

The Teacher's Work in PNLD (Brazilian Textbook Program) Proposals Regarding the Portuguese Language Teaching

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ABSTRACT – The Teacher's Work in PNLD (Brazilian Textbook Program) Proposals Regarding the Portuguese Language Teaching. This study discusses how some proposals of *Programa Nacional do Livro Didático* (PNLD – Brazilian Textbook Program) reflect, represent and influence the teacher's work. Through a brief history of PNLD and *PNLD-Dicionários* (PNLD Dictionaries), as well as a discussion about the context of textbooks production, it aims at understanding how such proposals were developed and are currently presented. The analyses of 1st grade textbooks, 5th grade dictionaries and guidance for the teachers indicate a gap between the textbooks' orientations and the teacher's work, and the necessity of reconsidering and reformulating the proposals, so that they can contribute for the knowledge development by the student and the organization of the teacher's work.

Keywords: Brazilian Textbook Program (PLND). PNLD Dictionaries. Production Context. Teacher's Work.

RESUMO – O Trabalho do Professor em Propostas do PNLD de Ensino de Língua Portuguesa. O artigo problematiza como algumas propostas do Programa Nacional do Livro Didático (PNLD) podem constituir e impactar o trabalho do professor. A partir de breve retomada histórica dos programas PNLD e PNLD - Dicionários e da análise do contexto de produção dos livros didáticos, discute-se como tais propostas foram concretizadas e são atualmente apresentadas. A análise de atividades dos livros didáticos do 1º ano do ensino fundamental e do PNLD - Dicionários para o 5º ano e de orientações ao professor indicam o distanciamento com relação ao trabalho docente e sugerem a necessidade de repensar as propostas, a fim de que possam contribuir para o processo de elaboração de conhecimento pelo aluno, bem como para a organização do trabalho docente.

Palavras-chave: Programa Nacional do Livro Didático (PNLD). PNLD Dicionários. Contexto de produção. Trabalho do Professor.

Introduction: do textbooks mediate the work of the teacher?

Currently, all Brazilian public schools receive books from *Programa Nacional do Livro Didático* (PNLD – Brazilian Textbook Program), composed of varied materials and proposals, such as textbooks, educational literary books, dictionaries and guides for the teacher¹, such as *Guia de Livros Didáticos PNLD* and *glia Dicionários elm Sala de Aula*. In addition to the almost constant presence in the classroom, which would already justify the study of the program, textbooks and guides for teachers are object of our attention due to the centrality they occupy in the organization of the educational work carried out by the teacher, since they convey a certain selection and sequence of the content to be taught, suggest methodological procedures, generate expectations of pathways and learning rhythms (Silva; Nogueira, 2015).

In view of this scenario, and knowing that the massive presence of these materials can be a risk factor to reduce the teacher's role in the organization of educational work, the purpose of this study is to know the content of the guidelines of some manuals and textbooks and to problematize their implications for the teacher's work.

We understand that the work of the teacher is mediated by “[...] material or symbolic instruments, insofar as the worker appropriates artifacts socially constructed and made available to him by the social environment” (Machado, 2007, p. 91). Among the many instruments that measure the teaching activity, along with the beliefs and conceptions, theories and proposals in the field of teaching and didactic methodology and *professional tradition* (Amigues, 2004), textbook orientations occupy a privileged place in this process, due to their remarkable presence and, perhaps, to the detailing and systematization of the presented activities.

Thus, there is an almost perverse dynamic between the textbooks authors and editors and the teachers and education professionals: as programs and textbooks begin to elaborate and detail the sequence and format of teaching activities, teachers are, little by little, being deprived of the work of conception and organization of the teaching. Taking this dynamics to the extreme, the detailing of the orientations presented to the teacher can place us in front of two situations:

[...] from a total concealment or negation of the teacher's work, or in the construction of his 'figure' as a simple adjuvant or instrument of a process that presents itself as having an ineluctable and almost mechanical character, since it would suffice that the teacher would apply the principles suggested by the prescriptions, so that the objectives of the activity could be achieved (Machado; Abreu-Tardelli, 2009, p. 113-114).

Also, because of this dynamic, we reiterate that the teacher's work may be restricted to follow the guidelines and prescriptions of the in-

struments, not knowing that the complexity of the teaching activity is precisely in the continuous selection, transformation and re-elaboration of orientations and means of work, articulated to the needs and characteristics of each of their students (Clot, 2006; Machado, 2007). That is, “[...] the activity of conception and organization of a work environment is certainly oriented to the activity of the students, but also to the teacher, who will be the executor of its own conception” (Amigues, 2004, p. 45).

And it is this understanding of the complexity of the professional activity that sustains, in this article, our option to consider the implications of the manuals and textbooks. In an analysis about the scientific production on the subject, Batista and Rojo (2008, p. 43) point out how school books are taken as object of study.

A complex object, resulting from a production process that involves economic, technical, social, political and educational dimensions, the school literature demands and allows the study of these different dimensions. In spite of the recent emergence of new thematic and methodological approaches, the determination of the interest of Brazilian research on only one of these dimensions – on the educational one, and particularly on its didactic facet, in its contents and methodology – therefore shows the need to overcome this strong imbalance and to assign to the school literature a specific status, that is, of the need to take this phenomenon not only as a medium for the study of contents and teaching methodology, but also as an object of investigation.

It is exactly in the space indicated by the authors, taking the didactic books as the object of investigation, that we try to inscribe our reflections about some PNLD proposals.

PNLD is a program of the *Fundo Nacional de Desenvolvimento da Educação* (FNDE – National Fund for Educational Development), which is responsible for the evaluation, selection and distribution of didactic books to all Brazilian public schools. Besides the distribution of the books, the program also develops other proposals, among them, the PNLD *Dicionários* (PNLD Dictionaries). Given the broad scope and capillarity of the program, we consider it essential to understand how the proposals that come to school affect the work and the autonomy of the teacher.

