

SOCIAL JUSTICE AND MODERN SLAVERY: THE CONSTRUCTION OF LANGUAGE EDUCATION THROUGH PROJECT-BASED LEARNING

*Justiça social e escravidão moderna:
a construção do ensino de línguas por meio da aprendizagem baseada em projetos*



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Abstract

This chapter describes a project titled La Esclavitud en El Siglo XXI developed in the Spanish Language III course of a technical professional course in commerce for youth and adults (PROEJA) at the Instituto Federal de Educação, Ciência e Tecnologia do Rio Grande do Sul (IFRS). Based on Freire's critical pedagogy (1987, 2003), we present the development of a Spanish as a Second Language (SSL) teaching proposal based on Project-Based Learning (PBL). This methodological approach aims to build knowledge around a social theme, which becomes the central focus of the project, addressing a question related to the topic under discussion. Therefore, we chose this as an alternative for creating an emancipatory language education, transforming the classroom into a space for the development of more autonomous and critical individuals in relation to their social reality. To this end, we describe the six tasks that comprised the eight-class project and outline the theoretical-methodological path used to construct the activities implemented with the group. Through the implementation of this project and the writing of this chapter, we aim to contribute to the dissemination of successful practices based on the PBL methodology and to inspire future didactic proposals that seek to enhance students' critical thinking through Spanish language learning.

Key words: project-based learning; Spanish as a foreign language; Base Nacional Comum Curricular; Learning tasks

Abstract

Resumo

Este capítulo descreve um projeto intitulado La Esclavitud en El Siglo XXI, desenvolvido na disciplina de Espanhol III de um curso técnico profissional em Comércio para jovens e adultos (PROEJA), no Instituto Federal de Educação, Ciência e Tecnologia do Rio Grande do Sul (IFRS). Com base na pedagogia crítica de Freire (1987, 2003), apresentamos o desenvolvimento de uma proposta de ensino de Espanhol como Língua Estrangeira (ELE), fundamentada na Aprendizagem Baseada em Projetos (ABP). Essa abordagem metodológica visa à construção de conhecimento em torno de uma temática social, que se torna o foco central do projeto, a partir de uma pergunta orientadora relacionada ao tema em discussão. Assim, escolhemos essa metodologia como alternativa para a criação de uma educação linguística emancipatória, transformando a sala de aula em um espaço para o desenvolvimento de sujeitos mais autônomos e críticos diante de sua realidade social. Para tanto, descrevemos as seis tarefas que compuseram o projeto, realizado ao longo de oito aulas, e traçamos o percurso teórico-metodológico utilizado na construção das atividades implementadas com o grupo. Por meio da implementação deste projeto e da redação deste capítulo, buscamos contribuir para a disseminação de práticas exitosas baseadas na metodologia de ABP, bem como inspirar futuras propostas didáticas que visem ao desenvolvimento do pensamento crítico por meio do ensino da língua espanhola.

Palavras-chave: aprendizagem baseada em projetos; Espanhol como língua estrangeira; Base Nacional Comum Curricular; tarefas de aprendizagem.

Introdução

This chapter describes a project titled *La Esclavitud En El Siglo XXI*, developed in the subject Spanish Language III as part of a technical course at the secondary level in commerce, within the youth and adult education program (PROEJA) of the Instituto Federal de Educação, Ciência e Tecnologia do Rio Grande do Sul (IFRS). The students in this class were between the ages of 20 and 50, working in various sectors such as civil construction and healthcare. The main proposal of PROEJA, according to its official guiding document (IFRS, 2017), is to settle a historical debt that Brazilian society owes itself, considering the long-standing lack of enduring public policies in the field of education for those who did not have the opportunity to study during the regular schooling period.

The main theme of the project, related to modern working conditions, required us to address the concept of social justice through a historical lens. To discuss this, it is important to first highlight that this term can have different definitions, whether viewed positively or negatively. While some often refer to social justice as synonymous with equality, it is necessary to consider that equality can be unjust (Scalon and Salata, 2016): providing the same conditions for everyone is not the way to achieve the same outcomes. The authors also argue that inequality is not a natural occurrence but rather a social construct. Therefore, the path to social justice is directly related to equity, meaning the provision of appropriate tools/conditions according to the needs of each individual, considering their particularities and requirements.

