

GEOGRAPHIC EDUCATION AND THE LANDSCAPE: THE IMAGE AS A SUBSIDY FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF GEOGRAPHIC KNOWLEDGE

Educação geográfica e a paisagem: A imagem como subsídio a construção do conhecimento geográfico

Educación geográfica y paisaje: La imagen como subsidio para la construcción del conocimiento geográfico

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ABSTRACT

The discipline of Geography can provide the formation of critical subjects, capable of reading, understanding and interpreting the world, worrying about the languages and resources to be used. With such responsibility for Geography, it is proposed, in this research, to present the use of photographs as a pedagogical proposal that aims to contribute to the construction of geographic knowledge, especially from one of the essential concepts in the analysis of space: the landscape. The aim is to emphasize the importance of imagery, observing, interpreting and comparing the dynamics of the landscape. The work is divided into three stages: A) bibliographical analysis; B) pedagogical-geographical planning and C) practical activity in the 6th grade class. The study of the landscape is approached in school geography, analyzing the interactions between the natural and social environment, being a theme of great relevance for the interpretations regarding the geographic space, identifying the forms, spatial changes and the society-nature relations. Through this research, the relevance of approaching different methodologies in the teaching of Geography, such as the use of photographs of the city, was evidenced, since it corroborates the construction of knowledge and geographic knowledge of the students, making them critical-reflective subjects in front of the community in which it is inserted on a daily basis.

Keywords: Geography Teaching; Landscape; Image; Pedagogical Resource.

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RESUMO

A disciplina de Geografia pode propiciar a formação de sujeitos críticos, capazes de ler, compreender e interpretar o mundo, preocupando-se com as linguagens e os recursos a serem utilizados. Com tamanha responsabilidade da Geografia, propõe-se, nesta pesquisa, apresentar o uso de fotografias na qualidade de uma proposta pedagógica que visa contribuir na construção do conhecimento geográfico, sobretudo a partir de um dos conceitos essenciais na análise do espaço: a paisagem. O intuito é salientar a importância do recurso imagético, observando, interpretando e comparando a dinâmica da paisagem. O trabalho divide-se em três etapas: A) análise bibliográfica; B) planejamento pedagógico- geográfico e C) atividade prática na turma do 6º ano. O estudo da paisagem é abordado na Geografia escolar, analisando as interações entre o meio natural e social, sendo uma temática de grande relevância para as interpretações a respeito do espaço geográfico, identificando as formas, mudanças espaciais e as relações sociedade-natureza. Evidenciou-se por meio desta pesquisa, a relevância de abordar metodologias diferentes no ensino de Geografia, como a utilização das fotografias da cidade, visto que corrobora a construção dos saberes e conhecimentos geográficos dos alunos, tornando-os sujeitos crítico-reflexivos frente à comunidade em que está inserido cotidianamente.

Palavras-chave: Ensino de Geografia; Paisagem; Imagem; Recurso Pedagógico.

RESUMEN

La disciplina de Geografía proporciona la formación de sujetos críticos, capaces de leer, comprender e interpretar el mundo, preocupándose por los lenguajes y recursos a utilizar. Con tal responsabilidad por la Geografía, se propone, en esta investigación, presentar el uso de la fotografía como una propuesta pedagógica que pretende contribuir a la construcción del conocimiento geográfico, especialmente a partir de uno de los conceptos esenciales en el análisis del espacio: el paisaje. El objetivo es enfatizar la importancia de la imagería, observando, interpretando y comparando la dinámica del paisaje. El trabajo se divide en tres etapas: A) análisis bibliográfico; B) planeamiento pedagógico-geográfico y C) actividad práctica en la clase de 6to grado. El estudio del paisaje es abordado en la geografía escolar, analizando las interacciones entre el medio natural y el social, siendo un tema de gran relevancia para las interpretaciones sobre el espacio geográfico, identificando las formas, los cambios espaciales y las relaciones sociedad-naturaleza. A través de esta investigación se evidenció la pertinencia de abordar diferentes prácticas en la enseñanza de la Geografía, como el uso de fotografías de la ciudad, ya que corrobora la construcción del saber y saber geográfico de los estudiantes, convirtiéndolos en sujetos crítico-reflexivos frente a de la comunidad en la que se inserta cotidianamente.

