Cultural Psychology of Education 8

Giuseppina Marsico · Luca Tateo *Editors*

The Emergence of Self in Educational Contexts

Theoretical and Empirical Explorations

Springer

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Volume 8

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Preface of the Series Editor

Cultivating New Ideas in Cultural Psychology of Education

> ***Pina Marsico****: Jaan, the Italian translation of your "Invitation to Cultural Psychology" has been presented today to the first year undergraduate students at University of Salerno.*
> ***Jaan Valsiner****: Good! Any news from them?*
> (Private correspondence, 15 May 2018)

The best thing that can happen to a scholar is that someone else takes her idea and elaborates it further. Replication, reification, and even taking care lead to no further theoretical advancement, since they tend to maintain the orthodoxy of the original formulation. The most faithful student makes the worse service to the teacher since she may merely reproduce or echo the teacher's voice. New ideas will emerge only in the process or cannibalization, dissection, and remaking.

Thus, just "taking care" is not enough for the process of science making. What we need is "cultivating" new possibilities to understand the phenomenon under investigation (Buner 2007; Marsico 2015).

This is exactly what happened in the last decade to the construct of Educational Self, which is the core of the present volume, and one of the promising new concepts in the field of Cultural Psychology of Education (Marsico 2017). Its initial elaboration occurred more than 10 years ago in a research project focused on the Italian school-family meetings and the school assessment (Marsico and Iannaccone 2012; Iannaccone et al. 2013).

The general aim of that research plan was to explore the social space emerging from the interaction between those two relevant socialization agencies and to investigate the specific aspects of the school/family meetings and their effects on the construction of students' identities. What has been found is that school's assessment represents the meeting/clashing ground between family and school. During these

meetings, perceptions, meanings, and personal evaluations take place and affect the construction of identity. The meetings are the place where the teacher's and parents' representations of the student are defined, made explicit, and modulated. School assessments are also frequently used not only to define the features of a "good" or "poor" student but also to connote the child/pupil's identity. From there, the construct of Educational Self, as a specific part of Self, emerging from the individual's experiences made by in the educational contexts, has been initially introduced.

This construct has been discussed in several international conferences and workshops in Europe, United States, and Latin America, resulting in some publications (Gomes et al. 2018; Marsico et al. 2013). Even more important, the Educational Self has been and still is the object of investigation of several master and Ph.D. dissertations (mainly in Brazilian universities). In other words, the construct of Educational Self has been "cultivated" over the last decades in many different places and has proliferated in new and unexpected directions.

The Emergence of Self in Educational Contexts. Theoretical and Empirical Exploration by Marsico and Tateo represents the attempt to collect and critically discuss the ideas that have been fertilized by the Educational Self construct over the last years.

This volume has been immediately preceded by three important books in the Series: *The Dialogical Self Theory in Education: A Multicultural Perspective* (Meijers and Hermans 2017); *Alterity, Values and Socialization: Human Development Within Educational Contexts* (Branco and Oliveira 2018) and *Sustainable Futures for Higher Education: Cultivating Knowledge Makers* (Valsiner et al. 2018).

The three books highlight the complex interplay between educational processes and dialogical construction of identity in the present complex globalized socioeconomical context, offering a toolbox for understanding how education could be and should be the arena for achieving a more sophisticated elaboration of the Self.

They well prepare the terrain for the current book *The Emergence of Self in Educational Contexts. Theoretical and Empirical Exploration,* which provides a conceptual armamentarium for understanding how the educational experiences are related to the processes of identity construction.

We hope that the readers will continue to cultivate the ideas provided by this book and to participate, in this way, to the elaboration of the Educational Self construct in the next decades.

Vienna, Austria
July 2018

Giuseppina Marsico

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Abstract

The volume aims to explore the dynamic processes of emergence and elaboration of the Self in relation to the educational contexts. The topic raises several theoretical and methodological questions. The educational experiences, whether taking place in formal or informal contexts, characterize the human development in different cultures. At the same time, the specific processes of Self's development result from the complex dynamic configurations of the educational contexts overtime unfolding. The relationship between the generality of educational activities and the particularity of individual development has been approached through the construct of *Educational Self*, a specific dimension of the Self, emerging from the individual's meaningful experiences made by in the educational contexts. These experiences specifically contribute to the lifespan identity's definition. The peer relationships, the interactions with significant adults, and the school assessments affect almost every aspect of individual development, providing values, models of behavior, norms, symbolic repertoires, emotional experiences, knowledge, and practices that are internalized in the form of "voices" that will constitute a capital of symbolic resources on which the individual will draw during all his/her life. The Educational Self emergence and elaboration are basically dialogical processes, taking place during the social interactions in the educational context, involving cognitive, affective, representational, and practical dimensions intertwined day by day during the school life.

Introduction: The Construct of Educational Self

Giuseppina Marsico and Luca Tateo

The Reason of the Book

This work originates from a long-lasting dissatisfaction of the authors with the current scenario of educational psychology. We are observing a trend towards an individualistic view of educational processes, an instrumentalist idea of learning/teaching and an organicist and maturationist view of human development (Marsico 2017, Valsiner 2009a, b; Valsiner, Marsico, Chaudhary, Sato, & Dazzani, 2016). We are dissatisfied with a view of development as progressive reduction of uncertainty and the idea of education as acquisition of transferable skills. We are dissatisfied with the assumptions of learning/ teaching as an accountable and visible achievement of pre-determined steps. Following a long tradition, that dates back to J. M. Baldwin, H. Werner, L. S. Vygotsky and J. Piaget, just to name few, we think that developmental processes are future-oriented and value-constrained unfolding of potential forms (Valsiner & van der Veer, 2014). In Fig. 1, Valsiner and van der Veer (2014) very clearly elaborate on the concept of Zone of Proximal Development, showing how the exact location in which psychology can find and study development is the in-between old and neo-formations.

Developmental and educational psychology are indeed "blind to the study of development by eliminating developmental phenomena at the outset—through treating the fuzzy "borders zones" between A and B as an "error" " (Valsiner & van der Veer, 2014, p. 152). Many current educational theories—such as visible learning (Hattie, 2008), problem-based learning (Dolmans, Loyens, Marcq, & Gijbels, 2016), or self-regulated learning (Zimmerman & Schunk 2013)—cannot deal with this fun-

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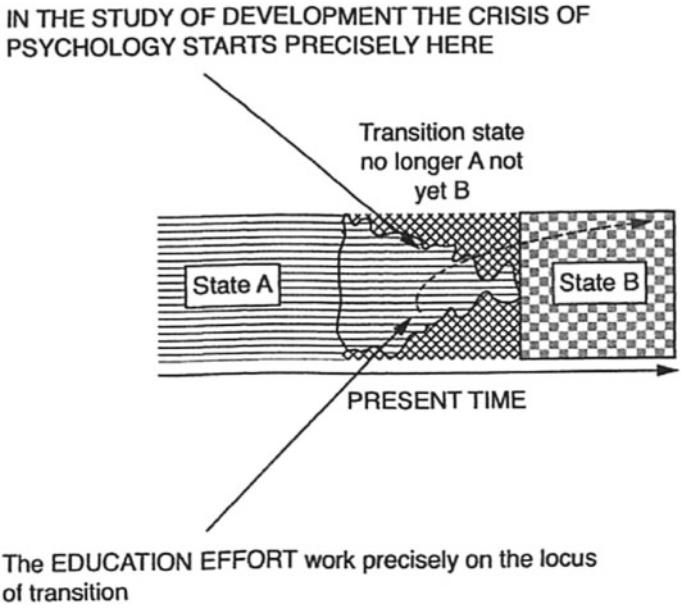

Fig. 1 The locus of development in education (Valsiner and van der Veer 2014, p. 152)

damental feature of development: once a psychological function is consciously mastered by the student, it is already out of the developmental zone. It is only the currently emerging, hence not yet clearly detectable, functions that constitute the subject matter of both development and education.

Furthermore, development is not reducible to simple dynamic change, but involves increasing complexity which is hierarchically organized (Werner, 1957). Such hierarchization includes contradictory relations between levels. Human development processes do not deal with reduction of contradictions. Development, rather, *feeds on* contradictions (Marsico & Tateo, 2017), who become the endogenous *fuel of further learning*. Thus, every understanding of development and education should incorporate this epistemology of complexity and uncertainty, rather than eliminating it (Marsico, 2015; Tateo, 2016). When it comes to educational contexts, such complexity and inherent contradictory nature must be accounted for. Another dissatisfactory element is that educational institutions have a prototypical image or definition: it is assumed that education is by definition "for the good" of the person, that it is necessarily oriented toward the progress of the person, and that the person *must* change by effect of the educational intervention. Educational contexts, instead, are much more complex than this. They are characterized by a number of tensions, ambivalences, inconsistencies, dilemmatic situations, etc. (Tateo, 2018). This is a question that the current educational psychology has not considered enough.

On these premises, a decade ago, we have started a research project to look at the human development in educational contexts that was able to consider the processual,

the personal and the contextual aspects as parts of a whole system. The main question was: how we can account for the uniqueness and complexity of the self-development individual trajectory that takes place in the complex situation called "education"? Besides, education is a liminal process (Marsico, 2018), that always takes place on the edge of what is and what is not-yet. Thus how can we understand what cannot be observed or assessed, how can we study what is *in potentia*?

We started from the perspective of cultural psychology of semiotic dynamics (Valsiner, 2014), assuming the self as a semiotic process, which proceeds through cycles of internalization and externalization in relation to the significant other. Along some specific periods of developmental trajectory, as for instance during the school age, the other (e.g. adult) discourses are actively internalized in specific ways and become mediating tools for the regulation of the self and the other. Though this is a fundamental process occurring all life long, during the early years it manifests for the first time and has a particular quality: the discourses *about* the self become internalized discourses *of* the self that the person learns to use as discourses *for* the self.

When this process occurs in particular contexts that the human collectives have built with the educational purposes, our claim is that they assume peculiar qualities. When the discourses about the self of the developing person take place in contexts like school, churches, armies, scout groups, internships, sport teams, etc.), they are characterized by a public evaluative dimension, by an affective tonality, and by the evaluation of the performance turns into an evaluation of the self.

A Brief History of the Idea

From the limits of the current conceptions, we started to draw a new concept that was able to grasp the systemic and dynamic processes of the self development in the context of educational experience in the course of life: the *Educational Self* (Iannaccone, Marsico & Tateo, 2013). Initially, we developed the concept theoretically and complemented it with notions such as tensegrity, dilemmatic field, borders, ambivalence (Marsico, 2015, 2016, 2018; Marsico & Tateo, 2017; Tateo, 2015). During the last years, many researchers in different countries have tried to develop the Educational Self empirically. This book represents a first overview of the results achieved so far.

The volume aims to explore the dynamic processes of emergence and elaboration of the Self in relation to the educational contexts. The topic raises several theoretical and methodological questions. The educational experiences, whether taking place in formal or informal contexts, characterize the human development in different cultures. At the same time, the specific processes of Self's development result from the complex dynamic configurations of the educational contexts over time unfolding. The relationship between the generality of educational activities and the particularity of individual development has been approached through the construct of Educational Self: the specific dimension of the Self, emerging from the individual's meaningful experiences made by in the educational contexts. These experiences specifically

contribute to the lifespan identity's definition. The peer relationships, the interactions with significant adults and the school assessments affect almost every aspect of individual development, providing values, models of behavior, norms, symbolic repertoires, emotional experiences, knowledge and practices that are internalized in the form of "voices" that will constitute a capital of symbolic resources on which the individual will draw during all his/her life. The Educational Self emergence and elaboration are basically dialogical processes, taking place during the social interactions in the educational context, involving cognitive, affective, representational and practical dimensions intertwined day by day during the school life.

The Epistemological Foundations

For a great number of people the context of institutionalized educational contexts is a common experience. Whether it is in a kindergarten, in a school, in a madras, in a boy scout group, in a sport team, people growing up in contemporary societies experienced these contexts (Marsico, Dazzani, Ristum, & Bastos, 2015). This has of course enormous implications in the construction and elaboration of Self since the early age. The concept of Educational Self is an attempt to capture this process by stressing how the discourse taking place in the educational context is providing the child with a complex repertoire of symbolic resources of the definition of her own self.

Though the contemporary discourse on education is stressing the relevance of performance, skills and competences (Tateo, 2012), the whole system of talks in education is actually about the child's Self, in other words, everyday talk at school continuously "determines a discursive overlap" (Iannaccone et al. 2013, p. 230) that shifts from the assessment of the performance to that of the person's Self. Teacher's feedback is a very relevant part of the educational process (Carvalho, Martins, Santana, & Feliciano, 2014), but such feedback has a different influence on developing self the child according to the different stages of development and her degree of awareness and understanding (Vygotsky, 1933/1984). Have you ever cried, felt shame or inadequacy for the teacher's feedback on a failed test? Have you ever been proud when your teacher was telling your parents that you were a diligent student? How the child represents in herself the meaning of these experiences? How these everyday experiences are contributing to the construction of the Self?

The idea of Educational Self originates at the convergence of two research projects: the study of the school context and the role of assessment in the development of the self (Marsico & Iannaccone), and the study of the self system as a semiotic tensional unity (Marsico and Tateo 2017).

On the one hand, we were observing how the discourses produced by the adults on the students' school performance were systematically shifting to the production of evaluations about the students' self in the present and in the future. In other words, the discourse about how the student *is doing* become discourses about how the student *is* or *should be*. On the other hand, we were studying the emergence

of self as semiotic process, that operates through the mediation of symbols. For instance, the person can tell, draw, narrate, express, remember, even dance or play the self. Thus, there is a relationship between the self and the combination of signs used to represent it in both the autodialogue and the heterodialogue. This semiotic approach to the self has two dimensions: the longitudinal genesis and elaboration of the self and the relationship between the self and its surroundings (people, objects, places, etc.). When an organism produces a sign, it immediately builds a system of relationships that at once (a) distinguishes the self and the environment; (b) puts them in relationship; and (c) puts them into a temporal flow (Tateo, 2018). This idea can be traced back to Peirce's and Mead's, who conceptualize it by the triad "I-present-sign, you-future-interpretant, and me-past-object" (Wiley, 1994, 215). Also William James talked about the individual "*inner or subjective being*" (James, 1950, 296) as an open system, a sense of consistency, agency and awareness, a process rather than an "entity" located somewhere "inside" the person.

Adopting the idea of the self as semiotic process implies a series of implications. First, that it is proceeding as a flux of interpretations (internalization and externalization cycles) in function of the future orientation. Second, the self is a dialogical process, in which the other is always present in different forms. It can be the other "me" as I become the object of my own experience. It can be the other "in me", as internalized voice of significant relationships. It can be the other "as me", creating intersubjectivity as projection. It can be the other "as not me", in this case generating the radical alterity which is functional to the definition of "I am X" also to the extent that "I am not Y".

Third, the self is semiotically constructed during development—first of all in childhood and adolescence—involving multiple voices, that express different points of view, modulated by specific sets of beliefs and experiences (Markova, 2006).

For instance, educational contexts are made of activities in which young people interact with significant others, experiencing a dialogical and contractual space where adults and peers voices provide different "as-if" possibilities, contributing to define what a person could be in present and in future time (Iannaccone et al. 2013). Thus, the self progressively experiences "voices" and is required to negotiate, reject or accept the different possible definitions provided (Chaudhary, Hviid, Marsico, & Villadsen, 2017; Simao & Valsiner, 2007).

The self is thus the dialogical process that organizes the different situated identities and voices at stake in the person's network of social relationships. In the semiotic perspective, the self is ontogenetically constructed through the child's active internalisation of the social interactions. The self emerges first as an interpersonal phenomenon, then as a personal process, finally as an interpersonal tool: "I am a social relation of me to myself" (Vygotsky 1989, p. 67).

The child's "self comes to use the signs, once directed to others or received from others, in relation to the self" (Holland & Lachicotte, 2007, p. 108), so definition of the self is expressed externally and is experienced internally (Mead, 1934).

The fourth implication of the self as semiotic process is its polyphonic and dialogical nature from its very origin. It is related to the guidance of the collective meaning, value system and social judgment shared by the collectivity the individual is part of.

The social guidance is expressed by signs that provide social suggestions that can be followed, elaborated or rejected by the person. Through the active internalisation of social relationships and the production of autodialogue between socially charged voices of the self, the child learns how to make sense of interactions, emotions and agency (Holland & Lachicotte, 2007).

The experiences made in the educational contexts contribute to emerge of the self, providing values, models of behavior, norms, symbolic repertoires, emotional experiences, knowledge and practices that are internalized in the form of voices in tension. This developmental process is investigated through the new construct of *Educational Self,* that is a specific dimension of Self, emerging from the dialogical process taking place during social interactions in the educational context.

The Importance of Educational Experiences

The Educational Self is not strictly a topological concept, is not a *part* or a *place* in the person's Self in which educational experiences are somehow stored. The Educational Self can be rather understood as a specific dimension of dialogical internalization and externalization of "emotional experiences" ("lived-through experiences"—*perezhivania*–Vygotsky, 1933/1984).

For instance, every educational intervention is initiated for the sake of some established educational and developmental goal. The teacher points to a future, not-yet-realized, condition of the child or student, suggesting an inherently ambiguous asymmetry: the future must be different form the past. Educational intervention takes for granted that the child *must* change in the direction of pre-established and value-laden constraints. Bruner (1996) called these values, expectations and theories about children's "regular" development "folk pedagogies":

> Folk pedagogies, for example reflect a variety of assumptions about children: they may be seen as willful and needing correction; as innocent and to be protected from a vulgar society; as needing skills to be developed only through practice; as empty vessels to be filled with knowledge that only adults can provide; as egocentric and in need for socialization. (p. 49)

Folk pedagogies are of course not "good" or "bad", as they simply reflect the *praxis* of teaching and learning in a given community. Nevertheless, we must be aware that they reflect a normative concept of development, independent from its epistemological foundations, that is oriented towards the child's future condition. The educational intervention is focused on an image of the child-to be and is framed by a "window of possibilities" (Tateo, 2019), that are set up by the specific cultural configuration of values (Fig. 2).

The intervention can risk to ignore the child's subjectivity (Ichheiser, 1943). Education implies a tension between the person and the imagined-person, framed by an educational ideology. There are as many imagined children as the actors: a polyphony between the adults' imaginations (e.g. teacher, parents, etc.) and the children's imag-

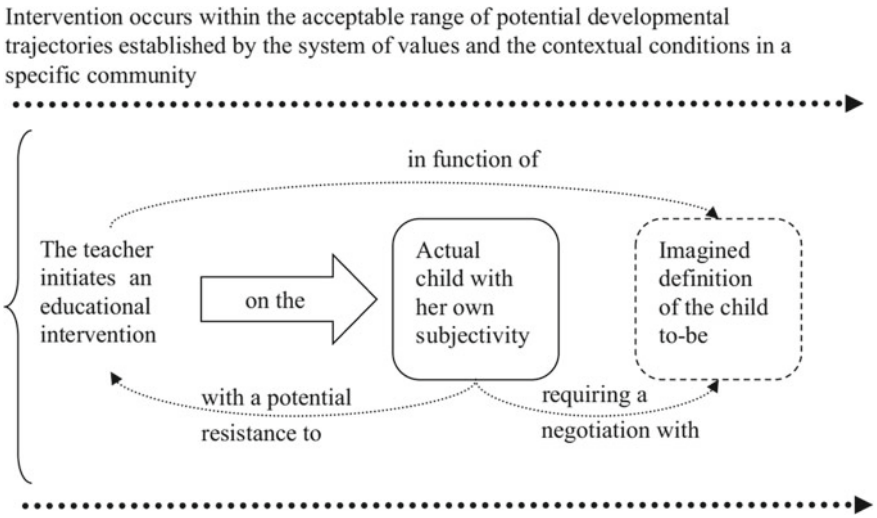

Fig. 2 Educational intervention in function of a value-laden imagined child

inations. This dialogical condition is characterized by a structural tension that allows both dynamic stability and dynamic development (Tateo & Marsico, 2013).

