ORDERING AND SEQUENCING IN READING QUESTIONS: A CHRONICLE AND PAINTING PROPOSAL FOR TEXTBOOKS

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Renilson José MENEGASSI**

ABSTRACT: The present study analyzes types of questions and their sequencing in a compilation of textbooks designed for 6th to 9th grades, particularly in the section “Cruzando Linguagens” (Across Languages). The latter asks questions for the reading of different genres sharing similar themes. Thereafter, a new sequencing of questions is proposed for one of the activities suggested by the 6th grade textbook, targeted at chronicle and painting genres. This study focuses on views about reading from an interactionist perspective, Applied Linguistics studies, and the practice of ordering and sequencing of reading, as advocated by Solé (1998) and broadened by Menegassi (2018, 2010a, 2010b, 2010c, 2010d, 2016), Fuza and Menegassi (2018, 2017) and Fuza (2017). From the proposed questions, only one may usually allow intertextual thematic dialogue. Hence, the following was suggested: (i) analysis of textbook questions related to chronicle and painting; (ii) a new sequencing of questions; and (iii) review of thematic gaps Subsequently, a theoretical and methodological proposal of ordering and sequencing questions was developed, focusing on intertextual dialogue allowing readers to: establish dialogue between texts of similar theme; craft textual, inferential and interpretive answers comprising the main ideas of the texts; produce meanings related to the themes in order to reach textual and inferential comprehension, as well as interpretation, allowing relative thematic emptying.


Introductory remarks

Reading questions are one of the most used tools in a classroom. Their study is of paramount importance, as it helps to construct a critical fluency of learner-reader’s reading and also exert some influence in their writing production. On that account, authors whose theories center on Psycholinguistics and Applied Linguistics, with

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In Solé (1998, p. 155, our translation), reading practice is characterized as “a crucial strategy for active reading.”2 It is necessary that teachers understand the question procedures based on “ordering and sequencing criteria”3, as they “make teachers conscious about the theoretical-methodological approaches involved in this process”4 (MENEGASSI, 2010a, p. 167, our translation).

Menegassi (2010b) states that textbooks are conventionally the source of reading narrative texts in class. According to Fuza and Rodrigues (2017), this is because textbooks have been more prominently used in Brazilian schools and, as such, they have sparked some scholars’ interest as well as concern over the last decades. The authors’ point of view is that “teachers and learners should make conscious use of textbooks”5 (FUZA; RODRIGUES, 2017, p. 189, our translation) in order to improve didactic competence in the learning environment.

Analyzing the activity, Menegassi (2010b) found lack of concern with thematic unit of the text and of the textual exploration, which indicates the need to rethink about the thematic issue in classroom practices. In this paper, ordering and sequencing join hands with the concept of exhaustion of the theme (BAKHTIN, 1986) as the first component to determine the constitution of an utterance; in other words, by “exhausting” the theme of a given utterance, one is able to reply to acts of language (CEREJA, 2005). It must be emphasized that official documents, such as Common Core State Standards6 (BRASIL, 2017), the reading standards, for instance, require learners to be capable of reflecting upon the themes of a text. This is also featured in the document Reference Guidelines of Portuguese Language7 (BRASIL, 2011, p. 22, our translation), in which the relation between texts during reading is described as: “Recognizing different manners of dealing with information when comparing texts of a theme”8 and “Recognizing distinct points of views among two or more opinions on

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1 “Sequencing” is the sequence of reading questions that result in the production of a text, in which information and ideas matured from the questions merge into a final text, a complete thought about the genre of choice, as presented by Fuza and Menegassi (2017).
2 In the original: “estratégia essencial para uma leitura ativa” (SOLÉ, 1998, p. 155).
3 In the original: “critérios de ordenação e sequenciação” (MENEGASSI, 2010a, p. 167).
4 In the original: “conscientização do professor sobre as determinações teórico-metodológicas envolvidas nesse processo” (MENEGASSI, 2010a, p. 167).
5 In the original: “utilização consciente do LD, por parte de professores e alunos” (FUZA; RODRIGUES, 2017, p. 189).
6 In the original: “Base Nacional Comum Curricular.”
7 In the original: “Matriz de Referência de Língua Portuguesa.”
8 In the original: “Reconhecer diferentes formas de tratar uma informação na comparação de textos que tratam do mesmo tema” (BRASIL, 2011, p. 22).
the same fact or theme.” Hence, it is imperative that reading practices be developed in learning environments, with emphasis on study of textual theme.

For the present research, Cereja and Cochar’s (2015) Brazilian Portuguese textbook compilation Portuguese Languages\textsuperscript{10}, used by Brazilian learners from 6\textsuperscript{th} to 9\textsuperscript{th} grades, was used as corpus. The textbooks are used throughout the country, as well as recommended and approved by the Textbook National Program\textsuperscript{11} (BRASIL, 2015). They are also largely used in Palmas (TO) and Maringá (PR) regions. A total of 16 reading activities from the textbook section Across Languages\textsuperscript{12} were analyzed as samples of the relation between texts with similar themes and different genres.

Subsequently, in order to analyze the types of questions as well as their sequencing, four activities from the 6\textsuperscript{th} grade textbook were specifically selected. Only one of them was highlighted as a topic for discussion and proposal of a new ordering and sequencing of questions due to space limitation. This activity illustrates how the proposal may be applied to other segments and other textbooks.

**Reading approaches and reading questions**

Due to taking reading questions as learning tools, it is pertinent to study them, given the possibilities for learners to develop fluent reading. Marcuschi (2001, 2008) grouped comprehension questions into nine categories: The color of Napoleon’s white horse, Copy, Objective, Inferential, Global, Subjective, Anything goes, Impossible, and Metalinguistic. Dialogue is established between those types of questions and reading approaches. For instance, text-based questions fall into the “Copy” category, which are activities focused on transcribing information from the text. Reader-centered questions may be of “Subjective” or “Anything goes” categories, as they are superficially related to the text: “the answer is on learner’s account, there is no way to test its veracity”\textsuperscript{13} and “anything goes, there is no wrong answer”\textsuperscript{14} (MARCUSCHI, 2008, p. 271, our translation). The categorization is groundbreaking, and so are Pearson and Johnson (1978) as well as Heaton’s (1991) studies on reading questions; however, they do not guide this research in terms of the discussion presented herein.

There are some aspects that interfere in the work with reading questions: “a) the reading concept of choice; b) the reading-work methodology based on the reading

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\textsuperscript{9} In the original: “Reconhecer posições distintas entre duas ou mais opiniões relativas ao mesmo fato ou ao mesmo tema” (BRASIL, 2011, p. 22).

\textsuperscript{10} In the original: “Português Linguagens”

\textsuperscript{11} In the original: “Programa Nacional do Livro Didático – PNLD”

\textsuperscript{12} In the original: “Cruzando Linguagens”

\textsuperscript{13} In the original: “sendo que a resposta fica por conta do aluno e não há como testá-la em sua validade” (MARCUSCHI, 2008, p. 271).

\textsuperscript{14} In the original: “qualquer resposta, não havendo possibilidade de se equivocar” (MARCUSCHI, 2008, p. 271).
concept of choice; c) the reading goal; d) the chosen genre; e) sorting and sequencing of questions about the text [...]” (MENEGASSI, 2010a, p. 167, our translation).

According to Fuza (2010), during the reading process, reading approaches16 are not subsequent steps, one after another, but rather, they relate so as to allow for dialogue among author-text-reader. Many different approaches coexist in Applied Linguistics literature, but three of them stand out: text-focused reading, reader-focused reading, and interaction-focused reading (MENEGASSI, 2010a).

Aside from the approaches, it is observed that questions also interfere in reading. In the present case, reading questions are related to the theme; in other words, the focal point is how to work with similar themed texts that belong to different genres.

Reading questions are concrete utterances determined by elements, such as: “1) semantic exhaustiveness of the theme; 2) the speaker’s plan or speech will; 3) typical compositional and generic forms of finalization.” (BAKHTIN, 1986, p. 76). The first being responsible for complete or partial exhaustiveness of speech, thus enabling the subject responsive stance to the text. Consequently, exhaustion of the theme consists of “a primary and essential component to speech genre production, guiding the producer during this process, and subsequently, the interlocutor-respondent during the process of responsive comprehension, thereby enabling verbal social interaction”17 (MENEGASSI, 2010b, p. 82, our translation). Therefore, every utterance has its own theme.

While in class, the teacher may contribute for learners to reach conclusions about the theme of a given text through reading questions, by fully exploring it, questioning the conditions of text-production, and thinking about the utterance under study. Bakhtin (1986) proposes that exhaustion of the text can be complete or relative. These concepts will be further explained during reading approaches discussion.

