

Política Nacional de Alfabetização (PNA): posicionamentos da ABAlf sobre os possíveis retroprocessos da PNA

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RESUMO

Este artigo objetiva apresentar uma sistematização dos posicionamentos realizados pela Associação Brasileira de Alfabetização, entre os anos de 2020 e 2023, referentes aos possíveis retroprocessos que a Política Nacional de Alfabetização e seus desdobramentos poderiam provocar na educação brasileira. Neste estudo, de abordagem qualitativa, por meio de pesquisa documental, foram analisados quatro posicionamentos publicados pela citada Associação. Dentre as principais conclusões obtidas, restou claro que para a Associação Brasileira de Alfabetização, a alfabetização precisa ser tratada como prioridade política e precisa ser vista nas suas diferentes possibilidades. Os resultados evidenciam ainda, que a referida Associação manifestou, por meio de seus posicionamentos, suas preocupações no que toca as possíveis rupturas e retroprocessos que a Política Nacional de Alfabetização poderia causar ao campo da alfabetização e reiterou a necessidade do debate e do diálogo na luta por uma alfabetização democrática e inclusiva.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Alfabetização. Política Nacional de Alfabetização. Políticas Públicas de Alfabetização.

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National Literacy Policy (NLP): ABAlf's positions on possible NLP setbacks

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ABSTRACT

This article aims to systematize the positions adopted by the Brazilian Literacy Association between 2020 and 2023 regarding the potential setbacks that the National Literacy Policy and its implications could bring to Brazilian education. In this qualitative study, based on documentary research, four position papers published by the aforementioned Association were analyzed. Among the main findings, it became evident that, for the Brazilian Literacy Association, literacy must be treated as a political priority and understood in its diverse dimensions. The results also highlight that the Association expressed concerns, through its position papers, about the possible disruptions and regressions that the National Literacy Policy could cause in the field of literacy. Furthermore, the Association reiterated the need for debate and dialogue in the pursuit of democratic and inclusive literacy.

KEYWORDS: Literacy. National Literacy Policy. Public Literacy Policies.

Política Nacional de Alfabetización (PNA): posicionamiento de ABAlf ante los posibles retrocesos del PNA

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RESUMEN

Este artículo tiene como objetivo presentar una sistematización de los posicionamientos realizados por la Asociación Brasileña de Alfabetización, entre los años 2020 y 2023, respecto de los posibles retrocesos que la Política Nacional de Alfabetización y sus consecuencias podrían provocar en la educación brasileña. En este estudio, con un enfoque cualitativo, a través de una investigación documental, se analizaron cuatro posicionamientos publicados por la citada Asociación. Entre las principales conclusiones obtenidas, quedó claro que para la Asociación Brasileña de Alfabetización, la alfabetización debe ser tratada como una prioridad política y debe ser vista en sus diferentes posibilidades. Los resultados también muestran que la citada Asociación expresó, a través de sus posicionamientos, su preocupación por las posibles rupturas y retrocesos que la Política Nacional de Alfabetización podría causar en el ámbito de la alfabetización y reiteró la necesidad del debate y diálogo en la lucha por una alfabetización democrática e inclusiva.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Alfabetización. Política Nacional de Alfabetización. Políticas Públicas de Alfabetización.

Introduction

The present article³ aims to address the positions published by the Brazilian Association of Literacy (ABAlf) on its website, from 2020 to 2023, regarding its concern about the possible setbacks and ruptures that the National Literacy Policy (PNA), now already repealed, could bring to the field of literacy.

According to the ABAlf website, as well as the technical report técnico 'Gestão 2020-2021'⁴ (Martins Filho; Barros-Mendes; Mafra, 2022), ABAlf is an institution that believes in collective literacy, fights against any form of discrimination and prejudice, and seeks to promote the integration of researchers, students, and teachers⁵ from the country's basic education networks, in addition to coordinating and fostering research and public policies in the field of literacy in Brazil.

Regarding the PNA, it is a policy that, as stated by Professor Maria do Rosario Longo Mortatti (2020, p. 27), "was instituted by presidential decree, without broad discussion with representatives from the academic and scientific community and with literacy educators," leaving schools, and consequently teachers, without the power of choice. Although the Decree states that participation is voluntary, it is well known that only the schools that joined the program would have access to federal government funds and resources, which, in the words of Professor Artur Gomes de Moraes (2019, p. 66), would be "blatantly undemocratic."

