

## Connecting through the heart: narrated experiences about reading and writing in times of pandemic

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### Abstract

This article aims to make considerations about reading and writing practices based on what ten kindergarten teachers narrate about their experiences with children in times of pandemic. The work adopts the epistemological perspective of (auto)biographical research in education in dialogue with authors who contribute to problematize these narratives of lived experience in the processes of co-training and teacher self-(trans)training. Technical competence and political commitment are articulated here, considered unavoidable to accompany children from 4 to 5 years old in the process of appropriation of reading and writing as a fundamental condition to the exercise of citizenship. It ends with the defense that the joint reflection between teachers and trainers on experiences, doubts, doings, and duties inherent to pedagogical practices has much to contribute to the production of scientific knowledge in educational research based on an incarnate knowledge.

### Keywords

experience narratives; coformation and self-transformation; reading and writing in preschool; pandemic.

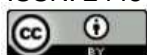
### Conectando-se pelo coração: experiências narradas sobre leitura e escrita em tempos de pandemia

### Resumo

Este artigo tem por objetivo tecer considerações sobre práticas de leitura e escrita com base no que narram dez professoras da Educação Infantil sobre suas experiências com as crianças em tempos de pandemia. O trabalho adota a perspectiva epistemológica de pesquisa (auto)biográfica em educação, no diálogo com autores que contribuem para problematizar essas narrativas da experiência vivida nos processos de coformação e auto(trans)formação docente. Articulam-se aqui competência técnica e compromisso político, considerados incontornáveis para acompanhar crianças de 4 a 5 anos de idade no processo de apropriação da leitura e da escrita como condição fundante para o exercício da cidadania. Finaliza-se com a defesa de que a reflexão conjunta entre professoras e formadoras sobre experiências, dúvidas, fazeres e deveres inerentes às práticas pedagógicas tem muito a contribuir para a produção do conhecimento científico na pesquisa educacional com base em um saber encarnado.

### Palavras-chave

narrativas da experiência; coformação e autotransformação; leitura e escrita na pré-escola; pandemia.



## **Conectando desde el corazón: experiencias narradas sobre la lectura y la escritura en tiempos de pandemia**

### **Resumen**

Este artículo tiene como objetivo hacer consideraciones sobre las prácticas de lectura y escrita a partir de lo narrado por diez docentes de Educación Infantil sobre sus experiencias con los niños en tiempos de pandemia. El trabajo adopta la perspectiva epistemológica de la investigación (auto)biográfica en educación en diálogo con autores que contribuyen a problematizar estas narrativas de la experiencia vivida en los procesos de coformación y auto(trans)formación docente. Se articulan aquí competencia técnica y compromiso político, considerados ineludibles para acompañar a los niños de 4 a 5 años en el proceso de apropiación de lectura y de escrita como condición fundamental para el ejercicio de la ciudadanía. Se concluye con la defensa de que la reflexión conjunta entre docentes y formadores sobre experiencias, dudas, acciones y deberes inherentes a las prácticas pedagógicas tiene mucho que aportar a la producción de conocimiento científico en la investigación educativa a partir del conocimiento corporeizado.

### **Palabras clave**

experiencias narrativas; coformación y transformación; leer y escribir en preescolar; pandemia.

## **1 Introduction**

When many paths open before you, and you don't know which one to take, don't choose one randomly: sit and wait. Breathe with the confident depth with which you breathed the day you came into the world, not allowing anything to distract you: wait and wait even more. Be still, silent, and listen to your heart. And when it talks to you, get up and go where it leads you [...]. (TAMARO, 2015, p. 152).

The words of Tamaro (2015), in the epigraph, were chosen as a metaphor to justify, in the title, our appeal to connection through the heart. After all, why not admit that the rhythm of its pulse moves and moves us? From now on, why not also admit the importance of thinking about ways to exercise in education, nurture, and cherish how the heart inspires us and what emanates from it in the direction of moving in life? We will address here narratives originating from the pandemic, in which teachers talk about their everyday actions and what was the heartbeat in paths taken within an early childhood education school.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the difficulties encountered by early childhood teachers in carrying out school activities related to literacy were notorious. Amid great tensions and expectations in the face of inevitable pedagogical damage caused by social distancing, practices were developed contrary to the child's learning, which, traditionally,

is structured in contact with concrete, interactive, and playful experiences. In this context, school activities gained new formats and allowed to live other experiences.

