Portuguese Teaching Book in Portugal: Writing Activities Versus Writer Training[I]

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Abstract:
This paper seeks to analyze the writing activities proposed by a Portuguese textbook adopted in secondary schools, in the formative path of scientific-humanistic courses, in Portugal. Our main goal is to reflect on the contribution of the writing activities of the book "Entre nós e as palavras", 10th year, by Pinto and Nunes (2015), Santillana Publisher, to the formation of students as a writer. Our methodology is qualitative and interpretive in nature (DE GRANDE, 2011). The results reveal that the proposals for writing production teaching in this book are mostly expository texts, intrinsically linked to the contents of the Literary Education domain and suggested in an isolated manner. Thus, it is possible to conclude that the analyzed activities do not contribute in a relevant way to the students' writing formation, because they do not promote their positioning as subjects, providing opportunities for their own relative autonomy and, instead, reinforce directed and limiting teaching practices of writing.

Keywords:
Textbook; activities; writer training.

[I] This study was produced by the author as part of a postdoctoral project in the area of Didactics of Writing, investigating teaching practices and materials in writing expression classes, as well as students' perceptions of them, in secondary education in Portugal, at the Faculty of Arts, University of Porto, during the period 2019 to 2021.

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INITIAL CONSIDERATIONS

To reflect and try to understand the contribution of textual production activities from textbooks to the written training of secondary school students in Portugal, we developed this investigation. Secondary education[2] in Portugal presents different training paths for students, which are: scientific-humanistic courses; courses with their own plans; specialized artistic courses; professional courses; secondary education in the form of recurrent education course and vocational courses, all supported by Decree-Law No. 139/2012 of 5 July, amended by Decree-Law No. 91/2013, of 10 July and by Decree-Law No. 176/ 2014, from December 12th.

The scientific-humanistic courses are for students who intend to continue their studies in higher education. In this formative path, there are two documents in force that regulate the teaching of Portuguese in Portugal. The first document is Portuguese Curricular Program and Goals for Secondary Education[3] (BUESCU et al, 2014) and the other one is Essential Learning in Portuguese - Secondary level[4] (REPÚBLICA PORTUGUESA, 2018).

The work analyzed in this paper is from a 2015 edition, equally reproduced in the following editions until the year 2020, its expiration date. In this context, it was produced under the guidelines of the 2014 normative document, the Portuguese Curricular Program and Goals for Secondary Education.

The Portuguese subject is equally developed for all students, in all formative paths, with the exception of professional courses. In this case, there is a normative guideline from the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Education, Order No. 7414/2020, which establishes the implementation of the Essential Learning document for professional courses from the date of publication of the order, coming into effect in the school year of 2020/2021. In it, the teaching of Portuguese and not only, presents the same content of the other training pathways, but can be more relaxed, with a differentiated curriculum management on the part of teachers and schools.

In other publication (PIMENTA, 2021), we analyzed the official guiding document of Portuguese teaching in Portugal, which regulates the production of the work that we analyze, namely, the Portuguese Curriculum Program and Goals - Secondary Education (BUESCU et al, 2014). About it and its reflections on the activities proposed by the book, we will deal with it further on.

In a brief survey of Capes' repository of theses and dissertations, we found greater interest in investigations into the teaching of reading than into the training of writers, although there is a rising interest in this area. Even so, the formation of readers and writers is still one of the great challenges facing schools today, in several countries. And this challenge is even greater when it comes to secondary education, a level at which graduates are expected to be proficient readers and writers. There are many

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[2] In Brazil, it is equivalent to ensino médio.

[3] Translator's note: free translation of the following "Programa e Metas Curriculares de Português – Ensino Secundário".

[4] Translator's note: free translation of the following "Aprendizagens Essenciais de Português - Ensino Secundário".

reasons for this scenario but works such as those by Pécora (1992), Geraldi (1997, 2011), Carvalho and Barbeiro (2013), Costa Val and Marcuschi (2008), among others, place Portuguese textbooks in the scenario of organization and orientation of classroom activities that have an exceptionally large contribution on the formation of students, influencing the relationship they will establish in the future with reading and writing.

Specifically with regard to writing, in the midst of this finding, we wondered what contribution writing activities made to students' learning as a writer in the 10th grade work *Entre nós e as palavras*[5] (2015), Editora Santillana.

