

CONTINUOUS TEACHER EDUCATION: THE PERSPECTIVES OF TEACHERS IN
THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

*FORMAÇÃO CONTINUADA DOCENTE: AS PERSPECTIVAS DOS PROFESSORES
NA PANDEMIA DA COVID-19*

*FORMACIÓN CONTINUA DOCENTE: LAS PERSPECTIVAS DE LOS DOCENTES
ANTE LA PANDEMIA DEL COVID-19*



Ricardo Luiz BITTENCOURT¹
e-mail: rlb@unesp.net



Vinicius Vieira dos SANTOS²
e-mail: vdossantos009@unesp.net

How to reference this paper:

BITTENCOURT, R. L.; SANTOS, V. V. Continuous teacher education: The perspectives of teachers in the COVID-19 pandemic. **Revista Ibero-Americana de Estudos em Educação**, Araraquara, v. 19, n. 00, e024035, 2024. e-ISSN: 1982-5587. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21723/riaee.v19i00.17908>



| Submitted: 27/03/2023
| Revisions required: 16/10/2023
| Approved: 17/01/2024
| Published: 18/03/2024

Editor: Prof. Dr. José Luís Bizelli

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

¹ University of Southern Santa Catarina (UNESC), Criciúma – SC – Brazil. Doctoral degree in Education. Professor in the Graduate Program in Education (PPGE).

² University of Southern Santa Catarina (UNESC), Criciúma – SC – Brazil. Bachelor's degree in Pedagogy. Member of the Research Group on Policies, Knowledge, and Practices in Teacher Education.

ABSTRACT: Continuous education emerges as one of the fundamental elements to enhance educational processes within the school environment. Therefore, the present study focuses on the importance of continuous teacher education in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. In light of this, the guiding question of the study is: What are the contributions of constant education to the professional development of teachers in times of social distancing? To address this question, field research was conducted, inspired by the principles of the qualitative approach, involving seven teachers from a state public school located in the AMESC region. Data collection was carried out through semi-structured interviews. The analyzed data indicate that much still needs to be done for continuous education to be understood by schools, maintainers, managers, and teachers. It is necessary for the collective of educators to take ownership of their education processes in order to become subjects of the process.

KEYWORDS: Teacher education. Continuing Education. Pandemic. COVID-19.

RESUMO: *A formação continuada desponta como um dos elementos fundamentais para qualificar os processos educativos realizados no âmbito escolar. Assim, o presente estudo tematiza a importância da formação continuada docente no contexto da pandemia da COVID-19. Diante disso, considera-se como pergunta norteadora do estudo quais as contribuições da formação continuada para o desenvolvimento profissional docente em tempos de distanciamento social? Para responder ao questionamento, realizou-se uma pesquisa de campo, inspirada nos princípios da abordagem qualitativa, com sete professoras de uma escola pública estadual, situada na região da AMESC. A coleta de dados foi realizada por meio de entrevistas semiestruturadas. Os dados analisados indicam que muito ainda precisa ser feito para que a formação continuada seja compreendida por escolas, mantenedoras, gestores e professores. É preciso que o coletivo dos educadores se aproprie de seus processos formativos de modo a se tornarem sujeitos do processo.*

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *Formação de Professores. Formação Continuada. Pandemia. COVID-19.*

RESUMEN: *La educación continua surge como uno de los elementos fundamentales para cualificar los procesos educativos que se llevan a cabo en el ámbito escolar. Así, el presente estudio tematiza la importancia de la formación docente continua en el contexto de la pandemia de COVID-19. Frente a esto, se plantea la pregunta orientadora del estudio: ¿cuáles son los aportes de la educación continua al desarrollo profesional de las docentes en tiempos de distanciamento social? Para responder a la pregunta, se realizó una investigación de campo, inspirada en los principios del enfoque cualitativo, con siete docentes de una escuela pública estatal, ubicada en la región AMESC. La recolección de datos se realizó a través de entrevistas semiestruturadas. Los datos analizados indican que aún queda mucho por hacer para que la formación continua sea comprendida por los centros, los patrocinadores, los directivos y los profesores. Es necesario que el colectivo de educadores se apropie de sus procesos formativos para convertirse en sujetos del proceso.*

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Formación Docente. Formación Continua. Pandemia. COVID-19.*

Introduction

The year 2020 was marked by the onset of a war unlike any seen in the 21st century: the human battle against the Sars-CoV-2 virus, popularly known as COVID-19. Since then, many transformations have occurred worldwide, resulting in the creation of a new *modus operandi*. In Brazil, this impact was no different, imposing a restructuring of social life, and especially professional life, on a large portion of society.

