Teaching Text Production in everyday life: socializing results[1]

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the current study is to investigate the main difficulties faced by senior students in the (9th grade) Elementary School students at the time to produce dissertative-argumentative texts. Study Its development was guided by the following question: What do collected data show us about textual production teaching? This work is exploratory and qualitative research collected the analyzed data by applying semi-structured questionnaires comprising open/essay and multiple-choice questions. The sample encompassed 42 students and 1 writing teacher. Results pointed out that students' difficulties are directly linked to limitations in their verbal expression skills and in mastering topics suggested for textual production purposes. Thus, it is essential investing both reading and research practices to help improving their knowledge. It is known that lack of periodic feedback and alignment between educational practices and students' needs have negative influence on the improvement of individuals' writing skills.

KEYWORDS: Elementary Education II. Textual Linguistics. Text Production.

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O Ensino da Produção Textual no cotidiano: socializando resultados

RESUMO

Este estudo visa investigar as principais dificuldades enfrentadas pelos alunos do 9º ano do Ensino Fundamental em relação à produção de textos dissertativo-argumentativos. Seu desenvolvimento foi orientado pela questão: O que os dados coletados evidenciam sobre o ensino da produção textual? Este trabalho constitui-se enquanto exploratório e qualitativo. Os dados foram coletados através da aplicação de questionários semi-estruturados compostos por questões abertas/dissertativas e de múltipla escolha. A amostra foi composta por 42 estudantes e uma professora de redação. Os resultados indicam que as dificuldades dos estudantes estão diretamente relacionadas à limitação de seu repertório de habilidades para expressão verbal e de domínio sobre as temáticas propostas para produção textual, indicando a necessidade de se investir em práticas de leitura e pesquisa que ampliem seus conhecimentos. Afirma-se que a ausência de feedbacks periódicos e de alinhamento entre as práticas educativas e as necessidades dos alunos influenciam negativamente o aperfeiçoamento da escrita.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Ensino Fundamental II. Linguística Textual. Produção de Texto.

Enseñar la producción de textos en la vida cotidiana: socializar resultados

RESUMEN

Este estudio tiene como objetivo investigar las principales dificultades que enfrentan los estudiantes del noveno año de la Educación Primaria en relación con la producción de textos disertaciones-argumentativos. Su desarrollo estuvo guiado por la pregunta: ¿Qué muestran los datos recopilados sobre la enseñanza de la producción textual? Este trabajo es exploratorio y cualitativo. Los datos fueron recolectados mediante la aplicación de cuestionarios semiestructurados compuestos por preguntas abiertas/de ensayo y de opción múltiple. La muestra estuvo compuesta por 42 estudiantes y un profesor de escritura. Los resultados indican que las dificultades de los estudiantes están directamente relacionadas con la

limitación de su repertorio de habilidades para la expresión verbal y el dominio de los temas propuestos para la producción textual, indicando la necesidad de invertir en prácticas de lectura e investigación que amplíen sus conocimientos. Se afirma que la ausencia de alineamiento entre las prácticas educativas y las necesidades de los estudiantes influye negativamente en el mejoramiento de la escritura.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Educación Primaria II. Lingüística textual. Producción de texto.

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Introduction

Producing dissertative-argumentative texts is an essential skill for senior Elementary School students, since this textual modality is required in several evaluation tools, such as the National High School Exam (ENEM - Exame Nacional do Ensino Médio). However, many students have a hard time dealing with this textual modality, due to lack of practice, skills or even knowledge about this genre's structures and features.

Difficulties experienced in textual production can also be associated with the methods, strategies and techniques adopted by teachers; after all, the educational routine tends to maintain traditional content reading, writing and assimilation fundamentals that are no longer capable of meeting the training demands of current-generation students. Therefore, issues associated with textual production comprise a set of factors whose specificities must be analyzed. After all, it is necessary recognizing these issues before developing any intervention practice.

The main aims of the current study, whose object of study lies on Textual Production Teaching, were to investigate the main difficulties experienced by senior (9th grade) Elementary School students at the time to produce dissertative-argumentative texts, to help identifying their likely causes and, consequently, to suggest pedagogical interventions to help improving their textual production skills. It was guided by the following

question: What do collected data show us about textual production teaching? The study hypothesis assumes that these difficulties are linked to students' likely lack of interest in this practice.

