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THE ROLE OF TEXTBOOK AMID A PANDEMIC YEAR: THE EXPERIENCE
REPORT OF TEACHING ENGLISH IN A PUBLIC PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL IN
FORTALEZA

FORTALEZA

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OF TEACHING ENGLISH IN A PUBLIC PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL IN FORTALEZA

Trabalho de Conclusão de Curso apresentada ao Curso de Letras Inglês do Departamento de Estudos da Língua Inglesa, suas Literaturas e Tradução da Universidade Federal do Ceará, como requisito parcial à obtenção do título de Licenciado em Letras Inglês.

Orientadora: Prof^ª. Dra. Lídia Amélia de Barros Cardoso.

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RESUMO

Livros didáticos possuem múltiplos papéis nos processos de ensino-aprendizagem. Os papéis que podem ser identificados vão desde um útil modelo de referência para a sala de aula até um guia que ajuda os professores menos experientes. No entanto, nem todas as perspectivas sobre o livro didático são positivas. Existem críticas direcionadas para a ausência de autonomia e espontaneidade que eles podem promover em sala de aula. Recentemente, uma nova perspectiva foi adicionada a esta discussão sobre os papéis do livro didático. A mudança foi em virtude do contexto pandêmico e as novas regras de distanciamento social que conduziram ao modelo de ensino à distância. Neste cenário os livros didáticos representaram diferentes papéis simultaneamente, uma vez que nem todas as escolas e estudantes podiam acessar as plataformas online. Assim, em alguns contextos eles foram essenciais e o único recurso para alguns estudantes, enquanto em outros eles continuaram servindo como guia de apoio para auxiliar na definição e adaptação dos conteúdos e aulas para as novas plataformas. Esse artigo tem como objetivo identificar alguns desses aspectos e refletir brevemente sobre como o papel do livro didático mudou durante o ano pandêmico de 2020, a partir de um relato de experiência pessoal. Alguns autores provêm suporte para as ideias desenvolvidas nesse artigo: Tomlinson (2005), Cunningsworth (2008), Hutchinson (1994) and Richards (2001). Livros didáticos ainda são valiosas e confiáveis fontes de *input* para o ensino e aprendizagem de uma língua estrangeira, seja como um recurso protagonista ou coadjuvante na escola pública. O advento de um contexto, no qual outros materiais são exigidos para intermediar o processo educacional, não excluiu a presença dos livros didáticos.

Palavras-chave: Livros didáticos. Língua Estrangeira. Escola pública. Ano pandêmico. Plataformas online.

ABSTRACT

Textbooks have multiples roles in teaching-learning processes. The roles that can be identified start from useful framework for a classroom to a guide in helping less experienced teachers. However not all perspectives about textbooks are positive. There is some criticism pointing to the lack of autonomy and spontaneity which they can promote in a classroom. Recently, a new perspective was added to this discussion about the textbooks' roles. The change was due to the pandemic context and the new social distance rules which led to the distance learning format. In this scenario textbooks portrayed different roles simultaneously as not all schools and students could access the online platforms. Thus, in some contexts they were essential and the only tool for some students while in others they continued to serve as a supporting guide which assisted to design and adapt the contents and classes to new platforms. This paper aims to identify some of these aspects and reflect briefly about how the role of textbooks changed amid the pandemic year of 2020 from a personal experience report. Some authors give support to the ideas developed in this paper: Tomlinson (2005), Cunningsworth (2008), Hutchinson (1994) and Richards (2001). Textbooks are still a valuable and reliable input to teach and learning a foreign language, either as protagonist or supporting resource in a public school. The advent of a context in which other materials are required to intermediate the educational process do not exclude the textbooks presence.

Key-words: Textbooks. Foreign language. Public school. Pandemic year. Online platforms.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Teaching a second language requires that teachers make use of several resources to promote interesting and motivating learning contexts. Among the pedagogical materials the textbooks are the most popular. They provide a huge support for students and teachers in classroom. From a plentiful source of input for learners to a syllabus and guideline for teachers, textbooks can play multiples roles. However, the perspectives about the textbooks are diverse and some of them identified these materials as a restrictive tool that can led teachers and learners to interactions without any spontaneity.

A new perspective was added to this discussion about the role of textbooks last year. The pandemic year of 2020 brought deep changes in the society and its relationships. Education was among the fields in which the interaction had the most impact. During the social distance measures imposed by the government authorities, almost all education settings needed to create alternative ways to adjust to the specific restrictions. The use of online platforms, social media and apps were the main means to preserve classes during this moment. Nevertheless, each school presents its own context, resources and students' profile and each institution provided different alternatives to deal with this reality.

Public schools had to face a huge challenge as most students do not have access to Internet or even have an own cell phone. In this type of educational institution textbooks portrayed simultaneously different roles, for example, in some situations they were the main pedagogical resource and in others they were a sort of guide to provide content by online platforms.

This paper aims to identify how the role of textbook changed and lead to a brief reflection amid a pandemic year from a personal teaching experience. The observations and reflections occurred in a professional public school setting in Ceará. The main focus of the paper explores the challenges and adaptations carried for the Foreign Language course (Applied) which is offered as part of the curriculum of the Tourism, Leisure and Hotel Management program. Some measures to overcome the obstacles of this new distance learning model will be mentioned. The work of Tomlinson (2005), Cunningsworth (2008), Hutchinson (1994) and Richards (2001) are used to support the discussion.

