

DOSSIER

Literacy and Curriculum: between the establishment of meanings and the experiments that create fissures and make other ways of life possible

Narrative as the mobilizing axis of the curriculum of a continuing Education program for literacy teachers***A narrativa como eixo mobilizador do currículo de um curso de formação continuada de professoras alfabetizadoras***

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ABSTRACT

In this paper, we addressed the potential of narrative as the mobilizing axis of the curriculum of a continuing education program for literacy teachers who work in cities in the west of Mato Grosso do Sul (MS) state, Brazil, near the Bolivian border. Our documentary and bibliographic study aimed at discussing consequences of autobiographical narrative as an ambivalent Education tool since it not only enables reflection and construction of knowledge about oneself in both professional and personal dimensions but also works as a sui generis element of teaching professionalization. The main material of our analysis was a set of final term papers (FTP's) written by the literacy teachers. We were able to constitute two meaning nuclei resulting from the participants' productions: (i) literacy teachers' practices - curriculum of professional experience; and (ii) narrative as an educational instrument - curriculum of writing about oneself. The analysis showed the relevance of narrative as the foundation of continuing Education, since it enabled teachers to experience an important space where they listen and speak, record and reflect, (re)constructing their ways of being and working. We may also reassure that actions proposed by continuing Education programs should be based on teachers' specific needs, constant reflection on their practices to develop a space for investigation and authorship that triggers clear-cut awareness of professional identity and the paths of professionalization.

Keywords: Teacher Education. Professionalization. Writing about Oneself.

RESUMO

Neste artigo, abordamos o potencial formativo da narrativa como eixo mobilizador do currículo de um curso de formação continuada de professoras alfabetizadoras que atuam em cidades do oeste do estado de Mato

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Grosso do Sul, na fronteira Brasil/Bolívia. Por meio de um estudo do tipo documental e bibliográfico, buscamos discutir os reflexos da narrativa autobiográfica como ferramenta de formação ambivalente: para a reflexão e construção de conhecimentos sobre si tanto no âmbito profissional como pessoal; e, como elemento *sui generis* para a profissionalização docente. Tomamos como material principal de análise os respectivos trabalhos finais de conclusão, sendo possível constituir dois núcleos de compreensão provocados pelas retomadas das produções das cursistas: (i) práticas da professora alfabetizadora - currículo da experiência profissional; (ii) a narrativa como instrumento de formação - currículo da escrita de si. A análise indica a relevância da narrativa como sustentáculo da formação continuada, uma vez que permitiu às professoras-aprendizes usufruir de um importante espaço de escuta e de fala, de registro e reflexão, de (re)construção de sua forma de ser e estar na profissão. Foi possível, ainda, reafirmar a necessidade de que ações de formação continuada de professores(as) sejam elaboradas a partir de necessidades formativas pontuais, pautadas no constante exercício reflexivo da prática, fazendo-se um espaço de investigação e de autoria docente que provoque uma mobilização para a clara consciência da constituição identitária profissional e dos caminhos da profissionalização.

Palavras-chave: Formação docente. Profissionalização. Escrita de Si.

Opening remarks

For so much love, for so much emotion
Life has made me like this
Sweet or atrocious, gentle or ferocious
Me, hunter of myself (Milton Nascimento, 1981)

The dive into an educational experience based on a continuing invitation to know, question, project and understand oneself, by writing about oneself, inevitably takes place in a complex exercise of discoveries, ruptures, assertions and inventions/reinventions. It is not a mere Education program anymore, but the real possibility of transformation. Larossa (2016, p. 28) states that “[...] therefore, only the subject of the experience is open to his/her transformation”. In this openness, writing about oneself intertwines with the reflective potentiality of arrangements that constitute existentiality and enable memorialistic and (auto)biographical experiences which produce tension and project the self dialogically. Here, the hunter of myself is (re)born, just like Milton Nascimento’s song. What do we hunt when we write about our experiences?

Thus, this paper describes our documentary and bibliographic study of a continuing Education program which discusses the potential of narrative as the mobilizing and articulatory axis of the curriculum of the Specialization Program in Literacy designed by the Universidade Federal de Mato Grosso do Sul (UFMS), in Campo Grande, Mato Grosso do Sul (MS), Brazil, and developed as a partnership with both City Departments of Education in Corumbá and Ladário¹, in western MS, near the Bolivian border. The program aimed at teachers who taught in city schools in both cities from 2020 to 2022.

