

## ARTICLE

**THE THREAD AND THE BEAD: THINKING ABOUT TEACHER EDUCATION FROM NARRATIVES OF THE EXPERIENCE IN YOUTH AND ADULT LITERACY****DANIEL DE OLIVEIRA<sup>1;2</sup>**ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7631-213X>**MAIRCE ARAUJO<sup>2</sup>**ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1434-7796>

**ABSTRACT:** This paper discusses a way of understanding the teacher education, which takes place in everyday crossings from experiences (LARROSA) mobilized by the exercise of teaching. Methodologically, we opted for narrative and (auto)biographical research, as this path allows us to talk to the school and from the school, instead of talking about the school. The purpose of this article is to produce reflections that contribute to the debate about this perspective of training that understands the experience as a privileged locus of teacher training and the teacher narrative as a means of reflecting on the teaching experience, which allowed us to understand how the other's view helps to form us. We bring here the narrative of a learning process of reading and writing in a literacy class of the Adult and Young Adult Education (EJA), in the city of Rio de Janeiro, involving the production of a letter, in which a student and her teacher live the experience of teaching-learning as an event (GERALDI), posing questions about the literacy theory-practice in course in everyday school. Freire (1996, 2014), Garcia and Alves (2002; 2012), Larrosa (2014) and Geraldi (2015) help in the reflection on the subject. In the experience narrated here, the dialogical relationship between a student and her teacher, throughout the classes, allowed us to realize what these dialogues revealed about the student's learning process, while it was also formative for the teacher.

**Keywords:** Continuing teacher education, Youth and Adult Education, Literacy.

**O FIO E A MISSANGA: PENSANDO A FORMAÇÃO DOCENTE A PARTIR DE NARRATIVAS DA EXPERIÊNCIA NA ALFABETIZAÇÃO DE JOVENS E ADULTOS**

**RESUMO:** O presente artigo problematiza uma forma de compreensão da formação docente, que se dá nos atravessamentos cotidianos a partir de experiências (LARROSA) mobilizadas pelo exercício da

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<sup>1</sup> Secretaria Municipal de Educação do Rio de Janeiro/ Gerência de Educação de Jovens e Adultos (SME-RJ/ GEJA). Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brasil. <profoliveira.d@gmail.com>

<sup>2</sup> Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro/ Faculdade de Formação de Professores (UERJ/ FFP). Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brasil. <mairce@hormail.com>

docência. Metodologicamente optamos pela pesquisa narrativa e (auto)biográfica, na medida em que esse caminho nos possibilita falar com a escola e a partir da escola, ao invés de falar sobre a escola. O objetivo desse artigo é produzir reflexões que contribuam para o debate sobre essa perspectiva de formação que compreende a experiência como lócus privilegiado da formação docente e a narrativa docente como meio de refletir sobre o vivido na docência, o que nos permitiu compreender como o olhar do outro ajuda a nos formar. Trazemos aqui a narrativa de um processo de aprendizagem da leitura e da escrita, em uma turma de alfabetização da Educação de Jovens e Adultos (EJA), no município do Rio de Janeiro, envolvendo a produção de uma carta, no qual uma estudante e seu professor vivem a experiência do *ensinaraprender* como acontecimento (GERALDI), colocando questões sobre a teoriaprática alfabetizadora em curso nos cotidianos escolares. Ajudam na reflexão sobre o tema Freire (1996, 2014), Garcia e Alves (2002; 2012), Larrosa (2014) e Geraldi (2015). Na experiência aqui narrada, a relação dialógica entre uma estudante e seu professor, ao longo das aulas, nos permitiu perceber o que esses diálogos vividos revelavam sobre o processo de aprendizagem dessa estudante, ao mesmo tempo em que se constituiu também formativo para o professor.

