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#### **The effect of reading goal on inference generation while reading poetry**

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**ABSTRACT:** The main purpose of this small scale research is to investigate the effect of different reading purposes on inference generation while reading poetry. Four MA students were divided into two groups and read two poems in Portuguese, with distinct purposes (study and entertainment) in mind. Participants expressed their thoughts during the reading through the use of a pause protocol. Data were analyzed and inferences were categorized according to Narvaez *et al.*'s (1999) Inference Categorization Model. Results showed that the total amount of inferences generated was not significantly influenced by the reading purpose. However, the amount and kind of inferences varied among the two reading situations proposed.

Key words: inference generation; reading purposes; poetry reading.

#### **Introduction**

Reading can be characterized as a complex cognitive activity which involves, among other cognitive processes, the reader's ability to connect background knowledge

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with the information presented in the text in order to construct a coherent mental representation of its content and achieve comprehension (KINTSCH; VAN DIJK, 1978). The reader's ability to provide this connection between what s/he already knows and the new information coming from the text, a process which involves generating inferences, is mandatory for mental representation construction and, thus, for text comprehension.

Narvaez *et al.* (1999) point out that much research has been conducted in the area of inference generation, with the main findings of the studies showing that, during reading, "there are variations in the extent to which particular types of inferences or activations are made" (p.488). Taking this variation into consideration, there has been an increase in the number of studies trying to understand the circumstances that lead to particular inferences.

Linderholm and Broek (2002) acknowledge that "in recent investigations of college students' use of reading purpose to guide text processing, students used different cognitive processes and strategies when reading for study versus when reading for entertainment" (p.778). More specifically, in the studies mentioned by the author, students read more slowly and used more cognitive processes such as inferences and paraphrasing when studying. On the other hand, when reading for leisure, they read faster, generated more associations and formulated opinions about what was being read. It was possible to conclude, therefore, that those students tailored "the types of cognitive processes and strategies they used depending on the reason for reading" (p.778). Narvaez *et al.* (1999) explain that if we consider that readers are sensitive to the purpose with which they read and are able to adjust their comprehension activities accordingly, it can be expected "to find differences in the inferences that are generated" (p.489). These differences may be of a more qualitative nature, such as when the reading purpose influences "how the reader allocates his or her attention and hence what types of inferences are generated" (p.489); or of more a quantitative nature, which would be the case when the reading purpose affected the amount of inferential activity but not the types of inferences generated.

It is also important to take into account that, as pointed out by Graesser *et al.* (1997), during reading, different types of inferences can be generated either 'on-line' or 'off-line', that is, 'while reading' or 'after reading'. Although there is still a controversy in the literature regarding what inferences are generated on-line and which are generated off-line, there is an agreement that at least those which are necessary for maintaining local coherence, that is, for the integration of clauses within sentences and between sentences within the same paragraph, are generated as participants read a text, provided the necessary information is available in working memory (O'BRIEN; MYERS, 1999). Investigating inferential processes is not an easy task for researchers, especially in relation to those inferences that happen on-line, since readers may draw them automatically and without awareness. Narvaez *et al.* (1999) point out that one way to investigate inference generation which is drawn 'on-line' is through the use of think-aloud protocols (TAPs), a verbal report procedure in which participants verbalize their thoughts as they read a text. This study makes use of a variant of the TAP procedure for data collection, thus being described in more detail in the Method section.

In relation to the type of text being investigated, among inference generation studies, the narrative type of text as stimulus has been intensively explored, followed by the

expository one, which has received much less attention. However, a small number of studies have investigated inference generation while reading poetry, and none (to our knowledge) has investigated the influence of different purposes, that is, study and entertainment, when reading poetry.

Regarding the above mentioned issues, the need of filling these gaps is the motivation of this study, which aims at investigating the effect of different reading purposes, i.e., study and entertainment, on MA EFL students' process of inference generation while reading poetry.

## 1. Review of the Literature

It has been well acknowledged in the Reading literature that individuals construct mental representations of the texts during reading. Contemporary models of discourse comprehension state there are at least three levels of representation involved in text comprehension: the surface structure, the textbase level and the situational model (VAN DIJK; KINTSCH, 1983; KINTSCH, 1998). The surface structure level of representation "represents the exact form of a text, for example, its wording and syntactic structure" (ZWAAN, 1994, p. 920). It includes the grammatical aspects, the style and the rhetorical means (VAN DIJK; KINTSCH, 1983). On the other hand, the textbase level and the situational model are results of two types of processing: microprocessing and macroprocessing (TAPIERO; OTERO, 1999). According to Graesser *et al.* (1997) "The textbase contains explicit text propositions in a strippeddown form that preserves meaning, but not the exact wording and syntax."(p.167). Therefore, the textbase refers to the microstructure level of representation because it corresponds to the meaning portrayed in the individual propositions of the text.