¹ The Specialization Program in Literacy (*lato sensu* program in Brazil) was funded by the Universidade Federal de Mato Grosso do Sul (UFMS), located in Campo Grande, Mato Grosso (MS), Brazil, and city authorities in Corumbá, MS, and Ladário, MS, by means of the Cooperation Agreement no. 0008/2020.

The following documents were the sources of this qualitative approach: (i) pedagogical project (UFMS, 2019); (ii) set of norms (UFMS, 2020a); (iii) curriculum structure (UFMS, 2020b); and (iv) final report (UFMS, 2022) of the Specialization Program in Literacy. Regarding the bibliographic material, we collected and systematized 33 final term papers (FTP's) written by the literacy teachers². They are available at UFMS's institutional repository.

To conduct the analysis, we used some elements of the French perspective of the Content Analysis proposed by Bardin (2016). Firstly, we carried out fluctuating reading of documents of the program and FTP's. Afterwards, in the logics of the thematic analysis, we identified and analyzed how narrative is shaped in the curriculum of the specialization program.

Among other assumptions, we believe that “[...] we embroider our lives without fully knowing the risks; we play our roles without fully knowing the play” (Soares, 2001, p. 28). Based on the author's analogy, we understand that the collective experience of studying, learning, sharing and graduating/developing showed that its singularities became threads and embroideries that stitch the large quilt called Specialization Program in Literacy. Thus, this paper was organized to follow the movement of embroidery. Firstly, “the choice of pieces to compose the quilt” showed the path from the need for development to the proposition of continuing Education in the literacy field. Secondly, “dialogic sewing to compose the quilt” described how narrative was chosen as the mobilizing/articulatory axis of the curriculum of the program. The third part, i. e., “the composition of the quilt” addressed the construction process of the FTP's, based on the narrative movement that intertwined it and, mainly, the courses that composed the Research Axis. Finally, we wove our final remarks.

The choice of pieces to compose the quilt - from the need for development to the proposition of a continuing Education program for literacy teachers

There is nothing to discuss about the view that being a teacher is not a simple task; in both everyday practice and academic debates and reflection, this fact is widely accepted. Likewise, to educate oneself to teach is also widely acknowledged since there are several ways which overlap other trajectories, as well. On the other hand, learning to be a teacher, according to Mortatti (2019, p. 41), involves:

[...] learning how to teach to learn, analyzing and developing conceptions of the world and ways of acting. To do so, it is not enough for teachers to learn what they were told to teach, it is not enough to learn how to use concepts to analyze reality; they must also learn how to use them to analyze conceptual thinking and knowledge related to their activities [...].

In the specific case of pedagogical work related to literacy, “[...] in the social imaginary, the literacy teacher is the one who – in any material and objective condition – is able to introduce new generations into the literate world” (Rodrigues; Sambugari; Souza, 2023, p. 324). Such scenario imposes a wide array of challenges to Education programs, mainly continuing ones, that aim at literacy teachers.

² The feminine gender has been used in this paper to refer to teachers who attended the program because all are women.

Aranda, Scaff and Lima (2017) carried out studies of children's literacy processes and continuing Education programs for literacy teachers and pointed out the need to design collective actions based on teachers' experiences in order to reach "[...] an educational process that is sensitive to aspects of teachers' lives, mainly regarding capacities, attitudes, values, principles and conceptions that guide pedagogical practices" (Viegas; Scaff, 2017, p. 68).

When paths and principles that guide teaching practices are taken into consideration, the concept of teacher Education is broadened, as advocated by Soares (2014); professional development is the reference, since

[...] teachers have already started to practice their professions, they have already finished undergraduate programs in Pedagogy or in Early Childhood Education, they do not want to keep studying these issues, but they search for professional development in the context of teaching: experiences, problems, difficulties and doubts that it arouses all the time (Soares, 2014, p. 151).

The author warns that most undergraduate programs in Pedagogy in Brazil graduate experts in Education, rather than teachers who may deal with the schooling steps, such as the literacy cycle. Thus, enabling teachers to integrate literacy with related skills means that they advocate children's rights to appropriate the technology of the alphabetic writing system (AWS) and understand its function and social use, as highlighted by Soares (2016, 2020).

The pedagogical project of the program clarifies that its proposal was based on indicators issued by the Public Ministry of Education (PMEDUC) by means of a project which was carried out in a partnership between the Federal Public Ministry (FPM) in Corumbá, MS, and the UFMS, with the participation of teachers that work in Pedagogy and the Post-graduate Program in Education on the Pantanal campus (CPAN). The partnership enabled the identification of the need for a continuing Education program in literacy.

The other aspects that encouraged the proposal for the program were the indexes of proficiency in reading and writing exhibited by students in the early years of Elementary School in city schools in Corumbá and Ladário.

