

VISUAL NARRATIVE: READING MEDIATION IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION¹

NARRATIVA VISUAL: MEDIAÇÃO DE LEITURA NA EDUCAÇÃO INFANTIL

NARRATIVA VISUAL: MEDIACIÓN DE LECTURA EN LA EDUCACIÓN INFANTIL

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ABSTRACT: With the goal of contributing to the literacy processes of 4-year-old children, this article investigates peculiarities about how children of that age read the visual narrative of “*Ladrão de galinha*” (Chicken Thief) by Béatrice Rodriguez. The research has a qualitative and exploratory approach and part of the selection and analysis of an integral part of the Program's Early Childhood Collection National Library of the School (PNBE) 2014, followed by construction and application of a proposal for mediation of reading with children in groups, in order to analyze how they act in the process of construction of sense of visual narratives, from intentionally planned situations of mediation. As a result of the study, we point out contributions from the literary reading of the picture book in the daily school life of pre-school children. We also verify that children, in situations of interaction, help, complement, converge, diverge, express their opinions through speech or other forms of expression. In summary, the book of images proved to be a valuable cultural object that promotes interaction and autonomy.

KEYWORDS: Mediation. Literary reading. Early childhood education.

RESUMO: *Com a meta de contribuir para os processos de letramento de crianças de 4 anos, investiga-se peculiaridades acerca do modo como leem a narrativa visual “Ladrão de galinha”, de Béatrice Rodriguez. A pesquisa tem abordagem qualitativa e exploratória e parte da seleção e análise de um título integrante do acervo de Educação Infantil do PNBE/2014, seguida de construção e vivência coletiva de proposta de mediação de leitura, a fim de analisar como as crianças pequenas atuam no processo de construção de sentido de narrativas visuais, em situações de mediação planejadas. Como resultados do estudo, apontamos contribuições da leitura literária do livro de imagens no cotidiano escolar de*

¹ Article produced within the scope of projects approved by the process: 309178/2019-3 Demand/Call: CNPq Call 06/2019 - Research Productivity Scholarships Modality: PQ Category/Level: 2 and by FAPERGS Notice: 02/2017 - PqG (term of grant 17/2551-0001 115-5).

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crianças em idade pré-escolar. As crianças complementam, convergem, divergem, expressam suas opiniões, quer seja pela fala ou por outras formas de expressão. O livro de imagens mostrou-se valioso objeto cultural que contribui para a promoção da interação e da autonomia.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *Mediação. Leitura literária. Educação infantil.*

RESUMEN: *Con el objetivo de contribuir a los procesos de alfabetización (literacidad) de niños de 4 años, este artículo investiga peculiaridades acerca del modo como niños de esa edad leen la narrativa visual “Ladrão de galinha”, de Béatrice Rodríguez. La investigación tiene un enfoque cualitativo y exploratorio y parte de la selección y análisis de un título integrante del acervo de Educación Infantil del Programa Nacional Biblioteca de la Escuela (PNBE) 2014, seguida de construcción y aplicación de propuesta de mediación de lectura con niños colectivamente, a fin de analizar cómo actúan en el proceso de construcción de sentido de narrativas visuales, a partir de situaciones de mediación planeadas intencionalmente. Como resultados del estudio, señalamos contribuciones de la lectura literaria del libro de imágenes en el cotidiano escolar de niños en edad preescolar. También verificamos que los niños, en situaciones de interacción, auxilian, complementan, convergen, divergen, expresan sus opiniones tanto por el habla como por otras formas de expresión. En síntesis, el libro de imágenes se mostró valioso objeto cultural que promueve la interacción y la autonomía.*

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Mediación. Lectura literaria. Educación infantil.*

Introduction

[...] every word has two faces. It is determined both by the fact that it proceeds from someone and the fact that it is directed towards someone. It is precisely the product of the interaction of the speaker and the listener. Every word serves to express one in relation to the other. Through the word, I define myself in relation to the other, that is, in the last analysis, in relation to the collectivity. The word is a kind of bridge thrown between me and others (BAKHTIN, 1981, p. 113, our translation).

The epigraph that opens this text is built from the word, but here we want to 'enlarge' it. The literary book is produced in response to a demand and from it emanate various possibilities of dialogue, whether through free reading or scientific investigation. Thus, the empirical research with children focused on in this article presupposes dialogue and puts on the scene more than the faces of words or pictures, but the fact that one subject is positioned in relation to the other – each being presents itself, it is asserted, connects, defines itself in relation to others present in a given situation. The setting and actors in this investigation emerge and become effective as living elements in the constitution of identities.



In an investigation environment that favored dialogue and interaction, we defined our objective: to investigate the reading of visual narratives (present in works that are part of collections – Early Childhood Education of the National School Library Program [PNBE] 2014 – 4 and 5 years), in order to contribute to the literacy processes in this age group. The guiding question – how does a 4-year-old child act in the process of constructing a sense of visual narrative, based on intentionally planned mediation situations? – was the motto of the study. However, this question is interlinked with another, to be thought about before: how the visual narratives, present in collections for Early Childhood Education at PNBE - 2014, constitute, discursively, appealing to their recipient?