In this paper, we will reflect on this issue from a qualitative-interpretative type of research, according to De Grande (2011), who states that it is necessary to consider that in research in Applied Linguistics no interpretation is neutral and that doing science must consider different factors involving the social, the historical, the political, with their beliefs and different ways of seeing the world.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK ABOUT WRITING

For Bakhtin (1997), the active responsive comprehension of a text, generates a response. This understanding may immediately come, or it may come only sometime later. About this, he states:

> the active responsive understanding of what was heard (for example, in the case of a given command) may take place directly as an act (the execution of the understood and obeyed order), it may remain, for a certain period of time, a mute responsive understanding (certain genres of speech are based only on this type of understanding, such as, for instance, the lyrical genres), but in this case it is, one might say, a delayed-action responsive understanding: sooner or later, what has been actively heard and understood will find an echo in the listener's subsequent discourse or behavior. The secondary genres of verbal communication, for the most part, precisely rely on this kind of delayed action responsive understanding. The above also applies, *mutatis mutandis*, to read or written discourse. Responsive comprehension is nothing but the initial and preparatory phase for a response (in whichever form it may be realized). The speaker postulates this active responsive understanding: what he expects, is not a passive understanding which, so to speak, would merely duplicate his thought in the other's mind, what he expects is a response, an agreement, an adherence, an objection, an execution, etc. (BAKHTIN, 1997, p. 291) (emphasis added).

As the author himself states, the foregoing applies to written speeches as well. From this, we can think that a competent writing formation is a response to the understanding of our experiences with the act of writing.

In this sense, Zozzoli (2002) discusses active responsive production:

> What I call active responsive production would be, therefore, the continuity of this attitude that starts in the understanding and is developed beyond a new generated text, considered, in this way, not a result, but as a part of a process that is established in the verbal and non-verbal interaction and that does not end in the materiality of the texts (ZOZZOLI, 2002, p. 21).

For her, based on philosophers such as Galissot (1991), Lantz (1991), and Renaut (1995), the active position of the subject of discourse, capable of generating an active response, is what provides it with a relative autonomy, which is relative because it depends on the conditions of speech production.

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[5] Translator's note: in free translation "Between us and the words".

This active positioning of the subject in its speeches is also addressed by Geraldi in his studies (1997; [1984]2011), in which he makes a relevant conceptualization between what can be considered a writing activity - done in a more mechanical way, to meet a school requirement and that hinders the positioning as a subject of student writers - and text production, which by considering different interlocutors for the text to be elaborated, requires the writer to elaborate a speech plan to achieve his objectives as a producer of written texts.

We consider equally important the studies in the field of Didactics of Writing that engage different understandings of writing and provide models of the writing process. Works such as John Hayes and Linda Flower (1981) conceive writing as a process that encompasses different stages such as planning, textualization, revision, and rewriting. For these authors, these stages interchange all the time during the act of writing, revealing how this act cognitively occurs:

> The problem with stage descriptions of writing is that they model the growth of the written product, not the internal process of the person producing it. 'Prewriting' is the stage before words appear on paper; 'Writing' is the stage at which a product is being produced; and 'Rewriting' is a final reworking of that product. However, both common sense and research tell us that writers are constantly planning (prewriting) and revising (rewriting) as they compose (write), rather than in well-defined stages. of planning, writing, and revising (...) (HAYES; FLOWER, 1981, p. 367)

The authors further state that the processes of planning and revision are constant during writing and that we should not understand revision and rewriting as final processes of textual production.

On the other hand, Millian and Camps (2005) present a survey conducted with teachers in initial training to discuss the 'writing to learn' perspective that inspired the National Writing Project network developed in countries such as the United States and Great Britain since 1970. Alongside the 'Writing in the Curriculum' movement, which was born almost at the same time, both have been influencing for almost thirty years new educational contexts and new perceptions about the act of writing, writing contexts and writers. About writing activities, the authors state:

> writing tasks should promote active knowledge construction, not repetitive patterns of knowledge use. Writing should be based on and enrich the writers' prior knowledge and beliefs about the topics and be integrated into social discourse (small group discussion and/or reading about the topic) to allow writers to reflect on their previous conceptions, experience, knowledge, and beliefs, and challenge them to elaborate and make connections with other views and perspectives. Connections can also be made about the social aspects of writing: audience, discourse and genre conventions, and the writer's goals (MILLIAN; CAMPS, 2005, p. 242)

In the conception of learning to write, academic genres are increasingly present in regulatory teaching documents and, therefore, in Portuguese textbooks. However, the mere existence of genres, either in one or the other support, does not guarantee the students' learning neither about the genre itself, nor about the content that is being studied through the elaboration of any of them.

