

TO BE A TEACHER TODAY: A CARTOGRAPHY OF TEACHING IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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ABSTRACT. Teaching is a profession shrouded in a diversity of concepts and ways of being-doing-acting and knowing the figure of the teacher and their different ways of acting allows one to understand the breadth of the reality that surrounds this professional. This research aimed to investigate the perceptions and meanings of teaching among elementary school teachers in a municipal school in Santa Maria/RS. Having cartography as a method, it was possible to pay attention to the processes that involve the subjects present in the research, allowing problematization to provoke reflections. For this purpose, observations and four group meetings were carried out at the school, in which three teachers participated. A field diary was used to record the narratives and activities performed. It was found that the teaching profession is built in the social field, as both the image and what it means to be a teacher is built throughout the life of each person. It was also observed that the exercise of teaching occurs in the collective sphere, as in this space new perspectives for professional performance emerge, thus enabling a way to escape from the sickening logic that involves the teaching profession. It is understood that this illness is the result of subjectivation processes that expand throughout a political, economic, cultural and social network. In view of this, it was possible to apprehend those interventions that involve the collective can be actions that enhance changes, both in the being and in the doing of the teacher in their professional routine, thus supporting their personal growth as a teacher.

Keywords: Public education; cartographic method; teaching work.

SER PROFESSOR/A HOJE: UMA CARTOGRAFIA DA DOCÊNCIA NO ENSINO FUNDAMENTAL

RESUMO. A docência é uma profissão envolta em uma diversidade de conceitos e modos de ser-fazer-agir e conhecer a figura do/a professor/a, e suas distintas formas de atuar permite que se compreenda a amplitude da realidade que cerca esse/a profissional. Esta pesquisa teve como objetivo investigar as percepções e significados da docência entre professores/as do ensino fundamental de uma escola municipal de Santa Maria/RS. Tendo a cartografia como método, pode-se atentar para os processos que envolvem os sujeitos presentes na pesquisa, possibilitando que problematizações provocassem reflexões. Para tanto, foram realizadas observações e quatro encontros de grupo na escola, nos quais participaram três professoras. Um diário de campo foi utilizado para o registro das narrativas e atividades realizadas. Constatou-se que a profissão docente tem sua construção feita no campo do social, pois tanto a imagem, quanto o que é ser professor/a se constrói ao longo

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da vida de cada um/a. Também se observou que o exercício da docência ocorre no âmbito do coletivo, pois neste espaço emergem novas perspectivas para a própria atuação profissional, permitindo assim uma forma de escape à lógica adoecedora que envolve a profissão docente. Entende-se que este adoecimento é resultante de processos de subjetivação que se expandem por toda uma rede política, econômica, cultural e social. Diante disto, pode-se apreender que intervenções que envolvem o coletivo podem ser ações potencializadoras de mudanças, tanto no ser como no fazer do/a professor/a em seu cotidiano profissional, corroborando para o seu crescimento pessoal como docente.

Palavras-chave: Ensino público; método cartográfico; trabalho docente.

SER MAESTRO/A HOY: UNA CARTOGRAFÍA DE LA ENSEÑANZA EN LA ESCUELA PRIMARIA

RESUMEN. La docencia es una profesión envuelta en una diversidad de conceptos y formas de ser-hacer-actuar y conocer la figura del docente y sus diferentes formas de actuar permite comprender la amplitud de la realidad que rodea a este profesional. Esta investigación tuvo como objetivo investigar las percepciones y significados de la docencia entre profesores de primaria de una escuela municipal de Santa María / RS. Teniendo la cartografía como método, fue posible prestar atención a los procesos que involucran a los sujetos presentes en la investigación, permitiendo que la problematización provoque reflexiones. Para ello, se realizaron observaciones y cuatro reuniones grupales en la escuela, en las que participaron tres docentes. Se utilizó un diario de campo para registrar las narrativas y actividades realizadas. Se constató que la profesión docente se construye en el ámbito social, ya que tanto la imagen como lo que significa ser docente se construye a lo largo de la vida de cada persona. También se observó que el ejercicio de la docencia se da en el ámbito colectivo, pues en este espacio surgen nuevas perspectivas para el desempeño profesional, posibilitando así una vía para escapar de la lógica enfermiza que envuelve la profesión docente. Se entiende que esta enfermedad es el resultado de procesos de subjetivación que se expanden a lo largo de un entramado político, económico, cultural y social. Ante esto, se pudo aprehender que las intervenciones que involucran al colectivo pueden ser acciones que potencien cambios, tanto en el ser como en el hacer del docente en su rutina profesional, apoyando así su crecimiento personal como docente.