The article presents a discussion on reading and writing practices, during the pandemic, based on research results that integrate broader projects funded by the Fundação de Amparo à Pesquisa do Estado de São Paulo (Fapesp) and by Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico (CNPq)<sup>1</sup>. The study is based on the perspective of (auto)biographical research in education, which assumes that when narrating the lived experience, the adult, the young person, and the child “[...] give themselves with the possibility of unfolding as a spectator and as a character of the narrated show; as an object of reflection and as a reflective being” (PASSEGGI, 2016, p. 82). Turning thought into action and action into a reflective exercise are ways of making visible what we think about the reality in which we find ourselves because it is this thinking that, in a way, will define our next actions and educational proposals. For Josso (2007, p. 431):

The practices of reflection on lived experiences are presented as laboratories for understanding our learning of the craft of living in a mobile world, which is constantly being made and remade and which calls into question the belief in an acquired identity, in favor of an existentiality always under construction.

This work, therefore, adopts the epistemological perspective of (auto)biographical research in education and aims to problematize what emerges from the teachers' narratives about their practices and interactions with children and highlight processes of co-formation and teacher self-(trans)formation through collective reflection.

## 2 Research methodology

The narratives that constitute the research corpus were collectively produced in the reflective group of biographical mediation, conceived by Passeggi (2011) as a privileged space for the constitution of biographical sources and as a research-training device. For the author, it is a dialogical and horizontal practice between teachers and trainers who share their reflections on the experiences lived in a collective and public

<sup>1</sup> “Narratives, education, health: epistemology and methods of (auto)biographical research with children” (CNPq processo n. 307063/2019-4), coordinated by Maria da Conceição Passeggi; “Implementation of educational policies and inequalities in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic”, coordinated by Maria do Carmo Meirelles Toledo.

work. In it, learning is developed through self-reflection, by critically turning to oneself, and learning through hetero-reflection, awakened by the experience narrated by the other.

The group meetings took place once a week, during a school trimester, from September to December 2021, and lasted 80 minutes. To carry out the meetings and build the empirical data, video communication services were used, through the Google Meet platform, which allowed recording of what was said about the experiences lived in the pre-pandemic, pandemic, and post-pandemic cycle and back to school. The corpus is, therefore, constituted by discussions about what ten preschool teachers who participated in the research have to say and who, during the meetings, discussed literacy practices during the pandemic.

### 3 Discussion of the results: school “cardiogram”

In 2020, the world was surprised by the pandemic caused by the new coronavirus – Covid-19. In a city in the interior of Vale do Paraíba Paulista, schools had their classes suspended on March 23, 2020. Faced with health measures required by the needs of social distancing, the Secretary of Education, following the determinations of the state of São Paulo government, defined that classes would be remote. In addition to the activities offered through the Internet apps, the children also had printed material, whose purpose was to ensure, for those who did not have Internet access, would receive the activities planned by a technical team from the Department of Education.

The momentary closure of in-person classes affected 90% of students in the world, according to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2021). This closure resulted in more than 100 million children below the minimum level of proficiency in reading, mainly in vulnerable and disadvantaged communities (UNESCO, 2021).

The desire to problematize reading and writing was motivated by the purpose of reflecting with the group of preschool teachers on aspects that involved this moment of learning during the pandemic, which had to take place in a different format. Regarding this stage of reading and writing acquisition, some important documents and research, such as the analyzes presented by Núcleo Ciência pela Infância (NCPI, 2020, p. 30),

revealed that children during early childhood (0 to 6 years old) “[...] learn through concrete, interactive and playful experiences”.

The Fundação Carlos Chagas (FCC, 2020), in a research entitled *School education in times of a pandemic*, whose purpose was to know how basic education students were learning from the teachers' point of view, identified different perceptions. For 49.7% of teachers, remote teaching reduced student learning, while 8.7% reported that student learning increased during online teaching with the help of technologies; 25.7% were unable to inform; and 15.9% said there were no changes.