The child's emotional experience is a complex negotiation between her own subjective world, the window of potential future selves provided by the school, and the contextual conditions in which the experience takes place (Marsico & Iannaccone, 2012). The child can comply with the intervention or resist it (the backward dotted arrows in Fig. 1) as "a fundamental conflict between expectations and realizations and must therefore call forth some kind of self-defensive reaction from the individual in later life" (Ichheiser, 1943, p. 139). In any case, the child and the student will have to negotiate between the potential different trajectories of the socially-imagined-child-to-be and their own expectations, desires, and needs. Such negotiation becomes even more complicated by the fact that "children at school are all the time confronted with the apparently opposing directions of developing independent thinking but following the teacher" (Tateo, 2015, p. 61). As every social institution, formal education is filled with ambivalence.

School uniforms are an example of how the value of equality and identity (all the students within my school are equal) is combined with a message of distinction (boys and girls are different within my school and they both are different from another school). The messages are not just passively received by the single student. They are rather personally elaborated, re-created and sometimes rejected or destroyed, moving from the monological ambivalence of the institutional guidance into the polyphonic arena of the personal culture. Student can very quickly personalize their own school uniforms, introducing a dialogical process of internalization (the school uniform as an institutional device of construction of the personal identity) and externalization

(the personalized school uniform as a personal device of construction of one's own institutional identity.

Defining the Educational Self

The school context is thus like the *cavea* of a theater, in which the voices produced assume a characteristic quality, due to the particular framework, resonances, echoes and ways of diffusing them. The student listening to these voices, and adding her own voice, actively internalizes a polyphony (Zittoun et al., 2013) which is not necessary a harmony but can also be a cacophony.

The concept of Educational Self is based on the idea that the set of adults' discourses about the child provide a wide repertoire of Self's definitions that the student internalizes from the very early age elaborating her own meaning. Utterances like "You are a good boy", "You are a sociable girl", "You are not mathematically inclined", or "You are intelligent but lazy" that are so common in school everyday discourse are nothing but suggestions for the definition of child's Self that she has to negotiate and make sense (Fig. 3).

These symbolic resources interact with the child's own sense of Self, producing a complex negotiation (internalization) in which some of them will be later used by the child to talk about herself and enacted in primarily in the educational context (externalization). Others will be ignored, refused, or partially modified. In any case, these definitions are not only about the child's Self at present, but, most important, they provide suggestions and directions for the developmental trajectory. School context is full of contradictory and ambivalent suggestions about what the child *is*, what *is not*, what *she should become* or *become not*. Discourses about gender roles, flair and talent, attitude, sociability flourish in adults' discourse of teachers and parents (Iannaccone et al. 2013), but also in the role models suggested by media and toy or fashion industry. They constitute a polyphony of voices suggesting different

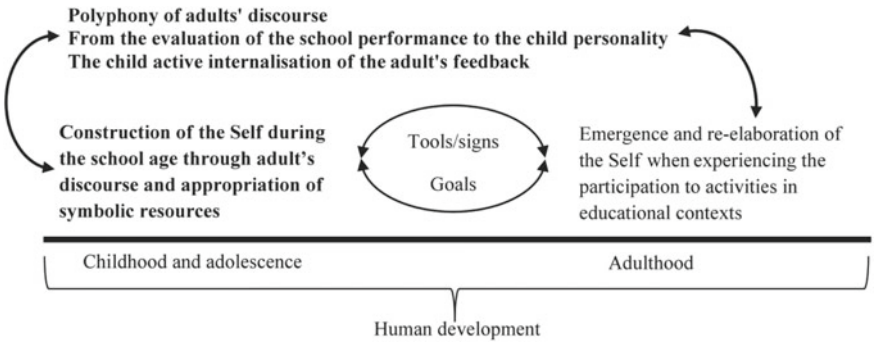

Fig. 3 The construction and elaboration of ES (Iannaccone et al. 2013, p. 228)

directions to the Self's development, according for instance to the different cultural contexts (De Luca Picione & Freda, 2014). Ambivalence and contradiction are the rule in these kind of messages, rather than the exception. For instance we as pupils can be requested to be obedient to authority, to behave well, but at the same time to become independent and critical, to be collaborative if they are girls but also competitive. Our teacher can tell us that education is the most important value, but just outside the school, our parents or group of peers can think differently, that making money is the best.

The actual way in which polyphonic adults' discourse is interacting with the child's Self is still an open question. Also because it must be understood in a genetic and developmental way: "One and the same event occurring at different ages of the child, is reflected in his consciousness in a completely different manner and has an entirely different meaning for the child" (Vygotsky, 1933/1984, p. 344). The construct of Educational Self is an initial attempt to grasp such a complexity in such a way that both environmental suggestions and personal characteristics can be taken into account to understand how the emotional experience is contributing to the elaboration of child's Self throughout development.

Yet what happens to Educational Self when we grow up? How does it continue lifelong? In which way this internalized repertoire of symbolic resources, of possible trajectories, ambivalences can play a role in the adult's life? The Educational Self hypothesis is that "adults would thus activate the educational self—that is, what has been defined here as the self-regulatory instance of the self formed during the dialogical interaction in educational contexts—to make sense of the school experience of the child as a pupil but also of their own experience as parents or teachers" (Iannaccone et al., 2013, p. 246). For instance, in the case of the teacher, making sense of everyday school activities requires the externalization of symbolic resources elaborated in the Educational Self. "These activities require the recourse to the symbolic system of autobiographical and social knowledge related to their personal educational experience" (Iannaccone et al., 2013, p. 246).

How the Book Is Organized

The book covers different aspects of the educational context in which the construct of Educational Self is applied to understand the developmental dynamics. As internalized polyphony of adult and peer voices in the course of educational experiences, the Educational Self is a personal synthesis of social interactions between those actors. So far, we have described the theoretical framework and the definition of the construct of Educational Self, as the authors have conceived it and elaborated in the course of the last decade. However, the construct seems to have inspired a number of potential uses, that we have collected in this first organic volume. Indeed, the authors of the different chapters have explored a wide phenomenology of school life across many situations.

The chapter *Dynamics in the educational self of an adolescent: from the dominance of parental voices to their silencing* tries to articulate a theoretical dialogue between the Educational Self, the cultural psychology of semiotic dynamics, and the Dialogical Self Theory. The chapter accompanies the trajectory of a student from the initial relevance of the parents' voices to the progressive populating of his Educational Self with the voices of the significant others during the school experience. The chapter immediately sets some of the issue that will cross the whole book: ambivalence and tension between voices; the Educational Self as a process rather than an outcome; the parental engagement in relation to the other significant others; the educational context as non-isolated to from the family and community context. Another relevant topic, that will return in the course of this volume, is introduced in the chapter *Self -Development, Human Values and the Construction of Children's Trajectories in Educational Contexts*: the role of value in guiding the elaboration, management and externalization of the Educational Self. The study focuses on the children's transition processes from preschool to primary school, showing how values orient interactions between adults and children, appreciate and anticipate some specific developmental outcomes, and can promote some forms of development while inhibiting others.

The chapter *The reconfiguration of the Educational Self in the context of higher education* is shifting the focus to undergraduate students, in which Educational Self is reactivated in the meaning-making of the new educational experience. This chapter add two more elements to the empirical exploration of the Educational Self: the future-oriented and goal-directed nature of the self development; and the dynamics of ruptures and transitions in life course (Zittoun, 2005) in relation to the construction of the Educational Self. The following chapter *Emergence of self situated at an institution* expands the empirical field of study for the Educational Self to the institutionalized young people. The institutions for residential care of adolescents are definitely understandable as educational contexts, in which particular forms of self development and value-guided social dynamics are at stake. The chapter presents the social-pedagogical treatment to support the adolescents developing agency in their own lives, stressing further the issue of future-oriented nature of Educational Self. The incapability of the adolescent to project herself into a possible future, due to her previous experiences and to the messages received from the adults, risks to undermine adolescent's gain of her own agency. This becomes thus the main focus of the pedagogical intervention, in order to support the adolescent in forming her own personal trajectory. Yet, who is responsible to scaffold this process? Besides the social worker, the teacher is a fundamental agent. The chapter *Teachers' feedback and educational self of institutionalized youngsters: a possible dialogue?* explores the interactions between teachers' feedback and educational self of institutionalized youngsters in Portugal. Despite current orientations in self regulated learning, the teacher still appears to be a crucial catalyzer in the process of development—either in positive or negative sense—to the extent that she mediates between the person and the context, translates the system of values and promotes or inhibits some developmental trajectories.

The chapter *Teacher's Role in the Dynamics between Self and Culture* further develops the analysis of the teacher's role in relation to the valued-guided canaliza-

tion of student's development. The chapter discusses the psychological construct of *Dynamic Self Positioning*, understood as a fluid process of configuration and reconfiguration of I-positions based on affective, communicative and meta-communicative relationships in the life context. The chapter introduces the very important topic of dynamicity and fluidity, stressing the self as process, which is one of the main features of ES construct.

The chapter *School complaints and the educational self: openings for the medicalization of school difficulties* discusses another very relevant normative aspect of the self development in the current educational context. Mental health issues and medicalization of students at all ages seems to have become a major topic worldwide. This is related with a dominating individualistic developmental ideology, that puts the whole load of development on the person alone. The construct of Educational Self, while stressing the personal agency in the negotiating of different internalized meanings, considers the educational context as a place of polyphony. Besides, the so-called medical model in learning problems is supporting a defective view of the child rather than a view based on developmental potentialities. On the other hand, the diagnosis can become a symbolic resources that mediates the definition of the student self (Brinkmann, 2016). It can apparently help all the parties involved in labeling a person that would require, otherwise, more effort to be boxed. We are back again to the issue of the tension between normative and non-normative dimensions of the self development, which is the topic of the chapter *Teacher participation in the constitution of the educational self*. The chapter focuses on the micro-genetic processes of self development in the course of teacher-student interactions. This perspective is combined with a longitudinal analysis of the school trajectory, leading to a better understanding of how the normative framework—mediated by the different teacher we encounter during the school trajectory—is suggesting what kind of person we are expected to become. This topic is further developed in the chapter *Walking in a book: teacher professional identity between psychology and culture*. The topic of the longitudinal development of the Educational Self is studied through the cases of five female primary school teachers in a rural community of South Italy. The chapter presents the relationship between community values, normative framework of development, teacher mediation and personal agency, following the process of construction of Educational Self first as pupils and later on its reactivation as teachers.

The final part of the book goes back to the school-family relationships in the elaboration of the Educational Self, trying to close the circle. The chapter *The production of school complaints in a public school: meanings and practices* studies the complex negotiations of meaning and the practices involved in situations of conflict at school in Brazil. The chapter seems to ask the question: how much diversity can the educational system *actually* handle If development is a unique personal synthesis of the community polyphony mediated by the Educational Self, how school can actually promote this uniqueness without forcing it into a normal *versus* abnormal constraining setting?

The chapter *Reflections on the construction of the Educational Self from an inclusive experience with School Therapeutic Accompaniment* seems to suggest that the

only productive discussion can be based on a reflective stance by the school actors. The chapter introduces a further agent on the educational scene: the School Therapeutic Accompanier for students with Special Educational Needs. This professional is an example of a double role: both one of the voices contributing to the development of Educational Self in the case of students with special needs *and* a reflective observer of the articulation of voices, mediating the existent relationships (teacher-student, student-student, family-school).

The final chapter *Parental engagement in light of the ecosystemic foundations of the school-family-community partnership: Toward a psychosocial, dialogical, and developmental perspective* brings back together the student, the family, the school and the community as parts of a system. The chapter very nicely shows how educational experiences are not moments in life that mark the Educational Self, rather processes unfolding over time and feeding into each other. In the same way, School, family and community are not places isolated from each other, rather communicating rooms in which the student acts as a commuter but also as a linker. Thus, one could argue that the Educational Self is not just a product of educational experiences, but it is rather an agent mediating between contexts and over time.

Future Developments

Among the human collective activities, education is the one which is completely oriented towards a condition that is not yet achieved in the development of a specific individual. In other words, education is by definition about the person-to-be—it is about the imagined person.

We have argued that the polyphony of adults' discourses provides the symbolic resources that the child will negotiate in the process of internalization to create the specific personal configuration of the Educational Self. Yet, we also argue that the polyphony is not only about the existing voices and their history. In the case of the Educational Self, the polyphony is about the imaginative process of the construction of the Self which is emerging in the present. The person is educated-to-be-someone (a primary school child, then a college student, than an architect, a PhD, a doctor, etc.), thus the educational intervention is at the interplay between the Self arena at the present moment and the imagined future Self.

So far, we have introduced three axes to the dialogical process of Self construction in educational context:

- The polyphonic nature of the Self arena in the specific context of education.
- The imaginative processes involved in the elaboration of the Self in the educational context. This is generating a future-oriented polyphony, which constantly actualizes and "presentifies" the future-Self into the arena of present.
- The concept of structural tension which is generated by the polyphony and the inherent ambivalence of the educational experience. This tension must no longer be considered as a temporary condition that needs a resolution, rather as a structural

feature of the Self construction and elaboration. Tension becomes both the force that leads to stability of the Self and feeds into development.

These three aspects need to be empirically proven ant theoretically articulated in order to elaborate a general model of the *Educational Self as a System of Dynamic Tension*. This would avoid the every present risk of a topological and reductive conceptualization of the Educational Self as an area, an entity or a specific thing located somewhere in the Self. Educational Self must be conceptualize and investigate as a process and not as a product. The idea of Psyche as a tensegrity system we have recently introduced in the field of Cultural Psychology (Marsico & Tateo, 2017; Tateo & Marsico, 2013) could be the general framework to better analyze the process at work in the educational setting as an arena of tensions, ambivalences, dilemmas where the identity construction unfolds.

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Dynamics in the Educational Self of an Adolescent: From the Dominance of Parental Voices to Their Silencing

Ramon Cerqueira Gomes and Maria Virgínia Machado Dazzani

Introduction

Parental involvement in one's academic trajectory is one of the main contextual factors studied in research on school transitions. In the present study, we are interested in the semiotic processes involved in school transitions for adolescents, focusing on parental participation in children's academic lives. To study the repercussions of the negotiations arising from the parents' positions towards their children, we use the concept of the educational self, which covers the ruptures-transitions that students go through during their schooling experience.

The scientific literature that studies the relationship between parental involvement and schooling from a quantitative approach has shown that parents influence different aspects of students' academic lives. Deslandes and Cloutier (2002) concluded that, when the parents of adolescents were involved in their children's formal education, the children demonstrated better academic performance, developed higher personal aspirations, and exhibited fewer disciplinary problems. According to Hill et al. (2004), although parental involvement was modified as the levels of schooling advanced, there was evidence that even as an adolescent, specifically in secondary school, parental involvement in students' academic lives was significant. This study, however, poses a question concerning these scientific findings: how do adolescents internalize parental participation in their academic lives?

The study of adolescents in vocational training integrated at the secondary school level contributes to filling a gap identified in the literature, which generally does not focus on adolescents who attend this type of school. It is necessary, therefore,

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to understand how parental voices participate in the dialogical construction of the educational self in adolescents engaging in full-time study in these educational institutions and analyzing accounts of their different academic trajectories from their entry into kindergarten to the present.

In addition, this study is intended to provide an understanding concerning parental participation in their children's academic lives based on the "voice" of adolescents themselves. Although there are many studies on parental involvement, these studies generally focus on certain parental behaviors and their relationship and effects on children's academic lives, such as school performance, while treating these aspects as behavioral variables. This chapter, however, seeks to privilege a study of the dynamics of the meanings that adolescents construct regarding parental involvement in their academic trajectories. Thus, the emphasis is given to the positions established in relation to the parents' voices in the multifold dialogical space of the self.

An understanding of the academic trajectory as a process crossed by semiotic regulation is, among other reasons, a function of the production of meanings established in the relationships between different actors, such as parents, students, and teachers (Marsico & Iannaccone, 2012) and the transitions (changes, ruptures, repositionings) in the educational selves that participate in the students' identity construction (Zittoun, 2006). Our focus in this chapter is on the semiotic processes in adolescents' educational selves that are derived from parental involvement in academic life. Before we reflect in greater detail on the concept of the educational self, we provide a brief discussion of the notion of self in cultural psychology and its dialogical nature.

The Dialogic Self and the School-Family Boundary

According to Branco and Valsiner (1997), the self comprises the subjective totality, which is organized in a timeline and supported in processes of meaning that are established through a matrix of sociocultural suggestions. Regarding the conception of self (I), Valsiner (2007) states that an individual functions through two dialogical processes: heterodialogue (with others, including imaginary others) and autodialogue (within one's own self). The dialogical self is a theoretic entity (self) that organizes itself through a process of dialogical relationships among its components (Valsiner, 2007).

In contrast to the notion of the individual self, the dialogical self is based on the assumption that there are many I-positions that may be occupied by the same person. I, in one position, may agree, disagree, understand, oppose, contradict, question, challenge, and even ridicule an I who is in another position (Hermans, 2001). The self emerges from an intense interconnection with the (social) environment and is intrinsically bound to particular positions in time and space (Hermans, 2002).

The dialogical construction of the educational self occurs in a dialogical dynamic between I-positions that act through different voices originating from one's personal educational experience with different actors (Iannaccone, Marsico, & Tateo, 2013).

With these actors, we create feelings, beliefs, and attitudes related to the experiences in the school institution. Generally, the multiplicity of voices that emerge tends to cause tensions between the different perspectives produced from internalized voices. These tensions between I-positions may create different forms of semiotic organization in the personal culture and acquire new configurations, which, according to Zittoun (2009), may emerge from ruptures-transitions or periods in which people define new identities and skills and confer meanings on their trajectories and their worlds (Zittoun, 2006). Ruptures in the system may be understood as breaks in conservative cycles that force the system to reestablish itself in another hierarchical order. This reestablishment, in multiple levels, may be called a transition (Zittoun, 2008), hence its relevance for developmental students.

For Zittoun (2009), the semiotic processes that define the individual's psychological experience occur not only through continuities but also, and primarily, through moments in which they are interrupted, redirected, or challenged. The ideas of rupture and transition are constructs that are used to study this process of change over the course of a person's life and are defined as follows: (a) rupture—signals the end of a mode of adjustment, requiring new dynamics through changes in development that are expressed in the subjectivity; and (b) transition—suggests the idea that something is being changed into something else. Commonly, this author uses the two concepts in a combined manner, rupture-transition, because she considers that the one process necessarily leads to the other.

According to Iannaccone et al. (2013), the educational self comprises a legacy of symbolic resources constructed from the knowledge, beliefs, narratives, and affective states established during the personal educational life. Understanding the educational self construct involves the notion that, during participation in school activities, the student progressively internalizes and appropriates signals, learning to administer them in order to elaborate, regulate, and reflect on the self. The idea of the educational self involves two related aspects: the construction of the self at school age through the interaction with discourse from adults and the emergence of the self when interacting with adults within a formal educational context.

As may be seen, the definition of educational self clearly alludes to the notion of the boundaries that are established in identity construction, especially in educational contexts. In interactions established between the family and school, school practices and family actors participate in the movement of the emergence of the self, which unfolds along the boundary of this plural and dynamic relationship between these institutions. This relationship is often expressed in the narratives of adolescents regarding their academic lives.

