Beyond (or not) the Teacher’s Manual

Matheus A. Agnoletto

Dr. Adriana de Carvalho Kuerten Dellagnelo

Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina

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BANCA EXAMINADORA

Profª Drª Maria Ester W. Moritz

Profª Drª Donesca Cristina P. Xhafaj

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Abstract

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Matheus André Agnoletto

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Profª Drª Adriana de Carvalho Kuerten Dellagnelo

Answers to the complexities of teaching are not simply formulated, requiring teachers to constantly reason upon their practices. Since knowing what to do when teaching depends on a variety of aspects, the teacher’s manual stands out as a tool that regulates teachers’ professional activities, especially at the beginning of their careers. With this in mind, this study aims at analyzing the extent to which a novice teacher changes or adapts the classroom practices suggested in the teacher’s manual. In order to do so, three classes of a novice teacher from an English extracurricular program of a federal university in the South of Brazil were observed within one-month intervals. Moreover, interviews were conducted right after each class observation, so as to question the teacher about the reasoning behind his practices. Also, questionnaires were applied to the teacher, as a manner to uncover his perception in relation to the use of both the textbook and the teacher’s manual. The results show that the teacher’s practices are mediated by concepts and beliefs that revolve around the profession and which tend to be unconscious, thus needing to be verbalized and critically assessed so that they reach a level of awareness and thus can be uncovered, manipulated and modified. This finding appears to reveal the importance of reasoning teaching to teachers’ professional development.

Keywords: teacher’s manual, reasoning teaching, mediation
Resumo

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Profª Drª Adriana de Carvalho Kuerten Dellagnelo

Respostas para as complexidades do papel do professor em sala de aula não são formuladas facilmente, tornando o processo de pensar criticamente sobre suas práticas uma necessidade constante para esse profissional. Ao considerar os vários aspectos envolvidos no ato de ensinar, o manual do professor se destaca como a ferramenta que guia as suas atividades profissionais, principalmente no início de sua carreira. Neste cenário, o presente estudo visa analisar em que medida um professor inexperiente muda ou adapta as práticas de aula sugeridas no manual do professor. Tendo em vista esse objetivo, foram observadas três aulas de um professor inexperiente de um curso extracurricular de inglês de uma universidade federal do sul do Brasil, em intervalos de um mês. Além disso, foram feitas entrevistas com esse professor logo após cada observação de aula, visando questioná-lo sobre as razões que impulsionaram suas práticas. Também foram aplicados questionários para desvelar a sua percepção sobre o uso do livro didático e do manual do professor. Os resultados mostram que as práticas do professor são mediadas por conceitos e crenças relacionadas a sua profissão, os quais muitas vezes são inconscientes e precisam ser verbalizados e criticamente acessados para que adquiram status de consciência e assim possam ser revelados, manipulados e modificados. Depreende-se daí, portanto, a importância de promover o pensamento crítico do professor tendo em vista o seu desenvolvimento profissional.

Palavras-chave: manual do professor, reasoning teaching, mediação
# Table of Contents

1. **Introduction**................................................................................................................................. 8
   1.1 Significance of the Study........................................................................................................... 9
   1.2 Organization of the Study......................................................................................................... 9

2. **Review of the Literature**............................................................................................................. 10
   2.1 Sociocultural Theory................................................................................................................ 10
   2.2 Beliefs........................................................................................................................................ 14
   2.3 Reasoning Teaching.................................................................................................................. 16

3. **Method**.......................................................................................................................................... 17
   3.1 Participant.................................................................................................................................... 18
   3.2 Context......................................................................................................................................... 18
   3.3 Instruments................................................................................................................................... 19
   3.4 Procedures for Data Collection.................................................................................................. 20

4. **Data Analysis and Discussion**.................................................................................................... 20

5. **Conclusion**.................................................................................................................................... 32
   5.1 Summary of the Results.............................................................................................................. 33
   5.2 Pedagogical Implications........................................................................................................... 34
   5.3 Limitations of the Study and Suggestions for Further Research........................................... 36

6. **References**.................................................................................................................................... 37

7. **Footnotes**....................................................................................................................................... 39

8. **Appendixes**.................................................................................................................................... 41
1. Introduction

There are many aspects that influence the way teachers teach. According to Johnson (1999), besides understanding that there is no right or wrong way to teach, the answers to the complexities of teaching are not simply formulated, and depend on a variety of aspects, such as teachers’ beliefs, students’ needs, the curriculum of the school teachers teach and so on. Considering the importance of these aspects, teachers need to constantly reason about their practices, and understanding this process is central to the area of teacher education.

As stated by Johnson (1999), the way teachers think about what they do, or what she calls reasoning teaching, lies “at the core of both learning to teach and understanding teaching” (p. 1). One of the main ideas of Johnson’s (1999) reasoning teaching concept is that it does not only describe what teachers think, but also how they teach within the teaching and learning contexts they participate. In other words, reasoning teaching represents the “cognitive activity that undergirds teachers’ practices: the reasoning that determines the doing of teaching” (p. 1).

Considering that reasoning teaching helps teachers understand their practices, it seems fair to add that teachers have a lot to gain by engaging in this process. However, it can be troublesome for some novice teachers to do so, since lack of practical experience might lead them to over rely on tools that end up shaping their practices, such as textbooks, or more specifically, teacher’s manuals. Johnson (2009) claims that the “initial over-reliance on a teacher’s manual will most certainly shape how a teacher thinks about and engages in instructional activities” (p. 19). It might even inhibit their reasoning teaching if they do not take some time to reason about how effective a particular activity is, considering their context of teaching. To put it differently, textbooks are important tools that can guide classroom practices, however, teachers need to be careful not to over rely on them and neglect the various aspects that need to be taken into account when teaching.

By considering that textbooks guide teachers’ practices, this study meets the Vygotskian idea that people’s relations to the world are not direct, but mediated by

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1 This study understands novice teachers as those who have either none or up to one-year experience in classroom.
mediational means (Oliveira, 2001). The way either the textbook or the manual influences a novice teacher’s practices may illustrate the understanding that people’s relations to the world do not happen directly, but are mediated. Additionally, both the textbook and the teacher’s manual function as mediating artifacts that aim at improving classroom practices’ effectiveness, guiding, most of the times, novice teachers through the complex processes of planning and teaching a foreign language classroom.

With this in mind, the present study aims at analyzing the extent to which a novice teacher changes or adapts the classroom practices suggested in the teacher’s manual. As a manner to do that, this piece of research is going to investigate a novice teacher’s practices, so as to identify the role that the manual has in his planning and performance. Under these circumstances, the following research questions will guide this study:

RQ1 – To what extent does a novice teacher follow or adapt the teacher’s manual?
RQ2 – How does this teacher justify his choices? And what does this reasoning say about him as a teacher and about his perceptions as regards teaching?

In order to answer these research questions, this study counts on three data sources: classroom observations, interviews, and questionnaires. Such sources will be detailed in the methodological section of this work.

1.1 Significance of the study

The present work seeks to analyze the extent to which a novice teacher changes or adapts the classroom practices suggested in the teacher’s manual. Its results may be significant for teachers interested in tracing their own development as regards their reliance on the textbook or manual. Furthermore, since interviews will be carried out for the teacher to verbalize the reasoning behind his choices, his perceptions of both himself as a teacher and teaching itself might be uncovered. Given these points, this work may shed some light on the subsequent work in the area of teacher education.

1.2 Organization of the Study

In order to provide the reader with information about this study, the coming sections are organized in: (2) Review of the Literature, in which the theories that base the study are
presented; (3) Method, in which the participant, the instruments, and the procedures for data collection are detailed; (4) Data Analysis and Discussion, presenting and interpreting the data collected; (5) Conclusion, wrapping up the study’s main findings; (6) References, bringing the readings that based this study; (7) Footnotes, bringing the footnotes with information about the study; and (8) Appendixes, which let the reader have an insider's glimpse on the instruments and the actual responses given by the participant.

2. Review of the Literature

The present section aims at acquainting the readers with the key concepts that formulate the basis of this work. With this in mind, this section is divided into three subsections: (2.1) Sociocultural Theory; (2.2) Beliefs; and (2.3) Reasoning Teaching.

2.1 Sociocultural Theory

Many aspects influence foreign language teachers’ practices, and teachers’ participation in real teaching contexts stands out as a paramount particularity in the process of learning to teach. According to Johnson (2009), this process “is based on the assumption that knowing, thinking, and understanding come from participating in the social practices of learning and teaching in specific classroom and school situations” (p.13). Johnson’s idea is rooted in the Vygotskian sociocultural perspective, which claims that human cognition is formed through people’s engagement in sociocultural activities (Johnson, 2009). To put it differently, the process of people’s cognitive development is related to the culturally established relations they have with the world around them, and such relations enable people to make sense of their knowledge of the world.

The author adds that “cognitive development is an interactive process, mediated by culture, context, language, and social interaction” (p.1). Notably, a central idea of sociocultural theory is that people’s relations to the world are not direct, but mediated by mediational means (Oliveira, 2001). These indirect relations are mediated by culturally constructed auxiliary means that are inserted between people and the world (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). For instance, when a novice teacher uses the teacher’s manual for preparing
his or her classes, the manual is a mediational means that mediates how this teacher prepares his or her lesson plans. As Lantolf and Thorne (2006) advocate, “Mediation is the process through which humans deploy culturally constructed artifacts, concepts, and activities to regulate (i.e. gain voluntary control over and transform) the material world or their own and each other’s social and mental activity” (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006, p. 79). For this reason, mediation makes people’s relations to the world more robust, since it is strictly related to people’s cognitive development.

The concept of mediation becomes more elaborate when Vygotsky divides mediational means into two different categories: physical tools (instruments) and psychological tools (signs). Physical tools are elements inserted between the doer of an action and its receiver. These tools mediate the relation between the subject and the object of an action, and might modify the world around them. As an example, in the relation between a teacher and the use of the whiteboard, the teacher uses a pen (physical tool) to write a particular word. In short, instruments are mediational means that impact concrete actions (Oliveira, 2001). On the other hand, signs are elements that impact psychological processes, because they control psychological actions (Oliveira, 2001). For instance, if a teacher writes the letter “H” at the bottom of the whiteboard to remind them to assign students homework at the end of the class, the teacher uses that specific sign to help control their memory.

When people engage in social activities they are introduced to mediational means that are culturally shared by the community they interact with. Lantolf and Thorne (2009) state that these elements only become meaningful for individuals after they are repeatedly used or regulated by others in social practice. In other words, people see and make sense of mediational means through the lenses of their community, context, and culture. As an example, a person that has never seen a television in their life will not understand its relation to a remote control. The idea that the remote is able to turn the television on and off does not exist in this individual’s mind, because in their community these devices have never been used. On the other hand, if this person moves to a community in which people watch television, over time, after seeing people watching it and turning it on and off, this object will
become meaningful to this individual, thus, they will be able to understand the role of that artifact to the use of television.

The aforementioned situation exemplifies that people only become able to mediate and regulate their own activities through the use of mediational means after participating in social contexts. Over time, people start self-regulating their actions without the need of external elements to do so. Such movement is known as “internalization”, and is defined as “the process through which a person moves from carrying out concrete actions in conjunction with the assistance of material artifacts and of other individuals to carrying out actions mentally without any apparent external assistance” (Lantolf, 2000, p. 14). This does not mean that people’s actions to the world lose their mediational character – they are internally mediated instead (Lantolf, 2000). As regards the present study, one can say that the teacher’s manual is one of the artifacts that mediates the teacher’s practices. It is expected that, after having experience and contact with such artifact, the teacher lowers his reliance on it. Again, it is not that the manual is no longer valid, but rather that the ideas and guiding principles of this artifact will have been internalized by then; i.e. development will have taken place, and from this point on, the teacher can self-regulate.

Teacher development is actually an area with which sociocultural theory has been largely used. Biehl and Dellagnelo (2016), for example, traced the development of the concept of contextualization of a novice teacher who was mediated by a more experienced other, in this case, a teacher educator, via feedback sessions after class observations. Along a one-semester period, the teacher moved from not acknowledging the concept at all to acknowledging it in discourse only – she could talk about it and sometimes refer to it in planning – and finally in her practice as well. She could then indeed contextualize her classes in relation to students’ lives and reality, as well as contextualize the class activities within the realm of the topic of the lesson as a whole.

