

Applied Linguistics and Literature: interfaces and possible dialogues

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Vera Lopes**

*Nós, os que temos a responsabilidade de escrever, e tanto falo da literatura quanto do jornalismo, temos o dever de levantar a nossa língua, de cuidar dela, de fazê-la reviver.*¹ José Saramago, 1983

*Ler é, por conseguinte, um convite à reflexão, ao olhar crítico sobre o texto, mas também sobre si e sobre o mundo, e daí que, na etapa de pós-leitura, seja importante levar o leitor a reagir ao próprio texto lido (...)*² Rosa Bizarro, 2008

The proposition of bringing to discussion the relations between Applied Linguistics and Literary Theory, for this edition of *Scripta*, comes from the importance of fomenting reflections on the finely tuned partnership between these distinct theoretical areas and on how much such partnership contributes to the reader's formation, especially the reader of Literature, aware of the role of lingual weavings in the engineering of literary production.

In Brazil, the path taken by these relations brings, among its initial manifestations, the study **Structural Analysis of**

¹ We, who carry the responsibility of writing, and I speak of literature as well as of journalism, have the duty of raising our language, of taking care of it, of reviving it. (free translation)

² Reading is, consequently, an invitation to reflection, to the critical outlook over the text, but also over oneself and over the world, and hence, in the step of post-reading, it is important to lead the reader to react to the read text (...). (free translation)

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Brazilian romances, by Affonso Romano de Sant’Anna (1975). In it, the critic analyses works, such as **The Tenement**, by Aluísio de Azevedo, in order to illustrate what he affirms in his other study, **For a new concept of Literature**: “o Estruturalismo, dentro de suas várias manifestações, oferece instrumentos para o desmantelamento do edifício literário ortodoxo e possibilita a confecção de modelos para a produção prático-teórica”. (SANT’ANNA, 1977, p. 23).³

In **Theory of Literature: Russian formalists**, organized by Deonício Toledo, there are discussions about prioritizing language in detriment of interpretations which were sustained by what was then denominated extraliterary, e.g. Sociology and Psychology, in such a way that the arrangement of the work as a process that results in the aesthetic product became the object of study of the area.

When dealing with this principle of relation between these areas, Lajolo (2011) considers it critically. She asserts that “[...] the path through which this formalist perspective gained the favors of literary studies came with a linguistic passport [...]” and goes on:

A palavra abalizada de Roman Jakobson citada por Schneiderman no Prefácio, de uma penada põe para correr a tradição dos estudos literários tal como eles se desenrolavam no Brasil, instalando em seu lugar uma vocação científica e a crença na literariedade: [...] o objeto do estudo literário não é a literatura, mas a literariedade, isto é, aquilo que torna determinada obra uma obra literária. [...] Tudo serve para os historiadores da literatura: os costumes, a psicologia, a política, a filosofia. Em lugar de um estudo de literatura, criava-se um conglomerado de disciplinas mal acabadas. [...] Se o estudo da literatura quer tornar-se uma ciência,

3 Struturalism, in its numerous manifestations, offers instruments to the dismantling of the ortodox literary edifice and enables the making of models for the practical and theoretical production (free translation).

ele deve reconhecer o processo como seu único herói (Prefácio. p. X) [...] (LAJOLO, 2001, p. 204).⁴

In this mix of new and dangerous perceptions about the composition of literary works and its correspondent theorization, the area of Linguistics grew in importance, adjusted to the curriculum of Literature courses and, in a way, has since then led literary studies. New theoretical methodologies rose from it, with agreements of academics such as Roland Barthes, in such a way that, still according to Lajolo:

[...] o mesmo par de óculos do velho mestre russo que lia e desmontava competentemente o slogan político norte-americano I like Ike, desmontava e com igual competência discutia o hermético poema que se inicia afirmando que O mytho é o nada que é tudo de Fernando Pessoa (LAJOLO, 2011).⁵