The text-based approach, which establishes a dialogue with the first part of the reading process, is referred to as decoding (MENEGASSI, 1995) in which reading is viewed as a process of decoding letters and sounds. According to Menegassi (2010a), the more a learner-reader response identification questions, the less s/he is able to produce meanings, and, consequently, s/he is not able to mature critically, particularly when dealing with texts. It is common for such questions to be presented in disarray without considering other steps of the reading process. As a result, the entire process is limited to decoding instead of being the first step18.

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15 In the original: “a) o conceito de leitura escolhido; b) a metodologia de trabalho com a leitura em função do conceito definido; c) o objetivo da leitura; d) o gênero textual escolhido; e) a ordenação e a sequenciação das perguntas oferecidas sobre o texto [...]” (MENEGASSI, 2010a, p. 167)

16 We use the term “approach” because it is related to methodological perspective applied in classrooms, which is the focus of this research, whereas “concept” is closer to reading theories (MENEGASSI, 2010a).

17 In the original: “elemento primário e essencial à produção de gênero discursivo, orientando o produtor, no seu processo de construção, e o interlocutor-respondente, no seu processo de compreensão responsiva, para que se estabeleça a interação verbal social” (MENEGASSI, 2010b, p. 82)

18 Santos and Kader (2009) state that text-focused reading, carried out through mechanical activity and linguistic code access, is most promising, especially in the beginning of the learning process. Thus, text-focused reading should be done according to the objective of the activity.
In reader-focused reading, reading is considered an act of giving meaning to a text, depending on the reader’s previous experiences when addressing a given text. As stated by Leffa (1996), reading quality is measured by the reader’s reaction quality. Despite having an active role, the social aspects of reading are discarded and any interpretation is valid (MENEGASSI; ANGELO, 2010). Reader-focused reading is at no specific step, since information comes from reader’s previous knowledge.

Interaction-focused reading establishes a dialogue among author-text-reader, promoting dialogue and the construction of comprehension, as well as an active response to the text. The latter becomes something akin to “an interlocution space intervened by contextual and intertextual elements, being seen as a result of absorption and transformation of other texts” (DELL’ISOLA, 1996, p. 71).

According to Colomer and Camps (2002, p. 173, our translation), assessment comprehension is still “an unclear and vague terrain that corresponds exactly [...] to minimal understanding of what it means to comprehend a text and how to teach it”. Menegassi (2016, p. 47, our translation) states that “using different reading concepts and models [...] to teach the learner how to perform critical thinking activities is the teacher’s job, as it provides better learning conditions for learners”. In addition, according to Solé (1998, p. 116, our translation), despite reading being an internal process, it should be taught: “learners should experience a reading process/model that allows them to see ‘strategies in action’ in a significant and functional situation”.

Rodrigues (2013) discusses about the relevance in proposing reading models to learners and about teachers being responsible to make an activity plan, which should include a special place for reading questions: “teachers dedicate most part of their interventions into devising questions to learners who, obviously, dedicate themselves to responding them, or at least trying to” (SOLÉ, 1998, p.110, our translation). Menegassi (2008, p. 46, our translation) states that reading questions are important, as they allow the teacher to guide the learner throughout reading, “they also serve to teach the reader, guide his/her learning, and contribute to reader’s education and development”.

Furthermore, the criteria of sorting and sequencing of questions allow for “a more efficient cognitive development for the learner-reader, once the teacher

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19 In the original: “espaço de interlocução no qual intervêm elementos contextuais e intertextuais, uma vez que é resultado de absorções e transformações de outros textos” (DELL’ISOLA, 1996, p. 71)
20 In the original: “um terreno nebuloso e impreciso que corresponde exatamente [...] ao pouco esclarecimento existente sobre o que significa entender um texto e como se pode ensinar a fazer isso” (COLOMER; CAMPS, 2002, p. 173)
21 In the original: “aplicar conceitos e modelos de leituras [...] ensinando o aluno a realizar atividades críticas, são obrigações do professor, para garantir melhores condições de aprendizagem aos estudantes” (MENEGASSI, 2016, p. 47)
22 In the original: “os alunos têm de assistir a um processo/modelo de leitura, que lhes permita ver as ‘estratégias em ação’ em uma situação significativa e funcional” (SOLÉ, 1998, p. 116)
23 In the original: “os professores dedicam a maior parte das suas intervenções a formular perguntas aos alunos e estes, logicamente, dedicam-se a respondê-las, ou pelo menos a tentar” (SOLÉ, 1998, p.110)
24 In the original: “servem também para ensinar o leitor, para orientá-lo na sua aprendizagem, para auxiliá-lo na sua formação e desenvolvimento” (MENEGASSI, 2008, p. 46)
has been made aware of the theoretical-methodological approaches involved in this process"\textsuperscript{25} (MENEGASSI, 2010a, p. 167, our translation). Creating a dialogue with Solé’s (1998) types of questions and retrieving the (literal and inferential) comprehension and interpretive steps involved in the reading process (MENEGASSI, 2010d, 1995), Menegassi (2010a, 2011, 2016) categorized questions into: textual questions, inferential questions, and interpretive questions.

Textual questions center on the text. However, they are not copy questions, in which ideas must be extracted from the text, but it is the reader’s responsibility to seek answers within it. This activity requires readers to comprehend and understand the cognitive organization of sentences, and not only the ability to match information stated by the question itself in accordance with the response found in the text (MENEGASSI, 2010a). By Marcuschi’s (2001, 2008), this is different from decoding and copy questions.

Inferential questions may be deduced from the text. Despite having a connection with the text, the reader needs to link the elements from the text, thus reaching some type of inference. There is no response in the text, but in the correlation between text and reader’s inference. This allows an answer to be built based on the relationship “thinking about the text and seeking for a reply outside it”\textsuperscript{26} (MENEGASSI, 2010a, p. 180, our translation).

Interpretive questions have the text as reference and require reader’s previous knowledge and opinion to intervene, thereby creating a personal answer. As stated by Menegassi (2010a), not any response can be accepted, since meanings are born from the dialogue between questions.

With regards to exhaustion of the theme, Bakhtin (1986) defines it, at first, as something complete, present in aspects of human life that create attitudes and responses characterized by factual actions; speech genres are standardized and the creative element is missing almost completely. Menegassi (2010c) introduces the speech genre Question Answer as an example of complete exhaustion. As a result of standardizing the speech genre, one’s creativity is restricted in accordance to the question and the construction of the response. As suggested by Fuza (2017) and Angelo (2015), the scope of interpretive questions is that textual answers and text-inferred responses are inclined to reach complete exhaustion, given that creativity in thematic exposure is limited due to question category. Textual questions are focused on finding and copying information; whereas inferential ones, despite presenting reader’s previous knowledge, depend on deduction made from the text (MENEGASSI, 2010a).

Relative exhaustion is marked by creativity and interpretation of facts, which contribute to the making of a counter-word. According to Bakhtin (1986, p. 77, author’s italics), “by becoming the theme of the utterance, the subject achieves a relative finalization under certain conditions, when the problem is posed in a particular way, on

\textsuperscript{25} In the original: “um trabalho de desenvolvimento cognitivo mais eficaz no aluno-leitor, a partir da conscientização do professor sobre as determinações teórico-metodológicas envolvidas nesse processo” (MENEGASSI, 2010a, p. 167)

\textsuperscript{26} In the original: “pensar sobre o texto e buscar resposta fora dele” (MENEGASSI, 2010a, p. 180)
the basis of a particular material, with particular aims set by the author, that is, already within the boundaries of a specific authorial intent. Questions and answers have their inherent utterance to be explored in class. The genre itself will require relative finalization because of its limitations as a concrete utterance imposed by the situation of communication. Interpretive responses, in turn, have relative exhaustion, since the question itself encourages creativity and nurturing of ideas, “guiding the interlocutor-teacher not only to categorize learner’s reply as right or wrong, but to agree, disagree, counter argue, request additional explanation, thus following up the enunciation chain” (ANGELO, 2015, p. 56, our translation).

The relative exhaustiveness of the theme “is present in spheres in which speech genre necessarily displays creative elements” (MENEGASSI, 2010c, p. 82, our translation), as it is the case of secondary genres which appear in conditions with more complex and organized cultural interaction.