In another study, Johnson and Dellagnelo (2013) examined the practices of a teacher educator who defined and modeled pedagogical tools to mediate the practices of three novice teachers of English as a second language, aiming at fostering a greater level of students’ participation and engagement in L2 instruction. The researchers found that after these novice
teachers used these tools and were mediated by the teacher educator and peer teachers as for their use, significance and role in the classroom, the meaning of those tools developed for them, i.e. those ‘empty’ words gained meaning as they became more concrete for the teachers. This study, which happened in the context of an extended team teaching project (Johnson and Arshavskaya, 2011), has foregrounded the importance of strategic mediation in sign meaning development.

In this vein, Johnson and Golombek (2016) highlight the extended team teaching project as a practice that creates opportunities for teachers to explore the theoretical and pedagogical reasoning behind their practices, through dialogic interaction. The authors claim that this project enables teachers to think together, due to the interaction they have with their classmates and teacher educator (a more experienced other), helping mediate their reasoning.

The studies aforementioned illustrate how strategic, goal-directed mediation takes place and impacts teachers’ development, being central for them to understand what revolves around their practices.

Another important aspect regarding Vygotsky’s studies is the concept of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). As a manner to be understood, this concept requires two other concepts presented by the author: real development and potential development. As Oliveira (2001) describes, real development stands for the capacity people have to perform actions without the need of assistance. On the other hand, potential development means the capacity people have to perform actions with assistance. With this in mind, the ZPD is defined taking into consideration the real development and the potential development. According to Oliveira (2001), the ZPD is “the way one will take to develop functions that are currently maturing and that will be consolidated, established in one’s level of real development” (p.60). It is the difference between real development and potential development. As both Oliveira (2001) and Johnson (2009) advocate, social interaction is the key to promote people’s cognitive

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2 Simply put, this project requires a team of teachers to take part in activities designed to prepare them to teach a lesson in a real English as a second language class. Detailed information can be found in Johnson and Arshavskaya (2011) or in Johnson and Dellagnelo (2013).

3 Translated from Portuguese: “(...) o caminho que o indivíduo vai percorrer para desenvolver funções que estão em processo de amadurecimento e que se tornarão funções consolidadas, estabelecidas no seu nível de desenvolvimento real”.

development, thus questioning teachers about their practices “make visible teachers’ current capabilities and reveal those abilities which are not yet fully formed but are still in the process of developing” (Johnson, 2009, p. 99).

As mentioned in the introductory section of this study, many aspects need to be taken into consideration when looking for answers to the complexities of teaching, beliefs being one of the most important and influential ones. In this vein, the following section aims at briefly explaining the role of beliefs in understanding teachers’ practices.

2.2 Beliefs

Before exploring the role of beliefs when teaching, it is valid to briefly discuss how this concept has been treated in research. As Pajares (1992) points out, many researchers have avoided such concept because it is not easy to be investigated empirically, due to the fact that many find such idea too unclear, making it impossible to “be clearly defined or made a useful subject of research” (p. 308). In Brazil, Ana Maria Ferreira Barcelos stands out for both having defined and characterized beliefs many times in her work, so this study adopts one of her definitions, understanding beliefs as “a way of thought, as constructions of reality, as ways of seeing and perceiving the world and its events, co-constructed in our experiences and resulting from an interactive process of interpretation and resignification”4 (Barcelos, 2006, p.18). In other words, beliefs are the lenses through which people see the world around them, being constructed through people’s interactions and experiences during their lives.

According to Pajares (1992), all teachers hold beliefs. Such beliefs are related to many aspects of the profession – from teachers’ workplace to their role as teachers – and their importance lies on the influence they may have on teachers’ practices (Barcelos, Batista & Andrade, 2004). Moreover, beliefs guide our thoughts and behaviors, since they have a cognitive, an affective, and a behavioral component, influencing our human perceptions (Johnson, 1999). For instance, the belief that the use of students’ L1 in class will hinder their learning of an L2 will lead the teacher to avoid using the class’ mother tongue at any cost.

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4 Translated from Portuguese: “(...) como uma forma de pensamento, como construções da realidade, maneiras de ver e perceber o mundo e seus fenômenos, co-construídas em nossas experiências e resultantes de um processo interativo de interpretação e (re)significação.”
There are many studies about the impact of beliefs on teachers’ practices. Farrell and Ives (2015) investigated the relationship between stated beliefs and classroom practices of one second language reading teacher. The results show that this teacher held complex beliefs about teaching reading, which were reflected on his classroom practices. Also, the researchers found that, after reflecting on his beliefs, the teacher became more aware of their impact on his classes, showing the importance of fostering teachers’ reflection.

Johnson (1992) investigated the relationship between ESL teachers’ theoretical beliefs about second-language learning and teaching and their instructional practice during literacy instruction with non-native speakers of English. Findings sustain that literacy instruction for non-native speakers of English was consistent with each teacher’s theoretical orientation.

Kuzborska (2011) investigated the relationship between the beliefs of eight teachers and their practices in the teaching of reading to advanced learners and found a relatively strong relationship between the teachers’ beliefs and their classroom practices. For instance, they showed the belief that readers have to understand all the words so as to understand a text, making these teachers direct the students to analyze texts in detail, study words, and translate sentences.

These studies instantiate the impact of teachers’ beliefs on their practices and indicate that beliefs mediate teachers’ strategies and decisions for coping with the challenges they face in their professional life. This said, it appears licit to say that beliefs play a driving role in shaping teacher cognition, thus foregrounding importance of investigating such relationship.

As Johnson (1999) observes, “the ways in which teachers come to conceptualize themselves as teachers and develop explanations for their own classroom practices tend to be filtered through their beliefs” (p. 31), so it seems fair to consider that beliefs have a strong influence on the ways teachers think about their practices, or, as aforementioned, what Johnson (1999) comes to call *reasoning teaching*. Furthermore, as teachers develop in the ability of reasoning teaching, they develop their ability to self regulate, constituting the moment we call *internalization*. 
Considering the importance of reasoning teaching for the present study, the following subsection explains this concept, as well as draws a discussion on how it develops as teachers engage in reflection upon their practices.

2.3 Reasoning Teaching

As Richards and Farrell (2011) advocate, teaching is shaped, among many other elements, by teachers’ understanding and beliefs about teaching. Moreover, teachers’ knowledge and beliefs are built according to “ways of thinking, talking, and acting that have been historically and culturally embedded in the communities of practice in which they participate” (Johnson, 2009, p. 17). These beliefs and knowledge are important elements that help constitute what Johnson (1999) comes to call “reasoning teaching”, which she defines as the process that represents the complex ways in which teachers conceptualize, construct explanations for, and respond to the social interactions and shared meanings that exist within and among teachers, students, parents and administrators, both inside and outside the classroom (…) reasoning teaching reflects the complex ways in which teachers figure out how to teach a particular topic, with a particular group of students, at a particular time, in a particular classroom, within a particular school. (p. 1)

When considering teachers as life-long learners of teaching (Johnson, 1999), the definition above corroborates the idea that teachers’ development revolves around many complexities that influence their practices. Such practices can be better understood when teachers reason upon the various aspects that determine the doing of teaching, which enables them to puzzle out their own teaching. According to Johnson (1999), knowing what to do in class depends on a variety of aspects, and the process of reasoning teaching lies “at the core of both learning to teach and understanding teaching” (p.1). That is to say, teachers have a better understanding of both themselves as teachers and their practices by engaging in constant reflection upon the numerous aspects involved in their teaching context.
The reasoning teaching process happens differently among teachers, and according to Johnson (1999), some of these differences are related to how thoroughly teachers reason upon the complexities of their teaching, or as the author herself calls, to the robustness of such reasoning. Johnson (1999) understands the robustness of the reasoning process as how deeply teachers understand “themselves, their students, and the classrooms and schools where they work, the flexibility with which they make use of these understandings, the complexity of their reasoning, and the range of instructional considerations they use” (p.2) when working as teachers. Therefore, the more robust teachers’ reasoning is, the better they will understand the great range of considerations that involve their professional activities. Johnson (1999) showed the importance of fostering teachers’ reasoning by bringing excerpts of conversations she had with some teachers she supervised. By doing that, she helped novice teachers verbalize the reasoning behind their practices, making them think about things they had not thought of before that moment and expanding the robustness of their reasoning, thus contributing to their development.

Under those circumstances, it seems fair to consider that reasoning teaching can be constantly expanded through reflection. Additionally, fostering this process holds paramount importance when it comes to teachers as learners of teaching, because it enables them to examine the complexities of their teaching over time (Johnson, 1999). Since this study aims at investigating the extent to which a novice teacher follows or adapts the suggestions made in the teacher’s manual, it is important to keep in mind that “Exploring and expanding teachers’ reasoning through reflection and inquiry into why teachers teach as they do is central to the long-term developmental process of learning to teach and understanding the complex nature of teaching” (Johnson, 1999, p. 7).

Having briefly provided the rationale that lies behind the present study, the next section focuses on describing the method used so as to reach its objective.

3. Method
This qualitative piece of research is characterized as a case study, since it has one single participant and one single context. In pursuance of its main objective, which is to analyze the extent to which a novice teacher changes or adapts the practices suggested in the teacher’s manual, this section will give details about the study’s participant and context, the instruments used for data collection, and the data collection procedure.

3.1 Participant

The participant was a novice teacher of an English extracurricular program at a federal university in the south of Brazil. He started teaching at this program in April 2016, and had only had one experience of teaching before then, as a volunteer in a three-month English course. Besides that, the participant is friends with the researcher, who knew that there would be a high chance for the participant to accept to be part of this study, and be committed to it until its end.

At the time data was collected, the novice teacher was a student of the English and literature department of a federal university. Also, he was in the final year of his undergraduate program, doing his student teaching.

In order to protect the welfare of the participant of this study, he will be referred to as “Alex”.

3.2 Context

The extracurricular program is an extension program of foreign languages held by the Foreign Languages and Literatures Department of the researched university and offers courses in 5 different languages, English being one of them. Classes are held at the same building of the undergraduate program of Languages.

Before teaching at the program, teachers go through a selection process in which they have to teach – from ten to fifteen minutes – one of the program’s textbook contents to a committee composed of 3 experienced teachers, two of which necessarily belonging to the faculty of the department, one being the course coordinator. The third component is usually
the sub-coordinator, who plays the role of pedagogical coordinator, and who is usually a graduate student with plenty of teaching experience. This committee assesses the teacher candidates in relation to their practice.

After entering the program, novice teachers have to observe six classes of experienced teachers and write reflective reports on them. When they start teaching, pedagogical support is provided: the pedagogical coordinator, who is in charge of assisting the program’s novice teachers, attends their classes and gives them feedback on their practices. If necessary, this coordinator also helps the teachers in their class preparation. Due to that, it seems fair to say that the program stands out as a good laboratory for teacher education.

In relation to the material used, the program works with a textbook that includes a teacher’s manual, which is a paramount aspect in this study. Moreover, the textbook used in this program follows the principles of the communicative approach to foreign language teaching. Emphasis on function over form stands out as one of the approach’s main claims.

As regards the group observed, it was composed of about twelve pre-intermediate level male and female students, most of them undergraduate students from a variety of different majors. The class met once a week on a three-hour period over the course of four months.

3.3 Instruments

As a manner to carry out the data collection, the participant answered a semi-structured questionnaire that was used to raise his perceptions about teacher manual’s role (see Appendix A and B). Due to their open-ended format, semi-structured questionnaires enable participants to answer and comment on questions on their own terms (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2005). Thus, this type of questionnaire was chosen as a manner to make the participant feel comfortable with expressing his ideas. Additionally, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the teacher after the classes’ observations. As Nunan (1992) advocates, semi-structured interviews are guided by topics and issues rather than questions. Moreover, considering that this type of interview does not follow a set of predetermined
questions, it provides both the interviewer and interviewee with a spontaneous research atmosphere. In order to record these interviews, a cell phone was used.

3.4 Procedures for Data Collection

The present study had to be carried out during the first semester of 2016, due to time constraints of the second semester of the same year. Since there was no time to finish the project and send it to UFSC’s research ethics committee before starting the data collection, the project’s researcher was added to a project entitled “Desvendando a aprendizagem do professor: a (re)conceitualização do ato de ensinar por meio da mediação dialógica” – number 33845114.2.0000.0114 – so as to start the data collection procedures. Furthermore, the participant was asked to read and sign a consent letter that explained his role in the study (see Appendix I).

As mentioned in the previous subsection, data collection counted on a questionnaire sent to the participant by email before each one of the three classes observed. It was composed of 4 questions, except for the first questionnaire which had 8, for it also inquired the teacher in relation to his previous experience with other teaching resources. Moreover, as a manner to see if there were any changes in the participant’s practices during the semester, three of his classes were observed: one at the beginning, one in the middle, and one at the end of the course. During these observations, the researcher compared the teacher’s practices as opposed to the suggestions made in the manual. In detecting mismatches, semi-structured interviews were carried out, after each class observation, so as to question the teacher whether the changes he implemented in his classes were planned beforehand and why.

