



## The protagonist's discourse in *Juliano Pavollini* by Cristovão Tezza: a parallaxic structure?

Marisa Corrêa Silva\* and Estela Pereira dos Santos

Centro de Ciências Humanas Letras e Artes, Departamento de Letras, Universidade Estadual de Maringá, Avenida Colombo, 5790, 87020-900, Maringá, Paraná, Brasil. \*Autor para correspondência. E-mail: mcsilva5@uem.br

**ABSTRACT.** The narrator of *Juliano Pavollini* is autodiegetic, which means its voice assumes the representation of all textual aspects; however, this narrator is not omniscient, for he has a limited vision of the facts and, moreover, he reenacts its moments of surprise. This Juliano-narrator expresses himself in a highly elaborate language, mastering formal speech. There are also moments when the narrative voice is representing the Juliano-character, whose interventions are shown as the dialogues in direct speech. There is a hiatus between these two discourses: the first is sophisticated and manipulative, whereas the second should express a *naïf* Juliano dealing with a reality 'bigger than him', so to speak. It may be assumed that this hiatus was calculated in order to have an effect over the reader and the narrative structure; this article seeks to investigate what effects it has on the text, using the concept of 'parallax view' as proposed by Žižek.

**Keywords:** *Juliano Pavollini*, parallax, discursive structure, narrator.

### O discurso do protagonista em *Juliano Pavollini*, de Cristovão Tezza: uma estrutura em paralaxe?

**RESUMO.** O narrador de *Juliano Pavollini* é autodiegético, isto é, sua voz assume a representação de todos os aspectos do texto; no entanto, trata-se de um narrador não onisciente, pois tem visão limitada dos fatos ocorridos e que, além disso, faz uma reencenação dos momentos de surpresa. Este Juliano-narrador apresenta uma linguagem altamente elaborada, com domínio total da norma culta. Há também momentos nos quais a voz representada é a do Juliano-personagem, cujas intervenções podem ser percebidas nos diálogos em discurso direto. Existe um hiato entre esses dois discursos: o primeiro é sofisticado e manipulador, enquanto o segundo deveria exprimir um Juliano ingênuo e às voltas com uma realidade 'maior do que ele', por assim dizer. Partimos do pressuposto de que se trata de um hiato de efeito calculado sobre o leitor e sobre a estrutura narrativa; buscamos, também, investigar quais os efeitos que isso provoca no texto, utilizando o conceito de 'visão em paralaxe', proposto por Žižek.

**Palavras-chave:** *Juliano Pavollini*, paralaxe, estrutura discursiva, narrador.

#### Introduction

The narrator of *Juliano Pavollini*, by Cristovão Tezza (2002), is autodiegetic, which means that his voice takes responsibility for all the elements that build the narrative; however, he is a non-omniscient narrator, having a limited view of the past events and, moreover, he reenacts the moments of surprise. The protagonist narrates his past from a supposed present. When Juliano tells his story, he is in jail, found guilty of the murder of Isabella, the prostitute who sheltered him in Curitiba. Juliano reports his story to Clara, a psychologist who treats his case, but his comments make clear to the reader that he tells the story in a way

calculated to arouse Clara's interest and that he intends to seduce her.

Juliano 'lives *versus* tells', i.e., he experienced particular moments but tells them in a way that allows the reader to suspect that his 'memory' might be different from what really happened. Thus, a form of 'parallax' (a term that will be discussed afterwards) is established because inside narration (act of telling; remembrance) there is a distortion with effects over the narrative (facts told; theoretically, what really happened), and this is possibly a narrative's choice. This article investigates what effect is sought by using this resource, what effect(s) it brings to the novel and the reader's interpretation. The 'living *versus* telling', the

distortion of language between the lived time and the recollected time at the narrative causes some strangeness for a watchful reader: this narrator's resource causes a distortion of the reader's perception of both Juliano's interpretation and personality, enabling doubts about the reliability of the narration.