Concomitant to the theoretical study, we read all works in the narrative category by images selected for 4- and 5-year-old⁵ students, in order to define criteria for choosing the titles used in this analysis. The research had a qualitative approach and was guided by:

1) selection of five books of image narratives from the 2014 PNBE - Category 2. Child Education – 4 to 5 years old – Collections 1 and 2 to later be worked on with a group of 13 children aged 4 years in a Child Education School that serves full-time. The criteria for defining the titles selected for the research were that the works were composed of images and the images should compose a narrative;

2) analysis of the books, observing the peculiarities about structural elements of the visual narrative genre, quality of the graphic-editorial project, literary quality of the text and proposal of interaction with the reader, based on structural elements present in the plot. In addition, we privilege image analysis, in order to understand the meaning of the visuality that such narratives generate, as well as the paths built by readers;

3) the investigation was submitted to the Ethics Committee and followed legal guidelines for its implementation. Subsequently, contact was formalized with the school, to make arrangements for the schedule of reading sessions and to request authorizations, aiming at the empirical part of the research. Seven collective reading sessions of the selected works were held with the children, with one of the researchers acting in mediation at all meetings. The sessions were planned to be independent, that is, each title was worked on in a specific meeting, with an average duration of sixty minutes, but with flexibility, respecting the progress and interests of the class. The sessions were recorded in audio and video, considering

⁵ Ladrão de galinhas (Chicken Thief), by Béatrice Rodrigues; Um+um+um+todos (One+One+One+All), Anna Göbel; Calma, camaleão! (Quiet, chameleon!), Laurent Cardon; O gato e a árvore (The cat and the tree), Rogério Coelho; Minhocas comem amendoins (Earthworms eat peanuts), Elisa Géhin; Mar dos sonhos (Sea of dreams), Dennis Nolan; Voa pipa, voa (Fly kite, fly), Regina Rennó; O noivo da ratinha (Little mouse fiancé), Lúcia Hiratsuka and Nerina: a ovelha Negra (Nerina: the black sheep), Michele Iacocca.

the importance of the visual record for the analysis, not only of the children's speech, but of their manifestations, including through silence. Thus, planning of reading sessions, recording material, observation form, field diary for notes and records and the books themselves are part of the research analysis material and, finally;

4) analysis of the material from categories that emerged from the constructed data, associated with the theoretical framework, the final step that enabled the writing of this interpretive text.

For the investigation, five works from the PNBE 2014 collection were used, category 2 – Early Childhood Education – Pre-School, as shown in table 1:

Table 1 – Books selected for research ⁶

Title	AUTHOR/ILLUSTRATOR	PUBLISHER	YEAR
“ <i>Calma, camaleão</i> ”!	Laurent Cardon	Ática	2010
“ <i>Ladrão de galinha</i> ”	Béatrice Rodriguez	Escala Educacional	2009
“ <i>Nerina: a ovelha negra</i> ”	Michele Iacocca	Ática	2012
“ <i>Um+um+um+todos</i> ”	Anna Göbel	Autêntica	2013
“ <i>O gato e a árvore</i> ”	Rogério Coelho	Positivo	2009

Source: Devised by the researchers

In this article, we will use the title “*Ladrão de galinha*” (Chicken Thief), one of the works included in the larger study. From this narrative, constituted by visuality, particularities of the text and aspects related to the interaction of children in a previously organized reading session will be discussed.

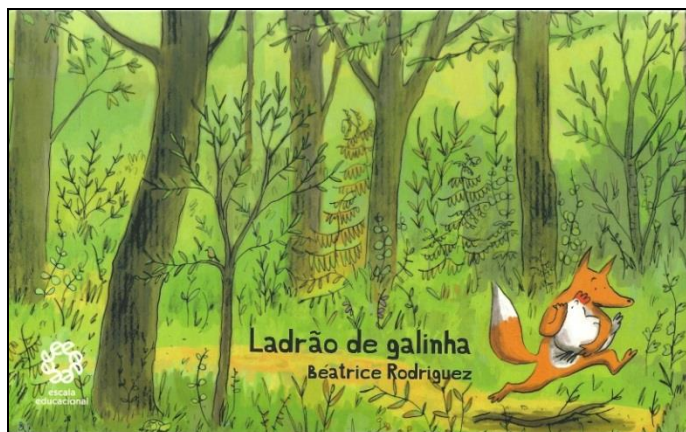
Presentation of the work

“*Ladrão de galinha*” (Chicken Thief), by Béatrice Rodriguez, it was published in 2005, in France, and, in 2012, in Brazil. Made up of 26 pages with dense weight, it favors handling. The plot, according to the paratext located on the back cover, consists of the story of “a fox who kidnaps a chicken and runs away. Characters like the bear, the rabbit and the rooster chase her day and night, through valleys and woods, crossing the sea and the desert. Until, at last, exhausted, they reach her hideout, but the hen likes the fox and wants to be with her”⁷ (our translation).

⁶ In table 1, the publisher informed is the one listed in Guide 1 – Literature out of the box. The books used in the research are not those sent to schools by the PNBE 2014. The copies were purchased by one of the researchers, so the citation may include another year and the references another publisher, according to the edition purchased. The year informed, the date was taken from the catalog card of the copies handled in the research..

