

LITERACY AND PLAYFUL MEDIATION: A STUDY BASED ON THE
HISTORICAL-CULTURAL THEORY

*ALFABETIZAÇÃO E MEDIAÇÃO LÚDICA: UM ESTUDO A PARTIR DA TEORIA
HISTÓRICO-CULTURAL*

*ALFABETIZACIÓN Y MEDIACIÓN LÚDICA: UN ESTUDIO BASADO EN LA TEORÍA
HISTÓRICO-CULTURAL*



Fábia Daniela Schneider LUMERTZ¹
e-mail: fabia.psicopedagoga@gmail.com



Lisiane Machado de OLIVEIRA-MENEGOTTO²
e-mail: lisianeoliveira @feevale.br

How to reference this paper:

LUMERTZ, F. D. S.; OLIVEIRA-MENEGOTTO, L. M. Literacy and playful mediation: A study based on the historical-cultural theory. **Revista Ibero-Americana de Estudos em Educação**, Araraquara, v. 18, n. 00, e023069, 2023. e-ISSN: 1982-5587. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21723/riaee.v18iesp.1.17528>



| Submitted: 22/03/2023
| Revisions required: 15/05/2023
| Approved: 29/07/2023
| Published: 19/09/2023

Editor: Prof. Dr. José Luís Bizelli
Deputy Executive Editor: Prof. Dr. José Anderson Santos Cruz

¹ Feevale University (Feevale), Novo Hamburgo – RS – Brazil. PhD student in Cultural Diversity and Social Inclusion (Feevale).

² Feevale University (Feevale), Novo Hamburgo – RS – Brazil. Professor of the graduate program in Cultural Diversity and Social Inclusion (Feevale). PhD in Psychology (UFRGS).

ABSTRACT: The article presents part of a research about the literacy process of children in the third year of elementary school. Based on the Historical-Cultural Theory, it aims to describe and discuss the impact of a psychopedagogical intervention through playful mediation in the literacy process, as well as to reflect on playing and interests in this phase of child development. This is a qualitative study involving two third-year students from a public school in the metropolitan region of Porto Alegre, RS. The survey took place in the second half of 2020, the period of the Covid-19 pandemic. The data were constructed in 10 psychopedagogical sessions with each student, predominantly using a playful and dialogic methodology. In analyzing the data, it was found that the students were moving between the phase whose main activity is playing and the phase whose main activity is studying. In addition, they understood the phoneme-grapheme system and the social use of writing.

KEYWORDS: Literacy. Historical-cultural theory. Psychopedagogical intervention. Mediation. To play.

RESUMO: O artigo apresenta parte de uma pesquisa acerca do processo de alfabetização de crianças de terceiro ano do ensino fundamental. Embasada na Teoria Histórico-Cultural, objetiva descrever e discutir a repercussão de uma intervenção psicopedagógica por mediação lúdica no processo de alfabetização, bem como refletir sobre o brincar e interesses nesta fase do desenvolvimento infantil. Trata-se de estudo qualitativo do qual participaram dois alunos de terceiro ano de uma escola pública da região metropolitana de Porto Alegre, RS. A pesquisa ocorreu no segundo semestre de 2020, período da pandemia de Covid-19. Os dados foram construídos em 10 sessões psicopedagógicas com cada aluno, utilizando predominantemente metodologia lúdica e dialogada. Na análise dos dados constatou-se que os alunos estavam transitando entre a fase cuja atividade principal é o brincar e a fase cuja atividade principal são os estudos. Além disso, entendiam o sistema fonema-grafema e o uso social da escrita.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Alfabetização. Teoria histórico-cultural. Intervenção psicopedagógica. Mediação. Brincar.

RESUMEN: El artículo presenta parte de una investigación sobre el proceso de lectoescritura de niños del tercer año de la enseñanza básica. Con base en la Teoría Histórico-Cultural, tiene como objetivo describir y discutir el impacto de una intervención psicopedagógica a través de la mediación lúdica en el proceso de alfabetización, así como reflexionar sobre el juego y los intereses en esta fase del desarrollo infantil. Se trata de un estudio cualitativo en el que participaron dos estudiantes de tercer año de una escuela pública de la región metropolitana de Porto Alegre, RS. La encuesta tuvo lugar en la segunda mitad de 2020, el período de la pandemia de Covid-19. Los datos fueron construidos en 10 sesiones psicopedagógicas con cada alumno, utilizando predominantemente una metodología lúdica y dialógica. Al analizar los datos, se encontró que los estudiantes se estaban moviendo entre la fase cuya actividad principal es jugar y la fase cuya actividad principal es estudiar. Además, comprendieron el sistema fonema-grafema y el uso social de la escritura.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Alfabetización. Teoría histórico-cultural. Intervención psicopedagógica. Mediación. Jugar.

