



# Reading and writing in Brazilian official documents in the transition between Early Childhood Education and Elementary School

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**ABSTRACT.** This study has analyzed national documents to outline the guidelines related to the Early Childhood Education (ECE) to Elementary School (ES) transition and its interface with the reading and writing practices, highlighting convergences and divergences in its language and literacy concepts. This is qualitative research based on documentary analysis. The transition is presented in the official documents; however, the guidelines are fragmented and a priori directed to the professionals in ECE; therefore, there is little focus on the institutional aspect, which reduces the action of the Education Secretariat. Regarding the reading and writing practices, it was possible to notice that some important concepts should be explored in ECE through literary and literacy practices; however, the Base Nacional Comum Curricular (BNCC - the national common curricular base) diverges in its reflections on the writing system; there are convergences in recognizing the languages as tools for interacting and communicating ideas, feelings and wished, and building meanings; and conflicts in the concepts of literacy, understood in the BNCC as the de-codification of a set of graphophone correspondences and, in the other documents, as the appropriation of the Alphabetic Writing System. The conclusion is that it is necessary to consolidate the identity of the ECE and the dialogue with the continuity of childhood education in ES, implying in reading and writing practices with the focus on closing the gaps and favoring the continuity through the articulation and the interdependence between the different languages.

**Keywords:** educational policy; language; literacy; pedagogical practices.

## A leitura e a escrita em documentos oficiais brasileiros na transição Educação Infantil-Ensino Fundamental

**RESUMO.** O estudo analisou documentos nacionais com o objetivo de conhecer as orientações relativas à transição da Educação Infantil para o Ensino Fundamental e sua interface com as práticas de leitura e escrita, evidenciando convergências e divergências em relação às concepções de linguagem e alfabetização. Desenvolveu-se uma pesquisa qualitativa por meio da análise documental. Sobre a transição, constatou-se que é um tema presente nos documentos oficiais. No entanto, as orientações são fragmentadas, direcionadas, a priori, para os profissionais que atuam na Educação Infantil; assim, o âmbito institucional recebe pouco enfoque, reduzindo a atuação das secretarias de Educação. Em relação às práticas de leitura e escrita, verificou-se que há entendimentos de que são importantes e de que, na Educação Infantil, devem ser trabalhadas por meio da exploração literária e das práticas de letramento. No entanto, a Base Nacional Comum Curricular (BNCC) diverge ao propor também reflexões sobre o sistema de escrita. Há, ainda, convergências em reconhecer as linguagens como instrumentos de interação e comunicação de ideias, sentimentos, desejos e construção de significados; e contraposições nas concepções de alfabetização, compreendida na BNCC como decodificação de um conjunto de correspondências grafofônicas e nos demais documentos como apropriação do Sistema de Escrita Alfabética. Conclui-se que é necessário consolidar a identidade da Educação Infantil e o diálogo com a continuidade da escolarização na infância durante o Ensino Fundamental, implicando práticas de leitura e escrita, cujo foco seja diminuir as rupturas e favorecer continuidades por meio da articulação e interdependência entre as diferentes linguagens.

**Palavras-chave:** política educacional; linguagem; alfabetização; práticas pedagógicas.

## La lectura y la escritura en los documentos oficiales brasileños en la transición entre la Educación Inicial y la Escuela Primaria

**RESUMEN.** El estudio analizó documentos brasileños con el objetivo de conocer las orientaciones acerca de la transición de la Educación Preescolar a la Educación Primaria y su interfaz con las prácticas de lectura y escritura, subrayando convergencias y divergencias con relación a las concepciones de lenguaje y alfabetización. Se desarrolló una investigación cualitativa a través del análisis documental. En cuanto a la transición, se señaló que es un tema presente en los documentos oficiales. Sin embargo, las directrices están fragmentadas, dirigidas a priori a los profesionales que trabajan en la Educación Preescolar; así, la esfera institucional recibe poca atención, disminuyendo la actuación de las secretarías de Educación. En cuanto a las prácticas de lectura y escritura, se notó que hay comprensión de que son importantes y de que, en la Educación Preescolar, deben ser trabajadas a través de la exploración literaria y de las prácticas de lectoescritura. Pero la Base Curricular Nacional Común (BNCC) diverge al proponer también reflexiones acerca del sistema de escritura. Hay convergencias en reconocer los lenguajes como herramientas de interacción y comunicación de ideas, sentimientos, deseos y construcción de significados; y contraposiciones en las concepciones de alfabetización, que es definida por la BNCC como decodificación de un conjunto de correspondencias grafofonéticas y por los demás documentos como apropiación del Sistema de Escritura Alfabética (SEA). Se concluye que es necesario consolidar la identidad de la Educación Preescolar y el diálogo con la continuidad de la escolarización en la infancia a lo largo de la Educación Primaria, lo que genera prácticas de lectura y escritura cuyo enfoque sea reducir las rupturas y favorecer las continuidades mediante la articulación e interdependencia entre los distintos lenguajes.

**Palabras clave:** política educativa; idioma; alfabetismo; prácticas pedagógicas.

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## Introduction

In Brazil, the transition from Early Childhood Education (ECE) to Elementary School (ES) has been addressed in official documents since the late 1990s, beginning with the publication of the National Curricular Reference for Early Childhood Education (in Portuguese, *Referencial Curricular Nacional para a Educação Infantil - RCNEI*) (Ministry of Education, 1998). The topic gained further prominence following the approval of Law No. 11.274 (2006), which established a nine-year duration for Elementary School, and was revisited with the approval of the National Common Curricular Base (in Portuguese, *Base Nacional Comum Curricular - BNCC*), a normative document that defines the essential learning outcomes for students in Basic Education.

The inclusion of this topic in official documents has drawn the attention of education researchers, as their deliberations and guidelines reflect the social struggles and conflicts of a historical period centered on a collective cause, making them relevant sources for research. Moreover, official documents serve as guiding frameworks for educational policy and school practices.

A study conducted by Gonçalves and Rocha (2021, p. 1), which analyzed eight documents produced at the federal level and 23 academic works—including articles, dissertations, and theses—on the topic of transition, points out that “[...] in the field of discourse (legal and academic-scientific), the importance of procedures to ensure that the transition fosters favorable conditions for child development is recognized; however, in pedagogical practices, little is actually implemented.” Santos and Lucas (2021) examined the main legal and theoretical-methodological guidelines presented in six official documents issued by the Ministry of Education (MEC) and the National Education Council (CNE) regarding the transition and articulation between Early Childhood Education and the initial years of Elementary School. They highlight the need to reorganize these two stages of Basic Education.

Pereira et al. (2022), in investigating how teachers understand the transition from Early Childhood Education to Elementary School based on the BNCC, emphasize that while teachers are familiar with the document, they do not demonstrate awareness of the transition children experience due to the change in educational stage, nor of the emotions that emerge during this period, which may affect their learning.

Braga and Carvalho (2024), through an integrative review of national and international studies on the transition from Early Childhood Education to Elementary School, note that interest in the topic has grown in recent decades. However, there remains little institutionalized connection between the two stages in Brazil,

which may hinder children's transition. In the international context, findings indicate that studies and guidelines concerning the relationship between these stages have been systematically developed since the mid-20th century by major educational systems in Europe, the United States, and Asian countries such as Japan and China.