Another worrying obstacle was the internal evaluative survey document carried out by the Municipal Secretary of Education of the municipality in which the research was carried out (SEED, 2021) in February 2021. This document revealed that, of the 2,975 children enrolled in the 1st year of Elementary School, that is, newly arrived from pre-school, only 11 children were literate. These numbers are in contrast to what is defined by the Plano Nacional de Educação (PNE), Law nº 13.005/2014, which proposes in its goal 5.1:

[...] structure the pedagogical processes of literacy, in the early years of fundamental education, articulating them with the strategies developed in pre-school, with qualification and valorization of literacy teachers and with specific pedagogical support, to ensure the full literacy of all children. (BRAZIL, 2014, p. 28).

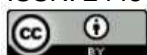
Can we consider as a failure of children the fact that they cannot participate in literate culture? It is undeniable that we are facing a crisis. For Arendt (1961, p. 174), the crisis only becomes disastrous when we intend to respond with prejudices, that is, with ready-made ideas, preconceived: “Attitude that not only exacerbates the crisis but also makes you lose the experience of reality and the opportunity for reflection that the crisis provides”.

Faced with the situations presented, in such a serious moment lived by society, we ask ourselves: what experiences do preschool teachers narrate and what reflections do they bring about their reading and writing practices amid the pandemic?

### **3.1 The rhythm of school learning in childhood**

The Diretrizes Curriculares Nacionais da Educação Infantil (DCNEI) – resolution CNE/CEB nº 5/2009 –, in the 4th article, define the child as:

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[...] historical subject with rights, who, in the interactions, relationships, and daily practices and experiences, builds their personal and collective identity, plays, imagines, fantasizes, desires, learns, observes, experiences, narrates, questions and builds meanings about nature and society, producing culture. (BRAZIL, 2009, p. 97).

In this legislative scenario, school institutions need, based on these rights, to think about a relationship of sharing and training between family and school, since contemporaneity calls for a new conception of children. School spaces no longer can be a building without a soul, that is, a school filled only with chairs, tables, and pictures, a school far from the children's daily lives, because, “[...] as a strictly human practice, I could never understand education as a cold, soulless experience, in which feelings and emotions, desires, dreams should be repressed by a kind of rationalist dictatorship” (FREIRE, 2010, p. 145).

Nowadays, schools of early childhood education assume, therefore, the commitment made to enable children to expand their interpersonal relationships and build the capacity to live in a plural society. In other words, they need to learn to live with others, to know each other, to explore the world, to express their feelings and thoughts, to participate in society daily (BRAZIL, 2017).

Writing, an object of knowledge created by humanity, exerts a great influence on children's culture and, in a way, is also influenced by them. Since they are born, girls and boys are immersed in a culture, and, throughout their development process, they interact in this world and try to interpret it. The child constructs meanings by listening to a story or elaborating narratives through the images of a book, without the need to have already built relationships between phonemes and graphemes. The desire to understand the writing system and take ownership of it is the result of the interaction with the written culture to which it belongs, even before entering school. In this relationship, the child develops their concept of written language, understanding the functions of reading and writing and distinguishing their genres and carriers (SOARES, 2016).

### **3.2 *Diagnosis: a matter of method***

Bruner (1997, p. 46) states that “[...] a narrative is composed of a singular sequence of events, mental states, occurrences, involving human beings as characters or

authors”. In this way, the narrative can be understood as the possibility for the narrator not only to see themselves in the situation they lived but also to (re)build this version in the narrative process. Bruner (1997) also clarifies that each narrative is organized in a context or a specific situation and its form will depend both on the subjectivities of the one who narrates, on their peers, and on the culture in which they are inserted. In this regard, he asserts that:

[...] unlike constructions generated by logical and scientific procedures that can be destroyed because of falsifications, narrative constructions can only achieve 'verisimilitude'. Thus, narratives are a version of reality whose acceptability is governed only by convention and 'narrative necessity', not by empirical verification and logical precision, and, ironically, we are under no obligation to call stories true or false. (BRUNER, 1991, p. 4).

According to Bruner (1991, p. 16), the narrative organizes the structure of human experience, giving us the possibility of understanding certain situations that, “[...] when they become interpretable, they become bearable”.

