confirming their initial hypothesis, the authors attribute such similarities to the editorial project that the Brazilian and the French publications share, constituted from a common target audience.

In the article *The Other Discourse in fictional and nonfictional narratives*, by Dóris de Arruda C. da Cunha and Tatiana Simões and Luna they present a study on the representation of the discourse of the other (RDO) present in fictional and nonfictional narratives. In this article, the comparison is established between two distinct genres of discourse: the chronicle and the narrative. One of the aims of the study is to observe the use of RDO forms according to the domain of each genre by the subject. The article is based on two distinct theoretical fronts: first, the transmission schemes of the other speech by Volóchinov and, secondly, the studies of Authier-Revuz on the modalization of the second discourse and the autonomic modality of the loan. At first, the authors uncover the field of studies on the representation of the discourse of the other. They then discuss the fictional and non-fictional narratives, represented respectively by the literary chronicle and the practice account. Having as corpus twelve winning texts of the Olympiad Program of Portuguese Language Writing the Future, the comparative analysis between the two genres revealed more similarities than differences in relation to the traces of RDO found. Respecting the conditions of production and circulation of each genre, the authors observe that both mobilize linear and pictorial styles in the interaction between an authorial statement with other statements and use indirect

free speech in a sparse way. However, the reports, written exclusively by teachers, present greater dominance of certain forms of RDO in relation to the chronicles that reflect the beginner character of its authors, the students.

Finally, Yuri Santos, Vânia Lúcia Menezes Torga, and Urbano Cavalcante Filho present *the Perspectives of a self-writing: a comparative analysis of discourses in the autobiography genre*, in which they discuss different meanings of the autobiography genre, and then undertake a comparative analysis of *For Part of Father* (1995) by the Brazilian Bartolomeu Campos de Queirós and *El cuarto de atras* (2012 [1978]) by the Spanish Carmen Martín Gaité. The results show, in one hand, the similarity of the Brazilian and the Spanish cultures on the social roles of the feminine and masculine genres, and, on the other hand, as for the differences in the autobiographies resulting from the Brazilian author being of the male gender and the author Spanish being of the feminine sort.

For the closing of this issue, Miriam Bauab Puzzo gives a review of Luiz Rosalvo Costa's *the Question of Ideology in Bakhtin's Circle*, published by Ateliê Editorial / FAPESP.

Linha d'Água hopes that the reading of these articles will be profitable to teachers, researchers in the area of Comparative Analysis, Bakhtinian theory and teaching.

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The process of submitting and selecting the articles relies on editorial and ad hoc reviewers, a procedure that makes this issue of high quality. *Linha d'Água* maintains its open space for publications linked to the Portuguese language, linguistic-discursive studies and its relation with teaching, keeping a constant dialogue with the studies developed in Brazil and abroad.

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