For this research, we align ourselves with the synthesis by Connel (2014), who argues that social justice is a demand to rectify inequality. The use of the word “demand” aligns with one of the aspects we consider most important when mentioning social justice: the collective struggle, which is only possible through raising awareness of the social and political context.

Developing a reflective perspective on reality and one’s place in society must occur during educational formation, and to achieve this, it is necessary to implement a critical pedagogy. In this sense, Freire (1987) proposes an alternative to the banking model of education, which positions students as passive participants in the learning process: critical pedagogy. From this perspective, students must be the catalysts of their own education. Furthermore, they must be able to recognize themselves as agents of social transformation throughout their educational journey. When addressing social justice within the realm of commerce and labor in a Spanish language class, we are facilitating a process of recognizing previously established systems of exploitation and helping students reflect on current social structures and their consequences.

The discussion of social issues and the development of students' critical thinking skills are highly relevant across all curricular components, but they hold particular importance around languages. According to the Base Nacional Comum Curricular (BNCC), the guiding document for teaching practices in Brazil, one of the required competencies around secondary education is to “negotiate meanings and produce mutual understanding in various languages (artistic, bodily, and verbal), with a view to the common interest, based on principles and values of equity rooted in democracy and human rights” (Brasil, 2017, p. 485, emphasis added). Considering this directive, we can understand that reflecting on issues that violate human rights and equity, such as the poor working conditions faced by workers in our society, is a duty of the school and, in our specific case, of the Spanish language class in a PROEJA focused on the commercial field. These guidelines lead

us to reflect on which didactic-pedagogical options would be most appropriate for achieving these objectives. In this chapter, we propose a model based on project-based learning. This approach aims to build knowledge around a social theme (which becomes the project's central axis) by responding to a question related to the topic under discussion. For this reason, we advocate it as an alternative in the pursuit of constructing an emancipatory school and language teaching environment, creating a space for forming more autonomous and critical individuals in relation to their social reality.

Finally, the structure of this work begins with a presentation of the theoretical-didactic method we chose to enhance students' experiences with literacy and language education. In section three, we detail the project developed with the PROEJA group. We conclude the text with our final considerations.

1 Theoretical-pedagogical pathways: project-based learning and multiliteracy

To meet the challenges outlined by Brazil's national education documents, we must seek to redefine the role that Spanish language teaching occupies in Brazilian schools. Research based on multiliteracy studies and language education has contributed over the past decades to paving the way for constructing this new role. These studies, in line with these documents, argue that the competencies in language - which includes Spanish - should provide students with a space for reflection in concrete and contemporary language use situations, aiming to create an environment for the development of citizenship, largely motivated by the topic under discussion.

While the BNCC maintains the text as the central focus of language classes, it also emphasizes that schools must strive for "the expansion of literacy, enabling meaningful and critical participation in various social practices permeated/constituted by orality, writing, and other languages"¹ (Brasil, 2017, p. 68). Furthermore, it highlights that contemporary practices involve "new genres and growing multimodal and multimedial texts, as well as new ways of producing, configuring, distributing, replicating, and interacting"² (Brasil, 2017, p. 68).

Brazilian laws and national documents stipulate that school education should be developed in a contextualized, dialogical, and ideological manner, meaning it should promote the development of students' critical thinking and their discursive engagement with the world (Brasil, 2000, 2017). However, these guidelines do not prescribe a specific methodological approach that teachers must adopt in their teaching practices. This absence of direction is due to the guidelines' advisory, non-dogmatic nature, which has both positive and negative points. On the one hand, it is beneficial for teachers to have the freedom to assess their audience, reflect, and decide on the most appropriate pedagogical tools to meet their students' needs. On the other hand, it can become highly complex to identify and develop lessons that align with official guidelines, particularly without sufficient time and adequate working conditions for lesson planning or professional development on teaching methodologies. Considering this, the current research aims to share with teachers a possible methodological pathway: Project-Based Learning (PBL).