**Palavras-chave:** Formação docente continuada, Educação de Jovens e Adultos, Alfabetização.

## EL HILO Y LAS CUENTAS: PENSANDO LA FORMACIÓN DOCENTE DE NARRATIVAS DE EXPERIENCIA EN LA ALFABETIZACIÓN DE JÓVENES Y ADULTOS

**RESÚMEN:** El presente artículo problematiza una forma de entender la formación docente, que se produce en los cruces diarios de experiencias (LARROSA) movilizados por el ejercicio de la enseñanza. Metodológicamente, optamos por la investigación narrativa y (auto)biográfica. Este camino nos permite hablar con la escuela y desde la escuela, y no sobre la escuela. El objetivo de este artículo es producir reflexiones que contribuyan al debate sobre esta perspectiva de la educación que incluye la experiencia como un lugar privilegiado de la formación del profesorado y la narrativa docente como un medio para reflexionar sobre lo que se vivió en la enseñanza, lo que nos permitió comprender cómo otro nos ayuda a formarnos. Traemos aquí la narrativa de un proceso de aprender a leer y escribir, en una clase de alfabetización de Educación de Jóvenes y Adultos (EJA), en la ciudad de Río de Janeiro, que implica la producción de una carta, en la que una estudiante y su maestro vive la experiencia de enseñar a aprender como un evento (GERALDI), haciendo preguntas sobre la teoría de la alfabetización en curso en la rutina escolar. Ayudan a reflexionar sobre el tema Freire (1996, 2014), García y Alves (2002; 2012), Larrosa (2014) y Geraldi (2015). En la experiencia narrada aquí, la relación dialógica entre una estudiante y su maestro, a lo largo de las clases, nos permitió comprender lo que estos diálogos vividos revelaron sobre el proceso de aprendizaje de la estudiante, al mismo tiempo que también era formativo para el maestro.

**Palabras clave:** Formación docente continua, Educación de jóvenes y adultos, Alfabetización.

## INTRODUÇÃO

The bead, everyone sees them.  
 Nobody notices the thread that,  
 In a showy necklace, goes composing the beads.  
 So is the voice of the poet:  
 A thread of silence sewing time  
 (MIA COUTO, 2009).

We open the article with an epigraph by Mia Couto (2009), a Mozambican writer, who compares the poet's voice to the "invisible" thread indispensable to the composition of a necklace, but almost never noticed in relation to the showy beads that leap to the eye. "The bead, everyone sees them. Nobody notices the thread that, in a showy necklace, goes composing the beads" (COUTO, 2009). Both, thread and beads, are important to the necklace, but it is the thread that unites each one of them.

We ask your permission to make an analogy that seems reasonably adequate to us: could not the experiences of *life-training*<sup>3 4</sup> narrated by teachers in classrooms, in continuing education courses, in the trajectories to and from home to work, in the leisure moments they spend there... be compared to the string of the necklace Mia Couto talks about?

The theme of teacher training in the school routine has been, for us, a constant *theoretical-practical* challenge, which leads us to tense and complexify the hegemonic ways of thinking and proposing actions and projects of initial and continued training. Focusing our investigations on basic schooling and electing it as the centrality in the formative processes (CANÁRIO, 2005), we have made an effort to contribute to the construction of emerging paradigms of formation that may break with technical and applicative rationalities, which persist in reserving for teachers the place of consumers of teaching methods and practices formulated far from the school.

Such perspectives have led us to the encounter of teachers' narratives, both as a teacher training process and as an investigative process. We remember that the use of narratives as an investigation or research method began to emerge more forcefully in Brazil in the last thirty years, after the contributions of Nóvoa (1991, 1992), with the life stories of teachers, followed by Clandinin and Connelly (2015), among others.

In common among the researchers who aligned themselves with the narrative or (auto)biographical view was the discomfort with productions in the field of education, which "looking at school from above" (ALVES, 2001), or from what school is not or does, were characterized by talking about school and teaching practices, instead of talking with it and from it. In contrast to this distant and biased look that appears when the school and its subjects are treated only as research objects, the results that begin to emerge from narrative research confirm that the ways of understanding and meaning about the practice and daily events are different when the meanings are elaborated by the researched subjects themselves (GERALDI, 2006).