### The protagonist's discourse: a parallaxic structure?

According to Wayne E. Booth (1980), narrators use several resources in order to manipulate the reader; the difference between 'tell' and 'show' is one of them. When narrative shows a character acting, there is an effect of truth. However, when someone narrates a character's actions, they can be distorted, presented in a subjective way. Booth studies, fundamentally, in what ways a narrator can 'falsify' the story told.

In *A Visão em Parallaxe* (2008), Slavoj Žižek borrows the concept of 'parallax' from Physics to refer to a situation in which the same object "[...] that exists outside is seen from two different positions or viewpoints [...]" (Žižek, 2008, p. 32) in thoroughly irreconcilable ways. He claims that

The standard definition of parallax is: the apparent shift of an object (changing position in relation to the background) caused by changing the viewpoint that allows a new line of vision. Of course the philosophical point to be added is that the observed difference is not simply 'subjective', due to the fact that the same object existing 'outside' is seen from two positions or different viewpoints (Žižek, 2008, p. 32)

Based on his observation it is possible to suspect that the character Pavollini has been built in order to create a parallaxic effect: there are at least three possible versions of him in the text. At a first moment, there is the naïve Juliano, victim of poverty and fate, which is possibly the most widespread interpretation by the reader. It is all about a poor boy coming from the countryside, and during his bus trip to Curitiba, meets Isabela, who welcomes him, raises him, feeds him and provides him a home. At Isabela's brothel, the boy feels safe, for he lives in relative comfort. Juliano talks about the home Isabela provided him, in which he was comfortably tucked in an attic (where there was a huge and absurd bed with a red canopy), vaguely having an insight that his world now would go beyond the limits more or less imposed by the family he had abandoned, but feeling protected for the first time in his life:

Why would the limits interest me? I was free, I guessed. I don't know if Clara will agree, but for a child it's only the immediate feeling that counts. Naturally, I didn't have the accurate idea of anything and even refused thinking – I even didn't know if that was a hotel. What mattered? Nobody there would tell me I was guilty for my temperature. (Why have you been in the rain without a shirt?) The Relative, the beating, the death were things from an already buried world. Now, sixteen years old and two days, yes, life was mine. The bed was comfortable; Isabela's protection was comfortable (Tezza, 2002, p. 35-36)

Beyond the "lost boy conducted by hazard", we have the second Juliano, a wily killer and a cold calculating boy since his early youth that, after being convicted, realizes his psychologist's interest in him and tries to manipulate her. Juliano knows that Clara, the psychologist, could help him leave jail earlier, for she had contacts and some power in prison, according to him. He is also aware that his ambiguity is appealing for her:

Clara started seeing me every two weeks, seeking for more pages and new revelations, which she carefully takes notes about. Sometimes I see myself as Juliano, another one, she tells me – there is something important about it, and I didn't know. I lost innocence. My word is my seduction – I'm closer to freedom each chapter, Clara has some power in the penitentiary (Tezza, 2002, p. 113)

The boy acknowledges his ability to lie in his reports: "I make two versions of myself: for my personal use – I like writing – and for Clara, who likes reading" (Tezza, 2002, p. 168). This manipulative Juliano, who could be absolutely guilty for the crime which sent him to jail, can be noticed by a more alert reader. Juliano knows that Clara can help him leave prison, therefore he writes what he infers the psychologist would like to read, attempting to seduce her. The word 'seduction' is carefully chosen, as it reflects both the psychologist's professional interest and the sexual and/or affective attraction he could possibly arouse on her, reenacting his situation with the brothel's owner (who had protected him in fact) and with the lawyer's daughter (who could have been his passport towards a bourgeois existence). When the character says he writes two versions of himself, a parallax in which there are two versions of Juliano emerges: the guilty and the innocent.

The third Juliano withdraws from the other two: that would be a Juliano manipulated by the author, i.e., of an authorial instance that intellectualizes the boy/killer through language and literary references,

disguising, this way, the gaps present in the work. The narrative instance persuades the reader that Juliano is extremely intelligent. The third version of Juliano emerges through his philosophical sentences, readings, reflections and poems he writes to Doroti, but Isabela thinks were written for her. However, it is also evident that such discursive productions are not integrally connected with the young Juliano, something that causes a new strangeness brought by the linguistic-discursive hiatus: a parallax in the narrative structure that can be on purpose or not, considering the narrator's wish, i.e., from Juliano himself, who consistently claims to be a liar and even states that lying is an art for him.