This paper is divided in four parts: the first part presents an introduction about the main aspects of the paper; the second discusses about the different roles portrayed by textbooks and the multiples viewpoints which can be find about them in the specialized literature; the third part identifies the methodological constituents as the institution, the learners, the program

and textbook observed; the fourth and last part promotes some final remarks about the multiple roles of the textbook used and how valuable they were to classes amid a pandemic year experience.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

This section intends to present some works which discuss about the multiples roles of the textbook in the teaching and learning of a foreign language. Firstly, it is presented some definitions about textbooks and what features characterize them (RICHARDS, 2001; TOMLINSON, 2015). Then, it is discussed about the roles of textbooks, the positive perspectives about them but also some criticism about these roles in the learning and teaching of a foreign language (CUNNINGSWORTH, 2008; CRAWFORD, 2002; HUNTCHINSON AND TORRES,1994). It finishes the discussion highlighting the importance of teachers, learners, and materials to promote opportunities to learn (ALLWRIGHT, 1981).

Teaching a second language demands the use of several resources and strategies from teachers in classroom. This is so as learning a foreign language requires exposure, frequent interaction and guided production as essentials experiences to learners. A number of Pedagogical resources as textbooks, dictionaries, authentic texts, multimedia and some new tools as apps and websites are considered valuable sources to teachers and learners involved in the educational environment. Richards (2001) highlights these teaching materials as a crucial component in language programs once they provide most of the basis for language input and practice received by learners.

Tomlinson (2015) clarifies what is the meaning of the term materials and expand the sort of resources that can be included in this definition:

‘Materials’ include anything which can be used to facilitate the learning of a language. They can be linguistic, visual, auditory or kinaesthetic, and they can be presented in print, through live performance or display, or cassette, CD-ROM, or DVD or the internet. They can be instructional, experiential, elicitive or exploratory, in that they can inform learners about the language, they can provide experience of the language in use, they can stimulate language in use, or they can help learners to make discoveries about the language for themselves.

Thus, all resources apart their format, approach or purposes, since they can provide support and improve the learning experience they can be considered materials. This perspective makes a positive parallel with the plentiful and multifarious scenario in which technology portrays a very important role nowadays as it provides a huge variety of tools to enhance the teaching and learning interaction.

Textbooks or coursebooks used to be the most common pedagogical resource which play an important role in classrooms. They can provide a huge variety of activities to improve the four receptive and productive language skills and can guide teachers to manage classes

through its different interaction moments and approaches. Cunningsworth (2008) adds some other multiples roles:

- a resource for presentation material (spoken and written)
- a source of activities for learner practice and communicative interaction
- a reference source for learners on grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, etc
- a source of stimulation and ideas for classroom language activities
- a syllabus (where they reflect learning objectives which have already been determined)
- a resource for self-directed learning or self-access work
- a support for less experienced teachers who have yet to gain in confidence

Besides its different roles, multiple authorship voices also shape the textbooks as diversified approaches, type of educational system, author's experience in classroom, teacher preferences, culture of learners, publisher and market issues, costs of production, authenticity, etc. All these voices lead to conflicting - opposing perspective about the use of textbooks and its relationship with teachers.

Crawford (2002), suggests as a positive view that textbooks can be a valuable structuring tool:

A textbook, from this perspective, does not necessarily drive teaching process, but it does provide the structure and predictability that are necessary to make the event socially tolerable to the participants. It also serves as a useful map of what is indeed and expected, thus allowing participants to see where a lesson fits into the wider context of the language program.

Thus, textbooks can provide a framework that help teachers to organize better the interactive and communicative tasks among learners during classes. Hutchinson and Torres (1994) expands textbooks' role as agents of change since they can lead the introduction of changes gradually in classroom and thus it contributes directly in the teacher's performance and to improve the teaching and learning proposes.

This bright side also includes the visual aspects and quality, the rich and plentiful resources that engage teachers and learners. The plentiful source of input and even, the role as a guide to train inexperienced teachers are other positive aspects listed by Richards (2001). Hence textbooks are powerful allies for teachers to plan their classes and manage the several activities in a very productive and organized way. On the other hand, students have guidelines to self-study, a training source, especially for grammar contents and some contextualized activities.

Therefore, there are countless positive aspects about the textbooks. They represent a valuable source of input and reference for learners which offer content and activities for study and practice, they can even offer guidelines for a self-study. For teachers textbooks provide a

guide that help them to structure the lessons (almost as a syllabus), to manage classes and interactions among students and even to promote changes through the topics covered and discussed.

However, not all perspectives about the use of textbooks are positive. Some of them identify these materials as a restrictive tool, especially, if it is used as a must-follow page-by-page guide.

