Assessment of Learning in Process (AAP): history and repercussions on the organisation of pedagogical work

Evaluación del Aprendizaje en Proceso (AAP): historia y repercusiones en la organización del trabajo pedagógico

Avaliação da Aprendizagem em Processo (AAP): histórico e repercussões na organização do trabalho pedagógico

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ABSTRACT

This article aims to analyse the Assessment of Learning in Process (AAP) that was part of the daily life of state schools in São Paulo from 2011 to 2022. For this purpose, we carried out documentary and bibliographical research, in order to identify the history, characteristics, the concepts that supported it and repercussions on the organisation of pedagogical work. Using the content analysis technique, the teacher's support materials that accompanied the AAPs and also dissertations, theses and articles located on the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel portal were analysed. The data indicate that the AAP, announced by the State Department of Education as diagnostic and formative, was a large-scale external assessment designed and implemented without the participation of teachers. Although some researchers identify diagnostic and formative aspects in AAP, the majority of productions found indicate that it contributed to the induction of pedagogical practices and, in certain cases, even occupied the space of evaluating learning in the classroom. It therefore constituted yet another large-scale external evaluation focused on quantitative results, following the managerialist perspective, the result of neoliberalism.

Keywords: Large-scale external evaluation; Diagnostic assessment; Formative assessment.

RESUMEN

El artículo tiene como objetivo analizar la Evaluación del Aprendizaje en Proceso (PAA) que formó parte del cotidiano de las escuelas públicas de São Paulo entre 2011

y 2022. Para ello, se realizó una investigación documental y bibliográfica, con el fin de identificar su historia, características, las concepciones que la sustentaron y repercusiones en la organización del trabajo pedagógico. A partir de la técnica de análisis de contenido, se analizaron los materiales de apoyo al profesorado que acompañaron a los AAP, así como disertaciones, tesis y artículos ubicados en el portal de la Coordinación para el Perfeccionamiento del Personal de Educación Superior. Los datos indican que la AAP, anunciada por el Departamento de Educación del Estado como diagnóstica y formativa, fue una evaluación externa a gran escala diseñada e implementada sin la participación de los docentes. Si bien algunos investigadores identifican aspectos diagnósticos y formativos en la AAP, la mayoría de las producciones encontradas indican que contribuyó a la inducción de prácticas pedagógicas y, en ciertos casos, incluso ocupó el espacio de la evaluación de los aprendizajes en el aula. Se trataba, por tanto, de otra evaluación externa a gran escala centrada en resultados cuantitativos, en la estela de la perspectiva gerencialista, fruto del neoliberalismo.

Palabras clave: Evaluación externa a gran escala; Evaluación diagnóstica; Evaluación formativa.

RESUMO
O artigo tem por objetivo analisar a Avaliação da Aprendizagem em Processo (AAP) que fez parte do cotidiano das escolas estaduais de São Paulo de 2011 a 2022. Para tanto, realizamos pesquisas documental e bibliográfica, de modo a identificar seu histórico, características, as concepções que a sustentavam e repercussões na organização do trabalho pedagógico. Foram analisados, a partir da técnica de análise de conteúdo, os materiais de apoio do professor que acompanhavam as AAPs e, ainda, dissertações, teses e artigos localizados no portal da Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior. Os dados indicam que a AAP, anunciada pela Secretaria Estadual de Educação como diagnóstica e formativa, foi uma avaliação externa em larga escala pensada e implementada sem a participação dos docentes. Embora alguns pesquisadores identifiquem aspectos diagnósticos e formativos na AAP, a maioria das produções encontradas sinaliza que ela contribuiu para a indução de práticas pedagógicas e, em determinados casos, chegou a ocupar o espaço da avaliação da aprendizagem em sala de aula. Constituiu-se, pois, em mais uma avaliação externa em larga escala focalizada em resultados quantitativos, na trilha da perspectiva gerencialista, fruto do neoliberalismo.

Palavras-chave: Avaliação externa em larga escala; Avaliação diagnóstica; Avaliação formativa.

Introduction

One of the main hallmarks of the São Paulo state school system is the School Performance Assessment System of the State of São Paulo (Saresp). Saresp, according to the State Education Department (Seduc-SP), is a large-scale external assessment implemented in 1996 to subsidise the monitoring of public policies (São Paulo, c2023a).

Large-scale external assessments such as Saresp are made up of standardised tests, developed externally to schools, and cover a large proportion of the target public (Durli; Shneider, 2011). These assessments have gained prominence in Brazil, especially since the 1990s, as a result of guidelines from international organisations on the need for educational reform.

These reforms are part of the movement to restructure the state, with changes in the way public services are run, in line with the neoliberal perspective (Durli; Shneider, 2011). This follows the international trend of directing government agendas towards managerial models aimed at effectiveness and efficiency (Jacomini; Nascimento; Stoco, 2023).

