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## Between summoning and choice: adherence to the PNLD 2022 as a device of curricular colonization in early childhood education

*Entre a convocação e a escolha: a adesão ao PNLD 2022 como dispositivo de colonização curricular na educação infantil*

*Entre la llamada y la elección: la adhesión a la PNLD 2022 como instrumento de colonización curricular en la educación infantil*

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### Abstract

This article analyzes the PNLD 2022 for early childhood education as part of a process of curricular colonization that aims to anticipate the schooling of young children through the distribution of textbooks. From a post-structural perspective, which understands curriculum as a discursive practice (Lopes & Macedo, 2011) and cultural enunciation (Frangella, 2016), the analysis is articulated in relation to the normative policies of the BNCC and the PNA. The textbook policy for children in the first phase of basic education is understood as a device that attempts to fix meanings of quality, childhood, and early childhood education, sustained by stereotypes and the desire to impose a homogeneous curriculum, operating as a fetish (Bhabha, 2013). Based on data on municipal network participation, the article discusses how the supposed freedom to

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choose didactic materials is traversed by mechanisms of summoning, the production of consensus—albeit temporary—and silencing.

**Keywords:** early childhood education; PNLD 2022; textbook; curriculum policies; curriculum.

## Resumo

*Este artigo analisa o PNLD 2022 para a educação infantil como parte de um processo de colonização curricular que busca antecipar a escolarização das crianças pequenas por meio da distribuição de livros didáticos. A partir de uma perspectiva pós-estrutural, que compreende o currículo como prática discursiva (Lopes; Macedo, 2011) e enunciação cultural (Frangella, 2016), articula-se a análise às políticas normativas da BNCC e da PNA. A política do livro didático para crianças da primeira etapa da educação básica é compreendida como dispositivo que tenta fixar sentidos qualidade, infância e educação infantil, sustentados por estereótipos e pelo desejo de fixação de um currículo homogêneo, operando como fetiche (Bhabha, 2013). Com base em dados de adesão das redes municipais, discute-se como a suposta liberdade de escolha pelo material didático é atravessada por mecanismos de convocação, produção de consenso, ainda que provisoriamente, e silenciamento.*

**Palavras-chave:** educação infantil; PNLD 2022; Livro didático; Políticas curriculares; Currículo.

## Resumen

*Este artículo analiza el Programa Nacional de Libros de Texto (PNLD) de 2022 para la educación infantil como parte de un proceso de colonización curricular que busca anticipar la escolarización de los niños pequeños mediante la distribución de libros de texto. Desde una perspectiva postestructuralista, que entiende el currículo como una práctica discursiva (Lopes y Macedo, 2011) y una enunciación cultural (Frangella, 2016), el análisis se articula con las políticas normativas del Currículo Nacional Común (BNCC) y la Política Nacional de Alfabetización (PNA). La política de libros de texto para niños en la primera etapa de la educación básica se entiende como un mecanismo que intenta fijar significados de calidad, infancia y educación infantil, sustentado en estereotipos y el deseo de establecer un currículo homogéneo, funcionando como un fetiche (Bhabha, 2013). A partir de datos sobre la adhesión a las redes municipales, se analiza cómo la supuesta libertad de elección de materiales didácticos se ve atravesada por mecanismos de convocatoria, producción de consenso, aunque sea provisionalmente, y silenciamiento..*

**Palabras clave:** educación infantil; PNLD 2022; Libro de texto; Políticas curriculares; Currículo.

## 1. Introduction

In 2020, the *Programa Nacional do Livro e do Material Didático* (PNLD-National Textbook and Didactic Material Program) started to include, for the first time, didactic works focused on Childhood Education, which was historically excluded from this policy. Based on the Notice nº 02/2020, the federal government offered to the Brazilian municipalities the possibility of participating in the distribution of didactic books for children between 4 and 5 years old, as well as for Early Childhood Education teachers and managers – day care and preschool – under the justification that they would support the pedagogical work and guarantee young children's preparation for literacy. However, this inclusion did not occur without tension: though new, it represented an inflection on the curriculum policies for young children, when proposing a curriculum organization around literacy and numeracy, aligned with the *Política Nacional de Alfabetização* (PNA- National Literacy Policy) (Brasil, 2019) and the *Base nacional Comum Curricular* (BNCC-Common National Curriculum Framework) (Brasil, 2017), and far from the historical conceptions of Childhood Education as a space for multiple languages, experiences, and games.

The participation of municipalities in this policy was institutionally seen as a voluntary and technical choice. Nonetheless, when analyzing this process under a post-critical perspective, we can question the meanings attributed to the idea of choice and problematize this adherence as a result of power relations and discursive policies that seek to establish ideas of quality, curriculum, childhood, and education. In several contexts, we can observe that participation is not an expression of autonomy, but rather an answer to a public notice that presents itself as neutral and beneficial, yet operates through discourses of efficiency and the promise of improved learning.

This article is based on a doctoral research that questioned the meanings of curriculum, childhood, and childhood education at PNLD 2022. Here, I resume and develop part of this analysis to tension the meanings of participation in the program as part of a strategy of curriculum colonization, marked by the anticipation of school practices and a homogenization of meanings about childhood and childhood education. I dialogue with Homi Bhabha (2013), who discusses the ambivalences of the colonial discourse, and understands the arrival of the didactic book in childhood education as a fetish. I am grounded in the post-structural perspective of the curriculum, understanding it as a discursive practice (Lopes; Macedo, 2011) and as a cultural enunciation (Frangella, 2016), thus built on contingencies and disputes over meanings.