But this movement of vertical intervention in the analysis/critique/theory of the literary text by the assumptions of Linguistics received criticism from segments of the literary critique and, thus, lost ground, although leaving behind some heritage, such as the acknowledgement that Literature is, like others, a production of and through language. The radical repulse of those extralinguistic conditions is called into question and these same conditions return amplified and deepened by theories like reader-response criticism and readings through the veil of Marxism, ideas that foment the perception of Literature

⁴ The highlighted word of Roman Jakobson cited by Schneiderman in the Preface, with one stroke of the feather, ousted the tradition of literary studies such as they developed in Brazil, establishing a scientific vocation and the belief in literariness: [...] the object of the literary study is not literature, but literariness, that is, that which makes a specific work a literary work. [...] Everything is useful to the historians of literature: traditions, psychology, politics, philosophy. Instead of a study of literature, a conglomerate of poorly planned disciplines was being formed. (...) If the study of literature wishes to become a science, it must recognize the process as its only hero (preface, p. X) [...] (LAJOLO, 2011, p. 204) (free translation).

⁵ The same pair of glasses of the old Russian master that read and competently took apart the American political slogan *I like Ike* took apart and with equal competence discussed the hermetic poem that starts affirming that The mytho is the nothing that is everything by Fernando Pessoa. (no date) (free translation)

as product of social linguistic practices, with singularities not limited to the instruments adopted by Linguistics, although they can utilize them.

Thereby, Linguistics and Literary Theory, through the final decades of the 20th century and the earlier decades of this century, have been seen in light of their differences, but, being both inserted in the studies of language, also simultaneously brought together and in dialogue. So much that, when treated dichotomously, which often happens, there is a risk of missing the importance of linguistic knowledge for the comprehension of the literary work and, on the other side of the coin, of the literary construction as a mobilizer of linguistic resources in their discursive, grammatical, pragmatic dimension etc.

Adopting both, and safeguarding their limits, before the linguistic ingenuity of Literature put into the rhythm, the voices, the arid selection or musical of words, the expressiveness of punctuation, the sonority that aligns or misaligns expressions, the evidence of socio-linguistics manifestations characterizing characters, spaces and times, it becomes clear that there is a necessity of also being able to observe the assembly of text with a magnifying glass, this language that speaks, this way of saying the infinite and odd ways of saying, possibilities in which the language is made with (and as) wit and art.

Caetano Veloso illustrates, in the materiality of language, the literary substance, when dazzling us with the verses:

*Gosto de sentir a minha língua roçar a língua de Luís
de Camões
Gosto de ser e de estar
E quero me dedicar a criar confusões de prosódias
E uma profusão de paródias
Que encurtem dores
E furem cores como camaleões*

(VELOSO, Caetano. *Língua*. In álbum Velô. Rio de Janeiro: Philips Records, 1984)⁶

In these verses, the songwriter deals with the architectural linguistic exercise in the ugliness of the aesthetic work, which is done through meta-exposition: the strong erotic image sublimated by the sonorous smoothness of the verb “rub”; the syntactic discussion about the verbs that connect, now filled with intransitivity; the prosody in the vocabular selection of the expression “creating confusions of prosodies and a profusion of parodies”, almost a tongue twister that acclaims accents, rhythms, lines; the ultimate end of Literature: shortening pains, swiping colors, in its infinite modalization.

The observation, description and explanation of the linguistic resources in the literary text unclthe the language made into art. With the contributions from Linguistics, it is possible to realize how the mark of verbal art is transgression, in how it foments the exercise of freedom to which, contradictorily, linguistic studies must submit, involved in the production of aesthetic pleasure. Veríssimo, in his classic literary chronicle “The gigolo of words”, states that “*A gramática precisa que apanhar todo dia, pra saber quem é que manda*”.⁷ Extending the hilarious line to the entire field of linguistic studies, we have, both in the production and the analysis of literary works, a toil that consist in scrutinizing how the linguistic structures are mobilized, the words in infinite conjugations to generate effects, in this differentiated nature of the relationship between

⁶ I like to feel my tongue rub up against the tongue of Luis de Camões

I enjoy *ser* and *estar*

And want to dedicate myself to creating confusions of prosodies

And a profusion of parodies

That shorten pains

And swipe colors like chameleons (free translation)

