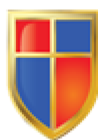

Instituto de Enseñanza Superior en Lenguas Vivas
"Juan Ramón Fernández"

Trabajo de Adscripción

Scopes and limits of the contending discourses in *Saturday*. Towards a discursive practice

Adscripta: Prof. Cecilia E. Lasa

Correo electrónico: cecilialasa@filo.uba.ar

Directora de adscripción: Florencia V. Perduca, M.A.

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Abstract

Saturday ponders a conception of Literature in terms of discourse: as a language formation embedded in a socio-cultural context. As such, Literature shapes individuals' perceptions of the world, themselves and others (Bakhtin, 1986: 60; Foucault in Ashcroft, 2001: 70; Morris, 1994: 249; Voloshinov in Morris, 1994: 41, 248). This process is not without conflict (Bakhtin, 1981: 263, 272; Morris, 1994: 248), since the discourse of Literature contends with the worldviews and subjectivities fostered by the discourse of Science.

Each discourse in the novel is articulated upon dissimilar understandings of the 'real'. The discourse of Science is of a Positivist nature, given that it equates reality to inalterable facts which individuals objectively access through their senses (Chalmers, 1999: 4, 12, 149). The discourse of Literature, conversely, qualifies as Postmodernist by denying a genuine access to reality: not only does language unavoidably mediate people's experience, but it becomes the sine qua non for it. Reality, then, is a textual phenomenon (Derrida, 1967: 224-225; Foucault, 2005: 360; Gregson, 2004: 7; Hutcheon, 2001: 76, 134; Rorty; 1992: 184).

Despite the marked difference regarding worldviews, both discourses deploy similar subjectivities. These are defined by the deprival of individuals' agency, i.e. their ability to act upon the world (Ashcroft, 2001: 8). Positivism envisages people as sets of molecules whose performance is genetically determined whereas Postmodernism considers them as subsidiary elements to a textually fabricated reality (Derrida, 1967: 224-225; Hutcheon, 2004: 11).

In this context, a discursive practice becomes impelling. This theoretical and practical device (Funes, 2006: 14; 2007: 9; 2009: 78) helps individuals grow aware of the scopes and limits of contending discourses around them and empowers them to inscribe themselves into those discourses. Such awareness and empowerment are possible thanks to critical reflection, which, if current regulations on education are followed, can be appropriately fostered in the Literature in English class at the Teacher Training College. (250 words, references excluded)

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1. Introduction: what do we talk about when we talk about Literature?

> But thy eternal summer shall not fade,
> Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st,
> Nor shall death brag thou wander'st in his shade,
> When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st
> So long as men can breath, or eyes can see,
> So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.
> (Shakespeare, Sonnet 18, l. 9-16)

Though Shakespeare's sonnet metaphorically pledges that Literature can resist death, to explore the question of what Literature is in the 21st century may not be a promising task. In performing it, an overwhelming bewilderment may be experienced at how much has been said and written upon that matter. Alternatively, quite on the contrary, some feelings of disenchantment may be undergone at confronting that, despite profuse and heated debates on the nature of Literature, its elusiveness has prevented critics from reaching any definite conclusion. However daunting that ambiguity may be, it is precisely on the boundary between the certainties and uncertainties fostered by the question on Literature that this exploration finds its raison d'être: problematising Literature entails continuous reflection upon it as an object of study and practice, a very welcome and desirable attitude among teachers of English as specialists in (a foreign) language and as educators. In other words, the question of what Literature is may be thought of as an invitation to reflect upon how Literature can be conceived of and constructed and upon what the implications of these processes are for studying Literature in general and, within a narrower scope, for the teaching of Literature at a tertiary level to future teachers of English. This paper will undertake such task within the framework provided by the reading of *Saturday*, a novel by Ian McEwan.

Saturday is set in London in 2003, two years after the attack on the World Trade Centre. Akin to James Joyce's *Ulysses* and Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*, *Saturday* unfolds in one day of the life of Henry Perowne, a renowned neurosurgeon. After a never-ending and strenuous Friday, Henry wakes to a much expected Saturday: his daughter Daisy, a former Letters student, and now talented writer about to have her first book published, is visiting the family. In this meeting, in which Henry's wife, Rosalind, a lawyer, and his son, Theo, a jazz player, will be present as well, Daisy will hopefully make amends with her grandfather Grammaticus, with whom she has fallen apart due to a literary argument on one of her poems. Nevertheless, the promise of an undisturbed

Saturday, part of which Henry also devotes to playing tennis with a colleague and visiting his Alzheimer-stricken mother, will not be kept. The Perownes will be assaulted and taken hostage by Baxter, a middle-aged man suffering from Huntington's disease, who is looking for revenge after having crashed Perowne's car and having been humiliated by him. However, Daisy's reading of Matthew Arnold's "Dover Beach" –a scene in which her pregnancy is disclosed, since she is forced to undress– will trigger Baxter's inexplicable withdrawal. This will be made the most of by Henry and Theo so as to reduce him and take over their house. Baxter is finally taken to the hospital and operated on by Henry, which signals the end of this particular Saturday.

Given the brief outline of the novel, it is likely for the question to arise as to how the debate on the nature of Literature is fostered. Precisely, it is the contention of this paper that *Saturday* poses a conception of Literature in terms of discourse, i.e. as a linguistic phenomenon rooted in a social and cultural context which influences the individuals' worldviews –how they perceive the world– and their subjectivity –how they perceive themselves and others– (Bakhtin, 1986: 60; Foucault in Ashcroft, 2001: 70; Morris, 1994: 249; Voloshinov in Morris, 1994: 41, 248). By deeming Literature as a discourse, any essentialist perspective of analysis (Bakhtin in Morris, 1994: 8; Voloshinov, 1973: 71) is disregarded and what is foregrounded is the possibility of studying Literature in its interaction with other discourses, mainly, that of Science. On these grounds, both the discursive statuses of Literature and Science, represented in the novel by Daisy and Henry, respectively, are intended to be proved by means of drawing upon the notion of discourse and related concepts posited by the Russian theorists Mikhail M. Bakhtin, Valentin N. Voloshinov and Pavel N. Medvedev in the first half of the 20th century. Considering literary texts as cultural artefacts, they put forward a methodology of analysis that ponders both the social and the aesthetic dimensions of textual productions: texts are simultaneously historical and artistic phenomena (Bakhtin, 1981: 258, 274; Voloshinov, 1973: 23, 41). This duality is rooted in the nature of the material with which texts are constructed –language. For the Russian thinkers, language voices the social and cultural context from which it emerges and has, in turn, a creative drive: language is not only a means of reference and representation of reality, but also a constructor of it. In this light, through language, one can access the area of experience where the voices of texts originate and explore such texts as aesthetic productions as well. From this perspective, form and content are inseparable (Bakhtin, 1981: 258): how a text is made and what it is made of are equally important. In fact, it is on this

inseparability that this paper dwells: not only do Henry's scientific discourse and Daisy's literary discourse betray their social background, but they also construct, through language, a conception of the world and of individuals.

The study, however, must be carefully conducted if a reductionist reading is to be avoided, a reading in which the long-standing rivalry between Literature and Science is merely presented as a dichotomy between the two contending discourses. That is why the aim of this paper is not to simply account for the differences between the discourse of Literature and the discourse of Science, but to delve into how they are created and constructed in the novel as well as to explore the conditions under which they relate to each other. For this purpose, this paper will borrow another concept from Bakhtin, Voloshinov and Medvedev's theory –that of polyphony and heteroglossia. These are mechanisms by means of which the multiple voices of a text engage in a discursive struggle, understood as a contention between competing worldviews and conceptions of individuals (Bakhtin, 1981: 263, 272; Morris, 1994: 248). Along these lines, in McEwan's novel, it is possible to trace two strikingly different conceptions of the world and of individuals. On the one hand, they are envisaged as completely independent entities which can only establish a relationship in empirical terms. From this perspective, the world is made up of facts which can be accessed and objectively known by people's careful use of their senses (Chalmers, 1999: 4, 12, 149). On the other hand, a claim is made in *Saturday* for a world exclusively mediated and regulated by language, and in which the relationship between individuals and their environment is representational. Within this framework, there is no direct access to the external reality other than through language. This mediation implies that the facts of the world and the people who inhabit it are not entities in themselves but come to existence by means of language, i.e. they are language entities (Gregson, 2004: 7; Hutcheon, 2001: 134; Rorty; 1992: 184). Both views contribute to specifying the discursive domain of *Saturday*: the former refers to the Positivist discourse of Science and the latter to the Postmodernist discourse of Literature, for their emphasis on the factuality of the world (Chalmers, 1999: 4, 12, 149) and on its textuality (Derrida, 1967: 224-225; Foucault, 2005: 360; Gregson, 2004: 7; Hutcheon, 2001: 76: Rorty; 1992: 184), respectively. In this light, this paper does not merely intend to bring into light the polarised status of discourses, but to explore the contention between them, both in terms of the disparities and similarities which emerge when each discourse defies the other and claims for a position of dominance.

Notwithstanding the abysmal difference concerning worldviews, both discourses posit an idea of subjectivity defined by a helpless secondarity (Derrida, 1967: 224-225; Hutcheon, 2004: 11). Such secondarity is tantamount to the undermining of individuals' agency, conceived of as their ability to act upon the world (Ashcroft, 2001: 8). In this context, the individual is, from the Positivist perspective, but another fact in world and is, as such, determined by their unchangeable natural composition. Conversely, from the Postmodernist standpoint in which direct experience of the 'real' is denied, individuals are simply the products of language and their experience and performance in the world reaches the very same status. This may cast some doubts on the validity of any course of action that individuals may undertake in terms of signification (Eagleton, 1993: 387; Hutcheon, 2001: 142): is it worth acting upon the world if the result is not 'real' but textual? As it transpires from this question, from both the Positivist point of view and the Postmodernist one, individuals seem to fall prey to some form of determinism, either natural o linguistic, respectively, since they are deprived of their ability to actively engage in the processes pertaining to the constitution of their environment.

The disquisition above reveals that, as Shakespeare's sonnet expresses it, there exists an inextricable relationship between Literature and the individual, a relationship in which one feeds the other and vice versa. The discussion about Literature, then, begets a discussion concerning the nature of individuals (Kristeva, 1976: 249). In view of the peripheral condition attributed to individuals both by Positivism and Postmodernism, it is compellingly necessary for this paper to develop a theoretical and practical tool which, at the same time as it acknowledges the power and scope of discourses in regulating worldviews and subjectivities, does not undermine people's capability to inscribe themselves into the discourses of their realities and act upon them (Funes, 2006: 14; 2007: 9; 2009: 78). This phenomenon is what will be explored as a discursive practice, a device which relates discourse and subjectivity in such a way that what is foregrounded is not the supremacy of one over the other, but the tension that the two elements experience in their encounter and mutual constitution. In *Saturday*, the emergence of the need of a discursive practice is embodied in the character of Baxter who, after harbouring feelings of empathy for the persona of the poem read by Daisy, Matthew Arnold's "Dover Beach", undergoes an epiphanic moment (Joyce, 1996: 193). He experiences a sudden and deeper comprehension and realization that his subjectivity, entrapped between the contending discursive forces of Positivism and Postmodernism,

calls for a space in which to leave its own discursive traces (Kristeva, 1988: 231), i.e. to inscribe himself as subject into its surrounding world of discourses.

The proposal of a discursive practice can illuminate as well the pedagogical dynamics in which teachers and students of Literature in English engage at the Teacher Training College. Precisely, the Literature in English class at a tertiary level is thought of as the appropriate space to enable the construction of a discursive practice. To this end, in the same way as content and form are inseparable when performing literary analyses, it is enormously fruitful to think of the Literature in English curriculum as inseparable from the pedagogy with which it is to be taught. With regard to the former, this paper advocates an approach from a discursive perspective and adheres in this way to the Argentinean Resolution on *Contenidos Básicos Comunes para la Educación General Básica* (1998: 16; *Common Basic Contents for General Basic Education*, my translation; referred to as *CBC*, onwards): the variety of literary trends and movements covered by the Literature in English curriculum designed for tertiary level studies can be explored as discourses, since, given that they are part of a particular historical context, they accordingly privilege certain worldviews over others and deploy different conceptions of subjects. As to the pedagogy with which content is to be approached, the analysis of discourses in literary texts can be undertaken in such a way that the Literature in English class emerges as a space where reflexive and critical thinking is to be fostered at every instance of learning. In this light, content and knowledge are not simply to be transmitted, but, rather, to be constructed by promoting constant reflection upon Literature as subject matter, the cognitive processes involved and its cultural implications (*CBC*, 1998: 2). Such pedagogical approach conforms to the guidelines laid by *Diseño Curricular de Lenguas Extranjeras* (*Foreign Languages Curricula*, my translation; referred to as *DCLE*, onwards) of the City of Buenos Aires which, although it has been thought of as a tool for primary and secondary school teachers, provides insightful readings on reflection as a methodological instrument. This document distinguishes three types of reflections: metalinguistic, i.e. reflection upon what is learnt; metacognitive, i.e. reflection upon how it is learnt; and intercultural, i.e. reflections of comparative nature upon different cultures (*DCLE*, 2001: 25). In the context of Literature in English for Teacher Training College students, metalinguistic reflections can be fostered by generating an atmosphere in which the discourses present in the texts are constantly questioned: what worldviews does a particular literary movement promote to the detriment of others? Why? How does it conceive of

individuals? This series of questions can be followed by others which make teachers and students ponder the process through which they have constructed those instances of knowledge, i.e. the characteristics of their cognitive procedures, and its sequence as well. In this way, the participants of the Literature in English class can engage in metacognitive reflections. Moreover, as the resolution on *CBC* (1998: 17) puts it, studying literary texts entails accessing other and different cultures, which sets the conditions for intercultural reflections (Byram, 1997: 3). In this light, analysing different discourses in literary works implies exploring the cultural context into which they are inscribed, in the fashion an ethnographer does, according to Corbett (2005: 35). Inevitably, this analysis leads to comparative and contrastive tasks between cultures and their discourses, akin to the ones performed by a sojourner (Byram, 1997: 1-2). These activities, though, are to be fostered not in terms of superiority or inferiority but in terms of the cultural conditions that privilege the emergence of certain discourses and abort the development of others. It is expected, then, that the task of constant reflections upon the characteristics, functions and possibilities of discourses enable teachers and students of Literature in English at the Teacher Training College to design their profession as a discursive practice. To this end, critical thinking can help them explore the scopes and limits of discourses which surround them. Moreover, it can equip them with analytical tools to construct spaces from where to participate in the discursive processes pertaining to their reality, and from where to enunciate themselves as subjects specialised in (a foreign) language and the pedagogy for teaching it.

Encompassing both teachers and students of Literature in English in the development of a discursive practice supposes a revision of their status within the Teacher Training College. In accordance with *DCLE*, this paper conceives of both of them as legitimate interlocutors: teachers as well as students can equally engage in the process of critical thinking to reflect upon the worldviews and subjectivities constructed by their surrounding discourses, which ultimately fosters a discursive practice. The difference between these interlocutors can be understood in terms of growth: teachers, unlike students, have developed a more proficient command of discourse and pedagogy, a status which students aim at reaching by means of their learning experience. Along these lines, *DCLE* (2001: 25) posits students as “responsible interlocutors” and teachers as “competent interlocutors”. In the light of this differentiation, the development of a discursive practice can be understood as a passage from a discursively responsible stage to an increasingly competent one. To facilitate the understanding of such passage, this

paper will draw upon research into education undertaken in the field of sociology, such as that by Basil Bernstein and Pierre Bourdieu. The former conceives of the learning experience as tantamount to an enrichment of codes, understood of as linguistic mechanisms by means of which students can relate to the world and their peers (Bernstein, 2003: 76). For Bernstein, becoming a competent interlocutor means moving from a restricted-code scenario to an elaborated-code scenario, one in which individuals can perceive their discursive possibilities enhanced. Through this passage, they can gain a broader and deeper understanding of how discourses operate and act upon them accordingly (77, 202). Bourdieu, on the other hand, conceives of that process as a qualitative and quantitative increase in individuals' cultural capital. This concept is, akin to Bernstein's code, a type of social relation which measures people's access to cultural market and industry. According to the degree of access to those spheres and command of them, power and status are conferred upon people within a community (Baker, 2004: 37). For Bourdieu (1986: 47), then, becoming a competent interlocutor corresponds to the acquisition of a qualitatively and quantitatively superior cultural capital. Whether it be in terms of a more complex code elaboration or of an enrichment of capital cultural, it is expected that the participants of the Literature in English class develop the necessary competences to become proficient at the development of a discursive practice. Among the competences necessary to build critical awareness on the mechanisms of discourses and promote reflexive and active participation in them, reading and writing prevail, skills which are not literally understood, but as more complex semiotic operations. In this regard, McRae (1991: 19, 126) extends the function of reading to that of scrutinising the world, trying to interpret it and coming to terms with it, all of which, this paper contends, can be attained by fostering the three forms of reflections that *DCLE* presents (2001: 25). Besides, this reading skill must pave the way for that of writing, which amounts to, in Kramsch's view, to a discursive inscription of the self (2003: 8). From this perspective, individuals, aware of the possibilities and limits created by discourses, can not only comprehend how they work, but they can also learn to express themselves within discourses and through them, with the overriding objective of acting upon them. It is evident that from Kramsch's ideas there transpires what this paper has posited as a discursive practice, though she still adds another dimension: the fact of undertaking such task in a foreign language context (1993: 234). For her, this amounts to a "boundary experience" (235), since individuals who undergo it find themselves within an area where two semiotic systems meet –that

of the mother tongue and that of a foreign language– which are, by extension, two different discursive systems, given that each language belongs to different cultures. This added dimension to the development of a discursive practice is similar to Bhabha's third space (in Ashcroft, 2001: 61), a space which does not synthesise two discourses but which is created by the encounter between them, which may not be free of tension and ambiguity. In the light of Bhabha's contribution, the passage which constitutes the construction of a discursive practice is, then, of a conflictive nature: becoming a more competent interlocutor in a foreign language and inscribing oneself as a subject into the surrounding discourses implies developing new worldviews and subjectivities which may be inconsistent with the previous prevailing ones. This is the reason why reflection becomes a compellingly necessary tool for teachers and students to endure the growing experience of critically reading the surrounding and contending discourses and actively engaging in the processes of which they are part. Such task, finally, involves both students and teachers of Literature in English at the Teacher Training College, given that it pertains to a broader scope, that of education. As (future) teachers of a foreign language, they help other people become more competent interlocutors, i.e. attain a higher level of proficiency at reading and writing of discourses. This exceeds the spheres of teaching and learning a foreign language: developing a discursive practice is to be understood in the wider field of education, since it is related to building competences that do not merely amount to their application in a particular subject matter, but which can shed light in other –though not measurable– aspects of the academic and professional life, reigned by ambivalence, contradictions and tensions. In other words, by putting forward the notion of a discursive practice, this paper aims at discussing the implications of the status of Literature in English students and teachers of the Teacher Training College as educators.