Presenting only the phonics method as a way of teaching literacy, the PNA disregards everything that has already been discussed regarding literacy and literacy practices. As Magda Soares (2011, p. 16) teaches us, "a person who is only capable of decoding visual symbols into auditory symbols [...] would not be considered 'literate'." Soares also states that literacy is "[...] a complex process. It is [...] the subject of study for several sciences and [...] we must also consider the social and political aspects that condition learning, in school, of reading and writing" (Soares, 2011, p. 21).

In this sense, ABAlf, through its positions, as presented in this article, argues that the scientific trajectory of professionals working in the field cannot be disregarded, nor the scientific trajectory and the practice of the policies already implemented in the country, dismissing all existing discussions on literacy and proposing only one perspective.

³ This article is derived from a study conducted in the Graduate Program in Education at the State University of Santa Catarina (UDESC).

⁴ Available at: https://www.abalf.org.br/_files/ugd/64d1da_6c662b32d6f54bd0916abcf7b24e670f.pdf. Accessed on June 30, 2023.

⁵ We emphasize that, for the authors of this work, 'teachers and researchers' refers to both men and women who study and/or work as education professionals in the field of literacy.

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To achieve the objective proposed in this research, the study is organized as follows: it presents the methodology used, followed by the theoretical framework; next, the results and discussions are presented, and finally, the conclusions and references used are provided.

It is hoped that by reading this article, it will be possible to identify, through the positions of ABAlf that will be presented below, the importance of the Association's struggle concerning its tireless effort to engage with the policymakers at the time of the positions, in an attempt to critically demonstrate the possible impacts that the PNA could cause to Brazilian education and, thus, contribute to literacy policies in the country.

It is also hoped that the study presented here will demonstrate the relevance of the work carried out by ABAlf regarding its fight for a democratic and inclusive literacy as a right for all, and serve as a catalyst for the production of further research on the work carried out by this Institution. It also aims to highlight the importance of dialogue with specialists who contribute to research in the field of literacy in Brazil, thus contributing to the country's programs and public policies.

Methodology

This article sought to highlight the importance of the positions taken by ABAlf regarding the National Literacy Policy.

Antônio Joaquim Severino (2010) explains that scientific articles are documents to be published in scientific journals and periodicals. For the author, this "type of work aims to register and disseminate, to a specialized audience, the results of new studies and research on aspects that have not yet been adequately explored or providing new clarifications [...]" (Severino, 2010, p. 208).

In this perspective, ABAlf's positions are published on its website and sent via email to its members, aiming to reach teachers, researchers, and others interested in literacy issues. For this study, positions were selected in which ABAlf, through its leaders, expressed their concerns regarding the National Literacy Policy, the legislation in force at the time, and its developments, from both political and academic perspectives.

Thus, this article, with a qualitative approach, is characterized as documentary research, as the texts analyzed "have not yet undergone any analytical treatment; they are still raw material from which the researcher will develop their investigation and analysis" (Severino, 2010, p. 122-123). In this sense, a thorough reading of the documents available on ABAlf's website was conducted, and a

National Literacy Policy (NLP): ABAlf's positions on possible NLP setbacks systematization of the four positions of the Association, published between 2020 and 2023, was made, all related to the PNA and its developments, in dialogue with authors from the field of literacy.

It is important to highlight that a search was conducted on the Capes Journal Portal and the Scielo Database, using the time frame from 2019, the year the PNA was implemented, to 2024, the current year. Various articles were found in these databases, which sought to analyze the aforementioned National Literacy Policy. However, the goal of this study was to present a systematization of ABAlf's positions between 2020 and 2023 regarding the possible setbacks that the PNA and its developments could cause to the field of literacy. Therefore, it was necessary to use specific keywords to find the desired research. Thus, the terms "Associação Brasileira de Alfabetização" were searched, both with and without quotation marks. Specifically regarding ABAlf's statements on the PNA, no articles were found. However, it is worth mentioning the existence of the special edition of the *Revista Brasileira de Alfabetização* (issue no. 10), which sought to present texts from various Brazilian researchers and teachers on the National Literacy Policy, an edition that will be addressed in the following chapters.

Theoretical Perspectives

Magda Becker Soares (2003, p. 15) teaches us that literacy is the "process of acquiring the written code, the skills of reading and writing." Furthermore, the author states that "[...] until the 1980s, literacy was considered the deciphering and encoding of a code: relating speech sounds to the letters of the alphabetic system, and not a system of representation that needs to be understood" (Soares, 2020, p. 10).

However, still in the 1980s,

[...] it was assumed that the almost exclusive focus until then on learning the alphabetic system [...] was not enough to form readers and text producers. Although literate, children and young people, as they continued their schooling, and adults who were already educated, revealed an inability to respond adequately to the many varied demands of reading and writing in not only school practices but also social and professional ones. (Soares, 2020, p.11).

