

Evaluation of reading fluency: analysis and discussion to current school



Fábia Cristina Morteau de Medeirosⁱ 

Universidade do Oeste Paulista, Presidente Prudente, SP, Brasil

Ademir Henrique Manfréⁱⁱ 

Universidade do Oeste Paulista, Presidente Prudente, SP, Brasil

Elsa Midori Shimazakiⁱⁱⁱ 

Universidade do Oeste Paulista, Presidente Prudente, SP, Brasil

Abstract

The present study aimed to 1. reflect on the current educational interest in reading fluency of students in the initial years of Elementary School, 2. describe how the Diagnostic Assessment of Reading Fluency is organized, and 3. analyze the results of participation and performance of the assessment in the public network belonging to the Education Board of Presidente Prudente, São Paulo, in the year 2023. The study was anchored in Vygotsky's Historical-Cultural Theory (2001, 2007, 2017), due to its contribution to human development. The research is qualitative-qualitative nature, using bibliographic and documentary techniques and included the following main categories of analysis: a) assessment, b) literacy process, and c) reading fluency. It covered the period from 2008 to 2023. The conclusions showed that the assessment of fluency little consider the relationship between the multiple skills that the task of reading contemplates, focusing on decoding and linguistic understanding.

Keywords

evaluation; literacy process; reading fluency.

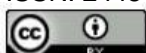
Avaliação da fluência em leitura: análise e discussão para a escola atual

Resumo

O presente estudo objetivou 1. refletir sobre a avaliação de fluência em leitura dos estudantes dos anos iniciais do ensino fundamental, 2. descrever como a Avaliação Diagnóstica da Fluência em Leitura é organizada e 3. analisar os resultados de participação e desempenho da avaliação na rede pública pertencente à Diretoria de ensino de Presidente Prudente, São Paulo, no ano de 2023. A ancorou-se o estudo na Teoria Histórico-Cultural de Vygotsky (2001, 2007, 2017), por sua contribuição para o desenvolvimento humano. A pesquisa é de natureza quantiquantitativa, de técnicas bibliográfica e documental, e contou como categorias principais de análise: a) avaliação, b) processo de alfabetização e c) fluência leitora. Contemplou o período de 2008 a 2023. As conclusões apontaram que a avaliação da fluência pouco considera a relação das múltiplas competências que a tarefa de ler contempla, direcionando-se para a decodificação e compreensão linguística.

Palavras-chave

avaliação; processo de alfabetização; fluência leitora.



Evaluación de la fluidez lectora: análisis y discusión a la escuela actual

Resumen

El presente estudio tuvo como objetivo 1. reflexionar sobre el interés educativo actual por la fluidez lectora de los estudiantes de los primeros años de Educación Primaria, 2. describir cómo se organiza la Evaluación Diagnóstica de la Fluidez Lectora y 3. analizar los resultados de la participación y realización de la evaluación en la red pública perteneciente al Consejo de Educación de Presidente Prudente, São Paulo, en el año 2023. Se ancló el estudio en la Teoría Histórico-Cultural de Vygotsky (2001, 2007, 2017), por su aporte al desarrollo humano. La investigación es de naturaleza cualitativa-cuantitativa, utilizó técnicas bibliográficas y documentales e incluyó las siguientes categorías principales de análisis: a) evaluación, b) proceso de alfabetización y c) fluidez lectora. Abarcó el período de 2008 a 2023. Las conclusiones mostraron que la evaluación de la fluidez poco considera la relación entre las múltiples habilidades que contempla la tarea de lectura, centrándose en la decodificación y la comprensión lingüística.

Palabras clave

evaluación; proceso de alfabetización; fluidez lectora.

1 Introduction

The Avaliação Diagnóstica da Fluência em Leitura (ADFL) has as an objective to check the student's ability to read words, pseudowords¹ and texts directed at their school stage in a fluid way and at the appropriate pace. In this assessment model, the student reads for a teacher and their performance is associated with a reader profile (pre-reader, beginner, and fluent). This structure was devised at a national level based on instruments designed to map students' difficulties in acquiring the alphabetical code of the Portuguese language, already consolidated in countries such as the United States, Portugal, and France (São Paulo, 2021). In 2017, this exchange of experiences between countries fostered the implementation of a digital reading assessment instrument and the application of a pilot project in Brazil. In 2018, the Superior Council of the Universidade de Juiz de Fora (Consu/UFJF), in the state of Minas Gerais (MG), through Resolution Consu/UFJF nº 27/2018, approved the agreement with Centro de Políticas Públicas e Avaliação da Educação (CAEd)'s accreditation request to provide specialized support for the execution of projects and services related to large-scale educational assessment and the development of public education assessment and management technologies.

¹ Pseudowords are sequences of characters that make up a pronounceable word as a whole but lack meaning.

To assess students' reading fluency, CAEd/UFJF was supported by the Base Nacional Comum Curricular (BNCC) (Brazil, 2018), which defined literacy as a pedagogical focus for the 1st and 2nd years of elementary school, as well as the creation of a new model for assessing student learning through the interface between the reading and speaking axes: oralization to complement the diagnoses already made by writing proficiency assessments. Meeting these requirements, CAEd/UFJF became responsible for creating, applying, and carrying out reading analysis in many Brazilian states, including the state of São Paulo.

Given the new assessment implemented in basic education, we sought answers to the following questions: how did the current national interest in student reading fluency arise? How is the ADFL organized? What did the general results of the diagnostic evaluation of the public education system in the state of São Paulo, specifically, in the region of Presidente Prudente, São Paulo (SP), in the year 2023, point out?

