

Pedagogical documentation in a formative experience in early childhood education: a look at the aesthetic principle*¹

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Abstract

This article discusses the pedagogical documentation and the aesthetic principles established in the guidelines of early childhood education. It aims to review to what extent the documenting path contributes to expanding sensitivity, the production of meanings and the possibilities of living together in early childhood education. The research, conducted in a qualitative perspective, stems from the following question: Does the documenting gesture make teachers aware of meeting and be together in early childhood education? The study carried out within the scope of a master's degree in education had as sample a group of ten teachers who worked in early childhood education and who participated in a formative experience carried out in an extension course woven along the course of documenting. The survey instruments included participants' observation, written, photographic and audiovisual records, documentation and, above all, being together with the teachers. From the dialogue between the normative guidelines and different authors, the aesthetic principle in the gesture of documenting is highlighted, because the encounter with the sensitive allows the expansion of borders, the possibility of affectation and the search for meanings and senses in the relationships woven between children and adults in everyday education. The training experience with teachers, built through the path of documenting, makes it possible to question assumptions naturalized in pedagogical practice, making important shifts in the ways of being and staying together in early childhood education.

Keywords

Early childhood education - Pedagogical documentation - Aesthetic principle.

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“To think is an act. To feel is a fact.” (Clarice Lispector).

The legal provisions of the Federal Constitution dated 1988 (BRASIL, 1988) and of the Law of Directives and Bases of National Education No. 9.394/96 (BRASIL, 1996) constituted a major milestone in early childhood education. From them, the daycare center begins to be discussed as a public space of collective education, of children's rights. The *Diretrizes Curriculares Nacionais para a Educação Infantil* (DCNEIs, National Curriculum Guidelines for Early Childhood Education) enshrine in the letter of the law the desire to produce an education supported by ethical, political and aesthetic principles (BRASIL, 2010). Building an educational proposal guided by these principles requires resisting the merely functional, the immediately useful education, claiming sensitivity, listening quality, openness, care and willingness to welcome the voice of the other. This is a configuration that implies in differentiated conceptions of the teachers' task and training, involving such questions as: how to welcome those who enter early childhood education? What is the specificity of the pedagogical action in the day care center? Which pedagogical devices are capable of producing constitutive effects to sustain educational relationships based on the principles proposed by the DCNEIs?

In Brazil, studies investigating such issues are recent. Rossetti-Ferreira (1988), Schmitt (2009) and Pandini-Simiano (2018) can be cited, for example, when they state that very young children are active and competent in their relationships; those authors point out socialization, interactions and learning between adults and children as pillars that support “pedagogy of early childhood education”. These processes take place in everyday activities, but because they are subtle, they still remain invisible, they go unnoticed.

In order to build another comprehensive horizon, we seek to establish a dialogue with the Italian approach to early childhood education⁴. Such pedagogical approach was born after the Second World War, in 1945, when Italian families devastated by the conflict organized themselves to build educational institutions from the rubble of their cities. Loris Malaguzzi (1995) was the forerunner of such an educational proposal, and together with the community he suggested building an education especially aimed at daycare centers and preschools, whose proposal is “to offer a quality, plural education, open to the world and creating in communities and families a conception of a powerful child and an educational institution as a meeting and common life location” (MELLO; BARBOSA; FARIA, 2017). It is a pedagogy characterized by an educational experience based on relationships, on the interchange between children and adults.

Among the Italian political and pedagogical strategies, one has been essential for the success of this proposal, the pedagogical documentation. Pandini-Simiano (2015), discussing studies of the Italian approach to early childhood education and to Benjamin philosophy, suggests thinking of pedagogical documentation as a peculiar narrative that

4- It should be emphasized that such an approach does not refer to the entire Italian educational system. This expression will be used to refer mainly to approaches located in the region of Tuscany and Emilia-Romagna

is woven in the encounter between adults and children. Small stories lived, recorded, invented, documented and narrated in everyday life.

This article addresses those issues, by reviewing the extent to which the course of documenting contributes in expanding sensitivity, the production of meanings and the possibilities of getting together in early childhood education. The questions and reflections are based on elements of a master's degree research in education held in 2019, which covered an early childhood education institution located in the southern region of the state of Santa Catarina (LISBOA, 2019). It is a qualitative research (ANDRÉ, 2003), whose basic focus of analysis is a formative experience carried out from an extension course⁵, with a duration of eight months, that was offered to a group of ten teachers who worked in early childhood education. In total, the course was held along eight meetings, whose subjects were based on the pedagogical documentation process. The proposal consisted of offering a time and space interval capable of encouraging dialogue, the construction of documentation in which the teachers could report their education practice.

