

Phonic method for teaching reading skills

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SUMMARY

This article aims to present phonics as an effective and advantageous method for teaching and learning reading skills. To better understand the topic, the specific objectives are: to present literacy and its importance in developing reading skills; to describe the phonics method in comparison to the global method; and to present the importance of the phonics method in teaching reading skills. The research method is a bibliographic review, gathering data from other authors who have already published and are present in the literature, such as Capovilla and Capovilla (2007); Vale (2021); Oliveira (2021); among others. The information gathered in this study indicates that literacy is characterized by its methods, and its quality directly depends on them. The phonics method has appeared in specific studies in the literature as one of the most effective for developing reading skills, although in Brazil it is not the predominant literacy method in schools. Even with some policies essentially directed at the use of the phonic method, such as the PNA, other policies are lagging behind in this regard and out of date regarding the advantages that the method has over others, the PCNs, for example, is one of these policies.

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Keywords: Literacy. Early Childhood Education. Reading Skills. Phonic Method.

ABSTRACT

This article aims to present, among the teaching-learning methods of reading skills, the phonics method as an effective and advantageous approach. To better unfold the theme, the specific objectives are: to present what literacy is and its importance in the development of reading skills; to describe what the phonics method is in comparison to the whole language method; to present the importance of the phonics method in teaching reading skills. The research method is a Literature Review, based on data collected from other authors who have already published and are present in the literature, such as Capovilla and Capovilla (2007); Vale (2021); Oliveira (2021); among others.

The information gathered in this study indicates that literacy is characterized by its methods, and its quality depends directly on them. The phonics method has appeared in concrete studies in the literature as one of the most effective for the development of reading skills, although in Brazil it is not the predominant method of literacy in schools. Even with some policies essentially directed toward the use of the phonics method, such as the PNA, other policies remain behind in this regard and outdated concerning the advantages that the method has over others; the PCNs, for example, are one of these policies that need to be revised and adapted to the needs of the current educational context in Brazil.

Keywords: Literacy. Early Childhood Education. Reading Skills. Phonics Method.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Skill can be defined as what one “knows how to do”, or the acquired ability. Developing skills is a task that is both complex and complex for those who teach and those who learn. Teaching and learning are two different concepts that complement and are directly linked to this development, because before knowing how to do it something, one must obtain knowledge. The educational process encompasses working on various skills through important processes, such as literacy.

The literacy process aims, primarily, to lead individuals to mastery of two important skills in critical, autonomous, knowledgeable human formation various subjects, these two skills being reading and writing. In this study, reading will be emphasized. For literacy, there are several methods that can be used by educators, such as phonics, considered by scientists to be one of the most effective for the development of reading skills.

Reading makes people more capable of understanding different subjects, but it is not about innate ability that can be activated just by contact with the text, but needs to be acquired. Mastering reading does not happen overnight, nor is it something simple to master. Thus, the choice of the teaching-learning method of the method of reading is essential for this domain to be effective, as well as to allow the literacy is worked on alongside the literacy process, where the use of reading is directed communication in the social environment. Thus, the research problem of this article is: Is the phonic method considered effective for mastering reading skills?

The phonic method is an effective and preferable strategy for literacy, since that seeks not in the direct presentation of complex forms of text, but rather in the subtlety and gradual introduction of textual complexity, where the child first begins to decode graphemes and phonemes, that is, I acquired levels of phonological awareness and understand grapheme and phoneme correspondences, preventing reading and writing problems.

Thus, the objective of this article is to present among the teaching-learning methods of reading skill, phonics as an effective and advantageous method. To better unfold the thematic in terms of its main objective, the following specific objectives were outlined: present what literacy is and its importance in teaching reading skills; describe the which is the phonic method; present the phonic method to work on teaching reading skills.