Quoting Martin (1993), the authors discuss the learning of the contents studied in university subjects through academic genres, but which can well be applied to secondary school students. They believe that students will only establish a learning relationship from the read text to the writing through the proposed activities if they are aware of "what happens in their minds as they participate in classroom

activities and the discourses that point to their active role in the construction of meaning"[6] (MILLIAN; CAMPS, 2005, p. 247). In this sense, the task for the sake of the task will not confer meaning.

In another publication, Camps (2000) addresses the reasons to write, reflecting on the role of school in the learning of writing and states:

> Writing is necessary for learning to write, but it is not enough. Reading and writing activities consist of engaging in human verbal communication. To learn to read and write, students must participate in a variety of reading and writing activities, with different purposes, speakers, and areas of interaction. But to learn the complexity of written uses, there must be teaching and learning activities that provide knowledge of specific aspects related to the particularities of the written genres that must be taught to be learned. Seen from another perspective, one would also say that teaching activities by themselves, without providing students with opportunities to write in different situations, would not be enough to learn to write texts that must respond to the complexity of interactive contexts. Thus, the need arises to relate practice to reflection. (CAMPS, 2000, p. 33)

In this sense, for the author, the school should promote writing activities that simulate activities of the students' social life and that lead them to ask why they are writing such text, what they intend with it, and who will read it, in other words, as Sercundes (2004) tells us, that the student elaborates a project of saying.

This last author sought to verify inside the writing activities proposed at school what she called school methodology, which guides students in text production. According to her, two major types of practices stood out, revealing two major conceptions of writing and the act of writing: i) production without a previous activity, in which the teacher asks the student to write a text without having any relation with a previous or subsequent activity or with an activity that serves only as a pretext for written production, such as reading a text, for example; and ii) writing as a gift, in which students believe that only those who were born with a talent for it will do well in writing their texts.

Based on these observations, Sercundes (2004) discriminates two methodological lines of production for productions requested from previous tasks such as reading and interpreting texts, for example:

> a) Writing as a consequence - "These are productions resulting from a reading, a field research, a lecture, a movie, an outing, in short, each one of these items will be a reason to do a written work" (SERCUNDES, 2004, p. 78).

> b) Writing as work - "The production, in this case, arises from a continuous teaching/learning process. This methodology allows integrating the construction of knowledge with the students' real needs" (SERCUNDES, 2004, p. 83).

As the author herself states, in writing as a consequence, previous activities are performed as an excuse for writing a text, which is only a consequence of the previous activity and there is nothing more to be done with writing after this production. In writing as work, however, previous

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[6] Free translation of 'Escribir es necesario para aprender a escribir, pero no es suficiente. Las actividades de leer y escribir consisten en participar en la comunicación verbal humana. Para aprender a leer y a escribir, los alumnos tienen que participar en actividades diversas de lectura y escritura, con finalidades, interlocutores y ámbitos de interacción diversos. Pero para aprender la complejidad de los usos escritos, tiene que haber actividades de enseñanza y aprendizaje que prevean que hay conocimientos específicos relacionados con las particularidades de los géneros escritos que habrá que enseñar para que puedan ser aprendidos. Mirado desde la otra perspectiva, también habría que decir que las actividades de enseñanza por sí mismas, sin ofrecer a los alumnos oportunidades para escribir en situaciones diferentes, no serían suficientes para aprender a escribir textos que deben responder a la complejidad de los contextos interactivos. Se plantea, pues, la necesidad de relacionar la práctica con la reflexión.

activities trigger the elaboration of written texts that, once elaborated, work as starting points for new productions.

Sercundes (2004) also adds in this work a brief overview of how textbooks, in general, behave regarding text production: "reading the text; talking about the text; understanding the text" (2004, p. 90), that is, they follow "(...) a standard line: read, discuss, write" (2004, p. 90).

