

Reading of the short story *Viagem aos seios de Duília*, by Aníbal Machado: a teaching proposal /

Leitura do conto ‘Viagem aos seios de Duília’, de Aníbal Machado: uma proposta de ensino

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ABSTRACT

For a long period of time, teaching literature in the Brazil's high school was restricted to the historicity of literary movements and biographies of considered known authors in the academic field, in a decontextualized and demotivating manner. Although the literature's recognized, over the decades, as indispensable in the classroom, it is common to perceive the reality that literary texts reading took place in the background of school environments', due to the teacher's lack of knowledge about how to teach literature and literary reading. In that context, studies and methodological proposals become relevant to make possible the formation of literature readers. Considering that, the target of the article is to present a reading activity proposal for the short story *Viagem aos seios de Duília*, by Aníbal Machado – Journey to Duília's Breasts, as the literal translation – to be applied in a second-year of the high school

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classes. The proposal is based on the basic sequence model developed by Cosson (2016), on reflections by authors such as Aguiar & Bordini (1993) and Aguiar (1996) which includes methodological alternatives for reader's development. We believe that this study can contribute to the teaching of literature in the schools, to recognize the importance of elements that promote the development of autonomous literary readers, motivating and expanding students' horizons regarding the ways of reading texts and their perception of the world.

KEYWORDS: Literature teaching; Basic sequence; Short stories reading; Readers' development.

RESUMO

*Durante muito tempo, o ensino de literatura no ensino médio esteve restrito à historicidade de movimentos literários e a biografias de autores considerados renomados, de modo descontextualizado e desmotivante. Apesar de a literatura ter sido reconhecida, ao longo das décadas, como imprescindível em sala de aula, não é incomum nos depararmos com a realidade de que a leitura de textos literários vem sendo deixada em segundo plano nos ambientes escolares, muitas vezes, devido ao desconhecimento do professor sobre como ensinar literatura e leitura literária. Nesse contexto, tornam-se relevantes estudos e propostas metodológicas que fomentem a formação de leitores proficientes. Assim, o presente artigo tem como objetivo apresentar uma proposta de atividade de leitura do conto *Viagem aos seios de Duília*, de Aníbal Machado, para ser aplicada em turmas do segundo ano do ensino médio. A proposta está respaldada no modelo de sequência básica elaborado por Cosson (2016), além de se fundamentar em reflexões de autoras como Aguiar e Bordini (1993) e Aguiar (1996) acerca de alternativas metodológicas para a formação do leitor. Acreditamos que este estudo contribui de maneira significativa com o ensino de literatura nas escolas, ao reconhecer a importância de práticas que promovam a formação de leitores literários autônomos e competentes, motivando e ampliando os horizontes dos alunos no que se refere aos modos de ler textos e de enxergar o mundo.*

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Ensino de literatura; Sequência básica; Leitura de conto; Formação de leitores.

1 Introduction

In recent decades, several studies on teaching literature in the classroom have given due recognition to the importance of literature for, among other purposes, developing proficient student readers. This recognition has led to changes in literature classes in Brazilian high school which, for a long time, was limited to the historical knowledge of literary movements and biographies of important authors in a decontextualized manner, consequently, demotivating classes.

Despite this, literature teaching in high school classrooms is often still put in a low priority, may be due to teachers' own lack of knowledge about how to teach literature and literary reading. It is worth remembering that reading literary texts enables, among other aspects, the exercise of critical and creative thinking, reiterating the need for it to be fundamental not only in elementary school, but also in high school, as we can find out in the BNCC-2018 (Brazilian educational normative: National Common Curricular Base): "in relation to the literature, reading literary texts, is the core of work in Elementary School, must also remain central in High School" (Brasil, 2018, p. 499).

Evidently, to form literary readers, the teacher must have previously built his/her literary reading repertoire, that is, he/she must be a reader of literature (Filipouski, 2005). In addition to this, it is worth mentioning that literary reading in schools needs to have well-defined objectives and pedagogical practices, which should not be confused with a simple leisure activity or a simply teaching content about literature (Cosson, 2015), with a view to developing literary literacy in the classroom, based on both canonical and non-canonical literary works.

