

Yakubinsky and the Circle of Bakhtin: Convergences

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Abstract: This study discusses Yakubinsky's contribution for the study of language and his influence on Bakhtin Circle. We describe facets of his academic background and environment in which he worked. We analyze his contributions relating them with the intellectuals belonging to Bakhtin Circle. We particularly analyze the text "On dialogical speech", highlighting characteristics of Yakubinsky's work such as the natural character of dialogue and its requirement for a social context, the conception of dialogue and monologue and the automatism of language in the interaction with the other. We finish by emphasizing the role and actuality of Yakubinsky for the comprehension of dialogism.

Keywords: dialogue, dialogism (literary analysis), language, oral communication

Yakubinsky e o Círculo de Bakhtin: Aproximações

Resumo: O presente artigo teve por objetivo discutir a contribuição de Yakubinsky para o estudo da linguagem e a sua influência sobre o Círculo de Bakhtin. Descrevemos aspectos de sua formação acadêmica e do ambiente no qual estava inserido. Analisamos suas contribuições, relacionando-as com os pensadores do Círculo de Bakhtin. Analisamos, particularmente, o texto "Sobre a fala dialógica", ressaltando aspectos de suas propostas como a naturalidade do diálogo e a exigência do contexto social, a concepção do diálogo e do monólogo e o automatismo da linguagem nas interações com o outro. Destacamos, por fim, a importância de Yakubinsky para a compreensão do dialogismo e a sua atualidade.

Palavras-chave: diálogo, dialogismo (análise literária), linguagem, comunicação oral

Yakubinsky y el Círculo de Bakhtin: Acercamientos

Resumen: Se discute la contribución de Yakubinsky para el estudio del lenguaje y su influencia en el Círculo de Bakhtin. Se describen las facetas de su formación académica y el medio ambiente en el que trabajaba. Analizamos sus contribuciones, relacionándolos con los pensadores del Círculo de Bakhtin. Analizamos particularmente el texto "Sobre el discurso dialógico", destacando características del trabajo de Yakubinsky tales como la naturalidad del diálogo y de su requisito para un contexto social, el concepto del diálogo y del monólogo y el automatismo de la lengua en la interacción con el otro. Acabamos acentuando el papel y la actualidad de Yakubinsky para la comprensión del dialogismo.

Palabras clave: diálogo, dialogismo (análisis literaria), lenguaje, comunicación oral

We start this paper with Brandist's consideration (2006b, p. 82), who discussed the articulation between Bakhtin and his contemporary linguists and experts: "Bakhtin's work closely followed the evolutions and upheavals in contemporary knowledge (...) demanding further research". In fact, Brandist has attempted to deconstruct the myth surrounding Bakhtin's ideas without, however, discrediting his broad and undeniable work on dialogism in that and other papers (Brandist, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006a).

Brandist and Lähtenmäki (2010) support this less orthodox perspective on Bakhtin's thinking and propose special attention to Yakubinsky's work. In two other papers, Lähtenmäki (2005, 2006) emphasizes the importance of Yakubinsky, not only for early 20th-century Soviet linguistics, but also in the Bakhtin Circle, as acknowledged by Volochinov and Bakhtin himself. In Brazil, two books organized by Brait

– *Bakhtin e o Círculo* (2009a) and *Bakhtin, dialogismo e polifonia* (2009b) – also contribute in this respect, revisiting the main texts of the Bakhtin Circle and translating inedited texts that demonstrate the dialogue between its participants and Soviet linguistic thinking at that time. Bubnova (2009) explicitly refers to Yakubinsky's work, affirming his influence on the Bakhtin Circle and mainly on Volochinov's thinking.

One important text by Yakubinsky was *O dialogicheskol rechi*, published in 1923, translated here as 'On dialogic speech' instead of 'On dialogic discourse', in line with Archaimbault (2000), for whom the word 'speech' more closely approaches the author's thinking about a 'living language' than the term 'discourse'. In their partial translation of *O dialogicheskol rechi*, Yakubinsky and Eskin (1997) inform that, despite his importance, Yakubinsky was forgotten outside Russia. We believe that, in Russia too, Yakubinsky was forgotten for a long time. Leontiev was the first Soviet researcher who recovered Yakubinsky's work, despite Ivanova's (2009) criticism on Leontiev's contribution, as he only considered the text from 1923.

