

THEMATIC SECTION:  
ART EXPRESSIONS  
AND CONTEMPORARY  
SUBJECTIVITIES



## **Creativity, Authorship and Argumentation at School: subjectivity in discourse**

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**ABSTRACT – Creativity, Authorship and Argumentation at School: subjectivity in discourse.** The research objective was to investigate the meanings that 5<sup>th</sup> grade students from a public school in Ribeirão Preto, state of São Paulo, give to the textual production that enables polysemy, creativity and authorship. Conversation circles were held with the students to know their relationships with written textual production and with the school. Pêcheux's Discourse Analysis guided the data analysis through concepts such as subjectivity, discourse, ideology, discursive memory and authorship. The results point out that the discourses produced by the students about writing often rely on dominant social discourses; when they rely on their own subjectivities, they become closer to polysemy and creativity.  
**Keywords: Discourse. Writing. Creativity. Subjectivity.**

**RESUMO – Criatividade, Autoria e Argumentação na Escola: subjetividade em discurso.** O objetivo da pesquisa foi investigar os sentidos que alunos do 5º ano de uma escola pública de Ribeirão Preto – SP, dão à linguagem escrita – à produção textual que possibilita a polissemia, criatividade e autoria. Foram realizadas rodas de conversa com os alunos para conhecimento de suas relações com a produção textual escrita e com a escola. A Análise de Discurso pecheuxtiana norteou a análise por meio de conceitos como subjetividade, discurso, ideologia, memória discursiva e autoria. Os resultados apontam que os discursos produzidos pelos alunos sobre a escrita, muitas vezes, apoiam-se nos discursos dominantes que circulam na sociedade; quando se apoiam em suas próprias subjetividades, aproximam-se mais da polissemia e da criatividade.  
**Palavras-chave: Discurso. Escrita. Criatividade. Subjetividade.**

## Subject, Discourse and School

*Navegadores antigos tinham uma frase gloriosa:  
'Navegar é preciso; viver não é preciso'.  
Quero para mim o espírito [d]esta frase,  
transformada a forma para a casar como eu sou:  
Viver não é necessário; o que é necessário é criar.  
Não conto gozar a minha vida; nem em gozá-la penso.  
Só quero torná-la grande,  
ainda que para isso tenha de ser o meu corpo  
e a (minha alma) a lenha desse fogo.  
(Navegar é preciso – Fernando Pessoa, 2017, p. 23)*

What is it to be an author? How does the argumentation process used by the subject to sustain a saying, being it written or oral, happen? How, in the school context, is it possible to ensure that the subject-students<sup>1</sup> have access to an archive that allows them to argue beyond what is already legitimized as a school content, being able to exercise the authorship? For example, if an activity is proposed to a subject-student asking him/her to address a particular topic, first it is necessary to consider which archive he/she had access to support the argument. The subject-student cannot be expected to argue what the subject-teacher expects him/her to achieve if the access to the archive was not sufficient for this. Moreover, from Pêcheux's Discourse Analysis (DA), we understand that the meanings can always be other, so what the subject-teacher often expects will not be what the subject-student will produce. Another question: what is considered creative in the socio-historical-ideological context in which we live and how does it affect the school institution and the textual and oral productions of the subject-students? All these questions, and many others, are part of a range of concerns that engender the pedagogical process. Our proposal is to discuss them from the understanding that DA has about language and discourse.

Discourse Analysis was designed and founded by the French philosopher Michel Pêcheux. Since the mid-1960s, the author thought of a device capable of functioning as a method of experimenting the ideologies that surround the social environment. Pêcheux was thus influenced by the Althusserian rereading of the Marxist historical-materialism and ideological theory. In the late 1960s, DA was born, more specifically in 1969, with Automatic Discourse Analysis. The author created a theoretical-methodological device for the use of social sciences, because in his view an alternative was needed, for example, to Content Analysis, which has a transparent view of language and therefore seeks a unique truth. DA assumes that one cannot reach a single meaning and that the object of an analysis will never be to understand what the subject meant, because language is not transparent. Therefore, for this theory, the analyst's object of study is the discourse in its linguistic materiality (Narzetti, 2008).

Pêcheux, when elaborating the discourse theory, which has Linguistics, Historical Materialism and Psychoanalysis as axes of articula-

tion and intersection, challenges the other theories that existed at the time, as DA considers the semantic domain of language to reach the discourse; questions and doubts the evidence of the meanings by saying that discourse is traversed by history, ideology and unconscious manifestations. The subject of DA, who puts the discourses into operation, is not a unit, is not complete. It is the subject of the unconscious, decentralized and pervaded by language. Thus, DA is constituted by Linguistics, by a general theory of ideologies (of a materialistic-historical nature) and by the theory of discourse; all of them are permeated by a theory of the subject and subjectivity from psychoanalysis (Orlandi, 2009; Pêcheux, 2014a).

The challenge of this field of knowledge is to comprehend the functioning of the discursive processes, how the discursive formations (DFs) are formed and how they happen. Since discourse is the effect of meanings between interlocutors (Pêcheux, 2014a), the analyst's work also unveils over the subject. Language, history and subject are the pillars of discourse, the latter being the symbolic material that enables the understanding of the mechanisms of meaning production: the discourse "[...] is the confrontation of the symbolic with ideology" (Brasil, 2011, p. 176). To do so, we have some very important concepts, such as interdiscourse, discursive formation and ideology.

