

The Use of Teaching Materials in Literacy Instruction During Emergency Remote Learning in Ceará



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Abstract

Introduction. This article investigates the use of teaching materials during emergency remote learning by 2nd-grade elementary school teachers in municipalities in Ceará, focusing on the teaching of reading and writing. **Methodology.** The field and documentary research involved 57 teachers who responded to an *online* questionnaire about the materials used in the context of the pandemic. **Results.** The results indicated the use of the following materials for teaching reading and writing: materials prepared by state education departments, materials produced by the teachers themselves, materials developed exclusively for remote learning, books from the National Textbook Program, and resources made available by the Literacy at the Right Age Pact. **Discussion.** It is concluded that there is a diversity of resources, alignment with literacy theory, and an emphasis on the importance of teacher autonomy and reflection in the selection and use of materials.

Keywords

teaching resources; pedagogical strategies; instructional materials; literacy.

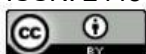
O uso de materiais didáticos na alfabetização durante o ensino remoto emergencial no Ceará

Resumo

Introdução. Este artigo investiga a utilização de materiais didáticos durante o ensino remoto emergencial por professores do 2º ano do Ensino Fundamental de municípios cearenses, com foco no ensino da leitura e da escrita. **Metodologia.** A pesquisa, de campo e documental, contou com a participação de 57 professores que responderam a um questionário *on-line* sobre os materiais utilizados no contexto da pandemia. **Resultados.** Os resultados indicaram o uso dos seguintes materiais para o ensino da leitura e da escrita: elaborados pelas secretarias de educação, produzidos pelos próprios docentes, desenvolvidos exclusivamente para o ensino remoto, livros do Programa Nacional do Livro Didático e recursos disponibilizados pelo Pacto Alfabetização na Idade Certa. **Discussão.** Conclui-se que há diversidade de recursos, alinhamento à teoria da alfabetização e letramento e destaque para a importância da autonomia e reflexão docente na escolha e uso dos materiais.

Palavras-chave

meios de ensino; estratégias pedagógicas; material didático; alfabetização.



El uso de materiales didácticos en alfabetización durante el aprendizaje remoto de emergencia en Ceará

Resumen

Introducción. Este artículo investiga el uso de materiales didácticos durante el aprendizaje remoto de emergencia por parte de docentes de segundo grado de primaria en municipios de Ceará, con énfasis en la enseñanza de la lectura y la escritura. **Metodología.** La investigación de campo y documental contó con la participación de 57 docentes que respondieron un cuestionario en línea sobre los materiales utilizados en el contexto de la pandemia. **Resultados.** Los resultados indicaron el uso de los siguientes materiales para la enseñanza de la lectura y la escritura: materiales desarrollados por los departamentos de educación, materiales producidos por los propios docentes, materiales desarrollados exclusivamente para el aprendizaje remoto, libros del Programa Nacional de Libros de Texto y recursos facilitados por el Pacto de Alfabetización a la Edad Adecuada. **Discusión.** Se concluye que existe una diversidad de recursos, una alineación con la teoría de la alfabetización y énfasis en la importancia de la autonomía y la reflexión del profesor en la selección y el uso de materiales.

Palabras clave

métodos de enseñanza; estrategias pedagógicas; material didáctico; alfabetización.

1 Introduction

From 2020 to 2022, due to the emergence of COVID-19, Brazil, like other countries, had to implement emergency remote learning (ERL) to continue school activities. In March 2020, with the start of *the quarantine/lockdown* and the closure of schools, it became necessary to adopt ERL, in accordance with Ordinance No. 343, dated March 17, 2020, issued by the Ministry of Education (MEC), which mandated the replacement of in-person classes with digital activities during the pandemic (Brazil, 2020).

In this context, teachers and schools had to adapt their teaching practices, making use of various instructional materials—both digital and/or printed—to ensure the continuity of education. Literacy teachers, in particular, had to develop and adapt the use of these resources to support the learning of reading and writing. These materials were essential for maintaining student learning during the suspension of in-person classes, highlighting the importance of teaching flexibility and pedagogical innovation in emergency situations.

It is worth noting that the ERE was characterized as an atypical and historic situation in Brazil, given that the need to develop pedagogical practices mediated by

educational technologies faced several barriers. Among these, the difficulties in accessing the internet and electronic devices stand out, especially among families from lower socioeconomic classes and students from public schools, in addition to the need for short-term teacher training, which is fundamental for the development of innovative pedagogical strategies or those adapted to the pandemic situation (Abalf, 2020). Thus, ERE constituted a quick and viable solution for that moment.