Despite facing obstacles already known before the pandemic and other inequalities exacerbated by remote learning, many teachers were called upon to build new knowledge, practices, and experiences, especially in the technological field. Practices that were once "distant," such as recording or conducting remote lessons, became familiar in the daily lives of education professionals. The need for teachers to innovate in the face of the new demands imposed by the Science, Technology, and Society triad gained immense visibility. Discussions about ongoing teacher education in the pandemic context reaffirmed the importance of developing strategies to analyze, reflect, and renew pedagogical practice.

Building on this premise, Imbernón (2010) problematizes the concept of ongoing training as a mere space for technical updates that reinforces instrumental rationality. Instead, for the author, ongoing training can be seen as an opportunity for self-assessment and reflection. Therefore, it is not based on individualism, but rather on collaboration and peer discussion.

This article seeks to understand the contributions of ongoing training to the professional development of teachers in times of social distancing. Field research was conducted inspired by the assumptions of a qualitative approach, with seven educators from a state public school located in the region of the Association of Municipalities of *Extremo Sul Catarinense* (AMESC) as participants. Although the analysis perspective is very localized, it is essential to realize that much of what Brazilian teachers experienced in dealing with the effects of social distancing on teaching and learning processes is replicated nationwide, at the state, municipal, and school levels, proportionally.

The instrument for collecting information was semi-structured interviews, which were later transcribed and returned to the participants for them to recognize and validate their respective statements. The collected data were analyzed in two blocks: "Self-training and pedagogical practice," which examined the participants' statements about professional development autonomously, based on their own needs, and lastly, "Impressions on ongoing training," which analyzed how this training was organized before and during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The article is organized with a brief introduction, the methodological design, and data analysis. Subsequently, the general conclusions of the study are presented, and finally, the bibliographic references.

Methodology and Data Analysis

This study was based on research inspired by the assumptions of the qualitative approach because ongoing training, analyzed from the perspective of teachers, did not occur through the collection of quantitative data. Perceptions about ongoing training in the pandemic context were sought through interviews, as in the qualitative approach, "the meaning people give to things and their life are a special focus of the researcher's attention. In these studies, there is always an attempt to capture the 'perspective' of the participants" (Luke; André, 2013, p. 12, our translation).

Thus, seven teachers from a state public educational institution in the AMESC region were interviewed between September 9th and 23rd, 2021. The initial contact took place with the school management in person, which opened up the possibility of conducting the research and contacting the teachers who were willing to participate in the study. To address the perception of various teachers performing roles in the school, a representative sample was selected, consisting of two teachers from Elementary School (Early Years), two teachers from Elementary School (Later Years), two teachers from High School, and one teacher responsible for Specialized Educational Assistance (SEA). Subsequently, the interviewees had the opportunity to choose the day, time, and format (online or in person) of the interviews according to their convenience. After obtaining consent from the educators, they all signed a consent form, which is in the possession of the researchers.

For data collection, a semi-structured interview guide with open-ended questions was used. The interviews were recorded with a mobile device, transcribed from listening to the recordings, and returned to the educators so they could recognize and validate their respective statements. It is also worth noting that the transcription, in its entirety, resulted in a 23-page document. Based on the research objectives and theoretical frameworks used, a careful reading of the raw data was conducted, which allowed for the establishment of two axes of analysis: "Self-training and pedagogical practice" and "Impressions on ongoing training." These two axes of analysis enable us to understand the contributions of ongoing training to teacher professional development in times of social distancing.

