

## Continuing education and teaching pedagogical practice: resignification of literacy practices?

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**ABSTRACT:** The aim of this paper is to reflect on continuing education for literacy teachers, highlighting the convergences and divergences between the National Pact for Literacy at the Right Age guidelines and pedagogical practice. A qualitative field investigation based on interviews with literacy teachers engaged in the program was conducted for this purpose. It was founded on the research of Tardif, Nóvoa, Schön, and Zeichner and sought to treat data using Grounded Theory. Points of convergence were identified across three areas of analysis: training path, literacy and alphabetization conception, and teaching practices. The findings indicate that multiple knowledge from training and experience intersect the training path of literacy teachers, having an impact on pedagogical practice.

**Keywords:** teacher training; teacher knowledge; literacy teacher; pedagogical practice.

## Formação continuada e o fazer pedagógico docente: ressignificação das práticas alfabetizadoras?

**RESUMO.** Este artigo objetiva refletir sobre a formação continuada para alfabetizadores, apontando as aproximações e os distanciamentos entre as orientações no âmbito do programa Pacto Nacional pela Alfabetização na Idade Certa e o fazer pedagógico. Para isso, realizou-se uma pesquisa de campo, com abordagem qualitativa, a partir de entrevistas com alfabetizadoras participantes da formação no âmbito do programa. Apoiou-se nos estudos de Tardif, Nóvoa, Schön, Zeichner e buscou-se para o tratamento dos dados apoio na Teoria Fundamentada nos Dados. Identificou-se pontos de convergência, compondo três dimensões de análise: percurso de formação, concepção de alfabetização e letramento e práticas de ensino. Os resultados indicam que o percurso de formação das alfabetizadoras se mostra atravessado por múltiplos saberes advindos da formação, da experiência que repercute no fazer pedagógico.

**Palavras-chave:** formação docente; saberes docentes; professor alfabetizador; fazer pedagógico.

## Educación continua y práctica pedagógica docente: la resignificación de las prácticas de alfabetización?

**RESUMEN.** Este artículo tiene como objetivo reflexionar sobre la educación continua para los maestros de alfabetización, señalando los enfoques y las distancias entre las pautas dentro del programa Pacto Nacional para la Alfabetización en la Edad Adecuada y la práctica pedagógica. Para esto, se realizó una investigación de campo, con un enfoque cualitativo basado en entrevistas con profesores de alfabetización que participan de la formación en el ámbito del programa. Subsidiada en los estudios de Tardif, Nóvoa, Schön, Zeichner. La investigación buscó el tratamiento del soporte de datos en Grounded Theory. A partir de los discursos dados, se identificaron puntos de convergencia, que comprenden tres dimensiones de análisis: camino de capacitación concepción de alfabetización y alfabetización y prácticas de enseñanza. Los resultados de la investigación indican que el camino de la formación de los profesores de alfabetización se cruza con múltiples conocimientos derivados de la formación, de la experiencia que tiene repercusiones en la práctica pedagógica.

**Palabras clave:** formación docente; enseñanza del conocimiento; profesor de alfabetización; hacer pedagógico.

Received on April 18, 2021.  
Accepted on January 25, 2022.

## Introduction

Concerns regarding the right to literacy have fueled conversations about education and school failure at the municipal, state, and federal levels in recent decades, leading to the development of public policies aimed at ensuring the materialization of this right. From this perspective, Gatti (2008) points out that, after the Law of Directives and Bases of National Education (LDB) (Law No. 9.394, 1996), federal agencies dedicated attention to the promotion of continuing education proposals and its methodologies. The intensification of the training process would present its consolidation with the publication of Resolution No. 2, of July 1, 2015, which defined the national curricular guidelines for initial higher education and continuing education, considering that consolidating the regulations aimed at the training of teaching professionals is “[...] indispensable for the national project of Brazilian education, in its levels and modalities of education, in view of the scope and complexity of education in general and, especially, school education enrolled in society” (Resolution No. 2, 2015). However, before that, in the national scenario, initiatives aimed at literacy, focusing on public policies towards the training of literacy teachers were already present, actions such as the Literacy Teacher Training Program (2001), Pro-Literacy (2008) and the National Pact for Literacy at the Right Age (2012a, 2012b), which were measures for a reconfiguration of the teacher training context in Brazil.