Through telling the stories of their school experiences, adolescents attempt to attribute meaning to the events in their memories. According to Habermas and Bluck (2000), the ability to build a life story begins in adolescence. The life story has highly specific structures that are built through relations of global coherence. In life narratives, these are the relationships in a text, while in autobiographical reasoning, these are the relationships in one's life that reveal the present self, past selves, past events, and past circumstances. The emergence of superior socio-cognitive skills in

adolescence is essential to the construction of a life story. These skills are cognitive tools that converge in the ability to form a coherent life story.

Through telling a story about oneself, we use characters in a plot that functions as a polyphonic novel: each character talks about a specific place and may completely diverge from other voices that compose the same story, which defines who we are. For Hermans (1996), in the polyphonic novel, there is not a centralized actor with a uniform view of the world but instead a multiplicity of actors. Similarly, the self may be viewed as a multiplicity of relatively autonomous I-positions. In this conception, the "I" has the possibility of moving, as in space, from one position to another according to situational and temporal changes.

The dialogical nature of the "voices" that appear through the characters who comprise the narrative indicates the type of encounter that is established between the characters, for example, whether it is hostile or friendly. The conversational encounters between parents and children concerning academic subjects may, at times, be conducted in a conflictive way. By constructing meanings concerning his or her own academic experience, the adolescent activates both I-positions and the stories that these positions tell from a relatively autonomous perspective. According to Hermans (1996), this process is imbued with the elementary function that we put into play by producing narratives about facts: valuation. Typically, when we tell a story, we assign value to the characters and events that are part of the plot. Valuation is largely influenced by the perspective that dominates the plot being told.

The Educational Self and the Emergence of the Subject

Zittoun's (2012) interest is the study of the emergence of the subject within the dynamics of semiotic suggestions that surround it. The individual is not predetermined by culture; thus, an individual produces his or her own uniqueness to the extent that one emerges as a "subject" who may even be outside the semiotic flows of social and personal determinations that have always traversed and guided the individual. Subjectivity is the result of a process of retracting or sculpting these flows to generate a space from which one can reflect, remember, and imagine, thereby transforming oneself (Valsiner, 2012; Zittoun, 2012).

In the present study, parental participation in the academic trajectory is conceived as an important condition for the development of the educational self. Thus, we understand that the dialogical construction of the educational self unfolds in the process of semiotic mediation, as an emergence of the subject. This is the case because, by internally negotiating parental voices, the subject may develop novelty in its semiotic system, thus forming his or her educational self.

Zittoun's (2012) conception of the emergence of the subject is in line with the notion of Iannaccone et al. (2013) concerning the educational self because the meaning of parental involvement makes each academic trajectory a unique experience for the subject. It is based on unraveling the emerging novelty of the educational self, in its development, that the semiotic mechanisms being internalized make a

unique "subject" appear in the educational context through the meanings attributed to parental involvement in students' academic lives.

It is also possible to identify the semiotic catalysts in the process of semiotic mediation that engender emerging differentiations (Cabell, 2010) at bifurcation points in the development trajectory. Through catalytic processes, some signs may arise in the field of the self and act as promoters or inhibitors of development. Depending on the contextual support of the semiotic catalyst, various semiotic regulators may be activated (or disabled) to act directly on the I-positions and on one's dialogues (Valsiner & Cabell, 2012).

With respect to promoter signs, their role is to feed-forward a range of possible boundaries of meanings for experiences that are unexpected, although expected for the future with the world. The individual is constantly creating meanings ahead of the moment when it may be necessary to move towards either side of the expected experience and thus to prepare for it (Valsiner, 2005).

Adolescence besides being a period marked by biopsychosocial transformations has, at school, a privileged space for the dialogical construction of identity. Thus, the school provides a space for relationships, in which the dialogues produced by the various actors (parents, teachers, students, community) participate in shaping the educational self through the narratives that constitute this process, guided by the individual's school trajectory.

Method

Design, Choice of Participants, and Research Tools

The present study has important similarities to the qualitative approach. However, the phenomenon studied is conceived in the field of Cultural Psychology as characteristically idiographic (Valsiner, 2012), considering both the person and the psychological field according to their uniqueness and continuity in time.

This understanding of the psychological phenomenon has important implications, especially for the methodological design and data interpretation. This study is grounded in the understanding that the object of psychology is idiographic, which means that the psychological processes at work in a person are uniquely ongoing. This understanding is reflected in the very posture of the researcher in face of the phenomenon. This is because, according to Valsiner (2012), following the strict methods for interpreting reality leads to the elimination of evidence on the dynamic flows of psychological phenomena. The researcher is viewed as a knowledge builder imbued with his or her theoretical, philosophical, and phenomenological skills that come into play when faced with the object under study.

The objective of this study was to understand the mechanisms involved in the dialogical construction of the educational self in the academic trajectory of adolescents in a vocational secondary school, focusing on parental voices in this process and the I-positions that emerge from the dynamics that configure the dialogical self.

Table 1 Selection criteria for research subjects

Grade	Satisfactory performance (S. P.)	Unsatisfactory performance (U. P.)
	Subjects (S)	Subjects (S)
11th (11)	S.F.11.S.P.	S.M.11.U.P.
12th (12)	S.F.12.S.P.	S.M.12.U.P.

Source Prepared by the authors of this research

Thus, this study fits within the idiographic research approach by focusing on the uniqueness of this phenomenon for the individual, in all its narrative temporality. A multiple case study was thus outlined.

To maximize within-group diversification, three selection criteria were defined based on the objectives of the present study: (1) the participants' gender: male and female subjects were included, considering gender diversity; (2) the last two grades of secondary school (11th and 12th)[1] that make up the average vocational education in the institution: subjects from these two grades were included; and (3) satisfactory academic performance (passing to the next grade) or unsatisfactory (remaining in the grade): subjects with both performance ratings were included. A total of four participants were chosen to participate in this study. However, due to saturation identified in data analysis, one subject was excluded because the preliminary analysis showed that the case would not bring new evidence to increase our understanding of the study object considering the cases previously analyzed (Table 1).

The case S.M.11.U.P. (male subject in the eleventh grade with unsatisfactory performance) was chosen as the case study for this chapter because he represented various facets of the dialogical dynamics of the educational self with various actors, in addition to intense negotiation and a power dispute with his parental voices.

The instruments for data production were represented by a demographic data sheet, a visual stimulus for introduction to the narratives, a nonstructured interview script and in-depth narrative interview, a script of questions of the second narrative interview developed specifically for each case, and a script with two stories read and commented on by the participants.

The script for the narrative interview was used as the primary instrument for data production. There was no a priori definition of the order of questions. Instead, the questions already provided in the script were reformulated based on the words and stories shared by the participants. After the interviews, the narratives were transcribed, and, in light of the narratives developed in the first interview, new specific questions were formulated for each case to be applied in the next interview.

[1] In the Vocational Institution, where the study was conducted, the student completes the common secondary school combined with the professional course chosen in full-time education.

Procedure for Data Analysis

The present study adopted a data analysis approach based on the proposition of Valsiner (2012) that research may be delineated from previously adopted theoretical assumptions by *constructing* an approach that may guide the researcher's perspective on the phenomenon of interest, while respecting its characteristics.

The phenomena researched in this study, i.e., the semiotic mediations produced from interactions with parents in one's academic trajectory, have a *dynamic* and unique character and should be studied using methods that are able to access these features. In this sense, for the purpose of data analysis, the methodological approach constructed is based on the systemic character of the self and the following theoretical concepts: Valsiner's (2012) concept of semiotic mediation, Hermans, Kempen, and van Loon (1992) concept of the dialogical self, and Iannaccone et al. (2013) concept of the educational self.

The analytical method proposed in this study was based on (1) the division of the academic trajectory into periods marked by moments of rupture-transition; (2) the selection of periods in which situations of dialogical interaction with parents regarding academic life emerged; (3) the selection of excerpts from the participant's narrative that discuss situations of interaction with parents and significant social others; and (4) the analysis of the narrative excerpts, taking into account the concepts of semiotic mediation from Valsiner (2012/2007), the dialogical self from Hermans et al. (1992), and the educational self from Iannaccone et al. (2013). This methodology enabled the organization of the data, first, to create blocks of analysis according to the periods, and second, to select the excerpts of the narratives that discussed dialogical situations between children, parents, and significant social others. Only two periods are presented to illustrate the movement of Elias's educational self in relation to the voices of his family, which are extracted from his narrative about the history of his academic life.

Analysis of Elias's Case: Semiotic Mediation, Catalytic Processes, and Alternating Voices in the Dialogical Hierarchy of the Educational Self

Elias is 18 and is repeating the 11th grade of secondary school. He resides in the state of Bahia, Brazil. He has always attended public schools. He has an older brother. His mother is a housewife, and his father is a driver. His father did not want Elias to study in the vocational institution that is located in a nearby town. However, with the support of his mother and brother, he applied to the selection process and was admitted in the second round. In Elias's narrative, transitions are perceived in the autodialogical dynamics between the positions established in his self in the course of his educational trajectory.

Periods consisting of situations of parental intervention in his academic life and of ruptures-transitions that acted on the reorganization of his educational self were identified. Elias's experiences at school gradually drew new boundaries between family and school, a product of semiotic transformation that involved significant social others in the dialogical space of the self.

From Entry into school to 4th Grade

In Elias's story, I-positions of the I-student and I-son predominate. In the interactions that he establishes in the first years of school life, greater emphasis on his relations with his mother, who got him ready for school and followed his daily activities, is found. Elias has few memories of that period. He reports that there were play activities, innocence, that he had many friends and thought it was great to go to school. He remembers that when he started learning how to read, he wanted to read everything he saw on the street.

With regard to his parents' participation in his academic life, his mother, especially, asked him how his day was, if there was any homework to be done, and whether he had any problems. His father was more distant, only becoming involved to help with material needs or go to the school if anything happened with the child in Elias's narrative, this reportage shows a complaining position with respect to the father figure, which claims that the father did not listen and immediately punished him verbally on these occasions. As for the division of parental tasks regarding participation in academic life, Elias evaluates:

> Sempre quem compareceu mais [na escola] foi […] minha mãe. Ela comparecia mais em reuniões. Só em reunião, porque até então eu não era um aluno que causava transtornos em sala de aula.
>
> […]
>
> The one who attended [school] the most was […] always my mother. She attended most meetings. Only at meetings because then I was not a student who caused problems in the classroom.
>
> Compartilhava [com minha mãe]. Falava tudo que acontecia durante o dia, como é que foi, o que eu fiz na escola, que atividades eu fiz, se tinha alguma atividade para casa, falava tudo.
>
> […]
>
> I shared [with my mother]. I told her everything that happened during the day, how it was, what I did in school, what activities I did, if I had any homework, I told her everything.
>
> [Meu pai] só [iria na escola] se fosse em caso extremo naquela época. Tipo assim, se eu fizesse alguma coisa no colégio entendeu? Não aprontar assim, mas que os professores considerassem como coisa errada e falassem para ele. Aí ele chegava e reclamava. Não sentava e conversava. Chegava e reclamava.
>
> […]
>
> [My father would] only [go to school] if there was an extreme case at the time. Like, if I did something at school, you know? Not doing something wrong, but that the teachers considered wrong and told him. Then, he came and complained. He did not sit and talk. He came and complained.

In the early years of his school trajectory, Elias had an important link with his mother with respect to communication concerning academic matters. His I-position, I-student, had the support and attention it needed from the mother figure. The father figure, in turn, seemed distant to him and emerged, in most cases, to address disciplinary issues concerning behavior in school through punishment.

Regarding his parents' reactions in the event of a school complaint, Elias comments:

> [Meus pais] Não gostavam, ameaçavam bater […] reclamavam muito do meu comportamento.
>
> [My parents] didn't like it, they threatened to hit me […] they complained a lot about my behavior.
>
> [Meus pais diziam] "Se não passar de ano não vai viajar no final do ano entendeu? "Você não vai ter, não vai comprar roupa, não vai ter dinheiro". [Já se tivesse bom desempenho] Era assim que eles recompensavam: dando "parabéns", "continue sempre assim que esse é o caminho certo", era mais assim.
>
> [My parents said] "If you do not pass this year, you will not travel at the end of the year, you understand? You will not have, you will not buy clothing, you will not have money." [If I demonstrated good performance], this was how they rewarded me: telling me "Congratulations", "Continue like this forever because this is the right way", it was more like this.

Although he reports that sometimes the school required his parents' intervention regarding aspects of his behavior or school performance, these events were actually rare in this period of his life. Overall, there was positive communication at the boundary between family and school. The voices of the adults (parents and teachers) who were involved in educating Elias valued him. In this way, a certain dynamic was engendered in his personal culture that outlined the direction of his identity construction in school, as is seen below.

During this period of Elias's academic life, there was a certain stability in his autodialogical dynamics with regard to the identity constructed in school. In the interactions maintained with the voices of adults participating in his school trajectory, voices converging towards the elaboration of a positive identity associated with the school context were pronounced. Until 4th grade, Elias holds a conception of himself as a student that is aligned with the perspectives provided by the voices of his teachers and parents concerning his journey in the realm of school life:

> Eu era uma pessoa que eles [professores] elogiavam muito, que era um aluno que estudava, porque professor gosta de definir perfis, se o aluno não se enquadra naquele perfil ele não gosta. Então se é um aluno que faz as atividades, que se comporta, eles gostam, acabam gostando do aluno.
>
> […]
>
> I was a person who they [the teachers] praised a lot, that I was a student who studied, because the teacher likes to define profiles, if the student does not fit that profile, he does not like him. So, if a student is doing the activities, if he behaves, they end up liking the student.
>
> Meu desempenho? Era bom. Vamos dizer assim, era bom, sempre foi bom. Sempre fui, […] ensinado [por meus pais] que o estudo, o ensino, são as portas para tudo em sua vida, que a partir do estudo você pode conseguir várias coisas.

> My performance? It was good. Let's say, it was good, it was always good. I've always been […] taught [by my parents] that studying, education, are the doors to everything in your life, that through education, you can achieve many things.

As one can see, Elias is positioned in that stage as a student who interacts semiotically with adult voices in relation to his schooling, aligning himself with these perspectives in his personal negotiation. However, according to Hermans (1996), it is important to understand the multiplicity of the dialogical self in a dynamic and malleable context and not as a set of subparts that are mechanically interrelated or as a range of elements of a fixed interpersonal standard. Rather, as may be identified in the analyses of later periods in his life, Elias undergoes transformations in the field of his educational self that greatly affect his identity construction in the school context. This is only possible due to the multivoicedness of the self, which is organized in a hierarchical and dynamic structure that enables the relative dominance of a few voices over other positions (Hermans & Kempen, 1998). At this point in his trajectory, the I-student holds a position that is subject to the voices of the adults who guide and dominate his understanding of himself as a student.

During this period of his school trajectory, he resorts to the voices of significant adults in his academic life (teachers and parents). According to Marsico and Iannaccone (2012), the interactions established with parents concerning academic matters may reverberate in the student's identity positions, thus interfering in the dialogical construction of the educational self. According to Hermans and Kempen (1998), an understanding of the dynamic potential of the self necessarily implies an approach from the dual dimensions of intersubjective exchange and control or social power, which are both intrinsic characteristics of the dialogical self. In this sense, the voices of the parents and teacher dominate the dialogical organization, guiding the dynamics of identity construction for Elias's educational self.

From 5th to 8th Grade—Change of School and the Emergence of a new position: I-troublemaker-student

After 5th grade, Elias began to attend a new school. Given the many older people and the larger school, the beginning was slightly anxiogenic because he felt overwhelmed. He was afraid of being the victim of some type of practical joke by his classmates because he considered himself thin and weaker than the others. During this period, relevant intersubjective processes began between Elias and his peers that marked a reconfiguration of the autodialogical dynamics according to the position of his parents and teachers in his self. He began to communicate increasingly less about his school routine to his mother after 5th grade:

> É porque assim… eu mudei meu jeito, cresci […] Aí a partir daí eu comecei a não gostar entendeu? Que eles entrassem na minha vida escolar.
>
> […]
>
> It is because… I changed my ways, I grew up […] From then on, I started to dislike it, you know? That they got involved in my school life.

> […]
>
> Eu só comecei a me fechar mais entendeu? Porque antes […] [sobre a participação dos pais] ficava muito em cima assim […] Para saberem de tudo […] Aí, quando você vai crescendo você vai querendo […] mais privacidade […] Aí pode ter sido isso entendeu? Eu querendo privacidade acabei deixando de falar o que realmente acontecia durante o dia na minha vida escolar.
>
> I just started closing myself off more, you understand? Because before […] [regarding the participation of his parents] they were too on top of me […] Wanting to know everything […] Then, when you are growing, you start wanting […] more privacy […] It might have been that, you understand? I ended up wanting privacy, I stopped saying what really happened during the day in my school life.
>
> […]
>
> Não teve uma coisa certa que fez eu mudar meu comportamento em relação a 5ª série. Foi mais questão de querer ser engraçado entendeu? Assim na sala de aula, foi mais isso.
>
> There was not a specific thing that changed my behavior regarding 5th grade. It was more a matter of wanting to be funny, you understand? Like in the classroom, it was more that.

As may be seen, Elias initiates a bifurcation in the I-position of the I-student: in the movement in the dialogical space, the preponderance of the maternal position that closely monitored his routine loses strength compared with peer interactions. As a result, new configurations appear as the semiotic product of tensions related to the multiple voices (peers, teachers, parents) acting on the self.

Given the need to adapt to the new school, Elias begins to change his behavior a little, trying to be more "funny" in interactions with his peers. He reports that at that time, he wanted to change his reputation from that of "a quiet person" and be more like his brother, who was outgoing and funny and who attended the same school:

> Meu irmão, ele estudou no colégio que eu estudei e um bocado de gente conhecia ele e ele era engraçado e muita gente falava que eu era quieto. Por decorrência disso também eu passei a ser mais engraçado entendeu? Para as pessoas, para tirar essa fama de quieto, de ter o irmão mais velho mais engraçado e o mais novo, no caso eu, ser mais quieto. Aí foi mais por causa disso entendeu? Dessa relação de as pessoas ficarem comparando ele a mim.
>
> My brother, he attended the school I attended, and quite a few people knew him. He was funny and a lot of people used to say that I was quiet. It is because of this that I began to be funnier, you understand? Because of other people, to stop having the reputation of being quiet, of having an older, funnier brother while the younger, in this case me, was quieter. It was more because of that, you know? This thing of people comparing him to me.

In this fraternal identification process, Elias activates his brother's voice in his self and seeks to imitate his brother's behavior at school, keeping in mind that his brother seemed to enjoy popularity among his peers. In the semiotic reorganization resulting from imitating his brother's behavior, the voices of adults, including the mother and father, are weakened in the identity construction that unfolds after that point in time. Elias begins to react to certain of his peers' behaviors by teasing them in order to change his position towards his peers. As a result, a change in the dominance of voices occurs: the I-student begins to be positioned more autonomously and independently in relation to the parents, exerting greater power over their voices. Thus, the I-student, in coalition with the position of one's peers, is strengthened and

marks its bifurcation in the educational self through empowerment established in the dialogical relationship with peers.