Palabras clave: Enseñanza de la Geografía; Paisaje; Imagen; Recurso pedagógico.

1 INTRODUCTION

Contemporary education goes through a dynamic process, characterized by discussions and proposals that seek to keep up with the pace of an increasingly accelerated and globalized society. The various transformations in the world end up becoming a challenge for teachers, since the current situation in which students are inserted is marked by information “at hand”, in digital vehicles (computers, smartphones, tablets, etc.) in a quick

way. For a long time, the teacher was synonymous with “knowledge”, called “human encyclopedia”; however, what is perceived is devaluation, lack of interest and lack of admiration for the teaching figure in the classroom.

As a result of this scenario, teachers bring some reflections on teaching, such as: how to teach content to students in the midst of digital technologies and their access, which often become more stimulating and attractive than classes. Restlessness is appropriate, through traditional practices considered repetitive and discouraging in teaching-learning, loaded with content alien to the reality and daily lives of young people and adolescents. In Geography, Menezes (2015) explains the particularities of the traditional current, represented by being encyclopedic, mnemonic, descriptive and fragmented.

The subject of Geography exemplifies, as an attribute, the formation of critical subjects, capable of reading, understanding and interpreting the world, and must be concerned with the languages and resources to be used. In this regard, the relevant work proposes to present an experience lived in the classroom through the Institutional Teaching Initiation Scholarship Program (Pibid), linked to the Degree course in Geography at the Federal University of South and Southeast of Pará (Unifesspa), campus Marabá, about the use of images/photographs as a pedagogical proposal that aims to contribute to the construction of geographic knowledge, above all, based on one of the essential concepts in the analysis of space: the landscape.

The activity took place with the aim of highlighting the importance of the imagery resource, observing, interpreting and comparing the dynamics of the landscape in the 6th grade of Elementary School at a Municipal Elementary Education School (EMEF) in the city of Marabá/Pará, in the year 2019.

2 METHODOLOGY

To carry out this survey, some procedures were considered based on the proposed objective. The methodologies used were: A) bibliographical analysis on the topic “landscape in Geography teaching” and “imagery resources”, in addition to documentary survey through the National Common Curricular Base (BNCC); B) pedagogical planning and documentary survey of current and historical photographs of the city of Marabá, the oldest of which were obtained from the Fundação Casa da Cultura (FCCM), and, finally, C) carrying out an empirical activity in the 6th grade class.

The theoretical-documentary reference was based on a bibliographical survey of topics such as Teaching Geography, Landscape and Photographs, exploring digital platforms such as magazines to survey articles, dissertations and theses databases based on authors of the topics mentioned such as: Maciel and Marinho (2011); Cavalcanti (2013, 2019); Callai (2013); Freisleben and Kaercher (2021); Santos et.al (2022), among other authors. Skills and objects of knowledge about “landscape” included in the BNCC were also used, more specifically in the 6th grade.

Next, a survey of photographs of the past of the city of Marabá – Pará, in which the students live, was carried out, obtained through FCCM, a collection of historical photographs that represent the founding of the city, as well as the transformations and events experienced.

The last stage took place in class, using experimental survey as a methodology model. The content of the class held was “the landscape and its transformations”, taught by two PIBID scholarship holders, in the 6th grade of Elementary School, containing 18 students from the school at the time of teaching. To carry it out, digital resources were used: notebook and Datashow in order to work on photographs of the city where the students live.

3 LANDSCAPE IN GEOGRAPHY TEACHING

Geographical science has, among one of its purposes, the intention of “[...] analyzing the relationship between society and its living space and the way in which different groups integrate with the environment. [...] It investigates the lived and produced space [...] whose visual image is the landscape” (Santos, 2019, p. 41), or paraphrasing, one of the best-known definitions by geographer Milton Santos (1988), when declaring that the landscape is:

Everything we see, what our vision reaches, is the landscape. This can be defined as the domain of the visible, what the view encompasses. It is not only made up of volumes, but also of colors, movements, odors, sounds, etc. (Santos, 1988, p. 61).

