

An Efficient, Meaningful, Dynamic and Fun Didactical Methodological Possibility: Interdisciplinary Games for the Classroom

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Abstract

The Brazilian educational system demands, more and more, pedagogical practices which encourage the students to get really involved with the learning process and also that have them develop the ability of establishing relation between what they learn in school and what happens in everyday life. Thus, it is not possible to accept a teaching practice which requests from the students, for example, memorization of big nomenclature lists, which will never be used in daily communication. Onwards this belief, came the idea of creating a work proposal guided by interdisciplinarity. The objective is to show how a Basic Education teacher can work with the figure of speech concept in a playful, meaning, efficient and mainly interdisciplinary way, which is a modern slope of the educational field nowadays, but it is not present so commonly within Brazilian schools.

Keywords: interdisciplinarity; education; teaching-learning; teaching practice.

1. Introduction

Writing and reading, both actions that may be simple and pleasant for some people, for others may represent a torment. These two opposite sides are easily found in schools, for some students struggle with difficulties when it is about reading or writing. Both are related to factors such as good text comprehension and satisfactory language, which presents precise vocabulary and clear exposure of ideas.

When a teacher expects the students to memorize “rules” of the language and considers the one who accomplishes this questionable task more capable than the other who couldn’t do the same, this is not effective language learning. In order to study literature, figures of speech or any other field of Portuguese language, having an organized reasoning in what concerns to the student, is essential. And it happens when the student has the capacity of exploring the language’s expressive resources and, by this, is capable of interpreting reality.

The student needs to accomplish one’s communication with ideas that have true content and appropriate language to the various life situations; it is not enough to know what to write, but also the correct manner to write it.

Words are linguistic signs which express determinate idea or represent something, such as an object, a sensation, a feeling or an action. Besides this, communication happens through the words. This why knowing how to use words is fundamental.

In the specific case of working with figures of speech, present in the various literary movements throughout history, in order to develop studies that contain this subject which is inserted in the most different contexts,

teacher should conduct the students in what concerns to words' polysemy, always keeping in mind that the meaning of a word is not only what is present in dictionaries. One word may have new different meanings according to the context in which it is applied.

For this reason, students must have a good idea of what are concepts such as denotation and connotation, for this second evokes people's emotions and subjectivity. Thus, words go from a common meaning to a figurative one.

According to Cereja [1]:

When someone says "The caravan passed through the desert", this person is using the word **caravan** with its proper meaning, common, that is, it means a group of people who travel together. However, when we see another sentence such as "a roses caravan wandering in na ineffable passion desert", the meaning of the word **caravan** gets different. This enunciation has not only the goal of informing, but also constructing another meaning, creating an image, expressing na emotional and affective state.

When we use an expression and its meaning is not proper (common), we also use figures of speech. They are a way of expression. We use words with figurative sense, that is, a different meaning from the one in the dictionary.

Portuguese language teacher may also show the students that figures of speech may be used to enrich a text, in order to have a more expressive form of language. This linguistic resource allows us to express, in different manners, experiences, creating emotion or poetic proportion inside discourse.

Figures of speech may transpire the sensibility of the person who produces determinate figure, and also demonstrate style characteristics of determinate author. A good teacher must create a kind of "route" during classes that allows the students to really see this subtle factor of the language. A word that goes from a denotative sense to the connotative one belongs to a wider meaning field and, possibly, more creative, depending on the way it is used.

Words are very rich when well used, even because Portuguese language allows speakers to do this "play" with its words. Therefore, teacher must not deal with grammar in na isolated way. This happens when a student receives a list of words that are classified as nouns, but actually when the same words are used in a phrase, they may assume the "value" of na adjective, to give an example. This way, the student is not able to understand what happened there and many times, unfortunately, teachers do not know hot to explain.

In order to give na example of polysemic words in Portuguese, we are using the word *mango* (*manga*, translated into Portuguese): it has two meanings; the first is a fruit and the second is a part of a shirt (the idea of sleeve, in English). Thus, it is possible to observe that this word assumes two very different meanings depending on the context it is used. The teacher's role is fundamental in order to guide the student in this linguistic analysis. It is not acceptable to singly classify words. The ideal would be to study words' functions inside a text or using a daily example. If all words were considered only based on denotative sense, figures of speech would not even exist.

The teacher needs to present language rules, as well as grammar and literature, but this process must always consider language usage contexts that make it possible to explain words' function and relevance. This way the

student will not think that what one learns during Portuguese language classes (and in other subjects too) is meaningless or not important in what concerns to enrichment of day by day life.

There we can find the importance of interdisciplinarity in education and the relevance of the practice of searching for justification for all the contents that are developed in classroom studies.