Throughout this article, I argue that the PNLD 2022 for Early Childhood Education, when articulated to PNA and BNCC, establishes a curriculum policy to nationalize a single perspective of literacy since early childhood, which ignores the inherent differences of childhood education, and that the massive participation of Brazilian municipalities cannot be understood without considering the symbolic, material, and ideological crossings that support the political discourse and the choice of didactic books. Hence, more than a policy of book distribution, PNLD 2022 presents itself as a device of curriculum regulation that tensions the possibilities of meaning production in the education of young children.

## 2. Early Childhood Education between the curriculum policies and didactic materials: PNLD 2022

The different moments that the curriculum policies of early childhood education have gone through since the Law *Lei de Diretrizes e Bases da Educação Nacional* [Law of Directives and Bases of National Education] (Brasil, 1996) until the BNCC, left marks that allow us to perceive the fluidity and the instability of the meanings of childhood and curriculum, which are provisionally build and continuously transformed amidst the disputes and contingencies of the political game. Far from being fixed categories, they are statements crossed by power relationships, affected by norms, and attempts to regulate the ways of teaching, learning, and living with young children.

The norm of curriculum policy currently in action, BNCC, though affirming the child as the center of the educational processes in early childhood education, imposes a prescriptive character on the curriculum when

establishing learning and development objectives that define in detail the contents expected for each age and experience field. In turn, PNA, although restricted to literacy, expands into early childhood education, seeking to reduce its curriculum to anticipate literacy practices, with a strong technical bias and alignment with standardized evaluations.

This normative set, also comprising documents with diverse objectives and scopes, supports the guidelines that guide the production of didactic materials from PNLD 2022 and contributes to the new meanings of didactic materials for the first phase of basic education. More than instruments of pedagogical support, these materials, and the didactic books for preschool specifically, present themselves as operators of curriculum memorization and precocious schooling, redefining the place of childhood and tensioning the principles that have historically grounded the practices of the first phase of basic education.

The arrival of Early Childhood Education at PNLD, with the distribution of didactic books for young children, marks a significant milestone in public policies for this educational phase. So far, the distribution of books for children in this phase has been restricted to the offer of literature books through the *Programa Nacional Biblioteca da Escola* (PNBE- National School Library Program), with no direct interference in the organization of pedagogical practices or curriculum with young children. In 2017, with the publication of the Decree nº 9.099, from July 18, 2017, PNLD assumes the role of PNBE and significantly increases the scope of the policy for all basic education:

Art. 1º The *Programa Nacional do Livro e do Material Didático* - PNLD, implemented in the scope of the Ministry of Education, will target the evaluation and availability of didactic, pedagogical, and literary works, as well as other support materials to the educational practice, systematically, regularly, and free, to public schools of basic education in the federal, state, municipal, and district systems and the community, confessional, or philanthropic community not-for-profit institutions with agreements with the Public Power.

§ 1º PNLD encompasses the evaluation and distribution of didactic and literary works, of individual and collective use, archives for the libraries, pedagogical works, educational softwares and games, supplementary and flow correction materials, formation materials, and materials for school management, among other support materials for the educational practice, including actions to qualify materials for the decentralized acquisition by federative bodies. (Brasil, 2017, art. 1º, § 1º).

With this change, literary works began to be submitted to the same evaluation processes as didactic books. On the one hand, this included the possibility of school choice, which was absent in the previous PNBE versions; however, on the other hand, the reformulation led to significant implications for the policy of book distribution. Thus, PNLD guidelines started to incorporate literary works within a selection logic that, although guaranteeing rigorous evaluation criteria, also raises questions about BNCC's influence in conforming the archives. In this sense, the introduction of literary books at PNLD under the BNCC logic suggests a broader movement towards standardization and control of materials for children, which is more evident with the PNA (2019), completely shifting the perspective on didactic materials in early childhood education.

The first PNLD notice for Early Childhood Education, Notice nº 01/2017, was for PNLD 2019. In that moment, the focus was the production and evaluation of the "Didactic works for Early Childhood Education Teachers", organized into two volumes: "Early Childhood Education Teachers' Book- daycare" and "Early Childhood Education Teachers' Book- Preschool". Therefore, there was no provision for didactic books specifically designed for children. However, the option for pedagogical practices manuals for teachers pointed out a perspective of greater curriculum control for the first phase of basic education.

The second public notice, in 2020, for PNLD 2022, takes place in a broader context of intensification of the centralized curriculum policies, articulated to BNCC and PNA. Specific to Early Childhood Education, the Public Notice nº 02/2020 opens the distribution of didactic books to daycare children. When using the same evaluation and selection criteria applied to elementary school, the process of childhood schooling is reinforced, aligning the materials with the competencies and abilities prescribed by BNCC and, therefore, with the practices of literacy and numeracy towards the preparation for literacy, as prescribed by PNA. Hence, the PNLD 2022 proposal not only extends the distribution of books for young children, but also redefines the meanings of early childhood education when displacing the focus of experiences and interactions, defended by the *Diretrizes Curriculares Nacionais para a Educação Infantil* (DCNEI-National Curriculum Guidelines for Early Childhood Education) (Brasil, 2009), for an instructional model that gets closer to the later phases of basic education.

The Public Notice nº 02/2020 establishes the selection and acquisition of three objects for childhood education: Didactic works for early childhood education students, teachers, and managers (Object 1); Literary works for early childhood education students and teachers (Object 2); and Pedagogical works to prepare for evidence-based preparation for literacy (Object 3). Object 1 establishes the offer of didactic books for preschool children.