For Cassany, Luna, and Sanz (2003),

> It is interesting to analyze how the student experiences the writing exercises that school assigns to them. Are they proposals to express their thoughts, feelings, and opinions, to express their imagination? Or are they simply instructions to be followed, separated from their interests and motivations, that is, exercises to be done out of obligation?[7] (CASSANY; LUNA; SANZ, 1994, p. 260)

Based on the above, these authors believe that the written expression class should motivate the student to write, because, otherwise, the requests of some activities will not overcome the lack of motivation and interest in performing them.

Based on the above, in the next section we will describe, in general terms, the selected work and analyze its activities, our object of investigation.

DESCRIPTION OF THE WORK AND DATA ANALYSIS

The teacher's book *Entre nós e as palavras*, 10th grade, Santillana publishing house, 2015, by the authors Alexandre Dias Pinto and Patrícia Nunes, was the work selected for this research because it is adopted by one of the schools that was part of our post-doctoral internship research. Added to this is the fact that the publisher Santillana made it available without problems and in a quick manner; it meets the teaching level that corresponds to the scientific-humanistic secondary level, one of my fields of study, and is in force at the time of writing this paper. The book has 327 pages and is made up of seven chapters, where chapter zero is a "Diagnostic Evaluation", which includes a writing activity, as well as knowledge about reading and interpretation of texts, grammar, and questions with spoken answers, and the other six chapters are dedicated to the systematization of knowledge. The work has an excerpt from the Curricular Program and Goals (BUESCU et al, 2014) at the beginning and, at the end, an appendix entitled 'Informative Block', with twenty-two explanatory lesson sheets, a subject index, and the summarized bibliography.

Each didactic unit features different amounts of proposals for writing activities: unit zero presents only one activity; in unit one, there are seven proposals of textual production activities; in unit two, two; in unit three, there are two; in unit four, there are five; and in unit six, there are two activities. There is no explanation from the authors about the reasons for this distribution and we did not identify any justification for this, but we thought that the units with more exercises would be the largest ones, but this was not confirmed, because unit one, which presents seven activities, has forty-nine pages and unit six, the largest of the book, with fifty-one pages, has only two activities.

In the teacher's book there is no manual for the theoretical guidelines on which the authors based themselves for the preparation of this material or comments/suggestions on how the activities can be better developed. What makes it different from the student book are the answers to the proposed activities.

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[7] Free translation of "Es interesante analizar cómo vive el alumno los ejercicios de redacción que encargan en el colegio. ¿Son propuestas para expresar sus pensamientos, sentimientos y opiniones, para proyectar su imaginación? ¿O son simplemente instrucciones a seguir, desvinculadas de sus intereses y motivaciones, es decir, ejercicios que debe hacer por obligación?

Before the table of contents there is a presentation in which the authors claim to be in accordance with what the document Curricular Programs and Goals of Portuguese for secondary education (BUESCU et al, 2014) proposes, explaining that

> (...) the learning paths that are proposed in the various sequences of *Entre Nós e as Palavras* are based on a logic of articulation between domains, objectives and contents, an articulation that is made at the didactic, thematic, linguistic and cultural levels, according to the principle of complex text and the notion of textual genres, as advocated by the *Portuguese Program* (BUESCU et al, 2014, p. 4) (emphasis added).

In this excerpt, the authors of the book refer to the domains of Portuguese teaching that are the axes of teaching activities, that is, Literacy Education, Orality, Reading, Writing, and Grammar, according to the document. They also refer to the complex text, taken in the Program and Goals as being

> (...) what also expresses values and perspectives and what allows, therefore, to exercise the observation and critical analysis skills of its readers or listeners. It is in these values and perspectives that one should recognize the ability to deal with the information received, and, consequently, to understand and use it in new settings, at school and outside school (BUESCU et al, 2014, p. 7).

In this presentation, the work also clarifies that this Program elects the literary text as the complex text, par excellence, but it also determines an integration of the domains among themselves, which, according to the authors occurs, although each of the domains is worked independently (PINTO; NUNES, 2015).

Besides this physical book, there is another physical material for the teacher, called *Educateca*, in which the authors provide resources for the teacher, such as lesson planning and historical and cultural contextualization of Literary Education, as well as assessment sheets, optional literary works and critical texts, and a virtual material, called *Livromédia*, also available to students, which brings the digital version of the printed book, with additional customization tools and resources (legislation, editable plans, powerpoints, animations and interactive activities, editable assessment sheets, activity book, and continuous assessment with answers).