The danger with ready-made textbooks is that they can seem to absolve teachers of responsibility. Instead of participating in the day-to-day decisions that have to be made about what to teach and how to teach it, it is easy to just sit back and operate the system, secure in the belief that the wise and virtuous people who produce the textbook knew what was good for us. Unfortunately this is rarely the case. (HUNTCHINSON and TORRES, 1994)

This criticism covers different views since the negative author's voice (or even the variety of voices) interference in teachers' role until the fail to represent authentic issues and the lack of topic connected with the learners' needs. Cunningsworth (2008) enlarge the list with some disadvantages of approaches in which the book is followed very closely:

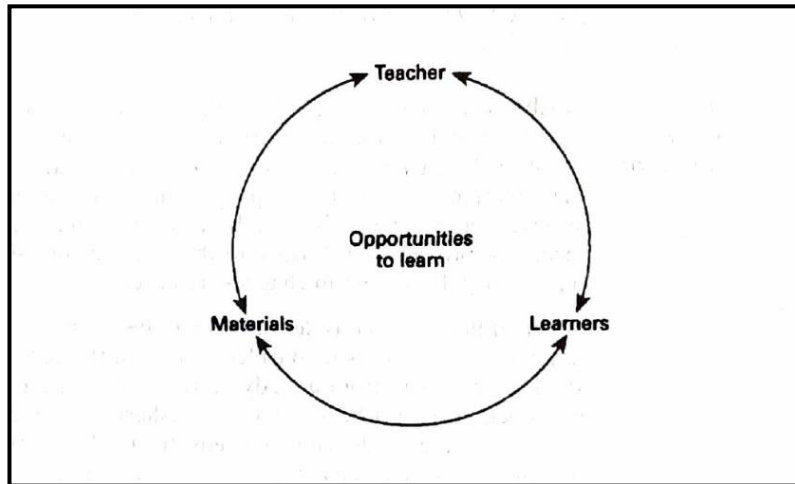
- a possible lack of variety in teaching procedures
- a reduced range of response to individual student needs and problems
- a possible lack of spontaneity
- a source of stimulation and ideas for classroom language activities

All these negative views claim the textbooks as a “debilitating teacher's crutch” as Crawford (2002) mentions in her text; something in which teachers use to help them but in fact it does not provide an increasing in the teaching and learning process. They assert textbooks reduce teachers' autonomy and even deskill them as the classroom decisions may be heavily dependent of these resources. Otherwise, learners may lose their motivation and the language acquisition decreases in spontaneity and real language context and cultural information.

All the negative aspects about textbooks relate them to a restrictive tool that does not allow teachers to be creative and produce authentic contents for classes. According to these criticisms, their interference reduces the role of teachers as mere speaker without any autonomy, and they center all choices in classes about contents, activities, and communicative interactions to the textbooks.

It is up to the teachers choose how to properly use these materials in classroom as the interaction between them and learners provides a valuable source to make the best decisions about which contents and tools can improve and contribute to an effective learning.

Figure 1: A model of the lesson



Source: Adapted from Allwright (1981) by Hutchinson and Torres.

Allwright's model (figure 1) portrays the lesson as a result of an interaction among teacher, learners and materials and how they produce opportunities to learn. It is still updated as it highlights these opportunities as the heart of the learning process. Thus, the pursuit of a balance among the aims of the teacher, the textbook and the needs of the learner it must be the main goal to produce opportunities to learn.

Recently, it was added a different viewpoint to this discussion about the role of the textbook in classroom, as a new perspective emerged, and its role has been changed since last year (2020). The advent of the pandemic context and the lockdown measures imposed by government authorities to avoid a disease outbreak, it led all the society aspects to face huge changes in how to deal to this new contact through distance. More than ever the technology started to mediate the different types of relationships among people at school / work, with family / friends, and even to the extent of provide services.

Almost all educational settings during this period have worked hard to create alternative possibilities especially due the mediation of technological resources which allowed learners and teachers to get in communication even though on distance. On the other hand, teaching and learning had to modify the way how the contents and discussions were presented and sized. The textbooks portrayed different roles simultaneously as not all school could provide online tools neither students got access to internet.

These totally different scenarios brought different approaches of textbooks by teachers and learners. In some contexts, the textbooks were the main material to learners keep studying as for some of them to access the internet was not possible, while at others teachers

had to provide the content through different online platforms in a very understandable and dynamic way to help students and the textbook were a support to produce and adjust contents.

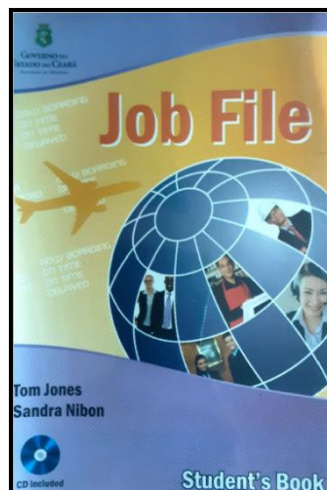
3 METHODOLOGY

This research was setting in a public school that offers high school and professional certificate programs like Nursing, Tourism, Leisure and Hotel Management, Brazilian Sign Language and Information Technology. The Tourism, Leisure and Hotel Management program prepare students as a professional to get a job opportunity in the tourism marketplace. Its curriculum includes many disciplines which promote a solid understanding of this industry. One of them is called Foreign Language course (Applied) in which students spend two years and six months studying English for the specific field of Tourism, Leisure and Hotel Management from a communicative approach.

