



The direct method in the teaching of foreign languages at the *Colégio Pedro II* in the 1930s¹

O método direto no ensino de línguas estrangeiras no
Colégio Pedro II na década de 1930

El método directo en la enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras en el
Colégio Pedro II en la década de 1930

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Abstract

Current paper analyzes how the direct method in the teaching of foreign languages was established in Brazilian secondary education at the *Colégio Pedro II* in the 1930s. Antônio Carneiro Leão, head-teacher of the French language at *Colégio Pedro II*, was responsible for implementing this method in secondary education. The implementation of the method in the teaching program of foreign languages at Pedro II gave teachers the opportunity of going beyond the traditional school's model that emphasized a bookish type of teaching in foreign language classes. In fact, the commitment to the ideals of the Active school strengthened the students' ability towards production through activities that functionally complied with their needs.

Keywords: Direct Method; Foreign Languages; Brazilian Secondary Education.

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Resumo

O objetivo deste texto é apresentar como se constituiu o uso do método direto nas aulas de línguas estrangeiras no ensino secundário brasileiro no Colégio Pedro II ao longo da década de 1930. O responsável por implementar esse método, no ensino secundário, foi o professor-chefe de francês Antônio Carneiro Leão do Colégio Pedro II. A implantação deste método no programa do ensino das línguas estrangeiras no Pedro II possibilitou a superação do modelo de uma escola tradicional que enfatizava um ensino de línguas estrangeiras de forma livresco. Isso ocorreu devido o engajamento no ideário de uma escola ativa, que buscou fortalecer as capacidades do educando para o meio de produção, mediante atividades que atendessem as suas necessidades de forma funcional.

Palavras-Chave: Método Direto; Línguas Estrangeiras; Ensino Secundário Brasileiro.

Resumen

El propósito de este artículo es presentar cómo el método directo en la enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras se constituyó en la educación secundaria brasileña en Colégio Pedro II en la década de 1930. La persona responsable por la implementación de este método en la enseñanza secundaria fue Antônio Carneiro Leão. Él fue un profesor titular de francés en Colégio Pedro II. La implementación de este método en el programa de enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras en Pedro II proporcionó la superación del modelo de una escuela tradicional que enfatizaba una enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras de modo libresco. Esto ocurrió para permitir el compromiso en los ideales de una escuela activa. Así, se buscó fortalecer las capacidades del estudiante para el medio de producción a través de actividades que cumplieran sus necesidades de una manera funcional.

Palabras-claves: Método Directo; Lenguas Extranjeras; Educación Secundaria Brasileña.

Introduction

The Direct Method emerged at the start of the 20th century as a contrast to the Classical Method (grammar and translation) in the teaching of foreign languages (English, French and German) at the Colégio Pedro II e other educational institutes at the same teaching level. According to researchers in Linguistics applied to the teaching of foreign languages, such as Larsen-Freeman (1986); Richards & Rodgers (1994); Howatt & Widdowson (2004); Leffa (1988, 2012) and Oliveira (2014), the method was considered a response to the period's social needs. The Direct Method became extremely popular during the first forty years of the 20th century.

The case of Michel de Montaigne (1533-1592) is perhaps one of the best examples on the teaching of foreign languages through such a method. Montaigne's father wanted him to learn Latin in a natural way for his daily tasks. He hired a speaker of Latin to teach the language to the young Montaigne. In his *History of English Language Teaching*, Anthony Howatt (HOWATT, 1985) describes the experience in learning Latin through the Direct Method as a successful example.

At the end of the 19th century, a movement on the reform of foreign language teaching in the British Isles disrupted the supremacy of the classical method. The British linguist Henry Sweet (1845-1912) led a reform that conceived teaching as a direct communication event with students directly communicating in the target language. The Direct Method for teaching foreign languages had been introduced in the United States in 1874 by Lambert Sauveur (1826-1907) who was the precursor for the Direct Method in the Americas after the reform in Britain.

Richards and Rodgers (1994) state that the Direct Method was first conceived in Europe and then spread to the United States by Maximilian Berlitz. It has been known ever since as the Berlitz method and widely employed by the Berlitz Language Schools worldwide, still going strong². The method was adopted in Brazil when the teaching of foreign languages in secondary schools was reformed by the Federal Government in 1930 during the Francisco Campos administration. The head teacher of the French language³ at the Colégio Pedro II, Antônio Carneiro Leão⁴ was the promoter of the Direct Method.

² Online information on the Berlitz language schools may be obtained from <<http://www.berlitz.us>>.

³ According to Chaguri (2017), the impact of the head teacher in foreign languages in the Colégio Pedro II was required. The role of the head teacher was not merely to supervise and guide teachers in teaching matters but also to deal with administrative issues. He was "the head of the department [...] and, at the same time, a supervisor of other teachers" (FONSECA, 1997, p. 101), or rather, he was responsible for what and how they taught. As head teacher of French, Carneiro Leão, "[...] guided and supervised forty teachers" (MENDONÇA, 1997, p. 12) within the context of secondary teaching reform. He did not only give French lessons for the third and fourth years but also supervised "[...] the methodology employed of what was considered a revolution in the teaching of languages" (MENDONÇA, 1997, p. 12).