⁷ Text taken from the back cover of the book.

Figure 1 – Cover “*Ladrão de galinha*”

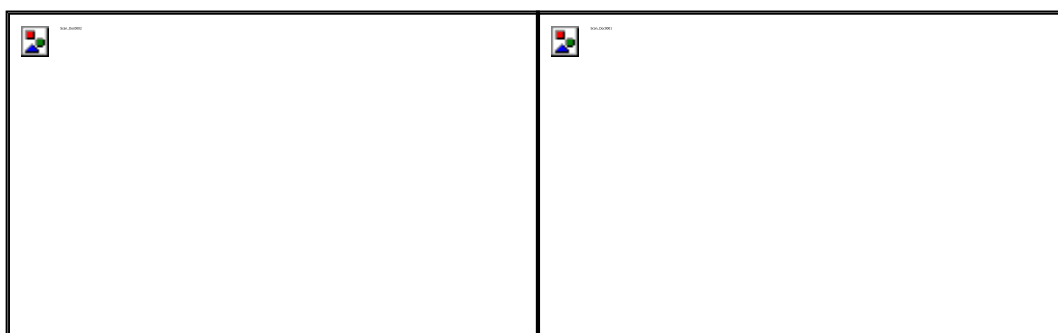


Source: Rodriguez (2009)

On the cover of the book (Fig. 1), the title and illustration are located. Through the image, it is possible to identify central characters and their expressions: the movement of the scene is made explicit by the running action of the fox, which takes place outdoors, resembling a trail in the middle of a forest. The scene suggests dynamism.

The reader can also get a preview of the setting from the elements present on the cover. By opening the issue and seeing the entire cover and the back cover (Fig. 2), we see another part of the story. In the sequence, the other characters run after the fox that has the chicken “in his hands”. Front and back cover, in this case, anticipate plot data.

Figure 2 – Open book: back cover and cover

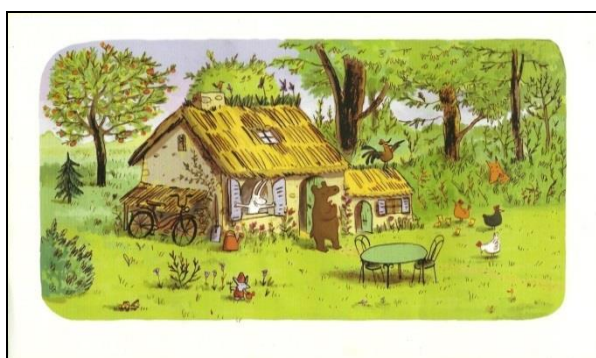


Source: Rodriguez (2009)

The country setting, announced from the cover, reappears on the first page of the book. Natural elements of flora and animals performing human actions compose the scenes. These, in an upright position, move by walking with two legs. The timing is expressed, in this scene, by movements such as, for example, opening a window, yawning, cock crowing. These

data are indicators of temporality constituted by the image, that is, experience suggests that these situations are related to dawn. For Oliveira (2008, p. 53), “[...] when visualizing the scene, the type of scenario in which the characters are acting is automatically being elaborated”. On this page, we see the initial situation of the story, but an element, not so explicit, announces the suspense that materializes on the opposite page. The fox is hidden among the plants and observes the other characters – bear, rabbit, rooster, chickens and chicks (Fig. 3).

Figure 3 – Initial situation: narrative balance

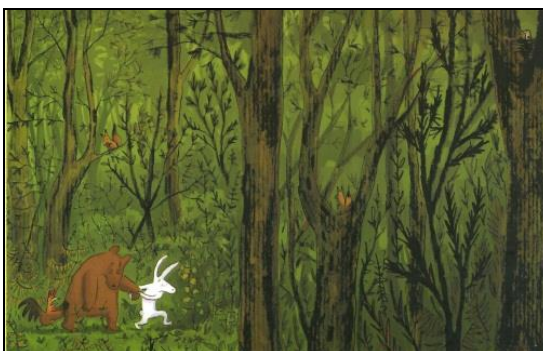


Source: Rodriguez (2009, p. 1)

In the scenario shown, color is an essential element for understanding the narrative. Shades of green predominate during the characters' journey through the forest and yellow on the beach. The passage of time is also marked by nuances of color. The day is marked by lighter tones, mainly yellow and green. Night is predominantly indicated with darker blue and green tones. According to Oliveira (2008, p. 51, our translation), “[...] the quality of light is an important element in the narrative process [...] the relationship between color and light is fundamental in the art of visual storytelling”. Without the presence of the word, the reader builds temporality through chromatic nuances.

On page 3 (Fig. 4), the green color is also revealed in a lighter tone, indicating daylight. Gradually, in the next scene (Fig. 5), the green becomes darker, signaling nightfall in the forest (Fig. 6).

