

# RELATIONS BETWEEN THE COMPONENTS OF SCHOOL PRACTICE AND NON-SCHOOL PRACTICES

RELAÇÕES ENTRE COMPONENTES DA PRÁTICA ESCOLAR E DE PRÁTICAS NÃO  
ESCOLARES<sup>1</sup>

RELACIONES ENTRE LOS COMPONENTES DE LA PRÁCTICA ESCOLAR Y LOS DE PRÁCTICAS  
NO ESCOLARES

**Edmilson Luiz Rafael\***

Universidade Federal de Campina Grande

**ABSTRACT:** The problematizing context within this article is about the necessity of digital products' incorporation in the school practice. One of our actions towards this topic was offering an Extension Course to undergraduate students of Portuguese and Elementary Education teachers in Paraíba State, Brazil, whose goal was to make the students create pedagogical blogs. In this work, we investigated how we built, during the course, a relation between the components of the school practice and the non-school practices. The analysis was based on data taken from two distinct documents: the Course Schedule (PC) and the Final Report of Activities (RFA), both analyzed by a sociological concept of school practice and potentiality. The results indicate that the relations built are complementary and accommodated between the knowledge and the specific tools from the school and digital practices.

**KEYWORDS:** School practice. Language Teaching. Potentiality. Teaching Materials.

**RESUMO:** O contexto problematizador, no qual se insere o presente trabalho, é o da necessidade de incorporação de produtos digitais na prática escolar. Uma de nossas ações de enfrentamento dessa problemática foi a oferta de um Curso de Extensão, destinado a alunos de graduação em Letras e professores da educação básica, no Estado da Paraíba, cujo objetivo foi conduzir os participantes à produção de blogs pedagógicos. Nesse trabalho, investigamos a forma como construímos, nesse Curso, a relação entre componentes da prática escolar e de práticas não escolares. Orientados por um conceito sociológico de prática escolar e de

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\* PhD in Applied Linguistics from the State University of Campinas (Unicamp). Portuguese and Linguistics Professor IV at the languages department (UAL) and part of the post-graduate program in language and teaching/Federal University of Campina Grande (UFCG). E-mail: eluizrafael@gmail.com.

virtualidade, a análise apoia-se em dados oriundos de dois documentos do referido Curso: o Plano de Curso e o Relatório Final de Atividades. Os resultados indicam que as relações construídas são de complementariedade e de acomodação entre conhecimentos e instrumentos específicos das práticas escolar e digital.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Prática escolar. Ensino de Língua. Virtualidade. Materiais Didáticos.

RESUMEN: El contexto *problematizador*, en el cual se inserta esta investigación, es el de la necesidad de incorporación de productos digitales en la práctica escolar. Una de nuestras acciones de enfrentamiento a la problemática fue la oferta de un Curso de Extensión, destinado a los alumnos del grado en Letras y profesores de la educación básica, en el estado de Paraíba, cuyo objetivo era conducir a los participantes a la producción de blogs pedagógicos. En este trabajo, investigamos la forma cómo hemos construido, en el curso, la relación entre los componentes de la práctica escolar y los de prácticas no escolares. Orientados por una noción sociológica de práctica escolar y de virtualidad, el análisis se apoya en datos oriundos de dos documentos: El plan de curso (PC) y el Informe Final de Actividades (RFA). Los resultados señalan que las relaciones construidas son de complementariedad y de acomodación entre los conocimientos e instrumentos específicos de las prácticas escolares y digitales.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Práctica escolar. Enseñanza de lengua. Virtualidad. Materiales didáticos.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Already part of the common sense, the so-called “technological era”, initiated by human action after the creation of computers and the internet, has summarily provoked two effects on our actions as users of digital products and as education professionals, specifically teachers of Brazilian Portuguese from primary to higher education. On the one hand, we have experienced a sense of fear or insecurity, based on the idea that this new world requires more from us than what we know; and on the other hand, an expectation of ease in solving problems, including several that are faced in teaching practices in primary education.

In a similar way to what was once experienced in the past, when in the midst of many discussions and experiences reported as positive, there was support to the inclusion of television and the newspaper in Portuguese teaching. Currently, it concerns us, despite the undeniable presence of various digital language products through the practices that came with the introduction of computers and the internet in people’s daily lives, schools may continue to guide its practices through graphocentrism, prioritizing tools from the print world. Accordingly, one of the many problems that deserve our attention, as researchers and teacher trainers, is the mobilization of tools and means of computer-mediated language practices – or similar equipment – in the construction of teaching-learning situations.

The expectation of ease is anchored to the hypothesis that the use of new technologies would be a motivational pedagogical strategy, and, at the same time, serve as didactic support. Motivational because, by incorporating daily language practices of the youth, the target audience of the school, a more welcoming environment would be created in accordance with the interests, knowledge, and usages of this public; and didactic because, given the supposed absolute presence of equipment for teachers and students, other alternatives for educational tools would be possible, besides those of the print world. The belief originated by this ease effect becomes official when it is promoted by the administrative/governmental discourse, which “guarantees”, through official programs, the guidance, support, and incentive to use technologies in the classroom.

As a result, this is the problematizing context for primary education and for teacher training in teacher education programs. For primary education, the need to include, take advantage of, and incorporate diverse digital media and products from specific technologies emerged from the development and use of computers. In addition to the same need for inclusion in teacher education programs, the prospect is also to expect commitment to preparing teachers-to-be to meet this need in their practice. This requirement becomes official when the Ministry of Education, by means of a specific document<sup>2</sup>, determines that teacher education programs – including language teaching ones – must cover courses or activities that approach this topic in their curricula,

<sup>2</sup> National Curricular Guidelines (Letras) – PARECER CNE/CES 492/2001 (Diário Oficial da União, 9/07/2001).

converting it into mandatory formation content. Therefore, there are two reasons that move us, as trainers, in this direction, which begins to manifest itself as a subject of academic interest, that is, interest in research and personal experience reports, almost continuously pointing towards the benefits of the inclusion of technology in the old-school practice.