Tapiero and Otero (1999) explain that while "the microprocessing implies the construction of a locally coherent propositional network" (p.341), the macrostructure type of processing "involves propositions of the textbase organized in a hierarquical and coherent sequence" (p.341). In this level, the reader builds a situation model that is the representation of what the text is about, and is characterized as " a representation of a state of affairs (in reality or in some fictional world) that is referred to by the text" (VAN DIJK; KINTSCH, 1983, *apud* ZWAAN, 1994, p. 920). The situation model comprises previous textbases and general experiences related to similar situations (VAN DIJK; KINTSCH, 1983). It concerns the global meaning of the text. According to Tapiero and Otero (1999), "what is represented at the situational-model level is the result of the interaction between information provided by the text and the reader's knowledge" (p.342). Therefore, the situation model is the result of textual information and background knowledge together, which allows readers to make inferences that connect global information and give coherence to the text being processed.

As mentioned before, inference generation is vital for text comprehension, as it connects the information presented in the text to the reader's background knowledge. As exemplified by Caldart (2012):

When reading the sentence *John fell on the floor. He stayed a whole week at home* most readers are able to infer that John had to stay home because he got hurt when falling on the floor, and even that his accident was quite serious, because of the period he had to rest, in order to recover”. (CALDART, 2012, p.20 – author’s emphasis)

According to van den Broek, *et al.* (1995) the term inference refers to “any information about events, relations, and so on that the reader adds to the information that is explicitly presented in the text” (p.353). If readers fail to connect the information presented in the text with their previous knowledge, they are likely to fail to remember and even to understand the text (BARETTA *et al.*, 2009).

As the present study uses poems as stimuli, it is also necessary to provide a definition of genre, and more specifically a definition of poem. According to Marcuschi (2010), genre is “a purposely vague notion that refers to materialized texts that we find in our everyday life and that present *sociocomunicative characteristics* defined by contents, functional properties, style and characteristic composition” (p.23 – our translation – author’s emphasis). Bazerman (1994, *apud* MARCUSCHI, 2010) declares that it is not an easy task to identify and categorize all genres, because these classifications change over time. However, some genres are easily recognizable, such as a recipe, a telephone call and a poem. According to Souza (1991), among other possible definitions, a poem can be described as “a literary genre that is characterized by the use of verse, metrics and, therefore, is an opposition to the genre prose” (p.40 – our translation).

Kintsch and Van Dijk (1978) point out that “comprehension can be modeled only if we are given a specific goal” (p.364). Grabe (2009) states that the construction of readers’ situation model is strongly influenced by the experience of reading different text types and genres, and also reading with different purposes. Grabe also claims that distinct genres evoke different levels of representation. In this sense, more objective texts such as technical texts and manuals are more likely to build a stronger text base model, because it is probable that the reader will interpret the text very similarly to what the writer intended it to, while poems and literary texts in general tend to build a stronger situation-model, because many interpretations are possible, due to the subjective nature of the texts.

Considering that readers’ goals influence the mental representations that are constructed, it is possible to assume that, depending on their reading purpose, readers “differently allocate resources to processes that construct these levels during reading” (ZWAAN, 1994, p.920), which leads to the generation of different kinds and amount of inferences. Linderholm and van den Broek (2002) emphasize that “to adjust processes to fit the purpose of reading, readers must keep in mind the purpose for reading as reading proceeds” (p.778). Therefore, by having different reading purposes, the reader might focus his/her attention to different aspects of the stimuli and, hence, generate different types of inferences.

Taking into consideration the aspects aforementioned, this study intends to unveil the effect of different reading purposes, i.e., study and entertainment, on EFL students’

process of inference generation while reading poetry.

## **2. The Influence of Reading Purposes on Inference Generation Process: Related Studies**

It is well acknowledged that reading is always carried out with a purpose in mind, be it to study for an exam, to know more about a certain topic or just to 'kill time'. Aebersold and Field (1997) state that it is the reading purpose that determines how a text is going to be read, that is, the reading strategies the reader is going to apply in order to comprehend the text. In the Reading literature it is possible to find many studies concerning the influence of reading purpose on inference generation. The most relevant ones are briefly summarized below.