⁴ Antônio Arruda Carneiro Leão (1887-1966) was a Brazilian teacher and educator. He was also a member of the Brazilian Academy and constantly involved in education and social debates. He graduated in social and juridical sciences at the Faculdade de Direito de Recife on December 15, 1911. His eclectic professional life was filled with activities and he was renowned for his in-depth knowledge in all tasks undertaken. He was the founder and director of newspapers and magazines in Rio de Janeiro and Recife, member of several institutes, associations and academies, such as Associação Brasileira de Educação (ABE); Academia de Ciência de Lisboa, Instituto Americano de Direito Internacional and others. He authored several books in Brazil and abroad, published in English, Spanish and French. For further details on the life and activities of Carneiro Leão in the political and educational fields and on his complete works, see Lima & Machado (2015), Chaguri & Machado (2017, 2018) and Chaguri (2017).

Current paper deals with the employment of the Direct Method in the teaching of foreign languages, at secondary level, in the Colégio Pedro II during the 1930s. It is based on investigations by Chaguri and Machado (2017) on the identification, localization, selection and ordering of Carneiro Leão's bibliographic productions which show the way the Direct Method was implemented within the teaching program of foreign languages in Brazilian secondary education.

The principle on which the Direct Method is based consists of students learning the language within the context of the target language (LARSEN-FREEMAN,2008). Students have to learn to think in the language they are learning, or rather, they are required to think in the target language. The study of a foreign language through the Direct Method triggers students to develop their communication capacities. Therefore, speaking is the main task focused in the classroom. The teacher is always trying to highlight the students' pronunciation. According to Oliveira (2014), the task is undertaken by employing pictures, figures, sketches, maps and other items that would make dynamic orality in the target language. The constant repetition of words or phrases is a technique to learn a foreign language naturally.

Current paper is divided into four parts. The first part is a bird-eye's view of the analysis, whilst the second part is an exposition of the Direct Method in the study of foreign languages at the Colégio Pedro II. The third part presents a discussion on pedagogical practices to establish the Direct Method in the study of foreign languages with regard to the social needs of Brazil in the 1930s. The fourth part deals with considerations on the entire text. A bibliography is given at the end of the paper.

The Direct Method in Foreign Language Lessons in the *Colégio Pedro II*

After the 1930 Revolution, Brazil went forward on its industrialization and urbanization process. In 1933, industrial production was greater than its agricultural produce. People were preferring such cities as Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo to live in, where labor was abundant in the great urban centers and in the large cities of the hinterland due to agricultural activities. The 20th century was branded by the industrialization process, triggered by transformations that occurred within the coffee production in Brazil. Policies merely based on agricultural production and labor failed to meet the requirements of industrialization which was emerging in the urban centers (especially Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo) which were being adjusted to the new national investments. In 1930, Getúlio Vargas became president of Brazil and inaugurated a provisional administration till 1934. The second phase started after this period, known in Brazilian history as the Constitutional Period (1934-1937).

Education was at its best moment and triggered a new phase that would change the entire country. This was due to the establishment of the Ministry of Education and Public Health, currently called MEC. Francisco Campos became the Minister of Education and Health. He established the National Council for Education to organize and structure the education system at all levels. The start of the secondary education reform, known as the Francisco Campos Reform, occurred on April 18, 1931, and aimed at preparing people living in the cities for a higher education by giving them a technical and practical formation that would reach the great sectors of Brazilian society.

Due to the transformations that occurred within the economy, Education was underscored and a type of education pinpointing people's education was established to attend to the demands of the country's new economical processes. Education was directed by the new economic trends, helping people to become productive citizens for the construction of the country and to be at the same educational level as the immigrants that were constantly arriving.

According to Chaguri (2017), within this context, the stature of a Brazilian teacher and intellectual was required to implement the Direct Method in Brazil in 1930. Antônio Arruda Carneiro Leão (1887-1966), better known as A. Carneiro Leão among historians of education, was the man who would be responsible for the establishment of the Direct Method in the foreign language program of the Colégio Pedro II.

The employment of the Direct Method implied the use of dialogues that focused on the daily issues of students to make a realistic use of the language learned in the classroom. The practice was extremely overt within the foreign language program of the Colégio Pedro II. Activities focusing on the learning of the vocabulary and the development of orality were part and parcel of the French and other foreign languages program in the first years of the secondary school.

In the first year, besides exercises in pronunciation and phonetics (when required), discourse should deal with the environment and students' lives, the classroom and the family; human life, domestic animals, flowers and trees ... through books and posters. Since their first day, the students should concentrate on the correct use of phrases and the application of grammar, intelligently and duly combined with the vocabulary (CARNEIRO LEÃO, 1935, p. 307).

Grammar is not the focus within the Direct Method approach. Larsen-Freeman (2008) insists that the study of vocabulary is more important than grammar. If the language's grammatical aspects were foremost in this method, she argues, we would be going back to the classical method, or rather, to the grammar and translation method used since the Empire for Latin lessons.

The development of students' communication ability is the focus when the Direct Method is employed. Richards and Rodgers (1994) highlight this issue and insist that vocabulary should be taught through words in the target language used in daily speech so that the method's aim is achieved, or rather, to help students develop speech in the language.