Regarding the profile of the interviewees, the selection of teachers was as follows: Renata and Roberta represent the Early Years of Elementary School (1st to 5th grade). In turn, Janice and Janete are responsible for the Later Years of Elementary School (6th to 9th grade). Meanwhile, Laura and Luíza represent the stage of High School. Finally, Vânia represents Specialized Educational Assistance (SEA) in the Special Education modality. For ethical reasons, fictitious names will be used to preserve the real identities of the teachers.

Regarding the main education of the surveyed teachers, three have degrees in pedagogy, which is the most mentioned degree among the responses. The others differ in their backgrounds, with professionals having backgrounds in Mathematics, History, Chemistry, and Visual Arts, respectively. The teachers work in different stages and modalities in primary education. Renata and Roberta work in the Early Years of Elementary School; Janice and Janete work with classes in the Later Years of Elementary School; Laura and Luíza work with High School grades. Vânia works with Specialized Educational Assistance (SEA), the school division responsible for supporting students with disabilities. Finally, the subsequent question was about the length of their careers at the research institution.

Regarding the length of their careers, we can observe that the numbers vary between seven months and thirteen years. Laura, representing High School, has the shortest tenure. Janete, corresponding to the Later Years of Elementary School, is the teacher with the longest tenure at the research institution. Among the other respondents, career length is divided as follows: two teachers with two years of work, two teachers with three years of work, and one teacher with eight years of work.

The Pedagogy graduates work in different modalities. While Roberta and Renata work with serialized classes, within a specific age range, Vânia works with Specialized Educational Assistance (SEA), thus serving students from different stages and ages. Another significant point concerns the interviewees' years of experience. It is noted that the majority are young teachers within the researched educational institution, as the longest tenure reported among all is only thirteen years.

Self-education and Pedagogical Practice

In this section, we will address the educators' views on self-education during the COVID-19 pandemic in more detail, as well as some aspects related to pedagogical practice. Nowadays, various educational institutions, whether public, private, or philanthropic, promote continuing education for their teachers, either provided by the school management itself or by the maintainers. However, it is worth noting that, most of the time, these trainings still adhere to a traditional, technicist, individual, and market-oriented organization model, possessing characteristics such as:

The subordination of the profession to the production of knowledge by others; Distrust in the teacher, considering them incapable of generating pedagogical knowledge and, therefore, of generating valid pedagogical knowledge; The separation between theory and practice, where practice is considered an application of theory, without a dialectical relationship between them; Professional isolation, through the development of a methodological teaching model; The abandonment of moral, ethical, social, and political issues in education, which are forgotten and marginalized in formal knowledge; The impulse of corporatism, instead of joint work for collective improvement, and the factor of decontextualization, since solutions in practice can be applied to any educational context (Imbernón, 2010, p. 53-54, our translation).

The reflections undertaken by the author draw attention to some elements intertwined with teacher education. Initially, it emphasizes that teachers are not recognized as individuals capable of reflecting on and constructing knowledge about what they do, leading to the development of continuing education programs that ignore their needs and place a responsibility on their shoulders for everything that could be improved in education. This produces a formative rationality that distances theory and practice, content and form, making it difficult to understand the school as a collective space for professional development.

Consequently, these facts are due to processes triggered by globalization, which not only interfere in various dimensions of society but also increasingly manifest in the field of education, with practices and discourses that, according to Nóvoa (2019), ultimately hinder teacher autonomy in creating consistent and innovative practices through continuing education in schools.

It also emphasizes the harmfulness of these discourses, both for the teaching profession and for continuing education, leading to the belittlement and disqualification of teachers and paving the way for a "market of courses, events, seminars, and meetings in which various experts put on their personal show to sell teachers useless novelties about the brain and learning,

new technologies, or any other current fad" (Nóvoa, 2019, p. 11, our translation). The reflections made by the author suggest that continuing education programs can be reduced to a market logic that promises simple solutions to complex problems, such as the desire to educate individuals passing through the school system.

