

Public policies and the continuing education of Early Childhood Education teachers in the municipality of Santa Maria/RS: achievements and impasses

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Abstract

This study investigates how the municipality of Santa Maria, Rio Grande do Sul, has been articulating public policies for the continuing education of Early Childhood Education teachers. This article focuses on a 2019 case study. Achievements and impasses were identified in the implementation of the municipal public policy *Conexões de Saberes* (2019), which arose from high rates of age-year distortion and school dropout in the municipality. From this policy, the Municipal Literacy and Literacy Project emerged for teachers of preschool and early years, for the qualification of teachers in their literacy practices, which sparked interest in including of the Early Childhood Education stage in the program. The study had as theoretical reference: Araújo (2011), Bardin (1977), Corsino and Nunes (2011) and Kramer (2006), carried out from a case study with documentary analysis and questionnaire for teachers and interview with the municipal secretary of education. The need for continuing education of Early Childhood Education teachers was identified based on the specificities of childhoods.

Keywords

Early Childhood Education; public policies; teacher training.

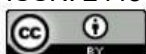
Políticas públicas e a formação continuada de professores/as da Educação Infantil no município de Santa Maria/RS: conquistas e impasses

Resumo

Este estudo investiga como o município de Santa Maria, Rio Grande do Sul, vem articulando as políticas públicas de formação continuada dos/as professores/as da Educação Infantil. Neste artigo, delimitou-se o recorte da pesquisa, o ano de 2019. Identificaram-se conquistas e impasses na implementação da política pública municipal *Conexões de Saberes* (2019), que surgiu a partir de altos índices de distorção idade-ano e evasão escolar no município. A partir dessa política, surgiu o Projeto Municipal de Letramento e Alfabetização para os/as professores/as da pré-escola e anos iniciais, para a qualificação dos/as professores/as em suas práticas alfabetizadoras, algo que despertou interesse pela inclusão da etapa da Educação Infantil no programa. O estudo teve como referencial teórico: Araújo (2011), Bardin (1977), Corsino e Nunes (2011) e Kramer (2006), realizado a partir de um estudo de caso com análise documental e questionário para docentes e entrevista com a secretária municipal de educação. Identificou-se a necessidade de formação continuada de professores/as da Educação Infantil a partir das especificidades das infâncias.

Palavras-chave

Educação Infantil; políticas públicas; formação de professores.



Formación continua de profesores de Educación Infantil en el municipio de Santa María/RS: logros y retos en la implementación de políticas públicas

Resumen

Este estudio investiga cómo el municipio de Santa María, Río Grande do Sul, ha estado articulando las políticas públicas de formación continua de los/as profesores/as de la Educación Infantil. En este artículo, se delimitó el recorte de la investigación, el año 2019. Se identificaron logros y obstáculos en la implementación de la política pública municipal Conexiones de Saberes (2019), que surgió a partir de altos índices de distorsión edad-año y deserción escolar en el municipio. A partir de dicha política, surgió el Proyecto Municipal de Alfabetización y Letramento para los/as profesores/as de preescolar y primeros años, para la cualificación de los/as profesores/as en sus prácticas alfabetizadoras, algo que despertó interés por la inclusión de la etapa de Educación Infantil en el programa. El estudio tuvo como referente teórico: Araújo (2011), Bardin (1977), Corsino y Nunes (2011) y Kramer (2006), realizado a partir de un estudio de caso con análisis documental y cuestionario para docentes y entrevista con la Red Municipal de Educación. Se identificó la necesidad de formación continua de los/as profesores/as de Educación Infantil a partir de las especificidades de las infancias.

Palabras clave

Educación Infantil; políticas públicas; formación docente.

1 Introduction

The analysis of the formative experiences presented in this text originated from the master's thesis developed in the Graduate Program in Public Policies and Educational Management of the Federal University of Santa Maria (UFSM), with the objective of investigating how the municipality of Santa Maria, Rio Grande do Sul (RS), has been articulating public policies for the continuing education of Early Childhood Education teachers from 2019 to 2021. This article will bring only an excerpt from the research, focusing on the tensions of the training of Early Childhood Education teachers *versus* the concern with the anticipation of literacy, reading and writing at this stage of Basic Education.

Several questions permeated the course of the research, making it necessary to carry out a study on the historical process of the consolidation of Early Childhood Education in Brazil as a space of struggles and rights, the search for the regulation of initial and continuing teacher education at the national and regional levels, as well as the study of the laws, regulations and official documents that regulate, standardize and guide the work at this stage.

In this perspective, we opted for the qualitative research approach, of the case study type, because it is a specific municipality. As instruments for data construction, we used a semi-structured interview with the coordination of Early Childhood Education of the Municipal Department of Education (SMED) and an *online* questionnaire with eight teachers from the municipal network of Santa Maria/RS. For data analysis, we used Bardin's (1977) content analysis approach.