Motivated, then, by the concern to create a space for study and support to primary education, aiming at addressing this issue, we created a set of study, extension, and research actions in 2011<sup>3</sup> that was mainly concerned with the investigation of the pedagogical production of digital media – specifically, the pedagogical blog – and its presence in textbooks used for the Brazilian Portuguese teaching, besides proposing alternatives for its use in school practices in primary education. During these actions and considering the results, which were published between 2014 and 2015 – see references to this production in the next paragraph –, we experienced several reflections and concerns, one of which is presented in this paper. The results are briefly presented in the two following paragraphs.

Initially, the teachers' difficulty in producing a pedagogical blog was observed by Silva (2013a, 2013b). According to the author, the difficulty laid in the production of the tool as a space to provide didactic actions with variable format and functioning, depending on the purpose of the manager – the teacher. This difficulty manifested itself mainly in the presentation and physical distribution of more appropriate markers to this aspect of the tool. Later, in assisting the teachers (PROLICEN) who had participated in the first extension course “Digital Media and Teaching”, in 2011, we found (RAFAEL; SILVA, 2015a) an excessive preoccupation with the physical construction of the tool in detriment of its pedagogical component.

Simultaneously, we were also investigating the use of technological resources and virtual support in textbooks. In general, this second set of academic production allowed us not only to confirm the presence of digital media and guidelines for its use in textbooks (EGITO, 2014, 2015; EGITO; RAFAEL, 2015), but also to understand the textbook as a teaching project, since its organization includes a sequence of teaching actions that are linked and ordered into the specific scope of language teaching: reading, writing, and linguistic analysis (RAFAEL; SILVA, 2015b).

It was in this context that we decided to offer, in the second half of 2013, an extension course called “Pedagogical Blogs and Textbooks in Primary Education”, which was aimed at Portuguese major and primary school teachers in Campina Grande and neighboring cities, located in the state of Paraíba, in Brazil, whose overall objective was to reflect about the use of digital media products in the classroom. More specifically, we wanted to lead the group of teacher and student teachers, the target audience of the course, to the production and maintenance of pedagogical blogs.<sup>4</sup> As suggested by the title, the course's proposal sought to align two distinct components, textbook and blog, considering the aspects that could approximate them: didactic and pedagogical; supra-ordered by a functional body: primary education. This relation was built with the support of the results of the aforementioned actions, which helped to reaffirm two fundamental ideas that motivated the proposal: (1) the perception of the textbook as a teaching project to be used as a tool for reflection, given its character as one of the most historically important elements of school practices and (2) the understanding of technological tools as products that depend on adaptation to different purposes, which has been documented throughout human history and our constitution as social beings. In short, the idea behind the course was to use the textbook as support for the construction of a digital tool – the pedagogical blog –, in order to reflect about its possible use with teaching features, especially the ones covered in the attributes “didactic” and “pedagogical”.

After completing the course and its report, the latter in compliance with institutional regulations, we comprehended the need to investigate how we constructed, in this extension course, the relation between school practice components and non-school practice components, generically speaking, and, more specifically, the relation between digital language products and Portuguese language teaching practices in primary education. Therefore, within the limits of our discussions, we sought to answer the following

<sup>3</sup> A set of actions, started in 2011, coordinated by professor Williany Miranda da Silva, which I started participating in 2012, by means of an extension course, Advisory Project (PROLICEN) and Research Project, the latter ongoing since 2014. Part of these actions include the contribution of an undergraduate student of Letras/UFCG in a research project that started in 2013, sponsored by PIBIC/CNPq/UFCG, in its final phase, on the use of technology in textbooks used for Brazilian Portuguese teaching, coordinated by me, and the contribution of graduate students, in their Master's research, from the Language and Teaching Graduate Program/UFCG, coordinated by professor Williany Miranda da Silva, whose development involved me as a researcher and appraiser.

<sup>4</sup> As proposed by Silva (2013a, 2013b), mentioned earlier.

questions: what type of relation was built between the tools, textbook and blog, as legitimate representatives of two distinct social practices – school and digital ones, respectively –, and which components of those practices guaranteed the construction of this relation?

From a theoretical-methodological point of view, we are situated in the field of Applied Linguistics, focusing on the construction of school practices and the reflection about the need for teacher education related to the demand of technological professional practices. We believe that the present discussion contributes to the production of knowledge in this field, and, indirectly, brings awareness to the difficulties faced by those who accept challenges such as understanding the disparity between teacher education and teaching practices.

The theoretical framework used to conduct our reflection included the social theory and institutional practice (GIDDENS, 2009 [1984]), associated with studies on online language practices (BARTON; LEE, 2015). From these theories, we are particularly interested in the concepts of social practice and virtuality, considering we have as corpus two documents of the aforementioned extension course: the course plan (hereinafter CP) and the final activity report (hereinafter FAR).

The present discussion is organized into three topics. The first topic aims to present the theoretical concepts taken as the basis for developing the explanations of the phenomena present in our data. We initially expose our understanding of digital language products, associated with the concepts of technology and technological products, in order to perceive virtuality, in a broader sense, as one of the characteristics of social practices. To clarify this concept, according to our object of study, we bring the notion of social practice from a sociological point of view, focusing on the following components: agents involved, time, and space/place. In the second topic, we describe and comment on the condition of production of the extension course, focusing on the expectation and organization of its proposal, seeking to highlight relevant points for the issue addressed in this paper. In the third topic, we develop an analysis of the research questions, based on the main observation that the relation between the practices considered here – school and digital – is complementary, ensured by the specific components of both social practices.

