EDUR • Educação em Revista. 2023; 39:e35763 DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.1590/0102-4698368535763t Preprint DOI: https://preprints.scielo.org/index.php/scielo/preprint/view/2205

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#### ARTICLE

# CICLOPEDALEIROS: EDUCATIONAL PROCESSES ARISING FROM THE STRUCTURING OF A SOLIDARITY ECONOMY ENTERPRISE<sup>12</sup>

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#### ABSTRACT

Implementing and consolidating the neoliberal economic model had as consequences the accentuated precariousness of work in Brazil and the increase in inequalities. The large number of people living in socioeconomic vulnerability and the search to overcome this situation has led to the emergence of alternatives to income generation. These alternatives have promoted exploitative practices such as the uberization of labor, although they have also contributed to driving other economies. The CicloPedaleiros Solidarity Economy Enterprise seeks, by making bicycle deliveries, to enable income generation for adults on the margins of the labor market and subject to unemployment and informality. This article aimed to identify and understand the educational processes that arise from the social practice of bicycle delivery based on the actions of this enterprise. We used participant research, systematization of observations through field diaries, and analysis based on phenomenology for the methodology. Three thematic categories emerged from the analysis: A) "I gone there to speak and said, I am from CicloPedaleiros solidarity economy enterprise"; B) "It is good to wear a helmet just to be sure, at right time you'll be saved"; and C) "Precariousness is the word of the year."

**Keywords:** educational processes. bicycle delivery. solidarity economy.

### CICLOPEDALEIROS: PROCESSOS EDUCATIVOS DECORRENTES DA ESTRUTURAÇÃO DE UM EMPREENDIMENTO DE ECONOMIA SOLIDÁRIA

#### RESUMO

A implantação e a consolidação do modelo econômico neoliberal tiveram como consequências a precarização acentuada do trabalho no Brasil e o aumento das desigualdades. O grande número de

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> This work was carried out with the support of the Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior - Brazil (CAPES) - Funding Code 001.

 $<sup>^2</sup>$  The translation of this article into English was funded by the Fundação de Amparo à Pesquisa do Estado de Minas Gerais – FAPEMIG, through the program of supporting the publication of institutional scientific journals.

pessoas vivendo em situação de vulnerabilidade socioeconômica e a busca pela superação desse quadro faz emergir alternativas à geração de renda. Essas alternativas promoveram práticas exploratórias como a *uberização* do trabalho, mas também contribuíram para impulsionar outras economias. O Empreendimento de Economia Solidária CicloPedaleiros busca, através da realização de cicloentregas, viabilizar geração de renda para adultos que estão à margem do mercado de trabalho, sujeitos ao desemprego e à informalidade. O presente artigo teve como objetivo identificar e compreender os processos educativos decorrentes da prática social da cicloentrega a partir das ações do citado empreendimento. Como metodologia utilizamos pesquisa participante, sistematização das observações por meio de diários de campo e análise pautada na fenomenologia. Da análise emergiram três categorias temáticas: A) "Eu fui lá na frente falar, falei, sou dos CicloPedaleiros, empreendimento de economia solidária"; B) "É bão usar o capacete, viu, numa hora dessa salva"; e C) "Precarização é a palavra do ano".

Palavras-chave: processos educativos. cicloentrega. economia solidária.

### CICLOPEDALEIROS: PROCESOS EDUCATIVOS DERIVADOS DE LA ESTRUCTURACIÓN DEL EMPRENDIMIENTO DE ECONOMÍA SOLIDARIA

#### RESUMEN

La implantación y consolidación del modelo económico neoliberal resultó en 1a marcada precarización del trabajo en Brasil y en el aumento de las desigualdades. La gran cantidad de personas que viven en situación de vulnerabilidad socioeconómica y su búsqueda por superar esta situación ocasionó el surgimiento de alternativas para la generación de ingresos. Estas alternativas promovieron prácticas de explotación como la uberización del trabajo, pero también contribuyeron a impulsar otras economías. El emprendimiento de Economía Solidaria CicloPedaleiros busca, a través del servicio de entregas en bicicleta, viabilizar la generación de ingresos de los adultos que se encuentran al margen del mercado laboral, sujetos al desempleo y a la informalidad. El presente artículo tuvo como objetivo identificar y comprender los procesos educativos derivados de la práctica social del servicio de entregas en bicicleta a partir de las acciones del mencionado emprendimiento. Como metodología se utilizó la investigación participativa, la sistematización de observaciones a través de diarios de campo y el análisis desde el enfoque de la fenomenología. El análisis llevó al surgimiento de tres categorías temáticas: A) "Fui al frente a hablar, dije, soy de CicloPedaleiros, un emprendimiento de economía solidaria"; B) "Es bueno llevar casco, oye, en cualquier momento te salva"; y C) "La precarización es la palabra del año".

Palabras clave: procesos educativos. servicio de entregas en bicicleta. economía solidaria.

### **INTRODUCTION**

We understand that "people are formed in all the experiences they participate in different contexts throughout life" (OLIVEIRA *et al.*, 2014, p. 36)<sup>3</sup>. We, therefore, adopt the perspective that education is not restricted to school or home and that we educate ourselves all the time to the world, in reciprocity, teaching, and learning in any space-time in which we participate, according to Oliveira *et al.* (2014) and Freire (2018; 2016).

Social practices emerge from the relations between people in and for society. These practices produce and reproduce material and symbolic structures whose consequences engender historical and cultural permanence or transformation. In line with Oliveira *et al.* (2014), it is explicit that social practices "are built on relationships that are established between people, people, and the communities in which they are embedded, people and groups, groups among themselves, groups and wider society, in a historical context of nationhood and, notably in our day, of relationships between nations" (p. 33) and aim to:

[...] to pass on knowledge, values, traditions, positions, and attitudes towards life; to supply survival needs, material and symbolic maintenance of people, groups, or communities; to seek the recognition of these needs by society; to control, expand the political participation of people, groups, communities in decisions of the wider society; propose, and/or execute transformations in the social structure, in the forms of rationality, of thinking and acting or articulate to maintain them; guarantee social, cultural, economic, political, civil rights; correct distortions and social injustices; seek recognition, respect, valorization of cultures and citizen participation of social, ethno-racial groups marginalized by society; think, reflect, discuss and execute actions (OLIVEIRA *et al.*, 2014, p. 33-34).