The starting point was the following question: does the gesture of documenting sensitize teachers to meeting and stay together in early childhood education? The methodological steps of the research were built between comings and goings, in meetings with the subjects. A journey guided by the ethical/aesthetic principle of care, sensitivity and attention to the other. Along the way, participants' observation, written, photographic, audiovisual records, pedagogical documentation produced by the teachers and above all, being together, were research instruments.

Choosing a research pathway through a training experience based on pedagogical documentation is neither a straight nor direct endeavour, because “[...] the experience is not the journey to a foreseen objective, to a goal that is known in advance, but it is an opening to the unknown, for which one cannot anticipate neither a “fore-see” nor a “pre-dict”...” (LARROSA, 2002, p. 28). In this connection, it is understood, with Benjamin (1986), that methods are deviations, actually another rationale of investigative work. Pandini-Simiano (2018) explains that understanding the method as a deviation involves careful and hesitant thinking that always returns to its object along different pathways. The author brings this perspective closer to what Benjamin (1986) calls contemplation, that is, a kind of attention that is both light and intense, which indicates a subject who knows how to stop, in admiration, being respectful, hesitant and perhaps lost, in which things to be seen slowly materialize. This perspective allows us to weave the threads of research with/in the lived experience.

The analysis of the data collected during the extension course involved different exercises of selection and categorization of notes, scenes, photos and documentation. In this article, as the analysis core, in the course of documenting, the sensitive, the production of meaning and possibilities of staying together in early childhood education stand out.

5- The extension course was proposed from the Education, Childhood and Gender Research Group (GEDIG), through the project “Pedagogical documentation in the context of early childhood education: perspective for teaching and teacher training”. This project is coordinated by Prof. Dr. Luciane Pandini-Simiano and funded by FAPESC.

Comments on the aesthetic principle and pedagogical documentation in early childhood education

The word aesthetic carries a polysemy of meanings, from everyday use to philosophy. Faced with such amplitude, we will seek to start with its origin in Ancient Greece, and with the principle that still vibrates in the word *aisthesis*. According to Duarte Junior (2000):

Aisthesis: in Greek, it means the human capacity to feel the world, to feel it organized, giving reality a primordial order, a meaning - there is a lot of meaning in what is felt by us. In English, *aesthesis* became *aesthesia*, with the same meaning given by the Greeks (*anesthesia* being its negation, the inability to feel). And from this term stems the word *aesthetic*, which does not fail to keep the general meaning of a sensitive body's ability to feel itself and the world in an integrated whole. (DUARTE JÚNIOR, 2000, p. 25).

Sensation, Sensitive, Sense. The principle of a word is not only the origin of its emergence, but the meaning that remains in it and gives it specificity. Thus, it is understood that aesthetics has a deep relationship with feeling, with the search for meanings and senses in the encounter with the sensitive. Therefore, it is closely related “[...] to a process of empathy that places the subject in relation to things and the things among themselves” (VECCHI, 2017, p. 28). In this direction, *aisthesis* is associated with the senses and with the qualities of an object that can be perceived.

At the same time, it is common for aesthetics to be associated with art and beauty; however, when establishing a connection with Benjaminian studies, this concept is thought as being dissociated from beauty. Walter Benjamin was one of the first philosophers of the 20th century to critically think and consider as a problem the traditional aesthetic based on the judgment of taste, of the “harmony of beautiful forms” (BENJAMIN, 2009). In his essay that discusses “Goethe’s Elective Affinities”, the author develops a critique of the traditional aesthetics of the beautiful, allowing this conception to be resized based on the proposition of a sublime aesthetic (BENJAMIN, 2009). It is in connection with this aesthetics of the sublime that one can understand the inexpressible in Benjamin (MURICY, 2007).

The inexpressible (*das Ausdruckslose*), at first, refers to what it seems to deny, that is, to the expression (*der Ausdruck*), a term of great importance in Benjaminian thoughts. Thus, it is worth noting that the category of the inexpressible is not a negation of expression, but a proposal for a certain dialectic that takes place “within every linguistic structure where a conflict exists between, on the one hand, the expressed and the expressible reigns and, on the other hand, between the unexpressed and the inexpressible” (BENJAMIN, 1992, p.52). In this connection, the inexpressible is part of a series of terms that indicate absence, without, though, having a negative connotation (MURICY, 2007). The meaning of the term inexpressible does not refer to a lack of expression as a weakness, but as a power.

In the field of aesthetic studies or in the field of art philosophy, the doctrine of the inexpressible is the condition for the critique of beauty as a reconciliation of life and appearance. Art is not, for Benjamin, an “illusionist vivification”, but on the contrary a “petrification, paralysis and critical breaking down of living beauty” (BENJAMIN, 2009,

p. 87). The inexpressible is, therefore, the destruction of the aura around the beautiful appearance, the reflective element that helps suspend the appearance.