Menegassi (2010c, p. 82, our translation) claims that “genre itself is not something relative, but the composing theme itself has this characteristic due to the author’s speech plan and intention, as well as the idea determined by the author.” Therefore, theme is an element closely related to the genre, the first of its components. Sobral and Giacomelli (2016) consider theme unit, style and compositional form as part of a dialogue, thus making it possible to “comprehend the theme as a whole, the meaning the utterance creates is beyond words” (SOBRAL; GIACOMELLI, 2016, p. 1085, authors’ italics, our translation).

In her theoretical-methodological proposal, Fuza (2017) presents reading questions for texts with similar themes but of distinct genres, expressing the necessity of rethinking the theme issue in the learning environment, especially in regards to textbooks. In light of what has been discussed so far, and with the intent of organizing the information presented to this point, we have assembled in Chart 1 the reading approaches, their characteristics and steps in the reading process, and types of questions.

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27 In the original: “ao se tornar tema do enunciado ganha uma relativa conclusibilidade em determinadas condições, em certa situação do problema, em um dado material, em determinados objetivos colocados pelo autor, isto é, já no âmbito de uma ideia definida pelo autor” (BAKHTIN, 1986, p. 77, author’s italics)

28 In the original: “orientando o interlocutor-professor a não apenas classificar o dizer do aluno como certo ou errado, mas a concordar, discordar, contra-argumentar, solicitar complementação, dando continuidade ao elo da cadeia enunciativa” (ANGELO, 2015, p. 56)

29 In the original: “está presente nas esferas em que o gênero discursivo apresenta necessariamente elementos criativos” (MENEGASSI, 2010c, p. 82)

30 In the original: “o gênero em si não é relativo, mas o tema que o constitui apresenta essa característica, em função do projeto de dizer do autor, da finalidade marcada, da ideia definida pelo autor” (MENEGASSI, 2010c, p. 82)

31 In the original: “compreender o tema do enunciado como um todo, aquilo que o enunciado, para além da língua, cria em termos de sentido” (SOBRAL; GIACOMELLI, 2016, p. 1085, author’s italics)
**Chart 1 – Reading approaches: characteristics, steps in the reading process and types of questions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>READING FOCUS</th>
<th>CHARACTERISTICS</th>
<th>READING PROCESS STEP</th>
<th>TYPES OF READING QUESTION</th>
<th>EXHAUSTION OF THE THEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Text**      | - Reading as a process of decoding letters and sounds;  
- “Ascendant” reading (bottom-up): process that goes from the text to the reader;  
- Reader recognizes words and ideas and copies information from the text;  
- reader scans the text and finds similar constructions that repeat words in the question;  
- Text is made complete, exact and unique, the reader is not able to take part in constructing meaning. | Decoding step | Questions to extract information from the text; copy questions.  
Responses are extracted/information is copied from the text. | Complete |
| **Reader**    | - Reading as a way to add information to the text;  
- “Descend” reading (top-down): process that goes from the reader to the text;  
- reader has a pivotal role in the process;  
- Learner’s reading is highly valued, every and any interpretation is considered valid. | There is no specific step in this case because information comes from reader’s previous knowledge and its relation to the text. | Questions that add information to the text. | Complete |
| **Text-reader interaction** | - Reading as interaction between (author) text-reader, establishing a dialogue;  
- Reading enables constructing comprehension and active answer to the text;  
- Reader creates meanings and senses, looking for and giving significance;  
- Reader as a cowriter;  
- Text is a place for dialogue. | Step at literal comprehension level. | 1. Questions of textual answers: responses are in the text, but cannot be copied, as decoding questions. | Complete |
|               |                  | Step at inferential comprehension level. | 2. Questions of inferential answers: responses are deduced from the text. Despite having a connection, the reader needs to link the elements from the text in order to create some inference. | Complete and relative |
|               |                  | Interpretation step. | 3. Questions of interpretive answer: responses relate the text and the reader’s previous knowledge, making it a personal reply. | Relative |

Source: Adapted from Fuza and Menegassi (2017, p. 268).
The fact that the questions fit into steps of the reading process justifies the relevance of the work with sequencing questions. Menegassi (2010a) proposes starting with textual questions, followed by inferential questions and interpretive ones. As a result, having the theme in mind, working with questions enables the learner to comprehend the theme in a textual and inferential manner, in complete connection with the theme, according to Bakhtin (1986). Once the reader has grasped the global comprehension of the text theme, s/he reaches the interpretive level, attributing self-thought meanings to the theme, which is relative exhaustion. Questions are organized in ascending order of difficulty, guiding the reader towards progressive reflection about the text and its theme (Menegassi, 2010a, 2011; Rodrigues, 2013). Accordingly, textual theme is one of the constructive essences of questions and a proposal for working with two genres used in the Portuguese textbook is presented as a sample of what can be done in a situation of education training and reader development.

Work methodology

The analysis of reading activities on section Across Languages32 has as theoretical-methodological support types of questions, ordering and sequencing model, as proposed by Menegassi (2008; 2010a, 2010b, 2010c; 2016), and mainly derived from Solé (1998).

The textbook chosen for this analysis is “Portuguese Languages”33, by Willian Cereja and Thereza Cochar (2015) and it is used in Palmas (TO) and Maringá (PR) regions, cities where the authors of this paper originate from. According to the textbook Teacher’s Guide, the aim is to carry out “a consistent reading work proposal with selective criteria of new texts, committed to forming competent readers of all kinds of texts and genres in social circulation.”34 (Cereja; Cochar, 2015, p. 275, our translation). There is focus on the enunciative perspective of language as “means of action and social interaction”35 (Cereja; Cochar, 2015, p. 275, our translation).

In observing the sections of the textbook, one entitled “Across Languages” was chosen to be analyzed. It is a section introducing a number of genres, with a particular or similar theme; hence this section was selected for this research, considering the aforementioned dialogism assumptions. There is no mention of this section in the Teacher’s Guide. Through analysis of the activities, texts with similar themes but from distinct genres were addressed; however, there is no reference as to the purpose of crossing such genres. Each textbook of the compilation has four sections, with a total of 16 activities, as shown in Chart 2:

32 In the original: “Cruzando Linguagens.”
33 In the original: “Português Linguagens”
34 In the original: “proposta de trabalho consistente de leitura com seleção criteriosa de novos textos, comprometida com a formação de leitores competentes de todos os tipos de textos e gêneros em circulação social” (Cereja; Cochar, 2015, p. 275)
35 In the original: “meio de ação e interação social”. (Cereja; Cochar, 2015, p. 275)
Chart 2 – Survey of featured genres and themes in the section “Across Languages”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Featured genres</th>
<th>Themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 6<sup>th</sup> | 1. Movie and short story.  
2. Painting and chronicle.  
3. Cartoon and a passage of Malala’s work.  
4. Advertisement and news report. | 1. Wisdom to overcome difficulties.  
2. Loving animals.  
3. Acting and thinking differently from others.  
| 7<sup>th</sup> | 1. Painting and myth.  
2. Cartoon and poem.  
3. Movie and chronicle.  
4. Robson Crusoe’s images and passage. | 1. Decision-making against the law.  
2. The power of artistic freedom.  
3. Prejudice can cause intolerance.  
4. Craving adventure and the ability to improvise according to the situation. |
| 8<sup>th</sup> | 1. Painting and chronicle.  
2. Poem and magazine article.  
3. Chronicle and poem.  
4. Movie and magazine article. | 1. Children grown apart from their families.  
2. Adolescence changes.  
3. Language use.  
| 9<sup>th</sup> | 1. Movie and chronicle.  
2. Poem and illustrations.  
3. Funk lyrics and chronicle.  
2. Love at any age.  
3. Consumerism.  
4. People’s habit of living unhappy lives. |

Source: Authors’ elaboration.

The learner is engaged in the study of two texts: (i) the “Across Languages” section itself and (ii) another text, which is taken up at the beginning of the respective unit. The most studied genres are movie, painting (artwork, picture, canvas) and poem, used in order to establish dialogue with other genres that have already been read throughout the chapter, for instance: short story and chronicle, in a clear relation established between genres.

The overall “Across Languages” section, from textbooks aimed at 6<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> grades, has no sequencing of questions in accordance to the ordering and sequencing principles. Despite being focused on crossing languages, there is usually one reading question regarding the thematic connection between texts. In order to determine how the different categories, as well as how sequencing of reading questions are carried out, the results found in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade textbook are displayed on, Table 1 due to space limitations:
Table 1 – Types and total of reading questions from “Across Languages” section in 6th grade TB

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>READING QUESTION CATEGORY</th>
<th>N. of questions - Activity 1</th>
<th>N. of questions - Activity 2</th>
<th>N. of questions - Activity 3</th>
<th>N. of questions - Activity 4</th>
<th>N. of occurrences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focus on text</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on reader</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on interaction (textual question)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on interaction (inferential question)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on interaction (interpretive question)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>22</strong></td>
<td><strong>13</strong></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
<td><strong>50</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Authors’ elaboration.