It is worth mentioning that landscape is nothing more than one of the essential key concepts in understanding and as an object of study in Geography. From this perspective, Moura-Fé (2014) defines it as “[...] an association of multiple phenomena” aggregated, whether cultural, social or/and natural phenomena. The landscape is considered an

enhancing instrument in the teaching-learning process, as it enables the contextualization of space-time materialized and modified by man.

As stated in the statement by Maciel and Marinho (2011, p. 69) that “The study of landscape, as well as other concepts of geography, is fundamental in the process of geographic education”. These concepts are emphasized by Cavalcanti (2013, p.224) through the approach of representing “[...] mentally an object and which help to give meaning to what is seen and perceived”.

In the article called “*Estudar a Paisagem para aprender Geografia*” (“Studying the Landscape to learn Geography”) Callai (2013) highlights that

The landscape shows at a given moment what is visible, but, behind this visible, history tells a lot about what appears there, and the processes that take place demarcate specific characteristics. The landscape is the backdrop where things happen in our lives, and therefore arouses interest in its interpretation and studies, as it continually transforms, sometimes more quickly, other times more slowly (Callai, 2013, p. 38).

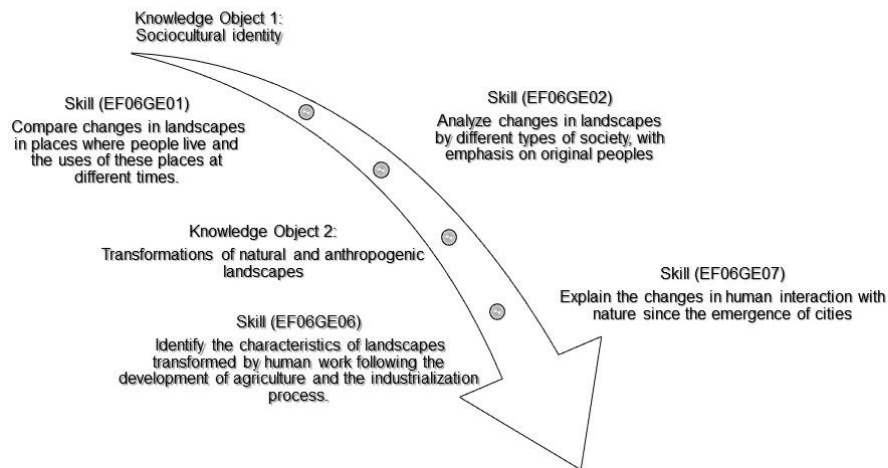
Reaffirming this assumption, Callai (2013) also highlights that

The landscape is the backdrop where things happen in our lives, and therefore arouses interest in its interpretation and studies, as it continually transforms, sometimes more quickly, other times more slowly (Callai, 2013, p. 39).

The study of landscape is covered in school Geography, analyzing the interactions between the natural and social environment, being a topic of great relevance for interpretations regarding geographic space, identifying forms, spatial changes and society-nature relationships. Curriculum documents such as the BNCC, which organizes themes and contents of basic education, presents the landscape category in geographic education in the 6th to 8th grade of Elementary School, however, we will specify its approach at this time focused on the 6th grade, since in it, class and survey took place.

Through figure 01, the use of the “landscape” category is evident in the two thematic units: The subject and his place in the world and the world of work.

Figure 01 - Approach to the landscape category in the 6th grade of Elementary School at BNCC



Source: Adapted by the author from Brasil (2018, p. 384-385)

Regarding the first object of knowledge “Sociocultural Identity” — The subject and his place in the world — an approach to the landscape category is observed related to the idea of “belonging and identity”, using the skills EF06GE01 and EF06GE02, through comparisons regarding transformations of landscapes in the places where students live, taking into account the context in which they are inserted, in addition to analyzing the changes made by different societies, with emphasis on original peoples (BRASIL, 2018).

Regarding the second object of knowledge “Transformations of natural and anthropic landscapes” – World of work” – the focus was evidenced from the characteristics that form the landscape, under the interference of human activities and productions, such as agriculture and livestock industrialization, interrelated with possible influences on nature and the emergence of cities. In view of the above, we discuss the possibilities of approaching the concept in the classroom, giving relevance to Geography teaching that allows interaction with the landscape, valuing students' prior knowledge in order to foster the creativity of each individual.