Data on the Basic Education Development Index (BEDI) show that in city schools in Corumbá, MS, 1,127 students attended the first five years in Elementary School in 2017. Regarding the national assessment called *Prova Brasil*, 949 out of 1,127 students took the test (84%) but 341 (30%) were classified into Insufficient in the scale of Proficiency in Portuguese. Besides, 544 students (48%) were classified into Basic. These data show that 78% of students who finished the first cycle in Elementary School in Corumbá, MS, exhibited a level of knowledge that was below the expected one in this stage of Basic Education (UFMS, 2019, p. 6).

The scenario in Ladário, MS, is not different since the pedagogical project of the program establishes that:

[...] 233 out of 287 (81%) students took the *Prova Brasil* in Portuguese in the first five years in Elementary School. Results showed that 82% were classified into Basic and Insufficient in the scale of Proficiency in Portuguese. In other words, even though both cities have different numbers of students, about 80% has not acquired the knowledge that is expected when they finish the fifth grade (UFMS, 2019, p. 6).

Another factor mentioned in the pedagogical project is that the Common National Curriculum Base (BNCC) (Brasil, 2017) and the Reference Curriculum of MS (Mato Grosso do Sul, 2019) ensure that children should read and write at the end of the second grade. Such fact leads to dilemmas and challenges posed to literacy teachers and to the whole school management which is responsible for children's literacy processes (Viegas; Scaff, 2017).

This scenario was presented to the authorities in Corumbá and Ladário, MS, in a meeting that joined the FPM and UFMS's professors who showed their willingness to contribute to city teachers' Education and improve the quality of the mentioned sector of Education in the region. Both city management committees were interested and the program started to be designed by UFMS's professors. The first step consisted in sending an online questionnaire to literacy teachers in both cities to find out their needs and whether they were interested in taking part in the program whose focus would be the literacy process. The analysis of teachers' answers enables us to re-state the "[...] need for an educational process of literacy teaching whose focuses are methods and practices and which considers both playful and didactic dimensions important themes in the educational movement" (UFMS, 2019, p. 8).

The Specialization Program in Literacy was ruled by a horizontal, reflective and critical conception based on teachers' experiences. Its focus was literacy teachers' professional development by means of investigation into narrative of pedagogical experience. The 360-hour in-person program was developed from November 2020 to February 2022 at the UFMS, on the CPAN. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and consequent need for social distancing, several courses were conducted remotely by means of the Emergency Remote Teaching (ERT), as described in the final report of the program (UFMS, 2022).

Thus, the pedagogical project of the program aimed at providing theoretical-methodological support so that literacy teachers could "[...] describe, problematize, analyze, and re-signify processes of literacy teaching and learning in their pedagogical practices" (UFMS, 2019, p. 11). The document also reads:

[...] based on reflection on their educational paths, literacy teachers who attend the program will follow their groups in school, constantly looking at the other, in this case, children in their literacy processes, besides looking at themselves in their dynamics and in the interaction with their classmates by exchanging experiences (UFMS, 2019, p. 10).

This perspective was based on teachers' professional development by articulating pedagogical practices and activities of individual and collective reflection. According to Mortatti (2019, p. 40): "[...] teachers are formed – or deformed – by others in the process that also forms others". In the presentation of the program, the next section deals with the insertion of narrative as a fundamental axis into the proposal that aims at literacy teachers' Education.

Dialogic sewing to compose the quilt – narrative as the mobilizing/articulatory axis of the curriculum of the specialization program

The methodological axis of the Specialization Program in Literacy focused on teachers' construction of narratives. Every teacher was encouraged to narrate and reflect on her own process of (re)construction of professionalization and identity. According to Connelly and Clandinin (1995, p. 12), “[...] *entendemos que la narrativa es tanto el fenómeno que se investiga como el método de la investigación*”, i. e., it is both the movement of memory and writing and the hermeneutic exercise of comprehension.

Teachers' professionalization refers to how they mobilize specific and/or pedagogical knowledge, construct ways of being in the profession and develop activities consciously considering the objectives of teaching; it is a continuing construction throughout teachers' active lives. Teachers' identities are closely related to the construction of professionalization, i. e., they are dimensions that do not dichotomize; however, we may state that the constitution of identities refers to how the self positions itself, reflects, values and (re)creates its difficulties, strengths, expectations, wishes, etc, in an attempt to improve processes of teaching and learning, considering specificities of levels and/or phases in which teachers work (Morgado, 2011; Severo, 2016; Gorzoni; Davis, 2017).