When we began our studies, we found that interest in fluent reading skills is recent, gaining strength after the publication of the National Reading Panel (NRP) in 2000, as described by Dossena (2022, p. 71-72):

The document was produced by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) in collaboration with the United States Secretariat, which presented research data referring to important points related to literacy, that is: phonological awareness, phonics instruction, reading fluency, vocabulary and text comprehension (Pikulski & Chard, 2005; Coelho, 2010; Kuhn, Schwanenflugel; Meisinger, 2010).

Shortly after the publication of the NRP, reading fluency attracts attention in the educational context in several countries, considering the effects on students' academic performance in large-scale assessments and its direct connection with reading comprehension. In this context, CAEd/UFJF (2023b) relies on Rasinski (2004, 2006) to conceptualize reading fluency. For the researcher, fluency refers to the reader's ability to develop self-regulation over the superficial elements of textual processing so that they can focus on the deeper meanings that emerge from the text. In this sense, fluency is a way to comprehension and it is composed of three central elements: accuracy, automaticity, and prosody. At one end of this road, fluency connects to accuracy and automaticity in decoding; at the other extreme, understanding, through prosody or expressive interpretation.

From the concepts found in the literature, we bring our interest closer to those of Daane et al. (2005), who state that comprehension is the most relevant part of the definition of reading fluency, highlighting that the prosody of oral reading reflects this understanding. The importance given to this aspect also reflects our interest in the study, as only then does language assume the character of a cultural tool responsible for guaranteeing the individual control over themselves and the reality in which they are immersed, following the precepts of Historical-Cultural Theory by Vygotsky (2001), in which we find the bases for understanding the process of human development, as well as the relationship of mutuality between man and the world. For the author, learning and development are interconnected from the first days of a child's life, contributing to the thesis that all higher functions originate from real relationships between human individuals. This way, an interpersonal process is transformed into an intrapersonal process and thus the appropriation of knowledge occurs. The author warns us that teaching children something that they are incapable of doing is as useless as teaching them something that they can already do on their own. This aspect not only relates to the study presented by us but also offers us directions regarding the relevance of the choices of didactic-pedagogical procedures that need to be considered in the act of teaching.

Continuously, in the sub-items of this text, we will discuss the main aspects of the evaluation: indicators, structure, application, correction, and reader profile. We will present the analysis of the results between the months of June and July 2023 assessed in the students in the 2nd year of elementary school in public schools in Presidente Prudente/SP, according to data from CAEd/UFJF (2023b).

2 Methodology

To investigate, describe and analyze ADFL, we support quantitative and qualitative research using bibliographic and documentary techniques. We justify the choice of the bibliographic approach because it is carried out based on “[...] available records, resulting from previous research, in printed documents, such as books, articles, theses, etc. [...]” (Severino, 2007, p. 122). We began the research by accessing the catalog of theses and dissertations from the Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior (Capes) and, later, through the Scientific Electronic Library

Online (SciELO) Brazil. At this stage of the research, the focus was on dissertations and theses published online in the period from 2008 to 2023. For the time frame, we used as criteria the decades closest to the present, which highlighted the worldwide interest in reading fluency.

After studying the bibliographical production, we carried out documentary research, which was carried out through the analysis of primary data from websites and databases from the São Paulo State Department of Education based on Gil (2002, p. 47), who describes documentary research as “[...] the most important source of data in any historical research”. Given the aforementioned relevance, this study aimed to complement knowledge through bibliographical research, helping to reveal new aspects of teaching and learning to read in elementary school. Primary sources were used, such as reports with the results of the ADFL published by the Centro de Políticas Públicas de Avaliação da Educação (CAEd-SP) and the Power BI software, among others.

To analyze the documents, organize and process the data presented, we carry out an interpretative description. We used the steps proposed by Bardin (2011), organized into three phases: pre-analysis, exploration of the material, and treatment of results, which culminated in inferential interpretations, bringing out moments of intuition, reflective and critical analysis. The main categories of analysis were assessment, literacy process, and reading fluency, which supported the search and pointed out other elements that could be added to the studies.

3 From fluency to assessment

The ADFL aims to verify the student's ability to read words, pseudowords, and texts related to their school stage fluidly and at the appropriate pace.

To apply the test, it is necessary that municipal secretaries and technicians from the Regional Education Directorates go through the following stages: adherence, preparation, implementation, results and planning. Regarding adherence, those responsible must go to the Secretaria Escolar Digital (SED) website, an online platform with several modules, accept to participate of the ADFL and nominate a coordinator to be responsible for monitoring the process. The preparation stage communicating with the professionals from the initial years of elementary education, participation in training, and

replicability among teachers, in addition to organizing the schools to apply the assessment. The organizers suggest that the application room can be in the computer lab, library, or even the cafeteria, as long as the space is quiet. Then, the implementation takes place, including printing the booklets used by students. Students are removed from the classroom, one at a time, and taken to the application room – the test is expected to last an average of ten minutes per student. At that moment, they receive the test booklet and reading instructions from the teacher. The audios are recorded by the application installed on a cell phone that must use an Android operating system, at least 6.0, or higher version. The test can also be done on a tablet, so depending on its configuration, it may affect the use of the app. At the end of the tests, the teacher must connect to the Internet so that the app can upload the recorded audio. Afterward, the files are sent to the CAEd/UFJF correction portal, and then the analysis is carried out.