Figure 4 – Light green (day)



Source: Rodriguez (2009, p. 3)

Figure 5 – Dark green (night)



Source: Rodriguez (2009, p. 5)

Figure 6 – Moon indicating dusk

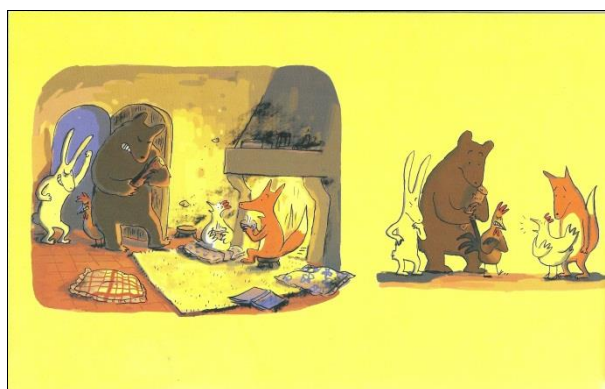


Source: Rodriguez (2009, p. 7)

Throughout history, the scenario, which, in the initial situation, was predominantly forest, details aspects of relief through the figure of the mountain, after the sea and the beach. The details in the composition of the space favor the identification of the place where the characters act, as well as the elaboration of the plot.

There is a scene where the fox continues to flee towards the sea and the other characters do not hesitate to chase him. She gets hold of a small boat and begins to row; the hen, with sunglasses on, seems to be enjoying the walk. The rabbit and the rooster, on the other hand, use the bear's body as a boat to navigate the sea, and their expressions are one of fear in front of the waves. They arrive at the beach exhausted and see footprints that lead to a large tree where the fox and hen's house is located. Through the window, in the trunk, the three try to identify what is inside. They enter with an expression of wrath, the bear takes a piece of firewood in his hand to defend himself, however, they find the hen and the fox in harmony, sitting in front of the fireplace, enjoying soup (Fig. 7).

Figure 7 – The encounter

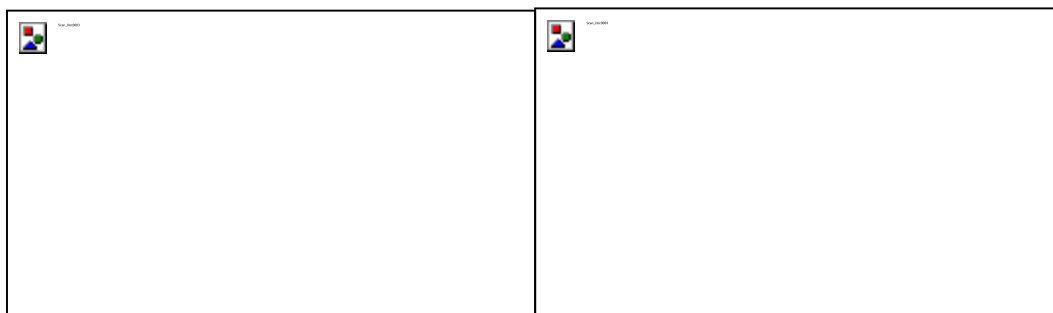


Source: Rodriguez (2009, p. 21)

Finally, the outcome occurs when the hen tries to explain the situation and then kisses the fox. Then everyone sits around the fireplace to drink soup – the hen is in the fox's lap, sharing the same dish with an expression of happiness. The rooster does not look happy, and the bear is upset.

In the last scene, on a double sheet, the farewell takes place, configuring the outcome of the narrative. The bear, rabbit and rooster set off in the rowboat and wave to the happy fox and hen on the beach. In the illustration, the fox turns to the left, suggesting to the reader the possibility of returning to the beginning of the narrative, that is, there is a proposal to reread the work. In this image, the rooster is crestfallen, making its way back with its friends (Fig. 8).

Figure 8 – Farewell



Source: Rodriguez (2009, p. 23-24)

In the last scene of the narrative, according to Figure 8, the sunlight reflected on the water, the calm of the sea and the horizon line at the top of the pages return to the balance observed at the beginning of the story, but now in another environment, with the reorganization of the relationships between the characters, revealing the diversity of scenarios and natural elements proposed to the reader in the book's dynamics.

We highlighted, in the composition of the plot, the importance of color and light in the scenes. Such elements, in this case, guide the reader about the passage of time, a constitutive aspect of the narrative and, in this way, if perceived by the reader, qualify the understanding of the work.

Child readers' encounter with visual narrative

After the presentation of aspects related to the construction of the story, we prioritized the children's interaction with the work. In this session, 11 children from the class participated, and four copies of the book were used for the intervention. Students, in the discussion of data, have their identities preserved and are referred to by a fictitious name, but present in the school universe.

In order to divide the class into four groups, we made four puzzle games with 3 pieces each. The images formed animals that are characters in the work – rabbit, bear, chicken and fox, but photographs were used for the activity. At that time, the children had not yet been introduced to the book. Randomly, each student chose a piece of the puzzle and needed to find the classmates who had the missing pieces to form the figure. The children were enthusiastic during the dynamic. Attention and reasoning, accompanied by playfulness, permeated the organization of the groups.

With the students grouped together, we began the presentation of the work and the author orally. We then deliver a copy to each group⁸ and observe the children's interaction with each other and with the narrative, without the mediation of the researcher who accompanied this stage. Afterwards, we started the oral and collective reading, when the researcher, with a copy in hand, leafed through it for the children and, together, everyone oralized the story.