Literacy has proven to be a strong ally for a more autonomous society,

critical, responsible. Thus, expanding the discussion around literacy topics is very important. Thus, the theme of this article is justified as a way to expand, not exhaust, the discussion on the importance of choosing literacy methods for development of the ability to read effectively in children, who are future citizens, as it is of a skill that leads to the understanding of different concepts, interpreting them and bringing them to daily life and lifestyle, as well as considering them in their values,

Therefore, the chosen research methodology is Bibliographic Review, with searches in mainly electronic databases, such as the *Scielo* and Domínio electronic libraries Public, in addition to university collections, with theses, dissertations, coursework, among others others with themes similar or relevant to the theme of this production, such as those of the authors Capovilla and Capovilla 2007; Vale (2021); Oliveira (2021). The searches were delimited by means of some descriptors, being: literacy; Early Childhood Education; reading skill; phonic method.

2 DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Literacy and teaching reading skills

Literacy can be understood as the process of acquiring the language code writing with reading and writing skills, as also defined by the National Policy of Literacy – PNA, established by Decree No. 9,765, of April 11, 2019, which is the “teaching of reading and writing skills in an alphabetic system, so that the learner can become able to read and write words and texts with autonomy and understanding” (BRASIL, 2019).

This process involves considering several aspects inherent to the subject, such as social, cultural, economic and political reality, as they influence methods and materials didactics to be used, and also includes the teacher's conception as an influencing factor literacy teacher. Writing and reading are two phenomena of the literacy process that are, and should being, meanings and contextualized in the aspects mentioned above with the aim of escaping the artificiality from the naturalness and reality that surrounds the child (OLIVEIRA, 2014).



It is worth highlighting the origin of literacy, a process that goes “hand in hand” with literacy, denoting more advanced and complex written reading practices than reading and to write from the mastery of the writing system. The invention of literacy was, as Soares (2004) argues, the emergence of social practices for reading and writing, emerging as fundamental in geographically, politically and economically distant societies.

Soares (2004) also draws attention to the evolution of the concept of literacy, emphasizing to what began to appear from the rooting of the concept of literacy. According to the author, The demographic census is a good parameter for comparing literacy concepts throughout the time, making a confrontation since the 40s, starting from what was considered literate the subject who knew how to write his own name and arriving at a conception sociocultural literacy, with the “disinvention” of literacy, a term that emerged in neologism, and being reinvented with the principle that learning to read and write is the same that learning to construct meaning through and for written texts, considering experiences and prior knowledge.

It is necessary to understand that literacy cannot be a process diluted in literacy, but which is a constituent part that has specificity that should not be despised. Soares (2004) explains that the “disinvention” of literacy occurs in this contempt for specificity of the process, and attributes that this contempt is related to the conception of literacy that arrived together with the concept of literacy in the 1980s in Brazil. There came a time when literacy methods were abandoned and in them one could no longer more speaking, an erroneous consequence that arose with the change in the conception of literacy.

Literacy has many facets, as Soares (1985) states, but it is a process that can be attributed to it a lot of scope. There is a division in the process of literacy, according to the aforementioned author, where the process of language acquisition unfolds and process of language development, and the latter would be the continuous and uninterrupted one. Thus, there would be two perspectives to be highlighted, that literacy would be a process of representation of phonemes and graphemes (writing) and of graphemes in phonemes (reading); and that the literacy is a process

of understanding and expression, with gradual replacement, leading to apprehension and understanding of reality close and more distant from the child.

Reading is one of the skills acquired in literacy and developed throughout life. process, being the representation of graphemes in phonemes, but considering consciousness phonological. The formation of the reader involves the interaction between the reader and the text being read. It involves reading strategies that lead to the awareness that reading is understanding, the key being to give meaning and significance to what is read, inquiring and seeking to understand terms and words which were not understood. This is part of the literacy process and can be seen as the necessary self-regulation of understanding (SILVA, 2019).

The school is the institution that must bring within itself reading with analytical practice, as highlights Couto (2019), who seeks in the student's prior knowledge, of his/her world individual and social context in which it is inserted, leading to the gradual apprehension and understanding, contributing to the teaching-learning process, leading the student to seek new ways of acquiring reading.

“The practice of reading implies a vision of transforming the student into a critical citizen, autonomous, creative, who knows how to understand and rewrite everything that has been read”, as well as, implies in the teacher's initiatives to contribute to this vision of the process. This is a conception which aims at conscious intellectual activity, as Couto (2019, p. 8) explains.