Introduction

The alphabetizing process is fundamental for the development and autonomy of subjects in literate cultures, such as ours. Studies in the field of neuroscience place the literacy process as a brain remodeling factor, such is its importance in terms of psychic development, according to Dehaene (2012), who also states that a fully literate individual is capable of unimaginable learning for non-literate subjects. In the same way, Vygotsky (2001) points out that literacy begins at an age when the child still does not have all the functions that ensure written language and that is exactly why learning to write leads to the development of them, entitled higher psychic functions, which is in line with what neuroscience is currently stating.

Bearing in mind that the phase immediately prior to entering the study phase is that of pretend play, and that one phase constitutes the basis for the subsequent one (ELKONIN, 1960, 1987; LEONTIEV, 2014), playing is placed closely linked to children's literacy. Vigotski (2001) proposes children's play as an imaginary situation on which the child builds his learning through the relationship between thought and reality, because, when acting on objects, he structures his time and space, develops notions of causality, constructs representations and arrives at logic.

Thus, this article presents an excerpt from a master's thesis research (LUMERTZ, 2021) that sought to answer the following question: what are the repercussions of a psychopedagogical intervention through playful mediation in the literacy process of children in the third year of elementary school? Aiming, therefore, to describe and discuss a psychopedagogical intervention through playful mediation in the literacy process, as well as to reflect on playing and interests in this phase of child development. This master's research was carried out in the second half of 2020, a period of social isolation due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Participants were in the third year of elementary school at a public school in the metropolitan region of Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul state.

The research is based on the Historical-Cultural Theory of human psychic development, as it presents assumptions that contribute to the understanding of the appropriation of writing as a human cultural event, an instrument of humanization, not innate, and that needs the mediation of another human being so that your learning takes place. Still, the study starts with playing as the foundation of the literacy period and focuses on a reflection: "what are the interests of children in the literacy process and how to think about them in this learning process?"

Playing and its implications for learning

Playing is always the first choice of activity for any child (LEONTIEV, 1978). It is through actions, doing, thinking and playing that children build their knowledge and develop their psychic structures, thus acquiring the conditions to situate themselves and relate to the world around them. The taste for playing takes the child to levels of understanding and construction of knowledge that would be unattainable without such activity.

Vigotski (2001) states that playing raises the child to the status of human, as it provides experiences that help them to appropriate the cultural goods produced by humanity, helping them to develop integrally, in the cognitive, affective and motor dimensions. Thus, it is possible to understand playing as the initial form that human beings use to learn, being essential for child development and for all learning after childhood.

Playing make-believe or role-playing is the phase immediately preceding the phase whose main activity is studying (ELKONIN, 1960, 1987). It is constituted when the child, already aware of the shapes and functions of objects, plays in order to modify their functions and determine roles for objects and play partners. By using the imagination in these games, the child improves in playing and develops the symbolic function, fundamental for the acquisition of written language (ELKONIN, 1987; LEONTIEV, 2014).

Symbolic playing advances the child mentally in relation to what he is not yet able to do due to his condition, that is, playing the child can drive a car, can be a teacher, a doctor, can make his own food... Thus, constructs superior psychological functions, typical of human beings, mediated by symbols that encompass thought and its complex relationships with language structures, with learning and with influences external to the individual, articulating sociocultural development in the subject's historical process. Examples of higher psychic functions are action planning, imagination, focused attention and intentional memory (VIGOTSKI, 2000).

Therefore, knowing that the literacy process is the beginning of formal or school learning, the gateway to the literate world, marked by the appropriation of writing, symbolic play can be a facilitator, as pointed out by Martins and Marsiglia (2015).

Alphabetizing and Literacy: Learning and Development

In the alphabetizing process, writing represents the form of expression that materializes speech, but not only that, it is a fundamental instrument of knowledge, science, information and literature, among other social spheres of human activity (VIGOTSKI, 2000). For Vigotski (2000), writing, once developed, becomes autonomous in relation to speech and starts to be exercised independently of spoken language, a sign that, then, it was constituted as a superior psychic function.

Literacy deals with the social function of writing, its use as its own language, (VIGOTSKI, 2000; SOARES, 2003). Following Soares (2003), we assume that literacy is the set of behaviors and practices of using the writing system in social situations in which writing and reading are used, in culturally and historically contextualized social experiences.

In line with neuroscience, it is known that alphabetizing develops brain regions that did not exist before (DEHAENE, 2012), unlike speech, which already has a brain region developed evolutionarily and suitable for this function, once the child has contact with the spoken language of your cultural group.

Thus, as a competence culturally developed, alphabetizing and literacy require formal school teaching and mediation to be acquired. Vigotski (2000), Luria (1988) and Soares (2003) converge to the idea that alphabetizing is not a mechanical process of encoding and decoding graphemes and phonemes, but that this mechanical process is the beginning of alphabetizing. However, they point out that its social function, alphabetizing has the status of its own language and is what makes literacy so relevant in literate societies.