A study conducted by Peters (2010), which examined evidence on children's transition to school with particular attention to literature from New Zealand and countries such as Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America, highlighted the complexity of the multiple factors that influence each child's learning and transition experiences, as well as the diversity among child groups. Peters also recognized that transitions are not a single event but rather a process, whose success can only be effectively assessed over time by considering long-term learning trajectories, rather than focusing solely on initial skills and adjustments.

Moss (2011), in exploring the relationship between Early Childhood Education and Elementary School, emphasized the global scope of this topic in research, policy, and initiatives led by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). He demonstrated that this issue is shaped by the conception that "[...] learning begins at birth, and investment in the early years of life is increasingly considered essential due to its positive long-term impact on children's education" (Moss, 2011, p. 142). The researcher presents four possible relationships between preschool and primary schooling: "[...] preparation for school; distancing; preparation of the school to receive the child; and the prospect of a possible convergence" (Moss, 2011, p. 142).

Einarsdottir (2011), in investigating how children perceive the differences between early childhood environments and Icelandic primary schools, highlights the importance of listening to them and providing spaces and opportunities for reflection on their current and past experiences. The study employed small-group interviews and drawings to allow children to express what they experienced in Early Childhood Education (ECE) and what they are currently experiencing in the first year of Elementary School (ES). The results showed that children recognize their learning across various domains of knowledge, but also reflect on their frequent play experiences during preschool. The author confirms, as other studies have pointed out, that the major difference between one stage and the next lies in the time and space allocated for play. However, the contribution of the study lies in objectively demonstrating that ensuring spaces for listening to children and responding to their needs and demands opens possibilities for rethinking pedagogical practices and fostering educational policies that support the transition from ECE to ES.

A study conducted by Zhao (2017), which examined the transition from kindergarten to primary school in Shanghai, presents a project that implements a set of actions throughout the transition process, involving the school community and families in helping young children adapt to school changes. The author explores four key areas for a successful transition based on continuity: curriculum, high-quality intercommunication, assessment, and cooperation between family and school. In terms of curriculum, through theoretical and practical analysis, the project invests in a longitudinal design in which the goals at the end of one stage and the beginning of the next are aligned, and teaching methods are play-based. Regarding high-quality intercommunication, the project emphasizes that children, families, schools, and the community form a dynamic network, and interactions among all parties influence the transition process. Investments in strengthening this network can empower children to play an active and supportive role in a dynamic environment conducive to a successful transition.

Zhao (2017) asserts that there is a close relationship between children's development and their environment. Therefore, the project includes guidelines for redesigning classroom environments, encouraging discussions about furniture arrangement to ensure that environmental setups support children's work, especially by listening to their input on spatial organization. In the area of assessment, the project developed shared evaluation indicators for both stages, serving as reference points to highlight what is valued in the transition process, what has already been achieved, and what is projected for the future in terms of long-term child development. These indicators also serve as tools to help teachers gain a more objective and comprehensive understanding of young children's overall situation during the transition period, enabling them to assess the suitability of educational goals, content, and methods, and adjust teaching strategies in the short term. Finally, regarding the relationship between school and family, the project develops strategies for cooperation between both entities, aiming for more effective joint efforts in supporting children's development and transition.

As can be seen, the transition from Early Childhood Education to Elementary School has been analyzed in both national and international contexts, as it is a complex process marked by challenges—especially in ES, where children are expected to demonstrate greater bodily control, reduced interaction and play, and increased focus on reading and writing (Braga & Carvalho, 2024). Given this situated reality, and considering that official documents guide the development of educational policies related to school management and teaching practices—thereby influencing children’s learning and development processes—this article aims to examine the guidelines related to this transition and to literacy practices, highlighting convergences and divergences in conceptions of language and literacy across both educational stages. We begin with the premise that such guidelines, whether in ECE or ES, can either contribute to continuity in the transition or exacerbate ruptures<sup>1</sup>.

Of the eleven documents analyzed, six serve as curriculum guidelines, which is why, in addition to examining recommendations on the transition from ECE to ES and literacy practices, we sought to identify the underlying conceptions of childhood and learning. We understand that these are based on a philosophy—a conception of person and world—and on a learning theory—a view of how human beings learn (Hentz, 2010)—that must be critically discussed. It is worth noting that school curricula are used by education systems to preserve, modify, and update accumulated knowledge and to educate children according to the values desired by society (Moreira, 2013).

Our intention is to foster debate and reflection on a transition that respects the pedagogical specificities of each educational stage, considering what surrounds, connects, and articulates them, with the aim of minimizing ruptures and promoting continuity in children’s schooling. In this regard, work and experiences related to language in its various forms—oral, written, bodily, visual—should be emphasized, as they constitute a foundational set of learning experiences at the beginning of ES. Ensuring continuity in the specific work with this area of knowledge can lead to more joyful educational experiences, both in the first year of ES and throughout this stage of schooling.

To this end, we first present the methodological approach of the study. Then, we discuss documents published between 1998 and 2005. Next, we analyze documents published after the extension of ES to nine years, from 2006 until the publication of the BNCC in 2018. Finally, we offer reflections on the convergences and divergences found in the analyzed documents regarding reading and writing.

## Methodology

This is a qualitative study conducted through document analysis, employing procedures that enable the examination and understanding of the content of specifically selected documents in order to produce meaningful information related to the research objective. The selection criteria for Brazilian national documents produced between 1998 and 2018 were that they include guidelines on the transition from Early Childhood Education (ECE) to Elementary School (ES), with priority given to laws, directives, and resolutions.

Cellard (2008) suggests two stages in document analysis. The preliminary stage considers: the context in which each document was produced, the entities responsible for its development and publication, the authenticity and reliability of the texts, their nature, internal logic, and key concepts. The second stage involves the actual analysis, in which significant information is extracted to achieve the proposed objective.

In accordance with Cellard’s (2008) first stage recommendations, we developed Table 1, which outlines basic information about the eleven documents selected for analysis, highlighting the institution responsible for their development and publication.

With the exception of the laws, the documents analyzed were produced by the Ministry of Education (MEC) and the National Education Council (CNE) during a period (1998 to 2018) marked by the implementation of educational reforms aligned with the global restructuring of the economy under neoliberal doctrine. The focus of educational policies during this time centered on education management, funding, curriculum, assessment, and teacher training (Melo et al., 2022). However, this study does not aim to discuss the production context of these documents or the power dynamics and disputes that shape their conceptions, but rather to identify aspects related to the transition from ECE to ES, literacy practices, and conceptions of language and literacy.

<sup>1</sup> O trabalho aqui apresentado faz parte de pesquisa que contou com o apoio FAPESP - Processo 2022/06833-3.