To reaffirm our interest in Yakubinsky and his text from 1923, considered seminal for Soviet dialogism, as well as his importance for the Bakhtin Circle, we repeat Bertau's (2005)

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question, asked at the start of her discussion at the summer 2005 Interdisciplinary Conference held at the University of Munich: *Why Yakubinsky, why start with his text from 1923, recently translated into English?*. Across her work, this author builds bridges between Yakubinsky's text and possible applications to the study of language, of language acquisition, recovering some aspects proposed in the paper *On dialogic speech*, such as automatism and the function of language as abbreviated forms of speech, the naturality of dialogue and the analysis of turn-taking during conversation. At the same Conference, Friedrich (2005b) presented a *workshop* on the theme *The use and function of the notion of dialogue in the Soviet-Russian discourse of the 1920ies*, especially with Yakubinsky and Vygotsky, including a review of Yakubinsky's text *On dialogic speech* and highlighting important points by connecting them with Bühler's theory of language (1934-1990).

The relevance and 'rediscovery' of Lev Yakubinsky was not only observed by researchers from the University of Munich, but also and mainly at the University of Lausanne, through the Research Centre on Comparative Epistemology of Central and Eastern European Linguistics (CRECLECO), which makes available texts, annals, journal issues and different original documents by Soviet linguists from the early 20th century.

In view of the attention Yakubinsky (1923) has received in recent years, we equally took interest in research about him, and mainly in the analysis of his text *On dialogic speech*, which different researchers have highlighted and referred to. In this project, we were confronted with other research areas and themes that deserve attention, but nevertheless go beyond the scope of this study: the communist policy on the concept of language; Russian formalism; debates on Saussure's idea, with characteristics of predominant Psychology at that time, to give an example. These aspects are revisited in the works by Ageeva (2009), Alpatov (2004), Archaimbault (2000, 2009), Bertau (2005, 2008), Brandist (2003, 2006a, 2006b), Brandist and Lähteenmäki (2010), Friedrich (2005b), Gulida (2010), Ivanova (2003a, 2003b, 2008, 2009), Kyheng (2003), Lähteenmäki (2005, 2006) and Romashko (2000), among others. Thus, the aim in this paper was to discuss Yakubinsky's contribution to the study of language and his influence on the Bakhtin Circle.

Lev Yakubinsky: Academic Background and Context

Lev Petrovich Yakubinsky was born in Kiev in 1892, where he took secondary education and started college in 1909. He then moved to Saint Petersburg, where he attended courses by Courtenay (Archaimbault, 2000) and gained particular interest in the study of phonetics and daily or 'living words', together with Scherba (1880-1944), Larin (1893-1964) and his main students and followers (Alpatov, 2004; Brandist, 2004, 2005, 2006a; Friedrich, 2005a; Gulida, 2010; Ivanova, 2008; Lähteenmäki, 2005, 2006; Romashko, 2000).

Ivanova (2008), discussing the importance of the Institute of the Living Word (IZhS), of which Yakubinsky was one of the founders, offers a panoramic perspective on the temporal and geographical context in the USSR at the turn from the 19th to the 20th century for the study of language and thought, involving linguists, psychologists, philologists and philosophers who were concerned with how speakers used language and how they constructed their discourse, including psychological, contextual and cultural aspects in this analysis (Ivanova, 2003b). This research group, represented by Yakubinsky, Larin and Zirmunskii (Brandist, 2003; Lähteenmäki, 2006) was recognized as the *Leningrad School*, in which the conception of language was considered an act of social interaction, a form of daily life, constituting a living and real dynamic phenomenon (Ageeva, 2009), as opposed to the *Moscow School* with Jakobson and his followers. Alpatov (2004) affirms that the *Leningrad School* took great interest in theoretical issues of linguistics, as evidenced in Bakhtin's book (1929/2004b) *Marxism and the philosophy of language*. This record is important to allow us to start approaching Yakubinsky and the Bakhtin Circle through the members of the *Leningrad School*, as that Circle was held for some time in the same city, in line with Clark and Holquist (1998), Faraco (2009) and Grillo (2009).

The contemporary Psychology context should also be underlined, which strongly influenced Yakubinsky's texts. Ivanova (2003b) describes this context, discussing the sources of this linguist's notion of dialogue and informing on the influences by Wundt (1832-1920), James' functional psychology and Watson's behaviorism, which together with Pavlov's approaches constituted a theory that was accepted and debated on in the Russian scientific community of that age (Ivanova, 2003b). These observations are reasserted in Kyheng (2003), Ivanova (2009) and Romand and Tchougounnikov (2008). Brandist (2005), in turn, identifies the influence of *popular psychology* (*Völkerpsychologie*) on Russian linguistics at that time, informing on influences by Lazarus (1824-1903), Steintal (1823-1899) and mainly Herbart's ideas (1776-1841), evident in Wundt's ideas on "apperception" and "apperceptive mass" (Honda, 2004) Yakubinsky recovers. Likewise, Tarde's (1843-1904) influence should be highlighted, who discussed communication and social formation modes (Gulida, 2010) and conversation types in different ages and social spheres from a Social Psychology perspective (Ivanova, 2003b), which were part of Yakubinsky's references (Archaimbault, 2000). Yakubinsky used these notions in the paper published in 1923 and this was the psychological focus, associating language with behavior, physiology and social aspects, he adopted to start his discussion project about the linguistic aspects of spoken language.