The latest initiative focused on the continued training of teachers that figured nationally was the National Pact for Literacy at the Right Age (PNAIC). The PNAIC, established by the Federal Government through MEC in 2012, anticipated one of the actions of the National Education Plan (PNE), with the goal of ensuring full literacy of children up to the age of eight throughout the Brazilian territory, thus meeting the requirements of Decree No. 6.094 of 2007 art 2, item II, which highlighted the guidelines of All Committed to Education, being aligned with Law No. 13.005, 2014, PNE, goal five: “[...] to literate all children, at most, by the end of the third year of Elementary School”.

Among the PNAIC axis, we highlight the continuing education of teachers who work in public schools at the literacy stage, because teaching as an educational action requires specific, interdisciplinary, and pedagogical knowledge, as well as continuous studies, peer exchanges, reflections, and changes. In this regard, training under the program encouraged face-to-face meetings at the teacher's school, with studies and practical activities aimed at developing actions supported by the local context. The PNAIC booklets corroborated the idea of an education that respected the children's right to learn Portuguese, Mathematics, and other subjects, while emphasizing the achievement of a quality education. Thus, the training program emphasized ongoing education that promoted not only theorization of instructors, but also dialogue about their own practice, interaction with their peers, and comprehending the world in which they worked (Melo, 2015; Santos, 2017; Pereira, 2018).

In view of governmental initiatives aimed at the professional development of teachers, this article aims to reflect on continuing education for literacy teachers, highlighting the similarities and differences between the National Pact for Literacy at the Right Age (2012a, 2012b) guidelines and the pedagogical work of teachers who participated in this training.

To this end, we developed field research, with a qualitative approach, following methodological procedures of analysis of the Grounded theory, through semi-structured interviews. Based on the answers, it was possible to delve into the reflective activity of the context closer to the real teaching situations, planned and developed in literacy classes. To that end, we organized three argumentative sections: one on teacher training and the guiding principles of continuing education; another on literacy and alphabetization conceptions in training programs; and, finally, an interview-based reflection in search of an understanding of literacy teachers' formative process, in order to list the thoughts about educational practices and knowledge produced or built in the pedagogical process.

## Teacher education: guiding principles of continuing education

The initial and subsequent teacher training activities at a national level, with the goal of qualifying the teaching action, aim to improve educational practice and, as a result, basic education evaluative results. The teacher becomes the centerpiece of the process to achieve a reflective practice that reveals his identity and professionalism.

When conceptualizing ‘reflective teacher,’ Schön (2000) proposes three circumstances of reflection on his own practice that come from reflective practice in action, on action, and a reflection on the act of self-reflection in action. According to Schön (2000), what comes before the reflective act is knowledge-in-action,

because by seeing something and reflecting on some educational doing, a description of this knowledge-in-action is formed, which is tacit knowledge. The representation of this knowledge will be determined by each subject's appropriation of language. As stated by Zeichner (2008), the reflective act refers to the knowledge that teachers must actively engage in the development of the objectives and purposes of their work, as well as their leadership positions in school reforms. According to Zeichner (2008), all teachers are reflective; nonetheless, what distinguishes them is the way and purpose for which they reflect on practice.

Ultimately, focus of teacher training is on the teacher's person, which allows instructors to comprehend the meaning of personal development in the professional process of being a teacher. The founding axis of a teaching person's development allows us to underline the significance of knowing him as a subject of knowledge, builder of his own history in life experiences, training acts, and professionalization.

The teaching job, in the daily life of pedagogical practice in the midst of planning and applicability actions, is impregnated with knowledge that, according to Tardif (2002, p. 19), is “[...] a plural and temporal knowledge [...]”, a wisdom that marks the practice acquired in the context of his life story, his formation and professional performance.

Even before beginning his teaching career, the teacher already understands what teaching entails and what it takes as a result of his previous school experience, that is, his own experience as a student. According to Tardif (2002, p. 20), “[...] much research shows that this knowledge inherited from previous school experience is very strong, that it persists through time, and that university training neither can change it nor even weaken it”. Thus, the teacher practice mobilizes several types of knowledges that Tardif (2002, p. 36) defines as “[...] a plural knowledge, formed by the amalgam, more or less coherent, knowledge derived from professional training and disciplinary, curricular, and experiential knowledge”.