The types of exercises in the Direct Method are embodied and varied as vocabulary is learned by the student. It was only in Year Two of the secondary school that the French language program and that of other languages demanded such activities as filling the blanks (nouns and verbs), learning words or phrases by rhyme, songs or making associations with pictures or objects on words learned by heart and, occasionally, a dictation, at every three lessons

Teachers will provide students with phrases to change, complete, put into the plural, modify gender, person or verb mode, making them employ words previously prepared. The Vocabulary will be retrieved

from the usual daily idiom and will refer to the main themes, such as the classroom, family, human body, clothes, animals, time, seasons, hours, meals, home, city. Indicated procedure will be based on a set of pictures placed before the students. The teacher will indicate the several objects shown and will describe their use and utility. The main words: nouns, adjectives, verbs... referring to the objects will be employed in the ensuing conversation. The phrases formed must be precise and to the point. The teachers will make question to the students and they will answer in complete phrases. New words will be written on the blackboard in their different forms and will be copied by the students. Likewise, with regard to conjugations, expressions and new grammar items. The teacher will complete the grammar through rules that students employ in their reply. Every three lessons, a dictation is given on the main issues discussed. Dictation should be made up of at least fifty words. The students should also compose five phrases of, at least, eight words each, on one or more issues, and apply the grammar rules learned (CARNEIRO LEÃO, 1935, p. 307-308).

Grammar and occasionally narrative, as assessment, was employed during the Third Year of the secondary school within the program of foreign language teaching at the Colégio Pedro II. Richards and Rodgers (1994) say that grammar should be studied inductively and the rules of generalization would rise according to the students' experience.

The program for this year includes the following: twice a month, students have a written task which will consist of a dictation, exercises for the formation of phrases on determined themes in which grammar is applied, replacing vocabulary, changes in number, gender, person, mode, voice, form. The next month, students will dedicate themselves to the use of the French language learned during the two previous years. Such improvement will comprise:

1st - Exercise students in the use of practical French;

2nd - Making students study grammar according the previous task.

[...]

Teachers will give lessons in French and the students will form questions and give answers in French.

For monthly marks, two tasks shall be given, including narratives in French, a reading summary, grammatical analysis, logical analysis and translation (CARNEIRO LEÃO, 1935, p. 309-310).

The grammar task indicated contents in a practical way. Each month the teacher of foreign languages at the Pedro II taught the matter listed in the program with secondary school students.

May
 “Syntax of definite, indefinite and partition articles”
 June
 “Syntax of nouns: gender and number”
 July
 “Syntax of adjectives: qualifying, numerals, demonstrative, possessive, Interrogative, indefinite”
 August
 “Syntax of pronouns: personal, demonstrative, possessive, relative, interrogative and indefinite”
 September and October
 “Syntax of verbs: concordance – time – reflexive – past participle”
 November
 Review of the year’s program (CARNEIRO LEÃO, 1935, p. 311).

Advanced students studying through the Direct Method used grammar inductively, but it became “[...] mandatory in more advanced phases within the course” (CHAGAS, 1967, p. 91), or rather, in the Third and Fourth year of the secondary school at the Colégio Pedro II. According to the program set by Carneiro Leão (1934; 1935), grammar was only studied in the higher classes. Consequently, tasks were based on literary texts.

Larsen-Freeman (2008) insists that literary texts should be employed in the classroom as an entertainment. Texts should not be analyzed from the grammatical point of view. They should merely be employed for the analysis of different themes in the classroom and for reading aloud, practicing pronunciation and making people hear each other in the classroom. Practicing “[...] silent reading was thus privileged; oral reading, especially expressive reading, was reserved for the training of pronunciation and further literary studies” (CHAGAS, 1967, p. 91) within the program of the Fourth Year of the secondary school. Carneiro Leão says:

The fourth year is reserved for the students’ enrichment in vocabulary. Readings and conversations on history and daily life, economics, politics, arts, moral and social ventures, in general and particularly, should be undertaken with the help of French newspapers and magazines on the history and life in France. The students shall make summaries of conversations and readings. *Different themes*: narratives, letters, dialogues, short essays and descriptions of easy daily themes. As a rule, themes will be elaborated outside the classroom and will comprise rapid comments on readings and texts chosen by the teacher. *Special themes*: they are prepared in the classroom with the help of the teacher (only one hour per week, due to lack of time) to verify knowledge in grammar in proportion to the students’ increasing knowledge, and as a comparative syntax between French and Portuguese. A moderate use of the dictionary is allowed (CARNEIRO LEÃO, 1935, p. 312).

Reading and conversation were a means to increase students' vocabulary. Besides the different and special themes studied in the Fourth Year, a list of "[...] readings, interpretations and summaries of selected texts by authors from the XIX, XVIII and XVII centuries" was forwarded (CARNEIRO LEÃO, 1935, p. 313). In the case of literary texts, a list of authors was prepared in 1932 for the Reform of Teaching Foreign Languages (BRASIL, 1932) to be read by students of the Fourth Years within the French, English and German language program.

Art. 31 –The following French authors are indicated for teaching

during the last year of the course:

Jean Racine: *Andromaque – Britannicus*

Pierre Corneille: *Le Cid*

La Rochefoucauld: *Maximes*

La Fontaine: *Fables*

Madame de Sévigné: *Lettres*

Molière: *Tartufe – Le Misanthrope – Malade imaginaire*

Bossuet: *Oraisons fúnebres*

Fénelon: *Télémaque – Dialogue dès morts*

Montesquieu: *Espirit des lous et lettres persanes*

J. J. Rousseau: *Extraits*

Voltaire: *La Henriade – Histoire de Charles XII*

V. Hugo: *Notre-Dame de Paris – Légende dès Siécles*

Lamartine: *Premières meditations – Histoire de la révolution de 1848*

A. De Musset: *Poésies nouvelles*

Bernardin de Saint-Pierre: *Paul et Virginie – Harmonies*

Pierre Loti: *Le désert – Au Maroc*

Alphone Daudet: *Lettres de mon Moulin – Le Nabab*

Paul Bourget: *André Cornélis*

Renan: *Souvenir d'enjance et de jeunesse*

Taine: *Philosophic de Vart*

Art. 32 - The following English authors are indicated for teaching

during the last year of the course:

Dickens: *David Copperfield*

Emerson: *Essays*

E. Poe: *Tales*

George Eliot: *Silas Marner*

Goldsmith: *The Vicar of Wakefield*

Jerome K. Jerome: *Three men in a boat*

Kipling: *Plain tales from the hills*

Lamb: *Tales from Shakespeare*

Mark Twain: *Life on the Mississippi*

Shakespeare: *Julius Caesar*

Stevenson: *The art of writing*

Tackeray: *The four Georges*

Art. 33 - The following German authors are indicated for teaching

during the last year of the course:

Lessing: *Nathan der Weise*

Herder: *Der Cid*

Goethe: *Herman und Dorothea – Faust: 1ª parte*

Schiller: *Wilhelm Tell – Maria Stuart*

Chamisso: *Peter Schelmihls – Wundersame Geshieht*

Uhland: *Balladen*

Theodor Storm: *Immensee*

Gottfried Keller: *Das Sinngedicht*

Sudermann: *Frau Sorge*

Hauptmann: *Die Weber*

Nietzsche: *Also sprach Zarathustra*

Herman Hesse: *Peter kamenzinel*(BRASIL, 1932, p. 4.241).

Articles 31-33 of the Reform (BRASIL, 1932) on English and German lessons indicate twelve literary works during the last year of the secondary school, although twenty French literary works were prescribed for reading by students for the Fourth Year. Literary formation comprised the most relevant writers. Consequently, secondary school students had access to the cultural manifestations present in the literary works.

The grammar program was similar to that of the Third Year, with an exception for October and November, since the teacher of French and that of other foreign languages should undertake “[...] a general revision of the rules acquired during the course in the French language” (CARNEIRO LEÃO, 1935, p. 313), where revision in the Third Year took place only in November. There were no lessons in foreign languages for students in the Fifth and Sixth years at the Colégio Pedro II.

According to the Reform (BRASIL, 1932), tests had to be given to students to verify learning. These evaluations occurred in partial and final modes. Term and final tests were applied according to the reform by Francisco Campos (BRASIL, 1932). Approval from one year to the other in any subject matter of the school curriculum depended on four partial and final tests applied in May, July, September and November.

Partial tests comprised questions on subject matter taught through the Direct Method. Problems were of four types, generally in ten questions. Carneiro Leão (1935) synthesizes the manner the questions were formulated and thus one may understand clearly the specificities of each problem.

First: questions were asked in the language taught and had to be answered in complete phrases in the same language. *Second:* construction of sentences in which the students had to change the time of the verb, gender and number of adjectives and nouns. *Third:* incomplete sentences to be completed by the students. *Fourth:* composition made up of descriptions, narratives and formation of original sentences constructed freely on the time of verbs, or on a determined grammatical item (CARNEIRO LEÃO, 1935, p. 289 – author’s italics).

The entire contents in the curriculum were selected carefully and applied, followed by ten questions. Besides the four partial tests, there was the final exam, applied in December. It comprised two modalities, namely, a written and an oral test. Articles 28 and 29 of the Reform (BRASIL, 1932) describe the organizations of the final exams applied to the students.

Art. 28 -The written test consists of a translation and a composition written in the foreign language; the theme will be proposed by the bench of examiners.

§ 1º - The dictionary may be used exclusively during this test.

§ 2º - In the case of the written test, allotments comprise all the authors listed in the program.

Art. 29 -In the case of the oral exam, the student chooses five authors listed in the program and one of them is chosen by the examining bench for the exam. An item for which all the books are previously subdivided is chosen at random.

§ 1 -The test comprises the reading and translation of a passage, a commentary on the author and grammar questions.

§ 2 -Examiners and examined should use the foreign language studied as their sole means of communication (BRASIL, 1932, p. 4.241).

Concomitant to the term and final exams, it is important to underscore the issue of the subject matters. They were organized in a single format so that the Colégio Pedro II would control all the other secondary schools. However, the didactic material to be employed within the method at the Colégio Pedro II was lacking. According to the opinion of Carneiro Leão (1934, p. 28), there was “[...] a solution to this difficult problem”.

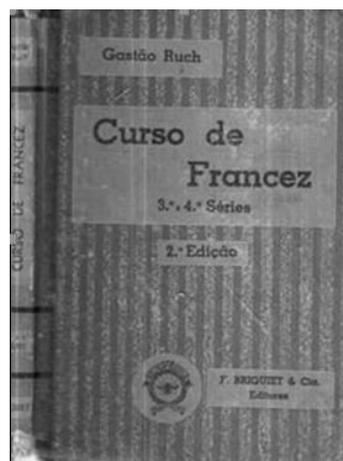
The most adequate book that complied with the principles of the Direct Method adopted for the teaching of foreign languages in the Colégio Pedro II, especially for the first year, had the title *France*, written by Mme. Camerlink (Figure 1). However, according to Carneiro Leão, (1935, p. 28) “[...] there were not enough copies of the book in Rio de Janeiro”. On the other hand, Gastão Ruth, a former teacher of French at the Colégio Pedro II, published the book *Curso de Francês* (Figure 2) for the first two years of the secondary school.