As it can be seen, this paper intends not only to provide a literary analysis of *Saturday*, but also to explore the pedagogical implications such reading may deploy, though it by no means expects to present these two dimensions as conclusively explored. This is the reason why a special section is devoted to suggestions in the direction of further studies. Among the aspects wanting exploration, guidelines for a more comprehensive study of the discursive property of *Saturday* are provided, as well as other approaches to tackling the novel or other issues related to pedagogy. With hindsight, though these uncharted topics may be thought of as a weakness of this paper, they are meant to function as a genuine invitation for the academic community of the

Teacher Training College to further discussion and reflection. In this way, it is expected that the discursive practise of the teachers and students of the Literature in English class can be still enriched, both in the specificity of their subject matter –Literature– and in the field of their experience as educators.

2. *Saturday*: a literature review

If the conception of Literature which *Saturday* deploys is to be conceived of in terms of discourse, it is expected for this paper to briefly explore the discursive conditions into which the novel is inscribed. In this light, *Saturday* does not emerge in a vacuum: it is part of a broader literary context affected by a multiplicity of variables, such as the set of texts that compose McEwan's work, writing styles and thematic concerns.

Saturday, published in 2005, is the ninth novel written by the English writer and screenwriter Ian Russell McEwan. McEwan, who received a BA degree in English Literature at the University of Sussex and a MA in the same specialisation at the University of East Anglia (Rennison, 2005: 87), made his first incursions into Literature by writing short stories, collected under the title of *First Love, Last Rites*, published in 1975. Without forsaking his production of short stories, he also delved into novel writing and thanks to this he began to earn local and international reputation among critics and readers in general (87-88). At the present time, not only is he an acclaimed writer but he also works as a screenwriter: a number of his novels have been adapted into films, a process in which he has partaken (Higson, 2006: 63, 167).

As regards thematic concerns, *Saturday* as well as other novels by McEwan are related to Literature and to Science, mainly by means of the characterisation of their protagonists. In fact, *The Child in Time* (1987) is about the events taking place in the life of a children's book author after he has lost his only child, events among which it is possible to distinguish the changes that two of his friends undergo, a couple made up by a novel writer and a physicist. Another of McEwan's novels, *Atonement* (2001), concerns the growth, as a person and as a writer, of a girl who, at the age of thirteen, makes a terrible mistake with tremendous implications for the main couple of the story. Finally, both *Saturday* (2005) and *Solar* (2010) deploy as their male protagonists a neurosurgeon and a Nobel Prize winning physicist, respectively.

With regard to their literary style, McEwan's novels are generally thought of as Postmodernist texts (Bentley, 2008: 31) within the field of Contemporary Literature. As

such, they “st[and] at a crossroads in terms of form; in one direction l[ies] realism, whilst in the other [i]s a continued modernist and experimental approach to fiction” (Lodge, 1982: 30). McEwan’s literary work does not seem to solve such paradox and blends in its texture both Realist and Modernist modalities (Bradford, 2007; Bentley, 2008: 31). However, what sets it within the range of Postmodernist fiction is its concern “with how writing [literary writing] transforms ‘real’ experience” (Bentley, 2008: 158). In this light, Literature is not a simple reflection of reality or a vehicle for it: Literature wields some form of power over reality, which is precisely the Postmodernist aspect this paper will explore.

The treatment which Science receives in some of McEwan’s novels, on the other hand, has earned him the inclusion within what has been called “New Atheism” (Bradley, 2009: 20; Beattie, 2007: 157). This phenomenon has been given birth to by the appearance of best-selling controversial works against religion, especially after the attack on the World Trade Center: Sam Harris’s *The End of Faith: Religion, Terror, and the Future of Reason* (2004) and *Letter to a Christian Nation* (2006), the former inspired by the events of September 11, 2001; Richard Dawkins’s *The God Delusion* (2006); Daniel C. Dennett’s *Breaking the Spell: Religion as a Natural Phenomenon* (2006); and Victor J. Stenger’s *God: The Failed Hypothesis – How Science Shows That God Does Not Exist* (2007), among other scientists’ productions. The doctrine that they all advocate is subsumed to “a deeply eighteenth-century appeal to the unforced force of Reason over and against ignorance, superstition and mythmaking” (Bradley, 2009: 20), an interest which McEwan’s scientists share, especially Henry Perowne. Nonetheless, it falls out of the scope of this paper to prove whether *Saturday* adjusts to the notions put forward and developed by “New Atheism”. Rather, as it has been stated in the previous section, it will be explored how Science is construed in the novel as a discourse and how it interacts with the Postmodernist discourse of Literature.

3. Theoretical framework

3.1. Why discourse?

The question of what Literature is may not only derive in a multiplicity of answers but it may require, before any attempt to answer it, to probe into the multiplicity of assumptions it entails. Among these presuppositions, asking about the nature of

Literature means asking about its specificity: is it to be understood as a form of essence, isolated from other disciplines? Or, on the contrary, as a socio-cultural phenomenon, affected by historical variables? Whether Literature is thought to be autonomous or not, how does it relate to what makes it possible, i.e. language? And how does it relate to the individuals who are users of that language but, and the same time, are preceded by that language, which becomes the condition of possibility for their interaction with the world and with others and, therefore, the condition for their growth and constitution as individuals? It becomes compelling, then, that the theoretical framework adopted to embark upon the task of intending to provide an answer to what Literature is should not remain oblivious to the assumptions it implies, mainly, the triangular relationship which language, subjectivity and socio-cultural context establish. In view of this requirement, this paper adopts and puts forward the notion of discourse as a platform from which to direct the reading of *Saturday* and as a framework from which to study the conception of Literature the novel constructs, since a discursive perspective cannot disentangle the bond which language, subjectivity and context create.

The earliest thinkers to systematically explore such threefold network related to the concept of discourse within literary analysis are a group of Russian intellectuals –later called the "Bakhtin Circle"– in the first half of the 20th century: Mikhail M. Bakhtin, Valentin N. Voloshinov and Pavel N. Medvedev. As Morris observes: "The unifying concern of all the texts written by Bakhtin and/or Voloshinov and Medvedev is the nature of discourse" (1994: 4). This common interest has its roots in what they identify as a problem in their contemporary studies in the field of language:

> Linguistics, stylistics and the philosophy of language (...) sought first and foremost for *unity* in diversity; this exclusive orientation toward unity (...) concentrated the attention of philosophical and linguistic thought on the firmest, most stable, least changeable and most mono-semic aspects of discourse (...) that are furthest removed from the changing socio-semantics spheres of [it] (Bakhtin, 1981: 274).

The objection raised to the theoretical choice that regulated the literary and linguistic studies of the beginning of the 20th century is, by opposition and simultaneously, an initial statement on the nature of discourse: it is an area of production of meanings anchored in the dynamics of a society. From this standpoint, discourse "is not investigated as the self-contained conceptual system studied by (...) formalism and structuralism" (Morris, 1994: 4). This initial definition of discourse posits it as an object

of study distant from the one constructed by the Formalist and the Structuralist lines of research, endowed with features of self-sufficiency, theoretical abstraction and withdrawal from socio-cultural contexts.

As regards Structuralism, it stems from the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure's investigations, though the term is not of his coinage (Harris and Taylor, 1997: 209). At the initial stages of his research into language, he meets the same phenomenon that Bakhtin describes: for Saussure (1959: 8), language is "many-sided and heterogeneous; straddling several areas simultaneously (...) it belongs both to the individual and the social; we cannot put it into any category of human facts for we cannot discover its unity". As it can be seen, Saussure also recognises the diversity to which Bakhtin refers (1981: 274), but he departs from the Russian thinker by means of what he defines as his object of study: "The linguist must take the study of linguistic structure as his primary concern, [understood as] a structured system, (...) both a self-contained whole and a principle of classification" (Saussure, 1993: 3-4). Through this definition, Saussure extirpates from the heterogeneity and complexity of language a part which he considers worth analysing, and susceptible to it: "As soon as we give linguistic structure pride of place among the facts of language, we introduce a natural order of things which lends itself to no other classification" (4). The linguistic structure, then, renders itself as a homogenous system in which regularities, exclusively, are to be found. These regularities become the yardstick against which linguistic phenomena are to be measured and studied, a fact that allows the advance of Linguistics and the birth of a new Science which Saussure (1959: 16) calls "Semiology". Under these circumstances, Voloshinov presages: "If we advance this abstract segregation to the status of a principle, if we reify linguistic form divorced from [contextual] impletion, (...) then we end up dealing with a signal and not with a sign of language" (1973: 71). From this critique there transpires a clear distinction: it is not the progress of Linguistics that is warned against, but the operation on which it is based –that of separating language, or a part of it, from the context where it emerges. Such action may lead to the treatment of language as an abstraction, denying its aspects related to a concrete and material existence, i.e. those which are anchored in the dynamics of a society and of a culture.

A similar critique is addressed to Russian Formalism, one of the first movements in the 20th century literary criticism to intend to define what Literature is, making a maxim of this attempt. With Viktor Shklovsky, Roman Jakobson, Yury Tynyanov, and Boris

Eichenbaum, among others, “in their ranks” (Eagleton, 1996: 2), Formalism is defined as

> essentially the application of linguistics to the study of literature; and because the linguistics in question were of a formal kind, concerned with the structures of language rather than with what one might actually say, the Formalists passed over the analysis of literary 'content' (where one might always be tempted into psychology or sociology) for the study of literary form” (3).

Sharing the same drive as Structuralist Linguistics as conceived of by Saussure, the Russian Formalists also execute a separation between the content of the text –what it is or what it has– and its form –how it is made, privileging the latter over the former. By means of this operation they expect to dismantle the devices that define what is properly literary or artistic, as Shklovsky (1993: 17) claims: “By ‘works of art’ (...) we mean works [literary texts, in particular] created by special techniques designed to make the works as obviously artistic as possible”. What follows is that the task of the critic is, by perusing the structure of a text, to bring into light the devices which “make objects ‘unfamiliar,’ make the familiar seem strange” (20-21) and which, because of that defamiliarisation, bestow upon the text its ‘literariness’. Reduced to a set of techniques or devices, the literary text is, according to Bakhtin “constantly contrasted to meaning, thought, artistic truth, social content, etc.” (in Morris, 1994: 139). Such opposition, equivalent to the one proposed by Saussure when defining his object of study (1993: 3-4), is tantamount to a “substraction [which] cannot gain anything positive, new, or profitable (...) [and] shows the tendency (...) to add nothing to reality, but, on the contrary, to diminish, impoverish, and emasculate it” (Bakhtin in Morris, 1994: 139). The Formalist method, then, contributes to the impoverishment of the literary text because, in Morris’s words, it “fetichisize[s] the work of art by regarding it as a purely linguistic construct thus abstracting it from the dynamics of a social context” (8). The artistic text becomes, like the Saussurean linguistic structure, nothing but an instance of abstraction.

Against the reified status gained by the respective objects of study of Formalism and Structuralism, Bakhtin advocates a dialectic position. What Bakhtin suggests is not exclusively exploring the content of a text to the detriment of its form or structure, an aspect dearly endorsed by the Formalist and Structuralist schools, but to think that “[f]orm and content in discourse are one, (...) that verbal discourse is a social

phenomenon –social throughout its entire range and in each and every of the factors" (1981: 258). The social property of language, then, cannot be isolated from its study, be it in the field of Literature or Linguistics, since, as Voloshinov states, "[e]ach word, as we know it, is a little arena for the clash and criss-crossing of different oriented social accents [and] a product of the living interaction of social forces" (1973: 41) Language is loaded with "social multiaccentuality" (23), which is the reason why to undertake its study deliberately ignoring that load will not only fail to account for its "vitality and dynamism" (23), but it will also depict an incomplete idea of language. Between the individuals and the world, there exists "a special kind of 'projection', a means whereby we project onto the 'individual soul' a complex set of social interrelations" (Voloshinov in Morris, 1994: 41). Precisely, it is this tripartite relationship among the social world, language and individuals that gives rise to discourse:

> "Discourse is like a 'scenario' of the immediate act of communication in the process of which it is engendered, and this act of communication is, in turn, a factor of the wider field of communication of the community to which the speaker belongs. In order to understand this 'scenario', it is essential to reconstruct all those complex social interrelations of which the given utterance is the ideological refraction" (41).

It follows that discourse is the mediator between people and the world as well as their possibility to understand the world, the community of speakers that inhabits it and themselves as subjects who belong to that community. In this regard, it is necessary to follow Morris's comment on the word 'ideology' in the context of the 20th century Russia: "it is not necessarily a consciously held political belief system; rather it can refer in a more general sense to the way in which members of a given social group view the world" (249). Discourse, by encompassing the inextricable relationship between language and socio-cultural forces, fosters certain world views, which permeates through the ways in which individuals conceive of themselves as being part of that world, i.e. their own subjectivities. If language is of a discursive kind, then, the approach to it, both in the arenas of Literature and Linguistics, should adopt a discursive perspective so as to explore both its formal aspects and its content.

3.2. Positivism

From the discursive standpoint within which this paper is framed, the Formalist and Structuralist lines of analysis cannot simply be disregarded. In this regard, a more comprehensive research into the discursive conditions for their emergence becomes impelling for a deeper and richer understanding of such phenomena.

Both Formalism and Structuralist Linguistics surface long after social sciences do "in the climate of scientism at the end of the nineteenth century" (Weinert, 2009: 210). Notwithstanding the chronological distance, language studies of the first half of the twentieth century confront the same dilemma, as social sciences, in defining the methodology with which to approach their object of study: "Should [they] lean toward the natural sciences or the human sciences?" (210). The decision is made for the "naturalistic model –sometimes also the empirical model–" (210) put forward by the former, based on Auguste Comte's "Positivist philosophy" (211, my translation). Positivism conceives of "empiricism as the source of all knowledge" (211): any form of knowledge is such if it is derived from the careful observation of verifiable facts. The reason for the Positivist exaltation of facts lies, according to Chalmers (1999: 4), in the assumptions that:

(a) Facts are directly given to careful, unprejudiced observers via the senses.
(b) Facts are prior to and independent of theory.
(c) Facts institute a firm and reliable foundation for scientific knowledge.

As it transpires from those presuppositions, the immediacy, the autonomy and reliability of facts not only make them dispense with the complexity associated with individuals and the socio-cultural variables that affect them, but also confer upon them a feature of objectivity. This is precisely the property which social sciences need in order to reach a scientific status: thanks to objectivity they can "emancipate from philosophical thought toward the end of the nineteenth century" (Weinert, 2009: 210). Similarly, the objectivity found in the linguistic structure helps Structuralist Linguistics separate itself from philology, comparative linguistics and diachronic linguistic research (Saussure, 1959: 1-2, 82). In the same way, the techniques or devices that make up a literary text provide the necessary objectivity for literary criticism to reconquer the long colonised territory of Literature by Sociology and Psychology (Tynyanov, 1992: 251). The objectivity granted by a factual object of study is, at the moment of the emergence of social sciences and language studies, a means of self-legitimation: objectivity guarantees enough validity to claim a scientific status. Nevertheless, when submitted to

a closer scrutiny, Positivism begins to flounder: the qualities of immediacy, autonomy and reliability attributed to facts become untenable, since "our perceptions [of them] depend to some extent on our prior knowledge and hence on our state of preparedness and our expectations (...), and the (...) observation statements [on such facts] presuppose the appropriate conceptual framework" (Chalmers, 1999: 12). What transpires from these assertions is that both the instance of perception of facts and the instance of their communication are affected by variables pertaining to their enunciation in charge of individuals. The phenomenon of enunciation cannot be abstracted from the socio-cultural vectors which intervene in the communicative situation, and which constitute those individuals as subjects. It is in view of this impossibility that the Positivist stance assumed by Structuralism and Formalism –and Natural Sciences as well– begins to be threatened.

3.3. Postmodernism: a heteroglot dismantling of the univocal Positivist tendencies

Among the threats posed to Positivism, one of the strongest is that issued in the aftermath of the Second World War by Postmodernism (Hutcheon, 2001: 24). Such statement compellingly leads the discussion towards an explanation on the fashion in which the threat is performed and towards a definition, or characterisation at least, of Postmodernism as the agent which poses such a threat.

The mechanisms by means of which Positivism is contested aim at disputing the Positivist allegation that an empirical approach to reality is the only way to comprehended it. In this light, the strongly held belief in the properties of immediacy, autonomy and reliability attributed to facts and in the objective observation of them thanks to the careful activity of individuals' senses is challenged as the exclusive access to understand and conceive of the world. Such conceptions are tantamount to centripetal forces which develop a tendency towards "centralisation and unification" (Bakhtin, 1981: 272) in the understanding of the modes in which the world operates. These forces seem to claim the status of being the only valid means of comprehending and explaining it. This assertion can be illustrated by the two Positivist expressions in the field of language: Structuralist Linguistics and Formalism. In their desire to inscribe themselves into the category of Science, they construct an object of study which disentangles itself from the diversity of life: for Saussure, the only phenomenon worth studying is the

linguistic structure which, unlike language, is homogenous and lacks irregularities; for the Russian Formalists, on the other hand, the literary text is a network of techniques whose systematic study leads to identifying what is specifically literary. These methodological choices, according to the "Bakhtin circle", deliberately ignore the social and cultural variety of human experience (Bakhtin, 1981: 274; Voloshinov, 1973: 41). However, the dynamics of societies do not remain silent because, as Bakhtin expresses it, "[a]longside the centripetal forces, the centrifugal forces of language carry on their uninterrupted work; alongside verbal-ideological centralisation and unification, the uninterrupted process of decentralization and disunification go forward" (Bakhtin, 1981: 272). This particular and conflictive interaction receives the name of 'heteroglossia' (263). It a process which accounts for the tension between voices which tend to understand and explain the world in terms of order and uniformity, i.e. centripetal forces, and those which act as disruptors of such conditions, i.e. centrifugal forces. Along these lines, it is possible to think of the Positivist approach that regulates language studies in the first half of the twentieth century as a centripetal force destabilised by the very centrifugal force of Postmodernism. The latter unsettles not only the coherence of the former but its claim to exclusive validity for approaching and studying the diverse phenomena of the world.

