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Narrative research as a structuring principle of teacher training: a dialogue between School and University

A pesquisa narrativa como princípio estruturante da formação docente: um diálogo entre Escola e Universidade

La investigación narrativa como principio estructurante de la formación docente: un diálogo entre Escuela y Universidad

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Abstract: The goal of this article is to investigate the dialogic dynamics between beginner and experienced teachers, highlighting how this interaction generates reciprocal learning (self/other formation). From this reflection, the role of narrative research emerges as a theoretical-practical tool capable of connecting critical reflection, pedagogical practice, and lifelong professional development. In conclusion, we argue that teacher education is not linear or restricted to the early stages of life, but a continuous process, fueled by intersubjective exchanges and shared experiences. The dialogue between Basic Education and University was inscribed in a relationship of exchange between the beginner teacher, the author of the research, and the experienced teacher, the investigated teacher, and underpinned the understanding that experiential formative processes always occur on a lifelong basis.

Keywords: Professional Socialization. Narrative Research. Self-hetero-education.

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Resumo: O objetivo deste artigo é investigar a dinâmica dialógica entre professores(as) iniciantes e professores(as) experientes, ao destacar como essa interação gera aprendizagens recíprocas (auto/heteroformação). A partir dessa reflexão, evidencia-se o papel da pesquisa narrativa como ferramenta de aprofundamento teórico-prático capaz de conectar reflexão crítica, prática pedagógica e desenvolvimento profissional ao longo da vida. Como conclusão, argumentamos que a formação docente não é linear ou restrita a fases iniciais da vida, mas um processo contínuo, alimentado por trocas intersubjetivas e experiências compartilhadas. O diálogo entre Educação Básica e Universidade esteve inscrito em uma relação de troca entre o professor iniciante, autor da pesquisa, e a professora experiente, professora investigada, e fundamentou a compreensão de que os processos formativos experienciais ocorrem sempre sob uma base vitalícia.

Palavras-chave: Socialização Profissional. Pesquisa Narrativa. Auto/heteroformação.

Resumen: El objetivo de este artículo es investigar la dinámica dialógica entre profesores(as) principiantes y profesores(as) experimentados, destacando cómo esta interacción genera aprendizajes recíprocos (auto/heteroformación). A partir de esta reflexión, se evidencia el papel de la investigación narrativa como herramienta de profundización teórica-práctica capaz de conectar reflexión crítica, práctica pedagógica y desarrollo profesional a lo largo de la vida. Como conclusión, argumentamos que la formación docente no es lineal ni está restringida a las fases iniciales de la vida, sino que es un proceso continuo, alimentado por intercambios intersubjetivos y experiencias compartidas. El diálogo entre Educación Básica y Universidad estuvo inscrito en una relación de intercambio entre el profesor principiante, autor de la investigación, y la profesora experimentada, profesora investigada, y fundamentó la comprensión de que los procesos formativos experienciales ocurren siempre sobre una base vitalicia.

Palabras clave: Socialización Profesional. Investigación Narrativa. Auto/heteroformación.

1. INTRODUCTION

The concept of narrative has been the subject of investigation and analysis throughout history, and its relevance has always been evident both as a mechanism for exchanging and transmitting experiences and as an essential activity of human nature, in which lived experiences, once shared, emerge as a point of reflection for a better understanding of oneself and the world. In this article, we argue that narrative production can also be inscribed in a process of self/other professional formation.

The concept of auto/heteroformation is understood here according to the contributions of Gaston Pineau (2021), who defines it as a process of formation that occurs through external influences on the individual, mediated by other people, institutions, social norms, cultural or formal educational structures. According to Pineau (2021), heteroformation is one of the three fundamental dimensions of human formation, along with autoformation (self-directed learning) and ecoformation (learning mediated by the natural environment). Pineau (2021) emphasizes that heteroformation is not opposed to autoformation, but is dialectically integrated with it. That is, even when we learn from the outside (heteroformation), we internalize and reinterpret this knowledge in a singular way (autoformation). For example, a teacher may learn pedagogical techniques from a colleague (heteroformation), but adapt them to their own practice (autoformation).

Thus, this article reflects the importance of fully realizing the training, made possible through the intertwining of the two referenced dimensions (self/hetero-training), when novice and experienced teachers learn from each other (hetero-training), but also with themselves (self-training).

To describe this process, we will present some conclusions resulting from an interpretative work anchored in a set of materials produced by teacher Rosana, who holds a degree in Literature from the Federal University of Minas Gerais (Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais - UFMG) and a master's degree in Education and Teaching from the Faculty of Education (Faculdade de Educação - FaE) at UFMG.

This material is a collection of *class notebooks* produced over nearly 20 years of teaching, as well as her training memorial (a requirement of the specialization and master's degree she completed). The material was collected and examined over four years of interaction with the teacher. The meeting took place in a study group on school culture and, so fruitful was it, that it led to research carried out within the scope of the professional master's program at UFMG. Teacher Rosana still works in public basic education and teaches in two education networks (municipal and state) in the city of Belo Horizonte - MG.