Therefore, they can root, uproot, or lead to create new roots, contributing to transformative actions or the reproduction of oppression and human segregation (OLIVEIRA *et al.*, 2014). The social practices give rise to educational processes that can be studied; however, we are in tune with Fiori (1991) when he says: "Education, thus, is liberating, or it is not education" (p. 83). In this way, we position ourselves for the non-existence of an educational process when these practices reproduce oppression and dehumanize. Nonetheless, we affirm that it is possible, even in contradictory contexts, for educational processes to emerge that promote liberation.

We also understand that we are unfinished beings built daily through multiple and complex experiences. Hence, we prefer to use the term educational processes since it refers to being continuously educated because it is impossible to mark the exact moment someone was educated about something. Regarding the meaning of educational processes, we agree with Gonçalves Junior, Carmo, and Corrêa (2015) when they proposed that:

[...] [educational processes] occur in a mutual learning relationship and not only in a situation where one teaches the other; they have equitable dialogue and intentionality directed towards cooperation as fundamental assumptions for its development, overcoming, being more, and demanding autonomy, the possibility of decision, and transformation. Such conditions allow those involved to understand the context, values, and codes of the group, community, and society in which they live, having the possibility to critically reflect on their condition of belonging to the world with others, educating and educating themselves (p. 176–177).

In the Latin American context, where we live the perspective of *suleada* science<sup>4</sup>, we understand that investigating educational processes arising from social practices must seek support in

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> All quotations in this article were freely translated from Portuguese.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> This is a neologism and in opposition to "northen," which subliminally alludes to the northern hemisphere, ideologically Educação em Revista | Belo Horizonte | v.39 | e35763 | 2023

reality, starting from lives, experiences, and understandings of the world that, through reflective, dialogical, and critical action, seek collective praxis, which is the producer of new knowledge and transformer of this oppressive reality. Thus, our study is inserted in the social practice of bicycle delivery within the context of the solidarity economy enterprise (SEE) CicloPedaleiros. By accompanying the group, we sought to unveil the resulting educational processes.

The SEE CicloPedaleiros (brand created by the entrepreneurs) is allocated in the service sector and makes deliveries (food, clothing, and documents, among other smaller objectives) using the bicycle as a means of transportation. The group intends to expand the business to bicycle maintenance and ecotourism, albeit this expansion has not occurred so far. The SEE is based in the solidarity economy's public center in São Carlos, where it has a room to store equipment and hold meetings.

The SEE has four partners: Fernanda, Benedito, Adriano, and Odair<sup>5</sup>, aged between 25 and 64. The primary means of communication between them is a smartphone chat application through which all delivery requests are sent. When someone receives an order (which generally arrives through each one's private cell phone), they send it on the application and collectively decide who will carry it out (it depends on availability, although there is a preference for rotation among the partners).

The SEE follows the principles of solidarity economy, meaning it has collective management; there is equal division among the partners, who are guided by human valuation, cooperation, and solidarity. The price is calculated fairly, thus avoiding the self-exploitation of labor. It is worth mentioning that this group does not work for any private company related to delivery applications.

CicloPedaleiros began its activities in 2017. In mid-2018, the group began to dedicate itself to expanding the brand in the municipality where it is based to consolidate an alternative to the current work system. In general, they structure their clientele through partnerships with other enterprises and shopkeepers and by spreading the services in the city, combining the brand with sustainability, fair trade, and valuing local businesses.

Currently, the enterprise is active, meeting as needed to talk about agendas and directions, as well as to develop cohesion activities, approve the entrance of new members, and provide training, among others. The SEE is not yet fully structured physically and financially, although it has partnerships in the city that provide minimal stability.

### NEOLIBERALISM, UBERIZATION, AND SOLIDARITY ECONOMY

The neoliberal model adopted by various countries in recent decades has promoted a broad destructuring of employment, giving way to informality, flexibility, and job insecurity at the base of the production chain. According to Hespanha (2002), "the employment system that is being instituted through the new global production model represents an aggravation of social risk and exclusion for a growing number of workers spread throughout the world" (p. 24). According to the cited author:

Social differentiation is one of the processes associated with globalization that explains phenomena quite visible in contemporary societies, including the accentuation of inequalities, the increasing marginalization of certain social classes, and the gradual destruction of social solidarities. It operates through a double effect. On the one hand, a social segmentation effect is

presented as superior to the southern hemisphere. "Suleado/a" proposes that we have as reference the southern hemisphere, southern epistemologies, and south-south dialogues. Further details can be found in the readings of: Santos; Meneses (2009); Freire (2018); Campos (s/d).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Fictitious names chosen by the participants.

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the detachment of the weakest segments of the social groups at the bottom of society and the promotion of the strongest at the top. On the other hand, an effect of individualization of social life (i.e., greater autonomy of individuals from collective structures of authority based on tradition or state power) (HESPANHA, 2002, p. 22).

The double effect mentioned by Hespanha (2002) increases the process of weakening the working class' power of struggle. By analyzing the working class as a whole and the losses of the last years, it is possible to identify that there is no robust class in Brazil with a well-defined and directed political project. On the contrary, what we have are segmented and individualized groups, politically unstructured and unable to overcome the capital-labor relations established by the neoliberalism in force.

The political deficiency of the class has corroborated the greater flexibilization of labor laws and the withdrawal of historically-won rights. In this context, transnational companies, supported by the advancement of technologies, have implemented a new form of outsourcing in the service sector through a process that has been discussed under the concept of uberization (ANTUNES, 2018). Uberization comes from the word Uber<sup>6</sup>, the first company to put this model into practice. A cell phone application allows non-professional drivers to transport people using their own or rented passenger cars. Afterward, other companies launched applications that operate under the same logic in this and other services, such as delivering food and goods in general.