The following section presents and discusses the findings that result from the aforementioned procedures, connecting them to the literature review.

4 Data Analysis and Discussion

Bearing in mind that the main objective of this study is to analyze the extent to which a novice teacher changes or adapts the classroom practices suggested in the teacher’s manual,
the present section aims at presenting and interpreting the data collected so as to answer the following research questions:

RQ1 – To what extent does a novice teacher follow or adapt the teacher’s manual?
RQ2 – How does this teacher justify his choices? And what does this reasoning say about him as a teacher and about his perceptions as regards teaching?

Since this study is mainly concerned with the way a novice teacher uses the teacher’s manual – which is a tool to be used in conjunction with the textbook – it seems fair to present the importance he gives to such materials. In response to the first questionnaire, Alex shows that he believes both the textbook and the teacher’s manual to be important tools for teaching a foreign language. When asked about possible advantages or disadvantages in using a textbook, Alex said:

I think one of the advantages of using a textbook is that students have something concrete to “hold on to”, and in an ordered sequence (…) Besides, I guess the “need” for a textbook is a widespread belief among most language students, so perhaps these students could face some trouble adapting to the idea of not having a textbook. I think the only disadvantage would be if the textbook were too “restrictive” and the teacher had no room to bring extra material or ignore parts of the textbook.

Alex attributes the importance of using a textbook in class to how his students would feel if they did not have such material to work with, showing that he is concerned with their welfare. Between the lines, his comment “that students have something concrete to ‘hold on to’, and in an ordered sequence” appears to reflect a belief that the non-use of a textbook may lead to disorder or lack of sequence. Also, when citing a possible disadvantage of the textbook, he shows the belief that bringing extra materials and skipping parts of the textbook are parts of a language teacher’s job, which would be limited by a “restrictive” book. As regards the teacher’s manual, Alex finds it important because it gives teachers (especially beginners such as myself) a kind of blueprint for approaching the activities, introducing them and concluding them. It also

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5 The interviews’ transcripts can be found in appendixes F, G, and H.
suggests questions for the teacher to ask, or cues s/he can use to better explain some contents. I would say it’s not essential, but it can be a great help.

In this passage, Alex acknowledges that the manual helps teachers – “especially beginners” – better explore their practices, facilitating their jobs since such tool works as a “blueprint”. However, he believes that even though it might help teachers do their jobs, it is not enough. These passages show that Alex acknowledges the importance of both the textbook and the teacher’s manual, but they also show the idea that teaching goes beyond following every step of the manual and every activity of the book.

In general, most changes and adaptations made by Alex in the suggestions given in the teacher’s manual were unconscious. Many times, when asked about the reasons that led him to make changes in some activities, Alex could not justify them, stating that those changes had not been planned nor had they been a decision on the fly. He basically forgot to do them, as the passage that follows demonstrates

R: And then, there is a part that the manual is asking you to ask students to guess what places they might read about.
A: About wonders… Yeah.

R: Yes. And you didn’t do that.
A: No, I didn’t.

R: Do you know why?
A: To be honest… I think I had planned to do that but… Just… Where is it? Uhm… Yep… I don’t know, I… I don’t think it was conscious. I…

R: Ok…
A: I didn’t remember or I just…

R: Yep. This is an answer. Haha.
A: I was… I was… Very nervous (…)

R: Oh, and also, just one thing, the second part of the conversation: you didn’t play it. Is there a reason for that?
A: Oh… Again, I forgot it. I was kinda nervous, but I had planned to do it. 6

6 “R” stands for “researcher”, while “A” stands for “Alex”.
In this excerpt Alex mentioned he was nervous. It was his first semester teaching at that extracurricular program and there was a researcher observing his class, so it seems like he was affected by such factors. Besides that, Alex was not able to self-regulate yet, so he had to monitor himself all the time, and resort to the manual and his own plans, as a manner to remember what activity he would do next and how he would introduce it. As Lantolf (2000) states, it takes some time for people to start self-regulating their actions, and Alex was teaching at the program for the first time, so he still needed the assistance of the teacher’s manual (material artifact) to know what his next step was. Moreover, it seems fair to mention that in the three classes observed, when explaining the grammatical topic, he did not follow most of the manual’s instructions. He did not mention why he did not follow it in the first class, but in relation to the second class he said:

 Uh… The reason is: I totally forgot it. Because when I planned the lesson I was going to do that, but then I forgot it. Well, I got confused because I wanted to do this, but for some reason I thought ‘no, I can’t do this anymore’…

Besides this excerpt, his attempt to justify why he did not accept the manual’s suggestion to present the grammatical topic in the third class shows he did not know why he did not do so:

 I think I didn’t do it, because… Well… I don’t know. I thought it would perhaps be… I don’t know (…) I think what I thought was that perhaps it would be too structuralist, perhaps, so it might have an effect on students, like all those words and… I don’t know. I really don’t know. Sorry, I…

It is clear that Alex tries to find a reason for not accepting the manual’s suggestions, but can find none. The two excerpts presented above illustrate that Alex has not internalized the pedagogical resources he works with yet, which means he still depends on the manual to remember what to do when teaching. This might be corroborated by one of his answers to the questionnaire: in the last questionnaire, when mentioning the advantages of the teacher’s manual, he says “I’d like to point out especially the alternatives it brings sometimes and the ‘scripts’ it presents for explanation of the grammar.” This comment indicates that Alex finds such suggestions positive, so he might want to incorporate them in his classes. On the other
hand, as presented above, he did not do what was suggested, which may have happened due to his lack of agency in relation to his practice. Another possible interpretation that can be raised is that the context of the extracurricular program in which Alex works requires teachers to teach according to the principles of the communicative approach. This way, whenever Alex came across an activity that he would judge more structural, he would, even if unconsciously, cut it off.

As opposed to the examples given above, there were some occasions in which Alex changed the suggestions made in the manual because he did not find them relevant, or even found them “too basic”, as he, himself, states. In one of these occasions, students were supposed to do a listening activity about the Empire State Building. The activity is presented below

Before showing the activity to the students, the teacher’s manual suggested asking students what they knew about the Empire State Building. Instead of doing that, Alex only asked students if they had ever been to New York, and had them read the sentences from part A and do the activity. After that, he played the audio so as to check the students’ answers. When questioned if he had not accepted the manual’s suggestions consciously, Alex said

It was conscious because… Well, I don’t know… I might be, perhaps, I might be underestimating them, but I don’t think they would know too many details about the
Empire State Building. I mean, I don’t, and I imagine 95% of the people I know don’t know either, so…

After that, Alex was inquired if he thought that the activity’s outcome would be different if he had asked students if they knew anything about the Empire States, and he said “I imagine the only difference would be that, perhaps, uh… If I asked them about the Empire State Building first, and some of the students knew some facts, then all the other students would know the facts too, so that would affect their decisions about the one which they thought were true.”

These passages illustrate that Alex was not aware of the pedagogical implication of the manual’s suggestion: to make students retrieve from their memory previous knowledge that would prepare them for the listening activity. In other words, even though Alex had assistance from a more experienced other – this researcher own questions aimed at being implicit mediation – he was not able to see the goal of the manual’s suggestion, which means that such implication was not within his ZPD yet. Another example can help illustrate this assumption: as a response to the third question of the last questionnaire – Have you ever felt the need to change/adapt/skip any activities from the Interchange textbook? If so, when? Why? Give an example. – Alex said

“(…) in some of the listening activities (mainly the ones in the conversation sections), I skip the part where the teacher asks the students to look at the pictures and try to make guesses about the incoming conversation, and sometimes I skip some of the initial comprehension questions (…) I feel that sometimes the initial comprehension questions, related to the picture, seem to be too basic.

In this passage, it is clear that he did not see such suggestions – predicting the content of the conversations by using images and questions – as pre-listening activities, having an essential role for the activity that follows. It looks like Alex was not ready to understand the pedagogical aims of these suggestions, corroborating the idea that these implications were not within his ZPD. In the words of Oliveira (2001), “not everyone is able to perform any actions
with the help of another. The capacity of benefiting from someone else is going to happen within a certain level of development, but not before.”\(^7\) (p. 59).

As previously mentioned in this section, Alex acknowledges that teaching goes beyond following every step of the manual and every activity of the book. In alignment with his positioning, Alex indeed both adapted and/or changed the suggestions made in the manual since the very first class observed. He brought one extra activity at the end of the first class, another one at the end of the second class, and two others in the third class, one at the beginning and another one right before the break. During the interviews, he mentioned why he believes that bringing activities that are not suggested in the manual are important, and the way he justified such changes uncovered some aspects that mediate his practices.

The activity Alex brought in the first class was a group game that involved speaking and dealt with the structure students had just studied. When asked about the reason why he brought this activity, Alex answered

\[\begin{align*}
&\text{(...) it involved speaking and that... It was, uh... I thought about bringing this game to kind of end the class because the... I... I felt that much of the lesson, except for the quiz, you know, had been about... one specific structure had been, perhaps, a bit too tiring for them (\ldots) and although the... the game involved using that structure I thought it would be a good thing for them to kind of relax a bit because... uh... they were using the structure, but they were using it in a fun way (\ldots) they could talk between them, in groups, and they also could (\ldots) bring their personal experience, their preferences, or the things they remember. I mean... it's a game that relies upon them.}
\end{align*}\]

This excerpt shows that Alex was concerned with having students speak, keeping them motivated, and also with having them bring their personal experiences to class while they practiced what was studied. It is interesting to bring another example from the same class that illustrates a misconception related to the concept of speaking that led his practice. The introductory activity of the lesson he was teaching required students to read – by themselves –

\[^7\text{Translated from Portuguese: “(...) não é qualquer indivíduo que pode, a partir da ajuda de outro, realizar qualquer tarefa. Isto é, a capacidade de se beneficiar de uma colaboração de outra pessoa vai ocorrer num certo nível de desenvolvimento, mas não antes.”}\]
some information about modern wonders of the world. This was a book activity. Alex had his students read these sentences aloud instead. When inquired if there was a specific reason for that, he answered

   Uh… I think part of it was to get them to talk a bit, because, uh… sometimes I’m concerned that sometimes I’m talking too much (…) well, they would start talking and I could, perhaps, model some pronunciation… uh… mistakes (…).

   It is clear that Alex was concerned with having his students talk, but it is interesting to see how he perceived “talk” and “read” as synonyms and how he focused on form by intending to use this activity to “model” some “pronunciation mistakes”. One should consider that both talking and reading require an interlocutor. In talking, this interlocutor is usually an external person; in reading, the interlocutor is aimed to be the reader actually, in this case reacting to the writing piece. In justifying the use of reading out loud as a way to make them talk, he actually mirrored a mistaken view of both these concepts. He appeared to conceptualize talking and reading as unilateral processes that do not involve or require interaction. Thus, the nature of his reasoning was confusing, since he attributed a different meaning to the word “read” and focused on form to justify his answer. As Johnson (1999) states, it is important for teachers to develop robust reasoning so as to understand their practices and carry out their professional activities. Thus, by considering “talk” and “read” as synonyms and as non-interactive processes and also by aiming at using the activity to work on students’ pronunciation, Alex reasoning was limited by a misconception and by his focus on form.

   At the end of the second class observed, Alex brought another extra activity. Since the class focused on movies, the activity consisted in having students conduct a survey about their classmates’ preferences considering the show business (favorite movies, TV shows, actors, actresses etc). Each student received a set of questions that they would have to ask their classmates, but before that, Alex gave them some time to think about their own answers. When inquired about the reason why he brought this activity, Alex said “I thought it’d be interesting for them to have a survey and then I thought initially about ‘Oh, perhaps they should conduct a survey on what kinds of movies their colleagues like’.” One more time,
Alex was concerned with keeping students interested in what they were studying by having them talk about their preferences, bringing their reality to class. It seems like the belief that motivating students by allowing them to talk and bring their personal lives to class, once again, influenced Alex’s pedagogical choice, which corroborates Johnson’s (1999) idea that “beliefs have a powerful impact on the nature of teachers’ reasoning” (p. 31). Moreover, Alex was inquired about the skills he wanted to develop in his students with such activity, and he answered “mainly speaking”. Once again, Alex used speaking to justify his choices, turning it into a concept that heavily mediates his practices. This, again, may be due to the principles underlying the communicative approach, which is the perspective he is expected to use in this context. As suggested by Larsen-Freeman (2000), the communicative approach claims that one of the teacher’s roles is to set up situations likely to promote communication.