The research arose from the researcher's interest in the field of childhoods, as she is a teacher at a public school of Early Childhood Education and the municipal context researched. In the development of the research, many learnings, resignifications and discoveries took place, in which we demarcated the achievements and impasses involving the implementation of a public policy of continuing education in the years 2019 to 2021, with the implementation of a municipal public policy called "Connection of knowledge", disseminated in other projects involving all segments of municipal education in Santa Maria/RS. In this article, we direct our eyes to the continuing education project "Programa Municipal de Letramento e Alfabetização" (Promla), implemented in 2019 throughout the municipal network.

The theme of teacher training is considered by us, childhood educators, one of the criteria for the quality of teaching in institutions that serve babies and children aged 0 to 5 years and eleven months. Thus, it becomes a powerful theme for research that does not end in this study, promoting reflections, debates, meanings and resignifications in order to contribute to the municipal education network of Santa Maria/RS, to society in general and, especially, to our children, in such a way that we chose the verb "resonate" to express these pretensions. "Resonate in Research" to present some indicators of the quality of the continuing education offered to Early Childhood Education teachers in the municipality of Santa Maria/RS, based on a continuing education project made available to Early Childhood Education teachers and the early years of Elementary School.

2 The legislation that regulates the context of Early Childhood Education: a space of rights Post-Constitution of 1988

Early Childhood Education in Brazilian legislation was undoubtedly demarcated and conquered from many struggles, produced from social movements, working women

and the articulation of different sectors of society. However, the compilations of this study follow the paths of these movements, outlining the achievements based on the Federal Constitution (FC) of 1988: with the conquest of new perspectives for Early Childhood Education, new rights, conceptions and conceptualizations for childhoods.

The Federal Constitution of 1988 is characterized as a “Citizen Constitution”, as it incorporates in its text, for the first time in history, significant social and educational policies in the search for the universalization of basic education. Education is taken as a right of all, being the duty of the State and the family, with the collaboration of society in an effort to provide opportunities and promote the full development of the subjects, in addition to preparing for the “[...] exercise of citizenship and their qualification for work”. Education is one of the first social rights presented by the aforementioned Constitution of 1988, in its article 6.

Despite advances in legislation, such as the 1988 Federal Constitution, which declares education as a social right, it is necessary to highlight the profound social inequalities, income, and access to cultural goods found in different regions of Brazil. From this, other problems are evidenced: the difficulty of access and permanence in school of the popular classes, the obstacles to guaranteeing the quality of education, the problems of political interests and the “misgovernment” that often severely affect education in our country. The partnerships of the public sector with the private sector in education are valued, in addition to the constant devaluation and attacks on the teaching profession, the lack of compliance with the national floor law, the lack of financial investments, the lack of articulation between the administrative spheres Union, states and municipalities for the implementation of public educational policies for Basic and Higher Education.

As evidenced by Araújo (2011, p. 280):

[...] the ‘greater problem of studying’ has deep connections with the configuration of the Brazilian State and, consequently, with the educational policy that was drawn from this configuration. While in other countries, already in the nineteenth century, national education systems began to articulate and the generalization of elementary education began to be understood as a primary task of the national state, we still do not have, in 21st century Brazil, an education system that can be called national, given the profound disparities between networks, education systems, between states and regions.

When we are faced with the indices presented by the school census of recent years, we verify the data of inequalities so naturalized, in fact at various times in our daily lives we naturalize inequalities. Still in 2020, we faced not only a health crisis (Covid-19), but economic, political and social. There was a lack of articulation between the different sectors of society, lack of responsible management at the national level, lack of government action leading the states, lack of responsibility for the management of the Ministry of Education (MEC), which was omitted, without giving guidance to the education system in the country.

Thus, Nunes and Corsino (2011) point out that public policies in Brazil have developed in two ways: universalist and residualist. The universalist seeks to guarantee the rights of all citizens, already in the residualist “[...] the State serves a portion of the population, groups marked by the sign of exclusion or poverty, and the market supplies services to those who can afford them” (Nunes; Corsino, 2011, p. 331). However, the idea of universalization is not consolidated in our country and the most impoverished layer of the population is often unassisted.

The State's duty to education, as of the 1988 Federal Constitution and Constitutional Amendment No. 59/2009, will be effective in guaranteeing compulsory and free basic education from 4 to 17 years of age. Early Childhood Education is the first stage of Basic Education, serving children in daycare and preschool, with daycare for children from 0 to 3 years old and preschool for children from 4 and 5 years old. Thus, children and childhood are consolidated with a broad and integral vision, being a phase of fundamental importance for human formation.

According to Opinion No. 20/2009, article 206, item I:

The incorporation of daycare centers and preschools in the chapter of Education in the Federal Constitution (art. 208, item IV) impacts all other responsibilities of the State in relation to Early Childhood Education, that is, the right of children from zero to five years of age to enrollment in public school (art. 205), free and of quality (art. 206, items IV and VI), equality of conditions in relation to other children for access, permanence and full use of the learning opportunities provided.

Education in the country must be organized in collaboration between the spheres of government: Union, states, Federal District and municipalities. Municipalities are primarily responsible for Early Childhood Education and Elementary School. The Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education (LDBEN) nº 9.394/1996 defined Early

Childhood Education as the first stage of Basic Education and brought consolidated standards that clearly established the search for quality for this stage.