**Table 1.** Official Documents Analyzed.

Document	Description	Origin	Year
National Curricular Reference for Early Childhood Education (RCNEI)	Curriculum-oriented document that outlines quality goals to ensure children's right to holistic development and childhood. It aims to foster environments that promote children's access to and expansion of knowledge about social and cultural realities.	Ministry of Education (MEC)	1998
National Policy for Early Childhood Education: for the right of children from 0 to 6 years old to Education	Guiding document that advocates for the collective construction of public education policies, aiming to fulfill the constitutional principle of administrative decentralization. It also promotes the participation of various societal actors involved in ECE in shaping public policies for children aged 0 to 6.	Ministry of Education (MEC)	2005
Law No. 11.274 (2006)	Federal law amending Articles 29, 30, 32, and 87 of Law No. 9.394, dated December 20, 1996 (Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education), establishing a nine-year duration for Elementary School with mandatory enrollment starting at age six.	Presidency of the Republic – Executive Office (Casa Civil)	2006
National Quality Parameters for Early Childhood Education	Policy-guiding document aimed at establishing reference standards for organizing ECE institutions serving children aged 0 to 5. It promotes innovative and collective initiatives focused on learning and holistic development.	Ministry of Education (MEC)	2006
Nine-Year Elementary School: Guidelines for the Inclusion of Six-Year-Old Children	Document presenting pedagogical guidelines for implementing the nine-year Elementary School structure, based on perspectives that respect children as subjects of learning.	Ministry of Education (MEC)	2007
Resolution CEB/CNE No. 5/2009	Document establishing the National Curriculum Guidelines for Early Childhood Education, to be observed in the organization of pedagogical proposals for this educational stage.	National Education Council (CNE)	2009
National Curriculum Guidelines for Early Childhood Education	Document defining guidelines, objectives, principles, and conceptions of ECE. It also provides guidance on organizing pedagogical proposals for children up to 5 years and 11 months, including space, time, materials, assessment, and articulation with ES.	Ministry of Education (MEC)	2010
Resolution CEB/CNE No. 7/2010	Document establishing the National Curriculum Guidelines for Elementary School with a nine-year duration.	National Education Council (CNE)	2010
Law No. 12.796 (2013)	Amends Law No. 9.394, dated December 20, 1996, which sets the guidelines and bases for national education, establishing mandatory and free Basic Education for children and adolescents aged 4 to 17.	Presidency of the Republic – Executive Office (Casa Civil)	2013
National Curriculum Guidelines for Basic Education	Document establishing the National Common Curricular Base, responsible for guiding the organization, articulation, development, and evaluation of pedagogical proposals across all Brazilian education networks.	Ministry of Education (MEC)	2013
National Common Curricular Base (BNCC)	Normative curriculum document that defines the progressive and organic set of essential learning outcomes that all students must develop throughout the stages and modalities of Basic Education.	Ministry of Education (MEC)	2018

Source: Prepared by the authors (2023).

Five of the eleven documents analyzed focus specifically on Early Childhood Education, three address Elementary School, and the remaining three provide guidelines concerning Basic Education, encompassing both Early Childhood Education and Elementary School. In the following section, we present the analysis of these documents in accordance with the objective proposed in this study. The discussion is organized into two time periods: from 1998 to 2005 and from 2006 to 2018.

## Analysis of National Official Documents: 1998 to 2005

The RCNEI, published in 1998, was the first document released by the Ministry of Education (MEC) to address the transition from Early Childhood Education (ECE) to Elementary School (ES), emphasizing that:

[...] the transition from Early Childhood Education to Elementary School represents a significant milestone for the child, potentially generating anxiety and insecurity. The ECE teacher must be aware of this from the beginning of the school year, remaining available and attentive to the questions and behaviors children may express. These concerns can be used to develop projects involving visits to Elementary Schools; interviews with teachers and students; and scheduling a day of immersion in a first-grade classroom (Ministry of Education, 1998, p. 84).

Additionally, the document highlights the importance of educators organizing farewell moments to prepare children for the transition through meaningful events, fostering a positive disposition toward the upcoming changes (Ministry of Education, 1998). The RCNEI presents important pedagogical guidelines for ECE teachers. However, the suggested actions seem to overlook the complexity of the transition by not mentioning the involvement of other professionals, such as school administrators, pedagogical coordinators, and families.

Regarding literacy practices in ECE, the RCNEI advises that: [...] it is important for the teacher to understand that when reading a story to children, they are working not only on reading, but also on speaking, listening, and writing (Ministry of Education, 1998, p. 53). It also recommends:

[...] using different languages (bodily, musical, visual, oral, and written) adapted to various communicative intentions and situations, in order to understand and be understood, express ideas, feelings, needs, and desires, and advance in the process of constructing meaning, continually enriching expressive capacity (Ministry of Education, 1998, p. 63).

[...]

Classroom organization may include environments that support diverse and simultaneous activities, such as spaces for games, art, pretend play, reading, etc. (Ministry of Education, 1998, p. 69).

The RCNEI emphasizes the importance of exploring the various languages of childhood and organizing diverse spaces. Reading is understood as a language practice centered on interaction—storytelling, speaking, listening, and writing. It also embraces a broad conception of language and its expressive forms, recommending that these be explored with different intentions and in varied communicative contexts so that children can interact, understand, and be understood. This reflects a view of the child as a social being who learns through social interactions, using different languages, learning from others while also constructing and producing knowledge (Hentz, 2010).

These propositions align with Corsino's (2007) perspective, which emphasizes that learning different languages requires teachers to create situations in which children gradually become aware of concepts and mental operations, representing what they saw, felt, and did. The author also stresses the importance of building a continuous process through: a) bodily expressions – play, imitation, dramatization using the body or objects like puppets and toys; b) graphic and visual expressions – drawings, paintings, collages, modeling to represent lived experiences; c) oral expressions – conversations with children about what they did, saw, felt, their experiences and emotions; d) written expressions/records – use of various discursive genres and forms of recording actions, gradually appropriating the conventions of written language.

By recommending the exploration of different languages, the RCNEI acknowledges that in early childhood, children make significant acquisitions, such as speech and imagination—especially in pretend play and drawing-based world representation. Although these acquisitions involve organic aspects of the child, they are not biologically universal, which is why it is essential to develop learning experiences that foster language development in its various dimensions.

The document also provides guidance on organizing spaces so that children can engage in diverse and simultaneous activities, including reading. Corsino (2007, p. 67) explains that quality work with children “[...] requires cozy, safe, encouraging, challenging, creative, joyful, and fun environments where activities boost self-esteem, value and expand their worldviews and cultural universe.”

In 2005, the MEC published the document titled National Policy for Early Childhood Education: for the right of children from zero to six years old to Education (Ministry of Education, 2005), which acknowledges the importance of articulating ECE with ES as a way to: “[...] avoid the impact of transitioning from one stage to another, respecting childhood cultures and ensuring a policy of childhood temporality” (Ministry of Education, 2005, p. 26). However, this is a vague guideline, lacking specific and actionable recommendations to support structured planning for this process. The document does not include guidance on literacy practices.

In the following year, 2006, the MEC published the National Quality Parameters for Early Childhood Education, in two volumes, aiming to standardize and universalize the quality of educational services for children aged 0 to 6. Volume 2 of the document emphasizes that municipal education departments should: “[...] adopt measures to ensure an appropriate pedagogical transition for children moving from Early Childhood Education to Elementary School” (Ministry of Education, 2006, p. 20).

This is the first document to assign responsibility for the transition to municipal education departments, not just schools and teachers. Although the recommendation is brief, it is part of a broader set of guidelines

for developing municipal ECE policies, highlighting the need for adequate physical infrastructure, equipment, educational materials, ongoing professional development, among other key actions.

Regarding literacy practices, the National Quality Parameters for Early Childhood Education state that:

[...] teachers and other professionals working in these institutions should equally value activities such as feeding, storytelling, diaper changing, drawing, music, bathing, group games, play, sleep, rest, among many other proposals carried out daily with children (Ministry of Education, 2006, p. 26).

[...]

Tasked with ensuring well-being, promoting growth, and fostering the development and learning of children in Early Childhood Education, teachers: [...] organize activities in which infants and children develop imagination, curiosity, and expressive capacity through multiple languages (gestural, bodily, visual, verbal, musical, written, digital)" (Ministry of Education, 2006, p. 39–40).