In the last class observed, Alex came up with two extra activities: one at the beginning and another one right before the class’ break. The first extra activity consisted of a set of “if” questions – a topic studied in the previous class. First, students had to guess a classmate’s answers. Then, they had to get together in pairs and read what they wrote about each other, checking their guesses. The questions are shown below

---

**I think you’d…**

A. Complete the sentences below about your partner.

1. If you could meet a famous person, I think you’d like to meet ____________________________
2. If you had to learn another language, I think you’d choose ____________________________
3. If you could have any car in the world, I think you’d have ____________________________
4. If you could be any age for a week, I think you’d choose to be ____________________________
5. If you could spend a week anywhere in the world, I think you’d go to ____________________________
6. If you got a new pet, I think you’d get ____________________________
7. If you were given unlimited money to buy any object, I think you’d buy ____________________________
8. If you could eat anything you liked this evening, I think it would be ____________________________
9. If you could have a special talent, I think you’d like to be able to ____________________________
10. If you could have any job in the world, I think you’d like to be ____________________________

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When questioned about the reason why he brought this activity, Alex answered
I thought it was a good way to get them to practice the ‘if’ sentences, the conditional. It’d be a good way to practice that and it would be fun and engaging for them. Cause personal answers are involved, even though the personal answers of your colleague, but yours as well.

Alex explicitly said that he brought such activity because it was a “fun” and “engaging” way for students to practice what they had studied, due to the fact that personal answers were involved. Besides that, an intriguing matter popped up when he was questioned about the idea of bringing students’ reality to class.

R: and you mentioned that they were supposed to give personal answers. Do you think it’s different when they fake something and when they give personal answers? You think it’s better for them to talk about themselves or…

A: I think they could fake perhaps, but I think… uh… and this is based on my experience and on the experience of other people I have talked to… I think when they talk about themselves, their personal experiences, they get more engaged because they feel like… most people, not everybody, but most people like to talk about themselves, or what they think about certain things, so I think they get more engaged, more motivated.

It is interesting that Alex acknowledges that this idea of engaging students by bringing their reality to class both comes from his own experience – either as a student or as a teacher – and from conversations he had with other people. This meets Johnson’s (1999) idea that beliefs are “grounded in powerful episodic memories from prior learning and teaching experiences” (p.31), showing that much of what a teacher does in class is a reflection of their experiences as a student or as a teacher, not necessarily being learned within a teacher education program. In other words, the complex developmental process of learning to teach is “continuously constructed and reconstructed within and out of your experiences, whether they be as a learner, as a teacher, or as a student of teaching in your professional development program.” (Johnson, 1999, p. 43).

Regarding the second extra activity in the last class observed, he again showed concern in engaging students. The activity was similar to the one previously presented:
students had to guess a classmate’s answers, get together in pairs, read what they wrote about each other, and check their guesses. The questions used were different, though

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Complete the sentences below about your partner.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. If you decided to learn something new, I think you’d learn ...........................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. If you could only watch one film again in your life, I think you’d watch ................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. If you were an animal, I think you’d be .................................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. If you could live anywhere in the world, I think you’d live ...........................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. If you could have a super power, I think you’d choose to be able to .................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. If you won a trip around the world for two, I think you’d take .......................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. If you could go to a concert tonight, I think you’d go and see .........................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. If you did a new sport, I think you’d like to .........................................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. If you had more money, I think you’d buy ............................................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. If you could learn to play a musical instrument, I think you’d choose ................................</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Alex was inquired if the reasons why he brought this activity were the same of the previous extra activity presented, and he answered

yeah. The same reasons and I tried to make this activity more like a game because (…) I thought it’d be nice for them to play a game and laugh a bit because I tried to make some funny sentences, some absurd situations… I think it’d be a nice way to still get them to practice and, like, perhaps make them a little less tired. (…) During the break, one of my students mentioned that she really liked that I brought extra activities because they usually were fun and they got away from the book…

It is interesting to see how he cares about his students’ likes, having in mind that bringing to class something they enjoy makes the process of learning a foreign language less tiring and more engaging.

As a study that aims at allowing a novice teacher to verbalize the reasoning behind his choices, the next paragraphs bring one event into discussion that can be used to illustrate the importance of fostering teachers’ reflection to help them examine their teaching.

In the methodological section of this study, it was mentioned that – as a manner to detect changes in Alex’s practices – three classes were observed. In summary, no significant changes were found. Since the beginning of the observations, Alex both followed the
manual’s suggestions and adapted them, sometimes even bringing extra activities. In relation to that, it seems fair to consider that learning how to teach takes time, as any other professional activity. However, one event stood out when Alex verbalized his reasoning during the interviews. In the first interview conducted, Alex seemed to reason upon one of the manual’s suggestions he skipped in a way that he had not thought of before that moment.

R: (...) Alex, you did this listening activity on page 74... and I have some questions about it. So... uh... you set the mood, you asked the students to have a look at the pictures, and then read the questions, and... you asked them to listen to... let me see... ok, to listen to the passage. You played the passage and asked students to listen to it. And then, there’s one thing that the book suggests that is “have students compare answers in pairs”.

A: hmm... yeah...

R: and you didn’t do that.

A: Oh... yeah.

R: Do you know why?

A: No... I don’t think I know why. In fact, looking at it now it’s a good idea.

R: Why?

A: I think I just didn’t think about it, I didn’t remember it at the time.

R: but why do you think it’s a good idea?

A: I think it’s a good idea because... well... they get to talk a bit more to the pairs and, perhaps, they feel more confident to share their answers with the whole class. If you talk in pairs or in small groups first, then you’re kind of “oh, so I’m more certain that my answer is correct so, perhaps, it’s ok if I share

Sometimes people tend to think that pair work aims at more student talk simply, but it is not. It also aims at giving students the chance to practice their speaking and to “test” their idea/opinion in small groups before exposing it to the whole class. It is interesting that he had not thought about such pedagogical intent before being inquired about it. This passage illustrates that, when questioned, Alex was able to verbalize his reasoning and come to an understanding that uncovered an important pedagogical implication. This being within his
ZPD – and together with the assistance of a more experienced other – Alex was able to see the goal of the manual’s suggestion, contributing to expand his reasoning through reflection. This is supported by Johnson (1999), as mentioned in the literature review section of this work, since it meets the idea that engaging in critical inquiry into their classroom practices helps teachers develop robust reasoning. The intervention of the researcher when questioning the teacher about his choices mediated his reasoning, which concurs the Vygotskian claim that social interaction fosters cognitive development (Oliveira, 2001).

Taking into consideration the main objective of this study, which is to analyze the extent to which a novice teacher changes or adapts the practices suggested in the teacher’s manual, it can be concluded that speaking, engagement, motivation, and students’ reality are, for sure, aspects that strongly influence Alex’s choices, shaping his teaching and how he interprets what goes on in his class. Such concepts mediate Alex’s practices, helping him both understand himself as a teacher and what his role in class is. Although Alex has little experience with teaching, the fact that he already sees it as a more complex process than merely following what the manual suggests, shows that he is aware of his profession’s plurality, which makes him a good teacher. In the same vein, I must agree with Johnson (1999) when she says that there is no right way to teach, and that – when it comes to teaching – “it always depends”, making it essential for teachers to be aware of their profession’s complexities.

The concluding section of this work wraps up its main findings, bringing some pedagogical implications, suggestions for further research, and the study’s limitations.

5 Conclusion

The present section is organized as follows: first, the study’s results will be summarized and briefly discussed; second, some pedagogical implications will be presented; then, the study’s limitations will be pointed out, together with some suggestions for further research and the idea of a project proposal that arose from this work.
5.1 Summary of the Results

As previously presented, the main objective of this study is to analyze the extent to which a novice teacher changes or adapts the classroom practices suggested in the teacher’s manual, counting on two research questions as a manner to reach its objective:

RQ1 – To what extent does a novice teacher follow or adapt, the teacher’s manual?

RQ2 – How does this teacher justify his choices? And what does this reasoning say about him as a teacher and about his perceptions as regards teaching?

From the discussion drawn in the data analysis section of this thesis, it was concluded that – from the first to the last class observed – Alex both followed and adapted the manual’s suggestions. As could be seen, most times Alex could not explain why he adapted such suggestions, saying that some of them were not followed because he forgot to do so, which means that it was not a conscious decision. This can be explained by the fact that it was the first time that Alex was working with that manual, so this lack of agency may be explained by his non internalization of the material artifact (the manual) he was working with.

Another aspect that can explain why he adapted the manual’s suggestions is the fact that, many times, Alex was not able to see the pedagogical implications of these suggestions. It is important to point out that even experienced teachers sometimes have trouble with seeing pedagogical implications of some activities and suggestions given by the manual, so it is not a surprise when a novice teacher does not do so as well. It seems unfair to expect that Alex would be aware of all the implications of the manual’s suggestions, since – as Johnson (1999) advocates – much of what a teacher learns about teaching comes from the experiences they have in class, contributing to develop their process of reasoning. By answering that he did not accept some suggestions because he found them “too simple”, not seeing the pedagogical aims behind them – even when being questioned by a more experienced other – Alex showed that such implications were not within his ZPD yet, which means he was not ready to make sense of them. In the words of Johnson (2009)

Given that the ZPD is a metaphor for capturing an individual’s potential abilities by observing and promoting his or her current performance through social interaction, the
public spaces created by inquiry-based approaches both make visible teachers’ current capabilities and reveal those abilities which are not yet fully formed but are still in the process of developing. (p. 99)

In relation to the extra activities brought by Alex in the three classes observed, developing students’ speaking skills, engaging them, and bringing their reality to class stood out as aspects that mediate his practices. Every time he was inquired about the reason why he brought an extra activity, these aspects popped up as having strongly influenced his choices. In relation to bringing activities that fostered the development of students’ speaking skill, one should bear in mind that Alex was required to teach keeping in mind the principles of the communicative approach to foreign language teaching, what might have made him prioritize activities that promoted student talking time. However, as previously illustrated, when considering “talk” and “read” as synonyms, Alex’s choice was mediated by a misconception, since the concept of speaking was not clear for him. This demonstrates the importance that constantly reasoning upon their practices has on teachers’ development, considering that robust reasoning is flexible and continually informs and reforms teachers’ practices (Johnson, 1999). Furthermore, it is interesting to point out that he seems to hold the belief that bringing students’ reality to class is connected to the idea of motivation, having explicitly said that in one of the excerpts presented during the analysis. This shows the powerful influence of beliefs on teachers’ reasoning, as suggested by Johnson (1999).

All in all, from the first class observed to the last one, Alex was both mediated by the teacher’s manual, his beliefs, and concepts that shape the way he teaches. Also, by showing the idea that teaching goes beyond following every step of the manual, and by being concerned with aspects that go from developing students’ skills to how they feel in class, Alex revealed that he is aware of the fact that his profession is made of a plurality of complexities, teaching depending on these various issues that revolve around his professional reality. To conclude, it is essential to keep in mind that learning to teach is a continuous process, since – when it comes to teaching – it “always depends”.

5.2 Pedagogical Implications
Research in the teacher education area has been providing teachers with the understanding that their practices are influenced by a variety of aspects that need to be taken into account when teaching. By focusing on the way a novice teacher works with the teacher’s manual, this study shows the importance of such tool as a mediational means that helps teachers – especially at the beginning of their careers – both organize their planning and carry out their professional activities. Despite the discussion whether teachers should or should not go beyond the manual, it is undeniable that when using this tool – which is developed by experts in education – teachers have a support that helps them organize their planning, better exploring the ways through which they make knowledge available to their students.

As previously presented, this study’s participant perceives the manual as a kind of “blueprint”, acknowledging its importance as it works as a model for teachers not to feel at sea when teaching. As regards how teachers’ use of the manual develops during their careers, Johnson (1999) claims that

(…) a novice teacher’s activities may be initially regulated by a teacher’s manual, but later come under her control as she internalizes certain pedagogical resources (…) that enable her to teach concepts and/or skills in ways that are more appropriate for a particular group of students in a particular instructional context. (p. 18).

Another paramount implication that stands out in this study is that it shows the importance of allowing teachers to verbalize their reasoning. As illustrated in the data analysis section of this work, the researcher fostered the participant’s reasoning by questioning him about the reasons behind his practices. It was revealed that, sometimes, the participant had not thought about the pedagogical implications of the suggestions made in the manual, it was only by exploring his reasoning at the moment the researcher inquired him about the adaptations/changes made that he realized the reasons/rationale behind the activities proposed. In other words, the participant’s reasoning was implicitly mediated by the researcher (a more experienced other) when questioned about his practices, calling his attention to aspects of his teaching that he had not thought of before, contributing to expand the robustness of his reasoning. The interviews brought to light aspects of the teacher’s practices that were hidden,
showing the importance of such moments in helping this professional uncover the thoughts behind his professional activities, impacting his development. According to Oliveira (2001) and Johnson (2009), one’s ZPD is constantly changing, being of great importance to detect what one is currently capable of and what abilities are still being developed. In the same vein, Johnson (2009) states that the ZPD “(…) comes into existence and changes in the activity of dialogic engagement”, reinforcing the importance of fostering teachers’ critical reflection. In short, the simple activity of observing classes and conducting interviews that focused on the teacher’s practices helped him expand his reasoning, positively impacting his professional development.