The product of neoliberal rationality is managerialism, the characteristics of which are: strategies to achieve targets, a focus on productivity, competitiveness as a principle that leads to improved services, accountability for the results obtained, standardisation to reduce deviations throughout the process, dissociation between conception and execution (Suspitsyna, 2010, Rodrigues, 2018). In education, this takes the form, among other things, of a productivist perspective based on standardised tests, combined with teacher accountability (Jacomini; Nascimento; Stoco, 2023).

Durli and Shneider (2011) warn that large-scale external evaluations represent a form of institutional regulation, since through them it is possible to influence curricula, school management, teacher training, etc. In the state of São Paulo, Saresp illustrates the phenomenon denounced by the authors. This is a large-scale external assessment which, as well as publicising the results of institutions, establishes rankings and

distributes rewards. Because it is involved in various aspects of educational policy (Jacomini; Nascimento; Stoco, 2023), Saresp has become the object of study for several studies.

In general, such research indicates that Saresp induces school practices, strengthens conceptions of evaluation aimed at verifying results; training students for the tests; pressure from managers for better results; decreasing teacher autonomy; competition between schools, among other repercussions on the organisation of pedagogical work (Freire, 2008; Arcas, 2009; Rodrigues, 2011).

However, Saresp was not the only large-scale external assessment implemented by Seduc-SP . There was also the Assessment of Learning in Process (AAP), which ran from 2011 to 2022. Over the years, the AAP has become more and more a part of everyday life in São Paulo state schools, which justifies the need to study it. With this in mind, we present the findings obtained from documentary and bibliographical research, the aim of which was to describe and analyse the AAP, considering its history, characteristics, the conceptions that underpinned it and its repercussions in schools.

The article is organised into six sections, this being the first. This is followed by the methodological trajectory. In the third section, we present the AAP, considering its characteristics and changes over time. The next section focuses on the reverberations of the AAP in the organisation of pedagogical work, described in dissertations, theses and articles. Finally, we outline some final considerations on external assessments[1] in the São Paulo state network.

The road travelled

To achieve our objective, we carried out documentary and bibliographical research. Lüdke and André (1986) point out that documents are a source of contextualised information, since they appear in a context and speak about it . There is a certain lack of documents that trigger the implementation of the AAP (Santos, 2017; Andrade, 2020). Therefore, the documents selected were the teacher support

materials that accompanied the AAP, precisely because they provided some information about it.

These materials were sent to schools between 2011 and 2020. During the pandemic, with digital applications, schools did not receive teacher support materials. As a rule, they presented a history of the AAP, its intentions, the skills assessed, the test questions and the commented correction, and, in some cases, indications of other materials. We considered one support material issued per year, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Documents analysed

Year	Document name
2011	Pedagogical Comments and Recommendations Teacher's Guide 7th grade Maths
2012	Pedagogical Comments and Recommendations Teacher's Guide Year 7 Maths
2013	Pedagogical Comments and Recommendations Teacher's Guide Year 7 Maths
2014	Pedagogical Comments and Recommendations: Teacher's Guide Year 7 Maths test
2015	Pedagogical Comments and Recommendations: Teacher's Guide Year 7 Maths test
2016	Teacher's notebook Year 7 Maths
2017	Teacher's notebook Year 7 Maths
2018	Teacher's notebook Year 7 Maths
2019	Teacher's notebook Year 7 Maths
2020	Support material for teachers 7th grade Final Years of Elementary School Maths

Source: own elaboration

For the analysis, we opted for the technique of content analysis (Bardin, 1977). This technique "uses systematic and objective procedures to describe the content of messages" and takes place in three phases (Bardin, 1977, p. 38). In the first phase,

the material is organised and the ideas that emerge during floating reading are systematised. In the second phase, the material is explored and coded so that the data is aggregated into units that represent the message. In the last phase, the data is interpreted.

Once we had gathered the supporting materials, we carried out a floating reading to get to know their elements. Secondly, the reading was repeated, highlighting information related to our objective. The data was then grouped into tables. Whenever any of the information mentioned generated doubts, we searched the web. Thus, we also have data obtained via press releases from Seduc-SP or on their websites.

However, the selected documents alone did not allow us to fully achieve our objective, especially in terms of the conceptions that underpinned it and the repercussions on the work carried out in schools. It was therefore necessary to carry out bibliographical research. "Bibliographical research is based on material that has already been prepared" (Gil, 2008, p. 50). We carried out a search for dissertations, theses and articles on the portal of the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (Capes). For this search, we used the command "Evaluation of Learning in Process" and found the productions shown in Table 2.