The precariousness of education, through limitations conditioned by “[...] low salary, excessive number of classes to complete the workload, large classes and few teaching

resources” (Cavalcanti, 2019, p. 40), in addition to the lack of resources in the acquisition of teaching materials, they hinder the insertion of different pedagogical practices, not limited to the use of textbooks. For Castellar (2013, p. 185) it is necessary

[...] pedagogical and material resources must be provided that make the school a space for work and life, enabling more significant pedagogical actions, with the construction of knowledge, character formation and citizenship (Castellar, 2013, p. 185).

Therefore, in the midst of so many difficulties, many teachers seek alternatives to didactic mediation to make classes attractive, interconnecting the pedagogical and geographical conception in the construction of meaningful knowledge. In view of this, Copatti (2020) highlights the importance of teaching autonomy, as it makes it possible to think about ways of approaching content, making two elements inseparable: the teacher's pedagogical and geographical thinking. To the author:

The relationship between the dimensions of geographic knowledge and pedagogical knowledge involves complex elements, which tend to provide the teacher with intellectual tools capable of establishing ways of giving meaning to the relationships they take part in with the student and, together with them, with the world. (Copatti, 2020, p. 159).

Proposing classes with different didactic and methodological resources about the landscape is a way of allowing individuals to be important elements in the construction of their learning, as they are encouraged to participate actively in Geography classes, developing and articulating their empirical knowledge with scientific knowledge, not becoming a mere apprentice of ready-made and memorized concepts.

With this in mind, what stands out here is the image resource, especially through the use of images and photographs about the city in which the students live, portraying the different historical moments and can, therefore, be an important teaching resource for the student to understand the landscape and urban transformations.

4 IMAGE RESOURCE IN GEOGRAPHY: PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE AT ESCOLA MARTINHO MOTTA DA SILVEIRA, MARABÁ/PARÁ

The landscape can be portrayed and worked on in the teaching of Geography through different teaching methodologies, such as: maps, field work, drawings, cartographic

sketches, models and not least, discussed and proposed here, the use of photographs as a potential resource in Geography teaching.

Every image carries with it a number of information and interpretative knowledge, becoming one of the competencies and abilities to be mediated and developed by the teacher in light of the reading and interpretation that photography intends to provide us. Verbal and written language, whether through oratory or texts, has always been predominant as a teaching resource in the classroom, and when accompanied by images, it provides an understanding of the content covered.

Freisleben and Kaercher (2021) reinforces the use of photographs based on problematization as an initial approach to a certain topic, tending to instigate students' cognition. For them:

[...] photography, when problematized, is a way to deepen students' knowledge, to build a bridge between theory and practice, to mobilize attitudes of citizenship, socio-environmental education, etc. however, the use of photography alone does not guarantee the success of learning, we must pay attention to the fact that the teaching objectives are clear, previously defined and that they are correlated with the text (whether from the geography textbook itself or other material). If this relationship is not made with the text and the subject covered, it loses its didactic function. (Freisleben; Kaercher, 2021, p. 87).

In this regard, and based on the previous quote, it is common to come across textbooks that are disconnected from the students' reality, with topics, subjects, maps and photographs that generally do not spatialize a local phenomenon, prioritizing larger scales. What often goes unnoticed in the student's reality can be highlighted through reading images and visual literacy, Oliveira and Chiapinotto (2007, p. 42) define visual literacy as “[...] the ability to understand a range of visual representations”.

The authors also highlight that “[...] photography creates possibilities for students to interpret the world around them, representations of their school, family and geographic life”. (Oliveira and Chiapinotto, 2004, p.45). Thus, images can be important in recovering memories and affections for a place already experienced by the student, in addition to enabling the elaboration of their mental representations.

In the words of Marchesan and Souza (2020, p. 400), “The image mobilizes elements, in the learning process, different from those arising from verbal language, for example, it “[...] opens paths” to learning, complements/ enriches/expands textual/verbal

understanding and is therefore relevant.” Its insertion in Geography then becomes essential, as it provides other forms of representation of socio-spatial phenomena.