Understanding teacher education as a teaching and learning process that is developed and revised in the classroom, determined by the amalgamation of knowledge, existing experiences combined with new knowledge and experiences, and with which relationships and interactions are established, it is perceived that such a process happens in a continuous and dynamic movement, understanding the teacher as an active and engaged subject, also marked by learning. In Freire's view, the roles of teaching and learning are shifting, and it is through this shifting of roles that teaching is formed: “[...] there is no teaching without learning, both explain themselves and their subjects, despite the differences that connote them, do not reduce themselves to the condition of object, of each other. Who teaches learns by teaching and who learns teaches by learning” (Freire, 2005, p. 23).

The teacher is seen as a subject who learns as much as he teaches, and therefore finds himself in constant relationship with different knowledges, which constitutes him as unique and singular, at the same time, multiple and plural. In pedagogical practice, therefore, there is a relationship between experience and the integration of experience. It can be claimed that the teacher develops his identity through the exercise of educational activity, through the confrontation of experiential, intellectual, and professional knowledge. For Nóvoa (2013, p. 16) “[...] identity is not something given, it is not a property, it is not a product. Identity is a place of struggle and conflicts, a space for the construction of many ways to be a teacher and to work as such”.

In this argumentative perspective, it is critical to consider not only the teacher's educational practice, but also to give visibility to what the teacher understands about pedagogical practice, based on theoretical and methodological subsidies provided by continuing education. Each subject-teacher has an identity that reflects on the act of being a teacher, which is the result of an interplay between his personal and professional attributes. According to Nóvoa (2013, p. 17) “[...] the way each of us teaches is directly dependent on what we are as individuals when we exercise teaching”. Each one has a unique way of being, behaving pedagogically, organizing himself, moving around the classroom, and addressing the students, which is not devoid of his sociocultural, academic, and psychological experiences.

Thus, when seeking to analyze the choices that characterize teaching practice and the knowledge relations formed by the guidelines of official documents, the practice cannot be simplified without considering the teaching identity and the amalgamation which comprises it. The perspective falls on the person-professional to comprehend the pedagogical process and the choices that distinguish teaching activity. Goodson (2013, p. 71, emphasis added) argues that lived experiences and the sociocultural environment become “[...] key ingredients of the person we are, of our sense of self. We create our practice based on 'how much' we invest our 'self' in our teaching, experience, and socio-cultural milieu”.

There is no neutrality in educational practice, which is characterized by different knowledges and the inconclusibility of the human subject, because, according to Goulart (2016, p. 709), “[...] the human condition

revolves around the idea of inconclusibility, of certain methodological and systemic discontinuity". Given this, it can be stated that teacher training involves a process that is not characterized by logical sequences, whether in terms of scientific knowledge, curricular content, or the operationalization of actions, preparation, and development of pedagogical activities.

Teacher training is built on the fact of the teacher's incompleteness, as he or she makes and remakes himself or herself in a reflective process. (Freire, 2005). Similarly, Goulart (2016, p. 709) points out that "[...] teacher training is configured from a continuous movement of action and reflection, which articulates acts and performances in a scope of approximations between the experience of school daily life and the theoretical conception".

## **Conceptions of literacy and reading and the training programs**

We understand that knowing how to read and write is the result of the literacy process and that, before reading, the child goes through stages of building the alphabetic orthographic writing system. The approach and work with the capacities listed in the scope of programs, such as Pro-Literacy, pointed to the idea that mastery and use of written language have social, cultural, political, economic, cognitive, and linguistic consequences, both for the social group introduced to and for the individual who learns to use it.