Uberization is linked to the relaxation of labor laws and the deepening of the exploitation of labor power for the benefit of the profits of transnational companies. In this model, the relationship between employer and employee does not exist, as those who decide to work for the applications register as self-employed. Since there is no record in a work card, all labor regulations in this area are rendered ineffective, including in case of accidents during the service provided. According to Pochmann (2018):

Regarding this [scenario], one can identify the experimentation of forms of greater capitalist exploitation of human labor through the advance of outsourcing and "Uberism" of labor. Simultaneously, one can note the advance of the degradation of workers' conquests in the environment of flexibilization and deregulation of the social and labor protection system that challenges the traditional format of organization and representations of a spontaneous nature, disconnected and disarticulated from a larger project of transformation of capitalism (p. 70).

The uberization of work intends to spread the ideology that everyone involved is an entrepreneur and can decide when and how to earn their own money<sup>7</sup>. Nevertheless, the applications' companies stipulate the service's price and make rigorous control through the customers' evaluations. The company evaluates the work routine through a points system: those who work many hours a week and during busy hours earn points, and those who do not have enough points can be blocked or excluded from the application. The companies charge 15–30% of the total value for each service provided. In many cases, those who hire the service don't know how much the provider will receive, and those who provide the service do not know how much was paid.

According to Presta (2019), the advent of these technologies added to changes in labor relations (more flexibility and autonomy of contracts, fewer charges) corroborates the appreciation of entrepreneurship. In these contexts, people work individually and competently, linking income generation

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Word originated from the German language (originally written with an umlaut: Über) that means "over," "above," "beyond," and in street language (slang) "super," "mega," like the Brazilian-Portuguese expression "top." Thus, it alludes to a form of shared transportation that is "cool," "hip," "young," and "cheap" and that takes place via an application.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Uber's advertising campaign: "Drive only when it's convenient for you. No office or boss. That means you can start and stop whenever you want. With Uber's app, you're in charge." (taken from Uber's website: https://www.uber.com/a/join-new. Accessed on: 13 Aug. 2020).

to the amount of work done. These new technologies bring the illusion of freedom and insubordination, but what happens is that millions of individuals work in an outsourced way for large groups without any guarantee, protection, rights, or regulation. For Linhart (2017, n/p):

[...] In their way, these companies seek to reduce the "yoke" that the rights and guarantees that constitute the other side of the salaried relationship represent for them. Thus they strive to develop individuals' competencies "to enable them to take charge of themselves" to face risks on their own while holding them back with impositions strong enough to guarantee profit. This takes the form of self-entrepreneurship, particularly in the digital platform economy (e.g., Uber). These workers, presented as lovers of freedom and adventure, daring and flexibility, are faced with very specific impositions in equipment (cars and bicycles), clothing, and even verbal interaction scripts, which they are obliged to respect on pain of a fine. The platforms also set the prices to be charged and receive evaluations from customers and do not hesitate to punish workers, thus resorting to disciplinary power. However independent they may appear to be, the "partners" of the Deliveroo platform, for instance, are fined if they refuse more than three service calls during their working hours. A similar rule exists for Uber drivers, although they are the ones who must pay the taxes related to the activity, the social contributions, the gasoline, and the car.

Data from the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) revealed that 23.8 million people were self-employed in the first quarter of 2019. The average real income of workers in this category remained at BRL 1,600.00 (IBGE, 2019). In 2020, from January to March, the quarter before the pandemic, the number of self-employed people had already grown to 24.1 million, keeping the average income at the same value (IBGE, 2020).

The Locomotiva Institute published a survey in the O Estado de S. Paulo newspaper about the number of workers involved with digital platforms in Brazil. According to the study, in April 2019, 17 million people regularly used apps to supplement their income, and about 4 million as the primary source; the article also stated that, together, IFood and Uber are the largest employers in the country (GRAVAS, 2019).

Growing unemployment and the exclusion of younger and older people from the formal labor market have forced some people to seek alternatives to generate income and support themselves and their families. The advance of digital platforms has made it possible for people to find forms of subsistence other than scarce formal work. Thus, this is the new multifaceted configuration of work in neoliberalism, which has intensified in recent decades and has completely transformed social relations.

Against this process, other options have arisen for the great mass of unemployed or marginalized workers in the labor market. One of them is the solidarity economy (SE), which is developing "in many countries, especially in Latin America, as an operative field of social transformation and political action" (HESPANHA *et al.*, 2015, p. 466). The associative, cooperative, and exchange bases that have existed for over two centuries are now present in the movement known as SE. Hence, SE is not the intellectual creation of a single individual but rather the synthesis of the action of various social movements throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, having its historical roots in the struggle of workers against the production of capitalist inequalities in favor of a fair society.

Although it has diverse expressions worldwide, SE has some fundamental principles that differentiate it from those observed in the predominantly capitalist model. According to Singer (2000), SE is based on the collective ownership of the means of production, the division of surplus among the partners, and collective management. The enterprises that operate under the prism of SE comprise a set of collective experiences of work, production, commercialization, and credit organized by principles of solidarity. To name a few: cooperatives, producers' associations, self-managed enterprises, community

development banks, barter clubs, and various urban and rural popular organizations (SINGER, 2000). These characteristics are the confluence of rules applied by several previous cooperatives, which now appear together. Moreover, SE represents modern challenges of the so-called minorities of the capitalist system:

> In addition to its historical roots, the current wave of SEEs [...] is influenced by the countercultural movements that arose in the late 1960s. The questioning of capitalism and the disenchantment with existing socialism provoked the emergence of ecological, feminist, and minority movements and the search for alternatives to existing models. Therefore, the classic forms of EcoSol [...] are the production and consumption cooperatives that emerged in the midnineteenth century, reemerge, in the new context of capitalist society, loaded with environmentalist values (of sustainable development), community, feminist, solidarity, among others, which are in line with the criticism concerning neoliberalism, in addition to meeting the technological and organizational changes of recent decades (OLIVEIRA FILHO, 2016, p. 50).