Based on this premise, the present article aimed to investigate the use of teaching materials during ERE by 2nd-grade elementary school teachers in municipalities in Ceará in the process of teaching and learning reading and writing. Given the importance of these resources in the literacy process and considering the novelty of ERE, this study thus seeks to contribute to the debate on the use of teaching materials for the instruction of reading and writing.

2 Methodology

Given the central objective of this study, which is to investigate the use of teaching materials in the ERE by 2nd-grade elementary school teachers in municipalities in Ceará in the process of teaching and learning reading and writing, this research is characterized as a field and documentary study, employing both qualitative and quantitative approaches.

The level adopted in this investigation was descriptive-exploratory. According to Gil (2011, p. 28), descriptive research “[...] has as its primary objective the description of the characteristics of a given population or phenomenon [...],” while exploratory studies have as their “[...] main purpose to develop, clarify, and modify concepts and ideas, with a view to formulating more precise problems or testable hypotheses for subsequent studies” (Gil, 2011, p. 27).

The selection of participating schools was based on the results of the Spaece-Alfa¹ (Ceará, 2019), considering the list of municipalities with full performance in the

¹ Starting in 2007, the Permanent Basic Education Assessment System of the State of Ceará (Spaece) began assessing second-grade elementary school students in all 184 municipalities in Ceará. The assessment focuses on reading and provides a diagnosis of the literacy level achieved by children by the end of the assessed grade, through the annual administration of Spaece-Alfa (Ceará, 2025).

literacy stage. Of the 20 municipalities with 100% of schools at the desired level, eight agreed to participate, totaling 35 teachers. To expand the sample, the municipalities of Sobral and Cruz were also included, recognized for their high performance in external assessments and national educational quality indices, resulting in 52 schools from 10 municipalities in Ceará participating in the study.

The study was conducted with 57 Portuguese language teachers in the 2nd grade of elementary school, affiliated with schools in 10 municipalities in Ceará (Barroquinha, Sobral, Caridade, Varjota, Meruoca, Solonópole, Pires Pereira, Catunda, Coreaú, and Cruz).

Given the impossibility of conducting in-person research, an electronic questionnaire was used, created in Google Forms and administered *online* between April and November 2021 to the 57 teachers. Along with the form, the researchers sent the Informed Consent Form (ICF) to ensure participants' awareness of the research information and their voluntary participation.

The instrument allowed for an investigation of the relationship between the teaching materials used by teachers and the reality of children's literacy regarding the teaching of reading and writing in the context of the pandemic, translating the study's objectives into questions capable of reflecting this reality, in accordance with Gil's (2011) recommendations.

For the analysis of the collected data, the Content Analysis (CA) methodology was used, following the guidelines of Bardin (2011). This approach involves the description, inference, and interpretation of data, focusing on how the collected information can contribute to the understanding of the phenomenon. The analysis followed three main stages: pre-analysis; exploration of the material; and processing of results, inference, and interpretation.

3 Results and Discussion

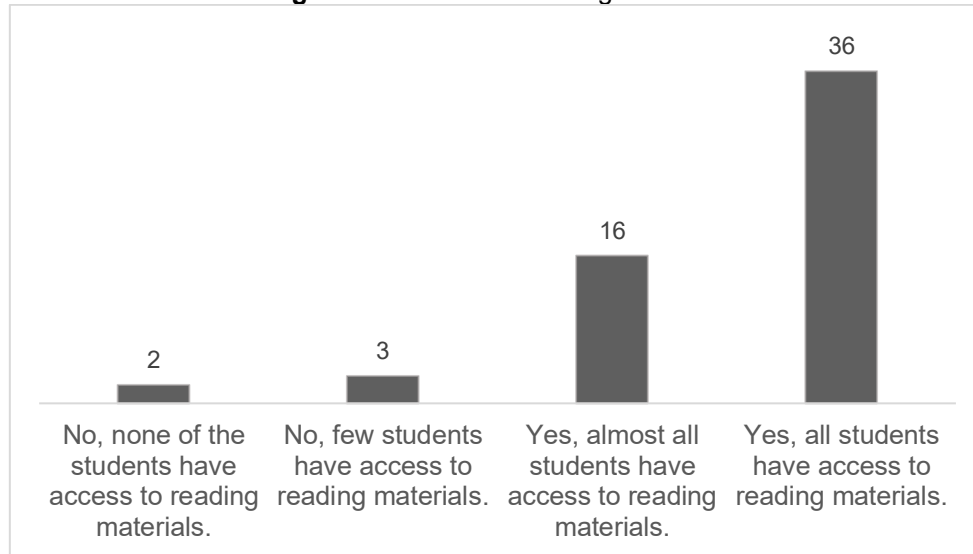
For this article, the analysis focused on the category related to the use of teaching materials by 2nd-grade elementary school teachers during reading and writing ERE. Considering that the literacy process underwent conceptual transformations