Benjamin (1993) emphasizes his criticism of the aesthetic tradition based on the harmony of beautiful forms. In the author's words, "no work of art appears fully alive without becoming mere appearance and ceases to be a work of art" (BENJAMIN, 1993, p.123). Against a harmonic aesthetic, Benjamin invokes the power of the inexpressible that destroys the integral beauty of appearance, through the "paralyzing" interference of the inexpressible. In this connection, the inexpressible is the reflective element of the work that awaits the savior word of criticism.

From this perspective, aesthetics dissociates itself from the concept of beauty and flirts with the inexpressible, thus causing us admiration, astonishment, strangeness. Beauty is understood as "[...] a way of relating to the world. "Beauty has nothing to do with supposedly ideal shapes, measures, proportions, tones and arrangements that would define something as beautiful" (DUARTE JÚNIOR, 1991, p. 13). It is related to subjectivity, to the cultural, to the political, economic and social framework in which the subjects are inserted.

According to Hermann (2005a), ethics and aesthetics go together, fostering relationships, connections, sensitivity and expressiveness. In the author's words, "only by giving a chance to sensitivity, you can realize that the differences in cultures and contexts of everyday life modulate the principle of equality and allow for the recognition and respect of differences" (HERMANN, 2005b, p. 70).

Thus, aesthetics is related to the sensitive, to sensitivity and to the production of meanings. It is understood that "the production of meanings does not take place as a purely cognitive activity, but it is the body, this bond of our sensibilities, that means, and interprets" (DUARTE JÚNIOR, 2000, p.128). Sensitive knowledge places the human being facing the world as a bodily being who interprets and means the world to give meaning to its experiences and, consequently, to its existence.

As proposed by the Greek root *aisthesis*, in English *aesthesia*, which highlights the human beings' ability to feel themselves and the world as an integrated whole, it is a matter of thinking of an incarnate body, which set its presence in the world and connects with the surrounding objects; that body listens by looking, looks by listening and smelling, touching and tasting. This sensitive knowledge provided by "human aesthesia, by the sensitive apprehension of the world, reveals itself as a production of meaning" (DUARTE JÚNIOR, 2000, p.173).

The day care center can be considered as one of the first spaces of humans' collective education. It is one of the places where children live their first experiences with and in the world. In this connection, Malaguzzi (2016), when emphasizing the importance of the aesthetic dimension in educational spaces, emphasizes that the institution needs to be kind, livable, joyful, that promotes communication as reciprocal listening, not only through speech, but also through the senses, through the body, the movement, the expression. A place that quenches children's thirst for knowledge that "tastes like". In other words, the aesthetic dimension brings a flavor, talks to the senses, makes you feel like it, pleases the body and nourishes existence. "[...] the pleasure of flavor is, above all, to be aware, to be aware of the world and oneself." (DUARTE JÚNIOR, 2000, p. 203).

The DCNEIs (BRASIL, 2010) establish that educational practices for early childhood need to be supported by ethical, political and aesthetic principles:

Pedagogical proposals for early childhood education should comply with the following principles:

I – Ethical: autonomy, responsibility, solidarity and respect for the common good, the environment and different cultures, identities and singularities.

II – Political: citizenship rights, the exercise of criticism and respect for the democratic order.

III – Aesthetics: sensitivity, creativity, playfulness and freedom of expression in different artistic and cultural manifestations (BRASIL, 2010, p. 2).

These are principles that complement each other and express a formation based on the integrality of the human being. Taking the aesthetic principle as a starting point, we intend to develop some reflections about it with the pedagogical documentation process in the framework of early childhood education.

In Brazil, the importance of observation, recording and pedagogical documentation in connection with early childhood education is consensual among theorists and scholars in the area. However, although theories and legal guidelines point to the importance of these practices in the educational context, the indications are not enough, there are difficulties to sustain such a process due to fragile pedagogical practices that usually associate documentation with bureaucratic activity, not understanding it as a process that allows to sustain educational relationships with young children.

In order to build a more legitimizing view of these issues, a dialogue was established with studies of the Italian approach to early childhood education, with the pedagogical documentation constituting the central axis (MALAGUZZI, 2016). Contrary to the idea of programs set in advance, the sequence of works previously announced and established to define what, when and how this should happen, the pedagogical documentation re-signifies childhood didactics and pedagogy as it proposes to reinvent and make the educational process more flexible. These are another ethical, aesthetic and political way of perceiving the relationships that have an effect on the organizational forms of pedagogical work (PANDINI-SIMIANO, 2015).