In the same way, PNAIC was not founded on pedagogical guidelines of cognitive skills and abilities, but rather on didactic-pedagogical propositions from learning rights that emphasize the necessary articulation between literacy processes, while preparing and empowering children for the exercise of citizenship and social integration, contextualizing formative experiences of language use, i.e., involving literacy practices. Literacy, according to the perspective presented, is the child's mastery of the alphabetic system, which includes writing, speaking, and reading texts independently, as well as engaging in various genres that circulate in social spheres. Thus, PNAIC's conception relies on literacy from the standpoint of literacy, which includes the necessity for the child to master the alphabetic writing system (SEA) as well as the development of capacities to use this system autonomously in a variety of communication setting (National Pact for Literacy at the Right Age, 2012a, 2012b).

To reinforce this understanding, the program prioritized a pedagogical proposal based on access to various textual genres, which dialogues with SEA appropriation practices, as presented by Goulart (2006), exploring them, perceiving their characteristics, organization, and the supports into which they are inserted, in addition to perceptions about language decodification and codification (graphemes and phonograms). Another pedagogical emphasis was on developing phonological awareness, which allows for a greater attention on the finer aspects of the text, such as words, syllables, and letters. However, according to Morais (2012, p. 76), this learning must begin with the "[...] development of methodologies that assist the learner in reconstructing those properties of the SEA while experiencing literate practices".

In the same direction, the processes described in official documents involve literacy and alphabetization, which in pedagogical action are distinct but complementary and important processes. Therefore, it is not a matter of choosing between one or the other process, but of integrating both in pedagogical action, that is, to literate by alphabetizing. A strand of literacy practice is that, as Soares (2018, p. 349) points out, "[...] one cannot reduce written language learning to only the linguistic facet, considering it as a condition and prerequisite for interaction with real texts and for the production of real texts". The author emphasizes the importance of teaching the smaller sections of the text such as: "[...] grapheme-phoneme - the linguistic facet of learning to write [...]", but this teaching must be paired with other critical components of the language acquisition process (Soares, 2018, p. 349).

This allows us to comprehend the parallel development of the linguistic component (word recognition) and the interactive facet, known as understanding. Soares (2018, p. 350) points out that this texture presented by the author needs to be permeated by the sociocultural facet: "[...] activities of the interactive and linguistic facets developed in contexts where the written language is placed in real scenarios of social use, marked by the cultural context in which they occur".

In this light, PNAIC materials showed close conceptions and highlighted literacy and alphabetization as interwoven processes of interaction between the subject and the object of study, in this case, language. The comprehension and appreciation of the written culture in society (sociocultural facet) and their production and circulation modes constitute essential factors and conditions, brought by the documents, for the insertion of students into the literate world. The interrelation between the multiple facets, the linguistic facet

'necessary but not sufficient' – according to Soares (2018) – the sociocultural and the interactive facet, constitute alphabetizing by literacy, defended by Soares (1998, 2017, 2018).

The learning rights present in PNAIC contemplated the facets proposed by Soares (1998, 2017, 2018) by presenting in all axes of work of the Portuguese Language - reading, writing, production, orality, and linguistic analysis -, a conduction to the process of becoming literate, in a process that started in the first year, but with deepening, resumption and consolidation of actions in the following years. It is understood, therefore, that activities related to writing, literacy and alphabetization should permeate all school activities, in a constant planning, sequential, with clear objectives, obeying a dynamism, a pedagogical organization, a routine.

## Methodological aspects and discussion of results

Focusing on the reflection on teaching pedagogical practice, we developed field research, with a qualitative approach, supported by the Grounded Theory (GT), according to Cassiani, Caliri, and Pelá (1996) for the treatment of testimonies provided in the field. For data collection we used the semi-structured interview technique with seven literacy teachers from the municipal education network of a city in southern Minas Gerais, selected for participating in the PNAIC program, from which we obtained the acceptance to participate in the research.

Ground Theory was chosen as a data analysis technique that comprises of three investigative steps that can occur concurrently: data collection, coding/categorization, and theorization. Cassiani et al. (1996, p. 78) describe this Theory as “[...] a field methodology that aims to generate theoretical constructs that explain action in the social context under study”. In this sense, we sought processes that are happening in the social sphere, starting from conjectures, which “[...] united to each other, can explain the phenomenon, combining inductive and deductive approaches” (Cassiani et al., 1996, p. 78).