With regard to Postmodernism, in spite of its apparent strength and ubiquity, the term results rather elusive (Hutcheon, 2001: 1, 2004: 3; Sim: 2001: vii). Aware of this elusiveness, Kristeva sketches, nonetheless, a definition which posits "[t]he political, social, and intellectual experience of the 1960s [as an] experience-of-limits: limits of language, limits of subjectivity" (in Hutcheon, 2004: 8). Precisely, these two elements – language and the subject– will become the target of the sternest critic in charge of Postmodernism, a defying attitude which definitely characterises this phenomenon of the second half of the 20th century (Sim: 2001: vii).

As regards language, Postmodernist thinkers challenge the conception that equates it with a faculty or form of behaviour of individuals. Rather, language is seen as a phenomenon which precedes them and constitutes itself as the condition for their understanding of themselves, of their peers and of the world that surrounds them. In other words, language is what makes any psychological or social behaviour possible, and not the result of the reverse process. This is so, since not only is language already present in the world when individuals are born, but it has also become the platform upon which all possible expressions of meaning are based. Among those manifestations, to

the Positivists' dismay, there is the production of knowledge. Along these lines, Lyotard (1984: 20) contests the traditional "distance separating the customary state of knowledge from its state in the scientific age" and argues that language in the form of "[n]arration is the quintessential form of (...) knowledge" (20). Knowledge, then, is not the result of the objective observation of external and autonomous facts, as Positivism claims it (Chalmers, 1999: 4), but a product of language, composed by it: knowledge is narration. This conclusion casts some "dubiousness on the positivist, empiricist hierarchy implied in the binary opposing of the real to the fictive, (...) suggesting that the non-fictional is as constructed and as narratively known as is fiction" (Hutcheon, 2001: 76). In the light of this statement, since the facts of the world do not seem to exist if not for language, their nature is textual. And this becomes, precisely, the most radical Postmodernist contention: facts are, in this regard, the outcome of narration and, as such, they are also fictional. By extension, if reality is made up of fictional facts, what it is understood by 'real', then, is a fictional construction as well.

According to the primary status language acquires within Postmodernism, the subject, as Derrida expresses it (in Hutcheon: 2004: 159), is to be re-located. In this sense, in the same way as language precedes the world of objects, as Postmodernist thinkers claim it, it also precedes the world of subjects:

> [What] accompanies our entire existence and never deserts it (...) is populated entirely by those complex mediations formed and laid down as a sediment in their own history by labour, life, and language; so that in this simple contact, from the moment the first object is manipulated, the simplest need expressed, the most neutral word emitted, what man is reviving, without knowing it, is all the intermediaries of a time that governs him almost to infinity. Without knowing it, (...) men enter into communication and find themselves in the already constructed network of comprehension (Foucault, 2005: 360).

When individuals enter the world, their experience is already mediated by historical variables which are the product of language, given the supremacy and ubiquity Postmodernism attributes to it. In this context, a new subjectivity emerges, since each individual "is seen to be known only as represented, that is, only in terms of social and cultural Symbolic formations" (Hutcheon, 2001: 134). The construction of subjectivity is not independent from the mediation of language but facilitated by it. Furthermore, if the Postmodernist train of thought is to be followed, such dependence reduces individuals to a secondary and subsidiary position: they are no longer "coherent,

meaning-generating entit[ies]" (Hutcheon, 2004: 11) and users of language; rather, they are, as well, an outcome of language. Their subjectivity is linguistically constructed, since it is through language that people understand themselves as subjects, i.e. as individuals who can think of themselves in terms of what they are in relation to others and to the groups to which they belong.

3.4. Discourse, subjectivity and context: the threefold dimension of a discursive practice

The implications of the Postmodernist idea of language for the conception of subjects confer upon Postmodernism certain ambivalence. In this regard, Hutcheon acknowledges that it is "both complicitous with and contesting of the cultural dominants within which it operates" (2001: 142). In fact, if the most challenging Postmodernist statement is that the status of the dominants that regulate a society is actually constructed by means of a process mediated by language, there exists, thus, no natural or logical property in them to keep them in their privileged position. As liberating as this maxim can be, it may transpire from such tenet a reactionary and conservative stain as well.

The Postmodernist claim of the textual property of reality renders a dual reading. To begin with, this is the reason why minorities have initially embraced Postmodernism, such as Feminism and Postcolonialism (Gregson, 2004: 10): it has provided them with strong arguments to substantiate their claims to better social and cultural conditions, since there is nothing intrinsic in them that makes them the object of appropriation of a certain group of powerful individuals. However, the same Postmodernist premise that has been so welcomed at a certain point has also been rejected later on because, taken to an extreme, it may be appallingly discouraging in suggesting that any course of action may lead to an equally textual result. Postmodernism seems, then, to mine the belief in individuals' agency, understood as their "ability (...) to initiate action in engaging or resisting (...) power" (Ashcroft, 2001: 8), because any course of action undertaken will be but narration, a fictional construction that can eventually be overcome by other fictions. This act of disempowering has given rise to "a dominant trend in contemporary criticism that asserts that the Postmodern is disqualified from political involvement" (Hutcheon, 2001: 3). These tendencies seem to understand the element of the political in terms of party politics and, in doing so, may fall prey to a naive conception of politics.

Another direction in which to retrieve a political aspect of Postmodernism is, whilst acknowledging the ubiquity of language, remembering that the relationship it establishes with individuals and the context in which it emerges is not unilateral but dialectic, as the "Bakhtin circle" suggests it (Bakhtin, 1981: 274; 1981: 258; Voloshinov, 1973: 41; Voloshinov in Morris, 1994: 41): language is rooted in a historical context and it simultaneously has a bearing on it. In this dynamics, individuals participate as members of their social and cultural environment and can act upon it by means of a language that allows them to emerge as subjects by regulating their relationship with others and their world.

It is precisely such particular form of relationship between the three aspects of discourse –language, subjectivity, and context– which gives rise to a discursive practice. Already hypothesised in the field of Spanish Medievalist studies (Funes, 2006: 14; 2007: 9; 2009: 78) as a perspective from which to explore medieval literary incursions assessing the text both as a linguistic and aesthetic construct and as a cultural object, hence affected by historical variables, a discursive practice is conceived of by this paper as a mechanism to critically tackle the contemporary discursive complexities with which Postmodernism has faced individuals. Given that their faculty of agency seems to be threatened by the overarching presence of language, a discursive practice draws upon the notion of discourse as a tripartite entity that encompasses language, subjectivity, and context. This, in turn, acknowledges the power which each of them wields, only limited, if any case, by the processes of their own interaction. In this light, an awareness of the dynamics of discourse is necessary in order for individuals to be able to exercise their agency. It is precisely in this direction, by fostering reflective and critical thinking, that the pedagogy of Literature in English must conduct its efforts.

4. *Saturday*: A discursive conception of Literature and Science

Saturday stages Literature as an entity differentiated from Science, which is achieved, initially, by the depiction of the main characters in the novel: the neurosurgeon Henry Perowne and "his literate, too literate daughter Daisy" (McEwan, 2006: 6). On the former's life, the novel abridges it succinctly: "straight from school to medical school to the slavish hours of a junior doctor, then the total absorption of neurosurgery training spliced with committed fatherhood" (6). As far a Daisy is concerned, "[h]er training was so different from her father's" (58): it started in the hands

of her grandfather, Grammaticus, who "persuaded her to try *Jane Eyre*" (133) and paid her "five pounds for every twenty lines memorised from the passages he marked [in] Shakespeare, Milton and the King James Bible" (134). Eventually, "[b]y the time she was eighteen and leaving school she'd read a decent fraction of what her grandfather called the obvious stuff" (134) and pursued her formal literary education at Oxford, since Grammaticus "wouldn't hear of her going anywhere to study Literature in English other than his own Oxford college" (134). The marked difference in academic and professional backgrounds is key to understanding and explaining the frequent disagreements between Henry and Daisy and why they "like their disputes" (58). Precisely, those disputes metonymically signal the conflict in which the disciplines they embody –Science and Literature, respectively– engage.

A feasible approach to the tension which articulates Science and Literature in *Saturday* is to understand it in terms of language. In this sense, Henry and Daisy command languages that seem incompatible, though this has not always been the case between them. In fact, in her first encounters with Literature, prompted by Grammaticus, Daisy undergoes the same bewilderment as her father when reading Charlotte Brontë's novel *Jane Eyre*: "The language was unfamiliar, the sentences long, the pictures in her head, she kept saying, wouldn't come clear. Perowne tried the book and had much the same experience" (133). Notwithstanding this initial coincidence, Daisy could eventually surpass the opacity and resistance of the language of Literature, as her career choice suggests it. Henry, on the other hand, does not show any hint of change, as it transpires from his reading of Henry James' *Daisy Miller*, some years later, on her daughter's recommendation:

> At her prompting, he tried the one about the little girl suffering from her parents' vile divorce. A promising subject, but poor Maisie soon vanished behind a cloud of words, and at page forty-eight Perowne, who can be on his feet seven hours for a difficult procedure, who has his name down for the London Marathon, fell away, exhausted (58).

The very same language that has aroused fascination and enthusiasm in Daisy still renders itself as mystifying for Henry, to the point of exhaustion, a sensation not even caused by tiring performances, be it at the hospital theatre or in a marathon.

The difference between Henry's and Daisy's language –which eventually leads to a difference in their general constitution as characters– can be explained if their respective

professions are attended. In this regard, the notion of 'speech genre' developed by Bakhtin (1986: 60) can shed light on the matter:

> All the diverse areas of human activity involve the use of language. Quite understandably, the nature and forms of this use are just as diverse as are the areas of human activity (...). Language is realized in the form of individual concrete utterances (oral and written) by participants in the various areas of human activity. These utterances reflect the specific conditions and goals of each such area not only through their content (thematic) and linguistic style, that is, the selection of the lexical, phraseological, and grammatical resources of the language, but above all through their compositional structure. All three of these aspects –thematic content, style, and compositional structure– are inseparably linked to the whole of the utterance and are equally determined by the specific nature of the particular sphere of communication. Each separate utterance is individual, of course, but each sphere in which language is used develops its own relatively stable types of these utterances. These we may call speech genres.

In the light of Bakhtin's theoretical contribution, it is possible to attribute the positions that Henry and Daisy adopt towards the language of Literature –towards Literature, ultimately– to their respective "areas of human activity": unlike the latter, the former's professional life has bestowed upon him a certain language that does not allow him to read what Daisy actually can, since the language of Literature turns out to be alien to the speech genre of the scientific sphere to which he belongs.

Accordingly, the tensions between Henry and Daisy, as metonymic embodiments of Science and Literature, respectively, relate not only to a difference in language, but also to a difference in reading. Reading, however, is not merely circumscribed to tackling the lexis and syntax used in the texts of a certain sphere –its style. As McRae (1991: 126) expresses it, to read is "to read the world". It emerges, then, as a more complex epistemological operation and, as such, inscribes itself into a wider concept than that of 'speech genre' –one which encompasses it: the notion of 'discourse'. In a Foucauldean sense, "discourse is a strongly bounded area of social knowledge, a system of statements within which the world can be known" (Ashcroft, 2001: 70). That "area of social knowledge", akin to the Bakhtinean "area of human activity" (1986: 60), confers a perspective on the individuals consisting of a certain language –the "system of statements"– from which to conceive of the phenomena of the world, approach, study and understand them. Along similar lines, Morris (1994: 248) suggests: "discourse always articulates a particular view of the world". As it can be inferred, 'discourse' provides individuals with a particular and differentiated mode of reading their reality. It

is in this regard that Science and Literature are posited as discourses in contention in *Saturday*: Henry and Daisy, because of their respective areas of study, voice different, and at some points conflicting, worldviews, privileging or underestimating certain aspects of it.

Nevertheless, the notion of discourse extends to a wider scope than that of simply being a mediator between individuals and their view of the world. In keeping with this, Ashcroft, following Foucault, claims (2001: 71): "the world is not simply 'there' to be talked about, rather, it is through discourse itself that the world is brought into being". Such a contention is tantamount to the assertion that there does not exist an objective pre-existing world, but rather one that is constructed through discourse. Furthermore, Ashcroft (71) asserts along the same lines: "It is also in such a discourse that speakers and hearers, writers and readers come to an understanding about themselves, their relationship to each other and their place in the world (the construction of subjectivity)". This broader conception of discourse entails that individuals as subjects are also discursive products: who they become in relation to their environment and others is highly conditioned by the discourse in which they are immersed. In this regard, discourse pervades individuals and creates and shapes their subjectivity. On this account, the portrayal of characters previously discussed is not merely a technicality or a whimsical formalism required when performing an analysis of the novel: Henry's and Daisy's subjectivity are articulated by the discourse of Science and the discourse of Literature into which they are respectively inscribed.

4.1. The (un)certainties of the 'real' as articulators of *Saturday's* discourses

Once that Science and Literature have been posited as discourses and, due to that condition, thought of as entities capable of not only governing the way in which individuals read the world, but also of scaffolding their subjectivity, it should be analysed how those discourses are created in *Saturday* and how they affect the characters and their relationship with the world and others. In other words, what is the particular element upon which Science and Literature are ultimately constituted as discourses? How does that construction favour certain readings of the characters' surroundings and of themselves as subjects?

As regards Science, Henry's first impressions of Saturday morning are quite revealing, since the view of the world which the scientific discourse has bestowed upon him begins to transpire through them:

> Some hours before dawn Henry Perowne, a neurosurgeon, wakes to find himself already in motion, pushing back the covers from a sitting position, and then rising to his feet. It's not clear to him when exactly he became conscious, nor does it seem relevant. He's never done such a thing before, but he isn't alarmed or even faintly surprised (McEwan, 2006: 3).

This initial paragraph seems to suggest nothing but a descriptive sequence of actions of a man who is just waking up. However, that description hints at an element which is crucial to the analysis this paper intends to pursue: that of the lack of clarity. Its importance is not attached to its mere presence in the novel but to what it entails: uncertainty is not relevant to Henry nor does it arouse any feeling of surprise. The extent to which this is true is, nevertheless, highly questionable, since he devotes his first thoughts to fathoming the reasons of his behaviour:

> He has no idea what he's doing out of bed: he has no need to relieve himself, nor is he disturbed by a dream or some element of the day before, or even by the state of the world. It's as if, standing there in the darkness, he's materialised out of nothing, fully formed, unencumbered. He doesn't feel tired, despite the hour or his recent labours, nor is his conscience troubled by any recent case (3).

He dwells for some time on the possible reasons of his sleeplessness but finds himself unable to provide a sensible account for it. This leads him to conjecturing that he might be "dreaming or sleepwalking" –a disappointing and unsatisfactory speculation which causes him to conclude: "[d]reams don't interest him; that this should be real is a richer possibility" (4). Again, Henry seems to make a case against uncertainty, though this time some added value becomes perceivable: rejecting uncertainty is related to favouring the 'real', which grants him "a richer possibility". Such a statement is nothing but an instance of Henry's worldview, which is deeply rooted in his profession. In fact, he does not hesitate to claim that "unassertiveness is misleading, more style than character - it's not possible to be an unassertive neurosurgeon" (19). It can be seen how the discourse of Science is operating on Henry's behaviour: his "area of social knowledge" (Foucault in Ashcroft, 2001: 70) or his "area of human activity" (Bakhtin, 1986: 60) has offered a certain mode of reading what surrounds him, a mode which

tends to exclude uncertainties, since they are not explanatory to the phenomena of the world. The “richer possibility” of the ‘real’, then, lies in that, as Henry puts it, “[i]n neurosurgery he chose a safe and simple profession” (McEwan, 2006: 141). Neurosurgery, in this light, constitutes a clearer realm whose variables are somehow understandable and manageable, since it is deprived of unassertiveness. This is why he finally finds an explanation for his “distorting euphoria (...) down at the molecular level [where] there's been a chemical accident while he slept - something like a spilled tray of drinks, prompting dopamine-like receptors to initiate a kindly cascade of intracellular events” (5). At that level, there seems to be no room for speculation, which means no room for uncertainties, given that the conclusion reached is supported by the factual and verifiable evidence of a molecular reality.

Henry’s belief in Science as a discipline based on the transparency of the factuality of reality has been given birth to by the scientific discourse in which he is immersed. In that belief, it is possible to read what Chalmers (1999: 149) defines as the ‘Positivist idea’ which endows Science with a special character. This idea contends that “science is special because it is based on the facts (...) presumed to be claims about the world that can be directly established by a careful, unprejudiced use of the senses” (1). Along these lines, “[s]cience is to be based on what we can see, hear and touch rather than on personal opinions or speculative imaginings” (1). Such measurability with which the facts of the world render themselves to the senses constitutes the defining feature of Positivism –its empiricism: the only source of understanding is that which is based upon experience, especially experience of the senses. In this light, Henry qualifies as a Positivist scientific observer because he makes use of facts as an unappealable basis to comprehend different phenomena –his sudden waking included. Additionally, he underestimates those which cannot be explained in factual terms –such as dreams, since “[i]f observation of the world is carried out in a careful, unprejudiced way then the facts established in this way will constitute a secure, objective basis for science” (1). As it transpires from this reasoning, the fashion in which Henry makes sense of the events and facts of the world, conceives of them and approaches them, is deeply ingrained in his area of experience: Science understood in Positivist terms. It is, therefore, Henry’s scientific discourse based on Positivism that leads him to believing that factual security is what guarantees the “richer possibility” of the ‘real’, an added value which lies in that if reality consists of facts which individuals can objectively apprehend, then that same reality can be not only comprehended, but also explained.