Understanding the didactic book as part of the curriculum production and problematizing its attempt to fixation over a conception of early childhood education as a preparatory phase and of curriculum as prescription, I defend, in this field, a childhood education based on experiences and relationships experienced by children and their peers, which give meaning to the present, without determining a prior "school contents", having the possibility of exploring multiple languages and children's experiences in a context of a culture in permanent change: contingent, playful, negotiated, provisory, fluid, responsible. A curriculum that contemplates the childhood experienced in the now, with no preparatory ends, but depended on the formative and hopeful tracks of a less unequal future. An early childhood education that "seeks its own form, that has its "own content", with categories of space, time, organization, and practices that do not admit a reductionist condition of a "previous phase" regarding the schooling period" (Faria e Finco, 2011, p. 122).

However, the PNLD 2022 notice made clear its perception of preparatory early childhood education, whose general criteria for the pedagogical evaluation of didactic, literary, and pedagogical works should

guarantee children's preparation to formal literacy and the mastery of more complex mathematical competencies, through the promotion of practices of emerging literacy and numeracy. Thus, their entry in elementary education will occur in more favorable conditions (Brasil, 2020, p. 30).

In this sense, besides the idea of didactic books for Early Childhood Education, the call established criteria for their content towards the systematization of literacy based on activities of phonological awareness and phonology, such as:

- 4.3.1.1. Segmentation of phrases into words and words into syllables;
- 4.3.1.2. Recognition and production of rhymes and alliterations;
- 4.3.1.3. Identification of the first sound (phoneme) of words;
- 4.3.1.4. Segmentation of words in their sounds (phonemes); and
- 4.3.1.5. Synthesis of sounds (phonemes) into words. (Brasil, 2020, p.39. Our highlights)

These demands establish a rigidly structured path, an idea connected to the concept of literacy defended at PNA and that grounds the call, completely disregarding the whole research production on literacy, reading, and writing in Early Childhood Education produced in the last decades in the country. According to Caldeira and Frangella (2023), the suppression of the term literacy at PNA ignores the multiplicity of concepts and gives literacy a unique character of scientific evidence. However, according to the authors

literacy is the search for normalization and unicity that reduces literacy to a technique to be acquired, as if learners were reproducers of the relationship grapheme-phoneme and not as a possibility to interpret the world. This technique needs to be explicitly taught through the relationship between grapheme-phoneme, and only later should the child learn how to read and interpret (Caldeira & Frangella, 2023, p. 11).

In this sense, the call for a student book reinforces the logic of literacy as a technical training, in which reading acquisition is not conceived as a cultural process, but as a linear and instructional mechanism that disregards the living and plural relationship children have with language.

As Lopes and Macedo (2011) highlight, the curriculum is a discursive practice, that is, a set of meanings crossed by power relationships that produce truths about the subjects and knowledge. PNLD 2022, when presenting itself as a technical and neutral policy, operates in the production of a curriculum consensus in which what is taught, how it is taught, and what should be learned start to be fixed by nationally selected materials. This movement reduces the curriculum to a territory of control, hindering the emergence of educational experiences that are contextualized, inventive, and sensitive to childhood specificities.

## 2.1 Colonization of early childhood education: the didactic book fetish

I understand the introduction of didactic books in childhood education in the scope of a national public policy as part of a broader process that reinforces the curriculum normalization in a schooling perspective that is supported in a teaching logic structured in contents previously defined, in sequence, and measurable, and in a given perspective of literacy assumed as a model to be followed. The institutionalization process of early childhood education, which is still historically recent, shows its subalternity condition, and the didactic book policy for this phase reinforces and tries to fixate this condition.

This subalternity condition in early childhood education, as pointed out by Moruzzi and Abramowicz (2021), is not only a recent institutional effect but also crosses historical relationships of power that silence certain voices and experiences within the educational field. Inspired by subaltern feminisms and the post-colonial criticism, the authors propose thinking of early childhood education as a place marked by tension between care and teaching, between the feminine and the rational, between playing and learning, a phase historically considered minor, less important, or preparatory for the "true teaching" that would come next. In this sense, the policy of didactic books for this phase of basic education reinforces and seeks to solidify this subaltern position when reproducing a schooling logic that associates educational value with formal instruction and curriculum control. This movement establishes itself as a silencing of childhood's specific forms of language, production of knowledge, and experiences, reaffirming the asymmetry between the educational phases and denying early childhood education the right to articulate its own perspectives.

Hence, we understand that this policy is being mobilized by the stereotype of elementary education, which emphasizes the teaching dimension and its instructional character. Thus, the imposition of this model presents itself as an attempt to subordinate early childhood education to the schooling paradigm, denying its autonomy, singularity, and the pedagogical potentials unique to this phase of basic education. I argue that this movement can be read as a colonization process (Bhabha, 2013) of early childhood education.

The desire to school the first phase of basic education, as materialized in the didactic book, shifts the focus of childhood experiences to the mechanization of learning competencies that will be demanded in the future, at the expense of experiences that might emerge from the interests, cultures, and contingencies experienced by the children themselves. It is not a neutral displacement: when fixating the idea of a linear formative pathway, based on progressions and phases, the didactic book operates as an instrument of curriculum control that ignores children as producers of curriculum. The idea disseminated by studies with an economic, political, and sociological bias that a quality preschool

would allow an increase in Gross Domestic Product- GDP contributed to a notion of childhood as a human capital, which needs preparation and investment for the future, as stated by Abramowicz and Cruz (2015),

Early childhood education is increasingly being held hostage and colonized by schools, where young children are transformed into adults. This process involves a growing emphasis on anticipating schooling, which proposes an alliance between the state and researchers when creating curricula and national evaluations. We have been experiencing an overwhelming and homogenizing process of educational practices so that it does not and it makes no difference in the practices with children (p.171).

