

Challenges and learned lessons stemming from dialogue and profession: what basic education teachers have to say

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ABSTRACT. The reflection on the impacts of contemporary educational policies on the work and training of teachers indicates the advancement of the neoliberal perspective that denies these professionals' condition as persons and intellectuals, trying to reduce them to the role of technicians who adapt to regulatory strategies and seek to achieve better results, with fewer and fewer resources. Dialectically, formative experiences guided by valuing the knowledge, trajectories and experiences of these subjects have also been recorded. This text aims to reflect, based on the dialogicity and its principles, on the limits and possibilities of learning in the teaching profession in the face of the influences of the current educational policies. Through reflexive dialogic circles carried out with thirteen teachers, aspects that articulate life, training and work were discussed. The results, analyzed based on Freire (1967, 1987, 1996, 2000) and other authors who present dialogicity as a theoretical, political and methodological perspective, point out that the learning of the teaching profession, in the current context, demands a critical and problematizing orientation that guide both the Limit Situations that slow the possibilities of humanization and the Unprecedented Viables that result from hope as a political and ethically situated attitude towards the profession and the context in which it is inserted.

Keywords: teacher training; dialogicity; teaching.

Desafios e aprendizagens do diálogo e da profissão: com a fala os/as professores/as da educação básica

RESUMO. A reflexão acerca dos impactos das políticas educacionais contemporâneas sobre o trabalho e formação dos professores indica o avanço da perspectiva neoliberal que nega a condição desses profissionais como pessoas e intelectuais, tentando reduzi-los à figura de técnicos que se adaptam às estratégias de regulação e buscam alcançar melhores resultados, com cada vez menos recursos. Dialeticamente têm sido registradas, também, experiências formativas orientadas pela valorização dos conhecimentos, trajetórias e experiências desses sujeitos. O presente texto objetiva refletir, a partir da dialogicidade e seus princípios, sobre os limites e possibilidades da aprendizagem da profissão professor diante das influências das políticas educacionais vigentes. Por meio de círculos reflexivos dialógicos realizados junto a treze professores foram discutidos aspectos que articulam vida, formação e trabalho. Os resultados, analisados a partir de Freire (1967, 1987, 1996, 2000) e de outros autores que apresentam a dialogicidade como perspectiva teórica, política e metodológica, apontam que a aprendizagem da profissão professor, no atual contexto, demanda uma orientação crítica e problematizadora que pautem tanto as Situações-Limite que freiam as possibilidades de humanização, quanto os Inéditos Viáveis que resultam do esperar-se como atitude política e eticamente situada diante da profissão e do contexto em que esta se insere.

Palavras-chave: formação de professores; dialogicidade; docência.

Retos y aprendizaje del diálogo y la profesión: el hablar de los profesores de la educación básica

RESUMEN. La reflexión sobre los impactos de las políticas educativas contemporáneas sobre el trabajo y la formación docente indica el avance de la perspectiva neoliberal que niega la condición de estos profesionales como personas e intelectuales, tratando de reducirlos a la figura de técnicos que se adaptan a las estrategias regulatorias y buscan lograr mejores resultados, con cada vez menos recursos. Dialécticamente, también se han registrado experiencias formativas guiadas por la valoración de los conocimientos, trayectorias y vivencias de estos sujetos. Este texto pretende reflexionar, desde la

dialogicidad y sus principios, sobre los límites y posibilidades de aprendizaje de la profesión docente frente a las influencias de las políticas educativas actuales. A través de círculos reflexivos dialógicos realizados con trece docentes, se discutieron aspectos que articulan vida, formación y trabajo. Los resultados, analizados desde Freire (1967, 1987, 1996, 2000) y otros autores que presentan la dialogicidad como una perspectiva teórica, política y metodológica, señalan que el aprendizaje de la profesión docente, en el contexto actual, demanda una orientación crítica y problemática que tanto las Situaciones Límite que obstaculizan las posibilidades de humanización como los Viables Invisibles que resultan de la esperanza como actitud política y éticamente situada hacia la profesión y el contexto en el que se inserta.

Palabras clave: formación de profesores; dialogicidad; enseñanza.

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Introduction

The educational policies developed since the 1990s have increasingly been guided by the principles of neoliberalism, placing the school's pedagogical practice in a scenario of tensions and contradictions that threaten the democratic perspective of education. Teachers, within this logic, have their work and training attacked by the perspective of business, control and productivity, which denies the condition of this professional as a person and as an intellectual, trying to reduce them to a technician who easily adapts to regulatory strategies and seeks to achieve better results, with fewer and fewer resources.

In the same context in which this authoritarian and antidialogical orientation significantly affects teachers' identity, professional development and appreciation, there are records of formative experiences that are guided by strategies for valuing knowledge, trajectories and experiences lived by these subjects, understanding them as fundamental elements for the learning of the profession, articulating initial and continuing training; knowledge of experience, field-specific knowledge and pedagogical knowledge; basic and higher education.

