

IS EVERY CHILD UNIQUE? UNDERSTANDINGS ABOUT SUBJECTIVITY
AMONG PRESCHOOL-TEACHERS

*CADA CRIANÇA É UMA? COMPREENSÕES ACERCA DA SUBJETIVIDADE ENTRE
PROFESSORES DE EDUCAÇÃO INFANTIL*

*¿CADA NIÑO ES UN? COMPRENSIONES ACERCA DE LA SUBJETIVIDAD ENTRE
PROFESORES DE EDUCACIÓN INFANTIL*



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ABSTRACT: This article presents and discusses the results of a research study aimed at investigating the understanding of early childhood educators regarding the process of human psychic constitution and its role in early psychic structuring. The data were collected through semi-structured interviews, and the results were analyzed using the content analysis method. From the analyses conducted, it was possible to observe that among the interviewed group, there seems to be a gap in their teacher training, as there is a lack of understanding about the importance of their role as a structuring factor in the lives of their students. The results of this research lead us to the conclusion that there is an essential task in ensuring the recognition of the importance of understanding early psychic structuring in educational settings by educators.

KEYWORDS: Psychic Constitution. Education. Psychoanalysis.

RESUMO: Este artigo apresenta e discute os resultados de uma pesquisa que teve como objetivo investigar as compreensões de professoras de Educação Infantil a respeito do processo de constituição psíquica humana e a sua função na estruturação psíquica precoce. Os dados foram levantados através de entrevistas semiestruturadas e os resultados analisados a partir do método da análise de conteúdo. A partir das análises realizadas, foi possível perceber que, entre o grupo entrevistado, parece haver uma lacuna em sua formação docente, uma vez que não existe entendimento sobre a importância do seu fazer como fator estruturante na vida de seus alunos. Os resultados desta pesquisa nos conduzem à conclusão de que é fundamental garantir o reconhecimento da importância do entendimento da estruturação psíquica precoce em espaços escolares por parte dos educadores.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Constituição Psíquica. Educação. Psicanálise.

RESUMEN: Este artículo presenta y discute los resultados de una investigación que tuvo como objetivo investigar las comprensiones de las docentes de Educación Infantil sobre el proceso de constitución psíquica humana y su función en la estructuración psíquica temprana. Los datos fueron recolectados mediante entrevistas semiestructuradas y los resultados fueron mediante el método de análisis de contenido. A partir de los análisis realizados, se pudo observar que, entre el grupo entrevistado, parece haber una laguna en su formación docente, dado que no existe un entendimiento sobre la importancia de su labor como factor estructurante en la vida de sus alumnos. Los resultados de esta investigación nos llevan a la conclusión de que hay una tarea importante en garantizar el reconocimiento de la importancia de comprender la estructuración psíquica temprana en los espacios escolares por parte de los educadores.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Constitución Psíquica. Educación. Psicoanálisis.

Introduction

For a long time, the human baby was conceived only as a biological body, devoid of the capacity to feel, think, and act. He can't talk, he can't walk, and he couldn't even survive on his own. However, perceptions have evolved, and in recent decades, it has been discovered that babies are sensitive to the voice while still in the womb, and although they don't express themselves through words, they are already immersed in the world of language. Advances in pediatrics, along with some contributions from psychology and pedagogy, have transformed the way we come to understand the newborn and the young child (Crespin, 2016).

Faced with this new situation, practices in Early Childhood Education began to be rethought, and the space that used to be destined for hygienic care and self-conservation came to be seen as having potential for children's development. In order to fulfill this responsibility towards young children, who until then were seen as incapable beings due to their fragility and submission to others, teachers also had to turn their attention to the constitutive processes of this subject (Crespin, 2016).

However, turning to these processes is no easy task. It is common in the field of Early Childhood Education to look at children's development through socially constructed ideals and expectations. This means that the centrality of working with these children lies in their ability to achieve these ideals, which most of the time involve the cognitive learning expected for each age group, according to the development manuals that come mainly from psychiatry, which have a biological order of development, the main example being the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM).