Due to the document's focus on guiding ECE policy organization, its recommendations on literacy practices are brief. However, similar to the RCNEI, it highlights the importance of storytelling and other activities that foster imagination, curiosity, and expressive capacity through multiple languages. According to Vygotsky (2009, p. 18), creative capacity: "[...] does not exist in isolation within human behavior, but depends directly on other forms of activity, particularly the accumulation of experiences." Thus, literature, drawing, and cultural exchange—primarily through oral language—are sources of development, offering diverse experiences that serve as the foundation for creativity and imagination.

## Analysis of National Official Documents: 2006 to 2018

Following the approval of Law No. 11.274 (2006), which established a nine-year duration for Elementary School, there was a significant increase in discussions and studies addressing the transition from Early Childhood Education (ECE) to Elementary School (ES). This context marked the entry of six-year-old children—previously enrolled in ECE—into first-grade ES classrooms. In addition to the mandatory nature of this change, it required curriculum modifications, playful methodological adaptations, and the development or acquisition of infrastructure and educational materials appropriate for this age group, among other aspects.

However, Craidy and Barbosa (2012, p. 25) emphasize that this law was approved "[...] without the education system being adequately prepared to receive the children [...]" and "[...] there was no time to anticipate spaces, pedagogical materials, specific training, or the reorganization of time and space so that mandatory enrollment (and welcoming) of the new children could occur appropriately." Similarly, Rocha et al. (2012) present a synthesis showing that these issues were experienced nationwide. The authors point out that the main impacts of the guidelines proposed in MEC documents were felt due to "[...] lack of material conditions associated with teacher insecurity and lack of preparation [...]" and highlight that "[...] these outcomes are also a consequence of the way in which public authorities prescribe but do not provide" (Rocha et al., 2012, p. 312–313).

To support municipalities in implementing the nine-year Elementary School, the Ministry of Education published in 2007 the document titled *Nine-Year Elementary School: Guidelines for the Inclusion of Six-Year-Old Children*. This document consists of nine texts that discuss the development and learning of six-year-old children from various perspectives. For the first time, the issue of transition from ECE to ES was addressed as a matter requiring political, administrative, and pedagogical attention, involving "[...] pedagogical, administrative, financial, material, and human resource conditions, as well as monitoring and evaluation at all levels of educational management" (Ministry of Education, 2007, p. 7).

The document outlines the following recommendations for education systems regarding the transition: a) a curriculum proposal that meets the children's characteristics, potential, and specific needs, ensuring the learning necessary for successful academic progression; b) support for the needs of teachers, administrators, and other education professionals, including policies for ongoing in-service training, guaranteed time for pedagogical planning, and improvements in career development; c) adaptation of educational spaces, teaching materials, furniture, and equipment.

Regarding the transition from ECE to ES, the document states that

[...] Early Childhood Education is not intended to prepare children for Elementary School; this stage of Basic Education has its own objectives, which must be achieved through respect, care, and education of children who are in a unique phase of early childhood (Ministry of Education, 2007, p. 8).

In summary, the nine texts that comprise the document recommend that both ECE and ES children be served in educational environments whose pedagogical proposals respect their life paths, cultures, diversity, individualities, and the right of all children to literacy beginning in the first year of Elementary School.

With regard to reading and writing practices, the document emphasizes that these two areas of learning should occur through diverse texts that convey knowledge from different disciplines, suggesting that such learning be implemented in a transversal and interdisciplinary manner. It highlights the importance of contextualizing reading and writing practices to facilitate the circulation of diverse knowledge about the world. Concerning literacy practices, the publication proposes that they begin in the first year of Elementary School, grounded in a literacy-oriented approach, so that children learn about the functioning of the Alphabetic Writing System, integrated with the social uses of reading and writing.

The document recommends that, starting in ECE, schools promote activities involving textual diversity and encourage children to build knowledge about textual genres and their uses in society. This perspective aligns with the propositions of researchers such as Brandão & Leal (2011), Morais (2012), and Soares (2020), who argue that this stage should not be understood as a space that excludes written language. Instead, it should include in its practices “[...] aspects related to the appropriation of the alphabetic writing system, without disregarding the objectives and activities within the literacy axis, as well as other needs related to development and childhood experiences” (Brandão & Leal, 2011, p. 21). There is no doubt that these practices can foster continuity in the transition from Early Childhood Education to Elementary School and contribute to children’s literacy development.

Further addressing the document *Nine-Year Elementary School: Guidelines for the Inclusion of Six-Year-Old Children*, Corsino (2007) offers several insights into the reading and writing practices to be developed in the first year of Elementary School. Among them, we highlight: a) activities involving the production and reception of oral and written texts; b) daily listening to the reading of various texts, especially stories and literary works; c) written text production mediated by the participation and recording of more experienced partners; d) provisional reading and writing of diverse texts, even without mastery of writing conventions; e) participation in games and playful activities involving language. In parallel with this work, it is important for teachers to carry out activities through which children “[...] can reason about alphabetic writing, [...] understanding and appropriating the uses and conventions of written language in its various functions” (Corsino, 2007, p. 61). This reflects an understanding of language as a form of social interaction, in which the interlocutor is an active subject in constructing the meaning of a text. Learning is understood as a process in which the child, as a biological and social being, interacts with peers, teachers, and the object of knowledge through “[...] appropriation and construction/elaboration and production” (Hentz, 2010, p. 48).

Another legal framework that provides guidelines on the transition from Early Childhood Education to Elementary School is Resolution No. 5 (2009) of the Basic Education Chamber/National Education Council (CEB/CNE), which establishes the National Curriculum Guidelines for Early Childhood Education (DCNEI). In this resolution, the transition is addressed in Articles 10 and 11, as follows:

Art. 10. Early Childhood Education institutions must establish procedures for monitoring pedagogical work and evaluating children’s development, without the purpose of selection, promotion, or classification [...].

III. Continuity of learning processes through the creation of appropriate strategies for the different moments of transition experienced by the child (transition from home to ECE institution, transitions within the institution, transition from daycare to preschool, and transition from preschool to Elementary School).

Art. 11. In the transition to Elementary School, the pedagogical proposal must include measures to ensure continuity in the learning and development process of children, respecting age-specific characteristics, without anticipating content that will be addressed in Elementary School (Resolution No. 5, 2009, p. 5).

This document emphasizes the importance of monitoring pedagogical work and evaluating children’s development during Early Childhood Education, highlighting the relevance of these actions in ensuring continuity of learning in the first year of Elementary School. It also recommends adapting pedagogical proposals and strategies to respect age-specific characteristics. While we recognize the importance of these adaptations, we emphasize that building bridges between Early Childhood Education and Elementary School requires broader planning, developed both at the institutional level (education departments and schools) and at the pedagogical level (ECE and ES professionals).

Gonçalves and Rocha (2021, p. 21) affirm that the responsibility for the transition from Early Childhood Education to Elementary School does not rest solely with schools and their pedagogical teams. It is essential

that education networks and public administrators, “[...] especially municipal education departments, [...] take a more assertive stance, creating conditions for dialogue to be established and for curricula to be articulated.” The text of the aforementioned resolution advocates breaking away from the preparatory conception of Early Childhood Education, which views this stage as merely a gateway to Elementary School, prioritizing cognitive aspects. This position is reaffirmed in the DCNEI (Ministry of Education, 2010), which fully incorporates the text of Resolution No. 5 (2009) without adding further actions needed for this process.

