

Literary reading in Early Childhood Education: from official documents to educational practices

*Leitura literária na Educação Infantil:
dos documentos oficiais às práticas educativas*

*La lectura literaria en Educación Infantil:
de los documentos oficiales a las prácticas educativas*

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Abstract: The objective is to identify the guidelines outlined in official documents regarding reading in early childhood education, in order to reflect on the process of implementing public policies aimed at literary education during childhood. To this end, a documentary analysis was conducted, prioritizing a study of the documents National Curriculum Framework for Early Childhood Education (1998), National Curriculum Framework for Early Childhood Education (2009), Reading and Writing Notebooks in Early Childhood Education (2016), and National Common Core Curriculum (2018). It was noted that public policies were mobilized and investments made possible; however, the guidelines on working with reading and the reading of literature became increasingly condensed, which signals a neglect of literary teacher training in early childhood education.

Keywords: Early Childhood Education; Official documents; Childhood; Teacher Education in Literature.

Resumo: Objetiva-se identificar as orientações dispostas nos documentos oficiais referentes à leitura na educação infantil, de modo a refletir sobre o processo de implementação de políticas públicas direcionadas à formação literária na infância. Para tanto, realizou-se uma pesquisa de análise documental, priorizando um estudo sobre os documentos Referenciais Curriculares Nacionais para a Educação Infantil (1998), Diretrizes Curriculares Nacionais para Educação Infantil (2009), Cadernos Leitura e Escrita na Educação Infantil (2016) e Base Nacional Comum Curricular (2018). Percebeu-se que as políticas públicas foram mobilizadas e investimentos viabilizados, entretanto, as orientações sobre o trabalho com a leitura e a leitura literária ficaram cada vez mais sintetizadas, o que sinaliza descaso com a formação literária docente na educação infantil.

Palavras-chave: Educação Infantil; Documentos oficiais; Infância; Formação Literária Docente.

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Resumen: El objetivo es identificar los lineamientos proporcionados en los documentos oficiales sobre la lectura en la educación infantil, con el fin de reflexionar sobre el proceso de implementación de políticas públicas dirigidas a la educación literaria en la infancia. Para ello, se realizó una investigación de análisis documental, priorizando un estudio sobre los documentos Referenciais Curriculares Nacionais para a Educação Infantil (1998), Diretrizes Curriculares Nacionais para Educação Infantil (2009), Cadernos Leitura e Escrita na Educação Infantil (2016) e Base Nacional Comum Curricular (2018). Se notó que se movilizaron políticas públicas y se hicieron posibles inversiones, sin embargo, se sintetizaron cada vez más los lineamientos sobre el trabajo con la lectura y la lectura literaria, lo que indica un descuido con la formación literaria de los maestros en la educación de la primera infancia.

Palabras-chave: Educación de la Primera Infancia; Documentos oficiales; Infancia; Formación Literaria del Profesorado.

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Introduction

This study navigates two lines of argument: one concerning childhood and the other concerning literary reading for children. Both are supported by theoretical concepts that point to the dimension of active and effective subjects in the production of knowledge and culture. In relation to childhood, there has been a shift in its conception beyond medicine and psychology since the 1980s, when the Sociology of Childhood introduced discussions in an attempt to talk about children as thinking and active subjects in society (Abramowicz, Oliveira, 2010).

In this context, discussions began to value children as producers of culture. As a result, many investigative, political, and educational actions have incorporated these perspectives in order to consider the multiple childhoods that characterize contemporary society. This view supports the concept of children as active participants in the environment in which they live, capable of thinking, interpreting, creating, transforming the reality around them, acting, and influencing their own context.

The other aspect is literary reading as a necessary activity for the holistic development of children, since it is a human right, as Candido (2004) points out. Literary reading has the potential to encompass all these aspects and promote moments where individuals evolve and improve their knowledge, recognizing their potential.

Some studies, such as those by Brandão and Rosa (2010), Baptista (2010, 2022), Baptista, Noronha, and Caligiorne (2013), Baptista, Silva, and Neves (2023), and Goulart (2016), show that children are immersed in language, surrounded by people who use words and expressions rich with meaning. Children do not only learn words

that name people, things, objects, and situations, but also learn what they represent and the function of these words in the composition of the statements produced. According to Abramowicz and Oliveira (2010), children develop, create, and invent especially in spaces and times where the degree of adult power and control is lower, such as in schoolyards, during recess, or on the street, places far from the direct supervision of adults. It is in these contexts that creating and inventing manifest themselves with greater intensity. Similarly, the space of literary reading, even when mediated by the teacher, is a conducive environment for children to activate their imagination, create scenarios, invent characters, construct new narratives, and reproduce, in their own way, the stories they have heard.

For this reason, early childhood education should be considered a very important phase in a child's development, as it is in early childhood education that children begin to be part of a formal institution, which enables them to act outside the comfort and protection of their families.

Although recognized as the right of all children and the duty of the State, early childhood education only became mandatory for children aged 4 and 5 with Constitutional Amendment No. 59/2009, which determines the mandatory nature of basic education from 4 to 17 years of age. However, this extension was only included in the LDB (Brazil, 1996) in 2013, fully establishing the mandatory enrollment of all 4- and 5-year-old children in early childhood education institutions. The purpose is for children up to 5 (five) years of age to have comprehensive development in their physical, psychological, intellectual, and social aspects, complementing the actions of the family and the community.

In view of this, this article aims to identify the guidelines set out in official documents relating to reading in early childhood education, in order to reflect on the process of implementing public policies aimed at literary education in childhood, given that training teachers to work with literature from early childhood education onwards is essential and necessary.