Still about the authorial instance, Wayne E. Booth claims that “[...] the presence of authors will be obvious all the time they enter or leave a character's mind – when << the point of view is changed >>” (Booth, 1980, p. 34). Also, providing a fiction with inner visions, and not only with changes that require points of view, is an author's intrusion. “The author is present in all the discourses from any characters that had been given the credibility emblem, be it any way whatsoever” (Booth, 1980, p. 35). In the following passage, it is possible to observe the authorial instance acting in order to justify the boy's intellectual precocity:

In my free time, that was all day long, I read all the books from the drawer, even the Forbidden Book, which always angered me and ended up in guilt and in the bathroom, and also the books Isabela would bring, by chance, so that I was guaranteed an eclectic background (Tezza, 2002, p. 76).

It is important to highlight that, at this period of time, Juliano is sixteen years old and the authorial instance inserts, in the narrative, some scenes in which Juliano shows his readings to the brothel women, ‘proving’ his intelligence: literary works are cited, as well as names of important people, historical events are mentioned, passages of books are recited, as well as sentences with some philosophical content.

#### Untrustworthy narrator and its effects

These three versions of the same Juliano can cause some skeptical withdrawal by the reader, who can inquire whether the formal speech and the reflexive tendency shown in the narrator's discourse are verisimilar for such a young character who had studied sporadically – something that boosts the unreliability of the narration. However, the

narrator's discourse attempts to postulate the discrepancies as acceptable, in order to preserve the fictional pact with the reader. Nevertheless, the effect this resource creates is a type of paranoiac reading, destabilizing the possible textual ‘truths’. It leads to the following question: at what extent is the narrator-commentator, who is Juliano himself, when older, imprisoned and paying for his crime, trustworthy? Would this linguistic hiatus be a ‘mistake’ of authorial instance? Although cultured narrators who are capable of using formal speech masterfully are common in Tezza (as the teacher's son in *Uma Noite em Curitiba*), in Pavollini the hiatus can be read as a formal reduplication of the narrator's unreliability, enriching the text.

Reporting an event, narrating a past event in a present time involves working with the concept of the story veracity, even considering that, when narrating, our version is subjectively set. According to Žižek (2010, p. 27), “[...] the act of publicly reporting something is never neutral: it affects the reported content itself”. Now the issue is about the irreducible hiatus between the enunciated content and the enunciation act of the narrator itself. In fact, we can claim that the narrative is imbued with the narrator-character's subjective point of view.

From Booth's reading, it is evident that a narrator, even if a heterodiegetic one, can tell another version of the occurred events, assuming, thus, a parallax perspective of the story. According to him, the authorial instance is noticeable, therefore, in all that is identified as personal touch: literary allusions, colorful metaphors, myths and symbols. He also claims that “[...] an enlightened reader will acknowledge that all of them (the personal touches) are imposed by the author” (Booth, 1980, p. 36). However, it seems exaggerated to say that all the personal touches are imposed by the author of a literary work, because there are novels in which the personal touches refer to the characters and their specific constitution. Even so, for *Juliano Pavollini*, Booth's proposition applies perfectly, concerning the literary allusions and the historical knowledge attributed to the narrator-protagonist, which are beyond the expectations upon his formation and studies, explaining the authorial dimension in the textual tessitura.