Vigotski (1997, 2000) postulates that children, immersed in their cultural environment and literate society, develop assumptions about writing precisely because of the experience they have in their group, because of the use that is made of writing and its characteristics. Thus, the child conceives notions about writing before schooling, but will need formal education in order to systematize alphabetizing and literacy. In this sense, Luria (1988) corroborates that writing is a superior psychological function that is carried out, culturally, by mediation, and that requires previous knowledge acquired by the child in their social interactions and mediations of the use of reading and writing in the cultural environment in the which it is inserted, depending then on its particular social situation of development and experiences (VIGOTSKI, 1997).

In this context, this work investigates how psychopedagogical interventions through ludic mediation can have repercussions on the literacy of third grade children in the alphabetizing process.

Method

The research participants were two students from the same class of the third year of elementary school in a public school in the metropolitan region of Porto Alegre, RS. Both were 9 years old. 10 psychopedagogical sessions were held with each one, individually, in the second half of 2020, during the Covid-19 pandemic. Thus, all research was done virtually, with children in their home environments and during remote classes. Both children did not participate in the online classes offered by the school, they only carried out the activities that the teacher sent in printed form by their parents on a weekly basis. The sessions with the students were recorded and later transcribed for analysis.

The students' participation in the research was authorized by their parents through a Free and Informed Consent Form. The children agreed to participate in the research and in order to protect their identities, they will be called by the fictitious names Lucas and Pedro. Ethical precepts for research with humans were followed according to Resolution 510/2016 of the National Health Council. The research was approved by the Research Ethics Committee (CEP) of Feevale University under opinion number 3,552,180.

The study is characterized as qualitative, descriptive and interpretive. It is a case study (YIN, 2001) whose data construction was carried out during psychopedagogical sessions with each student. The selection of participants was based on stratification (LAVILLE; DIONNE, 1999). Thus, when contacting the school and presenting the research, the director appointed a third-year teacher and she recommended two of her students who, according to her, were not yet literate.

In the psychopedagogical sessions with the children, conversations and activities were carried out in order to understand and intervene in their writing and reading processes, interests and way of playing. For Luria (1988) the child's activity must be linked to their interests. In the same sense, Leontiev (1978, 2014) postulates that activities must satisfy the subject's needs in relation to the world, and, therefore, the activity is linked to the psyche, as it involves emotions and feelings and is linked to its objective. When in activity, what moves the child is a system of motives, permeated by emotions and feelings, which make him want to perform the activity

to satisfy his need. Thus, there is a relationship between affection and cognition in child development (MELLO, 2011). For Vigotski (2000) the child must be the protagonist of his own learning and children's activity must be the pillar of formal education. Thus, the interventions were designed to meet the tastes and preferences of each student, in a naturalistic way, since each child was in their own home and had access to their toys and instruments for daily use.

Based on the interests of each child, every meeting was prepared in order to link with the previous one, but always with space to add the objects and intentions of the children themselves in the script. So, in a playful and dialogic way, readings and writings were proposed that were consistent with affections and zones of close development, as guided by the Historical-Cultural Theory (VIGOTSKI, 2000, 1997, 2003; LURIA, 1988, LEONTIEV, 1978, 2014; ELKONIN, 1960, 1987).

Thus, from the ten virtual meetings with each student, carried out in a dialogical way, through conversations and games, verbal narratives, manifestations during games and writings were extracted, considering their condition as a learning subject. In this way, the data were constructed for analysis and analyzed according to the premises of the Historical-Cultural Theory.

Results and discussions

LUCAS' CASE

In the first meeting, Lucas talked about his favorite programs, toys and games. He was very relaxed in his house, exposing the rooms to the researcher and talking about them, especially when he got to his own room, in which he narrated the story of each object: *"I asked for this curtain and I went to the store with my father and my mother bought it, but it was before the Coronavirus. And look at my rug! It's carts! I will show you my computer wallpaper"*.

Regarding formal learning, Lucas said he liked school and missed his classmates and teacher, but he still didn't know how to read and write. In her version, she only understood math: *"I do the activities the teacher tells me to do, but only the math ones, the others I don't like. They are boring and have no mathematics"*.

In this perspective, after realizing that Lucas was motivated by challenges, a challenge was proposed, which the student was immediately excited about. The phrase "Lucas is a beautiful boy" was placed on the researcher's computer screen. It took him a while, but he managed to read it slowly and phonetically, hesitating only on the word "beautiful". As soon

as he finished reading, he thanked him and said that he can even read some things, but they can't be too difficult.

Throughout the sessions, Lucas showed his closet and toy bags. He told how he got the toys, why he kept them where he kept them and how he used them in his favorite games. He skillfully set up games containing cities in which he placed tanks, soldiers and dinosaurs on the same line, saying that they would defend the city from an alien invasion, so that no one there would be attacked and die. He played collaboratively with the researcher and, during the game, he described details of the toys and the adaptations and transformations he made in them so that they suited his imagination and desire. At the end of the games, Lucas kept everything in an organized and calm way.