It is essential identifying teachers' perceptions to develop actions with positive impact on textual production practices. In order to do so, a survey questionnaire was initially applied to 9th grade students enrolled in Elementary School II and another questionnaire was applied to the teacher of a private educational institution located in Caldas Novas County, Goiás State, Brazil, in order to collect data about their main difficulties in elaborating dissertative-argumentative texts. Each questionnaire comprised 5 questions split into multiple-choice and essay types. Questionnaires' application was preceded by research proposal presentation. The entire process took place in compliance with guidelines set in opinion n. 65330622.5.0000.0036 by the Research Ethics Committee (CEP - Comitê de Ética em Pesquisa) of Goiano Federal Institute.

Based on the aforementioned scenario, the current study presented results deriving from the application of these questionnaires, analyzed the main difficulties highlighted by students and associated them with likely factors capable of influencing students' performance in producing this text type. It was guided by the following question: What do collected data show us about textual production teaching? The present research is justified by the need of understanding textual production skills as essential element for individuals' life in contemporary society.

Bibliographical research fundamentals were initially used to guide both the collection and interpretation of studies focused on Textual Linguistics, which is the aspect supporting the present discussion. It is possible saying that the current study also has exploratory nature if one takes into consideration the field trip carried out to apply the two questionnaires and to collect data. This study type allows researchers to understand their study field dimensions by acting as recognition

instrument. Qualitative approach fundamentals supported data interpretation and analysis processes.

Based on these analyses, pedagogical interventions will be suggested in the future to help students overcoming difficulties in structuring textual production when it comes to elements, such as introduction, development and conclusion - these difficulties were identified by interpreting participants' responses -, and, consequently, to help improving their performance in dissertative-argumentative text production. Thus, the current study is expected to contribute to train textual production-competent students, so it can have positive impact on their academic and professional lives. Furthermore, it is expected to help improving the performance of professionals working in the language field.

Methodology

The current study is defined as exploratory based on data collection features. According to Silva (2014, p. 21), exploratory studies are often elaborated based on "[...] bibliographic research with dense diagnosis in the literature, on conversations with other expert researchers in the field to gather information about the investigated phenomenon's specificities, as well as on interviews with focal groups." Therefore, developing exploratory studies helps bringing researchers closer to their object of study.

A set of studies about textual linguistics was initially selected. They were found through a non-systematized manual search conducted in digital databases, such as Scientific Electronic Library Online (SciELO) and Brazilian Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations (BDTD - Biblioteca Digital Brasileira de Teses e Dissertações). Physical works, mainly books, were also used. The purpose of this process was to build a conceptual-theoretical overview to substantiate collected data interpretation.

The methodology adopted to identify participants' textual production difficulties began with the presence of the investigated students' parents in a meeting to sign consent forms to ensure research ethics and legality.

A conversation circle was held after getting legal guardians' consent and it promoted a welcoming and participatory atmosphere. Students expressed their opinions about and experiences with dissertative-argumentative text production, and it opened room to explain the important role played by this text type as tool to communicate and express ideas in the educational and academic context.

According to Marconi and Lakatos (1999, p. 100),

> [...] together with the questionnaire, one should send a note or letter explaining the research nature, importance, as well as the need to get answers and to arouse recipients' interest in the investigated topic so they can fill in and return the questionnaire within a reasonable deadline.

Therefore, providing previous explanation about the research proposal enables participants to understand the research senses and importance, and it can increase their engagement in it. In addition, this awareness strengthens the ties between teaching and research, and emphasizes higher education institution's presence at school. It is worth emphasizing that the entire investigation process was preceded by the approval provided by the Research Ethics Committee of Goiano Federal Institute.

Data collection started after contextualizing the research purpose and talking with participants about its relevance. Two questionnaires were elaborated to help identifying the perceptions of 42 students and 01 writing teacher from Elementary School II, in a private educational institution located in Caldas Novas County, Goiás State, Brazil. Questionnaires' construction process was guided by recognizing textual production-teaching specificities in daily life. Five (5) specific questions were elaborated for each

questionnaire. The first questionnaire, which focused on students, comprised questions about how they perceived textual production, their eases and difficulties, as well as the methodologies adopted by the teacher and her evaluation methods. The second questionnaire, which focused on the teacher, comprised questions about strategies adopted for textual production teaching, evaluation processes and feedbacks.