Based on these reflections, we developed a qualitative study, with the objective of reflecting, grounded on dialogicity and its principles, on the limits and possibilities of learning in the teaching profession when faced with the influences of current educational policies. Through dialogical reflexive circles carried out with thirteen teachers working in the public school system of a municipality located in the state of Ceará, we discussed different aspects related to life, training and work.

The results, analyzed through the contributions of Freire (1967, 1987, 1996, 2000) and other authors who debate dialogicity, updating and expanding this theoretical, political and methodological reference, indicate that teacher education, in the current context, requires a critical and problematizing orientation that brings to the agenda both the Limit Situations that slow the possibilities of humanization and the Unprecedented Viables that result from hope as a political and ethically situated attitude in the face of the profession and the context in which it is included.

The training and profession of teachers within the scenario of contemporary educational policies in Brazil

The reflection we present here about the context in which educational policies and their reflections on life, training and teaching work are inserted dialogues with the Freirean perspective that tells us about the importance of understanding dialogue as an encounter of men and women mediatized by the world, covering elements that overcome the I-you relationship (Freire, 1987). This understanding demands of us an overview of the political, social, economic and cultural determinants, among others, that permeate our existence and permanently give new contours to the way we are and exist in the world. We are historical beings, unfinished and in permanent process of construction. In this sense, it is essential that we recognize in our contexts the situations that are placed as limits to the development of our potentialities, of our humanization and emancipation. Also understanding education as a social practice, we will see in different historical times and different spaces that the challenges posed to institutions and educators invite them to make decisions and position themselves politically in the face of the demands for preservation and transformation of culture, knowledge and power relations established in society.

Thus, we elect as the starting point of this discussion the acknowledgement of education as a right in Brazil (Constitution of the Federative Republic of Brazil, 1988), which triggered, since the 1990s, due to the

publication of the Law of Directives and Bases of National Education N. 9394/96 (Law N. 9394, 1996), transformation processes in Brazilian legislation and educational policies, interfering significantly both in the training and in the work of teachers.

Between the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century, processes of mobilization and defense of the right to education for all were developed in several countries around the world, having as a landmark the World Conference held in Jontiem – Thailand in 1990, which inaugurated a global movement of commitments related to the democratization of access to education, reiterated in Dakar – Senegal, in 2010, and, more recently, at the Incheon Conference – South Korea, in 2015. Brazil, as a signatory country of the declarations generated by the aforementioned World Conferences, has been, over the last three decades, implementing social and educational policies aimed at materializing this commitment. In this movement, the significant increase in enrollment in basic education is visible since the 1990s. However, the universalization of access is still a challenge to be overcome, considering the data expressed by the National Continuous Household Sample Survey, conducted by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE, 2018), whose data indicate constraints regarding the universalization of access to education at different schooling levels and, within this indicator, reveal inequalities of different orders, encompassing geographical, gender and ethnic issues.

The imbalance in ensuring the right of the Brazilian population to access, stay and succeed in education has been exacerbated by the current crisis scenario in the country, through the austerity policies implemented, with budget cuts and the freezing of public spending, negatively impacting the conditions necessary to achieve the goals set in the National Education Plan (Law N. 13005, 2014). It is also necessary to note that the advance, in national education, of private interests has been constituted as a strategy to dismantle the democratic achievements already accomplished that are continuously threatened by the neoliberal perspective that transforms education into a consumer good and transfigures the identity of teachers and students, consecutively, to the status of providers of educational services and clients, thus subjecting the process of human formation to the interests of the market.

In this sense, various strategies of regulation and control, implemented in Brazil since the 1990s, begin to become increasingly strong and translate in the daily exercise of the teaching profession, both in basic education and in higher education, the imperatives of efficiency and effectiveness, competition and individualism, values that subvert the subjects to the condition of objects (Sguissardi, 2005).

The set of legal provisions that guide national education, such as the Law of Directives and Bases of National Education N. 9394 (Law N. 9394, 1996); the Curricular Guidelines for Teacher Education (Resolution CNE/CP N. 2, 2019), impregnated by pragmatist logic and the discourse of competencies; the Curricular Guidelines for Basic Education (Resolution N. 4, 2010) that lost space for the National Curricular Common Base (Resolution CNE/CP N. 2, 2017; Resolution CNE/CP N. 4, 2018); large-scale Official Assessment Systems; Funding Policies; Inclusion Policies, among others, have their orientations stressed by the contradictions present in society. On the one hand, we have the alignment of educational institutions with economic / financial values and interests and, on the other, by the pressure of organized civil society, we have the defense of social rights.

