

## The written texts production and correction in pandemic times: is it about the use of technologies or is it about the possibilities of promoting an integral human formation /

### *A produção textual escrita e correção de textos em tempos de pandemia: é sobre o uso das tecnologias ou sobre possibilidades de promoção de uma formação humana integral?*

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**Received:** 18 abr. 2021. **Approved:** 21 mai. 2021.

**Como citar este artigo:** GARCIA, Daniela Cristina da Silva; THESSING, Aline Francieli; DE LIMA, Phelippe Rave Soares. A produção textual escrita em tempos de pandemia: é sobre o uso das tecnologias ou sobre possibilidades de promoção de uma formação humana integral? *Revista Letras Raras*, Campina Grande, v. 9, n. 2, p. 12-23. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.10121387>

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#### ABSTRACT

In this article, from a marked conception of Linguistic Education (BRITTO, 2012) and, therefore, from a work with the production and correction of texts that focuses on the development of the subjects that are part of the teaching-learning process, we seek to debate the limits and possibilities imposed on the work of the Portuguese language teacher, with specific attention to the written textual production, given the establishment of Remote Education in response to the emergency imposed by the global pandemic of the Sars-CoV-2 virus. For that, we will present in the following subsections a discussion about the conceptions of textual production, the possibility of dialogue with the student through the text as a space that aims to promote a project of saying, keeping in mind a correction to human formation. We hope, with this work, to contribute to a Portuguese language teacher with regard to teaching and learning of language in school contexts.

**KEYWORDS:** Written Textual Production; Text correction; Linguistic Education; Human Formation; Remote Teaching.

#### RESUMO

*Neste ensaio, a partir de uma concepção marcada de Educação Linguística (BRITTO, 2012) e de uma concepção de língua pautada na interação (VYGOTSKI, 2012 [1931]; VOLÓSHINOV, 2014 [1929]) e, por isso, de um trabalho com a produção e correção de textos que conceba como foco o desenvolvimento dos sujeitos que fazem parte do processo de ensino-aprendizagem, procuramos debater os limites e possibilidades impostos ao trabalho do professor de Língua Portuguesa, com atenção específica à produção textual escrita, dada a instauração do Ensino Remoto em resposta à emergência imposta pela pandemia mundial do vírus Sars-CoV-2. Para isso, apresentamos uma discussão sobre as concepções de aprendizagem de produção textual, a possibilidade de diálogo com o aluno por meio do texto como um espaço que visa promover um projeto de dizer, tendo em mente uma correção para fomentar a formação humana. Esperamos, com este trabalho, contribuir com professor de Língua Portuguesa no que se refere ao ensino-aprendizagem de língua em contextos escolares.*

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** Produção Textual Escrita; Correção de textos; Educação Linguística; Formação Humana; Ensino Remoto.

## 1 Introdução

Social isolation was decreed in March 2020 in Brazil as a procedure to contain the Sars-CoV-2 virus' proliferation, which causes COVID-19, and, consequently, the mass contamination of the population. This isolation caused severe impacts in various social spheres, as everyone was forced to adapt to the new context. In the school settings, the suspension of classes in the public and private education networks made educational actors strive to find new alternatives for the teaching and learning processes in the face of current demands, considering the need to maintain education for thousands of children, young and adults people removed from the school environment.

In this situation, public and private education networks have adopted remote teaching in order to maintain educational activities. In this way, the educators adapted the disciplinary contents, as well as the daily interpersonal interaction of the classroom to the online format.

However, both education professionals, whether teachers or specialists, and society itself were wondering how to do this in such a proportion, given that the pandemic caused a worldwide paralysis.

The adaptations that occurred in the school settings, from the adoption of remote teaching, through the use of videoconferencing applications, social networks, and even the adaptation of the contents and didactic practices for the distance learning modality (DLM), aroused the questioning of education professionals about the current role of technological tools, requiring careful observation of the challenges imposed by the new learning modality. Among them, the search for effective remote tools with quality parameters for greater efficiency stands out, as well as ways to overcome the inequality of access to digital information and communication technologies (DICT)<sup>1</sup>.