Thus, for the purposes of this article, we propose the retrieval of the guidelines addressed to teachers in activities for the 1st grade in Elementary Education (EE), focused on the literacy process, in some textbooks selected by PNLD – 2013, and guidelines for proposals for EE 5th grade by the *Guia Dicionários em Sala de Aula* (Rangel, 2012), which integrates the *PNLD Dicionários*.

PNLD and PNLD *Dicionários*: a brief history of the programs

It is believed that in 1929 what we now know as PNLD was born (Freitag; Motta; Costa, 1989), with another denomination and a different form of execution. At that time, the *Instituto Nacional do Livro* (National Book Institute) was created in an attempt to give greater legitimacy to national textbooks, as well as to expand its production. In order to control the production and circulation of the textbook in Brazil, in 1938, the *Comissão Nacional do Livro Didático* (National Commission of the Textbook – CNLD) was created (Batista, 2003). Since then, federal government programs for textbooks have been perfected and gained new formats until 1985, when PNLD was established, with the denomination that we know today, but still with a different execution from the current one.

From its beginnings, the State textbook programs have always aimed at improving the production of textbooks, as well as regulating it. What has not changed since its creation, however, is the participation of private publishers and the choice of books by teachers (a relative choice, which is not always respected). Regarding the dictionaries, in the last two editions of the program – 2006 and 2012 –, the works reached the schools in pre-selected collections, without allowing the teacher to choose.

The current format of PNLD was developed in 1996, when the Brazilian Ministry of Education (MEC) established the evaluation process of textbooks available to public schools. The process of enrollment and selection of textbooks in the program occurs as follows: as provided for in the public notice, with characteristics, rules and evaluation criteria of the program, the publishers register their works, which undergo an evaluation process carried out under the coordination of the Department of Elementary Education of MEC². Only the approved works are described by *Guia do Livro Didático*, and only the textbooks that integrate this document can be chosen by the teachers and sent by MEC to the public schools of the whole country.

The issue of the 'quality' of the textbook, defended by the Ministry of Education, is very explicit: as a guarantee of 'good choice' by the teacher, the teaching system (represented by MEC) performs a 'pre-selection' of this material. The result can be found in *Guia do Livro Didático* (Brasil, 2001), which contains reviews of all recommended books, grouped by areas of knowledge (Martins; Sales; Souza, 2009, p. 16).

Since its creation, the PNLD has undergone changes related to evaluation criteria, comprehensiveness and extension (at the beginning of the program, only EE initial-grade books were assessed; all levels of elementary education are now being assisted, except for Early Childhood Education) as well as gaining new modalities, such as the *PNLD Dicionários*, which in 2000 reintroduced dictionaries into official teaching materials' programs after almost two decades of absence.

The inclusion of dictionaries in the program was considered relevant, since the “systematized knowledge about the lexicon that the dictionary provides has a relevant role to play in the school (re)construction of knowledge concerning Portuguese language and language in general” (Rangel, 2012, p. 18). In fact, although the conceptions of language teaching depart from the consensus between linguists and grammarians, there is a point where there are no divergences: all agree on the importance of dictionaries as a support for learning both mother tongue and foreign language.

In the 2000-2004 editions, lexicographic works were inscribed and evaluated along the same lines as the options available for the textbook, with the distribution of one mini-dictionary per student, according to the title chosen by the school. Among the dictionaries approved in this period, the *Mini Aurélio Século XXI Escolar* (Ferreira, 2001) was the only one classified in the *Guia de Livros Didáticos* as “recommended with distinction” for presenting, among other characteristics, “simple and precise language”, “good vocabulary selection”, as well as because “there are no prejudices in the book” (Brasil, 2003, p. 35). Thus, the *Mini Aurélio*, with about 30,000 entries, became synonymous with a school dictionary when adopted by the vast majority of Brazilian public schools guided by the classification that the dictionary received in *Guia*, considered as work in total compliance with the common and specific analysis criteria used by the Program.

However, contrary to official expectations, it was observed a widespread disuse of these dictionaries in the school. Because they were designed for an adult schooling audience, the works required the EE Cycle I student to have the skills of an experienced user. In addition, the classic lexicographic definition is unfriendly even to the literate and experienced public in consultations. Another obstacle was the lack of a school tradition of systematic use of the dictionary, which prevented many professors, although motivated, from assuming the development of the proficiency in consultation as a necessary content of teaching. Directly or indirectly, this general framework was the basis of the changes introduced in PNL D 2006, which established parameters for the development of dictionaries that are more committed to the student profile and the objectives of the first EE segment (Rangel, 2011).

With the reformulation of *PNLD Dicionários* carried out in 2006, maintained in the following edition of 2012, the distribution of one mini-dictionary per student was replaced by the adoption of lexicographic collections, between three and seven titles per collection/class, with works adapted to the level of education, accompanied by the guide functioning as a Teacher’s Manual. Thus, dictionaries that were previously available as individual materials for student use, both at school and at home, became available only in the school environment and in a reduced number of volumes for collective use of such works, which obliges the teacher to make loan of collections of other classes when the objective is the work with all the students.

That is, within the last two editions of the *PNLD Dicionários*, instead of one dictionary per student, always with the same title, MEC considered more appropriate to the school demands to distribute collections composed of dictionaries, for collective use in the school, from different publishers, which currently have the following categories:

- Type 1: three titles with 500 to 1,000 entries, for EE 1st grade;
- Type 2: seven titles with 3,000 to 15,000 for the period between EE 2nd and 5th grades;
- Type 3: five titles with 19,000 to 35,000 for the second EE segment;
- Type 4: four titles with 40,000 to 100,000 for high school.

Thus, in view of the titles approved to compose the *Guia de Livros Didáticos*, the composition of the dictionary collection, and especially the guidelines formulated for the teacher, we now turn to the context of the production of the materials to understand the possibilities that these materials offer for the teacher's work.

Why Analyze the Textbooks' Production Context?