In this school students who successfully complete three years of study will earn a high school diploma and a certification. The student's workload is full time since the curriculum includes not only the regular high school subjects (Math, History, Chemistry, Biology, etc) but also those ones related to the certificate program. For this research was reported experiences with senior high school students from the Tourism, Leisure and Hotel Management certificate program who were in the last year in which they study disciplines from the certificate program for six months and then they start their experience in the internship.

The pedagogical material for the discipline Foreign Language course (Applied) is a 03-volumes collection composed by CLUE 1, CLUE 2 and Job File (figure 2) each of them used, respectively, for freshman, junior and senior high school levels and specially designed for this discipline. All these coursebooks have as main propose present the grammar content through contextualized texts, listening and speaking activities, in which students will find themes related to the Tourism aspects.

Figure 2: Job File cover



Source: Job File.

For this research, the reference for the experience reported was the third textbook volume, Job File, which is the material that presents a propose most oriented to an English for Specific Purposes since it is used during the last semester of the certificate program when students will be introduced to their first job experience.

Job File, as the other volumes, is composed by a textbook and a CD with all the audios for the listening activities. This volume has forty-five units. Each unit is two-pages (figure 3) composed and all the units are divided in: two or three vocabulary exercises, a fill-in-the-blanks short dialogue(s), two or three exercises about this dialogue, and one grammar questions as a review about a topic studied in the previous years. At the end it is suggested a role play speaking activity based on the model of the dialogue previously presented. After three units there is always an activity to review the content.

Figure 3: A sample of a lesson from Job File

UNIT 1 Welcoming

WORDLIST

1 Match some of the words to the pictures:

a) airport e) cathedral
b) city tour f) market
c) cab g) beach
d) tour guide h) historical center

2 Choose two of the words and give an explanation about them:

An airport is a place where airplanes land.

COMMUNICATION MODEL

3 Listen to the conversations and number the situations they represent:

Taking tourists on a tour.
 Giving information on how to get to the beach.
 Receiving a tourist at the airport.

4 Check (T) true or F (false):

a) Solar Hotel receives their guests at the airport.
b) The tour guide is taking the tourists to the beach.
c) The receptionist gives only one option on how the tourist can get to the beach.
d) The tourist in situation 3 decides to go to the beach by cab.

5 Listen to the conversations again and complete the spaces:

1. A: Excuse me, are you Mr. Peterson?
B: Yes, I am.
A: Hi Mr. Peterson. I'm Julia Costa, from Sunset Resort. _____ to Fortaleza!
B: _____ you very much.
A: Our _____ is waiting outside, Mr. Peterson. Can you follow me?

2. A: Good morning, everyone! My name's Carlos Vasconcelos and I'm your _____ today. How are you all?
B/C: Good, thanks.
A: This is Jonas our _____. He'll take us to the most important _____ in the city.
B: Where exactly are we going to go today?

LANGUAGE FRAMEWORK BE (INTERROGATIVE)
(Go back to CLUE 1 page 15)

6 Put the sentences in order:

1. A: Mrs. Lampkin? / you / Are

B: I / am. / Yes,

2. A: Mr. / Are / Andersen? / you

B: not. / I'm / No,

A: sorry. / I'm

3. A: Is / Hello, / Mr. / this / Silva?

B: he. / is / this / Yes,

A: Well, first of all we'll be visiting the _____, where we are going to see some of the old buildings, and their history.
C: It seems to be interesting. I'm excited.
A: Let us start, then.

3. A: Good morning, Mr. Peterson, how can I _____ you?
B: Good morning! I would like to enjoy a sunny day at the _____ How can I get to Futuro Beach? They told me it's a very beautiful beach with a lot of facilities.
A: Yes, it is. Well, you can catch a _____ on the back street. But if you like, we can call you a _____. As the beach is not very far, it won't be expensive to go there.
B: I'd really appreciate that. Please call the _____.

ROLE PLAY

7 In pairs, choose one of the situations below, prepare it and present it:

Situation 1

STUDENT A

1. You are the hotel representative and are waiting for a guest at the airport. You talk to a person, inquiring if it is the person you are waiting for.
2. You identify yourself.
3. Invite the tourist to follow you to the car and offer to help with the bags.
4. Say if the hotel is close and inform the length of the trip by car. Ask if the trip was good.

STUDENT B

1. You are a tourist arriving at the airport. You say that you are the person the rep. is waiting for.
2. Show surprise and excitement.
3. Accept the help and ask if the hotel is close.
4. Say if the trip was good and say if you are tired.

Situation 2

STUDENT A

1. Greet the tourist and say you are the tour guide.
2. Inform them of the place where you are going to take them to.
3. Inform them of the beginning and ending time.
4. Inform them that there is a place and the kinds of souvenirs the tourist may find there.

STUDENT B

1. Ask where you are going to go that morning.
2. Ask information on the length of the tour.
3. Ask to stop in a place to buy souvenirs.
4. Show excitement and ask to start a.s.a.p.

Source: Job File.

Last year, due the pandemic context classes had to be abruptly interrupted at schools and the education had to be managed from distance through online platforms and tools. All the content and activities proposed by the Job File textbook had to be adjusted in a new layout to present its discussions and approaches. In this new context, textbooks are the basis to teachers adjust the content to the digital platforms. They work mainly as a syllabus from which the contents and activities are selected. However, this distance learning demands new approaches and tools to make the information completely clear, and to keep motivating learners to study.