However, Science has a wider scope if it is to be envisioned as a master discourse: not only does it equip Henry with a certain perspective –in his case, of a Positivist kind– from which to approach and understand the world, but it also contributes to shaping an according subjectivity, which is understood in terms of the construction of the self in relation to others and to the world. For this reason Henry claims: "A man who attempts to ease the miseries of failing minds by repairing brains is bound to respect the material world, its limits, and what it can sustain - consciousness, no less (...) the actual, not the magical, should be the challenge" (McEwan, 2006: 67). What transpires from such attitude is that Henry, as a neurosurgeon, has not simply adopted the Positivist discourse of Science: together with that fact, in a dialectic fashion, that very same Positivist discourse of Science has constructed him as a subject and influenced and shaped his view of the world. In keeping with this statement, Halliday (2004: 141) asserts, according to his research on the physical sciences from a historical perspective, that the scientific specialist is thought of "not as a pre-existing persona but as someone brought into being by the discourse itself". Discourse, then, becomes the possibility of condition for the construction of who scientists are –Henry included– and for how they think of themselves. Henry, however, would never grant such a statement, since for the Positivist discourse in which he is absorbed, the world exists independently of the subject and of any discourse.

Nevertheless, the Positivist stance no longer bears close scrutiny in the field of Science. As Chalmers (1999: 149) concludes after a comprehensive review of the history and philosophy of Science, the Positivist attempt has "floundered because facts are not sufficiently straightforward for this view to be sustained, since they are "theory-dependent" and fallible and because no clear account of how theories can be derived from the facts could be found". Such a failure, which lies in the lack of autonomy of the facts of reality, is documented by *Saturday* by means of a very telling instance, that of the thought experiment known as 'Schrödinger's cat':

> A cat, Schrödinger's Cat, hidden from view in a covered box, is either still alive, or has just been killed by a randomly activated hammer hitting a vial of poison. Until the observer lifts the cover from the box, both possibilities, alive cat and dead cat, exist side by side, in parallel universes, equally real. At the point at which the lid is lifted from the box and the cat is examined, a quantum wave of probability collapses (McEwan, 2006: 18).

As this quotation evinces, the experiment suggests the possibility of two simultaneous and excluding realities which depend upon an individual –the one who lifts the lid– to be either sustained or undermined. Henry, in spite of the alleged failure of Positivism, is repelled by such reasoning, which he considers to be "a problem, or an idea, of reference", tantamount to "[a]n excess of the subjective, the ordering of the world in line with your needs, an inability to contemplate your own unimportance" (17). The dependence on the subject, then, and the consequent lack of objectivity in the realm of Science are, if not inconceivable, at least problematic for the neurosurgeon:

> None of this has ever made any sense to him at all. No human sense (...) He's heard that even the physicists are abandoning it. To Henry it seems beyond the requirements of proof: a result, a consequence, exists separately in the world, independent of himself, known to others, awaiting his discovery. What then collapses will be his own ignorance. Whatever the score, it is already chalked up (18-19).

This subject-independent viewpoint is the Positivist benchmark against which he measures, values and judges different phenomena, scientific or not. This is precisely the power of discourse: since it fosters a certain worldview, it is not restricted to the area of expertise in which it is rooted –medicine in the case of Henry– but extended to other spheres. In fact, the previous quotation corresponds to Henry's private digression concerning the probabilities of life or death of the passengers of a plane apparently in flames, which he has spotted in his sleepless hours. This instance illustrates how Henry reads reality in the light of the Positivist discourse of Science in which he is engrossed – "Perowne can't help unscientifically thinking" (65)– and from this condition derives his insistence upon the 'real': deemed in his own Positivist terms, i.e. free of any subjective intervention, reality corresponds to itself, it is its only reference. The 'real', then, is the element upon which the discourse of Science is built in *Saturday* and also articulates the conflict that it undergoes: experiments such as Schrödinger's reveal that the Positivist view does not stand up to scrutiny, much to Henry's regret, and evince as well that the discourse of Science is neither uniform nor homogeneous.

Nevertheless, the 'real' is not only the element around which some of the inner contradictions of the scientific discourse revolve, but also the one which triggers the conflict between the discourse of Science and the discourse of Literature. In Henry' view, literary discourse is characterised by the absence of the 'real', as it is possible to

infer from his epistolary exchanges with Daisy. In one of them, father and daughter squabble:

> 'No more magic midget drummers,'/ he pleaded with her by post, after setting out his tirade. 'Please, no more ghosts, angels, satans or metamorphoses. When anything can happen, nothing much matters. It's all kitsch to me.'
>
> 'You ninny,' she reproved him on a postcard, 'you Gradgrind. It's literature, not physics!' (68)

Henry's opinions on Daisy's recommendations are not mere complaints about Literature but objections raised to a discourse whose foundation is no other than its fictional quality: Henry equates Literature to fiction and understands this term in its ordinarily accepted sense –as lacking or in opposition to what is 'real', which is enough to be discredited, according to the worldview that the scientific discourse has bestowed upon him. To Henry's mind, Literature neither adjusts to the Positivist parameters that the discourse of Science has set nor does it contribute with any functional value, as it is stated in *Saturday*: Henry "thinks he's seen enough death, fear, courage and suffering to supply half a dozen literatures" (6). In fact, it is his Positivist attitude that earns him the nickname 'Gradgrind', in allusion to Dicken's headmaster Thomas Gradgrind in *Hard Times*, "[a] man of realities (...) of fact and calculations (...) who proceeds upon the principle that two and two are four, and nothing over, and who is not to be talked into allowing for anything over" (Dickens, 1951: 11). Similarly, for Henry there seems to be nothing over the reality with which he is confronted, that is why "it interests him less to have the world reinvented; he wants it explained" (McEwan, 2006: 68). To his mind, the fictional property of Literature is at variance with the factuality that the discourse of Science wields.

For Daisy, on the contrary, Henry's attitude evinces nothing but "his astounding ignorance" (6), a judgment which discloses her inscription into the other discourse brought into question by this paper: the discourse of Literature. In this regard, given the inextricable relationship between areas of experiences (Bakhtin, 1986; Foucault in Ashcroft, 2001) and the approach and understanding of the world, it is legitimate to state that the academic literary circles in which Daisy has studied and worked have promoted in her a worldview radically different from her father's, one which allows the 'real' to be challenged. In other words, in the same way as the scientific sphere in which Henry performs has moulded his perception of the world privileging the 'real', thought

of in Positivist terms, Daisy's theoretical and practical experiences favours a conception of the world in which the 'real' is constructed as fiction (Hutcheon, 2001: 76, 134). Nevertheless, it would not be entirely appropriate to contend that the discourse of Literature, in its entirety, hoists the flag of the fabricated character of reality, since it is Postmodernist Literature that has foregrounded the element of fiction which defines the 'real'. The attempt of laying emphasis on fiction, however, is attributed, by general consent, to Modernism. According to Pope (1998: 128), as the precursor of Postmodernism, "Modernism can be broadly characterised as an early twentieth-century literary and artistic movement with an aesthetic opposed to that of nineteenth-century 'classic realism'". Modernist artists, then, contest a reflexive conception of Literature: Literature should not mimetically represent reality. Instead, Modernism advocates the creation of an alternative reality and this is how the fictional status of Literature is foregrounded, though still as differentiated as opposed to reality. Nonetheless, this foregrounding movement is taken even further by Postmodernism, as Eagleton (1993: 387) asserts it:

> The aesthetics of Postmodernism is a dark parody of such anti-representationalism [i.e. Modernist anti-representationalism]: if art no longer reflects, it is not because it seeks to change the world rather than mimic it, but because there is in truth nothing there to be reflected, no reality which is not itself already image, spectacle, simulacrum, gratuitous fiction.

According to Eagleton, not only does Postmodernism mock the Modernist attempt to give rise to a reality other than the one which the world presents but it also suggests that the reality which Modernism tries to evade is already fiction.

It is precisely the Postmodernist discourse of Literature, built upon a fictional conception of the 'real', that is depicted in *Saturday*, and the one into which Daisy is inscribed. For her, "people can't 'live' without stories" (McEwan, 2006: 68). By referring to this impossibility, she does not necessarily, or exclusively, equate textual productions to commodities or items of use vital for existence. Rather, from her words there transpires the conception of an undeniable and inescapable fabricated reality: a reality that is constructed upon stories. Her vision of the world corresponds to the Postmodernist discourse of Literature, for which "there is no direct access to the real, which can only be problematically mediated by language and textuality (...) which [is what] motivates the characteristic desire to reveal that what claims to be real or natural

is actually artificial, is actually fabricated" (Gregson, 2004: 4). In the light of a notion of reality which hinges upon the artificiality of the 'real', if people cannot live without stories, it is because they live 'through' stories: reality consists in texts and it is by means of texts that individuals have access to it. This is why Rorty (1992: 184) claims: "we can only compare languages or metaphors with one another, not with something beyond language called 'fact'". Rorty's comments dwell on the fictional property of reality, and, at the same time, they contribute with the added value of the irreflexivity of language –simultaneously the raw material and the product of Literature– derived from the only possibility of reflection: language does not reflect an extralinguisitc reality due to its self-referentiality. Henry, "the professional reductionist" (McEwan, 2006: 272), given the Positivist discourse of Science in which he is immersed, would never grant the inexistence of the autonomy of facts. Daisy, on the other hand, has developed a different subjectivity on the grounds of the influence on her of the Postmodernist discourse of literature, a subjectivity with lacks her father's "coarse, unredeemable materialist" (134) feature. That is why she has assumed the task of "guiding his literary education, scolding him for poor taste and insensitivity" (6). Postmodernism has endowed her with a vision of the world capable of challenging the factuality of the 'real' which her father espouses as well as with a subjectivity which has raised in her an awareness of the textual condition of the phenomena of the world. This double endowment, as a function of discourse, confirms the discursive status of Literature.

4.2. *Saturday* as a site of discursive struggle

Saturday, however, does more than metonymically expose the contended juxtaposition of the discourse of Science and the discourse of Literature. The novel fosters their interaction in terms of a discursive contention: *the* Positivist discourse of Science and *the* Postmodernist discourse of Literature strive in controversy. The question remains unanswered as to how such tension is made possible. In other words, what are the conditions for the discourse of Science and the discourse of Literature into which Henry and Daisy are respectively inscribed to enter into conflict? A first attempt to answer such a question lies in the possibilities of the novel as a genre.

The Modern novel is conceived of as a genre whose main characteristic is that of allowing different voices to engage in a dialogic relationship. Bakhtin (1981: 262-263) calls this multiplicity of voices 'polyphony' and delves into this concept as follows:

> The novel can be defined as a diversity of social speech types (sometimes even diversity of languages) and a diversity of individual voices, artistically organised. The internal stratification of any single national language into social dialects, characteristic group behaviour, professional jargons, generic languages, languages of generation and age groups, tendentious languages, languages of the authorities, of various circles and of passing fashions, languages that serve the specific socio-political purposes of the day, even of the hour (each day has its own slogan, its own vocabulary, its own emphases) —this internal stratification present in every language at any moment of its historical existence is the indispensable prerequisite of the novel as a genre. The novel orchestrates all its themes, the totality of the world of objects, and ideas depicted and expressed in it, by means of the differing individual voices that flourish under such conditions.

Saturday, in the light of Bakhtin's words, epitomises the Modern novel because it celebrates polyphony. Two strong voices engage in a dialogue throughout the novel – that of Henry's and Daisy's, on behalf of scientific and literary discourses, respectively– and their orchestration is manifested, as Bakhtin expresses it, through a variety of languages. *Saturday* presents several instances which illustrate "the professional jargons, generic languages" that characterise and constitute each of the discourses.

As far as Henry is concerned, it suffices to recall the thorough descriptions and explanations of operations in his charge –such as his Friday's patient Andrea Chapman's (McEwan: 2006: 10-11) and Baxter's (250-257) – in which highly specific and technical vocabulary is ubiquitous. However, it is noteworthy that in situational contexts other than those in which Henry takes part as a professional, his scientific language pervades as well, even in very intimate episodes in his life, as the following passage describes it:

> As they [Henry and his wife] kiss he imagines the green eyes seeking out his own. This commonplace cycle of falling asleep and waking, in darkness, under private cover, with another creature, a pale soft tender mammal, putting faces together in a ritual of affection, briefly settled in the eternal necessities of warmth, comfort, safety, crossing limbs to draw nearer - a simple daily consolation, almost too obvious, easy to forget by daylight. Has a poet ever written it up? (48-49)

The lexical choices related to Science, such as 'creature' or 'mammals' and 'limbs' instead of the more ordinary 'person' or 'legs' are relevant insofar as they are related to Henry's discourse of Science: from them there transpires a conception of the world in which it is possible to trace the area of experience where it originates. Then, there emerges a triangular relationship which binds words, worldviews and social and cultural

spheres, since it can shed light on the context in which it surfaces and on the conceptions of the world to which it is related. In the light of the inseparability of those elements, the language chosen is not a negligible aspect for the understanding of the modes in which discourses operate. As Bakhtin puts it,

> [e]very language in the novel is a point of view (…) any point of view on the world fundamental to the novel must be a concrete, socially embodied point of view, not an abstract, purely semantic position; it must, consequently, have its own language with which it is organically united. A novel is constructed not on abstract differences in meaning nor on merely narrative collisions, but on concrete social speech diversity (1981: 411-412).

Henry's phraseology has its origins in the "concrete social speech" field of his profession and evinces how the scientific discourse is deeply rooted in him and how it shapes the way he perceives different phenomena of the world, including his own intimacy.

As regards Daisy, on the other hand, metaliterary terms as well as literary concepts and authors are prevalent in many of her speeches. An instance which illustrates this point is the conversation about one of her poems in which she and her grandfather Grammaticus are engaged and which deprives Henry of any possible participation:

> 'Granddad, it's not "doth bravely appear".'
> 'Of course it is. I taught you that sonnet.'
> 'I know you did. But how can the line scan with "bravely"? It's "On your broad main doth wilfully appear".'
> (...) For Henry, the word 'scan' triggers an unwanted memory, a prick of work anxiety about a hundred-and-ninety-thousand-pound shortfall in the funds the Trust has set aside for the purchase of a more powerful MRI scanner. He's written the memo, he's been to all the meetings. Was there something else he should have done? An e-mail to be forwarded perhaps. Of scanning in poetry, he's in no position to say that 'wilfully' is an improvement on 'bravely' (McEwan, 2006: 201-202).

The level of proficiency and accuracy with which Daisy and Grammaticus perform in the academic arena of Literature is extrapolated to a conversational exchange within a domestic atmosphere, in a fashion parallel to Henry's depiction of an intimate encounter using scientific terms. On this opportunity, though, it is the language and the discourse of Literature which pervades spheres other than the one in which it originates. Furthermore, the language used in the dialogue between Daisy and Grammaticus reveals

as well the power discourse wields when creating groups of reference and belonging. The exclusion that Henry experiences is evident: he confesses to ignorance regarding the polysemy of a word –a form of ignorance which is explained by the fact that he is alien to the discourse in which that word is articulated. This is not, however, the first time he feels excluded from a conversation between Daisy and Grammaticus: back to the moment when the grandfather starts to sharply criticise her granddaughter's poetry, Henry cannot offer her his support simply because he does not know the meaning of the word 'stanza'. He admits:

> He said the rhythms [of Daisy's poems] were loose and clumsy, the stanzas were of irregular length. Henry looked at Rosalind, willing her to intervene. If she didn't, he would have to, and the matter would assume too much importance. To his shame, he was not absolutely certain what a stanza was until he looked in a dictionary later that night. (McEwan, 2006: 36)

The language around which the argument between Henry's daughter and father-in-law revolves is of such unfamiliarity to him that he is hindered from defending her. It is the language of the discourse of Literature that withholds Henry, since language is "a socio-ideological conceptual system of real social groups and their embodied representatives" (Bakhtin, 1981: 411): the language of Literature has its sources in a social group to which he does not belong. Therefore, it is not only the literary language that he finds unfathomable, but also the practices associated with it, as he himself acknowledges when asserting: "[s]lowing down, stopping yourself completely, to read and understand a poem is like trying to acquire an old-fashioned skill like drystone walling or trout tickling" (McEwan, 2006: 129). His lack of understanding as well as his disdain for the characteristics and functions of the discourse of Literature breed the exclusion to which he is subjected.

Nonetheless, though polyphony is a notion that provides an insightful account of the presence of a multiplicity of voices, it does not offer the reason why they contend. An explanation for the conflictive tendency that the interaction between the scientific and literary discourses displays becomes impellent. In this regard, Bakhtin (1981: 263) expresses:

> Authorial speech, the speeches of narrators, inserted genres, the speech of characters are merely those fundamental compositional unities with whose help

> heteroglossia [*raznorečie*] can enter the novel; each of them permits a multiplicity of social voices and a wide variety of their links and interrelationships.

Polyphony, then, allows the entrance of heteroglossia in the novel and it is the heteroglot element that signals the direction of the "links and interrelationships" between the variety of voices. The main characteristic of their relationship is that of tension:

> "'Heteroglossia' (the Russian 'raznorečie' literally means 'different-speech-ness') refers to the conflict between 'centripetal' and 'centrifugal', 'official' and 'unofficial' discourses within the same (...) language. 'Heteroglossia' should not be confused with 'polyphony' (polifoniya). The latter term is used by Bakhtin primarily to describe (...) 'multi-voiced' novels, whereby (...) discourses interact on equal terms. 'Heteroglossia', on the other hand, foregrounds the clash of antagonistic social forces" (Morris, 1994: 248).

In this light, it is the divergent views attached to certain forms of language and which collide in the novel that are responsible for its polyphonic and heteroglot features: *Saturday*'s plurality of voices is articulated through conflict. The Postmodernist discourse of Literature and the Positivist discourse of Science emerge as "antagonistic social forces" due to their respective centrifugal and centripetal drives (Bakhtin, 1981: 272): by endorsing the non-referential –or self-referential– function of language (Rorty, 1992: 184) and the fictional character of reality (Gregson, 2004: 7; Eagleton, 1993: 387), the literary discourse of Postmodernism embodied in Daisy dismantles the Positivist insistence on the autonomous objectivity and factuality of the 'real' (Chalmers, 1999: 4) manifested by Henry's Positivist scientific discourse.

