Ethnography in Literacy—A Contribution Partnership

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Barton and Hamilton, in their text *Local Literacies: reading and writing in one community*, 2012, present the concept of literacy as a set of social practices and processes which connect people with others and can be described from the observation of events and activities mediated by the text in the midst of social interactions, which will interweave different modes of sense production, discursive relations and productions of subjectivity (FABRICIO, 2016).

The classroom is a place that houses social practices and processes and the interactions that occur there are organized under the two-axis cross, time and space, where teacher and students establish discourses, practices and contemporary uses of reading and writing through actions at observable events. It is these actions in these events from the texts produced that will drive the interactions between the actors involved. These interactions are important because they involve different productions of meaning and subjectivation with shared meanings in the speeches of teachers and students, which will compose different types of literacy from the social and cultural processes in operation in the context of the classroom.

One of the issues that I would highlight in these social processes is the place of the teacher who inscribes from a different perspective with the insertion of the new technologies of communication and information. The place of the teacher, conventionally marked as the place of enunciator of knowledge and contents and transmitter of knowledge, moves to a more peripheral place in the occurrences of actions detailed to the uses of new technologies in the classroom. The play of interactions between the actors from the speeches captured in the actions of determined events can help to investigate to what extent the insertion of the new technologies into classroom activities could affect the recognition of the teaching place and what effects are observed in the representations of teacher authority, whether it moves from the place of enunciator of knowledge to students in the classroom situation and from which issues.

These problematizations will dialogue with a proposal for a method of research and analysis in qualitative and interpretive research in the classroom, a field where multiple literacy functions are mobilized, and make it possible to prescribe some principles of organization in data collection.

According to Frederick Erickson (1985), these problematizations allow us to observe: (a) the specific nature of the classroom as a socially and culturally organized environment for the learning process; (b) the specific nature of teaching as only one element of the reflective learning environment and (c) the nature and content of the perspectives of meanings and meanings in the actions of the teacher and the students.

The ethnographic method, methodological procedure brought from Social Anthropology, is useful in research on literacy that involves the classroom because it allows the examination of the perspectives of meanings and shared meanings in social practices by putting under some suspicion the surface context of these daily practices from the interactions between its actors as something absolute and true.

Examination of action models that blend into the invisibility of interactions in classroom social practices, by suggesting aspects of uniformity in a diversity relief, or by traits of differences in a unit character, produces sets of data that provide new parameters of analysis and will promote the considerations and reflections that will make possible the transformations that we aim at in the classroom, in the state of things in the educational system.

Therefore, it is fundamental to choose a methodological path that makes it possible to organize the collection, documentation and recording of the data for a congruent understanding of the meanings and senses involved, so that it is possible to generate reflections from comparative data exams obtained.

For this, two sets of practices of my classes of Portuguese Language were filmed, with two classes of the 1st. high school series of a high school and technical state college in two tasks requests: the production of narrative scenes of *Lisbela and the Prisoner*, by Osman Lins (1963), and the production of a guide facilitator of the reading of *The time and the time of Augusto Matraga* by Guimarães Rosa (1946). The two groups worked with freedom of use of media possibilities in a technology lab, using computers and cell phones. The corpus consisted of descriptions of the interaction practices of this teacher with students in the activities and notes of the field diary and institutional documentation from categories of analysis, using the qualitative approach to action research.

The proposal to observe the lines in interaction in order to verify which elements suggest that the place of the teacher is affected with the insertion of the new technologies in the classroom demands to observe points of consonance and contrast that request a work of field that, according to Erickson, involves problematizations about what social actions are in practice, what their meanings are, and what models are organized.

This example of using an ethnographic approach in a research on Literacy focused on the interferences of the uses of new communication and information technologies in the classroom for the place of the teacher, conceived as a place of authority in the transmission of knowledge and content whose purpose was to verify to what extent the insertion of the new technologies in classroom activities could affect the recognition of the teacher place and what effects would be observed in the representations of the authority of the teacher instead of enunciator of the knowledge for the students in the classroom .

A clipping of Field Journal Notes and Records:

Fragment 1: "Where I was headed when I agreed to this lesson filming business. I won't make it." (Group 1—first week)

Fragment 2: "Today was better than last week. What helps me is that this class is so lovely, and worse, they feel immensely grateful that they are having a 'different' class. I feel bad, the feeling is of being a fraud because it seems that I am doing something great, but I am the limp that has an eye reigning in the land of blind and crippled." (Group 1—second week).

Fragment 3: "I can see some differences between one practice and another, from G1 to G2. I think I still have miles to go, but shooting was good because I could see myself. I had never seen myself like this, teaching, at the time of the classroom, with my students, in action. (...) And if I was able to haunt myself, to be disappointed, at times I could also enjoy what I saw. (...) But I think I need to change a lot of things with urgency, a lot of urgency." (Group 2—one year later).

The fragments selected from the records show two different perspectives of the teacher's statements regarding her students and her work. In fragment 1, the teacher expresses a fear of the breadth of the work

involved in filming, and in fragment 2, she sketches statements of greater confidence and encouragement the following week.

It is also possible to observe in fragment 2 the presence of an affirmation of depreciation and desvaluation in relation to the expectations of oneself and the idealizations of the students in relation to work, as opposed to the affirmation of consciousness of one's own work and one's own actions, after working with Group 2, which the teacher expresses in fragment 3.

The possibilities of interpretations that are offered from the descriptions of practices and interactions in the selected clippings for analysis allow that it is possible to know the meanings attributed to the social roles instituted between the actors and the environments that present themselves in the triangulation of the data between the annotations of the journal field, the examination of documents of the institution and the mapping of the descriptive records of the filming.

This allows us to understand, for example, that due to the lack of activities and practices with digital technologies in the college, the students of Group 1 experienced expressions of collaboration and gratitude to the teacher larger than the students of Group 2, that at the time of the accomplishment of the work, had already been inserted in some practices of uses of the technologies, instituted by the college, encouraged in part by the work with Group 1.

The ethnographic approach allows us to understand that the expressions of fragility of the teacher's thoughts in the notes of the field diary in the surface relief of the data are reconciled with statements of nonconformity and attitude of questioning that imply her in the research project with her students in the exhibition filming and analysis of the practice itself. If this analysis were analyzed without the ethnographic character of the organization and the framework of the data records, we would have the possibility of an analysis that would disregard the actions and practices in process beyond a partial understanding of the facts that mobilized the teacher to question about the uses of new technologies and the displacement of their place in the classroom.

Erickson will reaffirm that the focus of ethnography rests on a social ecology, on the structure and process of the social field from the observation of real, particular situations in order to construct meanings for what one wishes to understand.

The literacy practices, the new technologies, the classroom and the place of the teacher in this process still constitute problems in search of the construction of senses in front of the plurality of discourses and social practices of the present day.

Perhaps ethnography presents itself as an attempt to respond to our discomfort with the permanent uncertainties that surround us in our search for answers, and is more than a method in itself; is essentially the possibility of summoning us to the constant estrangement of what remains comfortably invisible in our daily life, and provoking us to seek the transformations we desire, in the inversion of the relative in strange and of the old in unprecedented.

References

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 Erickson, F. (1985). *Qualitative methods in research on teaching*.
 Fabricio, B. (2016). *Applied linguistics as unlocking space*.