The interdiscourse refers to a discursive memory, not the psychological memory that helps one to remember and retain information, but memory as materiality. In Pêcheux's words (1999):

[...] memory as a structure of complex discursive materiality, extended in a dialectic of repetition and regularization: discursive memory would be what, in the face of a text that emerges as an event to read, re-establishes the 'implicit' (i.e., more technically, the pre-built, cited and reported elements, transverse discourses, etc.) that their reading needs: the condition of the readable in relation to the readable itself (Pêcheux, 1999, p. 52).

Interdiscourse, as well as the discursive memory, understood as everything that has been said before about a given issue, affect the way subjects produce their discourses, as they relate to what is available to the pre-built. The return to the interdiscourse makes it possible for the subjects to construct their discourses, either in a movement of rupture or maintenance of the historically produced meanings, a process that occurs in the encounter of the interdiscourse into the intradiscourse. This means that the way subject-students argue, in a given situation, is influenced by what has been said a long time ago, by different subjects, under different production conditions, and that this historical saying meets the present in their production conditions, whether or not they may produce some new meaning, which was in the order of silence. The subject enunciates depending on the discursive formation (DF) to which he/she affiliates, in his/her given subject-position (in this case, subject-student), to come to the understanding that his/her interpretation is in accordance with what he/she thinks is correct. This is possible

because the subject privileges certain meanings over others, “forgetting” that his/her interpretation or saying is not the only one possible. The subject has the illusion of being the origin of the saying<sup>2</sup>.

The DFs mark what can and should be said about a given issue, in a given socio-historical-ideological context, taking into account the discursive position that the subject occupies. When the subject identifies with a DF and discourses from it, we can say that the meanings of words and expressions come from that DF (Pêcheux, 2014a). Thus, if the subject, in the student discursive position, argues positively or negatively about the learning of written textual production, he/she does so from a given discursive formation, which, in turn, is constituted by the linguistic materiality of an ideological formation that circulates in the social environment.

The ideology is intrinsically related to the meanings, whether in their circulation or interdiction, always remembering that discourse is the effect of meanings produced by the interlocutors (Pêcheux, 2014a). This implies that we do not consciously choose what to say in a given situation or context, as the speaking subject is affected by the interdiscourse, which are the historically constructed meanings. The subject may (or may not) give continuity to the dominant meanings, depending on the discursive formations to which his/her discursive positions are affiliated and which, above all, are linked to ideological formations. Thus,

Ideology here is not defined as a set of representations, much less as a concealment of reality. It is a significant practice. Necessity of interpretation, ideology is not conscious: it is the effect of the subject's relation to language and history in their necessary relationship, in order to be meaningful. The subject, in turn, is a place historically (interdiscourse) constituted of meaning (Orlandi, 2001, p. 48).

We can infer that for the DA, ideology is seen as a significant practice. The subject, as we conceive it, is in a constant process of signification, interpretation and formulation of meanings. When a subject interprets, being always inscribed in a certain historical and social conjuncture, we know that he/she makes the interpretation because he/she is affected by the functioning of ideology, which sustains the need to interpret and creates the effect of evidence of the meanings. In the subject's relation to language and history, ideology is present; it is intrinsic to language, as it materializes in it (Orlandi, 1983). Moreover, according to Pêcheux (2014b), “[...] language thus presents itself as the common *basis* of differentiated discursive *processes*” (p. 81). Since it is the common basis, the discourse is produced from the social position of a given subject in a given context, and it is possible that the same words produce different meanings depending on the social position in which the subject is inscribed, as ideologies and discursive formations that may differ are at stake. According to Pêcheux (2014b), “[...] ideology does not reproduce itself as the general form of a *Zeitgeist* (the spirit of time, the ‘mentality’ of the time, the ‘customs of thought’ etc.) that

would be equally and homogeneously imposed on ‘society’” (p. 130). Thus, “[...] ideology is part, or rather, is the condition for the constitution of the subject and the meanings. The individual is pervaded in subject by ideology to produce the saying” (Orlandi, 2009, p. 46). As stated earlier, ideology is a constituent of the subject, who is pervaded by it. For example, if the statements circulating in the social environment about written language give it power, as stated by Pereira (2011), the subject is pervaded by this ideology, without realizing it, without knowing what constitutes it.

From this, we can say that when the subject argues for or against a specific issue, this position is also related to the discursive formations with which the subject identifies, which come from the ideology that challenges him/her as a subject, since:

[...] the discursive *type* belongs, so we think, to the ideological *genre*, which is the same as saying that the ideological formations just mentioned ‘necessarily include, as one of their components, one or several interconnected *discursive formations* that determine what can and should be said (articulated in the form of a harangue, a sermon, a pamphlet, an exposition a program etc.) from a given position at a certain conjuncture’ (Pêcheux; Fuchs, 2014, p. 164, emphasis added).

In other words, as we have already pointed out, discursive formations are not homogeneous, therefore, more than one DF can derive from a single Ideological Formation (IF), and subjects can identify with one or more of these DFs, moving among them, since there is a grit among them that, in the slightest movement, can cause a change of meaning. Thus, we understand that if the meanings are given in the argumentation process and in the possibility of sustaining a saying from a given discursive position (subject-student, subject-teacher etc.), they also work, in the discourse and the effect of argumentation that it builds, the imaginary formations (Piris, 2016).