Brandist and Lähteenmäki (2010), Lähteenmäki (2005, 2006) and Romashko (2000) appoint that Yakubinsky always taught at pedagogical institutions and was involved in different language research projects, since the 1910's in the USSR, and participated in different Soviet language study

institutions (GIRK, OPOIaZ, ILIaV) until the 1940's. Between 1916 and the start of the 1930's, when Yakubinsky presented his texts and became an active linguist, we will look into his different intersections with the Bakhtin Circle, mainly through Volochinov, who was his student and whom he worked with on different projects (Alpatov, 2004; Brandist, 2003, 2004, 2006a; Gulida, 2010; Ivanova, 2003a; Lähteenmäki, 2006).

Lev Yakubinsky's Texts in the Bakhtin Circle

Based on our bibliographic survey, we organized Yakubinsky's texts in phases, in chronological order but also according to theme and their resonance in the works of the Bakhtin Circle. In the first phase, his papers *On the sounds in poetic language* (1916); *The accumulation of identical liquids in practical language and in poetic language* (1916); *Realization of sound uniformity in Lermontov's works* (1916); *About the poetic combination of glossemes* (1919); *Where poems come from* (1921) and *About the book by V. Zirmunskii: The composition of lyric poetry* (1922) present emphasis on the phonetics of poetry, associating psychophysiological and linguistic aspects of poetic language forms and so-called daily language, besides linking associations with emotions. Ivanova (2009) studied these papers in details and was impressed by the thematic change in 1923, in formalism itself, in his text *On dialogic speech* (Ivanova, 2009). In the Bakhtin Circle, Bakhtin and Medvedev (1928/1991) analyzed some of the texts, discussing the phases of the Formal Method (Soviet literary formalism): *On the sounds in poetic language*; *The accumulation of identical liquids in practical language and in poetic language* and *About the poetic combination of glossemes*. Bakhtin and Medvedev appoint this thematic change in *Soviet formalism* itself, including Yakubinsky and Tomashevski, representing a trend that aimed to apply the sociological method to language studies.

In the second phase, the text *On dialogic speech* (1923) stands out, which different researchers identified (Alpatov, 2004; Archaimbault, 2000; Brandist, 2003, 2006a; Friedrich, 2005a, 2005b; Gulida, 2010; Ivanova, 2003a, 2003b, 2009; Kyheng, 2003; Lähteenmäki, 2005; Romashko, 2000) as an initial text for dialogism, because it emphasizes the importance of dialogue and presents the conception of its naturalness as opposed to the artificiality of the monologue, besides other relevant aspects, with the composition forms or functions of discourse diversity as the core thesis. In the Bakhtin Circle, Bakhtin and Medvedev (1928/1991) cite this text in *The formal method in literary scholarship: a critical introduction to sociological poetics* and Bakhtin (1929/2004b) in *Marxism and the philosophy of language*. No formal quote of Yakubinsky by Bakhtin exists today in books published under his authorship. Lähteenmäki (2005), however, informs that a footnote with Bakhtin's viewpoint on Yakubinsky's (1923) essay may have been part of the original version of Bakhtin's paper *Discourse in the novel* (Bakhtin, 1934-1935/2004a). Based on

Hirschkop (1999), Lähteenmäki informs that these footnotes by Bakhtin, entitled 'Dialogue II', were written in 1952, when *Discourse in the novel* had not been published yet, and even affirms: "In this summary, we find an explicit reference to Yakubinsky's text, written in 1923, *On dialogic speech*, which suggests that this observation was also included in the original manuscript, but was removed in the editing process for the published version" (Lähteenmäki, 2005, p. 53).

In the third phase, with his paper *Ferdinand de Saussure on the impossibility of a language policy*, issued in 1929, Yakubinsky, representing the *Leningrad School*, is not enthusiastic about Ferdinand de Saussure's ideas. Two coincidences are observed here: (1) in the same year, Bakhtin (1929/2004b) also published his book with criticism against Saussure in *Marxism and the philosophy of language*, associating the Swiss linguist with the *Geneva School* and with 'abstract objectivism' as opposed to 'subjectivism'; (2) Brandist (2003) highlights that, in 1929, Saussure's work had not been published yet in Russia, but was only translated to Russian in 1933, which brings Kyheng (2003) to suggest that Volochinov and Yakubinsky translated Saussure's text to construct their 1929 work. More in-depth and comparative studies between Yakubinsky and Volochinov about Saussure are available in the papers by Ageeva (2009), Lähteenmäki (2006) and Reznik (2001).