The real possibilities of access to information and knowledge caused by technological advances, with the creation of the internet and personal computers, have provided considerable changes in the models of management of educational processes, by enabling greater efficiency with regard to the performance of the teacher, the manager, and the student, both about the administration of educational institutions and the realization of the teaching and learning process. Thus, the advent of virtual learning environments (VLE), which adds operational tools that allow active interaction, through communicative exchange between users, and the presentation of information in an organized way without worrying about geographical barriers come to contribute in favor of the teaching and learning processes aiming to meet the pedagogical objectives.

The use of VLE in the teaching modality known as Distance Education (EAD) serves students with the possibility of taking non-face-to-face classes, mediated by technologies. That is, the learning environment is built on virtual platforms composed of interfaces or tools that simulate the classroom, in which students and teachers are physically separated.

In Brazil, EAD was regulated in 1996 and since then distance education has become legal for all levels of education, providing, for those who choose this modality, convenience, and flexibility to adapt the class schedule to their own routine. Although the VLE are ideal mediators between the educational institution and the distance education modality's student, this type of platform has already been used in several classroom courses for the management of basic

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<sup>1</sup> According to the Pesquisa Nacional por Amostra de Domicílio Contínua (PNAD Contínua) on Information and Communication Technologies of 2018, released by IBGE in 2020, only 41.8% of households have microcomputers, while 12.5% of them have tablets, tools that essential for an access that effectively contemplates the moments of study, mainly the readings and production of texts, still emphasizing that the percentage of households with fixed broadband is 23.3%.

services related to the administration and learning of the student body, as in university courses, which present a massive range of individuals in their academic centers. Thus, the organization of the contents relevant to the course, direct communication with tutors and teachers, the promotion of debates through discussion forums, the availability and application of exercises and assessments, access to the bibliography, support materials, and extra video classes are some of the main functions of AVA in classroom teaching.

All this consolidation of distance learning since its regulation and the consequent expertise on the possibilities and tools used in this modality are therefore indispensable so that, in the urgency of sanitary containment by the pandemic context, it is possible for teachers and students to quickly adapt to remote teaching<sup>2</sup>.

Thus, in relation to the production and correction of texts, some courses, such as language and writing, already use virtual platforms in their learning process, which are now also adopted by basic education and preparatory courses. The cataloging and sending of students' essays, as well as the correction, are made using these environments so that the management and the continuous monitoring of the students are carried out with the purpose of observing the progress in the fulfillment of the necessary skills<sup>3</sup> during the written texts production activities.

Added to this is the fact that textual production written in a school context is usually elaborated around specific discourse genres, such as the dissertation or school writing. The practice of writing the dissertation and school writing is characterized by an expository methodological model of the typical characteristics of the genre, highlighting its linguistic and structural specificities, in addition to commonly ready-made sentences, cliched quotations, and generic repertoire, in service of a text that complies the mere competencies required for what is considered a text worthy of passing in university selection contests. Instead, the school should promote a practice of reading and writing that aims to conceive language teaching for the emancipation of subjects, through their intellectual development, promoting the processing of information through the ability to critically articulate elements of the world with varying degrees of knowledge complexity.

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<sup>2</sup> We highlight the understanding of the distinction between Distance Education and Remote Education since this one differs from that due to its emergency nature.

<sup>3</sup> Considering the different uses and perspectives of the term, we emphasize that, within the scope of this essay, it is used in the common sense intended by formal education in its parameterizing documents. In other words, as advocated in the National Common Curricular Base when presenting that the competences are “Mobilization of knowledge (concepts and procedures), skills (practical, cognitive and socio-emotional), attitudes and values to solve complex demands of daily life, the full exercise of citizenship and the world of work.” (BRASIL, 2018, p. 9)

The aforementioned context, then, could prove to be more challenging in a remote teaching process, if it were considered the core of the teaching and learning processes. What we defend, however, is that the main benefit made possible by the educational tools historically used by remote education in the urgent adaptation to the remote teaching is restricted to this: a tool. And we are not trying to detail it, diminish it or present it as elementary, but we consider it as, in fact, what lies on the surface of broad theoretical discussions that should underpin pedagogical practices. Our discussion, then, is based on the precepts of Linguistic Education, because

linguistic education implies the pedagogical action that leads the student to perceive [a] language and language as complex historical phenomena, to understand its functioning, uses and forms, as well as to know how to use it properly in oral and written modalities, especially for study and learn to live your subjectivity. (BRITTO, 2012, p. 84, translated by the authors)

And this conception is added to our defense that, regardless of platform or support, what constitutes the quality of textual production and its correction is not on the surface - in the tool -, but in what sustains the teaching understanding about the act of writing.