The concept of heteroglossia, then, sheds light on a reading of *Saturday* as a site of discursive struggle. Such approach fosters an understanding of the novel as the place where voices of different discourses partake and interact, and, in doing so, enter into conflict. By means of foregrounding the contention between the scientific and literary discourses in terms of a complex interaction between centripetal and centrifugal forces, a form of analysis is discouraged which is based on merely presenting the discourse of Science and the discourse of Literature as dichotomic watertight entities, remaining oblivious to the view of the worlds and the subjectivities associated with each of them. This is precisely the trap to which Henry falls victim when facing how Baxter succumbs to Daisy's reading of Matthew Arnold's "Dover Beach":

> [Baxter]'s hunched over, leaning his weight against the back of the sofa. Though his right hand hasn't moved from Rosalind's neck, his grip on the knife looks slacker, and his posture, the peculiar yielding angle of his spine, suggests a possible ebbing of intent. Could it happen, is it within the bounds of the real, that a mere poem of Daisy's could precipitate a mood swing? (McEwan, 2006: 221)

Henry's perplexity originates in his impossibility to understand a change in Baxter's attitude caused by a poem, since, to his belief, "[u]nlike in Daisy's novels, moments of precise reckoning are rare in real life" (156). For Henry, the poem amounts to a mimetically realistic interpretation through which he equates its content to Daisy's life in the light of her pregnancy:

> The lines surprise (...) They are unusually meditative, mellifluous and wilfully archaic. She's thrown herself back into another century. [H]e feels himself slipping through the words into the things they describe. He sees Daisy on a terrace overlooking a beach in summer moonlight; the sea is still and at high tide, the air scented, there's a final glow of sunset. She calls to her lover, surely the man who will one day father her child, to come and look, or, rather, listen to the scene. Perowne sees a smooth-skinned young man, naked to the waist, standing at Daisy's side. Together they listen to the surf roaring on the pebbles, and hear in the sound a deep sorrow which stretches right back to ancient times. She thinks there was another time, even further back, when the earth was new and the sea consoling, and nothing came between man and God. But this evening the lovers hear only sadness and loss in the sound of the waves breaking and retreating from the shore. She turns to him, and before they kiss she tells him that they must love each other and be faithful, especially now they're having a child, and when there's no peace or certainty, and when desert armies stand ready to fight (220-221).

The unfeasibility that he attributes to the change in the course of events determined by a poem that, in his view, does no more than depict his daughter's life is rooted in the discourse of Science in which he is absorbed, as he admits it: "He doesn't have the lyric gift to see beyond it - he's a realist, and can never escape" (168). His access to the "lyric gift" is denied by his Positivist standpoint, which reduces different phenomena to the alleged veracity of facts and which, simultaneously, purports a conception of man in the same terms. In this regard, for Henry, Baxter has fallen prey to a "fixed fate, to hav[ing] one tiny slip, an error of repetition in the codes of his being, in his genotype, the modern variant of a soul" (279) and it is not possible, then, for a poem to have affected an individual in a manner that not even Science can, especially when that individual's destiny is already set. Along this train of thought, a poem cannot deploy such function simply because the realm of Literature to which it belongs is not functional –a property

that corresponds to Science. In other words, for Henry, Science and Literature are, in Arnold's words ("Dover Beach", l. 38.), two "armies [that] clash": if he cannot dovetail Baxter's surrender with his worldview, it is on the account that he cannot perceive the complexity of how the centrifugal forces of Literature act upon the centripetal drives of Science.

Heteroglossia, then, emerges in *Saturday* as a property which articulates the Positivist discourse of Science and the Postmodernist discourse of Literature foregrounding the tension through which they relate to each other. The novel becomes, in this way, a breeding ground for a discursive struggle, which undermines an understanding of those discourses as merely opposed binaries. In such a contention, voiced out by the characters of Henry and Daisy, different subjectivities and views of the world partake, unsettling one another's stability due to the interaction between centripetal and centrifugal forces.

4.3. The limits of discourse in *Saturday*: Baxter and the conception of man. Towards a discursive practice

The consideration of *Saturday* as a site of a discursive struggle has not pondered, however, a disruptive element in the novel: Baxter. There is no direct access, though, to who Baxter is, other than through Henry's perspective, mainly, which is highly conditioned by his Positivist discourse. An instance which illustrates this point is provided by their first encounter, in which Henry infers, in the fashion doctors do with their patients, that Baxter may suffer from Huntington's disease. As from that moment, Baxter is for Henry nothing but a being condemned by his genetics:

> There's no obvious intellectual deterioration yet - the emotions go first, along with the physical coordination. Anyone with significantly more than forty CAG repeats in the middle of an obscure gene on chromosome four is obliged to share this fate in their own particular way. It is written. No amount of love, drugs, Bible classes or prison sentencing can cure Baxter or shift him from his course. It's spelled out in fragile proteins (210).

Such description echoes "biological determinism in its purest form" (93), a theory that Henry fully supports. This endorsement reveals a conception of individuals which reduces them to a sum of molecules that determines their performance in life. To account for such a belief, it is legitimate to claim that it is deeply embedded in the

discourse of Science into which he is inscribed. If, according to Kristeva (1976: 249), each theory of language endorses, with different degrees of explicitness, a conception of individuals, it is possible to claim, by analogy, that through the scientific and literary discourses in *Saturday* –as creators and shapers, by means of language, of worldviews and subjectivities– there transpires an ontological belief about people, i.e. who and what they are.

Whereas the scientific discourse embodied in Henry conceives of individuals as organisms determined by their genetics, there does not seem to be in the novel a direct account of how they can be defined according to Daisy's Postmodernist discourse of Literature. However, in view of a discourse that "focuses upon how the 'real' is constructed through language, how it is everywhere transformed into textuality, and how what appears literal is in fact metaphorical" (Gregson, 2004: 7), the train of thought leads to thinking of individuals as textual subjects: their ontology is preceded and conditioned by language. Language, moreover, "is not an abstract system of normative forms but rather a concrete heteroglot conception of the world" (Bakhtin, 1981: 293). If the possibility of condition for individuals is one that foregrounds the role of language as an entity which allows for the existence of a multiplicity of different worldviews, then individuals are envisaged as discursive subjects.

Nonetheless, there is not full concurrence on the Postmodernist conception of subjects as discursive constructions. This disagreement derives from the fact that, in the first place, the textual or discursive nature of the 'real', which Postmodernism promotes, has encountered resistance: as McHale (1987: 129) expresses it, "[n]ot everyone has been able to sympathise with Postmodernist fiction's role in this project of unmasking the constructed nature of reality". Along the same lines, Gregson (2004: 10) adds that despite the number of advocates for what have been considered peripheral discourses –feminism, postcolonialism, among others– who "are beneficiaries of the Postmodern collapsing of traditional hierarchies [they] are chary of Postmodernist undermining of political activism". That collapse makes reference to the challenge to the presupposition of the independent factuality of reality (Chalmers, 1999: 4), as one of the many instances of questioned hierarchies, and the ulterior fictional status with which it has been ascribed, to which *Saturday* gives testimony. Within this frame, individuals "discovers [their] irreducible secondarity, [their] origin that is always already eluded; for the origin is always already eluded on the basis of an organized field of speech in which the speaking subject vainly seeks a place that is always missing" (Derrida, 1967:

224-225). Conceived of as subsidiary (Hutcheon, 2004: 11), individuals seem to be deprived of agency. Therefore, to the Postmodernist discourse of Literature, they become helpless subjects, as they do to the Positivist discourse of Science.

In the light of the ontologies posed by the discourse of Science and the discourse of Literature, the role of Baxter in *Saturday* is precisely to signal that both discourses, then, seem to lead to a certain entrapment of individuals, since they divest them of agency, the former from the perspective of biological determinism and the latter by suggesting their secondarity in relation to a textually constructed reality and their dependence on it. Particularly in the case of the Postmodernist discourse of Literature, such a phenomenon is read as an aporia, which Derrida has named 'double bind': at the same time reality as an external and objective structure is dismantled by means of processes of denaturalisation which endow it with a fictional status, this very same fictional property becomes the natural –and reinforced– status of reality. Derrida (1981: 72) develops the paradox posed by the concept of 'double bind' in relation to the materialist/ idealist dichotomy:

> the materialist text, in the history of its repression, has not been sheltered from the dangers implied by every form of simply overturning the dominant idealist discourse; this materialist discourse thereby can take on a metaphysical form (that is, a mechanistic, non-dialectical form), remaining prisoner of the oppositional couples of the dominant (idealist, metaphysical) discourse, couples within which this materialist discourse can overturn idealist, metaphysical discourse according to a known tactic, that is, according to a gesture that this (mechanistic) materialism cannot thoroughly master.

The questioning and subversion of hierarchies, in spite of its liberating drive, can lead, paradoxically, to a simple reversal in which the challenging discourse assumes the same position, functions and characteristics of the previously challenged discourse. By extension, a perspective that has guaranteed individuals that there is nothing natural in the world that determines their condition, however marginal, may, contradictorily, at the same time, discourage and undermine any attempt of exert some action on reality (Hutcheon, 2001: 142), since its fabricated property will remain. The reason for this paradox lies, according to Jameson (1988: 373), in the double direction Postmodernist Literature takes: "[t]he problem of postmodernism (...) is at one and the same time an aesthetic and a political one". As regards the first one, the difficulty has its basis in its "irreducible variety" (373): its heterogeneity impedes, precisely, defining its aesthetic

value –or values– among which he distinguishes the "anti-modernist standpoint" (375) that has been explored in this paper. The political problem, on the other hand, is condensed in the Postmodernist apolitical trend, understood in terms of a deterrent to the individual's participation in the world (Hutcheon, 2001: 3). A possible course of action, then, to provide an alternative for the discursive aporia to which people are subjected –among whom Baxter is only one instance– is to rescue the ground-breaking drive of the Postmodernist discourse of Literature in relation to a political element, which is understood not in terms of party politics but in terms of making it possible for individuals to act upon the world.

In this regard, Kristeva, when exploring the modes in which linguistics could develop a certain ethic, offers an interesting insight into the possibility for the subject to exert some action upon the world without excluding a discursive perspective. She exposes a notion of language which recognises the presence of a symbolic modality and a semiotic modality at the same time as she claims their inseparability. The symbolic modality relates the objects and phenomena of the world to categories which organise and structure our perception of it, in accordance with social and cultural linguistic practises, which may be stable but not historically unchangeable (1984: 52). On the other hand, the semiotic modality is related to culturally unmediated experiences – mainly bodily experiences– which constitute the 'semiotic chora' (1984: 25). Since Structuralist Linguistics has dissociated the study of language from the notion of the subject (1976: 253, 1988: 231) when furthering its research into the symbolic modality over the semiotic, she tries to reconcile these two elements by foregrounding the semiotic modality at the same level of the symbolic through what she calls a 'poetic language': "It would deflect linguistics toward a consideration of language as an articulation of a heterogeneous process, with the speaking subject leaving its imprint on the dialectic between the articulation and its process (...) this would establish a *poetic language*" (1988: 231). By laying emphasis on the semiotic element of language –the one which has not been affected yet by social and cultural institutions– she recognises the importance of the action of subjects, since they are "living [their] imprint" in a form of performance that she names the "signifying process" (1984: 24). The signifying process, by means of a poetic language, relates both the semiotic and symbolic modality not in privative but rather interactive terms:

> This [signifying process] does not necessarily mean, as is often said today, that poetic language is subject to *more* constrains than 'ordinary language' [related to culture and society]. It does mean that we must analyse those elements of the complex operation that I should call poetic language (in which the dialectics of the subject is inscribed) that are screened out by ordinary language, i.e. *social constraint*. I shall be then talking about something other than language – a practice (1988: 231).

The signifying process becomes, then, a signifying practice which observes the social factors which mediate individuals' performance and their possibilities to inscribe themselves into the world by acting upon it. And, given that this paper has delved into that mediation as a function of discourse, it is legitimate to put forward a concept that encompasses the notion of discourse and that of poetic practice and moves beyond them as separate entities: that of a discursive practice.

A discursive practice, then, emerges as an alternative for individuals to the discursive entrapment, either caused by the Positivist discourse of Science or the Postmodernist discourse of Literature. This concept has been already put forward by the Argentinean medievalist Funes (2006: 14; 2007: 9; 2009: 78) to conduct research on the textual productions of the medieval Spain that simultaneously ponders the specificity of the literary value of the works studied and the historical context to which they belong and by which they are conditioned. Acknowledging that insightful contribution, this paper conceives of a discursive practice as a practical and theoretical contemporary device that yields a conception of subjectivity which raises in the individual an awareness of the reality as a construction resulting from the interaction of a multiplicity of discourses at the same time as it fosters a reflection upon such process, a reflection which can evolve into an invitation to act upon that very same reality. In this way, a sensibility to the power of discourse is fostered which does not deprive individuals of their agency by allowing them to voice themselves out and inscribe their subjectivity into the discourses that constitute their reality.

In this light, it is not misguided to claim that Baxter may have glanced at the opportunity of developing a discursive practice after listening to Daisy. As Henry speculates about it: "Baxter fell for the magic, he was transfixed by it, and he was reminded how much he wanted to live. No one can forgive him the use of the knife. But Baxter heard what Henry never has, and probably never will, despite all Daisy's attempts to educate him" (McEwan, 2006: 278). Baxter's falling for the magic may correspond to a certain desire to embark upon a signifying process that allows him to

inscribe himself into a reality –social and biological– that has deprived him of that opportunity. In other words, he may have developed an awareness of the possibility of engaging into a discursive practice, a possibility which he may not afford because he "will live to face charges" (266) and, due to his illness, "the door of his consciousness is beginning to close" (279).

Furthermore, it is not whimsical that Baxter's epiphanic moment is triggered off when listening to Daisy´s reading of "Dover Beach", a poem by Matthew Arnold first published in 1867. Constructed by Joyce as a moment of revelation, the epiphany is for the individual tantamount to "[a]n instant of wild flight [which] deliver[s] him and [in which] the cry of triumph (...) cle[aves] his brain" (1996: 193). The moment of deliverance causes a cleavage in the mind of a person which is equated to an instance of realisation or comprehension of the meaning of certain facts or events in the world. Precisely, what may have stricken Baxter is a feeling of empathy with the lyrical voice of the poem who can also hear "[t]he eternal note of sadness" (Arnold, "Dover Beach", l. 14) caused by a receding "Sea of Faith" (l. 21). This expression is nothing but a metaphor for loss: Baxter is overcome with grief at withdrawing waters that stand for the deprival of the experience of the discursive functioning of reality and the subsequent desire to be actively involved in such process. The same grief strikes the persona of "Dover Beach", in whom some awareness has arisen that the certainties that regulate people's life no longer hold. In the historical context into which the poem is inscribed, the movement of the retreating sea symbolises the withdrawal of the paradigms –of the discourses– which until half of the nineteenth century have conditioned individuals' conception of the self and of the world. On the one hand, subjectivities are condensed in the idea that people are "spiritual being[s]" (Strandberg, 1964: 3) and, on the other hand, worldviews are subsumed to the conception of "[h]istory [a]s an arrow pointing onward and upwards towards Infinite Progress" (3). Against this set of conceptions, individuals start to develop a new insight into what they are as such and as members of the wider gender of human beings: they lack the spirituality that makes them unique and the actions they perform upon the world may not necessarily create the conditions for a more promising future. For this set of circumstances Strandberg has coined the expression "crisis of belief" (3), given that people are no longer what they have thought to be. Moreover, this predicament can be thought of in discursive terms, since it takes place due to new emerging voices in the period of Victorianism which Foucault calls "founders of discursivity": "they are not just the authors of their own works, they have

produced something else: the possibilities and the rules for the formation of other texts (...), they have established and endless possibility of discourse" (1993: 206). These new voices, by virtue of their status as discourse creators, allow other forms of subjectivities and worldviews to surface. Among those discourses, it is worth mentioning Charles Darwin's theory of evolution (Strandberg, 1964: 2, 3), which claims that people may share common ancestors with apes; Sigmund Freud's theory of the Unconscious (Foucault, 1993: 206; Strandberg, 1964: 2), which suggests that individuals and their reasoning may not be completely under their command; and Marx's socioeconomic theories (Foucault, 1993: 206), which dismantle the historically and supposedly ordinary forms of capital accumulation and put forward that these have been achieved by an alienating process in which humans are exploited by humans. These discourses have inflicted a deep wound upon anthropocentrism and this is precisely the circumstance upon which new conceptions of individuals and of the world arise. People are no longer in command of what surrounds them because they are no longer in command of themselves; at the same time, their social environment does not guarantee economic and cultural progress any longer. In other words, these discourse founders have attacked the conception of individuals as centres of meaning (Hutcheon, 2004: 11) and their societies as centres of development, and what is left is only the state of "melancholy" (Arnold, "Dover Beach", l. 25) upon which "Dover Beach" dwells.