The increasingly in-depth investigative progress in the material indicated, more and more clearly, that the author of the narratives (class notebooks and memorial) engaged, through this elaboration, in an intense metareflexive process of teacher self-formation. The novice teacher and first author of this article, who conducted the research under the guidance of the co-authors, not only developed an interpretive work but also experienced an intensive process of existential reflection and professional formation, since it is in the effort to understand the relationship between Self and the Other that narrative research emerges as a spark for the work of interpretation.

Based on these traces (GINZBURG, 2007), this article thus takes as a heuristic object the narrative marks of this public school teacher present in the contents of her *class notebooks*, as well as in the production of her memoirs and in our understanding of her professional identity, derived from a biographical interview and the notes resulting from numerous dialogues with Rosana.

Considering that the concept of narrative is appropriated by very distinct philosophical, epistemological, and cultural traditions, it is important to indicate that we base this article on a type of investigation that, as argued Clandinin and Connelly (2011, p. 174), privileges a certain way of structuring the logic of research: "... narrative researchers



tend to start with the lived experience told through stories.” The narratives we rely on are idealized and materialized in teaching practices, but in research, they assume new contexts and meanings, while still providing intelligibility to the set of professional activities and commitments. Furthermore, we believe that this type of investigation has the potential to unveil and examine the dilemmas and anxieties inherent to the teaching profession.

To adequately interpret the available material, in addition to the previously mentioned references, we resort to the works of Zabalza (2004) and Huberman (2013), whose theories enable a deeper understanding of professional dilemmas. The former, when analyzing the pedagogical device he named “class diaries” (which we here refer to following the nomenclature spontaneously evoked by Rosana, as Class Notebooks), provided us with a guide for the analysis of this material. The latter, by theorizing the life cycle of teachers, contributes to the temporal dimensioning of the experiences and discourses that are the raw material of the research.

Thus, we believe that this article has the potential to critically and reflectively broaden the knowledge regarding the ideas and questions about teacher training within our pedagogical practices, as well as to illuminate the formative processes based on a *continuum* between School and University.

The article is structured into three sections, in addition to this introduction and the final considerations. In the first section, we reflect on narrative research as a metareflexive experience in the field of teaching. In the second and third sections, we describe the pedagogical devices that make up this narrative research, that is, the production of the *Formation Memorials*, as well as the *Class Notebooks* created by the teacher. Lastly, in the final considerations, we argue about the vitality of narrative research approaches in studies on the teaching condition.

2 NARRATIVES AS A METAREFLEXIVE EXPERIENCE

In this section, we will discuss the theme that encompasses all dimensions of this research: The concept of narrative. Although it dates back to the classical texts of Western Philosophy, our goal is to demonstrate what notion of narrative we are mobilizing in the study of Rosana's teaching activity, as well as to define narrative research.

Aristotle, in his encyclopedic mind, paves the way for a fundamental work for understanding the development of poetry and Philosophy among the heirs of the Hellenic tradition. His Poetics of narrative (2003), which represents a special and fruitful moment of artistic and philosophical reflection of the time, focused on literary discourse in its



rhetorical formality, to the detriment of its referential power. According to Silva (2018), this work thus concerns a philosophical explanation, which has a descriptive bias as its backdrop, although it is also prescriptive, endowed with a deep historical and theoretical dimension of how reality can be sedimented in text.

Aristotle's poetic art ultimately influences, besides poets and authors of tragedies, a type of philosophical current that would come to regard poetic work as an object of study endowed with singularities (COMPAGNON, 2012). Thus, Aristotle presents a fundamental structure of poetic thought and, within this, an essential conception of the overall architecture of human language: 1. reality; 2. thought; and 3. word. This structure, in turn, must be the epistemological framework of the text: Subject, verb, and complement, which comprise the fundamental elements of the narrative (1. a definition: What; 2. an explanation: Why; and 3. a conclusion: Demonstration of its essence).

With this, what Aristotle (2003) calls narrative is not a static, amorphous structure of life, but a mimetic process⁴ from the word transformed into knowledge. It was no different with Walter Benjamin (2012, p. 213) in modern times, who, based on this same bias, was concerned in his work *The Storyteller* with the legitimacy of narrative (oral) production as an essential dimension of being human:

[A] the art of storytelling is on the verge of extinction. People who know how to narrate properly are becoming increasingly rare. It is becoming more and more common that when the desire to hear a story is expressed, embarrassment becomes widespread. It is as if we are being deprived of a faculty that seemed completely secure and inalienable: the ability to exchange experiences.

