

THE MEANINGS OF WRITING IN HIGHER EDUCATION: TEXT PRODUCTION IN THE DISCOURSE OF TEACHERS AND STUDENTS FROM PORTUGUESE AND ENGLISH GRADUATION CLASSROOMS

Maria Eliete de QUEIROZ*
José Cezinaldo Rocha BESSA**
Adriana Morais JALES***

- **ABSTRACT:** Following a growing tendency of works in the field of language studies and education that investigate the written text production of students in Higher Education and the difficulties they present to produce texts that are communicatively relevant and successful, we aim at examining the work with text genres in the production of written texts in Higher Education. In this sense, we will focus particularly on the exam of two issues: the purpose of the text genres produced by students of Portuguese and English graduation courses and the possible interlocutors of these genres produced by them. Data were collected through questionnaires given to students and teachers of a public Higher Education institution. This paper adopts the conception of language as a process of interaction and the reflections on discourse genres from the studies of the Bakhtin Circle, as well as discussions about the genres and their teaching presented by other scholars. The results show that the teaching of text production in the context of Higher Education classroom caters mainly to the discipline specificities, revealing yet few initiatives that enable authentic situations of communicative interaction.
- **KEYWORDS:** Text genres. Higher Education. Portuguese and English graduation course. Teachers and students.

Introduction

The written text production of Higher Education students and the difficulties they present to produce texts that are communicatively relevant and successful have been widely discussed in academic area by researchers in the field of

* UERN – Universidade do Estado do Rio Grande do Norte. Departamento de Letras Estrangeiras do *Campus* Avançado “Profa. Maria Elisa de Albuquerque Maia”. Pau dos Ferros – RN – Brasil. 59900-000 – eliete_queiroz@yahoo.com.br

** UERN – Universidade do Estado do Rio Grande do Norte. Departamento de Letras Estrangeiras do *Campus* Avançado “Profa. Maria Elisa de Albuquerque Maia”. Pau dos Ferros – RN – Brasil. 59900-000 – cezinaldo_bessa@yahoo.com.br

*** UERN – Universidade do Estado do Rio Grande do Norte. Departamento de Letras Estrangeiras do *Campus* Central. Mossoró – RN – Brasil. 59600-000 – adrianajales@hotmail.com

language studies in its various branches, and also by education scholars. Among researchers interested in this subject, are, in the field of language studies, researchers of the *Grupo de Pesquisa em Produção e Ensino do Texto* (GPET), which, besides the diagnosis of the writing difficulties of students in Higher Education, has been devoted to the investigation of the written texts of this level of education, contemplating issues that vary from the study of the product of this writing – focusing, for example, in citation forms, paraphrasing strategies, enunciative responsibility, semantic processes, argumentative processes – to the treatment given to the genres, teaching methodologies, among others.

As Higher Education Teachers, engaged in the studies of text, discourse and textual-discursive analysis, we intend in this paper to present empirical data about the work with text genres¹ in the practice of written text production in Higher Education. To do so, we will focus on the examination of two issues in particular: the purpose of genres produced by graduation students of Portuguese and English languages and the possible interlocutors of the text genres produced by them. In other words, following discussions on the production of texts, especially those made by Geraldi (2002) in the 80s, we intend to examine the meanings that the students in Higher Education, specifically those in Portuguese and English graduation classes, found for the texts they produce. If Geraldi (2002) pointed out that, in that decade, the texts produced at school level configured an artificial use of language, we intend to observe how the written text production develops in Higher Education nowadays, especially after the most recent discussions of genres and teaching, also investigating whether this practice sets, to some extent, a situation of authentic, real language use.

The data presented here constitute part of the data from the institutional research *The social function of the texts worked in mother and foreign language teaching: a study about the discourse genres adopted in Secondary and Higher Education (A função social dos textos trabalhados no ensino de língua materna e estrangeira: um estudo acerca dos gêneros discursivos adotados no Ensino Médio e Superior*, SOUZA, 2008), linked to the *Grupo de Pesquisa em Produção e Ensino do Texto* (GPET), from the Portuguese and English Department of the *Universidade do Estado do Rio Grande do Norte/ Pau dos Ferros Campus*, whose general objective was investigating the work done by teachers and students of Portuguese (mother language) and English (foreign language) on the discourse genres in Secondary and Higher Education classes.