According to Pêcheux (2014a) “[...] what works in discursive processes is a series of imaginary formations that designate the place that *A* and *B* grant to *oneself* and *each other*, the image they make of their own place and the place of the other” (p. 82, author’s emphasis). The speakers then anticipate, “Who am I to talk to you like this? Who is he/she for me to talk with him/her like this? Who am I for him/her to talk to me like this? Who is he/she to talk to me like this?” (p. 82). This implies, for example, that in the classroom the subject-student anticipates, by imaginary formations, what can and should be said to the subject-teacher about a given matter. If the subject-teacher asks for the interpretation of a text according to the content that was discussed in the classroom, the subject-student is compelled to interpret *the way the teacher wants* or according to what the production conditions allow, for in the social imagination the teacher is the one who holds the power in the classroom and the questions must be answered according to what is supposed to be allowed to be told to the teacher.

Based on these questions, we understand that argumentation and authorship meet each other in the process of linguistic materiality of discourse, both crossed by the notions of paraphrase and polysemy, and by what we understand as creativity.

### **Discursive Position of Author**

In DA the author is not simply the one who writes the text, he/she is the one who groups the discourse, giving unity and origin to its meanings. Authorship is a discursive-enunciative function. Performing the role of author requires the subject to take responsibility for what he/she says, assuming him/herself as a language producer. The subject-author discourse is always affected by exteriority, that is, by history, ideology, power relations; therefore, it is subjected to the various institutional rules. According to Orlandi (2008), the contemporary school institution needs to understand how the students assume their role as authors, because assuming it requires an awareness of the insertion of the subject in culture, history and the social environment. Placing oneself as an author is also a social function. Before assuming authorship, the subject enunciates. In a text it is possible for the enunciator to represent him/herself in different ways, he/she may present different points of view in different ways, but ultimately the one who gives coherence and unity to the text is the author, because he/she is the one who creates the illusion of beginning, middle and end of the text, wherewith the responsibility he/she assumes through the intradiscourse.

Also according to Orlandi (2008), the school is necessary to provide the transition of the subject from enunciator to author, so that the student has control over the mechanisms of the discursive process (where he/she becomes an author) and the mechanisms of the textual processes (where the authorship is marked). In this way, the student goes through the necessary illusion of being the origin of his/her saying, being able to constitute him/herself as a subject permeated by language, making room for the manifestation of subjectivity and for the construction of meanings risen from interpretation. In our understanding, to interpret does not mean to explain what a statement is saying, for language is ambiguous and opaque, producing various meanings depending on the subject's socio-historical-ideological inscriptions. DA conceives this process as the production conditions (PC), which concern the socio-historical-ideological aspects that involve discourse and determine its production and the circulation of meanings. The production conditions go beyond what is defined as context, because they concern everything that is outside the discourse, but that interfere with the way it is produced. Thus, the CPs, going beyond the context, also concern ideology, discursive memory, interdiscourse, archive and everything that circulates in the socio-historical-cultural milieu (Fernandes, 2008; Pacifico, 2012).

Amidst the discursive process, the two constitutive axes of language function, namely paraphrase and polysemy (Orlandi, 2008).

Taking as reference the school context, the paraphrase, in the interpretation, configures itself in the assuming of position in which the subject-student reproduces and legitimates the meanings already produced ideologically by the school institution. Polysemy, in turn, is related to the possibility of the subject-student to produce meanings that differ from those set up by the dominant ideology. At times, subject-students who do not submit to paraphrase, valued by the school, are seen as the ones that evade the norm, at the risk of being labeled as failures. Pacifico (2012) proposes the concepts of reader-form and reader-function to refer to those who interpret and signify along the lines of the dominant ideology (paraphrastically) and those who can understand how certain meanings are produced and not others, respectively. We would like to add that, according to Pêcheux (2014b), paraphrase and polysemy are forms that the discourse can take, they work together as a continuum. It is not possible to argue, to discourse only from polysemy, after all, the mechanism we use the most is paraphrase. First of all, being able to inscribe a saying in polysemy is related to the possibility of creating something new, breaking up with paraphrase, even though it is so necessary for the production of sayings, for the repeatable is the starting point for the production of meanings.

Finally, for writing and orality to be sated of authorship, it is necessary to create space for the student to dialogue with his/her history (not only the personal one), to criticize and question the answers given by the textbook, so that the uniqueness that can doubt the ideology that creates the evidential effect of painful writing and *error* as an impossibility of learning can emerge. If the subject can identify with the meanings that he/she is producing, there is the possibility of the *writing of him/herself* (Coracini, 2014), which refers to the way the subject produces meanings, telling his/her story and even making a catharsis. Moreover, it is necessary not to deny access to the archive, which in DA is understood as “documentary discourse, institutionalized memory” (Orlandi, 2013, p. 12), which, in turn, relates to interdiscourse.