Soares (2020, p. 11-12) states that it is necessary to connect literacy to what the author called literacy practices, "understood as the explicit and systematic development of reading and writing skills and strategies. In other words [...] to know and learn their social uses: to read, interpret, and produce texts." Soares (2020) further explains that "[...] the child learns to read and write by engaging

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in literacy activities, that is, reading and producing real texts, engaging in social practices of reading and writing" (Soares, 2020, p. 27).

We agree with Albuquerque and Costa (2021, p. 493), who state that the PNA imposes a literacy proposal detached from literacy practices. For the authors, the National Literacy Policy prioritized "a phonics teaching method without opening up to literacy practices, disregarding the interactions of individuals with written culture in specific school and extracurricular contexts [...]" (Albuquerque and Costa, 2021, p. 493).

In this logic, as Martins Filho (2016, p. 1) asserts, "literacy goes beyond being considered a simple process of learning to read and write a historically determined language." The author further states that "the dimension of literacy has expanded, and today, [...] it is a fundamental element in the ongoing creation and recreation of society, being the responsibility of all actors and social institutions" (Martins Filho, 2016, p. 1).

In this sense, for professor and researcher Isabel Cristina Alves da Silva Frade (2020, p. 125), the PNA presented "reductionisms and erasures of various orders: semantic, conceptual, pedagogical, epistemological, and above all, of practices and research developed in Brazil and abroad on literacy." Frade (2020, p. 125) further states that this policy "narrows the focus on reading skills, without considering the social and cultural aspects that impact the cognitive development of groups, reducing reading and writing practices to skills separate from social practice.".

Brazilian Association of Literacy

The Brazilian Association of Literacy (ABAlf), as stated in its Statute, is a civil association, non-profit, a private legal entity, established by Assembly, directed and managed by its Board, and assisted by its Fiscal Council. From 2020 to 2023, ABAlf maintained its headquarters at the Center for Human Sciences and Education (FAED) at the State University of Santa Catarina (UDESC), where its last president⁶, professor Dr. Lourival José Martins Filho, held a position.

According to the Association's statute and the technical report 'Management 2020 – 2021' (Martins Filho; Barros-Mendes; Mafra, 2022, p. 15-16), ABAlf is an institution that seeks to

⁶ In June 2023, Professor Dr. Adelma das Neves Nunes Barros Mendes (UNIFAP), who held the position of vice president of the institution, assumed the presidency of ABAlf. The headquarters of ABAlf remained the same until the end of the 2022-2023 term.

National Literacy Policy (NLP): ABAlf's positions on possible NLP setbacks coordinate and promote research and public policies in the field of literacy, with the following objectives,

- I. to bring together Brazilian professionals engaged in research, teaching, and other activities related to Literacy, involving, among others, researchers, higher education and basic education teachers, associations/unions, and non-governmental organizations related to teaching;
- II. to establish itself as a reference for discussions and proposals related to Literacy and related processes, concerning information, data, and positions demanded by researchers, higher education and basic education teachers, associations/unions, and non-governmental organizations related to teaching;
- III. to strengthen the political dimension of Literacy in Brazil, especially in relation to public policies and actions aimed at overcoming the still significant rates of absolute illiteracy and functional illiteracy, by exercising critical, political, articulated, assertive, and representative positions;
- IV. to conduct and encourage studies on Literacy in its different facets and theoretical perspectives and approaches;
- V. to foster critical attitudes and theoretical pluralism in addressing the different aspects related to Literacy;
- VI. to promote exchanges with similar national and international associations;
- VII. to provide means for appropriate articulation between the production of knowledge on literacy and educational and policy demands, without prejudice to ABAlf's political and scientific autonomy, and promoting the participation of specialists from related fields;
- VIII. to carry out and encourage different forms of dissemination and information on academic-scientific production and didactic-pedagogical actions and other initiatives related to Literacy; and
- IX. to organize and promote academic-scientific events, courses, and other similar initiatives, possibly interacting with similar associations aimed at the production and updating of knowledge as well as the socialization of experiences in the field (ABAlf, Cap. I, art. 3º, 2021).

According to information from the ABAlf technical report 'Management 2020-2021,' the Association is an institution that [...] brings together professionals engaged in teaching and research activities related to literacy and aims to establish itself as a reference for discussions on the theme of literacy and related processes [...] (Martins Filho; Barros-Mendes; Mafra, 2022, p.16).

