

## Working with digital text in the language classroom in a transmodal perspective/ *O trabalho com o texto digital na sala de aula de línguas numa perspectiva transmodal*


*Jailine Mayara Sousa de Farias\**

Professor in the Department of Modern Foreign Languages, at Federal University of Paraíba, and a doctoral student in Language Studies at Federal University of Pernambuco.

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8369-6589>

*Suzana Leite Cortez\*\**

Professor in the Department of Languages and in the Postgraduate Program in Language Studies at Federal University of Pernambuco. Doctor in Linguistics (Unicamp), with a postdoctoral fellowship at Université Sorbonne Nouvelle Paris 3, France. Leader of the research group GESTO (Grupo de Estudos do Texto - CNPq/UFPE).

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0983-0900>

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### **ABSTRACT**

Given the intrinsic relation between linguistic, cognitive and social activities, and also the multiple semiotic resources involved in the compositional process, it is necessary to include the nonverbal dimensions in the work with text production and comprehension in language teaching contexts. The affordances of the digital and the emergence of digital-native genres imply, on the one hand, conceptual challenges and offer, on the other, new pathways for the interaction and meaning-making process, which can combine new and conventional forms of writing (HOWELL *et al.*, 2015). This implies working with an expanded notion of text, as defined by Cavalcante *et al.* (2019) and Cavalcante & Custódio e Filho (2010). Grounded in this notion of text, we reflect on the work with digital texts in the language classroom, based on a transmodal approach (SHIPKA, 2016; HORNER *et al.*, 2015), with the aim of contributing to the discussion of theoretical and pedagogical

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\* [jailine.farias@gmail.com](mailto:jailine.farias@gmail.com)



\*\* [suzana.cortez@ufpe.br](mailto:suzana.cortez@ufpe.br)



perspectives in language teaching contexts. Therefore, we present a teaching proposal for language classrooms, exploring the affordances of the digital in the expansion of students' compositional repertoire and the work with text.

**KEYWORDS:** Digital text; Transmodality; Language teaching.

#### RESUMO

Diante da relação intrínseca entre ações linguísticas, cognitivas e sociais, bem como das multissemioses envolvidas na construção dos textos, faz-se necessário incluir dimensões não verbais no trabalho com a compreensão e produção textual no ensino de línguas. As diversas potencialidades das ferramentas digitais e a emergência de gêneros nativos digitais oferecem, por um lado, desafios conceituais e, por outro, novos caminhos para o processo de interação e produção de sentidos que podem ser perfeitamente combinados com as formas convencionais de escrita (HOWELL *et al.*, 2015). Isso implica no trabalho com uma noção ampliada de texto, conforme Cavalcante *et al.* (2019) e Cavalcante e Custódio Filho (2010). Partindo dessa noção de texto, refletiremos sobre o trabalho com o texto digital na sala de aula de línguas, a partir de uma abordagem transmodal (SHIPKA, 2016; HORNER *et al.*, 2015), com o intuito de contribuir para a discussão de perspectivas teórico-pedagógicas no ensino de línguas. Nesse sentido, apresentaremos uma proposta de ensino voltada às salas de aula de línguas, explorando as possibilidades do digital na ampliação do repertório composicional dos alunos e no trabalho com o texto.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** Texto digital; Transmodalidade; Ensino de línguas.

## 1 Introduction

The emergence of new language practices in contemporary times can be understood as a result, among other factors, of the rapid advancement of digital information and communication technologies (DICTs), which have become more accessible and mediated more our communication, establishing new interaction dynamics. Such dynamics pose new conceptual-theoretical challenges to the study of the text, which has widened its conceptual limits based on the interdisciplinary articulations aimed at attending to the multiplicity of actions – linguistic, cognitive, and social – and the multiple semiosis involved in the meaning-making process, including, then, the non-verbal dimensions in text comprehension and production.

In this scope, we observe that, if on the one hand, the inclusion of the digital dimension has represented a theoretical imperative that requires the expansion and revision of concepts, such as that of text (CAVALCANTE *et al.*, 2019), on the other hand, we also see the emergence of a pedagogical imperative that demands the consideration of the possibilities of making meaning afforded by the digital in language teaching contexts.

Thus, it is important to seek alternatives and articulations that allow the understanding of this context, of the production and (re)configuration of texts in digital ecosystems, as well as the

development of pedagogical approaches focused on the work with digital text and its characteristics, as defined by Paveau (2017; 2019), in the classroom.

Based on that, and grounded in interdisciplinary reflections, this work presents a brief overview of how the notion of text had been expanded, based on the contributions of Text Linguistics, articulating, then, with considerations about the emergence of digital native texts arising from the Web 2.0 (BARTON e LEE, 2015; PAVEAU, 2017; 2019) and of new literacy practices (KALANTZIS; COPE, 2008; 2011). Finally, we present and illustrate a transmodal approach (SHIPKA, 2016; HORNER *et al.*, 2015), to work with the affordances of the digital in the meaning-making process.