It should be underlined that in the case of text books used in class and mentioned by Carneiro Leão, photos were employed to better explain the educational phenomena in the enunciations that comprised discussions of the text by teachers. Therefore, the book’s photo and others used in the discussion of the text are “[...] iconographic sources as witnesses [...] of historical studies” (CARDOSO, 1990, p. 17). In other words, they are documents in the analysis of the Direct Method used in the language classes at the Colégio Pedro II. The photos used in current paper are a witness of the political, education and social aspects that molded the teaching of languages in the secondary school.

Figure 1: “France” book used at Colégio Pedro II



Figure 3: Book “Curso de Francez” at Colégio Pedro II



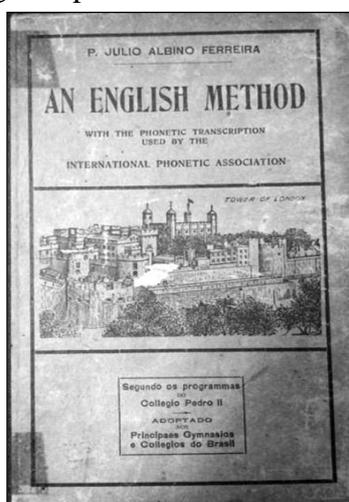
Source: Jonathas de P. Chaguri (2017).

Although *Curso de Francês* did not apply the Direct Method principles, there was no problem in employing the text book for French lessons at the Pedro II, since “[...] the teacher’s adaptation” (CARNEIRO LEÃO, 1935, p. 283) to comply with the teaching proposal of the secondary school would attend to the students’ needs.

In the case of German and English textbooks, Carneiro Leão does not mention any in these languages in his books on the reform in teaching of foreign languages (CARNEIRO LEÃO, 1934; 1935). Since German was only chosen by the very few and was considered a rather difficult language, most students opted for French and English.

Gomes (2014; 2018) studied the production of textbooks, published between 1931 and 1961, for the study of English within the Direct Method principle. The author (GOMES, 2014) pinpointed an important textbook called *An English Method*, by Júlio Albino Ferreira (Figure 3), published by the publishing house Cabral. Júlio Albino Ferreira was a Portuguese priest who studied in England and used to give lessons in English when he returned to his native country.

Figure 3: *An English Method*, by the Portuguese priest Júlio Albino Ferreira.



Source: Rodrigo Belfort Gomes (2014).

There is no information given by Carneiro Leão in his reports or by the historical memoirs of the Colégio Pedro II (DORIA, 1937) on the textbooks used for English lessons within the Direct Method except the book by Júlio Albino Ferreira. The copy in Gomes's study (2014) was the 12th edition and published in 1939. The first edition was published in 1930, confirmed by the investigation and retaken by Vera Menezes de Oliveira e Paiva on textbooks in English used in Brazil.

Besides the grammar and translation books used in Brazil in the first half of the 20th century, there was the textbook *An English Method*, by father Julio Albino, published in Coimbra in 1930 and adopted by the Colégio Pedro II, according to notes written on the book, already in its 12th edition, in 1939. The textbook was highly innovative for the period (PAIVA, 2009, p. 24).

The book was selected as a textbook for lessons in English at the Collégio Pedro II due to the idea of language that was conveyed. “[...] Although it still predominantly focused on grammatical structures, the textbook also included language as communication and as a vector of several social practices, from conversation to aesthetic display” (PAIVA, 2009, p. 24).

The substitution of classical texts by short and easy phrases that would be easily understood by students was of paramount importance for the selection of the textbook as a means of studying English (PAIVA, 2009). The importance of this type of material was the employment of sentences that the book showed as an exercise to practice the language (HOWATT & WIDDOWSON, 2004). Grammar would be studied without the traditional structures. In other words, it would not be applied through rules and concepts but by levels of difficulty according to the students' progress. According to Paiva (2009), the aim of the textbook was to make grammar clear for the student.

Although didactic material had practical and innovative characteristics in the teaching of foreign languages, Carneiro Leão (1934) states that the lack of a proper textbook was solved by a group of auxiliary teachers. It is thus highly relevant to see how these teachers organized and systematized a textbook to implement the pedagogical practices through the Direct Method at the Colégio Pedro II.

Pedagogical Practices with the Direct Method

According to Carneiro Leão (1934), auxiliary teachers prepared the subject matter for foreign language lessons. Teachers at a higher scale reorganized the material and the books were published to comply with Decree 20.833 (BRASIL, 1931) and the Instruction on the Foreign Language Reform (BRASIL, 1932). Art. 6 of the Instruction on the Foreign Language Reform says that “[...] the auxiliary teacher will be particularly vigilant on the correct pronunciation of the students” (BRASIL, 1932, p. 4.240), whilst Art. 7 insists that the “[...] head-teacher should seek harmony, as much as possible, among the several auxiliary teachers” (BRASIL, 1932, p. 4.240).

In fact, auxiliary teachers had the task of teaching the foreign language to students and head-teachers had to supervise the tasks of the auxiliary teachers during the first two years of the secondary school. Head-teachers were committed not merely to supervise their auxiliary teachers but to give language lessons to students of the fourth and fifth years. The Instruction is very clear with regard to the roles of the auxiliary teachers and head-teachers.