Because of these characteristics, according to Singer (2000), SE creates an alternative to the capitalist system of production. In this conception, the so-called SEEs are engaged in the materialization of practices configured as forms of politicization and strategies for generating employment and income, manifesting themselves through struggle fronts that seek to overcome social exclusion. According to Hespanha et al. (2015) "in the case of Latin America, confronted with a socioeconomic reality of marked exclusion, the SE has gained strong expression as a practice for economic inclusion" (p. 468).

In Brazil, the first expressions of cooperativism also date back to the 19th century; however, SE as a social movement began to have some visibility in the 1980s and only gained momentum in 1990, concomitant with the implementation of neoliberalism. According to Singer (2002), SE revived in the country "when millions of jobs were lost, leading to mass unemployment and marked social exclusion" (p. 122). It was also in the 1990s that the Technological Incubators of Popular Cooperatives (ITCPs), which are important in supporting SE, began to be founded in universities. According to Oliveira Filho (2016):

> [...] focused on the production of knowledge simultaneously with the intervention, in reality, the work developed in the ITCPs aims at the monitoring and formation of self-managed economic enterprises as an opportunity to generate work and income for excluded populations, as well as the consolidation of solidarity and cooperative principles in society (p. 53).

In addition to the ITCPs and the people linked to SEEs, the broad Brazilian SE movement also includes the Unitrabalho Foundation, which conducts research in the area and provides assistance to the enterprises, the Landless Rural Workers Movement (MST), Caritas, an entity linked to the National Conference of Brazilian Bishops, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), among others. The movement is organized through forums (Brazilian, state, and municipal) of SE. It has its representation in governmental instances, including the National Secretariat of Solidarity Economy (SENAES), which was created in 2003 within the Ministry of Labor, with Paul Singer himself as secretary (2003-2016). In 2011, the Brazilian Solidarity Economy Forum launched the Cirandas.net website to promote the economic, social, and political articulation of SE.

About the number of enterprises in 2007:

A broad survey on the solidarity economy has just been carried out in Brazil. Known as the first National Mapping, it was idealized by the Brazilian Solidarity Economy Forum and the Federal Government, with the support of universities, research institutions, and NGOs. In 2006, the end of the main stage of information collection resulted in a database of 15 thousand Solidarity Economy Enterprises, involving an estimated population of 1.2 million participants in all the states of Brazil and 41% of the municipalities. In late 2007, complementary field research included another 7,000 enterprises in the database (GAIGER, 2007, p. 58).

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Between 2009 and 2013, a new survey was conducted by SENAES through a National Management Commission, with representatives from the secretariat and other bodies involved with SE, including the Brazilian Solidarity Economy Forum. The goal was to assemble a national database called the National Information System on Solidarity Economy (SIES)<sup>8</sup> to characterize the SEEs and SE in the country (IPEA, 2016).

According to the II Solidary Economy Mapping, 19,708 enterprises were identified in all states of Brazil and 2,713 municipalities. "Of this total, 11,869 (60.2%) are new SEEs, that is, they had not been registered in the previous mapping, and 7,839 (39.8%) are from revisited SEEs" (IPEA, 2016, p. 10). The mapping also registered about 1.4 million people involved (workers and consumers) in the Solidarity Economy in the country.

Solidarity Economy has been growing in Brazil in the last decades, engaged as a social movement. Although it has stabilized in numerical terms in recent years, the number of new SEEs is expressive, according to the data presented in the first and second surveys. Over the years, it has also been configured as an essential tool for overcoming misery and social marginalization caused by the new economic restructuring since adopting the neoliberal model.

#### METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

We adopted a method anchored in the qualitative research approach to develop this study.<sup>9</sup> In this perspective, the act of researching is to go around the investigated phenomenon, whose intentionality is to seek a possible understanding, given that every phenomenon has varied perspectives. In the words of Garnica (1997):

In qualitative approaches, the term research takes on a new meaning, to be conceived as a circular trajectory around what one wishes to understand, not being solely and/or a priori concerned with principles, laws, and generalizations, but focusing on quality, on the elements that are significant to the observer-investigator (p. 2).

In order to shed more light on the studied context in its minutiae, thus avoiding generalizations, a careful and attentive insertion was carried out with the EES CicloPedaleiros anchored in participant research (STRECK; ADAMS, 2012). The apprehension is that the act of doing research should focus on 'doing with' the population and not 'doing for' or 'doing about' the people who contribute to the investigation (OLIVEIRA *et al.*, 2014). It also means that we do not adopt a neutral posture but an active one, living together, sharing tasks, and participating in dialogues. The researcher ceases to be a mere observer and becomes part of as much as the community, putting their knowledge in dialogue.

According to Bogdan and Biklen (1994), the insertion of the enterprise's participants was recorded in field diaries, which enabled the registration of the descriptive aspects of the experience, as well as the explicitness of the reflective dimension of the observed phenomenon. The objective of the reflective part is to improve the description of the notes and make explicit that there is a research subject

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Data available until 2013 that can be used by all those involved with SE, researchers, development institutions, and even the federal government in creating programs and public policies of support and development. Available at: http://sies.ecosol.org.br/. Accessed on: 13 Aug. 2020.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the Federal University of São Carlos under CAAE number 02939518.9.0000.5504.

who interprets the phenomenon, evaluates the situations, and reflects on the events observed and experienced in the field (BOGDAN; BIKLEN, 1994).

In the context of this article, we bring the analysis of seventeen field diaries made from our participation in the group's evaluation and planning meetings. We accompanied the CicloPedaleiros from March 2018 to March 2019, assisting in daily tasks, including checking routes, searching for partnerships, adjusting bicycles, and participating in the delivery service. We chose to only collect data in the meetings because, in these moments, the group reflected on the events and planned activities; therefore, all the actions of the SEE went through the meetings at some point.

The meetings, in principle, should occur weekly, but in some moments, the group met weekly, in others monthly, and also had periods of break. This context resulted from the demand for services and the interpretation of the need for meetings defined by the CicloPedaleiros and in no way affected the data collection of this investigation since the research was carried out in a participatory manner and over a year.