To this end, a documentary analysis was carried out, prioritizing a study of the documents National Curriculum References for Early Childhood Education (1998), National Curriculum Guidelines for Early Childhood Education (2009), Reading and Writing Notebooks in Early Childhood Education (2016), and National Common Core Curriculum (2018). To support the proposed discussions, the article will be based on the studies by Abramowicz and Oliveira (2010) on childhood and the studies by Baptista (2013) on literary reading in early childhood education.

Educational space and reading in early childhood education

In the context of early childhood education, it is possible to observe that, 15 years ago, 4- and 5-year-old children reached a significant milestone: what had been a right since 1988 became mandatory in 2009. Enrollment, participation, and attendance at school, with the aim of ensuring that children up to 5 (five) years of age have comprehensive development in their physical, psychological, intellectual, and social aspects, complementing the actions of the family and the community (Brazil, 1996).

The concept of a child mentioned here is that of an active and protagonist child who interacts, resists, and confronts the group around them and who, based on this movement, produces knowledge and forms their personality. In this sense, Anete Abramowicz and Fabiana de Oliveira (2010, p. 42) emphasize that "socialization is a social process of exercising power and knowledge that is imposed on children in order to produce them."

In this sense, the assumptions of the Sociology of Childhood ensure that in early childhood education "this process must be understood and described with the active participation of the child: sometimes resisting, sometimes reinventing, sometimes imitating, sometimes accepting" (Abramowicz, Oliveira, 2010, p. 42). By resisting, inventing, imitating, or accepting, children position themselves in relation to what is proposed to them and, according to the authors, the sociology of children has an "emphasis on otherness" – which consists of the ability to see children as individuals endowed with histories, experiences, and subjectivity, and not just as simple subjects.

Corroborating this discussion, Baptista (2016, p. 15) presents a child endowed with power, capacity, and intelligence. Such characteristics bring "children closer to characteristics inherent to humans, and not to some traits supposedly limited to a supposedly childish condition."

With this, we can see that, from the moment the child begins their school journey, the first moments in early childhood education are marked by contradictory feelings, in which they need to be in an environment different from the familiar one, which can cause a lot of insecurity. In this process, children demonstrate diverse feelings, and school becomes an ideal setting for developing peer interaction, different microcultures, knowledge, and experiences, which enable coexistence with different realities.

Abramowicz and Oliveira (2010) point out that this movement from leaving home and entering school is understood as a corridor, moving from the stage of being a student, and questions what types of socialization, individualization, and subjectivation processes are placed in this passage from the child's perspective.

When leaving the comfort of the family environment to enter school, children begin new processes of socialization. In this transition, they meet other children, interact with people who were previously unknown to them, expand their knowledge of the world, and experience the "multiple experiments" that school offers, as highlighted by Abramowicz and Oliveira (2010, p. 48).

Early childhood education becomes an educational space where creativity and imagination reign, "where different forms of sociability, subjectivity, and action are exercised, which is not possible in family spaces, which prioritize material and immaterial security. The public space exposes and enables children to experience other relationships, affections, and friendships" (Abramowicz, Oliveira, 2010, p. 48).

In this sense, literary reading is a formative and integrative proposal, given the subjectivity that characterizes it (Goulart, 2023, 2024). In early childhood education, reading activities broaden children's cultural and inventive repertoire, enabling their participation in new interactions, interaction with peers, and the development of oral skills, imagination, and collective participation.

Reinforcing this understanding, Baptista and Noronha (2013, p. 25) state that reading, "taken as the production of meaning by the subject, can only be active." The authors add that "reading by ear, based on the performance of another who lends their voice to the text, enables young children to enter into the written text," emphasizing that this "entering" goes beyond following along, meaning "understanding, thinking, imagining, and even being captured by the text." Thus, providing such experiences from early childhood consists of building a legacy of learning for life.

In view of the above, the following is a review of the documents that provide guidance on reading and literary reading in Early Childhood Education, in order to analyze how this activity is proposed in its guidelines.

Documents that guide Early Childhood Education in Brazil

To support the proposed analysis, we selected the following documents: National Curriculum References for Early Childhood Education (Brazil, 1998), National Curriculum Guidelines for Early Childhood Education (Brazil, 2009), Reading and Writing in Early Childhood Education Project (Brazil, 2016), and National Common Core Curriculum (Brazil, 2018). These documents have guided and continue to guide the pedagogical practices that underpin teaching in Early Childhood Education.

The National Curriculum Guidelines for Early Childhood Education (RCNEI) (Brazil, 1998) were published in 1998 with the aim of guiding educational work with young

children, in accordance with the provisions of the LDB (Law of Guidelines and Bases for National Education - Law 9.394/96), at a time when early childhood education was recognized for the first time in the country's history as the first stage of basic education.

The Reference Framework established quality goals that contributed to the integral development of children's identities, enabling them to grow as citizens whose rights to childhood were recognized. It also aimed at socialization at this educational stage, creating environments that provided children with access to and expansion of their knowledge about social and cultural reality.

According to the RCNEI (1998), children are viewed as human beings, as social and historical actors, who are part of a family organization and inserted in a society with a specific culture at a specific moment in history. and from this perspective, children construct knowledge based on the interactions they establish with other people and with the environment in which they live. The document recognizes that knowledge is not a copy of reality, but rather the result of intense work of creation, meaning, and re-meaning.

The RCNEI presents organized and detailed guidelines proposing a routine to develop with children. We realize that it was a document intended to facilitate the work of teachers working in daycare centers and preschools, since at that time higher education was not a requirement to work in early childhood education, and the available training was often superficial, requiring more robust curricular support.

The National Curriculum Guidelines for Early Childhood Education were published in 2009 with the aim of promoting the comprehensive development of children aged zero to five years in physical, emotional, intellectual, linguistic, and social aspects, complementing the actions of the family and the community (Brazil, 2009).