From this perspective, this study aims to contribute to the productive and effective teaching of literature in the classroom, with the objective of presenting a reading activity proposal for the short story *Viagem aos seios de Duília* (*Journey to Duília's Breasts*), by Aníbal Machado, to be applied in second-year of Brazilian high school classes. The short story genre was chosen because it is a relatively short text, allowing for careful and detailed literary reading in the classroom. It can be defined as a narrative of events which establishes itself as a short story when the voice of the storyteller transforms into the voice of the narrator, where exists an aesthetic result in the text and specific values related to the genre, since not every storyteller is a short story writer (Gotlib, 1985).

The choice of the work is justified by the fact that the short story has little recognition in Brazil, in the academic sphere or in the classroom, it is a rich short story and suitable for achieving one of the skills set out in the BNCC (2018), such as analyzing works based on “tools of literary criticism (structure of composition, style, discursive aspects), considering the production context (worldviews, dialogues with other texts, insertions in aesthetic and cultural movements, etc.) and the way they dialogue with the present” (Brasil, 2018, p. 499). In this sense, it is interesting to highlight that, despite it had been published in 1959, the narrative included in the work is quite current, making it possible to study several themes like nostalgia, youthful love, the relationship between man and work, reflections on the living meaning, technological advances/modernity, aging and expectations/broken expectations, in order to compare current aspects with those from the time it was written. In addition, it brings other aspects to be exposed in the basic sequence.

The activity proposal is supported by the reflections of Aguiar and Bordini (1993) and Aguiar (1996) concerned to methodological alternatives for reader training. It is also based on the “basic sequence model” guided by Cosson (2016), which covers four stages: motivation, introduction, reading and interpretation. um resultado de ordem estética e com valores próprios ao gênero, pois nem todo contador de histórias é um contista (Gotlib, 1985).

This study is organized into three sections, in addition to this introduction and the final considerations. The first section passes through discussions about the reading process, with a focus on literary reading, and the teaching of literature to form the literary reader; the second section discusses literary literacy and the basic sequence model developed by Cosson (2016), and the last section presents a proposal for an activity of reading the short story *Viagem aos seios de Duília*, by Aníbal Machado, based on the referred basic sequence model.

2 Literature teaching and formation of the literary reader

Literature and its language are one of the ways of the word's representation, since they are able to express the man's certainties and uncertainties to face the world and the reality that surrounds him. According to this, we can affirm that the teaching of literature allows the dialogue between reality and fiction, establishing confluence with history, culture and society. Thus, school environments become essential for the implementation of teaching practices for the reading of literary texts in a systematic and productive manner.

The idea that schools were the main space for reading teaching, however, it did not always exist. For a long time, reading practices were restricted to the most privileged social classes, only in the 16th century, with the Protestant Reformation movement initialized by Martin Luther, public schools were created, maintained by authorities, so that citizens could learn to read and write. It is worth to mention that, although the idea that every citizen had the right to be educated in school was propagated, the main purpose of reading learning was to popularize and increase the number of readers of biblical texts (Manguel, 1997). In this context, there was no systematic reflection on the teaching way, the pedagogical processes consisted on the intensive activities of reading, that is, encoding, decoding, memorizing and reciting classical texts, which were limited (Durkeim, 1969 apud Gauthier, 2014).

As stated by Chartier (1994), it was only in the 18th century that intensive reading shifted to extensive reading, gradually. According to him, extensive reading encompasses diverse and numerous texts, with the aim of broadening the horizon of knowledge and developing the capacity for critical awareness of reality, in addition, to consider the enjoyment and delight provided by reading. Furthermore, at this time the Pedagogy emerged, that is, "the establishment of a detailed and precise method and procedures for teaching" (Gauthier, 2014, p. 133).