¹ Although acknowledging the existence of discussions on the distinction between the terms “text genres” and discourse genres and the implications of this, we chose not to establish any distinction between them in the present work. Even aware that the theoretical-methodological perspective of the Bakhtin Circle, which we also adopt here, uses the term “discourse genres”, the two terms are taken here as equivalent. The term “text genres” is more used in this study because, in relation to teaching, most authors to whom we turn here use it, since they are, in our view, most affiliated with the theoretical perspectives that think the didactic transposition of genres.

As part of this exploratory and descriptive research, the data presented here were collected through questionnaires (with open and closed questions) applied to graduation teachers and students from the 7th semester of the Portuguese and English graduation courses of a public university in 2008. In the work, we tried to correlate the responses of teachers with those given by the students to the two issues cited above. It is important to emphasize that we are dealing with the words of our informants. Thus, we believe that if the discourses of these informants do not necessarily reflect what happens in the classroom practice, such sayings refract, in different ways, the way these individuals see the work with the text in the classroom.

For theoretical basis, this work, along with the research from which it results, adopts the conception of language as interaction arising from studies of the Bakhtin Circle, and its reflections on discourse genres, and also discussions about genres and their teaching based on authors like Dolz and Schneuwly (2004), Antunes (2002), Cristovão (2002), Paltridge (2001), among others.

The text production and the teaching of text genres

In the last decade, more specifically after the publication of the National Curriculum Parameters (*Parâmetros Curriculares Nacionais*, PCN, BRASIL, 2001), studies on text genres began to echo in the research developed in our country, especially in the field of Text and Discourse Studies, focusing on the relation with language teaching and learning. Such studies have contributed, among other things, to: i) prioritize communicative interaction between the individuals involved in the actual communication process; ii) defend the meaningful work with texts in language teaching and learning process; and iii) present the educational proposals that contributed to the reflection about the teaching of text production, at schools and in Higher Education.

Particularly with regard to the production of written texts in Higher Education, we believe it is of great importance to guide our teaching activities based on the understanding that our students must produce texts that materialize living discourses, verbally interacting with each other through utterances and not through isolated sentences or single words. This comprehension finds support in the idea that any production of texts must be based on the interaction with others, in real situations of interaction. It is an understanding that is shared by Bakhtin (2003, p.265), according to whom “[...] language enters life through concrete utterances (which manifest language) and life enters language through concrete utterances as well.”

From this conception comes the conviction that if the concrete utterances comprise the diverse genres produced in social spheres, as postulated by Bakhtin

(2003), the work with the production of written texts in school cannot escape the commitment to the exploration of the genre diversity to which the individuals resort in order to interact with each other. In this sense, many scholars have proposed works with genres, especially in terms of what is proposed by the group of researchers from Geneva, among which are Bronckart, Schneuwly and Dolz.

Schneuwly and Dolz (2004, p.74) associate genres to language teaching, based on the assumption that “[...] it is through the genres that language practices are materialized in the activities of the learners.” They also state that the educational setting should be an appropriate place to make the situations of text production and reception authentic, not like those in which the teacher asks a student to write a letter to the editor, a letter that will not be sent, or write an article for a site that will not be published etc., common situations in classrooms at all education levels. Within authentic situations of language use, conceiving the work of students with the production of oral and written texts is a big challenge for many teachers, and has called researchers of the area, as those of the group of Geneva and others like Paltridge (2001), Antunes (2002), Marcuschi (2008) Biasi-Rodrigues (2002) and Cristóvão (2002), to think about some alternatives. Although these authors are situated in different theoretical perspectives and they do not necessarily focus on the teaching of genres in Higher Education, they integrate this work because we understand that the reflections they bring allow us to have a more panoramic and representative view of important approaches of genre teaching. Besides this, we believe that many of the reflections on the work with texts at schools pointed out by these scholars, excluding their specificities, also enable us to preview the work with genre in Higher Education. Our belief is that all the proposals presented by these authors cannot be ignored by education professionals, including the ones in Higher Education, since we comprehend that much of what is proposed for the work with texts at school level can be applied (with appropriate adaptations) in Higher Education, in a successful way.