The seven literacy teachers interviewed have initial training in the technical course of Education, in the category of Normal Education, at high school level, attended in the same municipality. These teachers entered the teaching career through a municipal public tender and have working experience ranging from 6 to 15 years as a teacher. The higher education diploma comprises the courses: Education Studies, Modern Languages (Portuguese/English), Geography and Veredas, held in other municipalities and in different universities. Specializations also diversify. Another point referred to the time of work in literacy, which ranged from 9 to 15 years.

The interviews were conducted individually, recorded, and transcribed. For the process of (re)reading the answers, the meaning of the whole was pondered, although with clippings of more representative fragments in the predominance of convergent points, from which the following categories of analysis were attributed: (a) training path, (b) conception of literacy and alphabetization, and (c) teaching practices.

## Course of training outlined in the teachers' speeches

The answers that marked the accumulative experiences in the first and subsequent training courses, as well as information on the persons who inspired the teaching or individual experiences that impacted their educational practice in some manner, were used to identify the training pathway. During the interview, the teachers were asked what knowledge was articulated in meeting the demand of their educational practice.

As a result, we noted that a dialogue with multiple knowledges in the creation of the educational task enables well-thought-out, planned, and systematized actions to satisfy the true demands of human development, as indicated in P1's statement: “[...] I gather everything good and try to apply in the classroom [...]”, it is clear that when planning her classes, the teacher selects the knowledge she considers 'good', that is, that she considers relevant for students, according to her conceptions of teaching and learning (Interview, P1, 2018).

Therefore, theoretical and practical knowledge complement each other and constitute the support for teaching, as it can be seen in P5's answer: “So, I think I am more from the practical side, from experience, I realize that it works, but you have to be reconciled with the academic part, and I am very pleased when I read something in my work and realize exactly the same, then I think... oh well, I got it right, that is the way”. (Interview, P5, 2018).

In P2's speech, we noticed the mention of the exchange of experiences among peers as a formative process: “You learn over time yes, for sure, over time, with people, with other teachers, [...] the person says that they carried out a certain activity and it worked out, we try, because not always what you learned works out” (Interview, P2, 2018).

Teaching occurs through reflection and action, or rather, through pedagogical praxis, which allows to previously think about reality and promote changes and transformations in this reality. The dialogue between theoretical knowledge and reality constitutes the praxis, as presented by MEC, within the Escola de Gestores (School of Basic Education Managers, 2020), “[...] praxis, understood as a transforming social practice, is not reduced to mere practicalism, nor to pure theorization. [...] The understanding of reality, supported by theoretical reflection, is a condition for transformative practice, that is, praxis”.

In the formative experiences, the first training and continuing education courses were mentioned as elements of access to knowledge that favored the teaching performance. The interviewee P6 highlights:

[...] I take from what I learned in the courses we took, there were many courses, very good ones, so I gather everything good and try to apply it in the classroom, in addition to the information exchanged with colleagues; [...] there are also the educators we read, Magda Soares, I like her very much, on the part of her literacy, which I consider for my classes [...] (Interview, P6, 2018).

In her speech, the teacher emphasizes the importance of courses throughout her career, which allows us to think about the training and knowledge obtained, whether in initial or continuing education, in courses with more extensive training hours, in relation to other courses provided by the municipality that, in some way, impacted on teaching practice. In this sense, P1 points out that she took advantage of the experiences developed under PNAIC and P4 complements:

[...] PNAIC taught us a lot in the literacy part, because it was not only the theoretical part, the booklets had games and these games were many, we adapted to the class, and it worked very well; both in literacy in the case of writing and reading, and in mathematics there were many games... many operations games..., it was very good (Interview, P1, 2018).

The speech of P4 attributes importance to continued training for teaching performance and, especially, a training that adds not only theoretical values, but practical ones and the exchange of knowledge with other teachers, as in the speech of P4:

[...] so, we follow a plan, and this knowledge comes from the courses we always have at school, there are also things I always read about literacy and, also, more from experience, experiences of the years worked and from exchange with colleagues (Interview, P4, 2018).

Thus, we observed in the statements that pedagogical practice is sometimes guided by ‘formative experiences,’ referring to initial training and continuing education courses as relevant elements for teaching performance. Well, in ‘accumulated experience,’ the length of service conveys the idea that one learns via experience, observations, and living with other professionals.

