

Interactive processes in youth & adult education classrooms: the use of the didactic book¹ in question

Processos interativos em sala de aula de jovens e adultos: a utilização do livro didático em questão

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ABSTRACT

This work will present the results of an investigation that was focused on analyzing Didactic Book (DB) utilization in the interactive process of the classroom of the first phase of Young and Adult Education (EJA²). The choice of methodology centered on the qualitative approach of a case study with direction from interactional ethnography. This work is founded on studies by Bakhtin (1998, 2004), Bazerman (2006) and Marcuschi (2001, 2005). The study revealed, among other findings, that the use of the didactic book is not a consistent practice in the classroom, as other text-based materials such as newspapers and magazines are also present in the classroom. Despite the presence of such supports in the classroom, verbal interaction did not occur extensively.

Index terms: Youth & Adult Education – Didactic Book – Verbal interaction – Text genres.

RESUMO

Neste texto serão apresentados os resultados da investigação que teve como foco analisar a utilização do Livro Didático - LD no processo interativo de sala de aula da 1ª Fase da Educação de Jovens e Adultos - EJA. A opção metodológica centrou-se na abordagem da pesquisa qualitativa na modalidade do Estudo de Caso auxiliado pelas orientações da etnografia interacional. Para fundamentar a pesquisa tomou-se como referencial teórico

¹ A "didactic book" can be translated as a textbook or workbook but for the sake of translation authenticity, the term "didactic book" will be used whenever "livro didático" appears in the original.

² Educação para Jovens e Adultos

os estudos de Bakhtin (2004), Geraldi (2002), Koch (1997), Marcuschi (2001), Bazerman (2006). A pesquisa revelou dentre outros aspectos que o uso do LD, não é uma prática constante em sala de aula, outros suportes de gêneros como jornais e revistas marcam presença. Revelou também que não foi explorada e nem valorizadas outras vozes presentes nos gêneros trabalhados, tanto do LD como de outros suportes, prejudicando assim, o entendimento ao enfoque bakhtiniano, fazendo com que a interação e, conseqüentemente, a interação verbal não acontecessem amplamente.

Palavras-chave: Educação de Jovens e Adultos, livro didático, língua materna, interação.

1. Initial Considerations

This text represents part of a study entitled “The didactic book in the classroom: analysis of its utilization in the interactive process of the classroom of the First Segment of Basic Youth and Adult Education.”³

The investigation was guided by the following problematization: How are the text genres present in Young & Adult Education (EJA) Didactic Books (DB or textbooks) used linguistically by students and teachers in the classroom? The formulation of the problem – while maintaining a focus on the teaching and learning process in regards to DB in the teachers’ and students’ native language – was motivated by questions such as: What role do DB play in the pedagogical practice of teaching writing in EJA? How should interactions mediated by DB be configured? Does face-to-face interaction, with DB support, stimulate the teaching and learning process of writing? Which voices do DB allow to be heard in this interactional space? Are students and teachers able to understand basic concepts concerning genres, textual types and discursive domains that will alter their behaviors and skills in regards to academic literacy and social practice?

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In order to answer these questions, the main goal of this study was to analyze classroom⁴ situations in which youth and adults, in learning literacy, experience the production of text genres in EJA DB.

This qualitative study employed the case study method, with guidance from interactional ethnography. The case study is characterized by Gil (1991, p. 58) as a “[...] deep and exhaustive study of one or a few subjects, enabling the broad and detailed comprehension of them.”

Interactional ethnography made it possible to carry out an interpretative and observational work that accompanied the dynamism of the elements observed (in the classroom) and of the textual phenomenon. According to Nunes-Macedo *et al* (2004), through interactional ethnography, researchers have investigated classroom interactions believing that the classroom is a “culturally constituted community” by means of the participation of different subjects who assume different roles in the teaching and learning process. From this perspective, learning is situationally defined by the way in which the teachers and students construct the patterns and practices of life inside every classroom (op. cit., idem, p. 18-19).