Before the approval of the 1996 LDBEN project, it is necessary to mention the debates and the articulation of the General Coordination of Early Childhood Education (Coedi), with the MEC and other social segments. With the concern and look for caring and educating, as a function of Early Childhood Education, and concern for the training of professionals working in this context, other documents were prepared to support the policy of consolidating Early Childhood Education as the first stage of Basic Education in the 1990s, such as: *Early Childhood Education in Brazil: current situation* (Brasil, 1994a); *For a training policy for Early Childhood Education professionals* (Brasil, 1994b); *Criteria for care in daycare centers and preschools that respects the fundamental rights of children* (Brasil, 1995); *Early Childhood Education: annotated bibliography* (Brasil, 1995); *Pedagogical proposal and curriculum for Early Childhood Education: a diagnosis and the construction of an analysis methodology* (Brasil, 1996b); *Subsidies for accreditation and operation of Early Childhood Education institutions* (Brasil, 1998b).

Therefore, the post-constitution period was the peak of thinking and designing changes for the context of Early Childhood Education, aiming at quality. This movement, however, was interrupted by the government of Fernando Henrique Cardoso (FHC), which implemented the guidelines of the World Bank at the economic level and at the level of educational policies. The FHC government (1995-2002) lasted eight years, thus consolidating the banner of "modernization" and "globalization". As a result, investments in educational policies prioritized Elementary School, leaving the implementation of low investment programs for poor children for Early Childhood Education. Rosemberg criticizes (2002, p. 57) the actions of the FHC government:

My criticisms of these WB guidelines on EI and their incorporation by the current government and Brazilian politicians concern that they do not promote social, gender and race equity, as their defenders promise, but that they result, most of the time, in incomplete and low-quality care, causing new processes of exclusion, as they are particularly aimed at the poorest popular segments.

Preschools focused on combating school failure and preparing for entry into elementary school, aiming to improve children's performance at this stage. It is a rupture between daycare and preschool that was not limited only to the conceptual field, but also

to that of investment. The daycare centers were subject to lack of investments, with non-formal programs, in total precarious conditions; the subjects who worked in the daycare center did not have specific training, unlike preschool, in which professionals worked with training equivalent to that of elementary school teachers (Rosemberg, 2002).

Therefore, in the search to contemplate all subjects working in the care of children from 0 to 6, the LDBEN of 1996 now recognizes everyone who teaches children from 0 to 6 years old as a teacher of Early Childhood Education. Training at the high school level for teachers who work with children from 0 to 6 years of age is also admitted, but considering the demands on the conditions for the expansion of training, observing the large number of people working in this context. The Resolution of the National Council of Education/Chamber of Basic Education (CNE/CEB) No. 1, of August 20, 2003, defines that "Education systems, in accordance with the legal framework of reference, must respect in all acts practiced the acquired rights and professional prerogatives conferred by valid credentials for teaching in Early Childhood Education". This law also adds the need to establish the statutes and teaching career plans, which must be ensured by the education systems.

From this requirement of LDBEN nº 9.394/1996 regarding training for all teachers who work in the context of Early Childhood Education, new challenges are posed to governments, which need to articulate and provide the required training. More challenging is the scenario of daycare centers managed by philanthropic, community or affiliated entities, most of which are in precarious conditions. In this path of advances and setbacks, the performance of "Movements" that fought in the search for dialogue, proposing and implementing actions in favor of the rights of babies and children was fundamental for the current achievements and for facing the challenges in the face of the difficulties of consolidating Early Childhood Education in the scenario of public policies and in the lack of investments. The Brazilian Early Childhood Education Interforums Movement (Mieib) has been working, through Regional Forums, in all regions of the country with discussions to advance the policies of access and permanence of children in Early Childhood Education, with achievements in favor of a public and quality Early Childhood Education.

The marks of the struggles of the movements have been consolidated throughout history, resulting in the constitution of important documents with the MEC, namely: norms, guidelines, references for the demands necessary for the functioning of childhood schools, adaptation of spaces and pedagogical organization, continuing education of teachers, curricular and pedagogical proposals, conceptions of children, education, curriculum. It can be observed that, after the approval of LDBEN No. 9.394, other opinions and resolutions were formulated to guide, standardize and adapt childhood schools. The first to be highlighted is the National Curricular Framework for Early Childhood Education (RCNEI, 1998). Soon after, the MEC launched the National Curriculum Guidelines for Early Childhood Education (DCNEIs, 2009), which reflect issues of pedagogical and curricular practice, incorporating in its text the child as the center of pedagogical work. So, from the DCNEIs (Brasil, 2009b):

Art. 3 The Early Childhood Education curriculum is conceived as a set of practices that seek to articulate the experiences and knowledge of children with the knowledge that is part of the cultural, artistic, environmental, scientific and technological heritage, in order to promote the integral development of children from 0 to 5 years of age.