Narvaez *et al.* (1999) conducted a study on how inference generation and reading comprehension were influenced by reading purpose (study and entertainment). Their findings showed that there is a correlation between reading purpose and inference generation, but this correlation was not found as regards reading comprehension. Furthermore, students with a study purpose repeated the text more times, acknowledged lack of previous knowledge, and evaluated the text regarding its content and writing. This pattern was less strong in the entertainment purpose.

Another relevant study was conducted by Narvaez and Broek (1999) in order to determine the influence of reading purpose on inference generation and reading comprehension. Their findings showed that the reading purpose indeed influences the kinds of inferences made by readers but it is not the only influence.

Gerber and Tomitch (2008) also carried out a study as regards the influence of the reading purpose on the inference generation process. Their objective was to check whether different reading purposes, namely study and entertainment, would lead to different inference generation. Results showed that more inferences were generated by the text read with a study purpose.

## **3. Method**

In order to pursue the main objective of this study, which is to investigate the effect of different reading purposes, i.e., study and entertainment, on MA students' process of inference generation while reading poetry, the following methodological procedures were employed.

### **3.1 Participants**

A group of four students from the first year of the English Master Program, from the English Literature area, from Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, participated in this

study. The students were all native speakers of Portuguese, having English as their second or third language.

The selection of the participants justifies the choice of poetry texts as stimuli, because it is believed that MA students of English Literature are familiar with the genre, and are used to reading it both in entertainment and study situations.

Previous to the main study, a pilot study was conducted with an MA student, from the same group as the participants of the main study, so as to check whether the instruments selected for data collection would be able to measure what they intended to. The results from the pilot showed that both the instruments and the procedures were appropriate to the intended objectives of this research.

### 3.2 Instruments

Two authentic poems were used as stimuli. Both poems were written by the Brazilian poet Carlos Drummond de Andrade, namely *Sonetilho do Falso Fernando Pessoa* (2012) and *Memória* (2012). Both poems have four verses; the topics of the poems are of general interest, have similar metrics and are believed to be similar as regards the level of difficulty. The choice of poems was based on the metaphors presented in the poem, which may lead to inference generation. In addition, the chosen poems were in Portuguese because, although the participants can be considered to have an advanced level in English proficiency, possible language related difficulties were avoided.

The poems were presented to participants with different objectives, being one with study purpose and the other with entertainment purpose for one group, and the opposite way to the second group, that is, the first poem with entertainment purpose and the second one with study purpose.

Furthermore, The Pause Protocol (CAVALCANTI, 1989) was used in the version adapted by Tomitch (2003). Students were told to first practice how to verbalize their thoughts during the Pause Protocol with a poem different from the ones used for data collection, i.e. *Canção do Exílio*, by Gonçalves Dias (1948), which is a very well known poem in Brazil.

The selection of the Pause Protocol (CAVALCANTI, 1989) adapted by Tomitch (2003) was done because it is believed to have less interference in the reading process. This version instructs the participants to read the poem silently and stop whenever they perceived a problem in their reading slow, or anything that caught their attention, verbalizing it. Furthermore, participants were asked to verbalize their understanding of the poem at the end of each verse (where a red sign was placed to remind them to verbalize) and again at the end of the poem as a whole (see Appendix A for the Pause Protocol Instructions). The verbalization of both poems was recorded for further transcription and analysis.

Furthermore, the participants were asked to answer a retrospective questionnaire (see Appendix B), which intended to collect information as regards their knowledge about



the poems and whether they have faced any difficulty while participating in the study. This questionnaire intended to allow data triangulation, providing more evidence to support the research conclusions.

#### 4. Procedures for Data Collection

Participants were divided in two groups. The first group read the poem entitled *Memória* with an entertainment purpose and the poem *Sonetilho do Falso Fernando Pessoa* with a study purpose. The second group engaged in the opposite process, that is, read the poem *Sonetilho do Falso Fernando Pessoa* with a study purpose and the poem entitled *Memória* with an entertainment purpose. The order of the texts which were given first and second was also counterbalanced among participants.

As already mentioned, a practice text was used before the experimental texts, in order to make sure students would perform the task as instructed. The instructions were read and explained to the students before reading each one of the texts. They were written in Portuguese because all data collection was conducted in the participants' mother tongue so as to avoid language difficulties. The instructions were adapted from Narvaez *et al.* (1999), as follows.

