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## **TEXT LINGUISTICS – AN INTERVIEW WITH INGEDORE VILLAÇA KOCH**

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**ReVEL – What has changed and may yet change in Portuguese Language education from text linguistics studies?**

**Ingedore** – The greatest change was that the text began to be seen as the central object of teaching, that is, in Portuguese language classes, reading and writing activities were prioritized, leading the student to reflect upon the workings of the language in different situations of verbal interaction, upon the use of resources that language offers them to express meaning, as well as the adequacy of the texts in each situation.

As for what may yet change, I would say first of all that such a methodology would have to be extended to all schools, public and private, which evidently is far from becoming a reality. That being the case, all teachers must be prepared to use the concepts and strategies spread by text linguistics in the classroom and apply them to teaching writing, both in terms of writing and in terms of reading, since this orientation conforms to the National Portuguese Language Curriculum Parameters.

**ReVEL – What is the greatest contribution to text linguistics for a teacher of a native language?**

**Ingedore** – For me the greatest contribution, as discussed above, is providing the teacher with a theoretical and practical instrument which is appropriate for the

development of students' textual competence. This means making them able to socially interact by means of widely varying texts, the most diverse situations of social interaction. It also means revitalizing the study of grammar: not as an end in and of itself, of course, but in the sense of proving in what way the selection and combination of elements, within the innumerable possibilities which grammar places at our disposal – and which, consequently, it is necessary to know – in the texts that we read and write, has constituted a group of decisions that will serve as instruments or signs to organize the construction of meaning.

### **ReVEL – What is Brazil's role in text linguistics studies?**

**Ingedore** – Currently, text linguistics, which developed in Europe, particularly in Germany, is coming to occupy a prominent role on the national academic stage. After having been introduced in Universidade Federal de Pernambuco and in universities in São Paulo (PUC-SP, UNICAMP, UNESP, USP) this branch of linguistics gained ground in a great number of Brazilian universities, eventually making up part of undergraduate and graduate curriculum, which gave rise to a number of respectable publications in the field. Furthermore, a series of theses and dissertations have contributed to the spread of the area of study in the country and abroad.

### **ReVEL – In your opinion, what are the limits of text linguistics and what are its prospects?**

**Ingedore** – Of course text linguistics, like any science, has its limits. Its main focus is the text, including all of the linguistic, cognitive, and social actions involved in its organization, production, understanding and function in society. Such questions, however, only concern it in the sense that they help to explain its object of study – the text – and not society, the mind, or history, which belong to other related sciences.

As Antos (1997) maintains, texts, as forms of social cognition, allow mankind to cognitively organize the world. And it is due to this ability that they are also excellent means of communication, as well as of production, preservation and transmission of

knowledge. Determined aspects of our social reality are only created by means of the representation of that reality and therefore are only valid and socially relevant, in such a way that texts do not just make knowledge visible, but in reality, sociocognitively existent. The revolution and evolution of knowledge requires and demands, permanently, ways of representation which are clearly new and efficient.

Therefore, text linguistics, based on that perception of the text, seems to have turned into a crossroads at which many paths converge, but which is also the starting point for many of them, extending in different directions. This metaphor of text linguistics as a point of departure and of the passing of many – sometimes new – developments opens optimistic perspectives concerning its future, as an integral part not only of the science of language, but of many more sciences that have the human being as their central subject.

It is for this reason that science or text linguistics feels the need to always intensify the dialogue that has fought with the other sciences for a long time – and not only the Humanities! – turning into an “integrative science” (Antos & Tietz, 1997). It is the case, for example, of the discussion of the philosophy of language, cognitive and social psychology, interpretive sociology, anthropology, communication theory, literature, ethnomethodology, speech ethnography, and, more recently, neurology, neuropsychology, cognitive sciences, computer science, and lastly, the cultural theory of evolution. Thus, it becomes more and more a multi- and transdisciplinary domain, in which the understanding and explanation of this multifaceted entity which is the text – the result of an extremely complex process of interaction and social construction of knowledge and of language.

**ReVEL – Concerning text linguistics, what are some essential readings that you might recommend to a student of languages in order to begin studying the topic?**

**Ingedore** – My own works:

*A Coesão Textual*. São Paulo: Contexto, 1989.

*A Inter-ação pela Linguagem*. São Paulo: Contexto, 1992.

*O Texto e a Construção dos Sentidos*. São Paulo: Contexto, 1997.  
*Desvendando os Segredos do Texto*. São Paulo: Cortez, 2002.  
Koch & Travaglia. *A Coerência Textual*. São Paulo: Contexto, 1990.  
Koch & Travaglia. *Texto e Coerência*. São Paulo: Cortez, 1989.  
Koch & Fávero. *Linguística Textual: Introdução*. São Paulo: Cortez, 1983.  
Vilela & Koch: *Gramática da Língua Portuguesa*. Coimbra: Almedina, 2001.

Other works:

Marcuschi, Luiz Antônio. *Linguística de Texto: o que é e como se faz*. Universidade Federal de Pernambuco, 1983.  
Fávero, Leonor L. *Coesão e coerência textuais*. São Paulo: Ática, 1991.  
Guimarães, Elisa. *A organização do texto*. São Paulo: Ática, Série Princípios, 1992.  
Bastos, Lúcia K. *Coesão e coerência em narrativas escolares escritas*. São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 1985.  
Buin, Edilaine. *Aquisição da escrita: coesão e coerência*. São Paulo: Contexto, 2002.  
Massini-Cagliari, Gladis. *O texto na alfabetização: coesão e coerência*. Campinas: Mercado de Letras.  
Costa Val, Maria da Graça. *Redação e textualidade*. São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 1994.  
Ruiz, Eliana. *Como se corrige redação na escola*. Campinas: Mercado de Letras, 2001.  
Bentes, Anna Christina. A Linguística Textual. In: Mussalin & Bentes (orgs.). *Introdução à Linguística*, vol. I. São Paulo: Cortez, 2000.