I really liked showing the transformations I did on some toys:

Lucas: *This one, I put the bucket up, putting a pencil eraser underneath and making it stay fixed with this money eraser. I tied it to the window and pulled it to the bucket, to make it secure. Then I can carry whatever I want in the back that doesn't fall. Look at that green beetle! You can transport it in the bucket like a winch. And if I want to close the bucket, I put this cover that I made with cardstock paper, which is thicker, so I can make the folds and they stay fixed [...].*

Also, he spontaneously used to read when picking up a toy that had writing on it, such as stickers on carts, “Chevrolet” and “handmade toys”, for example. About “craftsmanship”, he read syllables, but explained what craftsmanship was in his own words.

The proposals for reading challenges continued throughout the research period, which became more complex, but always at a level that Lucas could handle, respecting his zone of close development and his affections, that is, the readings were always contextualized in their favorite activities and possibility of reading.

As for writing, it was worked on in the meetings so that Lucas would make small sentences to challenge the researcher to read, in the same way that she did with him. Lucas, under the guise of a joke, made an effort to write small sentences until, on the sixth date, the session was carried out by writing in the messaging application, as shown in the fragment below:

Researcher: *What are you kidding?*

Lucas: *Dinada*

Researcher: *And what did you do before we talked?*

Lucas: *I just play. A little.*

The dialogue excerpt shows that Lucas manages to communicate in writing, but lacks refinement - there are still agglutinations, phonetic writing, inappropriate use of punctuation in sentences... When we would write “de nada”, he writes “dinada”, instead of “ I played just a little”, he writes “I just played. A little”.

Throughout the meetings, Lucas made very elaborate drawings, played pretend and spelled with the researcher. In the spelling game, we used names of insects that Lucas was very fond of, so he spelled “spider”, “cricket”, “dragonfly” and “cockroach” - he spelled slowly, thinking about the sounds and their letters, but managed to complete the task.

In addition, she performed more complex readings and with less difficulty as they were presented in the consultations, such as when Lucas made a paper jet plane and showed how he makes it fly for a long time and, taking advantage of his excitement, he proposed to reading: "Lucas' plane turned out really cool". He read it quickly, lingering a little longer on just the word “cool”, pronouncing it syllabic. He thanked her and put the paper airplane to fly again, with an expression of contentment.

Theoretical-practical considerations from the Lucas Case

Lucas' narrative was linear and coherent, which is in line with Vigotski 's (2009), who states that speech and thought are interconnected and that speech organizes thought.

Lucas's preference was always to show and play with what he himself built. In this way, it was possible to observe their imagination and transformation abilities, which demonstrate refined reasoning, creativity, planning and execution capacity, all superior psychic functions. In addition, when rebuilding and transforming the carts and trucks, he spontaneously read what was written on their stickers, in addition to associating acronyms with the words, making it possible to perceive that Lucas had numerous well-developed superior psychic functions that enabled him to become literate (VIGOTSKI, 2000).

In the transformations of carts and trucks, he used different materials, usually scrap metal, such as milk cartons, empty deodorant bottles, product packaging and others, demonstrating creativity and preference for manual confections that he wanted and for which he had the ability (LEONTIEV, 2014).

The games showed that Lucas has a constituted symbolic function. It works with the imagination in a harmonious way, placing roles in inanimate toys, giving functions to these toys, so that it assembles a coherent story with objectives from its own imagination

(VIGOTSKI, 2001). Thus, it can be observed that one of the prerequisites for alphabetizing is well constituted (ELKONIN, 1987; LEONTIEV, 2014).

The drawings produced in the meetings were compatible with their preferences, such as carts and trucks, and were always very detailed. It is known that drawings are part of the literacy process, as they are forms prior to alphabetic writing, which use a symbology of representation for what is not concretely stated (VIGOTSKI, 2000). Thus, again, it was possible to perceive Lucas' psychic development and his condition for alphabetizing per se. His drawings followed an affective motivation and he showed the ability to copy according to a model, even with great detail. It was also observed that Lucas knew the function of writing and how to use it to achieve a purpose he wanted, thus using writing as a language and with a social function (VIGOTSKI, 2000; SOARES, 2003).

He showed himself capable of looking at his environment, planning what he wanted to do and looking for the elements to carry out his idea. In addition, he was able to properly read and understand everything that was included in his purpose. Thus, it was perceived that the development of superior psychic functions was occurring in a fluid way and that their zone of proximal development and preferences could be fundamental clues for a methodological change in their literacy process, in order to optimize it.

Based on the Vygotskian concept of the zone of close development, which says that the functions in the maturation process can be the object of significant interventions for child development (VIGOTSKI, 2003), and considering that during the research the various functions were evident that Lucas had already developed and many others that were in the process of being developed, promoting learning taking advantage of these characteristics can be a milestone in their literacy process and consequent development. Lucas presented functions such as memory, attention, imagination, language, logical thinking, behavior control, creativity, action planning (VIGOTSKI, 2000) very well developed, providing the most diverse learning, including full literacy.

