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Biographical narratives about the construction of oneself as a Pedagogy student in geographic mobility

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Summary

This paper presents the results of a doctoral research project in education conducted at the UFAL Campus.ACSimões, in Maceió, Alagoas, from 2018 to 2023. The study focused on the self-construction processes of three young women as university students on daily geographic mobility, through narrative interviews with a biographical bias. Each interview was conducted separately, with two meetings with each student, for a total of six interviews. The young women developed a story about their upbringing. In this, transportation conditions were considered a challenge to be overcome. The long wait times for transportation, especially breakdowns during rainy periods, and the lack of a support network in Maceió did not appear to the same degree in the narratives.

Thus, it became clear that being a university student in daily geographic mobility encompasses a context of similar challenges, but also an experiential and non-linear constructive process, marked by intellectual and subjective learning that influences the individual's level of engagement with their studies. Finally, the importance of enhancing the Pedagogy course curriculum was identified, with training proposals based on the biographical relationship with learning. I believe that such spaces can contribute to facilitating reflexivity and the articulation of knowledge with the real world.

Keywords: Narrative interviews. University students. Young women. Daily geographic mobility.

Abstract

This paper presents the results of a doctoral research project in education conducted at the ACSimões Campus of UFAL, in Maceió, Alagoas, from 2018 to 2023. The study focused on the processes of self-construction as university students of three young women engaged in daily geographic mobility, through narrative interviews with a biographical bias. Each interview was conducted separately, with two meetings with each student, for a total of six interviews. The young women developed a story about their development. In this interview, transportation conditions were considered a challenge to be overcome. The long wait times for transportation, especially the breakdown of the vehicle during rainy periods, as well as the lack of a support network in Maceió, did not appear to the same degree of importance in the narratives. Thus, it became clear that being a university student engaged in daily geographic mobility encompasses a context of similar challenges, but also a constructive, experiential, and non-linear process, marked by intellectual and subjective learning that influences the individual's level of engagement with their studies. Finally, we identified the importance of enhancing the Pedagogy course curriculum, with training proposals based on the biographical connection to learning. I believe such spaces can contribute to enabling reflexivity and the connection of knowledge with the real world.

Keywords: Narrative interviews. College students. Young women. Daily geographic mobility.



1 INTRODUCTION

The research path focused on young pedagogy students in mobility daily geographic information to the AC Simões Campus of the Federal University of Alagoas (UFAL), in Maceió/AL. The problem is presented in the following question: How to analyze within the framework of biographical narratives of three young people, the construction of oneself as a student of pedagogy in mobility daily geographic? Three participants were in their final semester. For this, I assumed that Alain Coulon (2008) that, because they have been at university for longer, they have appropriated the codes and the behaviors characteristic of academic daily life, thus becoming affiliates. In Due to the extent and depth of the research, this communication shares only the results of the narrative interview of a participant (conducted in two meetings via *Google Meet* due to pandemic), codename Violet.

Delory-Momberger (2008, p. 526) states that the purpose of the interview is to learn “the singular configuration of facts, situations, relationships, meanings, interpretations that each person gives to his own existence and which founds the feeling he has of himself as a singular and social being”. In the context of research, the group may even share similar situations; however, for each person the process is particular. Fritz Schütze (2010), providing guidance on how to conduct the interview, saying about the presentation of the narrator, later the unfolding of the narrative itself about the aspects intended with the interview. This should happen without interference from the researcher. Finally, the phase of argumentative responses, which are given due to concerns raised by the researcher.

Inspired by the respective theorists, the first meeting began with the presentation of the research objectives and invited them to view some photographs of the spaces that make up the AC Simões Campus, UFAL, to activate memories of a place where they had been confined for more than of a year. After looking at the photographs, the interview began. I asked each person to speak about themselves and describe their university careers. When the interview was over, I went over some of excerpts so that I could more effectively understand what they decided to share.

The second meeting began with self-reflections on the narrative of the first meeting, sent via *email*. Guided by the question “what was it like for you to read your story,” the students reported their impressions, removing and adding other facts. This moment is recognized by Reis (2020) as “biographical restitution”. After completing the review, I moved on to the central objective of the second meeting, agreed with each participant in the previous interview: sharing photographs of their academic paths that were selected after reading the narratives read. The photographs would serve to show situations that were told or share moments that were not told in the



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first meeting, this is because, when visiting their collections, other episodes came into play. Each young person selected a maximum of 10 photographs of their preference.