The two questionnaires covered aspects, such as organization of ideas, textual structure, and proper use of arguments, cohesion and coherence, among other relevant elements. In addition, the conversation circle enabled promoting the reflection about likely obstacles faced by students at the time to write their texts, as well as encouraging them to share personal experiences and to provide substantiating examples of them. This open and participatory dialogue made students comfortable enough to disclose their difficulties and express their opinions.

Data confidentiality and secrecy were guaranteed at all research stages. Students were assured that their answers would be treated anonymously and only used for academic purposes, without any individual identification. Thus, the environment was safe for students to feel free to express the difficulties faced by them.

At the end of the research project and questionnaire presentation process, the next research steps were explained to both the students and the teacher accounting for the text production discipline. It was emphasized that research results would be analyzed and used to substantiate the elaboration of more effective pedagogical strategies for dissertative-argumentative text teaching and learning processes.

Qualitative approach was used to substantiate data analysis. According to Oliveira et al. (2020, p. 02), "qualitative research aims at providing answers to quite particular, specific questions that require further analytical and descriptive elucidations". Rodrigues, Oliveira and Santos (2021) corroborate Oliveira et al. (2020) by stating that concepts' definition and data interpretation in qualitative research must be based on the social

context the analyzed phenomenon is inserted in. Therefore, the current study sought to investigate subjective phenomena permeating daily textual production practices.

Textual Linguistics

Koch (2004) has emphasized that textual linguistics (TL) no longer takes an isolated word or sentence as specific research object; it considers the whole text, which is taken as the basic language manifestation unit, since individuals communicate through texts. The aforementioned author has also emphasized the existence of several linguistic phenomena that can only be explained within the text. A text is much more than the simple sum of sentences (and words) composing it: the difference between sentence and text is not merely quantitative; it is also qualitative. According to Almeida (2019, p. 19), "[...] one of the reasons for TL emergence lies on the gap observed in sentence grammar, since there were no significant answers to most issues identified in the morphology, phonology and lexicology fields"

According to Koch (2014), TL understands the text as communicative practice unified in a complex universe of human actions. Thus, the theory of text is filled with interdisciplinary bias, since it focuses on a wide range of linguistic factors, such as the pragmatic, semantic, lexical, grammatical and social ones, i.e., on factors that complete both the structure and functionality of this linguistic current's object of study.

According to Marcushi (2012), TL is about describing the association among text construction, constitution and reception processes. Thus, this linguistic current "[...] must provide fundamental service in exercises' elaboration and readers' hermeneutic ability development, by providing the instrument to enable them to understand texts" (Marcuschi, 2012, p. 33). The aforementioned author also suggested that one should see

> [...] TL, even in a provisional and generic manner, as the study of linguistic and cognitive operations accounting for regulating the production, construction, functioning and reception of written or oral texts. In short, TL treats the text as unified communication act within a complex universe of human actions (Marcuschi, 2012, p. 33).

According to Koch (2004, p. 12), the following concepts were formulated within textual linguistics:

> 1. Text seen as complex sentence or the highest linguistic sign in linguistic system hierarchy (grammatical-basis conception); 2. Text seen as complex sign (semiotic-basis conception); 3. Text seen as thematically centered macrostructures' expansion (semantic-basis conception); 4. Text seen as complex speech act (pragmatic-basis conception); 5. Text seen as "frozen" discourse, as finished product of a given discursive action (discursive-basis conception); 6. Text seen as specific verbal communication means (communicative-basis conception); 7. Text seen as process to mobilize cognitive operations and processes (cognitivist-basis conception); 8. Text seen as place for interaction between social and interactional meaning-construction actors (sociocognitive-interactional conception).