The centrality of continuing education lies in collectively producing spaces and times for critical reflection on educational practices, to estrange and denaturalize them. Continuing education only makes sense for teachers when they become individual and collective subjects of their formation, when they are valued and respected as a professional category. Thus, it becomes possible to rescue the intellectuality of teaching work, often threatened by formative models that emphasize practice at the expense of theory.

According to Imbernón (2010), education has at its core the development of intellectual tools that serve as facilitators for reflecting on one's teaching practice, a reflection that, in turn, results in a constant exercise of self-assessment, which serves as the basis for guiding teaching work. In this understanding, the primary objective of continuing education is to enable teachers to learn to interpret, understand, and reflect on the social and educational reality that unfolds before them in a collective, collaborative process with school management, colleagues, and the community itself. Thus, it is emphasized that the continuing education of teachers must take into account the main factor for its effective implementation: the school locus.

According to Imbernón (2010), when we talk about teacher education centered on the school, we understand that the educational institution becomes a territory that can provide the necessary means for professional development. A reorganization of the educational space happens, where formative action based on the process of action-reflection-action takes priority over other places of education. In and from the school, answers to individual and collective challenges are found.

School-based training involves all the strategies jointly employed by trainers and teachers to direct training programs so that they respond to the defined needs of the school and elevate the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom and schools (Imbernón, 2010, p. 85, our translation).

Furthermore, according to the author, "this approach is based on deliberative reflection and action research, through which teachers develop their solutions to the practical problems they encounter" (Imbernón, 2010, p. 87, our translation). Thus, it is worth mentioning that the trainer should take into account the principle that the educator has already built prior theoretical knowledge, created from their practice.

As highlighted earlier, the COVID-19 pandemic has been responsible for bringing about social reorganization and, to a large extent, professional work reorganization as well. Remote classes via technological platforms such as Google Meet or Zoom, the production of videos with explanatory content, and the use of virtual learning environments such as Google Classroom have emerged as new tools for building the educator's new pedagogical practice.

It is also worth noting that, in addition to professional development provided by educational institutions themselves, continuing education also occurred informally, i.e., on the educator's own initiative. According to the Instituto Península (2020), the research *Sentimento e percepção dos professores brasileiros nos diferentes estágios do coronavírus no Brasil*³, found that 60% of teachers set aside time in their routine activities for study and improvement.

An interesting fact about autonomous improvement, which is presented in the data analysis of this study, concerns self-formation, a component of continuing education in which the teacher, through their own needs, seeks to build new knowledge, practices, conversations, or reflections. One of the first inquiries made, from the perspective of this analytical block, relates to the resources that, in the conception of the interviewees, teachers have to renew pedagogical practice in the classroom.

In addition to the traditional chalkboard, books, and materials provided by the school, we also have technological resources. Even resources like scrap materials that students have at home can turn into great educational projects. I see that education, thus, has many possibilities in terms of resources. The schoolyard is a resource, the lawn is a resource, so we can do really cool things using almost nothing, a schoolyard and what we have at hand, for example (Renata, our translation).

Janete points out that the resources are: "*basically, textbooks and courses that we pay for ourselves.*" Luíza highlights "*short-duration courses, [...] the internet, pedagogical books that come from the PNLD [National Program of Textbooks and Teaching Materials], collections within the library.*"

In general, it is observed that both statements presented different resources for the renewal of the teacher's pedagogical practice, with a greater emphasis on textbooks and technological/digital resources. Although extension courses are mentioned, possibly referring to continuing education, it is noted that the advancement of the "commodification of education, in which training courses become outsourced and offered virtually, often with the participation

³ Sentiment and perception of Brazilian teachers at different stages of the coronavirus in Brazil.

of the private sector, bringing the logic of the market into education, with the displacement of education to the service sector" (Magalhães; Azevedo, 2015, p. 18, our translation).

The practices of commodifying education have contributed to the confusion between education and certification. Teacher education needs to be understood in a context of collective reflection on the challenges faced by teachers and administrators in educational spaces. It is necessary to problematize how we understand the processes of teacher education. It is evident that education occurs through the movement of the teachers themselves, without mentioning how the school organizes possibilities for continuing education.