The methodological approaches were supported by the following procedures:

- a) Bibliographic review, selection and study of the categories central to the study: text genres, interaction, language conceptions and the didactic book, among others
- b) Interviews (recorded on cassette tapes) with teachers of the first and third sub-phases of basic EJA⁵ at a municipal public school

⁴ The term “classroom” is understood based on the definition provided by Macedo (et al, 2004, p. 18-19): it is a culturally constituted community by means of the participation of different subjects who assume different roles in the teaching and learning process.

⁵ In the investigated reality of Youth and Adult Education, only the first phase of basic education is offered but it is organized into three sub-phases: the first corresponds with literacy; the second with first and second grade; the third with third and fourth grade.

- c) Completion of questionnaire with the teachers and their students
- d) Observation of thirteen (13) literacy “events” in a first phase native language class (LM = *lingua materna*) and seven (07) in a third sub-phase class.

The observation of literacy events in LM classes gave priority, as a unit of analysis, to teacher/student interaction or specific speech in a specific speech community. These events were duly organized into literacy maps and analyzed. The data collected through the methodological procedures mentioned above were tabulated and analyzed based on the theoretical grounds of the authors chosen for the study. This paper will present a portion of the data analysis obtained during research conducted within the first sub-phase (literacy) of the first phase of EJA.

The results of the analyses will be presented from three blocks of interpretation:

- a) Characterization of the school and the individuals investigated – teachers and students
- b) The representations⁶ of the teacher and students of the first sub-phase about didactic books and their use
- c) The constituting of class interactions considering the literacy action/event developed that enabled individual and collective work with the LD

2. The *locus* school of this investigation

The school was formed from a community center in February 1994, with classes on how to boost income for the neighborhood’s residents, in addition to other classes such as: cooking, painting, recycling, crocheting

⁶ In this paper, representations refer to the opinions, ideas and conceptions of the investigated teacher and students

and knitting, whose composition was predominantly female. The products made during these classes were sold in front of the same building where the classes were held with the goal of directing all revenue to pay for the center's expenses.

With the increase in the number of children not in school, the center began to offer classes in preschool education, the first phase of elementary education (first through fourth grade), and youth and adult education divided into three sub-phases, serving a total of 114 students. By 2005, the combined number of students reached 382. It was thus that the community center formed a school, even without the legal permission to do so, which operated out of a building on the main road of an upper middle class housing community, with vast stretches of open space and ventilated rooms. These conditions made it possible to build additional classrooms.

Today, the school is built on a large expanse of land, but there are only four properly ventilated and maintained classrooms. There is also a fully equipped kitchen, a principal's office, a front office and a teachers' lounge, all connected. However, the library is inadequate for visiting and browsing through books, aside from the collective dissatisfaction on the part of the students regarding the patio because it is uncovered and so is the sand (playground), which causes much discomfort during the winter months.

Regarding the classroom observed, there were no fans, but the windows did permit the circulation of air creating a cool and agreeable environment; lighting was adequate; the tables and chairs were plain and always organized in rows; the walls were covered in tiles and decorated with examples of the students' work (the students being children and adolescents who attended day elementary and middle school), noting that there were no examples of work from EJA students.

Regarding the bibliographic collection earmarked for EJA, the school had four didactic book collections, totaling 96 books specific to EJA;

281 magazines – *Presença Pedagógica* and *Nova Escola*⁷ – dated 2002; three newspapers of the Ministry of Education (MEC); 10 reference dictionaries and 280 dictionaries for student use.

The school's teaching staff, in particular those of the EJA modality, was made up of four teachers: two had a bachelor's degree, one had a master's degree and one was currently in college, studying for her bachelor's in Pedagogy.

3. The subjects

Teacher

Teacher S⁸ stated that she was 36 years old. It had been ten and a half years since she earned her teaching credential. Since that time, she has been teaching at the school in question for 10 years, and for the last eight and a half years, she has taught basic EJA. She is credentialed in Pedagogy, specializing in Psychopedagogy.