## 2 A brief overview of the notion of text: challenges of digital text

We have observed, since the 1960s and the beginning of the development of Text Linguistics studies, the transition from a notion of text as “an autonomous system subject to the formulation by a ‘grammar’, subordinated to the idea that the text would be the highest linguistic unit (in relation to the sentence, the word, the morpheme and the phoneme), to the understanding of the text as a multifaceted unit, functional in the communicative processes in a concrete society” (CAVALCANTE; CUSTÓDIO FILHO, 2010, p. 58, our translation)<sup>1</sup>, as “a communicative event in which linguistic, cognitive and social actions converge” (BEAUGRANDE, 1997, p. 10 apud KOCH, 2003, our translation)<sup>2</sup>. About this evolution in the notion of text, Koch and Elias (2016) highlight that:

[...] Text Linguistics was constituted as a discipline whose investigation object – the text – has been conceived in different ways based on how the study perspectives were broadened. From understanding the text as the highest unit of the linguistics system, scholars move to understand the text as the basic unit in human communication and interaction, and, from this conception to another that focused on text as the result of a multiplicity of interconnected cognitive operations until they reached the understanding of the text as a ‘multifaceted entity’. (p. 31, our translation)<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> “sistema autônomo passível de formulação por uma “gramática”, tributária da noção de que o texto seria a unidade linguística mais alta (em relação à frase, à palavra, ao morfema e ao fonema), passou-se à consideração de texto como unidade funcional nos processos comunicativos de uma sociedade concreta.” (CAVALCANTE; CUSTÓDIO FILHO, 2010, p. 58).

<sup>2</sup> “convergem ações linguísticas, cognitivas e sociais” (BEAUGRANDE, 1997, p. 10 apud KOCH, 2003)

<sup>3</sup> [...] a linguística de texto (LT) se constituiu como uma disciplina cujo objeto de investigação – o texto – foi concebido de diferentes maneiras à medida que se ampliavam as perspectivas de estudo. Da compreensão de texto como unidade mais

As highlighted by Bluhdorn and Andrade (2009, p. 20), since the 1990s, “the creation of new communication media, [...], has led to the emergence of new text genres [...]. Since then, Text Linguistics has been much more concerned with authentic, every day, non-idealized, incomplete, and defective texts”<sup>4</sup>, multimedia, as well as non-linear, poly-managed, and poly-thematic texts. This also results in the expansion of the concept of text and the account for the emergence of new genres, that is, new practices and new interaction possibilities, which result from new communicative needs (MARCUSCHI, 2004).

Allied to this, we cannot disregard the current impact digital communication and information technologies have had in our daily lives. Undeniably, they have reshaped the possibilities of interaction in the digital universe and redefined the relationship between the elements involved in the meaning-making process. In this same sense, Elias (2017) stresses that “The constant technological innovations to which we are exposed nowadays put in evidence in a more accentuated way the dynamics and plasticity of our textual practices” (ELIAS, 2017, p. 457, our translation)<sup>5</sup>. On the emergence of new textual practices in virtual media, Marcuschi (2008) emphasizes the increasingly widespread use of new genres emerging in/from this context, as well as their formal particularities, the shift in our relationship with speaking and writing, while also noting “the possibility of reviewing some traditional concepts related to textuality” (MARCUSCHI, 2008, p. 200, our translation)<sup>6</sup>.

We observe, then, that new ways of making meaning in the digital universe result in new textual architectures, whose characteristics are genuinely different, demanding the rescaling of notions that allow for the understanding of the text in context, as a singular event, a meaning unit, expressed through the combination of semiotic systems, a situated, concrete, singular unit, always in relation to other texts. (CAVALCANTE *et al.*, 2019). This context puts in evidence, on the one hand, the

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alta do sistema linguístico, estudiosos passaram a entender o texto como unidade básica de comunicação e interação humana e, dessa concepção, a uma outra que focalizou o texto como resultado de uma multiplicidade de operações cognitivas interligadas até chegarem à compreensão do texto como uma ‘entidade multifacetada’. (Koch and Elias, 2016, p. 31)

<sup>4</sup> “A criação de novos meios de comunicação, [...] levou ao surgimento de novos gêneros textuais [...]. Desde então, a LT tem se ocupado muito mais com textos autênticos, cotidianos, não idealizados, inclusive incompletos e defeituosos”. (BLUHDORN and ANDRADE, 2009, p. 20).

<sup>5</sup> “as constantes inovações tecnológicas a que estamos expostos nos dias de hoje põem em evidência de modo mais acentuado a dinamicidade e a plasticidade das nossas práticas textuais” (ELIAS, 2017, p. 457).