The guiding ethical principle of research with life histories is that the narratives of experience, far from wanting to communicate what is already known, are true processes of discovering self-reinvention. “[...] It is in this sense that one can conceive the use of life stories, or autobiographical narratives, as teacher training processes” (PASSEGGI, 2017, p. 14).

By proposing the reflective group, the sharing of experience narratives of preschool teachers is encouraged, in a collective and public work, done with others and in front of others. In this way, writing and thinking seem inevitable, as well as commentary, contagion, and mutual stimulation. Dominicé (2000) presents this perspective as an opportunity, through life stories, to study how individuals give meaning to their experiences, in addition to being an investigation method.

### ***3.3 Pacemakers: in emergencies, what to suggest?***

Pacemakers are electrical devices capable of detecting the patient's heartbeat, in addition to emitting small discharges that make the heart beat when impulses are lacking. We were caught by surprise by the pandemic. In this sense, the municipality organized itself so that the children received monthly printed materials, containing proposals and activities which should be carried out by the children in their homes, with the assistance

of family members. In addition to this, students had guidance provided by teachers through cell phone messages.

When the teachers went to check the responses or posts of the proposals requested through these videos, they realized that few children had interacted with them and that, among those who had responded, there were answers that were unfinished or were not carried out by the children. Teacher Ana points to exactly this situation: "I discovered that a lot of things were done for them, the father, the mother, the older brother, someone else was doing it, but it wasn't the kid. This student, I knew, couldn't even write their name". This teacher expresses concern and exposes her certainty: "Someone was doing it, but it wasn't them". Her countenance denounced the eagerness that something had to be done. Indeed, these reports show that we were not prepared for such situation. If on the one hand, we had children at home respecting social isolation (taking care of their health), on the other hand, there were the teachers and a difficult social and economic reality: "[...] popular educators have in them a starting point for their action. Persist, a point of departure and not of arrival" (FREIRE, 2001, p. 16).

Families played an essential role during distancing, but they expected partnership and, according to teacher Ana, it was very important when she put herself in the families' shoes:

*A survey was sent to the group so that the student looked in magazines for words that started with the letter of their name, then I asked the mothers to paste it on a sheet, take a picture, and send it. But some students did it like this: they didn't cut it; they looked for objects, food, and other things; were taking pictures or videos and sent me.*

Often, with the rush of everyday life or even the lack of certain materials at home, the proposals were not carried out satisfactorily. In this and other situations, the families had to improvise and, for the teacher, this was valid, after all, the objective of the proposal was for the children to relate the initial letter of their name with the objects they had at home. Such narratives find support in the words of Freire (2010, p. 102):

While in the 'banking' practice of education, anti-dialogical by essence, therefore non-communicative, the educator deposits in the student the programmatic content of education, which they elaborate themselves or for themselves, in the problematizing practice, which is dialogic before anything else, this content, which is never 'deposited', it is organized and constituted in the students' view of the world, in which its generating themes are found.



In this way, when reflecting, the teacher does not fall into the trap of being a banker or a depository of knowledge, on the contrary, they become provocateurs, who, while teaching, learn and, while learning, teach. Paulo Freire sees the figure of the educator as the one who has the starting point in action and, in the pandemic period, this starting point of action was the action of speaking, speaking to persist, defend, lament, worry, and seek a solution to the problem for those who lived with school at home and away from school.

For the teachers participating in our study, the school has transformative potential, as it is the place of encounters, of diversity, where relationships are made through sharing and opposing opinions. The school environment fosters speech and action.

It is, therefore, through the narration and in the narration, produced by humans – children, young people, adults, and seniors – that they conceive themselves, and perceive themselves in self (trans)formation, through retrospective, inspecting, prospective and interactive movements that occur during the narration. (PASSEGGI, 2021, p. 106).

Teacher Julie said:

*I proposed the schoolwork about the legend of the pink river dolphin. I sent the chosen audio about the legend [...]; After researching, I went to chat and exchange messages. They would have to assemble the cut letters forming the word B.O.T.O. I asked them to pick up the letters at the school office.*

It should be noted that the distance made the teachers think about the most diverse strategies about reading and writing.