In this sense, ABAlf is responsible for organizing the Brazilian Literacy Congress (CONBAlf), a scientific and pedagogical event held every two years by this Association, which aims to provide a

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space for dialogue and discussion between teachers, students, and specialists in the field, on relevant topics related to literacy. ABAlf is also responsible for the editing and publication of the Revista Brasileira de Alfabetização (RBA), which, as stated on its website⁷ is a scientific journal published biannually, focused on disseminating academic-scientific production that seeks to contribute to reflections on the different dimensions of literacy.

Currently, ABAlf has 480 members⁸, including researchers, higher education and basic education teachers, undergraduate students, graduate students, and other interested individuals in the field.

The Managements of ABAlf during the period covered by this study (2020-2023)

Elected by the ABAlf's associate members on November 18, 2019, through a Public Session, the slate titled "Literacy in Continuous Dialogue" won with 100% of valid votes to assume the Board, Regional Representatives, and the Fiscal Council of ABAlf for the 2020-2021 term. For the 2022-2023 term, the slate titled "Literacy in Continuous Dialogue – Management 2022-2023" also won the election with 100% of valid votes. In both terms, the configuration of ABAlf's board included Professor Dr. Lourival José Martins Filho, from UDESC, as president, and Professor Dr. Adelma das Neves Nunes Barros Mendes, from the Federal University of Amapá (UNIFAP), as vice-president.

During the years 2020 to 2023, under the presidency of the mentioned management teams, several documents were produced in which ABAlf, representing thousands of literacy teachers in Brazil, publicly expressed its views, aiming to contribute to the country's public policies and fighting for equal literacy opportunities for all. In addition, acting as a space for professional development, especially for literacy teachers, ABAlf provided various books, informational cards, and links to videos addressing the theme of literacy during the mentioned time period.

Two editions of CONBALf were held under the presidency of the 2020-2021 and 2022-2023 managements of ABAlf. The first edition took place in 2021, held online⁹, via ABAlf's YouTube channel, and the second was held in person at the Federal University of Pará (UFPA) in the city of Belém/PA in August 2023. In these events, there was extensive discussion on literacy and public

⁷ Available at: <https://www.abalf.org.br/revista>. Accessed on August 25, 2024.

⁸ Available at: <https://www.abalf.org.br/associados>. Accessed on July 10, 2023.

⁹ In 2021, a pandemic caused by a highly infectious virus, popularly known as COVID-19, was taking place worldwide. Due to this, the aforementioned Congress, which was initially planned to be held entirely in person at the State University of Santa Catarina (UDESC) in the city of Florianópolis/SC, had to be reorganized to take place online.

National Literacy Policy (NLP): ABAlf's positions on possible NLP setbacks policies related to this theme, intensifying the dialogue among literacy teachers, undergraduate and graduate students, and experts in the field.

During the mentioned management periods, ten editions (Nos. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, and 21) of the Revista Brasileira de Alfabetização (RBA)¹⁰, were published, which presented important reflections on literacy issues in their various articles. Additionally, from 2020 to 2023, ABAlf held several live sessions on its YouTube channel, providing opportunities for discussion on topics within the field of literacy.

The 2020-2021 and 2022-2023 managements of ABAlf had/have as their Patron the professor Paulo Freire, a great educator and patron of Brazilian education, and as Honorary President, Professor Dr. Magda Becker Soares, a researcher, author of several books, and a reference in the field of literacy in Brazil. The Emeritus Presidents of ABAlf, in both managements, were/are Professors Dr. Cláudia Maria Mendes Gontijo, from the Federal University of Espírito Santo (UFES), Isabel Cristina Alves da Silva Frade, from the Federal University of Minas Gerais (UFMG), and Maria do Rosário Longo Mortatti, from the São Paulo State University (UNESP).

On June 14, 2023, Professor Dr. Lourival José Martins Filho was invited to join the Board of Teacher Training at the Secretariat of Basic Education (SEB) of the Ministry of Education (MEC) and, for this reason, left the presidency of ABAlf. The vice-president of ABAlf, Professor Dr. Adelma das Neves Nunes Barros Mendes, then assumed the presidency of the institution.

The National Literacy Policy (PNA)

The National Literacy Policy (PNA) was established through Decree No. 9,765 on April 11, 2019. Article 1 of the referred Decree stated

[...] the National Literacy Policy, through which the Union, in collaboration with the States, the Federal District, and Municipalities, will implement programs and actions aimed at promoting literacy based on scientific evidence, with the purpose of improving the quality of literacy nationwide and combating absolute illiteracy and functional illiteracy, within the scope of the different stages and modalities of basic education and non-formal education (Brasil, 2019).