For Cristóvão (2002), whose theoretical line is shared by the group of scholars of Geneva, when the work is based on the “[...] didactic model of genres”, students and teachers can engage in reflexive actions such as: analyzing the context in which it is inserted, describe pedagogic actions, report what underlies these actions, confront the choices made and thus reconstruct the practice of the classroom.

Even though many teachers claim to teach according to these assumptions, observations seem to reveal that in classrooms changes are not so significant. According to Antunes (2002, p.67), at school level, “[...] in some aspects, they continue to do what they used to do before. However, now, words and phrases studied are no longer conveyed separately, but taken from texts [...]”, which thus serve only as a pretext to teach the same things as before: digraphs, nouns etc.

In this sense, the author lists some benefits of teaching based on the work with text genres. According to the author, working with text genres can promote:

- a) apprehension of “communicative-linguistic facts” and not the study of virtual “grammatical facts,” fuzzy, decontextualized, objectified by determinations of a “program” previously set and established from the inherent properties of the language system;
- b) apprehension of strategies and procedures to promote the adequacy and effectiveness of texts, or language teaching with the explicit and determined aim to improve the competence of individuals so that they can produce and understand appropriate and relevant (oral and written) texts;
- c) consideration of how these procedures and strategies are reflected in the surface of the text, reason why one cannot, inconsistently, use any words or adopt any text sequence;
- d) correlation between the operations of textualization and the pragmatic aspects of the situation in which the verbal activity happens;
- e) expansion of perspectives in the understanding of the linguistic phenomenon, overcoming the simplistic and narrow parameters of “right” and “wrong” as indicative of good linguistic realization. (ANTUNES, 2002, p.71).

The author emphasizes, therefore, aspects which must be considered by the teacher in the language teaching, encompassing linguistic-communicative events and the work with text focusing on the improvement of the student’s text competence.

Besides advocating that the school work in the field of language production inevitably occurs according to genres (DOLZ; SCHNEUWLY, 2004), many scholars in the field have argued that the appropriation of genres at school begins in basic education, considering that “[...] genres are the instrument of mediation of any teaching strategy and the material that is necessary and inexhaustible for the teaching of textuality.” (DOLZ; SCHNEUWLY, 2004, p.51).

There are many educational suggestions presented by language scholars for the work with genres. Antunes (2002, p.72-73) suggests a selection of items and contents for each unit worked during the school year, based on a “[...] particular genre, which would be the central object of the moments of discourse, of writing, of reading, of linguistic analysis and systematization in classroom.” The selection of genres should follow the social and cultural parameters of learners. Thus, at the end of the semester or at the end of the year, the students would have had the chance to study different genres.

Such a proposal, according to the author, does not rule out the work with other genres and can be extended to various levels of education, including Higher Education. For Antunes (2002, p.73), it is really pertinent that the teaching of language helps “[...] the exercise of human interaction, of social participation, as a way of being and feeling acknowledged recognized, despite the inevitable conflicts and misunderstandings in the world of nature and culture, where everything regains meaning and relevance.” Didactically, this can only be possible if we confer importance to the work with genres.

Besides Antune’s suggestion, another proposal that should be emphasized in this perspective is the one elaborated by Paltridge (2001). In the author’s point of view, the knowledge about text genre can provide language learners the awareness and skills they need to successfully communicate in particular discourse communities, and provide access to different forms of language in society.

According to Paltridge (2001), the text genre can be the organizing principle for the development of language teaching programs. In this sense, he points out some peculiarities of that approach. There, for example, the units are neither too short, like the ones of a structural or functional-based program, nor too long, like the ones of a skill-based program. According to the author, an approach based on genres is relevant because:

- it emphasizes the communicative purposes;
- it presents typical models of text organization and linguistic organization;
- it enables a curriculum planning that gathers texts with similar purpose, organization and audience;
- it gives learners the knowledge that is necessary for them to organize their writing, whether in academic, whether in professional environment;
- it covers the organization of units beyond the grammatical and lexical boundaries, but does not exclude them from the overall program;
- it is developed based on a genre, such as the global guidance of the program, but also includes other language aspects such as grammar, functions, vocabulary and communicative and linguistic abilities. (PALTRIDGE, 2001, p.3-4).