In view of the above, 15 questions of inferential answers (30%); 14 questions of text-focused and textual responses (28%); 4 reader-focused (8%); 3 questions of interpretive responses (6%) have been found. Out of the 50 questions in the “Across Languages” section, 32 focused on interaction (64%). It was noticed that there is a trend to propose to learners questions focused on interaction, thus establishing a dialogue with the enunciative perspective of language present in the Teacher’s Guide. More important than addressing the types of questions, it is relevant to observe how they are sequenced in the activities, as it can be seen on Chart 3.

Chart 3 – Reading questions sequencing about chronicle and painting genres in “Across Languages” section on 6th grade TB

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Featured genres</th>
<th>Sequencing of reading questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 2        | Chronicle and painting   | 1a. Text-focused question.  
1b. Reader-focused question.  
2a. Reader-focused question.  
2b. Text-focused question.  
3. Textual question.  
4a. Inferential question.  
4b. Inferential question.  
4c. Inferential question.  
5a. Inferential question.  
5b. Inferential question.  
5c. Inferential question.  
6. Inferential question.  
7. (focus on dialogue between texts)  
   Textual question. |

Source: Authors’ elaboration.
From the analyzed activities, we observed that the reading question, which is related to the dialogue between texts (highlighted in bold on Chart 3), is usually located at the end of the script, it is either classified as textual or as having all three levels: textual question; inferential question; interpretive question. According to research, the questions do not follow sequencing, starting from textual comprehension and inferential questions until they reach the interpretive level, as suggested by reading process theories. Despite being entitled Across Languages\(^\text{36}\), there is usually one question that enables the connection between texts, which will be analyzed in the following section. The textbook presents a new text in this section, in order to establish a dialogue between this text and the unit’s opening text; however, there is only indication to the new text’s reading questions, which demonstrates lack of thematic relation questions.

**Analysis and theoretical-methodological proposal of thematic relation activities**

In this section, we focus on the reading questions present in an activity, followed by the proposal of a new sequencing, centered on dialogue between texts, having the theme as the main principle. This is justified by the small number of questions related to intertextual dialogue. It is necessary to increase this amount in order to fully contemplate all steps of the reading process, which will, in turn, enable the learner-reader to understand the texts’ theme unit and reconstruct meanings.

The selected activity is part of the 6\(^\text{th}\) grade textbook, from Chapter 1 – The City Farmer\(^\text{37}\) – which proposes the reading of the chronicle: City Boy\(^\text{38}\), followed by a few reading questions:

**City Boy**

Daddy, can I have a small goat at my farm?
Sure.
What about a guinea pig? A giant otter? A monkey? What about four dogs?
Two hundred doves? An ox? A rhino?
Not a rhino.
Okay, but a horse is okay, isn’t it?
The farm is just a piece of land at Rio state, nothing big planned for now.
But the boy needs to believe in the farm just like other people need to believe in Heaven. His Heaven is that of folkloric parties, the entire animal kingdom, and him, who was born in Rio and is made to live in this animal-less city.
As a matter of fact, he himself denies that Rio is an animal-less city, he has the gift of finding them in the most unexpected places. He vanishes as soon as he goes through the door when visiting someone’s house only to come back three seconds later with a cat or dog in hand. We walk through a street in Copacabana,

\(^{36}\) In the original: “Cruzando linguagens”  
\(^{37}\) In the original: “O fazendeiro da Cidade”  
\(^{38}\) In the original: “Menino de cidade”
he disappears and comes back with a chickling. We set foot on Barra da Tijuca and within five minutes he’s already caught a live crab.

He has an animal radar, finds all in the vicinity, going around as fast as a rocket; a hi to a parrot, a hello for the goose and the cat a little further ahead, restless and frustrated.

He can’t tell one car brand from another and his soccer knowledge is limited to Garrincha and Nilton Santos, but he knows better than anyone what is a mastiff, a boxer and a dobermann. He remembers people according to their pets: that’s Malhado’s owner, that one’s Lord’s owner… On the phone, he asks about ducks, cats and other dogs, hundreds, thousands of dogs, dogs he’d want as companions, dogs that watch him on the street, at school, during meals, dogs that bark and jump in his dreams, dogs to no end.

His reading is particularly limited to: colored animal books. He does a poor job on written words, but his proficiency in talking about reptiles, batrachian and the like is a little concerning. Son of an English mother, he can’t tell fork from knife, but knows the difference between a seal and a walrus. When he asks for a piece of paper is to draw a zebra or a whale.

Needless to say, his frustration is heartbreaking, which is why we got him a saffron finch a while back as a consolation. One day, since he was told he’d have the bird taken if he continued to misbehave, he ran to the yard and opened its cage.

Next one was a great-billed seed finch who died from too much birdseed. Later on, he got a tiny and foolish turtle that was named Henriqueta in the bathroom sink. Never before had a turtle given so much trouble. He went to the city’s dentist and, after arriving home, told his first terrible word to his dad: I’m desperate. He’d lost the turtle in the bus.

His life was now empty. What soothed him was calling grandma, who lived in another city, and asking about the ducks she “owned.” Or visiting Poppy’s future mom, a poodle that should be born in about half a year, promised to be his at all costs.

Another coping method: hunt for butterflies, moths, crickets, and carefully lodge them in empty cages, calling them by the names of dead or missing pets.

An uncle gave him a canary, but it was too much love and the little bird died. There was nothing to be done at the time, so he dedicated himself to drawing animals. Once in a while he’ll perk up and get home in a frenzy to show something invisible in his hands: “Look at this cricket, so cool!”

But the cool crickets and butterflies either die or quietly leave their cages, and once again, he is left empty-handed and his soul in pieces.

He found another way: got a few saucers and planted bean sends in them. The bathroom is full of shy, green sprouts. And now he knows he has a farm.

(CAMPOS, 1992, p. 45-47, our translation)

Next, there is the “Across Languages” section with a painting and its respective questions:
ACROSS LANGUAGES

Look carefully at the painting on the right.

1. The painting shows a boy surrounded by many elements.
   a) What are the elements around him?
   b) Do you think it’s a common scene from these days or from a distant past? Explain your answer using the elements from the painting.

2. The boy is giving a signal with his left hand.
   a) What sound is he making with his mouth?
   b) To whom is he signaling and making the sound?

3. Look at the dog’s expression. What does it want? Why?

4. The painting is named “The Stowaway.” Hypothesize about:
   a) Who is the stowaway?
   b) Where do you think the boy is?
   c) Why did he have to hide the dog?

5. Look at the suitcase on the boy’s lap and the package next to him. Hypothesize about:
   a) Where do you think he is going?
   b) Will he stay long in there? Why?
   c) What could be in the package next to him?

6. The boy could get in trouble by travelling with a “stowaway.” In your opinion, why do you think he is taking that risk?

7. Compare the painting with the “City boy” chronicle. What are the similarities and differences between the boy in the chronicle and the boy in the painting, particularly regarding their relationship with animals?

(CEREJA; COCHAR, 2015, p. 81, our translation)

Figure 1 – The clandestine passenger (1920), by Norman Rockwell

Source: Brainly®

39 In the original: CRUZANDO LINGUAGENS

Observe atentamente a pintura ao lado.

1. A pintura mostra um menino rodeado de vários elementos.
   a) Que elementos estão à sua volta?
   b) Você acha que essa cena poderia ter ocorrido nos dias de hoje ou em um passado distante? Justifique sua resposta com elementos da pintura.

2. O menino está fazendo um sinal com a mão esquerda.
   a) Que som ele deve estar produzindo com a boca?
   b) Para quem ele faz o sinal e produz o som?

3. Observe a expressão do cachorro. O que ele está querendo? Por quê?

4. O título do quadro é O passageiro clandestino. Levante hipóteses:
   a) Quem é o passageiro clandestino?
   b) Onde você acha que o menino está?
   c) Por que esse passageiro teve de ficar escondido?

5. Observe a malas que está sob as pernas do menino e o pacote que está ao seu lado. Levante hipóteses.
   a) Para onde você acha que ele está indo?
   b) Ele vai demorar nesse lugar? Por quê?
   c) O que pode haver no pacote ao seu lado?

6. Ao levar um “passageiro clandestino”, o menino pode ter problemas durante a viagem. Na sua opinião, por que ele prefere correr o risco?