Finally, we proposed the creation of a collective panel (Fig.9). With brown paper in the size of 1m x 1.50m, fixed to the living room wall, and a box with various objects, the children were invited to explore the materials and freely create a panel about the story, in order to represent aspects from the book. All children were involved in making the collective production.

Figure 9 – Collective panel made by the children



Source: Research archive Acervo da pesquisa

Excited about the activity, the students explored the materials and were, mainly, excited about the diversity of the materials and sometimes referred to the characters in the work, mentioning them orally. The way in which the children organize the elements points to initial aspects related to the establishment of inferences, from symbolization until reaching the production of meaning for the compositions created through interaction with peers.

⁸ Not all moments were possible to be filmed, since there were 4 groups performing the reading simultaneously and we only had two camcorders. Many of the records of these moments were entered into a spreadsheet, during and immediately after the meeting

Children's reading: reflections on interaction and mediation

In the study of shared reading of the copy, we chose as analysis categories the interaction between research participants and the researcher's action-mediation, so that events related to the indicated categories will be brought to the discussion, which will be analyzed below.

During the presentation of the work, as soon as we showed the cover, Giz de Cera⁹ announced with excitement: “– *Profe! Profe! In the corner walking! It is a fox*”. Even without knowing the title of the book and what the story was about, based on visuality, Giz de Cera immediately drew the group's attention to a specific element in the conflict. The child's indication “– *Profe!*”, and reinforces: “*Profe!*” – evidences spontaneity when exposing the discovery in relation to the focus of the class.

The narrative contains many details. As the children had the opportunity to explore the copy, prior to the shared reading, they interacted according to individual perception, but considered the impressions of their peers. We quote the dialogue in which Giz de Cera refers to the scene in which the fox kidnaps the hen: “– *Then the fox closed the hen's beak*”. To reach this conclusion, the child considered the previous scene, when the fox captures the chicken and it “*screams*”. Based on the child's observation, the researcher asks: “– *Why did she close her beak?*”; and, immediately, Aquarela added: “– *Because the fox didn't want the hen to have its beak open!*”; Pincel synthesized: “– *She closed her beak because she didn't want to scream either*”. The children explained the fact based on prior knowledge experienced in their social groups, since the visuality of the book did not explicitly bring these data.

It is possible that, if the mediator had not asked the question that caused the children to think about the situation, Aquarela and Pincel would not have spoken about the fact that the fox immobilized the chicken. Children show, first, only the closed beak, that is, the suppression of the voice.

In another scene in the narrative, we highlight the expressiveness and make-believe, elements intrinsic to the children's universe, as Pincel, when seeing the scene in which the characters show fatigue, after the fox's escape and the chase of the rooster, bear and rabbit, concludes: “– *And they were tired!*” More than words, Pincel lies on the floor as if sleeping. The scene can be explained because in this age group “[...] there is an expansion of the repertoire of instrumental gestures, which have progressive precision” (BRASIL, 1998, p. 24, our translation).

⁹ We use fictitious names to mention the subjects of this research, in order to preserve the children's identity.

The possibility of demonstrating to the other one's understanding of reading that image allows the mediator to foster this idea. Thus, the researcher continues: "*Tired. Look!*", valuing the expression of Pincel. Next, other children express their opinions. Giz de Cera says: "*- And I'm tired of running.*" Then, the researcher resumes, but in a questioning tone: "*- Are you tired of running too?*"; before Pincel responds, Lápis de cor asks: "*- Ah! He didn't even run!*" and Giz de Cera also participates in the discussion, emphatically joining the conflict: "*- Yes I ran*".

The conversation between children is resumed from the Bakhtian position in which people, through language, define themselves in relation to others (BAKHTIN, 1981, p. 113). Faced with the idea launched by the word of an individual, another can complement, agree or disagree. In the situation described, motivated by the visibility of the cultural object, the children diverged when they verbally positioned themselves. They used a real situation, of tiredness from running, so that each one expressed himself, according to previous experience or through the creation of a make-believe universe, common at this age.

At this point, the mediator realized how the children interacted with the narrative and with each other and, based on the manifestations or silence, raised challenging questions.

Another passage in the shared reading of the book that we highlighted refers to the scene in which the fox and the hen are already inside the fox's hole, and the bear looks for them in the external environment, on a hill. The researcher asks: "*- Did the bear get into the hole?*" and, promptly, Papel Machê justifies: "*- No! He is very big*". The adult voice insists: "*- He's too big, he couldn't get in, right?*" and, immediately, in the sequence, Giz de Cera concludes: "*- I am small*", inserting, explicitly, his condition to express the understanding of the scene. It is worth highlighting the peculiarities in the way each child interacts with the book and with peers and teacher in the sense that they build for the story.

Children dialogue, interact with each other, and their opinions about the above emerge from their experiences, from the understanding they have of themselves, from what they understand at that moment. That's what we noticed in the previous dialogue, in which, from the mediator's provocation, Papel Machê concludes that the bear is too big, which is why she was unable to enter the hole. Giz de Cera relate the fiction shown in the image in the book to its reality, comparing his size to that of the bear and deducing that it is small in relation to the animal.