She said that she did not have a specific theory that guided her pedagogical work but she attempts to base her lessons on Paulo Freire, who, according to her, takes into consideration the “reading of the world” that the adult student brings to the classroom, recognizing the right of the other to say what he thinks. She also mentioned Vygotsky for his contribution in seeing the human being in the social context and as being capable of developing himself with the right stimuli. Emilia Ferreiro was also cited as an influence in regards to the alphabetic method, since in the first sub-phase of EJA (literacy), comprehension of this method is fundamental to the student's development.

Students

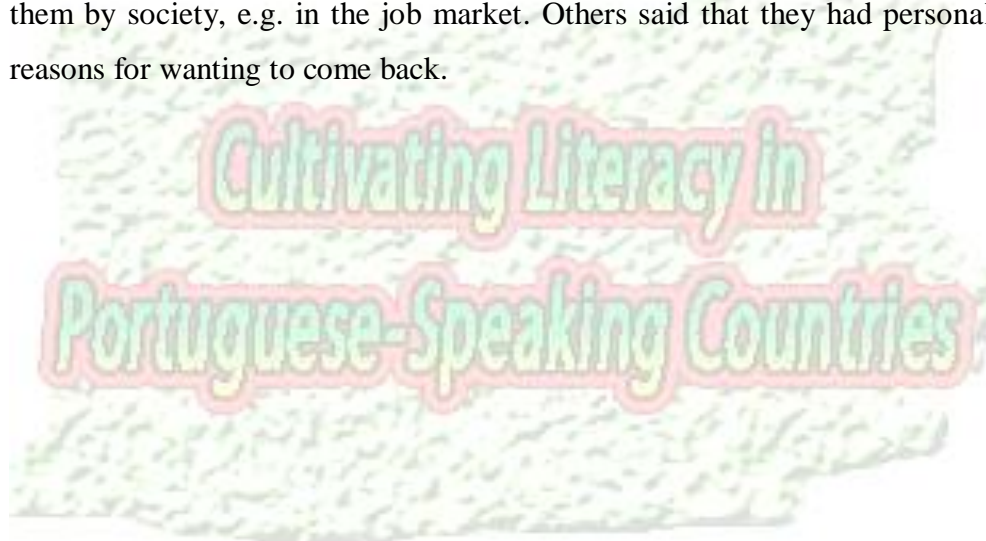
⁷ Pedagogical Presence and New School, respectively

⁸ Due to ethical reasons, the teacher/subject's name will be represented by the consonant letter S.

The class observed was composed of 32 students in the first sub-phase, with an average attendance of 27 students each night, representing an age range of 22 to 58 years of age.

Most of them lived near the school and were married, maintaining a family with two to seven children, were employed and/or under-employed surviving on a low income, never more than minimum wage.⁹ They looked tired, as many of them came straight from work. Despite their pallid expressions, they demonstrated a desire to learn.

According to their reports, the primary reason for returning to school was the need to learn how to read and write because this was required of them by society, e.g. in the job market. Others said that they had personal reasons for wanting to come back.



⁹ At the time of the study, the minimum wage was three hundred reais (R\$300) or roughly \$132, per month.

4. The teacher's and students' opinion about the didactic book and its use

In interviewing the teacher, we tried to capture the way in which she used the books designated for EJA at the school and her opinion of them, in terms of their role in her pedagogical work and consequently in the process of teaching-learning of students' and teacher's native language.

The teacher interviewed acknowledged the importance of the arrival of these books to the school and makes a comparison between pedagogical practice before and after the existence of didactic books in schools. For her, books were a point of suffering.

...[W]e didn't have anything to work with...comparing (the book) when there was nothing to work with...there was only a book for elementary education for children, but we knew that that wasn't how youth and adults worked, but we also didn't have another option.

She expresses the same frustration with the books she currently has:

These that I have now, the options are very limited, but they help a little in the classroom.