When narrating, they share their efforts to motivate learning, recording audio, researching a story, and looking for one that had a relationship with the content taught to encourage the students in their tasks away from school. This incessant search is thus translated by Larrosa and Skliar (1999, p. 196): “[...] every desire for knowledge, power and control to approach the enigmatic presence of childhood and allow oneself to be transformed by the truth that each birth brings with it.

For teacher Vitória, the pandemic showed her the importance of the ludic for children:

*Today I realize that playing is really important. Before [the pandemic] I gave a lot of activities, I wanted the children to write; after the pandemic, I saw the importance of interaction, of playing. I joked, but I always left playing for last, but*

*today [post-pandemic], no! Sometimes, I already start with games, I play games, before activities.*

Her words clearly show a change in attitude towards the importance of play in childhood, that is, the understanding that teaching writing, in preschool years, necessarily imposes a second demand: writing must be relevant to the lives of children, just like playing. It is not without reason that Vygotsky (1984, p. 133) “[...] defends that children should feel the need to read and write in their toy”.

The use of digital technologies, in turn, demanded that the teachers learn skills that they recognize as unknown: “Guys, I didn't know how to do anything on the computer! Didn't know how to move anything. I was so terrified! Oh my God! But then I started recording the videos and there were a lot of people who helped me. Today I'm doing well”, said teacher Paula. We see that speech acts related to questioning stir the thoughts and established knowledge, values, beliefs, and behaviors, in the face of what is considered trivial, without great importance for teaching activities, which allows focusing on predictable narratives. A good discussion moves these beliefs and values.

Experience, the possibility that something of ours happens or touches us, requires a gesture of interruption, a gesture that is almost impossible these days: it requires stopping to think, stopping to look, stopping to listen, thinking more slowly, looking more slowly and listen more slowly; stop to feel, feel more slowly, linger over details, suspend opinion, suspend judgment, suspend will, suspend the automatism of action, cultivate attention and delicacy, open eyes and ears, talk about what happens to us, learn to be slow, listen to others, cultivate the art of encounter, be silent a lot, be patient and give yourself time and space. (LARROSA, 2014, p. 25).

What defines (auto)biographical research as an area of scientific investigation is the focus on understanding how humans recognize themselves through their disposition for narrative reflection on the past, the present, and the future. How the subject gives meaning to what surrounds them and the world in which they participate. It is a unique, unique way of understanding and structuring the lived experience, but also in a universal, plural way, in the sense that human praxis, as Ferrarotti (2010, p. 46) states: “[...] reveals itself, even in its less generalizable aspects, as the vertical synthesis of a social history”. Furthermore, the way each person tells their story reverberates in their conscience and is part of the constitution of their subjectivity, which is why we understand that the social is involved in the subjectivity of the individual. It is due to the subjectivity of each being that

we identify and understand what is social in what we live and that inhabits us (PASSEGGI, 2011).

Teacher Aparecida made the following comment: “I learned to read and write the old fashion way, memorizing, all of that. And then the theories change, you keep updating, but we end up acting by trial and error”. We noticed how the collectively shared narrative configures us, leads us to attribute meanings to what we live, and makes us feel, to perceive the world in the singular and the plural at the same time, however, it is necessary to understand the importance of having the inalienable experience of appropriating ourselves through word, oral, written, gestural, of our relationship with the world, an inseparable relationship that operates in and through the relationship with languages.

In this sense, narrating is not merely communicating, expressing, or transmitting something. The act of enunciating announces how we constitute our own humanity. It is, therefore, a more complex knowledge. Reducing it to human technology, sometimes to communicate/express, actually erases what words make us, because the act of language, by allowing us to symbolically represent the world, makes us human. Language thus occupies a central place, as a human action, in the construction of reality and in power games in social practices. In this regard, Passeggi (2011, p. 155) tells us that: “The raw material of this new paradigm in education is the speech and writing of teachers”. Teacher Melissa showed how she becomes aware of her pedagogical postures:

*So, during social distancing, you know, I was doing my video classes, using the characters from Sítio do Picapau. Then, in this class, Narizinho shows the characters and then she brings a problem situation, which is the garbage. Narizinho's friends were finding garbage in the river, so I put the video of the story of the aquatic animals that had this garbage problem, there was a little animal that ate the garbage and got very sick, so all the animals got together to help that little animal that ate the garbage and that was sick.*

The practice described by the teacher had the intention of working with the students importance of separating organic and inorganic waste allowed her to observe in the videos and photos that the children sent her the way they were eating. In the trash, there were many packages of crackers, instant noodles, artificial juices, and low-priced ready-to-eat foods with low nutritional content. The children's responses were an unexpected opportunity to rethink their diets with them, which responds to the school's

purposes in guaranteeing the child's right to health, life, and well-being, which are part of school education.