According to Cruz (2012, p. 48), "It is understood that the emphasis placed on working with texts plays key role in the language teaching-learning process, as well as that texts must be used as basic unit for Portuguese language teaching, since they enable greater interactivity with both language and society". Thus, the adopted text approach and the promotion of practices focused on its construction precedes the understanding of it as complex and plural instrument

Bronckart (2006, p. 139) considered texts as productions endowed with their generating subjects' features and production context, as well as

defined them as empirical correspondents of a given group's language activities. In compliance with this assertion, Koch and Elias (2006) understood texts as social constructs generated under a set of conditions accountable for determining their essence. Thus, texts hold several implicit elements that can only be detected when the interlocutors' sociocognitive context is known. Therefore, the writing activity must be perceived as "interactive activity of expression, (e.g., "outwards "), as well as of verbal manifestation of ideas, information, intentions, beliefs or feelings one wants to share with others in order to interact with them, in a certain way" (Andrade, 2005, p. 45). Thus, it is necessary developing strategies to enable individuals to express meaningful elements during textual production processes.

Textual production from students and teachers' perspective

This section, which was subdivided into two topics, presents the results found through students' perceptions, as well as the teacher's, about textual production teaching. The herein developed qualitative research aimed at collecting data to analyze the semi-structured questionnaire (comprising open and multiple-choice questions) in order to identify the main difficulties faced by students at dissertative-argumentative text production time, besides assessing TL contributions to the applicability of the herein proposed activities.

Participants (students and the teacher) completed the questionnaire, in separate, without direct pedagogical interventions. They presented high engagement and enthusiasm level. Questionnaire application allowed both students and teacher to express their opinions and to autonomously share their experiences. They were encouraged to reflect about text production difficulties experienced by them and to identify the main obstacles found throughout this process.

Results in the current study have evidenced a wide variety of challenges faced by students in the writing process. Among the most common difficulties, one finds paragraphs' structuring, textual coherence and cohesion, organizing ideas, elaborating topic and intervention proposals, choosing the method to correct produced texts, receiving feedback after corrections, as well as properly using formal Portuguese language and cultural repertoire expansion. These obstacles represented the main gaps in knowledge and skills to be addressed in academic training context. However, it is worth emphasizing that students have shown interest in overcoming these difficulties and were motivated to improve their writing skills. They expressed the desire to get pedagogical support and guidance to face these challenges in a more efficient manner.

The current findings also pointed towards the importance of adopting more inclusive and personalized pedagogical approaches in education. After all, each student has specific needs and difficulties; thus, individualized attention plays essential role in their academic development. Teaching professionals must diagnose students' skills and deficits at textual production teaching time in order to develop practices focused on meeting their needs. Nowadays, this customized teaching process is supported by a wide diversity of technological instruments, such as platforms, applications and software, which enable data collection and structuring each student's profile, with emphasis on their learning style and pace. "Customization starts with a given student, with its skills, dreams and difficulties, and extends to other students with similar interests and aspirations, and it creates autonomy to design their learning" (Santos; Alves, 2022, p. 02).

Overall, questionnaire application has evidenced a good overview of difficulties faced by students in text production processes, and it highlighted the importance of adopting teaching-learning strategies capable of meeting individual needs. Results in the current study provided a solid basis for the implementation of pedagogical interventions to help continuously improving students' writing skills.

Students' Perceptions

As previously mentioned, a questionnaire comprising 5 questions was applied to investigate students' perceptions about textual production practices carried out in their daily lives. This process played key role in highlighting how textual production is perceived by students in apathetic ways, despite its fundamental importance for students' training. This factor suggests lack of consensus about its relevance.

According to Cruz (2012, p. 48), "[...] because text is the main language working instrument, it is also a fundamental activity for students' critical and interactive development, since language is the way through which text is featured as expression of their thoughts". Therefore, it is necessary outlining practices to help increasing students' interest in textual production. The exercise of writing cannot be understood as function limited to linguistics professionals, after all, all knowledge fields address textual production in their daily lives, even if from specific perspectives. In fact, Portuguese language and writing teachers account for technically guiding textual production teaching; however, the consolidation of this learning process demands multidisciplinary work.

The graph below (Figure 1) presents results obtained from the following question: Do you have a hard time producing texts?