7. Compare a pintura com a crônica, “Menino da cidade”. Que semelhanças e diferenças há entre o menino da crônica e o menino da pintura quanto ao modo como se relacionam com os animais? (CEREJA; COCHAR, 2015, p. 81)

As reported on Chart 3, and revealed by questions addressed to the painting, questions from 1 to 6 are specifically aimed at the work of art. It is only question 7 that proposes a dialogue between texts (painting and chronicle), while resuming what had been read at the beginning of the unit. Both texts are near, since they share a common theme: love for animals. In the “City boy” chronicle, the character would like to have a pet animal, but there is always something that keeps him away from animals. As for the painting, there is a boy that seems to have run away with a pet animal. Based on the painting, questions are exposed.

Questions 1a and 2b focus on text, as follows:

1. The painting shows a boy surrounded by many elements.
   a) What are the elements around him?
      A.: In the painting, the boy is surrounded by an umbrella, a suitcase, a basket with a dog and a package.
   2. The boy is giving a signal with his left hand.
      b) To whom is he signaling and making the sound?
      A.: The boy is giving a signal with his left hand to the dog.41
          (CEREJA; COCHAR, 2015, p. 81, our translation).

In those cases, information present on text surface is identified, and the reader is not required to interpret.

Questions 1b and 2a, on the other hand, are addressed to the reader:

1. The painting shows a boy surrounded by many elements.
   b) Do you think it’s a common scene from these days or from a distant past? Explain your answer using the elements from the painting.
      A.: The scene could have happened in a distant past, given the boy’s clothing and hat.
   2. The boy is giving a signal with his left hand.
      a) What sound is he making with his mouth?
      A.: He must be making the sound: “Shhhhh!”42
          (CEREJA; COCHAR, 2015, p. 81, our translation).

41 In the original: 1. A pintura mostra um menino rodeado de vários elementos.
   a) Que elementos estão à sua volta?
      R.: Na pintura o menino está rodeado por um guarda-chuva, uma mala, uma cesta com um cachorro e um pacote de embrulho.
   2. O menino está fazendo um sinal com a mão esquerda.
      b) Para quem ele faz o sinal e produz o som?
      R.: O garoto faz o sinal com a mão esquerda para o cachorro. (CEREJA; COCHAR, 2015, p. 81)

42 In the original: 1. A pintura mostra um menino rodeado de vários elementos.
   b) Você acha que essa cena poderia ter ocorrido nos dias de hoje ou em um passado distante? Justifique sua resposta com elementos da pintura.
      R.: Essa cena poderia ter ocorrido em um passado distante, tendo em vista as roupas do garoto, o chapéu.
   2. O menino está fazendo um sinal com a mão esquerda.
      a) Que som ele deve estar produzindo com a boca?
      R.: Ele deve estar produzindo: ‘Psiiu!’ . (CEREJA; COCHAR, 2015, p. 81)
The learner-reader presents a possibility of meaning in order to have his/her reading accepted, thus revealing that any answer is possible, since interpretation is required: “the answer might be yes or no.”

Questions 3 and 7 are at the interaction level and are known as textual questions. In question 3: “Look at the dog’s expression. What does it want? Why?”, the learner looks at the dog’s expression, which implies it wishes to leave the basket (text), and is required to explain the reason why s/he believes the dog wishes to do so (imply). Question 7, aimed at establishing a dialogue between texts, focuses on implicit intertextuality. In other words, “the producer of text hopes the reader is capable of acknowledging the presence of intertext by activating the source text in his/her discourse memory”43 (KOCH, 2009, p. 146, our translation). As regards intertextual relations, the textbook is responsible for leading the learner to establish them; however, no previous work on explicit intertextuality is carried out, since the focus is on thematic relations only, even if they are not very appropriate.

Questions 4, 5 and 6 are inferential, thus totaling seven questions. They require the learner to raise hypotheses. Despite being connected to the text, those questions lead the learner to correlate text and life, thus establishing inference. There is no answer in the text, but the correlation between text and reader’s inference. This allows an answer to be built based on the relationship “thinking about the text and seeking an answer outside it” (MENEGASSI, 2010a, p. 180). There are no questions at the interpretative level.

The following are questions at the interactive level:

**Textual**

3. Look at the dog’s expression. What does it want? Why?
   A.: The dog wishes to leave the box, as it seems tired, with its tongue sticking out.

7. Compare the painting with the “City boy” chronicle. What are the similarities and differences between the boy in the chronicle and the boy in the painting, particularly regarding their relationship with animals?
   A.: In the chronicle, the character would like to have a pet animal, but there is always something that keeps him away from animals. The boy depicted in the painting has a dog. Neither of them can leave their animals. In the chronicle, for instance, the character takes his turtle to the bus.

**Inferential**

4. The painting is called “The Stowaway.” Hypothesize about:
   a) Who is the stowaway?
      A.: The dog is the stowaway.
   b) Where do you think the boy is?
      A.: The boy is at a train station.
   c) Why did he had to hide the dog?
      A.: It had to hide because animals are probably not allowed to be on a train.

5. Look at the suitcase on the boy’s lap and the package next to him. Hypothesize about:

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43 In the original: “o produtor do texto espera que o leitor seja capaz de reconhecer a presença do intertexto, pela ativação do texto-fonte em sua memória discursiva” (KOCH, 2009, p. 146)
a) Where do you think he is going?
A.: He might be going to spend the holidays with his grandparents.
b) Will he stay long in there? Why?
A.: He probably will because he is taking a lot of luggage.
c) What could be in the package next to him?
A.: The package probably contains a present to whom will host the character.

6. The boy could get in trouble by travelling with a “stowaway.” In your opinion, why do you think he is taking that risk?
A.: During his trip, the boy might have problems for taking the dog along, but he’d rather take it, as he can’t leave his friend.

In an attempt to sequence potential answers to the question: “What is the text about?,” by juxtaposing textual, inferential and interpretive answers (MENEGASSI, 2010a), we conclude the answer is not built properly, with an initial assertion, followed by an explanation about it, and examples illustrating the explanation (GARCIA, 1992, our translation). This does not lead to discursive organization that is suitable to the theme:

3. The dog wishes to leave the box, as it seems tired, with its tongue sticking out. 7. In the chronicle, the character would like to have a pet animal, but there is always something that keeps him away from animals. The boy depicted in the painting has a dog. Neither of them can leave their animals. In the chronicle, for instance, the character takes his turtle to the bus. 4.a. The dog is the stowaway. b. The boy is at a train station. c) It had to hide because animals are probably not allowed to be on a train. 5. a) He might be going to spend the holidays with his grandparents. b) He probably will take a long time to come back because he is taking a lot of luggage. c) The package probably contains a present to whom will host the character. 6. During his trip, the boy might have problems for taking the dog along, but he’d rather take it, as he can’t leave his friend.

There is a miscellany of ideas that do not focus on establishing a dialogue between texts either, since answer to question 7 seems to be unattached to the other ones addressing the painting. While reading the questions, we have the impression the seventh is the only one aiming at the intersection of languages, of texts. All other questions

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44 In the original: 3. O cachorro está querendo sair da caixa, pois parece cansado, com a língua de fora. 7. O personagem da crônica gostaria de ter um animal de estimação permanente, mas sempre acontece algo que o distancia dos bichos. Já o menino do quadro tem um cachorro. Ambos não conseguem se separar de seus animais, como acontece na crônica em que o personagem leva a tartaruga até no ônibus. 4.a. O passageiro clandestino é o cachorro. b. O menino está em uma estação de trem. c) Esse passageiro teve de ficar escondido porque provavelmente não permitem animais no trem. 5. a) Ele pode estar indo passar férias na casa dos avós. b) Provavelmente, ele vai demorar no lugar porque está levando várias malas. c) Provavelmente, no pacote deve haver um presente para quem vai receber o personagem. 6. O menino pode ter problemas durante a viagem por levar o cachorro, mas prefere levá-lo, pois não se separa de seu amigo. (GARCIA, 1992)
exclusively focus on assessing the painting, thus not allowing for thematic discussion on both texts. This suggests the questions have failed and must be reviewed.

According to Fuza (2017), in an attempt to establish a thematic dialogue between texts, questions focusing on the chronicle only would be ideal, since it is the first text presented by the unit, as in the section Text study. Thereafter, it would be feasible to have questions specifically addressing the painting. Subsequently, focus would be on interactive questions addressing both genres and themes.

With a view to demonstrating how to put reading into effect, we highlight reading questions present in the book, but with new sorting, based on theory: focus on text, reader and interaction.

Questions about the chronicle

Focus on text

1.(1.) The boy’s interest in animals is expressed in the first paragraphs of the chronicle. What exactly proves this fact in the boy’s speech?