Accordingly, we believe that the combination of these principles, which include discussions about the communicative purposes of text genres, the context in which they occur, their structural organization, their supports, among other aspects, helps learners to understand why genres are written or spoken the way they are and what their roles in their discourse community are.

From the perspective outlined by Paltridge (2001, p.5), we infer that it is important for teachers to realize that “they are teaching trends and no fixed shape models”, developing in learners the ability to understand the communicative practices of real world and actively participate in them. This trend of the work with genres also dialogues with the ideas of Swales (1990, p.45), for whom “[...] it is indeed possible to use genres for teaching purposes without reducing courses to narrow prescriptivism or formalism and without denying students opportunities for reflecting upon rhetorical or linguistic choices.”

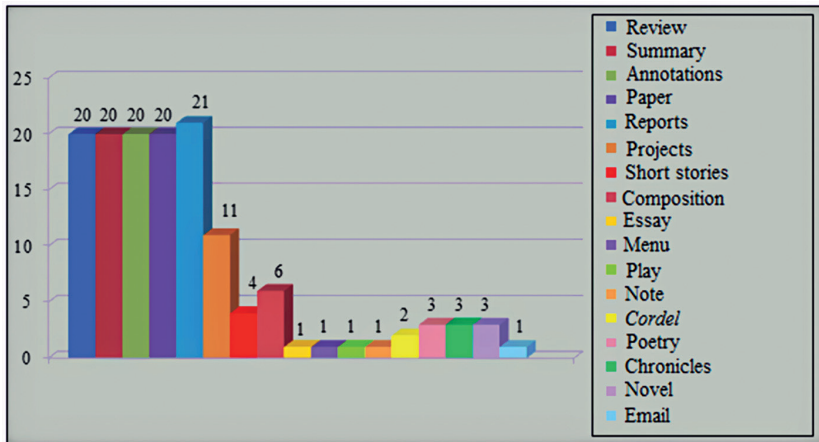
Freedman (1994), in turn, asserts that it is pertinent that genres are taught emphasizing the need for an analysis of those genres used in professional environments where students act. Thus, the learning of genres will be useful, according to the author, if, among the motivations for learning and the real needs in professional or academic life, there is a convergence that justifies such a teaching. For that reason, it is important to choose the genres carefully, so that the students can associate them to their personal and/or professional life.

From all that has been said above, it was clear that in the teaching work with text genres, it is essential that the teacher is aware, among other things, of the communicative purposes of the genres he/she is working with and their contexts of social production and circulation, as a way of enabling, within the classroom, authentic situations of language use.

Genres in written text production in Higher Education

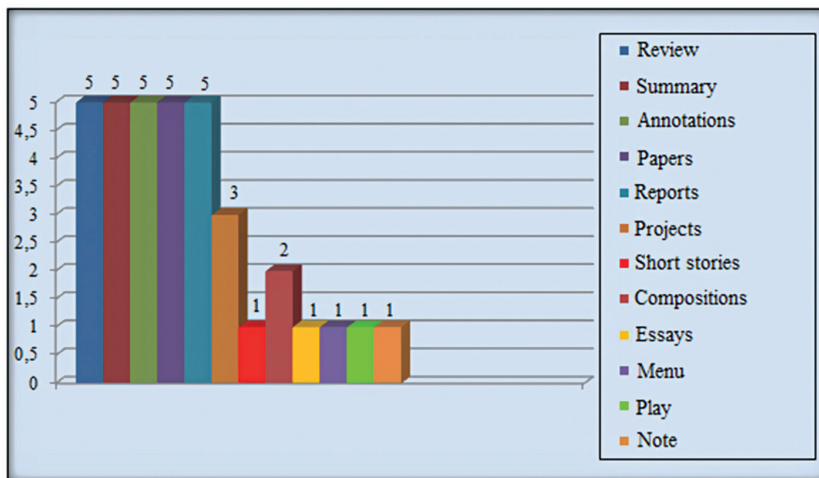
One of the necessary conditions to understand the work with text genres in the written production of graduating students of Portuguese and English Language, focusing on the purpose and possible interlocutors of the text genres they produce, is presenting, initially, the text genres these students produce. Based on the analysis of questionnaires answered by graduating students of Portuguese and English Language, we noted that in both courses the most requested genres are those of the academic-scientific domain, and that there is a greater diversity of genres explored among graduating students of Portuguese, according to the following charts.