Another children's dialogue concerns the insertion of a new spatial element in the narrative, referring to the scenes in which the chase between the characters continues. They come out of the dense forest; the fox climbs the mountain, at which point the mediator asks when turning the page: "*- And then they continued the chase, right? And where are they? Is it*

a city?”. Before asking the question, the researcher states that they continue the persecution, but soon questions about the place where the characters are and also mentions elements that contrast with the space that the children witness in the scene. “– *Is it a city?*”. The problematization through the question can help children to understand and position themselves about the teacher provocation.

Afterwards, Giz de Cera concludes: “– *No. It's a grass, Profe*”. The expression of denial highlighted the response, that is, for Giz de Cera, the scene was nothing like the city, but rather like the '*grass*'. For him, citing grass as a new setting was enough to make himself understood. The mediator's initial question mobilizes speeches from several children. Among the opinions, some agree with colleagues, others diverge, giving liveliness to the classroom routine. As soon as Giz de Cera identified that the characters were on a grass, Tinta Guache said: “– *It's a mountain*”. Soon, the mediator asked them to observe what the arguments would be: “– *It's a mountain! Why do you think it's a mountain?*”. Before the girl could respond, Caneta Hidrocor points out: “– *There is a grass*”. Tinta Guache immediately concludes: “– *Because he's tall*”, answering the researcher's initial question, referring to how the relief materializes.

The function of mediating the shared reading of the visual narrative is not to induce the child reader to see with the guide reader's eyes, but to provoke questions for the children to observe more, to pay attention to the details of the images and, above all, that put your marks in this reading. Each child mobilizes and gives meaning to what was seen, through the mediation of the researcher, and participates in the process, integrating themselves with the speeches and experiences of their peers.

In the continuation of the reading, the subjects defined the scenario, and the mediator still questions: “*And what is the fox doing?*”, expanding the children's perception of the place to the character's action, which is directly linked to the characteristics of the mountain. Soon, Aquarela reports: “*It's going up the mountain*”. In the children's discussion between grass and mountains, each one expressed their understanding, and Aquarela ended the dialogue by relating the action of the fox and the place, which was previously mentioned by colleagues, as the mountain.

We also highlight another experience, from the interaction and mediation raised by the visuality of the cultural object. During the shared reading, Crayons directs attention: “*Profe! Down here!*” (pointing to the fish appearing in the water on page 17). The mediator then takes up the new element found by Giz de Cera and confides: “*Look at what Giz de Cera found here in the water. What is here?*”. Mobilized by the question, the children express themselves

and Pincel assures them: “*A shark!*”, while Papel Machê says: “*A fish*”. To encourage the positioning of other children, the mediator insists: “*What is it?*” and Pincel reiterates, again: “*A shark*”. Committed to the other children expressing their opinions, again, challenges: “*Pincel thinks it's a shark. Who else thinks it's a shark?*”.

The possibilities of mediation are not always explicit. In the interaction with children, and depending on how ideas arise, mediation can take different paths, changing according to the interventions of the subjects and their experiences. Possibly, Pincel claims to be a shark as soon as he observes the image, as he has the information or previous experience that gives him subsidies to recognize the image of a shark. The presence of waves would be a clue to think that these waters are from the sea and sharks live in it. Another answer could have triggered other paths for the experience of reading the scene.

Then the kids start to come up with new opinions. Caneta Hidrocor, for example, disputes: “*It's not a shark. I think it's a giant fish*”. To justify that it is not a shark, we think the girl knows the shark's characteristics. She indicates that it is a giant fish, that is, for her, the way this animal is shown in the book is not a shark, but a large fish, revealing that she thinks that a shark is small. To express that it is gigantic, perhaps I used as a reference the size of this fish in relation to the bear or to the smaller fish, illustrated on the opposite page. Pincel shares the position of Caneta Hidrocor and ponders: “*I think it's a giant*”. Tinta Guache, on the other hand, agrees with Brush and sentences: “*It's a shark*”. At the end of the dialogue, Giz de Cera introduces another element to the discussion: “*I think it's a swordfish*”, and Aquarela synthesizes, bringing together the positions of the colleagues: “*I think it's a giant shark with a sword*”. The interaction reveals that children observe shapes, dimensions and also the proportionality between the beings represented.

The way children interact with each other, with the exemplar and with the mediator constitutes a unique moment. The diversity of elements exposed by the visuality of the narrative triggers perceptions, in which the children, together with the mediator and the book, explore hypotheses, research, explain and argue. Even though, in the shared reading, the constituent elements of the narrative structure have not been explicitly defined, the subjects recognized the characters, scenarios, notions of time and space.

Indeed, we reiterate the importance of the mediator's perception and action regarding the children's positions. Regarding the mediated reading in the age group in which this study is intended, Soares and Paiva (2014, p. 15, our translation) point out that “[...] it is worth betting on a more complicit and closer relationship, in which the mediator also listens to the manifestations - words or gestures – of children [...]”. In fact, this proximity through the

mediator's attentive and supportive listening increases the bond in the interaction, raising spontaneity and encouraging the young child to try new learning. In summary, child readers manifested curiosity, spontaneity and interaction in reading, so that the situation experienced implied an adult's opening to deal with the new, what was not foreseen.