2. Interdisciplinarity and context

Figures of speech are really important for they suit as expression resource, either in common language or literary language. When they are used, there is a construction of a sense which is related to the communicative act. Figures of speech may soften a piece of information, invert some specific meaning that we wish to say or even assign a wider sense to words. Cereja [2] explains that “figures of speech are, in short, intelligence exercises which have the reader stimulated to paying close attention to one’s own language construction and to the richness of meanings the different situations may offer”.

The expressive effect generated during the communication process does not happen only through writing. It also happens within orality, even if it is not easily perceived. When Portuguese speakers say “this guy is a cat”, the comparison is not with the animal that meows. Actually, the intention is to say that the guy is handsome. Many times, therefore, metaphors and comparisons are used without anybody observing this during a conversation, for communication is established in a fast, very dynamic way. According to Parâmetros Curriculares Nacionais do Ensino Médio [3]:

The language has resources, but their organization finds in social its raw material. Equal linguistic structures assume different meanings, depending on the interlocutors’ intentions. There is a “diversity of voices” in only one text. Normally, we use these resources unintentionally. It is common to say what we actually do not mean, or even to misunderstand what was said, then, excuses are infinite. Determinate voice intonation may completely transform a text meaning. The simple inversion of an adjective modifies the whole sense of a phrase. Literary text uses this possible word artifact masterfully. So does advertising field.

When we use, in Portuguese language, an expression such as “this boy is just like a bull”, we also do not mean he is an animal, but actually try to find common sense between two elements, in order to create a new sense field. In this specific case, the expression assumed the sense of strength. It means that strength is a common characteristic both to the boy and the bull, and a comparison has been made.

Working with songs inside the classroom, the teacher is working with the subject, too. It becomes more playful and the class is not only theoretical, that is, the work is not developed through analysis of isolated parts of a sentence without any sense. It is interdisciplinarity what can help the teaching learning process. According to Fazenda [4] interdisciplinarity

Is the substitution of a fragmentary conception into a unitary one, in what concerns to the human being. It is an opening attitude, non prejudiced, in which all kinds of knowledge are equally important. It presupposes anonymity, for personal knowledge is abolished against universal knowledge. It is a consistent attitude, which demands a unique posture about the facts, it is a critical opinion about others which is based on particular opinion. Only in intersubjectivity, in an interaction regime, dialogue is possible, the only condition of possibility

of interdisciplinarity. [...] in this sense becomes specially necessary a suitable formation that presupposes training for understanding and waiting, development related to creation and imagination.

Thus, it is possible to work with figures of speech in many different ways, without having the student memorize nomenclature.

Ideal learning characterizes when the student is capable of identifying and understanding the meaning of the text in the context it is used, instead of just memorizing a list with figures of speech.

The teacher may work with different musical styles and from different periods in order to demonstrate how important the lyrics are, inside each context. Similarly, one can develop a study based on Chico Buarque's song *Construção*, showing the large number of comparisons there are in the song. Another song that can be used is Banda Calypso's *A Lua me traiu*, indicating the personification figure, so on. The main point here is not to please students who like MPB (Brazilian Popular Music) or forró, because other music styles can also be developed; the idea is to apply figures of speech during the class, making this subject more playful, interdisciplinary and deviating from the traditional standard.

Besides, it is necessary to indicate how relevant the content is and how applicable during the classes as well as everyday life, without abandoning theoretical basis, which has an important role in schooling. The language is very rich and the educator may work with it in various situations with the students.

It is also important to say that literature is full of figures of speech. One famous example is a Camões' sonnet (a poet who wrote during the sixteenth century), in which we read "Love is a fire that burns unseen", besides analyzing the sonnet's "shape", its prosody or its rhymes, we also must mention words choice and the content.

If a teacher asked what figure of speech is present in this verse, one of the possible answers would be paradox, which prevails in the sonnet. However, it is important to point out that a poet does not write something only for free will. Every discourse, written or spoken, has an intention.

The objective is not only identifying the figures of speech and moving to another exercise. The teacher must indicate the likely reason for the writer to have used that resource, and besides that, what is the sense effect that it caused to the text. We can infer that the poet here wants to analyze the loving feeling in a logical way, using reasoning, but still love is something immeasurable. There we can see why paradox was chosen, because feeling and thinking are antagonistic states. Feeling is part of desire and thinking limits the individual. The poet cannot separate feelings from thoughts, therefore accumulates paradoxes and contradictions.

A good educator must show the students that figures of speech provide a richer, wider sense to any text, literary or not. Figures of speech help the poet to construct a reasoning motivated by contradictory ideas, since love is a contradiction.

Besides Classicism, the teacher can also work with other literary movements, showing that some have proper characteristics and, due to this fact, some figures of speech will appear more frequently than others.