Another issue that should be pointed out, especially because we are discussing authorship in the school context, is the need of coherence and cohesion (unity) of texts, specifically in written texts, for the subject who writes them to be considered *author*. Pfeiffer (1995) asserts that ambiguity in subject-students’ writing is seen as error, as failure, something to be corrected. To the subject-student, only one interpretation, only one meaning already given and to be found, as if mathematical and positivist logic fits into all spheres of knowledge. If this position of legal-subject is required of the student, the status of language as opaque, non-transparent is denied. Ambiguity is denied as constitutive of language, for it is attached to the illusion that the subject controls everything he/she says and makes use of language as he/she sees fit. Discursively, it is necessary to consider that there are always other possible meanings, that there are flaws and slips and that the subject-student is not excluded from these possibilities. The answer of the textbook is not the only one possible, what is demanded in a test can be interpreted in

countless ways, what the student writes or speaks is not wrong because it escapes from the legitimate and institutionalized meanings. For Pfeiffer (1995), the idea of asking for such cohesion and coherence in school is contradictory, making authorship impossible:

Everything leads us to believe that the production conditions under which students work do not allow them to take the place of the subject-author as idealized, although they are required to have all the qualities and characteristics that only the author function can give to the text (Pfeiffer, 1995, p. 52).

Also, according to the author, this happens because at school, the subject, in the position of student, finds him/herself cloistered in an attempt to make his/her text *good enough* to fulfill his/her (student's) obligation to satisfy the teacher's teaching proposal. By becoming stuck in this cycle, students find it difficult to assume authorship, since the imposition of school activities and the required obligations of students stand out despite the uniqueness necessary for the assumption of authorship. Moreover, historically, writing is seen as something cathartic, as an instrument of expression of feelings, and this implies the exposure of itself, of identity, which makes writing so difficult and inaccessible to various subjects, because it is as if they were in a confessional, appeasing their sins (Pfeiffer, 1995).

Thus, it is not difficult to realize that there are many reasons why writing and sustaining a saying is discoursed as difficult. Especially at school, where students write out of obligation, in the context of skill evaluation. For Pacífico (2012), subject-students write to teachers in order to gain a good score when they are evaluated. In addition, the meanings allowed by the school institution on a given subject are already constructed. Who has the voice of authority and power in school? The textbook. It determines the correct answers to the taught content, be it grammar, text interpretation, math etc. It legitimizes what can be interpreted. If the subject-student gives an out-of-form answer, he/she is left out. The school yearns for formal repetition, not historical repetition, which is related to archive access. Thus, the author proposes the concepts of reader-form and reader-function. In the first, readers are stuck with the meaning legitimated by the school institution and rely on personal experiences for interpretation and to exemplify any content they are learning in the classroom. In the second, the reader can make a socio-historical reading of the discourses, can question the meanings that are already legitimized and shift the understanding to history (Pacífico, 2012). The discursive positions of reader-form and reader-function affect the constitution of authorship, since, depending on the position that the subject occupies when reading and interpreting, he/she will have (or not) the conditions to assume him/herself as an author.

The subject becomes author only if what he/she produces is interpretable. He/she inscribes his/her formulation in the interdiscourse, he/she historicizes his/her saying.



Because he/she assumes his/her author position (represents him/herself in this place), he/she thus produces an interpretive event. The ones that only repeat (mnemonic exercise) do not produce it (Orlandi, 1996, p. 70).

If the school institution (and not only it) provides a fertile access to the archive, to the discursive memory that is built by historical meanings, it is possible that the subject-students can assume the author's discursive position, which requires a great effort to control the topic's meanings, so that the written text and the oral text do not disperse from one discursive formation to another. Authorship, more than any other position that can be assumed by subjects, needs access to discursive memory, so that there is room for argumentation, to produce a text that is inscribed in the social according to what is required of the subject.

## **Creativity**

With the above concepts in mind, what can and should be said about what creativity is or what it is to be creative in the social context in which we live? We understand that several areas of knowledge address the concept of creativity. For psychology, for example, it can be a construct that concerns intelligence and cognition skills and abilities; or a subjective skill that concerns the way the subject grasps the context in which he/she lives. For education, creativity can be a quality or skill of the subject, whether student or teacher, that concerns the ability to create new and original things in the classroom. There are several perspectives that, we believe, make up a social and historical whole of what it is to be creative or to do something with creativity. In other words, parting from DA, we realize that there is no single or absolute truth about a given issue, when it comes to creativity that does not change. A specific definition of what is creativity is not the only meaning that exists about this notion because, first of all, we understand that creativity is a social and historical construction, which leads us to the question: what is considered to be creative/creativity in the historical and social moment in which we live?

For the Belarusian psychologist Vigotski (2009), a reference author in the fields of Education and School Psychology, creative activity involves the creation of the new, whether in the arts, sciences or technique. Everything that was made by human hands (world of culture) came from man's imagination and creative ability. The author considers that the foundation of creation is linked to the ability to combine already known information with new information, forming a new set where all are together. The capacity for creation is not only related to fantasy and ludic, but to the reality of everyday life, in interactions between subject-environment and subject-subject. Based on Vigotski's theory, De Castro (2006) argues that "[...] imagination and creation do not come out of nowhere, but are the result of previous experiences of the subject, in which the elements that compose them are recombined and reworked into a new whole" (p. 57).

For Martínez (1997), a contemporary psychologist who is dedicated to studying learning and creativity, there is evidence of a consensus among the various areas that study creativity:

[...] there is some consensus that creativity presupposes a person who, under certain conditions and through a process, produces a product that is, at least to some extent, new and valuable (Martínez, 1997, p. 9).