To contextualize this concern not to focus development solely on cognitive aspects, we present an example from a school scene. This article's first author, an early childhood educator, once had to leave school for personal reasons. The day before, the teacher told her students, who were between 3 and 4 years old at the time, that she wouldn't be with them the following afternoon, but that the monitor who accompanied them in all their classes would be there and would carry out some activities that she had left for them. Then, a student who was listening attentively commented: "I hope it's really cool." The teacher didn't quite know how to respond; on the contrary, many questions arose from this reaction. Why wouldn't it be nice if the activities they were going to do had been prepared by her, just like every other day? What made this child yearn so much, to the point of verbalizing it, for a nice class without you? These reflections gave rise to the problem that led to the interest in this research, some of the results of which are presented in this article.

It was precisely the presence of the teacher that could make the class cool or not. When he realized the bond established with his students, it was also possible to understand a gap in his own training, since little had been discussed about issues related to the role of the teacher in its subjective dimension. It was while teaching that this educator began to reflect on some previously unknown movements that intensified her practice. These movements have to do with the subjectivization of the subjects/students and the role of this educator in this construction. The possibility of this perception was only named more precisely when the subject of the subject's subjective constitution came into play. It was only then that other concerns, beyond the development of children's skills and competencies, were recognized. There is a centrality to the process of constitution on a subjective level that needs to be recognized and reflected on in its repercussions on educational experiences.

Therefore, the interest is to promote reflection among educators on this subject, especially those who work with early childhood. Mariotto (2009) states that schools for very young children occupy a place in the psychic becoming, which is why it is necessary to include the notions of development and subjectivization in the act of educating, since education is one of the experiences that inserts the subject into culture and language, humanizing them, introducing skills and competences, but also enabling self-recognition.

In view of the above, this research sets out to investigate the existing understandings of the process of human psychic constitution among early childhood education teachers, reflecting on the role of teachers in early psychic structuring. The question in the title of this article, "Is every child one?" was inspired by the teachers' speeches and already points to some of our concerns that will be better addressed in the course of this work.

Methodological procedures

This research was based on a qualitative, descriptive, and cross-sectional methodology. Data was collected through individual semi-structured interviews, which, according to Boni and Quaresma (2005), allow the interviewee to discuss the proposed topic in a context similar to an informal conversation, made up of open and closed questions. Nine female teachers were interviewed, ranging in age from 23 to 42, who work with children aged 1 to 6 in the municipal school system of a small town located in the northern region of Rio Grande do Sul. The research was approved by the Ethics Committee of the University of Passo Fundo (CAAE No. 5.133.203) and received authorization from the municipality's Department of Education, where

it was carried out. The participants were informed about the nature of the research and, on agreeing to take part, signed an informed consent form. For a better understanding of the study, information on each interviewee's academic background and teaching time is shown in Table 1.

Table 1- Information about the interviewees

Interviewee	Training	Teaching time
Interviewee 1	Normal course; Pedagogy and post-graduation in Institutional and Clinical Psychopedagogy.	8 years
Interviewee 2	Pedagogy; Postgraduate in Early Childhood Education - Childhood Curriculum and Postgraduate in Art Therapy.	6 years
Interviewee 3	Teaching; Pedagogy; Postgraduate studies in Guidance and School Supervision and Human Resources Training in the Area of Mental Disability.	15 years
Interviewee 4	Pedagogy and Postgraduate Studies in Literacy	8 years
Interviewee 5	Teaching degree; Psychology degree; Pedagogy degree; Postgraduate degree in Art Therapy: Symbolic Processes and Postgraduate Studies in Inclusive Education.	7 years
Interviewee 6	Teaching; Pedagogy and postgraduate course in Pedagogical Coordination.	5 years and six months
Interviewee 7	Pedagogy and post-graduation in Ludopedagogy.	6 years
Interviewee 8	Teaching; Pedagogy and Postgraduate in Neuropsychopedagogy.	2 years

Interviewee 9	Pedagogy and Postgraduate in Clinical and Institutional Psychopedagogy.	12 years old
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Source: Prepared by the authors, 2022.

Based on the systematization of the interviews, three categories of analysis were formulated, which highlight the main aspects of the interviewees' responses. These categories seek to respond to the objective of this research insofar as they reveal the perception of subjectivity on the part of these educators, as well as give clues as to how they perceive their role in the process of the early psychic constitution of their students. The categories of analysis are: 1. The interviewees' understanding of subjectivity; 2. Some concerns about teacher training; 3. Teachers' conception of their role.