Some studies have shown the potential of teachers' construction of narratives as a way of investigating their processes of professional development and identity. Narrative offers the narrator the opportunity to organize and arouse senses, which are often diffuse, of experiences, perceptions, beliefs, decisions and behavior in the professional field. When senses are sincerely and ethically objectified, teachers may critically investigate them and reflect on the impact of ways of acting and thinking, mainly on intersubjective relations of teaching, (Rabelo, 2011; Zuffi *et al.*, 2014).

In every course in the Specialization Program in Literacy, teachers were encouraged to write narratives of their teaching experiences in the light of its contents, of previous discussions and, mainly, of the relation between teachers' specificities and their literacy identities. Evaluation processes of all courses involved teachers' narratives to help them continuously re-elaborate specific, didactic-pedagogical and political knowledge which is essential for literacy teachers' professionalization. Thus, they encouraged awareness and recreation of teachers' identities, mainly regarding unique ways of working with orality, reading and writing in the early years of Elementary School.

Narrative was considered the main foundation of continuing Education in the program. Therefore, didactic strategies involved its use in workshops that aimed at construction of diaries (or memorials), practical lessons that addressed games in their relations with work on literacy, reading and collective debates, theoretical lessons and analyses of video and/or documentary excerpts. All effort was made to enable literacy teachers to narrate their own stories. Such strategies were part of all courses that composed the structure of the curriculum of the program. Courses were classified into three thematic axes, as shown in Chart 1.

Chart 1: Curriculum structure of the Specialization Program in Literacy

Axes	Courses
1) Fundamentals	Literacy: Concepts, Policies, Rights and Practices I
	Literacy: Concepts, Policies, Rights and Practices II
	Psychological Fundamentals of Development in Orality, Writing and Reading
	Assessment of the Literacy Process: Diagnostic, Processual and Developmental Aspects I
	Assessment of the Literacy Process: Diagnostic, Processual and Developmental Aspects II
2) Didactics	Didactics and Digital Technologies in the Literacy Process
	Mathematical Literacy in the Early Years in Elementary School
	Literacy from the Perspective of Inclusive Education
	Literacy and Linguistics
	Reading and Writing Strategies from the Perspectives of Literacy
	Games, Playfulness and Literacy
3) Research	Reflective Ways of Pedagogical Investigation I
	Reflective Ways of Pedagogical Investigation II
	Reflective Ways of Pedagogical Investigation III
	Integrated Research Seminar

Source: the authors, based on the Pedagogical Project (UFMS, 2019) and the curriculum structure (UFMS, 2020b) of the Specialization Program in Literacy.

Besides activities proposed by the courses, teachers were asked to conduct some activities with their groups of children in their schools. As mentioned before, some adjustment was needed as the result of social distancing imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. Even so, the program kept focusing on teachers’ educational needs and their groups of students (UFMS, 2022).

Activities were organized in every course to trigger teachers’ reflection and transformation of everyday processes of teaching and learning. The idea was to create an environment which could produce tension in the ways literacy teachers constructed their identities by means of narrative investigation into pedagogical experiences. Thus, narrative became the essential element of their everyday Education.

Dialogic sewing of an investigative process in the field of Education requires not only study and deep comprehension of conceptual and practical elements but also an attentive, reflective and tensional look at the object of interest. In this case, in a specialization program that aims at developing professionals in the field of literacy, perception of this phenomenon and different possibilities arising from reading and problematization move through delimited choices related to reflection on teachers’ literacy practices and experiences, the process of reading and writing constitution and other issues that permeate the field.

In the movement of reflective construction adopted by the specialization program, the narrative support aimed at intertwining investigative constitutions, mainly through continuing and permanent encouragement to write about oneself, the educational environment, learning movements and reflection that emerge from educational experiences.

From literacy teachers’ points of view, writing became an essential tool for researching praxis and enabled constant revising and development of teachers who write, read, reflect, re-read and transform their teaching. Josso (2004) uses the idea of “walking toward oneself” as an exercise that leads to thinking about professional development and states that:

The choice of a verb highlights that it is, in fact, the activity of a traveler who takes a trip which will explore him/her; firstly, by reconstituting the itinerary and different intersections with paths walked by others, quite long stopovers along the way, meetings, happenings, explorations and activities that enable the traveler not only to find him/herself in the space-time here and now but also understand what guided him/her, catalogue items in the luggage, recall dreams, count scars of incidents and describe his/her internal attitudes and behavior. In other words, walking towards oneself aims at discovering and understanding that trip and traveler are just one (Josso, 2004, p. 58).

