

A rigorous methodology for an ethical agenda of the act: the dialogical structuralism of Critical Discourse Analysis

Una metodología rigurosa para una agenda ética del acto: el estructuralismo dialógico del Análisis Crítico del Discurso

Uma rigorosa metodologia para uma agenda ética do ato: o estruturalismo dialógico da Análise Crítica do Discurso

ABSTRACT

In this paper, we are concerned with the tension of a dialogical ontology with a structuralist episteme on the Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis model, the Social Theory of Discourse (1992, 2003). Our approach considers that, on the one hand, its origins in the Systemic Functional Grammar (Halliday, 2004) maintain a "top-down" structuralist residuality, which remains in textual and linguistic analysis. However, on the other hand, we recognize that the Bakhtinian dialogism assumption (Bakhtin, 1993, 1986) functions as a "bottom-up" dialogical eventicity that forms the ethical basis of the critical perspective. This methodological treatment of the relationship among events, practices and texts by their description and interpretation is what allows the transition from a static ethical agenda to an empowering ethical agenda. The real empowerment, embedded in the "critical purpose", needs the consideration of the responsible and responsive integrality of the act (Costa, 2013, 2012).

Keywords: ethical agenda; dialogismo; Critical Discourse Analysis; empowerment.



Recebido em: 17 de junho de 2023
Aceito em: 01 de outubro de 2023
DOI: 10.26512/les.v25i1.49181

CADERNOS de LINGUAGEM & SOCIEDADE

Papers on Language and Society

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ARTIGO

RESUMEN

En este artículo, nos ocupamos de la tensión de una ontología dialógica con una episteme estructuralista en el modelo de Análisis Crítico del Discurso de Fairclough, la Teoría Social del Discurso (1992, 2003). Nuestro enfoque considera que, por un lado, sus orígenes en la Gramática Funcional Sistemática (Halliday, 2004) mantienen una residualidad estructuralista "top-down", que permanece en el análisis textual y lingüístico. Sin embargo, por otro lado, reconocemos que el supuesto del dialogismo bakhtiniano (Bakhtin, 1993, 1986) funciona como un evento dialógico "bottom-up" que forma la base ética de la perspectiva crítica. Este tratamiento metodológico de la relación entre hechos, prácticas y textos a través de su descripción e interpretación es lo que permite transitar de una agenda ética estática a una agenda ética empoderadora. El empoderamiento real, incrustado en el "propósito crítico", exige la consideración de la integralidad responsable y responsiva del acto (Costa, 2013, 2012).

Palabras clave: agenda ética; dialogismo; Análisis Crítico del Discurso; empoderamiento.

RESUMO

Neste artigo, estamos preocupados com a tensão de uma ontologia dialógica com uma episteme estruturalista no modelo de Análise Crítica do Discurso de Fairclough, a Teoria Social do Discurso (1992, 2003). Nossa abordagem considera que, por um lado, suas origens na Gramática Funcional Sistemática (Halliday, 2004) mantêm uma residualidade estruturalista "top-down", que permanece na análise textual e linguística. Porém, por outro lado, reconhecemos que o pressuposto do dialogismo bakhtiniano (Bakhtin, 1993, 1986) funciona como uma eventicidade dialógica "bottom-up" que forma a base ética da perspectiva crítica. Esse tratamento metodológico da relação entre eventos, práticas e textos por meio de sua descrição e interpretação é o que permite a transição de uma agenda ética estática para uma agenda ética empoderadora. O real empoderamento, embutido na "finalidade crítica", necessita da consideração da integralidade responsável e responsiva do ato (Costa, 2013, 2012).

Palavras-chave: agenda ética; dialogismo; Análise de Discurso Crítica; empoderamento.

Como citar:

COSTA, Alexandre Ferreira da; RIOS, Guilherme Veiga; BARONAS, Roberto Leiser. A rigorous methodology for an ethical agenda of the act: the dialogical structuralism of Critical Discourse Analysis. *Cadernos de Linguagem e Sociedade*, Brasília, v. 25, n. 1, p. 12-25, jan./jun. 2024. Disponível em: . Acesso em: XXX.