FIGURE 1: Question 1 – Do you have a hard time producing texts?
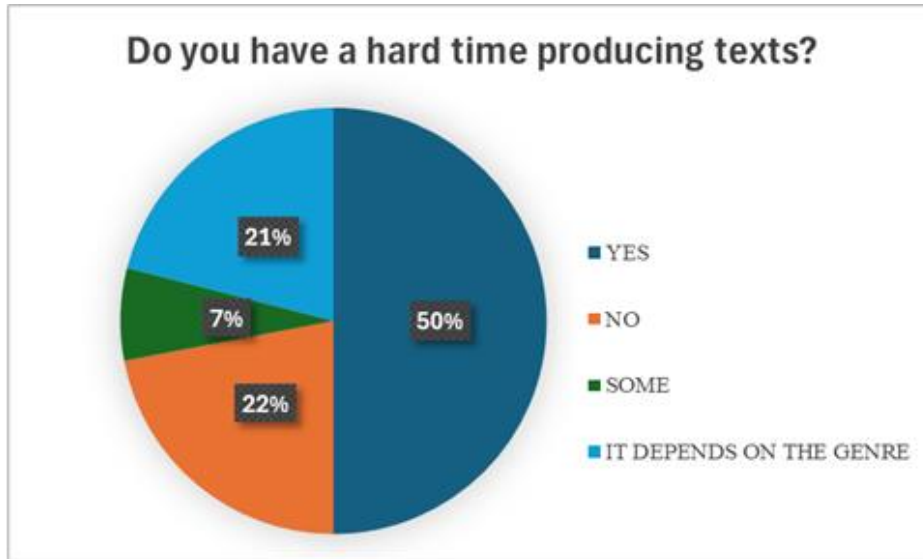
Source: Elaborated by the author (2023).

Based on Figure 1, 50% of students claimed to have textual production difficulties, whereas only 22% of them claimed to have no difficulties in dealing with it. These data initially reinforce the uniqueness of learning inherent to each individual; after all, a single training space ruled by the same standards and subjected to the same educational processes presents a wide diversity of opinions among individuals involved in these processes. Based on the rate of students who reported to have a hard time preparing texts, it is possible stating that practices adopted by both the educational institution and the teacher are not effective in developing students' writing skills.

With respect to difficulties involved in textual production processes, it is worth emphasizing that young individuals belonging to the current generation have direct contact with a new culture type: the so-called digital culture. Communication forms in this culture were given new meanings, and written language acquired simplified configurations. According to Ribeiro Júnior and Santos (2019, p. 06), "the daily use of unconventional writing has made students produce written texts that do not follow formal grammar rules and that present textual structuring similar to that seen in

instant messaging app chats". Therefore, based on Bronckart (2006) and Koch and Elias's (2006), it is necessary understanding text according to its new production logic. After all, text seen as social construction tool holds elements of its production context. Acknowledging it enables developing strategies to make textual production teaching meaningful. However, it does not mean that teachers must give-up the traditional norm; they must see new textual production forms as learning expansion possibilities.

Subsequently, in question 2, participants were asked about their main text production difficulties and were provided with a whole variety of answers, namely: introduction (2 students), topic (6 students), structure (2 students), conclusion (4 students), cohesion (3 students); genre (2 students); production in its entirety (12 students), connectives (3 students), vocabulary (2 students), paragraphs (4 students), concentration (1 student) and dissertative-argumentative text (1 student). These data have evidenced lack of consensus among students about the points they believe to hinder their textual production-learning process.

It is worth mentioning the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on individuals' learning process. Educational practices developed in all disciplines were affected during that period, since the unplanned transition from the face-to-face model to the Remote Learning System made the tangible planning capable of ensuring the quality of teaching-learning processes unfeasible. According to Santos and Alves (2022, p. 10), "[...] the COVID-19 pandemic had evident impact on education, since it both highlighted and worsened the country's social and educational inequalities and promoted significant discrepancy in students' learning levels". The COVID-19 pandemic had catastrophic effects, even at private educational institution scope, since these institutions target audience mostly comprised individuals with better financial status. The private network, just like the public one, was not prepared for such a fast teaching-model transition. The virtual environment was something to be explored by both networks, although at different intensities and from different perspectives. This issue

must be taken into consideration at the time to analyze learning difficulties expressed by students, nowadays.