In DCNEI, children are viewed as “the center of curriculum planning, historical subjects with rights who develop through interactions, relationships, and daily practices made available to them and established by them with adults and children of different ages in the groups and cultural contexts in which they are inserted” (Brazil, 2009, p. 6). Under these conditions, “they make friends, play, pretend, desire, learn, observe, talk, experiment, question, construct meanings about the world and their personal and collective identity, producing culture,” that is, children who attend early childhood education are encouraged to interact and participate in a structured learning environment to develop “motor skills, language, thinking, affectivity, and sociability” (Brazil, 2009, p.07). However, developing and enhancing these attitudes in children depends on how everyday situations are handled, how children participate, how they respond to gestures and words. In short, children change the way they act, feel, and think depending on the actions that are proposed to them (Brazil, 2009).

Recognizing the importance of teacher training for working with children in early childhood education, the DCNEI mandates the formulation of policies that include the training of teachers and other education professionals to work in early childhood education schools (Brazil, 2009).

However, it must be understood that we still have a long way to go in terms of training and changing our conception of children, of seeing them as individuals who suffer, feel, rejoice, create, dream, and participate in a world of diversity, who bring cultural, socioeconomic, and political baggage with them when they arrive at school. Abramowicz and Oliveira (2010, p.42) point to a phase in which adult values were imposed on children, leading them to remain silent, "mute," that is, in a marginalized and passive position in relation to the adult world. Is it possible that this type of attitude has already been eradicated? Or does it still occur on a smaller scale?

Unfortunately, this obedience cited by Abramowicz and Oliveira (2010) still persists in some classrooms as a sign of discipline and organization. However, the earlier we teach and develop this leading role for children in a comprehensive and cooperative manner, the more likely we are to have adults who are more proactive, critical, and active in society.

In 2013, the Federal University of Minas Gerais (UFMG), the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ), the Federal University of the State of Rio de Janeiro (UNIRIO), and the General Coordination of Early Childhood Education of the Ministry of Education (COEDI/MEC) developed the project "Reading and Writing in Early Childhood Education." According to Nunes et al. (2015, p. 6), in 2014, the Reading and Writing in Early Childhood Education Project (LEEI) was implemented with the overall objective of promoting the training of early childhood education teachers so that they can develop high-quality pedagogical work with oral and written language in daycare centers and preschools.

The studies by Castro, Lopes, and Nogueira (2025) point to three different moments in the implementation of the LEEI project: the first consists of its development as a training project for early childhood education teachers with its own teaching materials (2013-2016), in which it focused on the preparation of materials – workbooks – and the development of activities, such as scientific events and a training course through partner universities and COEDI, through the Technical Cooperation Agreement between the Ministry of Education and UFMG; its dismantling, with its inclusion in the training courses of the National Pact for Literacy at the Right Age (PNAIC) (2017-2018); and its national inclusion in the National Commitment to Literate Children (CNCA) (2023). The project's guiding questions were:

What is the role of Early Childhood Education in children's access to written culture? What is its role in the formation of readers? How do young children read and write? What texts need to be made available to children and how can they be worked on? What can children aged zero to five read and write in daycare centers and preschools? What themes, content, knowledge, and skills should constitute the training of early childhood education teachers to ensure practices that respect the specificities of children in this age group? (Brazil, 2016, p.11).

A partnership was formed between professors from the Federal University of Minas Gerais (UFMG), the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ), and the Federal University of the State of Rio de Janeiro (UNIRIO) and professionals from the General Coordination of Early Childhood Education, of the Secretariat of Basic Education of the Ministry of Education, to conduct the research (NUNES et al., 2015).

The LEEI project (2016) promoted five seminars and conducted two studies – "Reading and writing in Early Childhood Education: the state of knowledge (1973-2013)" and "Reading and writing in Early Childhood Education: educational practices" – which brought together studies, debates, and contributions from Brazilian and foreign scholars. This set of activities provided the conceptual basis for the design of this course and its instructional materials.

The research undertaken provided a mapping of the state of knowledge in the area over the last three decades in Brazil, together with an in-depth survey of pedagogical practices and their articulations in daycare and preschool contexts.

The latest research involved the participation of professors from five other universities – UFMG (Federal University of Minas Gerais), UFMS (Federal University of Mato Grosso do Sul), UFRN (Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte), UERGS (Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul), and UFPE (Federal University of Pernambuco)—as well as the collaboration of municipal secretaries, directors of early childhood education institutions, and teachers from six cities.

Although the implementation of the LEEI began in 2013, the first edition took place in 2016. It was only in 2024, eight years later, that the Ministry of Education promoted training for early childhood education teachers from all Brazilian states, with the participation of 68% of municipalities. This initiative, in partnership with public universities across the country, represents a sum of efforts to implement strategic actions dedicated to ensuring that all Brazilian children can achieve success in the literacy process. It is worth noting that teacher training by LEEI is part of the National Commitment to Literate Children - created in June 2023 by the federal government, through Decree 11,556 - which aims to introduce children to the culture of writing and the specificities that constitute the first stage of basic education.

One of the objectives of the National Commitment to Child Literacy (2023) is to ensure that all children are literate by the end of the second year of elementary school, through actions implemented in collaboration between the federal government, states, the Federal District, and municipalities, including actions for teachers and early childhood education managers, recognizing the importance of early childhood education for successful literacy.

The LEEI project, which included teacher training, was motivated by an understanding of the crucial role of teachers in early childhood education. This role encompasses the development of children in their early years and the formation of their subjectivity, with the promotion of oral communication, reading, and writing (Brazil, 2016).