According to the teacher, in general, EJA didactic books included themes that were interesting and worth working on, as were the texts that accompanied them. This affirmation on the teacher's part comes from the texts of the books in question, which addressed themes relevant to the reality of the youth and adult students.

The teacher elaborates by stating, "The activities, however, left much to be desired, for they are very repetitive and very traditional, almost always related to word formation." Even so, she hopes that the collections can contribute to student growth.

The teacher's testimony coincides with the results of a previous study [SANTOS (coord.), 2004] demonstrating that the themes proposed in didactic books were relevant to the students' context and quotidian reality. On the other hand, the reading comprehension exercises were largely "[...] those that suggest mechanical activities of transcribing words or sentences. They use verbs such as copy, remove, point, indicate, transcribe, fill in, mark, find, etc." (MARCUSCHI, 2001, p. 52).

Regarding the collection of didactic books adopted in the school, the teacher declares, "...[I]n particular that NUPEP¹⁰ book, in looking at the activities, they are all practically the same..."

NUPEP activities are always like this, they usually ask [the student] to choose a word from the text to work with, to write down, for example: one of them was *trabalho* (work), to search in magazines and newspapers for words containing *TRA*, at the beginning, in the middle or at the end. Then in the next text, it's the same activity, it asks [the student] to search [for the word] in a magazine, or it asks the student to say it and write it down.

Regarding the *Educarte*¹¹ *Collection* adopted by the school, the teacher says she does not make much use of it because the content is more centered on math and the books are very complex. She says, "Nowadays, Educarte is more about math. I do not use the Portuguese book much".

¹⁰ The material produced by the Center for Teaching, Research and Extension in Adult Education and in Popular Education of the Education Center of the Federal University of Pernambuco (NUPEP-UFPE) for EJA, is the result of a 5-year experiment at a Youth & Adult Education Center (CEJA) in the city of Olinda in the state of Pernambuco. It was conducted to meet the basic learning needs of working youth and adults and also to contribute to their professional development, as well as to the accomplishment of educational research processes and teacher training (SOUZA, 2001, p. 139-140).

¹¹ *Coleção Educarte/Educarte Collection* is produced by the publisher with the same name. It is one of the publishers in the editorial market of books purchased with government funds featuring old and new didactic materials for EJA. Its collection includes two books intended for native language instruction: *Linguagem é Vida* (Language is Life) – Elementary Education – initial series, volumes I and II.

Regarding the Portuguese Language (PL) didactic books, the teacher adds: “The texts are very long for the first sub-phase [of Youth and Adult Education].” When the teacher restricts the length of a text, she establishes a limit on the use of textual genres that circulate in literate society and with which the students have permanent contact, in addition to underestimating the students’ linguistic capacity.

Lastly, the teacher affirms that the best collection is *Viver, Aprender*.¹² She shares, “It is the best...it helps the most.” Determining what is the “best collection,” even without the teacher’s testimonial, one can infer that the principal argument is the fact that it had been thought out and elaborated upon by researchers and teachers with a theoretical understanding of and extensive experience with Youth and Adult Education. However, a recent study by Queiróz (2004) shows that the *Viver, Aprender* collection fails to prioritize native language instruction (in this case Portuguese). It highlights instead the social and natural sciences, including in each module a diagram entitled: “*Um Pouco Mais de Língua Portuguesa (A Little More About the Portuguese Language)*.”

Regarding the relevance of the didactic book for Portuguese language instruction in the classroom, the teacher says that:

It is important because many times it is the only written, systematized and sequenced material that the student has access to outside of school. This is a way of encouraging students and waking them up to be exposed to other kinds of reading and to be more committed to school (if a student misses a class, by using the book, he can learn what he missed).