Palabras clave: Educación pública; método cartográfico; trabajo docente.

Introduction

When beginning reflections arising from such challenging research as this one, it is necessary to highlight some considerations. Researching the teaching class has been a task for many scholars, but as Sacristán (2015) wrote, when analyzing some investigative trends in the field of teaching, it is necessary to keep in mind that the teacher and their experiences, experiences and practices needs to be the central agent of such studies and research, not just their pedagogical work as a teacher. It is necessary to expand our view of the entire reality surrounding this education professional (Limachi & Zucolotto, 2020), as according to Nóvoa (2007, p. 17, emphasis added), “[...] it is impossible to separate the

professional 'self' from the personal 'self'". For this author, being a teacher, as someone who teaches knowledge, is closely linked to who he/she is as a person.

Teaching is a profession surrounded by a diversity of concepts and ways of being-doing-acting (Aquino, 2019). However, in recent decades, studies on teaching have focused more directly on the figure of the teacher and their profession, which is perceived as a new professionalization, inculcating a self-responsibility for their practice as a teacher (Silva, Pereira, Novelho, & Silveira, 2018). It is important to add that the teaching profession always seems to have stood not on its own but pulled or pushed in the direction of political-economic interests (Limachi & Zucolotto, 2020). Within this capitalistic logic, subjectivation processes took place (and still take place) through the control of everything surrounding the subject, molding them to patterns of consumption and production (Guattari & Rolnik, 2013). This modeling/molding also had its repercussions in the field of teaching, for example, in the intensification of the working day and the excess of activities that involve teaching.

Living in times of constant change, in which certainties disappear in the face of the speed of new information when teachers find themselves immersed in a malaise resulting from sudden social transformations, there is an urgent need to listen to these professionals of education (Limachi & Zucolotto, 2020). It is imperative, according to Zucolotto (2018), to encourage debate about the difficulties faced in the work of educating today. Listening and paying attention to what they experience daily, both inside and outside the school, and their concepts/conceptions of what it means to be a teacher in a globalizing situation that homogenizes behaviors and hegemonizes ways of thinking.

In this context, this study aimed to investigate the perceptions and meanings of teaching for teachers at a public elementary school in the municipality of Santa Maria, state of Rio Grande do Sul. For this purpose, we sought to gather narratives from these individuals about their experiences as teachers and their motivations for choosing this professional career; discuss the possible difficulties and satisfactions encountered in the daily teaching practice and, concomitantly, provide opportunities for speech and new meanings about their own experiences as teachers in the contexts in which they are inserted.

Considerations about the method and analysis

Understanding the subjectivation processes of teachers today, their perceptions and meanings about their professional work, and how these influence their entire life context involves seeking and maintaining an inventive character in the way of research (Passos, Kastrup, & Tedesco, 2016). This form of investigation aims to broaden and shift the look from 'on' the research 'objects' to a look 'with' them, which means that both the researcher and the researched are co-participants in the same, i.e., research becomes a collective practice.

Therefore, instead of neutrality, this study proposed a dive into the experience (Heckert & Barros, 2013), turning our attention to the different realities that arise in the relationships between the research subjects. According to Veiga-Neto (2016), knowledge, changes, and even subjectivations are produced in the strength of these relationships.

This undertaking evoked the need to understand the notions of movement and displacement (Dias, 2012), as these denounce the constant change and transformation in the research path. In this trajectory of passage, what is apparently immobile, in reality, transforms and, in this field of research, needs to be 'drawn' through "[...] specific tools open to movements, to intensities [performing] the outline of a trajectory in the constitution" (Dias, 2012, p. 25).