In 2015, six years after the publication of the National Curriculum Guidelines for Early Childhood Education (DCNEI), a Commission of Experts was established with the purpose of developing a proposal for the National Common Core Curriculum (BNCC). The goal was to ensure consistent curriculum progression throughout Basic Education—from Early Childhood Education to High School—in order to optimize and promote student learning. The final version of the document was released in 2017. It is considered that Brazilian education took a historic leap forward by finally recognizing Early Childhood Education as an essential stage of Basic Education.

The document also innovates by recognizing this stage of Basic Education as fundamental for the construction of children's identity and subjectivity. Children need to think about the world around them, develop observation strategies, create hypotheses, and narratives. The BNCC guides pedagogical practices in Early Childhood Education based on six Learning Rights—interacting, playing, participating, exploring, expressing, and knowing oneself—which are linked to five Fields of Experience: "The self, the other, and us"; "Body, gestures, and movements"; "Traits, sounds, colors, and shapes"; "Listening, speaking, thinking, and imagining"; and "Space, time, quantities, relationships, and transformations."

It should be noted that, according to the BNCC, these learning rights, materialized through the fields of experience, need to ensure conditions for protagonist learning. This enables children to experience challenges and be provoked to solve them, allowing them to construct meanings about themselves, others, and the social and natural world (Brazil, 2017).

It can be observed that the Fields of Experience function as a mediating structure for the realization of the six children's learning rights. Thus, although they guarantee teacher autonomy in planning activities, they also provide greater clarity about which learning needs to be effectively promoted and developed in Early Childhood Education.

The concept of a child within the BNCC is that of a child who observes, questions,

raises hypotheses, concludes, makes judgments, assimilates values, constructs knowledge, and appropriates systematized knowledge through action and interactions with the physical and social world. Therefore, "it imposes the need to imprint educational intentionality on pedagogical practices in Early Childhood Education, both in daycare and preschool" (Brazil, 2017, p. 38).

Although official documents such as the RCNEI, DCNEI, LEEI, and BNCC present a view of children as active beings and protagonists of learning, this premise alone does not guarantee effective pedagogical practice. For this concept to become a reality in everyday school life, it is necessary to appropriate and critically reflect on the proposed concepts and approaches. In this context, it is essential to promote training activities that encourage discussions about what is meant by childhood, educational practice in early childhood education, and the role of teachers in this process, in order to value the participation of children in the construction of knowledge. It is with this purpose in mind that this study will investigate how reading is approached in early childhood education.

Language in official documents: a look at reading in early childhood education

This section aims to identify, understand, and summarize the guidelines on reading in early childhood education found in official documents.

a) National Curriculum Guidelines for Early Childhood Education – RCNEI

In volume 3 of the RCNEI, the Oral and Written Language section addresses the importance of and how to work with reading practices in Early Childhood Education. This theme is divided into Introduction, Presence of Oral and Written Language in Early Childhood Education: current ideas and practices, Children and Language, Objectives for children aged four to six, Content and Teaching Guidelines on Speaking, Listening, and Reading Practices for children aged four to six.

The document considers that children in collective interactions, mediated by the teacher, attribute meaning to speech. The more children can speak in different situations, such as telling what happened to them at home, telling stories, giving a message, explaining a game, or asking for information, the more they can develop their communication skills in a meaningful way (Brazil, 1998).

As the RCNEI points out, "when working on reading through drawing, children individually create and recreate expressive forms, integrating perception, imagination, reflection, and sensitivity, which can then be appropriated by the symbolic readings of other children and adults" (Brazil, 1998, p. 93). This process results in the evolution of oral skills and the expansion of vocabulary.

The RCNEI argues that the diversity of textual genres is a crucial element for expanding literacy in early childhood. From this perspective, the choice of written material to be made available should be based on rigorous criteria and meaningful content, since children's initiation into this linguistic universe has the potential to engage them in social practices involving writing (Brazil, 1998).

Learning to read is part of a long process linked to participation in social reading practices. The expansion of children's oral communication skills occurs gradually, through a process of involvement and participation in everyday conversations, listening situations, music, games, and storytelling. Children's knowledge construction is not uniform, as it depends on the level of literacy in their social environment. This refers to the importance given to reading and writing, as well as the literary practices to which children have access and can participate in their community (Brasil, 1998).

From a very young age, children can build an enjoyable relationship with reading, depending on their families, their teachers, and the environment in which they live. Therefore, "orality, reading, and writing must be worked on in an integrated and complementary way, enhancing the different aspects that each of these languages requires of children" (Brazil, 1998, p.133).

As highlighted in the document, reading or storytelling are essential practices, as they provide access to ways of living, thinking, and acting, as well as to the universe of values, customs, and behaviors of other cultures, located in different times and spaces. The document argues that "reading is not deciphering words" (Brazil, 1998, p.144), but rather an active process of constructing meaning, in which the reader draws on their prior knowledge. It is in this context that the defense of access to good literature is understood, since "having access to good literature means having cultural information that feeds the imagination and awakens the pleasure of reading" (Brazil, 1998, p.143). This conception of reading, therefore, goes beyond the mechanistic view, since "a good text should allow for multiple interpretations, thus overcoming the myth that reading is only about extracting information from writing" (Brazil, 1998, p. 145).

Table 1 shows the diversity of guidelines for working with reading and storytelling in Early Childhood Education within the RCNEI (1998).