beginning in the 1980s, we sought to identify which materials were adopted by teachers and analyze whether these addressed literacy from a literacy-based perspective, in addition to the inclusion of materials that promote the learning of reading and writing, such as children's literature, prose, and poetry, among others.

According to Soares (2016, 2020), having access to written materials, whether *online* and/or in print, contributes to the development of literacy and literacy, which involves recognizing the social uses and functions of written language. These aspects can be acquired by students in the school context, but also outside of it, involving the family context and/or other spaces, since it is through interaction with written materials and established social relationships that students formulate hypotheses about written language and begin to appropriate it, but this is not sufficient for the student to learn to read and write, thus depending on systematic school instruction for this to occur in a meaningful way.

Thus, recognizing that the process of learning to read and write requires systematic school instruction but is also influenced by student interaction with written materials, teachers were initially asked about students' access to reading materials, whether provided by the school and/or at home.

According to the teachers' responses, Figure 1 shows that: 36 stated that all students had access to reading materials, another 16 teachers reported that almost all students had access to these materials, while three stated that few had access, and two revealed that no students had access to this type of material during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure 1 – Access to reading materials

Source: Adapted from a previous study (Lima, 2022).

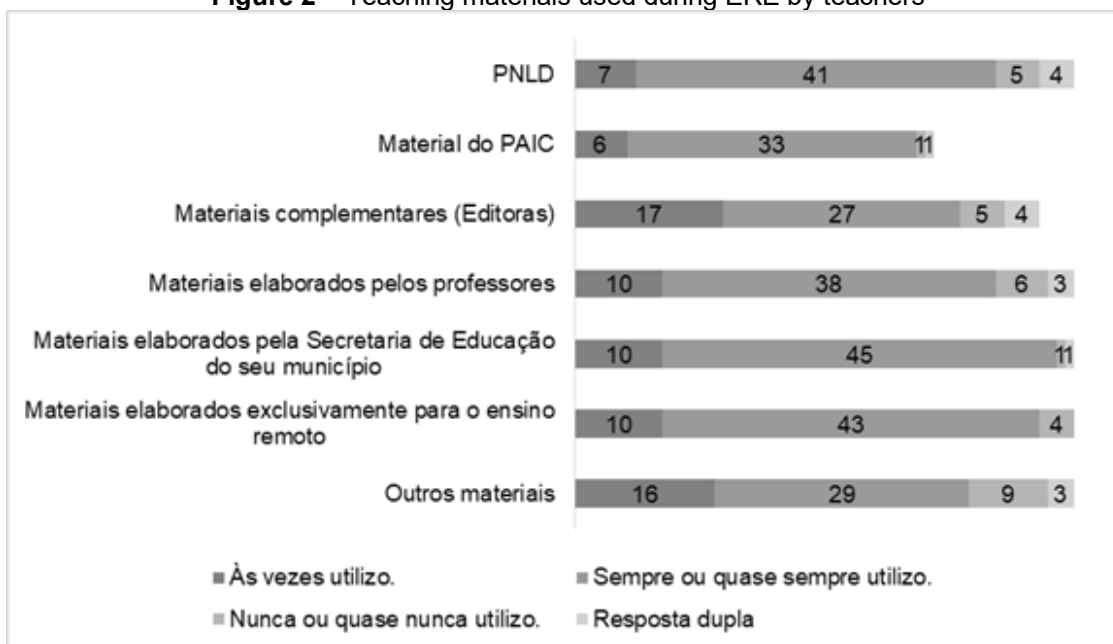
Although remote learning made it impossible for children to attend school, ensuring students' access to written materials was essential. These materials should have been provided by the school to reach everyone, given the importance of these resources for the literacy process, as noted by experts in the field.