⁷ Grammar needs to be beaten up every day, so it knows who's the boss (free translation)

language and literature. It is about a deviating procedure from the trivial application of knowledge about the phonic, morphic, syntactic, pragmatic and semantic strata. That is, borrowing the nomenclature by Geleuse and Gattari (2002), these areas become deterritorialized and, when materialized, become a new space of meanings, being reterritorialized, in a way that the shape of that content is altered by the shape of the expression. In this linguistic and aesthetic investigation, the higher function of Literature is highlighted, which is: the expression of human existence through the conjugation of forms and voices, guide of man, by means of the word that distorts, twists, contorts language, in its education for its fate, as affirmed by Umberto Eco (2003).

Thus, Literature, considered a textual event, contrasts against other acts of speech, distancing itself from intentions like informing, persuading, summoning... in a way that we give it (and receive from it) another perspective on reading, turning our attention towards elements that, at first, do not seem relevant to us in other texts. Those are unprecedented perceptions, such as between sound and meaning, between grammatical organization and thematic patterns, in a peculiar linguistic organization.

Guimarães Rosa (1994) begins the beautiful tale “*Fita Verde no Cabelo*”, a stylization of the traditional tale Little Red Riding Hood, like this:

Havia uma aldeia, em algum lugar, nem maior nem menor, com velhos e velhas que velhavam, homens e mulheres que esperavam, meninos e meninas que nasciam e cresciam. Todos com juízo suficientemente, menos uma meninazinha, a que por enquanto. Sua mãe mandara-a com cesto e pote, à avó, que a amava, a uma outra e quase igualzinha aldeia. Fita-Verde partiu, sobrelogo, ela, a linda, tudo era uma vez. O pote continha um doce em calda, e o cesto estava vazio, que para buscar framboesas.

Daí, que, indo no atravessar o bosque, viu os lenhadores que por lá lenhavam; mas o lobo nenhum, desconhecido nem peludo (ROSA, 1994, p. 981).⁸

In the extract, the traditional undefined beginning of wonderous tales, which immerses the reader into times and spaces that had always been navigated in the floating world of imagination, makes itself accentually indeterminate through indefinite articles and pronouns: *uma, algum, todos*;⁹ indefinite adjective wording: *nem maior nem menor*;¹⁰ indefinite actions: *velhar, esperar, nascer, crescer* —¹¹ intransitive morphosyntactic recreations, or made so. The permanence and sequence of this intensity are broken by an apposition that is constituted of a demonstrative pronoun *a*,¹² something already enlightening, followed by a restrictive adjective, flared by the cohesive referential element *que* — “*que por enquanto*”.¹³ The latter, in its turn, is an incomplete clause, which destabilizes the reading, since it makes the adverbial phrase *por enquanto*¹⁴ sound transitive, but still without presenting its complement, putting the reader in an abysmal situation, imposing onto him a feeling of nefarious omens and offering him, as the only safe spot left, the plot that he goes on discovering.

Down below, in the third paragraph, the narrator offers us a

⁸ There was a village, somewhere, neither bigger nor smaller, with old men and women who were oldening, men and women who were waiting, boys and girls who were being born and growing up. All of them with enough judgement, except for one little girl, the one who for now.

Her mother had sent her with basket and pot, to her grandmother, who loved her, to another and almost the same village. Green-Ribbon left, at once, her, the pretty one, everything was once upon a time. The pot contained candy with sirup, and the basket was empty, in order to fetch raspberries.

Then, while traversing the grove, she saw the woodmen that woodmened around there; but no such wolf, unknown nor furry. (free translation)

⁹ A, somewhere, all (free translation)

¹⁰ Neither bigger nor smaller (free translation)

¹¹ To olden, to wait, to be born, to grow up (free translation)

¹² The one who (free translation)

¹³ Who – who for now (free translation)

¹⁴ For now (free translation)

triangulation of readings – narrator, character, reader –, when he introduces the extract: “*viu os lenhadores que por lá lenhavam; mas o lobo nenhum, desconhecido nem peludo*”.¹⁵ The free indirect speech, glued and unglued on and from the narrator’s speech, “*mas o lobo nenhum, desconhecido nem peludo*”¹⁶, reveals to us that the character Green Ribbon knew the wolf, and a furry one. She is a reader, therefore, of the traditional tale, Little Red Riding Hood, and had, because of the similarities between those stories, the expectation of finding the animal, and that it would be furry, as she knew him. That is inferred from the unprecedented antonymic composition, generated by the expectation unknown vs. known, the first adjective being put in opposition to the latter, but metamorphosed into *peludo*.¹⁷ The narrator is part of this proposal of crossed readings and readers, creating a mixture of speeches.