When operating this colonizing logic, which seeks to increasingly approximate early childhood education to schooling that gives it the appearance of a recognized idea of education, mainly, as teaching, with fixed representations about learning and childhood, the didactic book assumes a symbolic role that overcomes its materiality: it becomes a sign of knowledge institutionalization, an element that grants legitimacy to school and its education processes. In this sense, it carries a stereotype that extends not only to early childhood education and elementary education, but also to the quality of education, which makes us problematize its presence in early childhood education.

The didactic book policy for early childhood education introduced at PNLD 2022 demonstrates a desire for a standardized quality of what constitutes a "good literacy", with a specific method, in a particular type of book for young children. In this sense, the didactic book for this phase could be read as a fetish, in the sense operated by Homi Bhabha (2013). Its reading of colonial discourse suggests the displacement "from the immediate recognition of images as positive or negative for an understanding of subjectivation processes, made possible (and plausible) through the discourse of stereotype" (Bhabha, 2013, p. 118), thus opening "the possibility of this and that" instead of "or this or that" (Frangella, 2017, p. 21).

Therefore, the author understands the ambivalence and hybrid, articulative character of difference in the construction of the colonial subject, in a movement that moves away from a fantasy of origin and fixed identity. To Bhabha, this analytical movement considers the forms of alterity in the construction of colonial discourse, as well as what seems to be contradictory but is also part of an ambivalent movement of articulating differences. In this perspective, the stereotype is grounded on the recognition and repulsion of differences, in the frontier between pleasure and displeasure, in the tension between desire and repulsion, between lack and presence. Hence, Bhabha proposes to think of stereotypes as a fetish.

(...) fetishism is always a "game" or vacillation between the archaic affirmation of totality/similarity (...) and the anxiety associated with lack and difference (...) Fetish or stereotype gives access to an identity based on domination and pleasure, as well as in anxiety and defense, because it is a way to repel the multiple and contradictory beliefs in its recognition of difference and refusal. (Bhabha, 2013, pp. 129-130)

The stereotype as a fetish has a fundamental significance for the colonial discourse, as it gives access to an identity based on domination and pleasure, as well as anxiety and defense, ambivalent conflicts that reactivate the primary fantasy of wishing for originality, a fixity that is always threatened by differences. Bhabha resumes the Freudian scene of castration and recognition of a sexual difference that disturbs and places the object-fetish as a fixed substitute of the absent object (the mother's lack of a penis), considering the denial of recognized difference. An absence-presence represented by the simultaneous game between the metaphor, which masks the lack and the difference, and the metonymy, which reveals at once the perceived absence. The fetish is, thus, conflicting in the wish to reactivate the primary desire, a wish for a pure origin, which we know to be impossible.

From Bhabha's ideas, we propose thinking about the didactic book in early childhood education as a fetish, because it is circumscribed in this entangled complex of implicit ambivalences of the wish for curriculum fixation, standardization, recognition, power, and dominance, a fetish-object that tries to purge the differences through the stereotype around what a quality education would be.

The fetish-book, as Frangella (2021) called it, operates in the ambivalence between repulse and desire, producing a fixed, duplicated, repeated image, which risks the desire of representation from an unchangeable origin. Understood as a support of knowledge produced outside of school, it is present in a school context that is foreign to it.

The book would be a stereotype, a fixed image — a fetish-object, using Bhabha's (2001, p. 116) explanation, "an object that masks that difference and restores an original presence", which rejects the difference, because it refers to a given reality, an original reality from which it becomes a reference. (...) The fetish-book represents a fixed-fixation. Its problematization as a fetish opens up different questions. One of these discussions is the idea of the book as a written curriculum. This conception is supported by an instrumental perspective of curriculum as an element of organization and planning for teaching content. The book materializes this organization, serializing, adapting, and ordering these contents. We can observe that, in this sense, the book is, appropriating Bhabha's terms, an image that recognizes this given reality, referring to an original that should be fixated. This fixation is achieved through exhaustive repetition in an attempt to fixate an authentic image. (Frangella, 2024, p. 9)

Such a representation of an instrumental perspective of the curriculum, when read as a sign, has its representation of originality and truth shaken, because the attempt at repetition and fixation points out its precariousness. Considering childhood education, the fetish-book presents itself through the Notice of PNLD early childhood education 2022 as a wish to represent a fixed and unchangeable image: an image of education as teaching. A book that teaches teachers and children, from a list of contents predicted at BNCC, with specific methods affirmed at PNA and, as in the later phases of early childhood education, subject to evaluation to assess learning.

The approximation with standardized schooling in elementary education, the idea of containing the difference through the curriculum materialized in the didactic book, the wish for anticipated literacy, stimulate the fetish that is supported in the ambivalence between these desires and the repulsion of the curricular fetish-object-book, which shakes the conception of a childhood education that builds its curriculum on the ground of the unpredictable daily experienced in the routine of school and life. When seeking to "guarantee children's preparation for formal literacy" (Brasil, 2020, p. 30), the public notice reveals a desire for a childhood education centered not on children and their development, but on the criteria of the subsequent schooling phase.