To think about curriculum in Early Childhood Education is to think about the identity of this stage, characterized by numerous specificities, something that requires commitment on the part of the management team and the professionals who work in it, as the curriculum needs to be thought, reflected and built collectively. To achieve the goals proposed in its pedagogical project, the Early Childhood Education institution organizes its curriculum. This, in the DCNEIs (Brasil, 2009b), is understood as “[...] educational practices organized around knowledge and in the midst of social relations that take place in institutional spaces, and that affect the construction of children's identities”. The curriculum seeks to articulate the experiences and knowledge of children with the knowledge that is part of the cultural, artistic, scientific and technological heritage of society through planned and permanently evaluated practices that structure the daily lives of institutions (Oliveira, 2010).

Early Childhood Education has its own organization and identity; this is undoubtedly an achievement. In this sense, the curriculum needs to contemplate the historical-social character and the conceptions of being a child, childhood, interrelationships with the environment, always respecting the children's knowledge, the

space for listening and speaking. Also according to the DCNEIs (Brasil, 2009b), in its article 9, the structuring axes of the pedagogical practices of this stage are interactions and games, which promote the experiences of construction, creation, exploration of the imaginary and manifestation of children's culture with the environment. The most recent document, the National Common Curricular Base (BNCC, 2017) is a normative document, that is, it establishes rules and guidelines for the organization of teaching in the country, defining the essential learning at each stage of Basic Education. Thus, Early Childhood Education is organized in the BNCC based on the Structuring Axes – interactions and games – and presents six learning and development rights for children that must be ensured and guaranteed by Early Childhood Education institutions.

We can highlight that the text referring to Early Childhood Education in the BNCC was discussed by experts, entities, discussion forums and Early Childhood Education movements. Even so, it is possible to observe different interpretations of the document and actions proposed for the children. Therefore, we reaffirm the need for continuing education and studies for the restructuring of childhood schools, seeking to expand and deepen the knowledge of teachers who work in daycare centers and preschools. We believe, therefore, that the initial and continuing education of teachers is one of the criteria and paths for the quality of Early Childhood Education.

3 Research context: characterization of the municipality of Santa Maria/RS and the municipal education network

The municipality of Santa Maria is located in the central region of the state of Rio Grande do Sul, belonging to the southern region of Brazil, and is recognized as a cultural and university city, on behalf of the Federal University of Santa Maria (UFSM), created on December 14, 1960. Santa Maria is 290 kilometers from Porto Alegre, the state capital, and is in the geographic center of Rio Grande do Sul, a condition that offers facilities for the flow of products from the southern region of Brazil to Latin American countries. According to data estimated by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE), in 2024, Santa Maria had 282,244 inhabitants, being the fifth most populous city in Rio Grande do Sul.

In the municipal network of Santa Maria, the maintainer of municipal schools, the Municipal Department of Education (SMED), acts as a central axis in the administration of schools through financial and pedagogical support and guidance. Schools also have the support and advice of the Municipal Council of Education, which is responsible for establishing standards for the operation of schools, in addition to monitoring their activities. The municipal education network currently has 78 schools, divided into: 22 Municipal Schools of Early Childhood Education (EMEIs), 54 Municipal Schools of Elementary Education (EMEFs), the Eduardo Trevisan Municipal School of Arts and the Municipal School of Industrial Learning, comprising approximately 20,000 enrolled students.

To investigate the training processes offered by the municipal education network of Santa Maria to Early Childhood Education teachers, the research had the following guiding question: what are the achievements and impasses in the implementation of public policies for the continuing education of Early Childhood Education teachers offered by the municipal network from 2019 to 2021?

In this sense, the Municipal Education Plan (PME) stands out, sanctioned in August 2015 by Law No. 6,001, which presents the strategies for meeting the goals established in the PNE (2014) in relation to Goal 1 - which deals with the universalization of Early Childhood Education by 2016 in preschool for children aged 4 and 5 years old and the expansion of the offer in daycare centers for children up to 3 years old, seeking to contribute to the achievement of the national goal of at least 50% access to daycare by the end of the term of the PME and the offer of full-time public Early Childhood Education with quality assurance in childcare. The PME also establishes, among other strategies, the requirement of teacher training at a higher level, an undergraduate course in Pedagogy to work in Early Childhood Education in municipal public schools, and intends to promote the “[...] continuous training of teachers who work in Early Childhood Education and in the Early Years in an articulated way within their weekly workload, in a collaborative regime, through partnerships with public and private HEIs” (Santa Maria, 2015).

In 2019, SMED de Santa Maria created the Municipal Public Policy to confront age-year distortion, repetition and school dropout, entitled "Knowledge Connection". The

emergence of this municipal policy was due to the high rate of students in situations of age-year distortion, repetition and school dropout. In 2018, of the 12,492 students enrolled in Elementary School, 9,684 were between the 3rd and 9th grades. Of these, 2,629 students were in a situation of age-year distortion, that is, 27% who exceeded by two years or more the regular age predicted for the year in which they were enrolled, according to data presented by the municipal secretariat in 2018. In this context, the Promla project for the continuing education of teachers of Early Childhood Education and the early years of Elementary School in the municipal network arises.