Table 1 – Reading and storytelling activities RCNEI

Reading activities	
RCNEI	<p>Displaying children's work encourages the appreciation and interpretation of their creations (v. 3, p. 101)</p> <p>Viewing works of art through observation, narration, description, and interpretation of images and objects. (v. 3, p. 103)</p> <p>In group readings activities, children not only elaborate on the content discussed but also establish contact and dialogue with other children, developing respect, tolerance for diverse interpretations, and admiration for the meanings attributed to images. They also learn to contribute to collective productions through practices of solidarity and inclusion. (v. 3, p. 105)</p> <p>Listening to texts being read, enjoying the teacher's reading; (v. 3, p. 131)</p> <p>Choosing books to read and enjoy; (v.3, p. 131)</p> <p>Participating in situations where adults read texts of different genres, such as short stories, poems, newspaper articles, newsletters, nursery rhymes, tongue twisters, etc.; (v. 3, p. 140)</p> <p>Children who cannot yet read conventionally can do so by listening to the teacher read, even if they cannot decipher each and every word. (v. 3, p. 141)</p> <p>Access to various types of written materials through reading by the teacher is of great importance, as it allows children to come into contact with cultural practices mediated by writing. Communicating reading practices allows children to take on the role of "readers," who can relate language to the texts, genres, and media in which they appear: books, notes, magazines, letters, newspapers, etc. (v. 3, p. 141)</p> <p>When teachers frequently read from the same genre, they provide children with opportunities to learn about the characteristics of each genre. (v. 3, p. 141-142)</p> <p>The teacher's reading involves the children's participation, especially in those elements of the story that are repeated (refrains, direct speech, certain episodes, etc.) and are therefore easily memorized by them, who eagerly await their turn to anticipate the teacher's reading by saying certain parts of the story. (v. 3, p. 144)</p> <p>Have a collection of books and other materials in the classroom, such as comic books, magazines, encyclopedias, newspapers, etc., classified and organized with the help of the children; (v.3, p. 144)</p> <p>Organize free reading times during which the teacher also reads to themselves. It is essential for children to have the teacher as a good role model. Teachers who read stories, who have a good and enjoyable relationship with reading and who truly enjoy reading, play a fundamental role: that of role models for children; (v. 3, p. 144)</p> <p>Allow children to choose their own reading material and have contact with books so that they can handle them, for example, during diverse activities; (v.3, p. 144)</p> <p>Regularly allow children to borrow books to take home. Good texts can have the power to encourage reading at home, together with family members. (v. 3, p. 144)</p> <p>Reading images and objects (v.3, p. 144)</p> <p>Reading books, encyclopedias, magazines, and newspapers (v. 3, p. 144)</p> <p>Preparing invitations for parent-teacher meetings, writing a letter to a child who is absent, reading a note left by the teacher from the other period, etc., can be shared with children or integrated into activities that explore the various uses of writing and reading. (v. 3, p. 151)</p> <p>In sequenced reading activities, texts can be temporarily selected that provide an opportunity to learn about the diversity that can exist within the same genre, such as reading the complete works of a particular author or reading different stories about saci-pererê, dragons, or pirates, or various versions of the same legend, etc. (v. 3, p. 155).</p>
Storytelling	
RCNEI	<p>The teacher tells stories, punctuating ideas with expressive gestures or using vocal resources to emphasize their drama. (v.3, p. 31)</p> <p>Sound effects for stories [...] fairy tales, children's literature, as well as the group's own creations are excellent materials for developing this activity, which can use vocal and body sounds, sounds produced by objects in the environment, sound toys, and musical instruments. (v.3, p. 62)</p> <p>The more children can talk in different situations, such as telling what happened to them at home, telling stories, giving a message, explaining a game, or asking for information, the more they can develop their communication skills in a meaningful way. (v.3, p. 121)</p> <p>They begin to learn from information obtained from various types of social exchanges and from their own actions, for example [...] reading a storybook, etc. (v. 3, p. 122)</p>

	<p>The construction of oral language is not linear and occurs in a process of successive approximations to the speech of others [...] using all the resources at their disposal: stories they know, familiar vocabulary, etc. (v.3, p.126)</p> <p>Observation and handling of printed materials, such as books, magazines, comic books, etc. (v.3, p.133)</p> <p>Retelling of familiar stories, approximating the characteristics of the original story in terms of the description of characters, settings, and objects, with or without the teacher's help. (v.3, p.137)</p> <p>In a circle, you can tell children facts, describe actions, and promote an approximation of more formal aspects of language through situations such as reading and telling stories, singing or chanting songs, reciting poetry, saying nursery rhymes, texts from children's games, etc. (v.3, p.138).</p> <p>The expansion of children's discursive universe also occurs through knowledge of the variety of texts and cultural manifestations that express their own ways and forms of seeing the world, living, and thinking. Songs, poems, stories, as well as different communicative situations, constitute rich material for this. (v. 3, p. 139)</p> <p>Narrative can and should be the gateway for every child to the worlds created by literature. Children learn to narrate through storytelling games [...]. Stories, unlike reports, are pre-constructed, complete texts. Stories are associated with conventions, such as "Once upon a time," a formal opening phrase, and "and they lived happily ever after," a formal closing. (v. 3, p. 140)</p> <p>Another activity to be carried out involves live oral presentations of memorized texts, in which children reproduce a wide variety of genres, such as stories, poems, nursery rhymes, etc., in situations involving an audience (their group, other children from the institution, parents, etc.), such as poetry readings and nursery rhyme recitals. Another possibility is the preparation of audio or video tapes for the recording of poetry, music, stories, etc. (v. 3, p. 140)</p> <p>Reading stories is a moment when children can learn about the way of life, thinking, acting, and the universe of values, customs, and behaviors of other cultures located in times and places other than their own. (v.3, p. 143)</p> <p>Fostering children's enjoyment of sitting down to listen to stories from an early age requires teachers, as readers, to read with interest. They must create a pleasant and inviting environment for attentive listening, engage children's expectations, and allow them to look at the text and illustrations during the reading. (v. 3, p. 143)</p> <p>Anyone who spends time with children knows how much they enjoy hearing the same story over and over again, for the pleasure of recognizing it, grasping its details, demanding the same sequence, and anticipating the emotions they felt the first time. This shows that children who hear many stories can build knowledge about written language. (v.3, p. 143)</p> <p>Retelling stories is another activity that children can engage in. They can retell familiar stories with the help of the teacher, reconstructing the original text in their own way. To do this, they can rely on the illustrations and the read version. (v.3, p. 144)</p> <p>Teachers who read stories, who have a good and enjoyable relationship with reading and truly enjoy reading, play a fundamental role: that of role models for children. (v.3, p. 144)</p> <p>Reading stories is a rich source of learning new vocabulary. A good text should allow for multiple interpretations, thus overcoming the myth that reading is only about extracting information from writing. (v. 3, p. 145)</p> <p>Storytelling is often a daily practice in early childhood education institutions. In addition to telling stories, it is necessary to read them and allow children to retell them. It is also possible to share books in chapters, which allows children to access longer texts through the teacher's reading. (v. 3, p. 153)</p> <p>Oral language projects can propose, for example, recording stories told by families on cassette tapes to create a collection for the classroom. (v. 3, p. 154)</p> <p>Literary soirées can also be organized in which children choose texts (stories, poems, nursery rhymes) to tell or recite on the day of the meeting. (v. 3, p. 154)</p> <p>Children need to participate in situations where they can talk and interact verbally, listen to stories told and read by the teacher. (v. 3, p. 157)</p> <p>In relation to reading practices, it is possible to observe whether children ask the teacher to read; whether they look for storybooks or other texts in the collection; whether they consider illustrations or other clues to anticipate the content of the texts; whether they comment on what they have "read" or heard; whether they share with others the effect that reading has had on them; whether they recommend to their classmates the reading that interested them. (v. 3, p. 158)</p>
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Source: Prepared by the authors.