<sup>6</sup> “a possibilidade de se rever alguns conceitos tradicionais a respeito da textualidade” (MARCUSCHI, 2008, p. 200).

understanding of the work with digital texts as a theoretical imperative, in which concerns about digital textuality have gained more space in the field of Text Linguistics. On the other hand, we also recognize the concurrent emergence of a pedagogical and curricular imperative that involves, thus, the work with digital native texts in the language classrooms.

In the field of Text Linguistics, the amplification of the notion of text has been enhanced to attend to the possibilities of interaction afforded by the new communicative contexts in the digital universe, putting in evidence that the “multifaceted nature of the text entails in its constitution the possibility of establishing communication not only through the use of verbal language but by the use of other semiotic resources” (CAVALCANTE; CUSTÓDIO FILHO, 2010, p. 64, our translation)<sup>7</sup>. About this aspect, Cavalcante *et al.* (2019) turn to Kerbrat-Orecchioni, in an attempt to understand:

Different media and channels of expression can involve resources, technological or otherwise, to produce, receive and distribute a text. [...]. Agreeing with Kerbrat-Orecchioni (2006, p. 22), we consider that the semiotic systems correspond to the various resources used (verbal and non-verbal) in order to convey communication. The author stresses that, in different interaction contexts, there is a combination of many of these resources. (CAVALCANTE *et al.*, 2019, p. 36, our translation)<sup>8</sup>

Thus, we believe it is essential to consider non-verbal dimensions in the meaning-making process, beyond graphocentric approaches that usually end up focusing their analysis on the text as an exclusively linguistic object. We observe, then, the widening of the limits of the text, whose nature is increasingly hypersemiotized (CAVALCANTE; CUSTÓDIO FILHO, 2010). On this same aspect, Koch and Elias (2016) underpin the need to develop theoretical models for the analysis and comprehension of “linguistic and textual phenomena that, constituted in the context of digital culture, require the re-elaboration of concepts and the discovery of procedures capable of responding to the

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<sup>7</sup> “a natureza multifacetada do texto comporta em sua constituição a possibilidade de a comunicação ser estabelecida não apenas pelo uso da linguagem verbal, mas pela utilização de outros recursos semióticos.” (CAVALCANTE; CUSTÓDIO FILHO, 2010, p. 64).

<sup>8</sup> “os diferentes meios e canais de expressão que podem envolver recursos, tecnológicos ou não, para fazer produzir, receber e fazer circular um texto. [...] À semelhança de Kerbrat-Orecchioni (2006, p. 22), consideramos que os sistemas semióticos correspondem aos diversos recursos utilizados (verbais e não verbais) para que se proceda à comunicação. A autora salienta que, nos diversos contextos interacionais, há a combinação de muitos desses recursos.” (CAVALCANTE *et al.*, 2019, p. 36).

many aspects involved in the processes of text production and comprehension” (p. 44, our translation)<sup>9</sup>, beyond, therefore, the verbal-linguistic aspects. This need for a conceptual (re)elaboration and analytical redefinition in order to deal with new compositional practices from the digital environment (or digital-native texts) leads us to articulations with works that address new (multi)literacy practices and technodiscourse.

### 3 The emergence of new compositional practices and digital native texts: Articulating some points for reflection

The emergence of new and multiple possibilities for making meaning, now increasingly mediated by digital information and communication technologies, as well as by the variety of social and cultural contexts mark the scope of multiliteracies studies. The creation of the term by the New London Group (NLG), in 1996, with the addition of the prefix ‘multi’, draws attention to the need for pedagogical approaches that understand language and the diversity of modes as dynamic representation resources, which have given texts increasing complexity, as new forms of making meaning mediated by digital information and communication technologies evolve. For Kalantzis and Cope (2008), a literacies pedagogy should attend to the great diversity in texts and communication contexts due to our increasingly diverse – linguistically and culturally – societies.

As stated by Kleiman (2014), by defining the multiliteracies practices as a new object of study, the NLG advocates an expanded notion of literacy that highlights the possibilities of combining different languages and modes, recognizing the progressive increase of the presence of images in texts, as well as the need to investigate how these changing forms are integrated into the meaning-making process, especially considering the impact of the digital.

Because we understand the specificities of the elements that characterize the processes of text production and comprehension in the digital universe, whose architectures are dynamic and fluid, as well as the limitations of conceptual frameworks to attend to this nature, we resort to the contributions

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<sup>9</sup> “fenômenos linguísticos e textuais que, constituídos no contexto da cultura digital, requerem a (re)elaboração de conceitos e a descoberta de procedimentos capazes de dar conta dos muitos aspectos envolvidos nos processos de produção e compreensão de textos” (Koch and Elias, 2016, p. 44).

of Paveau (2017, 2019, 2020) regarding the notions of technodiscourse and digital native discourses, along with her ecological perspective.