Chart 2: Dissertations, theses and articles found on the Capes portal

Title	Author	Type	Year
SEE/SP's Assessment of Learning in Process: developments in the maths curriculum in the final years of primary school	Edmar Montelli	Masters in Education	2015
Methodological path aimed at overcoming pedagogical problems, based on analyses of data from Saresp and the Assessment of Learning in Process – AAP	Edna Caldeira Martins Guellere	Professional Master's in Education	2015
Assessment of Learning in Process: limits and possibilities of use in a São Paulo state school	Maria Eliane Maia Sousa	Professional Master's in Education	2015
The Assessment of Learning in Process (AAP): SEE-SP (2011-2016): from proclamation to	Marcio Alexandre Ravagnani Pinto	Doctorate in School Education	2016

implementation: a case study of the programme in one school			
The pedagogical coordinator as an articulator of assessment practices in the school unit: a reflection on the Assessment of Learning in Process (AAP)	Lilia Alves da Silva Castro	Professional Master's Degree in Education:	2016
Analysing the competency matrix in a real application: Assessment of Portuguese Language Learning in Process by the São Paulo State Department of Education	Michelle de Souza Prado	Professional Master's in Literature	2016
Analysis of mental processes in the textual production of 1st and 2nd year secondary school students in the 2013 In-Process Learning Assessment	Robinson Gasbarra de Melo	Master's in Applied Linguistics and Language Studies	2016
The Assessment of Learning in Process (AAP) at the service of the training of trainers: limits and possibilities	Edislene Sedemaca	Professional Master's in Education	2017
Maths teachers' reflections on functions in the Assessment of Learning in Process	Vera Mônica Ribeiro	Master's in Maths Education	2017
Assessment of Learning in Process: uses of the results by Portuguese language and maths teachers in the early years of primary education	Vilma Claro dos Santos	Professional Master's in Education	2017
Analysing the competency matrix in a real-life application of the São Paulo State Department of Education's Assessment of Learning in Process in Portuguese Language	Michelle Souza Prado, Daniela Nogueira de Moraes Garcia	Periodical Estudos Linguísticos do Estado de São Paulo	2017
A study of teachers' perceptions of learning assessment	Nielce Meneguelo Lobo da Costa, Vera Mônica Ribeiro	Journal Em Teia	2018
Process Learning Assessment to guide maths lessons for students with intellectual disabilities	Amanda Garcia Bachiega	Professional Master's in Teaching for Basic Education	2018

Emerging genre objective test: analysing the "Learning in Process" Assessment (AAP/SP)	Elisangela Candida da Rocha Silva	Professional Master's Degree in Languages	2018
The study of semantic congruence in grade 1 equation questions in Process Learning Assessments	Gladys Beatriz Churata Garcia	Professional Master's in Teaching Exact Sciences	2019
Portuguese language teaching in the final years of primary school and the use of the focus learning platform	Dayane Martin Silva	Professional Master's Degree in Teaching and Educational Management	2019
Unveiling the backstage of the 3rd year secondary school classroom: a plot involving external assessment requirements	Rosangela Eliana Bertoldo Frare	Doctorate in Education	2019
The use of the Lensoo Create application for learning recovery in the maths procedural assessment process	Terezinha Marisa Ribeiro de Oliveira, Carmen Lúcia Costa Amaral	Journal Em Teia	2019
Literature at the centre of mother tongue study: overcoming gaps and advancing learning	Heloiza de Souza Moreno	Professional Master's in Literature	2020
Rationalisation and teaching work in the São Paulo state network: the pedagogy of "competences and skills"	Igor Gomes	Masters in Education	2020
Analysing professional teacher training processes in the context of In-Process Learning Assessment	Juliana Silva de Andrade	Doctorate in Education	2020
Teaching practice in the assessment of textual production: The marks of correction	Renata Daniela Silva de Cristo	Masters in Education	2020
In-process learning assessment and curriculum control	Maísa Malta	Journal Cocar	2020
Assessment processes in maths: a study of educational assessments	Vera Mônica Ribeiro, Nielce	Journal e-curriculum	2020

	Meneguelo Lobo da Costa		
Analysing the content of first-degree equations in editions of the In-Process Learning Assessment	Paulo César Oliveira, Gladys Cecilia Coronel García	Journal Intermaths	2020
The "Personal Account" Genre as a Contribution to Elementary School Students' Writing	Priscila Barboza Gomes de Souza, Silvelena Cosmo Dias	Journal Ensin@ UFSM	2023

Source: own elaboration.

Three dissertations (Melo, 2016; Bachiega, 2018; Garcia, 2019) and four articles (Prado; Garcia, 2017; Oliveira; Amaral, 2019; Oliveria; Garcia, 2020; Souza; Dias, 2023) were not taken into account because they include the AAP as a backdrop to their research. As a rule, their analyses are dedicated to the instruments or use them to carry out specific interventions.