The concept of children presented in the RCNEI (1998) documents is that of active and leading subjects who interact, resist, and confront the group around them. It is through this movement of interaction and conflict that children build their knowledge and develop. Regarding reading and storytelling activities, volume 3 of the RCNEI presents detailed guidelines to ensure the quality of educational practices. These guidelines are based on the principle of the child as an active producer of knowledge who, through these experiences, shapes their personality and broadens their understanding of the world, positioning them as protagonists of their own development.

a) **National Curriculum Guidelines for Early Childhood Education – DCNEI**

The National Curriculum Guidelines for Early Childhood Education, in Article 4, defines children as: “historical subjects with rights who, through their daily interactions, relationships, and practices, build their personal and collective identity, play, imagine, fantasize, desire, learn, observe, experiment, narrate, question, and construct meanings about nature and society, producing culture” (Brazil, 2009, vol. p.1).

From this perspective, it is necessary to carry out activities with children that develop and build with them, through the interactions and games they experience in their daily lives, situations that value and expand their culture, socialization, engagement, and knowledge. Given this, children have the opportunity to grow up in a literate environment depending on the motivation and integration that their family and school provide them. They are active subjects who learn from their experiences.

According to the DCNEI, “the period of life covered by Early Childhood Education is characterized by remarkable acquisitions: walking, talking, sphincter control, the formation of imagination and the ability to pretend and represent using different languages” (Brazil, 2009, p. 7). It is clear that when children enter a structured society such as school, they have the opportunity for comprehensive development (Brazil, 1996).

In this development process, language is recognized as a cultural asset that is the right of every child. As emphasized in a national document, “among the cultural assets that children have the right to access is verbal language, which includes oral and written language, basic tools for expressing ideas, feelings, and imagination” (Brazil, 2009, p. 15). Literary reading, in this context, emerges as a fundamental practice for operationalizing this right, as it is par excellence the space for the expression of subjectivities. The DCNEI reinforce this premise by guiding the guarantee of “access to processes of appropriation, renewal, and articulation of knowledge and learning of different languages” (Brazil, 2009, p. 20), of which literature is a fundamental part.

To implement these guidelines, the document specifies the essential pedagogical practices. Among the specificities that each child brings, the document values and guarantees work with games until the appropriation of different languages, pointing out the “importance of enjoyable

activities with different written genres, such as daily reading of books by the teacher, the possibility for children to handle books and magazines from an early age and produce narratives and ‘texts’, even without knowing how to read and write” (Brazil, 2009, p. 15).

The DCNEI places reading and storytelling in the field of languages, proposing guidelines for their practice. The implementation of these proposals, however, is conditioned by adequate teacher training, which prepares educators to promote meaningful experiences with different expressions of language, whether reading, writing, and/or storytelling.

Table 2 – Activities involving reading and storytelling DCNEI

READING	
DCNEI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The pedagogical proposal of Early Childhood Education institutions should aim to guarantee children access to processes of appropriation, renewal, and articulation of knowledge and learning of different languages, as well as the right to protection, health, freedom, trust, respect, dignity, play, coexistence, and interaction with other children. (p. 02) • Encourage children's immersion in different languages and their progressive mastery of various genres and forms of expression: gestural, verbal, plastic, dramatic, and musical (p. 4) • Provide children with experiences of storytelling, appreciation and interaction with oral and written language, and exposure to different oral and written texts and genres; (p. 4)
STORYTELLING	
DCNEI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote children's relationship and interaction with diverse forms of music, visual and graphic arts, cinema, photography, dance, theater, poetry, and literature (p. 4) • Recognition, appreciation, respect, and interaction of children with African and Afro-Brazilian stories and cultures, as well as combating racism and discrimination. (p. 3) • Activities carried out by the teacher to play with the child and tell them stories. (p. 07) • The acquisition of oral language depends on children's opportunities to observe and participate daily in diverse communicative situations where they can communicate, converse, and listen to stories. (p. 15).