## 2 SOCIAL CONSTITUTION OF THE SCHOOL PRACTICE, AGENTS AND TOOLS

The question that guides the present discussion was investigated, as we have mentioned, within the field of Applied Linguistics; in a more general way, regarding the construction of school practices in language teaching, and in a more specific way, concerning the operation of technological tools in the constitution of this practice. In order to do this, we use Lévy (1993) and Kenski (2012) to elucidate the meaning that we assign to “virtual language products” and, later, we adjust it to the understanding of “school practice”, which will guide our reflection.

When referring to “digital language products”, we are based on a conception of technology as the set of tools created by humans to aid in the resolution of physical or abstract problems – eating, medicating, learning, studying, among others –, and appropriate uses to meet our needs, serving certain purposes in different periods of time (KENSKI, 2012, p. 19). An example of this may be the use of what we know as “pencil” and “pen”. They do not only serve as tools for performing school tasks such as writing an essay. Transferring this reasoning to the possible uses of a computer keyboard or a smartphone, the same conclusion is drawn.

Still according to the same author, with support from the ideas developed by Lévy (1993), technology is not restricted to products and equipment and cannot be conceived only as physical, since spaces or other products serve as support for carrying out maintenance actions or the construction of knowledge by humans in their relationships with each other, such as technologies, written and digital language, as well as spaces where these take place. As such, we must also consider, along with Braga (2007), the technology’s mediating character. The written context, for example, serves as a mediator to transfer what was in a face-to-face oral context, and the digital and virtual ones also have the same function.

Given the reflective aspect of this paper, we intend to guide this discussion towards the place of tools or equipment in social practices, or even the language products generated from the use of certain tools – from pens to smartphone keyboards, from paper to screens... –, in the constitution of teaching situations. The guiding principle of the use of tools/equipment were conducted by the objectives of each practice. Thus, whatever products that come to the school via prepared materials, such as textbooks, or materials to be produced, according to the choices of their agents, teachers, and students, were used dependently in relation to their objectives. Therefore, we must consider, once transposed to a different social practice from which it originated, a certain digital or non-digital language product had certain characteristics altered or reinforced in view of its new function.

In the context of language studies, the concept of “practice”, which is socio-anthropologically inspired, travels through Linguistics and Applied Linguistics to support a contemporary view (SIGNORINI, 1998; MARCUSCHI; SALOMÃO, 2004), according to which, the problems that are investigated go beyond formal and structural limits, and are related to communicative, interactive, cognitive, and (socio-)historical processes which involve human beings in their daily activities. These aspects of social life affect language, which exerts “stabilizing and/or modifying” influence on the way human beings (re)construct their actions in society (PEDROSO, 2013, p. 65). These actions are, then, named practices.

The “social” attribute certainly contributes to the productivity of this concept in explaining linguistic/language phenomena, from its constitution to the implications of its use: description and function of texts as verbal manifestations of a given language (BRONCKART, 2008; MARCUSCHI, 2011); teaching and learning approaches through reading and writing, as well as the possibilities of solving specific teaching problems (DIONÍSIO; MACHADO; BEZERRA, 2010; SCHENEUWLY; DOLZ, 2004); implications for the formation of citizens who are skilled in the mobilization of language uses, participating in society (STREET, 2014 [1995]; KLEIMAN, 1995), among many other objects of theoretical and applied studies.

We are thus faced with two specific situations of language production: daily and institutional ones. The first is embodied in the various social routines – from the family context to formal ones –, with the support of natural – sound – and artificial – letters – resources, in the limits of the linguistic production of a given natural language, and of other typical contemporary resources, all with an artificial nature. From this universe, a very complex set of products and modes of production, consumption, and circulation characterize our actions in society. The second, of a strictly formal nature, corresponds to language products that ensure the existence of institutions, regarding bureaucratic, administrative or organizational aspects of their activities. Among institutions, the school, in order to maintain itself as such, needs a specific way of producing language for its ends, which will inevitably also depend on the demands that the external world is directed towards human beings as social agents. Commonly, we hear schools need to be up to date timely and in proper place, and that teacher training courses need to be less theoretical, as well as many other complaints on this dependent relation.

Nevertheless, the relations between the products of our actions, generated by repositioning in different situations of use, do not always clearly reflect the duration of our acting. An explanation for this fact may come from a sociological point of view, which, in this paper, we used as the main support of our reflection. The routinized character of daily life (GIDDENS, 2009 [1984]) makes us, human beings, participants in various situations of language use, which organization seems, almost at all times, so familiar that they become blurred as to what we actually do, while we act, speak, write, listen, or simply “be”/“exist” in the world. However, “the routines of our daily lives are fundamental even for the most elaborate forms of social organization” (GIDDENS, 2009 [1984], p. 75). As elaborate forms of social organizations there are formal institutions, among them, schools, and in them, individuals that interact physically, frequently, in person, in contexts of interaction.

This conceptual basis of the way social life is organized – sociologically thought – provides the needed characteristics for what we consider, still generically – but necessary for the purposes of the reflection to be exposed in this paper –, as “school practice”: a situated routine of interaction, in which human beings, as specific agents, operate established ways of habitual life – here, we can relate habitual life with the important notion of *habitus*, as proposed by Bourdieu (1977). The situated character of the encounters that shape school practices, as well as in daily life, has its duration – *durée*, in its original formulation by Giddens (2009 [1984]) – of activity – here understood as the complex set of individual or collective actions of individuals – by opening and closing, or in other

words, their existence is bracketed. Thus, what characterizes its functioning remains within the limits of its routine. Who, as a teacher, has not heard in the classroom questions such as: “Is it over, teacher? Can we leave? Is it classwork or at homework?”