The interviewees were asked about self-formation during the COVID-19 pandemic. Among the seven teachers, only Roberta reported that "*no, because we had plenty of lectures that the state offered. It was too much. Sometimes, I even felt overwhelmed by so much going on.*" Moreover, all other responses to the inquiry were positive, as represented in Janice and Vânia's statements:

[...] In this matter of self-formation, for example, I developed a problem with my arm [...] because I had to hold the phone with my left arm and write with my right. I would write and film at the same time. So, holding the phone in recordings so much created inflammation in the tendon. [...] Because of this problem, I had to find an application that I could record directly from the computer (Janice, our translation).

I did a lot of research and a lot of information about sign language teachers, mainly with interpreters who are bilingual, because I had deaf students, and I am not fluent in sign language because I am from the mixed AEE [Specialized Educational Assistance]. [...] I had to search a lot on how I was going to do these classes and adapt them to them. I played the role of a second teacher in lesson adaptation. Then I had to find out how to be a second teacher, because I had never been a second teacher before (Vânia, our translation).

An interesting fact that can be observed in both cases is the desire of teachers to seek overcoming strategies, even individually, to solve situations that are beyond their daily routine. According to Maciel (2003, p. 1, our translation), one of the characteristics of self-formation is to be "a space for the individual to invest in themselves and their education, from the moment they become aware of their needs and difficulties."

Subsequently, the surveyed teachers were asked about the possible contributions of continuing education or self-formation to their pedagogical practices. In most responses, positive results were observed, focusing on the use or effective adoption of technological resources, as pointed out by Renata when she says, "*They contributed a lot, especially for technologies and internet use. I already liked to use videos and technological resources in*

classes; sometimes, students brought their phones for research. But now I am using it even more because we know the importance of visuals for the student." Conversely, some responses showed partial or no contribution.

No. I don't think so because everything that was said that the state offered to us teachers was based on another reality that was not our school's reality in terms of internet access, materials for the students, and content. [...] They talked about, like, fantastic things, as if everyone had a nice computer and powerful internet, and everyone was attending the class [...] as if everything was one hundred percent. You sent it, they did everything right, everyone learned, and everything was beautiful and wonderful, and we know that's not the reality (Roberta, our translation).

[affirming] Wow, it contributed a lot. My self-formation contributed, because the training, even though we had, was inferior. The girls [colleagues from the institution] say [mimics], "Oh, because there was." There was. But how do you go there and install Meet on your cell phone or your computer? How do you go there and turn on the camera because, like, you wouldn't open your mouth; you'd just listen? So, after the live sessions, after the courses, you'd end up with many doubts, [mimics] "Okay, but why this? why that?" That's where you had to run after, and that's where the problem was because you didn't have anyone there by your side to assist you because here [at school], we have a huge team. You have a difficulty, you have a doubt, you run. There's the pedagogical team, there's a principal, there are other teachers, there's a team you can count on [...] and at home, there isn't (Vânia, our translation).

According to Imbernón (2010), the factor of decontextualization becomes one of the major problems for the effective implementation of continuing education, as observed in the account of the interviewee Roberta. It is noted that Vânia's account summarizes what Imbernón (2010) refers to as the application or normative model of continuing education. This model is characterized by low teacher involvement during the training, where they do not question, do not actively participate, and only observe and listen in order to "know how to do." It is understood that continuing education is produced with quality when teachers recognize themselves in the process and engage, when they perceive themselves as subjects in formation and feel valued for what they know and do.

Based on the reports presented in this analysis block, it was possible to observe the mention of extension courses as one of the resources for innovation or renewal of the educator's pedagogical practice, in a probable allusion to continuing education. Additionally, the traditional model of continuing education offered by the institution was also noted, which, according to the teachers, was inadequate and disconnected from the school reality experienced. Regarding self-directed learning, the surveyed teachers highlighted the need as a motivating element for learning and professional development.