It was considered that this aspect of the research is limited to access to reading materials, without specifying whether these materials were provided by the school or belonged to the children and their families. Furthermore, research conducted by Nunes and Zancanaro (2024) reinforces this difficulty in closer monitoring by teachers, such that the teacher-student relationship came to be mediated by a family member or guardian in the context of remote education.

To deepen our understanding of the use of resources to support teaching practice, we sought to identify which teaching materials were adopted for teaching reading and writing during remote learning, as well as the frequency with which they were used.

Figure 2 shows the list of teaching materials used by teachers during remote learning, such as the National Book and Teaching Materials Program (PNLD), materials from the Literacy at the Right Age Program (Paic), supplementary materials (publishers), materials developed by state education departments and/or teachers, materials developed exclusively for ERE and/or other materials, as well as the frequency of use.

Figure 2 – Teaching materials used during ERE by teachers



Source: Adapted from a previous study (Lima, 2022).

According to the information in Figure 2, among the materials that are always or almost always used by teachers, the following stand out: materials developed by the municipal education departments (45 teachers), materials developed exclusively for remote learning (43 teachers), PNLD (41 teachers), materials developed by the teachers themselves (38 teachers), and Paic materials (33 teachers).

Teachers were also asked to list the names of the materials they used most frequently. Among the materials cited by the teachers, we sought to briefly describe those that referred to PNLD and Paic materials available on federal and state (Ceará) government *websites*, respectively, in order to understand their theoretical perspective regarding the teaching of reading and writing and how these materials could contribute to the development of literacy.

Through the implementation of the PNLD, the federal government periodically provides public elementary and secondary schools with educational and literary works and other materials to support teaching practice, in a systematic, regular, and free manner. The works are educational materials produced in co-publication with the private sector and undergo a pedagogical evaluation process conducted by a committee of experts selected by the Ministry of Education (MEC). If the works are approved, they

become available for teacher access on *the* Guia Digital *website*, where reviews of the analyzed works can be found (Lima e Ciasca, 2020).

The list of PNLD books cited by teachers can be viewed in Table 1, along with a brief description of these materials available on *the* Guia Digital – PNLD (Brazil, 2019) – Early Years *website*². It is evident that most teachers reported using the PNLD Ápis (16), published by Ática, for teaching Portuguese, followed by the books Conectados (5), published by Frère Théophile Durand (FTD); Buriti (5), published by Moderna; Encontros (3), by FTD; Vem Voar (2), published by Scipione; and Encontros Aprender e Relacionar, published by Moderna. Other materials, although cited by teachers as belonging to the PNLD category, were not found on the Guia Digital – PNLD *website* (Brazil, 2019) and, therefore, could not be described.

Table 1 – Textbooks used during the ERE by teachers

(continued)

PNLD-2019	Number of citations	Publisher	Summary of reviews
Ápis	16	Ática	The collection features a variety of oral and written text genres, discussing their uses and circulation, thereby contributing to meaningful learning of the texts. In the realm of orality, the collection prioritizes discussions among students and in the classroom; however, it states that it is not limited to this, promoting activities related to orality in a systematic manner, treating it as a subject of instruction.
Connected	5	FTD Education	The collection uses text as a starting point and object of teaching and learning. A variety of textual, verbal, nonverbal, and multimodal genres can be found. Based on these texts, most of which are appropriate for children, the collection addresses the different organizing themes of Portuguese language instruction proposed in the BNCC, with the aim of developing readers and text producers across various social contexts.
Buriti	3	Moderna	The book contains a good collection of varied text genres that address current topics appropriate for the students' age group. Aligned with the BNCC regarding the teaching pillars (orality, reading, writing, linguistic and grammatical knowledge, and literary education), the book features diverse genres belonging to different discursive domains, enabling work through themes related to its target audience.

² The 2019 PNLD covers Early Childhood Education and the Early Years of Elementary School. The project cycle was extended from three to four years, in accordance with Decree No. 9,099, dated July 18, 2017.