Both groups were told: *We are interested in how people read and in how we can design strategies for improving instruction. Today, you will read two poems, and we will ask you about how you read. These questions are not about the specific texts, but about your reading experience in general. This is not an examination. We are only interested in what you do spontaneously.*

The instructions for the study condition were the following: *You are going to read a poem. Imagine that you are studying it to learn the information in it or that you are preparing for an examination. Try to imagine yourself where you would usually study, perhaps sitting in the library or in your room, studying the text. Afterwards, you are going to perform a test about your understanding of the poem.*

In fact, the participants did not have to answer any kind of comprehension question after reading the poem. The last sentence of the instruction was included in order to ensure that participants would read the poem as they do when they really have to study, that is, in order to bring the situation closer to reality.

The participants in the entertainment condition were told: *Imagine that you are reading for pleasure. For example, you are at home, have made yourself comfortable, turned on some nice music, and are now going to read a poem. Or, you are at the lake on a nice sunny day, and you decide to read a magazine. Try to imagine yourself in a situation like that—pleasant, relaxed. You are reading for fun or pleasure. You can even sit how you would in a situation like that.*

Before starting to collect the data, the instructions for Pause Protocol were read silently by each participant and explained to them by the researchers. As the Pause Protocol (CAVALCANTI, 1989) adapted by Tomitch (2003) was used, the students were asked to read each poem silently and stop whenever any thought would come to their mind,

verbalizing it.

At last, participants answered a retrospective questionnaire (see Appendix B), which aimed at verifying whether any difficulty arose during their participation in the study. Participants were asked to evaluate the level of difficulty of the poems, and to highlight any other difficulties they might have had while performing the activities. Participants read the poems and answered the retrospective questionnaire in one individual session, lasting around 30 minutes.

## **5. Procedures for Data Analysis**

In order to categorize participants' inferences, their utterances were divided into idea chunks or units (based on GERBER; TOMITCH, 2008), which varied from words and sentences to whole paragraphs. Moreover, a new chunk was considered whenever a new inference category appeared; therefore a single sentence could be divided in two or more parts, if a new inference kind was observed.

The idea chunks were then categorized following the procedure proposed by Narvaez *et al.* (1999), as repetitions, explanations, associations, evaluations, predictions, knowledge-based coherence breaks, or text-based coherence breaks.

Participants' verbalizations were recorded and the inferences were categorized according to the Inference Categorization Model proposed by Narvaez *et al.* (1999). Table 1 shows Narvaez *et al.*'s (1999) Inference Categorization Model, where inferences taxonomy are presented, as well as their features.



Inference Kind	Features
<i>Explanations</i>	Are related to the reasons why something happens, and include explanations based on background knowledge (I think that is the cause of the ice age”) and text-based explanations (This must be what they meant by ash”);
<i>Associations</i>	Provide information about characteristics and functions of people, objects and events in the text, including background associations (“This reminds me of a planetarium show I saw”) and text-based associations (“Okay, this is in the spa”);
<i>Predictions</i>	Refer to inferences about future consequences of a specific event (“Okay, the gases will lead them to the actual object”);
<i>Evaluations</i>	Regard comments about the text content (“I think that’s such a strong assertion”), the text writing (“That sentence was difficult to say”), or the reader’s state (“I’m kind of losing track here, being distracted”);
<i>Text-based coherence breaks:</i>	Relate to statements about the coherence of the text content (“That doesn’t make any sense”);
<i>Knowledge-based coherence breaks:</i>	Include statements regarding the readers’ inability to understand as a result of knowledge or experience lack (“It’s kind of hard to imagine, I mean, in space”);
<i>Repetitions</i>	Regard repetitions of words or phrases in the text.

Table 1 – Narvaez *et al.*’s (1999, p. 490) Inference Categorization Model

Due to the nature of the stimuli used in this study, another category had to be included, which was entitled *metacomments* and covered utterances concerning the structure of the poems, more specifically, their rhyme and metric.

## 6. Results and Discussion

As mentioned in the Method section, participants’ verbalizations were categorized using Narvaez *et al.*’s (1999) Inference Categorization Model. Table 2 shows the total number of inferences generated, from each kind under the two reading conditions, that is,

study and entertainment.