Well, how to go into the tale without facing these linguistic, textual, pluridiscursive arrangements, which invite the reader to go into the woods of fiction? What breaches of expectation put the reader on trails of sensation of fateful promise?

Culler (1999) affirms that

A obra literária é um evento linguístico que projeta um mundo ficcional que inclui falante, atores, acontecimentos e um público implícito (um público que toma forma através das decisões da obra sobre o que deve ser explicado e o que supõe que o público saiba). (CULLER, 1999, p. 37).¹⁸

The convergence between verbal language, the subjects

15 She saw the woodmen that woodmened around there; but no such wolf, unknown nor furry. (free translation)

16 but no such wolf, unknown nor furry. (free translation)

17 Furry. (free translation)

18 The literary work is a linguistic event that projects a fictional world that includes speaker, actors, events and an implicit public (a public that is shaped through the decisions of the work about what must be explained and what is assumed that the public already knows). (free translation)

sociolinguistically and historically involved in it, in their working conditions; the perception of the text as a form of knowledge permeated by the infinite and inestimable uses of language and other texts, imbricated with those of Literature, promotes the aesthetic effects of art, as illustrated by the extract from Rosa.

Thus, the work, being a pole of enunciation, loaded with a linguistic repertoire and textual strategies, “[...] *esboça[r] e pré-estrutura[r] o potencial do texto; caberá ao leitor atualizá-lo para construir o objeto estético [...]*” (ISER, 1999, p. 9).¹⁹ For that, he must rebuild two structures: that of the text and that of the communicative act, a path that makes the text present inside the reader, in its conscience as a rebuilder. Therefore, the processing of the reading – dynamic interaction between literary text and reader – also happens through the stimulus of linguistic conditions, supported by the conception of language as an activity that is done through verbal interaction, in polysemic, polyphonic movements, in language variation, a fan of knowledge.

Under this condition, literary works, literary translations and works of Theory of Literature are built; teaching and learning of reading the literary text are developed; reflections about marginalized peoples, like indigenous people, rise; bridges are built between works of countries that are brothers in their Portuguese language; etc.

Ingedore Villaça Kock, in a statement given for the composition of the work **Literature and other languages**, by Beth Brait, reports that, as an undergrad student and middle school teacher, she was afflicted by the dichotomy between literary studies and Portuguese studies. She also tells that, during her master’s degree course, she came to know the area of

¹⁹ Sketches and pre-arranges the text's potential; it will be up to the reader to update it in order to build the aesthetic object. (free translation)

Linguistics, which familiarized her with phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics and stylistics. When studying for her doctorate, she started studying pragmatics, text linguistics, which allowed her “[...] what a wonder: to be able to ally Linguistics, which by then fascinated [her], with the research about the text – any and all kinds of text, including, of course, literary ones!” (BRAIT, 2010, p. 163). Through these new studies, the scientist could undo the separation between Language studies and Literature studies, understanding that “[...] the former brought subsidies to better understand the latter, these, in their turn, could teach us much about the former”. (BRAIT, 2010, p. 163).

Her testimony advocates this edition, which receives and presents articles about the contributions of linguistics to the translation of literary texts, for the production of meaning; about the space of discursive production in service of linguistic and literary studies; about orality in Language and Literature, in their possible approximations; about teaching methodologies of how to read the literary text interfacing with Linguistics, considering the selection and production of courseware, both synchronically and diachronically; about the contribution of Applied Linguistics and Literature to the curricula of Languages degree courses, thus designing the learning professional as an academic on both genres, a theoretician of both areas.