Art 1 § -During the first years, direct teaching is the task of auxiliary teachers of each foreign language, whilst in the last years, it is the task of the head-teacher, coupled to the guidance and supervision of the auxiliary teachers' task (BRASIL, 1932, p. 4.240).

The head-teacher was hired for a three-year period, after which he could be employed on a long-term basis if he was also true to his profession. Auxiliary teachers were hired after being indicated by the head-teacher following evaluation by the language department. Only in this case, the auxiliary teacher was hired by the headmaster of the school.

Art. 20 -Directors are hired through a contract signed by the Minister of Education, for three years, after which they would be permanently hired if their conduct and behavior were excellent. Auxiliary teacher are assigned by the head of the respective section of the school through the suggestion of the director, previously submitted to the Language department (BRASIL, 1932, p. 4.240).

However, after 1933, there was a change in the way auxiliary teachers were hired. Art 20 was revoked (BRASIL, 1932) by the administration. The director of the school had full legal powers to contract auxiliary teachers for the Colégio Pedro II. The evaluation of the head-teacher was not required any more. According to Carneiro Leão (1935, p. 267), the administration's decision was somewhat imprudent since "[...] within a technically-based service, the possibility of the technician to influence efficiently the nomination of his direct auxiliaries was removed".

Although auxiliary teachers did not have any formation in the teaching of languages⁵, at that time, called "[...] special courses on the pedagogy of living languages", these teachers "[...] knew well enough the language to give lessons and almost all of them had already given lessons in private schools" (CARNEIRO LEÃO, 1934, p. 28).

Up to 1932, Brazil did not have any universities for the formation of teachers specialized in languages and, therefore, this type of teacher formation did not exist. Decree 19.851 of 11/04/1931 instituted the formation of the teaching board for secondary schools.

During this period, universities were founded in the Federal District and in São Paulo. "The University of São Paulo (USP) was established in 1934 and, in 1935, it was the turn of the University of the Federal District[...] through the formation of educators in its Faculty of Education" (FAUSTO, 2012, p. 289). The University of the Federal District became the National Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Brazil, structured in 1939. The Faculty of Education was incorporated into the University of Brazil, which was transformed into the University of Rio de Janeiro since 1937.

Carneiro Leão had a high esteem for university formation, since "[...] the university would not be the result of the juxtaposition of isolated faculties. It should be an organic whole where teaching, research and extension are integrated" (MACHADO, 2008, p. 119). The higher formation of language teachers was divided into "[...]three modalities – Classical Languages, Neo-Latin Languages and Anglo-Germanic Languages – with Portuguese as a specific undergraduate course" (CHAGAS, 1967, p. 114).

⁵ Teachers'Formation is given at present in the Arts Courses.

Regardless of the way of hiring or of their pedagogical formation, auxiliary teachers were assigned to prepare a textbook for the study of foreign languages that would take into account “[...] the psychology of the people who were learning the language” (CARNEIRO LEÃO, 1935, p. 38) and would abide to the Direct Method. The textbook would present a highly relevant teaching program that would comply with the needs of the historical period towards the country’s modernization and industrialization. The teaching of foreign languages would be wholly compliant with the political and economic policies bonded to world order.

A direct method textbook for the teaching of French to a German and an Englishman is not the best one for the Brazilian student. Our tastes, concerns and trends are different. Our intelligence and our way of perceiving and judging, commenting and expressing things are different. A textbook in French that would attend to the essential items of Brazilian psycho-sociology is more useful than that whose sole aim is to learn the language. The style of the book, the elaboration of the text, the construction of phrases and the presentation of the vocabulary should take into account our manners, thoughts and the spirit of the language. It is true that the learner of the Direct Method should have the paramount concern to penetrate the feeling of the language and think directly through it. However, this does not imply that within the first two years one should not try, in thought and in vocabulary, to avoid expressions entirely contrary to the ways of our language (CARNEIRO LEÃO, 1934, p. 38).

When the teacher is dealing with the teaching of a foreign language, the development of orality should be undertaken with great precision (RICHARDS & RODGERS, 1994; HOWATT & WIDDOWSON, 2004; LARSEN-FREEMAN, 2008). Experience in the use of the Direct Method at the Colégio Pedro II revealed the principles employed in the foreign language lessons:

1. Lessons were given in the target language without any intervention of the mother language;
2. Pronunciation and grammar used should be perfect;
3. The teaching of grammar was done intuitively;
4. Speech and oral comprehension were the main items taught;
5. Common vocabulary and sentences were taught;
6. Vocabulary was taught through pictures, illustrations and objects. In the case of abstract nouns, explanations had to be done by deductions and association of ideas (CARNEIRO LEÃO, 1934; 1935).

These principles, which somehow described the Direct Method, revealed that the most important was the technique to establish a direct link between meanings and words in the target language with satisfactory implications in the acquisition of the study of the language (LFFFA, 1988; 2012; OLIVEIRA, 2014; GOMES, 2018).

Within the above context, complementary activities, such as conversation clubs, inter-school correspondence, language laboratories, discs and radios, were employed in foreign language classes to guarantee the Direct Method. It was thus possible for students of the Colégio Pedro II to experience the daily use of the language.

Carneiro Leão (1934, p. 58) stated that “[...] wherever in-depth knowledge of languages and civilizations were sought after”, conversation clubs were formed⁶ to perfect orality through the Direct Method. Carneiro Leão (1934, p. 58) was always aware of what was happening abroad and insisted that “in the United States, in Britain, in Germany and in France,” conversation clubs were the rage of the moment.