In the fourth phase, a series of papers by Yakubinsky was published in the popular newspaper *Literaturnaia ucheba* in 1930 and 1931 (Brandist, 2003; Brandist & Lähteenmäki, 2010; Ivanova, 2003a; Uhlik, 2008), entitled *The class structure of contemporary Russian language*. According to Brandist (2006b, p. 69), this series "constitutes the base of sociological and historical reports of language in Bakhtin's essays in the 1930's". An analytic and more detailed study about the influence of these papers by Yakubinsky on Bakhtin, specifically on the text *Discourse in the novel* (Bakhtin, 1934-1935/2004a) is available in Brandist (2003, 2006b), Brandist and Lähteenmäki (2010) and Lähteenmäki, (2005).

In our study about Yakubinsky, special attention is also due to the newspaper *Literaturnaia ucheba*, where not only Yakubinsky, but also Volochinov and other important linguists at that time wrote their texts (Alpatov, 2004). This scientific-popular journal was related with the educational program for new writers and oriented them on the principles of socialism (Brandist & Lähteenmäki, 2010; Lähteenmäki, 2005). Bakhtin, during his exile in a Kazakh village between April 1930 and September 1936, because of his relation with the work of the Leningrad linguists, must have had access to publications in this journal (Brandist, 2003, 2006b). In addition, Yakubinsky and Volochinov worked together on this journal between 1930-1931, according to Gulida (2004). Ivanova (2003a) confirms this when she affirms that Yakubinsky invited Volochinov to work at the journal, reminding that both authors wrote articles published in the same issue (Ivanova, 2003a; Lähteenmäki, 2005), as mentioned further on. A consultation of *Literaturnaia ucheba* files shows

various articles by Yakubinsky and Volochinov, among which *On the non-technical style* (Yakubinsky, 1931) and *The construction of the utterance* or *The structure of the utterance* (Volochinov, 1931a) and *The word and its social function* (Volochinov, 1931b) should be highlighted.

The third issue of *Literanurnaia ucheba* reveals the coincidence of an article by Volochinov (1931a), *The*

construction of the utterance, and an article by Yakubinsky and Ivanov (1931), *About the theoretical study of the writer* in the same issue. In an analysis of the text by Volochinov (1931a), *The construction of the utterance*, we identified direct resonances of Yakubinsky’s previous text published in 1923, *On dialogic speech*, which we present in Table 1.

Table 1
Comparison Between the Chapters of Yakubinsky and Volochinov’s Texts

Chapters from the text <i>On Dialogic Speech</i> (Yakubinsky, 1923)	Chapters from the paper <i>The Construction of the Utterance</i> (Volochinov, 1931a)
1. On the functional varieties of speech	1. Social interaction and verbal interaction.
2. On the forms of oral utterance	2. <i>Monologic</i> discourse and <i>dialogic</i> discourse
3. On the direct form	3. Interior discourse: <i>Dialogism</i>
4. <i>On the naturalness of dialogue and the artificiality of monologue</i>	4. Social configuration of the utterance
5. Comments on dialogue in comparison with oral and written monologue	5. <i>Extra-verbal (implicit)</i> part of speech
6. The moment of apperception in the perception of speech	6. The situation and the form of expression, intonation, choice and collocation of words
7. Dialogue and family standards	7. The style of life expression
8. Dialogue and discursive automatism	

Obs. Our italics

Although a detailed analysis of the texts by Yakubinsky (1923), *On dialogic speech*, and by Volochinov (1931a) *The construction of the utterance* is not possible in this study, we defend the hypothesis that the chapters of the paper by Volochinov, written almost ten years after that text by Yakubinsky, present recurring themes (dialogue, monologue, dialogism) which Bakhtin (1929/2004b) also incorporated in his book, *Marxism and the philosophy of language*, such as: aspects of the dialogue and monologue, the extra-verbal elements of speech (gestures, intonation), the notion of the discursive context (situation), the conception of verbal intonation, colloquial speech or daily stereotypes of conversation.