Impressions on Continuing Education

In the Brazilian educational field, the consequence of social distancing, especially in the context of basic education, "[...] resulted in measures ranging from the suspension of classes without interaction through virtual platforms, [...] to the implementation of remote classes" (Alves, 2020, p. 351, our translation). With the issuance of Ordinance No. 343, of March 17, 2020, the Ministry of Education (MEC) authorized, on an exceptional basis, the replacement of face-to-face classes by classes via Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), as a means to ensure the continuity of the educational process (Brasil, 2020).

According to UNESCO (2020), some of the problems arose, such as the interruption of learning, the increase in dropout rates, the lack of school meals, parents' unpreparedness to assist their children in remote learning, the lack of assessment tools, and the lack of means to support children in socially vulnerable situations. Although the provisions ensured the continuity of teaching in a safe manner and technology provided feasibility, many known challenges faced by Brazilian education were exacerbated. Others, previously concealed (such as digital exclusion), were revealed, especially in socially marginalized classes.

It can be argued that teachers' pedagogical practices during the pandemic, in a way, resembled the challenge of solving a "Rubik's Cube." Not only because it was entirely complicated to find the correct combination, but also because it showed that being an educator is not about settling for the scrambled cube, but rather about spinning it, turning it, spinning it again, engaging in dialogue, and asking for help from the colleague next to you who managed to solve it, until the colors are aligned in the best way possible. This also speaks volumes about the essence of continuous teacher education, which at its core involves restlessness and collaborative action, being the space where all educators are confronted with their respective cubes (pedagogical practice), so that collectively, through conversations and exchanges of experiences, they can find a resolution to individual challenges.

When asked, some of the surveyed teachers responded that the primary purpose of continuing education is the updating and learning new knowledge by the teacher.

The goal is to get the teacher out of the 'parking lot' so that the teacher doesn't become complacent. There are teachers who sometimes graduate and think they have graduated; they already know, and only the textbook is enough. And continuing education, [...] it brings innovations, it brings knowledge, because it is based on studies from other scholars, where we are always learning new things, things we don't know (Luíza, our translation).

I see continuing education as a way for us to stay updated, to be encouraged to work, because it's really complicated nowadays to deal with everyone and everything. And continuing education, I see it as for this purpose, to keep us updated, to encourage, to give new ideas, to stimulate (Roberta, our translation).

Continuing education is seen not as a space, but as a tool responsible for providing "updates." According to Imbernón (2010, p. 72, our translation), "[...] we cannot understand education only as the scientific, pedagogical, and cultural updating of the teacher, but above all as the discovery of theory to organize it, ground it, revise it, and fight it, if necessary."

Renata also highlights that *"continuing education is also an exchange of experiences among teachers, what worked well, what was applied with your class that I can adapt and bring to mine. Sometimes, a colleague's idea opens up new paths for me."* According to Imbernón (2010), the teacher's professional competence, the ultimate stage of the continuing education process, results from the dialogue established among teachers, taking into account the practice of the profession. It is understood that continuing education processes become powerful when produced collectively, in order to overcome individualistic professional practices. Sharing experiences brings people and professionals closer, creating an atmosphere of solidarity.

When asked if the educational institution (or the maintainer) conducted continuing education before the COVID-19 pandemic, only Luíza couldn't answer. The other responses were positive, as represented by Janice:

The State Department of Education, along with the [...] Foundation for Inclusive Education and Special Education [...] have always offered continuing education courses. [...] Training focused on diversity [...] on the use of educational technologies. We had Training regarding [...] education funding. [...] These are courses offered every year. The State Department offers free training courses for teachers, where they can enroll whenever they want [...] There are also pedagogical breaks. In these pedagogical breaks, [...] the school has the autonomy to choose a theme more focused on the school's needs [...].

The provision of continuing education courses does not guarantee continuity in the educational professionals' formative process, as most of the time, this training comes "ready-made," disregarding the needs of schools and their teachers. The term "pedagogical stop" stands out, which does not align with the idea of education as a movement, as continuity, or as a shared construction. Consequently, under the same focus, the researcher asked the interviewees if the institution (or maintainer) had conducted continuing education during the period of remote

learning. Once again, all responses were positive, reaffirming the character of "scientific updating," but this time contextualizing the online organization of these formations.