Besides that, creative learning is a process of subjectivity that manifests itself in social as well as individual condition. The author also says that creativity in learning processes comes from at least three elements: the personalization of information; the confrontation with the data; and the production, generation of own and new ideas that transcend the data. Thus, the student's contact with knowledge does not occur passively, but in an active and transformative way (Muniz; Martínez, 2015). For the authors, creativity is understood as something that emerges through the "deeply implicated action of the subject" (Muniz; Martínez, 2015, p. 1042), because this is where the expression of subjective resources constructed during the person's experiences occurs. From this perspective, writing manifests itself creatively when the student is able to get involved in what he/she is producing, giving the meaning he/she has subjectively constructed over time to the action he/she is authentically performing.

For Csikszentmihalyi (2009),

[...] an idea or product that deserves the label 'creative' arises from the synergy of many sources and not only from the mind of a single person. It is easier to enhance creativity by changing conditions in the environment than by trying to make people think more creatively (Csikszentmihalyi, 2009, p. 1).

In other words, the author considers that creativity is not necessarily in the subject, because it comes from various sources. In a way it would be easier to provide creativity by making changes in context than to force a creative attitude of someone. Moreover, creativity would result from the interaction of three instances: culture and its symbolic rules; of a person who brings innovation to a symbolic field; and experts who recognize and validate that innovation. According to Csikszentmihalyi (2009), these three instances, together, would be necessary for something creative to happen.

Oliveira and Alencar (2010) point out that creativity is present in the various faces of human life, especially in education and work. According to the authors, creativity can be developed, built or incited, and the school, as a privileged educational space, should work to promote creativity, whether by students, teachers or the teaching staff. However, in its history, the school institution has a disciplinary, evaluative nature that prepares subjects to deal with the rules that govern the social context, as already pointed out by Foucault (1987). Being surrounded by discipline and a repetitive routine and for centuries privileging copy-

ing and memorization over the construction of different meanings through argumentation, the school surrounds the subjects who attend it, either by imposing what can and should be taught (and how it should be taught) through the textbook, either because of the difficult task imposed on the subject-student who must learn what is taught the way it is taught. All of these and other questions can deviate school, and hence students, from what science calls creativity.

We understand that no matter the area of knowledge or the researcher who studies creativity, the definitions are many and form a continuum of disagreement, but also of consensus. Creativity is always related to innovation, non-repetition and the use of its product for work purposes or adaptation to the context in which one lives. From this, considering the aspect of innovation and not repetition, we understand that polysemy is also a vicissitude of creativity, since it offers the possibility of the meanings being different. It is not possible to discursivize polysemically all the time, just as it is not possible to be creative or attain creativity all the time. From this, we understand that polysemy is a possibility for the subject-student to subscribe to what contemporary calls creativity. Our intention is to analyze, parting from DA, how and if the subject-students can argue polysemically about a given issue, assuming the author's discursive position.

## Analysis

The following excerpts were taken from a research conducted with 19 5<sup>th</sup> grade students from a public school in Ribeirão Preto – São Paulo, Brazil, following the approval of the Ethics Committee of Faculdade de Filosofia, Ciências e Letras de Ribeirão Preto – Universidade de São Paulo. The aim of the research was to investigate how these subject-students discursivize the learning and the uses of written textual production. Four meetings were held in the school, lasting from one hour to an hour and a half, of which the first was for the researcher's presentation of herself and of the research, taking place in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade classroom. In the second meeting, the documentary *Pro Dia Nascer Feliz* by João Jardim was exhibited in the school library, followed by a conversation circle to discuss the documentary and the topic that emerged during the conversation, namely the importance of writing and its use as a formal and/or informal language. In the third one, the book *De Carta em Carta* by Ana Maria Machado and the poem *O apanhador de desperdícios* by Manoel de Barros were read in the school yard and amphitheater, followed by a conversation circle to discuss the story and the topic that emerged, namely writing, formal and informal language and its uses in daily life. In the fourth and last meeting, in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade classroom, the subject-students produced a text with the theme *The school, the writing and I*. In addition to the discussions, the subject-students also produced short written texts after each conversation circle. Therefore, the excerpts we analyzed were taken from a *corpus* made up of oral and written texts.

*Excerpt 1 – Oral discussion – Subject-students (SS), Subject-teacher (ST), Researcher (R):*

R: Do you think if you were to write a letter here at school and one at home it would be different?

SS: Yeeeeeees. You can use slangs. At home we use slangs.

R: So, at home you can write in a way you don't write at school? Do you think that it is better to write at home or at school?

SS: At home! You are by yourself, you can write on the bed, you can write while you are lying in bed.

R: And why is it that at school you can't write the way you want to?

SS: We were studying about informal words and formal words with teacher X [...] If I were to talk to J using informal words, it's not a problem because she's my friend, but if I were to talk to you, I have to use formal words.

R: So, for you formal words are important in these moments you have to talk to *important* people?

SS: Yes.

SS: If it's with important people it means that her friends are not important?

SS: But it's important! If I were to talk to the principal, for example, I don't have intimacy. With my friends I can talk the way we speak.

*Excerpt 2 – Oral discussion – Subject-students (SS), Subject-teacher (ST), Researcher (R):*

R: Are you trying to say that when we write in the school, what we write here have a different use of the use we make of the writing outside the school?

SS: Yes!

SS: No!

SS: There are certain occasions, like, if I were to look for a job, I must have a formal language, now, if I'm like, going out with my friends, I can speak an informal language.

*Excerpt 3 – Oral discussion – Subject-students (SS), Subject-teacher (ST), Researcher (R):*

R: And do you write here at school?