Even with the emerging and development of pedagogical studies on the literature teaching, it is important to remember that for a long time the teaching of literary texts in Brazil was put on the background in schools, literary texts were used only as a material to support the study of normative grammar, mainly through canonical literary works. Later, especially in the high school, classes that aimed to focus on teaching of literature were restricted to historical facts about literary movements and biographies of the most important authors (Bordini and Aguiar, 1993).

Currently, the researches is increasing on the importance of teaching literature in the classroom, since it allows us to question what we see and experience, expanding our worldview. Based on the knowledge stored in memory, each one has a point of view, his or her own mark on reading, as Zilberman (1989) dicussed:

No reader absorbs a text passively; nor can it survive without the invasion of the reader, who gives it life by completing it with the strength of his imagination and the power of his experience. Since these properties are, in turn, changeable, readings vary, and reactions related to the text always change. (Zilberman, 1989, p. 51).

Corroborating this, Eco (2003) explaining about the literature functions says that:

the literary texts reading requires us to exercise fidelity and respect for the freedom of interpretation. There is a dangerous critical heresy, typical between us, which says that one can do whatever one wants with a literary text, reading into it whatever our most uncontrollable impulses suggest to us. This is not true. Literary texts invite us to the freedom of interpretation, because they propose a discourse with many plans of reading and confront us with ambiguities in language and life. But to be able to continue in this game, in which each generation reads literary texts differently, one must be moved by a profound respect for what I elsewhere called the intention of the text. (Eco, 2003, p. 12).

He adds the contribution of literature for the language formation, to create identity and community, pointing out that “the world of literature is a universe in which it is possible to carry out tests to establish whether a reader has a sense of reality or is a prisoner of his own hallucinations” (Eco, 2003, p.15).

The view that every literary work is a symbolic image of the world is evidenced by Zilberman (2009, p. 33) when he explains that this image is structured in an incomplete and closed manner, with gaps and unfinished situations, to be filled in with the intervention of the

reader. For this to happen, however, it is necessary to create conditions to form competent readers. Chartier (2001) reminds us that being literate is not enough for everyone to be able to read a text competently, since each individual has a different level of knowledge, there are other several factors that can interfere in the reading process, such as interests, habits, intentions and reading techniques.

Aguiar (1996) lists the age of the reader as one of the factors that may influence individuals' reading interests, considering that people become mature and preferences for more complex readings are formed, normally, according to their age group, although there is not necessarily a rigidity in each person's reading choices. Due to this, the researcher argues that it is in the school environment, as a rule, from the Brazilian ninth grade and high school, when the students are able to develop critical readings, as they begin to elaborate value judgments and have a perception of aesthetic content, through the comparison of ideas, conclusions, taking positions, reflecting, with a critical stance, on social and psychological problems. This point of view also supported our choice for the second-year in Brazilian high school classes as a target audience for the proposal developed in this work, due to the level of complexity necessary to read the chosen short story, to expand the students' reading skills.

According to her, on the other hand, the teacher should provoke new interests in the students, to multiply reading practices and expand the reader's horizons, doing that the student will have access to plenty materials and realities not yet visited. Aguiar (1996) explains that, by this way, the student will become a reader capable of dialoguing with new texts, to understand and interpret them, recognizing the structures, filling in thematically empty positions, toward to their maturity in the perception of the world, being aware about the growth as a reader and human being.

Considering the literature teaching and appropriated methodological procedures for the development of competent readers, the next section is dedicated to the presentation of a basic sequence model proposed by Cosson (2016).

3 The basic sequence proposed by Cosson (2016): developing literary literacy in the classroom

Increasingly contact with diverse literary texts gradually enables the autonomy of the student-reader. The significance of this autonomy is highlighted by Paulino (2005, p. 63), he

states that “literary reading must be processed with more autonomy, with students having the right to follow their own paths of meaning production, without ceasing to be social”. The school environment will become essential for the construction of students' reading autonomy, since one of its functions is to form the literary reader in a systematic and systematized way, to engender the student's literary competence (Cosson, 2020).