Cartography is one of these ways of carrying out research that moves and reinvents itself all the time, as it is important and necessary to join all the processes that involve it. Rolnik (2016) comments that in cartography we seek to follow the drawing at the same time as it transforms into the landscape. In the psychosocial field, according to the author, cartography allows us to witness and participate in the 'worlds' that dismantle and form into others. Hence the need for the cartographer to delve into these worlds and pay attention to the lines, and languages that could be used to compose 'his/her drawing'.

At this point, it is necessary to clarify that this type of research takes place in an interventional way, because, when realities that are not given in a fixed form emerge, attention shifts to the processes that mutually involve the subjects involved in it (Barros & Barros, 2016). Therefore, reciprocity is established between the researcher and participants who, together, amidst the relationships created at the time, problematize the realities posed by science, causing transformations by raising new problems, thus encouraging other research practices (Passos et al., 2016).

As proposed by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, cartography seeks to structure itself based on the processes involving the social field, as these are constantly changing (Deleuze, 2013; Passos et al., 2016). Therefore, questions established a priori, wrapped in already structured models, are set aside, as what is sought in this form of research are the arrangements and disarrangements of the realities that are revealed, even if provisionally and dynamically, in human existence. In this sense, when seeking to undertake cartography in research in the education field and, in this case, in the field of teaching, we seek to understand much more than data from reality but also the affections and sensations that surround this teacher, their interrelations, interlocutions, their escape lines⁴ established in an existential mesh in their social field.

These authors also point out that the analysis procedure permeates the same vision of a reality composed of lines, that is, in cartography, a drawing is formed as the data is revealed (Passos et al., 2016). This means that how these data are approached also differs from the objectivity of modern science. The very understanding of data collection is different when undertaking research in cartographic mode, as these are not ready in some place and/or someone but are part of relationships and experiences that emerge from the research processes. Given this, data construction is procedural, resulting from matches and mismatches between the research field and the researcher (Passos et al., 2016).

In this sense, analysis in cartography is carried out without detachment since it is immersed in the collective experience in which everything and everyone is involved (Passos et al., 2016). This means that all cartographic analysis has a participatory dimension, understanding that the analyst is involved in the field of research, i.e., the researcher needs to participate in the experience and not simply talk/write about it.

For this reason, one cannot adhere to a position of neutrality when analyzing all the processes and relationships established during the research. Being a form of intervention research, the participation and involvement of the researcher are necessary for a greater understanding of the multiple relationships emerging from the process. Barros and Barros (2016) highlight this participatory dimension of cartographic research, noting that the research is created at the most diverse moments of the research. Therefore, in cartography,

⁴ The conception of Deleuze and Guattari (2012) is taken here as escape lines, which indicate that the human being, as well as social groups, are crossed by basically three types of lines: one with harder segmentarity, another more malleable, and a third that signals rupture/escape. These latter emerge amid creative inventiveness to counteract a dominant machine that impedes the flow of changes.

there is no division of stages, in which analysis is one of them; on the contrary, analysis accompanies the entire research process.

Considerations about the research field

Before moving on, it is important to know how it happened and who the teachers participating in this research are. As the objective was to investigate the conceptions about teaching held by elementary school teachers at a municipal elementary school in Santa Maria (Rio Grande do Sul), contact was made with an institution where an internship project in psychology was already underway. The meeting between management and the researcher happened with great cordiality, and disposition. It was agreed that observations and group meetings would be held with teachers interested in participating in the research once a week and for six weeks. The principal was promptly willing to change the students' departure time if a significant number of teachers were willing to attend. The observations took place during the teachers' break (students' recess) in the teachers' room on six occasions. Observations also took place during some classes taught by those who participated in the research at three moments.

Group meetings took place from the second week of observation onwards so the invited teachers could think and decide whether they would participate in the research. Three teachers agreed to the proposal and promptly opened the classroom doors for observation. The research participants come from different contexts, of different ages, and with quite different lengths of time working in teaching. In this text, in order to respect confidentiality, they were named Teacher C, Teacher D, and Teacher E, with five, 18, and 24 years of experience in teaching, respectively, married, but only two (Teachers D and E) reported having children. Teachers D and E started teaching in the context of high school, working in primary education for approximately one (D) and ten years (E). Teacher C began her teaching profession in the context of technical education, entering the context of elementary education for about two years. They all work in the final years of elementary school, and one of them (Teacher E) also teaches in early years classes.