SS: Yes.

R: And outside the school?

SS: Yes!

SS: No!

SS: More or less!

SS: Only in the homework.

SS: I just read. At home I just read.

SS: Teacher, I write WhatsApp messages.

R: And do you think that WhatsApp messages are valid?

SS: No.

SS: No... practically, just a little bit.

SS: Because you don't know if it really was the person, if it got out of the person or if he/she took it virtually.

SS: No, I mean private conversations and not text, then you talk anything, talk wrong, don't use accent marks, these things.

SS: I don't think so because the most... when someone sends me a message, even my mom's clients... For example, I ask like this: have you ever read stars and planets? Then the person sends "n" or *não* without the tilde.

SS: But everyone does that.

SS: Everyone is lazy.

ST: But do you think this hinders the writing?

SS: But I don't do this at...

ST: But do you think that this is a way of practicing what you learn at school? Or is it a conversation just to talk?

SS: No.

R: So, do you think that it's wrong to write like this?

SS: Yes.

SS: No! It's just a way of abbreviation.

In excerpt 1, the issue of informality as opposed to formality stands out with regard to the way language is used in relation to the interlocutors, that is, whether they are important people or not, the subject-students discuss about language inside and outside of school. Faced with the question about the differences in writing at the school space and in the family space, the subject-students indict the constraints of the school institution and the supposed freedom of writing in the domestic environment, because according to them, "writing at home is better" because they can use slang, be more comfortable (writing lying on bed), not sticking to formal rules (such as using correct accent marks), and even writing through WhatsApp or digital media (excerpt 3), which does not require the correct spelling expected on a sheet of paper. These meanings point to the pleasure of technology-driven writing, as opposed to school writing. The principal, in excerpt 1, is mentioned as an important figure in school, a person with whom there is no intimacy, so it is up to the subject-students to use formal language to address her.

Based on the excerpts, we understand the subject-principal as the authority with maximum power, to which the subject-students, subject-teachers and other subject-employees must respect, and the use of formal language as a treatment of respect towards the principal. Informal language can be used with friends and close people who are also important, but not with someone who has a power role. This means that subjects understand that linguistic uses are not neutral, but are crossed by ideological and power issues, which are more prominent in the school institution and may affect authorship, since subjectivity may be more controlled, that is, the use of the language is controlled; the subject's inscription in writing is controlled.

In excerpt 3, the subject-students say that they write outside of school just to do their homework, others are in doubt, one says that he only reads and the other just write WhatsApp messages, prevailing the meaning that writing outside school only happens on specific occasions and for a different purpose than what is written in school. One of the arguments used is that writing by digital media is not formal, it is, therefore, wrong, not valid. They even argue that if someone writes wrongly is because they are lazy. For us, this formulation is the paraphrase of the dominant discourse in the school institution, as many teachers attribute the difficulties of writing to the laziness of the students. It is the

ideology that functions and creates this naturalizing effect of meaning; thereby, the students themselves repeat it.

For Telles et al. (2011), the virtual space opens the way for subjects to have the illusion of freedom which is necessary to express themselves and to argue in a sea of heterogeneous discourses. Virtual media presents itself as a possible space for minority resistance, for breaking silences, as there are several global voices trying to break dominant discourses, making a polysemic use of digital writing. We understand that the virtual environment occupies a different place from the others, because if understood as a possibility of resistance, it would not make sense for the subject to be stuck to the grammatical rules. Thus, writing on the internet can provide the freedom to break the standard norm.

We can observe that the meanings that the subject-students bring about virtual writing are conflicting – one thinks that it is not wrong, another that it is wrong and the other that it is just a way of abbreviation. We can analyze that they cannot argue in favor of this kind of writing because they consider it wrong. The subject-teacher interdicts meaning possibilities when asking if virtual writing is a way of practicing what one learns in school or whether this form of writing (without accent marks, for example) hinders the act of writing, as if there were only one way of doing it. It is worth remembering that for the school, in fact, there is only one type of writing that is legitimized: the one that follows the standard norm, that is, the formal language. We understand that all writing is valid, whether it obeys the rules or not, including the writing of *conversation just to talk*. We understand that although students indicate a movement of resistance to formal language, they are still impelled to lean on paraphrase and reproduce the dominant discourse that gives power to the *writing of the law*. In this case, the subject-students' subjectivity cannot deviate from the dominant meanings.

Moreover, it is important to note that in excerpt 1, one of the subject-students insists on arguing that formal language should be used with important people and informal language with friends. When the subject-student says that by studying formal and informal words with teacher X he has learned their uses, he is sustaining a favorable argument for linguistic variations, which he does not only once but twice, for he then exemplifies, "If I'm talking to the principal, for example, I don't have intimacy. With my friends I can speak the way we talk". We understand that the subject-student can sustain an argument from the discursive formation with which he identifies: each linguistic variant must be used according to the enunciation situation. Or, in DA's eyes, the subject-student is considering the set of imaginary formations, that is, who is the principal for me to speak to her like this? Who am I to talk to her like this? Who is my friend?