The discussion triggered in the reflective group, based on the experience narrated by teacher Melissa, led us to devise proposals on children's nutrition, based on what the group had been observing. What was presented as a basis for using food as a theme to be developed by children in reading and writing. Such an initiative, created and developed by reflective practice based on the vulnerable situation of the children for whom they felt responsible, allows us to weave approximations with the pioneering work of Paulo Freire (2019). In 1960, he drew the world's attention by teaching 300 adults to read and write in 40 classes in Angicos, Rio Grande do Norte. For this educator, who turned to the practice of reading with adults, deprived of the right to education, the founding idea is to start from themes of interest to the group, formed by people from the countryside. Reading thus became, for these adults, another way of conceiving the world in which they lived.

The perspective adopted by the group, consciously or unconsciously, takes up Paulo Freire's lessons, which, after all, are part of the collective memory of Brazilian educators. It can be seen, therefore, that the teachers, working together, build knowledge, and comprehension, and not just use the knowledge generated in teacher training, "deposited" in their ways of knowing. This conception operates the passage from the technician, applicationist conception, to a reflective and actional paradigm, which considers teachers as people capable of actively participating in the construction of their profession. As stated by Nias, quoted by Nóvoa (1995, p. 25), "The teacher is the person. And an important part of the person is the teacher."

Regarding this literacy practice linked to food, teacher Yasmim said: "So, I think it's really cool the proposal not only to encourage food, but we make a literacy proposal that they learn daily; they know about food; they know about seasonal fruit; they bring trivia".

It is interesting to notice that, however simple the actions of the teachers might seem, they were imbued with affection. Affectivity constitutes one of the skills that early childhood education professionals need to use in the elaboration of pedagogical proposals, in the planning of activities, and in the mediation of the relationships between teacher and child, between child and child, and between children and objects of knowledge. Thus, we

defend that the affective dimension is inherent to the primary functions of schools: caring and educating, since “[...] affectivity depends, to evolve, on achievements made in terms of intelligence, and vice versa” (DANTAS, 1992, p. 90).

We understand that training is done with peers and that the teachers participating in the study were trained in collaboration, supported by their tacit knowledge. The knowledge built from the narratives of experience, plus the reinvention of oneself, individual and collective, emerged as one of the potential benefits of a creative hermeneutic work, that is, of a formative and, therefore, transformative biographical praxis. This is what we notice in teacher Vitória's report:

*And then each one spoke in the video about which food they liked the most and why. Then I brought the lyrics of the song for us to read, running our fingers through the music, identifying the little words, the names of the foods that were there. And this song also yielded several other activities; modeling the fruits with play dough; they researched the labels. So, it was a series of activities, a sequence of activities that we carried out afterward.*

The understanding of an artisan teacher is that of one who weaves practices with children in a relationship of cooperation and dialogue. This is an interesting perspective to think about didactic possibilities in early childhood education (GOBBATO; BARBOSA, 2019).

What seems right to say is that looking at educational movements in crisis, resulting from the close relationship between the pandemic and the low literacy rate, we realize that the creative action of the teachers who participated in the research is undeniably evident. This undoubtedly extends to other contexts, which, in a moment of global crisis, demonstrate how, among humans, the retrointeraction between reflection-action-reflection, as Freirean thought suggests, is more important than methodologies and/or strategies of teaching alienated from the cultural context in which children are inserted.