The Decree also stated, in Article 4, that the objectives of the PNA are

¹⁰ Available at: <https://revistaabalf.com.br/index.html/index.php/rabalf/issue/archive>. Accessed on August 23, 2024.

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I - to raise the quality of teaching and learning in the scope of literacy, literacy skills, and numeracy, especially in the early years of elementary education, through scientifically grounded approaches;

[...]

III - to ensure the right to literacy in order to promote citizenship and contribute to the social and economic development of the country;

IV - to positively impact learning throughout the entire educational journey, at its different stages and levels; and

V - to promote the study, dissemination, and application of scientific knowledge on literacy, literacy skills, and numeracy (Brasil, 2019).

The following are developments of the PNA: the "Tempo de Aprender" program, which, according to official documents, aims to address the main challenges found in the literacy process, such as: the lack of teacher training, the shortage of materials and resources, among others; the "Conta pra Mim" program, which aims to promote family literacy practices, that is, to encourage parents, mothers, and guardians to read to children; the 2022 National Program for Textbooks and Educational Materials (PNLD) (Early Childhood Education), which, according to the MEC website¹¹, is aimed at "evaluating and making available didactic, pedagogical, and literary works [...] to public basic education schools [...] and also to community, confessional, or philanthropic early childhood education institutions [...]"; the "Graphogame" app, a tool that promised to teach literacy in six months; and the ABC Program – Science-Based Literacy, a program that strongly negates everything that has already been built regarding literacy, disrespecting the efforts of Brazilian teachers and researchers dedicated to teaching, research, and extension in this field.

In 2019, the year the PNA was implemented, ABAlf published issue¹² No. 10 of the Revista Brasileira de Alfabetização, which featured a special edition where the articles published in this scientific journal specifically explored the National Literacy Policy as their theme. In this special edition, with the aim of reinforcing their commitments to advocating for literacy as a right for all, several teachers linked to the Association, in addition to other researchers, expressed their political and academic views on the PN.

Professor Artur Moraes (2019) explained in his article published in the referred issue No. 10 of RBA, that the PNA presented a very simplistic view of phonemic awareness. For Moraes (2019, p.

¹¹ Available at: <http://portal.mec.gov.br/busca-geral/318-programas-e-acoes-1921564125/pnld-439702797/12391-pnld>. Accessed on July 10, 2023.

¹² Available at: <https://revistaabalf.com.br/index.html/index.php/rabalf/issue/view/17>. Accessed on July 15, 2023.

National Literacy Policy (NLP): ABAlf's positions on possible NLP setbacks (68), "[...] children can be helped to understand the alphabetic principle without [...] being burdened with systematic little lessons on the relationships between graphemes and phonemes, in a repetitive and controlled manner [...]" . Moraes further states that "[...] what the defenders of the PNA call 'systematic phonics instruction' seems to us like a straitjacket, grounded in an associationist perspective of learning [...]" (Moraes, 2019, p.68).

In this perspective, Telma Ferraz Leal (2019) stated in the same special edition of RBA that by considering that

[...] the child only learns to segment phonemes and relate phonemes and graphemes, [...] they disregard the research conducted [...] that has shown there is a path of constructions and deconstructions about how the writing system works, and that, therefore, there are conceptual learnings, not just perceptual-motor ones [...] (Leal, 2019, p. 77).

Thus, Cecchetti and Martins Filho (2023, p. 67) state that "the imposition of the phonics method as a guarantee for the success of children's literacy, by itself, has already been enough for the PNA to not be considered a legitimate policy [...]" . The authors explain that we have already consolidated in the country the "[...] proposal for literacy with the phonics method, as well as the proposal for literacy as an inseparable process from literacy" (Cecchetti and Martins Filho, 2023, p. 67).

ABAlf, as a representative of teachers, students, and researchers in the field of literacy in Brazil, mobilized to engage in dialogue with the government in order to contribute to the country's literacy policy. While the national literacy policies disregarded research developed in the field, ABAlf tried to express its concern regarding the need for dialogue and the implementation of solutions for the challenges found in the literacy process, through sending letters to the Secretariat of Literacy (SeAlf) of the Ministry of Education (MEC), requesting meetings.

For ABAlf, the PNA is a unilateral policy that is based on realities different from the majority of Brazilian schools and students seeking literacy and does not involve the teachers and researchers dedicated to this field in Brazil. The Association makes its point of view clear regarding the possible setbacks that the PNA could bring to the field of literacy in the country, through its positions published on its website, as outlined below.