Table 1 – Textbooks used during the ERE by teachers

(conclusion)

PNLD-2019	No. of citations	Publisher	Summary of reviews
Portuguese Language Encounters	3	FTD	The collection is organized into five volumes, addressing themes and topics from different social spheres. The five common pillars of Portuguese Language in Elementary School—oral communication, reading, writing, linguistic and grammatical knowledge, and literary education—are developed based on the knowledge objectives and skills proposed in the BNCC.
Come Fly	2	Scipione	It presents a wide variety of discursive genres, including both written and oral practices. The work aims to contribute to the development of literacy through chapters designed to encourage reflection on the texts studied.
Encounters: Learning and Connecting	1	Moderna	Part of the PNLD Integrative Projects collection. The book covers interdisciplinary themes, with the Science curriculum component serving as the central thread. The methodology involves Project-Based Learning (PBL). The general competencies proposed by the BNCC are explored in each project, linking the objects of knowledge and the skills of the curriculum components.
Nova Escola/ Aprova Brasil/	5	-	Not included in the 2019 PNLD list for the Early Years of Elementary School.
Buriti and Conectados	5	-	*Five teachers stated that they use the Buriti and Conectados books together, as described earlier.
Not applicable / Did not mention the title of the work	17	-	-
Total	7	-	-

Source: Adapted from a previous study (Lima, 2022) based on information from the Digital Guide – PNLD (Brazil, 2019b).

It was inferred that the books mentioned, as part of the PNLD, underwent a preliminary analysis conducted by experts in the field; consequently, all works address literacy from a literacy perspective, in accordance with the principles of the National Common Core Curriculum (BNCC), a document that guides the development of all school curricula. The BNCC emphasizes the need to encompass the four pillars of language practices: oral communication, reading, writing, and linguistic and semiotic analysis within the context of teaching and learning. In this sense, text—the foundation for teaching reading and writing—is cited as an indispensable element, highlighting the importance of its variety and appropriateness for the relevant age group.

According to Soares (2016), the literacy process in Brazil associates literacy and literacy skills as complementary elements and, therefore, they cannot be practiced in isolation. Thus, the systematization of both needs to be well-ly planned and defined:

while literacy refers to the teaching of writing techniques, literacy skills focus on the uses and functions of texts.

Other materials mentioned by the teachers are produced by the state government of Ceará, are part of the PAIC program, and are made available to all municipalities in Ceará. By conducting a search on the program’s *website*, it was possible to gain a deeper understanding of the materials mentioned by the teachers.

Regarding the materials provided by Paic, history books and supplementary materials were mentioned by 11 teachers, followed by Structured Materials and the Student Workbook, mentioned by nine teachers; seven teachers accessed the Mais Paic *website*; four other teachers stated that they used, respectively, Pé de Imaginação and the Prosa e Poesia collection; while the Estudo em Casa - Paic materials were cited by three teachers and Vamos Passear na Escrita was mentioned by only one teacher. Some of the materials cited were not found on the Paic *website* and, consequently, were not described. Table 2 contains the list of these Paic materials cited by the teachers and used during the ERE.

Table 2 – Paic materials used by teachers during the ERE

(continued)

Materials (PAIC)	No. of citations	Authors/ Source	Summary description
Storybooks/ Supplementary materials	11	Ceará. Seduc	A collection of children's literature available for <i>download</i> , featuring titles such as <i>The Animal Parade</i> , <i>The Magic of Letters</i> , and <i>Dom Ratão, the King of Chaos</i> , among others.
Structured material/ Student Workbook	9	Nova Escola	Produced by state teachers, the materials feature regional identity, games, texts, and innovative methodologies, aligned with the Ceará Curriculum Reference Document (DCRC). Organized into four bimonthly volumes.
Mais Paic Website	7	Ceará. Seduc	Brings together various program materials, such as Pé de Imaginação, history books, and structured materials.
Pé de Imaginação	4	Amália Simonetti; Cílvia Queiroz; -Nadja - Amado	“Letrando” Literacy Teaching Proposal (PDAL), focusing on literacy and reading skills for second-grade students and teacher training, based on official documents from the state of Ceará and national authorities.
Prose and Poetry Collection	4	More Paic/ Seduc	A literary anthology of authors from Ceará that celebrates local culture and encourages reading in the classroom, featuring titles such as <i>*History of the Sea Dragon*</i> and <i>*Valente, the Boi Bumbá*</i> .