## Conception of literacy and alphabetization

Being asked to specify which theoretical concepts were considered for developing their activities, lesson, or teaching plan, the teachers were requested to describe their teaching activities as literacy teachers, such as: methodologies, teaching resources used, routine, and the influence of training in their practice. We observed that sometimes the answers were related to the guidelines proposed by official documents and other times to individual experiences, to indicate the conceptions that guided the alphabetization and literacy practices in the daily professional life of the teachers.

The choices and ways of organizing the activities, the classroom routine, the selection of teaching materials and how to use them revealed the knowledge acquired in the continuing education courses, as in P1's answer:

I generally like to work with music, with stories, with short texts [...] I always work like this with them, approaching genres such as nursery rhymes, tongue twisters, diversifying the repertoire of texts, but within them I work with activities for the appropriation of the writing system, for example, taking the key word, marking the spacing, counting the letters, pointing out the initial letters, final letter (Interview, P1, 2018).

P1's speech shows the proximity of the guidelines based on the learning rights provided for in the axes of orality and linguistic analysis present in the PNAIC training by using playful activities in the manipulation of texts such as nursery rhymes, tongue twisters and songs for the systematic work of language teaching. In the same way as in the speech of P3:

[...] I use all methodologies. When I'm working and I see that I need to reinforce something, we immediately search for games, varied materials. If I see that text interpretation is needed, I look for texts of various text genres (Interview, P3, 2018).

The proposals described by the teachers permeate the axes of linguistic analysis, of orality, but the axis of text production was little mentioned by the literacy teachers. This may happen due to the belief that the student can only write texts after being literate, when in fact, the proposals point out the importance of the teacher as a scribe in writing practices in literacy. According to PNAIC (National Pact for Literacy at the Right Age, 2012a, p. 9) “[...] the choice of what the child will write depends on the communicative situation proposed by the teacher”. The pedagogical proposal of text production has the orientation that it should take place from the first weeks of class. To this end, the teacher should understand and differentiate that writing is not synonymous with copying and that one can encourage writing practices by acting as a scribe, that is, as the one who records the students' productions.

The work with texts, carried out by teachers, covers textual diversity, as observed in the speech of P2 “[...] I work with poetry, I talk a lot about textual genres, everything I take I ask if they know, what genre belongs to that text, I work on its characteristics and recurrences [...]”. It can be highlighted that there is a pedagogical practice committed to providing the child with contact with different textual genres in the practices of the interviewed teachers. However, it is not clear in the teachers' approaches a systematic work of text production. The speech of P7 shows a more associative perspective of writing:

a shorter text. First of all, short, very short. [...] This text has 10 lines. Shall we enumerate this text? Yes. It's ... What is title? So, let's color the title yellow. First, for him to know what a title is. He's going to memorize that. Then I'll work on spelling, word for word from the text with that child. For example, syllable by syllable. The ball is yellow. The, ball. The ball. is, yel-low. Yellow. I read the entire text like this (Interview, P7, 2018).

The answer shows proximity with the conception of literacy and learning rights proposed by the PNAIC training program, contemplating the work with all axes of the Portuguese Language. The emphasis of teaching on the properties of the writing system, especially in the first year, is essential, however, to read and produce texts autonomously, according to PNAIC, it is necessary that students consolidate graphophonic correspondences, while experiencing reading and text production activities. (National Pact for Literacy at the Right Age, 2012a, 2012b). In this sense, Soares (2017) summarizes that it is essential that literacy is developed in a literacy context, from the early stage of learning of writing, with participation in reading and writing events, with consequent development of skills for the social use of reading and writing.

## Teaching practices

To verify whether the trainings experienced in PNAIC, at the municipal level, contributed to overcoming the difficulties related to literacy, we asked what the trainings brought of relevant and significant to the developed educational practices, which is evident in the answers of P2:

[...] I look at the textbook, but I don't follow it every day, [...], I see what you can use in the book, but I research a lot on the internet, [...] I intersperse the reading classes, and in addition the routine, reading, interpretation, the spelling part [...] I'm always making a poster [...]. I did not use PNAIC. No, I didn't do anything. [...] What was spoken to me at the beginning was about reading delight (Interview, P2, 2018).