The data was analyzed and discussed using content analysis. The analysis was carried out in three distinct stages: pre-analysis, in which ideas were systematized, and interpretation indicators were established; exploration of the material, in which classifications and aggregations of the information were built; and treatment of the results (Silva; Fossá, 2015).

How do you become human?

According to Oliveira *et al.* (1992), child development is seen from three different perspectives: the innatist, the environmentalist, and the interactionist. From the innatist perspective, the subject is born with a genetic background, so it's up to adults to provide spaces and moments for them to develop what has already been established. In the environmentalist view, the subject is like a blank slate, and it is up to the adult to find ways of developing this child, with the environment being responsible for how development will take place, shaping the being in its way. In the interactionist perspective, on the other hand, the subject is constituted through their relationships and interactions with adults, their peers, and the environment.

In the interviews conducted, it was possible to identify answers based on these three perspectives. They appear sometimes in isolation, sometimes intertwined in arguments that link different visions. In this section, we will present each of these theories on the conception of development and illustrate them with comments from the interviewees who represent them.

We can perceive an innatist understanding when a teacher says: "I believe that the human being already comes with genetic baggage, he already comes with spiritual baggage, from God, that is, from the creator, and he shapes himself within the world he is in" (Interviewee 7).

Interviewee 2 said that "everyone is born with their way of being, and it's the process of life, the

development of life, acquiring new knowledge, but always with their essence" (Interviewee 2). She adds that "often the influence of others doesn't change what is yours, but it can influence you, but it doesn't change you" (Interviewee 2).

The innatist perspective present in the teachers' speeches shows a view that focuses on the uniqueness of the child, but a uniqueness that is already determined at birth, through their "way of being", the "baggage" that each one carries. The teachers made it clear that they deeply respect this uniqueness, although they often find it difficult or feel unprepared to deal with certain situations. Among the various statements expressing this idea, the following represents this premise well:

So we have to respect the characteristics of each child; each one is different, each one in their own time. I never evaluate the class, I have my own objectives, we have to develop, but each child is different. I never compare one child with another, I always compare them with each other. How did the child start and end the school year, right? Even if the objectives are the same at the time, each child will develop in a different way. So each child is different (Interviewee 3, our translation).

Guattari points out that there is a certain philosophical tradition that attributes an essence to humans simply because they are human. For him, this conception helps us to see our lives in a certain way (Mansano, 2009). Oliveira *et al.* (1992) compare this view to the unraveling of a ball of yarn, where the thread is already marked by genetic traits, and the abilities and qualities are already defined from the beginning of life.

Another way of understanding subjectivity is also found in the teachers' speeches. They refer to subjectivization as something that is also inherited, but this time from the environment in which the subject is inserted. This is the environmentalist vision referred to earlier by Oliveira *et al.* (1992).

We can recognize this perspective in the words of Interviewee 4, when she says: "What I see is that the environment interferes a lot with how the child is, how they act in different situations." You can also recognize this perspective in the following speech: "I think that everyone is born raw, with absolutely no knowledge of anything, or very little, and it's from living with people. First, we know it's the family, which is the child's first point of reference, and then contact with other people" (Interviewee 6, our translation). Interviewee 8 adds to this notion when she says: "I believe it comes from home. The main thing comes from the home because you see the difference between the children, in their actions, in their attitudes, and by

getting to know the family, you also realize that this comes with the child, that they carry this baggage".

Based on these excerpts from the teachers' speeches, we are referred to the studies and concepts developed by the Russian psychologist Vygotsky. In his studies, the author sought to understand the relationship between beings and their physical and social environment. For him, the environment in which a subject lives is cultural and historical and, precisely because of this, is constantly changing. Each and every subject, from birth, participates in the transformations that take place in this environment, being influenced by it but also influencing it so that the environment is under their control (Vygotsky, 1991).

The pediatrician Donald Winnicott also works with the idea of the environment as a determining factor for the subject. In *O Brincar e a Realidade (Play and Reality)* (1975), the author states that continuity of care is the central factor in an environment that facilitates the individual's emotional development. The researcher also recognizes that we can't talk about emotional development without considering the behavior of the environment. For him, the individual will never be totally independent of the environment, no matter how much he recognizes himself as such.

In the early stages of the human baby's emotional development, the environment plays a vital role since it has not yet separated externality from itself. Gradually, the separation between the non-self and the self takes place, and the pace of this varies according to the baby and the environment (Winnicott, 1975).