In addition to this initial moment of organization, the school also needs to coordinate its calendar, and define the number of days needed for the application, according to the total number of second-year students in that school and the number of teachers available for the application. This quantity is suggested in the tutorial materials as follows: for each group of 15 students, one teacher to apply the assessment. After sharing the results and organizing, planning takes place with a focus on results, in which participants are guided to structure an action plan to improve learning. Reading is assessed on a large scale and several aspects are considered in the instrument: indicators, structure, application, correction, and reader profile. The assessment was applied in June and July of 2023 to students enrolled in 2nd-year elementary classes at public schools in Presidente Prudente/SP. We emphasize that the aspects considered in the reading assessment are the same in all schools, whether in the city center, in affluent neighborhoods, in low-income neighborhoods, in rural settlements, in quilombos, and other different places in the state.

We deepen the ADFL analysis by basing the assessment on the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which is the distance between what the child can do independently and what they can achieve with the support of the teacher:

[...] learning is not, in itself, development, but a correct organization of the child's learning that leads to mental development and activates a whole group of developmental processes, and this activation could not occur without learning. Therefore, learning is an intrinsically necessary and universal moment for the

child to develop these non-natural [sic] but historically formed human characteristics (Vygotsky, 2001, p. 115).

Concerning learning the mother tongue and acquiring reading skills, the ZDP takes place in collaboration, mediation, and dialectical relationships, that is, the teacher, who, actively along the way, identifies the student's learning possibilities, plans, and intervenes so that learning turns into human development (Vygotsky, 2017). This way, ADFL distances itself from this epistemology of language learning. Hence the importance of thinking about mediation as a dialectical relationship in the assessment processes to promote learning.

3.1 The organization of the ADFL

The indicators investigated in the assessment refer to participation and performance. The analysis between the expected participants and those who were present on the day of the evaluation generated data referring to the participation indicator. Regarding performance, three reader profiles were defined: pre-reader, which is subdivided into four levels (1, 2, 3, and 4), beginning reader, and fluent reader, which makes it possible to describe a reader pattern. Data is generated from these reader patterns to compose the Reading Fluency Index (RFI). The RFI as described by CAEd/UFJF (2023b), was developed to quantify, on a scale of 0 to 10 the students' reading fluency. This index is calculated based on the percentages of students in all profiles, assigning greater weights to profiles with greater reading fluency. According to CAEd/UFJF (2023b), the RFI allows monitoring the historical evolution of public school literacy at the state and municipal levels over the years.

Another relevant aspect of the assessment is reading analysis. It is composed of precision (number of errors/correct answers), fluidity (speed/words per minute), and prosody (cadence, intonation, and rhythm. Precision is the first element analyzed. According to Basso et al. (2018), precision is the ability to recognize words correctly, and to adequately perform grapheme-phoneme decoding. It pertains to the ability to recognize or decode words correctly. According to Hudson, Lane, and Cols (2005), for this to happen, the student must have full knowledge of the alphabetic principle, know how to relate graphemes and phonemes, and have a long repertoire of words. In the ADFL carried out by CAEd/UFJF (2023b), precision was measured by the number of

errors and correct answers when reading 60 words in 60 seconds. The words chosen followed the criteria of length, stress, syllabic complexity, familiarity, and regular correspondences and irregularities. Hudson, Lane, and Cols (2005) state that reading a word sometimes ensures these connections, and this is the critical event for learning automated word reading. For authors, inaccurate reading can lead to inadequate understanding of a text.

As with precision, this test considered fluidity (speed/words per minute) as a second dimension. This is the ability to read without major pauses and difficulties. Armbruster, Lehr, and Osborn (2001, p. 22) state that fluency:

[...] consists of the ability to read a text with precision, speed, and adequate expression. When a fluent reader reads silently, they automatically recognize the words. It groups words quickly to extract the meaning of what you read. The fluent reader also reads aloud effortlessly and with expression. Their reading sounds natural as if they were speaking.

In this definition, fluidity articulates precision, automaticity and prosody of oral reading. Such components facilitate the construction of meanings by the reader (Kuhn; Schwanenflugel; Meisinger, 2010).

The third and final dimension to be assessed is the ability to read with prosody. For Kuhn, Schwanenflugel, and Meisinger (2010), prosody constitutes the ability to read with adequate expression and intonation. The intonation component is the frequency of speech. As noted by scholars, children learn to read with good prosody by observing the patterns used by adults when they read, which means that they learn from a good reader model. However, prosody is often neglected in the school environment. Another prosodic element is the tonic accentuation pattern (Hudson; Lane; Cols, 2005). It is the dimension of fluency that most clearly shows whether the reader understood the text since the appropriate use of prosodic elements reflects understanding. It is characterized as a relevant element of pronunciation and can be used to discriminate grammatical forms. According to Puliezi and Maluf (2014), duration also configures a property of prosody and refers to the articulation time of a sound, syllable, or utterance, in addition to differing according to the rhythm of each language. In addition to duration, there is the pause, considered by some researchers as a unit of time, therefore there is no consensus in the literature about its real interference, as described by Kuhn, Schwanenflugel, and Meisinger (2010, p. 64): “[...] we should not consider a pause in the middle of a unit of meaning as an error.”.