The 1923 Text by Yakubinsky: *On Dialogic Speech*

On dialogic speech was published in 1923, in a 100-page section that served to analyze the functional diversity of discourse (Ivanova, 2003b). Despite containing some of Yakubinsky’s ideas previously addressed in earlier papers, such as the psychophysiological perspective of language, in this text, he completely changes the focus of his research. When *On dialogic speech* was published, he started to focus on daily language, “living speech”. The text echoes his education under Baudouin de Courtenay, who emphasized the primacy of oral language and its existence based on daily living words (Ivanova, 2003a, 2008, 2009), as well the influence of his colleague Scherba (1880-1944), who proposed the oppositions between monologue and dialogue (Friedrich, 2005a) and the conception of dialogue as a natural form of expression (Ivanova, 2003b; Romashko, 2000). Scherba issued and published the text by Yakubinsky in a collection

entitled *Russian language (Russkaja rec)* and elaborated the preface to that edition (Archambault, 2000). According to Archambault (2000), the paper *On dialogic speech* takes the form of a dialogue between Yakubinsky and the reader, similar to a course or class that is read.

No complete Portuguese translation of the paper by Yakubinsky is available yet, nor did we have access to the complete German translation by Hommel and Meng (Jakubinskij, 1923/2004). We did access different partial translations, which together correspond to the full text. We also used the complete version in Russian, available in the University of Lausanne’s electronic files.

Based on the Russian original, we observed that Yakubinsky’s text consists of 8 chapters and 62 paragraphs, as shown in Table 2. As shown, Jakubinskij (1923/1977) translated chapters 2 to 5 into Italian, Yakubinsky and Eskin (1997) translated chapters 4, 5, 6 and 8 into English, Archambault (2000) and Kyheng (2003) chapters 1 to 3 into French, and Kyheng (2003) translated parts of chapter 5 and the main part of chapters 6 to 8. The paragraphs used by Friedrich (2005a) were taken from the German translation by Hommel and Meng (Jakubinskij, 1923/2004) and translated into English by Sixtus Kage.

The text *On dialogic speech* is based on a careful observation of daily speech, conversation with people at home and at work and a subtle introspection. It is essentially a description of the full complexity of categories in speech interaction processes (Gulida, 2010). Yakubinsky (1923) calls these ‘functional varieties’ or ‘formal varieties’ of discourse, considering the modes in which they are accomplished and situational limits or contexts. As a

draft, this conception is related with the ‘gender’ discussion Bakhtin and Volochinov would develop further on. Departing from the initial conception that language is a multiple phenomenon, with a complex variety of determinant factors, composing a specialized diversity of discourse (Yakubinsky, 1923), that text presents questions on: how verbal

interaction is socially organized and culturally shared; how information exchange is conducted and what factors determine its accomplishment; what non-verbal characteristics of a sentence are involved in its understanding and what speech forms are affected by the speaker’s emotional condition (Gulida, 2010).

Table 2

Comparison Between the Translations of Yakubinsky’s Texts (1923) “On Dialogic Speech”

Translation by	Jakubinskij (1923/1977)	Yakubinsky and Eskin (1977)	Archaimbault (2000)	Kyheng (2003)	Friedrich (2005a)
Language	Italian	English	French	French	German/English
Ch. 1: §1-13	–	–	Ch. 1: §1-4	Ch. 1: §1-5, §12-13	Ch. 1: §13
Ch. 2: §14-16	Ch. 2	–	Ch. 2: §14-16	Ch. 2: §14 e §15	–
Ch. 3: §17-24	Ch. 3	–	Ch. 3: §17-24	Ch. 3: §17-24	Ch.3:§22-24
Ch. 4: §25-29	Ch. 4	Ch. 4	Ch. 4: §25-28	Ch. 4: §25-29	–
Ch. 5: §30-34	Ch. 5	Ch. 5	–	Ch. 5: §30 e §29	–
Ch. 6: §35-48	–	Ch. 6	–	Ch.6: §35 e §37-40 §42 e §43	Ch. 6: §43
Ch. 7: §44-49	–	–	–	Ch. 7: §44 e §45 §47- 49	Ch. 7: §44
Ch. 8: §50-62	–	Ch. 8	–	Ch. 8: §50 - 53 §56- 61	–

Yakubinsky starts his text with a subtitle, *On the functional varieties of speech*, using two interconnected conceptions that will permeate this entire work: the notion of *immediate* and *perception*. According to him, without considering the different and complex determinant factors of language “(...) one could not study language as something given *immediately* to living *perception*, nor (to) clarify its genesis, its history” (Yakubinsky, 1923, p. 96, our italics). Thus, he relates language with perception and, in the following paragraph, proposes:

Language is an aspect of human behavior. Human behavior as a manifestation of the human body is a *psychological (biological) fact* and a *sociological phenomenon* as a manifestation that depends on this organism’s common life with other organisms, in terms of interaction” (Yakubinsky, 1923, p. 97, our italics).