The narrative alludes to common sense, which, in turn, is focused on the utility of action. In this sense, the storyteller is always ready to offer wise advice, without excessive explanations, but using an insistent recursion of mysterious anecdotes that always leads the listener to reflect: "Could it be the gift of listening in communities where repetition and the monotony of manual labor reign?"⁵ (BENJAMIN, 2012, p. 221).

If narratives have been objects of study and interest since the dawn of philosophical thought, more recent is the academic investigation defined as narrative research. This

⁴"Aristotle's position has an affinity with that of Plato, since he accepts that all art offers images of a possible reality, but at the same time is distant from it in spirit, since the qualification expressed by 'possible' involves a crucial relaxation of the demands that Plato had made on mimesis in its most precise (or disdainful) sense. Although he shares with him what can loosely be called a 'correspondence theory' of mimesis, Aristotle circumvents the implications of Plato's view on art by arguing that the content and meaning of mimetic works cannot justifiably be tested against any fixed criteria of truth or reality" (HALLIWELL, 1989, p. 152-153).

⁵Benjamin's (2012) elaborations on the Narrator lead us to the value of cordel literature that goes beyond a taxonomic utility of the text, but is constructed, from it, in an ideological functionality, in connection with its structures of production and reception.

methodological approach contributes to the emergence of a perspective that recognizes the individual as the protagonist in the process of knowledge construction based on their personal experiences and their interpretations of the contexts they frequent. Narrative research is quite close to another approach and can be confused with it: Autobiographical research.

Both are used, especially in the field of Human and Social Sciences. However, while the former uses narratives (oral or written) to explore various themes, identities, and experiences, the latter focuses specifically on the life of the subject, who is often the researcher themselves. Narrative research, in general, is capable of incorporating stories of events or life experiences to reveal broader insights, while autobiographical research usually involves a detailed reflection on personal life events, often providing a first-person account. Both approaches can be complementary and used together to gain a deeper understanding of the experiences being examined. As Abrahão (2003) states, the researcher, in the tradition of narrative research, does not intend to establish statistical generalizations, but to understand the phenomenon under study, even if it may allow for an analytical generalization.

In the research undertaken, an autobiographical text genre is used, the memorial of formation, but it is not an autobiographical research, given that the researcher, although having engaged in a vigorous dialogue with the author of the notebooks and memorials, is not the author of them. The formulation by Clandinin and Connelly (2011) on narrative research is the one that best defines the investigation undertaken. According to the authors:

[...] in a way to understand the experience in a collaboration process between researcher and researched. It, in its most common form, can be described as a methodology that consists of collecting stories about a certain theme where the investigator will find information to understand a certain phenomenon. The stories can be obtained through various methods: Interviews, diaries, autobiographies, recording oral narratives, written narratives, and field notes (CLANDININ; CONNELLY, 2011, p. 20).

Thus, the nature of the empirical material used allows us to frame the research within the narrative research approach, even though it has emphasized a narrative that is, by excellence, autobiographical, the memoir. Narrative research, like other forms of investigation, can draw on a variety of texts that give prominence to memories. It must be admitted that, from the perspective of the author of the memorial, the professional (and therapeutic) benefit of this type of self-writing is anchored, above all, in the production, albeit retrospective, of a personal ordering for a trajectory that is, inescapably and to a large extent, the product of uncontrollable social forces. Thus, as Cunha and Breton (2021,

p. 3) state, “(...) the transition from experience to language, from words to texts, from discourse to narrative implies that the narrator turns to their experience, temporally manages it, and logically configures it so that coherence arises through the work of self-writing.”

3 AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL RECONSTRUCTION THROUGH TRAINING MEMORIALS

We consider the training memorial to be an autobiographical narrative academic genre. In it, the author narrates their personal and professional life story and analyzes what was significant in their formation. Memorials often take on a (self) formative character in their composition process. In this context, they gain relevance as fundamental sources in building a new landscape of scientific knowledge. By incorporating personal and contextual perspectives, memorials offer a movement of (meta)analysis on lived experiences, challenges faced, and transformations that occurred in personal and professional life.

This approach to writing about oneself stands out for its ability to reclaim the voices and experiences of the individuals involved, allowing for a richer understanding of the complexities of life and the process of anthropoformation⁶. Through their own narratives, the authors of the memorials can analyze and reflect on their educational trajectories, and unveil their beliefs, values, and dilemmas over time.

The memorials are inscribed in a writing genre that has the potential to expand beyond memories, as it culminates in the metanoia of the subject. The concept of metanoia has its historical roots in Greek philosophical thought, but finds its strongest foundations in the thinking of Peter Senge, materialized in his book *The Fifth Discipline*, published in 1990. According to the author, metanoia represents a profound transformation of mindset, intrinsically related to the learning process, particularly in what he calls generative learning.