Applied Linguistics and Literature: a possible interface is the theme for this volume, bringing articles, interviews and reviews about the way the language operates in the constitution of the literary work, having as axis: the teaching of Literature and Language.

In the first article of this dossier, “If I say I became mute, I am not saying anything I am saying: aspects of the dialogue

between man and God in phloem, by Hilda Hilst”, Juliano Sippel analyses the categories of time and aspect, namely aspects of the past and present tenses, gerund and the periphrasis *estar* + gerund, in the text selected for study. When analyzing some events of this text as aspectual categories (finished, not finished, cursives, duratives, perfectives, imperfectives), the author dedicates himself to systematizing them in specific moments, attempting to find a textual or discursive organization of the confrontation that is introduced.

Next, the article by Souad Bennabes and Rachid Chibane, “L’enseignement de la littérature et de la langue dans les manuels de FLE des classes d’examens en Algérie”, examines the use of literary text in textbooks about French teaching, with the goal of investigating if the literary texts improve the students’ communicative and linguistic abilities.

The article by Vanessa Lopes Lourenço Hanes, “Non-standart language in Brazilian literary translations: new tendency or historic legacy?”, is inserted, therefore, in the intersection between Sociolinguistics and Translation Studies, also utilizing knowledge from other areas to find answers, even if partial ones, to the great question: are the attempts of using variation in the target text, as one translates the variation present in the source text, really a recent phenomenon in the universe of literary translation of the last decades?

With the work “Interfaces between Linguistics and Literary: a study of Madame Bovary”, Renata Aiala de Mello shows some possible interfaces between Linguistic and Literary studies, through a discursive analysis of the novel **Madame Bovary**, by Gustave Flaubert. Based on the Discourse Analysis theoretical framework, she outlines the main character self-images, i.e.

Emma Bovary's *ethos*.

Rita Cristine Lima Lages, in her article – “Language, literature and French prints in 19th Century Brazil: cultural and school practices” – deals with the circulation of books, and prints in general, that circulated in Brazil throughout the 21st century, and that were appropriated for French teaching. According to her, during the first moments of that language's schooling, maps with the examination plans indicated the use of not only specific manuals, grammars, but also the appropriation of works of literature, philosophy, politics and economics for the teaching of the French language.

The article by Sílvia Rodrigo de Moura Rocha, “The song genre in literature and Portuguese language textbooks”, is inserted in the discussions about the Teaching of Languages and Literature, in view of its goal of discussing the role of the song genre in the classroom and analyzing the available textbook collections in the Brazilian contemporary market, offering possible paths to the use of music at teaching and learning situations, especially in middle school, considering the focus on teaching practices, based on the textual genres and the aesthetic configuration of the texts, relative to the sociocultural spot that songs occupy in our country. According to Fernando Danner, Leno Francisco Danner, Julie Dorrico, in “Indigenous literature between ancestral tradition and present critique: about the indigenous voice and praxis in aesthetic and literary terms”, literature of minority groups in general and indigenous literature, in particular, make the publicization of the voice and praxis of those same minorities possible (in this article, indigenous people) from a perspective that intersects I and a group community and that is based on and constituted by

the triad memory (as community and victim), self-affirmation (as minority) and political and cultural resistance (against marginalization, exclusion and violence suffered and lived by minorities). In other words, the authors argue that literature of minority groups and, consequently, indigenous literature are constituted directly as aesthetic and literary activism, whether through the use of (and the bond to) the communitarian tradition, or through the voice and praxis of denunciation and unraveling of the condition of exclusion, marginalization and violence lived. This is, the authors argue, a fundamental condition for analyzing the meaning of authorship and of aesthetic and literary expression of minority groups in general and of indigenous productions in particular.