This multiplicity of opinions has evidenced that textual production involves a set of elements, whose lack of mastery can hinder dissertative-argumentative writing fluidity. Therefore, it is necessary promoting practices to help better understanding these elements. In order to do so, one must resort to instruments capable of simultaneously working with theory and practice. Teachers' monitoring is essential in this process.

The following graph (Figure 2) presents results obtained from the following question: Are you satisfied with the methodology used in text production classes?

FIGURE 2: Question 3 – Are you satisfied with the methodology used in text production classes?
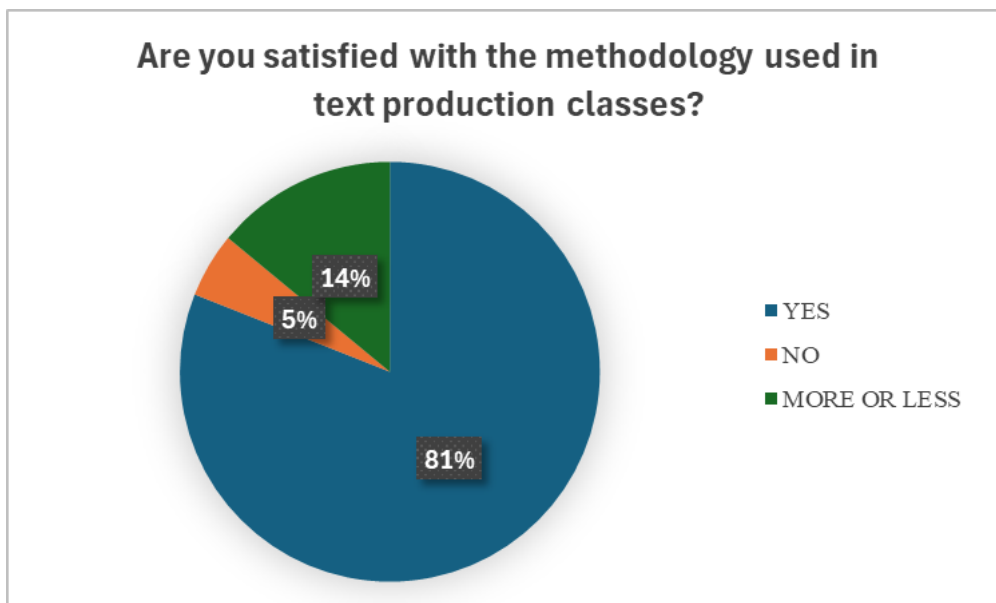
Source: Elaborated by the author (2023).

If one compares data presented in the graph above (Figure 2) to the numbers shown in the previous graph (Figure 1), it is possible seeing a set of contradictions. Results observed after applying the first question have shown that 50% of students reported to have textual production difficulties. However, it is worth emphasizing that most students reported to be

satisfied with the methodology used by the teacher. This scenario assumes that most students interpret their performance without taking into consideration the teacher's performance. This process can result from several factors, with emphasis on full self-accountability practice, according to which, students believe to be fully accountable for all issues involving their learning process; as well as on the attempt to protect the teacher, after all, the construction of affection bonds during daily school life sometimes result in defense and care practices.

When participants were asked - in question 4 - about what could be improved in text production classes, the following responses were observed: more detailed explanations (4 students), nothing (4 students), explanation of the topic (10 students), larger number of classes (6 students), individual correction (4 students), producing a larger number of texts (12 students), having a specific class to correct errors (2 students). Just as observed in the previous question, lack of consensus among students reaffirms how learning process is built in specific ways, in each individual. Participants' responses recorded higher concentration on two different items: explanation of the topic and producing a larger number of texts. However, a broad analysis enabled seeing association among all statements. After all, insufficient number of classes prevents the teacher from in-depth addressing genres, from gradually presenting contents to students and from providing personalized assistance to correct errors.

Students were asked – in question 5 - about their satisfaction with the feedback received on their textual productions and provided the following answers: yes (16 students), no (12 students), sometimes (4 students), and criticism discourages me (10 students). With specific regard to discouraging criticisms alleged by 10 students, Sandoval, Alcântara and Zandomenico (2017) draw attention to the need of thinking about evaluation as complex process capable of affecting each individual, in a unique way. The aforementioned authors addressed how evaluation takes certain forms aligned with academic training, personal preferences and even with

examiners' cognitive state. They also mentioned the importance of promoting textual production practices compatible to students' education level to avoid promoting a meaningless teaching-learning process.