2.(4.) The narrator is engaged to show how the boy sees the world.

a) What is the boy’s knowledge about car brands? How about dog breeds?

3.(5.) Although the narrator does not give any information on the boy’s age, it is noticeable he is a child at reading and writing learning age. What elements from the text prove that data about the boy?

4.(6.) In fact, the boy is given a few animals. One of them is a saffron finch.

b) How does the boy treat other animals he is given?

(CEREJA; COCHAR, 2015, p. 76-79, our translation).

Questions 1, 2, 3 and 4 focus on text, as they can be answered with text extracts. The learner must look for answers within the text. In question 1, for instance, the learner is lead to search the text for information about the boy’s interest in animals. In the introduction, the boy asks his father for a number of animals: “Daddy, can I have a small goat at my farm? What about a guinea pig? A giant otter?” In general, these are questions of which answers are exclusively centered around the text, thus requiring the reader to pay close attention to data present on text surface, while acknowledging written symbols and connecting them with meaning. The reader must find information, thus withdrawing content from what is read (KLEIMAN, 1996; MENEGASSI; ANGELO, 2010).

45 In the original: Estudo do texto

46 In the original: Perguntas para a crônica

Focus no texto

1.(1.) O interesse do menino pelos animais é retratado logo nos primeiros parágrafos da crônica. O que, na fala do garoto, comprova esse fato?

2.(4.) O narrador se empenha em mostrar a maneira como o garoto vê o mundo.

a) Que conhecimento o menino tem sobre marcas de automóvel? E sobre raças de cachorros?

3.(5.) Embora o narrador não informe a idade do menino, é possível notar que se trata de uma criança em fase de aprendizagem de leitura e da escrita. Que elementos do texto comprovam esse dado sobre o garoto?

4.(6.) Na realidade, o menino ganha alguns animais, sendo um deles um canarinho-da-terra.

b) De que maneira o menino trata os outros animais de estimação que ganha? (CEREJA; COCHAR, 2015, p. 76-79).
According to Menegassi and Angelo (2010, p. 19), this reading approach has a well-defined ideological perspective. The more learners answer to text-identification questions, the less they will develop the ability to produce meaning. As a result, they will not mature their critical position when facing texts found in their social group, society as a whole and their own school. This is an approach seen as necessary to reader’s education; however, having it as a strategy to teach reading does not allow for reader’s development. For this reason, it is necessary to take the extraction/decoding stage as part of a process.

As for the theme, we found that questions allow the text to be fully explored, thus allowing learners to acknowledge the character is a child who likes animals and is more aware of dog breeds than car brands.

Focus on reader

5.(4.) The narrator is engaged to show how the boy sees the world.
   b) His mother allows him to be in touch with the English language. In your opinion, why does he mistake “knife” by “fork,” but is able to distinguish the meaning of “seal” and “walrus?”

6.(6.) In fact, the boy is given a few animals. One of them is a saffron finch.
   a) In your opinion, why does the boy decide to release the bird in view of the threat of giving the bird away if he behaved badly?
   (CEREJA; COCHAR, 2015, p. 76-79, our translation).

Questions 5 and 6 focus on the reader: “In your opinion....” which might simply present a possibility of meaning. According to Menegassi (2010a), although questions focusing on readers require them to participate, they ignore the social aspects, while overly relying on the “guesses” they make and taking as possible any meaning readers present. This leads to a situation in which anything is allowed, which might be seen as dangerous, since reading mistakes can happen.

Questions focusing on readers must be part of the reading process, while establishing a dialogue with extraction questions, thereby allowing learners to step into comprehension and further interpretation of text. Regarding theme, the learner will offer an opinion about the proximity between the character and the English language, as well as about the attitude of letting the bird go in the event of bad behavior.

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47 In the original: Foco no leitor

5.(4.) O narrador se empenha em mostrar a maneira como o garoto vê o mundo.
   b) Por intermédio da mãe, o menino tem contato com a língua inglesa. Na sua opinião, por que ele confunde Knife (faca) e fork (garfo), mas sabe diferenciar o significado das palavras seal (foca) e walrus (morsa)?

6.(6.) Na realidade, o menino ganha alguns animais, sendo um deles um canarinho-da-terra.
   a) Na sua opinião, por que, diante da ameaça de que, se continuasse a se comportar mal, ia dar o passarinho, o menino resolve soltar a ave? (CEREJA; COCHAR, 2015, p. 76-79)
Focus on interaction

Questions with textual answer

7.(4.) The narrator is engaged to show how the boy sees the world.
   c) The boy refers to people as “Malhados’s owner,” “Lord’s owner,” etc. What does this reveal about his interests?

8.(7.) The boy lives in a big city and, for this reason, does not have a close relationship to animals as much as he would like.
   a) Who is Poppy? What does it represent to the boy?
   b) How important are insects to the boy?
   c) Is the boy satisfied with his attempts to have a close relationship with animals? Why?

9.(8.) At the end of the text, the boy begins to plant bean seeds. According to the narrator, green sprouts filling the bathroom make him feel as if he were a farm’s owner.
   a) What does the bean sprouts farm represent to the boy?
   b) From beginning to end, does the boy’s greatest wish change? Explain your answer.
   c) Is the chronicle title “City boy” consistent with the boy’s characteristics as well as with the end of the story? Why?

(CEREJA; COCHAR, 2015, p. 76-79, our translation)

At the first level of interactive questions, as presented by Menegassi (2016), there are questions with textual answer, referred to by Solé (1998) as literal. Answers to those questions are directly found within the text. This does not imply answers are a copy, in which case the reader would merely copy a text extract and transfer it as the answer, as in questions focusing on text/extraction.

The reader is led to acknowledge, for instance, in question 7, that the boy is really interested in animals, since he calls people not by their name, but with reference to animals: “Malhado’s owner.” Question 8 reveals to the reader that the character does not have a close relationship with animals as much as he would like. In question 9, on the other hand, the learner needs to textually understand what is being read. For instance, s/he must realize what bean sprouts mean to the boy and whether the desire to be close to animals remains from the beginning to the end of the story. The following question: “Is the chronicle title “City boy” consistent with the boy’s characteristics as well as with the end of the story? Why”?, focuses on the text title, thus demanding the
reader to realize that, in fact, the boy lives in the city and his greatest wish is to be in the country with animals.

Questions with inferential answers

10.(2.) In the sixth paragraph, the narrator states the land the boy refers to is only an empty land lot in the state of Rio de Janeiro.

a) Hypothesize about: Why does the boy call the land lot “farm?”

b) According to the narrator, “the boy needs to believe in the farm, as much as other people need to believe in Heaven.” Why is the farm some type of Heaven to the boy?

11.(3.) In the chronicle, the narrator not only states facts, but also expresses opinions.

a) Whose opinion is it that animals do not exist in Rio de Janeiro?

b) Does the boy have his own opinion? Why?

c) In the paragraph before the last, what is the passage expressing, in the narrator’s own words, the boy’s feeling of frustration for not having a close relationship with animals?

(CEREJA; COCHAR, 2015, p. 76-79, our translation).

The second level of questions presented by Menegassi (2010a) comprises answers that can be inferred from the text. In other words, they are connected to the text, but require the reader to establish relations among several text elements, thereby producing some inference and associating text and his/her own knowledge. Therefore, the answer is not within the text, but it is rather a result of relating the text with inference produced by the reader. The latter must build an answer based on the relationship “thinking about the text and seeking an answer outside it.” For instance, the fact that question 10a presents: “Hypothesize about: Why does the boy call the land lot “farm?,,” reveals the intention of leading the learner to infer some information, the idea that the character’s wish is to have a small farm to raise his animals.

The third level of questions comprise interpretive ones, taking the text as reference; however, answers cannot be exclusively inferred from what is being read, they require reader’s opinion intervention, resulting in clear production of meanings based on text meaning. Questions lead the reader to come up with a personal answer; however, not everything is allowed. There are no interpretive questions addressing the chronicle. This is because for meaning to be produced, there should be a correlation between those questions and textual as well as inferential ones, thereby causing the learner-reader to think about what is being read and thus associate text theme to his/her personal life. Answers would not be tied to the text, but rather to his/her personal life experiences, resulting in a particular textual interpretation.
Interpretive questions “are always presented at the end, after other questions have led the learner-reader to work with the text”50 (MENEGASSI, 2011, p. 29, our translation). Therefore, when reaching the answer, the reader has already been prepared to assign meaning to the theme; otherwise he might think of an answer in which everything is allowed. Hence, “this strategy reveals how building ordering and sequencing questions is key to the practice of reading assessment”51 (MENEGASSI, 2011, p. 29, our translation).