4 Continuing education offered to education professionals in the municipality of Santa Maria (2019)

Within the national context of teacher training policies, the municipality of Santa Maria, through SMED, has been seeking to contemplate and fulfill the goals of the PNE (2014-2024) regarding the training of education professionals, which we reaffirm to be one of the criteria for advances in the quality of Basic Education. In Table 1, we present the teachers participating in the research.

Table 1 – Characterization of the research subjects

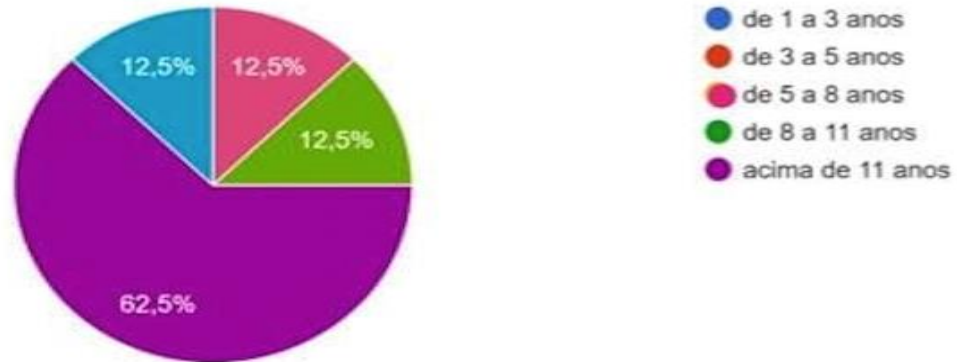
Fictitious name	Age	Education
Pink Teacher	Over 35	Teaching, higher education, specialization
Lemon Green Teacher	30 - 35 years old	Higher education, specialization, master's degree
Professor Violeta	Over 35	Higher education, specialization, master's degree
Blue-Royal Teacher	Over 35	Teaching, higher education, specialization
Yellow Teacher	Over 35	Teaching, higher education, specialization
Teacher Turquoise	From 25 – 30	Higher education, specialization, master's degree
Teacher Orange	Over 35	Teaching, higher education, specialization
Teacher Lilac	Over 35	Teaching, higher education, specialization

Source: Own preparation (2024).

Analyzing Table 1, it is possible to identify that all the teachers participating in the research have training, all attended specialization courses and three completed the master's degree, marking the search for qualification by the teachers, which is reflected in their daily work with the children of Early Childhood Education. It is recorded that 100% of the participation is female collaborating with the research and in the construction of the data.

Regarding the time of experience in Early Childhood Education, we can see in Graph 1 that, of the eight participating teachers, five of them have more than 11 years of experience in Early Childhood Education, representing 62.5% of the group, which demonstrates that they are teachers with experience in this stage.

Graph 1 – Time working in Early Childhood Education



Source: Own preparation (2024).

Another relevant and questioned data to identify the professional performance profile is the place of performance, 62.5% in EMEF and 37.5% in EMEI. The location of the participating teachers' schools in the municipality is: one in the northern region, one in the eastern region, one in the central region, one in the southern region and four in the western region of the city. It is important to note that it is a small sample of the municipal network.

To carry out the analysis of the data that were collected and produced during the research, we used as a method the content analysis based on Bardin (1977). For Bardin (1977, p. 42), content analysis is designated as:

[...] a set of techniques for analyzing communications aiming to obtain, through systematic and objective procedures for describing the content of messages, indicators (quantitative or not) that allow the inference of knowledge related to the conditions of production/reception (inferred variables) of these messages.

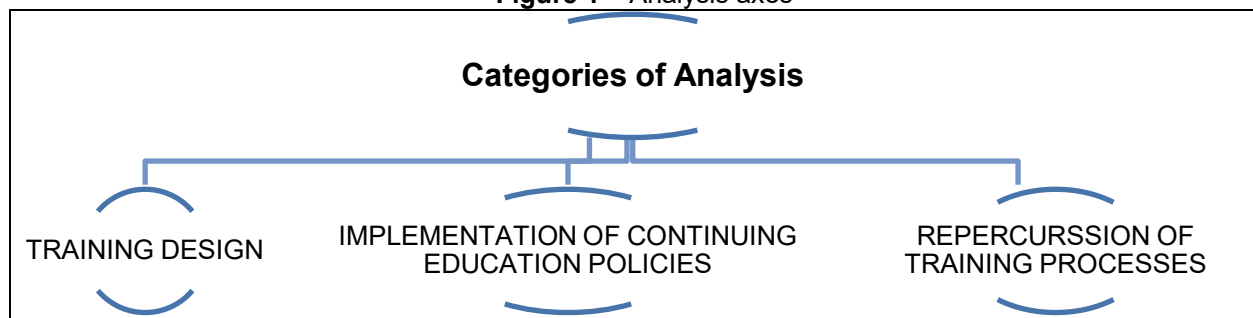
The content analysis method allows a look beyond the written, a look at the meanings, “[...] In other words, through content analysis, we can walk in the discovery of what is behind the manifest contents, going beyond the appearances of what is being communicated” (Gomes, 2009, p. 84). Thus, we sought to "unveil" the meaning of the communications, the speeches of the teachers of Early Childhood Education, the

conceptions addressed for the continuing education of Early Childhood Education teachers offered by the municipality's support network, based on the categories of analysis that emerge from the contributions brought by the collaborating subjects of the research.