We understand that teaching practice requires the teacher to master a repertoire of knowledge. Thus, teaching knowledge is in fact composed of several types of knowledge from various sources. Taking, for example, the case of continuing on-the-job training. We perceive the importance of recognizing and appreciating teachers' knowledge, particularly those derived from classroom experience, which Tardif (2002) considers to be the vital core of this knowledge. In this sense, P2's speech pointed to an appreciation of her own experiences as determinants for the constitution of her pedagogical practice.

Other answers showed proximity to the pedagogical proposals of the documents, under PNAIC. There was mention of reading for pleasure, the use of games, playing and interdisciplinarity by the interviewed teachers. However, no information about literacy or techniques involving the study of phonological awareness and learning the properties of the writing system emerged in the speeches of the interviewees. Although it was clear in certain speeches that the pedagogical activity focused on learning phonemes and graphemes, such knowledge was addressed by the programs as essential for the student to learn the skills of reading and writing. As Soares (2018) points out, this is a necessary but not sufficient linguistic facet of literacy alphabetization.

On the relationship between theory and practice, P4 highlighted that the PNAIC training did not remain only in theory, contributing with practical and playful activities such as games.

[...] in PNAIC we did not stay only in the theoretical part, we had contact with books with games and these games were many, we learned to use and adapt them to the class, and it worked very well, both for literacy in the case of systematic work with writing and reading, as for mathematics, with games of operations [...]. (Interview, P4, 2018).

The teaching practices highlighted by the teachers were quite varied, oscillating between activities based on a more traditional conception of teaching - based on theoretical and methodological proposals grounded on memorization and repetition based on the learning of the linguistic code - and a more constructivist or interactionist stance - based on proposals that consider the child's process of construction regarding writing, from the interaction with texts - as evidenced in the teachers' statements. The P1 teacher made it clear that he does dialogical work, talks to the students, seeking to identify the knowledge students bring about the topics addressed and their knowledge in general. A pedagogical approach that seeks to know the social context of learning, for 'not having anything ready-made', to bring an idea of construction of pedagogical proposals together with the students. In this practice it is understood that the orality axis contained in the PNAIC guidelines was also valued by the teacher, since it stimulated the students' ability to participate in classroom interactions.

P1 used different ways of organizing the students in the classroom: grouping them in pairs so that there could be more interaction between them, adherence to the resource of collective or group activities. P2 also used this grouping strategy so that a student could help those who presented greater difficulty during the activities. Furthermore, the teacher used a variety of resources and activities, as evidenced by the presence of songs, videos, radio, games, a reading corner, and exploration of various textual genres, as well as pedagogical suggestions brought by official training documents under the Pro-Letramento and PNAIC.

More evidence was found in the interviews that revealed practices in proximity with the experiences of each teacher. Practical situations, problem solving, socialization and use of good practices that he learned from a colleague, a supervisor or from his own performance as a literacy teacher.

Some teachers revealed that on-the-job training brought significant elements to their pedagogical work, but they considered that in addition to the theoretical and practical knowledge. The aspect of affectivity was fundamental to the students' learning process, as highlighted by P3: “[...] PNAIC brought many different things, but the most relevant is to understand the student as a human being, [...] the affectivity”. The affectivity, according to the teacher, was in evidence on other issues that involved the students' learning.

Another point raised by P3 was the necessity for the school to charge teachers for the implementation of the practices learnt in the trainings. “[...] we realize that most colleagues only put into practice or do something different when they are charged by the pedagogical team or when they have to apply activities and share them in the training meetings”. This demonstrates that on-the-job training has been unable to foster a training culture or thorough and continuous reflection on pedagogical practice to provide continuity to the actions proposed, regardless of the validity of policies and programs.

P5 highlighted that she carried out her activities valuing more the practical aspect, related to experiences and occasionally used the theoretical knowledge learned in academy: “[...] I think I am more on the practical side, of experience, I realize that it works, but you have to be reconciled with the academic part [...]” (Interview, P5, 2018). This contribution highlighted the teacher's perceptions of the usefulness of experience knowledge as mobilizers of pedagogical practices. Fiorentini, Souza, and Melo (1998) highlights that this knowledge should be viewed as the beginning and end point of continuing education but emphasizes that it does not imply abandoning theoretical and scientific contributions and believes that it is precisely this training that allows the teacher to perceive the more complex relationships of practice.