In a study on textbook collections, Lerner (2004) proposes as categories of analysis the conception of the object of teaching, the representation of the student as subject of learning and the representation of the teacher as recipient of the guidelines and prescriptions of the teacher's manual.

Considering, therefore, the last category, it is relevant to highlight that through the analysis of textbooks' production context, it was possible to make explicit the conceptions that are conveyed, but above all, to explain the different recipients and the voices present in the orientations to the teacher: in what production context are the textbooks and manuals for the teacher produced? What other texts are articulated and to which ones do they answer? (Machado, 2007).

Addressing textbooks, PNLD and its developments requires more comprehensive analysis than the book itself because, from the broader context, it is possible to elaborate hypotheses about the authors in the most immediate production situation (Ferreira, 2011). Thus, it is fundamental to analyze the production context in which it is inserted and to explain the different voices and interlocutors that circulate within these books. The analysis of the production context of didactic books allows seeing them in a dialectical way, highlighting the integrative, interactional and multidimensional character of educational practices (Saujat, 2004).

We do not look at the book only, but at the book within the society, as part of a program that is developed in different proposals, marked by forms of representation of the school, the teacher, the teaching-learning process. Thus, we focus on the context of textbook production that involves authors and editors who respond to the PNLD public notice,

which is ruled by specific norms for enrollment and assessment of the collections.

The production conditions of *PNLD Dicionários* are somewhat different. After defining the collections of each type, the suggestions for activities are prepared by authors invited by MEC to compose the *Guia Dicionários em Sala de Aula* (Dictionaries in Classroom Guide), marked by the conceptions and foundations they assume. In this case, the teacher is not called upon to make a choice, since the collections are already pre-defined and the guide is unique. In this situation, MEC assumes the prerogatives of preparing a single program to be proposed and implemented in Brazilian public schools, which does not guarantee the establishment of complementary relations with the textbooks indicated by the teachers among those approved by PNLD.

Considering, therefore, the process of evaluating collections, selecting dictionary collections and developing guidelines for teachers, we highlight the presence of different spheres, different subjects that elaborate educational proposals and orientations for the teacher, different statements about the textbook. Subjects who represent and talk about the book, so that their different voices echo in their constitution, retrieving statements already spoken and renewing them, in such a way to reinforce certain visions about the school operation and its members. Thus,

[...] what we are talking about is only the content of speech, the theme of our words. [...] But the discourse of others constitutes more than the theme of discourse, it can enter into discourse and its syntactic constitution, so to speak, 'in person', as an integral unit of construction. Thus, the quoted discourse preserves its structural and semantic autonomy without, however, altering the linguistic fabric of the context that integrated it (Bakhtin, 2004, p. 144).

We understand that discourses are permeated by the discourse of others, by other voices, they are polyphonic. The voices of the PNLD public notice and the evaluators are dialogically present in the textbooks, they cross the proposals and guidelines, because the authors and the entire editorial body are in intense dialogue with these voices. Therefore, in this production context, all the interlocutors participate in the polyphonic discourse on the didactic book and other modalities of the program: With whom does the author/editor dialogue? Is the teacher his first, real interlocutor? Or would the teacher be the intended recipient, and the real interlocutor is the commission of evaluators of the PNLD? How is the teacher represented in this process? Who is the teacher so that the author/editor addresses him in a certain way? What does the author/editor intend when speaking to a teacher/evaluator in a certain way? (Geraldini, 1997).

In the process of analyzing the collections, we noticed the presence of several recipients, even when the guidelines of the textbook are addressed to the teacher, they are addressed to the evaluators of PNLD,

in response to the requirements of the registration announcement. Even before being attractive and interesting for the teacher to choose a specific collection, authors and editors are focused on getting PNLD approval, a condition to reach the school for a possible indication by the teachers. Regarding *PNLD Dicionários*, there is a discussion about the lack of articulation between the materials that compose the same program, which includes the textbook, the dictionaries of the collections and the *Guia Dicionários em Sala de Aula*. The *Guia* proposes activities that do not fit the reduced number of entries of Types 1 and 2 dictionaries, and suggests that the proposed activities should be complemented with a textbook that rarely brings activities that require a dictionary consultation.

We highlight, therefore, the complex dynamics between authors, publishers, PNLD evaluators and teachers in their work. This dynamic is even more intricate if we remember the commercial interests present. It is important to emphasize the significant growth of the volume of books produced in Brazil in the recent decades, when a significant part of the publishing market turns to the elaboration and provision of didactic books to attend the programs of the federal government, producing some distortions and problems³.

Governmental programs for the acquisition of textbooks have a significant importance for the Brazilian publishing market. Estimates indicate that the didactic industry represents about 54% of the national book industry. Regarding the concentration of the segment, there is, on the demand side, almost monopsony (in the elementary school, for example, the State accounts for the acquisition of approximately 90% of the published books); on the provision side, there is an oligopoly (few publishers have been concentrating the largest volume of FNDE purchases over time) (Britto, 2011, p. 12).

As we can see from the data presented, publishers have great interest in submitting and having their works approved by the PNLD, given the guarantee of sale of a considerable number of copies, when chosen by the teachers. This chain of conflicting interests – with varying expectations on the part of the PNLD managers and evaluators, the authors and the publishers of the books – can result in the lack of knowledge of the interests and needs of the teachers to develop educational practices in the classroom appropriate to the real conditions. Thinking about the relationships between these various spheres helps to understand the process of producing textbooks and developing guidelines for teachers. Thus, considering the context of production of the PNLD proposals here indicated, we now turn to the discussion of some guidelines and their implications for the work of the teacher.

The Guidance of the Manuals and the Work of the Teacher

In a recently completed research (Silva, 2015), we present the didactic manuals of four collections approved in the PNLD 2013 for EE first grade, each belonging to one of the four major groupings indicated by the *Guia*, which divides the works considering the literacy time provided in each book. Our analysis allowed us to understand that textbooks follow this logic: although the teacher appears as a declared interlocutor and named in the statements of the didactic manual, this place is also filled by other interlocutors to whom the authors seek to answer and convince. That is, the first readers/interlocutors of the books, the ones who approve them, who include them in the list of indicated books and legitimate them are the PNLD evaluators. We have understood, therefore, that the teacher is the supposed recipient of the textbooks, while the actual recipients are the PNLD evaluators.