The duration of a practice, from the sociological standpoint, is directly dependent on a conception of time and space/place. At this point, it is necessary to distinguish these categories as the limit of occurrence of social events – for instance, delimit in time and physical space the occurrence of an event that we can call a class – and as components of the constitution of a memory of what a social event is. This second sense, as we will discuss later, is the one we comprehend as how school practices are constituted, given their institutional character.

In order to carry out their actions, human beings, in their condition of participants in social practices, from informal and daily to formal institutional ones, must be disposed in a given time and a given space, which, in the case of the more formalized contexts – meetings, classes, etc. –, will always require the use of equally specific equipment – tables, chairs, pens, paper, computer, etc. – and conduct to be considered appropriate – who can use a certain table, who should remain sit, who operates the computer, etc.

Tables, chairs, paper, and computers are human products that, generically, could serve as equipment or tools to aid the materialization, in the physical world, of the actions intended by individuals who need to make, maintain, and run social routines, guided by a memory associated with times and places. However, their use is controlled by the character of what is situated in the context of social interactions, not considering, here, the unreal sense of control that humans perceive they have on what they produce. With telephones, for example, we, humans, can maintain minimum daily interaction, communicate from great distances, not in person, with others. Originally, this was the telephone’s function. But what do we talk on the phone, with whom, with what purpose? Moreover, the fact that the situation is not direct – face-to-face – can contribute to what in a more direct interaction could be prevented by a behavior considered inappropriate: saying exactly what we think of a colleague. Long ago, with writing – a technological product –, humans could similarly camouflage a type of “discursive consciousness” (GIDDENS, 2009 [1984], p. 52) so as to be able to act with words, outside the limits of a given routine.

For this moment, and for the purpose of this discussion, we intend to propose a conception of school practice as situation of an institutional routine in which individuals act – practical consciousness, for Giddens (2009 [1984]) – in a certain time and space, and are guided by a discursive memory – or consciousness, for the same sociologist –, according to rules, or situational structural elements, using tools or equipment – here understood as technological products – built, originally or not, for the purposes of this practice. Historically, textbooks have been a tool of this nature in our education system, which, for the case here in focus, has been transformed into an object of knowledge about language teaching to support the construction of a new object that belongs to a practice outside the school – the blog as a product of digital language.

From this perspective, we are reflecting about the recursive character of social practices, that is, even admitting that “practices change over time,” one must know exactly what changes. In the case of the school, as a formal institution with formally elaborated activities, saying that the presence of “new technologies” has changed its practice(s) seems simplistic. In making such an assertion, one must discriminate what character, component, structural element of that practice is in focus.

Moreover, from a sociological point of view, we consider important the notions of presence and concealment (GIDDENS, 2009 [1984]) in social encounters that shape social practices, subjecting to theoretical treatment one of our objects of interest, school practices. Much of the preservation or maintenance of social routines is guaranteed by what Goffman (1996 [1959]) presented, an important contribution to studies on interaction, when he expressed, as a rule, face-to-face interactions present clearly defined openings and closures regarding time, and that monitoring their adequate accomplishment occurs by physical demonstration, including gestures and signals of those involved in the situation. In addition to this characterization of the co-present organization of social encounters, we must also bring to light what is, in a sense, “hidden” but not irrelevant to the conduct of a given social practice, its actions, and the exclusive uses of tools or equipment.

Thus, we are not focused on the explicitness or predictability of what constitutes school practices. We know that their operation is carried out through meetings between teachers and students, which we call classes, between teachers and teachers, which we can call pedagogical meetings, among others. We know that in the physical space of schools there are tables, chairs, books, pens – more predictable? –, doors, windows, glasses, pans, television, computers, smartphones, etc. – the latter items being less predictable or unpredictable? The notion of space of operation therefore exceeds the physical boundary of a classroom or school building, and must be understood as a wider setting that includes agents, actions, and purposes from the political to the family context. Linked to the space or context of functioning, time, in a way, is another relevant category for investigating social practices, and, in particular, school practices. In this case, time is related to the duration of what maintains a certain set of actions as a practice stored in the agents' memory.

Time can be related to how long a school year lasts, a term, a class, an activity. The existence of these periods depends, rather, on what has already been determined as school time. The time for teaching, however, exceeds predictability and control within the limits of *Chronos*. The feeling of not having done enough on (“real”) time is more common than the opposite, as well as the feelings of working more before or after than during the “class”. This fact leads us to possibility, that is, is it possible to have more time than it seems?

Conversely, the constitution of the school in time – in the historical sense, not chronological one – limited its action to physical space, keeping in the practical consciousness the idea of time schooling, which consequently generated a distrust in educational actions that are not materialized as the “two signals for entering and leaving” the building where there are environments which are suitable for the performance of tasks and are legitimized as educational ones. Far from wanting to end the discussion, erasing the specificity of functioning from the “disciplinary” and administrative point of view of the institution, we discuss the need to consider this category more flexibly, in an expectation of its inclusion in investigations such as the one we propose about the relationship between school and virtual language products; especially when we think of them at the service of schools.