Such narrative structure allows some subjective interpretations: Juliano can be reliable or not, according to the reader's view. Here it is necessary to remember *O amor impiedoso*, in which Žižek deals with the formulas ‘he does not know, but he does it’

and ‘he knows and, therefore, cannot do it’, adding the third formulation: ‘he knows exactly what he is doing and yet, he does it’. The first formula concerns the “[...] traditional hero and the second one, the hero from the beginning of modernity” (Žižek, 2012, p. 21). The third formula has two distinct readings: on the one hand

[...] it is the clearest expression of the cynical attitude of moral depravity – ‘Yes, I’m a shit; I betray and lie, so what? That’s life!’; on the other hand, [...] it can also represent the most extreme opposite of cynicism, *i.e.*, the tragic awareness that, although what I am about to do will have catastrophic consequences for my well-being and for my closer and beloved ones, I simply have to do that, due to the inexorable ethic injunction (Žižek, 2012, p. 21).

These two readings convey not only the opposition between well-being, pleasure, profit and the ethic injunction: “[...] it can also be the radical split between the moral norms that I usually follow and the unconditional injunction that I force myself to obey” (Žižek, 2012, p. 22). Moreover, the philosopher claims that there is always a sacrifice to be experienced, that is, something or someone ends up suffering the consequences when need leads one to betray the ethic substance of his or her being.

It is not possible to state categorically whether Juliano is sincere or not in his reports, because Tezza’s work leaves gaps for more than one interpretation. The narrative is not fixed, but changing – it fits more than one version, whether the one that acquits Juliano and shows him as a victim of social exclusion and of fate, or the one that makes him a manipulative and cynical killer. Juliano may have acted unconsciously, that is, he might have made mistakes – he could have killed Isabela without premeditation or even in self-defense, being coherent with the “naïve boy” version; but he could also have acted cynically, well aware of what he must not do; yet, he did it – which would portray his actions as ruled by a calculated interest.

In this ‘doing’ mentioned by Žižek, either for not knowing the social rules or for lack of any ethical awareness, there is often a sacrifice caused by the action. In this novel there are two victims, although at different levels: the nucleus formed by Doroti and her father (it is important to observe that Doroti is repeatedly described as the daughter of a powerful lawyer), who has some involvement with the boy, has her house plundered, her dog killed, and is almost deceived by Juliano’s sweet talking; and the brothel’s owner, Isabela, murdered right after losing all she had (due to an ex-lover’s revenge)

and being dumped by Juliano. The boy’s choice to tell her he would leave exactly at the moment she cannot shelter him anymore, neither give him money, can be also dually interpreted.

In that part of the narrative, Juliano suggests that, in his ingenuity and obsession for marrying Doroti, he did not think that it would be cruel and enhance Isabela’s despair to receive these news at that moment; but the careful readers can ask themselves whether the boy did not take advantage of what would be an instant of the woman’s extreme fragility. Deprived of her way of living, her lovers and powerful protectors, he discarded her in a cold-blooded way, with a discourse of mocking gratitude. Juliano feared Isabela, for he knew her terrible temper and her controlling habits. Both interpretations are valid, so it is the reader’s task to assume a participatory attitude, believing or not Pavollini’s innocence.

It is not possible to assert what is true in Juliano’s narrative because the narrator is autodiegetic; furthermore, according to Lacan’s teachings, every truth is partial. When we tell a story, we usually ‘copy it out’. It is common to base our speeches according to our acceptance/interpretation of the facts. There is a system of rules to be followed within a society, from grammatical rules to conscious prohibitions, such as committing murder. Therefore, when we speak, we not only interact, but we also operate at the Symbolic level (in Lacanian meaning), in which the speech is modeled according to a complex net of assumptions; certain rules follow us as unconscious prohibitions, so the omission of facts and/or change of versions of a same story is quite common. Reality can be manipulated, even unconsciously, by a series of complex circumstances that affect the course of a story to be told. It depends on the narrator’s intelligence and also, on the unpredictable events that can confuse them or confuse us, the readers.