Then, the guiding questions of the research allowed the choice of indexes or categories, building an organization of these into indicators. Starting from the themes that were repeated very frequently in the material collected in the interview and in the questionnaires, we cut from the text “[...] comparable units of categorization for thematic analysis and coding modalities for data recording” (Bardin, 1977, p. 100).

Thus, after the transcription of the semi-structured interview and the answers obtained through the questionnaires, we organized the analysis based on the exploration of the data, in which we chose three categories: training design, implementation of continuing education policies and repercussion of the training processes, as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1 – Analysis axes



Source: Own preparation (2024).

5 Formations of the Promla project

Promla “Weaving knowledge, building knowledge” appeared in 2019 and had as its target audience teachers of Early Childhood Education (preschool) and the early years of Elementary School I, aiming to:

Contribute to the qualification of training processes, fostering the socialization of knowledge, the resignification of practices and teaching protagonism, based on the development of creative, entrepreneurial and innovative pedagogical practices in the educational context, with a view to enabling meaningful learning (Santa Maria, 2019).

Promla's training meetings were designed to take place in an aligned way between theory and practice, based on the themes "Active methodologies and playfulness in the teaching and learning process" (Santa Maria, 2019) and the actions of the program were developed by the municipal education network based on the dynamics of the meetings. In addition, Promla continues with the same dynamics and organization of the training offered in the previous year (2018) by the National Pact for Literacy at the Right Age (PNAIC).

The teachers were selected to develop the training with the teachers of preschool and early years, totaling a group of 16, called articulators. As mentioned by the secretariat, some criteria were used to choose the articulators, such as: being a teacher in the municipal network; being a pedagogue or specialist in Early Childhood Education; having participated in PNAIC as A trainer or as a student. This group of articulators received specific training, before starting with the training proposals in their groups. These trainings were offered by the SMED team in partnership with the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) of the municipality.

Training was organized in face-to-face meetings (monthly), which were disseminated to the virtual space through the Moodle platform. With this, it was intended "To expand training from the digital platform aims to offer an environment for research and exchange of experiences among RME teachers" (Santa Maria, 2019). For the formative meetings, the participating teachers (students) were organized in different classes, namely: preschool, together with the 1st and 2nd grades; 3rd and 4th grades; and, finally, 5th grade. In one of the statements of the coordinator of Early Childhood Education – SMED (interview, 2021), it is possible to highlight the justification for the union of preschool with elementary school:

The idea of the 'pre' being together with the first years of Promla was to interconnect so that there would be no rupture in the departure from preschool to the 1st year. The idea was that the 1st year could enter the world of Early Childhood Education and experience some practices of Early Childhood Education and so that there would not be that rupture of everything. But it turned out that it didn't come out like that, perhaps, so much to the initial idea.

Later, we will understand the final statement of the SMED/EI coordinator when she says that "[...] *the initial idea*" of the organization of Promla did not come out like that, *perhaps*. The training proposals for preschool teachers aimed at the literacy process with

children aged 4 and 5 are in line with the public policies created at the national level, such as: National Literacy Plan (PNA, 2020) and National Textbook Program (PNLD, 2020-2022).

We highlight the public position of Mieib contrary to textbooks in Early Childhood Education, expressed through an open letter on August 6, 2021, which corroborates our defense and position on public policies that violate the rights to education acquired historically and that are guaranteed in the laws: CF (1988), Adolescent Child Statute (1990), LDBEN nº 9.394/1996, DCNEIs (2009), BNCC (2017) and PNE (2001 and 2014).

The notice proposed for the PNLD (2020-2022) provides for the transfer of a textbook for Early Childhood Education, so the use of the textbook at this stage goes against the foundations, conceptions and studies consolidated in the country's Early Childhood Education policy, “[...] which conceive children and their experiences as the center of the educational process and not the early and compulsory construction of the student's craft” (Mieib, 2021).

We are talking about choice – politics – that forges the project of society and education of our children. More than ignoring or leaving in the background relevant themes for the guarantee and realization of children's rights, it is disregarding:

The normative documents' National Curriculum Guidelines for Early Childhood Education 'of 2009 (DCNEI) and the' National Common Curriculum Base '(BNCC) define that it is not up to early childhood education to literate children, but to present to them the cultural heritage of humanity, which is part of the written culture, with a view not to literacy of children, but to their integral development respecting their characteristics and their way of learning that occurs through interactions and play (Mieib, 2021).