In Article 9, the resolution provides guidelines for the development of pedagogical practices that should shape the curriculum proposal for Early Childhood Education, whose core elements are interaction and play. Regarding reading and writing practices, it emphasizes the importance of:

III. Providing children with experiences of storytelling, appreciation and interaction with oral and written language, and engagement with various formats and genres of oral and written texts;

IX. Promoting children’s engagement and interaction with diverse forms of artistic expression, including music, visual and graphic arts, cinema, photography, dance, theater, poetry, and literature (Resolution No. 5, 2009, p. 4).

In addition to reaffirming the guidelines of Resolution No. 5 (2009), the National Curriculum Guidelines for Early Childhood Education (DCNEI) (Ministry of Education, 2010, p. 32) emphasize “[...] written language and the right to education in early childhood.” These two documents recognize that Early Childhood Education must ensure that children experience educational opportunities for interaction and appreciation of oral and written language through the exploration of various genres and formats of oral and written texts, including music, poetry, and literature. This is significant because, according to Vigotski’s studies (2009), learning is a social experience mediated by the interaction between language and action, made possible through the use of tools and signs—elements that hold meaning for the child, such as spoken and written language.

However, Moraes et al. (2020, p. 8, authors’ emphasis) point out that the DCNEI (Ministry of Education, 2010) adopted the same perspective as the RCNEI, “[...] by revealing a complete ‘dilution’ of writing among other languages, demonstrating an explicit intention not to guide pedagogical work focused on reflection about the written notation of language.” The fact is that the approach to writing in Early Childhood Education remains a controversial topic, generating disagreement among childhood researchers. Nogueira et al. (2023) indicate that there is consensus regarding the starting point—social practices involving language use: orality, reading, and writing. However, while one group of researchers advocates for the importance of encouraging children to reflect on the Alphabetic Writing System from within Early Childhood Education—thus treating writing as a teachable object—another group argues that children immersed in recurring and engaging everyday contexts of writing, reading, and speaking will understand and appropriate the functioning of writing without the need for systematic instruction.

On December 4, 2010, the National Education Council (CNE) approved Resolution No. 7 (2010), which establishes the National Curriculum Guidelines for Elementary School (DCNEF) with a nine-year duration and mandates enrollment in the first year for children who are six years old or will turn six by March 31 of the enrollment year. Article 29 of the document highlights the need to ensure children a continuous learning trajectory through better articulation between educational stages, especially between Early Childhood Education and Elementary School. Motta (2013, p. 171) explains that such alignment would be possible if, based on the recognition of the trajectories, experiences, and pedagogical traditions that characterize each stage, educators were to construct “[...] new forms of relationships and educational practices that would ensure a less abrupt transition from one level to another.” Thus, it becomes necessary to build a shared culture that enables convergence in the concepts of childhood, learning, knowledge, and education.

With a narrowly pedagogical focus—rather than the institutional scope the issue demands—Resolution No. 7 (2010, p. 8) further recommends, in §1 of Article 29, that “[...] recognizing what students have already learned prior to entering Elementary School and restoring the playful nature of teaching will contribute to improving pedagogical practices with children, especially in the early years of this stage of schooling.” We understand that the document highlights playfulness as a key axis of pedagogical work in the first year, implying, among other aspects, what Mello (2009, p. 21–22) presents:

Let Elementary School be contaminated by activities typically associated with Early Childhood Education [...]. I refer to expressive activities such as drawing, painting, pretend play, modeling, building, dancing, poetry, and speech itself. These activities are generally viewed in schools as unproductive, but in fact, they are essential for the

formation of children's identity, intelligence, and personality, and they also serve as the foundation for acquiring writing as a complex cultural tool.

When addressing reading and writing, Resolution No. 7 (2010) revisits principles already present in the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education (LDB), Law No. 9.394 (1996), which aim to ensure full mastery of reading, writing, and arithmetic. It specifies that the first three years of Elementary School must guarantee literacy. It also emphasizes the need to ensure continuity in learning through a sequential cycle that cannot be interrupted. This cycle should focus on expanding opportunities for the systematization and deepening of basic learning, which are essential for academic progression—particularly in the transition from the first to the second year, and from the second to the third. Beyond this, Lobo (2012, p. 76) highlights the need to reframe the entire curriculum of this stage, arguing that it is not merely about “[...] the inclusion and reception of these children in the early years of Elementary School, but rather about ensuring a pedagogical proposal that encompasses the specificities, subjectivities, and demands of the childhood that arrives at school to remain for a significant part of their lives.”

Finally, the document recommends that, in literacy processes, and considering children's developmental characteristics, teachers adopt work strategies that allow greater mobility in the classroom, encouraging the exploration of various artistic languages, beginning with literature. Borba and Goulart (2007, p. 52) affirm that a literary approach helps children develop sensitivity, imagination, and creativity. Therefore, it is crucial to offer them reading and writing practices that encourage them to play with words, to seek “[...] new meanings, new combinations, new emotions, and thus become authors of their own words and ways of thinking, narrating the world.”

On April 4, 2013, Law No. 12.796 (2013) was approved, amending the LDB (Law No. 9.394, 1996) and anticipating mandatory school enrollment to begin at age four, with registration to be carried out in Early Childhood Education. The impact of Law No. 12.796, which extended compulsory schooling from age four, intensified the debate around written language practices in Early Childhood Education. Soares (2020, p. 137) takes a clear stance in this debate, arguing that there is a “[...] need to introduce children to literacy processes, as well as to reading skills [...]” considering that they live immersed in graphocentric contexts and, even before entering Early Childhood Education institutions, they begin constructing knowledge about these processes.

Also in 2013, the Ministry of Education published the National Curriculum Guidelines for Basic Education (DCNEB), which establish the National Common Curricular Base responsible for guiding the organization, articulation, development, and evaluation of pedagogical proposals across all education networks in the country. Given the broad scope of this objective, the document integrates the guidelines and respective resolutions for all three stages (Early Childhood Education, Elementary School, and High School) and educational modalities (Special Education, Youth and Adult Education, Rural Education, among others). Regarding the transition from Early Childhood Education to Elementary School, and maintaining a predominantly pedagogical focus, these Guidelines state that:

[...] it must be anticipated that the transition from Preschool to Elementary School may occur within the same institution, requiring articulation of organic and sequential dimensions among teachers from both segments to ensure continuity in children's unique learning and development processes. When the transition occurs between different institutions, this articulation must be especially careful, supported by documentation—portfolios, reports—that allow Elementary School teachers from another school to understand the learning and development processes experienced by the child in Early Childhood Education at the previous institution (Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 20).

The aforementioned document is the first to address types of transition: internal, which occurs within the same institution, and external, which involves two different institutions—requiring greater care from Early Childhood Education teams, including the provision of records that enable Elementary School teachers to understand the progress and challenges related to the learning experiences of children in the initial stage. These guidelines align with the provisions of Article 31 of Law No. 12.796 (2013), which mandates that Early Childhood Education institutions issue documentation attesting to the child's development and learning, without the purpose of selection, promotion, or classification.

Still on the topic of stage transitions, Article 18, §2 of the National Curriculum Guidelines for Basic Education (DCNEB) states that this is a process that “[...] requires forms of articulation of organic and sequential dimensions that ensure learners, without tensions or ruptures, the continuity of their unique learning and development processes” (Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 69)—a concern also addressed in Article 11 of Resolution No. 5 (2009).