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INTRODUCTION

And just as lava differs from the rock it will become, so the two states of lived experience, on the one hand, and systems for registering such experience on the other, are fundamentally different from each other. (Michael Holquist in the Introduction of Bakhtin's *Towards a Philosophy of the Act*, p. x)

After almost 30 years of the appearance of Norman Fairclough's Social Theory of Discourse (STD), as a model of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), many of its followers seem to be condemned to choose just one of its strong constitutive elements to work with. Our hypothesis about it is that very few analysts used to consider in depth what we understand as the three articulated connections of STD. The first two of them, the functional and the discursive aspects of this CDA model, receive a lot of attention as entrances of many analytical devices that come from diverse disciplines such as Linguistics, Sociology, Anthropology and so forth. But the dialogical assumption of STD, that is clearly visible in the use of the discursive genre's concept, is usually underestimated in its phenomenological consequences.

In this article, we show how dialogism carries to the "critical purpose" the responsive and responsible demands of any integral act or, in other words, its eventicity as a condition of any utterance. The Bakhtinian Philosophy of Language is impregnated in the notion of discursive genres, and this concept is so important to Fairclough's work, that it is related by him to the Halliday's metafunctions of language. Therefore, our discussion here deals with the need to present and explain this very important aspect of this CDA model. We assume that the "critical" part of it does not come just from an external notion of Social Sciences about ideology (what really happens), but it is, after all, inherent to the dialogical orientation of the STD and, because of that, an important methodological topic.

In the following sections, we discuss the structuralist and the dialogical epistemic and ontological aspects of STD, and, in the last one, their integration in this CDA methodology.

1. THE HALLIDAYAN STRUCTURALIST ENTOURAGE

In former studies, we realized that the apparent "hangover" of the structuralist massive transference to other social sciences from linguistic models has caused a profound devaluation of this epistemological basis in the study of language itself. Currently, the presence of an assumed structuralist approach in Linguistics is so ghostly that it would be necessary to evaluate to what aspect of the procedures of discursive exclusion it was conjured: if to the taboo of the object, to the ritual of the circumstance or to the privileged or exclusive right of speech. What is certain is that structuralism episteme is on the periphery of the space of the "will to truth" of social sciences studies (Costa, 2013; Foucault, 1996).

However, and despite this, the theoretical and methodological consequences of the “ghost” are still present and still important for all areas and approaches to linguistics, including those dealing with the use of language (as STD does). This is not only because it is possible to locate its influence in the reflection of authors of the Human Sciences in which the studies of discourse and enunciation seek theoretical subsidies, but above all because we depend on research that remains very close to this heritage. This erasing of the structuralist episteme is also due to an old internal contradiction in its conception that goes back to his definition by Aristoteles, whose best synthesis is presented by the Italian semiotician Umberto Eco (Costa; Castro, 2014, 438):

[...] we used Eco's reflection (2001) to locate the difference between the concepts of "ontological structuralism" and "epistemological structuralism". According to Eco, ontological structuralism considers structures as real entities and the source of any phenomenon under study, and the researcher can find them and fit them into larger and more complex systems, reaching a superstructure that governs the others. In epistemological structuralism, on the other hand, structures are considered only as "models" that the researcher creates and applies to develop his/her studies with the possibilities of generalization. In his historiographical and epistemological reflection, Eco defines the notion of “structure” in the following ways: a) A set or parts of this set, and the relationship of these parts to one another; b) An autonomous entity with internal dependence; c) A whole formed by solidary elements, in which each element depends on another one, so that it cannot be what it is without this relationship.

In his conclusion about it, in the famous *Absent Structure*, Eco chooses the epistemic model, and we follow him through it. For instance, we consider in this way that the linguistic functionalism forms a pair with the linguistic generativism, as the mythic double-faced Juno. They probably are the two-great theoretical-methodological approaches of grammar studies, which are not explicitly termed structuralist, albeit it is partially assumed in inverse explanatory directions. In its analysis, generativism searches for internal (or deep) linguistic systems that are constitutive of the superficial diversity of language, trying to find the structures of each language and, in them, “the” universal grammar. Functionalism, on the other hand, adopts the interiorization of structures and not their externalization as its analytical perspective, considering the “language use primacy”. The two approaches, therefore, construct structural models for their data and must produce them based on empirical cuts in the usage of language. They do so, however, in different analytical directions, which privilege, respectively, structural stability and structural instability. Therefore, functionalism is the most common bias in maintaining structuralism in language studies, although cognitive models may be closer to generativism (Costa; Castro, 2014).