To explain PBL, we will employ the concept of method proposed by Richards and Rodgers

¹ Our translation.

² Our translation.

(2003). According to the authors, "a method relates to a theoretical approach, is determined by a design regarding organization, and is applied in practice through a procedure"³ (Richards and Rodgers, 2003, p. 40, emphasis added).

From the perspective of approach, PBL adopts an interactive view of language, as in a class guided by this methodology, students will investigate a problem-based topic, analyze it, interpret it critically, and share what they have learned with the community. This approach connects with Vygotsky's theory, as it is based on the idea that learning occurs through interaction via the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), defined as "the distance between the actual developmental level, determined by independent problem-solving, and the level of potential development, determined through problem-solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers"⁴ (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86). The ZPD implies interaction, problem-solving, and collaboration with the teacher and peers. All these elements are present in the development of a project-based approach. The focus of PBL is to learn about a problem-based topic through research and shared experiences.

With regard to design, the purpose of Project-Based Learning (PBL) in the teaching of Spanish as a Second Language (SSL) is to

[...] develop all forms of interpretation and expression in the new language in an integrated manner.

The student develops autonomy and becomes a subject. This subject produces knowledge and becomes aware of their identity through social and historical insertion in their immediate environment and in the world (Lagares; Correa, 2016: 136, emphasis added by the authors).⁵

The goal of fostering the linguistic potential of students throughout their investigation of the problem-based topic is reflected in the program model, the types of activities, the roles of students and teachers, and the function of teaching materials. Furthermore, it also influences the procedures adopted.

Regarding the selection and organization of thematic content in the program, it will preferably stem from a suggestion made by the group of students. However, it may also be indicated by the teacher based on their observation of the class. What is important is that there is a genuine interest in the subject and a question to be explored. The activities, therefore, will be those that foster knowledge about both the topic and the language simultaneously. We can organize them into several stages, as proposed by Schlatter (2009):

³ Our translation.

⁴ Our translation.

⁵ Our translation.

Table 01: Suggested Activities for Teaching Practice in Project-Based Learning (PBL)

- Preparatory activities that activate prior knowledge;
- Comprehension activities that promote initial contact with the discursive genre and identify its contextual and linguistic-discursive characteristics;
- Reflection activities on cultural aspects of L2 Spanish;
- Text response activities (oral and written production);
- Reflection and use of linguistic resources activities;
- Language practice activities in various L2 Spanish contexts;
- Activities for producing a final product;
- Community interaction activities;
- Evaluation activities.

Source: the authors.

In Project-Based Learning (PBL), students play an active role in their own learning process, as they must investigate the study topic to resolve the question posed by the group. The teacher, in turn, not only acts as a fellow researcher on the topic but also works as a curator of the materials that will make up the project tasks. This means they will select materials, organize the task sequence, prepare their students, and encourage awareness (Richards and Rodgers, 2003).

Regarding the teaching materials, Richards and Rodgers (2003) explain that they can be analyzed according to their main purpose, their form, their relationship with other sources of information, and the skills they demand from the teacher. In line with this, the materials in PBL are intended to assist in the investigation of the problem-based topic. This means they will be authentic and as varied as necessary for the development of the project. Their connection with other disciplines of knowledge, therefore, will also be as broad as required for the investigation and the production of the final product.

In terms of procedures, PBL focuses on research, which will culminate in the creation of a final product that reports on the findings. This product takes the form of a discursive genre, that is, a text that exists in the real world to address the problem being studied. The following section describes how the PBL approach was implemented with a PROEJA group in the Spanish Language III course of the Technical Course in Commerce. It will analyze how the design and procedures used aimed to construct critical language education through the debate on modern labor slavery.