Pedagogical documentation is part of a proposal that considers the importance of listening, observation, recording, interpretation (MALAGUZZI, 2016). For the Italian pedagogy, the gesture of looking and listening are closely associated. It is, therefore, a “metaphor for the openness and sensitivity of hearing and be heard” (RINALDI, 2017, p. 124). This sensitive listening is intimately connected to the aesthetic principle. Developing a sensitive look is making oneself available to listen with the body and all its senses. In Rinaldi’s words (2017), it is about valuing the listening:

[...] which is performed not by hearing, but through all the senses; in a time that is not linear but full of silences and pauses; an open listening about the differences; that acknowledges the value of other points of view; that does not produce answers, but that formulates questions, invites interpretations; that is not easy to perform, but it is the premise for any learning relationship. (RINALDI, 2017, p. 52).

Listening as a principle of pedagogical documentation can be understood as the sensitivity to connect with the other. In the documenting process, in addition to listening, it is necessary to enter the records. Recording means to materialize the lived experience. In the Italian pedagogy, records are entered daily and can be carried out in many ways, according to Gandini and Goldhaber (2002):

We can take quick notes that we later rewrite extensively, tape-record children's voices and words as they interact with each other or with us. We can also take photographs or slides, or even record videotapes showing children and teachers in activities (GANDINI; GOLDBER, 2002, p. 150).

In this diversity of forms, nothing is right or wrong, better or worse recording instrument. It all depends on what you want to record. Pandini-Simiano (2015, p. 61) emphasizes that "every instrument expands and, at the same time, limits what is observed. Each of them adds something, or leaves something out." Thus, it is worth emphasizing that making a good record does not mean capturing as much information and objects as possible. It's about choosing what makes sense.

Records – reflecting both children and teachers – are basic elements of pedagogical documentation. However, such a process is much more than a simple collection of records. It is essential to emphasize this difference, considering that if pedagogical documentation cannot be restricted to records, it is necessary to incorporate that the systematic idea of records is one of the central pillars of this process (MALAGUZZI, 2016; RINALDI, 2017).

After the recording, it is essential to interpret, to select what makes sense. It is necessary to read the written records again, whether they are short notes or texts, watch the images captured on photographs, select, organize, transcribe audios, select scenes from the videos. The records are revisited and interpreted in the company of other fellow teachers. Looking, listening, observing and recording are loaded with the subjectivity of those who perform them. In sharing and in the dialogue, there is an exposure to the subjectivities of others, which leads to a review, reaffirmation or not, new possibilities, other perspectives compared to what had previously been identified. Jointly, the looking expands, "the gesture of sharing establishes connections, creates hypotheses, expands meanings, helping the teacher in this subtle and delicate process" (PANDINI-SIMIANO, 2015, p. 62). This togetherness interpretation makes it possible to meet the other and together, reflect upon the process experienced.

After reflection on the records and after their interpretation, it is necessary to narrate. Malaguzzi (2016), with theoretical rigor and poetic delicacy, chooses the narrative as a privileged way of telling how children learn and relate with the world. Documentation is an open narrative that helps adults and children to find meaning in what they do, not just a single sense, but several possibilities thereof. For Malaguzzi (2016, p. 71) "meanings are never static, univocal or final; they always generate other meanings".

Thinking about the narrative in the early childhood education frameworks allows us to envision the bond that unites children and adults in a network of common signifiers. Pandini-Simiano (2015), dialoguing with the Italian pedagogy and Walter Benjamin,

suggests that pedagogical documentation is a peculiar narrative woven in the encounter between adults and children. In the author's words:

Pedagogical documentation is constituted by an alternation between visible and invisible, between voice and silence. In the gesture of observing, recording, interpreting and narrating, the teacher can be a narrator. Attentive to the world, the teacher acknowledges, values and collects gems, which, if not narrated, could be lost. (PANDINI-SIMIANO, 2015, p.13).

In this connection, we sought to understand a little more about the gesture of documenting, the documentation, the narratives woven by teachers and their possibilities to think about the aesthetic principle: sensitivity, creativity, playfulness and freedom of expression in the relationships that intermingle between children and adults in everyday education.

On the course of documenting: the sensitive, the production of meaning and the possibilities of getting together in early childhood education

Throughout the course of this research, the teachers had the challenge of building a pedagogical documentation of the educational context. The gesture of documenting led the teachers to awaken their aesthetic sensitivity, to connect with what was happening to them in the moments of formative meetings and with children in the educational routine. A journey made up of comings and goings, a search and finding, amidst looks, listening, dialogues, hypotheses, insecurities, doubts and sharing.

The choice of the form and content of the documentation takes place in the "within", in the encounter between children and adults in the educational framework. In this dialogue, in the context of the research, the most diverse forms and contents of pedagogical documentation emerged. A narrative fabric that is constructed, woven in the act of documenting. In this paper, a panel will be presented illustrating a way of narrating.