As a result, it is reasonable to envisage that all aspects of linguistics that are based on descriptions of functional grammars should participate to some extent in their epistemology. Thus, the constitution of objects or levels of analysis that include, for example, interfrastic mechanisms, reference processes, types and sequences of text should produce this kind of assimilation. It is at this level of relationship that, apparently, are the researches in Applied Linguistics, in Textual Linguistics and even in Discourse Analysis. In other words, if the areas of linguistics that focus on

the study of language use to rely on descriptions and functional grammatical explanations, they must also incorporate the structuralist epistemological bias (Costa, 2013). And we consider that it applies to STD1.

However, in the Fairclough's CDA model, the functional entrance has more constitutive consequences. The STD approach does not just include the analytical levels and concepts of the Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar but reproduces part of it in the discursive level. The hardest axiom proposed by Halliday theory is that all piece of language use activates three metafunctions when the "system of a language is 'instantiated' in the form of a text" (Halliday, 1985, p. 26; 29-31):

[...] language provides a theory of human experience, and certain of the resources of the lexicogrammar of every language are dedicated to that function. We call it the ideational metafunction [...] At the same time, whenever we use language there is always something else going on. While construing, language is always enacting: enacting our personal and social relationships with the other people around us. [...] if the ideational function of the grammar is 'language as reflection', this is 'language as action'. We call it the interpersonal metafunction, to suggest that is both interactive and personal [...] But the grammar also shows up a third component, another mode of meaning which relates to the construction of text. [...] [the former metafunctions] depend on being able to build up sequences of discourses, organizing the discursive flow and creating cohesion and continuity as it moves along. [...] We call it the textual metafunction.

Therefore, the instantiation of a language in use depends on an internalized structure that is condensed in the relationship of the ideational, interpersonal and textual metafunctions to produce what we call the top-down residuality. This grammar level is considered as homological related to other levels of analysis in STD, and because of that, it is part of what we understand as a rigorous methodology when it is related *to the bottom up dialogical eventicity of the ethical act*. That is the topic of the next section.

2. THE BAKHTINIAN DIALOGISM ETHICAL DEMAND

To understand the importance of the Bakhtinian dialogical entrance in the Fairclough's CDA model, we need to establish first his connection with what we call the *structuralist residuality* of Halliday's functionalism approach in it. In Bakhtin's work, we find both the defense of an inevitable objectivity, albeit precarious, and the assertion of an inapprehensible ethic, albeit absolute. In other words, we argue that the Russian philosopher places the validity of ethics in the becoming, and that of knowledge in the objectivity (Costa, 2013).

The objective structured treatment of the act that can be found in Bakhtin's *Genres of discourse* (1986) is completely well understood and applied in STD. In the same methodological way of Halliday grammar appropriation, the genres could be reduced to their residuality, as a *structural*

¹ After having written an essay for a course lectured by Norman Fairclough under his doctorate degree one of the authors (Rios) received a comment by Fairclough saying that his approach was not 'post-structuralist' as Rios had affirmed in his essay.

system of differences. However, the point we must explain here is the ontological eventicity, which is inherent to discursive genres and their dialogical relative stability/instability. This condition comes from the Bakhtinian phenomenology theory placed in *Toward of a Philosophy of the act* (1993), whose ethical act axiom is not well considered in the critical purpose of Fairclough's approach.

In his ontological problematic, the author assumes that cultural activities (science, philosophy, literature, history, etc.) "establish a fundamental split between the content or sense of a given act/activity and the historical actuality of its being, the actual and once occurrent experiencing of it", because they are not able to deal with the unattainable "transitiveness and open eventness of Being" (BAKHTIN, 1993: 1-2). The overcoming of the cut between the theoretician and the real one and concrete would be *totally hopeless*, since the lived can never be totally objectified (Bakhtin, 1993, p. 27-28):

We have identified as unfounded and as essentially hopeless all attempts to orient first philosophy (the philosophy of unitary and once-occurrent Being-as-event) in relation to the content/sense aspect or the objectified product taken in abstraction from the once occurrent actual act/deed and its author – the one who is thinking theoretically, contemplating aesthetically, and acting ethically. It is only from within the actually performed act, which is once occurrent, integral, and unitary in its answerability, that we can find an approach to unitary and once occurrent Being in its concrete actuality. A first philosophy can orient itself only with respect to that actually performed act (Bakhtin, 1993, p. 27-28).