The initial proposal consisted of six meetings; however, due to the limited availability of time in the school calendar, only four meetings were held, which was felt in the research as little time to achieve its objectives more broadly. At the first meeting, the research content was explained, and participants were proposed to share their opinions, desires, and ideas about what was raised to reflect on. From then on, each meeting (the intervention proposals or problematizing questions) resulted from something already awakened/created/recreated by the teachers in previous meetings. The use of art (painting, drawings, writing, collage) was also a means to express their perceptions about what was being discussed.

The proposal for each meeting was to follow the path of articulations that forged the creation of new ways of thinking and acting. In this sense, the researcher had to adopt a flexible position (Dias, 2015) so that she could pay attention to formulations and problematizations that emerged amid the speeches. Therefore, there was nothing pre-determined, just propositions that were accepted or not by the group members.

The process of analyzing the constructed data took place from the first moment of contact with the teachers. Expressions, narratives, opinions, and discussions at each meeting were recorded in a field diary to reflect on the different dimensions and perceptions they gave to what was being discussed at the time. Based on the material recorded in the field diary, the present study sought to highlight the areas of discussion most expressed by

the teachers. As a result of the discussions at each meeting, for example, the importance of the social, the collective, in the construction and exercise of teaching was revealed.

As this is research on human beings, the ethical precepts described in Resolução nº 510 (2016) of the Conselho Nacional de Saúde were followed, ensuring participants' confidentiality and the freedom to participate, refuse, or withdraw from this study at any time. This research was assessed by the Research Ethics Committee and approved under opinion – CAAE 19445319.4.0000.5306.

Results and discussion

Listening/hearing is one of the most common senses for many living beings. However, in humans, this act comes loaded with a range of meanings and impressions. To listen, it is necessary to offer yourself for this, for attention, to offer your body, your presence to someone else who is speaking and who wants to be heard. Teaching is a profession with a lot of talking and the teacher shares his/her knowledge and his/her knowledge to those who are willing to listen. In this sense, Nóvoa (2006, p. 14) expresses that

[...] teachers are neither angels nor demons. They're just people. And it's not much anymore. They are not supermen or superwomen. They are professionals who dedicate themselves to a mission for which they have to prepare themselves properly, for which they have to find support, particularly in schools and with their colleagues, that allows them to carry out a calm and qualified action.

Therefore, teachers are subjectivized subjects in a complex network of relationships and modeling and have to be heard, as their professional practice is always complex and intensified by conflicts, multiplicities, and uncertainties (Figueiredo, 2017).

The meetings with the teachers involved in this research were woven together with reports, reflections, affectations, and lines that revealed themselves with transformative potential. The most prominent information in the meetings is listed below in two points: first, drawing the line that teaching is a profession that is built socially, and second, understanding that teaching is a profession that is practiced in the collective sphere.

Teaching as a profession constructed in society

Teaching, throughout history, has been an activity/profession very linked to interests external to the teacher (Limachi & Zucolotto, 2020). Initially, it emerged as a profession with a certain status, but its path was and still is permeated with continuous embarrassment and neglect by its agents and society. Barretto (2015) researches teacher training throughout history and evidences the precariousness of the profession even with some investments by governments in education and the training of educators.

To understand the construction of being a teacher today at school, it is also necessary to understand that work is a fundamental experience in the subject's psychic constitution; this (work) is a practice that can both enrich and sicken. The teacher does not appear immediately (or when hired) in the school environment; The image we have about the teacher, or what it means to be a teacher, is built throughout each person's life story (Oliveira, 2006).