<b>Inference Kind</b>	<b>Study Frequency</b>	<b>Study Percentage</b>	<b>Entertainment Frequency</b>	<b>Entertainment Percentage</b>
<b>Repetition</b>	11	19,30%	6	11,11%
<b>Explanation</b>	11	19,30%	10	18,52%
<b>Evaluation</b>	9	15,79%	13	24,08%
<b>Association</b>	9	15,79%	10	18,52%
<b>Prediction</b>	0	0,0%	1	1,85%
<b>KBCB</b>	2	3,51%	6	11,11%
<b>TBCB</b>	5	8,77%	8	14,81%
<b>Metacomment</b>	10	17,54%	0	0,0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	57		54	

Table 2– Inference Kinds and Reading Purpose Relation

A total of 111 inferences were generated by the participants during the Pause Protocol task, being 57 under the study purpose and 54 when reading with an entertainment purpose. As can be observed in Table 1, the total number of inferences generated under each purpose was very similar, what changed was the kind of inferences generated in each situation. The following are examples of each category:

**Repetitions:** *“E aqui na terceira estrofe tem essa ideia de que as coisas concretas, que conseguimos pegar com as mãos, acabam se tornando quase que invisíveis, efêmeras, sem sentido, sem significado. Não conseguimos pegá-las.”* (Participant 1); *“As coisas tangíveis tornam-se insensíveis à palma da mão.”* (Participant 3).

**Explanations:** *“Parece que o poeta está presenciando um acontecimento, uma pessoa que se portou de alguma maneira, mas que ela é, de certa forma, desligada daquilo, ela está presente mas não é aquilo, como se fosse ‘detached’ do ambiente.”* (Participant 2); *“[...]parece alguém que morreu e não tá nesse mundo e tá se libertando dos sentimentos que tinha antes de morrer.”* (Participant 4).

**Evaluations:** *“Achei engraçado o título.”* (Participant 3); *“Aqui na segunda, do primeiro verso, me chama atenção a palavra ‘olvir’ que é muito bonita mas pouco usada em Português.”* (Participant 4).

**Associations:** *“‘E das peles que visto’” me lembrou o filme do Almodóvar, A Pele que Habito.* (Participant 1); *“Opa, terceira estrofe, Fausto e Mefisto, a obra celebre de Christopher Marlowe.”* (Participant 2)

**Prediction:** *“Carlos Drummond de Andrade...deve ser bom.”* (Participant 1)

**Knowledge-Based Coherence Breaks:** “*Sonetilho, hum...não conheço essa palavra. Quer dizer, nunca li antes...sonetilho.*” (Participant 1); “*E, eu sei que essas pessoas existem mas não sei quem são, Fausto e Mefisto. Elas não são pessoas, mas são personagens.*” (Participant 3).

**Text-Based Coherence Breaks:** “*Hum...tá, vou continuar a ler porque não entendi direito isso aqui.*” (Participant 1); “*Primeira estrofe, não entendi muita coisa ainda.*” (Participant 4).

**Metacomments:** “*Perdido com fundido. Termina com o mesmo som. Tem uma rima aqui nesse poema.*” (Participant 1); “*Bom, aqui na primeira estrofe, dá pra ver que a sequencia de rimas finais é ABBA, e dá pra ver que todas as rimas são pobres.*” (Participant 4).

The finding related to both conditions generating almost the same amount of inferences does not corroborate the ones from previous studies such as those by Narvaez *et al.* (1999), Gerber and Tomitch (2008), and Gerber *et al.* (2006). In these studies participants generated more inferences when reading with study purposes. One possible reason for this difference may be a result of the stimuli, that is, in previous studies participants were asked to read narrative and expository texts, while in this study they were asked to read poems. It is possible that the nature of the genre, with metaphors and subjective language, has played a role, leading participants to interpret the poems similarly when reading with study and entertainment purposes. It is also possible that, as the verses were very short, participants limited their verbalizations in order not to ramble and deviate from interpretations that could be considered more common, that is, they might have been afraid of interpreting the poems too deeply and lose track. However, due to the lack of studies that, to our knowledge, dealt with the same kind of text used in the present research, the interpretations presented above cannot be compared and, therefore, confirmed, having to wait for results from further similar research before any generalizations can be made.

In the retrospective questionnaire, participants were asked to provide their perception of the two reading conditions, that is, how they perceived their reading of the two poems according to the purported instruction. Participants 2 and 4 claimed to have read the poems very differently according to the purpose while Participants 1 and 3 observed only a very slight difference in focus. Participants 1 and 4 mentioned that when reading to study they tried to focus more on the formal aspects of the poem, such as rhyme and metrics, which did not happen when reading for entertainment. The following are the answers of two participants to question number 5, as regards whether they believe to have read the poems differently according to the instruction:

“*Sim, ao ler por prazer não notei qual era o aspecto formal do poema (rima, métrica, figuras de linguagem, etc.) tentei apenas me colocar na posição do narrador, para ter acesso aos sentimentos e ideias que o poema parece despertar. Lendo para estudo me preocupei em captar tais aspectos formais e manter dessa vez um certo grau de*

*afastamento para poder conceituar o contexto no qual o poema e autor se colocaram, nesse segundo caso minha experiência e percepção me soaram irrelevantes”* (Participant 4).