As Lima, Geraldi and Geraldi (2015, p.19) state, "genuinely different are the meanings produced by researches in which the subjects themselves are authors and co-authors of the narratives. In other words, researching about teachers and researching with teachers or researching in school and with school, result in different studies".

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<sup>3</sup> In dialogue with other research groups, especially the Polyphony Group (Voices of Education, FFP/UERJ/FE/UNICAMP), coordinated by Prof. Dr. Ines Bragança and the Group of Studies and Research in Continuing Education (GEPEC), coordinated by Prof. Dr. Guilherme Prado (FE/UNICAMP), we have been discussing the notion of *research-training* as a way of *living, researching, narrating and training*. We have been discussing the notion of research-training as a way of living, researching, narrating and training that emerges in the interface between narrative (auto)biographical research in education, the research on school everyday life and the conceptions-actions of human training that are made (BRAGANÇA, 2018).

<sup>4</sup> The registration of the term *life-training* written together and in italics, follows what Garcia and Alves (2012) teach us when we assume that we seek to overcome the dichotomy caused between these terms, as well as when dealing with thinking and doing teaching. This option, according to the authors, is expressed in the writing seeking to establish a coherence between content and form. In our texts, we also use this same reference in words such as *theoretical-practical, theory-practice, teaching-learning, thinking-doing*, among others, always with the same purpose.

In our research trajectory, we have been developing different investigative and formative actions, seeking to create spaces for memory, narration and (self)training, both at the university and inside the schools, thinking of reflection on pedagogical practice as a structuring element of teacher training. We have in the (auto)biographical approach one of the inspiring references of theoretical and methodological paths that interweave research and training processes.

Narratives have a very important place in the teacher education process because they reveal our experiences, our theoretical and epistemological references, our training paths and our places of speech. From them, we are provoked to think about our practices and our training; we are invited to problematize them in countless aspects. Just like the beads, wouldn't the practice itself, the most visible part of our pedagogical work, be crossed by a thread of invisible experiences, which overflow in the narratives and are creators of the predisposition to listen to ourselves and investigate our own practice?

Like the thread that makes up the string of beads, the oral or written teacher narratives we have found in our investigations, provoked by the exotic exercise, give new meaning to pedagogical practices and experiences, contributing to unveil other ways of thinking-practicing teacher know-how, producing and socializing this knowledge.

Therefore, in our actions and research, we have defended the school and the school daily life as a training space. This implies understanding the teacher as a researcher of his/her practice, understanding that this attitude may favor the construction of educational practices more favorable to students. As Freire (1996, p. 44) taught us, "it is by critically thinking about today's or yesterday's practice that one can improve the next practice", because the more the teacher analyzes and perceives the reasons that underlie her practice, the more she becomes capable of changing or moving, "from the state of naïve curiosity to that of epistemological curiosity"<sup>5</sup> (FREIRE, 1996, p. 44). "We have seen teachers who recognize the investigation of their own practice as an important instrument of action, contributing, in collective training spaces, with other teachers, narrating their experiences, sharing their concerns and socializing their advances" (MORAIS and ARAÚJO, 2014, p. 32).

Discussing the potentiality of the narrative for the understanding and re-signification of the ordinary actions that emerge in the school everyday life, we understand that the thread that sews the narratives of teachers is composed of multiple experiences lived on the school ground and in the communities that surround the school, experiences that are found in the restlessness raised in and by everyday life, which mobilize reflection on the practice. The participation in teaching collectives that assume an investigative posture based on the daily life of the school and the community, and the challenge of transforming oral narratives, a more traditional practice among teachers, into written narratives are other threads that sew the narratives contemplated here.

The writing of narratives by teachers is inscribed, thus, as an effort and a struggle to say their own words, their own knowledge, and to say about themselves, as an exercise of authorship. Part of the theoretical discussion of this text, a cut from a master's thesis of one of the authors, is inscribed in this exercise of authorship, problematizing the thread that composes the beads.