In the ADFL applied by CAED/UFJF in mid-2023, prosody was described as the correct use of the tonic and rhythmic aspects of speech, such as the pause at the comma and the interrogative intonation in a question. We understand that, when editing the evaluation, the pause was considered as an evaluated element. As well as fluidity and precision, prosody was measured by the test through the student reading 60 words in 60 seconds, considering cadence, intonation, and rhythms.

Application and reading of data by CAEd/UFJF is based on the Simplified Reading View (SRL) by Gough and Tunmer (1986). For the authors, reading comprehension results from the product of two skills: decoding and linguistic comprehension. They highlighted that, in this model, reading comprehension (RD) is seen as the product of oral comprehension (CO) x decoding (D), therefore $RC = CO \times D$. So, there are many questions in the literature about SRL, as Mota points out (2015, p. 348): “[...] if reading is a multidimensional construct, its assessment should involve its different dimensions. However, there is no single definition of what constitutes truly proficient reading comprehension”.

3.1.1 Structure

CAEd/UFJF developed an application capable of capturing and evaluating students' reading based on a calculation parameter mediated by an evaluation instrument prepared to measure the level of students' reading ability. The test is administered individually, divided into three reading blocks of 60 seconds for each reading (60 dictionary words², 40 pseudowords and the narrative text, characterized at complexity level 1).

In the first stage, the student is presented with a list of words selected following the criteria of: length, stress, syllabic complexity, frequency in the Portuguese language and regular and irregular graphophonemic correspondences³. In the test, the number of words read correctly is assessed based on the fluidity indicator. Some examples (in Portuguese): CAMA, MENINO, SETE, POMADA, JOGO, GIRAFÁ (CAEd/UFJF, 2023b).

The second stage takes place right after the first stage. Therefore the reading corresponds to 40 pseudowords, which are words without corresponding meaning, focusing exclusively on phonological processing, maintaining the basic linguistic assumption of the

² Words are in the dictionary.

³ The correspondence between letters (graphemes) and sounds.

Portuguese language that all the syllables of the word have at least one vowel. The linguistic criteria for constructing pseudowords are the same as for dictionary words, except frequency in the Portuguese language, for example: NIRA, FEPINO, VONA, LIBITE, GETO, VORENO (CAEd/UFJF, 2023b).

The third and final stage involves the student reading a narrative text (CAEd/UFJF, 2023a) entitled “Os Atletas”, by Mary França and Eliardo França (2007). The reading time is the same; the text presents syntactic structures compatible with the reading level expected of students enrolled in literacy classes, with an average quantity between 150 and 180 words. When the teacher starts the recording timer, the student begins reading the text, stopping the recording as soon as the time ends. At this point, the student can finish reading, even without recording, to be able to answer the questions that will be used to analyze their understanding. To answer the questions, the evaluator reads and, upon hearing the student's response, selects one of the five options. The questions are objective, with an interpretative character, and cover explicit themes in the text.

In the three moments of reading applied by the teacher (words, pseudowords, and narrative text), “[...] the recording is unique and cannot be redone” (CAEd/UFJF, 2023b, p. 3), a fact that does not allow neither the student nor the administrator making an error or the possibility of retaking the test. This aspect contradicts our conception, which is based on Historical-Cultural Theory, as we understand “error” as part of the process of appropriating knowledge and, therefore, as positive. From there, we can look for other ways to carry out the teaching, learning, and development process, offering students the possibility of learning through a strategy for appropriating school content. From this perspective, evaluation is a category that helps to revisit concepts, and not a form of control to measure effectiveness.

3.1.2 Correcting the audios

After applying the assessment, schools carry out some procedures: the files are directed to the CAEd/UFJF correction portal. In possession of the audios, without identification data of the students, school, or any links, those responsible carry out the analysis. Examiners are professionals who graduated in the area of languages and/or

literacy with a degree in Literature, Pedagogy, and/or Higher Education called Normal⁴. Assisted by a supervisor who settles any doubts, monitors corrections, and refers adverse situations to the CAEd Coordination. In all tasks, only what the student reads during the recording interval is evaluated. Lists of words and pseudowords have a significant number of terms, aiming to meet all reader profiles.

According to CAEd/UFJF (2023b), when measuring fluency, the following criteria are considered for each test modality: words and pseudowords (measures of fluency and precision are considered). For the text reading test, fluency, precision, and prosody are considered. Fluency is equal to reading correct words per minute ($FLUENCE = \text{CORRECT WORDS} / 1 \text{ MINUTE}$). Precision considers the correct words divided by the sum of the quantities of correct and incorrect words ($PRECISION = \text{CORRECT WORDS} / (\text{CORRECT WORDS} + \text{WRONG WORDS})$).

According to the organizers, the correction key provides specific analyses for students who have speech problems that can be identified and that specific situations of using Portuguese as a second language and/or speech deficiencies do not require specific correction. In addition to this note, they justify that the evaluation criteria for students with specific needs are in the study phase. Concerning this theme, it was possible to verify, during the research, that the Platform offers, among the booklets available, accessible booklets for students with low vision, but no other accessibility was offered to students eligible for special education services, requiring adjustments. We did not have access, for example, to written text in Braille, to audiovisual resources, to differentiated texts and words for students who have different needs, so we can say that the test was designed only for some student profiles.

3.1.3 Reader profile

After obtaining the performance results, the reader profiles are outlined: pre-reader, beginning reader, and fluent reader. The pre-reader profile is characterized by students who cannot perform oral reading and, when they do, require a lot of effort. According to the organizers:

⁴ Degree created in Brazil by the Lei de Diretrizes e Bases da Educação Nacional to train basic education professionals in higher education level (articles 61, 62, and 63) (Brazil, 1996).