Positions of ABAlf from 2020 to 2023 regarding the PNA

ABAlf publishes on its website various positions¹³ on relevant topics in the field of literacy. Between 2020 and 2023, several documents were published, among which we highlight four that addressed the National Literacy Policy and its developments, namely: the "Tempo de Aprender" program; the Continuing Education Program for Literacy Teachers based on SEAlf/MEC's scientific approach; the urgent and necessary repeal of the National Literacy Policy and its developments; and lastly, the "Graphogame" app, a tool that was part of the PNA and promised to teach literacy in six months, suggesting the dismissal of the teacher.

Below, we present a brief summary of each of these positions:

1) ABAlf's Position on the "Tempo de Aprender" Literacy Program (2020);¹⁴

This is ABAlf's position addressed to the representatives of the National Union of Municipal Education Leaders (UNDIME) and the National Council of Secretaries of Education (CONSED), clarifying that since the discussion on the PNA began with the creation of the Secretariat of Literacy by the Ministry of Education, ABAlf has made itself available for dialogue, but without any response from the Federal Government agents.

Among the attempts at dialogue, we can cite, as an example, a letter sent by ABAlf in January 2019 requesting a conversation; the invitation for the Secretariat to join a panel at the IV Brazilian Literacy Congress (CONBALf); and the publication of an open letter, also created at the IV CONBALf, voiced by more than 700 participants, all without any response.

ABAlf does not disregard that the Ministry of Education (MEC) should be the one to propose educational policies, but what cannot happen is for this Ministry to ignore the entire scientific trajectory of the field's scholars and the policies already implemented, as well as all the groundwork already established regarding literacy in the country, considering only one perspective on literacy.

In this same position, ABAlf lists seven considerations on the PNA of the government at the time of the publication of the position, advocating for a supportive and effective literacy policy that respects contexts, characteristics, culture, families, social groups, and the pace of students; that takes

¹³ Available at: <https://www.abalf.org.br/posicionamentos>. Accessed on July 01, 2023.

¹⁴ Available at: https://www.abalf.org.br/_files/ugd/64d1da_38d9d642576f4b8fb9ba8433bd6510a1.pdf. Accessed on July 15, 2023.

National Literacy Policy (NLP): ABAlf's positions on possible NLP setbacks into account the evaluations and analysis of the results of previous actions and strategies; that ensures the technical and financial conditions necessary to provide training, career, and work opportunities, among other considerations.

Therefore, ABAlf recognizes the need to propose policies that genuinely contribute to pedagogical practice in the field of literacy, that consider the contexts and diversity of all Brazilian students, and defends and reiterates the need for debate in the search for solutions to qualify literacy teaching with autonomy and respect for cultural plurality, based on the existing didactic-scientific productions in the country.

2) Position of the Brazilian Association of Literacy on the Continuing Education Program for Literacy Teachers Based on the Science of SeAlf/MEC;¹⁵

Once again, ABAlf seeks dialogue with SeAlf of MEC, with the aim of contributing to the PNA. The position informs that, in January 2019, ABAlf wrote a letter requesting a meeting with SeAlf to discuss the direction of literacy policy in the country. The document also informs that, in August of the same year, the Association sent an invitation to the Secretariat to join a panel at the IV CONBALf and that it sent and published an open letter constructed at the Congress, gathering positions from literacy teachers and researchers attending the event. Furthermore, this position informs that, in March 2020, ABAlf sent a letter to the representatives of UNDIME, reiterating the need for dialogue to seek solutions to qualify literacy teaching, hoping that this Institution would join ABAlf to be heard by SeAlf. ABAlf states that no response was received from the government leaders.

This position also reinforced the special publication, in 2019, of issue No. 10 of the *Revista Brasileira de Alfabetização* by ABAlf, which, as previously mentioned, reaffirmed its commitment to defending literacy and brought together articles from professors Maria do Rosario Longo Mortatti, Isabel Cristina Alves da Silva Frade, Claudia Maria Mendes Gontijo, Francisca Izabel Pereira Maciel, Maria do Socorro Alencar Nunes Macedo, Artur Gomes de Moraes, Telma Ferraz Leal, and several other Brazilian researchers and teachers, regarding the risks of setbacks to the field of literacy presented in the PNA. The texts in this special edition of RBA sought to answer questions such as:

What conception of evidence was adopted in the PNA? What is the concept of literacy contained in the document? Why the erasure of concepts, such as literacy? Why were more than 40 years of research and teacher training projects on the topic

¹⁵ Available at: https://www.abalf.org.br/_files/ugd/64d1da_f5af5c5cecc14ff593b2f20c2c1006e1.pdf. Accessed on July 18, 2023. 2023.