In this light, it is possible to conceive of the discursive crisis of belief as the embodiment of the modern tragedy. As it has been put forward by Strandberg, such crisis is characterised by individuals' sense of despair: "despair of [themselves], of [their] value and destiny; despair of one another, of the meaning of civilization; and certainly, despair of his God –of his Goodness, or power, or existence" (1964: 1). Despair, then, is experienced at the elusive and withdrawing sea which represents the previous dominant discourses and which leaves people in a state of uncertainty and perplexity. It is this quandary, indeed, that constitutes the tragedy of the Modern individual, a tragedy which Arnold's poem materialises by means of the reference to Sophocles (Arnold, "Dover Beach", l. 15). For the Greek tragedian, the tragic atmosphere is fostered by a person facing a conflict impossible to solve, created by two forces that divide the self: "The individual bearer of such consciousness is essentially tragic because he or she enters into [the] division (...) and in entering into that division is destroyed" (Segal, 2003: 3). In "Dover Beach", the lyrical I is faced with a situation in which old discourses fight against new ones and, therefore, in view of the conception

of discourse this paper endorses, old subjectivities and worldviews fight against old ones, a conflict anchored in the image of “a darkling plain (...)/ [w]here ignorant armies clash at night” (Arnold, “Dover Beach”, l. 36-38). The persona is trapped between the disappearing old discourses and the emerging ones, unable, yet, to come to terms with either of them. Such dilemma is what actually triggers off tragedy, since the choice for one of the two alternatives implies a form of annihilation of the self. If individuals let go of the old discourses, the subjectivities associated to it will be entirely obliterated; on the other hand, if they cling to the new discourses, they will see how subjectivities are already obliterated and what characterises them is uncertainty. In view of this poignant scenario, Steiner, against daunting prospects, asserts: “it is precisely this destruction (...) which constitutes man's eminent worth” (In Segal, 2003: 3). It follows that tragedy, by putting individuals to the test, confronts them with their importance as subjects, which “Dover Beach” documents as finding “also in the sound a thought” (Arnold, “Dover Beach”, l. 19). It is thanks to this revealing encounter with one’s possibilities that the persona of the poem as well as Baxter undergo an epiphanic moment: the former, faced to “human misery” (l. 18), can conclude that the element to endure the discursive crisis of belief in a world which “Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,/ Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain” (l. 34-35) is no other than love. The latter, on the other hand, cannot reach such conciliatory solution because of his legal and medical condition. However, the experience of epiphany is undeniable. Until that moment, Baxter has been thought of and constructed as an individual incapable of assuming responsibility for his decisions and his life. According to the Positivist discourse of Science, this incapability is genetically determined. Alternatively, for the Postmodernist discourse of Literature, Baxter’s powerlessness is contextually bound: Baxter is a victim of situational variables which, given the pre-eminence that Postmodernism has attributed to language, are nothing but textually fabricated circumstances (Derrida, 1967: 224-225; Foucault, 2005: 360; Gregson, 2004: 7; Hutcheon, 2001: 76, 134; Rorty; 1992: 184). When listening to Arnold’s poem and bonding with its lyrical I in terms of empathy, Baxter may have had an awareness of his own worth as an individual –not only who he has become due to the circumstances in his life but who he can possibly become. He has had an insight into the possibilities of developing himself as a subject who can explore and exploit his agency upon the discourses that surround him and has conditioned his subjectivity and worldviews. In other words, he has had an epiphany of the possibilities of a discursive practice, though he has only reached the point of

comprehending the power of discourses and may not actually be able to take part in the reality they constitute, since it is not possible to know whether the law or medical institution will work in that direction. A space is open, then, for the involvement of others, and this paper adheres to the idea that education is the one to assume the responsibilities for guaranteeing everybody –even extreme cases such as Baxter's– the means to the development of a discursive practice, and Literature in particular, given the frame into which this paper is inscribed.

Saturday and its pedagogical implications: The Literature in English class as an enabler of a discursive practice

What the analysis of *Saturday* specularly has shown about Literature and language is an alternative path to exploring how the former can be conceived of in the 21st century. Having raised that question, this paper has intended to seek and arrive at possible answers in the light of the notion of discourse, understood as language phenomenon rooted in a socio-cultural context and as the condition of possibility for individuals to construct their subjectivities and worldviews on what surrounds them (Bakhtin, 1986: 60; Foucault in Ashcroft, 2001: 70; Morris, 1994: 249; Voloshinov in Morris, 1994: 41, 248). In that task, inevitably, the issue of how human beings are thought of –particularly from a discursive perspective– arises as well. Such inevitability has been anticipated by Kristeva (1976: 249) and suggests that delving into the ontology of Literature –what it is, how it is created and constructed– entails probing into the ontology of the individual as subjects. In fact, *Saturday* opens with an epigraph which explicitly asks the question of what it is to be a man and what its implications are:

> For instance? Well, for instance, what it means to be a man. In a city. In a century. In transition. In a mass. Transformed by science. Under organised power. Subject to tremendous controls. In a condition caused by mechanization. After the late failure of radical hopes. In a society that was no community and devalued the person. Owing to the multiplied power of numbers which made the self negligible. Which spent military billions against foreign enemies but would not pay for order at home. Which permitted savagery and barbarism in its own great cities. At the same time, the pressure of human millions who have discovered what concerted efforts and thoughts can do. As megatons of water shape organisms on the ocean floor. As tides polish stones. As winds hollow cliffs. The beautiful supermachinery opening a new life for innumerable mankind. Would you deny them the right to exist? Would you ask them to labor and go hungry while you yourself enjoyed old-fashioned Values? You – you yourself are a child of this

> mass and a brother to all the rest. Or else an ingrate, dilettante, idiot. There, Herzog, thought Herzog, since you ask for the instance, is the way it runs. (Bellow, 1964, in McEwan, 2006: non-numbered page)

The epigraph foregrounds the ontological status of the individuals by making mention of the multiplicity of factors that partake of their construction. In this way, *Saturday* signals a possible course for the reading of the novel, one which lies on the attempt of answering what individuals are. This paper has intended to do so by understanding and positing that multiplicity as polyphony, i.e. as a presence of a number of voices which, anchored in a certain social area of experience, embody certain discourses (Bakhtin, 1981: 262-263): the Positivist discourse of Science and the Postmodernist discourse of Literature that, in their heteroglot interaction, bring into conflict their respective worldviews and their corresponding conceptions of individuals (Bakhtin, 1981: 272; Morris, 1994: 248). Subjectivity, then, is envisaged, in general, as a discursive phenomenon and, in the particular case of *Saturday*, either shaped by biological determinism or pervaded by Postmodernist scepticism. In both cases, the individuals' subjectivity is conditioned by discourse in such a way that they seem to have been deprived of any possibility of action. On this account, this paper has put forward the concept of a discursive practice, which recognises the power that discourses yield and, at the same time, "the pressure of human millions who have discovered what concerted efforts and thoughts can do": the power individuals have to act upon the discourses that make up reality.

As far as the Literature in English class is concerned, this cannot remain oblivious to the re-evaluation of the concepts of Literature and subjects put forward by this paper. An enquiry into their characteristics and functions within the Teacher Training College in Argentina becomes impelling in a context where education is tantamount both to a means of social and economic promotion and to the cause and effect of a democratic society. The first equation is presented by *Diseño Curricular de Lenguas Extranjeras* (*DCLE*, onwards) as the "instrumental value"[1] of English teaching and learning –and foreign language teaching and learning, in general (2001: 21; my translation, see the 'Appendix' for a reading of the Spanish version of this and other quotations extracted from curricular documents). The second equivalence, on the other hand, has been thought of as the "formative value"[2] (21; my translation) of education. The "instrumental value" lies in that "all students can, by means of the knowledge of a foreign language, have access to specialised training and broaden their working and

professional horizons"[3] (21; my translation). Along these lines, English as a foreign language is seen as channel through which students can enhance their socioeconomic conditions. On the other hand, but not independently from its instrumental correlative, the "formative value" is developed:

> from the perspective of a project committed to social and cultural democratisation [and] given that it is *in* language and *through* it that individuals constitute themselves within social relationships, school has the function and the responsibility of guaranteeing all students the access to having knowledge of the linguistic system of a language and of language in general (21; my translation).[4]

As it can be seen, English as a foreign language is bestowed upon a function of a broader scope –that of contributing to the growth of individuals as citizens immersed in a network of social and cultural conventions– on the grounds that language is precisely the possibility for such condition. As it has been explored, language, inextricably related to the historical context in which it emerges, can shape subjectivities and individuals' worldviews. It transpires from this function, then, than both the instrumental and the formative value are encompassed within the concept of discursive practice, as it has been put forward and discussed in this paper. A discursive practice can help students recognise and analyse the social variables that influence their surrounding discourses at the same time as it allows some room for them to develop their ability to critically perform in their contexts. Precisely, within the framework of the analysis pursued in this paper and the arguments exposed, the Literature in English class is envisioned as the appropriate place to both foster discourse awareness –its meaning and its scope– in students and future teachers and encourage in them an attitude to their profession as a discursive practice. This can be achieved by making room in the Literature in English class for the inextricable relationship between the content of its syllabus –what is taught– and its methodology –how that very content is taught. To do so, two aspects must be considered: the threefold profile of the teacher of Literature in English –teacher of Literature, teacher of (a foreign) language and teacher as an educator of future teachers; and, on the other hand, the tridimensional constitution of the Teacher Training College's student –student of Literature, student of (a foreign) language and a future teacher and educator.

As regards the content of the Literature in English Curriculum, this paper endorses an approach from a discursive perspective. In fact, such perspective is the one adopted

by the Ministry of Education of the City of Buenos Aires, as the resolution on the *Common Basic Contents for Foreign Language Teaching* (*CBC*, onwards) shows: the law tackles the teaching of Literature in discursive terms, since it refers to it as "literary discourse"[5] (1998: 16; my translation), and explores it as such. In keeping with such resolution, the current *Plan de Estudios para la Carrera del Profesorado en Inglés* (*Curriculum for Teacher Training College*, my translation; referred to as *CTTC* onwards) in the City of Buenos Aires fosters as well work in the English literary class in the light of the notion of discourse. This can be seen in one of the items on the list of the minimal contents of the subject: "tradition and break in the contemporary literary discourse"[6] (*CTTC*: 60; my translation). From this item, three inferences of major importance can be drawn: firstly, that the study of Literature must be conducted within the framework of a historical background; secondly, that Literature is already conceived of as a discourse; and, thirdly, that Literature is a site of struggle, as both the words 'tradition' and 'break' duly suggest so. The first two inferences, in fact, collude to one, since the former can be subsumed to the latter if discourse is thought of in the terms that this paper has posed; i.e., a certain understanding and approach to the world anchored in individuals' diverse areas of experiences (Bakhtin, 1986; Foucault in Ashcroft, 2001), which are undoubtedly permeated by historical forces. Discourse, then, is a highly productive concept which can as well shed light on the other minimal contents that the subject is supposed to teach:

• The tendency towards the Baroque in Metaphysical Poetry and Romanticism.
• The tendency towards the classic in Neoclassicism and Realism.
[…]
• Avant-garde Literature and Contemporary Literature.
• Postmodernist and Postcolonialist issues[7] (*CTTC*: 60; my translation).

The different literary trends and movements mentioned in the *CTTC* of the City of Buenos Aires, given that they are framed within a particular historical context, and privilege certain worldviews over others, can be tackled as discourses. On these grounds, in the same way as this paper has explored the discourse of Postmodernist Literature in relation to the discourse of Positivist Science in *Saturday*, the Literature in English class can delve into the discourses of Metaphysical Poetry and Romanticism and into how they recover the Baroque tradition at the same time as they break with the discourse of Renaissance. Along the same lines, it can explore how the Renascent

tradition is adopted yet again by the literary discourses of Neoclassicism and Realism and how Avant-gardes try to disentangle from those very same discourses. As it can be seen, the ideas of tradition and break are not exclusive of the contemporary literary discourse, and become extensive to other discourses of Literature. Literature, then, emerges as a site of discursive struggle, in the fashion evinced in *Saturday* when tackling, for instance, the relationship between Postmodernist discourse of Literature and the Positivist discourse of Science: a heteroglot place where the centrifugal and centripetal forces of the voices of different discourses encounter (Bakhtin, in Morris, 1994: 248).

Heteroglossia, however, has been analysed as a feature of the modern novel which allows "the clash of antagonistic forces" that is practically inherent to the multiplicity of voices in a text, as originally posited by Bakhtin (248). Despite this seeming restriction, the concept of heteroglossia can prove interestingly insightful as well for the work with Literature in general. In keeping with this, Corbett (2003: 174) asserts: "[t]he vividness of Literature lies in the construction of dramatic voices, which, though they are fictional, nevertheless represent the people who inhabit a given culture at a particular time". Polyphony and the tension that it implies are a property not only of the novel but of the entirety of literary texts. In view of this characterisation, the legislation on *CBC* (1998: 17; my translation) fosters the work on Literature and the peculiarities of its language because "[t]he literary discourse is an ideal approach road to foreign language [since] much of everyday language is figurative or poetic, even certain types considered non literary such as chatting, jokes, the discourse of journalism, of science, websites on the internet, advertisements, graphic press, radio and TV"[8]. Literature, by means of language, permeates through the individuals' diverse sphere of activities, and simultaneously, it draws upon them to constitute itself as a discourse. In considerations of these phenomena, the Literature in English class confronts the specificity of the status of its participants as Literature teachers and Literature students with a challenging task. By drawing upon the minimal contents and resources of the subject, the former aims at creating the conditions for the latter to reflexively read literary works so that they can distinguish in such texts the multiple and contending voices which belong to a certain "culture at a particular time". In this way, students are allowed to analyse the discourses into which those voices inscribe, their characteristics and their modes of operating. If this task is performed successfully, it may eventually have far-reaching implications for students' and teachers' lives, as the resolution on *CBC* (17; my translation) expects it:

“[a] proficient control of these resources [the above mentioned strategies] makes it possible to develop a better understanding of discourse in general”[9]. What transpires from this expectation is that, with an appropriate pedagogy, the participants of the Literature in English class can evaluate how the literary mechanisms that regulate the variety of voices of the texts that they read actually operate on their own lives.

As to the pedagogy with which content may be tackled, the study of discourses in literary texts is to be conducted in such a way that the Literature in English class emerges as a space which intends to develop critical thinking at every instance of learning. This is tantamount to conceiving of the Literature in English class as a place where content and knowledge are not simply to be transmitted but rather to be constructed by fostering a form of reflection whose scope encompasses Literature as subject matter, the processes of cognition involved and cultural implications (*CBC*, 1998: 2). By doing so, the Literature in English class adheres to the guidelines issued by *DCLE*, which states:

> Reflection includes metalinguistic aspects (those related to the functioning of the linguistic system in each language), metacognitive aspects (connected to the recognition and discernment of what is being learnt and how), and intercultural aspects (associated with what arises due to the distance and contrast with what is one’s own)[10] (2001: 25; my translation).

The three forms of reflection respond, primarily, to the teaching of foreign language in general. By no means, that generality acts to the detriment of the specificity of the Literature in English class: on the contrary, it foregrounds the second aspect of its participants –Literature in English teachers and students as teachers and learners of language. Such a condition is of primal importance if the study of Literature is approached from a discursive perspective, since language is the mainstay of discourse. This property emerges due to the fact that “[t]he language used (...) possesses its own belief system” (Bakhtin, 1981: 315) which has its roots in the social, cultural and historical context. Along similar lines, McRae (1991: 53) adds that language “does not exist in a historical vacuum”, which insists upon its strong connection to its context. In this light, Literature in English teachers and students, as teachers and learners of language, should embark upon questioning statements similar to the following ones in the fashion McRae (69) suggests:

Language tells – but what?
Languages describes – but how? and how well?
Language informs – but who? and how much?
Language deceives.
Language entertains.
Language placates.
Language arouses emotions.
Language reveals.
Language conceals.
Language distorts.

This task might as well be done in relation to Literature: What does Literature do? Does it describe, inform, deceive, entertain...? Which of these 'functions' have been attributed to what literary discourses? How and why do those discourses surface within a given historical context? How do those discourses interact with their predecessors and how do they pave the way for their successors? By means of such a task, a metalinguistic reflection is performed, since those questions contribute to "understanding the way in which a certain construction works"[11] (*DCLE*: 46; my translation), which can be subsumed to that of Literature as a discourse. The task suggested, however, may be thought of as a whimsical or mechanical transfer, though it is far from abiding by those qualities. Firstly, because teachers and students of Literature in English cannot remain oblivious to the fact that language is the raw material of their object of study –which is the reason why they are teachers and learners of language– and, secondly, because that extrapolation is contextualised within the discursive perspective that this paper has adopted to delve into Literature.

A similar projection must be made if the Literature in English class is to be conceived of as a space which fosters a metacognitive reflection. Not much has been studied about metacognition framed within such a degree of specificity, though a large amount of research has been undertaken about the cognitive aspect in foreign language teaching and learning. Among those contributions, Byram (2008: 232) makes mention of what he has called 'skills of discovery and interaction', defined as the "the ability to operate knowledge, attitudes and skills under the constraints of real-time communication and interaction". The skills of developing knowledge by means of inferring processes, as the word 'discovery' suggests it, and operating it within an interactive framework shed light on the possible ways of working in the Literature in English class from a discursive standpoint. Teachers, by means of a careful selection of literary and critical texts and appropriate scaffolding, will enable their students to pose

hypotheses regarding the relationship between the voices brought into play and the discourses into which they are inscribed, as well as the views of the world and subjectivities privileged by the latter. Such pedagogical act and its cognitive implications will hopefully allow students to explore a wide spectrum of alternatives to refute, confirm or enlarge their initial premises. In other words, teachers will facilitate the students' construction of knowledge in the field of Literature from a discursive standpoint. When doing so, Literature in English teachers can help students make those processes explicit by inducing them to reflect upon the steps followed to conduct a certain analysis and the sequence followed to produce a form of knowledge characteristic of Literature. In the light of this metacognitive reflection, written and oral presentations of different kinds within the Literature in English class become significant both for the teachers and students not only because they are evaluating and producing knowledge, according to their roles, but because they are, respectively, witnessing and taking part of the construction of the individuals as knowledge users and producers.

As to the intercultural form of reflection, it cannot be tackled independently from the metacognitive or metalinguistic reflections. In relation to the former, a cultural strain is already attributed to the construction of knowledge by Byram (2008: 232): the 'skills of discovery and interaction' to which he makes allusion are also characterised as the "ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture and cultural practices". To reflect upon knowledge and its construction from a discursive perspective within the Literature in English class implies acknowledging that it is culturally bound and, dialectically, that cultural practices condition the way individuals know themselves, others and the world. On the other hand, the metalinguistic reflection sheds light on a cultural one, since reflecting upon language entails reflecting upon culture, given that "language development and cultural awareness go hand in hand" (McRae, 2003: 26). In this regard, the Literature in English class holds a double added value: it can foster not only a cultural sensibility, but also an intercultural one. In the first place, by means of the study of literary texts from a discursive perspective, it helps cultural awareness arise because, as Revuz claims, the contact with a foreign language "shatters the illusion of one and only point of view"[12] (in *DCLE,* 2001: 21; my translation). This explosion derives in a multiplicity of viewpoints and it expects from teachers and students to analyse the worldviews of which such viewpoints are nothing but their expression, to explore how they and the subjectivities they foster are created from the interaction of language and the particular context in which it emerges. In this light, teachers and

students of Literature in English assume the roles of ethnographers (Corbett, 2003: 35) who engage in a "systematic observation and description of how communities behave" according to the discourses that govern their behaviours. Besides, cultural awareness can be further enriched and become intercultural due to one of the properties of literary texts: "literature can introduce to other worlds and the experience of otherness" (Byram, 1997: 3). The experience of otherness is equated not with that of Corbett's ethnographer but with that of Byram's sojourner, which "…is one of comparisons, of what is the same or different but compatible, but also of conflicts and incompatible contrasts" (1-2). The Literature in English class favours the constitution of its participants as sojourners because of a number of reasons, according to the legislation on *CBC* (1998: 17; my translation):

> Tackling literary texts entails the possibility of access to many cultures without appropriating any in particular, or entering a new and budding culture that makes the differentiation of individual cultures and of personal identity possible, (…) it means accepting different conceptions of the world, of cultures and of society, (...) it harmoniously contributes to the development of the poetic or aesthetic function of language, and therefore, the development of an intercultural competence.[13]

For teachers and students of Literature in English, the development of the intercultural competence involves the task of analysing in literary works the different discourses which originate in specific cultures as well as comparing them. Such comparison is to be drawn not in terms of superiority or inferiority but in terms of the cultural conditions that privilege the emergence of certain discourses and abort the development of others. In this way, critical analysis performed in the fashion suggested is tantamount to embarking upon an intercultural form of reflection.