Concerning the protagonist, let us observe that, after killing Isabela, either in self-defense or simply to get rid of her, he does not seem to be able to deal coldly with the consequences of the crime. His further actions (confessing to and asking for Doroti’s help) seem to be based on an impossible hope, and his report seems to show some absence of calculation, whether brief or innate. This ‘evidence’ can be faked by the character or it can be true: he may have underestimated Doroti, assuming that the girl, in love with him, would hide the crime and obtain her influential father’s help for him. These

Julianos glide one over the other, and the narrator hesitates to define himself about what of them is trustworthy. The following passage, emphasized by the author in italics, makes clear that Juliano is not a character easy to be pinpointed: “*I am not that Juliano, but I am not the other either. There is a mistake; there is something missing somewhere, and I do not know what it is anymore. I cannot be alone*” (Tezza, 2002, p. 209).

Concerning the possible interpretations mentioned above, it is important to refer to the critical canon regarding *Juliano Pavollini*, i.e., what other readings from this literary work were published, from what perspectives and using which theories. Currently there is only Rosse Marye Bernardi’s research, entitled *Composição e confissão – os dois processos de Juliano Pavollini* (1990). This research approaches the novel as a memoir full of self-confession, based on Mikhail Bakhtin’s theoretical assumptions. The research claims that the author creates “[...] the discourse of another one, employing this discourse with a group of esthetical procedures that turns it into the expression of a specific point of view upon the world” (Bernardi, 1990, p. 09), thus neutralizing its apparent monological characteristic. He even affirms that all the compositional process of the work is determined “[...] by the intense participation of the other’s discourse [...]” (Bernardi, 1990, p. 19), something that contributes for questioning the supposed monological feature. Thus, his research deals with other issues than the ones that support this study: therefore, the present paper’s innovative character is studying a novel that has not yet been widely studied, and doing so through the ‘parallax’ approach.

### **Symbolic act and (im) possible liberties**

It is possible to think that Pavollini enacts situations in order to structure subjective versions of the facts, according to the theory of ‘symbolic act’ proposed by Žižek. According to the philosopher, the symbolic act “[...] is better conceptualized as a purely formal act, self-referential, reassuring one’s own subjective position” (Žižek, 2012, p. 140). It is through it that one’s own identity is reassured. The collective enacting of an ordinary event makes its message to be “[...] only the purely performative claim” (Žižek, 2012, p. 140). It happens when what is enacted/said restructures the symbolic guidance of the agent’s situation, that is, when an intervention on the course of the agent’s own identity is radically changed.

In Tezza’s novel, the character Juliano enacts in order to affirm himself as the narrated story’s agent, to defend himself and to show who he is (even if in a distorted way). During the narration, the character’s claims are purely performative, for his first intention is to structure the entire event in a subjective way. As said before, it cannot be ascertained whether these claims (his version) concerning the facts are or not radically changed: the symbolic act can be found in the passage where the narrator enacts himself missing his family - from whom he eloped:

In a short time, the past was not a subject anymore; nobody would talk about it. Sometimes Isabela would say: ‘You must miss them a lot’, and I agreed, a great lie. I did not miss anything. (Tezza, 2002, p. 76, emphasis by the author).

Pretending he misses his life before Curitiba, Juliano keeps the image of the poor boy who had family problems, a result of fate, dreaming of a better life in the capital and wanting to earn his own money. He clearly performs to the reader the nostalgia of what he has left behind, such as his family.

This issue about Pavollini’s merely symbolic performance leads us to the following questions: if the character enacts the facts, if his messages are performative and subjective, can we say he is a pervert? It is important to say that “pervert” is to be understood in this paper in the conception by Žižek based on Lacan. To be a pervert “[...] means to acknowledge the rules and deliberately act as if they did not exist” (Silva, 2009, p. 213). And if Juliano is a pervert, does he ignore the social rules on purpose or does he follow the obscene rules from his society?