After data collection, the analysis began, which was marked by phenomenological reduction, an exercise that includes ideographic and nomothetic analyses. The first one implied several (re)readings of our data sources (field diaries) carried out in light of the research objective. The re-readings made it possible to highlight the so-called meaning units textually. According to Martins and Bicudo (1989):

[...] as it is impossible to analyze a whole text simultaneously, it becomes necessary to divide it into units. [...] the meaning units are discriminations [...] perceived in the subjects' descriptions [...]. The units of meaning [...] are not ready-made in the text and exist only in relation to the researcher's attitude, disposition, and perspective (p. 99).

The diaries were organized in chronological order and identified with Roman numerals, the oldest being the first (I) and the most recent the seventeenth (XVII). At the same time, the units of meaning were noted with Arabic numbers (1, 2, 3 etc.), always restarting the counting from number one in each distinct field diary. During the analysis, we will cite some meaning units, and at the end, in parentheses, we will first indicate the diary in which it was recorded and then the number corresponding to the US. For example, "IX-19" means the passage corresponding to the nineteenth meaning unit in the ninth field diary.

In an interdependent manner to the ideographic analysis, the nomothetic analysis occurred, which consists in the movement of identifying convergences (which express alignments and approximations about the understandings that the research collaborators communicate) and/or divergences (indicating opposing points of view between one or more meaning units) among the different meaning units that were highlighted (GARNICA, 1997; MARTINS; BICUDO, 1989; GONÇALVES JUNIOR *et al.*, 2021).

Faced with convergences and/or divergences among the units of meaning, or even idiosyncrasies (individualized positions), thematic categories were created that indicated the educational processes arising from the social practice of bicycle delivery. The analytical categories express the core meanings we captured from the speeches and records in the field diaries. From the phenomenological perspective, this moment is configured as a nomothetic analysis (GARNICA, 1997). In the path traced by the phenomenologically inspired method, the categories emerge authentically at the moment of analysis (ideographic and nomothetic), with no thematic pre-indications.

The following categories emerged from our analysis: A) I gone there to speak and said, I am from CicloPedaleiros solidarity economy enterprise; B) It is good to wear a helmet just to be sure, at

right time you'll be saved; and C) Precariousness is the word of the year. The titles given to the categories were extracted from the participants' speeches.

#### **CONSTRUCTION OF RESULTS**

### A) I gone there to speak and said, I am from CicloPedaleiros solidarity economy enterprise

This category emerged from the diaries when we identified educational engagement processes in the SEE's constitution. In general, this engagement could be noticed when something was done autonomously, for example, when the participants brought ideas, signed partnerships with shopkeepers and other entrepreneurs in the city, created agreements, and publicized themselves. It is also related to the participants' implicated attitude, as when they showed up to meetings, kept to agreements, wore safety equipment, and demonstrated they knew the history of the actions and the aspects of the enterprise. Engagement presupposes disposition, involvement, and deepening. It is to be soaked in the surrounding reality, reflecting and, simultaneously, building transforming actions.

According to the group's needs, we would meet to report on what had happened, think about possibilities, and divide tasks, among other aspects. The involvement of the participants was evident when they brought new ideas for the enterprise or when they reflected on the experiences brought by the delivery routine. Regarding the difficulties found concerning communication, Benedict and Adriano made a suggestion:

Adriano said: 'another idea, one thing that I think we need to improve a lot in our enterprise is the communication issue, of everyone knowing everything happening. Benedito commented: 'Couldn't we think about developing an application? Adriano said: 'I can imagine an application, I don't know how it would be to build it, right? What would be possible, right? But I imagine that an application would be able to do a lot, to call many clients. It arrives, has everything there, you put where you are from to where you want, and it already calculates the price, the route, everything appears to us, and you don't need to look for a map. I even thought about making a cool one, I thought about making a bike delivery game, you know? If you enter there, such and such a guy asks for such and such a delivery, and you have to go there with your bike and make the delivery. One that was linked to our application, you know? Because the person downloads it to play and our enterprise appears. Then we would put difficulties, the challenges of the dayto-day life of the CicloPedaleiros, oh, you went out and it's raining like hell, it would be an educational game. Benedito commented: 'at the end there would be the message: you lost, do you understand why delivery costs this much? Very educational. Everyone laughed at the possibility. Adriano continued: Then you have a hard time and you get five reais for the delivery, then the message appears, you need to change parts, two hundred and thirty reais, you only got it, you made 10 deliveries and got fifty. This time nobody laughed (XI-11).

Although the application was not possible, the expansion of the enterprise needed new partnerships for deliveries, the search for entrepreneurs who would use the service, and the search for more customers. Because of this dialogue about expansion, Odair, in an autonomous way, sought to partner with a market in his neighborhood on the city's outskirts. Even though this attitude was not previously approved, Odair's active participation brought an opening so that we could think of new ways to promote bicycle deliveries.

The novelty brought by Odair made us evaluate the possibility of better publicizing the enterprise in the southern region of the city, where we could find people interested in hiring our services. With the development of this action, we could have two distribution points in the city: one in Cidade Aracy and the other downtown. We have forwarded that this will be one of our actions in the coming weeks (I-2). Attendance at the Municipal Solidarity Economy Forum meetings also emerged as engagement since it was essential to contact other SEEs and integrate the Solidarity Economy movement. The meeting was monthly and the notice always arrived by email. However, the registered email was Fernanda's, who was not participating as much in the group due to other work she was involved in. Regarding the email forwarding, "Leandro suggested we insert his data for interlocution with the Forum" (IX-5). After that, we started taking turns going to the meetings, and little by little, we were building our identity in that space.