In this profile, there is, therefore, the student with difficulties in initial literacy learning related to the decoding process. These difficulties are of different types, but especially in decoding words formed by non-canonical and less familiar syllabic patterns, as it is at the level of letter recognition, also presenting difficulties related to the association of consonants and/or vowels to their sound values, especially in the case of irregular correspondences between phonemes and graphemes (CAEd/UFJF, 2023b, p. 1).

This profile is subdivided into four levels: level 1: the student did not read or said letters, syllables, or words that were not included in the item; level 2: the student named letters isolated from the words contained in the item, that is, they did not identified letters; level 3: the student identified the syllables when reading the words contained in the item; and level 4: the student read up to ten words and five pseudowords contained in the item.

The beginner profile is identified by the analysis when the student correctly read, within 60 seconds, 11 or more words and six or more pseudowords; even though the student can read fragments of text, they can't reach 65 words with up to 90% accuracy. This means that this student demonstrates that they already have appropriated the rules that organize the alphabetic writing system but still has difficulties with the orthographic basis, which makes him take longer in the process of decoding the words (CAEd/UFJF, 2023b).

The student classified as a fluent reader is one who correctly reads more than 65 words in 60 seconds with precision greater than 90%, considering the narrative text of the test. This student is the one who has already overcome the challenges related to decoding words, revealing that they have already automated the processes related to word recognition and mastered the alphabetic principle that organizes writing in Portuguese in the Brazilian variant (CAEd/UFJF, 2023b). We found that time is timed and students are timed, just like in factories, where people are timed in their tasks and the way they do things.

After conceptualizing reading fluency and contextualizing the immersion of fluency assessment in the educational context, we will present, in the following excerpt, the results of the assessment applied in June and July 2023 to students in the 2nd year of elementary school in the public network of the state of São Paulo, region of Presidente Prudente/SP.

4 ADFL results: participation and performance

The São Paulo State Department of Education (Seduc-SP), coordinated by Secretary Renato Feder, released, in August 2023, the ADFL results. The data was published through a platform⁵ of the Programa de Alfabetização em Regime de Colaboração (Parc). The platform is responsible for disseminating the results of the evaluation of several Brazilian states through a partnership between education systems, Associação Bem Comum, and CAEd/UFJF. On the website, indicators of participation and performance of public school students in fluency assessments are available to those involved in the process.

The first indicator analyzed in the research was the percentage of students by profile and reader level in public, municipal, and state systems. In the evaluation, 466,990 students were expected to participate in the public system, 346,661 students from municipal systems, and 120,328 participants from the state education system. 284,851 from the public system, 177,157 from the municipal systems, and 107,694 from the state system effectively participated in the evaluation, totaling the respective percentage of participation: 61%, 51%, and 89%. The analyzers did not justify the absences, but, in a study on the topic, we came across Technical Note nº 1, of 2023, issued by the Conselho de Representantes da União dos Dirigentes Municipais de Educação do Estado de São Paulo on June 7 of the same year, expressing some concerns such as: “[...] 2) reorganize the implementation schedule, especially the dates [...]” (Undime, 2023, p. 1). In addition to consider the academic calendar, the body's representatives also draw attention to evaluating at the end of June, a period “[...] which coincides with the end of the semester, bimonthly assessments, June festivities, and various holidays, which can generate distorted results that are not consistent with reality” (Undime, 2023, p. 1).

In addition to making notes, the Conselho, in the same document, listed some guidelines. Changes to the application dates for the beginning of the semester (August 2023) were suggested, as well as the need to publish the results and use them to adjust the gradual start of the Alfabetiza Juntos SP program⁶. In response to the note issued, the application date was extended to July 10, 2023, only for municipal systems, so the state system remained with the previous date. Given the numbers presented, we infer

⁵ The platform can be accessed through the following link: <https://parc.caeddigital.net/#!/pagina-inicial>.

⁶ A partnership program (under implementation) between federated entities that aims to ensure quality education for students in the public education systems through joint actions with municipalities, to overcome the fragmentation of public educational policies.

that this extension had no effect, since, on the measured date, students would already be on school vacation.

The context pointed out, according to Sordi (2002), the centrality that large-scale assessment assumed: a verification instrument that began to be supported by the media, making it possible to understand how evaluations consolidate, in Brazil, evaluation as a “[. . .] vigorous technical instrument to give credibility and legality to the administrative and political measures promoted by the high state bureaucracy” (Dias Sobrinho, 2002, p. 40). In this sense, the factors pointed out by the Council were relevant, since the application of an external evaluation must consider the particularities, specificities and different cultural, social, and structural contexts of educational institutions to naturally bring the instrument closer to the school calendar, and not distance or interfere negatively in your results.

In addition to the unsatisfactory percentage of student participation, the data highlighted another worrying factor: the number of students classified in the pre-reader profile, in which the student does not have the conditions to perform an oral reading and, when he does, it requires a lot of effort. The results in the public education system were 45% of students in this profile. In municipal systems, 43%, and the state education system showed worrying results, with 47% of students in the pre-reader profile (CAEd/UFJF, 2023b).

The beginner reader profile and the evaluation showed the following results: 42% in the public system, 44% in the municipal system, and 39% in the state system. Again, the state system presents the worst result compared to the others. As for the fluent reader profile, the municipal and state systems expressed, respectively, the same result: 13% (CAEd/UFJF, 2023b).