To perceive the contributions of the teachers' narratives, oral or written, as a network effect, which provokes other teachers to think about their references, preferences, methodologies, successes and failures can be pointed out as a first apprehension of the interlocution between the experiences brought by the present article.

Reflecting on one's own teaching practice is not an act that needs to be solitary. For believing in such a perspective, in our investigative-formative actions we have prioritized a methodology that favors exchanges among peers, sharing practices, stories, experiences, looking together, reflecting, thinking and studying together, looking for paths to a literacy practice more committed to the success of children, youth and adults from popular classes. "The teachers' memories populate their practices, sometimes errantly, without much reflection, assumed after solitary or group analysis. Worked as collective

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<sup>5</sup> For Paulo Freire (1996), the construction of knowledge implies the exercise of curiosity, which can move from naïve curiosity to epistemological curiosity. Naïve curiosity produces *the knowledge of experience*. Through methodically rigorous procedures, this *knowledge of experience* is criticized, becoming *epistemological curiosity*.

memories, they will produce a text that will enable the understanding of practices assumed in everyday life" (PARK, 2003, p 36).

Thus, we understand the teaching collectives as spaces of interlocution among peers, in which teachers share or rather, share their questions, challenges, anguishes, experiences, and teaching knowledge; they narrate, study, learn to research, and write about their own teaching practice. In the State of Rio de Janeiro, in universities and in basic schools, we highlight groups and teaching collectives<sup>6</sup>, as well as their intellectual productions, which have been configured as fertile formative spaces that are essential in the construction of the references with which we dialogue today about teaching collectives, teacher-researchers, teacher narratives, (auto)biographical research, experience, memory, and literacy.

The need to come together in a collective is something that, we can risk saying, is inherent to the human being. Among some teachers, the need to meet in a collective was felt many times, according to their own reports, to be able to think together about how to solve pedagogical issues that emerge daily in the classrooms of our schools.

From this perspective of doing things together, we wrote this article and reflected together on the experience lived by one of us at school and the provocations that this experience provoked in us.

## **A FLASH OF EVERYDAY LIFE: INTERROGATING THE LIVED**

In the eleven years I have been working in a Municipal Public School System, eight of those years were spent working in Youth and Adult Education (YAE), in Elementary School, between the classroom - as a literacy teacher, guidance and pedagogical coordination. In one of these years, working in Youth and Adult Education as a literacy teacher in an initial literacy class, a student, Antônia<sup>7</sup> - a woman, from the Northeast, black, from the lower social classes, already over seventy years old - with much seriousness in her voice, looking into my eyes, said that I needed to teach her how to write a letter. She told me that she didn't want to learn anything else from school at that moment. The most important thing was to learn how to write a letter to a brother who lived far away, in another state of Brazil.

The youth and adult literacy class that Antônia was part of was mostly female, mostly adults (with some young and some old), mostly northeasterners or descendants of northeasterners, all working class, residents of communities (or living near them). As it was possible to see when I took over the class, illiterate or, with very few exceptions, beginning conventional reading and writing processes.

Throughout the first classes, Antônia insisted that writing a letter to her brother was all that interested her at school. Although she got involved with the topics discussed in class and dedicated herself to the activities with good will and, sometimes, even enthusiasm, Antonia always returned to the same key: she wanted to learn how to write her letter. Everything else could be left afterwards. Writing the letter was her goal and the main reason for being in school. She was in a hurry, perhaps because of her advanced age and some health problems, which she said made it difficult for her to attend classes.

My planning, based on the Curricular Guidelines for Youth and Adult Education<sup>8</sup>, was based on two perspectives: one long-term, which indicated the objectives and general lines of action for the quarter (the school year for Youth and Adult Education in this network is divided into quarters); the other short-term, weekly, in which the issues emerging from the daily routine were linked to the quarterly objectives. On a daily basis, I was concerned with listening to the students' voices in search of making sense of the curriculum.