The teachers then began to signal his change of behavior in school to his mother, and his parents reacted by questioning this change and making threats of punishment. Outside of school, he considered himself "funny", but until then he did not exhibit this type of behavior in the classroom. In 7th grade, his change became more significant, and he was defined as more of a "troublemaker". It was the first time he had remedial classes. Instead of being a victim, he became an agent of jokes and teasing:

> Na 7ª serie, eu comecei […] a mudar o meu perfil de aluno, comecei a ser um aluno mais perturbado. Aí meu rendimento baixou, aí eu fui para minha primeira recuperação na sétima série. Aí comecei a mudar, comecei assim meu processo evolutivo. Na sétima série eu era um aluno perturbado, 8ª serie piorei.
>
> […]
>
> In 7th grade, I began […] to change my profile as a student. I began to be a more troublesome student. Then, my performance dropped, and I went to my first remedial class in 7th grade. Then, I started to change, I began my evolutionary process. In 7th grade, I was a troublemaker, and in 8th grade, I got worse.
>
> […]
>
> [A mudança ocorreu] por influência de colegas, porque meus colegas me viam assim quieto e eram perturbados, aí pra eu não ser perturbado, eu comecei a perturbar.
>
> […]
>
> [The change occurred] because of the influence of my colleagues, because my classmates saw me as so quiet and they were troublemakers. So that I was not harassed, I also began creating trouble.
>
> Aí começou, só que nessa relação simplesmente era só para perturbar, só que eu comecei a gostar e a mudar a minha personalidade.
>
> […]
>
> So it began, in this relationship, I was simply trying to be a troublemaker, but I began to enjoy myself and to change my personality.

In the case presented, there is an enhancement of the bifurcation of the I-student I-position, i.e., from disciplined student to troublemaker, a process that outlines a rupture-transition in the educational self with the emergence of a new position: I-troublemaker-student.

This transition related to the I-position I-student provoked reactions in Elias's parents, who questioned his change and threatened him with punishment. However, in the new configuration of the self, his parents had reduced power in the autodialogical dynamics. The I-son and I-student established a coalition to maintain the stability of the new configuration of voices because, to him, this seemed to be more adaptive to the school context than the guidance provided by parents and teachers. In the reports below, one can see the parents' reaction and the self-reflexive movement concerning his transition in school.

> [Meus pais] Não gostaram, porque eu era um aluno quieto, aí começaram a ter aquela reação diferente: "Por que você tá mudando?", "O que é que tá acontecendo?" Até então, não faziam nada, só ameaçando me colocar de castigo, tirar alguma coisa, me proibiam de sair. Mas até então só era isso.

> […]
>
> [My parents] did not like it because I was a quiet student, then they began to see that different reaction: "Why are you so changing so much?" "What is happening?" Until then, they did not do anything, only threatening to punish me, to take something away, to prohibit me from going out. Until then, it was only that.
>
> […]
>
> Eles não se agradavam se eles tivessem um filho que, para eles, não tivesse um bom comportamento na sala de aula.
>
> They were not pleased to have a son who, for them, did not behave in the classroom.

In resolving the tension experienced in the position choice between continuing to be a "quiet" student or becoming a "troublemaker", the peer voices prevail, which shows the significant role that socialization plays in the reconfiguration of the self in the school context. In response to his parents' reaction to his change of behavior in school, Elias exerts greater power, with respect to the positioning of the I-student, by controlling communication related to his experiences in school: "So, I ended up not saying anything to them [about academic life] because of my behavior at the time." This omission to his parents about his new behaviors in school plays a strategic role in Elias's educational self. In the negotiation established by him, his peers' voices are privileged in his new configuration of the self, by which he begins to construct a new social image of himself in school and which gives him greater popularity and dominance in the group.

The interactions between Elias and his peers strengthen the position of the I-troublemaker-student, highlighting its voice in the multiplicity of the various I-positions and overpowering even the internalized voices of his mother and father, in a semiotic process initiated by fraternal identification and strengthened by the position of power experienced in his peer group at school. One may note that, gradually, the voices of his parents are muted in the dialogical dynamics. This outlines a process that Hermans and Kempen (1998) call movement in a monological direction, in which a voice acquires predominance over others that become less dominant and, in turn, muted.

Thus, in the movement of the self characterized by multivoicedness, the I-student I-position favors the voices of peers and strives to maintain its position of power. For this purpose, he assumes behavior that challenges his teachers and the institution's rules, which gives him prominent positioning in the group, in a perspective that places the voice of the I-troublemaker-student as dominant in the dialogical space. This also denotes a departure from his parents' voices concerning his behavior in school and his performance, which marks a movement that once again signals the silencing of parental voices with regard to academic matters. While at the beginning of his school life, these voices dominate and guide his understanding of himself, at the end of primary school, these voices are dominated by the empowered I-student, who expresses the need for independence from the adults' voices.

Final Considerations

In Elias's narrative, parents have a decreased, and often muted, power to act in the dialogical space of the educational self. The I-student position appears, in the bifurcation of the I-student, dominant over the parents' voices. The structuring of the I-troublemaker-student enables Elias to try a new position that puts him in a prominent position in relation to his peers and teachers at school.

As Elias advances in his school trajectory, there is an increasing involvement of significant social others. The need for greater autonomy reported by Elias reveals an important psychological aspect that emerges in early adolescence. In this sense, parents have a renegotiated position in the dialogical dynamics, and Elias begins to consider other perspectives, in this case, those of his peers, as constituents of his educational self.

The meanings created regarding parental participation involve the assignment of positive value to his mother with regard to her monitoring the school routine and supporting her child's needs, thereby constituting an important protective aspect for her child's trajectory in school. In contrast, the meaning created concerning his father's participation is that it was incipient and even harmful to his trajectory because he did not give Elias support or listen to him at times when he needed to. In addition, the needs adapted to the school context (interaction with peers and identification with his brother at school) emerge as significant for Elias and require reorganizations that conflict with the guidelines provided by his parents, which creates a high level of ambivalence regarding the meaning of his parent's participation in the school.

Based on the reverberations identified in the dynamics of Elias's educational self, it is possible to establish that one of the most important aspects in his parents' relationship with their child's academic life is the consideration of the impact of the practices and voices in the student's personal culture. Researchers, parents, and the school itself may be relevant actors in this redefining process of the importance of parental involvement in school, which is strongly advocated in various sectors of society. A redefinition is proposed to reflect a change of attitude towards the issue that takes into account the cultures of different actors. Parents are knowledgeable concerning practices that they believe are worthwhile in students' academic lives, and schools may also have guiding strategies for parental involvement.

With regard to the possibilities of intervention in programs or projects that aim at parental participation in school, it is necessary that both institutions (family and school) meet and negotiate the forms of involvement in academic life that may be useful for students. Above all, these students are essential in the dialogical process of negotiating practices. The intervention projects should include the "voices" of the students, not only as effective monitoring resources but also as core actors in outlining a border that takes into account their psychological need for autonomy.

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Self-development, Human Values and the Construction of Children's Trajectories in Educational Contexts

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The current chapter is based on the doctoral dissertation of the first author under the advice of the second at the University of Brasilia, Brazil.[1] The research aimed at characterizing children's self-development in the transition period from Preschool to Elementary School. Self-development, human values, and the construction of trajectories of development were the central topics approached in the study, which adopted a semiotic cultural and Dialogical Self-theoretical approaches while providing theoretical elaborations for the scientific understanding of human self-development during childhood.

In this chapter, we discuss self-meaning processes and how values' constructions take place along the life-course of children, from early childhood education in transition to primary school in the near future. We assume that such a transition can facilitate the observation of the emergence of self-meanings and values in child development. That emergence may either help or render difficult children's lives when they begin the primary school. We are also interested in analyzing the role of social others that make suggestions and anticipations about children's development in the context of family and school. The focus is on human development, conceptualized here as dynamic, complex, and systemic. As our major concern lies on the processes involved in the promotion and inhibition of developmental trajectories, we emphasize the dynamic and flexible nature of the emergent self-meanings in children.

This chapter is organized in two parts. First, we present some empirical evidence about children's self-meaning making during their transitional process from

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preschool to primary school. Second, we analyze and discuss about the effects of values system organization on the promotion or inhibition of particular developmental trajectories.

Semiotic Cultural Psychology and Dialogical Self Theory

The current study is based on the Semiotic Cultural Perspective (Valsiner, 2014) and Dialogical Self Theory (Hermans, 2001, 2003). The integration of these two perspectives in the research of human development has expanded in recent years (Branco, 2010, 2012; Freire, 2008; Mattos, 2013; Santana, 2010). That integration is understood on the basis of the dialogical nature of the relationship between individual and culture and it takes into account that signs are the fundamental mediators and regulators of such relationship.

Semiotic Cultural Psychology is dedicated to the study of the "mechanisms by which individuals make their experiences meaningful" (Cabell & Valsiner, 2014, p. 11). The human being has a lot of resources for self-organization, self-regulation, and transformation of reality; as a result, the individual can rebuild his/her universe of meanings and, additionally, set new life trajectories based on unknown until then resources, feelings, and experiences, which unfold new meanings. Thereby, this approach considers the existence of a mutual dynamics between individual and environment, which is characterized by continuous transformation. The subject not only receives messages from others but also changes the meanings of the environment in which he is developing, thus there is a mutual constitution of subject and cultural context. That is, the human being is not shaped by culture; s/he is also an active participant in her/his own developmental process (Valsiner, 2007, 2014).

Semiotic Cultural Psychology points out that, as human beings, we are self-reflexive, in other words, we act purposefully and are focused on goal-future orientations. We are also organized by an affective system, where values, beliefs, and prejudice are essential parts of a hierarchical structure (Madureira & Branco, 2012; Valsiner, 2014). In this model, values and prejudices correspond to the highest level of the hierarchy, the hypergeneralized level, capable of controlling the other affective levels that are somehow subordinate to it—even though lower levels can affect higher levels, the whole system being dynamic. According to Valsiner (2014), the human being establishes different signs, especially "generalized and hypergeneralized signs" that enable adjustments as the person thinks about the future by anticipating personal experiences and achievements (goals). Therefore, some signs, deeply internalized, operate on the affective system as values or prejudices.

When internalized, a sign can work as promoting development, and it repeatedly acts as a regulator of human activities. It allows the individual to think about the future and consider diverse development paths. The construction and the use of signs allow us to adjust to the psychological phenomena that appear both in the field of personal culture as in the collective culture, interdependently (Valsiner, 2014). Therefore, we can say that the personal culture is made up of those personal meanings subjectively

coconstructed, while the collective culture is coconstructed by the interpersonally mediated communicative messages via the signs (Valsiner, 2014). As a result, we can say that each individual will have their own interpretation and internalization of the messages of the collective culture, which contribute to the personal culture and the singular ways in which each individual acts.

The concept of semiotic mediation is related to the production and use of signs. This concept is fundamental to understand the discussions occurring in individual interactions and relationships in all cultural contexts, including the school. The concept of semiotic mediation has been developed with a focus on the historical-cultural approach for many decades (Cole, 1985; Valsiner, 2014; Vygotsky, 1962), and it was defined by Vygotsky as a regulative principle of conduct to which signs and instruments are subordinated. Signs and instruments have a social origin, are internalized, and impregnate all individual and interpersonal interactions.

Vygotsky emphasized the study of signs and instruments in mediating the individual's relations with the world (Gillespie & Zittoun, 2010). For example, the Activity Theory emphasizes activities and artifacts that mediate human activity, focusing on the instruments (Engeström, 1987; Wertsch, 1998). On the other hand, approaches focused on signs underline the semiotic mediation of thought and action, as in the case of semiotic cultural approach (Gillespie & Zittoun, 2010; Valsiner, 2014). Thus, semiotic mediation as a human development process enables to regulate individual's psychological functions, both personally and interpersonally. In the case of institutions, signs regulate goal-oriented actions, monitoring, and maintaining the social interaction rules that allow for the transformation of personal culture systems and, eventually, the collective culture of the group. The routines of the institutions, the use of uniforms, playful activities and rituals, generally work as semiotic mediation systems (Valsiner, 2007). In this way, to create and to use signs leads to permanent meaning-making processes that have a dynamic characteristic. Several semiotic mediators coexist in meaning-making processes, according to Valsiner (2007):

> The co-emergence of semiotic regulators and generalized meanings guarantees the self-regulation of the semiotic hierarchy over time (and contexts). The crucial issue of semiotic regulation system is to grant its sufficiency for regulation of the immediate experience, blocking the unnecessary proliferation of the evoking of signs in anyhere-and-now context (p. 68).

The semiotic mediation allows us to block the proliferation of unlikely alternatives and generate a sense of continuity of action. Similarly, we construct sign hierarchies to guarantee the unity and stability of the Self, using mechanisms such as self-regulation, in order to manage in a flexible (or inflexible) way our construction of the future and our value systems in the irreversible time. The dialogic self-system can be considered as self-regulating, as it creates a personal general sense about what is happening at any given time (Valsiner, 2007).

The meaning-making processes are generated by the production and use of signs. According to Zittoun (2012) "Human thinking and activities are enabled because we perceive the world as inhabited by signs, and it is through some sort of translation of these signs in our mind that we can think, create and guide our action (Freud 2001a;

Peirce 1878; Valsiner 2007; Vygotsky 1934)" (p. 260). Therefore, the sign has two functions: on the one hand, it is something in the context of the here-and-now and, second, it guides the signs' creator (the individual) toward a potentially immediate future. As a result, "the sign prepares the person for new encounters with the world that might happen, but that are not to be taken for granted" (Josephs, Valsiner & Surgan, 1999, p. 258). These signs are designed in terms of opposites; so when we build a sign, immediately we build its opposite (e.g., A<>non-A), a key feature of the dialogical approach. Opposites are constructed on the basis of negative "A", so it is not possible to build "A" without the "non-A" in a semiotic tension. There are negotiations and renegotiations of tensions in the complex formed by "A<>non-A" in the interpersonal and the intrapersonal level, which brings a segregation state, possibilities of change and the emergence of the new (Josephs et al., 1999). As a consequence, the opposition is the basis of the change. These signs are not fixed entities, but meaning fields, that at the same time are the bridge between the self and the others (Bento, Cunha & Salgado, 2012).

There are different types of signs, which are all mediators but some are also regulators. For a sign to acquire a regulatory character, it needs a constant and generalized movement in order to enable its transformation into a semiotic marker, assuming, in this way, a certain power of regulation over the meaning-making processes. Values are an example of these semiotic regulators. They emerge in the flow of the experience and by regulating it, the signs may also take a residual function and play a role in a nonspecific time in the future to anticipate similar situations (Valsiner, 2014). So we can assume that semiotic systems, which were built based on past experience, can get to be reintroduced in the future as a way of resignification. The use of signs is generated from various mechanisms of development, including cultural canalization processes.

On the other hand, our value system is developed, primarily, from our affectivity and by the mediation of the signs. Thus, taking into account the above statements, we emphasize the role of the affectivity as a central element of human experience. In the Affective Regulatory Model (Valsiner, 2007), affectivity is organized at different levels, starting from level 0 (physiological: excitation and inhibition) to Level 4 (hypergeneralized affective field). Level 1 is defined as an anticipatory state, which does not require semiotic mediation (preverbal). On Level 2, the persons can verbally name their emotions, for example, they can tell if the emotion makes them sad or happy. Level 3 is the level of generalized categories of feelings; and, at Level 4, we find the affective semiotic hypergeneralized fields, produced by powerful emotions that cannot be translated by specific emotions, since they are genuinely difficult to describe. However, they do regulate all the other levels. At the higher level, the individual cannot express through words their feelings, values and prejudices, and their deep, affective roots have the power to guide meaning-making processes and the actions of the individual.

The Dialogical Self Theory (DST) (Hermans, 2001; Hermans, 2015; Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2010) argues that, in the individuals, different I-Positions coexist, and are associated to various "selves" that emerge from the relationships established between the subject and significant social others. Thereby, the Self is configured by

the "I" (the active instance) associated to the "self" (the reflexive instance). These I/self positions interact with each other and can be inferred from the multiple voices present in the narratives of the subject. According to Hermans (2015):

> a dialogical self as a composite term in which James's extended self is brought together with Bakhtin's notion of dialogue. In this way, a between-concept (dialogue) is combined with a within-concept (self) so that a conceptual basis is created for the transportation of the internal constructions of the self to the social and societal world and vice versa. In this way, self and the social environment intrinsically belong together and may question, correct, enrich each other and contribute to each other's development (p. 2).

In this chapter, we suggest that children may assume diverse I/self-positionings since an early stage of their development, and they may show these positionings at school. The notion of dialog is anchored in the relations between the self and the others within the school context. Thereby, the individual's positionings are determined, in the first place, by the otherness, and this otherness is understood as the relational and developmental movement subsequent to the sociohistorical development of the Self (Gratier & Bertau, 2012).

The DST has been mainly built upon adults' narratives (Hermans, 2001; Salgado & Hermans, 2005). Recently, though, the literature has showed a substantial interest in research with children (Bertau, 2012; Bertau & Gonçalves, 2007; Bertau, Gonçalves & Raggatt, 2012; Roncancio-Moreno & Branco, 2014, 2015; Garvey & Fogel, 2012; Lyra, 2010). Studies concerning self-development in the first 2 years of life have increased lately (Bertau & Gonçalves, 2007; Bertau et al., 2012; Fogel, Koeyer, Bellagamba & Bell, 2002; Komatsu, 2012; Lyra, 2010; Trevarthen, 2012). The topics of these studies are focused on the early sensorial experiences of the baby as channels of communication and in the creation of communicative frames between the child and the mother in the construction of a dialogical environment for the self-system (Fogel et al., 2002; Garvey & Fogel, 2012). Other studies are analyzing the dialogical dynamics in early communication between mother-infant and the emergent positionings of the infant in the dialog (Lyra, 2010). These studies are analyzed in a recent paper by Roncancio-Moreno and Branco (2015), in which we claim that even though the research with babies has increased, there are, still, certain lags concerning self-development during the childhood years (for example, in primary school).

Values, Beliefs, and Prejudice

In recent work about moral development from the Semiotic Cultural Psychology, Branco and Valsiner (2012) claim for the necessity of further study of the topic. As they point out:

> the contributions from cultural psychology are very important to revealing the historical and cultural basis of human values, as well as to making sense of how they operate as fundamental components of motivational systems, and how they permanently translate into

> cultural practices that, reciprocally, promote the emergence and consolidation of cultural and personal values (p. viii).

Consequently, researchers interested in this field have to open possibilities of studying the genesis and the development of human values, beliefs, and prejudices. These values, beliefs, and prejudices establish a complex motivational system with different degrees of emotional development. Accordingly, beliefs are at the most superficial level, and values and prejudices are deeply located at the core of the motivational system. Madureira and Branco (2012) claim that a value system consists of a set of cultural beliefs that are characterized by a strong affective rooting, which have been actively internalized by the subject.

As a result, values and prejudices are more difficult to change than a more superficial belief because their development corresponds to several I/self-positionings, characterized by their dynamicity, as well as the fact they may be linked to other values, more, or less, predominant (Rengifo-Herrera & Branco, 2014). Specifically, beliefs and values are conceptualized as cultural mediating devices that are built by the person and involve thinking about the future (Valsiner, Branco & Dantas, 1997). The values are "embodied" in individuals (Rosa & Gonzalez, 2012) and they promote a sense of continuity of the self-system along the ontogenesis (Branco, 2015; Branco & Madureira, 2008). Culture and values work in the same semiotic universe, but the latter do so not only as a by-product of culture. Both social interactions and values "emerge from a dialogical, reciprocal constitution of social practices and meaning-construction processes" (Branco, Palmieri & Pinto-Manzini, 2012, p. 32).

Branco and Valsiner (2012) conceptualized "values [as] motivational dispositions that are deeply rooted in individuals' affective domains" (p. ix). According to the authors, we can talk about ideal values in our society and we can also promote discussions in order to determine what values we want to guide our actions and relationships in everyday life. However, many are the values underlying our behaviors. This means that, because they are deeply entrenched in our affective system, it is not easy to realize the specific types of values that direct our daily choices in life.