Each teacher revealed a different pedagogical practice, based on their own way of literacy, mediating learning or assuming a position of knowledge building that seemed safer, closer to their experiences. In relation to the pedagogical practice, there was an emphasis on the concept that one can only teach from what one knows; that one must be concerned with improving one's own knowledge, always enhancing and adapting to new conditions to help others build their knowledge.

Thus, we observed that there was an understanding of continuing education as an action of relevance to pedagogical practice. According to the questioned teachers, when these trainings foster practical activities, they create opportunity for reflection and modifications in teaching practice. Furthermore, when socialization and the interchange of experiences occur, as in theoretical discussions and practices produced by training programs, the appropriation of formative action is favored.



## Final considerations

Based on the research, we reflect on continuing education for literacy teachers, highlighting the convergences and divergences between the guidelines of programs such as Pro-Letramento (2008) and the National Pact for Literacy at the Right Age (2012a, 2012b) and teaching pedagogical practice.

Three areas of analysis —the 'training path', 'concept of literacy and alphabetization', and 'teaching practices'—were shown to be significant in the training process based on interviews with literacy teachers.

The 'training path' was permeated with a formative and accumulative experience, that is, a relationship between personal and professional experience. The speeches were crossed by multiple knowledge arising from initial and continuing education, individual experiences, and professionalization, which had repercussions on pedagogical practice.

The dimension on 'literacy and alphabetization' referred to the conceptions that subsidized the pedagogical work, in which the teachers' theoretical inconsistency was evident in their speeches, sometimes approaching the guidelines proposed by PNAIC, sometimes prioritizing actions already experienced. This illustrates a practice of action, reflection, and modifications in the teaching practice as a result of formative experiences. Another finding was that teachers were unable to properly identify the approach employed for literacy, despite indications in the speech of a literacy proposal characterized by synthetic and analytical methods.

Finally, the term 'teaching practices' referred to evidence of the implementation of guidelines proposed by continuing education programs in teaching practice. The speeches indicated lived experiences, the exchange between peers, the socialization of initiatives, the work involving ludic activities as the guiding principles of the pedagogical approach that is developed in the daily life of the literacy classrooms. The significance of teachers interacting with colleagues' educational work was emphasized, a literacy suggestion that pervades the concept of cooperation, far from a perspective of isolated pedagogical activity.

When responding to the questions, the teachers eventually detailed some of the educational techniques used, frequently showing a theoretical-methodological relationship that was not consistent with those recommended by the training program. This exemplifies the imbalance brought by the new study perspectives in order to reframe the activities.

We realize that teaching practice requires the mastery of a repertoire of knowledge. Thus, teaching knowledge is made up of several sorts of knowledge from various sources. In the case of continuing education, the importance of recognizing and appreciating teaching knowledge, particularly knowledge of experience, which Tardif (2000, 2002) regards to be the fundamental core of this knowledge, must be emphasized.

In this sense, the interviews confirm an appreciation for experiences, relationships among colleagues, socialization, and activity sharing as determinants of the formation of literacy teachers' pedagogical practice. Simultaneously, both approximations and distances were seen regarding the theoretical-methodological proposals investigated, in a formative resignification that is not restricted to specific initiatives and must be ensured as a process over the entire professional trajectory. Positive points were highlighted in the program such as pleasure reading, the use of games, and playful activities in literacy and interdisciplinarity.

Teacher education has proven to be a desired initiative as a salvific action for the literacy problem in Brazil, which is not sustained, because improving education entails so many other actions, such as investment in infrastructure as well as social policies reaching schools and in professional valorization. Empowering teachers through theory, reflection, and advocating changes in school practices are efforts undertaken by federal public policies, which must be joined to a variety of other measures boosting Education's central position in the country.

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#### Note:

We, the authors, were responsible for the conception, analysis, and interpretation of the data; writing and critical review of the content of the manuscript, and also for the approval of the final version to be published.