It is interesting to understand that childhood is a stage of great discoveries and development of the human being, with greater ease of learning. As Santos highlights (2020, p. 17), “Before reading conventionally, children try to interpret the different texts that they encounter in their interactions with the world, books, magazines, packaging, pamphlets commercials, street posters, television advertisements, comic books”, among others. Thus, encountering such materials becomes part of the subject's reading world, they are aspects of applicability of reading and development of the child as a reading subject.

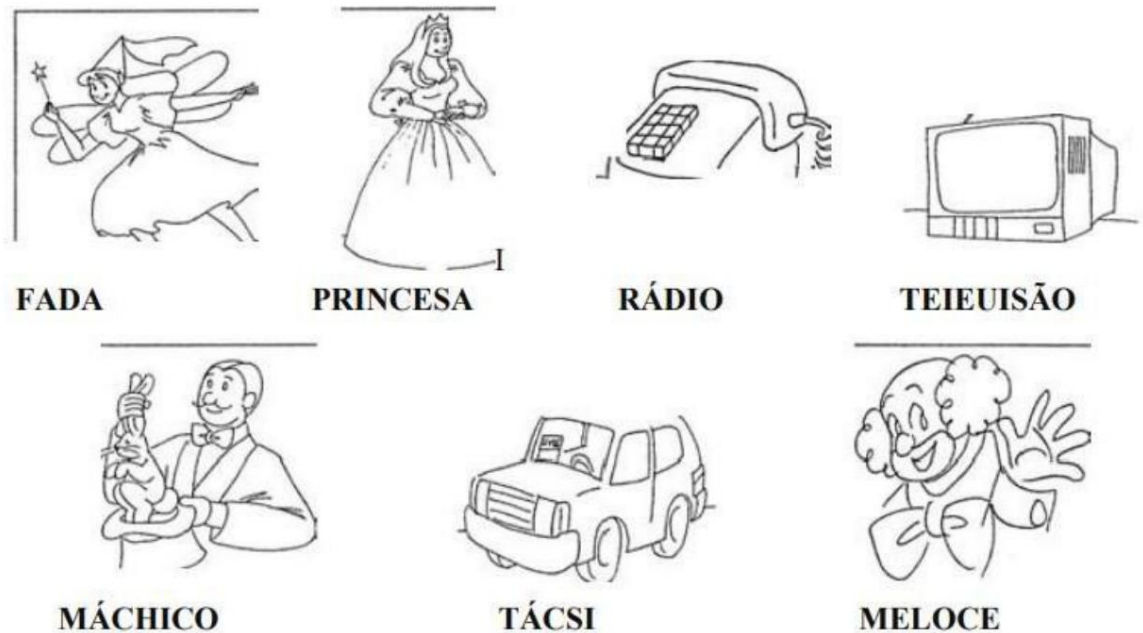
2.2 Phonic method

The methods give expression and develop the specificity of the literacy process. Without the methods, literacy becomes diluted in the literacy process and harms the acquisition of skills and their improvement, such as reading, resulting in difficulties for transform graphemes into phonemes in an understandable way, configuring a process without consciousness, based on common sense interpretations. In this topic, emphasis will be given to two literacy methods, the phonic and global methods, as both contribute to acquisition and development of the skill worked on in the content of this article, reading.

The phonic method is a reading teaching technique that probably originated in the 16th century, as Sebra and Dias (2011) argue, and which is based on the perspective that since the beginning of learning the subject must understand that there are consistent relationships between phonemes and graphemes. According to Vale (2021, p. 290), the child must understand reasoning and logic that exist in the ability to read. Vale also emphasizes that there are basic learnings inherent to phonics methods, which divides between systematic and simple phonics methods. These learnings there are three: “that of letters, the awareness of phonemes and that of the relationships between letters (or groups of letters) and phonemes. These three learnings – a virtuous cycle.”