The difference in performance between the systems raised some questions, such as: why did the state education system show worse rates, and what would be the reasons why the municipal systems showed better performance? These aspects are not answered by the organizers, so we infer that they are educational contingencies and endogenous factors that impacted the evaluation, bringing changes to the results.

Regarding the partnerships that federated entities have joined in the implementation of the ADFL, such as the Associação Bem Comum, we are concerned,

as they may reveal the restricted participation of the State in its basic role of being at the forefront of public policies aimed at education.

5 Final considerations

The present study covered a portion of research carried out in the master's degree. It aimed to investigate the current national interest in students' reading fluency, describe how the Reading Fluency Assessment is organized, as well as what was considered in the analysis of the general results of the assessment. We use the study in Historical-Cultural Theory to highlight the interconnection between individual development, and the social and cultural context, in addition to emphasizing the fundamental role of language and social interaction in the construction of knowledge and the formation of individuals' cognitive capabilities. We carried out research of a quantitative and qualitative nature, using bibliographic and documentary techniques, which included the following main categories of analysis: assessment, literacy process, and reading fluency, in a period from 2008 to 2023.

ADFL gained prominence following the publication of the NRP, in 2000, which highlighted research data relating to literacy, highlighting the importance of reading fluency for comprehension. From then on, CAEd/UFJF structured an instrument that could map students' difficulties in acquiring the alphabetic code of the Portuguese language. Although CAEd/UFJF demonstrates support for the BNCC (Brazil, 2018) requirement to ensure that the child is literate by the end of the 2nd year of elementary school, this aspect differs from our understanding for different reasons: the time for full literacy may change and the BNCC (Brazil, 2018) diverges from state public policy documents, such as the Parâmetros Curriculares Nacionais (Brazil, 1997), the Pacto Nacional pela Alfabetização na Idade Certa (Brazil, 2013b), the Lei de Diretrizes e Bases No. 9,394, of December 20, 1996, the Diretrizes Curriculares Nacionais da Educação Básica (Brazil, 2013a) and the Plano Nacional de Educação (Brazil, 2014-2024), per Goal 5 of Law No. 13,005 /2014: “[...] make all children literate, at most, by the end of the 3rd (third) year of elementary school” (Brazil, 2014, p. 58). In this way, we see Goal 5 of the PNE being contradicted by government policy in terms of time for literacy (3rd year), reducing it by one year, however, complying with what is described in item Strategy 5.2: “[...] establish educational instruments periodic

and specific national assessment to measure children's literacy, applied every year, as well as encouraging education systems and schools to create the respective assessment and monitoring instruments" (Brazil, 2014, p. 10). So, we see government policy differing in its actions, sometimes agreeing and sometimes going against PNE (2014) goals. We understand that monitoring is inseparable from evaluation, and it needs to have a preventive and formative function, allowing teaching action to be redirected so that the student can regain the opportunity to learn and not configure an instrument to only monitor the results of educational systems concerning competencies and skills required by the curriculum guiding documents, as Castro points out (2009).

Regarding the results of the assessment of students in the 2nd year of elementary school, in mid-2023, at the state and regional level (schools under the jurisdiction of the Education Board of Presidente Prudente/SP), they outlined an overview of literacy, signaling the IFL of 4.8 points, on a scale of 0 to 10, that is, less than 50% of students in the "ideal" reader profile. At the regional level (Presidente Prudente/SP), the 11 municipalities showed the following result: participation of 2,960 students (89%), classified as 35% in the pre-reader profile, 48% in the beginner reader profile and 16% in the fluent reader profile. Despite the regional level demonstrating superior results compared to the state education system, the gap in learning to read, according to the evaluation, persists. The Reading Fluency Assessment has flaws, however, the results could be used to review the continuing teacher training policy, offer greater academic support to students, offer better quality physical space to everyone, and combat social inequalities, among others.

Although the results of the assessment indicated a lag, the research demonstrated that the test does not consider the coordination of the multiple abilities that the reading task encompasses, as it is only aimed at decoding and linguistic understanding of the language. This gap made us wonder whether the assessment instrument under discussion would be qualified to measure students' reading ability and their understanding of it. We understand that it needs adjustments, as reading is a complex process that involves different cognitive skills and should consider the processing of graphic, syntactic, and semantic aspects of the text, as well as the knowledge of the world that the student has, taking into account the contributions of Vygotsky (2007) on language as a tool capable of shaping the way individuals think and solve problems, capable of influencing the way people process information and build their understanding of the world.

We also problematize the fact that there is no possibility of retaking the test. In this scenario, the assessment is selective, as it concerns children between 7 and 8 years of age who cannot make mistakes, resume, and redo the assessment, nor can the teacher restart if they encounter any atypical circumstances. We understand that this aspect is incompatible with the meaning of evaluation in the light of Vygotsky (2017). For him, the “error” is positive, and can be used in different ways as a new opportunity to learn or a gauge (diagnosis) of the student’s difficulties, being then considered no longer the end but a strategy that must be used to resume concepts. Error should not be a way of ranking what you don't know, but rather a way of looking for an appropriate way of working.

Another relevant aspect of the research concerns how the assessment was corrected and the students classified into a reader profile. The analysis and classification of student profiles is carried out by external examiners qualified by CAEd/UFJF. We understand that the assessment should take into account the ZPD, which is the distance between what the child can do independently and what they can achieve with the teacher's support. The teacher, active along the way, identifies the student's learning potential and adapts their teaching in favor of meaningful learning for human development (Vygotsky, 2007). Therefore, this analysis process should also be carried out at school, enabling the teacher to appropriate this knowledge as an integral part of the action, since they are the ones who teach and encourage reading, they know the specificities and individual characteristics of their students, and they can qualify the analysis and test results and redirect the didactic-pedagogical practice. Contrary to this, teachers receive ready-made results.

