

# Práticas de narrativas escritas em estudantes do ensino fundamental\*\*\*\*

## Written narrative practices in elementary school students

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### Abstract

**Background:** promotion of a written narratives production program in the third grade of an Elementary School. **Aim:** to analyze two written narrative practice proposals in order to verify which resources are more efficient in benefitting the textual productions of third grade Elementary School students. **Method:** sixty students were selected from two third grade groups of a public Elementary School in São Paulo (Brazil). For the analysis, students were divided into two groups (Group A and Group B). Fourteen children's storybooks were used. In Group A, the story was orally told by the researchers in a colloquial manner, keeping the narrator role and the original structure proposed by the author. In Group B, the story was fully read. The book was projected onto a screen and read aloud so the students could follow the reading and observe the corresponding illustrations. Voice changing resources in the characters' dialogues were used. **Results:** in the overall comparison, statistically significant results were found for moment (initial and final assessments) and for interaction between groups. It was observed that both groups presented substantial development from initial to final assessment. **Conclusion:** the Written Narratives Promotion Program based on the shared reading of children's storybooks constituted a more effective strategy than telling the stories using a single reader.

**Key Words:** Language; Narration; Handwriting; Education.

### Resumo

**Tema:** promoção de um programa de narrativas escritas na terceira série do ensino fundamental. **Objetivo:** analisar duas propostas de trabalho com práticas de narrativas escritas com a finalidade de verificar quais recursos seriam mais eficientes para beneficiar estudantes de terceira série do Ensino Fundamental na elaboração da produção de textos. **Método:** foram selecionados 60 escolares de duas classes da terceira série de uma escola estadual da cidade de São Paulo. Para fins de análise, os escolares foram divididos em dois grupos (Grupo A e Grupo B); foram utilizados 14 livros de histórias infantis. No Grupo A, a história era contada oralmente de modo coloquial pelos pesquisadores, mantendo-se o papel de narrador e a estrutura original do autor. No Grupo B, a história era lida na íntegra. O livro era projetado numa tela por meio de recurso de retroprojeção e lido em voz alta para que os estudantes acompanhassem a leitura e observassem as ilustrações correspondentes. Recursos de mudança de voz nos diálogos dos personagens foram utilizados. **Resultados:** na comparação geral, encontraram-se resultados estatisticamente significantes para o momento (inicial e final) e para interação entre grupos. Observou-se que em ambos os grupos houve um crescimento substancial entre início e final. **Conclusão:** o Programa de Promoção de Narrativas Escritas com base na leitura compartilhada dos livros infantis constitui-se em uma estratégia mais eficiente do que contar das histórias por meio de uma linguagem única.

**Palavras-Chave:** Linguagem; Narração; Escrita Manual; Educação.

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## Introduction

Written language requires instruction (formal or not) to be acquired, even if considered that, nowadays, the notion of writing is intrinsic to the child by the time she is admitted to school(1). In western countries, the educational institution is very valued for being the place of excellence in which education is carried out, and therefore has great influence in each person's maturation(2). However, many students finish the fourth grade of elementary school without developing the minimal reading abilities expected after four years of schooling(3).

It is known that narrative composition requires an adequate coordination of different cognitive and communication abilities, such as organization of ideas, interrelationship between facts and characters, among others(4). Thus, the association of different areas of knowledge in the educational process expands the range of opportunities, promoting the teaching-learning process. In this sense, School-Based Speech-Language Pathology have the purpose to bring basic knowledge in the area into the school, favoring the professional interrelationship between speech-language pathologists (SLP) and teachers(5).

The presence of the SLP in the school is related to the sense of creating favorable conditions for the capacities of both professionals and students to be fully explored(6). Therefore, SLPs working in the school setting might implement and/or develop programs to promote reading and writing skills. Hence, the present study had the aim to analyze two proposals of written narrative practices based on children's storybooks, in order to verify which resources would be effective to benefit third grade Elementary School students in text production.

## Methods

This study was approved by the Ethics Committee for the Analysis of Research Protocols of the institution (CAPPesq HCFMUSP 504/04). All parents or guardians signed an Informed Consent prior to the beginning of procedures, according to the National Health Council Resolution (196/96).

Sixty students from two third grade groups of a public school at the west region of the city of São Paulo were selected. Sixteen weekly meetings were planned, and the first and last meetings corresponded to the initial and final assessments, respectively; during the remaining meetings, a children's storybook was read each week, followed

by a written production of a story within the same theme. Inclusion criteria for this study were: to be in the third grade of Elementary School; to be in the alphabetical level of writing(7); to carry out initial and final assessments, and at least 50% of presence in the meetings of the Written Narratives Promotion Program. For analysis, the subjects were divided into two groups (Group A and Group B). For initial and final assessments, the students used bond paper and black pencil number 2 to register their written productions.