It was possible to extract from the analyzes of the sessions with Lucas that he has a predilection for methodologies that privilege movement, creativity, concentration and narrative, so, possibly, his learning would be better if it was built in this perspective. Thus, working with their close development and their preferences can access their affections and accelerate or optimize their learning and consequent development (LEONTIEV, 1978).

Lucas's case leads to a reflection on the ways of teaching, seeking in the interests of the child and in his zone of real and close development the instruments for such a practice. Literacy

using playing as an instrument can be an option to be considered, since in this literacy period the child is transiting between the basic activity of playing and the basic activity of studying (ELKONIN, 1960), that is, there is a period of interphases at this moment in the child's life, in which the study phase is structured from the playing phase (ELKONIN, 1960, 1987; VIGOTSKI, 2000). In this way, we can extract from the analysis of Lucas's case that possibly the union of these two elements, playing and formal learning, or learning through play, can be powerful.

Working, therefore, in order to propose games and challenges, offering possibilities to actively build learning can be a healthy way of working formal education with the student from intentional mediations, which act as an intermediary in the child's relationship with learning (LEONTIEV, 2014).

PEDRO'S CASE

We started the meetings dealing with Pedro's tastes and preferences and, despite his slow and low-pitched speech, he soon got excited and tried to talk about his games with his brother:

Pedro: [...] we played with modeling clay. [...] This is one of those old phones, check it out, there's even a place to put coins! This is a truck! [...] It's just that we put a "T" to look like it's a discharge pipe on the back! Look! It turned out the same!

Then, he said that they were also playing at making toys out of scrap metal, due to a school activity requested by the teacher:

Pedro: This is a cart. I made it with soda cans and pet bottle caps. [...] my brother and I punctured the can with a nail and passed a string until it crossed to the other side. Then we pierced the caps and put the same string and then we tied a knot so it wouldn't come loose!

Following this relaxed perspective of talking about the games, the researcher asked if Pedro liked to play challenges. He nodded and the sentence "Pedro is beautiful" (*Pedro é bonito*, in Portuguese) was proposed. The word "beautiful" was read syllabically by him, but he understood what he read, because, right after reading it, he thanked it.

Pedro's interest in toys and games was explicit in all consultations, as well as his creativity and ability to make:

Pedro: *They're here. I'll show you the toys we've made since the last time I showed you. The teacher had asked us to make about 20 toys, but I don't think I'll be able to make that many. That day I had made two, me and the brother, now we made three more. [...] I think we made 5 toys in all, right?*

The toys were a little truck, a telephone and a billboard. All very elaborate, with details and well-made. Pedro narrated in detail how the toys were made in a very lively way, despite hesitating whenever he started a new speech.

Pedro was also interested in music. He knew how to play "Happy Birthday" on his uncle's keyboard and offered to show his skill to the researcher. Taking advantage of the episode, a reading was proposed for him: "Pedro's music is great". He syllabically read the word "music" and the word "great", and, again, he understood what he read, as he thanked him immediately after reading it and said that he would improve more, because so far, he only knew how to play "Happy Birthday".

During the consultations, Pedro's school activities were also discussed, since he liked to show that he helped his brother, who was in the first year, to carry out his chores. About his own school tasks, Pedro narrated that they were very difficult and that he could not do them. Thus, the subject was treated in the sessions, but indirectly, based on games that involved his reading and writing skills, such as initial letter games and spelling, but always within a possible spectrum for Pedro, his development zone so that he could realize his own potential.

In games with initial letters, Pedro always did very well, as well as in spelling words with simple syllables, such as "gato", "pato", "sapato" and others with similar formation. As Pedro got used to these games, the level of difficulty of the words increased and the researcher helped him, when necessary, which Pedro happily adhered to, thus starting to work in his zone of close development.

As the consultations progressed, Pedro offered to show the researcher his own school activities. One of the activities in question was to complete the words with one letter or another, "P/B - ___ astel; C/G - a ___ ora ..." and so on. Pedro said that this exercise wasn't so difficult, but that he hadn't started doing the other activities yet. The researcher then proposed that he read the words of this activity, which he immediately started, but speaking softly:

Pedro: PAS__TE__L; A__GO__RA; FU__MA__ÇA;

PI__N__TU__RA; A__PI__TO; GA__RA__GE__MMMM;
A__VENNNN__TALLLL; DI__TA__DO; CA__BE__ÇA;
MI__NHO__CA; FE__RRRR__MENNNN__TO;
CA__NU__DI__ (can't finish the "NHO").

The reading above was done in a syllabic way, but Pedro was able to read all the words, with the exception of the syllable “nho, from “canudinho” (small straw).