It is important to highlight that the set of policies that have been orchestrated since the end of the 20th century in Brazil has the interference of international organizations and is based on the concept of education as a key to development and to overcome inequality and poverty. In this perspective, we seek training based on basic learning needs, defined through the minimum conditions necessary to introduce the population in the productive field, which induces training, including that of the teacher themselves, with a strong appeal to technical instrumentalization, with the practice emptied of the broad understanding of the meanings of social relations in which both work and education are in.

It is also noteworthy that different actions based on Brazilian educational institutions, even in times of greater democratic openness at the beginning of the 21st century, reveal the permanent clash between the discourse of inclusion and the meritocratic perspective, originated by neoliberal influence, which demands maximum results with minimal resources (Peroni, 2003). It is in this context of tensions and contradictions that we find education, teaching work and life, universities and schools, surrounded, in an increasingly incisive way, by political and ideological disputes about the future of educational processes, putting on the agenda antagonistic society projects.

The total quality that is an element present in the educational reforms of contemporary society brings to educational institutions the market perspective, the principles of competitiveness and performativity, significantly interfering in the commitments of educational institutions, repressing political debate and

participation in defense of equality and seeking the alignment of educational action with the imperatives of capital (Silva, 2015). From this vision, which devalues the political dimension of teacher education, we note the return of the technical perspective to the contexts of initial and continuous teacher training, generating clashes concerning the objectives of education, teaching, learning and teachers' performance.

In this context of tensions and contradictions, teacher education becomes a field of disputes that confronts concepts of society and education and the role of these professionals. Based on the experience of the United States, Zeichner (2013) points to two perspectives in dispute: those that are grounded on the recognition of the teacher as a professional, defending the right to career development, decent working conditions and remuneration; and those that are based on the technical dimension, based on skills to set in motion instructional scripts aimed at the good performance of students in standardized tests.

These discussions are also happening in Brazil and have fostered the development of research and projects of different natures that put on the agenda the perspectives that value the productivity and competitiveness of the formative processes, as well as naturalize the teacher's deprofessionalization, recognizing them as characteristics of current policies; as well as perspectives that subvert these values and seek to transform schools into places where the community can encounter their identities, values and cultures without losing sight of the need to include the subjects in the different spaces of social experience and for which professionals who are competent and valued in their careers are needed.

All formative actions, based on what has been discussed, are revealing of the political projects that underpin them and announce, in a more explicit or more veiled way, how they understand the role of educators in the world, increasingly aimed at technique and at a so-called neutrality. Freire (1996, p. 43) points out that educators should be aware of the impossibility of neutrality of their work, so that it is possible to understand that "[...] if education can't do everything, something fundamental education can do. If education is not the key to social transformations, it is also not simply a breeding point for the dominant ideology". Thus, different training actions, even situated in the field of tensions and contradictions presented, may represent opportunities for establishing authentic dialogues about teaching and learning the profession, which are not exhausted in the pronunciation of the word but mobilize actions that transform reality, through the unveiling of the phenomena which the subjects ponder.

Dialogue and reflection as the foundations of the investigative-formative process

The exercise of establishing the methodological paths for the development of this research was guided by the dialogical and dialectical perspectives of the construction of knowledge, which seek to articulate different aspects of reality for the broad reading of the phenomenon that we set out to investigate.

The dialogue encompasses, according to Freire (1987), the relationship between individuals, mediated by the world, therefore, it involves much more than the sum of their vision, expressing both the intersubjective encounter of the readings of reality that each one is capable of performing and the objective conditions of existence present in the context where the investigated phenomena are processed, related to political, economic, social, cultural and ideological issues, among others.

The dialogical attitude proposed by Freire (1987) is proclaimed as an exercise of expression of the authentic word, full of meanings and significations, which are present both in the awareness about the very context where those who pronounce them are immersed and in the possibilities of transforming them into action, in a process of unveiling reality and constructing alternatives to overcome situations understood as limits, from the perspective of praxis and emergence of consciences.

According to Triviños (2006, p. 122), praxis is conceived as a unit of theory and practice, it is "[...] the social material world created and organized by the human being in the development of their existence as a rational being". It is necessary to emphasize that each of these concepts carries within itself distinct characteristics that are articulated inside and outside the human consciousness in the context of the social practices in which the subjects participate. Thus, in the exercise of reading reality, we articulate the theoretical and practical aspects present in it, consciously reestablishing the existing connections between them and how they affect the existence of the subjects. The theoretical activity contributes to the transformation of the world through the articulation between the cognoscitive and teleological elements related to the reality that one wishes to know to produce new knowledge and the definition of purposes that guide the transformation of reality. The practical activity, in turn, is guided by objectives and demands knowledge to be materialized, aiming at the objective transformation of the real world. In *práxis*, theory and practice are inseparable (Vázquez, 1977).