It is undeniable that the pandemic cycle has exacerbated the fragility of human relationships. If we do not look at the abyss that opened and deepened in this cycle, it will be difficult for us to get out of it. We believe that the time has come to stop and think about school and personal relationships, bringing what is within us, in its highest sense of ethics, hope, and responsibility, so that we can walk other paths, paths of life, empathy, and human survival. We make Arendt's words our own (1961, p. 9):



The teacher's competence consists of knowing the world and being able to transmit this knowledge to others. But their authority is based on their role as responsible for the world. Facing the child, it is a bit as if they were a representative of the adult inhabitants of the world who would point things out to them saying: 'Here is our world!'.

In our research, we were able to observe, with a different perspective, how the teachers work with each other and with others, as human beings narrators of their own stories, which resonate skills acquired in their personal experiences and in working together. Investigating based on their experiences narrated and discussed in the group, in their relationships with the other, allows us to confirm that these are ways of giving meaning to what they do in school situations, evaluating and proposing actions. This understanding of the meanings attributed by teachers and children to everyday situations in the pandemic cycle is based on understanding contextualized learning, in which knowledge is constructed by actors based on their relationships and subjectivities. According to Passeggi's studies (2011, p. 146):

The teacher, when narrating a fact of her history, gives a new meaning, a very important reason for us, education researchers, as it directs us to seek the existing reactions between what the subject lived and what he narrated, an action impregnated with reflection, language, autobiographical reflexivity, and historical consciousness.

This valued perception about teacher reflection could be seen in the words of teacher Lavínia when she told us the following:

*I like to do that, make children learn to write, learn to read. Of course, I go very slowly; it's not like: 'Wow, I'm alphabetical!', no, but I like to give these little pokes; I like the child to learn. Oh, learned the syllable. Oh! I love!*

The analyses so far show that learning takes place in a non-linear way and with all the people involved in the learning processes: students, teachers, family members, and the entire school community. According to Nóvoa (1995, p. 25), “[...] training is not built by accumulation (of courses, knowledge or techniques), but rather through work of critical reflection on practices and permanent (re)construction of a personal identity”. For this reason, it is so important to invest in the person and give status to knowledge from experience, as stated by one of the teachers who participated in the present study:

*Those children who didn't know the letter of their own name now, in addition to knowing, rhyme with the name or other words they write with the letter of the*

*name. So, they've been thinking of the words to say to me: 'Ah, it's P for pot, P for pond and P for [...]'. (TEACHER CONCEIÇÃO).*

In this sense, we agree with Freire (2014, p. 37), when he states that: “Every educator creates work tools that underpin the appropriation of their practice”. The acknowledgment of the non-linearity of learning understood as an individual process, is also in Melissa's report when she states: “There are [children] who are already understanding the syllables. And I said, 'Oh! What a joy! Already writing their name. Oh! No need for a cheating card!'. I'm enjoying it! Those who did not participate today are participating”

By relating all the proposals made by the teachers and narrated by them, we agree with Nóvoa and Finger (2009, p. 38), when they argue that “[...] we teach what we are and that, in what we are, is found much of what we teach. What does it matter, therefore, that teachers prepare themselves for work on themselves, for a work of self-reflection and self-analysis”. Thus, it is essential to encourage self-training practices, that is, moments that allow the construction of narratives about their own personal and professional life stories. We defend this because we understand that the teachers' knowledge and how they teach are brought from their life history. All of their professional baggage, beliefs, representations, and even their certainties were built from their stories and their daily practice.

#### 4 Final considerations

Education is the point at which we decide whether we love the world enough to take responsibility for it, and [...] also [...] whether we love our children enough not to drive them out of our world [...], instead preparing them in advance for the task of renewing a common world. (ARENDR, 1992, p. 247).

We realize that the only possible way out of this pandemic period, or for any other crisis that we may be going through, is the investment in the construction of support networks, among the group of teachers, which become a support to the training practice, based on sharing and horizontal dialogue between professionals. We reiterate that teachers have knowledge that goes beyond pedagogical knowledge and that they are not always valued by pedagogical doctrines that tend to hide this knowledge if not silence teachers. These kinds of knowledge have “knowledge value”, as defended by Ferrarotti

(2014, p. 32). In this sense, we defend with Dilthey (2010) the dialectic between life, lived experience, and science, as a way to build possible and practicable paths towards a pedagogy of life at school and embodied knowledge.

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