He explained that in France, between 1929 and 1930, “[...] several German conversation clubs were established for girls attending Lyceums in Paris, Versailles, St. Germain-em-Laye and École Quinet” (CARNEIRO LEÃO, 1935, p. 315) and, in the wake of the students’ interests, there were “[...] exchanges of magazines and newspapers with like institutions in Germany” (Carneiro Leão, 1935, p. 316).

Due to results obtained abroad, Carneiro Leão tried to develop the same practice in the Colégio Pedro II. In fact, in 1933, the conversation club in French was founded with the collaboration of auxiliary teachers.

According to Carneiro Leão (1934, p. 59), such activity was “[...] a novel thing in Brazilian official teaching”. Extra-class activities of auxiliary teachers were not paid and the frequency of students and teachers was optional. However, such experience was restricted to French lessons, but later on, conversation clubs were considered extra-class activities for the study of other languages, such as English and German.

Besides conversation clubs for the study of foreign languages, inter-school correspondence was also extant (CARNEIRO LEÃO, 1934). The practice consisted of exchange of correspondence with other secondary school students by correspondence written in a foreign language.

This activity was organized in the Colégio Pedro II through the Young Red Cross: “[...] a correspondence by letters was enhanced between French schools and the schools of other countries where French was spoken and written” (CARNEIRO LEÃO, 1934, p. 60). It all started with students of the Second year. They received albums with photographs from Belgium, featuring life in that country, with memos written in French “[...] from students studying at the Royal Atheneum of Belgium” (CARNEIRO LEÃO, 1934, p. 60).

Another activity related to foreign language learning and “[...] practiced by students of the first year” (CARNEIRO LEÃO, 1935, p. 57) in French and English was the language laboratory addressing the experimental study of foreign languages. The laboratory was associated with *realia*.

The language Laboratory is an artificial means that establishes the environment of the country whose language one is studying. The environment room coordinates and systemizes mechanical means for the study of languages, called *realia* by which teaching occurs precisely through such vitalized materials (JUNQUEIRA SCHMIDT, 1935, p. 165 – author’s italics).

⁶ Conversation clubs are merely “conversation lessons” which private language institutes at present provide as a mandatory or optional program to their students.

The term *realia* or *orrealien*, mentioned by Junqueira Schmidt (1935) and by Kelly (1969) comes from the Latin word *res*, “things”, a term which Germans and Americans gave to tasks wrought by “things” in contrast to the practice of teaching by words alone, to distinguish “[...] the objects of general relevance and those peculiar to foreign culture”. (KELLY, 1969, p. 13). In the case of foreign languages, *realia* are related to “different things”, such as sketches, figures, stories, meeting people speaking other languages and people with different habits.

The use of *realia* in foreign language classes hails from the Reform period in Europe. In 1876, the *Katalog der Englischen Realien*⁷ provided Germans with the idea of *realia*, presenting the employment of *realia* in foreign language classes. According to Junqueira Schmidt (1935), US professor Pauline Pierson described in 1927 a plan that she elaborated to work with *realia* in the classroom.

Pauline Pierson chose one hour per week out of the four for the language laboratory and added the practice of *realia* (different things) such as songs, games, maps, theatre, history, geography and others (JUNQUEIRA SCHMIDT, 1935, p. 169).

It should be highlighted that the language laboratory conceived by Carneiro Leão to supplement the foreign language lessons in the Colégio Pedro II merely consisted of extracurricular activities which did not have any classroom features. They were merely activities conducted on a recreational basis. Therefore, any activity with a playful nature⁸ could be employed in the laboratory.

Consequently, *realia* were auxiliary means for the study of languages such as “[...] discs playing popular songs, stories, all type of music, folk music, literary passages, speeches, poems, word, history and geography games, magazines, newspapers, books; film featuring foreign civilizations” (JUNQUEIRA SCHMIDT, 1935, p. 166-167). They were the material employed in the language laboratory as props for the study of foreign languages.

The language laboratory at the Colégio Pedro II was also linked to the conversation club since there was not enough room for all. The same space was occupied by the two activities. The type of activities differentiated the teaching practice developed by the conversation club from the language laboratory.

For instance, due to its recreational characteristics, the language club would prepare a play; the laboratory should do so exceptionally since it did not have any spare time. The club is the responsibility of the students, with a teacher as supervisor, as counselor. Although students in the language laboratory are free to choose tasks, the teacher’s role is more positive, albeit covert. The teacher responsible for the club should have special qualities, such as imagination, enthusiasm, sociability, disposition to participate in feasts, recitals, theatre, to stimulate

⁷ List of Real Things in English.

⁸ Current studies by Andrade & Sanches (2005); Soldatelli (2005); Szundy (2005); Lopes (2005); Tonelli (2004, 2008); Chaguri (2009; 2013); Chaguri & Tonelli (2014) debate the contributions that playful activities have within the teaching and learning processes in Linguistics applied to the teaching of foreign languages.

initiatives, at a higher degree than regular teachers. Materials from the laboratory and the club should be held in common. The latter, however, requires a hall with a stage and a set of short and smart sketches for execution (JUNQUEIRA SCHMIDT, 1935, p. 171).