According to Senge (1990), it is not enough to simply survive, that is, “survival learning” or “adaptive learning” is necessary, but not sufficient: It must be accompanied by “generative learning”, which increases our capacity to create and generate fundamental changes in existence. We believe that both the *Memorials* and the *Notebooks*, which we

⁶Gaston Pineau (2005) understands the concept of anthropoformation as a process of continuous formation and transformation of the person, considered in their entirety, throughout their life, in interaction with their sociocultural environment.

will discuss in the next section, make up a mosaic composed of narrative traces and vestiges capable of revealing the effects of the metanoia process, since they not only provide information but also reflect the evolution of their perceptions, experiences, and education over time. This kind of generative learning offers an interesting overview of the dilemmas faced by the teacher and the impact that reflexivity has on her practice and professional development.

The autobiographies of teachers allow the narrating subject to connect with their uniqueness and, at the same time, enable a dive into the interiority of their education. Building on the autobiographical reflection developed by teacher Rosana in her two portfolios, as well as the notes from field notebooks derived from countless conversations we had with her over approximately four years of cohabitation, we will briefly reconstruct her trajectory. We believe that such reconstruction may contribute to the understanding of some of her characteristics, as well as the way she experienced a series of dilemmas that we will discuss in the third section. Her artisanal attention to detail in daily activities, as well as her discipline and dedication to the school and the subject taught, are noteworthy.

We intend to show that, in Rosana's case, teaching is the heart of her work activity. "Restless" and "interested" are the adjectives that best evoke the routine of her teaching activities, as her work has always been marked by challenges and purposes to avoid "becoming dull"⁷. She considers that teaching is a complex and multifaceted task, which presents numerous dilemmas for educators.

The figure of the *bricoleur* is the one that best defines teacher Rosana. Skilled at gathering and combining diverse resources, she reveals herself as a guide in this journey "very close to the figure of the *bricoleur*, according to Lévi-Strauss (1976), who, starting from fragments of old objects stored in the basement, constructs a new object in which its marks do not disappear" (LOVISOLO, 1995, p. 31). Thus, we also noticed in Rosana's material, an artisan, who transforms raw material into a unique and meaningful work. Such richness is what inspired us to delve deeper into the information in the *Class Notebooks* produced by the teacher, which unfold into interviews, conversations, and study meetings, as we wanted, as much as possible, to grasp the meanings of those valuable tools for the construction of new knowledge, as well as to understand her narrative process.

Talking about the life memories of teacher Rosana brings to the fore the existential motivation of her profession: A constant search for (self)formation. She is characterized as

⁷The expressions in quotes in this paragraph are commonly used by teacher Rosana at different times during the research.

a “non-conformist” teacher, as even during her undergraduate studies, she was already involved in several projects that led her to adopt bolder stances:

It was during my student days that I started to have contact with children and young people, when I participated in the Metropolitan Project, in the Lindeia neighborhood, where we formed a storytelling group supported by Bartolomeu Campos, Maria Antonieta Antunes Cunha, and coordinated by Ana Maria. This group lasted about four years and gave me a more mature perspective on what I was doing at the University (Memorial of formation of teacher Rosana for the master's selection, 2013, p. 1).

There have been many moments of crisis regarding her professional identity, but the pressing desire to never stop studying has always been present. It is as if, through study and reflection, she saves herself, her professional identity, and the sense of both the ascetic and creative exercise of the craft, from which we understand the fruitful creation of school and extracurricular projects that she has often talked about with enthusiasm:

I felt lost in professional terms and went through a turbulent, confusing, and unsatisfactory period, among other activities I engaged in between 1990 and 2000. In 2001, an old colleague encouraged me to return to teaching, but in the public education system. This is when I found myself again. I was appointed [hired teacher] by the State Network for six uninterrupted years, going through different grades, levels of education, and shifts, experiencing different realities and finding a work autonomy that made me dare, try, and experiment. At my first opportunity, I took exams and was approved in both the state and municipal networks, in which I actively participate (Memorial of formation of teacher Rosana for the master's selection, 2013, p. 3).

After graduation, an unexpected opportunity arose to undergo a retraining, after years of working in education. Employed by the City Hall of Belo Horizonte and working at the Municipal School Geraldo Teixeira da Costa, in Venda Nova, I learned about openings for a specialization course in education at FaE/UFMG, announced on the bulletin board in the teachers' room. The course is the result of an agreement between the Municipality and the University. I prepared my documentation, my resume, and wrote a commented report, being accepted into the course focused on Youth and School, organized by Laseb, and lasting a year and a half. Returning to university was more than a desire; it was a demand of the profession, which, due to its continuous and routine exercise, had already suffered wear and tear (Memorial of formation of teacher Rosana for the master's selection, 2013, p. 2).