The bibliographical research provided information on the characterisation of the AAP and made it possible to reflect on the concepts that underpin it, in order to identify the repercussions of this assessment in schools. The data obtained is presented in the following sections.

The AAP: history and characteristics

The AAP was implemented by Seduc-SP in 2011 to assess the arrival of students in the final years of primary school, as well as students entering secondary school, with a six-monthly application (Pinto, 2016). The AAP also emerged as an alternative to the lengthy delivery of Saresp results (Andrade, 2020).

There is a lack of documentation on the implementation of the AAP. It was launched via video conference. In this presentation, it was requested several times that the AAP not be confused with external assessment, since its aim was to help teachers identify students' difficulties, without intending to encroach on teachers' work (Santos,

2017; Sedemaca, 2017).

According to Sedemaca (2017), it was also said that the results of the AAP would not be used to rank schools and would not focus on assigning grades to students. The suggestion was to add this assessment to the teachers' records. With the results obtained immediately by the teacher when administering and correcting the test, they would be able to take quick action to recover learning (Sedemaca, 2017).

Little by little, the AAP underwent changes. The teacher support materials began to reflect some of the changes. The 2012 material states that the AAP was implemented as a pilot project and that it now covers the 6th and 7th grades of primary school and the 1st and 2nd grades of secondary school, based on the Official Curriculum of the State of São Paulo and the Saresp Reference Matrix (São Paulo, 2012).

> This action, based on the SEE's Official Curriculum, proposes **collective and individualised monitoring of students**, using a **diagnostic** tool, and is part of the actions aimed at **recovery processes** [...]. It is hoped that the materials produced for this action, **added to the records the teacher already has, will be instruments for defining individual and collective guidelines** [...] (São Paulo, 2012, p. 2, emphasis **added**).

It also contained a description of the content of the tests, which until then had included multiple-choice questions, essay questions and a textual production. This material also included: the reference matrices, the commented questions, the ability of each question, the correction grid, pedagogical recommendations and indications of materials.

There is an explanation that materials were indicated that were part of the teacher's daily life with content from the São Paulo State Curriculum, however it is mentioned that the teacher had the freedom to use what they considered appropriate (São Paulo, 2012). Among these materials were: the Student's Notebook, videos from the Roberto Marinho Foundation's Novo Telecurso, videos from the Institute of Pure and Applied Mathematics and a few scientific articles. The same support material took up what had been announced the previous year in terms of the possibility of immediately making inferences about successes and errors, and this is highlighted as

a differential (São Paulo, 2012).

In 2013, students in grades 6, 7, 8 and 9 of primary school and grades 1 to 3 of secondary school were assessed (Pinto, 2016). In the presentation of the teacher support material, it is mentioned that the AAP is an action developed collaboratively between the "Basic Education Management Coordination [CGEB][2] , the Educational Information, Monitoring and Evaluation Coordination [Cima][3] and a group of teacher coordinators from the Pedagogical Workshops of different School Boards" (São Paulo, 2013, p. 3). Similarly to the previous year, the AAP's diagnostic nature is emphasised, its data is recommended to be added to the teacher's records and, once again, it is stated that the AAP's differential is that it enables immediate inferences to be made (São Paulo, 2013).

The following year, the AAP began to be applied from the 2nd to the 9th grades of primary school and in all grades of secondary school, containing only multiple-choice questions (Pinto, 2016). Another novelty was the dialogue with the skills of Saresp, Saeb (Basic Education Assessment System) and Enem (National High School Exam) (São Paulo, 2014). In 2015, the teacher support material referred to formative and procedural assessment.

> The questions presented in this edition were devised based on the **assumption of a formative and procedural assessment**, with the main point being the diagnosis of the development of some key skills in the construction and development of mathematical knowledge (São Paulo, 2015, p. 3, emphasis added).

Since 2016, the AAP has been applied every two months (Pinto, 2016). In the teacher support material, when commenting that the AAP is developed by CGEB and Cima, there are no references to the contribution of teachers from the Pedagogical Centre of different Teaching Boards, as was the case in previous editions. It is mentioned that as of this year, there is a Procedural Assessment Matrix (MAP), drawn up by the CGEB, which has been made available on the web and will guide the AAP.

The MAP was based on the state curriculum and was designed to subsidise teachers' work (Andrade, 2020). Silva (2019) explains that, according to Seduc-SP, the MAP defines content and skills that could be assessed bimonthly in objective tests,

while the Saresp matrix indicated general skills, supporting end-of-cycle assessments. In addition to this matrix, which accounts for 80% of the AAP (Pinto, 2016), skills were selected from the Learning Focus Platform (PFA), making up around 20% of the test (São Paulo, 2016).