Photographs, whether printed and/or digital, are increasingly accessible in the reality of young people and adolescents, recording the different moments, whether of themselves or of the spaces visited, however, questions arise as to the ability to 'read an image', understanding the arrangements that compose them. Benjamin (2017, p. 70) guarantees that: “The illiterate of the future will be those who cannot read photographs. And not those who cannot read and write.” From this perspective, teachers need to (re)think how they handle images in relation to content, using them as an instrument of geographic-citizen training. Santos et. al. (2022) says that

[...] the use of photography, when inserted in education and Geography Teaching, gives the student the possibility of “traveling to countless places”, getting to know different places, in addition to the cultural, political and social phenomena that are present in the world outside, providing the development of geographic reasoning (Santos, et. al., 2022, p. 14)

The BNCC (BRASIL, 2018) states that the learning of geographic concepts and content cannot be closed, but it is necessary to involve the world experienced by the student, supporting the development of their intellect to think and build knowledge. In this way, the concept/content of landscape can be explored through the use of images in geographic education, as it is one of the competencies to be worked on in elementary school.

Table 01 - BNCC - 4th competency in Geography, Elementary Education
SPECIFIC GEOGRAPHY COMPETENCIES FOR ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

Develop spatial thinking, making use of cartographic and iconographic languages, different textual genres and geotechnologies to solve problems involving geographic information.

Source: Extracted from Brasil (2018).

In this context, based on the constructed theoretical framework, we will present an example based on the photo-comparative method, in which we work on the interpretation of photographs of the city. Comparing the past with the present, it is a proposal for an approach in teaching landscape, since the landscape is not static, being dynamic based on natural

and social actors. It is in the city that we can see the concept of landscape, in the human modifications and in the actions of the environment itself. (BALDIN, p. 14).

We quote Dantas (2011) to further reinforce this methodology by outlining:

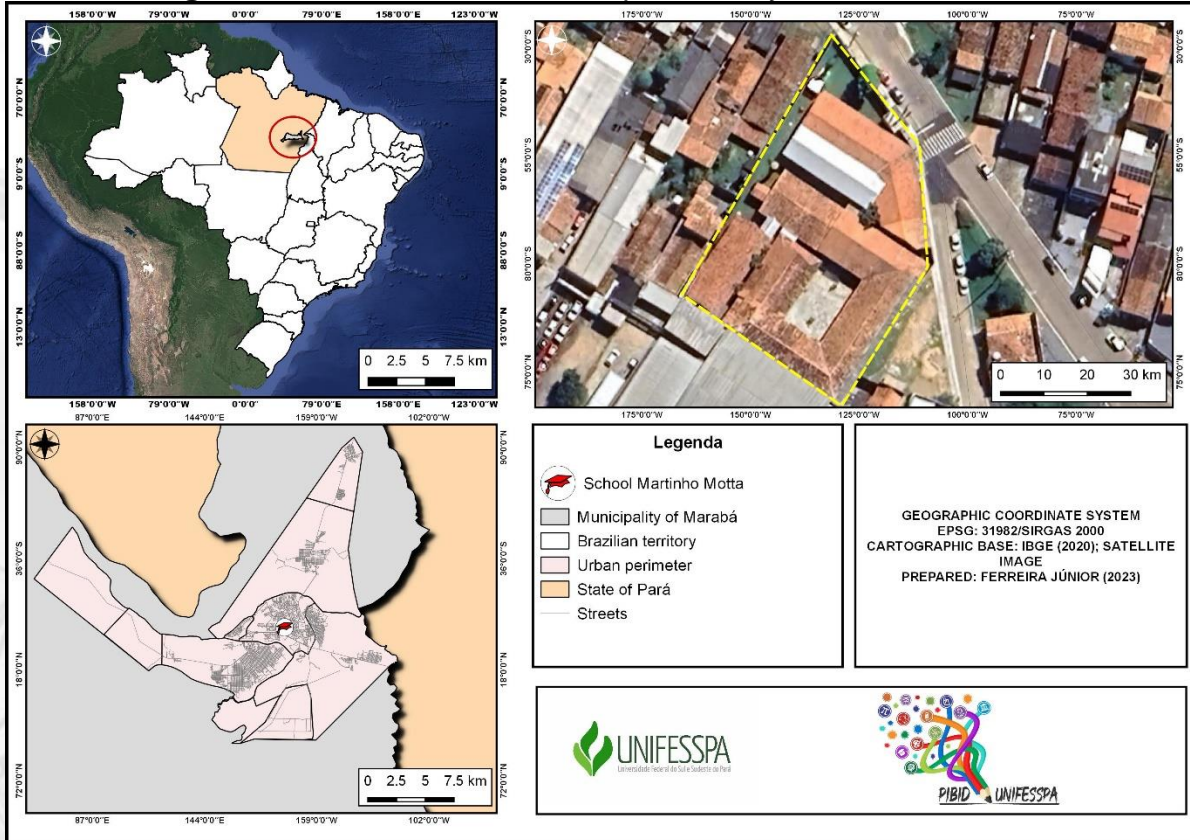
Geographizing images means putting into motion spaces that have been frozen by time in supports such as painting and photography, for example, encouraging dormant Geography to return to the stage, becoming a real-life, material and concrete character that stages the distinct stories of the city's collective and private life. This return causes reordering in the composition of the geographical reading of space, making its structuring evident (Dantas, 2011, p. 95).