Dedicated to the study and characterization of the digital native discourses that have emerged from Web 2.0, Paveau (2019) defines digital writing as potentially plurisemiotic, since the modes of digital native composition are composites, co-articulating different semiosis, images and sometimes sound. For the author, the web has transformed the modes of access to discourse and its formal devices:

The possible multisemiotic nature of the native technodiscursive production of the web (Paveau, 2015) enables, besides that, the elaboration of a remix and mash-up culture, allowing for a high level of reformulation of productions, great speed of circulation of materials, and an important audience that can be measured in millions of receivers, readers and viewers. (PAVEAU, 2020, p. 21, our translation)<sup>10</sup>

Considering the effects of web 2.0 on the production of online texts, Barton and Lee (2015) point to some specific features, such as the constitution of the writing process in flux, with collaborative participation, particular designs, production and sharing of self-authored text, interaction based on different media supports and modes, etc.

In their reflections about the work of writing in the age of its digital reproducibility, Kalantzis and Cope (2011) also recognize some implications and profoundly new aspects in the ways through which we make meaning in the digital universe: a shift in the balance of representational agency (author-reader relationship); a new dynamics of difference; the dissemination of multimodality and the expansion of representational repertoires; the emergence of a new navigational order (openness to alternative navigation paths and relations); and the ubiquity of registration and documentation (tracible aspect). The authors establish a parallel to illustrate the apparent aura of familiarity of the transmutation of practices from offline to online environments.

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<sup>10</sup> “As possíveis plurissemióticas da produção tecnodiscursiva nativa da web (Paveau 2015) possibilitam, além disso, a elaboração de uma cultura do remix e do mash-up, permitindo alto grau de reformulação das produções, grande rapidez de circulação dos materiais e, enfim, uma audiência importante que pode ser medida em milhões de receptores, leitores e espectadores.” (PAVEAU, 2020, p. 21).

**Table 1:** Apparent textual parallels

Business card, resume	LinkedIn
Broadcast TV	Interactive TV, YouTube
Manuscript	Google Docs
Encyclopedia	Wikipedia
Diary	Blogs; Vlogs
Scrapbook	Facebook, MySpace, Flickr, Instagram
Novel, soap opera	Videogames
Broadcast radio, playlists	Podcasts
Letter, memo	Email
Brochure	Website
Telegraph, Telegram	Twitter

**From:** Kalantzis & Cope (2011, p. 46)

According to the authors, this aura of familiarity in relation to the previous forms of textuality and the digital universe is illusory due to the fact that the digital universe establishes a new dynamic of interaction and meaning-making, to which the notion of design is central. Thus, it is worthy resuming the concept of digital-native practices, as defined by Paveau (2017), which correspond to new forms of producing, writing, and reading the text and its registration in the web ecosystem. For the researcher, digital native language productions can be defined based on six main characteristics: composition (hybrid and composite); delinearization (non-linear navigation with the use of hyperlinks); enunciative augmentation (conversational aspect of social networks); relationality (text are all connected/ in relation); investigability (documented and mappable/traceable navigational paths); and unpredictability (human use of tools modeled by programs and algorithms) (PAVEAU, 2017).

It is important to note how, in this context, different media, programs, platforms offer different affordances, technical possibilities, whose uses can transgress the predicted functionalities, as the technical affordances of web 2.0 lead to the production of new architectures, modifying discursive



repertoires (PAVEAU, 2017). In this regard, Leu et al. (2012) point out how new technologies regularly and repeatedly transform previous literacy practices, continuously redefining what it means to become literate. Individuals imagine new learning and literacy possibilities, transforming existing technologies and practices to build and share new opportunities, once that, as highlighted by Marcuschi (2008), although software designers may predict certain patterns in the modeling process of programs/algorithms, there is no rigidity in the strategies used to develop those practices, as instruments of social action, in the digital environment.

On the issue of changes in contemporary digital textual practices, Lemke (2010) stresses that “our technologies are moving us from the age of writing to the age of multimedia composition, in which documents and images of verbal texts and written texts are mere components of broader objects of meaning construction” (LEMKE, 2010, p. 456, our translation<sup>11</sup>).

Therefore, it is fundamental for us to think textually, as well as pedagogically about the new meaning-making possibilities afforded by the digital, that is, about the multisemiotic configuration possibilities of the textuality (CAVALCANTE et al., 2019) and the changing world of literacy practices, technology, and learning, in the language teaching context.