On the other hand, we have the prejudices. According to Madureira (2007), the prejudice is "a boundary phenomenon of affective meaning-making, a collective historical-cultural construction" (p. 326) that creates discrimination between individuals and groups. Following the author's pattern of thought, a prejudice involves the creation and maintenance of rigid symbolic boundaries, which are related to hypergeneralized meanings rooted in our affective system (Level 4 of Valsiner affective system). Prejudices are complex affective-cognitive constructions, which are on the basis of discriminatory practices—or prejudices in action (Madureira & Branco, 2012). Schools, as families, are social settings for the development of prejudices and discriminatory practices (Padilha, 2010; Madureira & Branco, 2012), that is, educational institutions may reproduce diverse prejudices and discriminatory practices in their daily routines (Madureira & Branco, 2012). Analyzing social interactions at school, we can observe which kind of prejudices are being constructed, for instance, prejudices regarding gender, sexual orientation, race, and so on.

In this chapter, we also want to discuss how in the socialization processes in school and in the family may coconstruct values and how it is linked to self-development. Socialization processes, in general, are the semiotic arena of internalization of human beliefs, values, and prejudices. These processes are set up in communicative frames, affective in nature, which are dialogic and are loaded with meanings that contain the cultural practices necessary for the coconstruction of the notions of right and wrong, between adults and children. We are always in the process of building values along our lifespan, and moral socialization is part of our daily practices and our discourses (Shweder & Much, 1991). As Shweder and Much (1991) pointed out:

> Children are continually assisted by local guardians of the moral order in constructing their notions of right and wrong, and the inferences they draw about both the moral (its form) and what is moral (its content) are personal reconstructions recreated within a framework of tradition-based modes of apperception and evaluation represented in everyday discourse (p. 186).

Interactions and relationships established between parents, children, friends, teachers, relatives, media, and social others are dynamic and dialogic, and they can promote goal orientations and values internalization. Affectivity and motivation are in the essence of the self-system and they allow for the permanent construction of such system. Values work like motivational devices that mediate the construction of the self. In that meditational process, the individual creates strategies of self-regulation, which allow him/her to anticipate their experiences and formulate goals as the person thinks about the construction of the future.

Specifically, at school, the approach taken is usually oriented—formally—to the development of values of justice, freedom, respect to human rights and democratic principles. However, the school' discourse does not necessarily reflect the educational practices actually observed, which, are often oriented to discrimination and the promotion of prejudices (Branco, Freire & Barrios, 2012). Hence, in educational contexts, it is common to find practices promoting individualism and competition among the children (Palmieri & Branco, 2007), even when the curriculum points out an emphasis in cooperation, communication, autonomy, solidarity, etc. Educational practices need, then, to approach the topic of values, beliefs, and prejudices in an integrative way, taking into account the reality of each community and engaging the school community in deep reflections upon such topics, involving teachers and students.

Values are also historically developed. Bang and Hedegaard (2008) discuss how, in the Danish curriculum, some common goals, defined for all levels of the educational system, have underlying values. These values are organized into three domains, (1) different ways of learning, (2) desire to learn and (3) learning together with others. Each one of these domains represent the idea of an integrated and multidimensional developmental basis, which stresses the diversity of learning from diverse activities, children's interest, and motivation, and focus on cooperative learning. All these values are essential for the construction of a democratic society (Bang & Hedegaard, 2008).

Here, we want to investigate how some values emerge along school interactions and communicative processes, particularly during students' transition experiences.

Data was constructed and analyzed in our research, which took place in public institutions in Brazil during the transition from preschool to primary school. The topic of transition is here relevant because such periods allow for significant transformation and for the emergence of new self-configurations.

Transitions in Development

Recently, Zittoun (2009, 2011, 2014) has theoretically and empirically worked with developmental transition processes with a focus on the dynamics of the individual's transformation. From a sociocultural approach, Zittoun conceptualized that transitions in development can represent qualitative changes allowing trajectory bifurcations and reconfigurations of the self-system; they will depend on the individual's intra- and interpsychological resources. For Zittoun (2008), "in a situation of regular functioning a disruption of the usual processes catalyses adjustment and calls for the production of newness. New forms of conduct can thus emerge. In some cases, these might involve a restructuration of the whole system" (p. 165). Consequently, the life span is not only characterized by regularities but by moments of rupture, bifurcation, and instability as well. In that regard, processes of positioning, repositioning, and reconfiguration occur, allowing for identity transformation and the emergence of novelties. Considering how a rupture in development involves a change in the subject's set of actions, transition can be defined as a process in which the configuration of the self-changes, that is, the relationships between the individual, the object and the social others involved in those relationships change. Zittoun (2008) emphasizes the need to study the dynamics of these self-reconfigurations.

What are the main features of children's social interactions that make a significant difference in their adjustment processes to elementary school? Here, we need a detailed study of each child's life trajectory in order to provide indicators of their subjective experience and the way students perceive the change between different educational contexts. Several elements come into play in the transition from preschool to elementary school and they can vary from one child to another. Hence, it is important to characterize these developmental paths and their transformations. The challenge is to study these processes in a systemic way (Ford & Lerner, 1992). The idea is to go beyond traditional conceptualizations of transition, in which the idea of linear sequences of events, organized in individual patterns, dominate and need to be overcome (Mattos and Chaves, 2013). We are interested in the developmental strategies and processes implicated in the transition between educational contexts and the specific contributions that significant others may give to generate changes in the self-system throughout the transition process.

In other words, we assumed that the transition period from preschool to primary school may generate changes in the children trajectory, since they will need to cope with a new environment, with diverse challenges, and they will need to adjust by creating new meanings about self and everything else. We supposed, and the research results confirmed, that children's self-systems go through transition periods par-

ticularly susceptible to reconfigurations. When that reconfiguration is happening, reconstruction of values is also operating in the system, allowing for the change that can lead to the emergence and internalization of values, beliefs or prejudices.

Educational Contexts and Developmental Processes

Educational contexts are cultural settings for individual development, socialization and coconstruction of personal meanings. According to Valsiner (2006), "education is a form of socializing the developing person into the semiotic texture of the given society—and to his or her private construction of personal subjectivity—"(p. 10). The semiotic universe of educational institutions enables the subjects' confrontation, negotiation and their projection to the future. Thus, these contexts provide social directions to the individuals in the construction of their developmental trajectories and their subjectivity (Iannaccone, Marsico & Tateo, 2012; Tateo, 2015).

Educational practices are cultural practices which are coconstructed among the child and the adults in the community; they have a historical value and provide social guidance through generations (Rogoff, 2003). Children actively internalize the practices of their communities and they are oriented to follow rules and prescribed directions. Schooling settings are ambivalent and they are characterized by creating tension in the individual self-system and by the promotion of development. Rogoff (2003) emphasizes that one of the main goals of schooling is to encourage individuals to compete with them. Therefore, one of the school most popular strategies of regulation is the use of comparisons and grades across subjects. These are values that are constructed on the basis of the curriculum.

According to Rogoff (2003), "development occurs in *participation* in shared sociocultural activities" (p. 285), not only by the "social influence" of adults in this process, but also by the active participation of children with social others, what leads to the internalization of the values of the community. The author emphasizes the concept of "guided participation", which is defined by two basic processes:

> The first involves children and their companions supporting their shared endeavors by attempting to bridge their different perspectives using culturally available tools such as words and gestures and referencing each other's actions and reactions. The second is their structuring of each other's involvement to facilitate engagement in shared endeavors (p. 285).

As a result, daily activities, routines, and other shared practices at school, at home and at other spheres of socialization, are impregnated with the meanings that circulate in the community and which children help to coconstruct with social others' values and goal orientations typical of their culture. So, developmental processes are in the core of the "guided participation", as they it allows for the transformation and the dynamic emergence of new meanings in the self-system.

Next, we analyze the processes of communication and metacommunication, cultural canalization, and anticipation of the future, which play a relevant role in the self-system development.

Communication and Metacommunication Processes

Communication and metacommunication processes are central in the study of social interactions and human development. According to Branco, Pessina, Flores, & Salomao (2004) "communication, conceptualized as the process that conveys coconstruction of meanings, involves the interplay of a systemically related collection of signs that dynamically changes as it proceeds, as is expressed by a multitude of communicative channels" (p. 7). Metacommunication is one of the dimensions of communication. It stands as a nonverbal level which is related to the quality and affective tone of the interactive frame coconstructed by the individuals in interaction (Branco et al., 2004). According to Branco et al., (2004), psychologists need to investigate the kind of metacommunication that is particularly "relational", and concerns the construction of meanings and interpretations. In communicative and metacommunicative frames individuals interpret and negotiate meanings about each other's actions, even when the subjects are not aware of these meanings. For instance, in a same communicative frame, different interpretations can exist among the individuals involved in the interaction, and this can produce ambivalence and tension in their relationship.

Communication and metacommunication have a central role in the educational context, since meanings are there continually elaborated in the communicative frames between teachers and students, and are influenced by affective semiotic processes and social suggestions (Branco et al., 2004). For instance, the teacher can communicate to one child certain instructions for the homework but, at the same time, can metacommunicate, with gestures, tone of voice, and body posture, his/her negative judgment (with irritation, authoritarian attitude) concerning the child's performance in class. It is in the small details that we perceive the ambivalences and affective components under which interactions and relationships are constructed. That is why we need to focus not only upon individual's narratives but, additionally, upon the way metacommunication operates in social interactions.

From Roncancio-Moreno's research (2015), we selected to analyze and discuss in the chapter two case studies. As said before, the focus was on children's self-development from preschool to the first-grade contexts. By studying teacher–child and child–child interactions, it was possible to observe how the processes of communication and metacommunication were operating. It is worth mentioning that communication and metacommunication are narrowly linked to cultural canalization processes. These processes are generated through social suggestions and consist of a general mechanism of development that promote certain developmental trajectories. In this way, teachers' values and beliefs may regulate the pathways of their social interactions with students, generating feelings of competence or incompetence in each child. Schooling practice and cultural values and beliefs are, therefore, coconstructed within interactions and relationships that happen inside educational institutions (Valsiner et al. 1997).

Cultural Canalization Process

The cultural semiotic psychology highlights the role of the cultural canalization processes in the individual's development. Taking into account a systemic and holistic approach, the canalization occurs through social suggestions by which the individual development is oriented along the microgenesis and the ontogenesis (Branco & Valsiner, 2012). The concept of "canalization" is widely used in a cultural constructivist approach and it is defined as a general mechanism of development, which, through a gradual process, provides the structures that guide child development in certain directions (Valsiner et al., 1997). Thus, the subject is constantly building paths, in interaction with the environment, which leads to the internalization of certain cultural messages and block others, however, allowing for the emergence of new meanings. According to this conception of cultural canalization, the developing individual also has an active role in building pathways to achieve its objectives in the course of his/her life.

Cultural canalization is considered as a key element in the analysis of the experiences of individuals in different contexts and provides information on how it originates and, furthermore, it may guide the construction of individuals' and groups' beliefs and values. This canalization occurs over historical and ontogenetic time, and the active role of the subject allows for a reconstruction of these suggestions through internalization process. Branco, Pinto-Manzini and Palmieri (2012) define cultural canalization as:

> the process, whereby, culture promotes the development in certain directions through implicit social suggestions (indirect) or explicit (direct). However, we cannot speak of determination or accuracy, because human development is the result of a multiple causality system, which also includes the constructive participation of the subject (Madureira & Branco, 2005; Valsiner, 2007) (p. 96).

Incorporating the concept of cultural canalization in development studies allows us to recognize that adults are important agents for values orientations. In the context of family and school, implicit and explicit rules circulate, governing the interactions between the participants, which are especially anchored in caregivers' beliefs and values. The systematic and detailed analysis of how meanings are coconstructed during interactions gives us the opportunity to capture the nuances of relationships and to know the configuration of the interactors' affective system. Therefore, cultural canalization is closely linked to practices, beliefs, and values that are co-built by the individuals via internalization/I externalization processes.

Let us illustrate the process of cultural canalization with Taís' case. In this case, we identified important indicators of cultural canalization in school and in family contexts that were promoting Taís' developmental trajectory. Mother and teacher, in the first grade, encouraged the girl to perform well in literacy activities. Consequently, Taís gradually coconstructed positive positionings about herself. Her mother was always positively evaluating the child:

> I had a positive surprise (in the first grade)! She was reading better than I was expecting, her reasoning was good, she could read the statements, she could understand what was needed

> to be done, she was able to make interpretations. I think she's right, I think it's also a merit of the teacher, as the teacher is only doing positive things". (Taís' mother, pleased and happy to talk about her).

The teacher also provided good evaluations about the child's performance, what may have promoted cultural canalization in a positive direction:

> She is a child that upon arrival (in the first grade) was not able to read, but then … she made a huge leap!! She is reading fluently now, she is super interested in reading books, research (…) in general. She likes to read (…) and all the creative activities that come with reading, of the things she experienced, the things she learned. (Taís' teacher)

The school academic environment, mediated by the meanings conveyed by the teacher, became a valuable developmental scenario, with the emergence of a new I/self-Positioning: she was viewing herself as a good reader and a good writer. The mechanism of cultural canalization was promoting in Taís the internalization of a self-evaluation as a capable and competent child. She was encouraged to read and write from an early age by her mother, and these semiotic markers were reinforced in the first grade by a similar encouragement from the new teacher. Along with cultural canalization, other developmental processes operates in the development of children's dialogical self-system, leading to self-regulation and self-organization.

Anticipation Process

In a recent study, Mattos (2013) defines the concept of "anticipation" as a marker or sign which achieves the role of anticipating through a social other, an alternative of future perspective. Anticipation is an "anticipated recognition" from social others with strong emotional value and it facilitates the emergence of new I/self-Positionings. The anticipated recognition works as a catalytic condition, in the self-system, which operates a significant transformation that enables the emergence of promoters signs (Mattos, 2013). Using microgenetic methodology, it is possible to identify the voices of social others (parents, teachers) anticipating a future specific positioning for the child, which can foster the recognition of capabilities, but can also lead the child to project himself in the future as a failure, occupying a position of incompetence. Thus, anticipation works as an element that pulls children's development forward, or, conversely, puts the child down by emphasizing negative meanings that generate feelings of insecurity and failure.

Anticipation processes are more than simple expectations. Anticipation is linked to the idea of change in the self-system, and it allows us to understand the role of significant social others in children's repositioning moves towards success or failure. Anticipations work in the manner of signs with a projection to the future, mobilized by the voices of social others. Anticipations are connected to individuals' value systems and are promoted through affectivity, being extremely powerful. They set future goals and constraints which implementation must be followed. When those anticipations are identified in the significant social others with which children interact

(even if is not explicitly expressed), they have a great power over meaning-making processes, coconstructed by the child in development, and according to a highly dynamic phenomenon.

Giselle's case is an example of the way anticipation processes may operate. Voices in school and family operated as counterpoints in terms of anticipations to her development, generating a dynamics where new I/self-Positionings emerged. The voice of the father strongly suggested the girl's failure: He insisted to compare Giselle with her older sister, the "smarter" and "more competent" child. The father's voice, however, was attenuated by the constant movement of the significant voices of the teachers, in preschool and in primary school, which encouraged her to be successful. The mother's voice was usually ambivalent: she was able to recognize aspects of the girl's development, contributing to neutralize a bit her father's voice. However, sometimes mother agreed with father, and also anticipated the worst. Fortunately, teachers in both educational contexts balanced the strong tension generated by Giselle's family. This diversity of voices and the way Giselle negotiated with them, together with the psychological resources that Giselle could herself mobilize, gave birth to the creation of a powerful new I/self-Positioning that firmly resisted the anticipation of failure: being a good drawer, she was constantly praised by teacher and peers for her good drawings and other academic accomplishments at school. Giselle, thus, progressively self-positioned herself as competent learner, developing symbolic capabilities to self-regulate the tensions and to create stability in her dialogical self-system.

In short, anticipation processes again highlights the role of significant social others in the inhibition or promotion of developmental trajectories. The following section shows how other processes put forth by the child, as the creation of symbolic resources, can operate dynamically in the self-system to help children to cope with transition processes.

The Use of Symbolic Resources in Children Transitions

According to Zittoun (2006, 2007b, c), based on cultural psychology, during a transition period some cultural artifacts or semiotic tools, named as "symbolic resources", are used by the individual. This concept has been used in different theoretical perspectives, and here it is operationalized in order to integrate the emotional and semiotic aspects of the individual and her/his meaning-making capacities (Zittoun, 2007a). The author's analysis is mainly focused on youth transitions; however, according to the theory and methodology used in the current research (Roncancio-Moreno & Branco, 2014), we verified that during the transition process children also created symbolic resources, or cultural tools, in order to cope with the new context. Zittoun (2007a) posed that there are two sorts of cultural elements:

> Cultural elements as books, movies, pieces of art, and pictures are made out of semiotic configurations of various codes (musical, graphic, verbal, etc.), bounded by a material support. Symbolic systems such as religious, political, or ethnic systems are also organizations of signs, including texts or rules of reference, objects and places for rituals, and "wardens,"

> or authorities that fix the system's boundaries (Geertz, 1972; Grossen & Perret-Clermont, 1992) (p. 344).

In the excerpt above, we see how there is a diversity of cultural devices that can be used for constructing new meanings and dealing with transition periods. One of the characteristics of the symbolic resources is that their use has to be intentional (Zittoun, 2007a). From our point of view, and in our research case studies, we cannot track the intention of the use of cultural devices, but there are, nevertheless, indications that they offered the children possibilities for the coconstruction of new meanings. There is a close relationship between symbolic resources and dialogicity:

> Uses of symbolic resources can be seen as dialogical processes: they take place in a cultural world constituted by semiotic exchanges; they can lead people to interact; and as artefacts, they contain echoes of many other voices (Zittoun, 2007b, p. 365).

The particularity of the studied transition process, from preschool to primary school, is the prospects of literacy. Changes in a child's status derive from the popular consideration that when they begin the primary school they are not children anymore. They will, and must, learn how to read and write properly. They enter a community of learners where the child is expected to read, to write and, especially, to behave (Cavada & Roncancio-Moreno, in preparation). The two children we selected to present in this chapter, Taís and Giselle, created symbolic resources that allowed them to deal well with the new semiotic cultural context. As stated by Zittoun (2007a), a symbolic resource appear when "the person turns a socially shared element into a psychologically relevant resource; uses of symbolic resources necessarily constitute a bridging between inner world and shared reality" (p. 345). Consistently, the use of symbolic resources in childhood may be considered as a source of self-transformation and the configuration of new developmental trajectories supported by the interaction between children's intrapsychological resources and cultural elements. The dynamic movement of the meanings created by the individual entailed negotiations and reconfigurations of the dialogical self-system.

Let us consider Giselle's case. Giselle's case is an example of the use of a symbolic resource linked to the transformation of her positioning as a competent child. In preschool, Giselle already showed her drawing skills, and this was recognized by her teacher and parents. Concerning the teacher, she was always giving positive feedback to the girl in the different activities, especially in drawing, an activity often developed in preschool. Giselle received positive evaluations about her and her performance. Even her classmates recognized her as a good drawer. Teacher's concepts about her development enabled a cultural canalization of messages that reassured Giselle's skills and abilities. She also praised Giselle' drawings. Sometimes the teacher showed Giselle's notebook as an example of organization and beautiful drawing to the class. In few words, the teacher became the social other who anticipated the girl's capabilities, and this contributed to the development of symbolic resources that later helped Giselle to cope with first-grade demands in the near future (primary school).

Giselle's father, though, did not encourage her to improve any of her abilities because he did not want to create a "rivalry" (in his words!) between the sisters.