2 The project: contextualization

The choice of the topic *Esclavitud en El Siglo XXI* was based on several factors that caught our attention when constructing this project. First, we took time to understand the nature of the professional practice of the group. According to the guideline document of the Technical Course in Commerce (IFRS, 2017), technicians will deal directly with suppliers in the exercise of their profession, as they will be responsible for purchasing products, materials, and hiring services. Because of this, we inferred that it would be important for them to critically analyze the labor relations of companies before signing contracts and establishing occupational ties.

The second factor that led us to consider this a suitable topic for the PROEJA group is that in 2023 there were several reports of wineries, companies where our students are likely to work, that

kept their employees in conditions resembling slavery (O Tempo, 2023). This happened in the region where we are located, in Rio Grande do Sul, further connecting the topic to the reality of our students. Finally, the last reason we considered this topic appropriate was the knowledge we had of their reality, being aware that they were working students. Therefore, proposing a reflection on their own lives and routines seemed to us a way to foster critical thinking about the place they occupy in the socioeconomic structure in which we live.

The main objectives of working with the theme Slavery in the 21st Century throughout the project were: (a) to provide students with relevant E/LA learning both personally and socially; (b) to build with the group an understanding that slavery, although considered by some as an individual problem, is in fact a collective issue; and (c) to emphasize that being aware of this problem in both their professional and personal roles is a social duty.

To achieve the goals set for the project, we designed six learning tasks with the aim of developing group responses to our guiding discussion question: What is modern slavery, and how does this phenomenon occur in our society? This material was applied over eight classes, each lasting approximately two hours. To share the answers developed, the final product of the project was an infographic about modern slavery. When preparing the tasks that resulted in the production of the infographic, we followed some principles beyond those outlined in the theoretical framework section:

Table 02: Principles for Teaching Practice in EBPT

- Every task must be directly related to the project's theme.
- The central discourse genre should be presented and worked on frequently so that students understand it well enough to produce it. This can be done by presenting various examples throughout the lessons.
- For tasks that involve longer and more complex texts, it is important to introduce essential vocabulary beforehand to facilitate students' reading comprehension.
- It is advisable to use objective questions for text interpretation activities, as the PROEJA group is at an elementary level in Spanish.
- For tasks requiring longer answers, it is necessary to provide an example structure that students can use in their production.
- It is important not only to ask interpretation questions but also to include questions that encourage students to take a critical and reflective stance on the texts in the tasks.

Source: the authors.

Based on the guidelines listed and aligned with the theory underpinning the Project-Based Learning (PBL) approach, we planned the project, which will be detailed in tasks described in the following subsections.

3 Task 1: Initial Discussion of the Topic


Before starting work on the tasks and even on the topic itself, we discussed with the group the organization of the classes, the project objectives, and our intended outcomes by the end of the sessions. Acceptance and interest from the class in the proposal made by the teacher are fundamental

in a pedagogy aimed at being critical and in Project-Based Learning (PBL). After agreeing on these essential elements, we began working on the first task in the sequence, which aimed to propose an initial discussion on modern slavery. In this methodological approach, we always start with a focus on the topic, as the goal is for students to expand their sociocultural knowledge, develop their critical thinking, and learn the language through the subject matter.

To design the tasks, including this first one, we used the concept of multiliteracy when choosing the materials, selecting texts from different modes of communication. We initially proposed the discussion based on the students' existing world knowledge and then integrated new knowledge through the multimodal texts used throughout the project. As will be seen, the initial exercises aimed both to start the discussion and to serve as an invitation to explore the topic further.

Table 03, Task 1: **Calentando los motores**

Ejercicio 01
Analiza las imágenes y escribe debajo de cada una de ellas los elementos que las conforman:



Palabras que puedes utilizar para responder en español: mujer, explotación, trabajadores, esclavos, niños esclavizados, trabajo infantil, calle, niñez, cansancio, hambre, comida zona urbana, zona rural, obligación, derecho, deberes, adultos, miseria, riqueza, países del sur global, países del norte global, raza, color de piel, rasgos identitarios, capitalismo, injusticia, sueldo, plata.