¹² The collection *Viver, Aprender* (Live, Learn) followed the end of the Educar Foundation in the 1990s, by order of the federal government, which provided financial resources from the Brazilian Fund for Education Development (FNDE) for the purchase of didactic materials, intended for the first segment of elementary education for Youth & Adult Education. This first edition of this collection was printed and distributed by the Ministry of Education (MEC) or by municipal and state departments all over Brazil. The collection is made up of four books, including the modules with corresponding thematic units.

The teacher realizes that the didactic book supports reading and writing learning if the texts and activities included in them are contextualized and well thought out. She further recognizes that the students like the book, feeling important and valued by using them. However, she considers the book dispensable, since she has access to other resources offered by the school: “It is not the only written material used. I always try to complement and make classes dynamic with other resources so that the students are able to expand their knowledge.”

When using a didactic book to teach Portuguese, the teacher told us that she picks the themes that she believes will be most relevant to the class. She uses the activities she considers appropriate and complements them with other activities that she creates. She uses the student didactic book once or twice a week.

When the teacher uses the didactic book in the classroom, she does so in a way that the students understand the importance of appropriating and making use of the daily language they are learning, while also looking for other materials that might enhance student learning, making use of various textual genres – recipes, songs, pictures and labels – and genre aids – newspapers. These activities contribute to the students’ development of oral expression as well. Here, she aligns strongly with Marcuschi’s (2005) opinion that “work with text genres is an extraordinary opportunity of dealing with language in its most different authentic uses in daily routines” (*op. Cit.*, p. 35).

Therefore, by exploring several text genres, the teacher recognizes that there exist written texts that represent conversational/informal language (notes, family letters, and humorous texts, for example), as well as verbal texts that align with formal writing (conferences, professionals interviews with people in high administrative positions and others), in addition to mixed types (of text), aside from many other intermediary forms, recalls Koch (1997, p. 32).

According to her, the students do not always react well in regards to use of the didactic book, requiring her intervention to solve the difficulties that arise: “[...] They are resistant sometimes, but when I see that the activity fails to meet their needs, I make some changes or complement it with other activities.”

Contrary to the teacher’s assertion that the students are (sometimes) upset about using the didactic book, the majority of them demonstrate through their words their liking of and interest in the book, according to what can be confirmed in the item below.

5. The use of the didactic book according to the students

When they were asked about how they use the didactic book, the EJA students commented that they liked the book and took the activities home to do but what they really wanted was “a book to study, to join words together, to know what they are doing...a book that can teach everything.”

One student commented that the book “is good, it’s great. For me, the book is great.”

Another said the book “is too hard,” justifying his answer by stating that “it’s because there is a lot of reading that we have to think about, we have to copy, you know, sometimes to complete the answers, for us that never know [the answer]...it’s hard, we rack our brains a bit and are able to get the right answer and if we’re wrong, she [the teacher] will tell us it’s wrong and that we have to keep trying until we get it right.”

The students expressed different opinions when asked about their favorite book. Some said they preferred the Portuguese language book, while others said math. The options provided by didactic books in these two content areas reveal the great importance that they – and society as a whole – attribute to the learning of said subjects.

Regarding the use of the didactic book, the students said its use goes beyond the classroom, as one of them said, "I take the book home, open it, look, read some words, not all of them..." Another student adds, "I read the book more at home than in school. I have some free time, so I read more. The school teaches well and pushes us, but at home, with patience, we learn things more calmly."

One student's testimony corroborates the teacher's affirmation of not being limited to the use of the didactic book in the classroom: "The teacher makes the assignment, types it up on her machine¹³ and brings the printed sheets for us to write in our notebooks."

When they were asked if they had other kinds of books at home, a student promptly answered yes, "There are plenty in my house." Another student said:

Since my children are in first and eighth grades, you know, there is always a book at home. It's just that...it's difficult for me to read one of them because I don't know anything so it's hard for me to pick up a high-level book because I'm just starting now, so it's harder, sometimes they explain to me, 'this book is like this...' but my reading level is too low to understand, because the book is too advanced and I understand almost nothing.