Approximating these ideas and the way curricula are elaborated and the constitution of school subjects, we believe it is possible to find an intersection point between practices – school and non-school ones – of use and language teaching. For scholars in this field, such as Saviani (2010), curriculum development and the constitution of subjects, which historically manifest themselves as academic knowledge – considered school practice –, are not established in a linear way. They result from negotiations based on priorities related to attending to official purposes, agreement with the government, conflict of interest between the involved agents, degree of acceptance or rejection of proposals that contradict traditions, among other intervening factors. Thus, much of the constitution of the school practice will always be dependent on a possibility, which, in our view, can be considered a favorable aspect to agents in making choices.

We focus, then, considering the analysis to be developed, this unexplored aspect of social practices, including school practices: virtuality in a broader sense. For this, we use, as theoretical support, the concept proposed by Barton and Lee (2015, p. 44), for whom “[...] virtualities are possibilities and constraints of actions that people selectively perceive in any situation.” In our view, it is possible to establish a relation with the sociological concept of practice, especially to build a reflection on what is possible to be inserted as a component of one practice into another. Historically, we know that schools have always needed this strategy for bringing into their activities, for example, texts produced in the literary sphere, and later journalistic – or printed – ones, and so on, which constitutes one of the specificities of their practice: teaching.

One of the problems that deserve our attention, as a branch of the idea of social practice virtuality, when applied to the constitution of the school practice, is still the granting of legitimacy of what is typical of a given practice considering the presence of elements of the new practice, as with the supposed idea of enhancing teaching by the mere presence of different or new technological tools. Street (2014), when commenting about the impact of writing in the Middle Ages, already warned that changes in the visuals of the means, for instance, alter the value of the written word itself, giving it a different status from the spoken word. Nowadays and for the interests of this discussion, it is necessary to reflect about the function of technological products or the virtual language in contemporary school practice. It is within this scope that the present study is situated.

### 3 THE EXTENSION COURSE AS AN OBSERVATION FIELD

The extension course, in focus in this study, was called “*Pedagogical Blogs and Textbooks in Primary Education*”. It took place in the second half of 2013<sup>5</sup>, during forty-five hours, and it consisted of face-to-face meetings on Friday afternoons, in one of the classrooms at the languages department (UAL), in the Federal University of Campina Grande. It was taught by me – author of the present paper – and another professor from the same aforementioned department. Thirty-nine students were enrolled and nineteen completed it. Of these, six were teachers in primary education – one taught History and five Portuguese –, the remaining were regular undergraduates or graduates.

As mentioned in the introduction, this course represented the continuity of previous actions, of the same nature, from 2011 and 2012, associated with research activities. The knowledge resulting from this experience resulted in our expectation to find, in school practices, elements that would help in the construction of an understanding that a pedagogical blog or any other instrument of this nature should have a technical and instrumental function in relation to teaching, and should also be a virtual space for verbal interaction where teaching-learning situations could occur. This knowledge brought textbooks, as school tools, legitimized as such by the Brazilian educational system, closer to blogs. Our hypothesis was that textbooks could serve as knowledge basis to produce a similar space in a virtual context, since they constitute examples of planning, in the form of teaching sequences – objectives, contents, activities, and assessment – with free and institutionally authorized entrance in classrooms, and are supposedly known to be historically constituted by school practices.

Hence, the execution of “*Pedagogical Blogs and Textbooks in Primary Education*” was not only an opportunity for continuing previous work, but also for theoretical reflections about teaching on the use of technological practices in the construction of blogs, and to understand the forms of this use suggested by the textbook itself.

The concrete justification for its implementation has two branches: one concerns teachers in primary education, and the other one concerns undergraduate students in teacher education programs. First, the realization that professionals in public school are beginning to face a digital environment, with computers with internet access, and since it is common to hear that they do not feel comfortable using technology, and that they have textbooks as a tool for structuring teaching; and, secondly, the verification that undergraduate students use digital technology and virtual spaces for different academic activities and varied personal interests, yet do not always regard them as prone to insertion in the school space to support specific teaching tasks.

Undergraduate courses still maintain an expectation of training based on the knowledge paradigm that is limited to its specificity. Thus, for language education programs, for example, the absence of subjects which content cover virtual language, its modes, places and means of production, as well as the little use of its spaces for academic activities – which leads to events like the great number of reprints within universities, the rush of students to “copy” the fragments of books minutes before the beginning of the classes, the students’ complaints about the financial cost of “paper” reproductions, among others –, which, generally, depend on action, not so well seen in the eyes of tradition and habits – or the established social routine – of some teachers when promoting experiences of the virtual world to their students. However, these actions are occasional and unsystematic and do not consolidate a reflection on the use of digital technology and virtual spaces of language as tools that can help and extend the teaching-learning dimension of reading, writing, and other objects of formal education.

Thus, based on this problematizing context, the extension course intends to present a path, in order to collaborate with balance in the relation between two distinct, though, historically, interrelated, language uses/production practices: school and out-of-school; represented, in this case, by textbooks and the blog, respectively. We should also point out the approximation we constructed between textbook and blog was supported by the social practical notion – discussed in the previous section. For Barton and Lee (2015, p. 46), what literacy studies provide is an internal perspective on people’s real practices in response to what they perceive as possibilities and constraints in particular situations. Therefore, on our observation’s interests, the expectation towards the course

<sup>5</sup> Since the elaboration of the aforementioned extension course, we intended, as the course instructors, to use it as research *locus*. However, this depended on the approval of a research project (see footnote 1), granted in 2014, and the approval from the Research Ethics Committee, granted in 2015.



was to somehow learn, from a set of possibilities of using the blog, what could possibly be taught to people, without distorting the blog's means, but ensuring that its secondary functionality would be, rather, an auxiliary teaching service. Supported by the same authors, who affirm that the blog is an open space for language use, where people can act with different purposes, our actions were guided by the understanding the textbook as a structured language setting with a previously defined purpose, equally virtual, once we understand their use depends on choices made by humans, as teachers, in different situations.