Because the authors come from different places of knowledge, their interest in the importance of the environment for children's development is also viewed from different perspectives. While Winnicott (1975) seeks to understand the influence of the environment on the child's emotional development, Vygotsky (1991) analyzes these early days in relation to the construction of psychological functions such as attention, perception and intelligence.

The interviewees, in turn, when talking about the environment in which the child lives, relate the influence both to affective issues and to the construction of intellectual psychic functions. Take a look at one teacher's response when asked what she understood human subjectivity to be.

Look, this year I've had an experience in terms of the school, where I've worked in a very precarious school in terms of affection, families, families that don't have that structure that we used to have, so I've felt the result of this lack of children. Children come to us with this lack of

love, affection, attention... I don't know if I'm answering exactly what the topic is, but when you talk about the human, that's what comes to mind. Look at the child as a human being. Try to understand why he has certain attitudes. Why that behavior? Is it his behavior? Where does he come from? What's his family like? So, it is important to know his reality and his environment so that we can do our best to help him. Because sometimes what they're looking for from you isn't knowledge per se, it's the main thing that's missing, love, affection, right? So I believe that, first and foremost, the teacher should have this look (Interviewee 1, our translation).

Here, we see a statement that highlights the affective dimension of subjectivity as a necessity for children in their environment. In this way, the family is seen as the center of children's emotional relationships, and it is accepted that if they don't find what they are looking for in the family, they can look for it at school, and it is up to the teacher to meet this demand, even if he admits that it is not the main objective of the classroom.

There are other examples of the family being at the center of the child's development, such as interviewee 4: "So, depending on the family environment mainly, because it's the first contact the child has, and what that environment is like, at school you see how they expose it, in different situations." Interviewee 7 once again points to a change in the panorama of family organizations as an impact on these processes of subjectivation:

And this question of the emotional, children are becoming more and more challenging, family contexts are no longer the old ones, they're not those of our grandparents, they're not those of our parents and I don't even know if they're ours because there are people much younger than us having children with other realities, with other experiences (Interviewee 7, our translation).

For Oliveira *et al.* (1992), the environmentalist view envisages a subject shaped by the environment, according to an ideal of behavior present in their culture. This view has the merit of drawing our attention to the adaptability of the human being, however, in the case of children, it understands them in a place of passivity in relation to the adult who is seen as the main promoter of their development.

An example of how adults, especially those in the family group, are seen as sculptors of the child, can be seen in some of the speeches: "So you see a lot of children who have contact with nature who are different from those who spend hours in front of the television. So they are very varied stimuli. And a lot of what the families also teach" (Interviewee 6, our translation). At the same time, the same interviewee highlights the importance of the school as a representative

of society contributing to this process. "First, we know that the family is the child's first point of reference and then contact with other people, both school and society, right? I think everyone contributes a little to this child" (Interviewee 6, our translation).

In addition to adults, these statements show us other components of the environment: school, society, nature, and stimuli. These are speeches that show us how the child is the product of a whole, and that one person is not exclusively responsible for their development. However, it can be seen that the passive character remains hidden in these components, as the stimuli need to be given by someone. The school is made up of people, just like society and nature. It is also constantly transformed by human hands, and it depends on someone introducing it to the child.

Finally, the teachers interviewed also gave answers based on the interactionist perspective. This, in turn, contrasts with the perspectives presented above, since it understands them in an associated way, with one mutually influencing the other. "The child's experience of a given environment is active and, at the same time as it modifies this environment, it is modified by it, especially through interaction with other individuals" (Oliveira *et al.*, 1992, p. 29, our translation).

This perspective appeared less intensely in isolation in the interviews. In general, when interactionist theory appears, it accompanies environmentalist ideas, being a mixture of these two perspectives. Let's now look at some of the speeches that refer to the subjective constitution through relationships: "It's through your relationship with others that you select what you want for yourself" (Interviewee 2, our translation). Interviewee 3 said: "In the time and space that I'm in, right? I think it's part of me, my family, where I am, who I relate to, where I am, in my social group".

These excerpts highlight the importance of human presence from this perspective, since for interaction to take place and for there to be any movement, there needs to be at least one human duo. The interactionist theory understands the human being as a being in constant modification since, throughout life, their interactions also change.