The use of new techniques during lessons was a suggestion that the New School introduced in the renewal of pedagogical practices throughout the 1930s. The New School was a renewal movement in Brazil, Europe and the United States. Also called Active School or Progressive School, the movement started by the end of the 19th century but became strong in the mid-20th century, especially after the 1932 Manifesto of the Pioneers of the New Education (BRASIL, 2010). The Manifesto defended a public, lay and free public school for all.

In Brazil, the educational renewal movement was a product of industrial and urban growth. The need was greatly felt to prepare the country to attend to these demands. Its development had to be advanced through education and, consequently, teaching renewal was the order of the day. The ideas of the New School were introduced in Brazil in 1882 by the Brazilian intellectual Rui Barbosa (1849-1923). In the United States, the precursor of the New School was the philosopher John Dewey (1859-1952), whilst in Europe Georg Kerschensteiner (1854-1932) was the precursor of the Active School. The latter defines the New School as “highly developmental [...] helping and socially propping school aims so that all may reach the utmost they can do to perfection” (KERSCHENSTEINER, 1992, p. 135⁹ - our translation). In other words, the Active School strengthens the students’ capacity for production, replacing “[...] traditional exams by tests and the adaptation of teaching to stages of development” (MENEZES & SANTOS, 2001, online) of students and attending to their needs within a functional way.

Further, the New School placed the student at the center of the pedagogical process. Activities developed in the Conversation Club and in the Language Laboratory were complementary means in the teaching of foreign languages through the Direct Method and a renewal in pedagogical practices derived from the New School movement. The use of the disc and radio was another aspect in the employment of new techniques¹⁰.

In the case of the use of these auxiliary objects (discs and radio) to forward the Direct Method in foreign language classes, Carneiro Leão was of the opinion that these resources could underscore the secondary school student to improve his pronunciation and enrich his vocabulary. In fact, they were the most advanced electro-electronic devices for the study of languages in Brazil.

The employment of discs and radio for teaching classes with many students is a highly priced learning process. Well-selected and managed by competent teachers, they give the right pronunciation with all its details, intonation, melody, rhythm, vocabulary, through repetition and style (CARNEIRO LEÃO, 1935, p. 55).

⁹[...] su desarrollo es suficientemente alto, [...] ayudan y apoyan socialmente a sí mismos y a los fines los fines de la escuela, para que cada individuo pueda llegar a la plenitud de que es capaz por su naturaleza (KERSCHENSTEINER, 1992, p. 135).

¹⁰ The 20th century has been characterized by great developments in technology, science and information. The first radios and recording devices arrived in Brazil in 1920. In the 1930s, the devices became highly popular and were considered the most advanced electro-electronic apparatuses of the period. Their use in foreign language classes meant the highest point in learning throughout Europe and in Brazil.

Carneiro Leão was very particular in the technologies of his age and suggested all that was modern for learning foreign languages used abroad. During the Educational Reform he tried to import teaching practices that would gradually serve as complementary activities together with the official curriculum.

Through such activities, Carneiro Leão desired to make students of the Colégio Pedro II experience the daily use of the language and, above all, to have in-depth knowledge on the cultural formation of other countries. Instead of writing letters, as school tasks, to the teacher of French, the students were stimulated to write real letters to real interlocutors within the writing practices of the French language.

Final considerations

When people learn from past history, the present becomes possible, without relating in a deterministic manner the relationship that past and present are results of one another. In other words, one should take into account the political, economic and cultural changes in the experiences derived from the past for the re-signification of people's activities in the present.

Within this interpretation process, researchers investigate human understanding as individuals that construct their own history. In other words, they research the activities created and developed within the context of their culture. This is the reason why the dialogue between the history of education and language teaching becomes relevant. Studies published in the series *Pesquisas em História da Educação e Linguística Aplicada* (CHAGURI & BERTO, 2018) are significant contributions that discuss the thematic link – history of education and the teaching of languages. It has become highly important to “look at history and point to the future” (GERALDI, 2018, p. 12).

The thematic link has been undertaken in current paper. One may perceive that the use of the Direct Method heralded a new rhythm in the learning of French, English and German in the foreign language classes at the Colégio Pedro II. The above was possible through the concerns of the Brazilian intellectual and teacher Carneiro Leão for the foreign languages program at the Colégio Pedro II, as head-teacher of French.

The modernizing of society was molded on the guidelines of democracy, industrialization and urbanization of the country. Placing students at the center of the educational process is the means to insert them within the social order. The New School or Active School objected to the passiveness of students, an inheritance of the traditional school that highlighted bookish teaching, memorization of rules and concepts without any concern for the students' needs.

Carneiro Leão defended the rupture from the classical method (grammar and translation) in foreign language courses inherited from the traditional school. The method consisted in educating people through literary formation by studying the Greek and Latin classical works. In his view, this type of formation was a contradiction in the wake of the new world order that required active people.

The introduction of the Direct Method was an innovative device in the study of modern languages at the Colégio Pedro II and other schools at the same level. Lessons in foreign languages were fine-tuned to the formation of the modern person in the wake of the needs of social relationships such as urbanization and industrialization of the country.

As Carneiro Leão himself emphasized for the teaching of English, French and German, the classical method did not comply with the demands of an education that had to reveal “[...] life and movement” (CARNEIRO LEÃO, 1935, p. 18). He did not reject the classical method but insisted that continuing its use would be a task “[...] lacking all communication [...] with the present, [...] and with students’ aspirations” (CARNEIRO LEÃO, 1935, p. 18). Carneiro Leão underscored that activities within the classical method did not comply with the needs of modern students.

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