Given the above, it is possible to apply those questions to the text, thinking about the thematic aspect, with the need to expand them to the interpretive level with a view to allowing the learner-reader to produce meaning about the theme.

Questions on the painting

Questions found in the textbook were reorganized at first, with the following reading approaches being taken into consideration: focus on text, reader and interaction:

Focus on text

1. The painting shows a boy surrounded by many elements.
   a) What are the elements around him?
2. The boy is giving a signal with his left hand.
   b) To whom is he signaling and making the sound?

Focus on reader

(3.) (1b) Do you think it’s a common scene from these days or from a distant past? Explain your answer using the elements from the painting.
(4) 2. The boy is giving a signal with his left hand.
   a) What sound is he making with his mouth?

Focus on interaction

Questions with textual answer

(5.) 3. Look at the dog’s expression. What does it want? Why?
(6) 4. The painting is named “The Stowaway.” Hypothesize about:
   a) Who is the stowaway?

Questions with inferential answers

(7) 4. The painting is named “The Stowaway.” Hypothesize about:
   b) Where do you think the boy is?

50 In the original: “são sempre apresentadas numa ordem final, depois que as demais perguntas levaram o aluno-leitor a trabalhar com o texto” (MENEGASSI, 2011, p. 29)
51 In the original: “essa estratégia demonstra como a construção, a ordenação e a sequenciação de perguntas é uma noção essencial à prática de avaliação de leitura” (MENEGASSI, 2011, p. 29)
c) Why did he had to hide the dog?
(8) 5. Look at the suitcase on the boy’s lap and the package next to him. Hypothesize about:
a) Where do you think he is going?
b) Will he stay long in there? Why?
c) What could be in the package next to him?
(9) 6. The boy could get in trouble by travelling with a “stowaway.” In your opinion, why do you think he is taking that risk?

Those questions guide the learner to initially infer information connected to text surface (questions with focus on text), leading him/her to describe the elements surrounding the boy as well as the quiet sign he makes with his hands. Subsequently, there are questions allowing reader’s own knowledge to be raised, questioning whether the scene can be thought to be possible at present times, as well as about the sound produced by the boy while making the sign with his hand (questions with focus on reader).

Interactive questions analysis reveals the learner is capable of fully exploring the theme; in other words, there are only questions focusing on text and inference, with neither of them reaching the interpretive level. Therefore, questions about the painting lead the learner to infer the dog wishes to leave the basket and the title points out to the figure of a stowaway. Furthermore, it is expected that inference leads to comprehension that the dog is a passenger being taken along by the boy surreptitiously. The interpretive level is not present in any questions, which highlights absence of text theme closure. This can be dealt with on the basis of the proposal aiming at a thematic dialogue.

Questions aimed at a thematic dialogue

New questions allowing for a correlation between both texts are rendered necessary, with the possibility of using question 7, following the sorting and sequencing of questions and thinking about texts theme. As a result, subsequently, new questions are proposed with focus on interaction, allowing for a thematic dialogue between texts to be established:

Textual

1. Why is the chronicle title: “City boy” and the painting title “Stowaway?”
A.: The chronicle title is “City boy” because the text depicts a boy who lives in the city, although his wish is to live in a small farm to raise animals. The painting is entitled “Stowaway” because it makes reference to a dog which is hidden by the boy during his trip.

2. Compare the painting with the “City boy” chronicle. What are the similarities and differences between the boy in the chronicle and the painting, particularly regarding their relationship with animals?
A.: The similarity between the boy in the chronicle and the painting is that both of them like animals and cannot leave them. The difference is that, in the chronicle, the character would like to have a pet animal, but there is always something that keeps him away from animals. The boy depicted in the painting has a dog.
Inferential

3. Why do characters of both texts wish to take their animals to all places?
A.: The characters wish to take their animals to all places because they do not want to be away from them.

Interpretive

4. What would you do in order to be close to your pet animal in the event of a trip?
A.: To be close to my pet animal, I would hide it in my luggage.

Questions 1 and 2 are known as questions with textual answer. They are centered around the text, but do not lead to extraction of ideas by the reader. The latter is required to understand it textually, fully organize the sentence, and does not need to match question information up with the answer in the text. For instance, question 1 examines texts titles, and it is the reader’s responsibility to go back to what had been read, seeking complete textual understanding, given that the title “comprises global/total text meaning”\textsuperscript{52} (COSTA, 2000, p. 82, our translation).

In question 2, the reader seeks similarities and differences between the boy in the chronicle and the painting, particularly regarding their relationship with animals. In that case, the goal is to establish a connection with question 1 answer, since it leads the learner to highlight that both texts depict boys who seem to like animals, and new information that suggest any similarities and differences between them. The learner remains within textual limits, but the text comprehension level is acknowledged, going beyond mere information extraction.

Questions 1 and 2 allow for a dialogue to be established between texts and were not randomly prepared. In a way, they take into account information that had been previously studied by the learner, at the time each text was examined by means of textbook questions, particularly in section Text study\textsuperscript{53}.

While questioning texts titles in question 1, it is expected that during separate reading of texts, readers will have had some contact with similar information, as questions have already been addressed:

\textsuperscript{52} In the original: “contemplam o significado global/total do texto” (COSTA, 2000, p. 82)

\textsuperscript{53} In the original: “Estudo do texto”
## Chart 4 – Original and reformulated questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions in the TB</th>
<th>A new proposal based on a thematic dialogue between texts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHRONICLE</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>c) Is the chronicle title “City boy” consistent with the boy’s characteristics as well as with the end of the story? Why?</td>
<td>A.: The chronicle title is consistent with the boy’s characteristics and the end of the story because the character is a boy who lives in the city, but dreams about having animals and living in the country.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PAINTING</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4. The painting is named “The Stowaway.” Hypothesize about: a) Who is the stowaway? A.: The dog is the stowaway. b) Where do you think the boy is? A.: The boy is at a station. c) Why did he have to hide the dog? A.: The stowaway was hidden because the boy is not allowed to travel with animals.</td>
<td>1. Why is the chronicle title: “City boy” and the painting title “Stowaway”? A.: The chronicle title is “City boy” because the text depicts a boy who lives in the city, although his wish is to live in a small farm to raise animals. The painting is entitled “Stowaway” because it refers to a dog which is hidden by the boy during his trip.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Textual</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Why is the chronicle title: “City boy” and the painting title “Stowaway”? A.: The chronicle title is “City boy” because the text depicts a boy who lives in the city, although his wish is to live in a small farm to raise animals. The painting is entitled “Stowaway” because it refers to a dog which is hidden by the boy during his trip.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Authors’ elaboration.

Both of them are texts with different questions, but which allow those questions to share a common theme with a view to giving learners the opportunity to build meaning about the texts that have been read. The learner will have already studied in the chronicle whether the title is consistent with the character’s characteristics, and will also have discussed, in the painting: “a) Who is the stowaway? b) Where do you think the boy is? c) Why did he have to hide the dog?” The new proposal for thematic questions allows the reader to assemble the textual general themes, thus building a whole of meaning.

The same process of thematic links is acknowledged in question 2. The latter aims at comparing similarities and differences between texts.
**Chart 5 – Original and reformulated questions**

<table>
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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHRONICLE</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1. The boy’s interest in animals is expressed in the first paragraphs of the chronicle. What exactly proves this fact in the boy’s speech? A.: The boy asks his father for a number of animals: “Daddy, can I have a small goat at my farm? What about a guinea pig? A giant otter?” 4a) What is the boy’s knowledge about car brands? How about dog breeds? A.: The boy is unaware of car brands, but has good knowledge about the difference between dog breeds. b) His mother allows him to be in touch with the English language. In your opinion, why does he mistake “knife” by “fork,” but is able to distinguish the meaning of “seal” and “walrus?” A.: The boy might mistake knife by fork because those objects might not be too common in his daily routine. Animals, on the other hand, are familiar to him. c) The boy refers to people as “Malhados’s owner,” “Lord’s owner,” etc. What does this reveal about his interests? A.: This reveals he is highly interested in animals. 5. Although the narrator does not give any information on the boy’s age, it is noticeable he is a child at reading and writing learning age. What elements from the text prove that data about the boy? A.: Elements proving he is a child are: “He does a poor job on written words” as well as the information that he likes coloring books depicting animals.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>PAINTING</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Look at the dog’s expression. What does it want? Why? A.: The dog wants to run away from the basket. 4. The painting is named “The Stowaway.” Hypothesize about: a) Who is the stowaway? A.: The stowaway is the dog who wants to leave the basket. However, the boy insists in taking it along in his trip. 2. Compare the painting with the “City boy” chronicle. What are the similarities and differences between the boy in the chronicle and the boy in the painting, particularly regarding their relationship with animals? A.: The similarity between the boy in the chronicle and the painting is that both of them like animals and cannot leave them. The difference is that, in the chronicle, the character would like to have a pet animal, but there is always something that keeps him away from animals. The boy depicted in the painting has a dog.</td>
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</table>

**Source:** Authors’ elaboration.
Textual questions allow the reader to acknowledge characters’ general characteristics, so as to allow for textual understanding of similarities and differences between them.