However, Antonia's request displaced me. It required me to break with the logic that guided my planning and enter in the flow of what Geraldí (2015) calls "class as event". Discussing a new teaching

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<sup>6</sup> Our reference here refers to the teaching groups and collectives in which we have participated throughout our own teaching trajectory, which were born inside the schools or the university from the movement of the teachers, especially: Network of Teachers Collectives that Study and narrate about Literacy, Reading, and Writing - REDEALE/FFP-UERJ; and Group of Studies and Training of Writers and Readers - GEFEL/ISERJ. For more information see: Moraes and Araujo (2018), about REDEALE, or Santos et al (2013), about GEFEL.

<sup>7</sup> Antonia is a fictitious name replacing the real name to preserve the student's identity. Likewise, not specifying the identity of the school or the time of this experience is part of preserving her identity.

<sup>8</sup> This school system has a specific curriculum for Youth and Adult Education at the Elementary School level.

identity, for the teacher of the future, the researcher alerts us that the role of the teacher today is "the one who is able to consider his or her lived experience, to look at his or her student as a subject who also has a lived experience, to transform the lived experience into questions" (GERALDI, 2015, p.95). Further on, the author adds: "it is only those who learn to walk inexistent paths, because they are made along the way, will be able to understand the answers and the paths previously walked" (GERALDI, 2015, p.96).

Antônia challenged me to go through non-existent paths. Thus, we began to write the letter. We agreed that every week we would work on the letter. However, Antônia was not the only student in the class, the other students also had their demands, had other desires and different objectives to be in the classroom. For some of these students, writing letters was not a relevant activity at that moment. Maybe because they did not have a concrete recipient, as was the case of Antônia. Dealing with heterogeneity in the classroom is always a challenge. But I had already learned in my trajectory not to involve the whole class with the same activity. The classes were based on discussion topics that we proposed, and sometimes I, sometimes the class, read different texts, and developed different writing proposals, etc. During the school term we experimented with a variety of topics and topics. During the school period we were experimenting with writing different textual genres, however, for Antônia the main proposal of written production was the letter she wanted to write to her brother.

Antônia met the essential conditions for writing to happen: she had a concrete recipient, a real reason to be communicated, and an affective relationship between her and her interlocutor. Dialoguing with Smolka (2012), we could say that the student, even without "the mastery of letters", was in conditions to produce her writing, because she was guided by the key mobilizing questions of written production that preserves the meaning and social significance of the written language: write what? for whom? and for what?

Smolka (2012), in the book "The child in the early stages of writing - Literacy as a discursive process", argues that teaching or learning to read and write are complex actions that take place in the game of social representations and symbolic exchanges. Having as central interlocutors the theories of Vygotsky and Mikhail Bakhtin, the author taking as a basis the fundamentally social and interlocutive aspect of the conditions and functioning of writing points out that: "'one does not simply teach or learn' to 'read' and 'write'. One learns (to use) a form of language, a form of verbal interaction, an activity, a symbolic work" (SMOLKA, 2012, p.60).

Little by little she wrote her word, we treated together form and content of the letter; sometimes she allowed her text to be appreciated collectively as a revision proposal. Textual revision as part of the learning process of writing was a routine activity in class and was performed in three ways: sometimes individually, by the author herself, other times in the exchange of texts between pairs, and collectively, with the whole class, based on the texts reproduced on the blackboard.

In my daily actions, I tried to meet Geraldi's (2015) recommendations:

the teacher only teaches to write if he assumes the student's writing processes, making him a co-enunciator, a privileged and attentive reader, a color-collaborator able to encourage the other to keep searching for the best way to say what he wants to say for the reasons that lead him to say what he says (GERALDI, 2015, p.98).