### 3.1 Implications of the digital text in the classroom

Considering the Brazilian context in relation to the official guidelines for language teaching, we can state that, since the late 1990s, the work centered on the text has been occupying a prominent place in the prescriptions, from Elementary to High School. After the publication of the PCNs (BRASIL, 1997), a document that recommended language work centered on two axes - uses (reading, listening and oral and written production) and reflection on these uses - and, later, with the publication of the PCNs+ (BRASIL, 2000) as well as the Curricular Guidelines for High School Education (BRASIL, 2006), we observe the inclusion of the diversity of languages and, therefore, of texts and ways of producing meaning, no longer merely as “corpus” or as a principle, but as objects of teaching in the language classroom (MENDONÇA, 2020).

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<sup>11</sup> “nossas tecnologias estão nos movendo da era da ‘escrita’ para a era da ‘autoria multimidiática’ em que documentos e imagens de notações verbais e textos escritos propriamente ditos são meros componentes de objetos mais amplos de construção de significados” (LEMKE, 2010, p. 456).

Given this unanimity of the guidelines regarding text-centered language teaching, it is pertinent to question which texts have gained space in school. As Santos and Teixeira (2017) point out:

it is important, therefore, to articulate the contributions of textual studies to language teaching in order to develop, in the classroom, what has been advocated for some time: taking the text as a teaching unit, analyzing textual and discursive aspects that contribute to the construction of meanings in varied text genres (oral and written). (SANTOS and TEIXEIRA, 2017, p. 6977. - digital version, our translation)<sup>12</sup>

Understanding this variety with regard to the emergence of new texts, especially in the digital native universe, we complement the authors' concern to embrace, therefore, the digital text as an object of study in the school universe and not only as a verbal manifestation. In this sense, it is worth noting that, aligned to a perspective that considers the new and multiliteracies and proposing an approach focused on linguistic and semiotic analysis, the new National Common Curricular Base (BNCC) "seeks to contemplate the digital culture, different languages and different literacies, from those basically linear, with low level of hypertextuality, to those involving hypermedia." (BRAZIL, 2018, p. 68, our translation)<sup>13</sup>.

As stated by Howell et al. (2015), "[...] the multifaceted possibilities of digital media suggest that writers today face increasingly complex and subjective decisions, free from well-specified, formulaic approaches. Therein lies the challenge for them and their teachers" (p. 30). The broadening of the concept of text and the recognition of the multiplicity of elements involved in the production and understanding of texts summons to work and reflect on "the (meta)cognitive procedures and strategies of analysis and conscious evaluation, during the processes of reading and production of texts (oral, written and multisemiotic), of the materialities of texts, responsible for their effects of meaning" (BRASIL/BNCC, 2018, p. 78, our translation)<sup>14</sup>. It is from such considerations, therefore, that we will

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<sup>12</sup> importa, portanto, articular as contribuições dos estudos textuais ao ensino de línguas a fim de concretizar, em sala de aula, o que se defende há algum tempo: tomar o texto como unidade de ensino, analisando aspectos textuais e discursivos que colaboram para a construção de sentidos em gêneros textuais variados (orais e escritos). (SANTOS e TEIXEIRA, 2017, p. 6977. - versão digital)

<sup>13</sup> "procura contemplar a cultura digital, diferentes linguagens e diferentes letramentos, desde aqueles basicamente lineares, com baixo nível de hipertextualidade, até aqueles que envolvem a hipermídia." (BRASIL, 2018, p. 68)

<sup>14</sup> "os procedimentos e estratégias (meta)cognitivas de análise e avaliação consciente, durante os processos de leitura e de produção de textos (orais, escritos e multissemióticos), das materialidades dos textos, responsáveis por seus efeitos de sentido" (BRASIL/BNCC, 2018, p. 78)

present, in the next section, a reflection on the work with text in the classroom, through dialogue with a transmodal perspective (SHIPKA, 2016; HORNER et al., 2015).

#### 4 Transmodality: ways to reflect on the work with digital texts

In line with the current discussions within Text Linguistics about the limits of text and the dimension of textuality (CAVALCANTE; CUSTÓDIO FILHO, 2010; CAVALCANTE et al., 2019), we have seen that the multiliteracies approach (KALANTZIS; COPE, 2008; 2011) calls attention to the need to include non-verbal factors in the construction of meanings, beyond the "verbocentrism" or graphocentrism (which almost always define the text as an exclusively linguistic object) recognizing, then, the multiplicity of elements that confer its multimodal nature.

Concerned with school practices, Shipka (2016) points to their limitations in relation to the lack of consideration of other representational/experiential/linguistics/material alternatives and to the almost exclusive status of typographic, alphabetic, graphocentric textual practices. The author calls attention to the use of different modes in the compositional process, treating "difference not as a problem to be solved or corrected, but as a resource for making and negotiating meaning". Shipka (2016) states that

we need also to commit fully to altering our pedagogical and research practices - to consider how concretely engaging with different modes, genres, materials, cultural practices, communicative technologies, and language varieties impacts our abilities to make and negotiate meaning. (SHIPKA, 2016, p. 251).