From the three perspectives, we can see commonalities and distinct conceptions. Now, we have a subject given from birth; now, we find a being formed by the environment in which he lives, and yet, a subject who, by influencing and being influenced by his interactions, constructs himself from the world.

However, according to Mariotto (2009), none of these perspectives understand the subjectivizing nature of school in the early years of a person's life. The pedagogical nature of the task of educating often places the child in a place where technical and standardized

knowledge is produced, disregarding the subjective bases on which cognitive capacities are built.

For Lajonquière (2000), the repressive and moralistic education criticized by Freud in the last century is giving way to what the author calls the "psycho-pedagogical illusion". This illusion presupposes the intervention in a supposed adaptation to infantile reality, which again makes it more difficult to recognize desire.

This infantile reality, presented by the psycho-pedagogical illusion, which seeks to adapt children, comes from a very specific place of knowledge, which presents human development in a fragmented way, grouping facts and assuming a linear succession, present in most developmental psychology manuals (Ferreira; Amorim; Oliveira, 2009). Gonçalves (2014) found in his research that a standard of normality is imposed on child development, which creates the need to measure children's progress, subjecting them to frameworks.

In this way, education deals with the complexity inherent in the educational act, considering its phases, stages, and phases. However, are these theoretical assumptions capable of explaining the various subjective heterogeneities present in the world? It is precisely in the face of these multiple subjectivities that psychoanalysis presents itself, seeking to understand how they are constituted in the subject, revealing what is deepest in each individual, and finding a space for what many do not realize: desire.

For psychoanalysis, the process of humanization necessarily starts with the human bond, and this occurs long before the physiological birth of childbirth. While the baby is still in the womb, it is already a being of relationships; its parents are already imagining it, creating possibilities, and anticipating its existence. These relationships are fundamental to the child's becoming (Crespin, 2004). For Freud, unlike the animal world, the human offspring is in total helplessness at birth. It is born with basic survival mechanisms - breathing, sucking - but it needs the action of another human to get out of this position (Freud 1925). Starting from this primordial helplessness, there is a long way to go, and it will necessarily involve the action of the Other⁵.

One of the teachers interviewed expressed this idea in her answer when she said that subjectivity is constituted through language and relationships with others throughout life. These relationships, mediated by language, contribute to the process of subjectivization of these subjects (Interviewee 5).

⁵ According to Roudinesco (1998), the Other, with a capital letter, a term used by Jacques Lacan, marks the place of the unconscious, of otherness, the place of speech.

According to Jerusalinsky (2002), childhood is characterized by four structures: growth, maturation, development, and subjectivization. Growth refers to organic aspects such as nutritional and hormonal characteristics and tissue density. Maturation is related to the evolution of nervous structures, providing the basis for the acquisition of skills. Development refers to the acquisition of language, motor skills, logic, and other skills. Subjectivization, finally, influences the other structures and is extremely sensitive to them. It begins with the child's entry into the symbolic world of language, humanizing them and placing them in a culture with a particular identity. Thus, psychoanalysis does not annul developmental and/or neurological theories but points out that something else makes the human organism a human being.

According to Mariotto (2009), a rich environment for babies in their first months of life is one in which the gaze and the word are present in the bond with the other, who feels called to occupy a place in this interaction. For Freud (1937), it is also the human bond that is at stake in the educational act, making educating something of the order of the impossible. The impossibility of predicting results, of fitting into techniques, of existing without a human bond.

At school, the figure of the teacher is the object of libidinal investment and represents a function that replaces parental figures, occupying a place of knowledge and idealization. But in order for knowledge to take place, it is up to the teacher to occupy this place, so that his or her word is heard. "In this way, we understand that every educational act refers to operations of transmission - of a legacy, of knowledge, of a desire - and transformation - from the flesh to the subject" (Mariotto, 2017, p.36, our translation).

As we saw earlier, the subject is constituted in the field of the Other, and the baby's entry into the symbolic universe makes it possible for this field to be opened up to other people, provided that they invest in it and are also invested in it. It is in this sense that the work of the teacher helps families and/or caregivers in the task of humanizing the subject; after all, by including the child in the discourse, they come to occupy a place in their history.