In the long run, the meticulousness surrounding the narrative interview became more evident, therefore during the transcription of the material, based on Delory-Momberger (2008), I identified the remarkable experiences, also called by Fritz Schütze (2010) frequent markers in narratives, that is, units of presentation. In other words, they mean situations and people that appear strongly in the narrative and give meaning to the process of being a student. Soon after, the forms of discourse that characterize the narrative, the recurring motifs that thematize and organize the report, acting in it as a place of recognition and a key to interpreting the experience.

Considering the research path, before presenting the analysis of a participant, I bring some fundamental concepts.

2. YOUNG WOMEN WHO COMMUTE DAILY TO STUDY

I start from the conception of youth as a relational and social category, entangled with biological conditions, making a precise definition impossible, but it can be understood, in the words of Reis (2020, p. 33), “as collectivities and/or singular/social subjects with their relationships with the world, with others and with themselves and as subjects of rights”. In the case of young people in daily mobility who travel from neighboring cities to Maceió/AL to study in ACSimões Campus, deal with demands from social structures, identified: harassment, violence, motherhood, work, household chores, as well as participating in the dynamics of life at the same time academic. This context reverberates a commitment made possible by his own youthful condition, called by researchers Margulis and Urresti (1996) of vital moratorium. Taking the identifiers mentioned in the research, the conception of youth is associated with gender relations.

Considering this assumption, gender relations appear markedly as implicating the course of academic training, indicating, according to Margulis and Urresti (1996), that young women, unlike young men, deal with social pressures that affect their youthfulness, in addition to social impositions that tend to recall the limited youth installed in their body, with a view to motherhood. Therefore, being young, a woman and a student presents itself in a more complex and challenging.

Regarding daily mobility (from one municipality to another) due to life student, Lobato (2021) explains that this mobility involves a personal and professional investment that causes subjective changes, modifying and redefining their relationship with the place. In words of Lobato (2021, p. 80), “movement [...] carries with it the senses, the weight and the



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experience produced and lived in spaces. Student mobility is not, therefore, a linear flow, but rather, a mobility permeated by negotiations”. Therefore, understanding this mobility daily geography goes beyond the idea of moving from one point to another, to understand overcoming in favor of a student and life project.

3. CONSTRUCTING YOURSELF AS A STUDENT

Violeta, a young woman in her early 20s, living in the city of Cajueiro, approximately 1 hour and 30 minutes from Maceió, married and a teacher of the initial grades of High School Fundamental, she readily accepted the invitation to participate in the study. Active in her daily life academic before the covid-19 pandemic, the young woman shared her concerns about the present pandemic in a more in-depth way, unlike past memories. On the other hand, when these emerged, were expressed nostalgically, at the same time, as an attempt to assimilate the changes resulting from the epidemiological scenario that led her in another direction: motherhood.

Violeta was studying in the seventh period, when activities at the AC Simões Campus (UFAL) were suspended in 2020. Pedagogy was not his first undergraduate course, having studied Literature at the same institution. However, the young woman states:

[...] I can say that today I am a different person after Pedagogy, I don't know what course that is, but I feel different, I have another vision of education, I entered Literature, but I couldn't leave with the perspective I have today. I can see things that many people can't see because of my training at CEDU (VIOLET, 2021).

In the vastness of her narrative, the remarkable experiences: “I am different after Pedagogy: I learned to express myself and put myself out there, I'm no longer afraid of speaking in public”, “my dream is to do a master's and a doctorate, but with the pandemic I paralyzed”,

“I slept at a police station because the bus didn't pick up the students.” In this case, of daily mobility, during the Literature course, travel was challenging, since the young woman moved to the state capital, Maceió, in the company of her parents. She had to learn to dealing with schedules, finding your way around and above all facing the obstacles of transport provided by city hall of their hometown, which took the students to UFAL. In pedagogy, the displacement did not impact in the same proportion, due to the accumulation of their experiences. However, young man highlighted the physical exhaustion and the limited time to participate in academic activities, due to dependence in many cases of city buses.



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In addition to these, his participation in research and conferences also stood out, as a context for cultural enrichment and development of their autonomy. Likewise way, he mentioned the bonds of friendship built at the university and the changes in his project of life with the pandemic. In this last case, Violeta decides during 2020, in agreement with her husband, for motherhood, postponing her entry into the master's program. Violeta vehemently shared the anguish at not being able to handle so much: being a mother, a university student and a teacher: How I am pregnant, I have no energy for anything. I feel limited. And I also get very embarrassed, because I'm not attending classes, because it's in the afternoon, and I'm not even doing the activities, so it's very likely that I'll be dirty for the master's degree that I so desire. It's like me I've said before, I feel paralyzed, both at work and at university (VIOLETA, 2021).