This was observed in the narratives shared by the teachers in one of the meetings. Teacher D reports the image of a teacher in her childhood, who was "[...] tireless in his daily practice. A dedicated teacher who pushed his students to study and learn, not allowing time for games". Teacher E comments on the pleasure she felt playing at being a teacher when she was very little. In this case, she had her mother, aunts, and uncles, who were teachers,

who gave her a small blackboard that she used to play with, with her dolls as her students. This pleasure was lost over the years but resurfaced when she began teaching the early years of elementary school. Teacher C is motivated to teach when she finds herself doing a graduate degree in education, although she had been involved in teaching since she was very young, whether within her family or among her friends.

The shared reports clearly express that their practices and ways of thinking result from interactions in a given culture, which perpetuates values, beliefs, and artifacts in society (Guattari & Rolnik, 2013). We recognize this as a process of subjectivation, in which the subject is constituted based on a network of relationships that make up a social fabric (Limachi & Zucolotto, 2020). As teachers, the discursive practices produced in society contributed to the identity construction of the profession, delimiting values and conduct.

The discursivity present in the teachers' narratives during the meetings (and also during work breaks) revealed an existence shaped by the patterns of this broad and heterogeneous network (Rolnik, 2016). A network that is not closed in itself but woven based on relationships and experiences lived in the matches and mismatches of life. These teachers' childhood and schooling history served as a reference for building their perceptions of what it means to be a teacher, as well as their daily practices as a teacher.

It is also worth considering that the school environment is constitutive in the subjectivation process of this teacher. As such, Foucault (2013) reflects on how the school becomes a device of power whose mission is to normalize/standardize behaviors, make bodies docile, and prepare the subject for the world of work. Veiga-Neto (2016) also registers the school as a center that generates knowledge-power and subjectivation because, in this space, discourses from outside are introjected and repeated continuously, resulting in stereotyping and crystallizing ways of being and doing.

When Deleuze (2013) outlines the presence of a society of control, the subject's subjectivation processes begin to occur through different vectors, heterogeneous in themselves, which reveal a weakening of borders, previously stable in Modernity (such as religion, family, traditions...). This weakening meant that contemporary subjectivity is linked to consumerist logic, manifesting itself in an individualized and serialized way, permeated by asymmetrical relationships, which he called capitalistic subjectivity (Deleuze & Guattari, 2012).

In the educational-school context, the teacher is subjectivized according to the discursive practices present in what it means to be/do school. Practices that originate in the most diverse places, from government policies and agendas to the junction between academic knowledge and local knowledge (Guattari & Rolnik, 2013; Rolnik, 2016). The discourse expressed by the teachers revealed a desire for a time of 'supposed safety' when "[...] the teacher was more valued and respected" (Teacher D) or when there was "[...] more control and discipline at school" (Teacher E). Teaching suffering currently arises because the environment and its different relationships seem to be in a continuous process of change, in which everything seems unpredictable and uncontrollable (Rolnik, 2016). The contradictions present in the subjectivation processes experienced by these teachers are evident, as they were produced under supposed stability and then, nowadays, 'were thrown' into a totally unstable and constantly changing job market.

Gallo & Mendonça (2020) emphasize that the market has become the reference for everything today and, in this sense, we can think with Sacristán (2015) that education has become a commodity to be uninterruptedly consumed, and the teacher ends up doing more and more what the market demands. This reveals that education and, consequently, schools are subject to the capitalist and neoliberal production market.

This context has generated demotivation in teachers towards their careers and increased the degree of devaluation of the profession. Teacher D mentioned: "I don't want my children to pursue this profession because I don't want them to suffer". A concern from this same teacher (D) is expressed in the following statement: "What will the teacher's future be like?" Such questions and concerns reflect certain subjectivation processes to which each teacher is currently subjected. Processes that shape certain types of behavior, such as rigidity, apathy towards students, aggressiveness, and, consequently, generating ways of thinking that are out of context with the work environment. Reflecting on what the figure of the teacher represents today, Masschelein and Simons (2017) mention that this professional occupies a prominent place full of inadequacies. With their different ways of being-doing, they also become a figure that destabilizes the order, daily confronting the status quo.

Therefore, it is worth clarifying the importance of the multiplicity and diversity of relationships that involve the subject in their constitution; according to Guattari and Rolnik (2013), this human being is a social being. Getting involved in this vision means breaking with individualism and moving forward in strengthening the relational networks that involve and build subjects. In the teaching context, it includes strengthening relationships present at school and outside of it, which allows new social arrangements to be built and contributes to the emergence of new meanings for a profession that has always been and will always be, involved in relationships.