The study of “Narrative Documentation of Pedagogical Experiences (NDPE) carried out by Daniel Hugo Suárez in Argentina and spread to other countries, such as Brazil, inspired us to think about the importance of circularity of permanent exercises of reading, writing, reading and writing. The author states that “[...] *en el transcurso del trabajo colectivo y cooperativo, los docentes se forman al mismo tiempo que narran, investigan y tematizan las maneras en que otorgan sentido y dotan de significaciones a sus mundos profesionales y laborales*” (Suárez, 2016, p. 483).

In the specialization program, the desired exercise-movement aimed at potentializing teachers’ narrative-investigation-Education based on reflection and problematization of literacy praxis, even though there was no organization of reading circularities and collective interventions involving all of them. In this case, readings and written reflections were carried out by teachers attending the specialization program. Circularities involved professors and literacy teachers who kept the constant exercise of writing/re-writing and ensured collective dialogues about general mobilization of writing. The quilt materialized in this exercise when literacy teachers produced their FTP’s, elements that are described in the following section.

The composition of the quilt – literacy teachers’ narrative production from the perspective of narrative-investigation-Education

As mentioned before, narrative was the element that intertwined the three axes of the curriculum structure of the Specialization Program in Literacy. The final composition of the quilt was the FTP’s produced by the literacy teachers. It resulted in “[...] production of a paper that will address/addressed literacy teachers’ movement of reflection or will deal/dealt with some specific issue they chose in the dimension of literacy” (UFMS, 2019, p. 16).

Production of the narrative reflection paper was supported by literacy teachers’ reflection throughout the development of all courses of the program – and, mainly, discussions in the axis Research – and investigation and reflection triggered by narratives about elements/specificities of literacy practices.

Chart 2 shows the list of courses (and their plans) in the axis Research which enabled participants to listen, reflect, talk and write.

Chart 2: List of courses in the axis Research and their respective plans

Course	Course plan
Reflective Ways of Pedagogical Investigation I	Teacher and pedagogical investigation. The role of diaries in everyday reflective recording of teaching. Teacher's memorial. Reflection on literacy teachers' constitution based on writing. Opening issues to define the object of investigation.
Reflective Ways of Pedagogical Investigation II	Systematization of investigative and narrative reflective process. Definition of the object of investigation, theoretical-methodological instruments and bases of research records. Dialogic sharing of records of teachers' practices.
Reflective Ways of Pedagogical Investigation III	Shared reading, re-signification and organization of pedagogical investigation. Construction of the project of the FTP.
Integrated Research Seminar	Theoretical-methodological discussion about projects of FTP's. Sharing of developmental paths of FTP's. Seminar of proposals for projects of FTP's.

Source: the authors; based on the Pedagogical Project and curriculum structure of the Specialization Program in Literacy (UFMS, 2020a; 2020b).

Thus, every teacher produced an academic text based on the narrative about oneself articulated with an investigation into the pedagogical experience as a literacy teacher and her professionalization. It resulted from the interpretative and analytical dialogue among memories, professional praxis and reflection and theoretical talks produced by different authors in the field of Education.

The reflective movement was mobilized by eight guiding questions to construct the text, as shown in Chart 3.

Chart 3: Mobilizing questions and the proposal for writing the FTP

Questions to mobilize writing	Proposal for writing the FTP
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What do I understand and reflect on the teacher that I say I am? Was I able to clearly describe how I organize, carry out and assess my practices? Why? 2. Am I really a literacy teacher? Does what I write say it? Why? 3. Am I able to clearly show my current level of satisfaction in my profession and my practice? 4. Who are the authors that support my text? Why were they selected? Are they enough? 5. Why did I choose this way of writing? 6. Is there a class in my text? Which class is it? Which place do I have in it? 7. Are the class and the school really my class and my school or a desire of something? Why? 8. Did the experience in this program move me from some place and mobilize me? To which horizon does it project me? Where do I want to go after these educational dialogues? 	<p>In the introduction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Which paper is it? - Which is the educational meaning of this paper? - Formal presentation of parts of the paper (what I will tell in my text). <p>In the development: (body of the text)</p> <p>In the final remarks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Has the experience with this group taken me out of some place and mobilized me? - To which horizon does it project me? - Where do I want to go after these educational dialogues?

Source: the authors; based on courses in the axis Research.

Mobilizing construction started from limits established by the task of writing. The academic dimension repeats what emerges in other spaces and platforms of communication and writing, i. e., fast language, production of short information and brief senses, focuses of a society that is subject to uncontrollable overload of newsflashes, but, as mentioned by Marques (2006), "writing is essential", mainly writing to research. But which writing is essential, or which comprehension is expected in writing that must be interpretative and projective of an educational action in the field of literacy?