Furthermore, this study may help novice teachers understand that there is no need for panicking when they are unsure about what to do, since their job is complex. Last but not least, the data presented reveals that cognitive development happens through social interaction, showing the importance of the social relations we establish within our professional community.

5.3 Limitations of the Study and Suggestions for Further Research

As any other piece of research, this study is limited by some aspects that could have influenced its results. These factors are presented and commented below.

Since data had to be collected in only one semester, few classes were observed, limiting the study’s results to a period of three class’ observation. Considering that learning how to teach takes time, as any other professional activity, a longitudinal study is indicated as a manner to better explore the researcher’s contribution when allowing the participant to verbalize the reasoning behind his practices. Also, a more accurate analysis could have been carried out if there were more examples to illustrate the teacher’s explanations about the adaptations made.

Another factor that could have affected the study’s results is that the participant knew when the researcher would come to class, which could have made him plan his classes differently from what he was used to, or even think about answers to possible questions that
he thought could be asked. This could diminish the reliability of the data presented, since it would not be that natural as if he had spontaneously responded to the questions. Thus, not letting the participant know about the researcher’s presence in class would be an alternative to solve this problem. On the other hand, the participant might have felt nervous if the researcher had shown up by surprise, also impacting his actions in class and the interviews conducted.

Finally, it seems fair to mention that the participant and the researcher are friends. No details about the study’s main objective were given to the participant, however, being friends with the researcher might have made him be either more or less careful when planning his classes or teaching them.

As aforementioned, the idea of a Master’s project arose from this piece of research. Considering the limitations of this study, the project aims at investigating the reasoning behind a novice teacher’s choices when adapting – or not – the suggestions made in the teacher’s manual. Moreover, it is interested in revealing if this teacher’s use of the manual changes during one academic year, as well as in identifying what these changes are attributed to. With this in mind, time constraints will not be a major issue. Thus, more classes will be observed.

As a final word, it is essential to acknowledge that not only did the novice teacher benefit from this experience, but the researcher was also able to develop and expand his own reasoning, which confirmed his understanding that teachers are never complete, making the profession a continuous and intriguing challenge, teachers being lifelong learners of teaching. Additionally, he was able to witness that verbalizing their reasoning helps teachers develop professionally, since it helps uncover perceptions and beliefs that are veiled.

6 References


7 **Footnotes**

1 This study understands *novice teachers* as those who have either none or up to one-year experience in classroom.

2 Simply put, this project requires a team of teachers to take part in activities designed to prepare them to teach a lesson in a real English as a second language class. Detailed information can be found in Johnson and Arshavskaya (2011) or in Johnson and Dellagnelo (2013).

3 Translated from Portuguese: “(...) o caminho que o indivíduo vai percorrer para desenvolver funções que estão em processo de amadurecimento e que se tornarão funções consolidadas, estabelecidas no seu nível de desenvolvimento real”.

4 Translated from Portuguese: “(...) como uma forma de pensamento, como construções da realidade, maneiras de ver e perceber o mundo e seus fenômenos, co-
construídas em nossas experiências e resultantes de um processo interativo de interpretação e (re)significação.”

5 The interviews’ transcripts can be found in appendixes F, G, and H.

6 “R” stands for “researcher”, while “A” stands for “Alex”.

7 Translated from Portuguese: “(...) não é qualquer indivíduo que pode, a partir da ajuda de outro, realizar qualquer tarefa. Isto é, a capacidade de se beneficiar de uma colaboração de outra pessoa vai ocorrer num certo nível de desenvolvimento, mas não antes.”
Appendixes

Appendix A

Questionnaire 1 - Language Teachers and the Use of Textbooks

Matheus André Agnoletto
Dr. Adriana de Carvalho Kuerten Dellagnelo

Dear teacher, I would like to invite you to answer these eight questions about your perception on the use of textbooks and the teacher’s manual in language classes. Please, answer the questions on the basis of your own beliefs and feel comfortable to write as much as you want.

1- Can you think of advantages and disadvantages of the use of textbooks in language classes?

2- Before starting to teach, had you had contact with other language textbooks for some reason? If so, why?

3- Can you think of any differences and/or similarities between the Interchange textbook and the other language textbooks you came across before Interchange?

4- How important do you think the teacher’s manual is? Why?

5- Do you like the Interchange’s manual? Would you like to comment on any advantages and/or disadvantages of it?

6- Do you think teachers need to follow every step of the teacher’s manual? Why?

7- Have you ever felt the need to change/adapt/skip any activities from the Interchange textbook? If so, when? Why? Give an example.

8- Would you be (more) comfortable with preparing the classes without using the teacher’s manual? Why?
Appendix B

Questionnaire 2 and 3 - Language Teachers and the Use of Textbooks

Matheus André Agnoletto
Dr. Adriana de Carvalho Kuerten Dellagnelo

Dear teacher, this questionnaire contains four of the eight questions from the first questionnaire. I would like you to answer them only if you feel the need to comment on something different from what you answered in the previous questionnaire. If your answer is the same, please, write “same as the previous questionnaire”.

1- Do you like the Interchange’s manual? Would you like to comment on any advantages and/or disadvantages of it?

2- Do you think teachers need to follow every step of the teacher’s manual? Why?

3- Have you ever felt the need to change/adapt/skip any activities from the Interchange textbook? If so, when? Why? Give an example.

4- Would you be (more) comfortable with preparing the classes without using the teacher’s manual? Why?
Appendix C

Alex’s Answers to the First Questionnaire

1 – I think one of the advantages of using a textbook is that students have something concrete to “hold on to”, and in an ordered sequence. Without a textbook, the students might feel lost sometimes, especially if they have to go back and review something they have studied a while ago. Besides, I guess the “need” for a textbook is a widespread belief among most language students, so perhaps these students could face some trouble adapting to the idea of not having a textbook. I think the only disadvantage would be if the textbook were too “restrictive” and the teacher had no room to bring extra material or ignore parts of the textbook.

2 – I had contact with the Messages and the Passages series by Cambridge University Press, the Join In series (by CUP too) and volume 1 of American Shine by Macmillan. Those were the textbooks used in the English classes I had in my childhood/teenage years. Besides Interchange

3 – I guess Messages and Passages (I can’t remember much about the others) have a quite similar sequence of components, like, first a small text, and a listening, and then the part with the grammar, and then an activity for speaking. There seems to be first one or two activities presenting the target point, then the objective explanation, and then the activities to work with that.

4 – I think the teacher’s manual is important because it gives teachers (especially beginners such as myself) a kind of blueprint for approaching the activities, introducing them and concluding them. It also suggests questions for the teacher to ask, or cues s/he can use to better explain some contents. I would say it’s not essential, but it can be a great help.

5 – I like the Interchange manual because of the ideas it brings for questions to ask the students in order to contextualise and some suggestions for extra activities with the students, such as the games that appear on some units. Also, I like the fact that the manual sometimes offers ideas on how to change something about the activities, indicating that students can talk about different topics in some discussions, for instance.

6 – I don’t think so, because sometimes some activities may be redundant, depending on what has already been done in class (for instance, there might be a listening activity that does not bring anything “new”, and mainly because some of the activities can be replaced by others with the same purpose, with different materials brought by the teacher. If the topic is reported speech, instead of using a text from the Snapshot part of Interchange, which usually presents the target structure and/or vocabulary, for example, the teacher could work with a journalistic text, with the same objective of presenting certain elements.
7 – I think I haven’t needed to change any activities, but I don’t always follow all of the recommendations on the teacher’s manual. Also, I have skipped one or two activities – for example, the pronunciation activity on unit 9 (page 59), which dealt with intonation in statements with time phrases, because I thought it was not necessary as the students were already using the right intonation when they used these structures. Of course, I’ve only been teaching for a few weeks with Interchange, so that is probably going to happen, as I have heard from other people who have used it.

8 - Definitely not. I would feel really lost. The teacher’s manual, in my opinion, is a great starting point for preparing the classes, as it already contains many activities and gives orientations on how to go about them (even though I don’t follow all of these). I think there is a certain safety to having the teacher’s manual, in that if you are completely lost or have no ideas about how to approach a certain point, it might give you a hint or spark an idea in you.
Appendix D

Alex’s Answers to the Second Questionnaire

1 – Same as questionnaire 1

2 – Basically the same opinion as in questionnaire 1. I would just like to add that, sometimes, some steps of the teacher’s manual may be replaced by other activities that engage the students more – instead of the discussions the book often suggests during the latter part of the cycles, for instance, sometimes it seems to be a good idea to bring a game or fun activity from outside the book.

3 – Same as questionnaire 1

4 – Same as questionnaire 1. I’d like to add that having a teacher’s manual helps with time – this semester, I’ve been overwhelmed with doing the obligatory practicum in my university program, and planning the lessons from scratch would take an enormous amount of time from a novice teacher such as myself. However, as I mentioned in questionnaire 1, I don’t follow all the orientations in the teacher’s manual, and try to bring other materials into class too.
Appendix E

Alex’s Answers to the Third Questionnaire

1 – Same as previous questionnaires. Also, I’d like to point out especially the alternatives it brings sometimes and the “scripts” it presents for explanation of the grammar. Another positive aspect, in my opinion, is the fact that the manual is interspersed with the corresponding pages of the student’s book (I’ve heard that is not the case with other textbook series), thus making it easier for me to visualise what I’m going to be using and keep organised during lesson planning (and sometimes conduction).

2 – Same as the previous questionnaire.

3 – I usually skip pronunciation activities, sometimes because the students are already pronouncing correctly and sometimes because some of them sound obvious, especially regarding pitch or intonation (maybe because of some sort of linguistic similarity, but I really have no knowledge to talk about it), such as the ones on unit 13 (page 88) and unit 14 (page 94). Also, in some of the listening activities (mainly the ones in the conversation sections), I skip the part where the teacher asks the Ss to look at the pictures and try to make guesses about the incoming conversation, and sometimes I skip some of the initial comprehension questions. An example would be the activity on page 93, for which I didn’t ask the questions in the two first steps in the teacher’s manual. I feel that sometimes the initial comprehension questions, related to the picture, seem to be too basic.

4 – No, definitely not. I’ve been really busy with the practicum, thus having less time to plan the classes, and the book helps a lot as a kind of compass, so I can have an idea of what to work with, many ready-to-use activities and how to go about it. In this way, I don’t spend that much time looking for other materials and activities to bring to class and thinking about the procedures to follow as if I didn’t have the manual.
Appendix F