Given all the contextualization, the use of such a resource was proposed in one of Pibid's management stages, at the E.M.E.F located in the municipality of Marabá/Pará (as shown in the location map in Figure 02). The school has an adequate infrastructure, providing, for example, a multifunctional resource room for Specialized Educational Assistance (AEE), with an average of 20 to 30 students per grade, in addition to offering Youth and Adult Education (EJA) classes, according to data available in the School Census (2020) from the National Institute of Educational Studies and Research Anísio Teixeira (Inep).

The class in the 6th grade class on "landscape and its transformations" began by debating in a dialogued manner with the students the definition(s) of the concept of "landscape" in addition to the presentations and classifications of landscape, natural and/or cultural (anthropogenic). As the images were reproduced (Figure 03), students were encouraged to classify between the two types of landscape; therefore, they were also asked about the elements that make up the images.

To carry out the class, examples of mutations in the structural and functional landscape were used, addressed by Santos (1988) in the work *Metamorfoses do Espaço Habitado, Fundamentos Teórico e Metodológico da Geografia* (Metamorphoses of Inhabited Space, Theoretical and Methodological Foundations of Geography). In the work, the author uses examples to explain the two types of mutations. When addressing functional mutation, he describes: "When we pass along a large avenue, day or night, we see different landscapes, thanks to its functional movement. The street, the square, the public place function differently depending on the time of the day, the days of the week, the times of the year." (SANTOS, 1988, p. 24).

Figure 02 - E.M.E.F Location Map in the city of Marabá – Pará.



Source: Authors; 2023.

Figure 03 - Geography class in the 6th grade Class at E.M.E.F



Source: Survey collection, 2019.

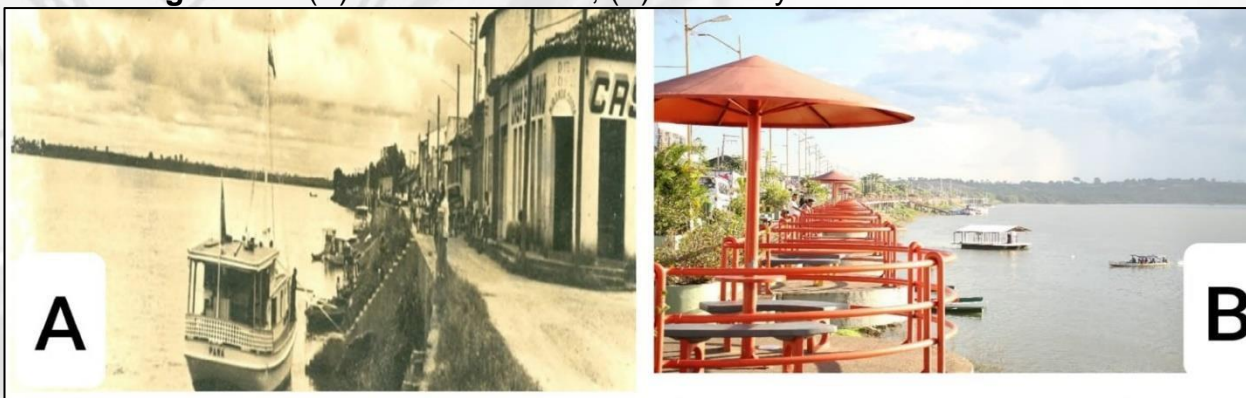
In other words, the functional dynamics of landscapes change according to the desires and demands of the individuals, whether for leisure or/and the search for equipment, installations, accessories, etc without the structural transformations necessarily changing their landscapes. Regarding structural mutations, Santos (1988, p. 24) exemplifies that “When buildings with forty floors are built, instead of twenty or thirty-two floors, it is, as a rule, a sign that others can also be built, that we have activities and people to fill them, and justify their construction”.