In fact, producing texts that require teachers to write about themselves in an action of reflective revisiting on the experience and the self also carries many fears about limits of subjectivity, management of value judgment and quality (good lessons, bad days, great group, etc), patterns of space-time and plots of personal narratives based on professional experiences. Therefore, questions shown in Chart 3 were answered and led to a narrative investigation into teaching experience and writing about it. Some examples of questions are: I write about my class, but do I perceive it clearly in the text that I write? Does what I write about me reveal the teacher I think I am? Am I able to describe my experiences and my pedagogical practice in my writing? Does my writing enable readers to redo and understand concretely and objectively the experience I am trying to narrate?

A game sets off among the act of writing, the text, the authorship and the reader. Even though there are distinct comprehension and different roles, there are also overlapping, dialogicity and circularity.

In at least three distinct moments of courses belonging to the axis Research, there were comings and goings, deviations and restarts. They involved individual and collective readings and exchange of opinions and sensations not only among teachers but also among professors and teachers in a rich movement of mutual learning and self-Education triggered collectively. Such intentional movement was based on the belief that “[...] every new version of History leads to resignification of experiences, which encourages educational research since it makes us search for relations between living and narrating, among action, reflection, narrative, language, autobiographical reflexivity and historical awareness” (Passegi, 2011, p. 148).

We also believe that an educational path was followed and a space for professionalization was developed since it was a space/moment of experience (according to Larossa), considering that teachers talked and listened, discovered and constructed themselves, and, somehow, understood that

the space of experience is me. It is in me (or in my words, or in my ideas, or in my representations, or in my feelings, or in my projects, or in my intentions, or in my knowledge, or in my power, or in my will) where experience happens, where experience has a space (Larrosa, 2011, p. 6).

Based on this reflective and dialogic movement, all 33 literacy teachers finished the program and wrote their FTP's, which show the narrative-investigation-Education dimension as the axis that mobilized and articulated the curriculum of the program. The analysis of the FTP's shows the emergence of educational programs based on the experience of writing and other nuances that reveal one's interpretative and projective construction. In the light of Marie-Christine Josso's words about narrative, we highlight that

to write one's life narrative and, then, sort out material, comprehending the educational process to begin to work on the organization of the sense the material makes when a story is constructed, one's story, constitutes a practice of the subject's staging and makes him/her become an author who thinks about his/her life in its temporal globality, its strength, its knowledge or its past marks, besides perspectivation of current challenges revisited memories and updated future, because it is induced by this temporal perspective. Briefly, a subject comes into play and becomes the author while s/he thinks about his/her existentiality. The auto-reflection process which requires a retrospective and prospective look has to be

understood as an activity of critical auto-interpretation and awareness of social, historical and cultural relativity of references internalized by the subject and, due to it, constituents of the cognitive dimension of its subjectivity (Josso, 2004, p. 60).

Thus, we composed two meaning nuclei as the result of the analysis of FTP's, in agreement with the search for the projection of narrative from the curriculum of the Specialization Program in Literacy. They are: (i) literacy teachers' practices - curriculum of professional experience; (ii) narrative as an educational instrument - curriculum of writing about oneself. We selected some excerpts for the FTP's to compose both nuclei and, consequently, the quilt that represents teachers' exercise of narrative-investigation-Education.

Our look at the first nucleus – literacy teachers' practices - curriculum of professional experiences – shows literacy teachers' reflective exercise while they experience a curriculum that goes beyond their knowledge and constitutes their way of being a professional who teaches how to read and write, considering literature and art the mediators of the process that makes them readers.

My group was extremely excited and very participative. **I proposed conversation circles, individual and collective reading, puppet shows, outdoor games, songs with themes under study, group posters, garden tasks, etc.** All class activities were planned for random groups of students; the ones who did something easily were always asked to join the ones who had some difficulty in a certain skill (Ferra, 2022, p. 12, our emphasis).

To promote reading, **in my pedagogical practice** with second and third graders, **literature has always predominated as a desired object to enchant them and construct knowledge** (Santos, T., 2022, p. 16, our emphasis).

I was about to sit down when a student called me, looked at me and said **"Teacher! I liked the text, read it again!"** It was not a mere sentence, she got happy and thrilled, gave a lovely smile, her eyes were shining, **I clearly remember her facial expression** (Santos, M. C., 2022, p. 13, our emphasis).

Another issue that must be considered in this nucleus refers to memories that belong to the teachers' educational dimension regarding their participation in actions of specific continuing Education for literacy teachers and sharing that results from movements of learning and collective experiences produced in schools.