Although the logic of Bakhtin's reasoning is impeccable, it is worth the paraphrase: the subject that exists in the processes of the world is concrete, unique, and his reality is the permanent event. Aesthetic or theoretical knowledge, whatever its form, is the contemplation of it: an abstraction that is incapable of reproducing the concreteness, uniqueness, and transitivity of reality. Having established this axiom, the author goes on to discuss the implications and limits of objective knowledge for the definition of an ethical system. Bakhtin is interested in overcoming the immateriality of Kant's abstract and universal ethics and in affirming the *non-alibi in existence*, the constitutive responsibility of the procedural reality of Being. As he himself assumes, his treatment of this is phenomenological, since such a problem does not fit into the objectivity (it does not lend itself to structuring). In other words, Bakhtin tells us that the real, in the final analysis, is irreducible to its objective representation, above all by the constitutive implication of the subjects in the world (Costa, 2013).

Without disregarding the risks of the following statement, we will say that, despite this ontological assumption, Bakhtin will seek to objectify the real in his subsequent works. Even considering the transitivity of the space-time materiality of life and its existential implications of facing the world as a possibility, it will also use principles of objective description of the processes of reality. Our reading of the author's reasoning, save a better judgment, establishes a seemingly inescapable logical derivation: *if the transitivity of the Being is inapprehensible, all objective research will be reductive*. In other words, all scientific research will deal only partially with complexity, and its

demands for rigor and validity relate to the balance between the reductionist descriptions and the derivations of the real. In this sense, the Bakhtinian approach will be related to subsequent discussion based on the following axiomatic derivations (Costa, 2013). The reality of the Being is always the becoming, the process:

- a) The theoretical discourse is always a partial objectification of this reality;
- b) Every level of objectification is not exempted in relation to its limitations, that is, it must operationally recognize its precariousness;
- c) The productivity of any objective approach results from the levels and relationships that can be built for the real, according to its intentions;
- d) Every theoretical-methodological device that is objective will always be more productive the less it depends on the aspects of the real that it excludes.

We can deduct from the last three derivations some part of the lack of STD critical purpose, which we are seeking for. Without having a rigorous methodological resource to work with a real emergence of the eventicity in the empowerment, this CDA model just has a static ethical agenda, not an empowering one. Therefore, to attack this problem, we must explore dialogism as the founder of all aspects and circumstances of the use of language and as the condition of its necessary objectification. As we recognize above, the most direct way to do this is consider the Bakhtinian's notion of discursive genres (or speech genres) as a top-down process in STD (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 60, our griffin):

All the diverse areas of human activity involve the use of language. Quite understandably, the nature and forms of this use are just as diverse as are the areas of human activity. This, of course, in no way disaffirms the national unity of language. Language is realized in the form of individual concrete utterances (oral and written) by participants in the various areas of human activity. These utterances reflect the specific conditions and goals of each such area not only through their content (thematic) and linguistic style, that is, the selection of the lexical, phraseological, and grammatical resources of the language, but above all through their compositional structure. All three of these aspects – thematic content, style, and compositional structure – are inseparably linked to the whole of the utterance and are equally determined by the specific nature of the particular sphere of communication. *Each separate utterance is individual, of course, but each sphere in which language is used develops its own relatively stable types of these utterances. These we may call speech genres.*

From the Bakhtin's perspective, treating the utterance only in an abstract objective way is an error because it skips the description of dialogical singularities, or to despise them, taking as real the abstraction of the eventicity of the act. As we explain below, the responsible and responsive aspects of any utterance and its surplus of vision are the conditions for a real empowering ethical agenda.

Therefore, we need a better understanding of the discursive genre's notion, not just as a top-down process of residuality, but as a bottom-up process of eventicity. And it can be found in a

common aspect of both directions with the inescapable *answerability* of any utterance (BAKHTIN, 1986, p. 91, our griffin):