Next, two other articles, without a larger commitment to the theme of this edition of **Scripta**, collaborate with the dossier, raising questions about Literacy and Dialectology. The first, “Tendencies of Brazilian scientific production in the area of Languages about academic literacy in the training of teachers”, authored by Elisa Bragança Curi Magalhães de Souza, investigates the main tendencies of scientific production about academic literacy in the formation of teachers of Letters, examining texts from 2013 to 2017 at the CAPES thesis database, and aiming to map the challenges and contributions of the debate about academic literacy in the training of teachers. On the other hand, Selma Sueli Santos Guimarães, in her article “‘The way from São Tiago’ or ‘Milky Way’: through where do the lexical choices wander?”, infers and identifies the production of meanings and the registries of discursive memory subjacent to the textual and discursive elements present in the answers of subjects of research to a question from the Questionário Semântico-Lexical,

utilized in the elaboration of the Atlas Linguístico do Paraná, by Vanderci Aguilera. According to the author, the diverse lexical choices, when producing new effects, are constituted in the registry of discursive memory in which the subjects are inscribed and which they appropriate during their interactions, sustaining the idea that meaning is produced in a social space directly linked to the subjects' ideological inscription, since their voices reveal the social space in which they are inscribed.

We highlight two interviews published in this volume. The first is with Carlos Alberto Faraco, Lecturer (retired) at Universidade Federal do Paraná (UFPR), conducted by Felipe Almeida Gomes, regarding a primordial point: the bakhtian studies on the interface between philosophy and language sciences. Professor Faraco, in this interview, argues that Bakhtin was, indeed, a great philosopher that dialogued with many philosophical traditions and modeled very innovative and heuristically powerful answers about language, aesthetic, literature and culture.

The second interview is with Márcia Marques de Moraes, Assistant Teacher at Pontifícia Universidade Católica de Minas Gerais (PUC Minas), conducted by the organizers of this volume, Vera Lopes da Silva and Clézio Roberto Gonçalves. It is a reflexive chat about the relation between literary reading and teaching, based on Guimarães Rosa, and wandering, also, through names of Brazilian Literature, prose and poetry, such as Bernardo Carvalho, Chico Buarque, Drummond, Murilo Rubião, Henriqueta Lisboa, Florbela Espanca, and others. The interview deals with questions about the acts of reading, studies through which she is committed to the formation of teachers, orienting them about the literary making not only in its constitution, but

also in the aesthetic procedures of teaching and learning this text mode in its Portuguese language materiality.

Two reviews close out this volume. Clézio Roberto Gonçalves e Elaine da Fonseca Ramos present the book **Linguistics, text and the teaching of language**, authored by José Carlos de Azeredo, and published by Editora Parábola, in 2018. According to the reviewers, the book reaffirms the importance of the word as the basis for any teaching, since it is in the language possession and in its use that a subject's way of being is found. Furthermore, in every chapter of the book, the author demonstrates that the text is constituted of words (object) and it is also the goal of the mother language teaching. In this review, we highlight the author's position who argues that men, in order to live in society, needs the word, which means it is indispensable. The value of words goes much further than being a simple instrument of language, something only meant for humans to communicate among themselves. The fact that it is inherent to man language is not explained in natural terms. It is grounded in the social universe because it is integrated to cultural phenomena learned through life.

The other review, **Isolation and porosity of character in Heroes and Figurants**, by Enrico Testa, written by Pedro Barbosa Rudge Furtado, is a critical analysis of Enrico Testa's book, **Heros and figurants: the character in novel** (2019), published by Editora Rafael Copetti. The review offers some reflections about the highlighted narrative category, in Literature, if not contemporary – depending on the temporal and formal dimension taken by each researcher with the goal of defining parameters of what is Contemporary Literature – closer to our present days, taking in account the prose from the

1980s and 1990s, such as those by Paul Auster, Ian McEwan, Javier Marías, among others. Along with the comments about these authors, there are those from literati considered 19th and, especially, 20th century classics.

In this set of articles, interviews and reviews, questions that highlight faces and interfaces between Applied Linguistics and Literature, in their specificities and in dialogue, promote knowledge that contribute to the professionals, scientists, translators, analysts, critics of both areas; and, yet, to those committed to the classroom, allowing them ways of teaching and learning the literary text reading mediated by the linguistic knowledge and allowing the formation of Literature readers with refined performance.

Let's get to them!

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