This was one of the principles that subsidized my practice. However, possibly echoes of a formation that still lives in us and believes that the teacher has the power to determine what the student knows or doesn't know, in my evaluation Antônia's letter was practically ready, but with some corrections to be made.

One day, the student presented her letter to me at the end of class. She was euphoric. She felt very happy to see that she was learning to write, to read and, mainly, to write her letter. After reading the letter that Antonia presented to me, I was also happy and congratulated her. The letter was well written, there were few things to revise and, in the place of the teacher who believes he knows more about the learning process than the learner himself, I proposed the revision for the next class.

Very sure of herself, Antonia refused the proposal. She told me that her letter did not need any further corrections. Any further correction would erase her identity in that letter. With her words,

Antonia argued that the text could be more correct from the point of view of language norms, perhaps even more poetic, but it would no longer be her text.

The first impulse I had was to question her and try to convince her of the importance of making the revision, but I didn't; I had already seen myself in that situation? I could only say "okay". Antonia's words were the kind of words that, we don't quite know how, take us to another "place": how did I feel about interventions in peer writing, in academic writing, and before that, in elementary school? I went home thinking. I was learning that evaluation is not only made from the teacher's perspective, and I started to propose evaluations in a participatory way with the students, listening to what they perceived about their learning processes and how they evaluated the productions developed.

The next night we worked in class on how to address the envelope to send the letter. In the next class, Antônia communicated that she had already posted the letter at the post office. Days later, she shared with the class her happiness at having received a phone call from her brother commenting on the letter, answering the questions she had addressed, and his joy at seeing that Antonia had now learned to read and write. Much more than learning how to write a letter, Antônia learned and taught me that reading and writing is to appropriate a "way of saying what one wants to say to the person for the reasons that lead him to say what he says" (GERALDI, 2015, p. 96).

Antônia once told me her story, revealing why she did not learn to read and write when she was still a child. Her father didn't want her to learn to write, so she wouldn't write to a boyfriend. She didn't even have a boyfriend, but her father said he did this to keep an eye on her and to make sure that she would only date at the "right time and with the right person", who, of course, would be chosen by him. Antônia didn't go to school, but went to work in the fields.

The story of Antonia, the story of an ordinary black woman, like so many others, tells us the story of a patriarchal, racist society, whose historical role reserved for women is one of submission. Antonia is seventy years old, so she was born in the 1950s, when the "Golden Law" that officially ended slavery in the country was one hundred and seventy-two years old. Even so, as a poor black woman, Antonia is still enslaved, as she was forbidden to have access to schooling and to historically produced knowledge. On the other hand, the absence of schooling also ends up determining the type of work that will be reserved for her - working in the fields, as a maid, as a nanny, as a cleaner, etc.

Apple (2017) discusses the need for Education to "act against the ideology, processes, and institutional practices that reproduce oppressive conditions" (APPLE, 2017, p. 901); he calls this a process of repositioning, in which we must seek to "see the world through the eyes of the dispossessed" (APPLE, 2017, p.901). What good would it do to keep the initial planning if he could not guarantee, for example, Antonia that she would have access to a knowledge that was so meaningful to her and that would allow her to get closer to her family by communicating through the letter? And so with the others, each with that which was most dear to him. What good would it do to rigorously do the initial planning and, with it, reproduce oppressive curricular conditions? It was essential to give back to them that which, in one way or another, had been previously denied and that had placed them in a situation of restricted conditions since we are in a graphocentric society, where the conditions of reading and writing can be converted into power relations.

Apple (2017) adds that to break with institutional relations that reproduce oppressive conditions, constituting with "repositioning" the foundations of critical pedagogy,

we must think in terms of relationships. That is, to understand that education requires that we see it, in its essence, as a political and ethical act. This means that we need to situate it again in the contexts of unequal power relations, in society at large and in relations of exploitation, domination, and subordination, and -in the conflicts- that are generated by these relations (APPLE, 2004 apud APPLE, 2017, p. 901).