Based on the concept of theory, practice and praxis, we understand the investigative movement as also formative. The critical reading of the context and the reflection present in the processes of problematizing reality do not occur in an epistemological political void, since they articulate theories, world views, principles and values, even if the subjects are not fully aware of this issue. In this movement, the articulations are revealed, the unity between theory and practice becomes explicit, the roles played by teachers in the reproduction and transformation of reality are understood and, finally, references are mobilized so that these subjects become increasingly aware of the complexity present in their work and the effects it has on society. In this perspective, the dialogical and reflexive movement proposed in this research aimed at strengthening a critical teaching practice, which, according to Freire (1996, p. 18), “[...] involves dynamic, dialectical movement, between doing and thinking about doing”.

By starting from the concept of Education as a social practice, we understand that it has socio-historical aspects that dynamically bestow different intentions to formative processes, interfering, in different times and spaces, in the way educational institutions organize their commitments and how educators materialize their work. Considering the complexity present in this process, Pedagogy, as an Education science and more specifically Didactics – an important part of this science that deals with the investigation of the phenomena of teaching and learning – has increasingly sought ways to understand the wealth of relationships established between theory and practice, in the different spaces of human formation (Pimenta, 2011).

Therefore, we understand the research in Education based on Didactics as a movement that interconnects different aspects of the process of knowledge construction, having as reference elements such as historicity, contradiction and totality, in a dialogical and dialectical perspective. The dynamic present in this process is based on the trajectory of the researcher themselves, from whom emerge experiences, world views, principles, values and beliefs that contribute to the problematization of reality and construction of the object of investigation. This movement expands, seeking to dialogue with other references, both in the fields of knowledge construction that systematize important research and findings, or in the field of practices where the phenomena to be investigated are processed and the different determinants present in society and which interfere in their organization are manifested.

Didactics, its multidimensionality and multirefenciality, is committed to the critical, ethical and scientific investigation of practices, questioning them as to their foundations and results (Franco & Pimenta, 2016). To that end, it presupposes collaborative work between teachers and researchers in order to broaden understandings about the different contexts in which educational practices take place, to create possibilities for their transformation. Thus, we seek in this research, in addition to promoting the construction of knowledge about the learning of the teaching profession and dialogue, to create conditions for the subjects to better understand themselves, the meanings and significations of their actions, in a perspective of self-knowledge and transformation of reality.

Dialogical reflexive circles

By establishing dialogue and reflection as epistemological foundations guiding this investigation, we acknowledge teachers as historical subjects who accumulate, in their trajectories, different knowledge, values and principles that bring light to their way of being / existing in the world and that are fundamental to the understanding of educational phenomena.

The conceptualization of Dialogical Reflexive Circles emerged from Freire’s theoretical contributions, more specifically from culture circles, and had as references investigative experiences carried out in the context of the University of São Paulo (Domingues, 2009) and the State University of Ceará (Nascimento, 2012), both in Graduate Programs in Education.

When investigating the pedagogical coordinator and the challenges of continuous teacher training at school, Domingues (2009, p. 35) resorted, among the strategies of approximation with reality, to the dialogue group, understood by the author as a space for dialogue and discussion among the subjects, “[...] with the active insertion of the researcher in the group, proposing the discussion agenda and questioning the answers given”. The movement carried out with the teachers was an investigative-formative experience, because, while enabling access to the information necessary for the research, it also provided the expression of the different voices, the individual and collective awareness in relation to their concepts and practices, fostered by the dialogical and reflexive posture of the researcher as mediator of this process.

Nascimento (2012) investigated the Curricular Internship in the Pedagogy course of the Regional University of Cariri, using Dialogical Investigative Circles. Inspired by the experience of the Culture Circles

developed by Freire (1967), the author proposed this dialogical experience of investigation through the following steps: immersion in the context to know the reality of the subjects to be investigated; the selection of themes related to the object of study; and the existential situation, through dialogical conversation circles that generated data for the investigation.

Considering the reflexive movement that marks the aforementioned studies and the characteristics that dialogue undertakes within the context of this research, especially through the commitment to overcome the hierarchical relationships between the different types of knowledge originating from the processes that reduce the act of educating to the utterance of information, we chose to develop a specific methodology of approximation with reality, which we call Dialogical Reflexive Circles. These constitute intersubjective meetings between subjects who share common experiences. In the specific case of this investigation, the subjects had in common the experience of teaching in an educational institution in the public school system.

Inspired by Freire (1967), before diving into the reflexive process facilitated by the Dialogical Reflexive Circles, an exploratory investigation was carried out to collect information about the work context, its characteristics and challenges. This information contributed significantly to the construction of the dialogical movement carried out with the research participants, because they allowed the problematization of reality and the selection of strategies that fostered the mobilization of subjects for dialogue and reflection.

The movement performed on the occasion of the Dialogical Reflexive Circles has, as a starting point, the teacher as a person and follows in a spiral movement from the expansion of experiences to the intersubjective field in which the subject recognizes themselves as part of a group, which both affects them and is affected by them. The comings and goings between individual and collective, between specific issues of the school and the university, as well as the comprehensive issues of society, mediated by reflection, are problematized in the investigative process and reworked by the participants of the Circles.