Phonics methods are critical components in developing the ability to reading, according to Vale (2021), is part of structured language teaching and requires systematic and explicit instruction in language skills. As carried out in the tests of Capovilla and Capovilla (2007). The authors applied tests of this nature to seven different types, ranging from regular word with correct picture matching to odd word such as shows figure 1.

Figure 1: Capovilla and Capovilla Silent Reading Competence Test.



Source: Capovilla and Capovilla (2007).

According to the arrangement of the tests of the authors cited in the figure above, with figures and words displayed in pairs, each word with a figure, the distribution pattern of the types of errors reported important values for characterizing the specific nature of difficulties in reading of a given child, such as difficulty in lexical processing and reading limitations in phonological decoding to the absence of lexical, phonological and/or logographic processing.

The National Literacy Plan relies on the phonic method, also known as phonetic, to eradicate illiteracy in Brazil, with the main focus being students of Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education in the initial years and Basic Education students who present unsatisfactory levels of literacy, as well as EJA (Teaching of Young People and Adults) and other students who fit into vulnerable situations and precarious literacy.

Although the PNA maintains its favorable position towards the phonics method, in practice it does not seem to there should be a broad debate in favor of considering the subject in its context

of learning, driving the literacy process that ignores each person's social context, as if they came from the same reality. This leads to the configuration of a process that disregards the student as a producer of knowledge and places him in the position of merely consumer, as highlighted by Marcomini and Costa (2021).

The student needs to participate in his own learning process. Therefore, and others factors, the phonic method has proven to be superior and more advantageous, as it provides the conditions to form subjects who think about what they read, the relationships between minimal sounds, phonemes and graphemes. For the formation of a reading subject, these aspects are very interesting, as they build a identity based autonomy.

2.3 Phonics method and teaching reading skills

Capovilla and Capovilla (2007) explain that reading is not something specific to human beings in the field of innate abilities that would be activated only by exposure to texts, but needs be worked on and developed, requiring a school and acquired instruction, depending on still of the student's achievement in understanding, mediated by those who are readers proficient. Reading, according to the authors, must be understood and accepted by parents and teachers as a complex and organized skill.

Still according to the authors mentioned above, for the acquisition of reading and writing, child goes through three stages, namely:

- 1) the logographic, in which the child treats the written word as if it were a pictoideographic and visual representation of the referent; 2) the alphabetic, in which, with the development of the phonological route, the child learns to do graphophonemic decoding; and 3) the orthographic in which, with the development of the lexical route, the child learns to do direct visual reading of high frequency words (CAPOVILLA; CAPOVILLA, 2007, p. 16).

The stages make up the path that the subject takes so that the ability to reading is achieved, both in the interpretation of phonemes in relation to graphemes and in the interpretation that understands what is read, that is, conscious reading, which is linked to phonological awareness.

The ability to read must be taught and learned and together with phonological awareness comes other important factors that are part of the acquisition of reading as a skill to formation of a reading subject, these factors being the mechanism

phonic (code functioning) and fluent word recognition, as Vale highlights (2021), and the focus cannot be on memorizing words as visual objects, but it implies in their treatment of their linguistic properties.

The phonic method does not seek to deceive in the correspondence that each grapheme corresponds to a phoneme, but tends to clarify the relationships between the two elements, since in a system alphabetical correspondence may not be so clear, so logic must come accompanied by the interpretation and understanding of how the system works, and the school's objective is to train the student for this.

In the Portuguese language, the system is alphabetical and its symbols represent the unit minimum of speech, the phoneme, thus, it is more viable for the child, or subject, to learn to identify and understand the function of the letters and not identify the word in a global way, this is expressed in specificity of literacy. It must be understood that words are composed of phonemes and understanding the relationships between them means reducing the chances of difficulties in understand the relationships between phonemes and letters, without this understanding, reading is left account of memorizing words, which is an almost impossible task (VALE, 2021).

Phonic methods are like powerful self-teaching mechanisms, as they teach in basis of the relationships between letters and phonemes, as highlighted in the excerpt below:

Learning to decode - which is the exercise of converting graphemes into phonemes, joining them one by one from left to right and, making the synthesis, producing the word - supported by a Principle that was explained - provides students autonomy, in the sense that they can apply the partial knowledge they acquire to new words without external help (VALE, 2021, p. 291).