Transcript – First Interview

R: Well… First of all I’d like to thank you for accepting my invitation to participate in this study. I’m sure we’ll have a very good time together.
A: My pleasure.
R: So, before starting to record, you were saying that it would be difficult for you to prepare the classes without the manual…
A: Yeah… Hm… I think it would, because, well, it would be difficult, uh, because I would have to look for the whole material, I guess, and I think the thing is that when you have the textbook you have a template you can work on. You can take some things out, put things in, but I think it’s good as a starting point, at least.
R: Nice, nice. Very nice. So, today you worked with the Modern Wonders…
A: Yeah…
R: Unit eleven, “It’s Really Worth Seeing”… And my first question for you is: as a manner to start the unit… You asked them what the meaning of the word “wonders” is.
A: Yeah.
R: Right?
A: If they already knew it.
R: If they already knew it. Good. And then, this is something that is in the teacher’s manual, right? This is one of the suggestions of the teacher’s manual…
A: Uhum…
R: And then, there is a part that the manual is suggesting you to ask students to guess what places they might read about.
A: About wonders… Yeah.
R: Yes. And you didn’t do that.
A: No, I didn’t.
R: Do you know why?
A: To be honest… I think I had planned to do that but… Just… Where is it? Uhm… Yep… I don’t know, I… I don’t think it was conscious. I…
R: Ok…
A: I didn’t remember or I just…
R: Yep. This is an answer. Haha.
A: I was… I was… Very nervous.
A: Ok.
R: So, let me just clarify something to you, I’m not criticizing you, ok?
A: no, no… I know, I know…
R: I’m just asking why, or why not.
A: No, it’s ok.
R: Good.
A: Uhum.
R: Nice. And then, uh, you asked students if they have ever visited the places you worked with. In the snapshot.
A: yeah.
R: Right? And this is one of the suggestions of the manual. And you did it after the discussion, not before they discussed it. Was that conscious, unconscious…? Like, they discussed the questions and then you asked them if they’ve ever been to any of those places, after they discussed the questions.
A: Yeah?
R: Was that conscious, unconscious?
A: Didn’t I ask them before that? Because I think I remember Marina saying that she went to the museum of contemporary art before that, but… You know, I don’t think it was conscious, but, uh… I thought it would be a good question to ask them after the discussion because… It’s a question that they might… Uh… It’s a question that could involve them. Like “oh, I went there, it was really nice…” so it might be a question that got them to talk…
R: ok…
A: More than just “oh, what modern wonders are there in your country”… “oh, we have bla bla bla…” Because it would be something personal…
R: ok… Good. Nice. And, Alex, when you, uh… I told you before that you didn’t ask them to try to guess the places they were going to read about…
A: uhum…
R: ok?
A: yeah.
R: And instead of doing that you gave them some examples of wonders. For example, “the Eiffel tower”… Well, you gave them some examples…
A: yeah…
R: Uhm… Do you think it’s different when you give them examples from when you ask them to come up with examples? To come up with ideas?
A: Uhm… If I think there’s a difference?
R: Yes.
A: Well, actually, there is because, uh… If I’m giving the examples it’s like “oh no, these are what wonders are”, but if I ask them it would be “Oh, what do you think wonders are”. If they already know what wonders are…
R: It’s their opinion.
A: I don’t know… I didn’t know if that came out very clear, but I think it’s different in a way because, uh… for instance, uh… If I give them the examples of wonders, uh… If I give them the examples of wonders I… I pretty… I mean… I – I… I have to know what wonders are, right?
R: Yes…
A: To talk about wonders. They might not know what wonders are, so… what they think wonders are… Isn’t that working?
R: let’s just wait for a moment… My phone stopped… Is yours working?
A: Yes, it is.
R: Are you sure?
A: Yes, it is.
R: So, ok. That’s it. So, you were saying that…
A: yeah, you know…
R: It’s different…
A: It’s different because uh… If I give the examples it’s more like “oh, this is what wonders are”, and if I ask them for examples they can bring their own experiences, perhaps…
R: nice…
A: … Their thoughts… Oh, I could say, for instance, “the Eiffel Tower is a wonder”, but then one of them might think “Oh, it’s not a wonder. It’s not that nice”.
R: ok. Good. They bring their world experiences to class.
A: yeah, yeah.
R: ok. Nice. And then, you… you… In this part, you asked some volunteers to read the sentences aloud, right? And this is not something that is in the teacher’s manual. The teacher’s manual is asking you… Is suggesting you to have them read the text individually, and then you asked them to read each of the descriptions of the wonders aloud…
A: uhum…
R: Why did you do that?
A: Uh… I think part of it was to get them to talk a bit, because, uh… sometimes I’m concerned that sometimes I’m talking too much, that there’s too much of my voice in the classroom, and so… I asked them to read because… well, they would start talking and I could, perhaps, model some pronunciation… uh… mistakes, perhaps, if there were any… Like… and some of the new words, because there’s no audio for the snapshot, so some of the new words, for instance, “lotus”. I remember they hadn’t seen the word “lotus” before, so I could show them that the pronunciation is “lotus” and not “lótus”, or something like that.
R: ok… Ok. Good. Nice. Thanks. Let me see… And then you did this activity here, the “perspective”, about the Empire State Building…
A: uhum…
R: ok… And then, uh… Just one think I wanna ask you… So, you asked them to have a look at the sentences and check if there were any vocabulary questions…
A: Uhum…
R: Good. And you… You just… Like, from this activity you just went through this one, but I remember that the book suggested you to ask them what they know about the Empire State. The book was asking that. It’s suggesting that, I’m sorry. And you didn’t do that.
A: yeah. Yes, I didn’t.
R: and, was that conscious or you just forgot it?
A: no, I… It was conscious because… Well, I don’t know… I might be, perhaps, I might be underestimating them, but I don’t think they would know too many details about the Empire
State Building. I mean, I don’t, and I imagine 95% of the people I know don’t know either, so…

R: ok…
A: yeah, I… I thought it, perhaps it was something more… Because, I mean… The empire state is a wonder, it’s a cultural icon, but it’s not one that you hear that much of, I mean, you hear more of the Eiffel Tower, or, I don’t know, Christ the Redeemer. Even then I think we, I mean, I don’t know what’s like for all Brazilians, but I think we’re not so… We don’t have much a thing of a cultural thing of “oh, I have to know a lot about this wonder”. I mean, you do that when you go visit, when you go on tour, but it’s not something we use a lot in our daily lives. So, I – I just figured that they would know, perhaps, “Oh, the Empire State Building is in NY city, it’s built around, it has” I don’t know “102 floors”…

R: And do you think it would be… The activity would have a different outcome if you had asked this question before, or not?
A: yeah… I don’t know, I think the outcome… I think, uh… I imagine the only difference would be that, perhaps, uh… If I asked them about the Empire State Building first, and some of the students knew some facts, then all the other students would know the facts too, so that would affect their decisions about the one which they thought were true.

R: Ok.
A: So, uh… Yeah, I think that it would be like that.

R: Got it. Nice. Thanks. Then, Alex… You presented the grammar focus.
A: Uhum.

R: Right? And you did it differently from what the books suggests. The book suggests you to prepare six cards and write the words on them… A different mechanism. And… Do you remember what you did?
A: Uhm… If I’m not mistaken, I took two of the sentences from the “perspective” part, I think “it was officially opened by the president of the United States in 1931” and “it was designed by an American architect”. So I… What I did was: I wrote these sentences on the board, and then I wrote the active version of them. So, no, first I took the… I wrote the two sentences and I asked them if they could see anything in common about them, besides the fact that they were about the Empire State Building, and eventually, uh, they said “oh, ‘was’”, and then I think Gisele said “they’re both in the simple past”, and then “Oh, ‘by’ too”, and then I went on to explain it. It was what we called the passive voice.

R: And why did you ask them to find similarities between the sentences?
A: To try to get them to understand it inductively… Like, if they could find, uh… to give them a bit of room to explore it, because, uh, I think that something, well, not always, some learners, yeah, there are learning styles, of course, but some learners like to have a bit of a room to explore, to come up with their own conclusions. So what I tried to do was “oh, I’ll give them space to figure out what the thing is, what the passive thing is, what’s going on”, and then I just checked, “oh, yes. Exactly, exactly…” And then I went on to explain that it’s what we call the “voz passiva” in Portuguese, and that it’s used when it focuses on… It’s on who receives the action, not who does it.

R: yes… Then, you were… I realized that you were trying to make them say “passive”…
A: yeeeeees…
R: Then you said: “so, what’s happening here?” And then you had to say “active”, so “there’s the active voice and the…”
A: oh, yeah…
R: cause they were not coming with the answer…
A: Yeah. And then I did the weird thing with the hand…
R: You kind of prepared… You kind of tried to set the mood by having them say “passive voice”, and you said “there’s the active, then…” And they said “passive”. And you also asked them about the ideas implied by the sentences. For example, “When we don’t know who did the action. Or, when there’s no doer in the action, or when the fact is more important than the doer of the action” which are things that you have here, in the teacher’s manual, right? Then you explained these ideas… You tried to get them from the students and you explained these ideas.
A: uhum…
R: And… Let me see one thing…
A: I remember that they were all sad sentences… Sad examples…
R: Yes. They were all sad examples. Yeah. Before… What caught my attention was that: you gave them two examples, and then after a while you gave them more examples, but before giving more examples and explaining these things, you played the audio program…
A: uhum…
R: Good… Uh… That explains the grammar. Right?
A: uhum.
R: you did this. You played this audio… The grammar focus… Before giving more examples. I remember that. Uh, is there any specific reason for that?
A: No, I don’t think it was, uh… I think I played the audio, uh… And then I gave them the examples after the audio as an additional, because I still wasn’t sure that they had understood or not, because sometimes, as you might have noticed, sometimes I ask them “So, could you understand?” and everybody is like… Nobody says “yes” and nobody says “no”.
R: Ok, nice. Then, Alex, uh… Don’t you think it would be better to have presented more examples before playing the grammar focus?
A: Perhaps… Yeah… I think, perhaps, it… Looking back, if I were to do it know I would have done that…
R: Why?
A: So I could be more… Be able to have a bit more certainty that they understood, or that they didn’t understand.
R: So you think that if you had given them more examples you could be more sure if they got it or not?
A: Yeah! I would try to give them examples and… uh… elicit… uh… answers from them. Like “Oh, do you think this is wrong or right” or “could you understand? Could you, like explain what’s going on”. I don’t know.
R: Do you like eliciting answers from them?
A: Sometimes. I think it’s good because sometimes they’re too silent, and then I get kinda lost because I’m not sure if they’re… they’re… if they are understanding it or not. If I’m being clear or if I’m not being clear.

R: ok. Got it. Nice. Thank you, Alex.
A: ok.

R: Let me see one thing… Ok, and then, on page 73 the book suggests one activity from the extended version of the book, right? This activity, right?
A: Ah… The Interchange. Yes.

R: And why did you decide to bring it to class?
A: I decided to bring it to class because it was uh… It’s a group activity and a speaking activity and so far, the class hadn’t been so much about speaking. I mean, there was “snapshot”, which involved reading… and it involved speaking too…

R: yeah.
A: … and we had the “perspectives”, which had no speaking, only listening… and then the grammar focus… So I… I decided to bring it because it was speaking, and because, also, I liked it because uh… It’s an activity in which they could get to be creative, because they could choose their own songs… They could choose their cultural items to use in the activity, and…

R: and do you think this is important?
A: I think it’s important because it… I think it involves in a way, because, uh, I mean, uh… We had done the grammar activity, which was “oh, it’s a grammar activity”, and so I thought it was important to kind of, uh… I’m not remembering how to say “descontrair” in English, but, anyway, to…

R: I don’t know this word… HAHA
A: … to make it a bit less serious…

R: Oh… Ok.
A: and I think that another fact about this activity that I thought helped was the fact that they could create false sentences, so that make up for really funny things like… I don’t know which movie was directed by Quentin Tarantino, for instance, and…

R: and do you thing they learn differently if they do something that is kinda like more fun than another thing?
A: Wow… I can’t say that they learn differently, but I think they learn… I think they learn… I think they learn in a way that involves them more, and kinda motivates them more… And I think it might help them to retain the information they are retaining… I don’t know… It’s only speculation, but that it’s because I feel that, for instance, when I… I don’t know… 30 hours… 30 minutes of a grammar lesson feels like there’s so many grammar exercises, there’s too much information, and I feel, I start to feel tired, so… I thought about bringing this activity so…

R: Nice… Nice. Ok! Very good. Let me see another thing… And then… let me see what you did because I don’t remember… Ok… There was the break, and then, after that you prepared a quiz for them…
A: yeah…
R: and the quiz… the students had two written questions and to choose one of the answers, and … in that quiz… all of the sentences were... were in the passive voice.
A: yeah.

R: Right? Good. So, was there a specific reason for bringing sentences like that?
A: I brought them because it was the, uh… uh… the main grammatical point of the unit… So they would get more input of that kind.

R: Ok… Good. And don’t you think it would be nice to bring this quiz before presenting the grammar or not?
A: It would be interesting! Yeah! I think it really would. I just don’t know if I could decide which order was better than the other. I didn’t bring it before because it hadn’t occurred to me that I could, perhaps, to that. So…

R: But… Do you see a difference by bringing them… Like, accepting my suggestion, or like, doing the way you did…
A: no, I, I, I think that there’s a difference in the sense that, uh… By the time I did the quiz they already knew the structure. I think that if the quiz had been done before, it would be interesting, a very fun way for them to… to… to present the structure to them… Explain it “Oh, this is the passive voice”, you know? Yeah but I think it would, I think that… uh… the difference would be basically that, because, uh… I did it after the grammar explanation, so… so it was kinda “Oh, you know how this works, so let’s see some more of it”. It would be kind of the opposite “Oh, uh… I’m kinda understanding this, I haven’t seen it grammatically, perhaps… but I’m understanding it. This game’s fun…” then afterwards “Oh, we used the passive voice”…”

R: I’m just asking you this because you just told me that there was more input. You said “Oh, in this activity there was more input…”
A: yeah, yeah… It makes sense. Yeah.

R: Why does it make sense?
A: no… I mean it… It makes sense to put the input before the… The actual explanation, I think…

R: why?
A: because, in that you can get them closer to understanding the structure without actually having to explain it to them.