Last year, there was a week of training, of continuing education. In this week of continuing education, there were four topics, always different. [...] I'll take one day that was the simplest of them: it was learning how to turn on a computer because most people were looking at and doing continuing education on their cell phones. Then learning (to use) [...] Word, Google, Excel, [...] PowerPoint. So they went through all that part of Google Drive so we could use it [...] (Laura, our translation).

Basically, we talked about the COVID situation, the student, and the work at school, [...] how we would attend to this student. We also had to learn about the technological tools that were being sent to us. [...] It was difficult, quite complicated, some people had no idea about these technologies, not even the simple fact of turning on and connecting a computer [...] (Janete, our translation).

From these accounts, the training also focused on teaching apparently simple things, such as turning on a computer, which, in a way, require some knowledge. In this sense, "the increasing incorporation of science and technology into production and social processes [...] constitutes an apparent contradiction: the more tasks are simplified, the more knowledge is required of the worker and, as a result, the expansion of their education, alongside permanent processes of continuing education" (Ferreira, 2006, p. 21, our translation). Here lies the challenge of understanding that teachers' continuing education cannot be reduced solely to mastering the use of technologies, although at that moment, it was essential to promote the development of these competencies.

Later, the final question asked about how continuing education will be viewed in a post-pandemic future by teachers themselves, educational institutions, or the government. Renata responds that "*more and more, the teacher will need these moments, of conversation, of studies, of connecting with colleagues in school, of having partnerships, because partnerships within the school strengthen the work.*" Vânia considers "*that it is seen in a way, not only seen, but sought after more.*" Janice, on the other hand, makes it clear that, as a resource inherent in any profession, continuing education will always be seen as necessary, regardless of any adversities.

Continuing education has always been seen as necessary. [...] I cannot say that it [the pandemic] contributed to the new outlook on continuing education. [...]. Continuing education for teachers or any area of knowledge is necessary for any profession (Janice, our translation).

Finally, the interviewee Laura emphasizes that:

There should be more, and it should be more humanized. [...] It should be more discussed among teachers. Isn't there that time during recess when teachers talk about the students? So, there should be a day for us to talk about each student, or each class, not just the so-called class council, but so we can observe the students better, observe ourselves (Laura, our translation).

All interviewees recognized the importance of continuing education for their professional development, which the sanitary crisis caused by COVID-19 strongly emphasized. Although society as a whole and its institutions have resumed face-to-face activities, there are still a series of developments that need to be understood by education professionals.

According to Ferreira (2006), the construction of a "new citizen of the world" is underway, and from now on, quality continuing education for teachers will become increasingly essential. Looking to the future and aiming for effective and comprehensive education for students also involves considering various pieces of the puzzle called education, including the continuing education of teachers.

In this final analysis block, it was observed that continuing teacher education, according to the conceptions of most of the surveyed teachers, is intimately linked only to the scientific updating of educators. Furthermore, the traditional model of this training was also observed during the COVID-19 pandemic, which, according to the interviewees' reports, was limited to synchronous activities such as watching videos and aiming to teach the use of technological resources. Finally, the surveyed teachers expressed their positions regarding continuing education in a post-pandemic future, with the majority of the discourse aiming for a more effective, dialogic, and humanized education.

Final Remarks

This article sought to understand continuing education from the perspectives of basic education teachers amidst the COVID-19 pandemic and its contributions. The central objective of this article is not to address the repercussions of this pandemic period on the education of teachers and their students but rather to produce reflections on continuing education during the pandemic period, considering the understanding of primary education teachers from a state public school. Certainly, the current experience of teachers must indicate that the pandemic has left many gaps in students' learning processes.

Throughout this study, the organization of continuing education in the context of the pandemic, the analysis of teachers' perspectives, and the recognition of the role of continuing education in teaching practice have been expounded and discussed. From the interviewees' accounts, it was identified that when recognized as fundamental through discourse, continuing education simultaneously becomes poorly understood when put into practice. Another point observed during the analysis was the perception that continuing education is carried out without teachers' real participation and disregards the school context's needs.