As they share experiences and reflect on their practices, teachers become aware of the different meanings and significations present in the practice of their profession and how they were constructed in the specific trajectory of each individual (Nadal, 2019). The pronunciation of the word is coated with a transforming and liberating power for each subject and for the group itself, since it allows to break with the perspective of institutionalization of silence, which enters the daily life of teachers as a reflection of the advance of neoliberal and conservative agendas that seek to remove, from teaching practice, its political dimension, reducing it to the technical dimension. This possibility is similar to that presented by Ribeiro (2017, p. 48) when discussing the concept of the place of speech, pointing out that all people speak from a social location from which “[...] it is possible to debate and reflect critically on the most varied themes present in society”.

In view of the above, we can say that the experiential dimension, present in the exercise of dialogue, crosses the existence of the subjects and encompasses them in their entirety, inviting them to expand more and more the understanding they have of themselves in their relationship with the other and with totality, since every social and historical phenomenon expresses the relationships through which it is built. Freire (1967) points out that the experience of constituting Brazilian society was marked by authoritarianism, naturalizing, since the experience as a colony, the relations of oppression between individuals and using, throughout history, education as a strategy focused on the uncritical assimilation of values and world views belonging to the culture of the oppressor / colonizer. Quijano (2009), when presenting the concept of coloniality, allows us to visualize how enduring are the reflections of the power strategies pressed by the colonizers on the colonized through educational processes and socialization experiences. Thus, the movement to reflect on one's own formative trajectories, problematize them and understand them widely allows teachers to realize in favor of what and in favor of whom have schools historically been performing their work.

The Dialogical Reflexive Circles were carried out with a group comprised of 13 teachers, from a universe of 20 teachers who worked in a public school in a municipality in Ceará and agreed to participate in this investigative-formative experience¹. They presented the following profile: regarding gender declaration, eleven declared themselves as female and two as male; concerning professional practice, all participants work as teachers in middle school in different fields of knowledge; finally, regarding experience in teaching practice, they have, on average, 11 years of experience. The objective of the Dialogical Reflexive Circles was to reflect, based on dialogicity and its principles, on the limits and possibilities of learning in the teaching profession in the face of the influences of current educational policies.

¹ Considering the guidelines set out in Resolution N. 510 (2016), regarding standards for the development of research in Human and Social Sciences, the confidentiality of the participants' identity was guaranteed. They were given names of cities in the region of the Baturité Massif - Ceará. In view of this guarantee and information about the objectives, possible risks and benefits of the research, the participants formalized their acceptance to participate in the investigation, signing the Informed Consent Form.

The organization of Dialogical Reflexive Circles is expressed in Figure 1.

I - Mobilization of subjects: Carried out through activities that set in motion aesthetic experiences of perception of oneself and the other, such as music, dance, drawing, literature, short videos, among others that allow the exercise of sensitivity and openness to the expression of different voices and sensitive listening to them.

II - Presentation of the theme: Presentation, by the coordination, of the theme about which the subjects would dialogue and sensitive listening to the experiences brought by the group.

III - Recording and problematization: The subjects' statements are recorded and problematized by coordination, helping them to think about their own experiences, integrating the constructed narratives, the analytical and reflexive perspectives.

IV - Reading suggestions: At the end of each movement, reading suggestions were presented to broaden their understanding of the debates held.

Figure 1. Organization of the Dialogical Reflexive Circles.
Source: Prepared by the authors (2018).

In the process of carrying out the Dialogical Reflexive Circles, the dialectical perspective was present, guiding the process of data construction and analysis, contemplating both the theoretical and practical aspects of the reality presented by the subjects, placing them in individual and collective spheres (Triviños, 2006). Having explained the theoretical and methodological elements, we move on to present the results of the investigation, beginning with elements related to the concepts of dialogue, results from life experiences and training of the subjects, extending to the experience of dialogue in the context of teaching practice.

Life's learning: teachers' concepts of dialogue

To reflect on the concepts of dialogue that each teacher carries within themselves, it is necessary to perceive this process from a historical and experiential dimension that allows the subjects to understand the existing links between theory and practice in their own lives. This movement requires the exercise of welcoming the other in their entirety, which is understood by Freire (1987) as a fundamental condition for the construction of authentic dialogues, in which the other is understood as such and not as an extension of ourselves.

The initial mobilization occurred through a song, based on which an activity was performed with the participants, highlighting the need to acknowledge the other, one's own incompleteness and of the unfinished state that marks each subject as a historical being with relationships (Freire, 1967). After this exercise, the group began to present their understandings about what dialogue is.