In regards to contact with other textual genres, such as newspapers and magazines outside of school at home or at work, only one of the students said that they did. The majority said no; for them, contact with this type of genre only happened at school.

The students spoken about the care required to keep the didactic book in good condition. Many of the students agreed with what one of them shared, "Mine stays only with me so that no one can take it or rip it." The students said that they had five of the books from the NUPEP collection. Regarding the Portuguese didactic book, the students said they did not like

¹³ Computer

the drawing activities, as one student said, “I try to make a beautiful drawing, but I can’t.”

6. Cases of classroom interactions with the use of the Didactic Book

The categories **interaction** and **writing** formed the basis of the analysis of this item. Interaction implies a responsive attitude between author and reader, always mediated by verbal and non-verbal language, or in other words, understood as a process that occurs between two interlocutors that interact through the ideological sign of the word, objectifying, at a minimum, meaning in the discourse (BAKHTIN, 1992).

Marcuschi provides the definition of writing, and he defends the vision of a speaking-writing continuum, emphasizing the textual genres appear in speaking and writing within this typological continuum of the social practices of textual production (2001, p. 32). To complement this meaning, we turn to Bazerman who mentions:

...the forms of writing as historical phenomenon – created and recognized, mobilized and fortified inside the mind of each writer and reader in specific socio-historical moments, but transmitted cumulatively through text. The cumulative and socially contextualized textual experience expands the formal repertoire and the procedural order of each writer and reader. (2006, p. 59)

In order for the didactic book to present the accumulation of genres that Bazerman (op. cit) focuses on, it is necessary for the book to be conceived from the Bakhtian perspective, “an enunciation that constitutes a link in the chain of ‘verbal communication’ established by students and teachers in the classroom...” (Nunes-Macedo et al., 2004, p. 18).

Also according to Nunes-Macedo, “the analysis of face-to-face interactions that constitute the use of the didactic book can be fertile for the comprehension of the teaching and learning processes of reading and

writing” (idem, ibidem, p. 18). It goes between the student and the teacher, in an interaction mediated by language that is made up of subjects and conscience.

In order to establish an overview of face-to-face interaction in the classroom with the support of the didactic book, a mapping of the participants’ (teacher and students) actions involving reading and writing was prepared. For the mapping, the teacher’s and students’ daily happenings in the classroom were analyzed, resulting in a total of 13 (thirteen) observed literacy activities in alternating classes and only one involving the use of the didactic book, which is the object of analysis in this text.

In this DB activity, the students were presented with the lyrics of the song *Carinhoso*¹⁴ by Pixinguinha, taken from the students’ Portuguese language book – **Module I – The Historicity of the Human Being**, NUPEP, lesson: “**My loves, My History with the other**” (p. 55). The objective here was to analyze the lyrics, interpret them and write them down.

First, the teacher conducted an analysis of the theme, leading the students to relax so that then she asked:

Q: “What comes to mind when you hear the word love?”

Students: “[L]ots of joy, gaiety, love for children, mother, granddaughter, passion, suffering, trouble with children, anger.” For them, the song is about a love story between a man and a woman.

After talking about the theme, the teacher played the song on a CD. The students sang along with the teacher, interpreting the music. Then she asked the students to number the lines of the lyrics and read them out loud together, following which they would do a written exercise in the book. The

¹⁴ To see a modern rendition of this song, view this duet by Marisa Monte and Paulinho da Viola at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8IhqXDQkWPQ>. *Carinhoso* means affectionate.

teacher asked them to answer only two questions: “What does the author say about himself?” “What does he say about his heart?”

While the students were getting ready to do the activity, she continued her monologue, saying, “Pay attention to this expression: ‘And my eyes keep smiling...’ Is it possible to smile with your eyes closed? How?” After that, the teacher begins to barrage the students with questions: “In your opinion, why does the person loved by the author of this song run away from him? What are the reasons for a person to want to run away from love? Have you ever had an experience like this?” In this moment it became clear that the teacher was focused on the reading comprehension questions and was attempting to extrapolate from them, but because the students were worried about the written activity, they did not pay attention to her questions. The teacher seemed not to realize that the wealth of working with text genres, specially in the EJA modality, lies in their characterization as historical phenomena related to cultural and social life, contributing to the organization and stabilization of daily communication activities (MARCUSCHI, 2005).