Benedito reminded Adriano to report on the last meeting of the Municipal Forum of Solidarity Economy. He said, 'Ah, the solidarity economy meeting was great yesterday; they talked about several things we can't discuss now, right? Because it was a meeting of a few hours, but then, it was only really like that, in the part that, in the reports, then when they asked for more information, **I gone there to speak and said, I am from CicloPedaleiros solidarity economy enterprise**. People said they already knew me; then I came to tell them that we were back there, then they clapped their hands, it was great, then they asked me 'how much is it? I said, 'ah, we have a table that we are still looking at, BRL 3,00 the minimum, BRL 1,50 the km,' then another asked, 'and do you carry anything?', then I answered, 'anything that you can carry on your bike,' because if you say anything you will be asked to carry a refrigerator, a bottle, then they made some jokes, so I said 'so that's it, we are cool' and I sat down again (IX-26).

Overcoming difficulties in creating strategies and improvements for our organization is also in this category. On a certain delivery by Leandro, the customer did not pay him, claiming that she had already paid another cyclist from the same group (Odair). However, when he came to the customer's house, Odair did not remember receiving any extra money the week before. We thought about it, but it was impossible to know what had happened (if Odair did not pay attention to paying for two deliveries; or if the person was confused about the amounts). At that moment, we made an apportionment so that Leandro would not be left without payment, and then we forwarded solutions:

We talked about the problem, and to prevent it from happening again, we thought about making vouchers. The vouchers would work as follows: the person who regularly hires the service can buy the vouchers. When the product is delivered, he/she gives a voucher to the delivery cyclist as payment for the service. We made the vouchers in a printer and had them laminated. Fernanda went to pick them up and brought them to the meeting. We divided them by color, and each participant received five vouchers of the same color: green, yellow, and red. The different colors will help us to know who the money is with, that is, to whom it was paid. Fernanda got the red ones, Leandro got the yellow ones, and Odair got the green ones. The vouchers were Fernanda's idea, and she made the artwork herself in a computer program (VI-6).

Another difficulty the group overcame was the lack of resources to make a uniform for visual identification. We discussed the need to wear cycling shirts to make deliveries because they are cooler than regular T-shirts in addition to being suitable for work. However, the group had no money for this since each shirt, made with dry-fit fabric and pockets on the back, costs around BRL 70.00. We talked about this problem and found a solution:

Adriano commented that he has a large backyard at home and that we could use it to throw a party for the benefit of the CicloPedaleiros. Leandro gave another idea: to have a pizza or hamburger event since food makes a lot of money. We discussed all these possibilities and decided to start by raffling off a complete bike revision and then, with the money from the raffle, throw a party with pizza and hamburgers. The uniform cost is BRL 70.00 per person (we will need 5 uniforms for a total of BRL 350.00), so, in principle, we must each sell 20 raffle tickets. With the sale of 120 raffle tickets, we would raise BRL 240.00. With this amount, we could buy the ingredients for the pizzas and hamburgers, see if someone could sing and play songs voluntarily, and have the party to raise the rest. Everyone agreed, and we decided to do it this way (VIII-10).

In an implicated manner, the participants demonstrated belonging, creativity, and proactivity in the conduction of activities and difficulties and in the decisions involving the SEE. We noted how important for the constitution of this solidarity enterprise was the construction of educational processes of engagement and autonomy, which we understand, like Freire (2016) and Oliveira *et al.* (2014), to be fundamental for meaningful education, whether in a non-school environment, as in the case of this SEE, or a school environment.

#### B) It is good to wear a helmet just to be sure, at right time you'll be saved

The recorded notes made explicit the daily dialogical relationships among the participants of the CicloPedaleiros SEE, whose attitudes and speeches were largely based on educational processes of solidarity, cooperation, and caring for others, as foreseen in the SE (SINGER, 2002). Dialogical relationships presuppose horizontality among everyone, whose involvement promotes welcoming spaces for speaking and listening. It means being attentive to others and the whole, sharing responsibilities, processes, and worldviews.

During the time we lived together, we had as a collective agreement the use of safety equipment, which at first were closed shoes and a helmet. Others are convenient when using a bicycle, such as goggles and gloves, but due to the costs, they were not part of our agreements. We discussed that using safety equipment made a difference in preserving life in the middle of the traffic and giving us more credibility before the consumers.

Odair, for instance, expressed care for others when he reported his involvement in an accident, which occurred on his way home from completing personal errands in the city center. According to the account, he was riding his bicycle on the right side of the road, and the car driver hit him while making an unsignaled turn. Odair fell, hit his head on the sidewalk, and as he was without a helmet (a safety item that, by the group's agreements, he should have been wearing), he suffered minor scalp abrasions. At the end of the story, Odair remembered that Leandro also did not like to wear a helmet and decided to advise him: "Hey, Leandro, It is good to wear a helmet just to be sure, at right time you'll be saved" (V-6). Odair's speech showed care and affection for Leandro, for his experience could help him to have another view on the use of safety equipment.

The care for others occurred among the participants but could also be noticed in the relationship between participants and consumers. One time we made deliveries together to standardize the processes involved in the work. When we arrived at the client's house, we pressed the bell and she, "when she opened the door, she smiled to see all of us together. She asked how we were doing and if we wanted some water. Odair answered that he wanted some and she went to get it" (I-11). We always carry bottles of water, but on that hot day, we were already out; therefore, we understand that it was a sign of care and attention from the client.

However, we had some impasses in the partnerships being built along the way. An artisan producer wanted to deliver her products through our EES, considering that it was related to her business since both brands were linked to sustainability. The problem was that this person lived far from our base and set a lower delivery price for her clients than what we charged. The discomfort caused by this situation yielded reflections and divergent meaning unity in the construction of this category, as follows:

Benedito asked who the girl was, and Leandro said she was the person who lived in a distant condominium and wanted her to charge only BRL 5.00 or BRL 6.00 per delivery. Andréia said

she could propose alternatives for this case, such as picking up the products once a week or asking her to bring them downtown. Leandro commented that no one else wants to make her deliveries because they are far away, and she wants to stipulate our price (i.e., she charges the price she wants for her products and then lowers the price of our service so that the whole thing is not expensive for her consumer). We understand that this (asking us to reduce the value of the cycle delivery) would have discouraged us from serving her (IX-16d).