In the next topic, we attempt to develop the intended reflection about the relation between virtual language products and language teaching practices in schools, investigating the way of building this relation in the aforementioned extension course. The data, as we have said, comes from two important course documents: the course syllabus and the final activity report.

#### 4 RELATIONS BETWEEN SCHOOL AND DIGITAL SOCIAL PRACTICES

As educators, developers and executors of such actions that are hereby presented, our intention is to introduce an approach that can contribute to the theoretical and applied discussions about technologies and language teaching, by pointing a way of treating objects from a language practice when placed in a different kind of practice. In this case, from a daily practice that, though virtual, materializes itself in the use of language via social networks and other virtual spaces, to an institutional practice marked by face-to-face interactions, which take place in limited time and space, unlike in a virtual practice. By linking these two language practices, we create a connection which is based on the characteristics of their constitution and functioning. Therefore, we believe it is relevant to investigate this activity taking into account the following questions: what kind of relation was built between the textbook and the pedagogical blog tools as legitimate representatives of two different social practices – respectively, educational and digital –, and which components of these practices guaranteed the construction of this relation? Our data for analysis are fragments of the course syllabus and the course final activity report.

Our main finding, based on the course proposal, according to the theoretical bias adopted here, is the manifestation of discursive consciousness, according to its sociological definition (GIDDENS, 2009 [1984]), as a result of practical consciousness. A practice must be theorized in order to make agents even more able to carry out actions of maintenance, preservation, renovation, changes or alterations of such given practice. In the case studied here, the relation built between educational and digital practices was both complementary and accommodative (item 3.1, below). In this construction, the fundamental component was the type of knowledge that was mobilized, to which components or characteristics of the constitution of these objects belonging to different social practices were added (item 3.2, below).

To build this relation, at least two types of knowledge have proved to be essential; both historically secured in our memory due to their place of production and functioning. The first is the knowledge about the subject of the teaching practice and the second is the knowledge regarding the tool used (textbook and/or pedagogical blog).

Regarding the teaching object, which character is epistemic by nature, knowledge comes from two different sources: from the academic environment, as a place of scientific production, and from the tradition of language teaching, as a place of consolidation of academic knowledge. The relation between specific knowledge about this object guarantees, as later discussed, a kind of epistemological security, which puts the teaching object in a central position around which other objects gravitate.

Among the other objects, the tool, which can be named from the point of view of its function, as pedagogical and/or didactic, and that, based on its form, can be named as support, material, genre, and so on. As for this tool, we equally mobilize two types of knowledge: that of the user and that of the professional. The relation between the two will be of exclusion, since it is necessary for the agent to make choices regarding knowledge that will be used predominantly at a specific time and place. This will bestow on the tool a peripheral character.

This general statement of analytical verification will be divided into the next two topics, in which we will initially focus on the manifestation of complementarity and accommodation relations between practices, and then on the components of those practices mobilized in this construction.

#### 4.1 COMPLEMENTARITY AND ACCOMMODATION BETWEEN SCHOOL AND DIGITAL PRACTICES

As we will discuss, the relation of complementarity is generally established between knowledge considered as training knowledge or teaching performance knowledge and the accommodation between training or acting knowledge and the use of a tool regarded as pedagogical:

(1) Contribute to complement the training of undergraduates and primary education teachers by addressing contents on the use of virtual and printed media in the classroom for teaching-learning purposes; comprehend the use of digital media proposed by textbooks in elementary education; establish the blog as a didactic-pedagogical tool; relate reading and writing practices worked in the school context to the virtual media and textbook; analyze and/or create activities that require the use of technological resources. (PC - Objectives)

In (1), we lie the course objectives. The idea of complementarity in the passage “contribute to complement...” in addition to highlighting straightaway a gap in the teacher training with regard to the approach of the use of “virtual media” for learning purposes, presents itself as the guiding aim of the actions to be developed in the extension course. Next, the expression “*training of undergraduates and primary education teachers*” highlights a place to which knowledge about the use of virtual media should be directed – by addressing contents on the use of virtual and printed media. In a juxtaposed way, knowledge covering virtual media is presented in order to “*establish the blog as a didactic-pedagogical tool*”. Thus, these are the two types of knowledge of academic nature that will join the textbook as a component of school practices, which seem to be emphasized in the stated objectives. We must observe that we may have been assuming beforehand the place to be held by the component of this new use of language in practice, the blog. This may have happened unconsciously (GIDDENS, 2009 [1984]), due to the fact that we do not lose sight of the specificity involved in the practice of language teaching.

In the same presented passage, the use of three expressions – “*for teaching-learning purposes*”, in the first objective; “*proposed by textbooks*”, in the second objective; “*that require the use of technological resources*”, in the last objective – not only makes us reflect about the inclination to keep focusing on school practices, but also, inevitably, provides the type of knowledge that needs to be engaged/mobilized: especially about language teaching and about textbooks, as well as their place in this relation. If we invert the syntactic order of these expressions, we find the following sentences: “the teaching-learning purposes are...”, “the textbooks propose...”, “X requires the use of...”. We observe that the absent component in the sentences structures will always bear a complementary character, that, nonetheless, is volatile, peripheral, and circulating. Consequently, what ensures the functionality of the complement is the possibility of accommodation by function similarity, not form, since the purposes are determined by the teaching-learning process, the proposals are originated from the textbook and the demand comes from X. In other words, a book or a blog are not necessarily didactic-pedagogical tools.