It was also stated that the results of the AAP would be systematised in the Assessment Results Monitoring System (Sara) to help with planning (São Paulo, 2016). Sara was an *online* environment of the Digital School Office, in which the teacher registered the students' answers, so that it was possible to carry out comparative analyses in real time (Comunicado Cima, 2015). As a result, unlike at the beginning, the AAP was now corrected automatically (Silva, 2018).

The use of digital technology resources is particularly emphasised with the PFA, created by CGEB in partnership with Cima (Silva, 2019). Thus, when accessing Sara, teachers were directed to PFA (Sedemaca, 2017), whose purpose was to store maps of the skills assessed in Saresp, the São Paulo State Education Development Index, school flow, AAP results per student and class, questions with the most hits and errors, as well as generating graphs and reports (Pinto, 2016; Silva, 2019; Andrade, 2020). For Pinto (2016), the exclusive presence multiple-choice questions in the AAP is also related to the use of this platform. With the PFA, the AAP data - by institution, class and student - could be accessed by the schools, intermediate and central Seduc-SP bodies (Pinto, 2016).

The 2016 teacher support material states that assessment is an instrument that helps the teacher, taken from a diagnostic and procedural perspective to obtain indicators of the teaching-learning process. And it is based on the National Curriculum Parameters (PCN) to explain assessment:

> [...] it is up to assessment to provide teachers with information on how learning is taking place: the knowledge acquired, the reasoning developed, the beliefs, habits and values incorporated, the mastery of certain strategies, so that they can propose revisions and re-elaborations of partially consolidated concepts and procedures (Brasil, 2000, p. 54 *apud* São Paulo, 2016, p. 10).

The 2017 support material contains the same information as the previous year's

material, but mentions the PFA, which did not appear in 2016. It states that in addition to the records that teachers already have, the information incorporated into this platform should help in the planning and monitoring of pedagogical actions (São Paulo, 2017). In 2018, there is no difference to highlight. In 2019, the AAP is presented as an action developed by the Pedagogical Coordinator and the Information, Technology, Evidence and Enrolment Coordinator (Citem)[4] . There is no reference to the PCN, which is justified by the approval of the Common National Curriculum Base.

In 2020, the presentation of the APP is more obviously linked to the curriculum. It is emphasised that the purpose of the AAP is to monitor the development of the curriculum on an ongoing basis and that its results will enable diagnoses to be made for the SEI - Intensive Studies Week planned in the 2020 School Calendar (São Paulo, 2020, p. 2). And furthermore:

> As a **formative assessment, it** mainly **focuses on the two-month skills referenced in the São Paulo Curriculum** for primary education. [...] It also introduces, as an innovation, some pathway skills. This **articulation with the curriculum is fundamental for it to have pedagogical meaning** - for both teachers and students - by integrating assessment into everyday classroom teaching [...] (São Paulo, 2020, p. 2, emphasis added).

The SEIs are scheduled and take place after the diagnostic and process assessments as "specific moments to recover and deepen the learning of all students, in line with the assessments" (São Paulo, c2023a). Thus, in addition to the standardised period for the application of the AAP, the standardisation of the recovery period was added.

The teacher support material had its last edition in the second bimester of 2020. In the following two months, the application went completely digital, based on the São Paulo State Platform for Activities and Formative Assessment, maintained by the Centre for Public Policy and Education Assessment at the Federal University of Juiz de Fora (CAEd/UFJF). Its website states that Seduc-SP's concern was to guarantee quality teaching and that it is "essential to obtain evidence that can subsidise curricular flexibilisation and the recomposition of teaching and learning" (CAEd, n.d).

The website also states that this is an environment that is part of the initiatives

of the Recovery and Deepening Programme, the aim of which is to cover essential skills for student development through the following fronts: "curriculum, teaching materials, training, assessment, technology and pedagogical support" (CAEd, n.d). The AAP was part of the assessment front, with the aim of "more accurately monitoring student development throughout the school year" (CAEd, n.d).

The application of the AAP, according to the video on the platform, was divided into stages that ranged from the alignment between the regional offices and headmasters and the latter with teachers, to the application of the test and its monitoring by the regional team, which had to keep an eye on the percentage of participation (São Paulo, c2023b). The digital test was aimed at students in grades 4 to 3, however, there were also printed versions in case the student was unable to access the *online* version (São Paulo, c2023c).

The AAP was part of everyday life in São Paulo state schools for a long time. Its hallmarks were its periodicity (it was no longer biannual but bimonthly) and its scope, which, from 2015, included all students. We must also emphasise its relationship with digital technology. Initially, the teachers were responsible for administering and correcting the tests, but this is no longer the case. Correction was automated, at first by Sara, later by PFA and finally by CAEd when the test was also *online*. As assessments generate traditions and direct the gaze of managers, teachers and students (Freitas *et al.*, 2009), we understand that the AAP was no different. We set out to analyse the relationship between the AAP and the organisation of pedagogical work, as identified from the literature review.