Any concrete utterance is a link in the chain of speech communication of a particular sphere. The very boundaries of the utterance are determined by a *change of speech subjects*. Utterances are not indifferent to one another and are not self-sufficient; they are aware of and mutually reflect one another. These mutual reflections determine their character. Each utterance is filled with echoes and reverberations of other utterances to which it is related by the communality of the sphere of speech communication. *Every utterance must be regarded primarily as a response to preceding utterances* of the given sphere (we understand the word "response" here in the broadest sense). *Each utterance refutes, affirms, supplements, and relies on the others, presupposes them to be known, and somehow takes them into account.* After all, as regards a given question, in a given matter, and so forth, the utterance occupies a particular definite position in a given sphere of communication. It is impossible to determine its position without correlating it with other positions. Therefore, *each utterance is filled with various kinds of responsive reactions* to other utterances of the given sphere of speech communication. These reactions take various forms: others' utterances can be introduced directly into the context of the utterance, or one may introduce only individual words or sentences, which then act as representatives of the whole utterance. Both whole utterances and individual words can retain their alien expression, but they can also be reaccentuated (ironically, indignantly, reverently, and so forth). Others' utterances can be repeated with varying degrees of reinterpretation. They can be referred to as though the interlocutor were already well aware of them; they can be silently presupposed; or *one's responsive reaction to them can be reflected only in the expression of one's own speech* in the selection of language means and *intonations* that are determined not by the topic of one's own speech but by the others' utterances concerning the same topic.

This coherence between Bakhtin's ontological considerations and his use of structuralist procedures in defining the notion of discursive genre is a fundamental difference between his approach and the traditional structuralist one. The Bakhtinian critique of abstract objectivism is relative to the reduction of the enunciative whole to its structural part, which should be obtained by analyzing the concrete and unrepeatable utterance. The concrete in Bakhtin is the utterance and never the structure. In Bakhtin's approach (1997, p. 282), the relation between acts and structures is dialogic: "Language penetrates into life through the concrete statements that carry it out, and it is also through the concrete statements that life penetrates the language".

When we recognize the structuralist principles in Bakhtin's theory we also accept that he introduces them to deal with the act, through the notion of discursive genre. Epistemologically, Bakhtin constitutes procedures of partial objectification of its ontology, guarding it by the notion of dialogy. Taken as a constitutive principle of language and social life, dialogue is based on the assumption that the real unity of language is the utterance, a unique and unrepeatable entity, an event: the links of an infinite and immense chain of active responsive relations of the subjects in the communication process (Costa, 2013).

As we will see in the next Section, Fairclough's three-dimensional model contains the analytical category of intertextuality, which figures in the discursive practice dimension, an

intermediary bottom-up level of analysis of practices from events. Dialogue, in Bakhtinian terms, bears upon this model through the category of intertextuality, a concept developed by Kristeva (1986 [1966]). Where Bakhtin talks of others' utterances within oneself text, Kristeva talks of "insertion of history (society) into a text and of this text into history" (1986, p. 39 in Fairclough, 1992, p. 102), that is, the event constituted by texts is an amalgam of others' texts in the past and it "responds to, reaccentuates, and reworks past texts, and in so doing helps to make history and contributes to wider processes of change, as well as anticipating and trying to shape subsequent texts" (Fairclough, 1992, p. 102).

Dialogue/Intertextuality, in its turn, is the piecework for Fairclough's development of a transdisciplinary embedding with categories such as logic of difference and equivalence brought from social sciences (Laclau; Mouffe, 1985). In this way, others' texts work in a text building relations of equivalence and difference (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999; Fairclough, 2003) pointing to hegemonic social struggles whether what it is on play is a interweaving of political and ideological investments on discourses. Through the category of dialogicity in textual events it is possible to examine texts and observe the extent to which it suppresses or recognizes differences and reaffirms similitudes and equivalences.

In this sense, the lack we are looking for in the appropriation of the concept of discursive genre in STD demands the maintenance of the eventicity to preserve its ethical character. To overcome a static ethical agenda on behalf of another one that contains in itself empowerment as part of the critical purpose one should draw on the notion of a *surplus of vision* (BAKHTIN, 2003, p. 21):

This surplus of my vision, of my knowledge, of my possession, [...] always present in the face of any other individual is conditioned by the uniqueness and unsubstitutability of my place in the world: for at that moment and in that place, where I am the only one to be situated in a given set of circumstances, all others are out of me.