Early Childhood Education is not responsible for literacy! The DCNEIs (2009) define the child as “[...] a historical and rights subject who, in the interactions, relationships and daily practices he experiences, builds his personal and collective identity, plays, imagines, fantasies, desires, learns, observes, experiences, narrates, questions and builds meanings about nature and society, producing culture”. This is to understand what in fact is and is done in Early Childhood Education, to recognize its multiple specificities, with interactions and games being the main ways of presenting the world and the culture that is being produced, (re)constructed and (re)created in daily life by children, recognizing the autonomy of the child and its ability to produce culture. In addition, it is possible to observe that the books that are based on the exploration of

literacy and *numeracy*, with an exclusive focus on the preparation and anticipation of literacy, according to the PNA (2020). It is a setback regarding the advances in Early Childhood Education acquired historically and ensured in current legislation. The PNA (2020) presents an already outdated proposal for literacy and literacy:

[...] of motor training, dotted cover and memorize syllables proved to be ineffective and, in addition to not respecting the characteristics of learning and child development, do not contribute to the education of subjects capable of thinking and performing the social use of reading and writing, but only copyists who cannot interpret the text read, nor establish relationships with the world (Mieib, 2021).

In view of this scenario, it is necessary to bring the contributions of studies and research on the possibilities of working with reading and writing in Early Childhood Education by author Mônica Correia Baptista, from the Federal University of Minas Gerais (UFMG), who developed, together with other teachers, the project produced by MEC in 2016, entitled "Reading and Writing in Early Childhood Education". According to the author:

[...] the conception that is intended to be affirmed as a reference for working with written language in early childhood education is based on the following assumptions: 1. Early childhood education has its own identity, constituted from the characteristics of the subjects for whom it is intended - children and their way of relating to the world and building meaning for what they experience. Working with written language should respect the child as a producer of culture. 2. The term written language refers, in this text, to the productions that are carried out through writing and the results of the social use that is made of this object of knowledge. 3. Play, a privileged way for the child to manifest and produce culture, is the central element for the constitution of educational action and must be understood as a source of knowledge about the child and its process of appropriation and production of culture. Understanding the child as a subject of rights, daycare and preschool should be spaces to guarantee the right to play (Baptista, 2010, p. 1-2).

In this context of reflecting the culture of reading and writing within childhood schools, in daily life and in practices, there is a complexity to think about these times and spaces, so that they do not become literacy environments, since the objective of Early Childhood Education is not to teach literacy, but has an important role in expanding children's knowledge, as they are "[...] subjects who aspire to new knowledge [...] face the challenge of understanding the signs, symbols and complex systems of representation that circulate socially, make sense of them and appropriate them" (Baptista, 2010, p. 2). It is about enabling children to expand their knowledge of the literate world in which they are immersed, breaking with literacy practices.

[...] writing, the object of knowledge created by humanity, exerts a strong influence on children's culture and is, at the same time and to some extent, influenced by it. From birth, children are immersed in a specific culture and, throughout their development process, they create strategies to describe the world, understand it and interact with it. Written language, which in contemporary societies influences and often determines urban structures, forms of interlocution, and expression of culture, is one of the elements with which children interact, seeking to appropriate it to better understand the world and relate to it (Baptista, 2010, p. 2).

It is important to situate the place that reading and writing occupy as social practices, in the attempt to reiterate that we do not need practices of repetition of letters, numbers or symbols, but well-planned and intentional pedagogical proposals that place the child at the center of the learning process of exploring the culture of reading and writing in which they are immersed.

The child rewrites, reconstructs, reformulates constituent elements of writing, making use of his peculiar way of thinking and his very own references about the world. It is not necessary for the child to understand the relationships between phonemes and graphemes to construct meanings when listening to the reading of a story or when elaborating narratives from a book of images, for example. Children formulate hypotheses, create stories, invent meanings, thus attesting to their protagonism in relation to the process of building knowledge about written language (Baptista, 2010, p. 3).

Therefore, it is not because we do not literate in Early Childhood Education that we stop working on such knowledge that is part of our culture historically constituted by humanity. Our research, however, shows the impasses faced by the implementation of Promla – as a political choice of municipal management – when the municipality proposes training with the centrality in the literacy of children in the age group of 4 and 5 years old, among preschool teachers, 1st and 2nd years, with the intention of covering concerns about age-year distortion rates, bringing to preschool the overload of anticipating the failure of Elementary School. In addition, it was possible to perceive that the same opportunity for exchanges between teachers could be based on the rights of children, dialoguing on the continuity and maintenance of these rights in Elementary School: with a sensitive look, promoting reflections on pedagogical practice in times and spaces that respect the cultural productions of children, as well as conversation circles on gender, class and ethnic-racial issues.

Carvalho and Guizzo (2018) bring important contributions about the public policies of Early Childhood Education in search of the construction of a Pedagogy of

childhood. Following a path of achievements, clashes and challenges, the authors intend to build a new pedagogical conception of caring and educating in childhood institutions, in the search to break and overcome welfare and schooling. The assistentialist conception disregards the specificities of the educational work of the children who attend this space, reinforcing a discourse of volunteering and poverty alleviation (Carvalho; Guizzo, 2018).

Schooling, on the other hand, is based on a propaedeutic teaching logic guided by Elementary School practices that aim at the development of human capital from an early age. [...] 1st.) the fact that Early Childhood Education is subordinated to Elementary School, based on a colonization process; 2nd.) the economic vision of education, based on a neoliberal logic based on productivity parameters, which understand children as human capital in which to invest from an early age as a way of alleviating poverty and, consequently, reducing inequality in third world countries; 3rd.) the understanding that Early Childhood Education can reduce children's school failure, provided that it adequately prepares them for subsequent levels of education, raising the country's level in large-scale evaluations, which have been the hallmark of contemporary evaluation policies (Carvalho; Guizzo, 2018, p. 774).