According to Gonçalves (2014), the specificity of childhood education is directly associated with the constitution of the child. The dimensions of affection, play, socialization, expression, language, and fantasy are examples of the different ways in which social and interpersonal relationships are expressed as they are established with the world. Mariotto (2003) points out that schools for very young children, therefore, occupy a place in the psychic becoming, including the professionals who work in these institutions as beings of language and, thus, of desire. This desire marks subjectivization and confers the institution as an instituting place.

What do you learn when you learn to educate?

Insofar as this research aimed to listen to female teachers, it also took on an ethical stance of attentive listening, seeking to understand between the lines of their speeches and welcoming what was presented to the researchers through their accounts. Below, we will present some data that stood out significantly in terms of the learning about education that they produce in the act of educating itself.

Firstly, when asked about their knowledge of subjectivity, most of the teachers said they had studied little about it during their training. The knowledge they possess derives largely from their personal experiences and professional careers, rather than from theories learned in the academic environment. The educators emphasized the need for a professional in schools who works from a different approach to pedagogy. "We would need the support of a professional who is more directly involved in the school than just the pedagogue, who is part of the teacher's orientation, and no one is there like that" (Interviewee 6, our translation).

It is clear that there is a lack. A lack of content, of support, a lack that is felt especially when teachers have to work with children with so-called non-typical behaviors or with a diagnosis that has already been established. One of the interviewees points out that in teacher training, "they always give you a perfect class, right? So you're always going to learn didactics in a relaxed way, but never with real classroom problems" (Interviewee 2, our translation). This statement alerts us to two very important ideas that were evident in the interviews. Firstly, there is a gap between what teachers learn and the real needs of everyday life in the classroom, and secondly, some believe there is a "perfect" classroom.

It is clear that there is a need for interdisciplinary work that aims to reflect on the potential that exists within the school, analyzing how each individual's personal beliefs influence school practice. It's about work that induces teachers to think about the human formation involved in their role, which is defined as pedagogical. Interdisciplinary work which, as one of the interviewees pointed out, represents a difference not only in the development of the children, but also in the strengthening of the professional. A job that, as the interviewee said, "also helps us to understand what the school's function is, beyond a curricular issue, but in terms of training people" (Interviewee 5, our translation). Interdisciplinary work that encourages reflection on the "perfect classroom", mentioned by the teacher and discussed below.

Perfection and what's wrong

The idea of something perfect runs through the teachers' speeches at many moments when they refer to the classes and the uniqueness of the students and their families. There is something in the discourse that points to a certain determinism of things, where $A + B$ will always give AB . With this, it is again necessary to return to the question of a certain idealistic formation in education, always in search of a perfect learning scenario, which needs to fulfill a series of expectations.

Although we have heard from the teachers how much they respect the uniqueness of each child, we are concerned about how they believe that some specific factors, such as family structure, predetermine this individuality. "When you don't have a father? When you don't have a mother? When you're raised by two fathers or two mothers? Then there were those gaps that would remain, but which could be filled by what we had learned, leaving our beliefs aside" (Interviewee 7, our translation). The following comment can exemplify these same determinisms:

Because I see it like this, the experience I've had this year, it's a place where there are a lot of cases of drug use, families with 5/6 children, one from each father, some don't even know the father, others don't even know where the mother is anymore, because they're with their grandparents. Grandma doesn't want it anymore and gives it to an uncle. So you can imagine how it is, he doesn't have that family bond, those values that were once passed down, that you received from your parents and you try to pass on to your children (Interviewee 1, our translation).

This statement exemplifies the relationship between the presence of the traditional family model and good child development, with a literal translation of the care functions with the presence of these family figures. This way of thinking presents a fine line between recognizing the absence of these care experiences and a certain social stigma, which leads us to reflect on what kind of respect for singularities we can identify in the school context. Is it respect or a certain benevolent compassion?

If it is respect, most of the interviewees seem to have the idea of a singularity that has no possibility of transformation throughout life. This condition is established in advance, even before it manifests itself in the school context. Because of the impossibility of change, therefore, any investment that might modify something in the subject's structure is dismissed.

Kusnetzoff (1982) calls this way of thinking unidirectional monocausality, i.e. the most straightforward way of answering why. When used to think of psychopathology, it envisages a

single cause acting on a given body and causing an effect. However, the author is emphatic in saying that "mental symptoms or illnesses never recognize a single producing or triggering cause" (Kusnetzoff, 1982, p. 18, our translation). As such, the researcher criticizes this conception, because those who think this way believe in linearity, in the principle of cause and effect, without considering the retroactivity between cause and effect.