Thus, a key aspect in promoting pedagogical articulation between Early Childhood Education and Elementary School is understanding the conceptions, purposes, and traditions that underpin both stages, so that educational practices are interconnected through the recognition of their distinct histories, perspectives, and specificities. This is essential to ensure continuity in the transition from Early Childhood Education to Elementary School (Melo & Barros, 2023).

The DCNEB emphasize the inseparability of the guiding concepts of care and education, which should be adopted as foundational principles of the political-pedagogical project and, therefore, as elements for integrating the curricula of different educational stages. This is a necessary condition for a transition that prioritizes not only continuity in learning but also the well-being and healthy development of students throughout their educational journey.

The document under analysis includes a review of the National Curriculum Guidelines for Early Childhood Education (Ministry of Education, 2010), highlighting the need to monitor the continuity of processes experienced by children during Early Childhood Education and the importance of developing appropriate strategies for different moments of transition. Accordingly, it recommends that schools anticipate:

[...] forms of articulation between Early Childhood Education and Elementary School teachers (meetings, visits, joint planning sessions) and provide documentation tools—class portfolios, pedagogical work evaluation reports, records of attendance and achievements—that allow Elementary School teachers to understand the learning processes experienced in Early Childhood Education, especially in preschool, and the conditions under which they occurred, regardless of whether the transition takes place within the same institution or between different ones, in order to ensure continuity in children's unique development processes and the realization of their right to education (Ministry of Education, 2013, pp. 95–96).

These guidelines highlight the important role of education departments in organizing continuing education sessions and collective planning meetings, through which teachers from both educational stages can engage in dialogue about curricula, pedagogical and assessment practices, and pedagogical documentation—key elements for ensuring curricular alignment that promotes continuity in learning and respects children's specificities. In line with these propositions, Merli (2021, p. 41) emphasizes that a powerful way to improve the transition is to promote formative moments that bring together Early Childhood Education and first-grade Elementary School professionals so that they may “[...] build educational proposals that are not antagonistic, in which learning is not separated from play, children's own institutional rhythms and time, bodies from minds, and being a child from being a student.”

The National Curriculum Guidelines for Basic Education (DCNEB) point out challenges related to the lack of articulation between Elementary School and other educational stages, especially Early Childhood Education, noting that this “[...] has created barriers that hinder students' educational trajectories [...]”. Therefore, it is necessary for Elementary School to incorporate certain practices historically associated with Early Childhood Education, such as “[...] strategies to ensure continuity in children's learning and development processes, respecting age-specific characteristics, without anticipating content that will be addressed in Elementary School” (Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 100). To this end, we emphasize the need for integrative curricula that respect childhood—whether in Early Childhood Education or Elementary School—and that recognize “[...] that children learn through multiple languages, interactions, and play, and therefore should not be subjected to constant control and containment of their bodies” (Merli, 2021, p. 80).

Regarding the approach to different forms of language in Early Childhood Education—including oral and written—the DCNEB emphasize that these are interrelated. For this reason, when planning educational activities with children, teachers should avoid developing practices in isolation or in a strictly disciplinary manner. Instead, they should adopt a contextualized approach, recognizing language as a fundamental tool for expressing ideas, emotions, and imagination, and placing it in service of meaningful learning. Accordingly, the guidelines state that:

[...] the acquisition of oral language depends on children's opportunities to observe and participate daily in diverse communicative situations where they can communicate, converse, listen to stories, narrate, recount events, play with words, reflect, and express their own viewpoints, differentiate concepts, see interconnections, and discover new ways of understanding the world. It is a process that must be planned and continuously nurtured. [...] Written language is a subject of interest for children. Living in a world where written language is increasingly present, children begin to show interest in writing long before teachers formally introduce it. However, it must be noted that

this topic is often not adequately understood or addressed in Early Childhood Education. What can be said is that working with written language in early childhood must not be a mechanical, meaningless practice centered on decoding. Children's appropriation of writing occurs through recognition, understanding, and enjoyment of the language used in writing, mediated by teachers, and present in pleasurable activities involving contact with different written genres—such as daily reading by the teacher, opportunities for children to handle books and magazines from an early age, and the production of narratives and 'texts,' even before they know how to read and write (Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 94, author's emphasis).

In alignment with previous documents, the guidelines add that pedagogical work with oral and written language should emphasize children's daily participation in oral activities involving communicative situations of reflection and expression of thought, their immersion in social literacy practices that ensure pleasurable contact with various written genres, and exploration of the literary universe through daily book reading by the teacher and children's handling of these materials. The document also stresses that working with written language must not become a mechanical, meaningless practice focused solely on decoding written text. Given these considerations, we ask: are the DCNEB suggesting that Early Childhood Education should not treat alphabetic writing as a teachable object? Or are these guidelines, in seeking to uphold the purpose of this educational stage, aiming to prevent reading and writing practices from assuming a preparatory role for Elementary School?

When addressing literacy, in convergence with the documents previously analyzed in this study, the DCNEB (Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 109) emphasize that children's entry into Elementary School at age six allows them to benefit from "[...] an educational environment more oriented toward literacy and reading skills." Like the document *Nine-Year Elementary School: Guidelines for the Inclusion of Six-Year-Old Children*, the DCNEB stress that children's educational experiences should not be reduced to learning to read and write. It is essential that they also access content from other subject areas, as this promotes broader understanding of the world through new perspectives and offers opportunities to engage in reading and writing in more meaningful ways (Ministry of Education, 2013).

Thus, educational planning must build upon the knowledge children have already acquired in Early Childhood Education and/or through their interactions in environments where the social uses of reading, writing, and other forms of knowledge are present. This calls for careful planning and a contextualized educational practice, guided by a pedagogical stance that ensures children's access to knowledge and learning across different subject areas, aiming at their understanding of the social and natural world and their holistic development.

## The National Common Curricular Base (BNCC)

Finally, in 2018, the Ministry of Education (MEC) published the BNCC, a normative and mandatory document that outlines learning guidelines based on competencies and skills deemed essential in the contemporary context. Regarding the transition from Early Childhood Education (ECE) to Elementary School (ES), the BNCC states that this is a period that:

[...] requires close attention, so that there is balance in the changes introduced, ensuring integration and continuity in children's learning processes, respecting their uniqueness and the different relationships they establish with knowledge, as well as the nature of mediation in each stage. It is necessary to establish strategies for welcoming and adaptation for both children and teachers, so that the new stage is built upon what the child knows and is capable of doing, from a perspective of continuity in their educational journey (Ministry of Education, 2018, p. 51).

In convergence with the provisions of the National Curriculum Guidelines for Basic Education (DCNEB) (Ministry of Education, 2013), the document highlights the need to develop pedagogical actions that promote integration and continuity in children's learning, aligning with what Moss (2011) refers to as a pedagogical encounter—where educational practices are interconnected, fostering continuity in educational trajectories to ensure children's learning. Among the actions suggested to achieve this goal, the BNCC emphasizes: a) the use, by first-grade Elementary School teachers, of the pedagogical documentation from Early Childhood Education, including the synthesis of expected learning outcomes in each field of experience; b) the establishment of dialogue between professionals from both stages, as well as the exchange of materials to support children's integration into this new phase of schooling; c) the development of a curriculum that balances the changes introduced, the continuity of learning, and emotional support, avoiding fragmentation and discontinuity in pedagogical work.