When we compare it with the content statement and the methodological proposal of the course, we perceive that this relation is maintained. This is what we shall verify in the analysis of the next two fragments, (2) and (3).

We emphasize the content of the course as one of the structuring components of typical academic behavior underlying the actions developed in institutions, such as the situation in focus: the extension course. Even assuming that, from the course’s standpoint, our aim was to show that the practical activities were the result of reflections developed from discussions about the potential of media support and methodology, without, however, losing the characteristics of a workshop designed for the course from its beginning, we needed to comply with one of the governing rules of the social situation, according to which it would be necessary to recognize the course, like in any other social situation, as formal education, an activity plan – or a course syllabus; according to the policy used in institutions. In such document, as we know, besides objectives, methodology, forms of assessment, and basic bibliography, we

should present the content “to be taught”. Thus, the relation established between the educational and digital practices is guided by an entrance into an experience of a conceptual nature. Undoubtedly, this moment was very substantial, especially for us, the course teachers and researchers, since it allowed us to (re)construct this relation from our theoretical perspective and to verify its intersection and limitations. Therefore, in (2) we present the conceptual design of this relation, in this fragment that represents the programmed content of the extension course:

- (2) Teaching-learning Process and Didactic Projects
    - 1.1. Teaching and Learning Concepts
    - 1.2. Didactic Projects
    - 2. Literacy Practices and Teaching Knowledge
      - 2.1. Digital, School and Vocational Training
      - 2.2. Existential, Social and Pragmatic Knowledge
    - 3. Printed and Virtual Media
      - 3.1. Textbooks
      - 3.2. Pedagogical Blogs
- (PC - Programmed Content)

As it may be observed, the content items are superordinate by two theoretical bases that signal the entry of our actions, as teacher trainers and course conductors (mediators), in the context of an understanding of school practices as a place for teaching-learning mediated by “didactic projects”. On the basis of this concept – school practices compose the place where the teaching-learning process of X is developed in such a way that it is guided by a plan – lied, for us, the understanding of the practice as a set of activities manifested in concrete acts – for instance, the selection of material – made by individuals who take the position of agents of an institutionalized practice and are, in order to act as such, supposedly, experts on the specific instruments used in this practice. In this case, the engaged knowledge is on school practices, more specifically, on language teaching and the instruments used for its accomplishment.

At the top of this conceptual scheme, the items textbooks and blogs are intermediated by three concepts: teaching, literacy and knowledge. In this context, teaching should be understood as a process of an institutionally oriented action for ends that are predetermined by a historically constructed social practice, and its development requires the abilities of acting that is mediated – or performed – by different linguistic activities – materialized through reading and writing of language products – and specific knowledge of the necessary instruments – empirical, theoretical, and technical – to make suitable choices for particular purposes. Therefore, the relation between school practice and virtual language products, from the monitoring of the extension course focused in this paper, is characterized as complementary, as far as the observation carried out here allows us to verify that our way of constructing this relation has shown that the use of the product – virtual or not – cannot overtake the specificity of the social practice to which it is destined as an instrument. The practice determines possible uses, confirming, then, the observation made in the analysis of the objectives (fragment 1).

Examining the methodological proposal of the course, we detected, in some fragments of the report, the same construction movement of complementarity and accommodation between school and digital practices. The following fragments (3) and (4), that were extracted from our comments in the report, help us to perceive this construction:

- (3) In order to carry out the teaching activities pictured for the aforementioned course, two stages were concomitantly systematized and named as follows: 1. Analysis of the textbook and the pedagogical blog and 2. Workshop for the creation and maintenance of the pedagogical blogs created in the course. (FAR, p. 4).
- (4) For the first stage, there were systematized activities in which the students, in a first moment, were to reflect about the organization of the textbook regarding three branches: reading, linguistic production and analysis; and, in a second moment, related the knowledge about the textbook with structural aspects that constitute a pedagogical blog: gadgets (markers, followers, applications in general) and comments. (FAR, p. 4).

Firstly, it is worth mentioning, in (3), the systematization of the methodological proposal in two stages, indicating two distinct, yet “concomitant”, places and periods of time, materializing the intended action of keeping the already known textbook as support for

the construction of the new element, in order to adjust it to the structural and functional conditions for the purpose to which it would be assigned: being didactic-pedagogical.

Secondly, the predominant relation, in this case, is the accommodation between kinds of knowledge, since a movement towards appropriation is privileged. This movement is carried out through exercises of reading and analysis – textbook and pedagogical blog analysis –, aiming for production – workshop for the creation and maintenance of pedagogical blogs produced in the course. Although supposedly concomitant, the actions have a distinct nature and are done in different periods of time: up front, the analysis exercise is made for consolidating knowledge of the school routine. The textbook manifests this knowledge. At this point, we could better understand and lead a reflection about the textbook as an object that is previously structured – in units, chapters, parts, sections... – by an institutionally responsible agent that is authorized to propose forms of agency, what is not as rigid as an institutional order. Its fixity is limited to what is expected as to the specificity of what it presents as goals and contents and the way it is organized. Therefore, this understanding guided the relation that was intended to be built between school practice and digital practice.

Finally, in (4), the way in which the relations of complementarity and accommodation between the types of knowledge are adjusted must be highlighted. Knowledge on the textbook as a compound product was taken as a starting point – *...in relation to the composition in three branches* – by previous elements. These elements preexist to the analysis exercise and are part of the specific social action in which this instrument is inserted: language teaching. The action was to outline, guided by a manifestation of discursive consciousness – in Giddens's words (2009 [1984], p. 56-57) –, a way of bringing out something known from the social routine – the textbook –, in this case, from the school. However, because the textbook is embedded, cognitively and mnemonically, in practical consciousness it seems minimal what is known about it. To put in another way, because it is embedded in the school routine, it promotes a certain type of security for the user, who thinks of it as a well-known element to the point that its exploitation as a technological resource becomes barely visible.