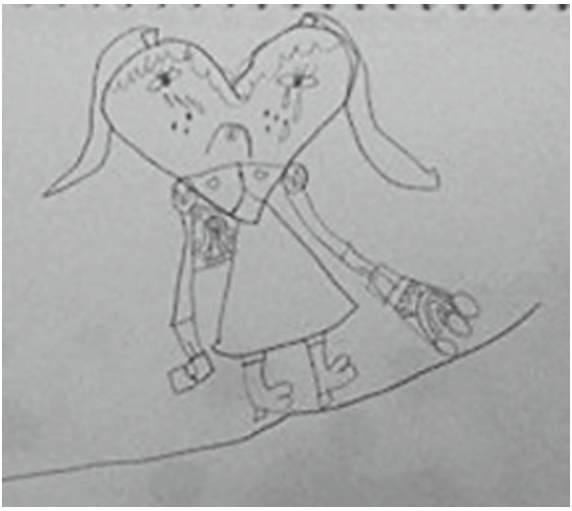

Fig. 1 A sad heart going to the school

Instead, her mother recognized Giselle potential for drawing. The ambivalent situation with her parents generated meanings that provoked tensions in her self-system. However, all the support she received from teacher and peers—she was then very popular, the beautiful leader of the group—made the girl happy and proud.

In primary school, things changed. Now play was substituted by success in learning activities, and she was no leader anymore. At first, she was very unhappy with the new demands and expectations. Figure 1 makes this very clear.

With time, though, Giselle's self-system made a very successful use of drawing as a symbolic resource. Several indicators appeared in her narratives and interactions with others, suggesting that the girl was assuming an I/self-Positioning as a "good drawer". The positioning "I as a good drawer" did not reveal itself in preschool, despite the mother and the teacher reports her drawings. But in the first grade, this ability turned out to be fundamental for her coping with the new demands and expectations.

The primary school is an educational culture that stresses the value of academic competences, and promote or inhibit specific trajectories of development that often lead to the emergence of competition and individualism (Branco et al. 2012). In the first weeks of primary school, Giselle was sad, but gradually she became more interested in drawing, what may be related to the value attributed in that context to the use of pencil and paper. In the new context, children's play was not valued: in the first grade, children could only play for a while, for some time on Fridays, and at the daily break (for about 20 min). At school, the visit to the playground was limited to Wednesdays for half an hour, and the teacher was not that warm and tender with the students. She valued very little free play. In one of her speeches, she said emphatically to the students that they had to stop playing as though they were in kindergarten. Therefore, the possibilities for having a context able to provide social

and joint activity among children to promote friendship and meaning negotiations (Corsaro, 2011) were minimum.

Consequently, the classwork stress and the tasks oriented to individually tasks like writing demanded a symbolic resource that could help the girl to cope and feel better, feel competent. "Drawing", then, was the symbolic resource used by Giselle, which supported the emergence of a new self-system configuration in the new environment. In other words, when the new context set new goals to reach and new demands for the child, requiring only her dedication to classwork, her dialogical self-system promoted a self-regulation process in order to reestablish a necessary balance in terms of self-value and self-esteem. Giselle compensated for what was lost and began to use the symbolic resource of drawing. When the researcher asked: "What do you think people like the most about you?", she said "they like that I am very good at drawing". In another moment of the research, she explained—as though showing off—that "the teacher cannot draw, she does horrible drawings. I draw much better than her, I mean, a lot more! (emphasis). I think I know how to draw very well!".

In this way, Giselle is positioning as a competent learner, developing a symbolic resource to reduce tensions and create stability in her self-system. The drawing was mediating her social relationships at school with the teacher and classmates. She began to be recognized by her peers who also asked her to draw in their notebooks. With the drawings, Giselle shared experiences with others and represented her feelings and affections. For instance, in the first week of classes in the first grade, she made the drawing of "a sad heart going to the school" (Fig. 1).

The drawings became the channel by which the girl self-regulated her feelings about the transition, about the new environment, about herself. To draw allowed Giselle to construct a positive perspective about her present and future, with the help of teacher's and mother's positive anticipations. In sum, symbolic resources in children are an interesting indicator of self-regulation processes and of possibilities created by children to overcome obstacles and difficulties along their developmental trajectory.

Let us now focus on the concept of the Affective Semiotic Fields (ASF), proposed by Jaan Valsiner in the theoretical context the Semiotic Cultural Psychology (Valsiner, 2007, 2014).

Affective Semiotic Fields: Meanings in Tension

The Affective Semiotic Field (ASF) is a concept from Semiotic Cultural Psychology that results from the creation of affective semiotic devices, which temporarily stabilizes the self (Valsiner, 2007), and guarantees its continuity. Specific meanings are constructed by individuals in affective semiotic fields and these fields are in relation to one another. Some of these fields become hypergeneralized signs along the individual's developmental trajectory and may turn into what we conceptualize as *values*.

Affective semiotic fields have deep affective roots and, when hypergeneralized, configure values that are situated at the top of the dynamic hierarchy that is typical of the dialogical self-system. A dynamics and a tension exists in-between the ASF, which are regulated by affective processes. Meanings pertaining to each affective semiotic field are negotiated between individual and culture and they can change over time, becoming more or less flexible. Inside and in-between ASF, different forces and tensions operate to allow for a permanent construction of new meanings. As Josephs et al. (1999) claim, "over the course of microgenetic meanacting, novelty emerges because of the person's activity and the open, complex structure of meaning-in-context" (p. 266). It is from the affective-semiotic tension that the self-system develops. The stronger the tension, due to high degrees of ambivalence, the clearer the indicators of tensions will be. It is possible to assume, however, that in the case of little children, the ASF are more diffused, since they are in a rapid process of transformation due to the multiple subjective experiences that they are living through. Thus, ambiguities among different meanings are less clear than in adults, since their more elaborate language allows for the establishment of clearer indicators of ambivalence. In addition, adults are able to better build, describe and reflect on the meanings that they make about themselves.

While exercising meaning-making, human beings are creating mechanisms, and types of signs, that promote or inhibit the emergence of self-change. Being immersed in a culture, allows people to use intrapersonal and interpersonal devices called semiotic regulators. They are "intra-mental devices that are actively and directly used in the ongoing psychological processes" (Cabell, 2010, p. 26). For a sign to acquire a regulatory character, it needs a constant and generalized movement that allows its alteration into a semiotic marker, assuming, in this way, a certain regulatory power over meaning-making processes. Values are a good example of semiotic regulators.

According to Valsiner (2007), hierarchical systems of semiotic control are constructed along ontogeny, and they enable the emergence, regulation, dynamic construction, and use of signs. The self constantly builds these hierarchies, which can be considered as significant ASF difficult to define. This conceptualization is based on the idea of self-organizing capacity of the human experience and, simultaneously, on the development of the semiotic regulation system. Meaning-making processes expand and generalize, leading the individual to orient his/her conduct through anticipations about the future, according to the guidelines defined by his/her goals, or objectives (goal orientations, Branco & Valsiner, 1997).

ASF can change over time, they can become stronger, weaker or even disappear, depending on the child's interactions with significant others and psychological resources. ASF are constructed in the self-system like dynamic poles in tension and are organized by clusters of meanings. With this category in mind, we are trying to integrate some dimensions of the Dialogical Self Theory and the Semiotic Cultural perspective.

Transition periods can, therefore, be a privileged moment for observing the variability, development, and emergence of new meanings. We assumed and verified that the transformation of the educational context could trigger different tensions in the self-system, setting the conditions for the emergence of new incipient values.

The Emergence of an Affective Semiotic Field

To exemplify the emergence of one ASF, we refer to Taís' case. In this study, we assumed that Taís was constantly constructing ASF through the mediation of different signs, present in her cultural environment, such as family and school contexts. In Taís' case, there was another important factor for her development: she spent all her afternoons in a gym for leisure and physical activities (swimming, gymnastic, capoeira, ballet, judo, etc.). The ASF here analyzed is "I/self as accepted" versus "I/self as rejected.

Taís Interactions at the Preschool

Taís' was 5 years old at the beginning of the study. She was the youngest of three children. She was the only girl, her two brothers were 7 and 13 years old. Her mother was a bank employee and was raising the children alone. According to the mother's information, the parents were divorced and the girl did not have any contact with her father since she was 3 years-old. The mother worked all day, from eight in the morning until six in the evening, and she decided to enroll her kids in a gym for children, as a sort of daily care after school. Children left school at noon, ate lunch with their aunt (or sometimes with mother) and went to the gym until six o'clock. Sometimes, it was the mother who took the children home; sometimes, the aunt did that.

During preschool, Taís had difficult relationships with her classmates and teacher. She often mentioned, during the research, that the girls did not want to play with her. A reference to the teacher was also made, suggesting discomfort with this relationship. During observations of teacher–Taís' interactions, we noticed tensions. For example,

> First hour of the day, the kids were together, close to the teacher. Taís, crying (visibly sad), says to the teacher: Daniel hit me! The teacher answers, "You're not a saint, you did something! Daniel, please do not touch her anymore (yelling and angry). Taís stopped crying, but she kept being sad until the end of the activity.

The girl, at various times, became sad after her teacher's communicative and metacommunicative messages about her behavior. The teacher frequently opposed to whatever the girl did, and Taís showed signs of discomfort. Despite being an organized girl, who followed the rules, like "to be quiet", this was a challenge for her, for she sought to interact with her classmates, what is usual among children. She often seemed sad and isolated from her classmates. Additionally, the comments of the teacher seemed very destructive. It seemed that the teacher only paid attention to Taís' mistakes and the child was always positioned as a victim of the situation, putting her head down with gloomy expressions. Taís felt rejected by her teacher.

The relationship with her classmates was a bit better, although most of the time, her interactions with the girls made her feel sad and upset. These feelings were produced by the rejection by the girls. The girl group had their preferences and Taís

had trouble to participate. The dynamics generated among the girls seemed to take Taís to interpret the messages as rejection, and she ended up moving away from the girls, her whole body expressing unhappiness.

Other indicators showed that Taís had strong feelings of sorrow because she was not in contact with her father. These emotions emerged during several procedures used in the research. The girl seemed very sad whenever she spoke about her father. Perhaps she did not understand why her father was absent and, therefore, she felt abandoned. It was her initiative to talk about her father, but this conversation completely changed the girl's mood: she put her head down, with a melancholic face, and moments of silence followed. When she did speak about the subject, she used a very low voice. She frequently told the researcher that she missed her dad a lot and that the current situation made her feel unhappy.

In sum, Taís interactions in preschool were characterized by difficult relationships with teacher and classmates and by her grief concerning her father. Next, we analyze how Taís produced self-regulatory strategies for dealing with her feelings and how she created new ways of development.

I/Self as Responsible and I/Self as Independent

In the current study, responsibility seemed to be an incipient value that was allowing Taís, as a little girl (5-to-6 years-old), to self-organize and self-regulate her dialogical self-system in order to deal with feelings of rejection and abandonment. This incipient value may have emerged from her relations with her mother, and progressively, it was growing stronger during the transition period. The hypothesis is that responsibility could turn into an emergent value that would organize her hierarchical self-system, acting as a powerful sign. This sign could act in her system by providing meanings and conduct regulation.

In Taís' life story, we observed some indicators of responsibility and independence construction. In phase 1 (preschool) Taís showed some evidence of responsibility construction, a sign with potential to become a regulator sign. In phase 2 (primary school), this sign became even stronger and stable with the transition.

In the two phases, we saw Taís struggling to organize objects and follow rules during the semi-structured task. During the procedure called the dolls' school, Taís showed a persistent need to organize everything (all objects) while her playmate was actively creating stories. She was focused on making the "school environment" look good and she followed the rules as though in real classroom. While doing so, she looked calm and comfortable, even happy. During one of her individual interviews, Taís talked about her daily routine and stressed the fact that she was able to do her homework by herself.

In the interviews with the mother, she attributed to Taís a lot of qualities related to maturity, responsibility, and independence. She also said that ever since Taís was a baby (one and a half years-old), she showed a tendency to resolve her problems

by herself; for instance, she was able to take off her diaper and throw it away. In the interview the mother claimed:

> At home, she is very independent, she picks up, takes her clothes off, folds them and puts them in the wardrobe in her own way, but she does it nevertheless! Since she was a little baby, she took off her own diaper, tied it and placed it in the trash! There are days when she wets the bed and she takes all her clothes, puts them together with the other dirty clothes, and takes a shower… All this while she's only five years old!"
>
> (…)
>
> So, what I… I think it's a pretty feature of hers - her independence, the fact that she has a personality…

Taís' mother was sure that she had developed this maturity and responsibility because she was aware of her mother's situation (raising three children alone), and also because she was a woman. Every day, since her early childhood, Taís tried to take care of herself in order to help her mother. Housework was rapidly incorporated in Taís' routine, and since she was three years-old, she was already helping with cleaning the bedroom, making the bed, putting dirty clothes in the washing machine, and so on. According to the mother, even being the youngest at home, she was the most responsible of her three children. Taís also referred to her responsibilities at home:

> *Researcher*: Who helps you to do homework?
>
> *Taís*: I do it by myself! (excited voice) My mother helps too. When I remember what the teacher says that we need to do, I do it myself. Only when it is to read and to cut I don't do it myself, I do with my mother because everything about cutting has to be done with her.
>
> *R*: And what do you like to do over the weekend?
>
> *T*: We go to the club. I organize the house; I wash the bathroom and organize my room… [then she tells the researcher how she organizes the room]

In her narrative, she seems to feel comfortable with having responsibilities. As she talks, her expressions are of satisfaction with the performance of small tasks at home and with the possibility of doing school duties by herself. Household chores were functioning in Taís' life as a sociocultural routine that was helping to self-regulate her feelings and to promote a positive view of herself.

Taís, in addition, participated in activities at the gym every afternoon after preschool and school (in both phases). This cultural context was definitely incorporated in the girl's routine. During the interviews and conversations with the researcher, Taís often referred to her experiences and relationships in the gym. She drew some of the activities (Fig. 2).

This cultural context offered Taís the possibility to interact with others and to establish relationships based on inclusive socialization and motivation. There Taís assumed a positioning as a child available for coconstructing new experiences, not only related to sports activities but also to contact with social others. The positioning assumed in this new environment allowed her to build new supporting webs with social others outside the school. This environment, even though regulated by specific rules and norms, was more open to the occurrence of dialogic relationships than the

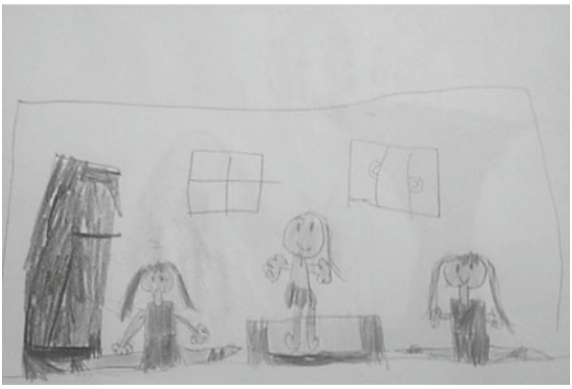

Fig. 2 Taís and her friends at the gym

school environment. As it is widely known that dialogic relationships are imperative for self-development and the promotion of developmental trajectories (Branco & Lopes de Oliveira, 2012; Roncancio-Moreno & Branco, 2014), the gym was a particularly interesting developmental context.

Activities at the gym also promoted responsibility in Taís, for they expected discipline, responsibility and organization capacities. When at home, even when she was tired after the gym, she completed her homework without complaining. Therefore, it seems that responsibility was, indeed, regulating her actions and relationships with meaningful social others. We can see, in Taís' case, how this incipient value was operating as a central element in the configuration of her motivational system.

Another element that contributed to the promotion of Taís' developmental trajectory was her relationship with the teacher in the first grade. That teacher was interested in helping Taís to deal with her sadness and gloomy mood.

During preschool, children were regularly involved in physical activities and socialization (judo lessons, ballet, play in the playground), what kept Taís in constant movement. With the transition to primary school, Taís found herself in a new context in which motion control was valued and physical activities practically no longer existed. This initially increased the girl's feelings of sadness, and she felt sad during the first two months of her first grade.

However, her teacher's awareness and attitude toward the girl changed this situation; the teacher started to ask Taís to perform her sporting skills in the classroom, and this operated as a mechanism of regulation for Taís' self-confidence and development. Here, we see how the process of anticipation worked in Taís' self-system, since the teacher positioned her as a capable girl of projecting herself positively in the near future. The teacher was able to see through her sadness, and found a way to encourage and empower the girl by inviting Taís to present her performances learned in the gym.

The school is organized to promote formal learning. It does not focus on promoting affective processes (Kullasepp & Roncancio-Moreno, in preparation; Linnenbrink-García & Pekrun, 2011), or processes related to body development. Instead, it is

focused on endorse cognitive development and motion control. For example, in classroom the rule is that all children remain seated and quiet. The teacher encouraging Taís was, then, something remarkable, since she overcame an institutional rule to stimulate the girl to show her abilities. This was essential to promote her empowerment and a positive self-concept. The teacher reoriented the child's developmental trajectory, highlighting to her—and to the rest of the students—Taís' possibilities of change by creating a dialogical environment where new meanings were coconstructed.

The gym was, then, a good environment for the flourishment of Taís' physical abilities. Joining the gym meant the possibility of putting her body in-motion, and brought new signs that were used in her relationships with others. The social abilities of Taís became better in primary school because she felt more accepted by everybody, teacher, and peers. Similarly, the mother valued and promoted in Taís positive feelings about herself regarding her abilities as an athlete, and as a helpful and responsible daughter.

The interactions with different social others that encouraged Taís to create a new I/self-Positioning led to the emergence of new meanings related to herself as a good athlete, which mediated her social and affective interactions and relationships within the new context. In one of the interviews, Taís positioned herself as a competent athlete by saying that she was "good at doing splits and jumps". In addition, the emergence of a value of responsibility and independence became linked to her positioning as a good athlete.

The positive anticipation of the mother regarding the girl's success canalized, by constructive messages, confidence in her features and capabilities, important signs that were internalized by the girl about herself. Taís' mother constantly projected her daughter onto a successful future, enhancing her skills and providing symbolic resources to encourage her development. She bought books, and also took the girl to the bookstore. The mother's anticipations converged, in the first grade, with the teacher's, who valued Taís academic and athletic performance, creating new meanings that allowed Taís to resist the sadness caused by her father's absence and her initial difficulties of interacting with peers.

The ASF created by Taís during her transition period resulted from different self-meanings in tension: I/self as rejected versus I/self as accepted. Sometimes she felt rejected, other times accepted. The dynamic among this tension enable Taís to access various possibilities for meaning-making: athletic abilities praised by significant others, teacher s incentives and mother's anticipation concerning the child capacities were fundamental. That is, the cultural practices and sports activities in the gym, plus mother's anticipations and the teacher's awareness and encouragement, allowed Taís to create opportunities for engagement and social valorization experiences from which new meanings prevailed. Taís' good performance in that particular cultural practice (sports) ended up mobilizing her wishes and interests and made it possible for her to use important semiotic resources to cope with her problems. Taís, hence, created new signs in order to deal with those feelings of sorrow that appeared in the first year and she also produced strategies to empower her own development.

Developmental Processes, School and Self

According to the analysis of the empirical evidence of the research by Roncancio-Moreno and Branco (2014, 2017), we conclude that each child coconstructs his/her own path of development. The research revealed important aspects of the dialogical self-system in development of each participant. The analysis of the diversity of meanings, and the movement of regulatory signs related to the otherness revealed the possibilities of open scenarios in the configuration and reconfiguration of the singular developmental trajectories of the children.