The National Curriculum Parameters (PCNs - Parâmetros Curriculares Nacionais) reinforce the importance of having schools favoring "[...] the production and use of multiple languages, expressions, as well as historical, social, scientific and technological knowledge, without losing sight of students' intellectual autonomy and morale, as basic education purpose" (Brasil, 1998, p. 47). The Brazilian National Common Core Curriculum (BNCC) reinforces this indication by stating that "[...] the relationship with multiple languages, including the social uses of both writing and mathematics, allows individuals' participation in the literate world, as well as building new learning processes, both at and beyond school" (Brasil, 2017, p. 58).

Thus, textual productions' evaluation must take into consideration writers' specificities. Therefore, it is up to teachers to propose textual production practices capable of integrating students' reality elements, so they can identify the meaning of the addressed topic. According to Ribeiro Júnior and Santos (2019, p. 06), "[...] the insertion of new text structure types in the adopted teaching methodology, instead of criticizing advanced mechanisms enabling democratized communication" may be a solution to dissertative-argumentative writing issues. Based on this process, students must be understood as self-sufficient individuals and their autonomy must be respected. It is worth emphasizing that textual production should not be randomly requested, since students must perceive the need of such production to better understand the meaning of the effort undertaken in its construction process.

Teacher's Perceptions

After implementing the practices and applying the questionnaires to students, the current study sought to recognize the teacher's perceptions about the herein investigated topic, namely: textual production teaching. Questions allowing the teacher to address different aspects of her practice and daily professional life were defined.

The teacher provided the following answered when she was asked if she knew the theoretical foundations of Textual Linguistics: "Yes. The Specialization course I attended at UFG focused on Textual Linguistics, and my CCT (Course Conclusion Thesis) addressed textual genres in Textbook". This excerpt highlights the important role played by continuous training as tool to help expanding individuals' pedagogical repertoire.

According to Rodrigues, Lima and Viana (2017), continuous teachers' training plays essential role in improving educational practices, since it induces professionals to reflect on the effectiveness of their own actions. According to Jaschefsky (2019, p. 23), although there are several education professionals in full practice, "their training process still lacks articulation between theory and practice, which is truly explanatory and enlightening about the process of working on contents in the classroom". Therefore, it is necessary taking into consideration that knowledge acquired during the initial training process is not always fully materialized in educational practices, after all, the educational environment is permeated by several inconsistencies that, sometimes, limit teachers' ability to perform.

However, according to Magalhães and Azevedo (2015, p. 32), "[...] continuous training should not overcome initial training, which is the basis for quality professional practice; it should provide citizens with multiple possibilities to take their place in society in an engaged way". Therefore, the success of continuous education provided to teaching professionals is closely related to their training history. Although continuous education is a

necessary process, it is not capable of fully providing skills whose acquisition should take place during initial training.

Subsequently, the current study sought to identify whether the teacher used different methodologies to assess her students' textual productions. According to her, "corrections are carried out by an external examiner and they are based on text delivery and performance." Based on this statement, it was possible identifying some issues that require attention. Firstly, evaluation is carried out by an external agent and it can harm the close monitoring of students' writing development, after all, evaluation is an important instrument to help improving *praxis*. In addition, this instrument enables identifying students' strengths, as well as weaknesses requiring intervention. It is also necessary taking into consideration the subjective elements involving the teaching-learning process; after all, each individual assimilates concepts and builds knowledge in a specific manner. Therefore, when the herein interviewed teacher assesses the textual production of students she deals with on a daily basis and whose difficulties she knows quite well, she can interpret the text content based on these individuals' specificities. On the other hand, it is possible stating that the support provided by the external professional can contribute to her quality of life, since she can distribute her time among other daily school activities. Furthermore, the teacher receives the correction data and it enables her to develop practices focused on addressing the identified training deficits.