At the beginning of the activity, the program scholarship holders, together with the Pibid coordinating teacher and the school teacher, prepared a script with central questions to be observed by the students through each photograph presented. Establishing a plan to be followed.

- Do you know the place that the landscape represents through the photographs?
- What catches your attention when looking at the images?
- What elements make up landscapes?
- Identify and compare the transformations of the images presented

In this way, we based ourselves on these approaches in the classroom by organizing the photographs in pairs: from the past and the present, presented in the following figures.

Figure 04 - (A) Old Marabá Pier; (B) Currently: Orla Sebastião Miranda.



Source: (A) FCCM, 2019; (B) Marabá City Hall, 2019.

In the photos presented during the class, the students immediately recognized the current image, pointing out the name, the location and that they visited the space presented

in the class with their families through the slides. The interaction takes place through the desire to express, through the speeches given by the students, the relationships with the recognized place. The students pointed out the changes present in Figure 04, marked by boats and an old urban aesthetic, with residents closer to the banks of the Tocantins and Itacaiúnas River; characteristic of the emergence of cities in the Amazon, as highlighted by Trindade (2008)

[...] we highlight that the beginning of the settlement of the Amazon, the exploitation of “drugs from the hinterland” and, subsequently, commercial agriculture and the exploitation of rubber, were socioeconomic expressions that gave rise to villages, towns and cities along the rivers (Trindade Jr, 2008, p.29).

Emmi (1999), for example, highlighted the functional dynamics of the landscape (photograph A) as an important encounter, given that it was a place for a river port and sheds, where Brazil nuts were stored. In the same photograph (Figure 04B), the changes in the face of increasingly accelerated anthropic actions are evident, observed by the 6th grade students, the modifications, from the new “Infrastructure works such as the construction of the boardwalk, the pier, warehouses and several ramps that serve as berths for small vessels” (Lima, 2021, p. 06).

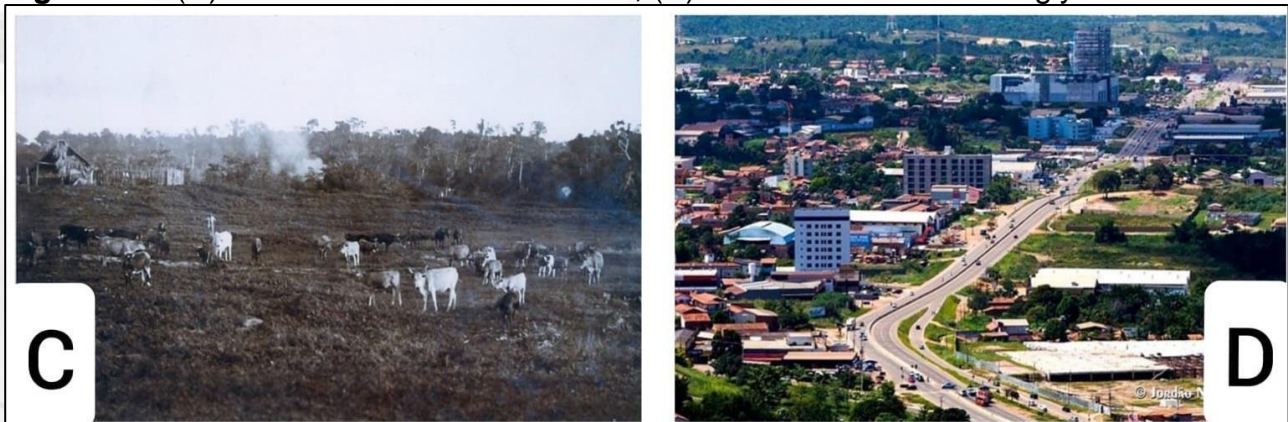
The mutations present in this landscape are structural, since changes in geographic space are clearly present; however, this does not change the function of the Marabá waterfront, which meets the logic of the consumer market and relations with tourism. These elements were pointed out and mediated by the teachers/pubidians responsible for the Geography class. Figures 05 C and D stand out due to the intense urbanization process in the urban core of Nova Marabá. The students pointed to the city's shopping mall as the main way of identifying the nucleus, since they use the space as a leisure and meeting practice. This element was emphasized by Silva (2020):