This paper is a descriptive research based on the personal experience report of this author as a teacher in a professional public school in Fortaleza. It presents the steps and choices followed to cover the content of the discipline Foreign Language course (Applied) during a pandemic year in which the distance learning format had to be adopted by educational institutions. It is also reported how the textbook Job File and its content was used and adjusted to meet its proposes. All the information described in this paper were obtained by a participant observation as teacher with senior high school students for six months and registered in lessons plans, online platforms and the means of communication with learners.

4 DISCUSSION

Foreign Language course (Applied) is part of the curriculum for senior high school student level from the Tourism, Leisure and Hotel Management certificate program for six months as they are in last year of the program and after that they must start their experience in the internship. The discipline time load is eight hours per week, four of these hours are used in classes with all students together and the other four hours are classes with half students (two hours with each half). These different classroom moments are especially important since, in general, every single year the classes present about 40 students. This huge number of learners makes the communicative goals difficult to be achieved.

When there are all students in classroom, the focus is to cover contents as grammar, short readings, vocabulary, and exposed them to different context of use of the language and present important features to learners understand and correctly express themselves using English. On the other hand, the classes in which there is only half students are for communicative tasks as the number of students are small and it is possible to track cautiously the learning process and to provide a more accurate feedback about their personal performance. In this last layout, students are invited to take part in different interactive proposes of using of the language.

In both moments, the textbook Job File has been a valuable framework of the contents and powerful tool for classes for many reasons: firstly, it presents a content in which vocabulary and context of communication are related to the local culture and reality as it is a textbook produced by the Secretary of State for Education (SEDUC); second, it proposes activities which focuses on different language skills and leaning aspects (since vocabulary until grammar topics), and finally, it stimulates students to participate actively through interactive contextualized activities of using of the language.

However, some changes happened about the approach of the classes and the use of the textbooks when on March 18th the professional public school, in which this paper is based on, decided to cancel the in-person classes according to the social distancing measures established by the government to avoid a disease outbreak in Fortaleza. That time it was believed that this will last one week, so the first school guidance was to ask students to take all textbooks to home and teachers had to assign some activities about the least content covered, as everyone believed that briefly everything would be back to the common daily routine.

During this first week without classroom students were assigned with exercises from Job File textbook whose content they had already been presented to promote some practice and to prevent them from being idle.

Nevertheless, after one week the expectation of a return to the daily face-to-face routine was not defined. Thus, the pedagogical supervisors and teachers realized that they had to keep the classes going on in somehow. They needed to find an alternative, but the challenges were multiples: firstly, nobody was prepared for this change that affected all the relationships in society and demanded the large use of technology to keep in contact due this social distance. The second huge obstacle was that the internet access was not a common reality among students in a public school in which most of them live in a poor economic context.

Thus, the first step proposed towards to the distance education model was to create WhatsApp groups to keep in contact with most of students possible and their parents. It was created one group for each class and even to each subject. The class schedule kept the same. It was also decided that as the return to in-person classes was unpredictable all teachers had to plan activities for three weeks. These ones had to be indicated from textbooks and students had to send the picture of all the activities made by e-mail or WhatsApp.

This three-week lesson plan (figure 4) for LEA discipline was hard to be design as the Job File textbook did not present explanation about the contents but only a huge variety of exercises to review grammar topics previously studied and vocabulary, listening and role play proposes. For this lesson plan the review section (Portfolio) of the textbook was especially useful as the activities promote not only review questions, but also stimulate the production of some short writing texts about the content.

Figure 4: Sample of a three-week lesson plan (first week)

<p>ORIENTAÇÃO DE ESTUDOS (3º ano – Hospedagem)</p> <p>DISCIPLINA: Língua Estrangeira Aplicada – LEA</p> <p>PROFESSORA: Raquel Maria Gadelha de Sousa</p>	<p>PERÍODO:</p> <p>18 de Março - 03 de Abril de 2020</p>
<p>PERÍODO: 18 – 20 DE MARÇO</p> <p>CONTEÚDO: revisão de conteúdos já ministrados em sala de aula, versando sobre vocabulário e contextos comunicativos dos serviços e facilidades do hotel.</p> <p>ATIVIDADES: resolução das atividades das páginas 16, 17, 18, 19 e 99. Todas as atividades estão disponíveis em formato <i>pdf</i>, assim como seus respectivos áudios em formato <i>mp3</i>, no <i>link</i> abaixo (pasta compartilhada no <i>Google Drive</i>).</p> <p>OBSERVAÇÃO: Utilizar as anotações de sala de aula para resolução das atividades, especialmente, gramaticais. Nos exercícios de compreensão auditiva (<i>listening</i>), ouvir, pelo menos duas vezes, sendo que na primeira não visualizar o <i>script</i> do livro. Nas atividades comunicativas (<i>speaking</i>), praticar como atividade individual ou valer-se de ferramentas de interação social para prática com os colegas de classe.</p> <p>LINK: https://drive.google.com/open?id=1AizhxiimROa2KN5ecDd9YAErYi4reD4I</p> <p>REFERÊNCIAS:</p> <p>JONES, Tom; NIBON, Sandra. <i>Job File – student’s book</i>. Fortaleza: SEDUC- CE.</p>	

Source: Document from the author.