In the reflections brought by the teachers, it was possible to detect the predominance of the concept that restricts the dialogue to the relationship established between me-you, pointed out by seven subjects. In their statements, they highlighted elements referring exclusively to provisions related to individuals, such as a willingness to listening to and accept the other, expressed as follows:

To dialogue is to exchange ideas on a particular subject. It is listening and being listened to, without any of those involved wanting their idea to prevail or superimpose the other's idea (Pacoti);

To dialogue for me is to exchange ideas, talk, listen to opinions, listen and debate (Palmácia).

It is important to understand the willingness to listen to and accept the other as essential attitudes to the experience of authentic dialogue, as an exercise of love and humility (Freire, 1987), incompatible, therefore, with the ideas of self-sufficiency, hierarchy or authoritarianism so present in the historical constitution of Brazil and that, until today, try to prevent the expression of different voices and the emergence of relationships based on humanization and emancipation. Thus, we can say that, although relevant, this concept of dialogue needs to be expanded and also consider the contexts and challenges of not only individual, but collective existence.

Based on what has been discussed, we access the expanded concept of dialogue, expressed in the speech of six subjects, among which we highlight the following:

It is the way we find to try to resolve some conflicts that we constantly face in our lives, because dialogue is sometimes the best way to solve them (Itapiuna).

It is exchanging ideas, opinions, knowing the will and challenges of others, learning to know and acknowledge the space of each person, knowing how to accept the expressions and space of the other, to always be aware of respect for their opinions, even when we do not agree (Capistrano).

Ribeiro (2017), following a thought similar to Freire's (1987), points out that in the exercise of expression of different voices, speaking is not restricted to the emission of words, but the possibility of existing. Thus, the exercise of dialogue encompasses the me, the you, the us in the world and with the world, the various determinants present in it, the conflicts, the consensus, in a historical and dialectical perspective of our existence. Far from these elements, from the problematization of reality, the word becomes hollow, barren, therefore not authentic.

Understanding that the relations established between the subjects are crossed by power relations that both limit and enable the expression of critical thinking, we asked the teachers what dialogue experiences they have lived and how they had occurred. The group of subjects expressed the presence of diverse hierarchies, in the family and at work, which promoted the silencing of some segments to the detriment of others, as can be seen below:

We dialogue with all the people with whom we live: children, spouse, friends, relatives, co-workers, students and others. Generally, these dialogues happen in a way that one superimposes the other as truth, as correct (Pacoti).

In summary, I was able to dialogue in the family sphere, with friends and in the professional sphere. In both of them, expression of and listening to opinions occur/occurred. However, usually the opinion of the subject with more power, bosses or patriarchs, usually, has more weight (Guaramiranga).

The statements presented by the subjects indicate a certain naturalization of the silencing processes learned in the context of the family and work and that translate the historical heritage of authoritarianism as a mark of the formative processes experienced in Brazilian educational contexts, in a broad and restricted way, in which gender, age, ethnic, economic and cultural relationships, among others, are imposed (Ribeiro, 2017; Freire, 1967; Quijano, 2009). Overcoming this historical heritage is only possible with the problematization of origins and purposes, understood as social constructs that can be overcome, through the critical and reflected stance that involves, according to Freire (2000), action, speech, thinking, reflection, meditating, seeking, understanding and communicating that understanding, dreaming, "[...] always referring to a tomorrow, comparing, valuing, deciding, transgressing principles, embodying them, breaking, opting, believing or closed to beliefs" (Freire, 2000, p. 57).

Even though the collective of subjects stated that they did not experience, throughout their trajectory, conscious occurrences of attempts to overcome the oppression relations experienced in the family, formative or work context, it was possible to identify in their statements some intuitively materialized initiatives.

The people with whom we can dialogue are always from our family, with whom we work, because talking already facilitates this event. It is not easy to have sincere and objective conversations about certain subjects, but something that helps us to be better and better people (Capistrano).

With my sisters and co-workers. The dialogue with my sister is more intimate, when I want to expose some problems and questions. With my other brother, I always justify the opposite ideas. With colleagues in the profession, the dialogue is focused on exposing how the professional trajectory is going, difficulties and problems (Acarape).

The movement of learning to dialogue, exposed by the subjects, allows us to visualize themes present in their daily lives and that reveal different perspectives and challenges, expressed from different places of speech, those of women, the youth, professional collectives, among others. The perception of oneself as a social being with diverse relationships and roles, lived in different contexts, allows teachers to understand the complexity of human existence and the challenges present in it. By providing the problematization of these experiences, the Dialogical Reflexive Circle constitutes an investigative-formative space of identity strengthening and empowerment, in an intra- and intercultural perspective, which has the potential to promote the engagement of subjects with collectives in search of humanization (Candau, 2017; Freire & Shor, 1986).

Teaching and the challenges of experiencing dialogue at school

The Reflexive Circle that had as its theme 'Teaching and the challenges of experiencing dialogue at school' began with a song after which participants were invited to think about their personal and professional trajectories, progressively promoting the encounter of participants with themselves, with their stories and with the collectivity.