Source: Prepared by the authors.

In the DCNEI, children are seen as “the center of curriculum planning, historical subjects with rights who develop through interactions, relationships, and daily practices made available to them and established by them with adults and children of different ages in the groups and cultural contexts in which they are inserted” (Brazil, 2009, p. 6). Under these conditions, “they make friends, play, pretend, desire, learn, observe, talk, experiment, question, construct meanings about the world and their personal and collective identity, producing culture,” that is, children who attend Early Childhood Education are encouraged to interact and participate in a systematic agency to develop “motor skills, language, thinking, affectivity, and sociability” (Brazil, 2009, p.07). The development and enhancement of these attitudes in children, however, are intrinsically linked to the conduct of everyday situations. Through their participation, confrontation with gestures and speech, and the actions proposed to them, children rework their ways of acting, feeling, and thinking (Brazil, 2009).

b) **LEEI Workbooks**

The eight LEEI notebooks that make up the Reading and Writing in Early Childhood Education Course collection have a theme that is interrelated with the other notebooks. The workbooks consist of three texts written by different authors, which enables a dialogue between theory and practice that guides the teaching work. There are also sections such as: "Sharing experiences" and "Action and Reflection" that prioritize the description of educational practices carried out with children.

Workbook 1 – Being a teacher in early childhood education: between teaching and learning – invites teachers to reflect on the specificity of teaching in Early Childhood Education, committed to respecting children up to five years of age as active and capable subjects of rights. In this first workbook, the focus is on the relationships between teaching, language, and culture in Early Childhood Education.

In Workbook 2 – Being a child in early childhood education: childhood and language – attention is directed to the child, who in the process of discovering the world constructs and is constructed by language, whether in gestures, looks, sounds, speech, games, the stories they invent, the relationships they establish, or the preferences they express. Teachers are invited to discuss concepts of childhood, language, and culture and their repercussions on pedagogical practice.

In notebook 3 – Oral language and written language in early childhood education: practices and interactions. – The focus is on written culture (or cultures of writing) as a specific mode of cultural expression – written language – in which adults and children are somehow involved, with different levels of production and participation.

Booklet 4 - Babies as readers and authors - deals with the specifics of working with babies, who are both delicate and highly active and capable. We see how babies, in their relationships with others, construct meaning, and how early bonds with adults are fundamental to this process. We are challenged to think about a broader conception of reading, which allows us to understand that babies are beings of words, even when they are not yet able to pronounce them.

Notebook 5 – Children as readers and authors – focuses on the development of reading and writing in children aged three to five, studying different theoretical concepts and their implications for reading and writing practices in early childhood education, based on an understanding of the processes and contexts that favor the development of written language.

Booklet 6 – Curriculum and Language in Early Childhood Education – encourages us to deepen our analysis of the relationships between theoretical assumptions, pedagogical practices, planning, daily organization, and assessment in Early Childhood Education. In

addition, it explores the articulation of these elements with the National Curriculum Guidelines for Early Childhood Education and the National Common Core Curriculum, with an emphasis on the place of orality, written culture, and reading practices in the teaching-learning process. Finally, it reflects on the importance of planning as a resource for organizing daily life and making space for children's expression.

In Workbook 7 – Children's books: collections, spaces, and mediations – teachers have the opportunity to learn about public policies on books and reading, in particular the National School Library Program (PNBE) and the selection processes for titles intended for Early Childhood Education.

Workbook 8 – Dialogue with families: reading inside and outside school – deals with social practices of reading and writing conducted in families and in the city and reflects on the potential for articulation between these practices and those developed in the school context.

The course's teaching materials, consisting of eight notebooks, provide a link between science, art, and life, seeking a unity of meaning in which teachers can relate theoretical and scientific knowledge to different artistic and cultural manifestations and to their daily lives in early childhood education.

The LEEI Notebooks highlight the assumptions of the Sociology of Childhood by emphasizing a conception of the child as an active subject. From this perspective, the educational process in early childhood education "must be understood and described with the active participation of the child: sometimes resisting, sometimes reinventing, sometimes imitating, sometimes accepting" (Abramowicz; Oliveira, 2010, p. 42). These actions - resisting, inventing, imitating, or accepting - represent the different positions that children take in response to the proposals presented to them. According to the authors, this approach is based on the "emphasis on otherness," central to the Sociology of Childhood, which deals with the ability to understand children as unique beings, bearers of history, experiences, and subjectivity, and not as passive or incomplete subjects. In practice, this view is realized by giving credibility to what children say and do, recognizing them as producers of culture and knowledge.

c) **National Common Core Curriculum – BNCC**

According to the BNCC, the learning objectives of Early Childhood Education comprise "both behaviors, skills, and knowledge, as well as experiences that promote learning and development in various fields of experience, always taking interactions and play as structuring axes" (Brazil, 2017, p. 44).

The structural axes of Early Childhood Education are interactions and play, the same axes as those of the DCNEI (2009). However, in the BNCC (2017), they must ensure the six rights of learning and development, which are: to live together, to play, to participate, to

explore, to express oneself, and to know oneself. The work must permeate the five fields of experience so that children's rights, through interactions and play, can be realized. These are: The self, the other, and the us; Body, gestures, and movements; Traits, sounds, colors, and shapes; Listening, speaking, thinking, and imagining; and Spaces, times, quantities, relationships, and transformations.

The analysis of the Field of Experience "Listening, speaking, thinking, and imagination" highlights the importance of valuing experiences with oral language, considering the various social forms of communication present in human culture, such as conversations, songs, circle games, and singing games. The document also recommends stimulating child development in a playful way through diverse reading - reading that explores, engages, and motivates students to get involved (Brazil, 2017).