The Portfolio pages (figure 5) from the Job File textbook are composed by associated activities and translation ones about expression and vocabulary. In the end there is always a speaking propose which led students to plan short, contextualized dialogues. Besides grammar and vocabulary activities were also added to this 03-weeks lesson plan. All these activities were registered in a document with some guidance about how to study the content and solve the activities. The resources (audios and textbook pages) were also available by means of Google Drive.

Figure 5: Sample of a Portfolio page and its activities

Portfolio 1

TEST YOURSELF

1 Which information do you have to ask the guest at the booking time? How do you ask it? Make a list:

Things you ask	How you ask them
1 Name	What is your name ma'am / sir?
2	
3	
4	

2 Which questions would you have asked if your guest gave the responses below?

Questions	Responses
1	For 4 nights.
2	L - E - E
3	I would like to stay in a single room, please.
4	No, thank you.
5	It's 555 - 3257.

USEFUL LANGUAGE

3 Read the expressions and translate them into your own language:

- Excuse me, are you Mr. Peterson?
- Welcome to Fortaleza!
- Let us start, then.
- How can I help you?
- Can I have your passport, please?
- I'm sorry Ma'am, I'll change that.
- Enjoy your stay, Ms. Sullivan.
- May I help you with your baggage?

SPEAKING PRACTICE

4 In groups follow the pictures below to create a situation based in what you studied in lessons 1, 2 and 3:

a b c d

98

GOVERNAMENTO DO ESTADO DO CEARÁ

Source: Job File.

In April, the Secretary of State for Education (SEDUC) got a Google for Education suite pack license which allowed schools to create virtual classrooms, to broadcast live classes and to storage online folds unlimited. During this month, the main goals were to get teachers and students familiarized with this online platform, exploring its features, and trying to understand it. So, on this first moment the WhatsApp was still the main online tool to get in contact with students and to post contents and activities.

As the classes schedule kept the same and during this first moment the main online platform to contact students was the WhatsApp, all LEA classes were organized in different moments: some to post resources for study and recorded audio with briefly explanation and others to answer doubts from students. It was chosen videos, sites, and digitalized pages from

other textbooks to cover the contents presented, all this material was available in the Google Drive. The activities were assigned in two different proposes: questions selected from the textbooks as some students could not use the Internet frequently; and activities created or adapted to online questionnaire on Google Forms.

During the last two months (May and June) students and teachers were more adapted to the education distance model. Every student and teacher had an institutional email address, and all the contents and classes resources were upload at Google Classroom. WhatsApp started to work as a bulletin board. Online questionnaire got more frequently as they provide a quick activity for students answer and easily for teachers give a feedback. However as not always students could access the Internet frequently for many reasons specially for a limited Internet pack access or for not owning a mobile phone, most of the tasks proposed were selected from textbooks (figure 6).

Figure 6: Sample of a content available in Google Classroom (print)

GIVING DIRECTIONS (vocabulário)

RAQUEL MARIA GADELHA DE SOUSA • 26 de mai. de 2020 Editado às 9 de jun. de 2020

Expressões e vocabulário sobre como solicitar e fornecer informações sobre direções e localização. Segue abaixo diversas fontes de estudo (links) sobre o conteúdo.

REFERÊNCIAS:

- Só Língua Inglesa (site)
- EF English Live (site)