Ejercicio 02.
Ahora reflexionaremos acerca de las imágenes y de sus significados. Contesta las preguntas, escribiendo tu respuesta. Después vamos a discutir las. Puedes utilizar las estructuras sugeridas.

a. ¿Las personas de las imágenes te parecen felices? ¿Por qué?
Si, me parecen porque...
No, no me parecen porque...

b. Para tí, ¿las personas de las imágenes son trabajadores o esclavos? ¿Por qué?
Para mí, las personas de las imágenes son trabajadores porque...
Para mí, las personas de las imágenes son esclavos porque...

Source: the authors.

After the two initial exercises, the group received cards with various concepts to match their definitions. The goal was to further deepen their lexical repertoire for discussing the topic and to prepare them for reading Task 2, as some of these lexical elements were taken from the text of that activity. The instruction for this third exercise was: "Ahora, vamos a hacer un juego: ustedes

recibirán cartones con algunos conceptos y deben pegarlos en la casilla de la palabra que corresponda.” As an example, we mentioned that one of the terms was “servidumbre,” with the definition in the material being: “Sustantivo f.: condición y trabajo de la persona que está subordinada a otra.”

Finally, the last exercise of this task aimed to connect with the students' work life, opening the opportunity for them to relate the collective aspect with the individual, through the following instruction: “Queremos saber acerca de tu rutina. ¿Cuántas horas trabajas al día? ¿Cuántas horas tienes libres para ti al día? ¿Estás feliz con la rutina que llevas? ¿Por qué? ¿Qué cambiarías?” Based on the answers to these questions, we were able to discuss with the students their position in the socioeconomic structure, both directly and indirectly, making the learning experience meaningful for critically reflecting on their own lives in relation to the project topic.

4 Task 2: Reading Comprehension

Task 2 was designed with the goal of delving into the topic more deeply, promoting thematic engagement, and providing the group with a historical overview of this social phenomenon through a news article. The reading and comprehension work began in Task 1, in Exercise 03, as mentioned in the previous section. In that task, we started with a debate about the title of the news article, which provides the thread of the text and relates to the question the group will need to answer by the end of the project: "What is modern slavery and how does this phenomenon occur in our society?" The activity was as follows:

Table 04, Task 2: Lectura de la noticia desde el título

<p>Ejercicio 01. El título de la noticia es ¿Qué es la esclavitud moderna y qué podemos hacer para combatirla? Considerando los conocimientos que tienes acerca de la historia, de la vida y de noticias, reflexiona acerca de las siguientes preguntas:</p>	
<p>a) ¿Qué es la esclavitud? Para mí, la esclavitud es..... porque.....</p>	<p>e) En el trabajo moderno, como lo conocemos, ¿Existe la posibilidad de la servidumbre? Me parece que la servidumbre existe porque.....</p>
<p>b) ¿Qué es la esclavitud moderna? Me parece que la esclavitud moderna es porque</p>	<p>f) ¿Quién o quienes lucran con la servidumbre? Para mí, las personas que lucran con la servidumbre son porque.....</p>
<p>c) Hoy día, ¿qué les parece que sean condiciones infrahumanas? Para mí, las condiciones infrahumanas son porque.....</p>	
<p>d) ¿Hay alguna relación entre la ganancia y la esclavitud? Para mí, hay relación entre la ganancia y la esclavitud</p>	

porque.....	
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Source: the authors.

As can be seen, we initially provided pre-suggested linguistic structures so that the students could have guidance on how to construct their responses, considering their basic level of Spanish. This not only ensures their participation in SSL from the very beginning of the project but also serves as a strategy to maintain their motivation for active learning of the additional language (hereinafter AL). After discussing these issues, we moved on to the comprehensive reading of the text and the discussion of more specific aspects through a true or false exercise. This type of activity, in addition to working on reading comprehension, also provides additional vocabulary for these students, who have an initial level of Spanish, to express themselves.