With the attitude of deep respect for the journey of each person and the collective regarding professional practice, we invited the group to dialogue about the following question: Is the school where you work a place of dialogue experience? The teachers, while they agreed that the institution where they work seeks to build

dialogical relationships among all, recognized that the attitude of the individuals and the effective institutional conditions significantly interfere in this exercise. Let's look at their statements:

Yes. As far as possible we have experienced problem solving with dialogues between coordination, teachers and students, but like all things there are always some events that we have to involve the presence of the family, in order to reach more concrete results (Redenção).

Yes. Dialogue happens in some moments, because it is not always possible to stop and solve problems, but due to the rush of day-to-day life and the difference in opinions (Mulungu).

Yes. Dialogue is always a bridge, a link of experience between all segments of the school, even if most of the time the school is not so democratic in its actions (Barreira).

The teachers' statements indicate that the dialogical movement constitutes a permanent search and is inserted in a tense and contradictory way in concrete contexts, considering that these are permeated by various issues, such as social, political, economic and cultural, which dialectically affirm and deny dialogue as a formative principle. In contemporary society, we live under the auspices of globalization that articulates different possibilities of humanization and dehumanization of men and women (Charlot, 2016). Schools, within this context, are inserted in a movement to seek the appropriation of knowledge considered valid by humanity. However, this process does not always take into account the challenges experienced by the subjects to maintain their existence, understood as indispensable to the construction of meanings and significations for formation. Dialogue, in view of this reality, constitutes an imperative that allows subjects both to critically appropriate their own experiences (Bondía, 2002) and to mobilize them to make decisions in the face of the Limit Situations that dehumanize them.

With their work routine overtaken by the agenda of results policies, schools are increasingly permeated by the perspective of technical rationality, seeking speed and efficiency in achieving the goals proposed by the instances of education management (Santos, 2016). This fact has extremely negative implications for teaching practice, as it reduces the role of teachers to that of executors of methods and techniques acquired through training packages, structured materials, digital platforms, among others.

Freire (1997, p. 12), when criticizing the presence of such packages in the educational context, points out that technicians "[...] produce them in their offices in an unequivocal demonstration, first of their authoritarianism; second, as a stretch of authoritarianism, of their absolute disbelief in the potential that teachers have of knowing and creating". It is necessary, therefore, to reflect on why the socio-historical experience of educators and students does not find space in this agenda. We verified, through a broad reading of our reality, that we are living another moment of institutionalization of the silencing of the subjects' cultures and identities, submitting the political-pedagogical commitments of education to references exclusively external to the school and the community in which it is inserted, adjusting the formative role developed in it to the reproduction of social inequalities. To dive a little deeper into this understanding, we continued to ask the participating teachers to indicate which factors present in the school limited and enhanced the development of dialogues.

Concerning collective work, we evidenced as limiting issues: divergent points of view, an intense work schedule articulated with the resolution of emergencies and, finally, lack of compliance with the established agreements, as can be seen below:

The difficulty of gathering the collective of teachers in its entirety in the day-to-day of the school movement, especially in the unexpected warnings (Aracoiaba).

Being able to bring the whole faculty together (with the exception of collective planning) for the transfers of information flow and referrals (Guaramiranga)

Too many problems to be solved in a short time (Guaiuba).

The mechanical action that settles in the context of the daily emergencies of the school causes small epidermal issues to be resolved quickly, without, however, advancing more effectively in confronting the fundamental issues, which involve social, political and pedagogical elements, among others that affect the lives of people and educational institutions. The permanence of this pattern of action also does not allow us to advance in the debate about the principles and concepts that guide school practices, causing an emptying of the political content of formative actions, because the roots of the problems that are present in the school remain immersed in the reality that is not taken as an object of reflection.

Freire (1987) states that the complexity of the act of dialogue demands, of those who choose to do so, the exercise of presence, of the encounter with the other, of the time to live this experience, of listening to different points of view, of the problematization of reality, of respect for the authenticity of the other and of the commitment to the articulation between word and action. It is important to emphasize, in this reflection, that school practices are always permeated by institutional and political issues that announce greater or lower possibilities for dialogue and collective construction.

Thus, democratic action is increasingly stifled by education management agencies, demanding from educators a broad understanding of their work so that they can develop strategies to resist this form of oppression. It is necessary, therefore, that the concerns of teachers leave the sphere of debates around 'how to do' towards the 'whole to do' (Lima, 1995), allowing them to understand in favor of what and in favor of whom they do their work. In this movement, the educational act is also reaffirmed as a political act that evidences different projects of society.

Continuing the reflexive movement, we also invited teachers to announce the factors that have made it possible to establish dialogues at school. Their stances in general indicated the maintenance of democratic and human values and principles that resist in the work contexts, despite the perverse logic of productivity that has advanced in great strides.

The way in which take place meetings with the teachers' collective, training, planning and celebrations (Aracoíaba).