The author aligns herself with Horner et al. (2015) regarding the need to rethink the processes involved in the composition process. Shipka (2016) proposes, then, a conceptual change to think about the production of texts from a transmodal perspective, which focuses on the movement and dialogue between different modes, which does not necessarily occur only in the digital universe. There is an alignment with Horner et al. (2015) in relation to the interest in overlaps, parallels, and points of intersection between the diversity of modes and languages, which helps us consider the potential of digital literacies, as well as how texts are produced in this space and how they move through the virtual space.

While these authors acknowledge the multimodal nature of language practices, they are critical of a certain limitation of the prefix multi, which seems to emphasize an additive model of change (counting the number of varieties and identifying how they are configured, mixed or interchangeable). Hence, the need to introduce a new alternative prefix - trans (transmodality), that would focus on the articulation between modes and the need for negotiation.

it is quite true that all language use is multimodal. I'm not sure that all environments for linguistic exchange are created equal in regards to the modal mixing they accommodate. For instance, while print texts have always mixed some modalities of expression (words and visual information, for instance), digital environments allow for different kinds/varieties of mixing. Here, I'm thinking of the ways in which print text and video/audio texts can be juxtaposed/combined in a single composing environment. (HORNER et al., 2015, p. 15).

In the same direction, Lemke (2010) argues about the fluid, moving, non-fixed and non-additive nature (the meaning of the word plus the meaning of the image) of the meaning-making process supported by the media. The author highlights, then, the multiplicative nature, in which, on the one hand, the meanings of the word are modified, updated based on the imagetic context, and, on the other hand, the meaning of the image is modified by the words, “making the whole something much greater than the sum of the parts”<sup>15</sup>. We note that the variety of modes and technologies represent a great reservoir of design resources available to the communication process, and it is not enough, therefore, to recognize different modes/forms, but to experiment with them, experiencing different possibilities of articulation, what they have to offer, that is, their affordances.

Therefore, it is worth reiterating that, although multimodality permeates every language practice, such practices are not multimodal in the same way, and the differences between them are significant and depend, thus, on the articulation, negotiation and the affordances of different available resources (HORNER et al., 2015). Horner et al. (2015) point out that a big “part of what is happening with multimedia/multimodality/transmedia/transmodality is tied to/situated within digital composing environments where people have access to composing tools that allow for different forms of hybrid mediation.” (HORNER et al., 2015, p. 14). On this point, Cope e Kalantzis (2008) also state how new

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<sup>15</sup> “fazendo do todo algo muito maior do que a simples soma das partes” (LEMKE, 2010, p. 456).

media allow for the dialogue and mixing between modes in a much more powerful way than what was culturally the norm or even technically possible in a previous print-dominated logic.

As Shipka (2016) states:

[...] we need to work toward increasing awareness of, and facility with, a wide variety of communicative options with the goal of helping individuals choose wisely, critically, and purposefully the representational systems, materials, and language varieties that are most fitting for, and appropriate to, the purposes, potentials, and contexts of the work they endeavor to do. (SHIPKA, 2016, p. 256).

The author argues, then, for the need for broadening the linguistic, cross-cultural, material and modal awareness to build what she calls communicative or compositional fluency. For Shipka (2016), this approach entails the development of students' rhetorical awareness about the extent of the variety of conventions, technologies, materials, and practices typically found in different areas or domains – at school, at work, at home, in churches, in shops, in online or face-to-face communication, etc. – which, therefore, make up different repertoires for making meaning in the digital universe.

#### 4.1 Proposing ways to compose digital texts in language education contexts

Before presenting the proposal of composing digital texts focused on basic education, we will make a brief report of a project<sup>16</sup> developed in an undergraduate course with English pre-service teachers at the Federal University of Paraíba (UFPB), as one of the modules of the subject of English Language (intermediate level). The project "Developing a pilot survey research" dialogues with the discussions presented in this article and sought to create opportunities for developing students' linguistic and textual-discursive repertoire, from their engagement in planning, producing texts and reflecting on the meaning-making possibilities of the digital.

This experience of working with digital texts led us to reflect on how the dialogue between different semiosis, supported by the compositional possibilities of the digital, could be articulated to some theoretical and conceptual conceptions and challenges that the studies about the text, the new multi-literacies and technodiscourse have sought to address and respond.

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<sup>16</sup> This project was coordinated by one of the authors, in 2018.