The writing activities of this manual are proposed, according to the authors, in accordance with what guides the Portuguese Curriculum Program and Goals - secondary education (BUESCU et al, 2014) regarding the texts that will be studied in the 10th grade, namely: synthesis, exposition on a theme and critical appreciation.

Regarding this aspect, we observe the orientation towards a genre of the order of narrating, the synthesis, of reasoning, the critical appreciation, and the expository textual type. In this sense, it is possible to assume that the authors of the guiding document have made this option to let the student choose the genre to make the exposition about a theme.

We analyzed the entire work and, altogether, it presents 31 proposals of activities with writing, being only one proposal about writing synthesis, one informal letter, nine critical appreciations, one satirical poem, two proposals without definition of a specific genre and 17 about exposition of a theme. All the proposals define a minimum and maximum number of words, which is around 120 to 300 words. Some of these proposals are part of the same activity, in other words, the same activity presents two proposals and others only one. Each proposal refers to the sheets that contain information about content and guidelines for writing, and to the content of the other axes. There are three sheets on writing: sheet number twelve, which deals with the genres of report; documentary; advertisement; exposition on a theme; travel report; scientific article, critical appreciation, and synthesis; sheet number seventeen, which

deals with the stages of writing a text: planning, writing, and revision; and sheet number twenty, which deals with the rules of punctuation.

We do not intend to present here the analysis of the activities in their totality due to the limited space we have, so it was necessary to make a cut. To do so, we observed that there is a preference of the authors for the expository text, because such proposals happen in a larger number of times, and we chose to select them. As it would not fit here the description and analysis of the seventeen occurrences of expositions on a theme and we did not observe any gradation of difficulty or difference between the maximum number of words in the proposed activities, we will select the first one that asks for this type of text in each unit of the first three units and present them following the order in which they appear in the book.

The first activity on writing an expository text is on page 39 in Unit one and features two proposals:

Table 1: Writing activity

Following are two writing prompts for you to do. In both cases, plan your text before writing it and, at the end, make the necessary linguistic revision.
a. Write a well-structured expository text, one hundred and twenty to one hundred and fifty words long, about the different roles that nature can play in **cantigas de amigo**[8]. Make references to poems you have read.
b. In a well-structured expository text of two hundred to three hundred words, explain why love is such an important feeling in our lives. (Worksheets 17 and 20).

Source: Pinto and Nunes, 2015, p. 39.

Regarding this activity, the first aspect that caught our attention was the fact that the authors did not refer the students to sheet 12, where there are explanations about the texts requested in the book, thus making it possible for the students to elaborate expository texts that are not included in these sheets, but that are not explained by the book anywhere else. Probably, the authors believe that the students will use their previous knowledge about the genre to be chosen.

In the sequence, we notice that the activity does not foresee an interlocutor other than the teacher and, therefore, does not aim the communication between who writes and different readers, and can be considered more, according to Geraldi (1997) as an activity of writing than as textual production. We also observed that the propositions use verbs in the imperative mode (plan, do, write, explain), which is common in writing exercises.

Despite these aspects, proposal two asks students to develop a text of the expository-argumentative type, because in explaining why love is such an important feeling in our lives, each student will do it from their point of view, showing the reader their reasons. Although there is no further explanation in this work about the difference between an expository-informative text and an expository-argumentative text[9], nor even about the properties or the way argumentation works, this second proposal may come closer to the possibility of the student learning to write by writing, establishing relations with their observations or previous experiences about/with love, making it possible for them to position themselves as the subject of what they say. This type of proposal is closer to an activity that does not erase the student's history, but considers it (SERCUNDES, 2004). Proposal one, on the other hand, requires a writing that responds to a knowledge of the content that is being studied, reproducing it.

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[8] Translator's note: in free translation it means friend song. It is a genre of lyric poetry.

[9] In worksheet 12, p. 303, on this subject, there is the following explanation: "There are two types of expository text: expository-informative, whose purpose is to present information about a given subject; and expository-argumentative, which aims to give information and defend a point of view, an opinion, on a subject through arguments (e.g., defend or condemn the death penalty)." (Authors' emphasis)

We also do not consider that the activities are part of a learning continuum in which writing is inserted, but that it was developed as a consequence of previous activities (SERCUNDES, 2004), because the theme of study of this unit is the troubadour poetry, in which one of the genres are the cantigas de amigo, presented in the opening of item 1.4 in this same unit with the song *'Ondas do mar de Vigo'*[10], by Martim Codax, to be read and interpreted by the students, which justifies the first activity in this proposal, and another text, also subject of reading and interpretation, which brings an excerpt from a work that deals with longing and love as central feelings in Portuguese literature, which justifies the second activity. The writing section appears as the last activity, preceded by others focused on Literary Education, Comprehension and Interpretation, Grammar, Reading, and Oral Expression.