However, the conception of curriculum as discursive, fluid, and contingent practice (Lopes; Macedo, 2011) and as cultural enunciation (Frangella, 2016) allows us to think the processes of negotiations, disputes, and power relations as forces that tension the fight to signify culture, which is always hybrid and able to be reformulated in the enunciation act. Such a perspective, therefore, reinforces the idea of a curriculum that is not pre-existent but is built through daily relationships, the exchange of knowledge, and the challenges imposed by the reality of each educational context. Hence, the policies of didactic book distribution and the structure of PNLD 2022 itself are not, by themselves, determinants of what is taught and learned, but part of a broader game of forces that involve the voices of children, teachers, families, and the local policies themselves.

Understood as a fetish-object that operates in seeking a curriculum fixation, the didactic book for Childhood Education at PNLD 2022 carries the promise of a standardized and measurable quality. However, for such a promise to be fulfilled, it needs to be accepted, legitimized, and incorporated by the municipal systems. At this point, adherence to PNLD 2022 assumes analytical centrality. When observing the participation data of Brazilian municipalities, we can identify how this quality discourse, associated with the book and the standardized curriculum, produces truth effects that operate as a mechanism of persuasion and subjection. After, we analyze the public data of PNLD 2022 participation by region, problematizing the construction of consensus, and the discursive crossings that support the choice, not always autonomous, for the didactic materials offered.

## 2.2 Participation in regulation times: When refusal is not an option

The participation of municipalities<sup>1</sup> at PNLD 2022 is part of a context in which the distribution of didactic materials to early childhood education is presented as a support policy for the education system. Although optional, this participation does not take place on neutral ground, but in a scenario marked by regulatory guidelines, such as BNCC and PNA, which guide the construction of curriculum and underpin the formulation of evaluation policies that evidence the "quality" of education. Thus, more than an autonomous choice, participation in the program reflects the discursive power of the education policies that regulate and, to a certain extent, impose certain meanings on the curriculum and on childhood.

Therefore, the use of objects from PNLD 2022 can be understood as an effect of the discursive policies that structure the educational field and guide the choices in the systems and schools. As any discourse, it is not only a linguistic phenomenon, but the curriculum policies are crossed by contingencies and negotiations (Lopes & Macedo, 2011). The quantitative data built from the participation survey can be seen as provisory manifestations of these disputes. In this sense, the data presented in the tables below are not an objective reflection of reality, but contribute to building a critical panorama, offering clues that allow us to problematize the conditions of production and circulation of meanings about curriculum and early childhood education. Hence, knowing the panorama of adherence to the didactic materials allows us to reflect on the dynamics that cross the distribution and appropriation of these objects, as well as the discourses that legitimize them in different contexts.

In 2022, after the evaluation and approval of the works submitted to the Notice nº 02/2020, all Brazilian municipalities offering early childhood education were called to register their adherence to PNLD 2022. The participation was done through the MEC system, in which the municipal manager should indicate, for each phase of basic education, the types of materials their system would like to receive — such as didactic, pedagogical, and literary works. In the case of childhood education, the manager should sign an interest in materials for children and teachers in daycare and preschool.

After this phase is completed, the school principals started to have access to the system to select, among the materials approved in the notice, the collections that would be effectively distributed to the schools in the system.

The approved works of objects 1 and 2 were the following:

Table 1 – Works approved at PNLD 2022 – Objects 1 and 3 (DW: Didactic Work / L.P.G- Literacy preparation guide)

COLECTION	SERVICE	PUBLISHER
PORTA ABERTA	DW. Daycare / DW. Preschool / L.P.G	FTD SA
BONS AMIGOS	DW. Daycare / DW. Preschool / L.P.G	FTD SA
INTERAÇÃO	DW. Daycare	EDITORIA ATICA S.A
BURITI MIRIM	DW. Daycare	EDITORIA MODERNA LTDA.
CRIAÇÃO: CRIANÇAS EM AÇÃO!	DW. Daycare / DW. Preschool / L.P.G	FTD SA
INICIANDO O APRENDER	DW. Preschool	JOANINHA EDICOES LTDA.
DESAFIOS - EDUCAÇÃO INFANTIL	DW. Preschool	EDITORIA MODERNA LTDA
É TEMPO DE APRENDER	DW. Preschool	EDITORIA DO LIVRO TECNICO LTDA.
DESAFIOS - EDUCAÇÃO INFANTIL	DW. Preschool	EDITORIA DIMENSAO EIRELI

<sup>1</sup> The municipalities are responsible for offering early childhood education; thus, they are the managers of the decisions regarding the implementation of PNLD at this phase.