Let us highlight various aspects of Yakubinsky’s first assertions on language, as follows: (1) human behavior; (2) its psychophysiological aspects; (3) its social nature; (4) the interaction among organisms; (5) a common environment (context, situation). These proposal, although not always sufficiently elaborated throughout the text, carry the seeds which not only Volochinov, but also Bakhtin would develop in his contributions to dialogism. They are also related to the basic pieces of discursive pragmatics conversationalists would develop in the USA as from the 1960’s, including Goodwin (1981) and Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1974). In this respect, Ivanova (2003b) affirms that Yakubinsky was the first in linguistic history to consider the issue of “shared common knowledge’ and the first to apply the analysis of verbal interaction in linguistics (Ivanova, 2003b).

The principles the Russian linguist presents are related

to dialogue, founding a dialogic perspective, as identified by Ivanova: (1) dialogue as a mutual and interactional activity; (2) the phenomenon of the other’s answers to the utterance; (3) the incomplete nature of the assertion; (4) the simultaneous process of saying and listening to the utterance. These considerations on dialogue are proposed as one of the discursive functions of the dialogue in the *immediate* condition, considered the natural form, as opposed to the monologue, a functional manifestation of language that is not immediate for the interlocutors. Gulida (2010) schematically presents the two distinct and basic varieties of dialogic speech Yakubinsky identifies: on the one hand the natural form of language (dialogue), and on the other the artificial form of language (monologue). The central thesis in Yakubinsky’s (1923) paper is the naturality of dialogue and the artificiality of the monologue. The dialogue is characterized by its immediate nature (current situation), face-to-face interaction, spontaneous, fast, daily, almost automatic. The monologue, in turn, takes the form of a distanced interlocution, not spontaneous, which needs to be further elaborated in its reception and response, mainly considering the expansion of the space and time between the interlocutors. Examples of the latter are letters and poetry.

Chapter 2, *On the forms of oral utterance*, is quite short, with only three paragraphs (§14-15), reaffirming some aspects of the previous chapters and correlating the immediate forms of language (speaker’s visual and auditory perception) with the immediate form of human interactions (face to face), distinguishing them from non-immediate interactions like the written form of the utterance. Thus, he associates the dialogic form with immediate interaction and the monologic form with non-immediate interaction among the interlocutors.

Yakubinsky (1923) gives different examples of dialogic expressions, such as direct daily conversations, as well as examples of monologic expressions, like letters. He also observes cases in which immediate communication takes place, which is imperfect though “when visual perceptions are absent when confronted with what is immediately perceived” (Yakubinsky, 1923, p.117), like in the case of conversational interaction in the dark, by telephone, behind closed doors or between walls. Also, anticipating emerging types in current digital technology (e-mails, blogs, etc.), Yakubinsky observes cases of written communication with dialogic characteristics, like in the notes or short messages transmitted between participants in a meeting: although written (monologic), it is also immediate.

Chapter 3, *On the direct form*, presents relations with two Russian thinkers, Volochinov and Vigotski, including ideas incorporated into their work. Ivanova (2003b) defends the influence of Yakubinski’s conception of dialogue in Bakhtin’s *Marxism and the philosophy of language* (1929/2004b), as well as in Vigotski’s *Thought and Language* (1934/2001), in his analysis of the ‘interior word’. In his study of Vigotski, Bertau (2008) as well was inevitably confronted with Yakubinsky.

Yakubinsky (1923) affirms in this chapter that the speaker’s visual perception consists in the apprehension of his facial expressions and body gestures, which include and complement speech. In that sense, he also states, in the same chapter, that “even in a telephone dialogue, when the interlocutor has no visual perception, facial expressions and gestures are frequently present” (Yakubinsky, 1923, p. 124). The conversationalists Sacks et al. (1974) will observe these aspects in their studies of communicative interactions by telephone for example (Schegloff, 1979). Yakubinsky emphasizes the importance of gestures in a conversation, admitting that they even replace verbal expression, giving ‘tone’ or ‘temperature’ to a dialogue. These observations also briefly anticipate the studies by Goodwin (1981, 2000, 2003), who will later propose the idea of *contextual configuration* in the environment of a situation the interlocutors share.