The dialog that we developed, Antônia and I, allowed us to know her greatest desire to learn and her greatest need at that moment. It also allowed us to know her story and negotiate the meaning of a curriculum, rethink planning, and negotiate the meaning of an evaluation.

In a dialogical education perspective (FREIRE, 2014), the word is not the privilege of some, but the right of all; Education is made in the dialogue between subjects. This opens space, for example,

to discuss in class what will be studied, when and how it will be studied, and how it will be evaluated, referring to the curriculum, planning, and evaluation. In this experience that I bring to the text, the student's word is right and transforms the practice regarding her planning and evaluation; first, as a spoken word that argues negotiating a meaning for her production and, then, as a written word over which we negotiate the meanings of the textual revision.

In treating dialogue as a human phenomenon, Freire (2014, p.107), states "there is no true word that is not praxis. Hence, to say the true word is to transform the world." Praxis results from an action-reflection process, a dialogical relationship, and Freire understands the inseparability of these two elements, since the dichotomy between them could be reduced to action for action's sake or to empty words.

The emphasis on the dimension of reflection in teaching practice, especially in basic education, has two representatives in Brazil whose thoughts have influenced and still influence many teachers: Paulo Freire and Regina Leite Garcia. The production of these thinkers contributed significantly to the transformation of educational concepts and the actions of many educators. The teacher-researcher conception, in Brazil, was widely discussed by Regina Leite Garcia, who also strengthened the discussion about the practice-theory-practice relationship.

Garcia and Alves (2002, p.110) state that "pedagogical practice is a space of theory in motion". With this, she is explaining the teacher-researcher, its existence, its necessity. The practice with a space of theory in motion proposes to recognize, understand, affirm these three elements - practice, space (of everyday life) and theory - as non-definitive, malleable and heterogeneous. That is, considering that everyday life is transformed by the presence of different subjects and their ways of being and being in the world, the practices in everyday school are required to meet a diversity of thinking and ways of learning and that, in this sense, always presupposes a new look, a new problematize, a new create, deal with our doubts, from the reflection that produces new knowledge and theories.

It is in this sense that Garcia and Alves (2012) discuss the practice-theory-practice relationship that for the authors means the dialogical interdependence between practice and theory; more than that, the inseparability between them. The interweaving of two dimensions in which practice is articulated to theory through reflective processes.

[...] we understood that practice is theory in motion and theory is the result of reflection on practice. That is, we discovered that there is no practice devoid of theory, nor theory that does not result from practice. [...] theory is confirmed in practice, and when not, it is in practice that theory is updated or even modified, when it cannot explain what happens in practice (GARCIA and ALVES, 2012, p. 491).

A practice that is full of theory because it produces knowledge while dialogically relating to our references with which we identify throughout life, even if it is not explicit.

The reflective process of the teacher-researcher, of Praxis, for both Freire (2014) and Garcia (2011) has a common element: the awareness of incompleteness of each one of us. For Freire (2014),

Once again, men, challenged by the drama of the present hour, set themselves a problem. They discover how little they know about themselves, about their "place in the cosmos," and are anxious to know more. The recognition of how little they know about themselves is one of the reasons for this search. As they settle into the almost, if not tragic, discovery of how little they know about themselves, they make a problem of themselves. They ask questions. They answer, and their answers lead them to new questions (FREIRE, 2014, p. 39).

In the words of Garcia (2011, p. 20), "Today we know that doubt, uncertainty, insecurity, the awareness of our not yet knowing is what invites us to investigate and, investigating, we can learn something we did not know before". The recognition of our incompleteness and the need to find answers to the challenges that are proposed to us daily moves us to do research in teaching.