What we observe is that the BNCC does not introduce new elements regarding the transition when compared to the guidelines expressed in the DCNEB, except for the inclusion of the synthesis of expected learning outcomes in each field of experience within children's pedagogical documentation. On one hand, this synthesis may contribute to greater clarity regarding institutional and teaching responsibilities related to each child's right to learn. On the other hand, it may lead to rigidity by emphasizing expected standards in the name of guaranteeing rights, which could affect how children are supported and welcomed in both stages of Basic Education—potentially disregarding their diverse realities, heterogeneity, unique conditions, and individual ways of learning.

In alignment with the National Curriculum Guidelines for Early Childhood Education (DCNEI) (Ministry of Education, 2010), the BNCC emphasizes that educational work with children at this stage must be grounded in the inseparable conception of educating and caring. To this end, it must be based on the exploration of the axes of interaction and play, recognizing that: "[...] interaction during play characterizes the daily life of childhood, bringing with it many learning opportunities and potential for children's holistic development" (Ministry of Education, 2018, p. 37).

The BNCC adds to the Early Childhood Education curriculum the learning rights—living together, playing, participating, exploring, expressing oneself, and knowing oneself—which are to be developed across five fields of experience. These fields encompass a set of objectives that children should achieve through experiences with different forms of language (Ministry of Education, 2018).

In one of the fields of experience—Listening, speaking, thinking, and imagining—we find more specific guidelines on how to approach reading and writing, as we will explore next:

In Early Childhood Education, immersion in written culture should begin with what children already know and the curiosities they express. Experiences with children's literature—proposed by the educator, who acts as a mediator between texts and children—contribute to the development of a love for reading, the stimulation of imagination, and the expansion of world knowledge. Furthermore, contact with stories, tales, fables, poems, cordel literature, and so on fosters familiarity with books and various literary genres, the ability to distinguish between illustrations and writing, the understanding of writing directionality, and the correct ways to handle books. Through this engagement with written texts, children begin to form hypotheses about writing, initially expressed through scribbles and marks, and, as they become familiar with letters, through spontaneous, non-conventional writing—already indicative of an understanding of writing as a system for representing language (Ministry of Education, 2018, p. 41).

In alignment with the provisions of the National Curriculum Guidelines for Basic Education (DCNEB) (Ministry of Education, 2013), the BNCC prescribes that writing should be approached based on the cultural experiences children already possess, using textual genres to foster a love for reading and expand their understanding of the world. It also emphasizes the importance of creating conditions for children to reflect on the characteristics of the different texts circulating in their environment—their styles, uses, and purposes—through meaningful experiences that prioritize literacy practices. Within this framework, it becomes clear that the BNCC does not position writing as a central object of reflective teaching; instead, it highlights children's immersion in social literacy practices, centered on oral language activities and exploration of the literary universe.

For young children (ages 4 to 5 years and 11 months), the field of experience Listening, speaking, thinking, and imagining proposes the following learning and development objectives:

Choose and browse books, attempting to orient themselves by themes and illustrations and trying to identify familiar words. Retell stories they have heard, with the teacher acting as scribe to produce a written version. Create their own oral and written stories (spontaneous writing) in situations with meaningful social function. Form hypotheses about textual genres found in familiar formats, using graphic observation and/or reading strategies. Select books and texts from familiar genres for adult reading and/or for their own reading (drawing on their repertoire, such as memory recall or reading illustrations). Form hypotheses about written language by recording words and texts through spontaneous writing (Ministry of Education, 2018, pp. 49–50).

When analyzing the above learning and development objectives, we observe that, in addition to the learning goals related to children's engagement in social literacy practices—such as producing oral and written stories provisionally in socially meaningful contexts—the BNCC also includes learning outcomes related to reflection on the writing system, such as forming hypotheses about written language and recording words and texts through spontaneous writing. Thus, it becomes evident that the BNCC does not take a definitive stance on how writing should be addressed in Early Childhood Education—whether as a teachable object or merely as a means of integrating children into recurring and engaging everyday contexts of language

use. What we observe is that the document seeks to incorporate propositions from both perspectives, presenting guidelines that navigate between these two approaches.

There is no doubt that the objectives outlined in the field of experience Listening, speaking, thinking, and imagining are relevant for expanding children's knowledge and understanding of reading, writing, and oral language (listening and speaking). However, it is also possible to note the absence of clearer and more specific objectives that would support progression into the first year of Elementary School—objectives that, for instance, address the transition from provisional to conventional writing. In light of this observation, we ask: could this absence lead to discontinuities in the transition to first grade, where children are expected, for example, to observe conventional writing, compare it to their own written productions, and identify similarities and differences?

For Elementary School, the BNCC organizes the curriculum into four areas of knowledge: Languages, Mathematics, Natural Sciences, and Human Sciences. It also establishes that school knowledge should be addressed in an interdisciplinary manner, while preserving the specificities and distinct bodies of knowledge constructed and systematized within each component. In the early years (from first to fifth grade), the Language area comprises: Portuguese Language, Arts, and Physical Education. The Portuguese Language curricular component is structured around four language practices: 1) Orality; 2) Linguistic and Semiotic Analysis; 3) Reading; and 4) Text Production.

For first grade, the BNCC stipulates the importance of valuing playful learning situations, promoting articulation with experiences lived in Early Childhood Education. This approach allows for an expanded engagement with multiple forms of language, including orality and writing, through the appropriation of the Alphabetic Writing System, enabling children to discover “[...] new ways of relating to the world, new possibilities for reading and formulating hypotheses about phenomena, testing them, refuting them, and drawing conclusions, in an active attitude toward knowledge construction” (Ministry of Education, 2018, p. 58).

Regarding literacy, specifically within the Portuguese Language component, the BNCC states that:

[...] in the first two years of Elementary School, pedagogical action should focus on literacy, in order to ensure broad opportunities for students to appropriate the Alphabetic Writing System in connection with the development of other reading and writing skills and their engagement in diverse literacy practices (Ministry of Education, 2018, p. 57).

Here, we observe a divergence from previous documents (Ministry of Education, 2007, 2010, 2013), which advocate for a focus on literacy and reading skills throughout the first three years of Elementary School. In contrast, the BNCC establishes a sequential hierarchy between literacy and reading skills, stating that: “[...] learning to read and write [...] expands [students’] possibilities for constructing knowledge across different curricular components, through [their] integration into literate culture, and enables them to participate more autonomously and actively in social life” (Ministry of Education, 2018, p. 63).

Although the BNCC acknowledges that the society we live in is organized around reading and writing—and that children, from birth, are surrounded by and participate in various literacy practices, including in Early Childhood Education—the document emphasizes that literacy should occur during the first two years of Elementary School. At first glance, it appears that the BNCC supports a group of researchers who argue that literacy should not be part of Early Childhood Education. However, by concentrating literacy within the first two years of Elementary School, the document separates literacy from the social practices of reading and writing.

It defines that, in literacy

[...] students must become familiar with the alphabet and the mechanics of reading and writing—processes aimed at enabling someone to become literate, that is, to ‘encode and decode’ the sounds of the language (phonemes) into graphic material (graphemes or letters). This involves developing phonological awareness (of the phonemes of Brazilian Portuguese and their organization into larger sound segments such as syllables and words), knowledge of the Brazilian Portuguese alphabet in its various formats (print and cursive letters, uppercase and lowercase), and the establishment of graphophonemic relationships between these two systems of language representation (Ministry of Education, 2018, pp. 89–90, author’s emphasis).