It is in the third chapter that Yakubinsky uses an example from Dostoyevsky, taken from *The Diary of a writer*, when he reports on a scene in which six drunks were talking and used a same word with different tones, obtaining different meanings. Bakhtin (1929/2004b) and Vigotski (1934/2001) use this same example to discuss the issue about the tone of voice while talking in an immediate context the speakers share. Bakhtin defends the idea of “expressive intonation”, determined by the “*immediate situation*” (Bakhtin, 1929/2004b, p. 132, our italics) and which extends to an *appreciative orientation* determined by the interlocutors’ horizon “in the *immediate horizon* as well as in the broader social horizon of a given social group” (Bakhtin, 1929/2004b, p. 135, our italics). Vigotski, in turn, reuses the same example by Yakubinsky to discuss the abbreviations of spoken language: “It is perfectly understandable that these two moments,

which facilitate the abbreviation of spoken language – the subject’s knowledge and the *immediate* transmission of thought through intonation – are completely excluded by written language” Vigotski (1934/2001, p. 455, our italics).

Besides the significant aspects of gestures, facial expressions and tone of voice, when considering the immediate situation among interlocutors, Yakubinsky (1923) introduces yet another element: the emotional aspect, which constitutes a rich information source for direct communication. As to emotional states and mainly abbreviation in dialogue, contemporary researchers like Lyra (2007) and Lyra and Bertau (2008) present contributions related to Yakubinsky’s ideas.

Chapter 4, *About the naturalness of dialogue and the artificiality of the monologue*, Yakubinsky (1923, p. 132) presents Scherba’s idea about the artificiality of the monologue and that “(...) *the true language of being is found in dialogue*”. Yakubinsky proposes that, in a psychophysiological perspective deriving from psychology at that time, any utterance, constituted in the human being’s perceptual field, provokes a reaction (our attitudes, evaluation, etc.) that is externalized in discourse. He observes that, even in a conference, where listeners are expected to be silent, the public tends to interrupt for questions, talk to someone sitting next to them or even silently, apparently talking to themselves, showing facial expressions, lip movements, expressing the naturalness or spontaneity of dialogue. Then, he gives various examples of daily life, including administrative meetings, lectures, conferences, illustrating the dialogue as if comprising abbreviations of words and continuous interruptions.

The monologue, then, according to Yakubinsky, is characterized by long discourse, which needs a silent public with as little interruption as possible, like in the case of official ceremonies, rituals and/or authoritarian manifestations. He again highlights the natural force of dialogue, appointing that, even when confronted with the monologic form of writing (a book for example), we want to answer and, therefore, make notes in the margins of the text.

In chapter 5, *Comments about dialogue in comparison with the oral and written monologue*, which consists of five paragraphs (§ 30-34), Yakubinsky (1923) gives some examples and characteristics of dialogue: (1) continuous interruption between interlocutors; (2) short utterances and (3) abbreviated words. With regard to the latter, Yakubinsky gives the following example of a possible utterance between interlocutors A and B:

A: “*Are you going for a walk?*”

B1: “*Yes*” (‘I am going for a walk’

B2: “*Maybe*” (I am going on foot really’).

Hence, there are different possible answers, without the need for interlocutor B to give a complete answer, using all of interlocutor A’s utterance. This is a typical example of abbreviation. Vigotski uses various similar examples of daily dialogue or conversation between the characters Kitty and Liévin in a book by Tolstoy (*Anna Karenina*) to illustrate what he calls the ‘predicative’ nature of answers in a

conversation. Assertions like “Yes”, “No”, “I will” and “I liked it” are predicative, without the need to repeat the whole utterance present in the question or in the first interlocutor’s turn. Vigotski (1934/2001, p. 447) affirms that this language phenomenon occurs in two cases and even cites Yakubinsky: “(1) in a response situation (2) in a situation in which the interlocutor know about the subject of the judgment to be pronounced in advance”. Further ahead, Vigotski (1934/2001, p. 450) informs that “Yakubinsky is completely right because, in the cases of these abbreviations, this is an original syntactic structure of the discourse (...)”, characterized by simple syntax, condensed expression forms, a minimum number of words, tending towards *predicative* discourse.

Chapter 6, *The moment of apperception in the perception of speech* comprises 9 paragraphs (§ 35-43), in which Yakubinsky uses terms from contemporary Psychology: *apperception* and *apperceptive mass*. According to Johan Friedrich Herbart (1776-1841) *apperception* is the perceptive process of assimilating new mental representations which, when added to the collection of previously acquired ideas, compose the *apperceptive mass* (Cabral & Nick, 2006). The psychologist Wilhelm Wundt (1832-1920) also insisted in the active nature of *apperception* as the act through which psychic contents are more clearly understood, in line with Honda (2004). Other authors, including Brandist (2005), Ivanova (2003b, 2009) and Romand and Tchougounnikov (2008), confirm this influence by Herbart and Wundt on the Russian linguist and the matter of apperception. Yakubinsky (1923) conceptualizes *apperceptive mass* as the perception and understanding of other people’s discourse, determined not only by an external verbal stimulus, but by previous internal and external experience and, finally, by the mental contents perceived at the moment of the perception.