*“Acho que a diferença foi mínima. Porém, estando num ambiente de estudo, o segundo poema, prestei mais atenção à estrutura do poema e também, apesar de não ter certeza da minha interpretação, tentei elaborar mais a respeito. Mas sei que faço isso também em algumas ocasiões da leitura por prazer* (Participant 1).

Participant 3 claimed to have read the poems similarly, but without the necessity of rereading when something was not clear, in the entertainment condition: *“Busquei entender os dois poemas de maneiras similares, mas no segundo não me preocupei tanto em relê-lo. Quando não entendia algo, continuava a leitura.”* (Participant 3).

Participant 2 stated that what changed for him was the amount of concentration and objectivity devoted while reading with study purpose: *“Ao ler para um teste, a concentração aumenta e a tendência é a objetividade. Já para lazer, não há preocupação linear, nem supressão de pensamentos.”* (Participant 2).

Concerning the kinds and amounts of inferences generated for each purpose, for the study condition, repetitions and explanations had the greatest incidence (19,30%), followed, respectively, by metacomments (17,54%), associations and evaluations (15,79%), text-based coherence breaks (8,77%), knowledge-based coherence breaks (3,51%), and predictions, with no occurrence. In relation to repetitions, these results may indicate that students in the study condition made this type of inference in order to maintain the main words in mind as a way to better understand the poem. One possible interpretation for the great incidence of explanations can be related to what van den Broek; Ruiz (1999) called the “search-after-meaning” principle, that is “the reader attempts to explain each element in the text before continuing on to the next element” (p.493). The authors point out that this principle is normally used by students who are “reading for study rather than those who simply read for entertainment” (p.493).

As regards the entertainment condition, evaluations had the greatest incidence (24,08%), followed, respectively, by explanations and associations (18,52%), text-based coherence breaks (14,81%), knowledge-based coherence breaks (11,11%) and repetitions (11,11%), predictions (1,85%) and metacomments, as the least generated inference kind (no occurrence). The incidence of the evaluation type of inference can be related to entertainment purpose, since students under this condition may relate the reading with pleasure and, therefore, evaluate the beauty of the poem or the characteristics concerning the author.

Although no statistical analysis was carried out, it is possible to observe some relevant results when comparing the amount and kinds of inferences generated in each condition. As regards repetitions, it is possible to observe that they were much more frequent in the study condition than in the entertainment, corroborating Narvaez *et al.*'s (1999) findings.

It is possible to observe that explanations were among the most frequently

generated inference kind in both conditions, which is probably due to the nature of the genre selected as stimulus, because it is not possible to understand a poem keeping reading on the surface, it is necessary to make explanatory inferences in order to make sense of the text. Associations were also highly generated in both conditions, probably for the same reason, that is, in order to interpret and comprehend the subjectivity of a poem, it is necessary to make associative inferences between the verses and also with outside subjects.

Evaluative comments were more frequent in the entertainment condition than in the study one, probably because participants were engaged in a less focused interpretation of the poem and concentrated more on its beauty, hence most comments were made regarding the content and structure of the poems, more specifically whether they were beautiful and easy to understand or not.

As regards metacomments, which was a category included to comprehend participants' comments concerning the metric and rhyme of the poems, participants in the study condition generated almost 18% of sentences with this kind of comment, while no utterance was made in the entertainment condition. This result was somehow expected, because the use of metacomments is more specific of study conditions. It is not natural for a person to read a poem for pleasure and count its syllables, for instance.

The number of knowledge-based coherence breaks and text-based coherence breaks was greater for the entertainment condition, but we believe it was not an effect of the reading purpose, but of the characteristics of the poems. While reading the poem entitled *Sonetilho do Falso Fernando Pessoa* (2012), participants reported more knowledge-based coherence breaks and text-based coherence breaks, indicating that they faced difficulties both with the references of the poem and with its wording and structure. The poem *Memórias* (2012), on the other hand, was easier to understand according to participants' answers in the retrospective questionnaire, because it presented less analogies and intertextuality. In order to completely understand the main idea of the poem *Sonetilho do Falso Fernando Pessoa*, participants would need to have knowledge about who Fernando Pessoa, Fausto and Mefisto were, and not all of them had this previous knowledge. On the other hand, the topic of the poem *Memórias* was more familiar, because memories are a universal topic.