In this case, there was no care for others. In SEEs, the decision about the price of products and services is made through the business plan and the economic feasibility study, which considers all aspects of the work and its context. It defines a fair calculation of the amount to be charged. Regarding bicycle deliveries, we arrived at a price per kilometer described in our price list (always passed on to customers and partners). Stipulating the price of our service or lowering it beyond what was calculated as fair makes the work more precarious and the relations between SEEs and partners. After several conversations with the production company, we opted to terminate the partnership without success in solving the problem.

We understood that dialogue is indispensable because it transforms common relations into solidarity. During the meetings, we dialogued about everything that happened in the following days. Sometimes we talked about specific points until everyone agreed; at other times, the group was already cohesive, and the decisions were faster. On one occasion, Odair showed his discomfort with the writings sent in the chat application:

Odair said 'writing is bad, right? I think you keep writing many things, you see, I used to get everything written, but I didn't understand who it was. I see that when they said that writing would work, it is better in audio. I think it is beautiful when it speaks in audio: Odair, can you make this delivery? It is four deliveries. I think it is better, you can understand, and I can understand, me too, right? I don't know how to write well. Leandro said: 'On more specific issues, we can send an audio, Mr. Odair. Benedito added: 'I think it is easier too, so we just send audio. We agreed to send audio only (IX-25).

However, there were times when the dialogue was tenser. We needed to talk about a customer's complaint, who was annoyed that Odair wanted to talk for extended periods at the gate, which delayed his daily chores. The customer requested, through another person, that the delivery man keep his words short. During the meeting, Leandro got angry, upsetting Odair, generating another divergent meaning unit in this category:

Before the end of the meeting, Leandro took up with Odair the complaint made by the boy who received the lunch boxes. He started the conversation in a loud and strong voice, saying that some people like to talk at the gate, but others do not. He understands that Odair loves to tell stories but would be appropriate during the service to limit himself to the delivery and, if people start talking, to talk. If not, 'just deliver and go, do other things, sleep,' said Leandro. Odair reacted and said loudly, 'I didn't do anything, Leandro, I don't talk to anyone. Leandro changed his voice again and said that for the customer, 'it doesn't matter if your bike was stolen or if you got lost on the way, he just wants to receive the product' (VII-30d).

During one of our meetings, Odair expanded his worldview by experiencing the strangeness of kissing another man on the cheek. We were all sitting in a circle, and Leandro arrived last, greeting each one with a kiss on the cheek. When he went to kiss Odair, he moved away, warning Leandro that men greet each other with a handshake, not a kiss. Uncomfortable with the comment, Leandro asked Odair about the difference between men's and women's greetings.

> Leandro asked him to try out the new greeting and approached him, opening his arms to receive a hug; Odair waited a few minutes, smiled, looked down, and finally hugged and kissed Leandro's cheek. Everyone laughed. Odair said it was 'no big deal' and apologized to the group. Fernanda commented that she liked to see Odair trying something new because that was how the world Educação em Revista [Belo Horizonte]v.39]e35763]2023

was changing. She also said that if Odair didn't feel comfortable hugging and kissing Leandro, he didn't need to, but that it was important for him to know that this was just a demonstration of affection and respect (V-4).

The educational processes of caring for others also allowed us to overcome barriers. The care and affection helped to deepen the bonds between the participants, generating empathy about each other's reality. From this, it was possible to understand others fully, in-depth, and complexly, valuing each experience in the world. It was like this when we learned a different way to name the streets of the city:

We talked a little more about Odair; Andréia commented that he must be worried about the addresses because she believes he has difficulty reading. Leandro told us that he finds it curious the way he saves the routes in his memory and told us about a day when he needed to give Odair a delivery address. As he said the streets, he recognized them in his own way, like 'this is the street where my wife used to buy ham,' this is where the cyclist passed by me on the wrong way,' this is where he used to freeze the dead,' on the street where there is a shop that washes dogs.' Fernanda commented that she finds 'this form fantastic.' We also started to explain the addresses to Odair through the stories about the streets. We never talked or arranged anything like that; it just happened. I think Odair taught us to read the world in other ways (DC-IV, 10).

When dialogical, relationships are respectful, welcoming, caring, and open spaces for constructing a shared world where we expand our conceptions of existence. It is also a space for struggle, transformation of oppressive relationships, and overcoming difficulties. They make it possible to recognize other individuals, consolidating fairer and more solidary actions. Dialog provides the opportunity for denunciation and announcement, provokes reflection, and humanizes relationships. It makes daily life the search for the difference, the viable alternative that materializes in a humanizing reality.

#### C) Precariousness is the word of the year

From the work relations in the SEE, educational processes emerged embodied in the third category. The participants perceived the surrounding precariousness engendered by neoliberalism, especially compared to the form of work proposed by SE. The apprehension of the political and economic context demands being out in the world, reflecting on our actions in what surrounds us. Although reflection does not operate as any transforming action, it is from it and the recognition of oppressive situations that the processes of mutation begin. The dialogues made us realize that uberization permeates our daily life in São Carlos, in the most diverse branches.

We received a proposal for a partnership to work in the delivery of products from a market that would operate behind closed doors and would sell through a website and mobile apps. Curious about the proposal, Adriano offered to represent the group in a meeting with the establishment's owner. Afterward, Adriano reported back and commented that it was a proposal on demand and, therefore, it would be necessary to be available during the entire service period to make any requested deliveries. According to Adriano, the owner expected to occupy everyone involved in the same way:

His idea is that people earn for what they produce, so he wants to pay a fair price to the guy who cuts the meat, a fair price for the person who collects and receives the order, a fair price for the person who puts things in the cart, who separates, right? And the fair price for him is according to the demand, so he goes there, the guy receives the order, then he will be paid according to that order, right? But it's like this. I think we work, now at this moment, we work for paid time, right? With the current CLT<sup>10</sup>, we work eight hours a day, and we get paid for those eight hours

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> CLT stands for Labor Laws Consolidation and covers workers' rights. It was established by Decree-Law No. 5.452, May 1, Educação em Revista | Belo Horizonte | v.39 | e35763 | 2023

a day, no matter what we do. [...] So, what happens, for me, I think, probably it will not pay, he will pay for this labor produced, but the time you are stopped, you will be there betting, right brother? And you will not get paid for it, you know? I think it's more of a precariousness of a work project, you know? [?] He started to explain it to me with an example that the owner of another market came and asked him, 'I have ten people here at the cash register, and most of the time they're not working, right? Then he said to me, 'Look, Leandro, I honestly can't tell you what these other eight people are going to do. I wanted him to tell me, I don't know, that 'ah no, these people are going to be reassigned to other functions, like this,' but he didn't even think of that' (XV-11).