We realize that it is also important to return to the role that partnerships, such as Associação Bem Comum, play with federated entities in the ADFL implementation process. They expose the minimum participation of the State in education, leaving this fundamental function to the co-participations it establishes, and reveal the deplorable results in which public education finds itself, tending society to discard public education as a cultural heritage.

Based on the above, we found that ADFL, in the way it was implemented, is being aimed at decoding and linguistic understanding, abstracting the multiple skills that the act of reading encompasses; shows a lag, suppressing endogenous and exogenous

factors and educational contingencies that can impact the results, as well as little consideration of the teacher when analyzing the results. For these reasons, we interpret that it requires significant adjustments for an implementation favorable to learning to read.

We understand that people need to learn to read, not within the established time, but that reading is one of the instruments to obtain more education, greater democratic participation, and more culture.

6 References

ARMBRUSTER, B. B.; LEHR, F.; OSBORN, J. *Reading first: The research building blocks for teaching children to read*. Washington, D.C.: National Institute for Literacy, 2001.

BARDIN, L. *Análise de conteúdo*. São Paulo: 70, 2011.

BASSO, F. P.; MINÁ, C. S.; PICCOLO, L. R.; SALLES, J. F. Construção do instrumento Avaliação da Fluência de Leitura Textual (AFLeT). In: BASSO, F. P.; MINÁ, C. S.; PICCOLO, L. R.; SALLES, J. F. (ed.). *Avaliação da Fluência de Leitura Textual (AFLeT)*. São Paulo: Vetor, 2018. p. 35-50.

BRASIL. *Base Nacional Comum Curricular (BNCC)*. Educação é a Base. Brasília, DF: MEC, 2018.

BRASIL. Conselho Nacional de Educação. Resolução CNE/CEB nº 7, de 14 de dezembro de 2010. Fixa Diretrizes Curriculares Nacionais para o Ensino Fundamental de 9 (nove) anos. *Diário Oficial [da] República Federativa do Brasil, Poder Executivo*, Brasília, DF, 15 dez. 2010.

BRASIL. *Diretrizes Curriculares Nacionais da Educação Básica*. Brasília, DF: MEC, 2013.

BRASIL. Lei nº 9.394, de 20 de dezembro de 1996. Estabelece as Diretrizes e Bases da Educação Nacional. *Diário Oficial [da] República Federativa do Brasil, Poder Executivo*, Brasília, DF, 21 dez. 1996.

BRASIL. Lei nº 13.005, de 25 junho de 2014. Aprova o Plano Nacional de Educação – PNE e dá outras providências. *Diário Oficial [da] República Federativa do Brasil, Poder Executivo*, Brasília, DF, 26 jun. 2014.

BRASIL. *Pacto Nacional pela Alfabetização na Idade Certa*. Brasília, DF: MEC, 2013b.

BRASIL. *Parâmetros Curriculares Nacionais: Introdução aos Parâmetros Curriculares Nacionais*. Brasília, DF: Ministério da Educação e do Desporto, 1997.

BRASIL. *PNA Política Nacional de Alfabetização/Secretaria de Alfabetização*. Brasília, DF: MEC, 2019. Available in: <https://alfabetizacao.mec.gov.br/#pna>. Accessed on: 18 Jul. 2023.

BRASIL. Portaria nº 867, de 4 de julho de 2012. Institui o Pacto Nacional pela Alfabetização na Idade Certa e as ações do Pacto e define suas diretrizes gerais. *Diário Oficial [da] República Federativa do Brasil*, Poder Executivo, Brasília, DF, 5 jul. 2012.

CAEd/UFJF. *Caderno do aplicador*. Modelo D0202. Juiz de Fora: CAEd, 2023.

CAEd/UFJF. *Plataforma de avaliação e monitoramento PARC: Resultados - Avaliação de Fluência – Resultados Atuais*. Juiz de Fora: CAEd, 2023. Available in: <https://institucional.caeddigital.net/projetos/parc.html>. Accessed on: 18 Nov. 2023.

CASTRO, M. H.G. Sistemas de avaliação da educação no Brasil: avanços e novos desafios. *São Paulo em Perspectiva*, São Paulo, v. 23, n. 1, p. 5-18, 2009.

DAANE, M. C.; CAMPBELL, J. R.; GRIGG, W. S.; GOODMAN, M. J.; ORANJE, A. *Fourth-grade students reading aloud: NAEP 2002 Special Study of Oral Reading*. Washington, DC: Government Office, 2005.

DIAS SOBRINHO, J. *Universidade e avaliação: entre a ética e o mercado*. Florianópolis: Insular, 2002.

DOSSENA, G. A. *Prova Paraná Fluência 2019: reflexões e desdobramentos*. 2022. Dissertação (Mestrado em Educação) – Programa de Pós-Graduação em Educação, Universidade Estadual do Oeste do Paraná, Cascavel, 2022.

GIL, A. C. *Como elaborar projetos de pesquisa*. 4. ed. São Paulo: Atlas, 2002.