Graphic 1: Genres worked in Textual Production classes – Portuguese Graduation Course



Source: Adapted of Souza (2008).

Graphic 2: Genres worked in Textual Production classes – English Graduation Course



Source: Adapted of Souza (2008).

The data above show that the variety of genres explored in the teaching of text production in Portuguese and English Graduation classes generally covers the academic-scientific genres, since the paper, the review, the summary, the project, the annotations and the report (teaching report certainly) are among

the most cited genres by students, although genres from other domains, such as fictional (short stories, chronicles, *cordel*) and interpersonal (notes, emails), are also explored. The data thus show that the privileged genres belong to two domains, the academic-scientific² and fictional, what seems to reflect the specificity of these students' Higher Education, in the Portuguese and English Graduation Courses.

Having studied these genres, we focused on how the work with written text production in classes of Portuguese and English graduation Courses happens, in order to answer the following questions: for what and to whom do the students write the texts requested by the teacher? That is, why do they write and who are the possible interlocutors of their texts? To illustrate our analysis, we consider the responses of teachers³ and students⁴, among which we selected those we consider most recurrent and representative, in relation to the information gathered⁵.

To deal with the question related to the possible interlocutors, we first present the answers given by teachers, among which we highlight those that follow:

- (1) My student writes to me. (HET1⁶)
- (2) We conduct our practices in a continuous way, with the belief that the text and/or the written production of the student go through stages and can be improved as the rewriting process is put into practice. The English language learner writes to both the academic community and the community in general, depending on the requested work. (HET2)
- (3) The students write for/aiming producing scientifically and meeting the requirements of the course's assessment and also those of institutional nature. (HET3)

² We want to emphasize that, although they assume different settings and permeate various communicative situations of social life, genres like the Review and the Summary, when worked in Higher Education classroom, tend to be restricted to that sphere's canonic model, following the guidelines proposed by the manuals of scientific methodology and technical norms, thus lending itself more to the evaluation of the readings undertaken by students.

³ During the research, 6 from the 13 questionnaires sent to teachers in Higher Education were given back. In the analysis undertaken here, we consider the responses of these teachers to the following questionnaire question: for what and to whom do the students write the genres you request in your classes (English or Portuguese classes, according to each graduation course)? Based on the answers they presented, we selected those passages that are sufficient to illustrate the research findings satisfactorily, in our point of view.

⁴ From a total of 31 questionnaires sent to students, 22 of them were sent back. In this study, we bring the answers the students gave to the following question: for what and to whom do you write the genres requested by the teacher during the classes (English or Portuguese classes, according to each graduation course)? In the current analysis, we bring the passages that best illustrate the most recurrent data from the answers given by the students.

⁵ It is important to say that the repetition of the answer of a teacher during the work occurred because the issues related to the purpose and the possible interlocutor of the texts came from the question, so that the repetition of the answer was necessary in order to prevent misunderstanding.

⁶ The code HET indicates the following: HE = Higher Education; T = teacher; Number 1 = order of the questionnaire collected.

- (4) It is also very variable. In the subject Monograph Seminar I (*Seminário de Monografia I*), written production aims at developing the research project, an academic genre that requires the student's knowledge on skills in scientific writing addressed to the teacher and to the student's possible supervisor. In the subject Textual Production (*Produção Textual*), students' written production is usually intended for the teacher and classmates, and aims at developing the necessary requirements for successful writing skills. (HET4)
- (5) The written activities are done in the student's house, corrected and then discussed in classroom with the student. The student usually needs to redo some of the work that was obscure. He writes for producing knowledge, that is, analyses and writings about the works that other academics or school students can read. (HET6)

Based on the answers, we can see that, during the text production activities, the students write to a definite interlocutor: the teacher of the subject (HET1, HET3 and HET4), or the possible monograph supervisor (HET4), or classmates (HET4 and HET6) or even the academic community and the community in general (HET2). About these answers, it is important to emphasize the need to consider the specificities of text production in certain subjects, since, as HET4 points out, in the subject Monograph Seminar I, the monograph project was written by the student to the teacher of that subject and the student's possible supervisor.