By the strength and richness of the accounts, it is possible to affirm that the memorials, in addition to being precious material for the analysis undertaken here, were important instruments for analysis, training, and sustaining Rosana's activities, and helped in the development of difficulties and dilemmas, as well as the production of meanings. They also proved to be instruments for elaborating on her trajectory and improving her pedagogical practices. By revisiting her own experiences and dilemmas, teacher Rosana finds support for a more meaningful (self) training process. The constant quest to refine her role as an educator is clearly associated with a much broader and fundamental need, linked to the recognition of the dimension of self-determination:

In addition to the precariousness of the material structure made available by the government for Basic Education, what also drove me to seek support was the discomfort caused by being in the school environment, my daily work place, and feeling coldness and bitterness in the relationships of older colleagues with the profession. They touched me because of their lack of support, time, space, and satisfactory salary, which I also still feel. But, at the same time, I was bothered by the victimization on the part of the majority. I did not want to be a teacher like that... (Memorial of formation of teacher Rosana for the master's selection, 2013, p. 2).

Teacher Rosana seems to combine personal traits of resilience with a critical perspective on teaching, supported by a professional identity aligned with self-determination. Her stance reflects not only individual strength but also a political choice of resistance, which seeks to transform adversities into motivation for action, perhaps heavily inspired by Freire's critical pedagogy.

4 CLASS NOTEBOOKS: A USEFUL TOOL FOR TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

As stated, the material collected for this article comprises two dimensions of a self/other-formative process anchored in narrative research: The *Formation Memorial* and the production of *Class Notebooks*, the latter amounting to 32 and developed over nearly 20 years of teaching, as well as interviews with the teacher and notes in field notebooks. To address the nature of the *Class Notebooks* in narrative research in the field of Education, certain delimitations regarding this field of study become essential.

Zabalza (2004, p. 9) argues that writing diaries is a “resource for reflection and professional clarity.” Therefore, this tool has become, for the author, the foundation of a series of experiences and writings about the potential unleashed from classroom diary entries:

The writing of diaries carries with it a whole set of successive phases that facilitate the establishment of a learning process based on a dual category of phenomena: (a) the process of becoming aware of one's own actions by having to identify their components in order to narrate them, and (b) the process of recoding these actions (transforming action into text) allows for the rationalization of practices and their transformation into modifiable phenomena (and ones that can be improved) (ZABALZA, 2004, p. 27).

This reflection on the narrated data goes beyond a qualification of new knowledge. It is a process that occurs through the construction and formation of pedagogical practice, which allows us to achieve a certain distance from everything that surrounds and suffocates us, and to take a panoramic view of our actions.

Due to the stress of daily life, we enter into dilemmas of the profession and, consequently, we are prevented from stopping to think, plan, and review segments of our practices. Furthermore, from this point of view, “journals become tools for personal development and improvement of the professional practice that one exercises” (ZABALZA, 2004, p. 10).

Thus, by “Class Notebooks,” we understand a pedagogical device that, when analyzed, offers interesting clues about the professional development of teachers. This is because, in the narrative records, each teacher can be confronted with the multiplicity of situations experienced, and their self-reflection evokes the reframing of the most important practices in the exercise of their profession. Therefore, the notebooks can function as a type of pedagogical device capable of problematizing some important concepts within the teacher's functions:

Diaries contribute remarkably to the establishment of this kind of improvement circle capable of introducing us into a dynamic of review and enrichment of our activity as teachers. This circle begins with the development of awareness, continues with the acquisition of analytical information, and is followed by a series of other phases: The anticipation of the need for changes, the experimentation of those changes, and the consolidation of a new personal style of action. As we can see, in addressing our experience using diaries, this is the itinerary that many teachers are able to follow through the narrative and reflective activity that diaries provide (ZABALZA, 2004, p. 11).

In this investigation, the term *Class Notebooks* refers to the notebooks handcrafted by the teacher herself and used by her as a form of personal record in the exercise of her duties. These notebooks, in a didactic-pedagogical way, function as *logbooks* in which she wrote her notes spontaneously and/or routinely about the profile, behavior, and other particularities of the classes she taught. Next, we will present the covers of all the *Class Notebooks* of teacher Rosana, which she entrusted to the research group as part of the material for this article.

Covers of the teacher Rosana's notebooks.



Source: Survey data (2023).