Authors and publishers of the textbooks are concerned with responding to the demands of these interlocutors in such a way that the didactic collection is approved, within this immense array of voices and discourses. What we find in the manuals is a response to what has already been discussed about the functioning of the school and the teaching work, a dialogical process in which the teacher remains idealized and marginalized, without becoming the major interlocutor.

Our analyses suggest that the manuals of teacher-directed textbooks already seek to meet the requirements of the application, by presenting to the teacher those themes already highlighted by the authors of the textbooks, according to the evaluation criteria presented in the *Guia*. In this context, what authors point out to teachers is strongly marked by the emphases of the document, as it can make explicit the analysis of a section of the *Guia de Livros Didáticos PNLD 2013* (PNLD 2013 Textbook Guide), listing the requirements for structuring the teacher's manual, and the summary section of the Teachers' Book of the *Viraver* collection, analyzed by us.

Figure 1 – Excerpt of the item *Princípios e Critérios Estabelecidos para a Avaliação das Coleções de Língua Portuguesa Destinadas ao EF* (Principles and criteria established for the evaluation of collections of Portuguese language aimed to EE)

Teacher's Manual	
The Teacher's Manual or Book must be an instrument capable of adequately supporting the use of the collection by the teacher, both in the classroom work and in the orientation for the autonomous study by the student.	
It cannot, therefore, be merely a copy of the student's book, with the answers completed. Therefore, it should:	
– make clear and precise the theoretical and methodological assumptions from which the didactic-pedagogical proposal was elaborated;	
– accurately and functionally describe the organization of the books, including the objectives to be achieved in the proposed activities and the necessary referrals;	
– provide inputs for the evaluation of teaching outcomes, as well as for the extension and adaptation of the proposals contained in the book(s);	
– propose ways of articulation between the proposals and activities of the collection and other didactic materials distributed by official programs, such as PNLD- <i>Dicionários</i> , PNLD of Complementary Materials and PNBE.	

Source: Brazil (2013, p. 17).

Figure 2 – Summary of the *Viraver* Collection *Teacher's Book*

SUMMARY	
THEORETICAL-METHODOLOGICAL PROPOSAL	
Working with the language and goals of the collection	5
The formation of the reader and the writer: a dialogue between theory and practice	6
– Reading for what? Why reading?	6
– Why writing? Why writing?	7
The practice of reading and writing	8
Group work and learning	9
OBJECTIVES OF PORTUGUESE LANGUAGE TEACHING IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION	
Literacy and reading and writing skills	11
The reader and the variety of discursive genres	11
Letter styles: challenges to reading and writing	13
– When to introduce cursive writing?	14
The role of previous knowledge in the appropriation of written language	15
EVALUATION	
The evaluation action and the teacher's practice	16
– Diagnostic evaluation	16
Reviewing and rewriting texts	18
HOW THE BOOK IS STRUCTURED	
Why a topic per unit?	19
The text and the intertexts	19
The sections of the book and guidelines on pedagogical practice	19

Source: Miranda; Micarello; Schapper (2012).

As the aforementioned documents indicate, in compliance with the evaluation criteria indicated by the *Guia*, the teacher's manual follows the topics and items pointed out as of essential importance. Our analyzes indicate that, instead of addressing the teacher and students, the editors and authors of the textbooks need to adequately respond to the PNLD's evaluators, the public notice and the norms of the programs for their approval. These are, therefore, the main interlocutors and protagonists in the production of the school book, and the teacher, who occupies a definite place in the concretion of the conditions of the school, occupies a secondary place.

And which problems can this cause to the teacher's work? We believe that writing manuals for the teacher, but with the focus on PNLD approval, creates a mismatch between expectations and what is said to the teacher and program evaluators. We will exemplify it with an activity of the *Porta Aberta* collection, one of the collections analyzed by us.

According to the *Guia de Livros Didáticos*, it is essential that the entire teacher's manual presents the theoretical basis for the proper use of the material by the teacher, since there is where teachers will find the conceptions of teaching, learning, literacy, among others that guide the textbook with which they are working. To meet this PNLD requirement, all textbooks seek to provide the theoretical foundation. In the manual of *Porta Aberta* book, aimed at the EE 1st grade, we find the following:

The sounds that letters represent, that is, the relationships between phonemes and graphemes are, in turn, a fundamental knowledge. It is worth mentioning that, at the beginning of the literacy process, sound (the phoneme) is a very abstract reality for the child. Children tend to deal with larger units, which they hear and can speak more easily. Thus, it is understandable that you choose to use units like the syllable and even the words (Bragança; Carpaneda, 2011, p. 6).

However, in the same textbook, we find the following activity.

Figure 3 – Activity Proposal – *Porta Aberta* Collection



Source: Bragança; Carpaneda (2011, p. 52).

In the proposed activity, students in the initial phase of literacy are called upon to compare words – fruit names – without dealing with

larger textual units, but they will need to understand the grapheme/phoneme relationship, seen as difficult at the beginning of the literacy process, or do the simple relation between the writing of the word *CAJU* (cashew) and the other fruits. Thus, we understand that not always the information that the teacher finds in the Manual, considered by the *Guia de Livros Didáticos* as important for the use of the book, will effectively be contemplated by the proposed teaching activities.

The activity leads the child to compare and recognize the relationships between graphemes and phonemes, a fundamental aspect during the literacy process. However, the main problem is the predominance of activities like this, to the detriment of activities that present written texts. The presence of such activities can be understood by the teacher as a desirable and appropriate proposal for working with written language, and may reiterate the idea that teaching of aspects regarding the functioning of writing prevail over its functions and social uses.