Solidarity, sharing, support and clear and objective discussions, for the realization of collective work (Acarape).

Solidarity by some colleagues in sharing and listening to the difficulties of the classroom (Pacoti).

We verified in the excerpts of the teachers' statements that the factor that has been feeding the dialogical practices is the quality of the use of available time for the collective. The welcome, respect, solidarity, partnership, among other attitudes based on affection, contribute to the process of approximation, necessary for the establishment of dialogues and critical, but no less hopeful, understanding of the challenges present in educational work. According to Freire (1996, p. 53), the cognoscitive and affective dimensions are an indivisible totality. According to his words:

On the other hand, it is necessary to again insist not to think that the educational practice lived with affection and joy dispenses with serious scientific training and the political clarity of educators. Educational practice is all this: affection, joy, scientific capability, technical domain at the service of change or, regrettably, the permanence of today.

The way in which relationships with knowledge have been historically constructed associates the production of knowledge with an image dissociated from joy, the beauty of discovery, the epistemological curiosity that makes us want to know more about the world and the diversity of forms of thought and intervention in reality. The perspective of the proclamations, present in banking education (Freire, 1987), was removing from the formative processes, including from teacher training, the possibility of enjoying aesthetic experiences, which allow the subject to perceive oneself and the other in the dialogue they establish with life, with work and with training.

Considering this need, we proposed to the teachers that they record the main challenges present in the daily life of the school and the strategies constructed through the collective dialogue to face them. Among the themes that are part of the collective dialogues were: devaluation of the teaching profession, physical conditions of the school, little family participation, professional instability, external evaluations, student performance, indiscipline and violence.

The teachers' reflections on the topics in question indicated the need for a closer look at the different factors that interfere in the context of the classroom and that are disregarded at the time of evaluation of the work developed by the teacher, especially by external evaluations. According to their statements, it is in the collective that they have the opportunity to express their anxieties and build viable alternatives to overcome the challenges:

We have been sharing our anxieties a lot and making many collective commitments. This has helped me a lot (Aratuba).

There are a lot of demands that come to us in our work. The collective's attitude is to try to help everyone when it is necessary (Capistrano).

Our collective is very curious. Each one always seeks to research things to share in the collective and try to intervene in the reality here at the school (Guaramiranga).

The attitude of the collective of teachers approaches some of the formulations proposed by Alarcão (2011, p. 40) when presenting the concept of reflexive school, especially the posture of thinking about itself, when the educational institution “contextualizes itself in the community it serves and with which it interacts. Believes in its teachers, whose capacity for thought and action it always fosters. It involves students in building an ever-improving school”.

Final considerations

Throughout this study, we sought to reflect, based on dialogicity and its principles, on the limits and possibilities of learning the teaching profession in the face of the influences of current educational policies. In the Brazilian context, we visualize the progressive advance of neoliberal principles that, based on business and privatist logics, are projected at different levels of education. These principles are translated into the perspectives of productivity and performativity that pressure institutions to seek more and more the best results, with fewer and fewer resources. Thus, they foster the advance of neotechnicism, which affects teacher training and practice, with the technical dimension occupying central space and subjecting teaching to the logic of efficiency, effectiveness and competitiveness, thus distancing itself from the political, ethical and human dimensions.

Through the development of Dialogical Reflexive Circles carried out with teachers who work in a public school in Ceará, we observed that the learning of dialogue and of the profession is surrounded by different challenges that emerge from asymmetric power relations, justified by gender, ethnic, economic and political issues, among others. This reality can be understood in a dialectical way, considering the relationships that are established between past and present, because since the colonial experience in Brazil the issues that oppress and silence subordinated subjects have been historically treated in a naturalized way in educational institutions and reinforced by the banking perspective, whose logic, until the present day, is based not only on the reproduction of subjects or teaching methods, but on the reproduction of social relations marked by authoritarianism, inequality and oppression.

Dialogue opens possibilities to strengthen the institutional collective, through the loving invitation to critical reflection on one’s own practices, to the understanding of the limits and possibilities of work, to the constant search for ways to transform reality. Reports of experiences, reflexive records, studies of challenging situations experienced in schools, search for new references to broaden understandings are some of the many movements to be performed by the school in the constitution of themselves as a space for reflection and learning of the profession.

In times of advance of conservatism, deepening of inequalities, silencing the voices of historically subordinated subjects, dismantling the social rights previously conquered and the pressure of the neoliberal logic on the school that dehumanizes the formative processes, we hope that the experience of reflection on the learning of dialogue, carried out with this group of teachers, illuminates new debates and spreads to the context of schools, who are still lacking in dialogue. May the various professionals, teachers, students and the community experience and value the exercise of dialogue as a formative strategy, with humanization and emancipation as horizons. May the critical understanding of the Limit Situations that prevent us from Being More drive the formulation of strategies for the construction of Unprecedented Viabiles.

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