The second selected activity is part of unit two and features only one writing proposal:

Table 2: Writing activity

In a well-structured expository text (two hundred to three hundred words) explain how citizens can come together and legally act together to defend their interests. Give an account of various forms of social and civic intervention.
Plan your text before you write it and revise it when you have finished the textualization phase. (Worksheets 12, 17 and 20).

Source: Pinto and Nunes, 2015, p. 78.

This activity, like the previous one, refers the student to the explanation sheets at the end of the book. This time there is an indication of worksheet number twelve, which brings as genres the reportage, the documentary and the article of scientific dissemination, relating them to the expository textual type. As this proposal does not fit any of these genres presented in the form, we believe that the authors leave it up to the teacher or the students to choose the most appropriate genre to meet what is being requested.

Observing unit two, in which the activity is inserted, we see that it deals with the study of the life and work of Fernão Lopes and one of his texts, the *Cronicas de D. João I*[11]. Before starting to read an excerpt from it, the authors ask the students to "Point out situations in which, in our days or in the past, citizens get together or have gotten together to defend common interests. Comment on the cases you identified." (PINTO; NUNES, 2015, p. 73), in a section entitled 'Before Reading'. This section suggests that students debate, talk about aspects of the topic that will be dealt with next. In this chronicle, Lopes reports how the people of Lisbon behave when they learn that the Master of Avis is in danger. Thus, the request for this proposal, the way it is formulated, has the same function as the previous ones: to fulfill a school assignment.

Thus, this writing proposal again occurs as a consequence (SERCUNDES, 2004) of previous activities, making it a task proposal with an end in itself, although there is a possibility of personality, which can connect the student to their context, making them reflect on everyday life, placing themselves as a subject of their speech, as long as the teacher guides the work in this manner. Besides this aspect, the expression 'Give account of various forms of social and civic intervention', directs the writing of the student, determining what cannot be missing in the text.

The third activity is the first one that asks for an expository text in unit three. Although the activity does not explicitly propose an expository text, nor does it allude to any specific genre, the proposal makes it clear that this is the request made to the students:

[10] Translator's note: Waves of the sea of Vigo (free translation).

[11] Translator's note: Chronicle of D. John I (free translation).

Table 3: Writing Activity

In the following, there are two proposals for written production. In both cases, plan your text before writing it, and review it at the end.

a) In a well-structured text, with one hundred and twenty to one hundred and fifty words, show that the *Farsa* de Inês Pereira is a satirical work. Illustrate your answer with references to behaviors and social groups targeted by Vincentian satire.

b) According to Adrien Roig, duplicity is the central theme of the *Farsa* de Inês Pereira: the characters are not what they appear to be. In a well-structured text, with one hundred and twenty to one hundred and fifty words, explain how the issue is addressed in this tale. (Worksheets 12, 17 and 20).

Source: Pinto and Nunes, 2015, p. 117.

This exercise, as well as the previous ones, presents the teacher as the only speaker; it is close to a task with strictly school purposes and totally focused on the content that is being studied in the Literary Education axis. By referring to the sheets 12, 17 and 20, it does not necessarily ask the student to write his expository text in any of the genres present in sheet 12, but this indication can serve as an orientation as to what a well-structured text is, which the sheet brings when dealing with the exposition of a theme:

> The text should be **well organized** (introduction, development, conclusion) and the ideas should be well structured and well-articulated. In order to organize the content, you may need to use linguistic forms such as connectors and deictics. The presentation of the content should be ruled by the principles of conciseness, objectivity and clarity. (PINTO; NUNES, 2015, p. 303) (emphasis added).

Analyzing this proposal more closely, we observe that the authors' request requires students to carefully read the novel 'A Farsa de Inês Pereira', entirely available in the book between pages 100 to 106; 107 to 114 and 118 to 120. Thus, the central axis, as already alerted us by the authors in the presentation of the book, is Literary Education and the written activity is in service of it, although it is also said in the same presentation that although the axes are worked autonomously, they maintain relationships among themselves.