Playing storytelling with a telephone made of scrap metal by Pedro was one of the games he played and, based on these stories, the importance of communication was discussed. In this plot, Pedro talked about the tutorials and came to the conclusion that he makes a very good milk with Nescau, the best in his family, and that he could make a tutorial about it, to which he proceeded to write an essay:

Pedro: *Today I'm going to teach you how to make a very tasty Nescauzinho! It's like this, first you pour the milk up to here (it shows a certain level in the glass, like two thirds). Then you put two spoons of Nescau (shows the spoon of Nescau). Then you stir well with the same spoon (stir well). And then a very tasty Nescau is ready. Now just drink!*

He lifted his glass of Nescau and took a sip. Afterwards, he gave the glass to his brother, who drank the rest. He looked at the researcher in order to know her reaction. When he was praised, he was visibly satisfied and said he would record the tutorial then.

The video was recorded on his cell phone and his brother helped him with this part. Afterwards, we talked about the importance of having written tutorials as well, because then the person could have the possibility of understanding through the video or reading the tutorial, which would increase the chance that he would learn to make Nescau the way Pedro taught.

He nodded, but said “*I don't know if I can do it*”, to which the importance of trying and going slowly was reaffirmed, as he had the capacity and the researcher would be with him in this endeavor. He agreed and went to get his school supplies.

Pedro started a writing outline. He wrote: “COMO FASE NECAU”. He was speaking the words syllable and writing them as he pronounced the syllables.

He looked at the paper and began to speak in a low voice: “*two spoons of Nescau*”, and began to write: “DUAS COLER DE NESCAU”. This time, he spelled Nescau correctly. It took a long time, but it just forgot the “h” in “colher” (spoon). He looked at the researcher waiting for affirmation and, to which he was praised, he continued. Clearly, the writing did not make him comfortable, but he continued talking and writing: “a glass of le __ i __ ti”. He took a long time on the word “leite” (milk) and wrote it as he speaks: “LEITI”.

Finishing the written tutorial, Pedro was pleased with himself, saying that he would try to make other tutorials.

Theoretical-practical considerations based on the Pedro Case

Regarding Pedro's relationship with the school, affection and dedication were perceived, despite his insecurity about his own potential. This affection is a positive point for their learning, since learning depends on this affection, as it puts the child into activity, which triggers their psychic and human development (LEONTIEV, 1978).

In several situations, Pedro's taste for concrete things that he did manually was observed, such as building toys out of scrap metal and using the keyboard to play music for the researcher to listen to, showing affection for his own achievements and skills.

Pedro performed several short and slow readings, but was able to read and understand what he read, mastering the grapheme/phoneme system and understanding the reading. It should be noted that the proposed readings for Pedro were largely related to facts of his life and of his person, and he managed to carry them out, which suggests that the personalization of the process can help the child to recognize himself in the activity of reading and writing and favoring the process (LEONTIEV, 1978; LURIA, 1988; MELLO, 2007). Still, working with the child's own situations leads him to perceive a social function for learning, even if this perception is not conscious (LEONTIEV, 2014).

For Vigotski (2000), the development of writing by the child is not natural, it is complex and occurs discontinuously, with changes and interruptions during the process. Because it is a cultural behavior, and not innate, for it to occur, it needs the interaction between culture and organic development, in addition to the mediation of another human being able to do so, which, in the context of this research, was interrupted due to the pandemic, which canceled the face-to-face school year and pedagogical interventions and interactions between peers and with their teachers.

Pedro's feeling of insecurity in relation to his own ability to learn was evident throughout the research, demonstrating the urgency of him being placed as the protagonist of the process, working for his own development (MELLO, 2007). As Pedro was reading, even if slowly, it became clear that he is in full development and that this is his zone of close development, needing the necessary mediations for it to become real development (LEONTIEV, 1978; VIGOTSKI, 2000). From what we were able to extract from the meetings with Pedro, a

methodology that meets his manual skills, as well as his taste for building and playing with toys, could be a way of accessing his affections, teaching him through his own skills and tastes (VIGOTSKI, 2000).

Pedro's speeches revealed an organized thought and denoted that playing make-believe was no longer his main activity, but that the study activity was not yet either, indicating a transition process between the main activities of playing games papers and studies (ELKONIN, 1960). The construction of toys by transforming scrap metal and playing with such artifacts point to a child with an established symbolic function (ELKONIN, 1987), which is a prerequisite for literacy.

The proposal to spontaneously show what he was doing in terms of school activity was in line with what Vigotski (2001) says about the role of mediation in learning. Mediation, in the Historical-Cultural Theory, is the process of articulating the child with the culture through signs, whether linguistic, visual or others, through a process that intends the child's psychic development, carried out by another human being who already has internalized what he is teaching (MARTINS; MOSER, 2012). Thus, in Pedro's consultations, it was possible to observe the role that mediation can play, whether done through conversation or through play, but always starting from his individuality and not from the mediator's interest.