The bulletin board, so common in early childhood education institutions, is an important type of documentation for its visual appeal. In its aesthetic qualities, the board feeds, with colors, images, textures and shapes, the gaze of those who contemplate it. In this connection, such documents that make up the educational spaces are visual and aesthetic repertoires that expand or restrict sensitive and, therefore, aesthetic experiences of adults and children who are part of the educational institution.

The panel, to be presented here as an analysis fragment, is woven by relationships, like a home-made fabric and shared in visual narratives. This is how professor Mariane's pedagogical documentation is constituted.⁶ She would normally take her group of 2-3 year olds to play outdoors among the trees, lawns, flowers, birdsongs and sunlight. She was in the habit of watching children play. However, over the course of the research, she expanded her way of looking. She paid more attention to the details and she appreciated

6- Fictitious names were used to ensure confidentiality, in accordance with the consent form and in compliance with the ethical procedures established for scientific research, as well as the same principle applies to the dissemination of images of people and/or institutions.

the moments more carefully. And that's how she became aware of the richness that involved children's playing within a fragment of nature background. Leaves, branches, seeds, earth... "Children get enchanted by materialities and their ability to relate to them. [...] In the encounter with the world, children seem to take the shape of things" (PANDINI-SIMIANO, 2018, p. 12). They are attracted to things and establish new relationships with them through playing. In her narrative, she states:

There was a situation that was striking for me: two children playing under a tree and there were several little seeds and one of the children called me: - "Teacher, my friend can't open the seed!" - "But do you have to open it?" I asked. - "Yes, I do!" - "But why?" - "Because there's a really cool surprise inside the seed!" So I went there and opened the seed. Boy! But it's not that the seed has a design inside. And this enchanted me so much! And then I stopped and started watching. We, as adults, don't stop to look at the seeds, the beauty of that seed [sic]. (Professor Mariane, narrative on 09/20/2018).

Figure 1 – Teacher Mariane's photographic record⁷



Source: Author's collection, 2019.

The promotion of open spaces use for children to have access to nature and the multiple experiences and games that take place there contribute to a potential for collective well-being. Playing, for children, is a way of being in the world; it is the possibility of feeling and interacting with others, with the world and with oneself. The teacher, by opening space and providing time for children's experiences with dry leaves, twigs and

7- In order to carry out the research and authorize the use of children's images, in compliance with the ethical procedures established for scientific research, the Consent Term was sent to the management of the educational institution and to the children's families. In addition to the formal authorization of the adults responsible for the children, we sought to ensure, together with the teachers, that the images produced by them throughout the documenting process passed through the children's assent.

seeds, demonstrates understanding and valuing that the body, its humanity and culture, its feeling and thinking are deeply integrated with nature. Enabling children to access different materialities allows them an aesthetic experience, which is also an experience of selection possibility (OSTETTO, 2011), besides allowing themselves time and space to observe and be touched by what happened to them.

Opening to the sensitive look interrupts, pauses, paralyzes: “Guys! The seed has a design inside! That fascinated me so much. Then I stopped and started to observe!”: admiration, astonishment; strangeness. The inexpressible, an immobilization that interrupts, a power that paralyzes (BENJAMIN, 1992). The possibility of taking a break, of putting yourself next to the children with the gesture of a sensitive listening makes it possible to resist pedagogical actions that do not recognize the beauty of the details and the playful processes of thinking: “We, as adults, do not suddenly stop to look at the seed, at the beauty of that seed”. Children modify logic, value objects that, in the eyes of adults, may not have any value. Inverted look, other weights and measures...Similar to what the child in Benjamin points out (1986):

Children are irresistibly attracted to the wreckage that emerges from construction, from work in the garden or at home, from the work of a tailor or a carpenter. In these remnants they recognize the face that the world of things turns exactly to them, and only to them. (BENJAMIN, 1986, p.77).

Value what is undervalued. Abandoned seeds, apparently waste, can become poetry... Through occupation and the relationships they establish with each other, children and adults share knowledge and meanings. In the gesture of the teacher recognizing and valuing not only the functional, the immediately useful, the possibilities of living experiences in the world are expanded, affirming children education as an action that is simultaneously ethical and aesthetic. It is a daily quest that claims a more inventive, passionate, joyful, poetic and intelligent life, based on more sensitive collective values.

The teacher, in his/her narrative, also reports that the children played with opening the seeds to discover what was the “surprise” in each one, with great curiosity.⁸ From that moment on, the many other possibilities of play that the children built with remains of nature were revealed to the teacher.

Fly with wings of dry leaves. Swords and magic wands made of dry branches. Gemstone collections. Other games that were captured by the camera composed a collection of photographic records. Not just pictures of the children, because:

When you take a photograph or make a document, in fact, you are not documenting the child, but his knowledge, his concept, his idea. Thus, their limits and their view of the child become more and more visible. You don't show the child, but the relationship and the quality of your relationship, and the quality of your looking at him. (RINALDI, 2017, p. 345).