Similar discursive functioning is found in excerpt 2, when the subject-student reinforces the formality/informality opposition by saying that "[...] if I were to look for a job, I must have a formal language, now, if I'm like, going out with my friends I can speak an informal language". We can analyze that the use of *must have* when referring to the formal

language creates the meaning effect of obligation in the referred occasion, that is, *looking for a job*. On the other hand, the use of *can* when talking about informal language suggests the meaning that there is the possibility of *lexical choices* (illusion n. 1) for the subject to talk informally with friends. The formulation, introduced by *now*, which seems to work on the discursive thread as an adversarial connective, goes on with the use of *I'm, like* that connects with friends (“[...] now if I'm, like, hanging out with my friends”), that is, a linguistic mark of informality.

These meanings are reinforced in the school and social environment. The discourse about the linguistic uses has an impact on the intradiscourse of subject-students and affects the way they subjectively subscribe to language. These questions, associated with those of the other excerpts, indicate that subject-students may be impelled to repeat what they learn at school, or that the school institution fails to provide access to the archive, because subject-students are captured to argue predominantly from a place that allows only paraphrase to the detriment of creativity or polysemy of meanings.

The next excerpts were produced by the subject-students in form of written text. The writing proposal had the theme *The school, the writing and I* and was held on the last day of research, when all oral discussions on the topic had already been made. During the research, as we have already pointed out, the following materials were used for discussion: João Jardim's documentary *Pro dia nascer feliz*, Ana Maria Machado's book *De carta em carta* and the poem *O apanhador de desperdícios*, by Manoel de Barros.

*Excerpt 4 – Subject-student C – Textual production:*

Title: The school, the writing and I

I want to learn everything about school and writing, don't have difficulty in math be a soccer player have my own house and family. And I liked these four days.

*Excerpt 5 – Subject-student H – Textual production:*

I'm H, I'm 11 years old, I was born in Brazil, in the state of São Paulo, in Ribeirão Preto. I have two dogs and a cat, and I like to dismantle electronic devices.

My school is big, with a lot of students and teachers. Since last week, one lady called Noilma for her to do a research for the university. This research was so cool.

Writing is very important for the speaking, communication, etc. I don't really like to write, but, when I have to, I make an effort.

In excerpt 4, subject-student C writes about school, about himself, and about writing, but does so without developing an argumentation about writing in his life, briefly marking his desire related to school and a profession. It is important to highlight that he wants to have no difficulty in math. Pacífico (2012) argues that students in the classroom have great difficulty starting to write a text because they claim not to know where to start. This difficulty is related to the work that the subject has dealing with the interdiscourse and making his inscription in

it to produce the intradiscourse. It is the author's job to penetrate in discursiveness and take responsibility for certain meanings and not for others, which is not an easy task (Coracini, 2007).

Considering that, although we know that each student has access to certain archives, which are not necessarily the same for everyone, in this research all the subject-students had access to the same archive (João Jardim's *Pro dia nascer feliz*, Ana Maria Machado's *De carta em carta* and Manoel de Barros's *O apanhador de desperdícios*), and discussions were made in conversation circles, where the subject-students could argue by mobilizing several meanings. However, subject-student C says he wants to "learn everything about school and writing," not taking forward the argumentation to support his writing, dislocating it to topics that were not discussed during the research. And even more than debating with the topics of discussion, for authorship to be established, it would be necessary for the subject-students to make a socio-historical interpretation of the meanings, combining new knowledge with interdiscourse to formulate the intradiscourse in a unique and subjective way. We understand that this happens because in school what is expected from the student is the formal repetition, which is already legitimized by the textbook or the teacher, to go beyond that is to get out of the paraphrastic form and use polysemic meanings and creativity (Pacífico, 2012). This leads us to the study by Pfeiffer (1995), who says that in school authorship is on the "threshold of formal repetition with historical repetition" (p. 91). In other words, because the school focuses so much on the reproduction of content and on the teaching of grammar and orthography rules, it ends up cutting out the space of interpretation of the subject-student, he/she is interdicted, the possible meanings are silenced in detriment of those legitimated and expected.

In excerpt 5, subject-student H tries to control the meanings of the text by separating the self, the school and the writing into different paragraphs, and he succeeds in this attempt, because the text is interpretable, not contradictory, and the subject-student puts himself in the first person, indicating an inscription in writing and signaling that he relies on subjectivity to produce meanings. We claim this because, when discursivizing about writing, in the last paragraph, the subject-student makes the meanings valued by the school institution scream, that is, that students should enjoy reading and writing. Instead, he subscribes to the DF which builds meanings that many students write only because they need to, not because they like to do so. However, he does not develop the argumentation, an opportunity he could have taken to expose the arguments that justify his (dis)taste for writing. Subject-student H's writing flows, indicating how his relationship with it occurs, but at the same time he repeats the meanings about the writing function. So, despite coming close to authorship, the subject-student is still on the threshold between it and formal repetition. Let's look at the next excerpt:



*Excerpt 6 – Subject-student B – Textual production:*

The writing, how great that writing exists,  
it is part of my life.  
If it didn't exist  
Our life would be sad.  
Lots of people want to know and also understand,  
the beautiful writing  
that enticed our life.  
I like the writing, but don't know why  
and so, who would know?  
The writing that invaded us without pity nor mercy  
and it exists at any age.