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in Brazil not considered? Why adopt a methodological and theoretical path, when there are several paths with which pedagogy and policy should have dialogued? What other research evidence and valid experiences to make the discussion more qualified and complex were not considered? Who were the experts chosen to write the documents? What are the possible repercussions of the PNA for education systems and networks and for the production of materials? What expectations are created for families with the idea of family literacy?
(Frade; Monteiro, 2020, p. 11).

The position also informs that ABAlf, through its members, participated in a "Public Hearing" with contributions regarding the technical definitions of the 2022 National Program for Textbooks and Educational Materials (PNLD) call, but their considerations were not heard.

ABAlf asserts in this document that it had no opportunity for dialogue with SeAlf, and believes that the actions of the MEC management, at the time of the position, were misguided, reducing scientific evidence to opinions and subjectivity, and leading people to believe that it would be necessary to seek "Science-Based Literacy" from abroad in order to qualify its literacy teachers. The Association further believes that it is essential for SeAlf to have a channel of dialogue with professionals who work in and study literacy in Brazil.

3) Motion for the Repeal of the National Literacy Policy and its Developments;¹⁶

The document in question clarifies that since the PNA presented its first signs of development, ABAlf has been mobilizing to engage in dialogue with SeAlf, with the aim of contributing to this policy. However, it did not receive any response from this Secretariat.

For this reason, ABAlf, along with other entities, researchers, educators, and literacy teachers gathered at the 2022 National Popular Education Conference (CONAPE) in Natal/RN, in July 2022, expresses the urgent need for the repeal of the PNA and its developments, due to several previously mentioned mistakes, which the document lists as the most serious:

A unilateral policy, grounded in realities different from those of most schools, children, young people, adults, and elderly individuals in Brazil who need to become literate;

Based on the denial of an entire set of theoretical and practical constructs regarding literacy, and attempting to make it seem as though Brazilian science is not science, especially in the field of literacy;

¹⁶ Available at: https://www.abalf.org.br/_files/ugd/f293dd_e5adf151be7d40bda8b96f2accc6566e.pdf. Accessed on July 22, 2023. 2023.

National Literacy Policy (NLP): ABAlf's positions on possible NLP setbacks It reveals a dichotomous view that places on one side the overvaluation (of science from other countries, - Portugal) and on the other, the devaluation (of universities, researchers, and teachers, - Brazil);

Developments of the PNA that occur apart from the realities and diversities of literacy teachers and learners in Brazil, such as the "Tempo de Aprender" and "Conta pra Mim" programs;

PNLD-2022 - Early Childhood Education distorted;

The adaptation and availability of Graphogame, a game based exclusively on the issuance of isolated phonemes, despite its apparent contextualization in the structure of digital games; and

The "Science-Based Literacy" program - ABC, which aims to train "40 thousand literacy teachers in an online course, completely disregarding the majority of the realities of schools and teachers (FNPE, 2022).

4) Position of ABAlf and GT-10 of ANPEd on "Literacy in Six Months Through an App," Suggesting the Discard of Teacher Intervention;¹⁷

This is the position of ABAlf and GT-10 of the National Association of Graduate Studies and Research in Education (ANPEd) regarding literacy in six months through an app, suggesting that teacher intervention would not be necessary in the literacy process. The app in question, called "Graphogame," is a tool included in the PNA as a tool that "literates in six months," suggesting the elimination of the teacher.

ABAlf's position explains that with reductionist information about the literacy process, the aforementioned app reduces the process of literacy to just one of its aspects, leading the Brazilian population to believe that a mechanistic and repetitive game can take on the role of a literacy teacher.

ABAlf, along with ANPEd, further states that the government, at the time of the position, broke off dialogue with associations and universities and began to engage only with professionals who are not part of the field of pedagogy, such as speech therapists, neuroscientists, and psychologists.

The document also lists several setbacks such as,

1. Discontinuity of literacy policies, the scientific and pedagogical advances associated with them, violating academic freedom by imposing only one pedagogical perspective and disregarding the complexity of practices and learning;
2. Disrespect for legal documents, built from collective agreements that support literacy, such as the PNE, BNCC, and DCNs;

¹⁷ Available at: https://www.abalf.org.br/_files/ugd/64d1da_e145c3e94d174dc29c5f105854c632e8.pdf. Accessed on July 2 2023.