Photographs that record the games in the “park” actually the name given to the tree-lined courtyard. Observation and recording go hand in hand, and there is a moment

to interpret what the images say, what the eyes perceive, what the listening apprehends. The teacher selected those that most expressed what she wanted to tell: how they related to nature and to this diversity of materialities when playing.

During the research, at the time when sitting around the table, when impressions, thoughts and reflections were shared, always focusing on what the teacher wanted to tell, in addition to the images, several phrases and words were explored that integrated into the photos and gave greater significance, expressive and communicative value to the documentation. As a result, therefore, in the wall board as a way to materialize what the teacher narrated about the children's experiences and his/her own in those playful moments with nature. Thus, the documentation emerges: Surprise! What's in nature? Figure 2– Documentation for the Bulletin Board: Surprise! What's in nature?

Figure 2– Documentation for the Bulletin Board: Surprise! What's in nature?



Source: Author's collection, 2019.

In the above documentation produced by the teacher, one can observe, in her choices, the relationship between form and content: the panel reveals significant traits for the issue in question, that help understand the reception of alterity and the construction of knowledge through aesthetics. The documentation shows a pedagogical know-how

that is produced in a particular relationship with the other, where its action is a condition for the educational practice. But what the board tells, without saying so, is the course of another knowledge, of another rationale, which occurs by the affectation of alterity, by the unknown, by the encounter with aesthetics.

“Surprise! What is in nature?” Enigma, the unknown, the hidden. The learning pathway in early childhood education requires assuming its dimension of uncertainty and unpredictability. For Benjamin (2009), doing justice to aesthetics is to preserve its mystery, “the idea of revealing the mystery becomes the impossibility of revealing it” (BENJAMIN, 2009, p.75), and yet, for the author, it is within the scope of singularity that the sublime finds its definition. In this connection, it is worth highlighting the teacher’s narrative: “In each space, an invitation. Try walking, summon your senses and enjoy the surprises that nature has in store for you. Allow yourself!”

Discoveries, admiration, wonder, surprises... “Childhood findings” lead to meet the boys and girls who once were there. The action of taking children to the park, which was seen before as routine, is now interpreted as possibilities for building a narrative. Teacher Mariane when narrating and materializing the children’s experiences and discoveries in nature, developed another sense and meaning. “The narrative is an invitation to thinking, to the construction of meanings, to the elaboration of meanings” (BÁRCENA; MÈLICH, 2000, p. 122).

Documentation sharing Surprise! What’s in nature? The question meets the aesthetic dimension. It is manifested by the quality of listening, by the openness and sensitivity of connecting to the others and listening to them, with the commitment and willingness to welcome their voice with all the senses. According to Rinaldi (2017, p. 237), welcoming the specificities of children and taking a different attitude towards the children who pose questions to us and, in order to document, lead “to understand and change their own identity as educators, can be an invitation to reflect on their values”.

Throughout the development experience with the teachers, through the sharing of their speeches, writings, photographic and audiovisual images, it was possible to perceive that, when sharing, they reflected their doing and, at the same time, they identified themselves with the records of the colleagues, and gave other meanings to what they were seeing and doing. The act of documenting the experience with the children welcomed the unexpected, the unpredictable, valuing the day to day in the encounter with the others. And so:

Greater sensitivity; less anesthesia in front of the profusion of wonders that this world allows us to enjoy and savor. A fuller, more pleasurable life, aware of its capabilities and duties, given the awareness of our interconnection with others and other species on the planet. (DUARTE JÚNIOR, 2000, p. 186).

In the process of documenting, the sharing of records, the dialogues, the exchanges between peers, in addition to expanding the views through a process of interpretation and reflection, allow the teachers to feel valued, their voices heard and their work made visible: “If we understand the sensitive look as the one addressed to the connection with

the subjectivity of the other, we expand the potential to exercise it and to see ways to do so” (FREITAS, 2016, p. 10). This can be seen in the following statements:

So, everything was like this, very clear to me, I mean: very clear, no. Of course, I still have a lot to learn, right?! But, so, our mission that you proposed was in a simple way, like that. [excited] I loved every moment, to prepare the Pedagogical Documentation! So, it was very pleasant, you know? I felt fulfilled! Because there, I was showing my work, the interaction of children. So, I was able to look at the children more closely, with more... how shall I say: another look. More look. It's just that the words escape me. A sensitive, closer, more detailed look. It was very gratifying [sic]. (Professor Lara, narrative on 11/29/2018).