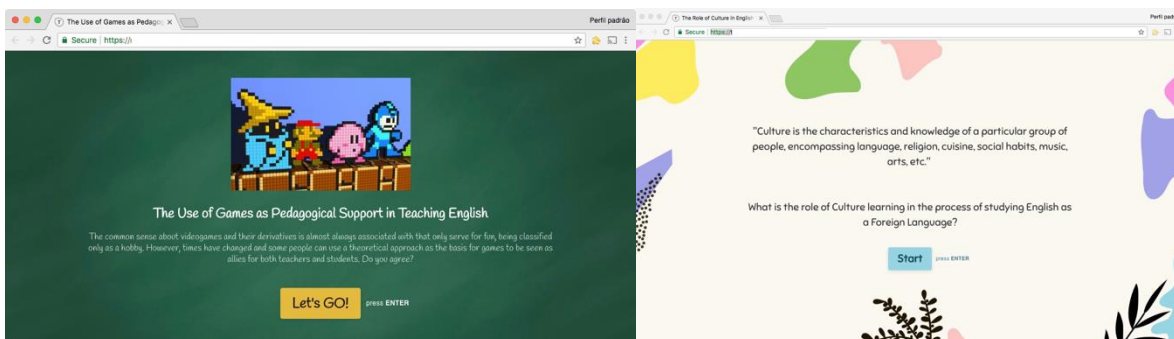
Thus, in this project developed, students designed an online questionnaire/survey, collected real data on problems or research questions of interest to the group, which could then analyze and present the results of their investigations, exploring different resources and media.

In the questionnaire development phase, it was possible to observe the articulation of multisemiotic elements that connect directly or indirectly to the research theme, contributing significantly to the meaning-making process. In the examples below (Figure 1), we verify, in the opening of the questionnaire on the left, that the choice of font style, the insertion of characters (images), colors, can be related to the universe of games, a theme explored in the research. In the second example, on the right, we see different choices, evident in the choice of font, layout, images, motivated by the repertoire of each student, as well as by the theme of the research, the choice of a platform to develop the questionnaire, as well as the familiarity of students with these and their resources, among others, all integrated in the production, which highlights the transmodal, moving aspect of the compositional process.

**Figure 1:** Questionnaire examples

**Source:** Author's personal file (2018).

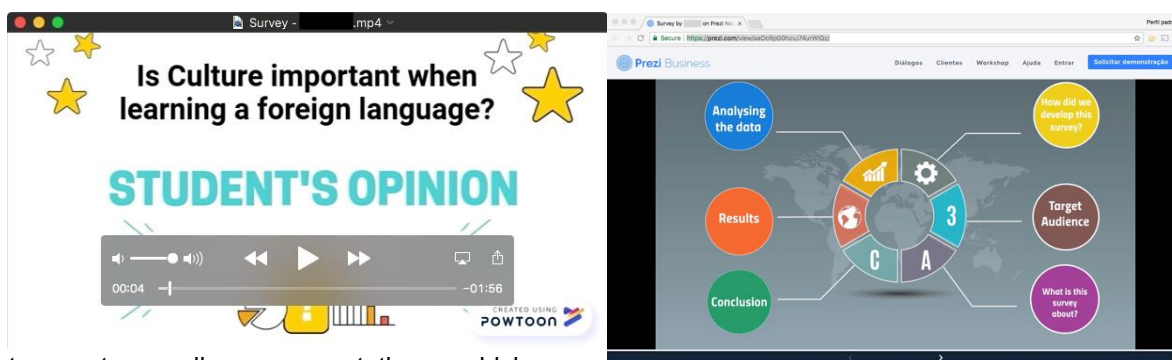
Regarding the presentation of the results (Figure 2), the culmination of the project, no single format was specified to be followed by the students, and this flexibility allowed us to observe how each group explored different compositional alternatives to meet their purposes. The students were guided during the process by both the instructor and the monitor of the course.



**Figure 2:** Presenting the results

**Source:** Author's personal file (2018).

In the picture on the left, the student produced a two-minute video, using the Powtoon platform, presenting the results of her research. On the right, the students chose to use Prezi, a software used



to create non-linear presentations, which are

stored on the web and shareable (through a link). There were also presentations organized in PowerPoint. We observed that the students' choices to present the results indicates a multiplicity of forms of interaction between visual, static, and moving elements, which interact with the linguistic to constitute their production, demanding, therefore, the work with an expanded notion of text, which considers its technodiscursive configuration, supported by the potentialities of the digital.

Based on this experience in a higher education context, we think it is pertinent to reflect on the viability of developing a proposal for basic education, in order to articulate the theoretical and conceptual discussions, the recommendations of official documents, and the pedagogical dimension, focusing on the work with the compositional possibilities of the digital.