COLECTION	SERVICE	PUBLISHER
É TEMPO DE APRENDER	DW. Preschool	EDITORIA DO BRASIL SA
GIRASSOL	DW. Preschool	EDITORIA DO BRASIL AS
ADOLETÁ	DW. Preschool	ESTUDIO DA CAROCHINHA PRODUCAO EDITORIAL LTDA.
BAMBOLE	DW. Preschool	RONA EDITORA LTDA.
ERA UMA VEZ... 1, 2, 3!	DW. Preschool	EDITORIA MODERNA LTDA.
COLEÇÃO VILA MUNDO	DW. Preschool / L.P.G	EDITORIA FTD S A
DESAFIOS - EDUCAÇÃO INFANTIL	DW. Preschool / L.P.G	SARAIVA EDUCAÇÃO S.A.
ESTAÇÃO CRIANÇA	DW. Preschool / L.P.G	MVC EDITORA LTDA.
INFÂNCIAS	G.P.A	AVIS BRASILIS COMERCIO DE ARTIGOS ECOLÓGICOS, CULTURAIS E EDITORA LTDA.
MUNDO DAS COISAS: EDUCAÇÃO INFANTIL	G.P.A	RHJ LIVROS LTDA.
A CONSTRUÇÃO DO APRENDER: GUIA DE PREPARAÇÃO PARA A ALFABETIZAÇÃO	G.P.A	RONA EDITORA LTDA
CONEXÕES EMERGENTES – LITERACIA E NUMERACIA	G.P.A	EDITORIA DO BRASIL AS
PREPARAÇÃO PARA A ALFABETIZAÇÃO: TEORIA E PRÁTICA	G.P.A	EDITORIA MODERNA LTDA.
CONSTRUINDO AS BASES DA ALFABETIZAÇÃO: EVIDÊNCIAS CIENTÍFICAS APLICADAS AO DIA A DIA ESCOLAR	DW. Daycare / DW. Preschool / L.P.G	FTD SA
PRÁTICAS NA ESCOLA GUIA DE PREPARAÇÃO PARA A ALFABETIZAÇÃO	DW. Daycare / DW. Preschool / G L.P.G	FTD SA

Source: Queiroz (2025).

The distribution of the approvals at PNLD 2022 reflects the concentrated structure of the editorial market of didactic books in Brazil, characterized by the strong presence of major publishers

(Cassiano, 2005, 2007; Freisleben; Kaecher, 2022), such as FTD, whose didactic materials were approved in all modalities analyzed, besides Moderna and Brasil. The powerful presence of these publishers in the approval process reinforces the domain of traditional publishing companies, which already have the expertise to produce didactic materials aligned with the educational policies in action, demonstrating how the PNLD's dynamic contributed to maintaining an oligopoly in the editorial sector.

Furthermore, the disparity between the number of works approved for preschool (15) compared to daycare (5) confirms a greater guiding of education policies towards the schooling of children over 4 years old. However, this guidance is slowly extending towards daycare children.

The survey on the use of materials from PNLD 2022 in Brazil does not aim to reveal which works were selected; however, we must consider that all approved works were created based on the same criteria established by Notice 02/2020. This means that, although there may be variations in interpretation and approach, there is a normative pattern to be followed in the shape and content of these materials to ensure approval. Therefore, what stands out is not the specific choice of one collection or another, but the hegemonic force of the policy discourse during its implementation.

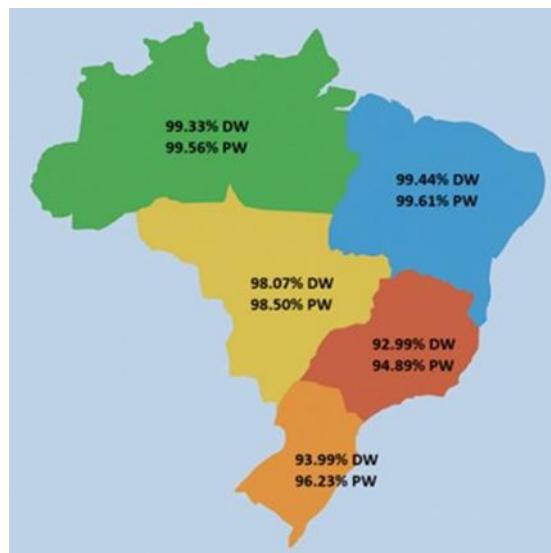
To conduct the survey of adhesion, we accessed the public system of MEC to check the participation per municipality, between February and September 2024, at the website

[https://simec.mec.gov.br/livros/publico/index\\_adesao.php](https://simec.mec.gov.br/livros/publico/index_adesao.php), where the participation reports of each municipality can be downloaded.

The fact that Brazil is a vast country with significant regional disparities in access to resources, as well as in political, social, and economic conditions, was considered when raising participation by region to understand if these disparities reflected access to PNLD.

The data presented countrywide shows how the policy spread and was legitimized for almost all Brazilian municipalities.

Figure 1 – Regional map of participation of didactic works (DW) and pedagogical works (PW)



Source: Queiroz (2025).

As we can see, there was a massive participation in the project regarding didactic works (didactic book, teachers' manuals, and managers' materials) and pedagogical ones ("preparation guide for literacy"). The majoritarian adhesion reflects the influence of discourse in the political and educational fields, highlighting the hegemonic force of certain discourses and pedagogical practices, as those supported by BNCC and PNA.

At first glance, the data could be celebrated as a sign of the success of the public policy and the systems' broad acceptance. However, the efficiency of a policy cannot be measured only by its formal participation, but by the meanings it produces and the subjectivities it calls upon. In this sense, we can question: what is at stake when almost all municipalities in the country adhere to a national curriculum policy that introduces the didactic material with a literacy focus for early childhood education?

The answer to this question demands understanding the didactic book not only as a physical object but as a cultural artifact loaded with meanings and performative effects. Colonial discourses do not operate only through explicit domination, but through the repetition of stereotypes, the production of fetishes, and the illusion of inclusion (Bhabha, 2013). Therefore, the didactic book, when working as an object-fetish, promises belonging and recognition in the field of education while hiding its role of reproduction of hegemonic school values, masking curriculum control under the appearance of innovation and inclusion.