The work with the texts cannot be ignored, instead, the student should be given the opportunity to think the language in movement, in a constant game between signifiers and meanings. However, in the school, these activities are reduced to the location of rhymes, of words that have similar sounds (Romão; Pacífico, 2006). Therefore, we understand the significant importance of making the student to reflect on the language and its various uses, concerning textual genres, linguistic variations, the specificities of the language oral or written form.

All the collections analyzed by us highlight the importance of learning to reflect, interpret, and have a critical vision about the world in which we live, in such a way that the student's repertoire is always expanded. In this process, the oral language also acquires a certain prominence, so that the student can participate in the most distinct communicative situations.

We live in a literate society in which written situations and the standard norm are highly valued, in which linguistic variations and orality end up being less considered by the school, which could privilege reflection on the different uses of the language, but misses good opportunities for this to occur, as in the following proposal:

Figure 4 – Comics – *Viraver* Collection



Source: Cedraz (2007 apud Miranda; Micarello; Schapper, 2012, p. 144).

The teacher's orientation emphasizes that the comics presents regional, northeastern characters. In addition, some words are written according to the oral language, and several of them not only refer to the pronunciation used in the northeast region, but to the oral form of language, such as *qui*, *faiz*, *istranhá* and *tá*, as well as some expressions such as *ainda cai nessas do Saci*.

We see here a great opportunity to reflect and learn the distinct aspects of language, as well as its variations, operation and use. However, as we observe below in Figure 5, the book does not explore the various possibilities for reflection on the use of language in different social situations and practices, aspects of linguistic functioning and the differences between oral and written language.

Figure 5 – Activity proposal – *Viraver* Collection

ENDO E CONVERSANDO

O TÍTULO DA HISTÓRIA É "COISINHA". POR QUÊ?
 Porque *Coisinha* foi o nome que o Saci deu ao seu pássaro de estimação.

UM DOS PERSONAGENS DO TEXTO É MUITO CONHECIDO NO FOLCLORE BRASILEIRO. QUAL É O NOME DELE? O QUE VOCÊ SABE SOBRE ELE?
 Saci-pererê. Possibilidade: Ele é um menino negro que tem apenas uma perna, usa bermuda e gorro vermelho, fuma cachimbo e costuma apertar travessuras com as pestanas.

POR QUE, NO ÚLTIMO QUADRINHO, O SACI ESTÁ RINDO?
 Porque ele conseguiu enganar o Zé Pequeno.

Prof. (a): É possível que os alunos não saibam que o personagem Saci é conhecido por suas travessuras. Assim, cabe ao professor apresentar essa característica, com base em relatos sobre Saci, para que compreendam melhor o humor da história em quadrinhos.

PENSANDO SOBRE O TEXTO

LIGUE OS NOMES AOS PERSONAGENS CORRESPONDENTES:

SACI ZÉ PEQUENO XAXADO E MARIETA	 <div style="font-size: 8px; margin-top: 5px;"> Prof. (a): Realize as atividades de 1 a 3 coletivamente. Leia cada questão e as opções de resposta, só um tempo para os alunos responderem. Em seguida, circule entre as cartelas e observe as escolhas de alguns ou coloque as opções no quadro de giz e marque a resposta para que eles possam conferir. Ainda, se perceber que Saci é uma única palavra que nomeia um só personagem, enquanto Zé Pequeno também refere-se a apenas um personagem, riscar e corrigir por duas palavras; além disso, uma das opções tem dois nomes de personagens unidos pelo conectivo e. </div>
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MARQUE AS RESPOSTAS CERTAS COM UM X.

A) O SACI DEU O NOME DE "COISINHA" À SUA AVE PORQUE:

ELA ERA BEM PEQUENA.

QUERIA ENGANAR O ZÉ PEQUENO.

NÃO SABIA O NOME DELA.

CENTO E QUARENTA E CINCO **145**

Source: Miranda; Micarello; Schapper (2012, p. 145).

The exercises related to the comics do not address aspects of social use and linguistic variations. On the contrary, they bring some questions that demand seemingly obvious and non-challenging answers for the student. Moreover, the choice of activities such as this, reduced to the recognition of the writing of the characters' names, makes explicit a limited and misleading conception of what children in the literacy phase can learn and perform, as if, as long as they do not know how to read, they could only deal with isolated words and certain aspects of the functioning of writing – in this case, the written record of the names of the characters – to the detriment of the textual and discursive aspects of the language in operation in real situations of use.

In situations like this, which are quite common in textbooks, teachers not only find the reiteration of certain practices that they already know, but, above all, miss the opportunity to know other conceptions and alternatives for literacy practices. In this sense, we can say that the reduction and simplification suggested by the textbook have the effect of legitimizing certain literacy practices, in which the text remains only a pretext and source of isolated words, practices in which children have rare opportunities to reflect on the textual and discursive aspects of writing.

Finally, the constant presence of activities similar to this one in the literacy books and Portuguese language puts us in face of the subtleness of the problem: it is not only the presence of activities like this, but the absence of other proposals that bring a broader conception about writing.

Again, we find a mismatch between the *claims* suggested by the textbook and what the activities actually propose to discuss and teach. We believe that this may be due to the need for the manual to conform to the PNLD requirements for its approval, *avoiding* issues that are extremely important in the classroom context, both regarding the teacher's work and the student's learning. According to the program's public notice, the manual whose intended recipient is the teacher should highlight the educational work with orality, social practices, literacy, reflection on the language and participation in the most diverse social practices. Although comics allows us to explore linguistic variations, this appears only marginally in the proposed activity.

And it is precisely because we look at the book in its context of production and use in the classroom, and not only at the book itself, its structure, constitution, organization, topics evaluated by the PNLD (as the approval of didactic works present), that we can perceive these mismatches between what is indicated in the manual and what we actually find in the activities of the student's book.