Before proceeding with the analysis, it is important to emphasize that, for Lacan, a pervert is not defined, *per se*, by the contents of his/her actions, but it “[...] resides in the formal structure of how the pervert relates with truth and speech” (Žižek, 2010, p. 142). And to what extent are we free and have freedom of choice in the society we live? For Žižek, liberty is far from being a free act and also, it is not the opposite of a causal need, but “[...] it means a specific way of casualty, agent’s self-determination [...]”, every subject is determined “[...] through causes (either motivations, natural causes, raw or direct) [...]”, it is “[...] my ability to retroactively choose/determine which causes will determine myself” (Žižek, 2008, p. 274-275). Currently, according to him, we are incited to ‘Enjoy!’, from the sexual pleasure to the

professional, financial and spiritual ones; the enjoyment “[...] works effectively as a strange ethical injunction: people feel guilty not for violating moral inhibitions and getting illicit pleasures, but for not being able to enjoy” (Žižek, 2010, p. 128). In this sense, the individuals are pressured by the society in which they are inserted, that is, society itself is perverted, capable to make us follow the obscene, silenced rules that provide the systematic violation of the explicit rules.

It is possible to perform a reading in which Pavollini is the result of social exclusion and the society he inhabits: the environment leads him to his mistakes. He ‘follows the obscene rules’ of the environment he lives in order to have a good life, for the social system in which he is inserted is perverted. Since he was very young, Juliano lived inside poverty and, after his father’s death, he stole from the character named only as the Relative, who came to take care of the funeral, getting money to run away, leaving his mother and sisters. He went to Curitiba, met Isabela, who offered him a shelter, support and sex. He had some benefits; however, he got gladly involved in thefts with Odair, until falling in love with Doroti. After that, he wanted a better life and regretted the robberies and the lies he had told in order to attract her. His desire was to have his own life and he tried to tell Isabela, who did not accept and got furious: fearing to die, Juliano killed Isabela and was imprisoned.

Considering that though Isabela’s brothel offered him enough for a living, it did not offer social legitimacy, keeping the boy in a peripheral situation. Living at the expense of his lover was a shameful secret and that could have been Juliano’s motivation to go bad. In this interpretation, it would possibly be because of this that Juliano had opted for robbing and lying – these were the ways he had to reach the bourgeois standard he wished for, the standard society imposes as a model. Doroti would be the embodiment of fulfilling this model, turning her irresistible to Juliano.

In another interpretation, we may remember there is a system of symbolic rules that adjusts our social interaction, explicit rules (the laws) and ‘implicit’ rules (not registered or written) that regulate our way of acting and speaking. Under this point of view, it is the individual, and not the society, who is pervert, because the individual violates such rules due to a subjective need or a desire and, while violating them, the individual ends up “[...] finding pleasure on what is imposed on

them” (Žižek, 2010, p. 130).

Within this alternative reading (in which Juliano is a pervert and ‘ignores the imposed social rules’ on purpose), there is an important note: he leaves the responsibility of saying who he really is to the Other (the reader). The pervert thus leaves the responsibility of deciding about his supposed innocence to the Other, since, in order not to say whatever truth, he distorts his apparently objective reports.

Juliano lies to the psychologist: “The text I wrote is not the one I lived” (Tezza, 2002, p. 136); he tries to seduce her. He lies to Doroti, whom he wanted to marry – he invades her house and kills her dog. Afterwards, when approaching her, he lies about his life, until truth is found out. He also lies to Isabela about Doroti, choosing the moment when the female pimp was weakened and threatened by the police to reveal his intentions. He had already declared his will to kill Isabela, but not only her:

[...] killing Odair, Rude, Isabela, as well as I had killed my father and my mother, go on killing all the forest monsters, one by one, until I reached the enchanted side where I could finally see my own face (Tezza, 2002, p. 145).

The parental murders mentioned above seem, at first, a way of meaning that, for him, his family has died, but we cannot ignore the fact that there is no innocence in a literary text: there are not evidences in the text that allow us to raise the hypothesis he had, in fact, killed his parents, but this verbal explosion witnesses the desire of killing as a way of breaking the family bonds.