Direções - Directions - Só Lí...
<https://www.solinguainglesa.co...>


Direções - Directions (conti...
<https://www.solinguainglesa.co...>


Direções - Directions (conti...
<https://www.solinguainglesa.co...>


Expressões em inglês para p...
<https://englishlive.ef.com/pt-br/b...>

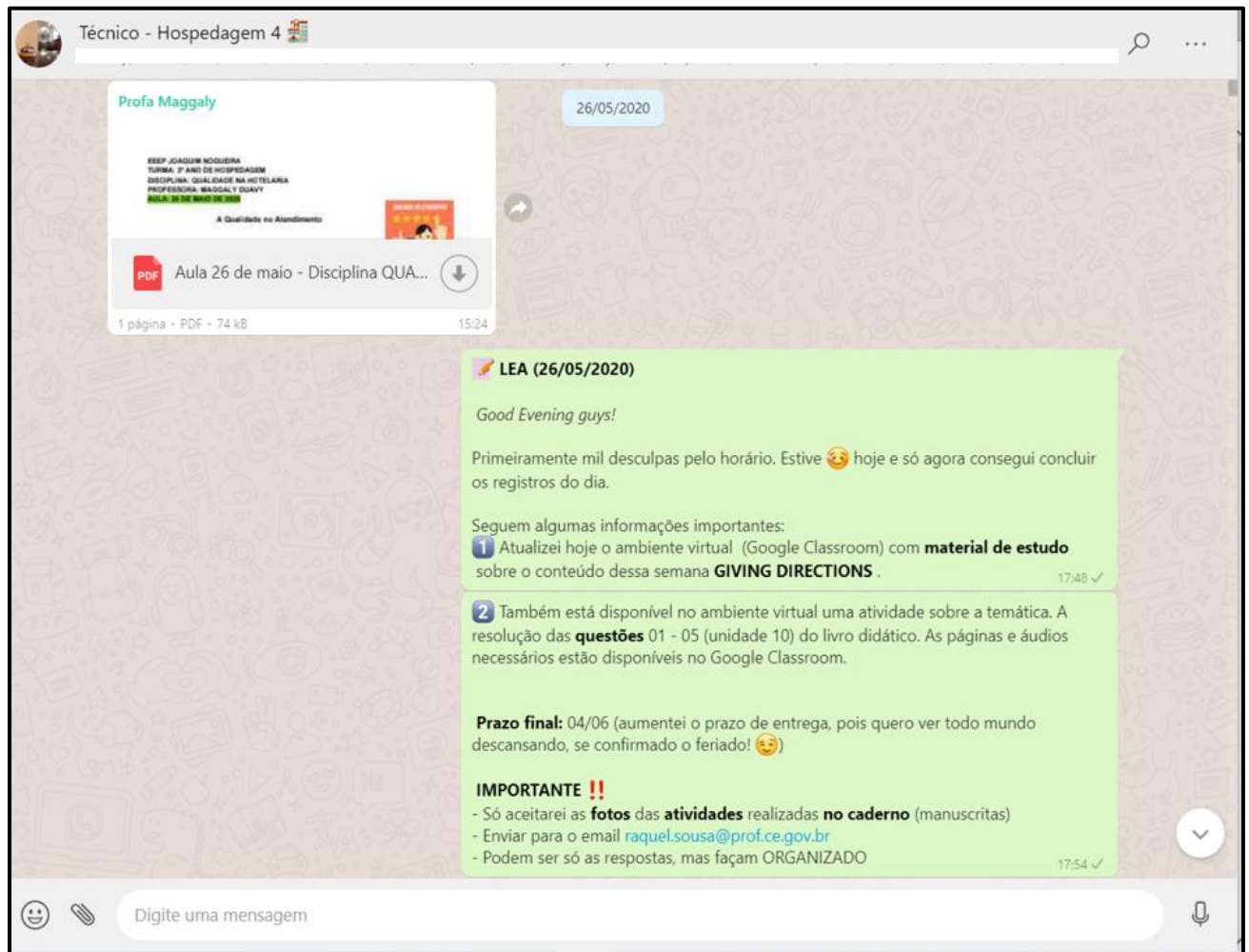

Left ou right: o caminho em i...
<https://englishlive.ef.com/pt-br/b...>

Source: Document from the author.

The speaking and listening proposes were adapted with tasks in which students had to record and send short audios (figure 7) or receive scheduled calls to use the language in contextualized interactions like to provide information about the hotel or helping guests to make a reservation. Once the teacher had to provide an individual feedback for each student, this model of activities was not so frequently as they demanded time to be applied and to correct

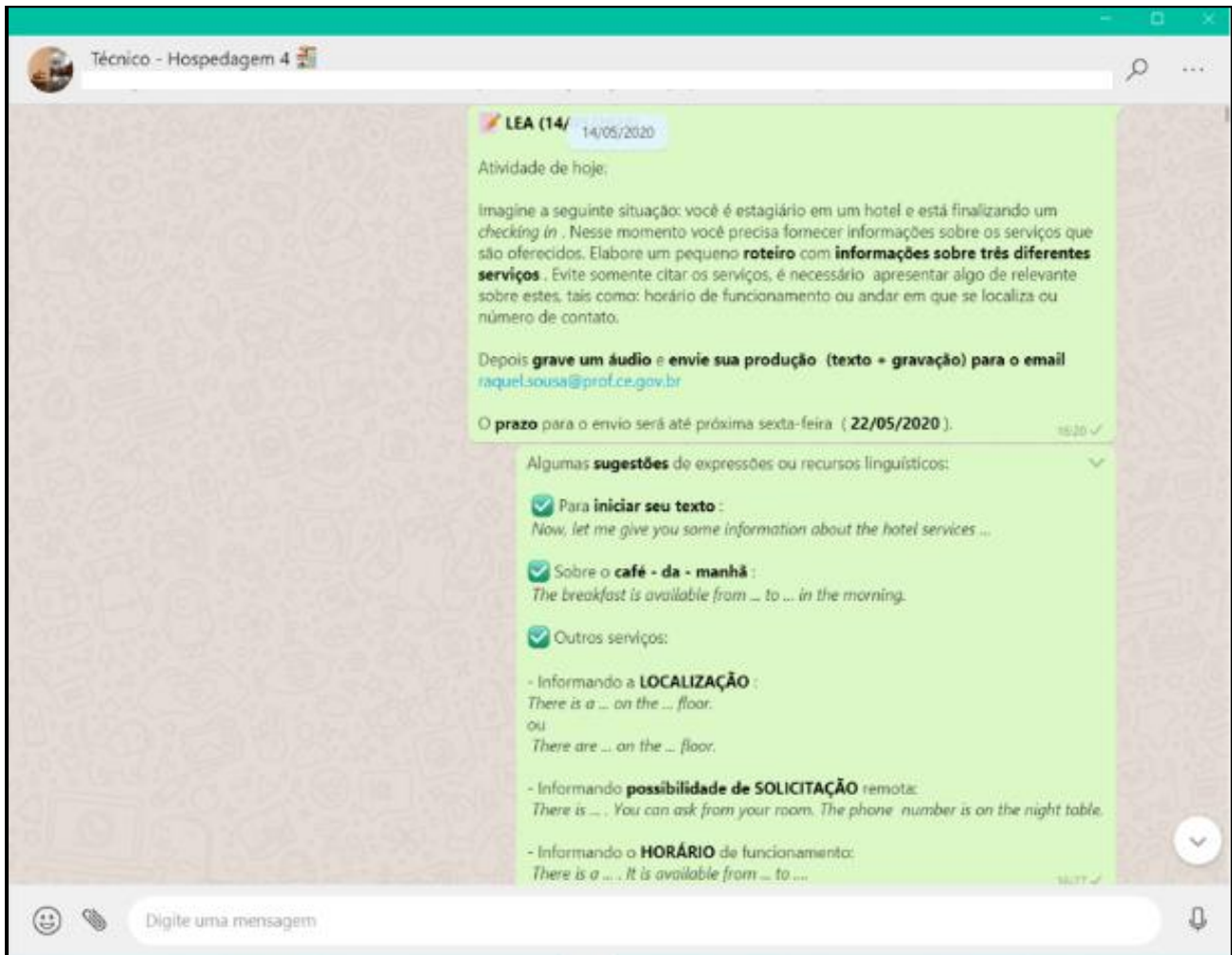
and send the feedback. Live virtual classes were also possible, but they only happened every two weeks.