In order to answer the questions from the book, the teacher broke up the students into pairs. A student asked if the word *apaixonado*¹⁵ was spelled with c, ch or x. The teacher answered that the correct spelling was with the letter x. The teacher thus passed on the opportunity to have the student reflect on his orthographical conflict, particularly to explore the question of the sound of letters that are similar to each other. This requires familiarity with phonics. Had the teacher handled the student’s question in this manner, she would have initiated significant verbal interaction.

After some time, the teacher expressed her concern with the spelling issue. She asked the students to tell her the letter of the words that they found difficult and she would write them on the board. While spelling the

¹⁵ Apaixonado = in love

word *apaixonado*, the students forgot about the letter “i.” The teacher wrote the word as they had spelled it: *APAXONADO*. She alerted them to their spelling error and said that even though the “i” was not pronounced, it existed. Students who are learning basic literacy use oral communication extensively, and thus the letter “i” is not important for pronouncing the word. This occurs most importantly because the student is taught that written language represents spoken language.

Then, the teacher invited the students to write the word *romântico*¹⁶ on the board. Five students went to the board. Each of them wrote the word in a different way: *ROMETIO*; *ROMETIRO*; *ROMETICO*; *ROMANTETCU*; *RAUNATEC*. The teacher emphasized the fact that each student wrote the word differently. Then she asked about the word’s first syllable, and the students said *RO*. She asked if the students who wrote on the board started the word with that syllable. The class answered that one student wrote *RA* instead of *RO*. Only one student correctly identified the next syllable, *MAN*, and he shook with contentment at getting the answer right. The activity continues through each syllable and then the correct spelling of the word is put on the board and the teacher applauds her students by saying that each of them got a little bit of the word right.

Next, she has the students write the word *VERDADEIRO*.¹⁷ She passes through each row of desks, checking each student’s writing even though they have not asked her to and warns them that even though it is not pronounced, the letter “i” is also in this word. A student says that *VE* is strong and that it needs an *R*. The teacher agrees and takes the opportunity to say that there is more than one *R* in the word. The next word is *SINCERO*.¹⁸ While writing the syllable *SIN* on the board, the teacher says

¹⁶ romântico = romantic

¹⁷ verdadeiro = truthful, true

¹⁸ sincero = sincere

this syllable is like *MAN* from *ROMANTICO*. The students quickly catch on to the teacher's tip as they say the word has the letter N.

Although she tries to set up verbal interaction with the students, the teacher ends up abandoning exploration of the meaning of the text and its linguistic-discursive relevance, instead only highlighting certain words to explore spelling issues. This is an example of the predominant traditional form of instruction, still very present in EJA classrooms. This modality works with youth and adults who go to school in hopes of expanding their possibilities of success in life and in their contribution to society. For Bazerman, it is in the classroom that teachers of literacy have the opportunity to work with and contribute to the growth and development of the students (2006).

The teacher's behavior demonstrates that while she tries to advance the methodological and pedagogical ways of teaching, linguistically she ends up focusing on grammar for the sake of grammar, on the way the words are written.

It is clear that the teacher demonstrates difficulty in working with the textual genres from the perspective of speaking and writing within a typological continuum of the social practices of the production of texts as explained by Marcuschi (2001), according to how the teacher explored the words extracted from the text. According to Freitas (1999), since the word is taken from the "stock of signs," which circulates in certain societies and in a given moment, it detains ideological information, allowing for another reading (reaction) by the interlocutors. Thus in his observations the author (op. cit.) portrays the dynamic nature of the word as a sign, which circulates among the social structures in their most elementary level – that of quotidian ideology. This did not occur in the class observed.