In this clash, it is necessary to problematize Federal Law No. 11.114/2005, which made it mandatory for children aged 6 to enter elementary school, generating strong repercussions among scholars, researchers and civil society, due to the lack of discussion, articulation and disrespect for educational processes and the lack of structure of private and public education networks to receive these children (Carvalho; Guizzo, 2018). Also due to the deadline for the implementation of the legislation, continuing education courses were not made available to teachers of the 1st year of Elementary School who received 6-year-old children in schools.

And the changes in the legislation that affected Early Childhood Education continued in the following year (2006), after the approval of Federal Law No. 11.274/2006, which expands Elementary School to nine years and makes it mandatory for children to enter this stage at age 6. As a result of this law, Constitutional Amendment No. 53/2006 was originated, redefining the age group of attendance in Early Childhood Education for babies and children aged 0 to 5 years. Thus, other dilemmas challenge municipal and state departments, universities and other institutions to think about the field of childhoods, concerned with:

[...] the forms of structuring early childhood education within the scope of basic education and its articulation with elementary education; school organization and early childhood education in different municipal contexts; curricular guidelines and quality criteria; diagnoses and/or evaluations of public policies; performance evaluations (Kramer, 2006, p. 804).

In the area of knowledge to be produced about Early Childhood Education, Kramer (2006, p. 804) reiterates that, in addition to the themes mentioned above, the importance of thinking:

[...] the institutionalization of childhood and its consequences; theoretical conceptions of childhood (it is necessary to consolidate the contributions of sociology of childhood, anthropology and cultural studies on children and children's cultures); specificities of daycare and work with babies – an area in which research is urgent regarding policies, practices in daycare centers and family actions.

Undoubtedly, this political scenario demands attention from municipal, state and federal administrations for the formulation of public policies for continuing education offered to teachers, not least because the “[...] progressive democratization of Early Childhood Education and Elementary School generated – as a policy – the inclusion of 6-year-olds in compulsory schooling. And training teachers for teaching in early childhood education is a new task in the history of the Brazilian school ” (Kramer, 2006, p. 804). In this sense, these challenges were faced by the municipal management.

6 Final considerations

It should be noted that we have had many advances and achievements in the field of childhood, in the creation of public policies and government policies over the last 30 years, as well as the importance of problematizing the continuing education of teachers that has been discussed in several areas of the educational field. The research pointed out the tensions of the Promla formations (2019) for not contemplating specific aspects of the field of childhoods and for reinforcing discourses and practices with a proposal to anticipate literacy in Early Childhood Education, something that moved a group of teachers to organize a document directed to the Department of Education.

This research mapped changes in the formations of the following years, as a result of the manifestation of the teachers of Early Childhood Education, and there was the creation of the 1st Municipal Seminar of Early Childhood Education (2020), being a project of continuous *online* formations – implications of the Coronavirus pandemic (2020) – in order to promote teacher development, reflections on practices with children, recognizing the specificities of Early Childhood Education. Training proposals that were

offered in 2021 were also presented, named as "Project of continuing education of teachers of Early Childhood Education – from public policies to pedagogical actions in the daily life of childhood schools" (Profcei, 2021).

Reflecting the changes in the conceptions of the proposed training for the 2019-2021 period, it is necessary to highlight the advances in continuing education offered to teachers in the municipal network of Santa Maria, specifically in the training of Early Childhood Education teachers. There are changes in conceptions about the field of childhood in the municipality, based on the movement of teachers and daycare and preschool teachers. We emphasize that resistance movements have always marked this place and to say what they think about their training processes is to fight for the realization and maintenance of the rights won.

The historical movement of teachers of Early Childhood Education in Santa Maria, when constructing a document for SMED, expressed discontent with the structuring of continuing education in 2019, expressing concern about the format of the program (Promla, 2019), which proposed different formations within the same stage (daycare and preschool). The document also mentions the recognition of the importance of establishing spaces for exchanges between Early Childhood Education and Elementary School, but with the concern of the transition between the stages, reflecting the ruptures, in the search for quality of this process, respecting the identities of each of the stages.

Understanding the place of reading and writing in the context of childhood schools and pedagogical practices moved us to look at the weaknesses of Promla's training (2019), as it did not include the limitations of early childhood education teachers' training on the subject. However, the lack of specific training in Early Childhood Education may reinforce discourses, practices and actions to anticipate Elementary School processes for Early Childhood Education.

In view of this, it is clear that the Early Childhood Education of Santa Maria has a teaching identity with ethical and political responsibility, which fights for the maintenance and realization of the rights of children, childhoods and quality public education. Thus, it is understood that it will not be any formative processes that will promote the production of knowledge, reflection on practice, the resignification of thinking about daily life with

children in the times and spaces of childhood schools, but that the teacher is also responsible for the formative path by assuming to be in spaces to participate, collaborate, reflect, contribute and build knowledge and actions in favor of children among peers.

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