This is why, once again, we emphasize the importance of various types of knowledge in schools, which can bring new conceptions that question the stigmas and/or determinisms currently in force in this context. According to Pereira (1999), most teacher training curricula are still based on a model of technical rationality, where mastery of one's area of knowledge is seen as sufficient. However, Lajonquière (1997) reminds us that: "All education also presupposes the transmission of a certain existential knowledge that is not reduced to knowledge about any possible world" (p. 30, our translation). Every educational act takes place from the perspective of demand and desire and the teacher, in this dialectic, is called upon to occupy a place that goes beyond pedagogical practice (Mariotto, 2017). When we talk about working with young children, this place occupied by the teacher becomes even more important since the educator is an agent of language and desire and, in addition to traditional basic care, stimulation, and affective exchanges, is a symbolic element in the psychic becoming (Mariotto, 2009).

What do the teachers say about the role of the nursery school-teacher?

During the interviews, after listening to what each of the interviewees had to say about subjectivity and its constitution, we felt it was pertinent to ask them about their roles as nursery school-teachers. According to Oliveira *et al.* (1992), the nursery school teacher "will be constituted differently depending on how they perceive their role in the nursery school and with the children. This way, you can see yourself as someone who just 'looks after' and 'takes care of' the children or as someone who actively contributes to their development" (p. 32, our translation).

When we analyzed the answers, we noticed that the idea of the early childhood teacher as the one who builds the conditions for the possibility of experiences that enable meaningful learning stood out.

I think the role is to provide experiences so that these children can develop; they can relate to their peers and to adults, right? However, I

think the role is to foster the education of those who go through the school, but in the sense of providing meaningful experiences to each one (Interviewee 5, our translation).

This year, because of the pandemic, we haven't been able to do as many experiences, to go out of school as much, but my plan for next year is to do a lot of experiences, to go out, so that they get to know the world more, that they experience it, that they feel it so that they can learn (Interviewee 3, our translation).

Experience appears in the speeches as a central concept in the role of the educator, seen as a possibility of opening up to the world, to the dynamics of life, and as the existential territory of learning. Thinking about this requires us to turn to the concept of experience, and, to this end, we will use the writings of Jorge Larrosa Bondía as a reference.

For Larrosa (2011), experience is not what passes, but what crosses me, a passage, a crossing, a journey that leaves its mark. Experience never comes from me; it is external, strange, foreign, and therefore, needs something or someone that is not me. However, although it is alien to me, it is in me that it takes place; I am the place of experience. As such, whether it's an event, a word, or an unspoken word, I'm affected in some way when I'm taken by it. It is precisely this effect that gives the experience its subjectivizing character because each individual's experience is unique, even if what happens is the same for everyone.

That's why, when we talk about experience, we can't make generalizations or determinations, such as those mentioned in the previous section. If we recognize that we are singular subjects, we also understand that we cannot anticipate an experience's effect on the other. Based on the experience/meaning pair, Bondía (2002) proposes a reflection on education, because, for him, the experience that "crosses me" and has an effect on me opens up space for something that forms and transforms me, placing the subject of the experience side by side with the subject in formation.

Final considerations

At the end of this research, we understand that as well as each child being one, each teacher is also one, and is constituted as a teacher through a journey of her own. From this journey, each person understands the psychic constitution in a different way, so much so that in our analysis, we can find various forms of understanding.

Although they still don't recognize themselves in the constitutive processes, most interviewees demonstrated that they link their work in early childhood education to providing experiences that foster the development of their students. In this sense, it is necessary to recognize the importance of experience as training and transformation, also understanding that by providing these experiences, the interviewees are somehow realizing, through their relationships and interactions with the children, how much the role of the education professional is to make room for a becoming.

At the end of this research, it is clear that there is still a lot to be done for the education of babies and young children in the context of education, through training that goes beyond the limits of didactics and is constituted through the interdisciplinarity necessary for understanding the subject. However, it is also important to note that several of the teachers interviewed understood the school as a space of life, with potential, exchange, and openness for new knowledge to intertwine and form a strong network for caring for children.

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