The school's function of training competent literary readers simultaneously opens up space for literary literacy, which, according to Cosson (2020, p. 10), concerns the “process of symbolic construction of the world perception and the subject through words”. According to the researcher, literary literacy can be implemented independently of the school, but to achieve a more effective result, it depends on the school sphere. This happens due to the inherent complexity of the process, which includes both the reader's search for resources to reconstruct the literary text based on intertextual references, their own life, contextual resources and the appropriated experience of others announced in the literary text (Cosson, 2020).

Based on the implementation of literary literacy, Cosson (2016) proposes basic and expanded sequence models to support teachers when developing literature teaching activities. Here, will be explained the basic sequence model chosen to develop the reading proposal for the short story *Viagem aos seios de Duília*. The basic sequence model encompasses four stages: Motivation, Introduction, Reading, and Interpretation. The Motivation stage is understood as a kind of preparation, anticipation of the literary text reading, providing the initial success of the reader's meeting with the narrative. For the reader to feel motivated, the author suggests the teacher set objectives for the text approach, before the reading, present a situation which instigates the student to answer a question, by the raise of hypotheses about the title of the text, or a discussion based on the thematic aspects highlighted in the text, the students can position themselves.

The Introduction stage is defined by Cosson (2016) as the presentation of the author and the narrative, which, according to him, requires caution to not be restricted to an extensive exposition of the author's biography, considering that the function of this stage is to draw attention to elements of the author's life that may have a link with the text to be studied. The presentation of the narrative should also be brief, so as to clarify the importance of the chosen short story.

Then, the reading stage must be done with the supervision of the teacher, who will have the task of helping students in any difficulties. Thus, Cosson (2016) recommends that reading be carried out through intervals, that is, moments in which students are invited to present results, for

example, in a conversation about the progress of the reading, that they can follow the progress and rhythm of the reading to perceive if there are vocabulary comprehension gaps or problems related to the compositional structure of the text.

The last stage, Interpretation, must be conducted in two moments, the interior and the exterior. The interior moment corresponds to individual reading (and interpretation), and is consolidated as a social act, considering the experiences lived by the reader can directly interfere in the way in which the interpretation of the reading is made. The exterior moment is linked to the interpretation sharing with other readers, which will provide the expansion of the senses, the reading horizons, constructed individually. The researcher presents examples of activities that can be carried out at this moment, such as intertextuality with other texts on the same theme and dramatization of scenes. Through activities of this nature, the interpretation will be constructed in a creative way, pointing to the diversity of ways of reading and the world perceptions.

Concerning to the relevance of the sequence model explained above for the literature teaching, in the next section there is a proposal to be developed in a literature class.

4 Basic Sequence Model: reading the short story *Viagem aos seios de Duília*, by Aníbal Machado

As explained in the introductory section, this article aims to present a reading activity proposal of the short story *Viagem aos Seios de Duília*, by Aníbal Machado, to be applied in the second year of Brazilian high school classes, supported by the basic sequence model organized by Cosson (2016). To achieve this, we list three specific objectives to be reached by the teacher and students in the classroom: 1) Investigate the structural elements of the narrative: plot, narrator, space, time and characters; 2) verify the themes included in the short story: relationship between man and work, reflections on what it means to live, nostalgia, young love, technological advances/modernity, aging, expectations/broken expectations; 3) Stimulate an intertextual analysis with other texts: elements/images present in the film version based on the short story, comic strip, song and news report.

Based on the Motivation stage, the sequence begins with a preparation for the student to read the short story by presenting the following questions: “1) Do you have any nostalgic experience(s)? 2) Have you ever been in a situation which, driven by nostalgia, some expectation was broken?” These questions anticipate some of the themes inferred in the selected work,

nostalgia and expectations/broken expectations, while at the same time awakening the students' interest in what will be read by lighting experiences they have lived.

Next stage, some questions to be asked can generate predictions about the plot based on the title: “3) What does the title of the story refer to? 4) Does it make clear what the story is about or does it point more than one meaning? 5) Does it suggest any nostalgia? 6) What could it be?”. We believe that through these questions, students will be able to associate the term journey, present in the title, with more than one meaning, that is, moving from one place/location to another (literal meaning) and fantasizing/remembering something, going outside of one's normal emotional state (figurative meaning). From this, we believe that students will realize the title suggests a nostalgia experienced by one of the characters in the short story with another character, probably Duília, a term also present in the title.