The AAP in the school environment: some analyses

We saw that the AAP was announced by Seduc-SP as a diagnostic and procedural assessment, sometimes classified as formative. However, in the materials analysed, there is no explanation of what Seduc-SP means by these concepts. We believe it is necessary to bring into the debate what diagnostic assessment is and what formative assessment is.

For Luckesi (2000, p. 01), "evaluating a student implies, first of all, accepting them in their being and their way of being, as they are, in order to decide what to do". There are two inseparable processes: diagnosis and decision. The author explains that the first step is to collect data about the state of learning. With the data obtained, it is necessary to qualify it, taking into account the criteria established in the planning. This makes it possible to arrive at a diagnosis, i.e. "a qualified expression of the situation, person or action that we are evaluating" (Luckesi, 2000, p. 06). The evaluative act is completed by making decisions about the diagnosed situation (Luckesi, 2000).

Formative assessment has similar principles, as it seeks to promote learning (Villas Boas, 2011). In this conception, assessment takes place at various times and is not a single test; it involves activities that enable the student to express themselves in various languages; it considers the student themselves as a reference and there are no comparisons based on the performance of the class(es) (Villas Boas, 2011); one of its hallmarks is *feedback*, but this does not just mean signalling the number of successes and errors. It's about *feedback* that allows students to reflect on where they are in their learning process and that makes it possible to analyse the gap between the current level and the reference level (Villas Boas, 2011).

Silva (2018) believes that the AAP was diagnostic in nature and that when it was incorporated into the teaching-learning process, it became formative. Silva (2019) also sees the AAP as formative, since its results were obtained immediately, unlike Saresp, which provides the results the following year. According to Cristo (2020), the AAP was formative because it quantitatively signalled successes and errors, enabling teachers to readjust their practice. For Costa and Ribeiro (2018) and Ribeiro and Costa (2020), AAP was a diagnostic assessment, as it helped the patient determine which knowledge and skills needed to be retaught. However, they point out that the increase in objective questions favoured quantitative aspects that do not inform about students' real difficulties.

Guellere (2015) and Sousa (2015) discuss the nature of the AAP: external or internal? Both conceive of this assessment as hybrid because it has the characteristics of an external assessment - being drawn up by external agents - and an internal

assessment, since it is used by the institution's professionals. Based on Durli and Shneider's (2011) definition, we believe that the AAP was a large-scale external assessment, as it was drawn up externally to the schools and applied on a large scale, based on the São Paulo Curriculum and following a standardised timetable. Montelli (2015), Pinto (2016), Frare (2019), Gomes (2020) and Malta (2020) also classify the AAP as a large-scale external assessment.

From reading Luckesi (2000) and Villas Boas (2011) and considering the configuration of the AAP, we noticed that it was moving even closer to an external assessment. Its matrix began to dialogue with Saresp, as well as eliminating open questions that would have allowed students to come up with their own answers. Even the correction was no longer carried out by teachers, as the process was automated with digital platforms that established comparative positions. In Gomes' (2020) analysis, this is a logic based on results that reduces the purpose of education to numbers for national and international comparisons.

The simple fact of having a quick return of the results and making them available to the school on a digital platform does not make it a diagnostic or formative assessment. It is yet another standardised instrument that disregards the "specificities of the school and its surroundings, the economic, social and cultural issues surrounding the people being assessed" (Pinto, 2016, p. 99). For Gomes (2020), standardised tests such as the AAP do not assess the conditions of the teaching-learning processes and are closer to measurement than assessment. We also have to consider that, over time, its application has become bimonthly. The census and periodic application ends up favouring the "[...] culture of naturalisation of tests and quizzes", in order to incite competitiveness, which generates wear and tear on the school's work because it is based on preparations for quantitative achievements (Bertagna; Borghi, 2018, p. 55).

In addition, its preparation and operationalisation was thought up by higher authorities and the schools only received it with a set of predetermined rules. Its matrix was not discussed with teachers (Malta, 2020) and there was no training to discuss the assessment (Sousa, 2015; Castro, 2016; Prado, 2016; Ribeiro; 2017; Sedemaca,

2017; Moreno, 2020). As a result, the AAP entered schools in a verticalised way (Andrade, 2020). Without being involved in the design of the programme, it was up to teachers to play the role of implementers. Pinto (2016, p. 138) states that teachers' participation in the AAP "does not stem from autonomous participation, but from submission to an exogenous assessment model that is imposed on the school".