The discursive action has the effect of revealing motivation from the daily activity of using the textbook, which is silenced or inhibited in the actions of the practical consciousness. The textbook is – or is not – used in the classroom, but little is known about its presence: it is on students' chairs, on the library shelf, in storeroom boxes, on bookstores shelves, on the internet... The proposed strategies of analysis and comparison, taking the textbook as a supposedly known element, can thus be considered as a kind of psychic mechanism of memory, supported by the school action context. This mechanism makes visible the knowledge about the school practice of language teaching, which has been historically marked by the presence of textbooks that allows us to accommodate any other instrument or material, instead of them, provided that its use is in function of one of the objectives of the practice itself.

#### 4.2 THE MOBILIZED COMPONENTS IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PRACTICES

As already indicated in the previous item, we must discriminate which components of the two practices, school and digital, were important in the construction of complementarity and accommodation relations. In general, we can affirm that they belong to two non-excluding natures that are produced, however, in different places: cognitive and experiential.

The cognitive component refers to two types of knowledge: theoretical-academic and professional. The theoretical-academic knowledge refers to the set of statements about facts and objects of our social practices, that are taken as true at certain times and validated in teacher education courses. What we know about language and teaching, concepts and descriptions of modes of operation may be associated to this knowledge. The professional cognitive knowledge lies in the scope of institutional action, to which we can associate what is known, for example, about what is or what means teaching Brazilian Portuguese and its academic functions.

The experiential knowledge also refers to two types of knowledge: that of the user and that of the professional. The user's is associated to the knowledge about various everyday social practices, and knowledge about the role of the instruments, equipment, and materials necessary for their conduct. The professional's is associated to knowledge about the use of certain instruments or materials in a way towards a specific purpose of a particular practice.

For demonstration purposes, we can consider the fragments:

(5) For the second stage, the students had access to a tutorial on blogs (prepared by a volunteer in order to meet the specific needs of the course). This was adapted to meet the “pedagogical” nature of the support, aiming at satisfying the interests of each administrator and created blogs, with postings of activities proposed by them. (FAR, p. 4).

(6) In common, there was the interest in learning to make use of the pedagogical blog as a potential tool to complement their teaching activities. Our intention was to relate this need to previous knowledge, which was to reflect about the textbook as a teaching project. This, being a material fully available to everyone, could provide elements for the construction of the virtual innovation: the pedagogical blog. (FAR, p. 5).

To illustrate the statements presented above, we highlighted, from fragments (5) and (6), the adaptation of the blog – *this was adapted to meet the “pedagogical” nature of the support* – and the knowledge required to meet expectations – *the intention was to relate this need to previous knowledge, which was to reflect about the textbook as a teaching project*. As can be seen, two knowledge bases stand out. The adaptation action, understood here as an accommodation relation (item 3.1.), requires knowledge about the teaching object whose evidence materializes in “meeting the ‘pedagogical’ nature of the support” and in the instruments themselves: the blog was adapted and the textbook taken as an example of something previously known, both being considered as known by the agents involved in the situation.

Therefore, the relations of complementarity and accommodation between what is peripheral, what is circulating, what is possible and what is socially established are evidenced in the following actions: concern in adapting what is “new” to the necessary conditions for the functioning of the “old” (teaching-learning); and respect the virtuality of the actions of others; ease actions according to the interests of the participants. For this purpose, it was important to mobilize what appears in these fragments as “prior knowledge” or what is supposed by the use of the preposition “about” – “about the blog”, “about the textbook” –, as part of what can be said, expressing verbally, about the social conditions for performing actions in different practices.

What we have, finally, is a heterogeneous set of types of knowledge that, cognitively, covers what is known or is thought to be known about language teaching, teaching objects, didactic materials and their forms of organization and functioning. To trigger this set of types of knowledge, it is expected a social agent that is characterized as academic-scientific, for knowing how to locate, theoretically, in academic space and in his/her, also heterogeneous, production of knowledge about our language actions, as users of social practices, for making use of technological instruments available and necessary for everyday actions, governed or not by formal institutions, and professional, for knowing the interests and the form of organization of the social context in which many different means, apparatuses, instruments and materials come from the outside.

## 5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The experience in the extension course, focused in this paper, as well as our investigative look on the path we have built, as an alternative to think about the relation between social practices, has helped us to discriminate the nature and the components of this relation, especially regarding the insertion of digital/virtual instruments in school practices.

The results of the present research show not only the possibility of insertion, but also elucidate, in our view, how we should understand the encounters of different social practices. Surely the first characteristic of the relation is complementarity, that is, the idea of the non-existence or insufficiency of the components of the supposedly more stabilized practice; In this case, the school, which, ironically, would always need external complements. On the other hand, this idea is only conjectural, because the external component needs to be integrated into what is stabilized, which leads us to the second nature of this relation, which we call accommodation. The guarantee of effectiveness or possible success of this relation depends on the mobilization of the two

fundamental components of the construction of social practices: a cognitive one that refers to what is known about its functioning, and an experiential/professional one related to what is known about the instruments necessary and appropriate to the situation. Considering these results in order to rethink the current teaching and teacher training settings, we arrive at a profile that demands an agent in the role of planner, executor, and manager, who is able to make choices guided by the understanding of the didactic-pedagogical instrument, blogs, or any other media and materials, which can be virtual, possible, volatile, always depending on the construction of school practice as social practice.

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