Throughout the sixth chapter, Yakubinsky illustrates the concept of *apperceptive mass* through different examples of abbreviated dialogues, with excerpts from discourse by Kitty and Liévin in *Anna Karenin*, in which reticence or mere exchange of looks between acquaintances permit continuing the dialogue.

We found parallels between Yakubinsky’s conception and the Bakhtin Circle in two excerpts by Volochinov and also in Bakhtin, when they refer to the notion of *apperception* to understand language. In the same chapter in which he cites Yakubinsky twice, Bakhtin (1929/2004b, p. 147) affirms that the person who captures the other person’s statement is not a dumb, silent being deprived of words, but a being constituted by interior words: “His entire mental activity, what can be called the ‘apperceptive ground’, is mediatized for him by the interior discourse and that is where the junction with the externally apprehended discourse is operated” (our italics).

Bakhtin (1979/2003, p. 302) affirms, in turn, that when constructing an utterance, the person does so actively, at the same time as he seeks to anticipate the other person’s utterance and this anticipatable response, in turn, actively influences the first utterance: “When talking, I always consider

the *apperceptive ground* of the perception of my discourse by the receiver: to what extent he is familiar with the situation (...)” (our italics).

Chapter 7, *Dialogue and family standards*, consists of 6 paragraphs (§ 44-49) and presents examples of family and daily conversations, illustrating observations of the *apperceptive mass among people who share a same environment* (Yakubinsky, 1923). Kyheng (2003) informs that Yakubinsky analyzes adjacent pairs in a dialogue, like Sacks et al. (1974). Yakubinsky illustrates with the joke about the deaf people in the market who reveal the ruptures in expected conversation pairs in a common conversation. Vigotski (1934/2001) incorporates this same example of the deaf people’s joke in chapter 7 of his book *The construction of thought and language*.

Chapter 8, *Dialogue and discursive automatism*, contains 13 paragraphs (§ 50-62), in which Yakubinsky again illustrates daily scenes for different utterances (sarcastic and reticent speech and poetic expressions) to end with the automatism of dialogic language: “When an utterance does not demand an exact and lengthier attention of words and choice of words, then we have an as if it were unconscious and automatic discourse” (Yakubinsky, 1923, p. 182) and finishes: “The dialogic form contributes to the development of the discourse, as a result of an automatic activity” (Yakubinsky, 1923, p. 184).

Finally, Yakubinsky (1923) acknowledges limitations in his proposal, concluding that the dialogue is a special discourse phenomenon, already anticipating future critics like Emerson (2002), who affirms that Yakubinsky’s observations are quite naive.

Final Considerations

The importance of Yakubinsky has been recovered in recent years and his contribution to language studies has been reconsidered. In Brazil, Cunha (2005) discussed Yakubinsky based on the study by Kyheng (2003) and two academic dissertations (Severo, 2007; Souza, 2002) make reference to the Russian linguist, but it is abroad that further reference to Yakubinsky is found. Bertau (2007), Bertau and Gonçalves (2007) and Lyra (2007) use him as a reference in their articles in the same volume of the *International Journal of Dialogical Science*. In Europe, he has been studied and his 1923 text has been translated by Archaimbault (2000, 2009), Bertau (2005, 2008), Friedrich (2005b), Jakubinskij (1923/1977) and Kyheng (2003). Other researchers, like Alpatov (2004), Brandist (2003, 2006a, 2006b), Brandist and Lähteenmäki (2010), Gulida (2010), Ivanova (2003a, 2003b, 2008, 2009) and Lähteenmäki (2005, 2006) have revisited the history of Soviet linguistic files, recovering important information to acknowledge the Yakubinsky’s contribution, mainly in the Western context.

Yakubinsky’s (1923) pioneering work, mainly his text *On dialogic speech*, is part of the Soviet context, the cradle

of dialogism, and strongly influenced the Bakhtin Circle. In this paper, we mainly attempted to address approximations between both. We do admit, however, that the broader considerations elaborated by Volochinov and Bakhtin, as we appointed in some excerpts, further elaborate on and also take distance from Yakubinsky's ideas (Santos, 2010). In short, we support Brandist's thought (2006b, p. 83) that "(...) we should not be satisfied with focusing our attention especially on Bakhtin. His work should be treated as a valuable contribution to a dialogic process, whose importance by far surpasses that of his own writings".

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