After the questions, to reach the *Introduction stage*, a brief presentation of the author Aníbal Machado and the historical-literary context of the work is made, highlighting aspects that may have a link to the short story. The explanation of the place and year of birth (Sabará, December 9th, 1894) and the place and year of death of the author (Rio de Janeiro, January 19th, 1964) is primary and important information for students to establish an association with the possible choices of the author regarding the regions in which the plot of the narrative takes place, since the city Pouso Triste where the main character José Maria spent his youth is portrayed in the interior of Minas Gerais; in his adolescence, José Maria moves with his family to Rio de Janeiro, because his father finds a job in the city.

The possible choices of geographic spaces narrated in the short story can also be related to the experiences and situations Aníbal Machado had when lived in Belo Horizonte and Rio de Janeiro: he completed his Law degree at the Faculty of Belo Horizonte, in 1917; he enjoyed his youth in the cultural life of the capital of Minas Gerais, Brazilian state, published in a magazine “Vida de Minas”, from 1919 to 1924; he moved to Rio de Janeiro in 1923, with his wife and three daughters to work as a police delegate at Ilha do Governador [Government Island], while waited to be invited to be an assistant prosecutor for the election of Artur Bernardes to the Presidency, etc.

One can also see aspects of Aníbal Machado's biography showing his interest in literature, for example, in the fact that shortly after being appointed to the position of deputy prosecutor of Rio de Janeiro, Brazilian state, he resigned to become professor of Literature at *Colégio Dom Pedro II*. Other situations reiterate his interest, such as his important participation in

literary activities, writing for some magazines in Rio de Janeiro, such as *Estética*, organized by Sérgio Buarque de Holanda and Prudente de Moraes Neto; also, as one of his daughters, Maria Clara Machado, stated he frequently received and spent time at home with several literary writers: Carlos Drummond de Andrade, Pablo Neruda, Vinicius de Moraes, Albert Camus, Otto Lara Rezende, João Cabral de Mello Neto, among others (Machado, 1991).

The writing of the short story *Viagem aos Seios de Duília* took place in a context which the writer was immersed in cultural and literary events, had contact with several other writers, providing the space of his own home for events which could take place at that time:

His house, a pleasant little two-floor building with a garden in the front side (which was recently demolished to make way for an apartment building; there is a photograph of it in the first edition of *João Ternura*), has been considered the last literary salon in Rio. But it was not really a salon; rather, it was a meeting place for writers and friends and, for young people, the gateway to the world of letters, the place where they could see some sacred writers of Brazilian literature. Everything in there was informal; Aníbal knew how to create an atmosphere that was at once one of collective cordiality and intellectual seriousness. He never allowed a small chapel to be created inside his house. And the subjects were not strictly literary. Aníbal, and those who frequented him, also enjoyed cinema, painting, theater, popular music and carnival (Fausto Cunha, 1974, p. x).

Aníbal Machado also expressed his passion for theater and cinema, which is a important information to highlight in the classroom, considering that the author wrote plays (*A praça X* and *Piano*) and developed short stories with heavily explored visual elements, such as *Viagem aos Seios de Duília*, which contributed, not only this, but other short stories to be adapted for the cinema. It is important to highlight that the movie has the same name of the short story, *Viagem aos Seios de Duília*, was produced and directed in 1964 - the year Aníbal Machado died - by Carlos Hugo Christensen, and received some awards: Special Honorable Mention, “Dedo de Deus” [God’s Finger Trophy], from the I Teresópolis Film Festival [Festival from Teresópolis, a city in Rio de Janeiro – Brazillian state]; First Place, “Governor of the State of Guanabara Award, from Rio de Janeiro [Movie Industry Aid Commission], in 1965; First Prize, “IV Centennial Film Award”, from Rio de Janeiro, in 1965; Best actor prize to Rodolfo Mayer, at the “Governor of the State of São Paulo” Award – São Paulo, also in 1965 (Silva Neto, 2002, p. 842- 843).