The educational policies are crossed by power relations and produce different effects in each context. There are no sources about the reasons why the municipalities decided to use or not use the works of PNLD 2022. Can the participation of the municipality reveal its concepts of childhood, curriculum, and teaching? Does the municipality that did not join the program use other collections of educational works from private companies?

The massive use of certain materials can indicate not only a supposedly technical “preference”, but also the efficiency of certain discourses regarding childhood education and quality in the construction of a curriculum hegemony. Or was early childhood education didact materials simply accepted as they were something that, in fact, could reach schools, especially in cities farther from urban centers? There are no absolute answers to this issue, but raising the questions pointed out here allows us to perceive the complexity of this discussion. The first aspect to be highlighted is the high participation index nationwide, particularly in the North and Northeast regions, where 11 of the 16 states achieved 100% participation.

Table 2 – North region participation

States	Municipalities	Participation Didactic work	%	Participation Pedagogic work	%	Did not answer MEC
AC	22	22	100%	22	100%	-
AP	16	16	100%	16	100%	-
AM	62	62	100%	62	100%	-
PA	144	144	100%	144	100%	-
RO	52	49	94.23%	50	96.15%	-
RR	15	15	100%	15	100%	-
TO	139	139	100%	138	99.28%	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>447</b>	<b>99.33%</b>	<b>448</b>	<b>99.56%</b>	<b>-</b>

Source: Queiroz (2025).

Table 3 – Northeast region participation

States	Municipalities	Participation Didactic work	%	Participation Pedagogic work	%	Did not answer MEC
AL	102	102	100%	102	100%	-
BA	417	416	99.76%	414	99.28%	-
CE	184	181	98.37%	184	100%	-
MA	217	217	100%	217	100%	-
PB	223	223	100%	223	100%	-
PE	184	181	98.38	181	98.38	1
PI	224	223	99.55%	224	100%	-
RN	167	165	98.80%	166	99.40	-
SE	75	75	100%	75	100%	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,793</b>	<b>1,783</b>	<b>99.44%</b>	<b>1.786</b>	<b>99.61%</b>	<b>1</b>

Source: Queiroz (2025).

We can question how the discourses about PNLD 2022 reached those municipalities. Or how is the book, as a cultural artifact, valued in these regions? Or yet, that the use of didactic books can be understood as a fetish (Frangella, 2024), operating in the wish to fixate a curriculum for literacy?

These issues continue when observing the Central West, which has a similar behavior to the North and Northeast, with an approximate participation of 100% in most states.

Table 4 – Central west region participation

States	Municipalities	Participation Didactic work	%	Participation Pedagogic work	%	Did not answer MEC
GO	246	243	98.78%	244	99.19%	1
MS	79	78	98.73%	79	100%	-
MT	142	137	96.48%	137	96.48%	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>467</b>	<b>458</b>	<b>98.07%</b>	<b>460</b>	<b>98.50%</b>	<b>3</b>

Source: Queiroz (2025).

The South and Southeast regions, numerically, show a bit more resistance towards the participation in the program, though the percentage were also quite high.

Table 5 – South region participation

States	Municipalities	Participation Didactic work	%	Participation Pedagogic work	%	Did not answer MEC
PR	399	394	98.74%	394	98.74%	1
SC	295	257	87.12%	270	91.53	-
RS	497	469	94.36%	482	96.97	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,191</b>	<b>1,120</b>	<b>93.99%</b>	<b>1,146</b>	<b>96.23</b>	<b>3</b>

Source: Queiroz (2025).

Table 6 – Southeast region participation

States	Municipalities	Participation Didactic work	%	Participation Pedagogic work	%	Did not answer MEC
ES	78	77	98.75%	77	98.75%	-
MG	853	829	97.17%	836	98%	-
RJ	92	80	86.96%	85	92.39	-
SP	645	565	87.5%	585	90.69%	12
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,668</b>	<b>1,551</b>	<b>92.99%</b>	<b>1,583</b>	<b>94.89%</b>	<b>12</b>

Source: Queiroz (2025).

Can this smaller participation be related to different factors, such as greater municipal autonomy to implement educational policies? Or maybe a higher local investment in childhood education and a history of less dependency on federal policies in this field?

The acceptance of the policy may be associated with structural factors and how the discourses about quality and educational equity manifest themselves in different territories. Besides the regional differences, another relevant data is that, nationwide, the use of the Literacy Guide was slightly higher than the use of didactic books for children and teachers.

Table 10 – Table of total participation – Brazil

States	Municipalities	Participation Didactic work	%	Participation Pedagogic work	%	Did not answer MEC
26	5,569	5,359	96.23%	5,423	97.38%	20

Source: Queiroz (2025).

Although the adhesion to didactic books was not unanimous, most municipalities that refused them still adopted the literacy manuals for childhood education. This participation difference suggests a possible difference in the perception of educational policies: while the literacy manuals could be understood as resources of pedagogical support, the didactic books could be perceived as a more structured intervention in the curriculum, which can create resistance in some contexts. Though some municipalities have refused the use of didactic books for children, the adherence to the preparation guide for literacy points out an ambivalence: while seeking to preserve a certain curriculum autonomy for early childhood education, it is still anchored in a logic that anticipates schooling and reinforces expectations of alignment with literacy practices. The choice for one and the refusal of the other do not establish a gesture of rupture, but express the constitutive ambivalence of the relationship between childhood education and literacy in contemporary public policies.