We can observe that subject-student B makes use of the poetry genre to produce his text, demonstrating knowledge about how several poems are structured by making rhymes (in Portuguese), for example: *Se ela não existice [sic]/Nossa vida seria triste* (If it didn't exist/Our life would be sad). Moreover, we can analyze that it is a text that produces meanings other than those that arose during the research: the beautiful writing that exists and that one likes and does not know why; the sadness that life would be if writing did not exist; writing that has no mercy on people, no matter how old they are. These are meanings that already exist in the social environment but gain a different interpretation to what is commonly done. For example, we know that literacy is necessary for subjects to circulate in certain social environments, and without it one cannot advance in the years of K-12 Education or even reach higher education. Can we say that this is a face of writing in which it invades us mercilessly, regardless of age? In our understanding, yes. The subject-student makes a historical repetition of meanings, managing to follow the meanings in discourse. There is a fruitful encounter between interdiscourse and intradiscourse, provoking an update of meanings. The subject-student, using “my life” and “our life” and “(I) like the writing” and it “invaded us” indicates that the subject-student conceives writing as his and ours, and someone else's, this movement that marks language as constituent of the subjectivity of the subject and, in this case, as a practice of authorship.

## **Final Remarks**

We understand that the formation of subject-students in Brazilian public schools goes through historical and ideological issues, such as the constant lack of investment and education budget cuts, which affect the possible ways for the teacher and the pedagogical staff to work in the school and classroom. Because Brazil is a country of many social struggles, where education appears as a possibility of rising from one socioeconomic class to another, the mandatory nature of being in school for an established end, *for a better future*, falls upon the subject-students from an early age in the teaching-learning process. This relationship is dangerous in the sense that it is possible that, from the early grades of the schooling process, the subject-students are impelled to

learn writing, in the case of this research, for one purpose only, namely to use formal written language to get a job or a good future and to communicate with important people. We know that written language is not restricted to these possibilities alone, it is much broader, full of creative and imaginative places that subject-students and subjects of the pedagogical process can visit. However, the question is: how to enable, in the Brazilian public school, that subject-students and subject-teachers engage in other biases of writing? How to enable authorship and creativity? How to mediate the learning process so that subject-students can rely on their own subjectivities to produce discourses?

Based on the results of this research, we found that subject-students make much use of formal repetition and often have difficulty controlling the meanings of the text, a necessary condition for authorship. Remembering that the control of meanings, for DA, is illusory, because the subject of the unconscious, affected by oblivions number 1 and number 2 (Pêcheux, 2014a; 2014b) has no control over the discourse, what happens is the illusion of this control, required for authorship. Nevertheless, some subject-students assume the discursive position of author, even being barred by issues such as the need to reproduce what the dominant discourse establishes as important. We understand that these questions foreclose what is scientifically and socially considered creative. If the discursive production conditions present in the school context do not allow the subject-students to trespass formal repetition, the encounter with the new, with change, with creativity is distant. It is contradictory to charge the subject-student with a creative position when the pedagogical practices and meanings allowed within the school institution are so ingrained in repetition.

Polysemy and authorship are possible when the subject can give unity to the text and interpret it anchored to the discursive memory. The school has much to gain from considering this perspective, as there is not only one way to present and read the text. The student does not learn by him/herself, and the teacher is not a teacher without the student. There is a game of interlocutions and shared knowledge, because in the social environment we are always relating to each other. The powers that dominant ideologies exercise are not the only ones that exist, and many pedagogical practices can be created to offer subjects the possibility to be authors of what they write.

We suggest that, regarding the teaching of Portuguese language, writing, reading and everything that involves the language teaching-learning process, the production conditions should be valued, as they establish what is important to work with in class at any given historical moment. The production conditions can act as a marker to know how to provide the subject-student with a context in which he/she can question and criticize what and how he/she is learning, what uses he/she can make of what is being presented in school, in the sense that it is possible for him/her to realize that education, school, and written language are very broad if thought outside the objectives already legitimized by the standard norm: learning can and should be creative, inventive, authori-

tative, provocative, pleasurable, and challenging. It is a subject-student right.

The access to the archive is also a subject-student right. In order to be able to argue, it is necessary to be presented with the various possibilities of reading, interpretation and writing, the various forms it has already taken in history, the infinite and different topics on which to write and argue. When pedagogical practices do not include access to discursive memory, the right of the subject-student to choose what makes sense to him/her is denied, which is relevant for him/her to learn leaning on his/her subjectivity.

Thus, we suggest the conduction of researches with subject-teachers, so that it is possible to reach a greater understanding of how pedagogical practices related to the teaching-learning process of written language occur, as we consider that this process is dialectical. It is also necessary to know it from the subject-teacher's view of the topic. From these researches, focusing on different subjects that make up the Brazilian education, it will be possible to think structurally on how to allow the subject-students to have the choice and autonomy to be creative, being responsible for what they write, in a process of authorship.

Translated by Noilma Alves Martins and proofread by Ananyr Porto Fajardo

Received on March 18, 2019

Approved on June 24, 2019

## Notes

- 1 We understand that the subjects enunciate from the discursive positions they occupy. If a subject is a student in a school, we understand that he/she produces the discourse from this position, so we give him/her the subject-student nomination.
- 2 For Pêcheux (2014a; 2014b) there are two oblivions that affect the subject. Oblivion number 1, ideological and unconscious, which makes possible the illusion of control of the meanings of what we say, not realizing that we return to the existing meanings; and oblivion number 2, which concerns the question: why do we enunciate this way and not another? Through this oblivion the subject has the illusion of control of what is said and that it can only be said in that specific way to produce the meaning he/she desires.

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