In the light of the relationship between content and pedagogy, in the inextricable fashion that has been exposed in this paper, a revision of how to conceive of teachers and future teachers in the Teacher Training College becomes necessary. It is expected that this reassessment will enable them to develop their professions as a discursive practice. In order to do so, two concepts posited by *DCLE* (2001: 25; my translation) can shed light on the matter: that of the "competent interlocutor"[14] and that of the "responsible interlocutor"[15]. Literature as a discourse as well as the processes of teaching and learning it, by means of the abovementioned threefold forms of reflection, bestow the Literature in English teacher and student with a new status which *DCLE* (25; my translation) defines as follows:

> Students are thought of as responsible interlocutors, who have the ability to give their opinions and harbour hypothesis drawing upon other types of knowledge and who feel they can suggest, ask and answer (…). Teachers, on the other hand, must assume the responsibility of a more competent interlocutor, of the model of the foreign language, and genuinely make room for students' participation, suggest sources to help them in the process of learning to learn, and acknowledge their own need to check sources.[16]

It transpires from those characterisations that in the foreign language class both the teacher and the students are expected to commit to an active involvement as regards the production of knowledge. The Literature in English class need not be an exception to that expectation. Literature in English teachers and students can work together to produce a certain form of knowledge derived from the study of literary texts. Such knowledge is understood, along the lines pursued in this paper, in terms of the development of an awareness of the constitution and functioning of discourses –how they create subjectivities and shape individuals' view of the world– and, in keeping with this, of the reciprocal relationship between language and the context within which it arises. Along similar lines, Byram (1997, 18-19) claims: "FLT [foreign language teaching, in general, and Literature in English teaching, in particular] should concentrate on equipping learners with the means of accessing and analysing any cultural practices and meanings they encounter". This equipment contemplates the double status of Literature in English students within the Teacher Training College both as students and as future teachers; in other words, their property as responsible interlocutors who are working to become a more competent ones. This passage consists of enlarging and enhancing their discursive position and can be read as a growth into a more complex possibility of enunciation. Bernstein has accounted for such a development by means of the concepts of 'restricted codes' and 'elaborated codes'. The English sociologist has conceived of codes as "[f]orms of spoken language [which] in the process of their learning [individuals' learning] initiate, generalize and reinforce special types of relationship with the environment and thus create for the individual particular dimensions of significance" (2003: 76). Though Bernstein's theoretical device has been designed specifically to explore the causes for low-class children's poor performance at school, it can be seen how it exposes relationship between language and social context parallel to the one discourse does. In the light of Bernstein's contribution, the Literature in English class, by means of the work with the three forms of reflection upon the

constitution and functions of discourse, enables students to pass form a valid though restricted code, where the discursive alternatives are more limited, to an elaborated code, which guarantees a wider spectrum of choices (77). The passage from a stage in which Literature in English students are responsible interlocutors, albeit their restricted code, to a stage in which they become more competent ones due to the development a more elaborated code can be enriched with Bourdieu's notion of cultural capital and the process of its acquisition. 'Cultural capital' has been defined as "a social relation within a system of exchange that include[s] the accumulated cultural knowledge that confers power and status" (Baker, 2004: 37). This theoretical device, then, accounts for social differences in terms of the positions individuals occupy in society and their access to the cultural industry. Bourdieu (1986: 47) has deployed the concept of 'cultural capital' "as a theoretical hypothesis (...) to explain the unequal scholastic achievement of children originating from the different social classes by relating academic success, i.e. the specific profits which children from the different classes and class fractions can obtain in the academic market". By extension, the Literature in English class, when exploiting the three forms of reflections, should facilitate students' access to the academic market, not only in terms of accessing cultural goods or products, but also by creating, enlarging and enriching the possibilities to become a more competent interlocutor (Bernstein, 2003: 202) within the arena of teaching and education. As Bourdieu (1999: 43) claims, the linguistic competence is not merely a technical skill: in the case of the Literature in English lesson, that competence implies developing discourse awareness, which includes its composition and its modes of operating –what it restricts and what it permits.

As competent interlocutors students will be better equipped to become proficient readers. In this sense, reading is understood in the fashion suggested by McRae (1991: 19):

> "When we talk about reading, we do not mean only texts, verbal or non-verbal as they may be. Reading (...) also means reading the world, attempting to interpret, to come to terms with, to assimilate, perhaps even one day to understand what surrounds us, in order that we be better equipped to live in the world. And just as the world must constantly interest, fascinate and surprise us, so our reading must stimulate, provoke, irritate and *teach* us. Thus, we expand our horizons, we compare and contrast our experiences, we react and respond outside the classroom, much as we learn to do inside the classroom".

According to McRae, there is more to reading than decoding texts: reading is a wider epistemological operation by means of which individuals try to interpret and understand their surroundings and the discourses present in it. That is why the metalinguistic, metacognitive and intercultural reflections are not simply theoretical exercises but tools to read the world by means of comparing, contrasting, reacting and responding, as McRae expresses, and, eventually, to act upon that world. Along similar lines, the legislation on *CBC* (1998: 2; my translation) expresses:

> "learning languages helps reflect upon the processes that generate one's own language and improves its usage, opens the spirit towards other cultures and other peoples, offers a wider worldview; using other linguistic codes favours a more diversified mental structure, a more flexible way of thinking, it generates a wider cognitive richness (...) and therefore becomes an efficient vehicle of rediscovery of the world, that expands the already explored area of the mother tongue, or that reconfirms some of its limits".[17]

That is how the Literature English class becomes an enabler of a discursive practice: it helps students grow aware of the power and scope of discourses in conditioning individuals' worldviews and subjectivities at the same time it equips them with critical tools to develop their agency.

Nevertheless, for the growth of students as competent interlocutors who can reflect and act upon their surroundings, it is necessary for them not only to critically 'read' reality by also 'write' themselves into that reality. This metaphorical distinction is contemplated by *CBC* (1998: 17; my translation), which specify that "it is necessary to differentiate between the access to culture and the access to cultural productions"[18]. Such distinction does not conceive of access to culture to the detriment of access to cultural production; rather, it points the direction which the Literature in English class should take. Accordingly, teachers and students should work together in order both to understand the discursive processes by means of which worldviews and subjectivities are created and to participate in the production of those discourses. As 'writers' of the discourses in which they are immersed, competent interlocutors read their reality and participate in its construction as well. As Kramsh expresses it (2003: 8), in this process, students "construct not only reality, but a discoursal self through their discursive choices". In the case of Literature in English students and teachers, the discursive self that emerges thanks to a metalinguistic, metacognitive and intercultural reading of reality has the added value of becoming so in a foreign language. This implies,

according to Kramsch (1993: 234), "giv[ing] voice to feelings of being forever 'betwixt and between', no longer at home in their original culture, nor really belonging to the host culture". Though Kramsch's reflection refers to learning English in an endolingual context –one in which the target language is normally used– it can as well shed light on the status of students of Literature in English at the Teacher Training College, since they are expected to become competent interlocutors in a language that is not theirs –and by means of that very same language– within an environment largely regulated by their mother tongue. These set of circumstances created, according to Bhabha, due to the "relations of two systems" (in Ashcroft, 2001: 61) constitute for students a "Third Space of enunciation, (...) [a] contradictory and ambivalent space" (118). It is precisely in the encounter of an alien and a familiar language that students become proficient readers and writers of discourses. Such experience is, in Kramsch's words, a "boundary experience" (1993: 235): "participants become conscious of the paramount importance of context and (...) manipulating contextual frames and perspectives through language" (235). As it transpires from this definition, the "boundary experience" is of a discursive nature, since it evinces the inseparability of language and contextual variables, to which, in the light of the arguments exposed by this paper, students can gain access thanks to approaching Literature by performing metalinguistic, metacognitive and intercultural reflections. The resolution on *CBC* (1998: 2; my translation) does not remain oblivious to the "boundary experience" of learning a foreign language: "the knowledge of more than one language contributes to a full participation of individuals in the world and societies"[19]. On these grounds, it becomes impelling that the reading skills, as McRae understands them, are articulated with writing skills, i.e. the ability of individuals of inscribing their subjectivity into the processes of discursive production and of acting upon the context in which they originate, an ability this paper has treated as a discursive practice.

Finally, developing a discursive practice is related to a special feature present in teachers and students, and future teachers, of Literature: their condition as educators. In this context, fostering a discursive practice as an act of education is conceived of as subversive by McRae (1991: 69), an attribute which is not to be underestimated, but encouraged, since it "does not mean the overthrow of values and standards, but the constant constructive questioning of assumptions, attitudes and standpoints". Such 'constructive questioning' is anchored both in the content and the pedagogy of the Literature in English class, as it has been evinced throughout this paper. On the one

hand, thinking of Literature as a discourse helps develop a sensibility of the inextricability between language and context and how that becomes the condition for different discourses to emerge and shape the individuals' views of the world and subjectivity. This task, on the other hand, is scaffolded by means of privileging instances of metalinguistic, metacognitive and intercultural reflections which not only lead to critically analysing the discourses present in literary texts, as well as in the world, but also to foregrounding individual's agency and prompting them to reflexively act upon their contexts. It is in this way that the Literature in English class becomes an enabler of a discursive practice and this is where the subversive value of education lies. The Literature in English class can make students grow aware of the possibilities and conditions established by the discourses that surround them. It can provide them, as well, with theoretical and practical tools which will enable them not to be silenced by the power of master discourses. It can help them, indeed, to voice themselves out within those very same discourses, an instance of enunciation which aims at a critical involvement in their realities.

6. Further studies: Issues in *Saturday* left unexplored

Although this paper has intended to perform a thorough analysis of *Saturday* in terms of discourse, some issues remain unexplored or have not received further attention due to the scope and aim of this research work. In this light, studying the heteroglot interactions between the Positivist discourse of Science and the Postmodernist discourse of Literature, their scopes and limits; putting forward the concept of discursive practice as a theoretical and practical tool both to analyse discourses and participate in them; and exploring pedagogical implications for tertiary level participants of the Literature in English class means leaving aside certain aspects and topics which need to be duly addressed in further studies. Among those issues, it is noteworthy to mention that, on the one hand, there exist other perspectives from which *Saturday* may be read and, on the other hand, in keeping with the theoretical framework and approach undertaken, other discursive aspects may be included, such as the presence and the incidence of other discourses in the novel as well as the inner functioning of each discursive formation. Furthermore, the pedagogical proposal of this paper lacks the substantiation that some fieldwork may have provided. It wants, besides, analytic speculations on the possible pedagogical implications of a discursive practice in the contexts of primary and

secondary school as well as reflections upon the courses of actions worth undertaking for fostering interdisciplinary work, among other factors.

As for the discursive perspective adopted for the literary analysis of McEwan's novel, it is by no means an excluding one. An intertextual approach, for instance, may as well render interesting and insightful readings. Defined by Genette (1989: 10; my translation) as "a relationship of copresence between two o more texts" and as having multiple modalities of expression, intertextuality may not only account for the implicit and explicit references *Saturday* makes to other texts, but it could also allow an analysis which discusses the significant bearing those texts may have on the development of the novel, in terms of form and content. From a formal standpoint, *Saturday* deploys a narrative structure akin to that of James Joyce's *Ulysses* and Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*, since its relevant events unfold in one day. The reference to these two Modernist texts within the framework of a Postmodernist one prompts the worth exploring and unresolved matter of the relationship of continuity or discontinuity between Modernism and Postmodernism (Lodge, 1982; Eagleton, 1993). Along similar lines, the reference to Victorian literary and non-literary texts –Matthew Arnold's "Dover Beach" (McEwan, 2006: 220, 229-231, 269, 279), Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (133), Charles Darwin's *The Origins of Species* (55-56, 255) and Charles Dicken's *Hard Times* (68), whose character Thomas Gradgrin is presented by this paper as an 19th century counterpart of the English neurosurgeon due to their common thirst for the 'real'– pose the question of the relevance of Victorianism within Postmodernism. In this way, these queries become an invitation to embark upon an intertextual reading of *Saturday* at the same time as they cast light upon the discursive perspective adopted by this paper, since, as it has been stated in the previous section related to the pedagogical implications of McEwan's novel, Victorianism –referred to as 'Realism' in contexts other than England– and Modernism can be tackled as discourses as well.

As it can be seen, the discursive approach of this study is far from being exhausted. Another factor that contributes to such inconclusiveness is the fact that the heteroglot nature of *Saturday* does not solely amount to the tensions between the Postmodernist discourse of Literature and the Positivist discourse of Science. Other discursive formations, together with their functions, characteristics as well as their interactions with the discourses studied in this paper, remain unexplored. Among those discourses, it is worth mentioning the discourse of Politics and the discourse of Law. As regards the former, upon which Daisy and Henry keep heated arguments (McEwan, 2006: 187-

193), it is expressed in McEwan's novel by means of the reconstruction of the demonstration taking place in London in 2003 against the invasion of Iraq, in charge of the United States and supported by England and Spain, in the political aftermath of the attack on the World Trade Centre. As for the discourse of Law, embodied in the character of Henry's wife, Rosalind, a lawyer, it may be interesting to explore how it construes and articulates the concepts of truth, legitimacy and power. *Saturday* bring this notions into play in the episode in which Henry first meets Baxter, lies to him and humiliates him "in the street in front of his sidekicks" (210): the neurosurgeon is well aware of the asymmetry between them and he makes use of the authority conferred upon him by his profession in his favour (94-98), to the detriment of Baxter's reputation, causing his temporary withdrawal. Whereas he confesses to abuse of authority later on when discussing with his wife the dramatic way in which events have unfolded, Rosalind relativises his reasoning by claiming: "Of course it wasn't an abuse of authority. They could have killed you" (268). What may be worth analysing in such argument for self-defence is whether there exists a connection between Rosalind's conclusion and the world of Law to which she belongs: do her "area of social knowledge" (Ashcroft, 2001: 70) or her "area of human activity" (Bakhtin, 1986: 60) condition her quite flexible and circumstance-bounded ideas of what truth and power are? In regard to the same topic, Theo, his musician son, warns him: "You humiliated him. You should watch that. (...) These street guys can be proud" (McEwan, 2006: 152). In this case, the same question that has been asked in relation to Rosalind's profession and her worldview can be posed for Theo: is his perception of the world, which is embodied in a different form of sensitivity, anchored in his field of expertise, i.e. music, particularly jazz? The attempt to answer these questions may derive in an alternative research that should devote itself to studying other discourses present in the novel as well as other areas, such as music. This confirms that the discursive richness of McEwan's novel has not been exhausted.

Along the same lines, another discursive aspect that may demand further studies is that of the inner tensions which discourses undergo. Each discourse is not a homogeneous entity: whereas frictions appear at the level of interrelationships, it is possible to notice them at an intralevel as well, i.e. the level in which conflicts arise within their own discursive matrixes. In the case of the Positivist discourse of Science, its uniformity has been put to the test by experiments such as the one discussed in this paper, known as 'Schrödinger's cat'. However, for a more complete –and fairer–

description and explanation of the contending forces at the core of Positivism, it would have been appropriate to make some room for more voices coming from the field of Science. In this regard, the inclusion of the views of a renowned philosopher of Science, such as Chalmers, could have been enriched by involving more staunch Positivists whose ideas still hold in certain areas of Science, such as the Argentinean Mario Bunge, or, alternatively, more anarchist scientists such as the Austrian Paul Feyerabend. On the other hand, as far as Postmodernism is concerned, this is only one of the discursive formations within Literature. Throughout this paper it has been suggested how the Postmodernist discourse of Literature may be at variance with other literary discourses – therefore, other conceptions of the world and of individuals, exemplified by the argument between Daisy and his grandfather Grammaticus who, as his name insinuates, may entertain a more Structuralist conception of Literature. Nevertheless, the main opposing force of Postmodernism is, at this point in history, itself: the temporal proximity to its origins and development makes it hard for critics to judge it as an object of study. As Foucault (2004: 49) states:

> The conditions necessary for the appearance of an object of discourse, the historical conditions required if one is to 'say anything' about it, and if several people are to say different things about it, the conditions necessary if it is to exist in relation to other objects, if it is to establish with them relations of resemblance, proximity, distance, difference, transformation, (…) are many and imposing. Which means that one cannot speak of anything at any time; it is not easy to say something new; it is not enough for us to open our eyes, to pay attention, or to be aware, for new objects suddenly to light up and emerge out of the ground. But this difficulty is not only a negative one; it must not be attached to some obstacle whose power appears to be, exclusively, to blind, to hinder, to prevent discovery, to conceal the purity of the evidence or the dumb obstinacy of the things themselves; the object does not await in limbo the order that will free it and enable it to become embodied in a visible and prolix objectivity; it does not pre-exist itself, held back by some obstacle at the first edges of light. It exists under the positive conditions of a complex group of relations (…) established between institutions, economic and social processes, behavioural patterns, systems of norms, techniques, types of classification, modes of characterization (...).

The contemporariness of the Postmodernist phenomenon endows it with a certain resistance to become an object of knowledge: the social and cultural conditions have not reached a state of maturity necessary to analytically detach from Postmodernism and perform a critical study of it. Notwithstanding such theoretical drawback, this limitation is precisely one of the most important reasons to promote reflective practices in the Literature in English class: given the dynamics of discourses, of Literature as one of

them, of language and historical circumstances, it becomes impelling for teachers and students at the Teacher Training College to make of reflection their most effective tool.