Regarding reading, it was clear that Pedro mastered the grapheme/phoneme system, but lacked reading practice. He read words with simple syllables quickly and without much hesitation, but those with complex syllables he did so more slowly and phonetically, having to think about the grapheme/phoneme correspondence. This indicates that he still hasn't completely freed himself from codifications and decodings with regard to sound value, but in making the tutorial, he demonstrated that he also understands the social function of writing (SOARES, 2003; VIGOTSKI, 2000).

We extract from the meetings with Pedro which pleasant activities are significant for the child, as we could observe during the elaboration of the tutorial and, even if in the written part Pedro did not have the same enthusiasm, it was noticed that he is in the process of literacy. Writing challenges, associated with an exciting activity for the student, are in line with the premises of the Historical-Cultural Theory, in terms of working towards the affections and needs of each individual child – conducting the process through mediation, in their zone of close development (VIGOTSKI, 2003).

Final remarks

The article presents an excerpt from a master's thesis research that sought to answer the following question: what are the repercussions of a psychopedagogical intervention through playful mediation in the literacy process of children in the third year of elementary school? Aiming, therefore, to describe and discuss a psychopedagogical intervention through playful mediation in the literacy process, as well as to reflect on playing and interests in this phase of child development.

The research was built on the basis of the Historical-Cultural Theory of human psychic development, and, in pursuit of the objective, we built methodology based on Vygotskian theory, especially in its concepts of development zones, development phases, superior psychic functions and mediation.

Thus, at the end of the consultations carried out during the research, compared to the beginning of them, the students were reading better and writing spontaneously, even if they lacked refinement. It was also possible to infer from the research that, in both cases, they understood reading and knew the social function of writing, in addition to having the superior psychic functions necessary for learning literacy. Still, they had very specific interests and focused on playfulness, but already in transition to the phase whose main activity is studying.

Child development is a priority when thinking about humanization. Looking attentively and lovingly at children is a prerequisite for thinking about a less unequal society, with more empathy and basic living conditions for everyone. Starting from the Vygotskian sense of humanization, we know that this depends on several factors, and part of the socio-historical-cultural environment as a promoter of psychic development and not the opposite, thus privileging human relationships, social conditions, learning through mediation and the coexistence between peers, long before questions of organic maturation. In this line of thought, we are born biological beings and become human beings from the internalization of the culture of our environment, which can only be done through the mediation of another human being able and willing to do so. So, humanizing and being humanized are acts of affection that led to transformations.

In this sense of humanization, we think of the emancipation of subjects that formal education can provide. It is at school and from the learning and relationships formed in this environment that much of what we are is built. Thus, thinking about the school teaching and learning processes from an approach that aims at teaching that is active in each child's close

development zone and that uses playing and children's affections as the basis of early childhood education, is especially important. In the literacy period, when the child is transitioning between two periods of development, the main activity of playing and the main activity of studying, offering reading and writing learning based on play and the individual interests of each student can be a founding factor for a pleasant and successful phase of main activity of studies.

Trying to answer the questions that fostered the research and responding from what we inferred from the research itself, we think that structuring teaching from a consistent bond between the teacher and each student and a closer and more sensitive relationship can make all the difference for the subjects' learning. In this article, it was evidenced that the bond and the genuine interest in the child can be a learning lever, as well as the realization of mediations that start from the child's interest and what he is capable of doing by himself and what he is already capable of do with help, that is, working in their zones of real and proximate development.

We also reflect on the role of mediation in the school teaching process. How can this process actually be effective without knowing the peculiarities of each student? And, since in the literacy period children are in transition between the main activity of playing and the main activity of studying, and, knowing that the previous activity is the basis of the subsequent one, how can we teach without involving ludicity in the process? Furthermore, it is essential to reflect on mediation as an articulator between the real development and the close development of the child. Therefore, it is urgent to put the spotlight on the mediation process and on its investment in the imminent development zone of each child, based on their affections and interests, which can be known by listening to the child himself.

During the research, mediation was a fundamental and founding instrument of the interventions. Through playful and conversational mediations, the researcher was able to form bonds with the children and learn about their preferences, skills, insecurities and development zones, as well as work, based on this knowledge, also through mediation, which became an instrument of knowledge and intervention concomitantly, showing its importance in the process of helping children's learning and development.

Thus, this research indicates a real possibility of intervention in the school space and outside it, through playful mediation and listening to learners, based on Vygotskian theory, which underlies the learning and development process and, therefore, instrumentalizes the professional in his teaching practice.

In any case, we conclude that the study was valid and has research value in the field of education and child development, and can be used to help other investigations that deal with

these themes and purposes. In this sense, we end with a tone of encouragement so that other research can be conducted and can highlight reflections that have the purpose of modifying the literacy scenario in our country. As a start, we suggest that complementary studies be carried out, in order to evaluate in greater depth, the variables that can interfere in the students' literacy process, especially the issue of the teacher/students' bond, taking into account the impasses of remote teaching in school pedagogical interventions.