Teaching as a profession exercised in the collective

During the meetings with the teachers, there were several times when they mentioned their satisfaction at having that moment and that space to reflect, talk, share, and, why not, also relax. Amid reflections on this space, some questions arose: Which space, exactly, are the teachers referring to? A physical space, determined in a specific time and place? Or would it be a space characterized by a positioning, by relationships? On this issue, Foucault (2009) articulated the idea that the subject is surrounded by a diversity of spaces from fixed spaces constituted by more 'disciplinary, normalizing, and controlling' relationships to spaces he calls heterotopias, i.e., real spaces that oppose the utopias present in culture.

So... what could Teacher D, for example, refer to when complaining/calling for a space for the teacher at school? At first, it is evident, at least in this school, the lack of a physical space, to which teachers can escape and take refuge. This desire for escape or refuge is a clear symptom of the suffering that involves teaching, to the point that the teacher no longer wishes to be in that place.

Pereira (2017) talks about the importance of time and space for teachers to talk calmly and to have a brief break from school routines. This author comments that relationships between teachers in the school context are weakened, which can result in illness at work. This illness can be reflected in the sense that the teaching profession seems to have been confined to a space restricted to the classroom.

An important consideration to make before moving forward. Throughout the journey undertaken so far, the expression meeting was sometimes revisited. It is understood that meetings are not just a gathering of individuals who (perhaps) think the same way or a clash of people with different opinions or even a convergence of ideas and ideals of those who meet. Meetings are, simultaneously, this entire set that has already been exposed, a diversity of relationships and opinions that give rise to a potential for construction and transformation. Rolnik (2016) comments that, in meetings, bodies attract and repel each

other, and this movement reveals their power to affect and be affected. This means that, at each group meeting, there was a variety of affectations, in which the opinions of one reverberated in another, which, consequently, affected the others in the group. Sometimes disagreements occurred, such as when Teacher D referred to today's teacher as a poor thing, which prompted Teacher C to immediately say: "I don't consider myself a poor thing! On the contrary, I consider myself a warrior!" Then, Teacher E also comments on her agreement with her colleague that, nowadays, you have to be brave to be a teacher. It is observed that, in this meeting, they aroused forces that seemed to oppose each other; however, they resulted in forces that generated new ties capable of deterritorialization, enabling the "[...] creation of spaces in movements and affections that leave us adrift" (Silva, Macedo, Barros & Vilhena, 2012, p. 114).

During group meetings with teachers, we sought to promote the possibility of building a new space. A space-time that is also real and locatable in which they could express opinions and ideas, share feelings and sensations/impressions, or try to build new relationships, thus strengthening the relational web at school. It is necessary to remember the processuality of the human condition, i.e., the human being is subjectivized amid collective, institutional, and social practices (Figueiredo, 2017). Therefore, paying attention to this space constructed in the collective allows new meanings to emerge for teaching, for the teacher himself/herself.

The open space for meetings between teachers allowed for the surfacing of a feeling and/or sensation during experiences in the group – loneliness. According to them, they often had to resolve, on their own, conflicts beyond the classroom, without the help of other instances in the school environment, which ended up generating fatigue and discouragement in their daily teaching practice. Oliveira (2006, p. 172) shows that the teaching profession is generally exercised in an "[...] isolated way, without any sharing, with very little solidarity experience". For this reason, it can be seen that talking to each other, sharing fears and anxieties, and listening to the joys and sadness of colleagues during meetings served as motivating triggers for working together and recognizing each other's potential. In one of these moments, Teacher C turned to her colleague (Teacher E) and commented that, despite many calling her "[...] harsh, complaining and boring" (as she had mentioned in one of the meetings), she could understand that there was also sensitivity and affection in her (Teacher E). This moment aroused many emotions between them, which had repercussions on subsequent meetings, generating higher respect and concern for each other.