Thinking, then, about this challenge of working with different conventions, materialities, modalities, technologies (digital and analogical), we suggest, as a way to integrate such proposal in the context of the language classroom, the development of a pilot research for students of basic education. This proposal seeks to create opportunities for students' linguistic development and the expansion of their textual-discursive repertoire, based on their involvement in the production of real texts that value the interaction and the use of language in the digital context, as well as the possibility of exploring different genres and different elements involved in the meaning-making process.

As an initial step and as a way to explore the knowledge that students already have, we start with their familiarization with the survey genre and with the development of a survey/questionnaire as a data collection instrument for research. In this step, we problematize the goals behind administering questionnaires, the types of questionnaires, their main characteristics, ways to approach the participating audience, and how these moves are translated to the digital universe.

Next, we suggest the selection by the students of a research topic of their interest, they will work in small groups for the development of the project. This is then followed by the development and application of an online questionnaire. During the questionnaire development stage, students can use different platforms and explore different resources, including, for example, the inclusion of videos, images to help contextualize the research topic to the participants. After organizing and analyzing the data collected by the students through the questionnaire, the project moves on to the final stage, the presentation of the research with the help of media.

For this final moment, we consider important the creation of a rubric, which can be designed collaboratively together with the students, listing movements and important elements for the development of the research and the presentation of the results. As a way to value the students' repertoires, we believe it is productive to maintain some openness and flexibility regarding the format of the presentation, without specifying a single format or a single specific genre, guiding the students as to their objectives and encouraging them to reflect on their compositional choices, which may involve the use of platforms such as Prezi (software used to create non-linear presentations, stored on the web), social media platforms, as well as other alternatives for creating short videos, besides the use of PowerPoint. In the end, students can share their experience and reflect on their choices, semiotics resources, platforms, and strategies mobilized (to what extent they were similar and how they were different) in the development of the project, expanding the students' rhetorical awareness of the variety of elements used and the articulation between different materialities, modes, and technologies, integrated in the meaning-making process.

We believe that this work allows students to choose between different compositional paths and mobilize different strategies and dimensions, involving "new" potentialities and forms of articulation of different modalities that emerge from the possibilities of interaction mediated by technology. To develop the research, students engage in the construction of an instrument - questionnaire - that gains specific



characteristics, more fluid, flexible, hybrid, and delinearized layouts, when taken to digital platforms such as *Google Forms*, *Type Form*, *SurveyMonkey* (alternatives that can be used by students). Moreover, choosing a topic of interest to the students can directly reflect on their involvement in the development of the research and the choices made during the process, as well as on the students' awareness of the expansion of their compositional repertoire, since they were encouraged to go beyond the traditional work with the text and its compositional process.

The project allows the interaction between multisemiotic elements of the productions presented, built from the dialogue between different modalities, and the possibility of giving new meaning to the work with text in the classroom. It needs, therefore, to be expanded to include the diversity of elements present and constitutive of texts that mark our daily interactions, exploring the potential of the web.

### Final Remarks

The present work highlighted, initially, the enlargement of the notion of text from, mainly, the studies of Text Linguistics, which have increasingly sought to respond to the theoretical-conceptual challenges imposed by the texts of today, focusing on their multisemiotic and digital dimensions. Based on this concern, we undertake the articulation of the notion of text highlighted here with reflections around the emergence of digital native genres, according to Paveau (2017, 2019, 2020) and the literacy practices marked by ICTs. We then present how such elements are reinterpreted and incorporated in the documents that guide language teaching, to, finally, present a proposal to approach digital texts from a transmodal perspective.

The transmodal perspective of Shipka (2016) and Horner et al. (2015) suggests, in our view, not only working with an expanded notion of text but also understanding the moving nature of the construction and negotiation of meanings supported by the affordances of the digital universe.

The impact and transformations that the web has generated in textual architectures lead us to consider how the digital environment mediates and operationalizes the mobilization of different modalities, articulated in different practices, which are characterized, therefore, by their multisemiotic, multilinear, hybrid, composite, and mappable nature. The transmodal perspective opens new paths for reflection on how the movement and articulation between different modes occur in different interaction

situations in the digital universe, thus expanding the possibilities of analyzable aspects and situations to encompass digital native texts. In this scope, the possibilities of integrating such approach in the context of basic education are also broadened, in order to explore the students' compositional repertoires and the work with digital texts, recognizing the fluid nature and the articulation between different materialities, modes, and technologies in the meaning-making process.

Moreover, it is also pertinent to point out the need to approach the digital and multisemiotic dimensions of the process of making meaning in the contexts of language teacher education, both from theoretical and practical/compositional experiences. Such possibilities represent, therefore, possibilities for future studies that seek, based on interdisciplinary articulations, to advance in the understanding of the new horizons of interaction expanded by the digital.

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#### Contributor Roles:

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Conceptualization, Data curation, Methodology, Project administration, Visualization, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing : CORTEZ, Suzana Leite.

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