By separating literacy from reading skill practices, the BNCC reveals a conception of written language as a code—one that involves the graphic transposition of the minimal sound units of speech. To ‘decode’ this system, it is necessary to memorize the graphemes that correspond to distinct phonemes. Moraes (2012), even prior to the BNCC, warned that understanding writing as a code is a misconception, as it places visual and auditory discrimination skills at the forefront, while sidelining the conceptual properties of writing. This perspective reflects a view of language as a tool for communication and information transmission—a code

through which a sender conveys messages to a receiver. In this model, the learner is seen as a being without prior knowledge, and literacy occurs through explanation and memorization of letter–sound relationships. Learning is thus understood as the accumulation of information by children. Hentz (2010, p. 48) asserts that when one “[...] understands the person as a passive being in their relationship with the environment (which excludes the social context), there is a tendency to believe that learning occurs solely through apprehension.”

Phonological awareness is the ability to consciously reflect on and deliberately manipulate the sound units of language (Morais, 2012). Although it forms the basis for constructing graphophonemic relationships, literacy is a complex process. It is not enough for children to memorize sound–letter associations to become literate. This process requires understanding the Alphabetic Writing System, a notational system of representation, whose learning goes beyond memorizing which letters represent which phonemes. It demands a literacy practice that engages children with the diverse properties that characterize this system.

For the early years of Elementary School, the BNCC implicitly suggests that play—explored as one of the curricular axes in Early Childhood Education and included in the category of learning rights and various objectives—should give way to more structured activities, in which interactions take on new intentionalities related to the development of the skills proposed in the document. The gap between the BNCC’s curricular propositions for Early Childhood Education and Elementary School may lead to ruptures in children’s transition from one stage to the next. Thus, we emphasize that the need for integrative curricula that promote learning and child development as an inseparable continuum—already pointed out by Kramer (2007) during the implementation of the nine-year Elementary School—has not yet been fulfilled. In that text, the author stressed the urgency of curricula through which children are recognized as subjects of rights and supported beyond the category of student, ensuring “[...] knowledge and affection; wisdom and values; care and attention; seriousness and laughter” (Kramer, 2007, p. 20).

By explicitly committing to holistic education and recognizing that the purpose of Basic Education is “[...] the formation and global human development, [...] breaking with reductionist views that prioritize either the intellectual (cognitive) or the affective dimension” (Ministry of Education, 2018, p. 14), the BNCC offers indications that could improve the transition from one stage to another. This definition reinforces the purpose of Early Childhood Education as expressed in the LDB (Law No. 9.394, 1996): the development of the child in all aspects—physical, psychological, intellectual, and social.

In summary, although Brazil has a framework of national official documents that guide the transition between educational stages—as well as reading and writing practices in Early Childhood Education and Elementary School—the BNCC, a mandatory curricular document, reveals a lack of alignment regarding the guiding conceptions of reading and writing practices. It is important to note that this document exerts influence over educators, in a way that directs and shapes reading and writing practices and the transition between stages. On the other hand, Alves (2004) argues that, by participating in the everyday curricular experience—even when instructed to follow the determinations of normative curricular materials—teachers and students weave practical alternatives, resulting in the existence of multiple curricula in action within schools, despite various homogenizing mechanisms, such as the BNCC.

Nevertheless, despite divergences and gaps, the set of documents analyzed here—each in its own way and according to its purpose—offers a range of guidelines that may inform the development of educational policies and pedagogical practices that support the transition from Early Childhood Education to Elementary School, as well as the reading and writing practices to be developed with children aged five and six. However, it is essential that public administrators and education professionals identify the divergences in conceptions of language and literacy so they can implement coherent and robust policies and practices capable of ensuring educational processes that respect children’s life trajectories, cultures, individualities, and the heterogeneity among them—as well as each child’s right to literacy. A clearly defined process of continuity and progression, in terms of knowledge objects and the experiences promoted through the development of different forms of language within the curriculum, can make significant contributions to the transition from Early Childhood Education to Elementary School, positively impacting the construction of more fruitful relationships between children and written language.

## Final considerations

The transition from Early Childhood Education to Elementary School has been addressed in official documents since 1998, with the topic appearing predominantly in those that focus specifically on the initial

stage of Basic Education. Overall, it is evident that pedagogical and curricular guidelines are primarily directed toward professionals working in Early Childhood Education, to the detriment of the important role played by those involved in the first year of Elementary School. The institutional dimension receives limited attention, thereby reducing the role of education departments, which should be responsible for ensuring pedagogical, administrative, financial, and material conditions for monitoring and evaluation at all levels of educational management.

The National Curriculum Guidelines for Basic Education (DCNEB) and the National Curricular Reference for Early Childhood Education (RCNEI) are the only documents that, beyond emphasizing the importance of ensuring continuity in learning during the transition between stages, also express concern for children's health and well-being. The first document recommends the necessary inseparability of care and education as elements for integrating the curricula of different stages. The second warns that the transition from one stage to another may generate anxiety and insecurity, and therefore educators must remain attentive and develop strategies for connection and support.

The documents converge on the importance of promoting activities involving orality, reading, and writing in Early Childhood Education—not with the aim of preparing children for Elementary School, but rather to foster a love for reading, engagement with writing through children's literary genres, and the stimulation of imagination and expansion of world knowledge. In contrast, the BNCC presents objectives that suggest reflection on the writing system, but without clearly stating whether alphabetic notation should be taught in Early Childhood Education.

When addressing oral and written language, the documents analyzed converge in asserting that these should be approached in an integrated manner, adapted to different communicative intentions and situations, based on the recognition that language is a tool for interaction and the communication of ideas, feelings, desires, and meaning-making. They advocate for children's active participation in diverse activities through which meaning is assigned to oral and/or written texts.

However, when it comes to literacy, the BNCC diverges from the other documents analyzed. While literacy is understood as the appropriation of the Alphabetic Writing System, to be developed in conjunction with reading skills practices throughout the first three years of Elementary School, the BNCC defines literacy as the memorization of a set of graphophonemic correspondences—a code that graphically transposes the minimal sound units of speech. This suggests that children must first be literate during the first two years of Elementary School, and only afterward may they engage as producers of written texts, with an emphasis on conventional writing. According to this view, written language is understood as a code through which a sender communicates messages to a receiver who plays a passive role in the learning process.

In summary, the analysis reveals that national official documents offer predominantly fragmented guidelines regarding the transition from Early Childhood Education to Elementary School, leaving it up to states and municipalities to define complete and clear regulations on the subject. Regarding literacy, the analysis shows that the BNCC presents contradictory conceptions in relation to what it prescribes for Early Childhood Education and the continuity of work in Elementary School. This inconsistency may confuse educators, given that the BNCC holds both pedagogical and political significance, serving as a guiding framework for school-based educational practice.

We conclude that, despite more than 20 years of discussion, when it comes to the transition from Early Childhood Education to Elementary School and the approach to reading and writing practices with children aged five and six, what remains at stake is the necessary consolidation of Early Childhood Education's identity and its dialogue with the continuity of schooling during childhood in Elementary School. This entails the development of reading and writing practices in both stages, with a focus on reducing ruptures and fostering continuity in children's schooling—considering language as discourse, allowing space for diverse ways of speaking and thinking through provisional forms that evolve through interaction, pedagogical intentionality, and repeated experiences with language, and valuing this dynamic process.

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