Composition of the visual narrative through the eyes of infant readers

In the shared reading of the book, we observe the involvement that the narrative provides to the reader. In a dynamic and detailed way, the actions of the characters and the constitution of the setting form and reveal the plot. Whether by natural elements or by the action and expression of the characters, it is possible to identify the sequence of the story.

The reading of the work began before opening the book. Cover and back cover of the copy are considered, as they contain important elements in the construction of the story. For this reason, at the beginning of the shared reading, the mediator invites the children to look at the cover and the back cover, when they anticipate aspects of the story.

The researcher called out: *“Let's start by looking at the cover. What is it about this cover that seems to be related to the title? What do you think?”*. At that moment, Aquarela took the book from the researcher and began listing the characters illustrated on the back cover: *“There's a rooster, rabbit, bear and... (turns the book to look at the cover) and the fox with the chicken”*. Colleagues indicated the presence of the fox.

The fact reveals that, due to the visual appearance of the cover and fourth, the children point out what most caught their attention, in this case, the characters. Initially, children readers identify the whole, and then stick to details and describe actions, inspired by previous experiences that made it possible to recognize the animals present in the narrative.

Following the reading, on pages 1 and 2, the children point out that the characters were eating, and the mediator specifies: *“They were eating, but were they having dinner?”*. The question prompts you to think about temporal elements, that is, what clues are present in the figures that demarcate at what time of day the initial situation takes place? Immediately, Aquarela replies that they were having dinner, and the mediator questions: *“Do you think they were having dinner? We have dinner at night, right?”*. Giz de Cera corrects: *“The characters were having lunch”*.

Asked if it was day or night, the children say it was day, because it has the sun. However, the sun does not appear explicitly, so the mediator problematizes: *“Where is the sun?”*, Pincel answers: *“The sun is hidden”*, and Aquarela complements: *“Like the fox”*.

Perhaps, at that moment, the response expected by the mediator would be that they were having coffee, since, in the opening scene, the characters yawn, open the window, suggesting waking up; then the morning meal. The observations culminate in the inference about the time of day. The colors, lighter shades of green, indicate the dawn, even if the sun is not explicit on the page.

After the children identify the setting, the 'forest', we ask them to compare the images on pages 3 and 4 with those on pages 5 and 6, where the setting is practically the same (the bushes), but there are subtleties in the characters' expressions and in changing the color tone, indicating the passage of time and thematic progression, expressed by the action of animals. The children's interaction with the book reveals singularities, as we can see in the following dialogue:

Pincel – *And there is the bush!*

Researcher – *There is the bush, right? And what did you notice changed from this page here (showing pages 3 and 4) to this page here (pages 5 and 6)?*

Giz de Cera – *they are lost.*

Researcher – *But what happened?*

Aquarela – *The rabbit told them to go fast to get the chicken that the fox took. (our translation)*

The movement of flipping through the pages and returning to the previous ones is a primordial exercise for the understanding of the narrative. The reader has the possibility of going forward or backward through the pages, in order to observe elements that caught his attention, or else, identify situations that could have gone unnoticed.

The characters' actions, illustrated in detail in the expressions, are observed by the children. When reporting the rabbit's performance, Aquarela deduces that he "*said*" the other companions to go faster. In the image, the rabbit is shown pulling the bear by the arm, as if encouraging him to continue the chase. They conclude that the animals got tired, but, on the previous page, they showed '*strength*'. Again, the expression of willingness in the race to rescue the chicken demonstrates the characters' strength and determination.

The time of the story is observed by children more by the action of animals than by nuances of color. Again, they perceive beings and their actions. Then the subtleties that surround them. This ability develops as children capture, for example, chromatic variations and their contrasts.

Motivated by the mediator's inquiries, the students described the night by visualizing the moon and stars in the sky and pointing out such elements in the narrative scenes. They expressed themselves with joy, recognizing natural elements that identified the time of day.

For this, again, they used the movement of flipping through the copy, advancing and retreating. Reading translates into a back-and-forth action.

Night and day are constantly explored in the narrative, signaling the passage of time. In scenes where darker tones and natural elements, characteristic of the night, appear, the children report that the animals are sleeping because they are tired. However, when the sun rises, they show that it has 'dawn' and they [the animals] are strong, that is, they have rested.

In the course of shared reading, the scenarios were perceived by readers. The children report when the characters reach the beach and still infer that 'dawn'. The perception happens because, on the previous page, a scene composed in two pages, there are: natural elements (moon, stars); action of the characters (fox and hen sleep) and the darker tones signal nightfall. So, on the next page, the scene is also double-layered, but the predominant color is yellow, the sun appears, explicitly, and all the characters are running.

It is clear to the reader that it has dawned, as we observe in the interaction that follows:

Giz de Cera – *he was running away on the beach.*

Researcher – *What happened again?*

Giz de Cera – *Dawn.*

Researcher – *Dawn, look at the sun. And where are they?*

Aquarela and Giz de Cera – *On the beach.* (our translation)

Again, the children identify the change of scenery as the denouement begins. This time, the setting is not outside, but inside the fox's house. The reader comes to this conclusion, because on the previous page you can observe the outside of the house, where bear, rabbit and rooster peek at the hen and fox through the window. Motivated by the visuality of the narrative, the children clearly report their understanding, especially regarding the performance of the characters, in line with the outcome of the story.