About this relationship between the axes, this activity shows that there is this relation of cause (reading and understanding the text) and consequence (written activity), as we have already pointed out, but in this task, there is still the requirement of extremely specific knowledge to be able to perform it. This specific knowledge, as far as proposal A, is presented previously by the authors on page 54, in which they explain to the students what satire is.

About duplicity, knowledge required to elaborate proposal B of this activity, this will only be dealt with in the book on page 125, in the item Systematization of Knowledge, in which the authors comment on the characters and their characterization; the structure of the action; the themes; the satire in the *Farsa* de Inês Pereira and the style, language, and formal aspects.

DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

The teacher's book *Entre nós e as palavras* presents writing proposals with the genres presented in the guiding document of Portuguese teaching for secondary school in a systematic way, allowing the student to have the opportunity to experience writing these genres several times throughout the year, which is important for their learning. However, there is a request for two genres not foreseen in the Program and Goals (BUESCU et al, 2014) for this year of teaching, without any explanation addressed to the teachers.

Something that calls our attention in the analyzed activities and in the other writing activities present in this work, is the fact that a great part of them is not elaborated having in mind the student and their historical, social, political, and economic context, nor requiring from the student a critical position in front of these contexts. Almost all of the proposed activities are linked to the content dealt with in the book on the Literary Education axis.

Also, as Sercundes (2004) tells us, there is no writing proposal that leads the student to another writing, that is, the proposals bring isolated activities, which are not connected to the previous ones nor to the next ones, as well as do not provide the active positioning of the writer, in the sense that the authors mentioned at the beginning of this article point out.

What the statements of the activities denote is a constant concern with format, since in all of them the authors emphasize the need for students to be concerned with planning, writing and revising. The expression "in a well-structured expository text or in a well-structured text" is frequently present, without being explicit about what this concept is about, although in Sheet 12 there is an explanation of what, for the authors, a well-structured expository text is, as previously mentioned.

Besides this matter, the activities do not present guidelines for rewriting the text, which can make it difficult for the student to understand that writing is work, which involves coming and going, doing and redoing, because, as Antunes (2005) tells us, every well-written text is a rewritten text.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

In this article we aimed to reflect on the contributions of the proposed textual production activities for the student's written formation of the work "Entre nós e as palavras" (2015), for the 10th grade, adopted in a public secondary school in Portugal.

Given the above, we can consider that the analyzed activities do not constitute a relevant contribution to the students' written formation.

It is Camps (2005) who reminds us that writing is important to learn to write, but not writing for writing's sake, without diversifying the communicative situations, the expected interlocutors, the author's intentions. In this way, we can think that the proposals of writing exercises analyzed here are much more towards the school essay format than textual production (GERALDI, 1997), which implies not enabling an active responsive production by the writer as an individual, not promoting their relative autonomy and, moreover, at the same time reinforcing directed and limiting writing teaching practices.

Perhaps it is possible to think that the strong investment of the authors in the activities that propose the elaboration of genres of the expository type occurs because this textual type brings the linguistic structuring and to focus on it reveals an option of teaching about the structure of texts and not by the internal relations of the same and its discursive mechanisms, showing that the focus is on the form and not on the genre and its social function. This understanding is easy to deduce when we observe the constant concern of the exercises with planning, revealed by the type of questions.

In a recent study Pimenta (2021) analyzed two guiding documents of teaching in Portugal, among them the Curricular Program and Goals of Portuguese - Secondary Education (BUESCO et al, 2014). The author states that in it writing is understood as a way of developing school skills. This perspective is what marks the format of the writing activities present in the book that is the object of this study, based on such a normative. We can say, consequently, that if the book has a pedagogical function, there is the need, then, for its authors to refer to the most recent studies on the Didactics of Writing in Portugal, as, for example, in the works of Barbeiro & Pereira, 2007; Graça, 2010; Alves & Limpo, 2013;

Carvalho & Barbeiro, 2013; Rodrigues, 2020, among others, in order to rethink the axis of writing as an interactive activity, which brings meaning both for those who write and for those who read.

This study by itself is not enough to understand how writing is learned in Portugal, nor did it intend to do so, because it is necessary, besides studies like this one, to investigate the teaching practices and the social practices of writing among secondary school students, so that we can understand a little more about this learning universe.

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