This ambivalence could be understood to the extent that we consider that the curriculum policies do not operate only at the technical or management levels, but also as a cultural enunciation. The concept of cultural difference, developed by Homi Bhabha (2013), is key to understand this working, because it displaces the diversity focus as an identitarian data and repositions it as an instability constitutive of power relations. The ambivalence, then, is not a flaw of domination, but its condition of possibility: the exercise of cultural authority is only sustained as a promise of inclusion and recognition, while standardizing practices and subjects. To Bhabha (2013):

The concept of cultural difference is concentrated in the ambivalence problem of cultural authority: the attempt to dominate in the name of a cultural supremacy that is, in itself, produced only in the moment of differentiation. And it is the own cultural authority as the knowledge of referential truth that is in question at the concept and at the moment of enunciation. The enunciative process introduces a break in the performative present of cultural identification, a break between the traditional culturalist demand of a model, a tradition, a community, a stable system of reference, and the necessary denial of certainty in the articulation of new demands, meanings, and cultural strategies in the political presence as a practice of domination and resistance (p.70).

In this perspective, the selective use of PNLD 2022 materials is not only part of a rational choice for certain resources, but part of a more complex game of identification and differentiation. The preparation guide for literacy operates as an ambiguous artifact: while promising to support teachers and approximate the demands in the school field, it reinscribes the same logics that regulate childhood and subjugate the curriculum to the promises of anticipated literacy. The performative present of the public policy is then tensioned by the attempt to keep a stable system of references — curriculum, evaluation, content — and the denial of its own certainty, which expresses itself in the gaps, refusals, and partial participations that enact other strategies and possible meanings for early childhood education.

The introduction of didactic books in early childhood education, under the veil of "choice", can be understood as a gesture of erasing situated cultural practices, of listening childhoods, and daily invention. What is presented as an offer is, in fact, a call: choose to participate is, at the same time, aligning to a logic of school anticipation and homogenization of pedagogical practices supported by discourses of equity and quality that disregard the complexity of everyday life and the principles of early childhood education, whose curriculum proposals are grounded in principles, such as play, listening, and multiple languages.

Therefore, the participation at PNLD 2022 cannot be understood outside its political-discursive context. It is the result of a policy built as hegemonic, which mobilizes pedagogical knowledge legitimized by PNA and BNCC and that articulates itself as a logic of curriculum nationalization. The systems' choices are, in this sense, a so-called choice — a choice made under the threat of refusal, as refusing participation would often mean renouncing materials, technical support, and, symbolically, belonging to the field of "good education".

The almost complete adhesion to the program also reveals the power of the federal discourse as the producer of truth. The centralization of curriculum policies through the massive distribution of didactic materials, in the name of equity, can paradoxically contribute to erasing the cultural, epistemological, and pedagogical differences that mark the Brazilian territory.

Hence, PNLD 2022 opens a new chapter in the dispute over the early childhood education curriculum, in which the meanings of childhood and curriculum are increasingly nuanced by subtle regulatory policies. Even though the subsequent call for childhood education, PNLD 2026, did not account for the production and distribution of didactic books, manuals, and guides for literacy, we cannot say that this exclusion represents a stable and lasting rupture. The traces left by the policy remain: in the materials that reach the schools, in the teacher training based on these books, in the new policies, in the meanings produced on what it is to teach and learn in early childhood. Therefore, the exclusion of these materials does not annul their effects, nor does it guarantee their future relapse. On the contrary, it reveals the constitutive ambivalence of the curriculum, which promises guarantees between enunciations about quality and homogenization devices. In this tensioned field, the early childhood curriculum continues to be built: among adhesions, refusals, and everyday reinventions that escape, even if fleetingly, the fixation attempts.

### 3. Final remarks

PNLD 2022 for Early Childhood Education presents itself as a policy marked by an attempt to capture the meanings of childhood and curriculum within the standards already recognized and legitimized by school logic. What is announced as innovation, inclusion, and adequation to the needs of young children, in fact, operates as a device of fixation and erasure. The play, the experience, and the unpredictability – elements that constitute childhood education – are marginalized in favor of a previously structured, serialized, and didactized curriculum.

The introduction of didactic books for preschool children, when materializing this logic, works as a powerful sign of normativity and control. As a fetish (Bhabha, 2013), which masks the incompleteness of the curriculum and promises an impossible totality, instead of opening space for the multiplicity of children's voices and experiences, it reinforces a unique representation of what teaching and learning in the first phase of basic education would mean. Nevertheless, as a discursive practice and cultural enunciation, the curriculum escapes the attempt to imprison it. Teachers, children, and schools also produce meanings that can re-signify, displace, or even refuse the hegemonic discourses inscribed in the didactic materials. Hence, despite the symbolic and institutional power of this policy, the everyday experience still leaves gaps for the unpredictable, the difference, and resistance.

When analyzing the massive participation at PNLD 2022, we can perceive not only the capillarity of policy but also how the desire to belong to an idea of education recognized as legitimate is associated with the discourses of technique, efficiency, and homogeneity. It is a process of symbolic colonization that occurs not only through direct

imposition but also through fabricated consensus, calls disguised as choices, and a curriculum that describes itself as neutral, even if it is not entirely so.

Therefore, it is necessary to keep the dispute open for the meanings of childhood and early childhood education curriculum. Despite its powerful effect, PNLD 2022 does not deplete the power of childhood and childhood education, which subverts, reinvents, and resists in the detours found in the curriculum invented daily in their relationships. In this tension lies the possibility of insurgence: one that, when allowing a discursive curriculum, challenges the meanings fixed in the present, opening pathways for new ways to give meaning to the education of young children.

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