The absence of teacher participation in the construction of the AAP generated some noise in the school environment regarding the understanding of its proposal. Castro (2016) reports that some teachers believed that the AAP was important for the school and could provide diagnostic aspects, although they said that its objectives were not yet clearly known. In his research, Sousa (2015) states that there was a gradual awakening to the contribution of the AAP as a possibility for monitoring students, even with the lack of information at the beginning of its implementation.

Research also indicates other conceptions and practices based on the AAP. According to Costa and Ribeiro (2018), for some teachers, the AAP was an assessment coming from outside the school with no relationship to the institutional context, and was an unnecessary tool. For Sedemaca (2017, p. 128), the AAP had "a positive impact on the school's conceptions and forms of assessment", since time was allocated to analysing its results, reading the successes and errors and the skills required. The author describes how this assessment was used by the teachers: they showed the results to the students, emphasising the competences and skills required in the assessment, worked on the difficulties and wording of the tests, revisiting the questions that had the most errors. Montelli (2015) gives a similar account when he says he believes that the diagnostic objective of the AAP was being understood as an investigation into learning and the curriculum, even though he identifies moments of practice for the tests.

Unlike these authors, we believe that the data they present reveals an induction of pedagogical work, as already denounced by the literature in the area (Ravitch, 2011; Menegão, 2016; Rodrigues, 2018). Andrade (2020) states that the reading of the AAP results was guided by a quantitative perspective, focussing on percentages of errors and successes. For Guellere (2015), the identification of errors and skills ends up

reducing the curriculum and inducing teaching. Classroom time is focussed on skills covered in tests, stealing "precious moments that could be used for knowledge that is relevant to the students' education" (Pinto, 2016, p. 105).

Pinto (2016) denounces the discomfort and supervision that surrounded the teachers, since there was guidance from Seduc-SP to work with the Student Notebook and the presence of supervisors to check that this was happening. The purpose of the AAP, therefore, was to ascertain whether determinations had been complied with. It resulted in the school submitting to an assessment "that does not respect the student's time to learn" (Pinto, 2016, p. 123). Sousa (2015, p. 98) states that the AAP was used by managers and technicians from the Directorate of Education to assess teachers. The results of the AAP signalled "which teachers performed best in their role" and made it possible to establish "comparisons between the performance of a class of a particular teacher in relation to the same subject with another class of a different teacher" (p. 99). Malta (2020) emphasises that the AAP was an external assessment with the function of controlling the curriculum and teaching practice.

Santos (2017) identified that the AAP compromised the autonomy of schools in the development of their Pedagogical Political Project, since they gave up their leading role in order to fulfil, in the set timeframe, what would be required by this assessment. Moreno's (2020, p. 41) analysis follows this path:

> [...] teacher and student are confined to a system that dictates what to learn, when to learn and how to learn. They define what skills and competences students should develop each term, without considering the individual nature of learning. In this way, what would be a path towards a more democratic and inclusive education, which considers the multiplicity inherent in human beings, has become a way of standardising individuals [...].

We realised that Brazil's largest public school system did not consider the specificities of the different communities and sought to standardise. What is considered valid is the knowledge (i.e. skills) contained in the São Paulo Curriculum, which is required in the external assessments. In fact, the fact that the AAP has more and more multiple-choice questions and includes skills that are also included in Saresp demonstrates the alignment between them, with the former being a kind of preparation

for the latter. In a similar interpretation, Frare (2019, p. 109) emphasises that there was "a double preparation: we prepare for the AAPs, which, in turn, prepare for Saresp".

This alignment that imposes standardisation is typical of managerialist business reforms (Freitas, 2018), which, based on targets and the pursuit of productivity, induce ways to make it impossible for deviations to occur in the process. There is a reduction in the "margin of freedom and creation typical of teaching work for technical issues" (Rodrigues, 2018, p. 140). Teachers were left to execute rather than author their pedagogical practice. As Pinto (2016) states, in the AAP, the entire process was defined from the outset, including the indication of tasks to be carried out by each professional. In this way, we are faced with neotechnicalism (Freitas, 2018), in other words, a new form of technicalism that removes teachers from the planning and decision-making processes, making them mere executors. The AAP was in the wake of the managerial policies that entered the São Paulo state network, along with Saresp and payment by results.

We can't fail to mention that in recent years this logic has gained another ally: digital technology . Of particular note is the work of CAEd, which contributes to regulating the curriculum and monitoring educational results (Garcia; Silva, 2023). Through digital technology, school actors are induced to commit to results, as well as moulding subjectivities. "Thus, control over goals and actions is personalised, since each professional starts to monitor and demand attitudes from themselves and their peers that are in line with the projected performance" (Garcia; Silva, 2023, p. 484).