For her, the teacher who is not satisfied with the discourse on school failure, which blames the students themselves, and who is committed to their success and in search of answers, assumes an investigative posture (GARCIA; ALVES, 2002). And I, facing the same situation, of not being satisfied

with the explanations that do not explain, very common to be heard, such as "lack of family support", "his brothers were also like that", "he lacks interest", "it must be a problem with the speech therapist or some psychological block"..., I also adopted an investigative posture. These kinds of simplistic answers blame the subject, label him, and do not help to deal with the issues of the teaching-learning processes that challenge us daily. I took on an investigative attitude to understand some of the challenges my teaching practice faced with respect to these processes, to understand my practice, how students react to its stimulus, its impact on students' relationships with knowledge.

By allowing myself to ground my practice in the principles of action-reflection or the practice-theory-practice relationship, that is, a teaching praxis, I believe that the most important point of this experience of mine was not bringing the letter into the classroom, thinking about how to organize a work with the letter and meet the expectations of a student and the other students. The moment I learned the most from was evaluating together - teacher and student. By proposing one more revision to the student, she assumes that her text cannot be tinkered with anymore, that it has already satisfied her, that there is an identity relationship in her way of writing that marks it and she does not want it to be erased.

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

To resume here the dialogue about the research methodology that subsidizes our reflections we bring back again Geraldi, Geraldi and Lima (2015), when they point out that the specificity of investigations that make use of narratives of educational experiences,

lies in the fact that the subject of the experience narrates it in order to, by dwelling on what was lived and narrated, extract lessons that are worth as knowledge produced a posteriori, resulting from the clash between the experience and the theoretical studies carried out after the narrated experience. The research that can be triggered from the narrative of the experience is not a construction prior to the experience. It is from the lived experience that themes and questions emerge from which the theoretical references to be dialogued are chosen and, in turn, the lessons to be drawn emerge [...] (Geraldi, Geraldi and Lima, 2015, p. 27).

In this sense, dwelling on the narrated experience, we synthesize some lessons or knowledge produced that the lived experience brought to us. With the class and, especially, with Antonia's provocations and determinations, we learned about the curriculum, evaluation, and planning, instigating us to think about the challenge of articulating the individual and collective dimensions, considering different goals, different starting points, and different "arrival points".

Themes and questions were also raised by the reflection on the experience. The dialogical relationship is a learning process that is always under construction. In this dialogical teacher-student relationship in Youth and Adult Education, how many things are revealed about what the students know from their vast life experiences? What contributions do the meanings they negotiate in their daily lives bring to the knowledge-doings that circulate at school? Is there room for these propositions and negotiations? What clues do they offer us about their learning processes? How can we ensure in the daily life possibilities of participation of these subjects in the decision about what they want to learn, about the negotiated meanings for learning and about the meaning of the (self)evaluation of their learning processes? We believe that the answers to these questions lead us to put ourselves in the exotopic place, which Bakhtin (1992) talks about. The author says about exotopy

I must identify with the other and see the world through his value system, just as he sees it; I must put myself in his place, and then, back in my place, complete his horizon with all that is discovered from the place I occupy, outside of it; I must frame him, create for him an environment that finishes him, by means of the surplus of my vision, my knowledge, my desire and my feeling (BAKHTIN, 1992, p.45).

It is in this sense of listening to the voice of the other, which reveals things about him/her that we could not know otherwise, that we understand the students' voices as formative for teaching and powering of more meaningful and democratic curricula for the popular classes. When we allow ourselves

to listen to the other and to think together with him/her, we also put ourselves in the exotic position of one who can learn from the shared experience.

What do the students need and want to write? In the excerpt presented here we brought the letter episode, but many other situations mobilize us in the daily routine of EJA teaching: surfing the web (internet), producing a resume, a sales sign for some commercial activity, a song, a recipe, etc. Listening carefully to the propositions to guarantee space to develop projects that can meet these propositions can contribute to bring new meaning to the *teaching-learning* process, which articulates reading the world and reading the word, as Freire teaches us.

On the other hand, thinking about teacher education from the narrative of experiences allows us to develop new understandings about school practices and the school world, built in processes of co-authorship, which contribute to tighten the relations between the speeches that define what the school and the teachers should be and what in fact the teachers think and make happen on a daily basis at school.

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