3. Discontinuity of teacher training policies that covered universalized actions with literacy teachers across the entire national territory;
4. Impediment to access to literature books, with the end of book policies such as PNBE;
5. Omission of the problems faced by networks, literacy teachers, schools, and families during remote teaching;
6. Break between literacy and literacy practices, by radically changing the quality criteria for books used for literacy, and disregarding the assumptions for book analysis that had been developed since 1996;
7. Destabilization of INEP by disregarding the literacy assessments conducted by the agency;
8. Dismantling of funding policies for literacy research, among other mismanagements (ABAlf, 2022).

ABAlf's Agenda for 2023

ABAlf published its Agenda for the year 2023 on the "positions" tab of its website in February 2023, highlighting the principles and priorities of the institution's struggle, with a special emphasis on the request for the repeal of the PNA. ABAlf justified the request for the repeal of Decree No. 9,765/2019, considering that this unilateral policy exclusively adopts the phonics method for literacy, presenting several flaws, being solely based on what it calls "scientific evidence," attempting to suggest that Brazilian science is not science, and basing itself on a reality different from that of most Brazilian schools and students, thus representing a major setback in the field of literacy. In the referenced document, ABAlf prioritizes the repeal of the PNA and the democratic construction of a new national literacy policy.

The document also presents ABAlf's suggestions for new scenarios and perspectives regarding the theme of literacy in Brazil. Below, we highlight some of ABAlf's suggestions concerning the PNA:

1. Repeal the PNA;
2. URGENTLY rebuild a literacy policy that respects childhoods and truly addresses literacy needs, involving continuous training, preparation/construction of didactic materials in partnership/voice with literacy teachers, researchers, and education networks, while ensuring the diversity of Brazil in all aspects, and also ensuring the acquisition of books, digital and printed games for support in schools (PNLD and PNBE, for example);

[...]

10. Recognition and appreciation of the scientific and pedagogical production from laboratories, networks, and research groups, literacy forums, and associations, with dialogue as a principle and partnership as a strategy (ABAlf, 2023).

It is important to highlight that after the change in government (2023), the PNA has already been repealed through Decree No. 11,556/2023, and the MEC, through the Secretariat of Basic Education, has already called for technical meetings to discuss a new preliminary proposal for the restructuring of this policy. This proposal will involve the participation of researchers in the field of literacy, including ABAlf and ANPEd.

Final considerations

The central objective of this study was to present the positions of the Brazilian Association of Literacy (ABAlf) regarding the possible setbacks that the National Literacy Policy (PNA) and its developments could cause to the field of literacy in Brazil.

From this study, it was possible to confirm that ABAlf, along with thousands of teachers and researchers in the field, provides a space for dialogue on literacy and education in the country and significantly contributes to education, as demonstrated in this study, through its positions and tireless efforts for dialogue with the country's leaders, striving for a fair and democratic education.

Based on the principle that literacy is a political act (Freire, 1989), the study showed that ABAlf, through its positions, reinforces the political dimension of literacy and understands that the PNA could not be considered a public policy, as it was developed by a group of people who do not involve the teachers and researchers dedicated to the literacy field in Brazil. For the Association, recognition must be given to the researchers from universities who train teachers, and it is necessary to listen to the teachers who are directly involved in literacy, so that policies can be proposed that truly contribute to pedagogical practices in literacy.

With this study, it was also possible to conclude that the central issue of ABAlf's positions is not about whether the phonics method works or not, but rather the lack of plurality suggested in the existing normative documents in our legislation. The individuals in the process of literacy are independent people who live in different contexts, so not everyone adapts to a single way of learning, to a single literacy method. As we learn from Magda Soares (2020), literacy and literacy practices go hand in hand, and the PNA disregards the complexity of learning practices.

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Regarding the "Tempo de Aprender" Program, ABAlf states that the policy revealed a lack of dialogue with teachers and researchers in the literacy field. ABAlf understands that the Ministry of Education (MEC) should indeed propose educational policies; however, what this Ministry cannot do is disqualify the scientific trajectory of people in the field and the practices of the policies already implemented, and disregard all the existing discussion on literacy in the country while proposing a policy with only one approach.

In this sense, it was concluded that, for ABAlf, there is not just one method for literacy; literacy must be viewed in its different possibilities. ABAlf also believes that literacy is a social right and must be treated as a state political priority, not just a government priority. Through its positions, it affirms that the Ministry of Education cannot ignore social movements, associations, and specific entities, nor the ongoing fight for the universalization of literacy, and it defends and reiterates the need for debate and dialogue in the search for a democratic and inclusive literacy.

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