To understand what Freitas means, the analysis of the orthographic system of writing used by the teacher did not have an important role when writing occurred during the period we observed. The fact that the majority

of the students mastered the alphabetic system of writing can be justified by the emphasis on orthographic analysis. Reading and the production of text did not have a place in the classes, with or without the didactic books.

The textual genre used by the teacher, in this case music, was not explored. According to Brandão, this genre that circulates in the artistic and literary discursive domain often includes a lyrical and poetic language that emphasizes socio-cognitive competencies when facing diversity and heterogeneity (2000, p. 25). When students feel part of the world of a genre, whichever one calls their attention, the arduous and detailed task of writing becomes irresistibly real because it brings with it a reward, a real reward when the students are engaged in activities that they consider important (BAZERMAN, 2006).

The teacher needed to realize that genre is not merely a linguistic category defined by the arrangement of textual excerpts. Genre is a socio-psychological category that is used to recognize and construct typified actions within typified situations. It is a way of creating order in an always-fluid symbolic world (BAZERMAN, idem).

What was also missing from the class was the articulation of the vision of a speaking-writing continuum as Marcuschi proposes (2001). The focus remained on the dichotomy that continues to persist between orality and writing, which is:

...a) the idea that writing codes content lexically and syntactically, while speech uses paralinguistic elements; b) the idea that written text is more cohesive and coherent than oral communication, since speech is fragmentary and lacks connection (or has a connection that is strongly interactional); c) the notion that writing directs meaning directly from the printed page, whereas speech is dependent upon context and the conditions of face-to-face interaction... (MARCUSCHI, idem, p. 29)

In the activity above, the teacher made an initial attempt to foster interaction between teacher-students and students-students. However, she

did not advance beyond the use of the text as a pretext for use of an isolated object for grammatical analysis. When the teacher only offers the formal elements of the genre, she is imprisoning the students to a slavery irrespective of current practices without giving them ways of surviving changes, which will occur in their professional and personal lives (BAZERMAN, op. cit.).

7. (In)conclusion

The key (in)conclusions of this study are as follows: First, at times the teacher seemed to align with the same concepts defended by the theorists referenced. Second, in her pedagogical practice, she demonstrated coherence to her testimony in regards to the use of didactic books. Out of 13 observed classes, even when students were bringing their didactic books every day, only in one was the use of the book noticed. These observations revealed that the use of DB was not a constant practice, even considering that nowadays, in the municipality where this study was conducted, DB are adopted for EJA, in addition to other collections available in the library for teachers and students to use. In replacement of the DB, the teacher used other genres such as newspapers, magazines and brochures, which is very significant.

In the observed classes, with and without the use of DB, attempts at verbal interaction between teacher and students could be noticed. However, during one of the literacy activities, teacher S entered into conflict with the conception of language that she had until then presented to her students in regards to writing in syllabic form. With this behavior, the teacher demonstrated the view of language as an expression of thought (GERALDI, 2002). That caused some perplexity among the researchers, since the teacher, in addition to her extensive experience with EJA (eight and a half

years), had attended all of the professional development opportunities offered by the education department of the municipality studied.

The moments of intertextuality while writing – with the support of didactic books and other tools – left much to be desired since the teacher's and the student's focus was always on standard dialect, in proper writing. The disdain and even disrespect for the local dialect, was observed in one of the spelling activities that involved a text written by students from another school. When reading and commenting on the text, the students criticized the way it was written, pointing out the orthographic errors and soliciting their correction based on standard language.

Finally, comparing the literacy activities observed with the contributions of consulted authors, it is possible to confirm that the teacher's approach to interaction in the classroom, using discursive genres and presenting speech-writing as a continuum presented proposals that did not contemplate the categories adopted in this research. It was also noticed that other voices present in the text genres used were not explored or valued, neither in the DB or other materials, harming in this way understanding of the Bakhtinian focus, making it so interaction and consequently verbal interaction, would not happen on a large scale.

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