It is worth resuming Isabela’s death scene. This seems to be a classic story of ethical trial, the moment when a character is put to test, exposed to temptations. Initially, there is the impression that Juliano was seeking to purge his past and thanking her for all she has done, when he tells Isabela about his plans. Then, he claims he had wished that “[...] the policemen had killed Isabela with a shot on her forehead [...]” (Tezza, 2002, p. 207) when the police put an end to her ‘hotel’. The protagonist reports that, when Isabela got to know about his plans, she got furious and struck him a blow:

She was going to kill me; I felt her nails on my throat and the deep roar of memory: she was also getting rid of a nightmare, but started to cry before the time while she tried to hit my head on the floor, already powerless. I kept strangling Isabela as I could, but seeing her lifeless, drooling, was not enough. It was my turn to strike her, hit that hard head at the corner of the balcony, three hundred

times, and afterwards breaking the whiskey bottle on her forehead and keep the bottleneck in my hands, furious, cornered, waiting for Isabela to stand up (Tezza, 2002, p. 208).

Juliano had already felt like killing Isabela in other occasions. From this report, we have the deployment between the boy who failed in the ethical trial, won by the desire to kill Isabela and the fear he had always had of her, and the sadist who keeps striking his former protector's lifeless body. After all, is the narrator-character Julian Pavollini, with all his inconstancies, a pervert who 'ignores the social rules on purpose', or it is the society in which he lives a pervert that he 'follows, without being fully aware of it, the obscene rules that taught the only unforgivable sin is failing to pursue the bourgeois and wealthy existence?' The novel is open for both interpretations. Cristovão Tezza did not write a work with incontestable truths. Such judgment is up to the reader, who will embody a Big Other foreseen in the text's internality.

Here we are back to the central concept of the work *A Visão em Parallaxe* (2008), by Slavoj Žižek: the parallaxic structures. We call *Juliano Pavollini's* configuration 'parallaxic' because the protagonist has a triple characterization: naive, cynical or bright. According to each reader's (subjective) interpretation, Juliano's narration can be reliable or not, something that establishes two different versions of the story; these two readings are obliterated by the objective reading both offer. Moreover, the author leaves textual gaps for interpretations concerning the perversion established in the novel, something that came both from the own character and from society's obscene rules.

### Final considerations

The work of art – specially the literary work – is a structure with gaps of meaning to be filled by the reader along the act of reading. Such gaps allow several interpretations, many times totally unexpected by the author, of the construct as a whole. It follows that it is possible to claim that Tezza's novel gets a parallaxic effect, as the configuration of its meanings changes as each individual reader relates to it. In other words, the *locus* the work uses in the Imaginary can be renegotiated at each new interaction. However, this novel has a special characteristic: Juliano's versions emerge not only from the narrator's problematic reliability, but also from the action of the authorial

instance, endowing him with a refined and erudite speech, taking the risk to become unlikely (that is why there is the repeated preoccupation to 'explain' the origin of this erudition in the character's monologues) and hanging about what we could consider a thin thread of verisimilitude. This building of a narrator's speech establishes the novel's great parallax, enhancing the text unreliability.

The narrator's elaborated and formal use of language does not conciliate with the character's use of it, and it marks the subject's duplicity and ambiguity. The inconstancies of this autodiegetic narrator makes one realize that the character has three versions of himself (and not only two), for there is a well-intentioned narrator-character, a manipulative narrator-character and a narrator-character whose authorial instance is in charge of his intellectualization.

Juliano enacts moments to affirm himself (the 'symbolic act'), as a way to show who he is, although in a distorted way. This enacting happens through the narrator's speech, which is highly educated and seems manipulative, in order to support his version of the facts towards a more naïve reader. The way the character reacts refer to whether Juliano is a pervert or not, in the Lacanian meaning – if he lies, steals, kills and manipulates because he purposely ignores the social rules or if he follows the obscene rules from the environment he lives in. And, once again, both versions fit the novel creating a textual parallax.

That is what we intended when claiming that *Juliano Pavollini*, by Cristovão Tezza, is parallaxic. Along this research we showed that the autodiegetic narrator's inconsistencies in this specific novel end up undermining and weakening its verisimilitude, bringing some strangeness to the readers, allowing them to define the versions they wish to believe, that is, in what authorial instances they trust. And this movement happens in several levels of the novel, forcing each reader to build representations which are always different from the narrated material, depending exclusively from the point in which the reader stands to focus on the textual universe.

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