Bakhtin insists exhaustively in all his books about the singular and unrepeatable ontological condition of any utterance and, because of that, in the uniqueness of the participant in the ontological act. And, at any circumstances, it happens in the alterity condition that demands the non-alibi implied by the agents' responsivity and responsibility. This surplus of vision, or *exotopy*, in its eventicity implies an interaction made by the stages of comprehension and finishment of any utterance. The real empowering ethical agenda needs a methodology that could include a dynamic and tense relationship between these exotopic stages (Bakhtin, 1993, p. 2-3):

It is only the once-occurrent event of Being in the process of actualization that can constitute this unique unity; all that which is theoretical or aesthetic must be determined as a constituent moment in the once-occurrent event of Being, although no longer, of course, in theoretical or aesthetic terms. An act must acquire a single unitary plane to be able to reflect itself in both directions – in its sense or meaning and in its being; it must acquire the unity of two-sided answerability – both for its

content (special answerability) and for its Being (moral answerability). And the special answerability, moreover, must be brought into communion with the unitary and unique moral answerability as a constituent moment in it. That is the only way whereby the pernicious non-fusion and non-interpenetration of culture and life could be surmounted.

Therefore, as we can see, albeit the discursive genres could be useful for a top-down methodology, as a structural abstraction, its constitutive dialogism is a bottom-up ontological condition. The methodological treatment of its residuality is submitted to the consideration of its eventicity present in exotopic processes. That is what we discuss about the STD methodology in the next section.

3. THE FAIRCLOUGHIAN CRITICAL EMPOWERMENT

In the former sections, we present the splitness between the real act in its eventicity and its theoretical representation as residuality, calling them as a *bottom-up* and *top-down* methodological processes. It was related to the Fairclough's CDA model, the STD, and its methodological demands in the application of its critical purpose. Both Halliday and Bakhtin's models were considered well established in the top-down Fairclough' approach, but not in the need of bottom-up eventicity and its implications for the critical purpose. Finally, we found in the operational treatment of the Bakhtinian exotopy concept a possible response to this lack, and that is what we want to scrutinise now.

First of all, it is necessary to present Fairclough's conception of his critical approach, which was appropriated from social sciences in a very polemic context. We do not disagree at all with him. But, once we are concerned with a different topic, a methodological one, it is important to make it explicit. The critical discussion of STD is focused in the concepts of ideology and power asymmetry (Fairclough, 1995, p. 17):

In my view, particular representations and constructions of the world are instrumental (partly in discourse) and important in reproducing domination, they do call for investigation and critique, and the force and specificity of the concept of ideology has come from its deployment in the critique of these particular processes. If the concept of ideology is to be used, it should be used critically. [...] In tying ideology to social relations of power, I am alluding to asymmetrical relations of power, to domination.

This excerpt is clearly linked to what we are calling in this article the *top-down* process, once it is direct to map, describe and analyse texts and discourses reducing the utterances to amounts of structured objective data. In this sense, the analysis of power asymmetry is conducted by some static ethical agenda. It is not concerned with the methodological model itself. In other words, it could be done in the same way which is applied to linguistic and textual in the functional entrance. It is an abstraction made by some fixit position.

Of course, there is no problem with it at all. It is just common science applied to “objects”. All the methodological concepts, as ‘text’, ‘genre’, ‘discourse’, etc., are focusing elements that belong to what Bakhtin calls ‘the world of culture’, the partial representation of the acts. However, our concern takes in account the use and the exchange of these critical statements between real agents in real practices involving real asymmetries, in which the comprehension and finishment of the acts are happening.

A good summary of STD was done by the author in his Introduction of *Analysing Discourse*, and its consideration is quite useful for a comparison that we want to do about the dialogism notion of genres of discourse (Fairclough, 2003, p. 3):

Critical discourse analysis is concerned with continuity and change at this more abstract, more structural, level, as well as with what happens in particular texts. The link between these two concerns is made through the way in which texts are analyzed in critical discourse analysis. Text analysis is seen as not only linguistic analysis; it also includes what I have called ‘interdiscursive analysis’, that is, seeing texts in terms of the different discourses, genres and styles they draw upon and articulate together.

Fairclough’s approach has been transforming itself since the publication of *Discourse and Social Change* (1992) but, in this ten-years later excerpt, it is possible to see the maintenance of the homology with Halliday’s metafunctions. The concepts of ‘discourse’, ‘genre’ and ‘style’ still correspond to the ‘ideational’, ‘textual’, ‘interpersonal’ metafunctions, albeit with a little bit different relationship, they still refer to “representation”, “action” and “identities”. It seems that we continue in the top-down approach.