In childhood, when children begin to decode, they do so with great effort. conscious and therefore it is a slow process until it reaches automated cognitive control, automatically identifying words as you read them. It is at this point that it materializes learning to read, when the child begins to read predominantly.

Phonics methods are literacy methods that teach reading so that it is developed to become automated, but they also serve the task of identifying reading difficulties, in which interventions are possible, depending on the degree and composition of the problems that present themselves to the subjects.

Capovilla and Capovilla (2007) identified some of these difficulties by applying tests of phonic method, which were already mentioned in the previous topic. The results, in short, pointed out that the hypothesis that reading difficulties occur in problems of a phonological is true.

Another aspect inherent to the phonic method is to serve the literacy process in inclusive perspective, working on reading skills in students with disabilities, special needs, learning difficulties, and giftedness. The signed phonics method as effective in teaching reading to students with autism, as shown in the highlighted excerpt below:

Regardless of the characteristics of a child with autism, there are techniques that can help with learning, reading, and writing. Simple stimuli can be provided and connections can be established with the child's routine to engage them in the learning process. When it comes to teaching children with autism, the traditional approach may not work—many are more visual, some rely on sounds to learn, while others require multisensory learning techniques (OLIVEIRA; ALBUQUERQUE, 2021, p. 01).

For students with Autism Spectrum Disorder – ASD, using the phonic method is possible to achieve significant advances in the development of writing and reading skills. According to Oliveira and Albuquerque (2021, p. 01) the prioritization of teaching “grapheme sounds, starting with the simplest letters (vowels) to the most complex (consonants) until forming syllables and words” significantly favors the learning of writing and reading.

Although there are many studies that indicate that the phonics method is effective and more advantageous, in Brazilian schools the global method still remains dominant, even with the bibliography, including international, corroborate experimental studies that point in the direction of teaching reading and also writing in the phonological processing that the phonic method presents, as add Capovilla and Capovilla (2007).

Thus, the nature of the phonic method encompasses, in summary, the benefit of learning progressive and gradual relations between phonemes and graphemes, starting from the simplest units, vowels, to the more complex ones, consonants, unfolding the learning process of reading in constant literacy and improved with each construction resulting from the combination of sounds, achieving complete pronunciation of words. This learning leads to stimulation of production oral by students and progressive progress as a reader.

3 CONCLUSION

It can be understood that the literacy process has specificity and should not be diluted in the literacy process, or literacy, as the PNA states, but it needs to be worked as a unique process with particularities that meet the technicality and systematic teaching of important skills to subjects, who will always do part of life and quality of life, such as reading, being a skill that opens opportunities and improves the relationship between human beings and their world. School, in turn, is the institution that most encompasses the function of developing reading skills in individuals, especially from childhood onwards. It is during literacy development that strategies are worked within the methods selected to develop this skill and the phonic method is shown to be the most effective and advantageous on an international level, but on a national level the global method is the prevailing, going against what studies have shown.

The phonic method, in addition to being advantageous in the context of regular teaching, also serves to detection of reading difficulties in certain students, which can mean opportunities odd planning and applicability of interventions at the right time and with the right means to meet these students regarding their specific learning needs, improving the quality of teaching. In Special Education, the applicability of the phonic method is also interesting, as it denotes advantages in the development of reading and writing of these students, therefore, it has a clear opening for the inclusive perspective.

Therefore, it is concluded that the phonic method is effective in developing the ability of reading in the literacy process, characterizing this process as different from others that, although the PNA needs to be considered in other policies, which are already outdated in terms of methods of teaching, such as the National Curricular Parameters – PCNs.

For future research, we suggest collecting data on the history of methods of literacy in Brazil and the path of national education policies and which approaches have regarding the phonics method and advances need for the phonics method to be implemented as a literacy method in the country's schools.



Thus, by pointing out the possible vulnerabilities, the development of the skill can suffer from the lack of applicability of the phonetic method.

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