GOUGH, P. B.; TUNMER, W. E. Decoding, reading & reading disability. *Remedial and Special Education*, [S.l.], v. 7, p. 6-10, 1986. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/074193258600700104>

HUDSON, R. F.; LANE, H. B.; COLS, P. P. Reading fluency assessment and instruction: what, why, and how. *The Reading Teacher*, [S.l.], v. 58, n. 8, p. 702-714, 2005.

KUHN, M. R.; SCHWANENFLUGEL, P. J.; MEISINGER, E. B. Aligning theory and: automaticity, prosody, and definitions of fluency. *Reading Research Quarterly*, [S.l.], v. 45, n. 2, p. 230-251, 2010. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1598/RRQ.45.2.4>

MINAS GERAIS. *Resolução nº 27, de 31 de outubro de 2018*. Aprova a concordância com o pedido de credenciamento da Fundação CAEd como fundação de apoio da UFJF. Available in: https://www2.ufjf.br/consu/files/2018/02/Resolu%c3%a7%c3%a3o_27.2018-CONSU_CAED-Credenciamento-Fund.-de-Apoio.pdf. Accessed on: 15 Oct. 2023.

MOTA, M. M. P. E. Um olhar crítico sobre os testes de compreensão de leitura. *Avaliação Psicológica*, Itatiba, v. 14, n. 3, p. 347-351, 2015.

PULIEZI, S.; MALUF, M. R. *A fluência e sua importância para a compreensão da leitura. Psico-USF*, Bragança Paulista, v. 19, n. 3, p. 467-475, 2014.

RASINSKI, T. V. Creating fluent readers. *Educational Leadership*, Illinois, v. 61, n. 6, p. 46-51, 2004.

RASINSKI, T. V. Reading fluency instruction: Moving beyond accuracy, automaticity, and prosody. *The Reading Teacher*, [S.l.], v. 59, p. 704-706, 2006.

SÃO PAULO. *Avaliação da Fluência Leitora*. São Paulo: Secretaria da Educação, 2021.

SEVERINO, A. J. *Metodologia do trabalho científico*. 23. ed. rev. e atual. São Paulo: Cortez, 2007.

SORDI, M. R. L. Entendendo as lógicas da avaliação institucional para dar sentido ao contexto interpretativo. In: VILLAS BOAS, B. M. F. (org.). *Avaliação: Políticas e Práticas*. Campinas: Papirus, 2002. p. 65-81.


UNDIME. *Nota técnica nº 1 de 2023*. Programa pela Alfabetização em Regime de Colaboração Programa Educa Juntos SP. São Paulo: Undime, 2023.

VYGOTSKY, L. S. *A construção do pensamento e da linguagem*. Tradução Paulo Bezerra. São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 2001.

VYGOTSKY, L. S. *A formação social da mente: o desenvolvimento dos processos psicológicos superiores*. 7. ed. São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 2007.

VYGOTSKY, L. S. Aprendizagem e desenvolvimento intelectual na idade escolar. In: VYGOTSKY, L. S.; LURIA, A. R.; LEONTIEV, A. N. *Linguagem, desenvolvimento e aprendizagem*. 13. ed. São Paulo: Ícone, 2017. p. 103-117.

Fábia Cristina Morteau de Medeiros, Universidade do Oeste Paulista (Unoeste)

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9594-9363>

Master's degree from the Unoeste Postgraduate Program, Presidente Prudente campus, São Paulo. Basic education teacher.

Authorship contribution: Preparation, creation, and/or presentation of published work by those in the original research group, specifically critical review, commentary, or proofreading – including pre- or post-publication steps.

Lattes: <http://lattes.cnpq.br/9611877217991093>

E-mail: fabia.cristina2@hotmail.com

Ademir Henrique Manfré, Universidade do Oeste Paulista (Unoeste)

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2067-4657>

PhD from the Postgraduate Program in Education at the Faculty of Science and Technology of the Universidade Estadual Paulista (Unesp), Presidente Prudente campus, São Paulo (SP). Professor at Unoeste, Presidente Prudente/SP campus.

Authorship contribution: Preparation, creation, and/or presentation of published work by those in the original research group, specifically critical review, commentary, or proofreading – including pre- or post-publication steps.

Lattes: <http://lattes.cnpq.br/2559786704613672>

E-mail: ademirmanfre@yahoo.com.br

Elsa Midori Shimazaki, Universidade do Oeste Paulista (Unoeste)

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2225-5667>

Post-Doctorate from the Postgraduate Program at Universidade Estadual de Maringá (UEM), *campus* Maringá, Paraná. Professor at Unoeste, Presidente Prudente campus, São Paulo.

Authorship contribution: Preparation, creation, and/or presentation of published work by those in the original research group, specifically critical review, commentary, or proofreading – including pre- or post-publication steps.

Lattes: <http://lattes.cnpq.br/9372609347074339>

E-mail: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2225-5667>

Responsible editor: Lia Machado Fiuza Fialho

Ad hoc experts: Maiquel Röhrig and Justino Pereira de Magalhães

Translator: Marina Lima Pompeu

How to cite this article (ABNT):

MEDEIROS, Fábila Cristina Morteau de; MANFRÉ, Ademir Henrique; SHIMAZAKI, Elsa Midori. Avaliação da fluência em leitura: análise e discussão para a escola atual.

Educação & Formação, Fortaleza, v. 9, e12695, 2024. Available at:

<https://revistas.uece.br/index.php/redufor/article/view/e12695>



Received on February 12, 2024.

Accepted on April 24, 2024.

Published on June 04, 2024.