Finally, this paper has tackled the development of reflective competences as the focus of its pedagogical proposal. This topic is far from being exhausted, though. The suggestion of the Literature in English class as an enabler of a discursive practice can still be enriched by other possibilities which need not exclude reflection but work along with it. One of them is interdisciplinary work: given that the notion of discourse articulates language and contextual variables in creating worldviews and subjectivities, cross-curricular work integrating the different curricular subjects which approach such phenomena, from their own specificity, may contribute to more meaningful and enriching teaching and learning experiences by broadening teachers' and students' horizons and enhancing their perspectives. Another factor which may have strengthened the pedagogical proposal of this paper would have been some fieldwork within the tertiary level Literature in English class. This task would have anticipated the possible advantages and drawbacks of presenting it as an appropriate place for the development of a discursive practice. Along similar lines, it would be worth exploring the implications of the same proposal in the context of primary and secondary schools.

Though the unexplored issues exposed above may constitute a weakness of this paper, it is expected that they function as a genuine space for dialogue, debate and intervention. To that end, the Literature in English class creates the appropriate atmosphere for furthering research along the lines suggested, due to the multiplicity of reflections it fosters and the conception of students and teachers as responsible and competent interlocutors, respectively, who engage in the process of constructing their professions in terms of a discursive practice.

7. Final reflections: Is there a Sunday to every *Saturday*?

Approaching *Saturday* from a discursive perspective, as it is indicated by the legislation on *CBC* (1998: 16), has intended to foreground a double dimension of Literature: its instrumental and formative properties, as well as its own discursive status. As regards the first two conditions, Literature has been studied in terms of a vehicle for the expression of different discourses, understood as worldviews and subjectivity shapers and creators (Bakhtin, 1986: 60; Foucault in Ashcroft, 2001: 70; Morris, 1994: 249; Voloshinov in Morris, 1994: 41, 248). These properties derive from the possibility

of discourses to articulate and relate language to social and cultural areas of experience (Bakhtin, 1986: 60; Foucault in Ashcroft, 2001: 70). On the other hand, the status of Literature as a discourse in itself has been explored and challenged as well.

In consideration of Literature as an instrument for the manifestation of views of the world and subjectivities, this paper has focused on the interaction of what it deems the two main discourses in *Saturday*: the Positivist discourse of Science and the Postmodernist discourse of Literature. The former, voiced by the neurosurgeon Henry Perowne, articulates itself upon a conception of the 'real' in terms of an autonomous and objective entity (Chalmers, 1999: 4), whereas the latter, embodied in Henry's literary daughter, Daisy, endorses the notion of a textually constructed reality (Derrida, 1967: 224-225; Foucault, 2005: 360; Gregson, 2004: 7; Hutcheon, 2001: 76: Rorty; 1992: 184). However, McEwan's novel does more than present the two discourses in a dichotomic fashion: the conceptions of the world and of the self that one of the discourses evinces are constantly brought into question by the other, which fosters an atmosphere of continuous tension (Bakhtin, 1981: 263, 272; Morris, 1994: 248).

Within this heteroglot frame, the limits of the discourses of Science and Literature are made explicit: both of them lead to an entrapment of subjects due to the deprival of their agency. Positivist Science, as posited in *Saturday*, divests individuals of any possibility of action by adhering to biological determinism, according to which genetics design a factual reality which cannot be altered. Postmodernist Literature, on the other hand, endorses a textual determinism by asserting that language ubiquitously and unavoidably mediates people's relation to the world and to others. In this context, individuals are language creations as well, since the conception of the self and of others is, as any other phenomena, also regulated by language (Gregson, 2004: 7; Hutcheon, 2001: 134; Rorty; 1992: 184). Such unchangeable condition emasculates people's possibility of acting upon the world, since any course of action they may undertake will not have a substantive effect on their surroundings. What they perform will not alter their reality; rather, it will just assume the same status as any of the other textually constructed aspects of that reality (Eagleton, 1993: 387; Hutcheon, 2001: 142). Though more research may be conducted into the inner functioning of Positivism and Postmodernism, it transpires that both discourses relegate individuals to a position of secondarity (Derrida, 1967: 224-225; Hutcheon, 2004: 11). Such secondarity is tantamount to the undermining of people's ability to actively participate in their environment, whether it be on account of either biological or textual determinism. On

these grounds, discussing the status of individuals not only poses a challenge for a conception of the subject solely in terms of discourse, but also signals the direction to follow in this field of research: discourse must be articulated with a possibility for individuals to take active part of their world. To this purpose, the concept of a discursive practice has been put forward. This notion does not belittle the power of discourses in shaping views of the world and creating subjectivities and groups of reference and belonging. On the contrary, it lays emphasis on such properties of discourses and, at the same time, it allows individuals to inscribe themselves into the discourses that surround them and to exert some action upon them (Funes, 2006: 14; 2007: 9; 2009: 78).

It is precisely in relation to the idea of a discursive practice that the condition of Literature as a discourse becomes relevant. Literature is par excellence the discourse which not only allows other discourses to emerge within it, but also reflects upon its own discursive dimension. By means of this metadiscursive property, Literature can disclose the mechanisms by means of which other discourses, as well as itself, constitute themselves as worldview shapers and subjectivity creators (*CBC*, 1998: 17). In doing so, Literature paves the way for the reflexive and analytical awareness necessary to develop a discursive practice: raising objections, signalling limitations and critically referring to characteristics and functions typical of a discourse. There is no better proof for that than the fact that an analysis upon Science and Literature as discursive entities has been possible thanks to a literary text, *Saturday*. Although both discourses are perceived from a scientific point of view, it is the genre of the novel that contains them.

Envisioning Literature as the appropriate atmosphere to explore the limits of discourses and thereon build a discursive practice places a great power upon the hands of Literature in English teachers and students at the Teacher Training College. They cannot remain insensitive to the scope and limitations of discourses in general and of Literature, in particular, as one of them. That is why this paper has suggested tackling the minimal contents of the subject from a discursive perspective together with a pedagogy that fosters critical awareness and reflection upon them. As *CBC* (1998: 2) and *DCLE* (2001: 25) suggest it, such a task is to be channelled in three directions: metalinguistic, metacognitive and intercultural thinking skills. With regard to the metalinguistic form of reflection, in the light of the discursive approach of this paper, it implies engaging students into questions directed to Literature as a subject matter; for

instance, how a text belonging to a particular literary movement presents individuals, how it constructs their subjectivities and according to what conception of the world, and how literary language can dismantle those processes, among others. As for the metacognitive competence, it entails, within a discursive framework, critical and reflexive thinking upon the cognitive procedures involved when trying to answer the metalinguistic questions. In this regard, teachers may encourage students to perform a rich variety of tasks: to explore the elements involved in harbouring a reading hypothesis, such as previous knowledge; to think how and why some arguments may favour the development of their hypotheses and some others may act to their detriment; to arrive at final stages of their research with the knowledge that they are never a conclusion but an invitation to continue reflecting in a deeper and more mature fashion; and to conceive of this process as knowledge constructor. Finally, as for the intercultural thinking skill, according to *CBC* (1998: 17), Literature is the appropriate area of studies to foster intercultural analysis, given that it entails accessing other and different cultures without appropriating any in particular (Byram, 1997: 3). The discursive perspective adopted by this paper inevitably implies reflecting upon cultural diversity due to the inextricability that relates discourses to the cultural and social context in which they emerge (Bakhtin, 1981: 411-412). Within this framework, exploring different discourses and cultures is similar to performing an ethnographic study, as it requires a close observation on how diverse communities behave (Corbett, 2003: 35). Furthermore, the task of reflecting in intercultural terms is akin to that of a sojourner's, since it can be submitted to comparative and contrastive analysis (Byram, 1997: 1-2), not according to a degree superiority or inferiority but in terms of the cultural conditions that privilege certain discourses over others. This threefold form of reflection is equated to a reading competence, in a broader sense (McRae, 1991: 19, 126). Reflection equips students with critical resources to proficiently read the discursive world which surrounds them, i.e. to thoroughly evaluate the functioning of discourses as worldviews and subjectivities generators. Such awareness will eventually allow them to inscribe themselves into those discourses, or, in other words, perform a discursive practice.

Embarking upon a reflexive task in the terms mentioned above involves both students and teachers, though it is in the hand of the latter to create the conditions for it. Such distinction is related to their different discursive positions: as *DCLE* (2001: 25) suggests it, teachers are thought of as competent interlocutors who, having already

developed an awareness of the mechanisms through which discourses operate, can guide students to grow as proficient as they have become at reading discourses. This does not mean that students do not have a discursive status at all: according to *DCLE* (2001:25), they are responsible interlocutors who can venture hypothesis and make informed decisions within the process of their learning experience. In this light, it is possible to confirm that students who further their studies at the Teacher Training College seek to enhance their discursive position and to be able to proficiently inscribe themselves into the discourses that make up their reality. In other words, it is feasible to understand their undertaking of higher level studies as a possibility to develop a discursive practice.

The process of students' enriching their possibilities of enunciation is conceived of, then, as a passage from a position of responsible interlocutors to one in which they become more competent. Kristeva (1976: 249), aware of the impracticality of extricating the issue of subjectivity from language studies, has illuminated that transition by discussing the possibility of individuals to inscribe themselves as subjects into a textual reality (1984: 24). For her, the supremacy of language that Postmodernism has claimed may not necessarily lead to a total annihilation of the subject. She alleges that it becomes compelling for people to develop a new form of language which acknowledges both the extent of its influence in shaping conceptions of the self and of the world as well as its scopes. It is precisely on these limits that individuals can start to develop a "poetic language", one which recognises their ability to act upon their environment (1988: 231). It transpires from this property that a poetic language, as Kristeva posits it, is tantamount to the discursive practice put forward by this paper. This phenomenon has also been studied from a sociological perspective which observes Bernstein's and Bourdieu's contributions to the field of education. In the light of the former, it is possible to think of a discursive practice as an enrichment and sophistication of linguistic mechanisms by means of which students can relate to the world and their peers, mechanisms which he has termed "codes" (Bernstein, 2003: 76). In Bernstein's view, reaching the status of a competent interlocutor is equated to moving from a stage regulated by a restricted code to another articulated by a more elaborated code (77, 202). By means of the latter, individuals can perceive their discursive possibilities enhanced, as they can afford a more penetrating insight into how discourses operate and can act upon them accordingly. Alternatively, though not in a mutually exclusive fashion, Bourdieu, conceives of the passage from the discursive position of the responsible interlocutor to that of the competent interlocutor in terms of a

qualitative and quantitative raise in individuals' cultural capital. This notion assesses individuals' access to cultural market and industry in relation to the power and status they can attain within a community (Baker, 2004: 37). To Bourdieu's mind (1986: 47), then, reaching the discursive position of the competent interlocutor parallels the acquisition of a qualitatively and quantitatively superior cultural capital. Such theoretical contributions are not supposed to act as mere taxonomical descriptors; rather, they are expected to shed light on the transition from the discursive stage of the responsible interlocutor to the one of the competent interlocutor. Hence, the passage implied in the development of a discursive practice, which compellingly calls for fieldwork to provide more insights by exploring its dynamics in the classroom of Literature in English, is envisioned as the growth into a more resourceful and complex place of enunciation that students undergo at the Teacher Training College.

Such enhancement, however, is not without conflict. As it has been explored, it is possible to understand the construction of a discursive practice in terms of what Kramsch calls "boundary experience" (1993: 235). Though this concept has been initially posited to exclusively describe the learning of a foreign language (234), it may as well illuminate individuals' processes of reading their surrounding discourses and writing themselves into them. In this regard, it is possible to think of Baxter's epiphany –that realization of the possibility of inscribing himself into his discursive reality– as a boundary experience. Aware of having his subjectivity entrapped between the contending discourses of Positivist Science and Postmodernist Literature, he undergoes an epiphanic moment when glimpsing at the possibility of surpassing his status as a genetically or textually determined individual to a self who can be inscribed into the discourses that constitute his reality. Extended to the context of the Teacher Training College, the boundary experience can, moreover, take place even between discursive positions, that of the responsible interlocutor's and that of the competent one's. In this light, the development of a more sophisticated place of enunciation is a discursive transition and, as such, it is accompanied by a deeper perception of the world and a different conception of the self as subject, which may be at variance with student's previous worldviews and subjectivities. That is why, in this regard, it is extremely insightful to think of Bhabha's third space (in Ashcroft, 2001: 61): the tension and ambiguity which characterises the space generated by the encounter of two systems of signification clearly accounts for the probable lack of smoothness of the passage from a discursive position to another. Within this framework, both the place of the responsible

interlocutor and that of the competent one are centres of discursive meaning, since each of them deploys different views on the world and of individuals. The transition from one to the other may imply the emergence of new worldviews and subjectivities to the detriment of the previous ones, a process which may not always run smoothly due to the possible resistance that may be mounted. Another implication derived by Bhabha's notion of third space is that no discursive position is static: its contending forces not only allow responsible interlocutors to become competent but it also makes room for competent interlocutors to become even more competent. It is on these grounds that reflection emerges as the most appropriate tool to be employed by both students and teachers. This resource does not intend to erase the conflictive strains of the development of a discursive practice, but helps endure such process, contributing in this way to keeping a critical stance.

As it can be seen, this paper has intended to perform a reading of *Saturday* that harmonically and critically encompasses both literary and pedagogical analyses. Such intention is far from being whimsical: in the same way as a theoretical framework has been chosen which renders form and content inseparable when studying literary texts, it is expected that any literary task undertaken within the framework of the Teacher Training College should correspond to a pedagogical one. The dual nature of this research work can be explained if the context in which it is enunciated is observed: an educational institution which trains individuals to become foreign language teachers, but, above all, trains them to be educators. As such, those who undergo the experience of the Teacher Training College work to be proficient at the command of their subject matter –Literature in English, in particular, and English as a foreign language, in general– as well as at the pedagogy with which it is to be tackled. As educators, then, students and teachers explore both the instrumental and formative value of their learning and teaching experience (*DCLE*, 2001: 21). In this way, what is foregrounded is the importance of what they learn and teach as a means to a multiplicity of ends *and* as the condition of possibility of a project of social and cultural democratisation which guarantees the constitution of individuals as subjects related to others within their communities.

In the light of such explicit disclosure of the inscription of this paper's enunciation into a specific context, this research work does nothing but assert itself as an instance of a literary and pedagogical discourse. This performance is but a metadiscursive reflection by means of which this research work highlights, once more, the discursive property of

literature and the necessity of a discursive practice born out of its limits within an educational institution. Through this metadiscursive mechanism, this paper accepts, in metaphorical terms, the ending of a Saturday and the coming of a Sunday only if this succession is kept as a promise. In other words, this research work issues its last lines not as an indisputable closure but, again, as an invitation to submit itself to close scrutiny, open debate and thorough analysis within the academic community out of which it is born, fostering one more time the critical reflection that determines the subjectivity of educators as professionals of a discursive practice.

8. Appendix

[1] valor instrumental.

[2] valor formativo.

[3] todos los alumnos puedan, a través del conocimiento de una lengua extranjera, acceder a una formación especializada y ampliar su horizonte laboral y profesional.

[4] … desde la perspectiva de un proyecto educativo comprometido con la democratización social y cultural [y] puesto que es *en* y *por* el lenguaje que el sujeto se constituye en las relaciones sociales, la escuela tiene la función y la responsabilidad de garantizar para todos los alumnos, el acceso al saber *de* y *sobre* la lengua y el lenguaje.

[5] discurso literario.

[6] tradición y ruptura en el discurso literario contemporáneo.

[7] • La tendencia hacia lo barroco en la poesía metafísica y el romanticismo.

• La tendencia hacia lo clásico en el neoclasicismo y el realismo.

[…]

• Literatura de vanguardia y contemporánea.

• La problemática post-moderna y post-colonial

[8] [e]l discurso literario es una ruta de acceso ideal a la lengua extranjera [dado que] gran parte del lenguaje cotidiano es figurativo o poético, incluso modos considerados no literarios como la conversación, el chiste, el discurso periodístico, el científico, las páginas de Internet y los textos publicitarios de la prensa escrita, la radio y la televisión.

[9] [e]l manejo eficiente de estos recursos posibilita una mejor interpretación del discurso en general.

[10] La reflexión […] abarca las instancias de lo metalingüístico (aspectos que tienen que ver con el funcionamiento del lenguaje en las particularidades de cada lengua), lo metacognitivo (aspectos que tienen que ver con reconocer y discriminar qué se está aprendiendo y de qué manera) y lo intercultural (aspectos que tienen que ver con lo que va surgiendo a partir de la distancia y el contraste con lo propio).

[11] la comprensión del funcionamiento de una construcción determinada.

[12] el contacto con la lengua extranjera hace trizas la ilusión de que existe un punto de vista único.

[13] El abordaje de los textos literarios implica la posibilidad de entrada a muchas culturas sin apropiarse de ninguna en particular, o de entrar en una nueva cultura global en ciernes que posibilita la diferenciación de las culturales individuales, y por ende de la identidad personal (…), significa aceptar las diferentes concepciones del mundo, la cultura y la sociedad (…), contribuye en forma armónica al desarrollo de la función estética o poética del lenguaje, y por ende, el desarrollo de la competencia intercultural.

[14] interlocutor competente.

[15] interlocutor responsable.

[16] el alumno es considerado un interlocutor responsable, con capacidad para opinar y elaborar hipótesis a partir de sus otros conocimientos, que siente que puede sugerir, preguntar y responder (…). El docente, por su parte, deberá asumir la responsabilidad de interlocutor más competente, de modelo de lengua extranjera y abrir espacios genuinos de intervención; sugerir fuentes de consulta que los ayuden en el proceso de aprender a aprender y reconocer, si es necesario, su propia necesidad de consultar.

[17] el aprendizaje de lenguas ayuda a reflexionar sobre los procesos que generan la propia lengua y optimiza su uso, abre el espíritu hacia otras culturas y otras gentes, brinda una cosmovisión más amplia del mundo en su diversidad; el manejo de otros códigos lingüísticos propicia una estructura mental más diversificada, un pensamiento más flexible, suscita una mayor riqueza cognitiva (…) y por ende puede constituirse en un eficiente vehículo de redescubrimiento del mundo, que extienda el territorio ya explorado por la lengua materna, o que reconfirme algunos de sus límites.

[18] es menester diferenciar entre el acceso a la cultura y el acceso a las producciones culturales.

[19] el conocimiento de más de una lengua contribuirá a la participación plena de las personas en el mundo y la sociedad actuales.

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