In both cases analyzed, we identified ambivalences and tensions that contributed to the coconstruction of new self-meanings, which can certainly be found in the dynamics of development of others individuals' self-systems. We consider the anticipations of significant others as critical to the processes of development. The creation of signs to regulate the dialogical self-system has proved to be an essential resource that was used by all the subjects; the type of sign used, and its actions within the system, however, were unique. In general, though, we should conceptualize the self-system as a lifelong mobilization, or continuous use, of resources by the developing subjects, according to a constant movement of meaning-making and change.

We argue that during an institutional transition period, and possibly in the course of any transition process, the dialogical self-system actually is in constant formation, what is especially true in children. It may change dynamically by the action of different sign systems, which mediate and regulate the relations of the subject with the new environment. In order to cope with a new context, the child is required to fit the new demands, and, consequently, the child creatively uses his/her psychological resources, which can be recognized and encouraged by the adults in the specific cultural contexts. In sum, we claim that from an early age children can create strategies and possibilities for their own development.

The development of the Affective Regulation System is linked to internalization/externalization processes (Branco & Valsiner, 2012). In contexts in which children develop, they are permanently under 'symbolic attacks', often redundant in space and time (Valsiner, 2006), what favors the internalization of meanings, beliefs and values in the self-system. These attacks are successful by the convergence of countless interactions of the subject with the world. The school context, semiotically impregnated, enables the integration of social suggestions canalizing the internalization of certain values that may guide children's actions, oriented to the future. In this way, educational institutions contribute to the formation and development of the self, constantly adjusting the individual to social and cultural requirements (Iannaccone, Marsico, & Tateo, 2012) through cultural canalization processes.

Researchers should investigate how the sign systems in educational contexts, mainly represented by the teachers, contribute to the creation—or not—of resources and strategies by the children in order to cope with the challenges presented at school. The emotions, affectivity, and values expressed by the teachers in the interactions with children contribute to the coconstruction of each child's I/self-Positionings and, more generally, for the coconstruction of their development paths.

Cultural Psychology (Bruner, 1988; Valsiner, 2014) and the Trajectory Equifinality Model (TEM) (Sato & Valsiner, 2010; Sato, Hidaka & Fukuda, 2009), emphasize the role of intentionality, goals, and expectations. This means that the dimension of the future time should be thought of as fundamental for the development of action in the present moment. Hence, the study of processes of human development, from an idiographic point of view (Salvatore & Valsiner, 2008) should consider how the notion of future impregnates the holistic and dynamic characteristics of human development.

Conclusions and Future Perspectives

The research from which we have drawn the data here analyzed used an idiographic approach (Salvatore & Valsiner, 2008), and developed multiple research procedures and different levels of microgenetic analysis (Branco & Mettel, 1995), and that allowed for the identification of indicators that provide information to conceptualize the ASF and their association with children's I/self-Positionings. This was possible because we especially focused on the dimension of affectivity, and its central role in the processes of meaning-making related to the development of self-conceptions and evaluations

The empirical evidence presented in this chapter and its theoretical analysis, demonstrate that children, in their transition processes from preschool to primary school, are not only facing the challenge of adapting to a new environment, but they also have to deal with new meaning-making processes and with the creation of new positionings about themselves, which may promote or inhibit their own development. The observation of children in the two educational environments, in our research, allowed us to characterize the changes generated by the action of various signs systems put in motion by specific social others, and also generated by the psychological resources used by each child, in a dynamic movement of meaning-making and resignification.

The social others have a very important role in a child's experiences and development since they operate as significant actors in the child's reconstruction of his/her self-system. They act as voices with a high potential for internalization, to which children may also resist in different ways. The teachers, then, are able to recognize, value or minimize the skills and abilities of children, becoming important agents of cultural canalization, able to change children's views of themselves. The results of the study showed that the teachers were positioned differently according to each child, occasionally promoting the emergence of constructive positionings in some children, or, on the opposite, reinforcing feelings of failure and incompetence.

The affective relationship established between the teacher and the child was very important in the construction of the child's I/self-Positionings. For instance, in the case of Giselle, she received special attention from the preschool teacher, who made her feel safe and happy with her performance in the classroom. In contrast, the same teacher, concerning Taís, seemed quite irritated and annoyed with the girl,

what, together with other family factors and relationships with colleagues, led Taís to feel rejected. Consequently, the teacher's position related to the child works as an important cultural canalization agent, either promoting benefits for some children or creating difficulties for others. Therefore, it is very clear the fundamental role of the teacher as participant of the children's coconstruction of positioning. He or she, in fact, act as the otherness that recognizes the child's capabilities (or not), and do make a difference in children's construction of positionings that will lead to their successful development, or to problems and difficulties.

The family, in turn, also had a powerful voice in the cases analyzed, both in constructive or nonconstructive senses, possibly due to the high emotional valence of the relationships between parents and children. Giselle's parents sent permanent messages about the incompetence of the child, while Taís' mother always indicated that she believed in the girl, giving her positive feedback upon her performance. The interaction between all factors, such as the cultural practices of educational contexts, the cultural canalization of family's messages, and the psychological resources of each child, ended up building a complex network of meanings, which led to the coconstruction of different positions, which significantly changed over the life experiences of the subjects.

Hence, all these factors must be taken into account when we analyze children development, because despite children's psychological resources for dealing with a new context and new situations, voices of failure from significant social others may lead the children to succumb and disqualify themselves and their own skills. In contrast, voices that continuously value the potential capabilities of the children, allow for the emergence of new opportunities and the creation of new developmental paths.

In this chapter, we aimed at linking three time-context levels, micro, meso, and ontogenetic, building on the triangulation of the various procedures used in our research and on the theoretical contributions of cultural psychology and dialogical approaches. The research procedures allowed the generation of indicators that helped to characterize the self-system in development, as we could identify each child's I/self-Positionings vis-a-vis social others and cultural practices. In other words, this chapter sought to theoretically advance and articulate the concept of Affective Semiotic Field, postulated by the theoretical model Valsiner proposed, based on the semiotic cultural psychology (Valsiner, 2014) and the concept of I-positions of the Dialogical Self Theory (Hermans, 2001; Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2010). We hope to have contributed, in heuristic terms, for the search of indicators of person's positionings found beyond verbal narratives, in the various expressive dimensions of the self in development from an early age.

Finally, in order to understand the complexity of human development and children dialogical self-construction, we suggest further research to focus on the central role of values' construction along ontogeny. This process, as we saw in the chapter, is mediated by significant social others and by the semiotic systems found in the different contexts in which the child participates. Research should go deeper to analyze the meanings that mediate the construction of values and the individual's self-system. Some studies have analyzed the relations between the self and

the construction of the values system (Rengifo-Herrera, 2014; Rengifo-Herrera & Branco, 2014) by addressing the dynamics and integration of affects, cognitions, and motivation which regulate the relationships between individuals. This topic should be explored further. Concerning methodological issues, the imperative is to create methods that can contribute to the identify and analyze indicators of changes and transformations in children's positionings. Furthermore, we suggest the study of the mechanisms that enable children to overcome difficult situations and drastic changes in life, allowing them to actively promote their developmental trajectory.

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The Reconfiguration of the Educational Self in the Context of Higher Education

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Introduction

The contemporary expansion of higher education in Brazil is encouraging studies oriented towards a new student profile that was unusual at this educational level. Among other themes, these studies examine confrontation strategies constructed by students belonging to non-hegemonic and minority segments to adapt to the context of higher education and changes in their psychosocial development. This study aims to reflect on the relevance of experiences of higher education for the reconfiguration of the Educational Self of young persons, highlighting some contributions of Cultural Psychology applied to educational contexts.

Cultural Psychology´s approach places culture as central in the process of human development, based on processes of meaning construction. The self is constituted by meanings that the subject internalizes and reinterprets in the cultural matrix, emerging from the dialogs that occur in his/her experiences. According to Bruner (2000), educational experiences are part of life trajectories and perform a crucial role in the construction of the self. This author's premises were the starting point of Iannaccone and Marsico's (2012) investigations, focused on the family-school relation as crucial for development. These authors have therefore elaborated the notion of Educational Self, considered as a regulatory process emerging from experiences of interpersonal relationships in educational contexts. Based on this proposal, in this paper we highlight higher education as a context of developmental transition for young students, bringing about affective, cognitive, and social changes, which constitute their academic trajectory. Our purpose is to reflect on identity repositioning,

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symbolic resources, interlocutors, and temporalities that characterize the Educational Self.

Ruptures-Transitions and the Reconfiguration of the Educational Self in Higher Education

In order to describe aspects signified by youngsters as ruptures and transitions along the experience of higher education, we resort to the methodology proposed by Zittoun (2007, 2009, 2012) for the analysis of the development of life trajectories. Based on the perspective of Cultural Psychology and resorting to the Social Sciences, Zittoun (2004, 2005, 2007) defines ruptures/transitions as units of analysis for the comprehension of psychological development since they allow the study of processes of change at the level of abilities acquisition, identity positioning, and construction of meanings. Ruptures/transitions represent adjustments between the person and the sociocultural environment in the dynamics of development, since, all along the life course, persons do not move in linear trajectories, but rather in routes with ruptures or bifurcation points followed by transitions.

Ruptures are significant tensions in the life of persons resulting from several episodes occurring in their path (immigration, physical changes, schooling, social mobility, catastrophes, and others). They can be described as bifurcation points acting as catalysts for intransitive changes, that is, moments when developmental continuities are interrupted, reoriented, and challenged, and the person searches new arrangements in the self (Zittoun, 2009). However, ruptures are not felt as relevant unless they bring about uncertainties which can be paralyzing or stimulating and are re-elaborated through transition processes. Ruptures are, therefore, followed by transitions, processes that reduce uncertainties because they provide possibilities of repositioning or relocation in the socio-affective and symbolic fields of the person's experience, reconfiguring the self, and creating novelty (Valsiner, 2012).

Transitions are developmental opportunities, designated as processes of adjustment to new circumstances. They are present in socio-psychological events and suggest something that is moving from one state to another, with unpredictable results with respect to new future perspectives and reconfigurations in socio-affective and symbolic dimensions of experience. The requisite for a developmental transition is, therefore, the social and cultural relocation that brings along the challenge of leaving behind or changing identities, routines, and representations of reality. Transitions occur all along the life cycle and involve three interdependent dimensions: identity processes (repositioning), learning processes (cultural relocation), and construction of meanings. Identity processes include positioning occurring in family, education, professional, interpersonal contexts, and representation of oneself. They are ways of creating new goals, orientations, possibilities, pressures over actions and losses, confrontation with others, through discursive practices that imply positioning changes (Zittoun, 2005). In learning processes, relocations are observed in social and cogni-

tive fields, implying the acquisition of novel knowledge and abilities. On its turn, the construction of meanings is disclosed in the subjects' narrative of experiences and affective expressions through the emergence of signs regulating the psychological structures that preserve the cultural organization of development.

These processes involved in transitions can be observed in the academic trajectory of young students in higher education. The entry to this educational level has been studied by researchers as an event felt as ruptures followed by transitions—-for instance, in Coulon's (2008) study on the student's condition. As approached by Cultural Psychology, society is a dynamic system, since it preserves a constant state and at the same time reorganizes itself, producing new states. Social institutions (family, community, school, work, and others), which compose the social structure, are constantly changing and realigning their roles and power relationships. Persons pertaining to them exhibit different modes of belonging, since they perform temporary roles in the processes of stability and instability in the social field (Valsiner, 2012).

Based on Jeromer Bruner's and Jaan Valsiner's assumptions, Iannaccone and Marsico (2012) conceive educational contexts as boundary zones par excellence in the promotion of human development. These authors are interested in the intersection between two highly relevant life contexts: family and school. The home-school arena is, in this sense, a zone of overdetermination and double belonging where some continuities and discontinuities are constantly present. In this space, it is relevant to know how human experiences are culturally organized through semiotic mediation and symbolic actions. According to these researchers, studying what happens in the boundary between *in* school and *out of* school means, in the first place, paying attention to intersections with other life contexts that are relevant for development and personal growth, mainly in the family.

From this perspective, the concept of boundary has a dynamic and imprecise character. It constitutes a constantly reconstructed limit between the subject and the context, social environment and significant others, personal culture and collective culture. Boundaries can be substantial or unsubstantial, visible or fugacious, special or temporal. The totality of human life is permeated by boundaries where rests the limit between interior and exterior self, with a double and ambiguous movement of separation and unification that orients the person's actions and emotions. In the effort to reduce ambiguities, changes emerge (Marsico, 2013). Educational processes, therefore, create boundaries that generate development, since from the present ambiguities novelty and new meanings constructed by the person in transition moments appear.

The authors use the balcony metaphor to construe school as an area of contact with other educational and social contexts. School is represented as a boundary between internal aspects (different practices, discourses, and actors) and the broader sociocultural climate. The balcony is understood as the place of intermediation with other actors (neighbors) and of intersection with other educational contexts that are relevant for youngsters' development. As a boundary, the balcony regulates forms of intersubjectivity and inter-objectivity between family and school, enabling some interactions

and excluding others and dialoguing between established and still uncertain and not mastered knowledge.

At this balcony, where intersections of belonging and values occur, Iannaccone, Marsico, and Tateo (2012) state that it is possible to identify a specific form of self, originated from persons' experiences in educational contexts, named Educational Self. They explain that school is a context where youngsters live experiences that contribute to develop psychosocial aspects in the relationship with colleagues, in the interaction with significant adults and in school evaluations. The Educational Self is characterized by the set of identity positioning emerging from the subject's experiences in educational contexts. Such positioning is constituted by historical aspects of subject's education, involved in a polyphony of voices, which establish relations with other voices, expressing current thoughts, emotions, beliefs and values.

Educational Self is a dynamic and continuous construction in the subject's life, as it involves two-related dimensions: the construction of self along school age through the discourse of adults, and the emergence and re-elaboration of the self when, by adulthood, the subject takes part in activities in educational contexts. These dimensions are permeated by active internalization processes and semiotic mediation. Internalization is active because it takes place in two levels: the intersubjective level, in the social space, when the subject takes part in the culture and interacts with others; and the intrasubjective level, when the subject goes through a personal process of mental and reflexive experience, reconstructs reality and incorporates it to his/her own structure (Vygotsky, 1988).

Semiotic mediation involves the construction of self through interactions established with other actors (other voices), from which the Educational Self and the resulting changes emerge. In semiotic mediation, signs are created by the person at the spatial-temporal dimension through the continuous movement of resorting to the past and anticipating the future at a particular moment and place. According to Valsiner (2012), signs can be considered as a variety of forms or functions jointly constructed by the person and the social world. As such, they emerge to overcome the demands of a particular process of the system, they connect past experience to the future and provide the three temporal orientations: they represent lived experiences, co-present current experience, and pre-present some possibilities of future experiences.

Contexts are semiotic mediators that create hypergeneralized fields of meaning where persons assume an active and interactive condition, mutually constituting themselves in cultural practices. Iannaccone et al. (2012) explain that people constantly participate in educational contexts, which implies the reactivation of the Educational Self that becomes conspicuous whenever the person is involved in a challenging educational activity, such as higher education. Thus, they define the Educational Self as a heritage of symbolic resources that reunites knowledge, beliefs, narratives, and affective states established during the person's educational life. Symbolic resources include systems of activities and emotional experiences acquired in school experiences and used by the subject to make sense of and regulate the diverse types of interactions (Marsico, Cabell, Valsiner, & Kharlamov 2013).

From this psychological-cultural perspective, youngsters transform cultural elements into symbolic resources to facilitate transition processes they are involved with. The transformation derives from the need to elaborate new meanings that act as tools for personal relocations, temporal reorientations and identity repositioning, in order to reestablish stability. We think that the balcony metaphor (Iannaccone & Marsico, 2012) can be coherently applied to the study of higher education as a space destined to produce knowledge that can launch changes and interaction between actors and society: higher education is a boundary zone between the development of Self and the broader sociocultural development. This intersection delimits belongings and the dialogical intercultural space. Stories lived in this context affect and reconfigure the students' self, promoting cultural intersections that lead them to overcome boundaries and orient themselves to the future.

Methodological Routes: A Case Study

The case study presented here was part of a qualitative research aiming at the identification of aspects/events felt as ruptures and transitions in the experience of higher education and how these display themselves as developmental organizers.[1] Data collection was based on the narrative method with an episodic interview (Flick, 2008). In the biographical episodes, we search for Identity positioning and affective, cognitive, and symbolic resources used by youngsters in order to organize their development. In this study, we present the case of a 28 year-old student from indigenous origin, attending an undergraduate course at a public university; the choice criterion was accessibility.

Data analysis consisted in the identification of thematic nuclei centered on tensions, contradictions and signs, constructed at the three levels of affective experience named as micro-genetic, meso-genetic and onto-genetic (Valsiner, 2012). At the micro-genetic level, we tried to identify personal experience episodes that presented the main ruptures and how they were surmounted; at the meso-genetic level, we analyzed ambivalences emerging from interactions experienced at the academic environment and at the belonging community of the student; and among onto-genetic aspects, we highlight the systems of values that guided the student's trajectory.

The main markers of ruptures/transitions were synthesized in maps of meanings based on each analytic matrix, after intensive reading and interaction with the data. The construction of these maps allowed a clearer visualization of the themes that compose the analysis, and the logical relations established between them with respect to chronology, positioning and roles and spatial-temporal dimensions. Aiming at a more refined analysis, the more representative maps of the student's symbolic resources are presented here. For the identification of repositioning related to the

[1] Research carried out at the graduate program in Psychology of Federal University of Bahia, under the supervision of Prof. Sonia Maria da Rocha Sampaio.

Educational Self, we resort to some schemes and figures suggested by Iannaccone et al. (2012).

According to Brazilian norms for research involving human beings, the procedures proposed in the investigation were performed with free and informed consent of the involved participants and institutions, as required by CNS (National Research Council) Resolution # 169 (as off October 1996) and CFP (Federal Council of Psychology) Resolution # 016/2000 (as off December 2000).[2]

Higher Education as a Cultural Boundary: The Educational Self of the Young Student

The student is presented here with the nickname Tomiak. The first thematic block of the episodic interview aimed to lead the interviewee to reflect on the general meaning of the theme and to identify, based on his trajectory to higher education and on his subjective definition of academic experience, aspects, and events construed as ruptures, followed by transitions. The map that follows, named narrative lines, presents the construction of temporalities involved in events which mark Tomiak's trajectory to higher education. Lines are represented by arrows and can be read as follows: starting from "1st grade of High School", following the arrows, by line and from left to right, and then to the left (Fig. 1).

From the perspective of Cultural Psychology, ruptures in development represent significant tensions or ambivalences in the broader cultural context, in the various spheres of interactional experiences with other persons and of the person with him/her self. These changes propitiate transition processes in identity positioning and in the construction of meanings and of knowledge. Tomiak's narrative of the events that led him to higher education presents two moments that he signifies as ruptures: when he leaves his community to tour around the country, and when he realizes the importance of higher education. These ruptures led him to reassume his condition as a student endowed with symbolic responsibility, a distinctive mark of juvenile transitions (Zittoun, 2007). The constitution of this responsibility can be illustrated by the following statement, where Tomiak generates his own temporality and reorients his system of values:

> (…) Aí a ficha caiu para mim que a universidade é essencial na vida das pessoas, esse País está fundamentado na questão na educação. Está fundamentado em quem teve oportunidade de ir para universidade, este é visto diferente. Aí voltei para comunidade, me veio a vontade de entrar na universidade… me formei e aí não parei mais. Depois eu estudei sozinho em casa e me preparei para entrar na universidade (…).
>
> (…) Then it came to me that higher education is essential in people's life, this country is founded on the question of education. It is founded on those who had the opportunity of attending higher education, people look up at them. Then I went back to my community, willing to get higher education… I graduated (in Upper High School) and moved ahead.