After the National Pact for Literacy at the Right Age (PNAIC), my posture as a teacher changed; I became a teacher-reader [...] I noticed the context of students who do not have books at home, and nobody that reads to them; I started a daily practice: I read to the children, with no pedagogical intention, but for the pure pleasure of reading (Bays, 2022, p. 12, our emphasis).

Thus, **every Friday, we used to organize a meeting, a cultural get-together with presentations, which became pleasurable moments for the children since they liked to participate, sing, dance, read, interpret or dramatize.** [...]. I was also the coordinator of the PNAIC in Corumbá, MS, for a year. Its main axis was continuing Education for literacy teachers in in-person programs which took place in Campo Grande, MS. Teachers from 78 cities had unique experiences; **we met to exchange experiences, learn with UFMS's professors, attend**

speeches, presentations, seminars, **poems, songs, integration and approximation** (Moraes, 2022, p. 8, 13, our emphasis).

The reflective exercise of producing their narratives made teachers look at their fears, their uncertainties, their methods of teaching how to read and write. The movement of intentionally re-visiting themselves enabled them to criticize themselves and to look for changes. To rummage, to recall and to understand; then, to wish a change and to make it happen: they are significant steps in the task of narrating oneself to develop. In this case, we highlight teachers' perception of how they were touched by literacy and its praxis in some key moments.

I was in the school court while the coordinator was roll calling my students'; suddenly, a young boy comes closer to me, showing certain restlessness and asks, while staring at me: "Are you the one who is going to be my teacher? The one who will teach me how to read and write? Is it you? **At that moment, I saw myself in that child, the difference is that I did not show my concern, but it was equal.** I noticed that I was not the only uneasy one. I said to him, yes, it's me. And my thoughts said, "I don't know how, but I will" (Santos, M. C., 2022, p. 20, our emphasis).

So, I may say that **my early reference as a literacy teacher started with the phonics method** (Toniazzi, 2022, p. 10, our emphasis).

Even though I learned how to read in a decontextualized and mechanical way, in my teaching practice, I have another way of acting: I organize reading circles, I ask students about the title of the text before starting to read, I ask questions about the book that was read, they have the opportunity to recount the story in the way they understood it, I use the movable alphabet, memory games, games that trigger reading and writing to encourage students to read and write in a pleasant way, with production of meanings, with no memorization (Santos, M. V., 2022, p. 8, our emphasis).

In the nucleus "narrative as an educational instrument - curriculum of writing about oneself", we noticed mobilization towards clear awareness of the constitution of professional identity and professionalization paths, which are not always linear. Teachers appropriate their paths, reflect on trajectories full of choices, perceive themselves in and as the movement of producing and developing themselves. It makes literacy teachers understand their historical consciousness and, in parallel, their authorial action. We believe that awareness of an authorial action is fundamental in teaching.

It is hard to write about everything that really matters to you, sometimes I think about childhood, my childhood, how long I played in the backyard alone. When I was a child, I used to look through the window, from there, I saw many things, I lived in the Noroeste neighborhood, I saw the train arriving and leaving everyday, I kept thinking where is it going? Where has it been? I saw that it kept coming back. In fact, I knew part of the way, but I was too young to remember details. **This is our constitution as teachers, a way which is in full movement, which goes through many landscapes and stopovers, cycles that are constantly reconstructed** (Santos, M. C., 2022, p. 22-23, our emphasis).

To construct some work from the perspective of the look inside myself and to arouse what was asleep, such as my childhood and, mainly, my literacy process, made me go back to

some good and bad experiences; the good ones, when I remember that I learned how to read to be able to read books and comic books alone, and bad ones, the way I learned how to read and write. This specialization program made me perceive that I had school traumas which I carried since my childhood and I had forgotten for some reason. **I noticed that, in the educational process proposed by the Specialization Program in Literacy, I became a teacher who is different from the ones that preceded me [...]** (Olarite, 2022, p. 2).

This autobiographical process imposed the difficult exercise of “thinking about oneself” and, on the borders along the author, her text and the character, it made me reflect on the whole methodological path of my educational process as a teacher. **Writing** was not only a report of “my personal life”, “my school life” and “my professional life”, **but also an instrument that enabled me to retrieve memories and re-construct myself as the subject of my personal development and historicization of personal educational practices experienced by the “self”, the woman-teacher, where I re-constructed my history, my feminine space in society** (Santos, T., 2022, p. 21, our emphasis).