Nevertheless, Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999, p. 22) have already opened a new direction with the revision of the concept of practice: “practices always have a reflexive dimension: people always generate representations of what they do as a part of what they do”. It could be do not represent to much, but the small ontological reflection that start then, became a more well-established position later (Fairclough, 2003, p. 14):

The position I take is a realist one, based on a realist ontology: both concrete social events and abstract social structures, as well as the rather less abstract ‘social practices’ (...) are part of reality. We can make a distinction between the ‘potential’ and the ‘actual’ – what is possible because of the nature (constraints and allowances) of social structures and practices, as opposed to what actually happens. Both need to be distinguished from the ‘empirical’, what we know about reality. (...) Reality (the potential, the actual) cannot be reduced to our knowledge of reality, which is contingent, shifting, and partial.

Here, we finally have a more close approximation from the STD with the Bakhtinian dialogism. Both theories, as we pointed out, have the top-down residuality well postulated in their sharing of the discursive genres structuralist direction (the ‘empirical’). Now, however, with the conception of the

'potential' and 'actual' reality, STD could have in its methodology similar notions to the 'comprehension' and 'finishment' as part of Bakhtinian exotopy, the surplus of vision.

The methodological limit of Fairclough's CDA model, however, remains in the same problem that was implicit in the Bakhtinian dialogism. The non-alibi in existence depends on responsivity and responsibility, and it is still phenomenological. A real empowering ethic agenda demands a real participatory thinking. There is not some 'critical purpose' without an "interpellated analyst". At the end, the theory development generates an "existentialist paradox": the assumption of the responsive aspect of the act, but not the rigorous responsible process of the research itself. But this "existentialist paradox" might have a start to be tackled in the last stage of Chouliaraki & Fairclough's critical explanatory framework (1999, p. 60), which is based on Bhaskhar's approach of critical realism (1986): the reflection on the analysis, which could be an open space for the consideration of utterances in the events other than those of the analyst.

This methodological discussion was recently addressed by *Critical Discourse Analyses: A Method of Quality Research*, assuming the empowerment as a desirable consequence of the critical purpose (Magalhães; Martins; Resende, 2017, p. 176-177):

By articulating theories and methods, the CDA provides both a critical analysis of realities of injustices and inequalities what benefit some groups at the expense of others as much as it provides a theoretical-practical instrument that may have a predominant role in the political struggle that precedes the transformation of these realities, which implies putting an end to oppression and promoting justice and equality in social relations. This is possible because of the conjuncture that marks the contemporaneity - besides the omnipresence of discourse in the public sphere, the battles fought in this arena reveal themselves as important or, who knows, as the war conflicts, or the clashes economic order - and the potential for self-emancipation and empowerment that CDA provides to people.

As a matter of fact, despite this approach being concerned with empowerment, its focus is on describing CDA as a qualitative methodology, working in some way of top-down direction, with the primacy of the analyst. In other words, the emphasis is on the production and sharing 'critical achievements', and because of that it is still in the critical analysts' static ethical agenda (Wodak, 2009, p. 7 *apud* Magalhães; Martins; Resende, 2017, p. 33): "[critical analysts] "want to produce and present critical knowledge that enables human beings to emancipate themselves by dominating forms of self-reflection".

However, the merit of this approach is the assumption of the ethnographical need (Chouliaraki; Fairclough, 1999, p. 61-2), which leads and will push the analysts to think more and more about the surplus of vision between them and the field agents. More than that, the maintenance of this demand will expose the comprehension and finishment aspects of the exotopy, and it will fix the need to fulfill the rigour of the methodology in discussion.

FINAL REMARK

Finally, we want to foster this discussion using CDA's own reflection in Chouliaraki & Fairclough (1999, p. 29) about the emancipatory knowledge interest of critical social research, which needs more attention and more practicing: this interest implies a dialectical social theory, in which phenomenological knowledge integrates with objectivist knowledge giving room to a dialectical knowledge. This way of knowing would prevent reducing the object of knowledge to the practical experiences of research participants, which it would have the disadvantage of overlooking structural and objectivist relations, whereas it would prevent wiping off research and theoretical practice from the actual researched practices. In so doing, "critical social science constructs as the object of scientific research the dialectical relationship between objective relations and structures on the one hand, and the practical dispositions of subjects engaged in practices on the other" (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999, p. 30).

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