The answer for inferential questions can be inferred from the text, leading the learner to infer about what is being read, while thinking about the text and seeking an answer outside it. Question 3 is an example: “Why do characters of both texts wish to take their animals to all places?” The learner infers the reason why characters do not leave their animals. The learner not only interacts with what is being read, but also produces meaning on the basis of inference, whether authorized or unauthorized (MENEGASSI, 2010b), provided that they have some connection with the theme.

**Chart 6 – Original and reformulated questions**

<table>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CHRONICLE</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. In the sixth paragraph, the narrator states the land the boy refers to is only an empty land lot in the state of Rio de Janeiro. a) Hypothesize about: Why does the boy name the land lot “farm?” A.: The boy names the land lot a farm because the former is a place where one could socialize with animals. b) According to the narrator, “the boy needs to believe in the farm, as much as other people need to believe in heaven.” Why is the farm some type of heaven to the boy? A.: To the boy, the farm is some type of heaven because it is paradise, a place where he will live with animals.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PAINTING</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Where do you think the boy is? c) Why did he have to hide the dog? 5. Look at the suitcase on the boy’s lap and the package next to him. Hypothesize about: a) Where do you think he is going? A.: He might be going to spend the holidays somewhere, with his grandparents, for example. b) Will he stay long in there? Why? A.: He probably will because he is taking a big suitcase. c) What could be in the package next to him? A.: The package probably contains a present to whom will host the boy. 6. The boy could get in trouble by travelling with a “stowaway.” In your opinion, why do you think he is taking that risk? A.: He’d rather take the risk because he does not leave his pet animal.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inferential</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Why do characters of both texts wish to take their animals to all places? A.: The characters wish to take their animals to all places because they do not want to be away from them.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Authors’ elaboration.
While taking the thematic dialogue into account, the inferential question examines the characters’ wish to take their animals along. Previous questions somehow state that notion, as they reveal characters’ attachment to animals. Hence, it can be inferred that both of them have never wished to leave their animals.

Interpretive questions take the text as reference, but allow reader’s previous knowledge and opinion to intervene. Thus, readers produce a personal answer about the theme presented by previous questions. For instance, question 4, “What would you do in order to be close to your pet animal in the event of a trip?” assumes the reader’s personal answer, with a number of possibilities. The following is highlighted: “To be close to my pet animal, I would hide it in my luggage.” However, answers are always connected to the theme. Importantly, it is observed that not any answer is taken as acceptable, since meanings are produced based on dialogue established with previous questions. This allows the learner to “think about what is being read and associate textual theme with his/her own personal experience, s/he is encouraged to relate the theme of the reference text to his/her social and personal life knowledge”54 (FUZA; MENEGASSI, 2017, p. 278, our translation).

The interpretive question allows the reader to fully explore the theme in a relative manner, since his/her creativity and interpretation of facts are highlighted. This contributes to interlocutor’s counterword to be manifested. In the present case, the question itself allows for creativity and expansion of ideas, while “guiding the interlocutor-teacher not only to categorize learner’s answer as right or wrong, but to agree, disagree, counter argue, request additional explanation, thus following up the enunciation chain”55 (ANGELO, 2015, p. 56, our translation). Furthermore, Fuza (2017) reinforces the need to offer to learners questions that fully explore the theme in a complete and relating manner, with a view to enhancing reader’s development.

**Final considerations**

The present study aimed at analyzing types of questions and their sequencing. To this end, four activities were specifically selected from a textbook for 6th grade. One of them was highlighted for discussion and further proposal of a new sequencing of questions, thus revealing how ordering and sequencing can be put forward in other sections and textbooks. We sought to highlight how questions with an interactional focus could be worked up, so as to allow for intertextual thematic dialogue of different genres: chronicle and painting.

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54 In the original: “raciocinar sobre o que lê e a articular o tema textual com sua experiência pessoal [ele] é obrigado a relacionar o tema trabalhado no texto de referência com os conhecimentos de sua própria vida social e pessoal” (FUZA; MENEGASSI, 2017, p. 278)

55 In the original: “orientando o interlocutor-professor a não apenas classificar o dizer do aluno como certo ou errado, mas a concordar, discordar, contra-argumentar, solicitar complementação, dando continuidade ao elo da cadeia enunciativa” (ANGELO, 2015, p. 56)
In order to carry out a new proposal for the ordering and sequencing of TB reading questions on the basis of theme, reading questions found in the textbook were analyzed. There was only one question from the “Across Languages” section capable of establishing intertextual dialogue between texts. For this reason, the following were suggested: (1) analysis of questions from the textbook, particularly those designed for the chronicle and painting; (2) new sequencing of questions, according to the reading process: focus on text, reader and interaction; (3) checking for potential thematic gap.

As a result, a theoretical-methodological proposal of ordering and sequencing of reading questions was put forward, focusing on intertextual dialogue. This allowed readers to: (1) establish a dialogue between texts sharing a similar theme; (2) come up with textual, inferential and interpretive answers comprising the main ideas of the texts; (3) produce meanings relative to the themes introduced in both texts, thus reaching textual and inferential comprehension, as well as interpretation of the text, which allowed for relative exhaustion of the theme.

The methodological proposal of working with questions, which establish a relationship between texts of different genres sharing a similar theme, explores not only deep textual examination, but also contributes to reader’s development in terms of reading and writing of texts. This process results from the need to work, in class, with interactional questions comprising all reading process steps: questions with textual answer, questions with inferential answer, and questions with interpretive answer. Additionally, the sequencing of questions should be considered: initially, highlight questions with textual answer with a view to allowing the reader to learn how to work with texts. Subsequently, evince questions with inferential answer with a view to allowing the learner to establish relationships between the text and previous knowledge. Finally, focus on questions with interpretive answer with a view to enabling the learner to have the possibility of producing his/her own meanings relative to the theme.

Fuza and Menegassi (2017), Angelo and Menegassi (2014), Rodrigues (2013) and Menegassi (2016) advocate questions need to follow an ascending order of difficulty, leading the reader to engage in gradual reflection about the text interaction. Additionally, reading questions provide considerable cognitive benefits to develop reading and writing teaching and learning for Elementary School learners, as they require complete phrasal organization, such as retrieving the question “as means to expose the theme that led to the process of the response text production” (MENEGASSI, 2016, p. 49, our translation).

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56 In the original: *Cruzando linguagens*
57 In the original: “como uma maneira de expor o tema que conduziu ao processo de produção do texto da resposta” (MENEGASSI, 2016, p. 49)
RESUMO:

Analisa-se os tipos de perguntas e sua sequenciação, em uma colecção de livros didáticos do 6.º ao 9.º ano, na seção “Cruzando Linguagens”, que apresenta perguntas de leitura para géneros diferentes, mas com temáticas próximas. A partir disso, propõe-se nova sequenciação de perguntas para uma das atividades do livro do 6º ano, destinada aos géneros crónica e pintura. O trabalho centraliza-se na perspectiva sobre leitura interacionista, nos estudos da Linguística Aplicada e da prática de ordenação e de sequenciação de leitura, discutida por Solé (1998) e ampliada por Menegassi (2008; 2010; 2016), Fuza e Menegassi (2018; 2017) e Fuza (2017). Dentre as questões da seção, geralmente, apenas uma delas possibilita o diálogo temático entre textos, sendo assim, sugeriu-se: análise das perguntas do livro, voltadas à crónica e pintura; nova sequenciação das perguntas; verificação das lacunas temáticas. Na sequência, desenvolveu-se a proposta teórico-metodológica de ordenação e sequenciação de perguntas, com foco no diálogo entre os textos, que possibilita ao leitor: estabelecer o diálogo entre textos com aproximação temática; elaborar respostas textuais, inferenciais e interpretativas, envolvendo as ideias principais dos textos; produzir sentidos quanto às temáticas apresentadas, alcançando as compreensões textuais e inferenciais e a interpretação, possibilitando tratar da exauribilidade temática relativa.


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