After the Introduction, the reading stage of the story begins. It is recommended that students read the short story collectively, each student reads a passage, the teacher can identify any difficulties about the comprehension of the narrative. Some breaks during the reading

can be taken, sections to refer to the identification of the structural elements of the narrative should be highlighted: plot, narrator, space, time and characters. At this point, we suggest the Interpretation stage be carried out simultaneously, since it will consider the students' individual and collective points of view regarding the reading of the short story.

Regarding the plot, we can highlight passages that lead students to perceive central themes embedded in the narrative, such as the relationship between man and work and, consequently, reflections on what it means to live. The main character, José Maria, is a civil servant who, for thirty-six years, had led a routine focused on the activities of work. Obtaining retirement made him to see the emptiness of his daily life:

For more than thirty years the same time, a quarter past ten, the urban train came down from Silvestre neighborhood would stop like a trained donkey in front of José Maria's little house, and there he would find the old employee, who had eaten lunch and was punctual.

[...]

Suddenly, he had stopped his habit of waiting for the train, buying the morning paper, taking his coffee on the Avenue, and sitting at the Ministry's desk, serious and silent, until five o'clock. What to do now? No more reporting on cases, no more worrying about the name and face the boss, the future Minister. (Machado, 1977, p. 35-36).

This drives the character to try to find meaning in his life, starting with a change in his home environment, when he keeps open the living room window to let the light come in and to see the nature. However, it makes him to realize that he never had time to appreciate the city's landscapes close to him; his departure to "recognize" Rio de Janeiro, due to the changes perceived in the environment, causes in José Maria a feeling of a stagnant existence. The attempt to change his appearance, by taking off the hat he always wore, also symbolizes search for a new identity and a liberty gesture.

The themes nostalgia, expectation and youthful love can be highlighted in the reading, when we consider, for example, the moment when the retiree felt asleep and had a dream that brought to his mind the scene he experienced with Duília, his youthful passion, who during a procession showed him her breasts:

What most astonished him about Duília's gesture – José Maria remembered during his insomnia, clutching his pillow – was the inexplicable gratuitousness and absurd purity. She was a demure young woman, he was a shy young man; they had only been courting each other. They barely knew each other. The procession was going up the hill, the mystical song was lost in the starry

sky. Suddenly, the procession stopped so the virgins could advance, and in the shadow of a tree, she saw the young men fixed on her lap. It seemed as if she felt sorry for him and, simply, opened her blouse, said to him: “Do you want to see?” – He almost died of ecstasy. Both pale, she repeated: “Do you want to see more?” – And she showed him her other breast, white, white... And she calmly closed her blouse. And she continued singing... That was all. It lasted few seconds, it is lasting an eternity. (Machado, 1977, p. 47).

This image had been forgotten for a long time and, due to the end of his routine work activities, it came back to his memory, which made him travel to the rural town of Pouso Triste, where he spent his childhood and part of his youth, trying to find Duília, a new motivation for José Maria's future existence. The temporal dimensions can be highlighted - in several passages that show the opposition between José Maria's past and his present - and the spatial dimensions - mainly during the seven-day trip from Rio de Janeiro to Pouso Triste -, which mixes facts that happened in the character's youth with the route he took in reverse (from Pouso Triste to Rio de Janeiro), in an attempt to connect the present to the past: “His desire was to retrace, by the means of old, the same route of the past. Impossible. New roads came to replace the paths that lead to the past.” (Machado, 1977, p. 43).

The teacher can lead students to realize that the narrator of the story is omniscient, as he narrates the characters' memories and emotions through free indirect speech, showing expectations and broken expectations based on the comparison that José Maria makes of the places and changes he sees in the present with what he saw in the past and was stored in his memory, starting with the transportation:

He was surprised by the Diesel's hoarse whistle at the time of departure. A voice without authority, more of a moo than a whistle. So different from the lyrical cry of the locomotive that had brought him from the countryside more than forty years ago. He felt sad. There were many things he would encounter ahead, changed by progress: the locomotive, for example; the luxury train he was traveling in. (Machado, 1977, p. 43). (Machado, 1977, p. 43).