REFERENCES

- CONSELHO NACIONAL DE SAÚDE. **Resolução n. 510, de 07 de abril de 2016**. Trata do consentimento e do assentimento livre e esclarecido no art. 15, que também estabelece diferentes modalidades de registro, respeitando-se a maior diversidade possível e legítima de formas de interação com os participantes das pesquisas. 2016. Available at: <http://conselho.saude.gov.br/resolucoes/2016/Reso510.pdf>. Access: 10 July 2021.
- DEHAENE, S. **Os neurônios da leitura**. Porto Alegre: Penso, 2012.
- ELKONIN, D. B. Desarrollo psíquico del niño desde el nacimiento hasta el ingreso en la escuela. In: SMIRNOV, A. A. *et al.* (org.). **Psicología**. México: Grijalbo, 1960.
- ELKONIN, D. B. Problemas psicológicos del juego em la edad pré-escolar. In: DAVIDOV, V.; SHUARE, M. (org.). **La psicología evolutiva e pedagógica en la URSS** (Antologia). Moscou: Progreso, 1987.
- LAVILLE, C; DIONNE, J. **A construção do saber: manual de metodologia da pesquisa em ciências humanas**. Belo Horizonte: Editora UFMG, 1999.
- LEONTIEV, A. N. **O desenvolvimento do psiquismo**. Lisboa: Livros Horizonte, 1978.
- LEONTIEV, A. N. Os princípios psicológicos da brincadeira pré-escolar. In: VIGOTSKI, L. S.; LURIA, A. R.; LEONTIEV, A. N. **Linguagem, desenvolvimento e aprendizagem**. 13. ed. São Paulo: Ícone, 2014.
- LUMERTZ, F. D. S. **Abordagem psicopedagógica por mediação lúdica a partir do estudo de caso de duas crianças de terceiro ano em processo de alfabetização**. 2021. Dissertação (Mestrado em Diversidade Cultural e Inclusão Social) –Universidade Feevale, Novo Hamburgo, RS, 2021.
- LURIA, A. R. O desenvolvimento da escrita na criança. In: VYGOTSKY, L. S.; LURIA, A. R.; LEONTIEV, A. N. **Linguagem, desenvolvimento e aprendizagem**. São Paulo: Ícone/Edusp, 1988.
- MARTINS, L. M.; MARSIGLIA, A. C. G. **As perspectivas construtivistas e histórico-críticas sobre o desenvolvimento da escrita**. Campinas, SP: Autores Associados, 2015.

MARTINS, O. B.; MOSER, A. Conceito de mediação em Vygotsky, Leontiev e Wertsch. **Intersaberes**, [S. l.], v. 7, n. 13, p. 8-28, 2012. DOI: 10.22169/revint.v7i13.245. Available at: <https://www.revistasuninter.com/intersaberes/index.php/revista/article/view/245>. Access: 23 July 2021.

MELLO, S. A. A literatura infantil e a formação da atitude leitora nas crianças pequenas. *In*: CHAVES, M. (org.). **Práticas pedagógicas e literatura infantil**. Maringá: EdUEM, 2011. p. 41-54.

MELLO, S. A. Infância e humanização: algumas considerações na perspectiva histórico-cultural. **Perspectiva**, [S. l.], v. 25, n. 1, p. 83-102, 2007. DOI: 10.5007/%25x. Available at: <https://periodicos.ufsc.br/index.php/perspectiva/article/view/1630>. Access: 20 July 2021.

SOARES, M. B. **Letramento**: uma temática em três gêneros. 2. ed. Belo Horizonte: Autêntica, 2003.

VIGOTSKI, L. S. **Obras Escogidas**. 2. ed. Madrid: Visor, 1997.

VIGOTSKI, L. S. **Obras escogidas**: problemas del desarrollo de la psique. Madrid: Visor, 2000. t. III.

VIGOTSKI, L. S. **A construção do pensamento e da linguagem**. 2. ed. São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 2009.

VIGOTSKII, L. S. Aprendizagem e desenvolvimento intelectual na idade escolar. *In*: VIGOTSKII, L. S.; LURIA, A. R.; LEONTIEV, A. N. **Linguagem, desenvolvimento e aprendizagem**. São Paulo: Ícone, 2003. p. 103-116.

VYGOTSKY, L. S. **Obras escogidas**. Madrid: Visor, 2001. t. II.

YIN, R. K. **Estudo de caso**: planejamento e métodos. Porto Alegre: Bookman, 2001.

CRediT Author Statement

Acknowledgments: Not applicable.

Funding: Not applicable.

Conflicts of interest: There are no conflicts of interest.

Ethical approval: Opinion number 3,552,180 – Research Ethics Committee (CEP) of Feevale University.

Availability of data and materials: In the article itself.

Authors' contribution: 1st author: Fábila Daniela Schneider Lumertz – research ideation, fieldwork, data collection, analysis and interpretation of results and text writing. 2nd author: Lisiane Machado de Oliveira- Menegotto – orientation and revision of the work.

Processing and editing: Editora Ibero-Americana de Educação.
Proofreading, formatting, standardization and translation.