Seeing the possibility of new feelings, sensations, and perspectives for one's professional performance can be considered a way of escaping this sickening logic that surrounds the teaching profession. The immanence of another 'escape line' was observed in the speech of Teacher C, who refused to accept the idea of being a poor thing for being a teacher, thus revealing her refusal to give in to the labels that the teaching profession currently receives (and which they mentioned) as hard, devalued, lonely, distressing, among others.

"How beautiful it would be for the teacher to have a space/place to relax and share! I believe that every teacher should have time like this... we don't take care of ourselves... or we're not taken care of like that" (Teacher D). This expression also mobilized reflections in group meetings. In each of these, the teachers looked for each other so as not to be late. Such behavior reveals the desire for time and space to live together in a closer and more reflective way. The meetings were considered as forms of care between them. Teacher C

remembered another colleague who was unable to participate in those moments and commented that she would share with her the experiences she had in that time and space.

This self-care perspective triggered the proposal to hold more meetings between them, even in small groups, at different times of the school year. The idea awakened the desire to have other experiences as a teacher, sharing, listening/being heard by their colleagues in order to, perhaps, try to minimize the feeling of loneliness that has distressed some of them. Nóvoa (2009) corroborates, highlighting the importance of generating spaces of solidarity since teacher training, as “[...] being a teacher means understanding the meanings of the school institution, integrating into a profession, learning from more experienced colleagues. It is at school and in dialogue with other teachers that you learn the profession” (Nóvoa, 2009, p. 30).

In an individualized culture, responsibilities and blame fall on a subject excluded from their social context, and requests for a space-time of coexistence and reflection signal the importance of providing moments to coexist, dialogue, and reflect. Such meetings open doors to break with the individualizing culture present in contemporary times and strengthen relationships, strengthening the networks of interactions that constitute the subjectivity of every human being.

Final considerations

Supporting the procedural character of the world and the relationships established in it and believing in the potential mutability of the subject in contemporary subjectivation processes, one cannot accept a stagnant form of existence without prospects for any changes. Although the control society appears in contemporary society as volatile and inconstant and conditions subjects to act and think in an individualizing and solitary way, it is necessary to promote escape lines, which, even though they are invisible, can be powerful generators of new forms of thinking and acting (Guattari & Rolnik, 2013).

In group meetings between teachers, some fine lines could be glimpsed. The discourse of suffering and disregard for the profession emerged as ‘hard lines’ of a reality that seems to be doomed to chaos, with no prospect of change, like the lines of the molar plane⁵, well explained by Rolnik (2016). Discourses regarding what it means to be a teacher seem limited to a notion of necessary skills (such as intelligence, commitment, and responsibility), with many limitations in recreating new modes of existence. It seems to be very difficult to think of other meanings of what it means ‘to be’ a teacher, and it is much simpler and more practical to think of something that he/she needs to ‘have’ to be a good education professional.

The reality of suffering in teaching was manifested through the teachers’ narratives. But this already given situation does not need to remain, it is possible to transform it, find other ways out, rethink plans, and recreate one’s existence as a teacher. Nevertheless, giving new meanings to experiences is complex and involves a willingness to develop a different perspective on the surrounding circumstances. To do so, it is necessary to observe the re(creating) processes that emerge in the matches and mismatches of experiences occurring in the collective sphere.

⁵ Rolnik (2016) explains this concept as lines that are configured in a clear, limited, and defining way of territories, in which consciousness commands affections, composing a plan that is somehow stable and rigid.

Thinking and mobilizing in different spaces within the collective can open up opportunities to resist the isolation that has taken place in the teaching profession. Teachers, even in an environment conducive to socialization and coexistence, have felt increasingly alone and distant from each other. Precisely at this point, the group meetings broke the walls of abandonment and forged escape lines that allowed them to see each other, hear each other, and affect each other. Therefore, it is important for the entire set of relationships to be strengthened so that the teacher can build a new existence. It takes work not just from one sector of society, such as, for example, a government body, or some organization outside the government. It also does not just involve the goodwill of this teacher; it involves joint action by everyone who cares about education and those involved in it. Therefore, it is necessary to let go, let oneself be enveloped by the strangeness of what is present, resist the rigidity of the social, and then be willing to create and recreate.

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