Thus, this essay aims to reflect on the challenges evidenced by social isolation, with respect to the transformation of teaching activities through the use of digital technological resources in the production and correction of textual productions. For this, we divided this essay into three parts, in which (i) we delineate the outlines in which the work of the Portuguese language teacher takes place in relation to the use of technologies and the emergence of their establishment; (ii) the importance of teaching understanding about the objectives that move their action and the entry of technologies as a tool that helps the teaching-learning process, but that are not the process itself (iii) the possibility of training that goes beyond the everyday life and put themselves in favor of integral human formation.

## **2 In addition to the tools, teacher understanding**

Discussing the text correction methodologies in which digital tools are used seems to us to evoke a tradition of searching for something palpable or replicable that provides, in a certain way, an apparent security to the teacher's planning. Our search, however, is to reflect on how to think about the production and correction of texts regardless of their support, so that this security

occurs not for the final product, but for the objectives that underpin it. It is not our intention to exclude the importance of DTIC tools for the production and correction of texts - especially in their role of adapting to the context of adapting to the new health standards - but we will seek to give them their appropriate value, not as a point of arrival or objective teaching planning, but as strategies to enable a greater objective: the formation of subjects, because the tools, even if they present themselves as valuable and diverse instruments, should not act as the center of teaching action. Thus, we understand that the discussion of how to produce and correct a text virtually must come after the theoretical foundations that permeate textual production.

Initially, it is necessary to point out that we understand language as a process in which the subject can only be by thinking about his relationship with the other, instead of interaction in social use (VOLÓSHINOV, 2014 [1929]). Thus, it is evident the significance of language and texts in the teaching and learning processes of subjects who, from the interaction, have the possibility of appropriating previously unknown knowledge. We also consider language as a *psychological instrument of symbolic mediation* (VYGOTSKI, 2012 [1931]), which enables humanization. From this perspective, in order to effectively guide the practice of producing texts in a school setting that expands students' writing skills, the main object of production should not be the text in its immanence, but the learning possibilities that come from it. For this, it is necessary that the production of text in the school context ceases to act only as a formalization for exam processes or as objectification of pro forma tasks and starts to act as an important element in the teaching and learning processes, which it is only possible if the teacher is intentionally based on coherent conceptions about the role of formal education and the production of texts in this context, as well as the role of the evaluation of these productions, which we will seek to develop in this section.

Initially, we consider it important to state that "[...] teaching to read and write is part of a training process in which the subject recognizes himself and recognizes the world in which he is, with its tensions and contradictions." (BRITTO, 2012, p.106) and that this understanding should guide the writing proposals much more than the formal or structural elements of a given genre. It is not, of course, a salvationist vision of the role of textual production in the formation of subjects, it is, in fact, to contribute so that this subject has possibilities beyond those imposed by his daily life, through expansion of their linguistic knowledge and the objectification of the artifacts managed in their productions, to seek ways for humanization since "[...] humanization advances as the social and conscious activity of men produces objectifications that make a human existence possible increasingly free and universal." (DUARTE, 2013, p. 23).

Under a process with these outlines, we understand a language education in which a conceptual appropriation that implies the tension between everyday and scientific concepts is fundamental. In this case, these concepts cannot, in our perspective, stick to the teaching of normative grammar or discourse genres focusing on their textual structure, as is commonly seen in Portuguese language classes (GERALDI, 2010). It must be made clear that these cultural objects are by no means neutral, but that they are ideological processes that reproduce the values of culture and domination, and should therefore be questioned. Based on this search for the human formation and understanding the language from an interaction perspective, we emphasize that

to maintain a coherence between a conception of language as interaction and a conception of education, this leads to a change in attitude - as teachers - towards the student. We need to become interlocutors for him, respecting his word, to act as real partners: agreeing, disagreeing, adding, questioning, asking, etc. (GERALDI, 2012, p. 128, translated by the authors)

Thus, more than any search to improve correction tools - whether in person or online - the great search must be the authorship of students, placing them as agents of this authorship, which is only possible by providing them with the necessary conditions for the production of a text, such as having something to say, a reason to say it, for whom and with strategies to say it, as proposed by Geraldi (1997).