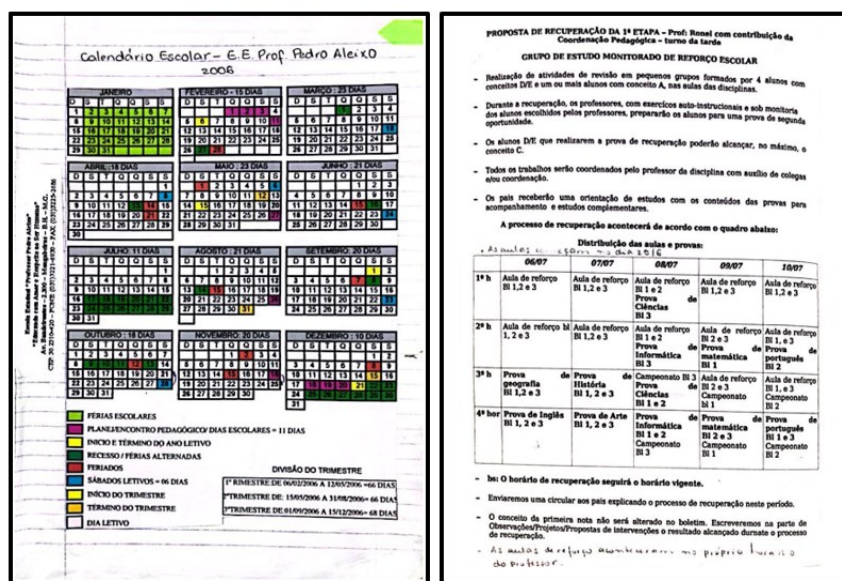
Thus, Zabalza (2004) argues that the writing of class notebooks can serve as a set of contents that is often perceived as something disposable. However, it is material that carries, in addition to knowable content for the professional development of the teacher, an emotional and affective dimension that enriches the understanding of teaching activities. It is a subsequent reflection of the teacher themselves that serves as a source of feedback, that is, a kind of constant feedback on their practice in the classroom.

This research was able to rely on detailed descriptions of the elements that shaped Rosana's professional personality based on her *class notebooks*, given her marked tendencies toward constant scrutiny of herself and the world. Since the beginning of her career as a contracted teacher in the state and municipal public networks, Rosana has been restless and questions herself about existential situations of teaching, such as the fear of “regressing intellectually,” as she gradually found herself ensnared in bureaucratic activities of her profession that, according to her perception, increasingly limited the time available for study and professional development. In order to avoid this regression (to remain vigilant and awake in her inner world), she discovered, in the notebooks, an interesting tool that allows her to make “many notes so as not to lose the thread of the matter.”

It is interesting to note that the adoption of this practice coincides with the period when she achieves stability in her career, after nearly a decade working as a “temporary or designated” teacher. It is possible to observe, in the internal pages of the *Class*

Notebooks, as shown in the following images, how attitudes of methodical organization guided her work routine.

Internal pages of teacher Rosana's notebooks.



Source: Research data (2023).

Regarding the relationship between notebooks and the professional lifespan, it is important to bring in Huberman's contribution (2013). The author points out that, at the beginning of a teaching career (the first professional life cycle), teachers tend to be more limited to the content and techniques acquired during their university training. We note that the teacher's *class notebooks* align with this statement, as the first notebooks analyzed reflect, in their notes, the characteristics of this initial cycle.

The *class notebooks*, as silent witnesses to the experiences and reflections of teacher Rosana, become rich records that transcend mere factual description. They transform into a space for reflection and self-reflection, allowing Rosana to explore her teaching practice, her intuitions, and to express her challenges and achievements.

In this way, the *class notebooks* reveal the predominance of notes related to curriculum content, teaching strategies, and the teaching materials used. It is possible to observe an emphasis on the application of theoretical knowledge acquired during initial training, with few references to personal experiences or deeper reflections on teaching practice.

This predominance of technical and content-related aspects in the teacher's *class notebooks* highlights the moment of initial adaptation and assimilation of professional knowledge. During this first cycle of professional life, it is natural for teachers to focus on

developing the basic skills needed for conducting classes and becoming familiar with the content to be taught.

However, it is important to emphasize that the trend discussed by Huberman (2013), although it may not represent all educators, was very useful for understanding Rosana's professional journey, as she demonstrates many of these characteristics in the analyzed categories in her narratives. Thus, for the purpose of analysis, this article focused exclusively on the analysis of the 11 notebooks from the 1st cycle and sought to categorize a set of dilemmas. Here, we will address two: Dilemmas related to the mechanization of public education and dilemmas related to the lack of dialogue between Public School and University. These were also present in the analysis and interpretation of her memorial, as well as in the meetings of the study group.

According to Caetano's classification (1992), it is possible to distinguish three perspectives concerning the concept of dilemma: The philosophical, the psychological, and the pedagogical. The factors she identifies as part of the genesis of these dilemmas would be present in a complexity of personal variables, ethical value variables, and variables of the subject's own epistemological conceptions.

From a philosophical perspective, dilemmas are fundamentally considered through a code of conduct that relates to their resolution, or lack thereof. From a psychological perspective, many authors focus on a developmental viewpoint, either by analyzing artificial dilemmas presented to subjects or real dilemmas experienced by subjects in their daily lives, whether current or remembered.

As this research privileges the pedagogical dimension of dilemmas, we will discuss the concept developed by Zabalza (2004, p. 10), as the relationship that the author presents regarding problematic situations in the work of teachers can be understood as a resource for metareflection and “essential components of ongoing training.”

In the concept of narrative in light of the intellectual and epistemological process of life stories, the notion of dilemma plays a fundamental role in Rosana's narrative. In a survey, based on a retrospective of the time and life of the teacher, conducted by Caetano (1992), it is recognized that there is no uniformity of opinions regarding the consideration of dilemmas. This has led to distinct notions surrounding a conceptualization.