We understand that the AAP, a large-scale external assessment that was present in the São Paulo state school system between 2011 and 2022, has gradually taken up more space, to the point where it has taken over the level of classroom learning assessment. Although these are interconnected levels of educational assessment (Freitas *et al.*, 2009), their specificities and purposes must be preserved. Large-scale external evaluation is important for gathering data and building historical series that enable the (re)planning of public policies (Freitas *et al.*, 2009). Learning assessment, on the other hand, is the responsibility of the teacher (Freitas *et al.*, 2009)

so that they can monitor the teaching-learning process and (re)plan their practice, taking their context into account.

We agree with the observation made by Rodrigues (2018, p. 163-164):

> [...] it is necessary to have access to the reality, to the characteristics of the school network, so that the problems that arise can be responded to appropriately. This is one of the foundations of external evaluation [...]. Considering the origin and guiding principles of current policies, it is possible to say that this character is put on the back burner. [...] the policy manifested in Saresp and APP has triggered a gradual reordering of assessment processes within schools, the signs of which indicate a movement, albeit a slow one, to strengthen external assessments to the detriment of classroom assessment.

We are concerned about external assessments that are not labelled as such by their implementers. In this way, they end up "hijacking" the assessment of learning in the classroom, distancing it more and more from the teacher, as it is not conceived by him or her and is used for quantitative and prescribed purposes that may be far removed from the reality he or she experiences.

Santos (2017) ponders the replacement of the teacher's classroom assessment by the AAP. The author also mentions the attribution of grades, which we also find in the research by Sousa (2015), Sedemaca (2017) and Frare (2019). According to Gomes (2020, p. 89), "not drawing up the assessment itself is [...] a factor in the 'decomposition' and 'simplification' of teaching practice". Thus, we see that the control of pedagogical work is in force even "under the rubric of words such as formative assessment, which are typical of the school world and have been defended by professional educators for years" (Rodrigues; Ferrarotto, 2023, p. 183).

The way it was set up, the AAP contributed to alienating teachers from assessment. Its preparation, correction and, in some cases, utilisation were not defined by the teacher. The information, as well as being fed into digital platforms, induced the production of indices in order to favour the perpetuation of rationality based on quantitative standards and competition.

Final considerations

We present the history of the AAP, its characteristics and some analyses of its repercussions on the organisation of pedagogical work. There have been several changes during its existence, among which we can highlight its expansion to include the whole of primary and secondary education, its periodicity, which became bimonthly, and its format, with more and more multiple-choice questions.

According to the academic papers analysed, there was no teacher participation in their conception. As time went by, the teacher's role became closer to that of a simple applicator, in the wake of the neo-technicalist logic. This situation was accentuated by the digital platforms, signalling Seduc-SP's alignment with managerialist concepts. We realised that the AAP contributed to the alignment of processes, via the curriculum and assessment. Although these are repercussions related to external assessments, which have already been denounced by various studies, in the case of the AAP, we need to be more attentive, since it has been given another name by its makers.

The AAP was defended by Seduc-SP as a diagnostic and even formative assessment. Thus, a vocabulary close to teachers' daily lives was used, in a movement of conquest, which ends up subjecting them to a logic of applying tests and quantitative verifications, inducing pedagogical practices and reducing them to the achievement of skills. As well as generating possible conceptual confusion in the school environment - after all, is it internal, diagnostic, formative or external? - we believe that external assessment is taking over the role and function of learning assessment.

While the purpose of large-scale external evaluation is to collect data and build historical series that make it possible to (re)develop public policies, the purpose of learning evaluation, which is the responsibility of the teacher, is to enable the teacher to (re)think and conduct their work in order to promote learning. Although they are interconnected levels of educational assessment, they have their own specificities and purposes that must be preserved.

Learning assessment needs to remain in the hands of the teacher, planned, carried out and used by them. An assessment that is attuned to the context, developed

from multiple possibilities and at different times, as opposed to standardisation. In this way, it is at the service of the teacher and their students and is not there to control or supervise the work in the classroom. In fact, control and monitoring via assessment has a new ally, digital technology.

Finally, it's worth saying that the AAP was recently replaced by the Prova Paulista and is even more closely linked to digital platforms. New studies need to be carried out in order to identify the logic behind it and its reverberations in the organisation of pedagogical work. We venture to say that the Prova Paulista will perpetuate neo-technicalism in the São Paulo state network.

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Notas

[1] To avoid repetition, we consider large-scale external evaluation and external evaluation as synonyms

[2] The CGEB is responsible for implementing and managing actions in state schools on the training of professionals (Sedemaca, 2017).

[3] The Cima analyses the results of the evaluations, draws up recommendations for policy formulation, etc.

[4] Citem is responsible for managing educational information and draws up recommendations for policy formulation in conjunction with Coped (São Paulo, c2024).