Another aspect that must be addressed in the reading is to make students identify the climax of the short story, that is, the moment when José Maria meets Duília, who appears to be older than she is:

An expression of surprise and sympathy lit up the teacher's face. José Maria stared at her with painful intensity. Suddenly he turned pale. The climactic moment had arrived. He closed his eyes as if he didn't want to see the effect

of his own words [...] — Do you remember a little boy, many years ago, who saw you in a procession?

[...]

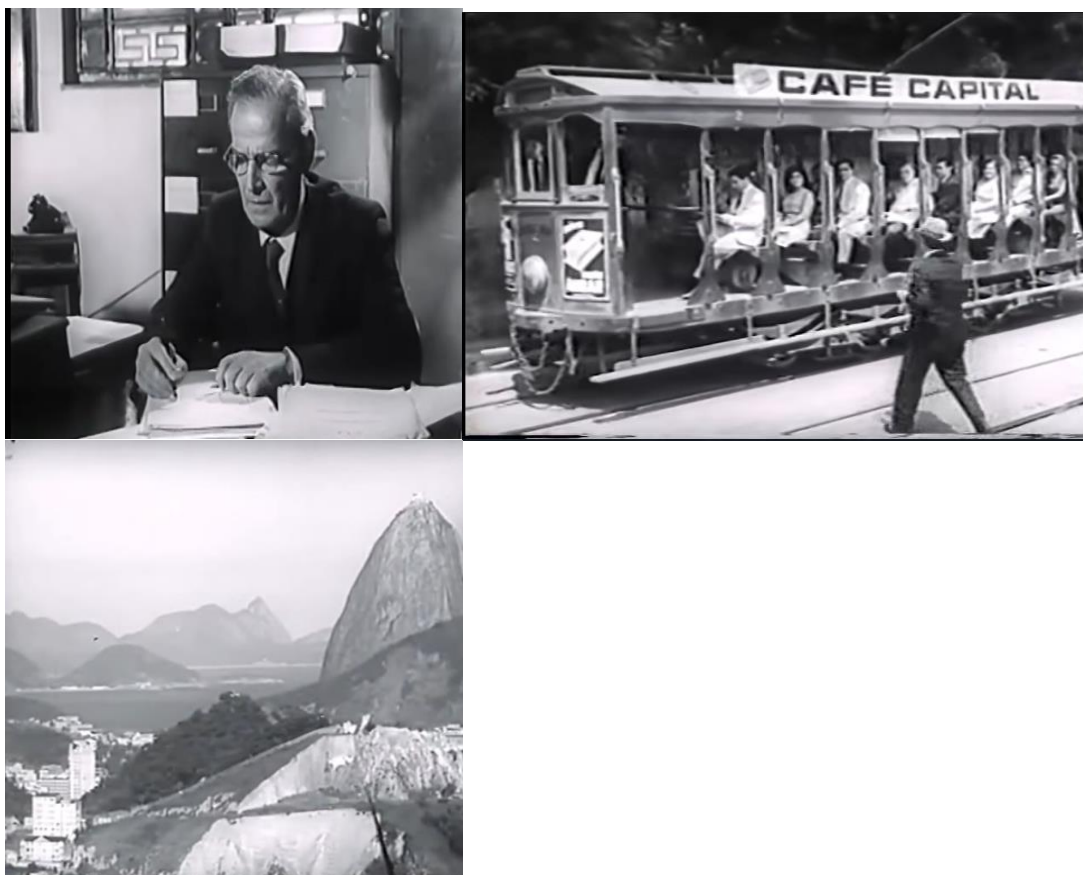
The woman, frightened, recognized him as the little boy from before. She stared at him for a long time. A flash of youth passed across his face. Turning his head to the ground, he blushed, forty years too late... (Machado, 1977, p. 53).