The teacher was asked - in question 3 - about difficulties reported by students during text production classes. According to her, "the main difficulties lie on building authorial texts. Their productions are mostly based on texts consulted at textual construction time, and it leads to paraphrasing. There is also lack of knowledge about the topics covered in students' essays". This factor, which is often identified by other Basic Education teachers, reinforces the need of proposing practices focused on expanding students' repertoire. This process is related to reading, which is seen as something uninteresting by a significant number of young

individuals belonging to the current generation, who prefer searching for more assertive and objective information, given their direct contact with different technologies. This point was addressed by Moran (1999), who pointed out difficulties in combining the amount of information circulating in virtual environments and the teaching-learning processes. The aforementioned author advocated for the need of establishing practices to allow students to critically understand different technologies, as well as to reflect on their benefits and dangers.

Finally, the teacher was asked about how feedback on text productions was provided to students. According to her, "the main difficulties are addressed and exemplified in the classroom. However, given the small number of writing classes and the extensive material to be covered, it is not possible dedicating a lot of class time to meet productions' specific needs". Teachers' multiple responsibilities often prevent them from actively participating in several essential activities, such as providing feedback on students' activities.

Lack of debate about what was produced - so students can identify their hits and mistakes - prevents these activities from being perceived as significant. Shute (2007) corroborated this statement by saying that feedback changes individuals' thinking or behavior in order to promote learning; therefore, lack of feedback makes it impossible for students to recognize their weaknesses in order to improve them. In this case, lack of feedback can perpetuate mistakes made by students in textual production processes.

Based on answers provided by the herein interviewed Portuguese language and writing teacher, it was possible seeing the need of introducing Textual Linguistics fundamentals in textual production-teaching processes, in a more assertive way. Therefore, it is up to teachers to outline strategies to give new meaning to textual production, so that this process can be more dynamic and meaningful. In order to do so, they must understand students' singularities, after all, the text seen as product of a set of linguistic

operations holds elements inherent to those who produced it, and these elements must be taken into consideration during teaching-learning processes.

Conclusion

The aim of the current study was to investigate the main difficulties experienced by senior (9th grade) Elementary School students in producing dissertative-argumentative texts. It is possible saying that this aim was met at the end of this investigation process, since it enabled making a set of generalizations about the collected data.

Two questionnaires were prepared and applied for data collection purposes. The first questionnaire was applied to 42 students and the second one was applied to one writing teacher. Data systematization enabled outlining a set of important considerations about the processes and factors involving textual production.

The study development process was guided by the following question: What do the collected data show us about textual production teaching? Based on data collection and interpretation processes, it is possible saying that difficulties surrounding textual production are directly linked to a set of factors that permeate students' own perceptions about the importance of this practice. These factors also permeate planning, management and evaluation strategies adopted by both the herein interviewed teacher and the educational institution.

Initially, it was assumed that textual production-related difficulties were related to students' likely lack of interest in this practice, but this hypothesis could not be confirmed through data analysis. Results have evidenced that these difficulties are linked to several factors, such as not understanding the structure of a dissertative-argumentative text, insufficient number of writing classes, as well as lack of focal support and feedback. In addition, students often fail to see the meaning of textual

production, since they perceive this practice as mere bureaucratic act. Therefore, it is necessary thinking about a Text Production Teaching process aligned with students' field of interests, so they can feel motivated to actively participate in text construction processes.

Moreover, the herein interviewed teacher has external support to correct her students' essays and, although this practice provides her with better conditions to work, it limits her contact with textual productions by students she deals with on a daily basis. Therefore, it is necessary understanding that the herein analyzed context is featured by mediation between teaching and evaluation. Accordingly, the teacher must outline strategies to more diligently monitor the evaluation process, because evaluations carried out by third parties can disregard the subjectivity of each student. On the other hand, one must take into consideration that the correction of textual productions, at the scope of processes, such as the National Secondary Education Examination (ENEM - Exame Nacional do Ensino Médio) and college entrance exams, is performed by an external agent, from an impartial perspective. Therefore, the practice adopted by the analyzed institution can prepare students for these future processes.

Finally, teachers' recognition of new language and text configurations plays essential role in developing practices that take into consideration new writing forms. After all, young individuals in the current context - which is featured by digital culture - communicate with each other based on a specific logic that, in its turn, is featured by synthesis of words and information.

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