I just wanted to point out, beyond what has already been said, that the Documentation for me was very much like this, our look at that. Because, maybe, something that happens in Mariane's room, I would look at it with another look, I wouldn't give it so much importance, right?! So, it is our look at what happens, but also how the look of the other is enriching! Because we were sharing and then, when I was already editing the video, Lu would say something: “Ah, what about this here?” And then it makes you think, it makes you look at it again. So, that was something really cool that I thought [sic] (Professor Fabiana, narrative on 11/29/2018).

In the course of documenting, the teachers referred a lot to the look, to the unveiling of what they were already doing, had already seen, but which they did not legitimize as something inherent to the educational practice in early childhood education. A look at oneself and at the others. As Madalena Freire Weffort says:

Seeing and hearing require implication, surrender to the other. To be open to see and/or hear him as he is, in what he says, based on his hypotheses, and his thinking. It is a matter of seeking harmony with the rhythm of the other, of the group, adapting in harmony to our own. For that we also need to be focused on our internal rhythm. The action of looking and listening is like coming out of oneself to see the other and the reality according to one's own points of view, according to one's own history. (WEFFORT, 1996, p. 1).

From the moment the teachers were invited to the challenge of taking a sensitive look at everyday life, they incorporated it in such a way that they could no longer look without it, as highlighted in the written records of the last meeting:

The theme was a process built at each meeting, of how “to look”, this different look at what happens to us daily. [...] so that I can look at children with another look... (Professor Sandra, narrative on 11/29/2018).

The process of documenting allowed me to broaden my view of the importance of recording in the classroom and the different ways of looking at children... (Professor Fabiana, narrative on 11/29/2018).

When this “veil” is removed, it is possible to see in detail each gesture, each look that makes all the difference in that scene. (Professor Mariane, narrative on 11/29/2018).

The aesthetic principle understood as the encounter with the sensitive, the involvement with what is in front of and around you through the channel of sensitivity, connecting with things, the recognition and the relationship with the other, hand in hand with ethics, makes it possible to infer, in this study, that the course of documenting is impregnated by aesthetics. The gesture of documenting, supported by the aesthetic experience, allows us to expand sensitivity, produce meanings, meet the other and live together in the educational space. Each one with its uniqueness but building a collective whole⁸, each one with its differences.

For this educational practice, time is also an essential factor. When teachers have time to listen to each other, to share, to get out of the autopilot triggered by routine, they experience wonder, the joy of discoveries, through “beauty”.

Now, to restore our ability to marvel at the world, to feel alive in a daily life that is not made up of busy schedules and levels of productivity, to perceive our sensitive integration with the reality around us, to understand that knowledge is not given only by mathematical formulas and logical-conceptual reflections [...]. Educating our senses so that they allow us to savor more and more the subtleties of the world I believe is the first step towards a happier and more self-centered life. Unbridled competition (towards nothingness) prevents us from taking pleasure in the fact that we are alive, and such pleasure is, in its essence, aesthetic. (DUARTE JÚNIOR, 2012, p. 365).

Paulo Freire (2011) points to the importance of ethics alongside aesthetics, in which decency and beauty must always go hand in hand. Aesthetics, the encounter with the sensitive, expands relationships with the other, goes hand in hand with ethics.

After all, the aesthetic experience that leads to singularity presupposes the existence of the other and otherness as a complementary relationship. Neither the singular is understood without the other, nor can the other be conceived without the singular, since both refer to each other reciprocally. Insofar as the aesthetic experience has privileged conditions to bring out the difference, the singular and the strange, it opens up possibilities for a moral judgment more in tune with historicity and contingency. (HERMANN, 2005b, p. 45).

The broadening of borders and the possibility of being affected by others are provided by the aesthetic experience, since it operates precisely with the decentering of the self, without erasing the presence of what remains unnamed in the encounter with the other. The teachers participation in this research, when documenting, in addition to enhancing sensitivity, perceiving meaning in each fragment, being concerned with the singularities within the collective, they also felt touched, sensitized, marked by the lived experience:

8- “Collective work is not decreed, it is constructed. And to be built depends on the desire and attitudes of its components” (OSTETTO, 2006, p. 25).

Those were very valuable encounters, which contributed to the development of meaningful experiences, simple for me, but grandiose for the little ones. (Professor Lara, narrative on 11/29/2018).

Development was the opportunity to stop for a few moments and look at what surrounds us and see infinity of experiences. (Professor Mariáh, narrative on 11/29/2018).

Our meetings in this extension course were unique moments; it made everything more meaningful, where a simple scene becomes a great show! [...]. When the veil is removed, it is possible to see in detail each gesture, each look, which make all the difference. (Professor Mariane, narrative on 11/29/2018).

During the whole process, it was clear the pleasure that the teachers had in being able to show the other their own work and its value. A desire that often goes unnoticed, but when it comes to the surface, it causes a satisfaction in recognizing that there is something that will cause admiration, marvel, that will resonate in the other. We agree with Duarte Júnior (1984, p.72), when he says that “the opinions expressed by those who are significant to me have greater strength to build and maintain my identity and that of things (and of course, they also have greater strength to change these identities)”.