The non-recognition of his youth makes José Maria to see that his existence had no meaning and there was no time to restore the lost time. In the classroom, the teacher should discuss the final part of the short story with the students, associated to the idea it is necessary to live each moment fully, without neglecting emotional issues, since it is impossible to return to the past.

Still covering the last stage, Interpretation, we suggest the teacher to conduct an intertextual analysis activity with other texts that highlight the same themes present in the short story. From this perspective, predicting the stimulation of a depth reading of the themes, contemplating other semioses, we recommend the teacher present images of the film version of the story, including the film cover, such as those selected below (Fig. 1):

Figure 1: Prints from the Brazilian movie *Viagem aos seios de Duília*.





Source: YouTube. Available in: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QzLIV_TnJg&t=9s. Accessed in: 07/15/2024.

The teacher could ask the following question: “7) Which parts of the short story come to our mind by looking at these images?” From this question, the students will be able to identify characters (in the past and present), the relationship of the main character with his work, reflect on the technological innovations/modernity by comparing images of transportation and geographic spaces that refer to the story told related to the present, etc. It is also interesting for students to watch the film, becoming possible to analyze the aspects that converge and diverge between the film and the short story, in order to raise hypotheses and justifications regarding possible changes in the narrative elements.

At this moment, the students can reflect deeply about work and life, we recommend reading the *Mafalda*'s comic strip, below, associated to the listening of the song *Epitáfio*¹, by the Brazilian musical group *Titãs* (Fig. 2):

¹ Available in: <https://www.lettras.mus.br/titas/48968/>. Accessed in: 07/15/2024.

Figure 2: Mafalda's comic strip about the work and life.



Source: Brainly. Available in: <https://brainly.com.br/tarefa/26098015>. Accessed in: 07/15/2024.

Starting with the question “8) How could we associate Mafalda’s comic strip and the song with the story?”, the teacher can stimulate the discussion about the need to work in order to survive, reflecting on the fact that many people work exhausting hours, which ends up contradicting the importance of living fully, not only considering professional issues, but also personal and emotional ones. The students could also list many other songs that can be associated to the short story they read.

Finally, the teacher could ask the students to imagine another ending for the short story: “9) How could it be the ending of the short story?”. In sequence, suggest a reading of the report “Elderly couple reunite and get married 63 years after a forbidden relationship²”, so that the students could also reflect on the way we think about age - sometimes in a negative way - and about the fact that the ending of the story could have been “better”, it was not, due to the reflections intended by the author of the work about encouraging people to live fully since the youth. In this case, we list the questions to be asked by the teacher: “10) What if there was an ending, similar to the one reported by the news, in the short story? 11) Why do you think the ending was different in the report?” We believe that reading texts like those highlighted will allow students to expand their discussions and horizons while interpreting the texts and their perceptions of the world.

Final considerations

² Available in: <https://noticias.uol.com.br/cotidiano/ultimas-noticias/2021/03/22/casal-idosos-reencontro-casamento-ceara.htm>. Accessed in: 07/15/2024.

The study aimed to present a reading activity proposal for the Brazilian short story *Viagem aos seios de Duília*, by Aníbal Machado, to be applied in second-year of the high school classes. To this end, we presented a basic sequence, guided by arising discussions from Cosson (2016) and studies related to the importance of literature teaching in the classroom, to contribute to spread the literature in schools.

We understood the proposal presented here is relevant because fosters an environment that encourages students to construct many ways of reading literary texts, in a critical and reflective manner. Furthermore, we confer the basic sequence as an assertive methodological practice to be used by the literature teacher, it allows a contextualized and motivating reading for the students, stimulates the autonomy of the student/reader in producing meanings of the text, through the formulation of questions and hypotheses during the reading of the selected literary text. It can be confirmed or discarded by the teacher and students in a dialogic manner, in addition, can expand the horizons regarding the different themes that can be addressed in the same literary text. We believe that proposals like that are extremely important for the implementation of the literary literacy process in the classroom, developing students' reading skills through specific strategies.

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