R: ok… Got it. Thank you, Alex. Let me see.. Oh and… Uh… Ok… You already answered this question. Let me see… Oh, I liked the fact that you asked them to read the questions and the answers… the same thing you did here. I really liked that you asked them to read aloud. Very nice. And then they did the pronunciation activity… Let me see… Oh, I felt that, in this pronunciation activity you showed them, you did the activity but you really didn’t focus on it. Am I right or not?
A: Yeah, yeah. You’re right.

R: why?
A: I… I didn’t want to focus too much on pronunciation because… on the pronunciation activity, I mean… Because I had other activities I wanted to do, and time was not enough, but, uh… I think it was mainly because… I mean… I want them to know that pronunciation is important but I don’t want them to kinds obsess over it… You know? And… Which is one of
the reasons why I tried to show them, and I have done this in previous units too, for the pronunciation part, like... I don’t know, the pronunciation activity was... Anyway, uh... The thing is, I try not to obsess them over pronunciation, and I try to explain to them today that oh, uh... Interchange works with general American, am I right? So, uh, this is just one way of pronouncing the words, because if you take... receive pronunciation or most of the British accents, perhaps you wouldn’t have the same phonemes here, and even if you take other kinds of American accents you wouldn’t have the phonemes exactly as they are here...

R: yeah... Got it. Thanks. And then, Alex, you did this listening activity on page 74... and I have some questions about it. So... uh... you set the mood, you asked the students to have a look at the pictures, and then read the questions, and... you asked them to listen to... let me see... ok, to listen to the passage. You played the passage and asked students to listen to it. And then, there’s one thing that the book suggests that is “have students compare answers in pairs”.

A: hmm... yeah...

R: and you didn’t do that.

A: Oh... yeah.

R: Do you know why?

A: No... I don’t think I know why. In fact, looking at it now it’s a good idea.

R: Why?

A: I think I just didn’t think about it, I didn’t remember it at the time.

R: but why do you think it’s a good idea?

A: I think it’s a good idea because... well... they get to talk a bit more to the pairs and, perhaps, they feel more confident to share their answers with the whole class. If you talk in pairs or in small groups first, then you’re kind of “oh, so I’m more certain that my answer is correct so, perhaps, it’s ok if I share”

R: Ok, got it. Nice. Thank you, Alex. And then, last question, I think... Yes. At the end you brought the game...

A: yes...

R: with the cards, right? And I wanna know “why”? You brought two extra games: the first one you told that it was because of input, and this last one? Like, it was at the end of the class so it probably wasn’t input. Right?

A: Yeah... no... it was more for the fact that it involved speaking and that... It was, uh... I thought about bringing this game to kind of end the class because the... I... I felt that much of the lesson, except for the quiz, you know, had been about... one specific structure had been, perhaps, a bit too tiring for them...

R: yeah...

A: and although the... the game involved using that structure I thought it would be a good thing for them to kind of relax a bit because... uh... they were using the structure, but they were using it in a fun way... uh... kind of like what they did in the “interchange” activity, the one... the extra... uh... and because, so... they could talk between them, in groups, and they also could... and also the I had mentioned that they could bring their personal experience, their preferences, or the things they remember. I mean... it’s a game that relies upon them.
R: ok. Got it. Nice. Thank you. Very good. Thank you. Let me see, I think this was the last question I wanted to ask you… let me see… Yes. Basically, that’s it.
A: ok.
R: from what you did differently and similarly to the book, that’s it… and then, I remember that you asked me “I want to know what you think about the class”. You asked me that. So you said “I can help you, and then I want you to help me”. You told me that, do you remember?
A: yeah, yeah. I remember that.
R: So, I have some suggestions for you. Some things that I noticed.
A: yeah.
R: ok?
A: Yeah, please. So tell me.
R: So, first, one thing that… Sometimes when we are teaching we don’t see what we do, or we think we do something but we don’t, or we think we don’t do some other thing but we do…
A: yeah…
R: So, one thing that I noticed is that… I think… Your students are level 4, right?
A: level 4, yes.
R: Level 4. I think they’re speaking too much Portuguese in class.
A: yeah?
R: Yeah. I think you could… For example: every time that they’re in groups, when they finish one activity, they start speaking Portuguese, or even sometimes in the middle of the activity they speak Portuguese.
A: you know… That’s quite funny because it’s something I noticed more in the last two classes, because I remember that one of the things that surprised me in the first and in the second classes was that… I noticed that some groups, uh… They used to finish the activities before the other ones... They would continue talking about other stuff, but in English, and I was like “oh, that’s amazing”. But, ok, I get it…
R: Nice. I think you could have a look at it, to try to be more careful, to be… to be more picky… more like “Hey, you!!! Speak Portuguese!”
A: yeah, yeah…
R: Then, uh… There’s one thing that I noticed… This is me, ok? It’s my opinion.
A: ok…
R: I think that sometimes… you… I have no problems with using translation, but depending on the occasion. And I think you used it more than you needed today. I think that there were some specific parts of the class that there was no need, because they understand what you say very well. The group is very… like… Their English is very good… I don’t think it’s, like… I only observed one class, but I haven’t seen a very huge difference among your students… I think the class is homogeneous. There isn’t a class that is completely homogeneous…
A: yeah…
R: and I think that sometimes… You didn’t even realize that… but sometimes you were translating things, but you didn’t need to. Also, sometimes, when they commented on something, you commented on that thing in Portuguese.
A: Wow… I didn’t notice that.
R: Yeah, that’s why I’m telling you that. Sometimes we don’t see, we don’t notice we do some things.
A: uhum.
R: so sometimes, for example, let’s say that you were explaining the activity, and then one of them made a joke, in Portuguese. Then you responded to the joke in Portuguese. And then, ok, it’s like 5 seconds, but you spoke Portuguese.
A: yeah, yeah…
R: You know what I mean?
A: I know, I know…
R: I think… If you try to uh… Respond… even to the things that are not related to the class, I mean, the jokes they make during the class in English, it will show them what the purpose of the class is… It’ll, it’ll give them more, uh… not motivation, it’ll give them more…
A: yeah… They’ll get more into the mindset that this is English class…
R: yeah. They’ll be aware that this is English class.
A: Yeah. Uhum.
R: It’ll become more natural, that’s what I mean.
A: yeah, yeah. I know.
R: It’ll become more natural for them because that’s real life speech… Like, mocking and making jokes and things like that.
A: yeah.
R: so, even the things that are not related to the class itself, directly related to the class itself, I think you could like… uh… as I told you, sometimes we don’t see that we do things like that. I think you could bring it to English. And also, I think you could be pickier with them in terms of Portuguese. Like, if you see them speak Portuguese, like, don’t be afraid of… Because sometimes when we teach we want to conquer the class, we want them to like us, and we want to be nice to them. But sometimes we need to be a little bit mean. So, there’s no problem for you to just point to them and say “hey, Portuguese? This is English class.” I do that all the time. I feel that sometimes they hate me, because I’m always like “Hey, I have two radars here! I capture everything!” And this is something nice, like, it’s not … uh… at the beginning some of them might feel a little bit uh… not upset, but a little bit like “Oh my God. What the f*?” but, as time goes on, they’ll see that this is something that makes a difference. Like, even the comments in Portuguese, even, you know… a “saúde” that is said in English is a huge thing. They don’t see that because they’re on the other side.
A: yeah, yeah.
R: So, these two things that I said. Hm… I think that you connect the activities very well. There isn’t a break. For example, sometimes… I observed classes that teachers kind of broke the flow of the class, drastically changing from one thing to the other. This
didn’t happen to you. It was very nice. So, you set the mood in a very good manner. Uh, the activities were well connected, were nice. The only two comments were these two, like, related to the use of Portuguese in class and about the use of translation.
Appendix G

Transcript – Second Interview

R: So, the first thing that caught my attention was that, uh... At the beginning of the class you had... uh... let me see... this activity in the snapshot, introducing the topic they were going to work with during the class... and there are some questions at the end of the activity about “movie trivia”. And you added two more questions. Do you remember?
A: I think they had to do with TV series, right?
R: yes...
A: uh... if they watched any TV series and... well, I... I don’t remember what the other question was...
R: yes, but it was something related to TV series, to movies... Two other questions related to the same topic. Can you tell me why you did that?
A: I thought it would be interesting because sometimes... well, TV series is something that is very popular now, and I know that some people are not interested in watching movies, but they like watching TV series, and I thought it would engage them a little bit more, perhaps, because, well, maybe if they don’t have many movies to talk about they might have some TV series to talk about. And anyway, even if they do have a lot of movies to talk about they can also talk about TV series.
R: ok, can I say that it was kind of a strategy to reach more students... In the discussion...
A: yeah, perhaps. I’m not sure, but yeah. I guess so.
R: I think it was. Hahaha... The second thing that really caught my attention was that, in the conversation you set the mood, you told them what the conversation was about, and then you wrote two questions on the board. One of them was “Who is more difficult to please?” and the other “What did they decide to see?” These two questions were related to the conversation. And then, I wanna know if this was on purpose or if this just came out, out of the blue... The manual was suggesting you the following questions: “Who is choosier?” and “What did they decide to see?”. And then you replaced the expression “choosier” for “more difficult to please”. Can you tell me why you did that?
A: Hm... I’m not sure. I’m trying to remember... Just a second.
R: if you don’t have an answer there’s no problem, ok?
A: no, I... I don’t know I... I think there was something in the moment. Like, I looked at it and I thought “No, I think that it’d be better to use ‘more difficult to please’.” I don’t know if this was conscious.
R: so, you’re saying that “more difficult to please” would be better than “choosier”. Why do you think so?
A: I don’t know. It came in the moment, but perhaps... Yeah... I-I think at the time my thought was “Wow... If I write ‘more difficult to please’, perhaps they’ll understand right away, and if I write ‘choosier’ then I might have to explain and, perhaps, give an example.” But anyway, I had to explain “more difficult to please” in the same way, so... It didn’t make that much of a difference, I guess.
R: so, I remember that they had trouble to understand, even when you said “more difficult to please”. So, you used this one, which is more common than “choosier”, but even so they were kinda like “What?” And do you remember what you did? Which strategy you used?
A: if I’m not mistaken, I gave them an example.
R: Yep. But you did something else, and I think you don’t remember.
A: probably.
R: You translated the expression.
A: Oh, yeah, yeah… I translated it at the end.
R: can you tell me why you decided to translated it?
A: I don’t know. I think it was just to be 100% certain that they would understand.
R: Did anything about them tell you that they had not understood it?
A: I don’t know, I… I had the feeling that they kind of understood it, but I wasn’t sure if everybody understood it. Because, as you might have seen, sometimes I ask them and they make that “blank face”.
R: And then you got to the grammar focus part. You were implicitly introducing the grammar, which was adjectives ending in ING or ED. Then, as a suggestion, the book is asking you to write this on the board, play the audio, and ask Ss to match the adjectives with the movies and novels. And you didn’t do this part. Is there a reason for that?
A: Uh… The reason is: I totally forgot it. Because when I planned the lesson I was going to do that, but then I forgot it. Well, I got confused because I wanted to do this, but for some reason I thought “no, I can’t do this anymore”, and so… there was that kind of awkward thing when I asked them “Oh, which movie is exciting?”…
R: Why do you think it was awkward?
A: I don’t know. It felt awkward to me, perhaps, because I was nervous because I had forgotten it. I don’t know. But anyway, my idea was to use that, but I forgot it.
R: Oh, and also, just one thing, the second part of the conversation: you didn’t play it. Is there a reason for that?
A: Oh… Again, I forgot it. I was kinda nervous, but I had planned to do it.
R: Why were you nervous?
A: I don’t know I…
R: because of me? We’re friends”
A: No… I don’t think so. I haven’t gotten beyond the part of not being nervous anymore.
R: So, another thing that caught my attention was that… You brought these two extra activities and then you handed them in, and after that you started explaining the grammar. You asked them some questions and started to explain grammar. So, you gave them the activities but you didn’t use them right away. Can you tell me why?
A: well, uh… first of all, I got confused because my idea was to hand in the movie lists before the conversation. I think they suggest that in the book, like, “if you can bring movie lists, bring them”. Because I think one of the warm up questions is “what are the movies playing at the theater?”. Well, to be honest, the only reason I handed the two of them right away was because I intended to hand in the survey later, when I was going to do the activity, is because
the guys at the printer made the copies in this order. Then I thought “Well, instead of taking one or two minutes to just separate everything I’m just going to hand them in right away”.  