It is also important to highlight that, during their verbalizations, all participants used more words to talk about the text under the study condition than for the entertainment one. More specifically 841 words were used to talk about the texts being studied while 651 words were necessary for participants to talk about the text being read for pleasure. This finding seems to provide evidence for the claim that readers read texts more carefully and consequently in a more detailed way when reading with study objectives than when reading for entertainment. Therefore, although it is not possible to make sure whether participants were really reading the texts under the purported condition, i.e. study or entertainment, the number of words used suggest that they read with specific purposes in mind. The kinds and amounts of inferences generated, discussed above, also corroborate this claim.

## Final Remarks

The aim of the present research was to check whether different reading purposes, namely study and entertainment, have any influence on Brazilian MA students' inference generation process. Data from the Pause Protocol reports provided evidence that the total amount of inferences generated was not significantly influenced by the reading purpose. However, results have shown that the amount and kind of inferences varied among the two reading situations proposed, in accordance with most literature in the area (NARVAEZ *et al.*, 1999; GERBER; TOMITCH, 2008, GERBER *et al.*, 2006, among others). Nevertheless, considering that this is, to our knowledge, the only study conducted using poetry as stimuli to check how inference making is affected by the reading purpose, much more research is needed before generalizations about the results can be made.

This study provides empirical support for previous pieces of research regarding the effect of reading purpose on inference generation. However, it has limitations as well, such as the number of participants, which could be greater in order to increase the study validity. Furthermore, the fact that reading time was not considered in the analysis is another limitation of the present study, because students tend to read faster when reading for pleasure and take more time when reading with study purposes (LINDERHOLM; VAN DEN BROEK, 2002; GERBER *et al.* 2006), but this claim could not be confirmed in this study. At last, it might be of great academic value if the participants of this study had answered some reading comprehension questions in order to verify whether the reading purpose had any influence in their understanding of the poems.

According to Davies (1995) there is a close relationship between reading purpose and text type. Therefore narratives are generally read for entertainment, while informative texts tend to be read for study purposes. However, we believe that especially for *Letras'* students, who constantly have to study and analyze literary material, the relationship between text type and reading purpose is not so clear. Therefore, this study's findings confirm the importance of teaching students reading strategies like inferencing, emphasizing that distinct purposes demand different strategies, so that they feel more confident to apply the most appropriate strategies according to the reading situation, being able to extend beyond the texts and becoming more proficient and critical readers, no matter the genre.

In conclusion, despite being a small scale research it is believed that this study contributed to a greater understanding of the reading process, especially regarding inference generation and how it is influenced by distinct reading purposes when reading literary texts such as poems.



## O efeito de diferentes objetivos de leitura de poemas na geração de inferências

RESUMO: Esta pesquisa tem como objetivo investigar o efeito de diferentes propósitos de leitura no processo de geração de inferências durante a leitura de poesia. Quatro alunos de mestrado foram divididos em dois grupos e leram dois poemas em Português com diferentes propósitos de leitura (estudo e entretenimento). Os participantes fizeram uso de protocolo de pausa para expressar seus pensamentos durante a leitura. Os dados foram analisados de acordo com o modelo de categorização de inferências proposto por Narvaez *et al.* (1999). Os resultados evidenciaram que o número total de inferências gerado não foi significativamente influenciado pelo propósito de leitura. Contudo, a quantidade e o tipo de inferências variaram entre as situações de leitura propostas.

**Palavras-chave:** geração de inferências, propósitos de leitura; leitura de poesia.

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## APPENDIX A

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE PAUSE PROTOCOL

#### 1. Instrução do protocolo de pausa adaptado de Cavalcanti (1989) e Tomitch (2003).

Esta parte do experimento consta da leitura de dois poemas. Durante a leitura de cada um dos poemas, observe o seguinte procedimento:

1 – Leia o poema silenciosamente. O objetivo da leitura é uma compreensão geral do poema.

2 – O poema deve ser lido **silenciosamente**; contudo, essa leitura silenciosa deve ser interrompida quando você:

2.1 detectar uma **\*pausa** (não importa a duração) durante a leitura

**\*Pausa** – momento em que a atividade de leitura é interrompida e você nota que está, por exemplo, pensando sobre um problema que encontrou ou sobre alguma coisa que tenha chamado sua atenção).