Table 05, Task 2: **Ejercicio de interpretación V o F**

<p>Ejercicio 02 Considerando las informaciones de la noticia, contesta con verdadero (V) o falso (F):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Se estima que 75 millones de personas en todo el mundo son explotadas por la esclavitud. () . Los tipos de esclavitud son trabajo en servidumbre, trabajo forzoso, explotación sexual y trabajo en condiciones extremas. () . El trabajo de servidumbre es voluntario y se hace para pedir préstamos. () . El trabajo forzoso normalmente ocurre en la pesca, en la busca por el oro, en fábricas de ropa y en plantaciones de alimentos. () . La explotación sexual es basada en la venta de niños y mujeres de acuerdo con su valor comercial, especialmente para la prostitución y pornografía. () . Para cambiar la esclavitud moderna es necesario mantener sus hábitos de consumo y denunciar la esclavitud. ()
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Source: the authors.

Next, other points of reading comprehension were discussed, and we proceeded with an interrogative approach that connected issues addressed in the text with the students' routines:

Table 06, Task 2: **Preguntas de conexión entre la noticia y la vida del grupo**

<p>Ejercicio 04. ¿ERES UN ESCLAVO MODERNO O UN TRABAJADOR?</p> <p>En tu opinión ¿es posible que pensemos que el trabajo ejecutado por las clases más bajas tenga una relación con la esclavitud moderna? ¿Por qué?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> . ¿Tú eres un esclavo moderno o un trabajador? . En nuestra sociedad actual, el lucro es lo más importante para las elites. ¿Tú conoces algún caso en que los trabajadores fueron o son tratados como esclavos? . ¿Qué anhelamos en nuestras profesiones?

Source: the authors.

The pre-defined linguistic structures for the responses were removed in this task, as we understood that by this point the students could answer in Spanish using the structural and

linguistic knowledge previously acquired in the earlier exercises, as well as having sufficient understanding of the topic to argue more deeply. Even in Task 2 (cf. Table 05 and Table 06), working with numbers and extensive figures could have been included, as the information in all the texts of the project uses these elements to illustrate statistical data on forced or slave labor. In the PROEJA project, we chose not to do so due to the limited class time with the group. Instead, we decided to focus on deepening the discussion on the topic and working with the vocabulary and linguistic structures that would be fundamental for the debate on modern slavery and for the final product: the infographic.

5 Task 3: Infographic Genre

To start the discussion on the genre, we conducted an analysis of the word “infográfico” We asked the students to try to divide it into two parts (info and gráfico) and to make hypotheses about its meaning to share with the group. Understanding why this genre is named this way helped them grasp both its communication objective (to inform) and its structural realization (information presented with graphic highlights and/or images). Subsequently, we presented an infographic to the group and proposed a discussion based on a broader question so that we could then focus on the details of the genre:

Table 07, Task 3: **El infográfico**

Ejercicio 01

Vamos a leer juntos el siguiente [infográfico](#). Fíjense en las informaciones y en los datos presentados para 49ustifica la reflexión. Teniendo en cuenta los datos del infográfico acerca de la esclavitud moderna, contesta y 49ustificat: *¿Se puede afirmar que se acabó la esclavitud? 49ustificat u respuesta.*

Source: the authors.

Exercise 02 of Task 03 involved a literacy activity for the group to delve deeper into the information presented in the text:

Table 08, Task 3: **Interpretación del infográfico**

Ejercicio 02

Considerando las informaciones del infográfico, contesta las siguientes preguntas con verdadero (V) o falso (F):

- . El país más esclavizador es China. ()
- . El matrimonio forzoso ocurre cuando una mujer o niña es obligada a casarse y eso generalmente ocurre por cuestiones culturales. ()
- . La esclavitud militar ocurre cuando los niños son obligados a trabajar para la policía o para los generales. ()
- . 75% de los esclavos son mujeres y niños. ()
- . La servidumbre ocurre cuando las personas son obligadas al trabajo doméstico. ()

Source: the authors.