The analysis of the impacts of the PNLD program on teacher's work is also the subject of research reflection in which we have studied the PNDL *Dicionários* (Colombo, 2016). As already mentioned, in addition to the dictionaries, all the collections are accompanied by the *Guia Dicionários em Sala de Aula* (Rangel, 2012), which brings to teachers a set of suggestions of activities using the collection exploring the alphabetical order, ability to find words, comparison of definitions, synonymy, homonymous words, spelling, among others.

The main purpose of the *Guia Dicionários em Sala de Aula* is to support the work with dictionaries of the collections, also working as a type of teacher's manual. For this, it is divided into two parts. The first aims to emphasize the importance of the dictionary in the process of developing written language understood as "a particular type of writing support – a genre of discourse" (Rangel, 2012, p. 44) and to describe the dictionaries of the collections that have arrived in the schools. "What kind of book is the dictionary exactly? What is it for? For what reason have the dictionaries become the subject of public policies in education?" (Rangel, 2011, p. 50) are some of the questions answered in the first part of the teachers' manual. Also, according to the author, it is possible to say that the PNLD induces to include the development of proficiency in consulting the dictionary as an object of the teaching-learning.

The second part of the guide considers that the use of the dictionary should be object of teaching and learning in school, since "both increase the degree of literacy of the subjects and deepens the social functioning of writing" (Rangel, 2012, p. 45). To do so, it proposes activities that meet different objectives that the teacher can select, adapt and complement according to the curricular contents targeted.

Still in relation to children's dictionaries, Humblé (2011) suspects that the fact that they present a few words unknown to the children may indicate that their main purpose is not to clarify meanings, but to sym-

bolize the intention of the rulers to improve the quality of teaching by presenting a new object of knowledge. Possenti (2012), with whom we agree, questions the effectiveness of children's dictionaries and proposes comparing the same entry in a complete dictionary and in a children's dictionary so that it can be observed the misunderstanding of making the child believe that the word has only one or two meanings, without exploring polysemy and discursive functioning.

For Silva-Rodrigues and Pacifico (2007, p. 58), the non-exploration of polysemy is intentional:

[...] since it breaks with what is guaranteed, with the historically accumulated, it opens space for subjectivity; the paraphrase, indeed, is praised by most of the school institution, because it demonstrates stability, security – the illusion of unbreakable truth. This truth has even more prestige if it is regulated by grammar and orthographic norms.

In the following table, we take as an example the adjective *cru* [raw] in the *Caldas Aulete* dictionaries (Geiger, 2011a; 2011b; 2011c; 2011d), the only one with titles in the four categories of 2012 PNLD *Di-cionários*.

Table 1 – The Entry *cru* [raw] in Types 1 to 4 Dictionaries

Type 1 1,000 entries	A raw food has not been cooked, or is not completely cooked. [The opposite of raw is cooked.] (Geiger, 2011a, p. 57, authors' translation)
Type 2 6,183 entries	a. 1 A <i>raw</i> food has not been cooked: raw meat. 2 fig. Something <i>raw</i> is also what has not been prepared or improved: This text is quite <i>raw</i> , I have to work harder on it. (Geiger, 2011b, p. 139, authors' translation)
Type 3 29,431 entries	a. 1 What is not cooked (raw fish). 2 Not prepared (rawhide) 3 Fig. Inexperienced: <i>The new employee is still quite raw.</i> [Female: <i>raw.</i>] [F.; From Latin. "Crudus", one, a.]. (Geiger, 2011c, p. 238, authors' translation)
Type 4 75,756 entries	a. 1 What is not cooked: <i>I do not like sashimi because I do not like raw fish.</i> [Ant.: cooked] 2 Not sufficiently cooked: <i>Pass this steak over, it is still raw.</i> 3 Said to be in a natural state, which was not prepared in any special process, such as tanning, dyeing etc. (<i>rawhide</i> , <i>raw linen</i>). 4 What did not undergo any process or interference that diminished the intensity, the brightness etc.: <i>No cloud obscured the raw light of noon.</i> 5 Fig. Inexperienced, immature: <i>He is still too raw to handle this machine.</i> [Ant.: experienced, mature] 6 Still in the initial stage, not elaborate enough; INCIPIENT: <i>This text is still quite raw, you have to work harder.</i> 7 Without disguise or pretense: <i>He spoke the truth naked and raw.</i> [Ant.: disguised] 8 No finesse, euphemism or polishing (raw words); ROUGH, GROSS, HARSH 9 Gory, bloody, barbaric (<i>raw war</i>) [Ant.: bloodless.] 10 Agonizing, distressing, painful [Ant.: delicate, gentle, soft.]: <i>And that, of raw and ugly disease, The most that I have never seen...</i> [Ant.: bearable, tolerant.] 11 Scandalous, shocking (<i>raw language</i>) [Female: raw] <i>a2g2n.</i> 12 Which is according to the material that is done in a natural way (<i>raw dress</i> , <i>raw cruse purses</i>) 13 Said of this color: sheet of raw color. Male noun. 14 <i>Lus.</i> In Portugal, <i>crude oil</i> , crude oil [F.: Form lat. <i>crudus</i> Hom./Par.: (pl.) <i>raw</i> , <i>crude</i> (fem. noun.). A – No concealment or disguise. Being ~ on/in. To lack knowledge on, not be prepared to. (Geiger, 2011d, p. 421, authors' translation)

Source: Based on the mentioned dictionaries.

We can observe that in the passage from one type to another not only new meanings are added – from 1 to 14 –, but there is also an increase of metalinguistic information, among which the grammatical class stands out, indicating as adjective from Type 2, the gender flexion, indicated in types 3 and 4 as *fem. of raw*, the connotative use in figurative expressions, among other aspects present in the transcript of the Type 4 dictionary (Geiger, 2011d), which implies that such information is appropriate only to high school students for whom they are intended.

Therefore, according to Rangel, we can conclude that the PNL D expects from the selected dictionaries a character almost as didactic as that of the book. In this sense, similar to what happened with the textbook, PNL D became a reference source and model for the editorial production of school dictionaries. On the other hand, the principles and evaluation criteria for the dictionaries have repercussions on the Portuguese language textbooks that started to present more frequently activities of reflection on the vocabulary, often with references to the use of dictionaries.