According to Ben-Peretz and Kremer-Ayon (1986) and Lampert (1985), a dilemma is an argument that presents an antagonist, with two (or more) alternatives, but any choice alternative is equally conclusive against this antagonist; a definition that focuses more on the deliberation about the alternatives than on the choice between them, whereby the

teacher in conflict becomes his/her own antagonist and cannot win by choosing. It is worth noting that Zabalza (2004, p. 18) uses the concept of dilemma to refer to “the entire set of bipolar or multipolar situations that arise for the teacher in the development of his/her professional activity.”

The dilemmas seem to support the continuation of a practice that has persisted throughout the career of teacher Rosana. What leads a Portuguese teacher to accumulate the practice of writing in notebooks for almost 20 years?

The process of mechanization of teaching work emerges in the form of a complex materiality of the pedagogical dimension. Through the pedagogical work of the teacher, this foundation is constructed in the dynamic relationship between teacher and student.

In this context, one of the concerns of teacher Rosana emerges, whose focus on the interaction between these elements has led her to a constant reflection on the modus operandi of her work and its implications:

Interviewer: What is the discomfort more about? What do you think? Rosana: It's not an embarrassment, it's not personal. It makes me question the whole system I'm working in, right? And I continue to reproduce the system, uh... sometimes I might have tried to change it? I might! But to what extent did I do that? To what extent could I do it? Or go beyond. So, like, the diaries, like, in hand, which is already, people, right, in the hands of other people, it... makes me think (Study group meeting, 2020).

The reflection contained in this excerpt leads us to recognize the importance of preserving the fundamental truths that are cultivated in the classroom environment, in contrast to the impositions that may be directed towards the execution of educational activities. In this game of interests, what is questioned in the curriculum of educational practice is activated:

Interviewer: The dialogue, right?

Rosana: No, the life raft that I mean to save my life, I have to give a class, I can't prepare that class properly, I don't know how I'm going to give that class, you know, and sometimes I go with the one I wrote down, and I have another one up my sleeve in my head because I will try to do that one, if that one doesn't work, then I adopt another approach (Study group meeting, 2020).

On the contrary, in teacher Rosana's experiences, through the writing of the notebooks, it is possible to observe that she is always wanting to lead her life to the position of thinking and expressing herself.

I live the Dilemma, what I see here is that I have already tried to share, at least this issue of opening the dialogue. This issue of valuing this autonomy, because we have an autonomy. Why in the political field, right? There is a political culture. I understand Political Culture here as a bureaucracy. That thing of organizing the school. That thing of organizing the school, the requirements of the school. The requirements of the school. It [this political culture] is crushing. No one rebels against what no one proposes. Because in the field of academic culture, everyone

is too outdated. Because if it's about 'confronting', there is no basis at all. Not even Academic (Study group meeting, 2020).

Therefore, we identified three aspects that, within the scope of this study, appeared as the process of mechanization of the teaching profession: a) the process of entering the educational network; b) the relationship of the teacher with autonomy; and c) the collective organization of teachers in the school context.

According to Cunha (1989), this first aspect is defined by the life cycle of the teacher, which is also subject to variations in relation to time, space, and ideologies, as it represents a dilemmas of professional life. In the following dialogue, we can see how these characteristics are foundational in the professional relationship of teacher Rosana:

Interviewer: Do you notice a difference between your first record and the penultimate one, or did they maintain the tone?

Rosana: They maintained the tone. It may have actually been that I have reduced my way of taking notes.

Interviewer: Just that perception is an interesting clue.

Rosana: These days I have been doing very little (Study group meeting, 2020).

Frequently, the signals present in the career plan of teachers place them in conflicts with their personal objectives. Regarding the second aspect, which deals with the teacher's relationship with the autonomy of their work, Contreras (2002) recalls that autonomy is inseparable from teaching identity and the struggle for an emancipatory education, in which teachers and students are active subjects, not passive objects of systems foreign to their realities.

Some excerpts from Rosana's memorial highlight the importance of challenging the often managerial and alienating work of the school to appropriate the ability to teach with critical awareness, ethics, and creativity, transforming limits into possibilities and resisting the alienation of educational work.

I believe in the construction of autonomy that is only realized in the teaching work space through conscious training. I am interested in the education of our young people for these discussions and not just for the execution of a paid job, a job that guarantees the economic maintenance of the family (Memorial of formation of teacher Rosana for the master's selection, 2013).

The autonomy of teaching work, mentioned and believed by teacher Rosana, allows for a constant and conscious maturation of planning a personal trajectory, the consequences of which can help ensure that the school community does not merely submit to a project of educational public policies imposed by the power of institutionalized structures. Regarding the third aspect, the collective organization of teachers in the school context:

Yes, now for example, that this is over, right... We finished this master's program... I feel even more lonely at school. But I feel lonely in the teachers' lounge! (Interview with teacher Rosana).