Violeta's fear raises the debate about how each young person decides to conduct their life. professional life in the interface with your personal life must be respected, and it is up to society in its regulatory institutions, such as universities, to collaborate in their permanence. One professional project should never be negotiated, on the contrary, the fight for quality time work, study and others must persist. Louro says that (1997, p. 23), a priori, the concept becomes demanding that we think in a plural way, emphasizing that projects and representations about women and men are diverse.

Henceforth, their narratives punctuated an evaluative and descriptive discourse of themselves, which means the way of understanding and structuring the narrated experience. Violeta's evaluative discourse on her transformations, weighing the choice of motherhood during the completion of the course, reflected what Delory-Momberger (2008, p. 533) calls acting risky when

“the individual seeks to reconcile work options and personal interests or talents”.

Violeta presented the university as a place for intellectual improvement, but, above all, of expanding your ability to go out and explore a world beyond your hometown. This In this way, the recurring reasons presented are: to broaden horizons in relation to studies and professional identity, entering the master's and doctorate programs; passing a public exam; last but not least, being one of the first in your family to go to university federal. In Pedagogy, his development as a student gained institutional and mainly subjective, using epistemic knowledge to develop a stance self-confident about the social scenarios that surround her. Violeta approaches what Pineau (2006, p. 64) highlights: “This process corresponds to a double appropriation of the power of formation; it is taking this power into one's hands — to become a subject. But it is also to apply it to oneself: to become an object of formation for oneself.”



4. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

To share the final notes of the work, I bring a quote from Boff (1998, p. 9) regarding the richness of studies on life and the appreciation of singularity:

“Everyone reads with the eyes they have and interprets from where their feet step. Every point of view is the view of one point, because each person reads and rereads with the eyes they have, because they understand and interpret from the world they inhabit.”

It is known that academic training involves objective dimensions that can provoke ways different ways of interpreting student life by those who are experiencing the process. In the case of young people in daily geographic mobility, the research found, through the questionnaire, that the moving from one city to another took up a lot of their lives. The rainy seasons and the breakdown of transport increased delays in classes, the level of anxiety of young people and the time prolonged wait to return to their homes. Along with displacement, the difficulties economic, family, children, work, school limitations, feelings of fear in mobility due to violence or harassment interfered with academic routine, with few hours to experience it at the interface between teaching, research and extension; or not experience it.

As a student, young woman and woman in daily geographic mobility, questionnaire respondents regarding the narratives of the three participants highlighted the challenges, redefining them and constructing meanings for the student process at university and in Pedagogy, by through the following learning experiences: intellectual (mastery of content, forms evaluative, linguistic repertoire, research participation, extension and events), institutional (knowledge the rules and extracurricular demands of the course, request information from the course secretariat, find out enroll every semester, or sign up for academic events) and, finally, subjective, which responds to the way students interpret this context in relation to their personal lives and your professional projects.

Among the common senses, I found: mobility as a challenge overcome by motivations personal, the university as a mediator of the transformation of their realities as women, connoting the importance of the Pedagogy course for critical training on society and the role of education. In addition to these, the achievement of Higher Education has served as an example for its families, mobilizing others to enter university. Likewise, the course presented senses of sociability, and through it they built friendships and the perception of their own intellectual capacities and autonomy, as they take control of their lives and learn to position yourself in conflict situations (whether inside or outside the university), envision horizons beyond their small towns.

According to the analysis of the research findings, I defend the thesis that the young women experienced similar conflicts regarding daily geographic mobility and engagement with the course, producing



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senses that approach the process of being a student. However, each young student faces singularly the challenges in their academic affiliation, which presented themselves beyond mobility, having interference in social and cultural structures, in opportunities for engagement in meaningful activities and the existential demands of being a woman.

Thus, biographical narrative references, as a way of doing research, allowed, at the same time, conclude that the concern of the analyses must focus on the meanings attributed to educational experience, since it is not possible to have direct access to what was experienced. It is also considered that the integration of biographical contexts into the curricular matrices of teacher training courses, especially in Pedagogy, can be an alternative to demystify the historical roots of salvationist and romanticized idea of women teachers in Education and to problematize the conditions in which this formation occurs.

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