[...] an urban equipment of services and commerce with a modern capitalist trait on the scale of the city, a shopping mall, creates in itself a mosaic of perspectives in urban life, whose nature is standardized, which tends to standardize social behaviors. (Silva, 2020, p. 272).

The presence of pastures and animals from old farms was mentioned as currently absent in the urban area, being predominantly elements of the rural area. It is worth

mentioning that, in the past, there were already human actions, even without the presence of buildings, paved streets and cars, as shown in Figure 05 D.

Figure 05 - (C) Nova Marabá as a rural area; (D) Nova Marabá increasingly urbanized.



Source: (A) FCCM, 2019; (B) Jordão Nunes, 2019

The intense transformations in geographic space, represented through the duality of past/present portraits, make students understand how cities – especially in which they live – are formed and change landscapes in order to meet the demand for the increasingly intense presence of human beings, producing and reproducing their cultures in the city space. The idea of landscapes being in constant modification was evident in Figure 05, historically recounting the changes in the same geographic space.

Figure 06 E and F depict the old Municipal Market of Marabá (E), in the pioneer nucleus, which is currently the Orlando Lobo Municipal Library (F).

Figure 06 - (E) Marabá Municipal Market; (F) Orlando Lobo Municipal Library.



Source: (A) FCCM, 2019; (B) Marabá City Hall, 2022.

The students stated that there were not many changes, only changing its current function as a public space; Furthermore, they were unaware of its former operation as a

Municipal Market, which was inaugurated on October 3, 1931 (Mattos,1996). Later becoming the Orlando Lobo Municipal Library, founded in 2005, undergoing a project to revitalize the space and becoming important for reading, workshops and soirées that strengthen the culture and history of the city and the region.

In view of the above, some possibilities for elucidating geographic themes based on photographs and images are highlighted. It is in this way — based on observations of the different elements that make up the landscape of the present in contrast to that of the past — that this resource can be used in teaching-learning in geographic education. When properly elucidated by the teacher, they provide a way for the student to begin to internalize a process of critical observation of the space inhabited and used.

5 CONCLUSIONS

Through this work, the relevance of approaching different methodologies in the teaching of Geography - such as the use of photographs of the city - was highlighted, as it corroborates the construction of students' geographic knowledge, making them critical-reflexive individuals in relation to the community where they are inserted on a daily basis. It can be seen from both the student and teacher perspective that it is a pleasure to include activities that arouse interest and capture students' attention, given the difficulties in accessing resources, such as electronic devices, in the classroom.

The level of participation and excitement of students with the approach presented is also emphasized, as they feel “inside” each image; It is also emphasized the relationship and connection with regard to places already visited and/or experienced, in the students' routine journey or as a leisure practice, viewed in the classroom through photographic lenses.

Geography is surrounded by key concepts for understanding geographic space, and, therefore, it reconstructs itself by renewing the ways of analyzing, researching and capturing the nuances that are present in an increasingly flowing world.

Students are surrounded by “landscapes”. Thus, it is possible to encourage them to observe, describe, analyze and interpret using photographs. It is also intended that this methodology provides support and basis for future theoretical and practical research, essential in the construction of school Geography for primary school teachers, a method that is not only evaluative, but also participatory.

We also highlight the BNCC as an instrument for the teacher to use in the classroom, in which the skills and competencies present in it are used. Therefore, we reinforce the different handling of pedagogical-geographical practices in teacher training, reflecting on a teacher concerned with the training of individuals.

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