Participants’ productions reveal that writing about oneself, projected as the axis of the program they experienced, enabled re-connection with several events related to their educational path. Teachers/narrators were able to write about themselves in an explicit authorial intent, in the first-person singular, giving voice to details of their existentiality, provoking and being provoked to align the person to the professional who also saw herself in the projective mirror of the paper (or computer and phone screens, where the text was written).

Facts narrated by memories of the beginning of schooling, Education and professionalization were full of meaning, and made us see life stories as instruments to understand the fact of being teachers and, mainly, literacy teachers, since we recall facts and events that may be a theoretical basis to reflect on teachers’ roles, their didactics, political opinions that define their actions. [...] Who is this literacy teacher? Why do I believe in this but not in that? Why do I have these reactions toward learning experiences but not those ones? **I can see clearly now the type of teacher I am and the one I want to be, which schooling experiences I carry with me and repeat and which I should leave behind. I’m a subject who is constantly changing, who reinvents herself daily, as I follow my path** (Toniazzi, 2022, p. 13-14, our emphasis).

In the narrative about oneself, where a person follows a path that takes her to meet herself, **I discover and re-discover the educational nature of this autobiographical memorial**, i. e., a person constitutes herself while she develops, since writing one’s memories is a unique opportunity because **a person develops and transforms herself, incites new looks at her own writing** (Oliveira, 2022, p. 9, our emphasis).

This writing made me perceive how important it is to focus research on oneself. To apply this awareness of “being a woman-teacher” and discover myself was a very important exercise in my development, **daring to write was the intertwinement of many personal and academic references which I shared here as an investigative piece**. [...] To understand the logics of my educational path broadened my capacity to question my own values, ideas and practices, enabling better personal and professional development **since penetrating in my female teaching universe made me see through the fine mist that hovers around words, a complex exercise due to the involvement that the autobiography arouses between the woman and**

the professional life, between the text and the teacher, me (Santos, T., 2022, p. 21, our emphasis).

The narrative-investigation-Education exercise based on the experience provided by the Specialization Program in Literacy enabled us to briefly redo the sewing and senses revealed by the relation between the curriculum of continuing Education and the identity constitution of literacy teachers. It would be “[...] writing as provocation to think, as the smooth slide of reflection, as the search for learning, the principle of investigation” (Marques, 2006, p. 26). Therefore, writing about oneself was experienced from the latent perspective of the search, the investigation that was neither pre-defined nor centered on its problem, objectives and hypotheses. The investigation started throughout writing which was not only a method but also the object of an analysis of significances. Development gradually rises from these narratives and investigations as materiality of a comprehensive, reflective, critical and projective movement itself.

Final remarks

Writing, looking at my practice in the light of past experiences make me reflect on how they define what I am these days. Memory is one of the skills that make us human, but looking at oneself is not an easy process, we must defeat resistance, feed on courage and soothe our hearts. It is not easy, but it is necessary (Toniazzo, 2022, p. 3).

The analysis of the Specialization Program in Literacy, from its conception to the production of FTP's written by literacy teachers who finished the program, makes us point out some important topics. One of them is the relevance of narrative as the foundation of continuing Education which enabled teachers to enjoy an important space where they were able to listen, talk, record, reflect and project their knowledge, fear and anxiety. It leads us to state that our proposal for continuing Education was daring and quite innovative.

Another relevant aspect, which stems from the previous one, is that actions of continuing Education must account for literacy teachers' needs in a reflective exercise of their practices to create a space of investigation and authorship. Therefore, according to Soares (2014), the conception of continuing Education must be broadened and based on teachers' professional development. Flores (2015, p. 145) states that:

It is fundamental to understand (and question) personal beliefs, values and images of teaching, what it means to become (and be) a teacher, the Education process itself and (re)construction of knowledge by means of reflection and questioning articulated with the practice [...].

Thus, we should highlight that following a narrative-investigation-Education perspective inserts the subject in a provocative invitation-wish: to investigate oneself while narrating, to develop oneself while investigating and to transform oneself while developing. The complexity makes an apparently simple act of writing about oneself transform into a dense and performative game of forgetfulness, resistance and (re)inventions. All movements are important regarding their subjective and educational dimensions. What may be hidden behind something I want to forget? Or, why do I

resist describing the class that I have taught for so many years? Or, what is revealed as the invention of the self in my narrative?

These are possibilities when we carry out a study supported by narrative research, which constantly deals with the image of inconclusion and the limits and enlargement of interpretation of narrative texts. This knowledge-potency, inconclusion and interpretation generate the liveliness of the movement of writing about oneself in the field of Teacher Education. Even though it is essentially difficult, writing may become emancipatory and construct many new worlds, such as teaching ones.

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