Predicting difficulties due to the reduced number of entries in some of the collection books, one of the orientations is about the teacher's early verification that all words to be searched by the students are from the dictionaries, since the quality and appropriateness of the dictionaries "depend on how much they are in line with the objectives and the public of the Elementary Education and, therefore, to its students and teachers" (Rangel, 2012, p. 28).

The *Guia* suggests as a starting point for the selection of activities the survey of the lexicographic approach of the textbook adopted. In this way, the activities proposed by the mentioned document could be differentiated, complementing or expanding the work proposed by the textbook.

After changing the composition of the collections, with a copy of each title, the *Guia Dicionários em Sala de Aula* began to prioritize the use of this material in the classroom, where they are available for the students' consultation. Thus, broadening the typological framework of works available to students would reverse the absolute idea of mini-dictionaries as the only choice of school dictionary, which corroborates the idea that "there is not a specific category of school dictionary, but dictionaries suitable for school" (Krieger, 2006, p. 238).

However, changing the collections leads us to problematize whether such books – given the reduced number of entries in the Type 1 and Type 2 collections (from 500 to 15,000 words) – are adequate to the demands of the public to which they are aimed, students of EE 1st cycle. What entries do they register? What entries do they exclude? What are the possibilities that such collections give to the work of the teacher within the classroom?⁴

In our studies, we realize that the proposal does not always respond to the expectations created. It is worth remembering what Batista (2003) highlights about the existence of a mismatch between the

expectations of teachers and the PNLD regarding what is a book that is appropriate to classroom practices. The same happens with the dictionaries and, more than the discontent of the teachers who did not participate in the choice of the titles, there is the dissatisfaction of the students, consultants of these works, who present frequent complaints about the absence of searched words. This fact could be observed from the recording and analysis of the impressions of about 50 students of EE 5th grade of a public school in the countryside of São Paulo state. Here are some of these impressions.

Initially, the differentiated graphic designs from the dictionaries of the collection awaken in the children the enchantment proper of the most seductive literary works through the call of well-known illustrations, such as characters from *Sítio do Pica Pau Amarelo* (Geiger, 2011a) or *Turma do Cocoricó* (Geiger, 2011b). However, when searching for a specific entry, students begin to realize that most of the time it is necessary to consult various titles available until they find what they are looking for, because in Types 1 and 2 dictionaries there is a reduction of entries and meanings in each entry. The original proposal for language adequacy in works for EE students was limited to simplifying it and adding illustrations.

Since they still do not completely understand the alphabetical order and/or are not absolutely sure about this domain, the students insist on the search for words that the dictionaries of the collection do not often register, causing great loss of time generated by the uncertainty about the absence of the word or the difficulty in finding it (Colombo, 2014).

Still, concerning the difficulties that the students encountered in carrying out the proposed activities, our observations suggest that the lack of metalinguistic mastery also constitutes an obstacle to their execution. Among them, the *Equal, but different...* activity (Rangel, 2012, p. 59) proposes the search for homonymous words (verb/noun) in the context of pre-defined phrases like *I do not like John, he always mocks a lot of me!* or *I love music, but I do not sing very well*, in which the words to be searched are the verbs *mock* and *sing*. By requiring more elaborate reflection on language – function, grammatical class and syntactic relationship between certain words in a sentence – the complexity of the activity for the student still in Cycle I is greater than what is often predicted. If the searched word is a verb, EE students will only learn to localize it if they know what a verb is and that this class of words is listed by the infinitive in dictionaries.

These aspects can be problematized from the situation experienced by a pair of EE 5th grade students when they looked in the dictionary for the word *vela* in the phrase *O soldado vela pela segurança do palácio*⁵ [The soldier takes care of the security of the palace]:

L. – Agora é qual?

M. – Vela (*começam a procurar no dicionário*).

L. – Deixa eu ver “vela pela segurança do palácio” (*lê a frase dada na atividade e lê ‘vela’ – substantivo – no dicionário*)

M. – Tem outra *vela*, sem ser isso?

L. – Ó, tem duas velas, mas eu já li a vela 2 e a vela 1. Na vela 2 tem “peça cilíndrica ou de outros formatos [...]” e na vela 1 tem “peça de lona ou de brim [...]”

(*Ambas seguem em silêncio a sequência de entradas do dicionário e localizam o verbo velar. Leem juntas em voz alta.*)

L. e M. – Velar 1: “cobrir com véu, esconder tapando, escurecer, tornar-se secreto, ocultar”. Velar 2: “passar a noite acordado [...]” (*interrompem a leitura*).

L. – (*Com entusiasmo*) Ah! Eu acho que é esse! (*as duas riem felizes com a descoberta*).

M. – Qual que é o velar?

L. – É esse daqui, ó (*ainda sorrindo*), é igualzinho.

M. – (*repetindo devagar, enquanto copiam*) “Passar a noite acordado”. 2- “Estar alerta, vigiar”.

Although the students had reached the expected response, the analysis of the activity of the two students showed that there was no reflection on the function of the word in the sentence, but rather the sequential reading of the dictionary entries that led to the correct answer: *vela 1, vela 2, velame, velar 1 and velar 2*.

For this activity, the *Guia Dicionários em Sala de Aula* (Rangel, 2012) brings a relevant observation about working with classes of words, indicating that the teacher shows that words appear in the same way in the sentence and in the dictionary when they are nouns, while when they are verbs, the dictionary only records the infinitive. Although this information was passed to the students, it had little value in the execution of the activity, since they lack the systematization of such linguistic analyzes.

The utmost benefit in the use of the dictionary is reached by the reader who understands how the language works and has linguistic knowledge to understand its description. For students to make the best use of the information contained in the entries and the degree of grammatical deepening of the dictionaries, they must have the opportunity to deepen and systematize this knowledge, a work that should also be provided by the textbook, a complementary material in PNLD.