From this infographic, we also explored visual aspects of the genre in the third exercise

through questions such as: a. "¿Hay elementos visuales que llamaron tu atención en el infográfico? ¿Cuáles son?" and b. "¿Hay fuentes de información presentadas en el infográfico? ¿Dónde están?". With the debate generated by these inquiries, we began discussing the structure of the genre.

For the students to create the final product (an infographic on modern slavery), we considered it essential for them to know the verbs in the simple present tense. Therefore, we included a general activity on verbs (identification in the infographic) to assess their level of knowledge on this linguistic topic and thus decide whether to include or exclude information in the following tasks: exercises 04 and 05.

In exercise 04, the following actions were proposed to the students:

- Identification of the verbs in the text.
- Classification of the verbs according to the tense in which they are conjugated.
- Reflection on the relationship between the verb tense and the communication objective of the genre.

In this activity, we were able to discuss the connection between the verbs in the simple present tense and the infographic genre, that is, we built with the group the recognition that this genre, by presenting recent and updated research, is linguistically realized in the present tense. By doing this, we were able to help them understand that all linguistic-discursive elements we use relate to what we want to communicate with our texts. Finally, questions were posed for the group to respond to the text by positioning themselves.

6 Task 4: Child slavery and simple present tense verbs

Previously, we discussed modern slavery in general (cf. 3.1 and 3.3), and in contrast, this task focuses on the discussion of child slavery. To start, we asked the students to review previous exercises and note data that provided them with quantitative or qualitative information about child slavery. For this task, we brought another infographic, using the same didactic approach, that is, objective questions (semi-controlled production) followed by open-ended questions (free production).

Next, to continue and reinforce the work with verbs, we proposed a more detailed explanation of the topic through excerpts from the presented infographic.

Table 09, Task 4: **Recursos lingüísticos (presente de indicativo)**

Ejercicio 03:

a. Acompaña la explicación sobre los verbos en cada uno de los enunciados abajo:

Ejemplo 01

*200 mil menores de África Occidental **trabajan** en minas y canteras de oro.*

En el ejemplo anterior, la acción física es **TRABAJAR**. En ese caso, ¿quiénes trabajan? La respuesta es **200 mil menores de África Occidental**, o sea, **ellos**. Identificar el verbo y preguntar quién hace la acción puede ayudarte a identificar la persona, o sea, la persona que la realiza.

Ejemplo 02

*El tráfico ilegal de niños y niñas **genera** \$24.903 millones.*

En el ejemplo, la acción es **GENERAR**. En ese caso, ¿quién genera?. La respuesta es **El tráfico ilegal de niños y niñas**, o sea, **él**.

b. Ahora que ya sabes que es un verbo, identifica por lo menos tres verbos del infográfico y escribe una explicación parecida con las dos anteriores.

Source: the authors.

Then, we deepened the teaching by focusing on the simple present tense, its functions, and how it is conjugated. Next, we also proposed verb conjugation exercises so that students could practice, especially the irregularities of this verb tense. Finally, we presented a dynamic activity to the students: they had to discuss the actions they did (or did not) take in their lives to combat slavery, leading to a collective discussion before the final production.

Table 10, Task 4: **Discusión del tema y uso del presente de indicativo**

Ejercicio 05.

Sobre la esclavitud de niños, escribe tres acciones que haces para combatirla a partir de tu realidad, como en el ejemplo:

- . **Reflexiono y discuto el tema con mis compañeros de clase.**
- a.

Source: the authors

7 Task 05: Research

To create their own infographics, the group needed data beyond what had been discussed in the multimodal texts in class. Thus, the final task of the project was aimed at conducting research. Initially, we provided written instructions on how to search for data in Spanish using search tools, including screenshots and specific instructions on how to do it. We then guided the group in searching for potential sources of information for their infographics, turning the task into a written record of this process for the organization of the collected data. Next, after gathering at least 3 sources of information, students were to evaluate them considering (a) relevance, (b) publication date, and (c) reliability of the website.

Finally, we provided a template for students to plan their infographic, detailing the title, the data they would use, the sources, and the links to the images that would be part of the production.