Ergo, the teacher cannot work with literary movements in an isolated manner, for some characteristics are similar from one movement to another. Baroque, for instance, has an outstanding language. Gongorism, aspect

that faces a game of words, can be really extensive regarding figures of speech. There is metaphor, paronomasia, periphrasis, antitheses, hyperbole, synesthesia, hyperbole, prosopopeia, gradation, zeugma, ellipse and others.

The teacher starts with a theoretical referential basis, explaining what are figures of speech, but one must not analyze them in random sentences and ask the students to simply classify them. Working with these figures must start with literature, but can pass through songs, advertisement and other kinds of non literary texts. Interdisciplinarity and intertextuality, therefore, are fundamental, for a text dialogues with others and are used in various fields:

Portuguese language's space in school is to guarantee the ethical and aesthetic use of the oral language; make it possible to understand that through language it is possible to transform/reiterate social, cultural and personal fields; accepting human complexity, respect for different speaking, as part of the possible and needed voices towards human development, even that during communication process, there are advancing/receding proper of the language usage; summarizing, having the student understand that one is a constant dialoguing text with other texts [5]

3. Interdisciplinary games

Besides working with literature, music and advertisement, as a final activity, the teacher may create an interdisciplinary virtual game, which concerns figures of speech and the text genres in which they appear. Once more, this is an interdisciplinary way:

Education that embraces interdisciplinarity states between two poles: total immobility and chaos. The perception of the past's relevance, as gestor of new times makes us practice paradoxically the imperative of new orders, impelling us to the metamorphosis of a freer, happier and more proper knowledge, potentially the propellant of new paths and facts. The interdisciplinary process has a crucial role in the sense of embodying the dream of establishing an educational work in light of knowledge, courage and humanity. [6]

Initially, it is important to remember that virtual game is an important resource in the educational field, for it propitiates a more dynamic teaching and promotes students' cognition development. Besides, it is related to affective, linguistic, social and motor matters. Games also help students develop creativity, autonomy and group relationship. Thus, it is a channel that incentivates students to participate of a team activity.

However, it is even more interesting when the game approximates academia subjects and students' everyday life. Thus, when the teacher puts together figures of speech to the songs the students listen to everyday and to the advertisement pieces present in magazines or in television, the teacher promotes more sense and meaning to what is taught at school. Interdisciplinarity, therefore, is much more meaningful.

The objective is not taking a class time that would have mainly tasks written on the blackboard. On the contrary, the idea is to make teaching learning process more dynamic and ease the comprehension of the theme in question. Moreover, it is necessary to take in consideration that inside a classroom there are multiple intelligences. Sometimes a restless, anxious student who does not pay attention to the class because the teacher puts too much information on the blackboard is the student who most participates in the game. This is due to the fact that the game is more flashy, and contains everyday life images. A student can also be more visual than auditory. Instead of showing a metaphor inside a Camões' poem, the teacher may exemplify through lyrics of

the students' favorite rock band. The teacher must respect the diversity and the way each student absorbs information.

Moreover, using computers, in this case a virtual game with questions and answers, helps the student develop not only cognition abilities, but also affective ones, performing an important assistance to the teacher-student relationship and student-student one. In this teaching-learning process given by games, the whole class works as a group, answering personal and collective interests.

It is worth highlighting that the teacher cannot leave the students by themselves only because the activity is a game. The teacher's presence is essential not only for solving doubts but also to observe the students' interest and their interaction with the colleagues. For this reason, the educator needs to know how to work with the digital resources: "[...] the problem is not only in bringing media inside schools, but actually to know to whom they are serving." (FREIRE; GUIMARÃES, 2012, p. 122) [7].

4. Final considerations

The educator must be in constant evolution, that is, must update one's curriculum and search for new information and knowledge. This is the teaching guiding line in a classroom. If the teacher shows low or no interest, it is impossible to expect the students to have a good performance.

It is important to remember that a good educator is not the one who transfers content and information, but the one who forms one's students as critical and autonomic citizens. Traditional teaching, based on memorization of terms and rules, is not effective in many aspects. It is not enough teaching nomenclature, for this kind of teaching has no context. A student is not more intelligent because one memorized all figures of speech, for this kind of "knowledge" will help only with tests grades.

Teacher's work is slow and constant, for one will not always please all the students, and many times, there will be students with great difficulties. For the teaching-learning process do not fail:

It is necessary, on the other hand, to insist on not thinking that educational practice lived with affection and joy, dispenses with serious scientific formation and the educators' political clearness. Educational practice summarizes all this: affection, joy, scientific ability, technical domination towards changes, or, unfortunately, towards maintenance of what is current. (FREIRE, 1996, p.90). [8]

Teaching is not a simple task, for this a long process. But an interdisciplinary approaching might help. Besides, it is necessary to have creativity, patience and dedication. A man is not a man all by oneself. A mediator is needed when we have to learn how to live in society, in order to be conscious of our duties and rights. This is the teacher's role. The keyword, then, is commitment.

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