The words that make up the field of experience "Listening, Speaking, Thinking, and Imagination" are necessary actions that determine children's participation and involvement in the institution's daily life. Therefore, working with literary reading means creating conditions for the development of these four skills – which are so significant and important – thus promoting richer interaction and the evolution of children's oral and communication skills with their surroundings.

Based on the analysis of the BNCC (2017), it is possible to observe that reading and storytelling activities are articulated as follows:

Table 3 – Reading and storytelling activities (BNCC)

Reading activities	
BNCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select books and texts of familiar genres for an adult to read and/or for their own reading (based on their repertoire of these texts, such as memory recall, reading illustrations, etc.). (p. 50) Become familiar with different genres and textual media, demonstrating an understanding of the social function of writing and recognizing reading as a source of pleasure and information. (p. 55).
Reading activities	
Storytelling	
BNCC	<p>In addition, contact with stories, tales, fables, poems, cordel literature, etc. promotes familiarity with books, different literary genres, the differentiation between illustrations and writing, learning the direction of writing, and the correct ways to handle books. (p. 44)</p> <p>Experiences with children's literature, proposed by the educator, who acts as a mediator between the texts and the children, contribute to the development of a taste for reading, stimulate the imagination, and broaden knowledge of the world.</p> <p>Retell stories heard and collectively plan scripts for videos and plays, defining the contexts, characters, and structure of the story. (p.49)</p> <p>Retelling stories heard for the production of written retellings, with the teacher acting as scribe. (p. 49)</p> <p>Produce your own oral and written stories (spontaneous writing) in situations with significant social function. (p. 49)</p>

Source: Prepared by the authors.

It is important to note that, according to the BNCC, the learning rights developed in the fields of experience must ensure conditions for children to learn in a position of protagonists. This means experiencing challenges, being provoked to solve them, and, based on these experiences, constructing meanings about themselves, others, and the social and natural world (Brazil, 2017).

The BNCC conceives of children as beings who observe, question, raise hypotheses, draw conclusions, make judgments, assimilate values, and construct knowledge, appropriating systematized knowledge through action and interactions with the physical and social world. It is precisely this conception that “imposes the need to imprint educational intentionality on pedagogical practices in Early Childhood Education, both in daycare and preschool” (Brazil, 2017, p. 38).

Although official documents such as RCNEI, DCNEI, LEEI, and BNCC conceive of children as active and protagonists in the learning process, this alone does not guarantee effective pedagogical practice. For this concept to become a reality in everyday school life, teachers need to take ownership of and critically reflect on the concepts and approaches proposed by the documents. To this end, the relevant role of training activities that focus on discussions about childhood, educational/pedagogical practice in early childhood education, and the role of teachers in this process is evident, in order to value children's participation in the construction of knowledge.

Final considerations

It was found that the official documents analyzed, RCNEI, DCNEI, LEEI, and BNCC, demonstrate a concern with reading in Early Childhood Education. They guide that reading practices, carried out in a diverse and routine manner, should enable children to actively participate in the construction of knowledge, rather than being mere passive recipients of information.

The information in the tables above, related to reading, shows a concern with the teaching/learning process of reading in early childhood education, from the RCNEI to the BNCC, understanding that reading is fundamental for the development of critical and social thinking.

Although it is a reference that is no longer in use, the analysis showed that the RCNEI is a comprehensive document that helped early childhood education teachers understand what needs to be developed in terms of reading practices, in addition to offering methodological suggestions for this. When analyzing the four linguistic skills - speaking, listening, reading, and writing - proposed by the RCNEI, we can infer that their expansion and development in Early Childhood Education are highly crucial, as this is when students should be stimulated and encouraged to speak, interact, listen, read, and write in their own way (Brazil, 1998).

In analyzing reading practices, it was found that the RCNEI provides precise guidelines for planning activities, while the DCNEI and BNCC briefly define the learning to be developed. In turn, the LEEI Notebooks articulate theory and practice, proposing questions that lead teachers to reflect on the scope of pedagogical work at this stage and, unlike the others, the project proposes training actions.

It is essential that reading be a vehicle for new learning in Early Childhood Education. At this stage, which is the foundation of Basic Education, children need stimulation, especially considering that many lack access to or encouragement from their family environment. This reality poses an additional challenge for schools.

The success of educational work with preschool children is intrinsically linked to qualified teaching planning and reading practices that are playful and active. Such practices aim not only at decoding, but also at training literate readers, developing the fundamental skills for this stage and creating the necessary foundations for the subsequent student trajectory.

It was possible to see that public policies were mobilized and investments were made in line with the guidelines that recognize the importance of early childhood education. A comparative analysis between the RCNEI (1998) and the BNCC (2017), however, reveals that experiences with literary reading have become increasingly synthesized. While the former offers a wide repertoire of reflections and suggestions, the latter condenses its guidelines into learning rights. In comparison with the other documents, the LEEI Notebooks feature a section entitled “Sharing experiences,” creating dialogues with teachers based on educational activities carried out with children, articulating actions that bring theory and practice closer together.

This trajectory of public policies for Early Childhood Education signals some advances in relation to the conception of childhood and that of reading and writing for children. Recurring conceptual changes in official documents unaccompanied by training actions have demonstrated a certain disregard for the need to expand and continue teacher training in literacy, a fundamental element in ensuring quality educational practice. This gap is expected to be filled by the extension of the LEEI (2024) project with the Continuing Education Program for Reading and Writing in Early Childhood Education - Pro-LEEI (2025-2026), established under the National Commitment to Child Literacy through MEC Ordinance N°. 85, dated January 31, 2025.

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