It is under this panorama, then, that we will seek in the following section to present the relationship between teaching understandings about language education and the search for training that is characterized as integral, that is, the search for training that aims at human and the consequent emancipation of the subjects.

### **3 Beyond technologies, comprehensive human training**

As we have seen throughout this essay, working with the language and, more specifically, with Linguistic Education, implies the assumption of teaching that does not become mere automatisms and utilitarianisms. Thus, the teaching and learning of language in school contexts are conceived as working with the language as a “pedagogical action that leads the student to perceive language and language as complex historical phenomena” (BRITTO, 2012, p.

84) and not as with the exposure of norms of behavior and adjustments to a superior model of language, the so-called “standard language”.

With that, we defend that the teaching and learning of the Portuguese language, and, mainly, the work with the written textual production, should not be approached from models of right and wrong, as a ready and finished product, perhaps closed in itself, because working with the language demands on the one hand, as pointed out by Geraldi (1997),

apprehending the marks of its constitutive exteriority within (and therefore the external is internalized); on the other hand, because the historical product - resulting from the discursive work of the past - is today a condition of the present that, also making history, participates in this same product, always unfinished, always under construction. (GERALDI, 1997, p. 28, translated by the authors)

In this sense, we take - even if in a very embryonic way - such assumptions as a basis for the teaching and learning of language with reference to the production and correction of texts in the school space, which implies considering school education as the one responsible for expanding knowledge of the language and the world, overcoming the simple correction of deviations or the imposition of a correct model of language use based on a pattern that instead of contributing to the efficiency in the use of linguistic forms, invariably corroborates “the idea of privilege culture” (BRITTO, 2012, p.94).

Such considerations are taken by us to deal with textual production, as the SARS-COV-2 pandemic, as we have already said, brought as an emergency the widespread use of technologies by teachers in all disciplines, being no different with those who dedicated to working with the production and correction of texts. This time, the Pandemic, in addition to the weaknesses of current society - split into antagonistic classes - respecting the survival of individuals, opens up the difficulties of access and use of these technologies, both by teachers and students. Thus, even if the use of technologies is already a constant presence in the educational ideology, the need and, sometimes, the only way to be taken for the remote teaching of the contents and, specifically in our case, for the production and correction of texts, has become, for many, a demand to be overcome.

In this vein, what was seen with the introduction of remote education in a generalized way in national education was that very immediately after the adoption of such a teaching model - done exclusively by digital means -, education professionals began to question the role of technologies or they even went on to seek to understand the implications and limitations of using



these technologies in the teaching of content and, specifically, in the production and correction of texts.

The written textual production in the schooling contexts, generally, occurs from the speech genres or from specific textual types - as is the case of the dissertation in the preparatory courses for entrance exams, or school writing, in the case of regular schools - which have linguistic and structural specificities. Even so, the production of these genres or types demands from teachers much more than the mere methodological model, which aims to expose characteristics of the genre, with introduction, development and conclusion, in addition to sometimes ready-made sentences and endings clichés that serve all themes; as well as, without a doubt, a correction that overcomes the marking of right and wrong and generic comments on whether or not to place a title in the text, for example.

The emergence in the use of technologies by language teachers has raised much more than the difficulty with the use of technologies, but the conceptions of text, school, and human formation that accompany such professionals. Although the most urgent demand in the school ideology throughout the pandemic and remote education is how to produce texts in digital media, what are the best platforms for such production, among the many offered and, more readily, how to correct, then the texts produced in such digital media, the central question should, in fact, be the conceptions that underlie the teaching and learning process of textual production and not only what technological tool to use, or how to use it, since this is very easily resolved with a brief tutorial, often offered by the school itself that chose such a platform.