R: And do you think that handing in the activities right away affects the class in a sense, or not?  
A: I think some students might get curious about “Wow, what are we going to do?” but I don’t believe it affects them to a great extend. I guess.

R: So… bringing this list was something suggested by the book, but then you brought the survey. Did you also see this in the book or not?  
A: No, no.

R: Why did you bring this activity?  
A: I thought it’d be interesting for them to have a survey and then I thought initially about “Oh, perhaps they should conduct a survey on what kinds of movies their colleagues like”. Then I was looking on the internet for some activities and I had the idea to work with specific ideas, like, one specific TV show, or one specific movie, or one specific actor…

R: And which skills did you want them to develop with this activity?  
A: Mainly speaking. And I wanted to get them to move because they’re always sitting and everything. And also because I wanted them to interact a little bit more with other students, because they tend to sit in the same places and sometimes even with the same people, so I wanted them to have a little bit of interaction with other people.

R: Do you think this is necessary? Do you think it’s important to talk to different people?  
A: I think it’s… I don’t know if it’s 100% important, but I think that it’s nice because, perhaps… Uh… I don’t know… I think that in real life, sometimes, we have a lot of interesting people around us and we don’t realize because we never talk to them. So I don’t know, perhaps even if it’s just to… I don’t know… get them a bit closer…

R: Ok… Thank you. And then, before asking them to stand up and go around the class and ask the questions of the survey to different classmates, you asked them to think about their own answers. You asked them to think about their answers before talking to the other students. Why?  
A: I thought about it because… Just so they wouldn’t like… For instance: the first person comes to them and asks “Oh, what do you think about Leonardo DiCaprio?” and then the person stops to think and “Oh, I’m gonna look in the book for an adjective…”. It was kind of… Just for them to have already thought of the answers.

R: So… Was that to make the activity happen faster or not?  
A: Perhaps. But I’m not sure if it actually happened faster, because it took a bit of time… the individual moment. I don’t know. Perhaps it was.

R: Ok. Good. So, I think that in today’s class the activities were better connected than in the first class that I attended. Also, you set the scene for every activity, which is something that sometimes, in the first class I attended, you didn’t do. This is something nice. I think you were more focused on the fact that it’s important to set the mood before having them do the activities… To connect one activity with the other. I don’t know if that’s what you think about…  
A: yeah, uh… I try to consciously do that.
R: But I think this is better now if compared to the first time I attended your class. So, other things that I found are that: they’re speaking more English, which is something good. Do you remember that, in the first meeting we had, I told you that they were speaking too much Portuguese.
A: yep. And that I shouldn’t be afraid to do like “Hey, guys. Speak English.”
R: yes, yes. So, it’s better now. It’s changed. Do you feel it’s changed?
A: I think so. I mean, sometimes they still speak Portuguese, but I guess it’s a bit less now.
R: and do you think you’re the responsible for this or…
A: I’m not sure, because I don’t remember doing much of the “Hey, guys…” I think that, for the most part, it’s coming from themselves.
R: Another thing is that: sometimes you ask a question and then they look at you with a very vague expression and I think, my opinion ok? I think you should be more insistent.
A: yes?
R: I think you should look at them and ask them the question again, because most times, what happens is that you ask them a question and you answer your own question. This happened many times. Not that it’s wrong, but I think that you can change this pattern they have of waiting for you to give them the answer, because if you keep doing that they’ll keep accepting that and will always wait for you to give them the answers. You know what I mean?
A: Yeah, yeah.
R: So, I think this is something you could work on. You can look at them sometimes and say “Guys, I asked you a question.” You don’t need to laugh, you don’t need to joke about it, you can just look at them and say “Guys, you need to help me. I’m asking you a question.” I think you can use different strategies. You can be funny, too. For example, what I sometimes do is: I look at my watch and say “Ok. I’m not getting older…” And then they speak. So, I think you should try to insist a little bit more.
A: Ok.
R: Also, something that I was against before starting to teach, but then I’ve changed it about myself is that “OMG, I hate placing them in groups, because I didn’t like it when it happened to me.”, but then I realized that school wasn’t language class. This is different. This is a language course. It’s important for them to speak with different people. So, I think you could try to place them in groups… Don’t be afraid of calling out their names, like “Matheus, Fabiana, and Mauricio…” Some people don’t like it, but I think that if don’t have time to raffle their names or think of something to place them in groups, call out their names. That’s what I do. And students are never embarrassed. Sometimes we think they might get embarrassed but they don’t. The experiences that I’ve had so far showed me so. Again, I’m not telling you that what I do is the right thing. This is just a suggestion that works with me and that I think it can work for you. Also, they need to remember that you are the teacher. You don’t need to be a monster, but they need to see that you’re the person that is responsible for connecting things, for leading things… for taking them where they need to be. They continue the process… They keep the activities going, but you lead them. You don’t “control”, but you “lead”
them. I think it’s important for them to see that. I think it’s important for them to see you as a teacher. Not only as a friend.
Appendix H

Transcript – Third Interview

R: Well. Let’s start it. After having Ss discuss the questions of the homework, you gave them an extra activity. And I think you took it from “teach this”
A: yeah.
R: So, I wanna know why you felt the need to bring this activity to class.
A: I thought it was a good way to get them to practice the “if” sentences, the conditional. It’d be a good way to practice that and it would be fun and engaging for them. Cause personal answers are involved, even though the personal answers of your colleague, but yours as well. So, it’s funny sometimes to… uh… because it deals with that perception, like “Hm… If you could be an animal, you’d be a dog”, and “No! I’d be a cat. I prefer cats”. I thought it would be a nice way to get them to practice while engaging them.
R: an extra practice for what they have studied in class.
A: Yeah.
R: and you mentioned that they were supposed to give personal answers. Do you think it’s different when they fake something and when they give personal answers? You think it’s better for them to talk about themselves or…
A: I think they could fake perhaps, but I think… uh… and this is based on my experience and on the experience of other people I have talked to… I think when they talk about themselves, their personal experiences, they get more engaged because they feel like… most people, not everybody, but most people like to talk about themselves, or what they think about certain things, so I think they get more engaged, more motivated.
R: uhum. Got it. Then, you did some other activities from the book and they went to their break and when they came back you brought another extra activity: “what would you do if…” And again, the same reasons? Why did you bring this activity?
A: yeah. The same reasons and I tried to make this activity more like a game because I figured they would be really tired. And the thing is: in my lesson plan we… This was supposed to come before the break, but then… well, we never have enough time, but I thought it’d be nice for them to play a game and laugh a bit because I tried to make some funny sentences, some absurd situations… I think it’d be a nice way to still get them to practice and, like, perhaps make them a little less tired. Oh, I just want to comment because this is interesting since your research is about the use of the teacher’s manual and everything… During the break, one of my students mentioned that she really liked that I brought extra activities because they usually were fun and they got away from the book and the students that was next to you, he said that he likes it too because you use only the book and you get tired. And when they do an extra activity that is not so grammatical they feel like… they relax a bit.
R: Also Alex, something that caught my attention was that… I don’t know if this was on purpose or not, but then you worked with them with the “word power” and with the “perspectives”, these two activities from the book, and then you just did letter A, in both activities. Do you have a reason for that?
A: Yeah. In fact, I wanted to do letter B and I even thought about doing a kind of a game with this, like, for instance: pairs or groups would have to go to the board and write opposite verbs
and they would get points for that. I wanted to do a game like this, and I wanted to do letter
“b” of perspectives too, but we didn’t have time.

**R:** uhum. *Why would you change it into a game?*
**A:** because, well, we were near the end of the class, when the students are very tired, so, this
would be a nice way to get them to, like, I don’t know… to perhaps… it would help them feel
less tired I guess. And it could also get them to move around. Which is something that I think
that helps them. Even, well, it helps you when you’re kind of sleepy if you have to, like get up
and move around. It makes you more awake, so…

**R:** nice. Ok. *And the last thing that caught my attention was: when you explained the
grammar, which was “should” and “would”, you didn’t do what the book suggested you. Are there any reasons for that?*
**A:** Can I take a look?
**R:** yeah, of course.
**A:** I think I didn’t do it, because… Well… I don’t know. I thought it would perhaps be… I
don’t know. Perhaps it wouldn’t be a need for me to write the columns, you know? Perhaps, uh…

**R:** you think they would figure it out by themselves?
**A:** no, it’s because I… When I was planning the classes, for some reason, it didn’t seem a
good idea to me to write the columns. Now I’m looking at them again, perhaps… I think what
I thought was that perhaps it would be too structuralist, perhaps, so it might have an effect on
students, like all those words and… I don’t know. I really don’t know. Sorry, I…

**R:** No, no. No problem. *And, don’t you think – this is me speaking, ok? – don’t you
think a little bit of structure is good sometimes?*
**A:** No, it’s good sometimes. In fact, I have a feeling that most teachers would call me,
perhaps, too structuralist. Even though I try not to use only structure, but structure is
important. I mean that, sometimes, for some reason it didn’t seem to fit at that particular time.
But I really… I don’t like the idea of not working with the structure.

**R:** So, now I have a question connected to this: *after that, the book suggested you to
elicit the rules from the students, and you didn’t do it.*
**A:** well, I might’ve forgotten it. I had planned to do that. I think I forgot it at the time and also
because of time. I tried to explain it a bit quickly, which perhaps was not a good idea, so they
could do the grammar focus and everything.

**R:** Nice. Ok. *We’re good for today, Thanks.*
Appendix I

UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DE SANTA CATARINA
Centro de Comunicação e Expressão
Departamento de Língua e Literaturas Estrangeiras

Formulário do Consentimento Livre e Esclarecido

Gostaria de lhe convidar a participar de uma pesquisa intitulada Beyond (or not) the Teacher’s Manual. Você está sendo convidado(a) a participar deste estudo por ser um(a) professor(a) de língua estrangeira nos cursos Extracurriculares da Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina.

O objetivo dessa pesquisa é investigar as relações de professores de língua estrangeira com o material didático utilizado por eles, mais especificamente, com o manual do professor. Esse estudo será conduzido pelo pesquisador Matheus André Agnoletto, sob a orientação da Professora Doutora Adriana de Carvalho Kuerten Dellagnelo.

Se você aceitar participar deste estudo, será solicitado(a) a (1) permitir a presença do pesquisador em sala de aula três vezes durante o período letivo de um semestre, (2) responder a questionários sobre suas crenças em relação ao uso de materiais didáticos em sala de aula de língua estrangeira e (3) participar de entrevistas com o pesquisador logo após cada aula observada.

A participação na presente pesquisa não envolve riscos de alto nível, porém, devido à presença do pesquisador em sala, você poderá se sentir nervoso(a), ansioso(a) e desconfortável ao lecionar. É importante salientar que os resultados do estudo serão tornados públicos, mas tua identidade será totalmente preservada e não será incluída nenhuma informação que possa identificá-lo(a). Somente o pesquisador e sua orientadora terão acesso aos dados coletados. Ao final da pesquisa, o pesquisador irá lhe mostrar os resultados obtidos.
e as conclusões do estudo, o que poderá lhe ajudar a ter uma melhor percepção de suas práticas pedagógicas e do seu processo de preparação de aulas.

É importante mencionar que você poderá desistir da pesquisa a qualquer momento por qualquer motivo, sem necessidade de justificativa, não acarretando em prejuízo algum para a tua pessoa. Para esclarecimentos, entre em contato através do e-mail matth.ufsc@gmail.com ou através do número (48) 9930-1381. Além disso, tu poderás contatar o Comitê de Ética em Pesquisa com Seres Humanos da UFSC através do telefone (48) 3721-6094 ou do e-mail cep.propesq@contato.ufsc.br.

Se você aceitar participar, por favor, assine este consentimento em duas vias - uma cópia ficará comigo, pesquisador, e outra contigo – e rubrique em todas as páginas. Ao assinar esse documento, você estará consentindo com o uso dos dados coletados para a pesquisa. Obrigado pela participação.

Florianópolis, ____ de ________________ de 2016.

____________________________ ______________________________
Matheus André Agnoletto Adriana de C. Kuerten Dellagnelo
Pesquisador Orientadora

Declaração de consentimento:
Declaro que li a informação acima. Quando necessário, fiz perguntas e recebi esclarecimentos. Eu concordo em participar deste estudo.

Nome: ________________________________________________________
Assinatura do(a) participante _________________________________
RG: _________________________________________________________
Assinatura do Pesquisador Responsável _________________________

Florianópolis, ____ de ________________ de 2016.

Contatos
Matheus André Agnoletto
Celular: (48) 9930-1381
E-mail: matth.ufsc@gmail.com

Adriana de Carvalho Kuerten Dellagnelo
E-mail: adrianak@cce.ufsc.br