The textbook adopted for the groups studied was *A Aventura do Saber* (The Adventure of Knowledge) (Ferronato; Silva, 2011), of the PNLD 2013-2015 triennium, which brings a single activity that mentions the use of the dictionary, proposing the work of producing sentences with the different meanings of a dictionary entry. In addition to this proposal, there are no data in the book to assist the student in looking up words in the dictionary, such as alphabetical order-related activities, verbs in the infinitive, or inflection in numbers, gender and grade, making it unfeasible for the teacher to articulate the activities of these two PNLD resources: textbook and dictionary. The units of the book are organized by thematic axis and therefore do not follow any previous sequence of contents, presenting grammatical aspects according to the possible analyzes in the texts presented.

The reduced number of entries can also hinder the work of teachers and students. We know that it is impossible for a dictionary to bring all the words of a living, constantly changing language. However, there is no justification for the dictionary of school use to not present words such as those of the Brazilian National Anthem – *fúlgido, garrido e labaruro* (brilliant, garrulous and labarum) – to privilege in its reduced entries words like glass, knife and lemon that, even for beginning readers and writers, do not offer doubts about the spelling, have no graphic accent and are characteristic of the active vocabulary of these students. We consider, therefore, the need for greater care, the revision and adequacy of textbooks and dictionaries, so that they become more and more suitable instruments for the organization of the teachers' work and the students' learning.

Despite the quality of the *Guia Dicionários em Sala de Aula*, which achieves its objectives of providing theoretical and practical support, when indicating activities that lead beyond the traditional use of the dictionary to ask questions of spelling and search for unknown meanings, such discrepancies between PNLD parameters, the guide and the dictionaries themselves suggest to those responsible for the program the need for greater care in evaluating the works to be approved.

Final Remarks: how can the guidelines dialogue with the teacher?

In order to understand the relationship between the textbook guidelines and the teacher's work, throughout this article we argue in favor of the analysis of the textbook production context and the implications of the textbook guidelines for the teacher's work. In this sense, we emphasize the need for managers and evaluators of PNLD to look beyond the book itself, being more attentive to the adequacy between the guidelines of the manuals and the textbook proposals and the effects of the guidelines of the manuals regarding the real conditions for the organization of teaching work in the classroom.

If the presence of textbooks is remarkable in the classroom, much is due to programs such as the PNLD, which, at the same time that seeks to guarantee and universalize the access to textbooks, ends up determining the way in which it is drawn up. Among the many voices that echo in the textbook, the voice of the PNLD is quite strong, in an attempt of the publishers to have their works approved, in face of the very profitable market that is the one of didactic books in Brazil. The teacher seems to be the stated interlocutor, not the actual interlocutor, a place that is occupied by the program's evaluators. The distance and the mismatch between the real and the imagined interlocutor can also be the cause of the distance that we find between the textbooks teacher's manual and what we actually find in the activities directed to the students in the classroom.

Regarding the PNLD *Dicionários*, issues such as those indicated here explain that, although the *Guia* brings suggestions of interesting

and feasible activities, these were not thought focusing on dictionaries available in the collections, in such a way that they are not always adequate to what these works offer. The constitution of the collection with different titles does not consider moments in which it would be more significant to the learning process that all the students of the class use equal dictionaries. In addition, the reduced number of copies hinders the development of collective activities, and the need for constant mediation of the teacher does not favor the student's autonomy.

Considering our analyzes, we also emphasize that the textbook proposals can affect the teacher in a much deeper and more extended way, going far beyond the occasional use in the classroom, since this material has/would have the potential to provoke reflections on their educational conceptions and practices. That is, it is fundamental to consider how the teacher who follows the guidelines of a textbook can understand the concepts conveyed, the choice of certain contents, sequences and teaching procedures, instead of other possibilities. It was possible to indicate that, in the analyzed books, it still predominates teaching proposals that reproduce what the teacher already knows and usually does in the classroom. Thus, in addition to legitimizing and reiterating certain educational practices, and mainly because of the centrality they occupy in the organization of the didactic work, it is necessary to problematize how textbooks can contribute to the teachers' construction and effectiveness of practices that are more appropriate to the characteristics and needs of their students.

Therefore, in terms of the process of literacy and teaching of Portuguese language, it is worth asking: how can textbooks be able to address different social uses, the specificities of written language, discursive functioning, among many other aspects to be taught in school? We believe that, for this, it is important to consider teachers and students as interlocutors and paramount, protagonists, as well as assume the school context as a space for the polysemous processes of language, production and circulation of the most varied socially produced texts⁶.

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Notes

- 1 Detailed information on the PNLD and its operation are available at <<http://www.fnde.gov.br/programas/livro-didatico/livro-didatico-operacao>>.
- 2 The public notices and documents related to the registration and evaluation process are available on the FNDE website. Description and analysis of this process can be found in Silva (2015).
- 3 Regarding the analysis of the publication of textbooks in the context of the Brazilian publishing market, please see consult Britto (2011) and Mello (2012).
- 4 This discussion is deepened by Colombo (2014) in a research about the use of dictionaries by elementary school students.

- 5 In Portuguese, *vela* can refer both to the nouns *candle* and *sail*, and to the 3rd person form of the verb *velar*, which means *to take care of*, *to watch over*. In the case reported, two students read the sentence *O soldado vela pela segurança do palácio* (which could be freely translated into *The soldier takes care of the security of the palace*) and look *vela* up in the dictionary as the noun (*candle* or *sail*), although in the sentence *vela* is the 3rd person form of the verb *velar*. Firstly, they found the entries regarding *vela* as nouns, referring to *candle* and *sail*; next, they look up for the verb *velar*, then understanding the sentence, since verbs are only found in dictionaries in their infinitive form, and not inflected.
- 6 The authors thank *Espaço da Escrita – Coordenadoria Geral da Universidade – UNICAMP* – for the language services provided.

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