In the initial assessment, groups A and B worked separately. The instructions were provided orally and identically to both groups. All students wrote their productions at the same time, with no time prescheduled for the completion of the task. The following order was provided: "Imagine you are walking through a desert. Suddenly, you meet a witch. Now you're going to write on this sheet a story about what happened then. Use the sheet however you'd like, and write the necessary. You don't need to use a rubber eraser or to trace lines".

The Written Narratives Promotion Program used 14 children's storybooks (Appendix I), transparencies for projection (reproduction of the selected storybooks, scanned and printed on transparencies for screen projection), overhead projector to reproduce the transparencies, and bond paper for the students' written productions. The selection of the storybooks considered, as a first criterion, if it was new to the children. The teachers pre-selected the stories, with the aim to avoid books previously known by the students and books already used in classroom that year. All storybooks selected were the same genre, a narrative story with temporal sequence and adequate textual coherence that could be told or read with no ambiguity for each group.

Each story was told during the weekly meetings, with initial time pre-determined and variable duration, according to the rhythm of each group and the length of the storybook presented. The sequence of stories was rigorously the same to both groups, but the procedure was different.

In Group A, the story was orally told in a colloquial manner by the researchers, keeping the narrator role and the original structure of the author. The characters' speeches were told using indirect speech to facilitate the children's comprehension.

In Group B, the story was fully read. The book was projected onto a screen and read aloud so the students could follow and observe the corresponding illustrations. Changing voices during characters dialogs was used as a resource, with

prosodic changes and emphasizing the direct speech and the dialog.

Each week, a different story was presented to both groups and, before it began, the title of the book and the name of the author were emphasized. Right after the story was finished, the theme of the book and the messages taken from the story were discussed with the students. At the end of the discussion, they were motivated to write a story based on the theme of the storybook read that day.

In the final meeting, the final assessment was carried out using the same procedure of the initial assessment. The written production was requested with the following instruction: "Imagine you are lost in the woods. Suddenly, you see a flying saucer. Now you're going to write on this sheet a story about what happened then. Use the sheet however you'd like, and write the necessary. You don't need to use a rubber eraser or to trace lines".

Before and after the Written Narratives Promotion Program, the students developed free written productions. The criteria of the Communicative Competencies - Generic, Encyclopedic and Linguistic(8) were adopted, as observed in Table 1.

Such criteria were based on the ideas of Maingueneau (2002), which posit the instances that should be mobilized to produce and interpret an enunciation. For the author, there are three competencies that intervene on the knowledge of discourse and are not manifested in a sequential manner, but interact with each other to produce an

interpretation. The domain of the laws and genres of discourse are essential components of one's communicative competence, and corresponds to the generic competency, that is, the capacity to produce enunciation within a given number of genres. For that, one needs to master the language in question, to be linguistically competent, and to have a considerably amount of knowledge about the world, an encyclopedic competency.

The initial and final textual productions of each student were qualitatively and quantitatively analyzed based on these criteria.

## Results

Initial and final assessments of each subject were scored and statistically analyzed using the ANOVA test(9). The results obtained are presented in Figure 1 and Table 2.

The results regarding the comparison between initial and final assessments, as well as the relation between the groups and the moment of the assessment were statistically significant. In the general comparison, significant results were found for moment (initial and final) and for interaction between groups. It was observed that, in both groups, there was a substantial increase from initial to final scores; however, the mean increase was higher for Group B (Figure 1).

TABLE 1. Scoring criteria for the analysis of written productions.

Competency	Classification	Score
Generic	Adequate	2
	Partially adequate	1
	Inadequate	0
Encyclopedic	Maintenance to the theme	2
	Partial maintenance to the theme	1
	No maintenance	0
Linguistic	Adequate	2
	Partially adequate	1
	Inadequate	0

FIGURE 1. Profile of Groups A and B on initial and final assessments.

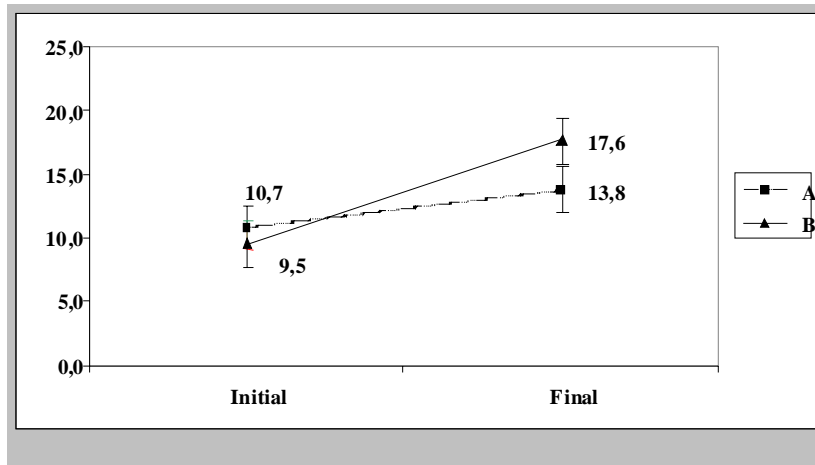


TABLE 2. Comparison between the groups (ANOVA).