2.1.1 - Quando a leitura for interrompida devido à ocorrência de uma pausa, por favor,

a) localize a pausa no poema, isto é, leia em voz alta a palavra, expressão ou oração que a ocasionou.

b) comente sobre a razão da pausa, isto é, se resultou de algum problema encontrado na leitura ou de algo que lhe chamou a atenção.

2.2 - chegar ao final de cada estrofe. (Um ponto vermelho foi colocado no final das estrofes como lembrete).

2.2.1 – Quando terminar de ler cada estrofe, por favor

a) fale sobre o que acabou de ler, isto é, sobre o conteúdo da estrofe.

b) comente sobre o que estava pensando enquanto lia a estrofe.

Obs.: Se a pausa requer a solução de um problema antes que você possa continuar a leitura, por favor, tente pensar em voz alta enquanto tenta resolvê-lo.

3 – Continue a ler o poema e a falar sobre ele até o final.

4 – Tente ler como se você estivesse sozinho.

5 – A sessão será gravada.

6 – Será feito um treinamento inicial.

### INSTRUÇÕES PÓS-LEITURA

- 1 - Por favor, tente verbalizar tudo o que você se lembrar do poema. Tente usar frases completas.

### APPENDIX B – RETROSPECTIVE QUESTIONNAIRE

Muito obrigada por sua participação nesta pesquisa! A fim de elucidar os resultados deste estudo, gostaríamos que você respondesse a algumas questões referentes à sua percepção sobre os poemas e atividades:

Nome: \_\_\_\_\_ Data: \_\_\_\_\_

I – Por favor responda às seguintes perguntas. Você não precisa fornecer respostas longas, mas pedimos que tente responder da forma mais completa possível.

1. Com relação à dificuldade, como você classifica os poemas lidos? (Sendo 1 muito fácil e 5 muito difícil):

	Muito Fácil			Muito difícil
Poema 1:	1 ( )	2 ( )	3 ( )	4 ( ) 5 ( )
Poema 2:	1 ( )	2 ( )	3 ( )	4 ( ) 5 ( )

2. Você conhecia algum dos poemas lidos? Em caso afirmativo, qual deles?

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3. Você teve alguma dificuldade ao ler os poemas? Em caso afirmativo, quais?

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4. Como foi a experiência de verbalizar seus pensamentos durante a leitura? Você acredita que este procedimento ajudou, atrapalhou ou não teve influência em sua compreensão?

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5. Qual sua percepção da leitura em cada uma das situações propostas? Você acredita que tenha lido os poemas de forma distinta devido ao fato de terem objetivos diferentes? Por favor, explique.

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6. Você teve alguma outra dificuldade enquanto desempenhava as atividades? Se sim, quais? Por favor, explique.

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## APPENDIX C – INFERENCES GENERATED BY PARTICIPANTS

PARTICIPANT 1		
	Sonetinho Lazer	Memória Estudo
<b>Total:</b>	16	15
<b>REP</b>	0	5
<b>EXP</b>	3	1
<b>EV</b>	2	3
<b>ASS</b>	2	1
<b>PRED</b>	1	0
<b>KCB</b>	3	1
<b>TCB</b>	5	1
<b>METC</b>	0	4

PARTICIPANT 2		
	Sonetinho Estudo	Memória Lazer
<b>Total:</b>	16	15
<b>REP</b>	2	4
<b>EXP</b>	5	4
<b>EV</b>	3	2
<b>ASS</b>	6	5
<b>PRED</b>	0	0
<b>KCB</b>	0	0
<b>TCB</b>	0	0

<b>PARTICIPANT 3</b>		
	<b>Memória Estudo</b>	<b>Sonetilho Lazer</b>
<b>Total:</b>	14	13
<b>REP</b>	4	1
<b>EXP</b>	3	3
<b>EV</b>	1	3
<b>ASS</b>	3	1
<b>PRED</b>	0	0
<b>KCB</b>	0	3
<b>TCB</b>	2	2
<b>METC</b>	1	0

<b>PARTICIPANT 4</b>		
	<b>Memória Lazer</b>	<b>Sonetilho Estudo</b>
<b>Total:</b>	10	12
<b>REP</b>	1	0
<b>EXP</b>	0	2
<b>EV</b>	6	2
<b>ASS</b>	2	0
<b>PRED</b>	0	0
<b>KCB</b>	0	1
<b>TCB</b>	1	2
<b>METC</b>	0	5

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