Table 11, Task 5: **Preguntas para la producción del infográfico**

PARTE III - INFORMACIONES PARA EL INFOGRÁFICO (producción colectiva)

Con los sitios web previamente evaluados, discute con los compañeros los datos que podrán ser utilizados para la producción del infográfico en grupo. Utiliza las preguntas a continuación para conducir tus respuestas. Apunta los datos en la tabla abajo:

1. **El título del infográfico:** ¿Cuál es el tema del infográfico?
2. **Explicación general sobre la esclavitud moderna:** ¿Qué es la esclavitud moderna? ¿Por qué

- ocurre? ¿Hay datos acerca del número de esclavizados?
3. **Tipo(s) de esclavitud (es):** ¿Cuáles son los tipos de esclavitudes?
4. **Descripción de cómo este tipo de esclavitud ocurre:** ¿Cómo ocurre este tipo de esclavitud? ¿Este tipo de esclavitud presenta alguna característica propia acerca de quiénes son esclavizados y cómo eso ocurre?
5. **Datos cuantitativos:** ¿Hay datos en números que? ¿Son confiables? ¿Son relevantes para el infográfico?
6. **Imágenes ilustrativas:** Enviar el o los enlaces de las imágenes en el grupo de whatsapp. También puedes enviarnos, por ejemplo, flechas u otros elementos visuales que se utilizarán para producir el infográfico.
7. **Fuentes utilizadas:** ¿Cuáles fueron los sitios web utilizados en la investigación?

Source: the authors

We argue that evaluation functions as a pedagogical tool and not just as an evaluative one. To that end, this table was constantly available to the group so that they could understand the logic behind the criteria development and have a guide for their final production.

8 Task 6: Writing and Revising According to Evaluation Criteria

In the next class, we presented the evaluation criteria so that students could finalize their texts after conducting their research. These criteria were designed according to the genre models we worked with, the profile of the students, and what they presented in class in terms of comprehension and production possibilities in SSL. It is important to note that these indicators guide both the initial production and subsequent revisions, as they allow students to focus on specific points in the text, add elements they had forgotten, and rewrite parts that were not suitable for the context, theme, or linguistic resources of the genre. Three levels were established for each evaluation criterion: I. No cumple el criterio (0,00); II. Cumple parcialmente (1,00); Cumple con excelencia (2,00).

Conclusion

The teaching of SSL in Brazilian basic education, within the broad field of Language, can and should be conducted in a way that promotes the development of students' critical thinking. The discussion on social justice and modern slavery allows for a critical view of working conditions at both the collective and personal levels. Moreover, doing so in the SSL class provides access to information about other cultures (news, information, videos, etc.), thus diversifying and expanding students' knowledge about different ways of living and confronting this problem.

Working with PBL represents a new perspective on how to teach and think about classes, presenting a challenge for both teachers and students. This challenge stems from its methodological nature, where class participants must seek to resolve an investigative question. Therefore, both the teacher and the students must actively and critically engage in the learning process. Changing the perspective we have on learning a second language can be difficult, especially for those who have long taught in a manner connected to grammatical tradition. However, this transformation is necessary to build a space in our classes that promotes critical thinking and, with it, the pursuit of fairer living conditions and social justice. In a purely expository class, where the teacher speaks while

others listen passively, or in a class where exercises only focus on grammatical, functional, or lexical aspects of the language, this is not possible.

According to the course project (IFRS, 2017), the existence, and resistance, of the PROEJA, from our emphasis, constitutes a public policy that seeks to restore the citizenship of a segment of the population that could not complete their studies regularly. Therefore, PROEJA attempts to be an act of social justice through public policies. Discussing slavery, especially with working students, was crucial both for them to understand their place in the current structure and to analyze the social injustices occurring within the context of modern labor exploitation of which they are victims. Doing so turned the SSL class into a space for social discussion, expanding critical thinking, and simultaneously learning the language. Through the application of this project and the writing of this chapter, we aim to contribute to the dissemination of successful practices based on the PBL methodology and inspire future didactic proposals that share this perspective on SSL learning.

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