Effect	p-value
Groups A and B	0,2178
Moment (initial e final)	<0,0001 *
Group x Moment	0,0004*

\* statistically significant

## Discussion

All final productions of the subjects analyzed in the present study improved on the three communicative competencies, producing coherent narratives with well organized structures, elaborated with great detail and action. The concern and care of the students with their written productions showed that, at the end of the Written Narratives Promotion Program, their texts were bolder and they were less afraid to expose their ideas.

Both types of the Written Narratives Promotion Program used in this study improved the three communicative competencies, resulting in more structured, coherent and cohesive texts. For some students from Group A, who did not have significant progresses, the productions also improved, even if lacking important elements for textual structures, resulting in a better interpretation of the message by their readers. Interaction between competencies is imperative to remediate the deficits or the failure in using specific resources

of one of them(8).

The contact with the book and the way the program was executed in Group B allowed the students to search for information, adjust the structure, pay attention to writing rules, compare the texts, discuss and encourage new written productions, with no fear to expose their difficulties. The linguistic characteristics more evidenced in Group B were the use of spatial and temporal deictics, the marking of characters' dialogs, the correct use of paragraphs, the length of the narrative, and the correctness of punctuation.

The different results found in both groups lead to a reflection about the benefits of each type of program. The fact that Group B presented a higher increase on their mean score than that of Group A suggests that the work based on the multiplicity of languages produced an improvement of the students' writing.

The achievements obtained from children's storybook reading allow the reader to be in contact with a complete textual structure,

and benefit the development of other linguistic aspects, from vocabulary increase to the improvement of oral expression and logical reasoning needed for cause and effect interpretation. Familiarity with books provide greater gain and improvement of children's written language abilities, especially if the stories lead to discussion and joint interpretation between the storyteller or reader and his listeners(10-11).

Similar results were found in another study(12) after a program of "Book Loan for the Family", which promoted the conscience about

the use of books by children, and the implementation of a routine of reading aloud at home. Such habit benefited the acquisition of advanced reading abilities and writing abilities in school.

The improvement of the linguistic quality after programs directed to students corroborates the results from other researchers, who emphasized the efficacy of oriented reading tasks and focusing on writing(13-15). According to these authors and complementing the findings of the present study, reading and discussing storybooks was essential to improve writing abilities in school(16).

### Conclusion

Both types of Written Narratives Promotion Program promoted more elaborated written productions. However, the program based on joint reading of children's storybooks was more effective than using a single language to tell the stories. The latest program counted on prosodic resources that explored the linguistic complexity needed to motivate the students to conceive reading and textual production as pleasant activities.

School-Based Speech-Language Pathology contributes to a dynamic articulation between Health and Education. It emphasizes the importance of language in people's lives, which allows learning and searching for a better quality of life, and produce critical citizens capable to communicate effectively.

### Appendix I

#### Books used on the written narratives promotion program

<b>Week</b>	<b>Book</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Editor</b>	<b>Year</b>
<b>1st</b>	<i>Problemas com Cachorro</i>	Elvira Vigna	Moderna	2003
<b>2nd</b>	<i>A Descoberta de Miguel</i>	Marilurdes Nunes	Ática	2002
<b>3rd</b>	<i>Não Me Chame de Gorducha</i>	Bárbara Phillips	Ática	1980
<b>4th</b>	<i>As Maluquices do Drº Lelé</i>	Teresa Noronha	Poneira	1982
<b>5th</b>	<i>A Risada de Biriba</i>	Isabel Botelho	Scipione	1989
<b>6th</b>	<i>As Férias da Bruxa Onilda</i>	Larreula & Capdevila	Scipione	1996
<b>7th</b>	<i>O Pequeno Planeta Perdido</i>	Ziraldo	Melhoramentos	1986
<b>8th</b>	<i>Rita Não Grita</i>	Flávia Muniz	Melhoramentos	1995
<b>9th</b>	<i>A Operação do Tio Onofre</i>	Tatiana Belinky	Ática	1994
<b>10th</b>	<i>Franguinho Sebastião</i>	Ricardo Soares	Moderna	1992
<b>11th</b>	<i>As Confusões de Aninha</i>	Stella Carr	Moderna	1985
<b>12th</b>	<i>A Invasão do Pensamento</i>	Alina Perlman	Brasil	1985
<b>13th</b>	<i>Os Porquês do Coração</i>	Conceil Corrêa da Silva/Ney Ribeiro Silva	Brasil	1995
<b>14th</b>	<i>Aventuras do Grotão da Mata</i>	Maria Clara Machado	Brasil	1993

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