The analyzed data indicate that much still needs to be done for continuing education to be understood by schools, administrators, managers, and teachers. The collective of educators must take ownership of their formative processes to become agents of the process. Thus, continuing education becomes meaningful when teachers are protagonists in defining the topics, how they do things, and the goals they collectively wish to achieve in the school context.

With that said, this article can generate valuable contributions to the construction of a broader perspective on continuing education, especially for current and future teachers. This perspective is not only related to its importance but also to reflection and understanding of how we can enhance continuing education processes, considering teachers' perceptions not only as consumers of content but also as producers of experiences and pedagogical knowledge committed to the effective learning of their students.

REFERENCES

ALVES, L. Educação remota: entre a ilusão e a realidade. **Interfaces Científicas: Educação**, v. 8, n. 3, p. 348-365, 2020. DOI: 10.17564/2316-3828.2020v8n3p348-365. Available at: <https://periodicos.set.edu.br/educacao/article/view/9251>. Accessed in: 3 Aug. 2023.

BRASIL. Ministério da Educação. Portaria nº 343, de 17 de março de 2020. Dispõe sobre a substituição das aulas presenciais por aulas em meios digitais enquanto durar a situação de pandemia do Novo Coronavírus - COVID-19. **Diário Oficial da União**: seção 1, Brasília, DF, n. 53, p. 39, 2020.

FERREIRA, N. S. C. Formação continuada e gestão da educação na cultura globalizada. *In*: FERREIRA, N. S. C. **Formação continuada e gestão da educação**. 2. ed. São Paulo: Cortez, 2006. 318 p.

IMBERNÓN, F. **Formação docente e profissional**: formar-se para a mudança e a incerteza. Tradução de Silvana Cobucci Leite. 8. ed. São Paulo: Cortez, 2010.

INSTITUTO PENÍNSULA (org.). **Sentimento e percepção dos professores brasileiros nos diferentes estágios do coronavírus no Brasil**. São Paulo, 2020. 24 slides, cor. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3QnzTnu>. Accessed in: 3 Aug. 2023.

LUDKE, M.; ANDRÈ, M. **Pesquisa em educação: abordagens qualitativas**. São Paulo: EPU, 2013.

MACIEL, M. D. Autoformação docente: limites e possibilidades. *In*: ENCONTRO NACIONAL DE PESQUISA EM EDUCAÇÃO EM CIÊNCIAS, 2003, Recife. **Anais [...]**. Recife: SBPC, 2003. p. 1-5.

MAGALHÃES, L. K. C.; AZEVEDO, L. C. S. S. Formação continuada e suas implicações: entre a lei e o trabalho docente. **Cadernos Cedes**, Campinas, v. 35, n. 99, p. 15-36, 2015. DOI: 10.1590/CC0101-32622015146769. Available at: <https://www.scielo.br/j/ccedes/a/G7Fqdms45c6bxtK8XSF6tbq/abstract/?lang=pt>. Accessed in: 3 Aug. 2023.

NÓVOA, A. Os professores e a sua formação num tempo de metamorfose da escola. **Educação & Realidade**, Porto Alegre, v. 44, n. 3, p. 1-15, 2019. DOI: 10.1590/2175-623684910. Available at: <https://www.scielo.br/j/edreal/a/DfM3JL685vPJryp4BSqyPZt/>. Accessed in: 3 Aug. 2023.

UNESCO. **Consequências adversas do fechamento de escolas**. 2020. Available at: <https://bit.ly/43P4nlu>. Accessed in: 3 Aug. 2023.

CRediT Author Statement

Acknowledgements: We thank the University of *Extremo Sul Catarinense* - UNESC for its institutional support.

Funding: There is no institutional funding.

Conflicts of interest: There are no conflicts of interest.

Ethical approval: The work adhered to ethical standards during the research. All participants signed informed consent forms, and their identities were kept confidential. Fictitious names were used to avoid identification.

Data and material availability: The data and materials used in the work are presented in the manuscript.

Author's contributions: The authors contributed to the field research, data collection, analysis and interpretation of the data, and writing of the text.

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