Figure 7: Guidelines for textbooks activities assigned on 26/05/2020 at WhatsApp group (print)



Source: Document from the author.

Figure 8: Guidelines for a speaking activity assigned on 14/05/2020 at WhatsApp group (print)



Source: Document from the author.

5 FINAL REMARKS

Textbooks are valuable pedagogical resources to teach and learn a foreign language as they provide support for learners and teachers. These materials offer different types of input and promote a contextualized learning. They work as a guide, almost a syllabus, that teachers and learners usually take as a compass. For learners, a source of content, activities, interactions and communicative tasks or guidelines for self-study. For teachers, a framework to better plan lessons, a bottom line to manage classes and interactions among students and the basis to promote changes through the topics covered and discussed. All these multiples roles portrayed by textbooks it shows how versatile they can be. Although there are some viewpoints that criticize the textbooks, they are still extremely relevant to the teaching-learning process of a foreign language, specially, because they are one of the most popular and accessible material for education.

In a public school in which pedagogical materials are not so plentiful, textbooks are the main tool in classes, they represent the principal source of activities, contents, cultural information, and contextualized interactions for learners. For teachers it usually represents a framework to organize contents and to guide the teaching approaches. Although sometimes there are not textbooks for all students, the classes are developed using them as a basis. This idea can be confirmed even when we look at the classroom layout that is defined according to the availability of these materials (students may be seat in pairs to share textbooks, for instance).

Last year (2020), the pandemic context that required from everyone to stay home and changed completely all the sorts of relationships in society, it also brought a totally new scenario for education as the field had to keep on but then from a distance teaching and learning model mediated by technology. The sudden change was a huge challenge for all educational institutions as they had to adjust completely their methodologies and strategies. However, for public schools this new scenario had an extra challenge as most of their students do not have freely access to Internet and sometimes not even a device to surf on Internet.

These difficulties that teachers had to face while adjusting classes to the new scenario of distance education and, specially, some roles of textbooks during this moment were reported by the personal experience and perspective of this author working as a teacher in a professional public school teaching English by means of the steps and pedagogical choices followed and registered in lessons plans, online platforms and the means of communication with students.

Along this report it is possible realize that the role of the textbook changed once it was not the main protagonist that intermediate the relationship between learners and teachers. The distance learning format required that all the roles until then played by the textbook as the main source of input, a reference of activities, contents and interactions tasks for learners and the principal resource for teachers manage classes and produce lesson plans it became portrayed by others pedagogical resources like online platforms, sites, and apps. These other sources were more relevant to the new educational format.

In this new context the textbook portrayed a supporting role in which its contents provided part of the basis needed to adjust the information to the new online sources that were the main intermediate to promote learning opportunities during the distance education model. Sites, videos, online platforms, and apps started to play the role as main pedagogical material until then predominantly portrayed by textbooks.

On the one hand it is also important highlight that for some students, the textbook kept being the principal source of input in which they could find activities and information about any contents, once they could not access frequently the online resources.

The change in the protagonism of textbook during the pandemic context and the respective distance education led to an important remark: the textbooks are still a valuable and reliable source of input to teach and learning a foreign language, specially, in a public school. Not even the advent of a context in which other materials are required to intermediate the educational process excluded its presence.

This paper intended to promote a brief reflection about the roles of textbooks during pandemic year and how they still are relevant to the learning and teaching of a second language, especially in public schools. It is expected that others research can explore different aspects about these pedagogical resources mainly in this recent scenario in which education has had face a huge challenge to recreated and reinvented itself to achieve its main goals.

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