I do my best to arrive there [teachers' room] right on time. There are people [teachers] who arrive 15/10 minutes before the class starts. Not me, I have to stay there during recess (Study group meeting, 2020).

The persistence of a hierarchical relationship between the University and Public School is an important issue raised by teacher Rosana, viewed as a counterproductive division. This division is also mentioned by Tardiff (2012, p. 122), who states that “[...] the production of knowledge about teaching can no longer be the exclusive privilege of researchers, and they must recognize that teachers also possess knowledge that is different from university knowledge.”

Rosana: If you are going to challenge the foundation of academia, from the moment you start participating in this reflective universe of the university. Then you start to question what is here (University) that makes us so strong? And why do other teachers start to contest any participation of academia here (school)? They have access to almost nothing in terms of continuing education! (Study group meeting, 2020).

It is worth noting that there is still a hierarchical relationship between the University and Public School, which hinders the advancement of education as a whole and limits the school's potential. For this category of analysis, we take as reference the studies of Peters (2023), specifically the idea that certain subjects, endowed with a characteristic of hyper-reflexivity, mobilize it to strategically adapt their actions to the objective conditions of the contexts they frequent.

According to the sociologist, the actor's reflective consciousness intervenes between habitual practical dispositions and the structural context as a relatively autonomous mediating factor in determining action (PETERS, 2013). This is one of the most valuable concepts in the metareflexive process that emerges from teacher Rosana's dialogues in one of our study meetings:

Bringing him here from this crossing today is... really scary, I agree with you, it gives me the impression that it's not such a big deal, but I feel limited in my understanding of what I have there, that's it (Study group meeting, 2020).

This emancipatory potential, through the lenses of Bourdieu (2024), derives from the sociological-reflexive effort, similar to Plato's concept of “anamnesis” (2011), which consists of the memorization and elaboration of significations deeply rooted in our subjectivity, a process of self-reflection in which individuals gain a clearer awareness of the forces that act upon them and, notably, within or through them.

The writing in the *notebooks* is also not detached from a moral order that guides Rosana's life in a broader sense. During her interviews, she referred to this disposition as

“domestic attitude,” because, for her, the gestures of choosing, decorating, organizing, and filling the notebooks daily are part of a know-how related to organization, order, storage, and care, the genesis of which originated in the domestic environment:

A lot of things slip through my notes. There are things that aren't noted, they've disappeared, I went a while without writing anything down, and then it's a big gap, then there's... a week that had a school event... Because the school is very dynamic. The notebooks (that's why I'm saying I don't know if they are interesting for you), because, um... They are essential for me, you know... [laughs] It's a domestic attitude, you know? [laughs] For me to take care of my classroom. So it's something very domestic. It's not institutional... No one taught me how to do this (Interview with teacher Rosana, 2020).

As for the spaces for professional training, considering that teachers constantly face pressure for self-regulation, and that narrative and reflective writing allows them to return to action, assess it, rethink it, and then position themselves more consciously, it is undoubtedly an exercise in clarity for such a complex profession.

Lastly, from the study of the notebooks, it was possible to interpret that teacher Rosana was in a very dilemma-filled period of her teaching career. As mentioned, the process of constructing her narratives coincides with the same period in which she was approved through a public competition to work in the municipal education system, which sounded to her like a more demanding situation and potentially a source of insecurity regarding the new position. Thus, her class notebooks arise from the activation of a know-how that helped her in the need to address her dilemmas through tangible artifacts, such as a notebook, in order to bring her greater and better security.

5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

In this article, we seek a broader understanding of the teaching career, especially as we analyze the narrative production of teacher Rosana, present in her memoirs, in the construction of a pedagogical device that we call the *Class Notebooks*, and in some interviews conducted during our time together. Thus, this article aimed to wander between the records produced by the teacher in the exercise of teaching and the analysis of her memoirs, and it allowed us to outline the importance of narrative research in the context of teacher training.

By applying this perspective to the professional history of teacher Rosana, we were able to broaden our understanding of the factors that shaped her personal and professional development throughout her life cycles. Our analysis revealed crucial moments, significant decisions, and specific challenges she faced at each stage of her career and those present in her narrative production.



Thus, aspects such as initial training, adaptation to the school environment, pedagogical improvement, changes in the educational context, dilemmas faced throughout the career, and the impacts of these experiences on professional development were some of the issues we sought to analyze.

We believe that the analysis undertaken in this article highlights the vitality of narrative research approaches, self and (hetero)biographical studies, and memorials of training that have as a heuristic object the analysis of the teaching condition. The synchronic and diachronic analysis of the methods, pedagogical resources, and the history of a teacher, along with her professional life cycle, opens new perspectives for understanding and intervention in the field of Education.

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