Quadrants, some closed and others open, with a yellowish background, appear only on pages 21 and 22. Observing the sequence of the quadrants, from left to right, and the expression of the characters helps in understanding the outcome of the story. Once again, the children translated their impressions of the plot into words. The dialogue synthesizes the subjects' perception at the end of the reading.

Researcher – *They entered the fox's house. And what were they doing in there?*

Aquarela – *They were going to get the chicken. And they were bad (pause), with the fox.*

Researcher – *And? What conclusion did they reach?*

Aquarela – *The chicken told them: She's just my friend. And they were their friends too (pointing to the bear, rabbit and rooster).*

Researcher – *And the rooster did what?*

Giz de Cera – *The rooster got mad*.
Aquarela – *No. The rooster died*. (our translation)

The sequence of the narrative culminated in a dialogue in which children show their understanding of the narrative, making use of perceived details, colors, natural elements, actions, expressions, scenarios, characters. Even if not expressed through speech, but through gesture, they produced meanings for the images of the copy. It is worth highlighting the divergence of two children about the outcome of the story, a possible aspect in the understanding of the literary text, which comes with an open ending to be constituted from the experiences of each reader.

Child readers, in the shared reading, observed, identified and reported situations that explain the understanding of the narrative based on the characters and their actions. They perceived the setting and its changes, according to the plot dynamics, as well as temporality data, that is, the passage of time constructed by the nuances of colors and the representation of natural elements, sometimes explicit in the images such as sun and moon, sometimes implicit.

Final considerations

What aspects should be considered in teacher mediation situations with 4-year-old children? What elements would be prioritized in the mediation of a literary work made up of images? These questions guided the empirical research on visual narrative reading.

In reading the visual text of the chosen copy, we observed the perception of boys and girls about various images. The observation of each page brings up the children's comments, most of the time, motivated by the mediator's provocations. The mediator perceives the subtleties of the interlocutors' experiences and welcomes them, helping them to 'see'.

Despite the clarity about the role of reading mediation, we understand that this is part of the interaction, which is greater. While the mediator fulfills his role of contributing to effecting collective reading, he is also interacting with the book and with readers. In the same way, students interact with the work, with their colleagues and with the mediator.

In mediating the shared reading of the visual narrative, the mediator does not assume the role of narrator of the story. If so, the reading will be guided by the teacher's impressions and not by the book's potential or the child readers' repertoire, so that the reception by the children will tend to be passive, consequently, with a restricted survey of hypotheses and construction of felt by beginning readers. The (child) reader is a co-author of the text, so that

the teaching action would create conditions for (children's) reading to be an exercise in authorship.

As for the repercussion of the work for the research participants, we point out that in the reading session after the one analyzed here, at the time of reception, when sitting on a "circle", Giz de Cera asks: "*Where is the book 'Ladrão de galinha'?*" and the researcher answers: "*Today the book 'Ladrão de galinha' was in the library, I brought another one*". The fact that the child remembers the title, at the beginning of the conversation, refers to the importance of providing situations of encounter with literature, with handling of the book object, from an early age. Probably, the reading of the cited copy allowed relevant experiences for the child, to the point of indicating it at the next meeting. The mediator's answer did not leave the question unanswered, much less enunciate a monosyllable "no". It brought up another reading experience, the existence of libraries as a place where we can find books, and also introduced new information, access to another work.

In the narrative as a whole, we understand that visuality (constructed in spatiality) has gaps that are filled by the readers' experiences and that reading the book begins before opening the copy. In the case in point, hypotheses about the story were elaborated from the observation of the cover and the back cover. Regarding the structural elements of the narrative, the absence of the word requires the reader to construct, for example, the temporality and spatiality of the plot through the figures. Through the questions, the mediator problematizes and rehearses possible ways of reading, equipping students to act autonomously when reading other literary works.

In summary, when reading the visual narrative, in a collective environment, the child reads the images based on their experiences and knowledge of the world, but their performance is expanded and potentialized in the interaction with the other (colleagues and teacher). In the situation experienced, returning to the epigraph of this article, the children place themselves in relation to the others in the enunciative situation created. Through language, bridges are built, and the meaning of the text and the subjects is being drawn, gradually materializing. The reading, within the scope of this research, is done by the movement of advance and retreat in the copy as well as by the provocation of the other (teacher or colleague) about the direction of the narrative. In other words, reading with young children is a solidary experience.

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How to reference this article

LORENZET, F. L.; RAMOS, F. B.; SOUZA, R. J. Visual narrative: reading mediation in early childhood education. **Revista Ibero-Americana de Estudos em Educação**, Araraquara, v. 16, n. 4, p. 2600-2619, Oct./Dec. 2021. e-ISSN: 1982-5587. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21723/riaee.v16i4.13624>

Submitted: 11/07/2021

Required revisions: 09/08/2021

Approved: 10/09/2021

Published: 21/10/2021