How gratifying it was to see my work and/or my “pedagogical action” being observed through other perspectives, and what perspectives! (Teacher Mary, narrative on 11/29/2018).

The emotion of the reports remained, the enchantment for the different works of the groups. [...]. I was sure I wasn't alone. (Professor Júlia, narrative on 11/29/2018).

It was nice to hear my colleagues and recognize myself, often in their “look”. (Professor Mariáh, narrative on 11/29/2018).

Someone looked at my work! [sic]. (Professor Mary, narrative on 11/29/2018).

I shared, I told my doubts, my concerns. And in listening to the colleagues, to the scenes, and that makes more sense, more and more sense. So, it broadens our vision range, right? [sic] (Professor Mariane, narrative on 11/29/2018).

It is also noteworthy that in many instances the body “spoke” about the fatigue of a whole day of work (70% of the teachers worked 40 hours). They lacked physical vivacity. Kindergarten teachers work a lot with the body, because, as already seen, it is part of the integral whole of the human being, and all the sensations get there. It is with it that the teacher interacts in space, time and relationships, especially with children.

[...]body as a complex organization that integrates, in itself, everything that our language has separated over time, such as matter and spirit, body and mind, sensation and thought, reason and feeling, etc. We are, in fact, a tangle of highly organized and interdependent processes that

manifests our own ways of wisdom and knowledge at all levels, from the order of biochemical substances that carry genetic information, in the chromosomes, to the most specific reasoning of a given modality, scientific or philosophical modality. Each portion or stratum of our organism exhibits its peculiar form of knowledge, articulated to this bodily whole that defines us as an existence. (DUARTE JÚNIOR, 2000, p. 139).

Another point to consider is the day-to-day routine of educational spaces that contribute to the demand of this body, and which is often not respected at its own pace due to the large number of norms and functions that the teacher is accountable for, as the following record portrays: “The meetings helped me to cast a different look at the rush days (afternoons) giving much more value to every gesture and movement of the child.” (Professor Júlia, narrative 11/29/2018).

At the beginning of the journey, some teachers voiced their concerns about this “accountability” that haunts preschool teachers so much. They felt encouraged to start due to the assurance that they would not be alone in this process, that the researchers would welcome them and that the pedagogical coordination of the educational institution would support them, as well as they could give up at any time, removing a little the nightmare of “having to be accountable”, even more so because it was the second semester, a period in which reporting and portfolio requirements increase, in view of the proximity of the end of the school year.

In the middle and at the end of the development journey with the teachers, the speeches and the looks expressed the joys of discoveries, the astonishment of looking at the same situation, the same fact as if they were new and the confidence in the process in which the trajectory of the journey was being built step by step according to the group.

In this research, we tried to thematize the pedagogical documentation, and the act of documenting broadens and diversifies the points of view, allows the interpretation and enables the construction of narratives; that is, it makes you feel, think and narrate about the experiences. It allows us to envision the aesthetic dimension that presents a new way of being and being in the world through the sensitive route, which is ethical in the respect and coexistence with otherness, in the transparency of educational practice and the educational institution, as well as political, for calling the community, the society, to participate and commit to the educational process.

The formative experience woven in the process of documenting constitutes a link between the visible and the invisible, estrangement and welcoming, voice and silence. Through aesthetics, the possibility of welcoming alterity in connection with an educational practice is envisioned.

Final considerations

In our article, a formative experience was reported, based on an extension course, which was woven during the journey of documenting early childhood education. Fragments and short passages were presented, which are believed to be significant to compose other narratives about being a teacher, being a child, being in early childhood education institutions.

The continuing education of teachers is one of the main problems to be faced in early childhood education. Providing time and space for teachers to talk about their experiences in everyday education is still a challenge. What are the spaces and times devoted to continuing education of early childhood teachers? How to perform the function of reading and narrating everyday experiences? Is it possible to compose narratives that take care of singularities, collectivity and experience?

Early childhood education, based on the dialogue with the guidelines, implies the construction of formative pathways capable of recognizing, welcoming and valuing the reinvention of the education processes. It is, therefore, a movement that evokes the need to build devices that allow a greater understanding of the complexity of the social, subjective and educational processes involved in the daily life of early childhood education institutions.

Throughout the formative experience, through the pedagogical documentation, the teacher is invited to narrate and inscribe his/her own experience. This journey of poetic nature that wanders and capable of estrangement and welcoming, allowed the teachers to broaden their sensitivity, to offer a meaning to their educational practice, narrate their relationships in the educational space. These are important displacements that allow the production of meanings and the gesture of living together in early childhood education.

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