Although the most part of the answers indicate the teacher himself as the main interlocutor of the texts produced by the students, other interlocutors take part in the text production activities, such as the academic community, which represents the possibility of a productive work with the teaching of written text in Higher Education classroom, considering the consequent expansion of the social circulation of texts.

Therefore, given the requirements of a text produced to circulate in a setting of social movements such as the academic community (and even the community in general), it happens to be possible for the student to plan his/her text production, its content and its language, the making and remaking of this text, since he/she writes motivated by the belief that there will be someone to interact with him/her about what he/she writes. In this sense, one can say that, in relation to the desirable interlocutor the students have when they write, the work with the production of texts in Higher Education classrooms allows the production to happen, sometimes, within the authentic situations, about which Schneuwly and Dolz (2004) talk about. We surely do not agree that the work with genres always happens in situations like these, for, as we know, we must consider that bringing genres to the classroom, in any education level, implies some kind of simulation of the communicative situation, with consequences for the destination of the texts produced, for example.

For dealing with the issues related to the students' purposes while they write in Higher Education, we present some of the most representative answers of teachers and students. At first, we highlight the answers of teachers (as shown in passages 6, 7 and 8), which then are related to the students' answers (shown in passages 9, 10 and 11). Here is what teachers say:

- (6) Students write for/aiming producing scientifically and fulfilling the requirements of the course's assessment and also those of institutional nature. (HET3)
- (7) [...] to produce knowledge, develop the necessary skills for a successful written production or more specifically for the elaboration of the research project, an academic genre that requires the student's knowledge on skills in scientific writing addressed to the teacher and to the student's possible supervisor. (HET4)
- (8) In the subject Textual Production (*Produção Textual*), students' written production is usually intended for the teacher and classmates, and aims at developing the necessary requirements for successful writing skills. (HET4)

Based on the teachers' answers, we found that the production of texts in Higher Education intends to cater mainly to the specificities of the academic domain, that is, produce knowledge, what seems natural since the genres of this domain are the most explored in the written production activities, according to the teachers.

We can say that the work with the students' production of written texts presents well-defined goals, and the answers given by some teachers enshrine the specificity of the subject, as we can see, for example, in HET4, who highlights that, in the subject Textual Production, students' written production usually aims at "developing the necessary requirements for successful writing skills" and that in the subject Monograph Seminar I, the student writes for producing knowledge and for developing "the skills on scientific writing".

Among the answers given by the teachers, it is also important to highlight the one which punctuates the students' production of texts aiming at meeting the requirements of the course's assessment and also those of institutional nature, that is, the production is a consequence of the evaluation, what is also confirmed in most answers given by the students, among which are the following ones, used to illustrate our analysis:

- (9) The productions of written texts are not always conducted to provide the student with satisfaction, because they are often done to obtain grades. (PHES2⁷)

⁷ The code EHES2 indicates the following: E = English (the ongoing graduation course); HE = Higher Education; S = student; 2 = order of the questionnaire collected. In other passages, where E is replaced by P, it means that Portuguese is the graduation course.

- (10) The most part of times we write in order to get a grade. (PHES8)
- (11) We always write to be evaluated and so that the teacher can know his/her students' degree of progress or learning. (EHES1)

Although other purposes are added, and the student affirms that he/she writes “so that the teacher may have a perception of the degree of progress or learning of the student” (EHES1), the tendency is writing for a grade, for being evaluated, as PHES2, PHES8 and EHES1 reveal. If we consider the existing theories on text production in the field of language studies, this procedure adopted by the teacher represents a way of restricting the writing of texts within the classroom. It restricts because it considers assigning a score as the single purpose of this production, without considering the process of writing and rewriting (although some teachers claim to practice the activity of rewriting), the interlocution and the subsequent circulation of the text produced by the student. Even considering that, in Higher Education, the specificity of academic-scientific domain implies, to some extent, that the texts produced by students (eg, review, summary and annotations, which are among the most requested) have an evaluative purpose and that they are addressed to the teacher, it is really possible to think of a work with written text production in which the activities of interlocution are more explored in the context of the classroom. As we can see below, in the words of EHES4, there is enough space in the classroom for the achievement of authentic situations of text production:

- (12) He [the teacher] creates fictional situations in which we act as a fictitious sender writing to a fictitious receiver, with a fictitious purpose. (EHES4)

It is necessary to emphasize that, at some point, the situation of written production is fictional, and while, in most cases, the purpose is evaluative (as occurs mainly with genres like the annotations and the summary), in other moments, a concern with the functionality of the students' writing is shown, especially when they are asked to write a text – a scientific paper, for example – also aiming at presenting it in an academic event, as shown in the students' answers transcribed below:

- (13) The texts produced are reviews and articles; they are supposed to be presented in “local academic events” and other meetings related to scientific studies. (PHES4)
- (14) The written production is usually used by the teacher as a way of evaluating the students, and it can be presented in conferences on Portuguese and English languages. (EHES3)
- (15) The immediate interlocutor is the teacher, who writes first to accomplish the academic tasks and second to allow a possible socialization of knowledge through the publication of works in conferences. (EHES5)

As we can see, it is clear that, besides meeting an evaluative requirement of the subject, the student of Portuguese and English graduation course writes for the circulation of the knowledge produced in the academic community in which he/she is, so that the written production starts to be considered not just as an end in itself, since, when it is presented and published in academic events, the student's production acquires a more dialogic, inclusive perspective, with other interlocutors besides the teacher and the classmates.

Thus, the student produces texts in Portuguese and English graduation classrooms to achieve specific goals, predominantly those that involve the specificities of the subjects, while others deviate from the authentic situations of communicative interaction, as they are restricted to an evaluative purpose and to classroom environment and interaction between teacher and student and among students, while some others are intended for publication in academic events.

We realize then that there is not yet, in a satisfactory level, what Antunes (2002) considers a systematic study of genres so that it can cover the socio-cultural elements of the students' formation, especially when we consider, as pointed by the questionnaire answers, that the work with written production requested by teachers in Higher Education do not fully include the pragmatic aspects inherent to all forms of verbal activity.

It is evident that, on the one hand, the answers given by the teachers indicate the teaching of text production based on a variety of text genres (predominantly genres of the academic and scientific domain), as suggested by the authors in this field, but on the other hand, the treatment given to the production with regard to the communicative purpose and the possible communication partners still limits, in many instances, the possibility of experiencing authentic interaction situations.

Conclusion

The data analysis undertaken reveals that the students' text production in Portuguese and English graduation classrooms comprises a variety of text genres, mainly the genres of academic-scientific domain, such as scientific paper, review and summary, what seems natural, considering that students are in a sphere whose demands include a materialization of the systematized knowledge in genres like the scientific paper, for example.

We note that the genres produced by the students have well-defined goals and interlocutors. The teachers remind that students write for the following purposes: to be evaluated (to get grades), to improve their writing skill, develop the academic and scientific production and expand knowledge. In relation to the interlocutors of the texts produced by the students, informants point out that they are: the subject teacher; the classmates; and the academic community in general, in the case of publications of texts produced in academic events.

In this sense, we are led to believe that the teaching of text production in the context of Higher Education classroom caters primarily to the specificities of the subjects, if we consider that the purpose of student's writing is almost always meeting the requirements of academic writing, aiming at developing the theoretical basis and meeting the evaluative requirements, having the teacher as the main interlocutor, still with timid initiatives that enable authentic situations of communicative interaction.

Thus, we understand that while the classroom space in Higher Education has promoted a work with genres in the activities on written text production and, at times, the text written by the student has real purpose and interlocutors, – indeed consisting of a process of communicative interaction – a lot still needs to advance in the treatment given to the written text in Higher Education towards the discovery of a sense for what our students write at college. Initiatives such as producing an academic text to publish it in academic and scientific conferences can certainly be a step towards this direction. We believe that initiatives such as these, if explored more and correctly, will contribute to the improvement of students' writing of communicatively relevant and successful texts. However, this has a cost; it fundamentally presupposes a greater commitment of teaching professionals, what first comprises a deeper understanding of the genre approaches, including those for specific purposes.

QUEIROZ, M. E. de; BESSA, J. C. R.; JALES, A. M. Os significados de escrever no ensino superior: a produção textual no discurso de professores e alunos de um curso de letras. *Alfa*, São Paulo, v.59, n.3, p.507-522, 2015.