After Adriano's report, we discussed these new forms of work and how they are harmful to the workers. We remembered other proposals we had already received and had the autonomy to deny, but we understood that the choice was not available to most people. In Adriano's narrative, the term precariousness appeared, a novelty that generated curiosity in another member of the group:

'Where did you hear about precariousness?' and Leandro answered, 'where did I hear about it? Gee, man, everywhere. Old man, I think that precariousness is the word of the year. I think that from the moment we saw that Congress was getting ready to make a new CLT to fix all this, we started to hear about work precariousness; it became a more recurrent word. Like, I think that before that, we didn't hear it so much because, man, I don't know, neoliberalism was always there, right? Like, as something that people, that politicians proposed, but it never became as present as it seems to be now, you know? Now, the idea has changed; you have to work, but you have to produce, and you will only be paid for your production. You will not be paid for your working time, so I think that from the moment the politicians started, here in Brazil, they started to move, we ended up hearing this more' (XV-12).

Finally, we talked about the visions we had about the different situations of daily life and how they were being broadened by participating in the SEE. This partnership proposal aroused in Adriano the notion that the novelty would take away eight people's jobs and put the others in a precarious situation. By bringing the issue to the meeting, he enabled the others to also reflect on this, which generated a shared construction of what are humanizing and dehumanizing forms of work. Benedict reported:

That is often the case, isn't it? We have a working concept, and then something happens, and our concept expands. That's what it is like, how sometimes we go, in a dialogue, somewhere, something that happens far away from us, but we hear about it, it expands our world, you know? I find it very funny how we sometimes go through moments. For many years I thought I was very apolitical. Man, I didn't give a shit about anything, then I don't know at what moment it was a turning point that I thought I became aware of the world enough not to remain neutral (XV-13).

Within the principles of SE, human valuing should be above profit (highlighted in capitalist businesses). The main difference between SEE workers and those involved with private company applications is the possibility of making decisions that consider the well-being of those who will perform the work. There was a moment when we were invited to deliver pizzas, and while we were reflecting on the issue, Leandro pondered:

I don't really feel like riding at night. Adriano answered, 'so, our bike delivery scheme, there's the issue of distance, I don't know what, pizzerias deliver to vast regions. I don't know if there are some more local ones because the pizzeria, it's one, it's another, it's a, so, and pizzerias have a kind of frenetic pace, it's more accelerated, you see the motorcycle delivery guys, I don't know if we can do it, it's not that we don't want to, I don't know if it fits in this acceleration, because the pizze goes out directly, and many times it is wide-ranging, I don't know. Leandro said that it could work if it was a smaller pizzeria or something linked to the Solidarity Economy and that

<sup>1943,</sup> during the presidency of Getúlio Vargas.

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'the pizzerias that work, I don't know, with this intention of raising as much money as possible wouldn't work for us' (XIV-8).

Being part of an enterprise that follows solidarity principles gives us the repertoire to reflect on other forms of work and criticize them from a more human point of view. The emerging educational processes show the participants' sensitivity to the context of uberization in the same way, allowing for more lucid decision-making-building alternatives to the given model. Being able to do things differently does not exclude caring about others; on the contrary, it can create more sensitive and implicated looks toward oppression.

### **CONSIDERATIONS**

This article sought to discuss the educational processes resulting from the social practice of bicycle delivery. To do so, we understand that it is necessary to contextualize the various faces of work in Brazil, developed within an exclusionary economic model driven in this country since the 1990s. Recently, the precariousness of work has been deepened by the uberization, which removes rights historically won by workers while enabling huge profits for companies. Additionally, the lack of work corroborates the deepening of exploitation, as it weakens the political struggle and individualizes the search for alternatives.

In another way, Solidarity Economy, understood here through the actions of CicloPedaleiros, tries to propose more balanced, fair, and solidary alternatives. Within the principles of SE, entrepreneurship can be developed by those working and creating their own business in an insubordinate and free way. Decisions, taken consciously, promote human enhancement and explore new horizons.

The qualitative methodology helped us to situate experiences in a time and space, in subjects and their praxis. Through shared daily life, we could reflect jointly on what was experienced, bringing an "us" present in each participant and that, soaked in this reality, tried to transform it. Such activity was not alien to the oppressive context, but resisting and showing that it is possible to build new perspectives.

As a social practice that engenders educational processes, bicycle delivery allowed worlds to be expanded through new practices arising from conviviality. It also allowed the participants to become politically engaged, noticing the surrounding precariousness and valuing who they were and what they were building. It gave them the autonomy to structure and expand the SEE. Moreover, although permeated by conflicts, it transformed common relations into dialogical relations. Only in this way was it possible to overcome the different difficulties.

Given the aspects observed, we consider that amid the deepening of labor precariousness, new repertoires are constructed, more balanced, sustainable, fair, and solidary. It unveils, thus, that human work, although necessary for the production of life, cannot be oppressive, dehumanizing, and a promoter of human segregation. Thus, the educational processes presented demonstrate that it is possible to transform the human experience historically constituted as life for work into work for life and liberation.

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Submitted on: 23/08/2021 Approved on: 08/23/2022

## **DECLARATIONS OF AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS**

Author 1: conceptualization, methodology, research, formal analysis, data curation, writing - original draft.

Author 2: conceptualization, data curation, writing - proofreading and editing, supervision.

### DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

We declare that this article has no personal, commercial, academic, political, and/or financial conflicts of interest.