Table 2 – Paic materials used by teachers during the ERE

(conclusion)

Materials (Paic)	No. of citations	Authors/ Source	Summary description
Home Study Materials - Paic	3	Felipe Kokay Farias <i>et al.</i>	Material provided to families with various Portuguese language and math activities, along with guidance on how to help children complete the activities at home, tell stories to encourage reading, play games, etc.
Let's Go on a Writing Adventure	1	Amália Simonetti	An activity workbook organized around the exploration of texts that help children develop writing skills, such as tongue twisters, riddles, and more. Note: On the Paic <i>website</i> , only the workbook for 1st-grade elementary school students was found.
Light of Knowledge	1	Ceará. Seduc	A free educational portal from the Ceará Department of Education, featuring <i>online</i> activities, games, and digital resources focused on developing reading and writing skills. It provides textbooks for the 1st and 2nd grades of elementary school, pedagogical guidelines, and a virtual library with works from the Paic – Prose and Poetry collection. The activities are organized into teaching sequences that approach literacy from a literacy-based perspective, in line with the BNCC.
Not applicable/Other materials	17		Materials mentioned but not found on <i>the Paic/Mais Paic website</i> (2) or not cited/specified by teachers (15).
Total	57		

Source: Adapted from a previous study (Lima, 2022) based on information from *the Paic/Mais Paic website* of Ceará (Ceará, 2022).

According to the research, Ceará develops a variety of materials aimed at the literacy audience, including collections of children's literature, structured materials for teaching practice, and resources that highlight Ceará's culture, such as the Prosa e Poesia collection. Of the total participating teachers, 21 reported using children's stories in their teaching practices, followed by the structured materials developed by Nova Escola.

Chagas and Domingues (2015) highlight that understanding reading as a social practice, combined with specific work with children's literature, supports the literacy process and is fundamental in the literacy cycle. Furthermore, working with different textual genres and teacher mediation prove essential for the systematic teaching of reading and writing in schools.

Other materials, such as the Prosa e Poesia collection and the Luz do Saber portal, were cited by few teachers, indicating the need for greater emphasis on them from the perspective adopted here. The former due to its importance in valuing local culture, and the latter due to its playfulness, a significant aspect for children's learning in this age

group. It should be noted that the use of *the software* requires internet access and electronic devices such as cell phones or computers, which can be a limiting factor, given the lack of equipment and/or internet access in most municipal schools, according to data from the Anísio Teixeira National Institute for Educational Studies and Research (Brazil, 2021). Government investment is needed to expand access to these resources.

The category regarding the use of teaching materials by 2nd-grade elementary school teachers during remote learning, specifically concerning reading and writing, showed that teachers organized their practices using resources developed specifically for this purpose. These materials include those produced exclusively for remote learning, those developed by municipal education departments, as well as books and educational resources from the PNLD and Paic programs.

The use of materials developed by the teachers themselves was cited by 66.6% of the participating group, demonstrating autonomy, creativity, and the ability to adapt to the specific needs of their students during the ERE. This behavior highlights the importance of pedagogical reflection and the customization of teaching strategies, especially in the context of literacy, where individualized support is essential.

On the other hand, the 33.4% of teachers who used pre-developed materials, such as those provided by the PNLD and Paic, show that these institutional resources remain relevant and reliable for supporting the teaching of reading and writing. The use of these institutional resources ensures curricular coherence and provides support for teachers to develop teaching strategies aligned with curricular standards, strengthening the integration between institutional guidance and teacher autonomy.

4 Final Considerations

The ERE constituted a viable alternative during the Covid-19 pandemic, given the impossibility of in-person contact between students and schools, emerging as an unprecedented teaching modality for all involved.

Regarding the use of teaching materials, resources were produced by the teachers themselves, as well as by the municipal and state departments of education in

Ceará, specifically designed for the ERE context. Materials from the PNLD and Paic programs were also used, aligned with literacy theories.

The choice of teaching materials for the literacy stage, as indicated by official documents and authors in the field, is fundamental to the development of full literacy—which involves not only mastery of writing techniques but also an understanding of its uses and social functions.

In this sense, the effort of the research participants to diversify the materials used during remote teaching is recognized, reflecting the impact of recent transformations in the educational landscape. In general, teachers most frequently relied on materials produced by municipal education departments, highlighting the influence of local guidelines on pedagogical practice.

The PNLD continues to play a significant role, although a trend toward diversification is observed, with particular emphasis also on original materials produced by the teachers themselves and the still-significant use of Paic materials. This dataset points to a pluralistic teaching practice that combines institutional references and original productions, articulating tradition and innovation in the use of teaching resources.

It is reiterated that literacy has specific characteristics that require physical presence to develop effectively. The inclusion of this population in the context of remote learning revealed various barriers—social, pedagogical, political, and technological—that significantly impacted teaching and learning processes.

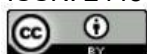
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