- *RESUMO: Seguindo uma tendência crescente de trabalhos que, no campo dos estudos da linguagem e da educação, investigam a produção textual escrita de alunos do ensino superior e as dificuldades que estes apresentam para produzir textos comunicativamente relevantes e bem-sucedidos, objetivamos aqui examinar o trabalho com os gêneros textuais na prática de produção de textos escritos no ensino superior. Nesse sentido, focalizaremos particularmente o exame de duas questões: a finalidade dos gêneros textuais produzidos por alunos de um curso de Letras e os possíveis interlocutores dos gêneros textuais por eles produzidos. Os dados foram coletados por meio de questionários aplicados a alunos e professores de uma instituição pública de ensino superior. O trabalho adota a concepção de linguagem como processo de interação e as reflexões sobre gêneros do discurso advindas dos estudos do Círculo de Bakhtin, bem como as discussões acerca dos gêneros e de seu ensino apresentadas por outros estudiosos. Os resultados apontam que o ensino de produção de textos no contexto de sala de aula do ensino superior atende fundamentalmente às especificidades das disciplinas; revelando ainda poucas iniciativas que possibilitem situações autênticas de interação comunicativa.*
- *PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Gêneros textuais. Produção textual. Ensino superior. Letras. Professores e alunos.*

REFERENCES

ANTUNES, I. Língua, gêneros textuais e ensino: considerações teóricas e implicações pedagógicas. **Perspectiva**, Florianópolis, v.20, n.1, p.65-75, 2002.

BAKHTIN, M. **Estética da criação verbal**. São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 2003.

BIASI-RODRIGUES, B. A diversidade de gêneros textuais no ensino: um novo modismo? **Perspectiva**, Florianópolis, v.20, n.1, p.49-64, 2002.

BRASIL. Secretaria de Educação Fundamental. **Parâmetros Curriculares Nacionais**: terceiro e quarto ciclos do ensino fundamental – Língua Portuguesa. Brasília: MEC/SEF, 2001.

CRISTÓVÃO, V. L. L. Modelo didático de gênero como instrumento para formação de professores. In: MEURER, J. L.; MOTTA-ROTH, D. (Org.). **Gêneros textuais e práticas discursivas**: subsídios para o ensino da linguagem. Bauru: EDUSC, 2002. p.31-73.

DOLZ, J.; SCHNEUWLY, B. Gêneros e progressão em expressão oral e escrita: elementos para reflexões sobre uma experiência suíça (francófona). In: _____. **Gêneros orais e escritos na escola**. Tradução e organização de Roxane Rojo e Glaís Sales Cordeiro. Campinas: Mercado de Letras, 2004. p.41-70.

FREEDMAN, A. 'Do as I say': the relationship between teaching and learning new genres. In: FREEDMAN, A.; MEDWAY, P. (Org.). **Genre and the new rhetoric**. London: Taylor & Francis, 1994. p.191-221.

GERALDI, J. W. Unidades básicas do ensino de português. In: _____. (Org.). **O texto na sala de aula**. 3.ed. Ática: São Paulo, 2002. p.57-79.

MARCUSCHI, L. A. **Produção textual, análise de gêneros e compreensão**. São Paulo: Parábola Editorial, 2008.

PALTRIDGE, B. **Genre and the language learning classroom**. Ann Arbor: Michigan University Press, 2001.

SCHNEUWLY, B.; DOLZ, J. Os gêneros escolares: das práticas de linguagem aos objetos de ensino. In: _____. **Gêneros orais e escritos na escola**. Tradução e organização de Roxane Rojo e Glaís Sales Cordeiro. Campinas: Mercado de Letras, 2004. p.71-91.

SOUZA, G. S. de. (Coord.). **A função social dos textos trabalhados no ensino de língua materna e estrangeira**: um estudo acerca dos gêneros

adotados no ensino médio e superior. 2008. Relatório técnico final de atividades do Departamento de Letras, Universidade Estadual do Rio Grande do Norte, Pau dos Ferros, 2008.

SWALES, J. M. **Genre analysis**: English in academic and research settings. Cambridge: CUP, 1990.

Recebido em agosto de 2014.

Aprovado em agosto de 2014.