Surely, we have understood, from a marked conception of Linguistic Education (BRITTO, 2012) and School Education (SAVIANI, 2012 [1983]), that the production and correction of texts regardless of the platform or medium - digital or in-person - in which it occurs, therefore, these are only means, tools, they must serve the objectives of enabling learning. Certainly conceiving digital tools as support and not as the whole of education implies that professionals consciously assume a specific type of human formation, since we know that language teaching practices have been consistent - within school spaces -, educational projects that easily align with ideals of society and human formation that aim to maintain the status quo and not to transform it, which means that, depending on the way it is conceived, language teaching may or may not contribute for the emancipation of the subjects. Precisely for this reason, in this essay, we are adhering to a conception of education as one capable of “contributing to the intellectual and social development of students, especially in regard to the knowledge that expands daily life and breaks with common

sense” (BRITTO, 2012, p. 83), which immediately refers to a conception of human formation in favor of omnilaterality.

On this, we agree with Manacorda (1996, p. 361) when the author states about the humanizing role of education, as shown in the following excerpt.

Whereas, while each animal is, by its nature, soon and always, unilaterally itself (the flea is soon and always flea, the bird, bird, and the dog, dog, whatever the destiny that its brief life may reserve), only the man broke the bonds of natural unilateralism and invented his possibility of becoming another and better, and even omnilateral; considering, furthermore, that this possibility, given only by life in society, has until now been denied by society to the majority, or rather, denied to all to a lesser or greater degree, the categorical imperative of man's education can be stated as follows: Despite if the man seems to you, by nature and in fact, unilateral, educate him with all the effort in any part of the world so that he becomes omnilateral (translated by the authors).

Training in favor of omnilaterality refers to school education and language education with a focus on the production and correction of texts in the school sphere that is not organized in favor of the mere pragmatic enrollment of the subjects and, as to the teaching of language, to a teaching that does not aim only at an expansion of uses in everyday regulatory processes (BRITTO, 2012), either by correcting specific grammatical errors in the texts produced or by the so-called correct ways of using the language. Regardless of the medium - virtual or face-to-face, of the specific tools and methods, the success of both the production and the correction of school texts would depend on clear conceptions of School Education, Linguistic Education, text, and human training, which cannot be acquired and/or expanded from watertight tutorials and training.

### **Final considerations**

The establishment of remote education in the midst of a global health emergency has placed us in front of the weaknesses and possibilities of using technologies in the school context. If, on the one hand, we have the engagement of the entire school staff - teachers, administrators, parents, and students - to adapt to a teaching model that is not in person and mediated by technologies, on the other, we have to question the rise of a leading role in these technologies. in the teaching-learning process, as if the tools were capable of supporting or even replacing the teacher's role in that process.

In the context of written textual production, the installation of the non-classroom teaching model showed, at the limit of the contradictions that accompany the textual production activity in school contexts, the weaknesses of a production model that is based on automatism and ready models, focusing on genre specificities or textual types decontextualized from their means of production, in addition to the weaknesses of a correction based on models of reproduction of right and wrong instead of promoting, based on the students' written production, a formative process that extrapolates pragmatism and nomenclature.

In such a way, what we try to highlight and we think it is essential to promote, based on this discussion, is that more than focusing on the importance of technologies in the work of text production and correction, it is important to highlight that technologies are tools that should be in favor of a teaching-learning process that provides training that goes beyond mere adaptation to right and wrong modes of writing and that transcends the automatism imposed by genres and textual types frequent in school spaces, such as dissertation or school writing, but which, taking into account the contradictions imposed by the current mode of sociability and, from that, on the access and use of technologies, can provide opportunities, within these limits, for a human formation with integral adjective.

<b>CRedit</b>
<b>Acknowledgement:</b> Not applicable.
<b>Financing:</b> Not applicable.
<b>Conflicts of interest:</b> The authors certify that they have no commercial or associative interest that represents a conflict of interest in relation to the manuscript.
<b>Ethical Approval:</b> Not applicable.
<b>Contributor Roles:</b> Conceptualization, Data curation, Formal Analysis, Investigation, Methodology, Project administration, Supervision, Validation, Visualization, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing: GARCIA, Daniela Cristina da Silva; THESSING, Aline Francieli; LIMA, Phelippe Rave Soares de.

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