[2]The Project was submitted to and evaluated by *Plataforma Brasil* and approved by CEP (Ethics and Research Council) of State University of Bahia (UNEB), according to Sentence # 338.065/2013.

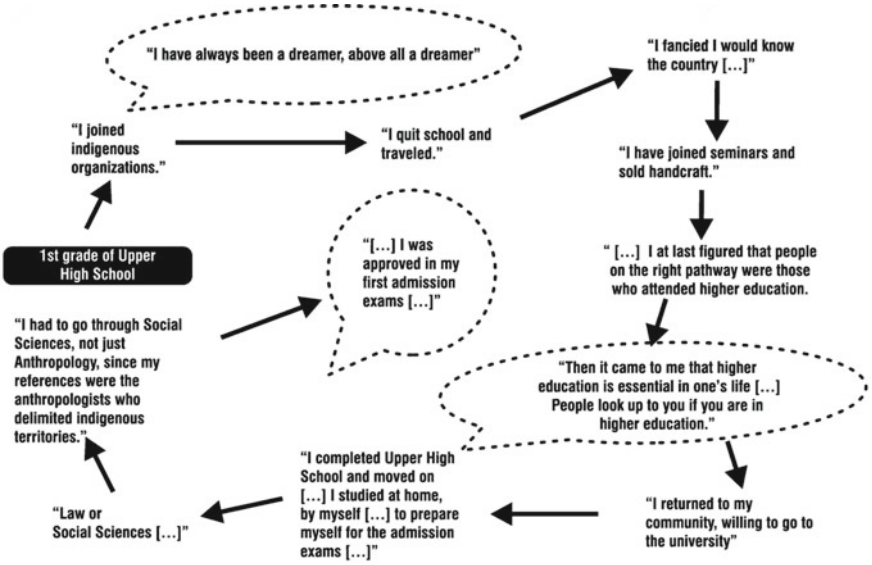

Fig. 1 Narrative lines on marker events in Tomiak's trajectory to higher education. *Note* Authors elaboration (2013–2014)

> Afterwards I studied at home, by my own, and prepared myself for the admission exams (…)

We identify in this narrative new identity positioning, cultural, and cognitive relocations and construction of meanings. The experiences lived by the student after he left his community to pursue the dream of exploring the country allowed him to question his values and create new goals. There is a change in his ways of thinking about higher education and about his country's people, and this rupture challenges him, stimulates him to return to the community, resume Upper High School and, in order to get prepared for admission exams, give up his previous political militancy.

Tomiak reports that he studied by his own, in his own ways and that, although facing difficulties, managed to be approved, having acquired, along this trajectory, new cognitive abilities that led him to spatial and cultural relocations: entering higher education. We infer that, at this moment of his life, at 24 years of age, the process of rupture/transition allowed a reconfiguration of his self, defining a new temporal perspective and a system of guidance for his conduct, and endowing him with symbolic responsibility. Zittoun (2007) labels responsibility as symbolic because, at this stage of life, the youngster is already able to establish relations, criticisms, choices, reconstruction of rules and conducts through internalizations and externalizations occurring in the interaction with significant interlocutors: parents, community, church, circle of friends and others.

When asked about what led him to higher education, the first reference was his grandfather, whom he identified himself with due to his active leadership in the

community; therefore, Tomiak admits that he is similarly inclined, attentive to his people's needs and an active participant of indigenous movements. According to his narrative, other interlocutors, or "significant others", have also influenced his quest for higher education—such as his parents, who had not had the opportunity to study, some of his siblings who graduated only in Upper Higher School, and pioneer Indians who completed higher education: "[…] Porque o índio acredita: aonde tem índio, vai índio" [because Indians believe that wherever Indians are, other Indians will go.].

Symbolic responsibility involves abilities to internalize and externalize—processes related to personal and collective cultures, respectively. In personal culture, the subject internalizes and reappropriates meanings shared in the collective culture, displaying his/her autonomy and singularity. Collective culture assembles cultural elements, including complex symbolic constellations such as objects or rites inside the family, religious or national traditions, arts, which are shared and organized in semiotic units available in a given society. In the trajectory to higher education, elements of the collective culture can be observed in the multiplicity of messages that this student has internalized in interaction with others and in experiences, he lived during the period when he was away from the community. However, at the same time, at the semiotic level, he moves away from the collective culture, attributing meanings to reality, rationalizing, delimiting his sociocultural location, repositioning himself and constructing new temporalities. This process is a circular movement, resulting from descriptions and interpretations made by the persons as they reflect on themselves and on reality at the experiential spheres, symbolically moving away, but remaining as an actor in the same context. Valsiner (2007) names this process as psychological distancing.

In his narrative, Tomiak expresses the tension between his interlocutors and his own positioning at the level of his personal culture; and, when describing his experiences, he creates methods and categories based on his collective culture. He does not get married or have children, he does not limit himself to Upper High School. Among the multiplicity of voices, he moves on to higher education. Thus, he differentiates himself from the others, keeping, however, a strong ethnic belonging bond, taking the young pioneers who attended higher education as a reference. "Because Indians believe that wherever Indians are, other Indians will go". The student informs that at the time of his entry in higher education, he was already sure of this choice of course, and he thinks that this is "extremely important". He admits having hesitated between Law and Social Sciences, but chose Social Sciences as a first step because of the reference he had from anthropologists who were involved in the demarcation of indigenous territories, and because he believed that in this area he would acquire more knowledge about other cultures. As he understood the importance of this area for his people, this choice made sense for him: "(…) I understood that Anthropology would be important for me". But he keeps interested in Law, as he understands the importance of the familiarity with laws to ensure his people's citizenship.

In this transition dynamics, we identify a promoter sign: "the dreamer." In this context, signs can consist in rituals or social roles created by the persons to stabilize their state, being considered as orienting promoter signs that can be reactivated in new manners (Valsiner, 2012). The sign "I have always been a dreamer, first of all

a dreamer" appears to have assumed a new configuration in Tomiak's self. After he decided to attend higher education, his dream is projected on the knowledge that academic life would offer him to instrumentalize him for the fight on behalf of indigenous issues. Scientific knowledge is a cultural element and, as such, is used by the youngster as a symbolic resource to support his transitions.

However, upon his entry in higher education, Tomiak faces another reality, and realizes that it does not offer everything he expected, and that the manner in which it is offered is elitist, conservative, highly competitive, prejudiced and distant from the indigenous reality. This realization hampers his expectations, brings about the "frustration of never being able to change anything", and configures itself as the first rupture in this academic space, causing feelings of strangeness:

> (…) Formei várias expectativas [pausa], já vim com a ideia de que a universidade é um universo de diversidade, a presença de várias coisas diferentes, e um dia debater com várias questões. Depois eu decepcionei com a universidade porque ela acaba privilegiando certas pessoas e aí eu não me vejo dentro da universidade, eu não vejo os meus dentro da universidade. A universidade acaba sendo um espaço elitizado, onde poucas pessoas acabam passando por aqui (…) uns deixam sua marca, outros de passagem mesmo.
>
> (…) I had many expectations [pause], I came with the idea that higher education is a universe of possibilities, the presence of many different things, and that I would some day debate several questions. I was disappointed because it privileges certain persons and then I do not see myself in it, I don't see my people in it. Higher Education ends up as an elitist space, for a few people (…) some leave their marks, others only pass by.

Based on the same episodic theme, we asked the student what does the experience at higher education means for him and what he relates these words with. His answers were synthesized as follows in the map of meanings, where arrows display the interrelation between the main themes of his narrative. Themes are represented in the smaller fields, separated by dotted lines (symbolic frontiers) and in the center is the promotor sign that regulates their identity positionings (Fig. 2):

Tomiak is guided by the spatial-temporal dimension to narrate the meanings he attributes to the experience of higher education, based on the contradictions that he identifies in this experience. At first, he feels he is a foreigner and disorganizes himself in the spatial and temporal dimensions. He states that "our people's logic is acquiring knowledge in order to respect, rather than to dominate, like white people think." Knowledge has its own timing and its value is to improve people's life. He argues that higher education is the place par excellence to appropriate this knowledge, but is also the place where the subject finds out what he really stands for society, where his group is placed and how it is treated by other social groups. It is, therefore, a place where you interact with differences, prejudice, and discrimination, as he explains in the following excerpt:

> A universidade ela precisa agregar mais pessoas, né? E isso só se constrói no meu entendimento através das lutas. Então nós como indígenas, quando chegamos à universidade, a gente … [pausa] eu nas minhas percepções dentro da universidade, cheguei com várias ideias e vários projetos e constantemente é jogado vários baldes de água fria 'acorda, aqui é diferente'. E assim a gente vai aprendendo como é a universidade da forma mais dura possível, a gente vai percebendo que a universidade de certa maneira acaba sendo … [pausa] espaço de privilégio de certas classes.

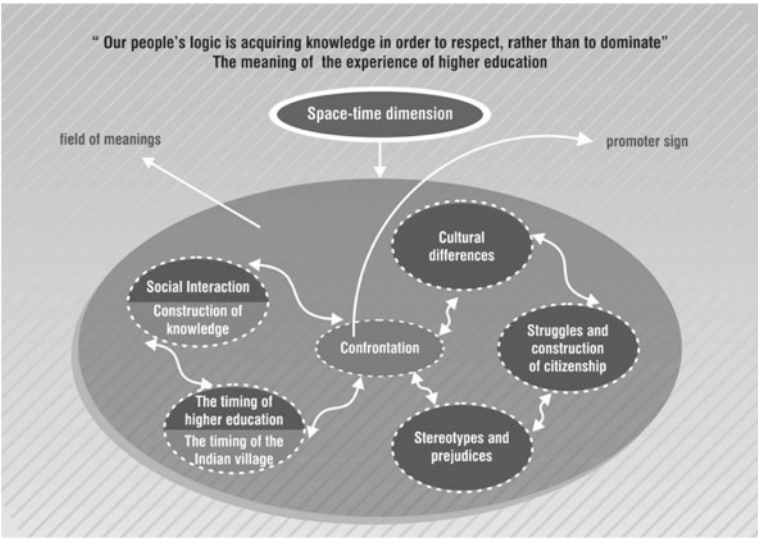

Fig. 2 Map of Meanings on Tomiak's experience of higher education. *Note* Author's elaboration (2014) based on the figure Vertical construction of *I- positions* on the basis of a structured field of dialogicality" (Valsiner & Cabell, 2011, p. 86)

> The academic environment should reunite people, isn't it? And I believe that the only way of doing it is by struggling. When we, Indians, have access to higher education, we… [pause] me, in my perceptions at higher education, I arrived with several ideas and projects and these are constantly cooled off, 'wake up, things are different here.' And so you learn the hard way what higher education is, in a sense… [pause] a privileged place for certain social classes.

Tomiak's feelings of strangeness can be interpreted with an analogy to the balcony metaphor developed by Iannaccone and Marsico (2012). Higher education as a balcony is a place where cultures, both inside and outside cultures, communicate—an interactional place. Similarly to what happens at schools, this intercultural meeting seems to reunite social groups and promote the recognition of differences, but there is a limited availability for these. Higher education remains tied to theoretical-scientific knowledge, apart from reality, reproducing social inequalities and unable to produce an effective intercultural dialog. In the boundary dynamics, it integrates and divides, includes and excludes at one time.

Tomiak narrates a boundary situation between his people's culture and the academic culture where he experiences strangeness, frustration and unrest. His people's village is his time and space, where habits, ways of thinking and acting that compose his ethnic identity are assembled. When he enters higher education, he moves to a boundary where he feels he remains a foreigner, different from other persons and where academic belonging remains frail since "it privileges certain people, and therefore I don't feel that I am at higher education, I don't see myself in it, I don't see my people in it." The institutional and intellectual affiliation processes that configure academic belonging (Coulon, 2008) confirm the assumption that higher education

is a privileged place where ruptures (what is unknown, what destabilizes), and transitions (what is about to happen) occur in the development of young students. The map of meanings of Tomiak's experience in higher education shows how he deals with ruptures, and presents new positioning and meanings.

According to Valsiner (2012), signs' construction can perform two functions: regulating, when it reconstructs or faces the demands of a certain current process; and promoting, when it provides approaches to the future. When facing the rupture of higher education "conservative, elitist, competitive and unable to deal with intercultural differences" character, the student highlights, as the particular source of his transition, "confrontation" as a regulating sign that helps him to overcome strangeness and the more emergent demand of his experience: "I think that we live nowadays in a world where there is a lot of confrontation, the academic world is a world where ideas and space are disputed, it is the place of confrontation.

When objectifying the meaning that he attributes to this experience, Tomiak reconstructs his concept of higher education, endowing it not only with the meaning of construction of knowledge, but also of conviviality, where similarity and difference can interact, surpass prejudices and stereotypes, and fulfill the dream of conquering citizenship.

> Eu vejo às vezes que a universidade ela me obriga a conhecer algo que eu não desejo, mas como é oferecido no meu curso eu sou obrigado a conhecer [pausa]. Mas, por outro lado, tem algo que desejo conhecer, mas que não está presente, isto é intrigante na universidade. [pausa]. Acho que é a experiência de estar na universidade, de conviver com outros estudantes, acho que é tão importante como estar dentro da sala de aula. É de conviver com os colegas, de vivenciar experiências …[pausa], relatos, pessoa que sofreu na pele o preconceito, a discriminação e aí você acaba sendo vacinado do que se diz ser a universidade e o que você vê na prática.

> Sometimes I feel that higher education forces me to get acquainted with something I don't want to know, but since it is offered I am forced to learn… [pause]. But, on the other hand, there are things that I want to learn and are not present there, this is queer… [pause]. I think it is the experience of being there, interacting with students, this is as important as being in a classroom. It is interacting with colleagues, having experiences … [pause], reports, a person who has faced prejudice, discrimination and then you become immune with respect to what people say that higher education is and what you effectively see.

The sign "you become immune" suggests affiliation to the academic space; in this utterance, there is a polyphony of voices expressed by his mates, his current belonging group in that space. However, transition processes involved in institutional and intellectual affiliations are oriented by strategies or ethnomethods (Coulon, 2008) and mediated by symbolic resources (Zittoun, 2007) to support his identity repositioning, his learning processes and the new signs emerging in the intersection between ethnic and academic belonging.

In this direction, it is important to present the results obtained from the second episodic theme of the interview, where we recognized strategies and identity positioning emerging from ruptures and transitions related to ethnic and academic belonging, that is, from the intersection between original culture and academic culture. This part of the interview aimed to establish meanings attributed to higher education in everyday life. On this theme, the student states that he faces conflicts between full-time

academic dedication and his political militancy on behalf of his community: he feels the need to engage in academic activities in order to face their demands but, on the other hand, he fears being alienated as to social questions and knowledge constructed by his people. We asked him: "Could you please tell me about what you did yesterday and if any part of these experiences has to do with the fact of being a college student?" and he replied:

> Ontem, ontem? Basicamente como se vem para universidade, a partir de sua perspectiva, de seu olhar, é que você acaba dedicando sua vida para esta universidade. Você muitas vezes perde a noção do social, da família, é meio que alienado, algo louco, tem que seguir leituras do texto, tem que apresentar na universidade, fazer provas. Se você não se adequar a isso, preparado para fazer isso, você vai ficando para trás. Porque a universidade é uma competição tremenda, é uma guerra, uma disputa de um querendo ser mais que a outro e, muitas vezes, eu acabo pensando sobre isso. Por que isso tudo? Ontem mesmo fiquei em casa estudando, mas estudo no meu tempo, estudo na minha lógica, se isso não tiver, eu sei que eu tenho que me formar, não somente formar, mas ter notas boas.

> Yesterday, yesterday? Basically, when you come to higher education, it is from your perspective, from your view, that you end by dedicating your life to it. Many times you lose the notions of social, family, it is sort of alienating, sort of insane, you have to read the papers, to present in the classroom, to do tests. If you don't adapt to it, if you are not prepared to do it, you lag behind. Because higher education is a huge competition, a war, a dispute to be better than the others and many times I think about that. Why is it so? Yesterday I stayed at home to study, but I study with my own timing, my own logic, if I can't do it, I know I have to graduate, not only graduate, but have good marks.

At this point, the student refers to the ruptures that he signified in the process of affiliation to the academic environment, which are considered striking because they conflict with his people's culture: how to manage time to study, competition and individualism recognized among his colleagues, predominance of hegemonic knowledge and absence of indigenous issues from the curriculum and the classroom routines. He also refers to prejudice: some colleagues believe that Indians are not able to learn and debate scientific questions with white people. He describes an episode with two colleagues, a white girl and an Indian girl: the former detaches herself from the latter when she learns that the latter has had better marks in a test because she cannot accept that an Indian could surpass her. In the narrative on this theme, Tomiak's voice displays an emotional valence: "And we come here to show that in practice [louder voice] it is all a lie, a prejudiced conception, and that the Indian is fully able to attend higher education at the University of Bahia, which is our case."

Tomiak believes that Indians are able to overcome this sort of prejudice in the classroom, by proving their competence. He recognizes the importance of the knowledge transmitted by the teachers because they propitiate the ability to learn what "non-indigenous" thought is like and allow a correlation between their thought and that of his community. He informs that only since he was midway in the course, when he dedicated most of his time to academic activities, he did recognize the logic of the production of scientific knowledge. Nonetheless, he notices that academic knowledge is hierarchized and disqualifies other forms of knowledge, including that of indigenous people: "[…] we notice that our knowledge is disrespected, it is denied in the academic environment because it was not judged by scientific criteria."

Tomiak experiences a belonging conflict between the academic culture, that endows him with a student status, and the culture of his community, that projects on his academic career the possibility of improving the community's life conditions. At the academic environment, he assumes the positioning of an apprentice, using the opportunity of being there to represent his people. Therefore, he tries to make sense of scientific knowledge by establishing a critical relationship with the hegemonic knowledge and, at the same time, trying to select from this knowledge the possibility of a dialog with his original culture, performing what he describes as "(…) sort of sifting what I am going to take back to my life and what is going to be discarded here". A further assumed positioning was to approach other discriminated groups, forming a counter-hegemonic force in the academic space. He explains that this positioning does not contribute to the denial of indigenous knowledge and does not offend his ways of being:

> Eu não me coloco como superior aos meus colegas, eu me coloco na condição de aprendiz e talvez um dos maiores, no último fôlego de vida estamos aprendendo… eu quero viver minha vida na simplicidade, na humildade. Tentando viver, tratando todo mundo da forma como gosto de ser tratado.
>
> I don't place myself above my colleagues, I place myself as an apprentice, perhaps one of the most engaged, we learn until our last breath (…). I want to live my life simply, humbly. Trying to treat everyone as I would like to be treated.

Nonetheless, the belonging conflict remains and he searches for other resources to face it, trying to preserve his bonds with his community, where he feeds back his "dreamer" sign and renews his willingness to study.

> Sempre que eu posso, eu volto para minha Aldeia. O que muda ao voltar para a Aldeia é que as pessoas são mais esperançosas. A esperança delas é em mim. Elas projetam seus sonhos em mim e nos outros índios; têm uns que nem sabem o porquê, mas falam assim 'poxa eu vou estudar'. Têm uns que não sabem por quê, mas dizem que continuem estudando. Eles esperam que de alguma maneira eu poderei contribuir para comunidade, não sabem como, e por isso eu tenho que estudar, estudar, e talvez seja isso que não permita que a gente desista, não permita que o cansaço e os problemas da cidade nos vença.
>
> I go back to my community whenever I can. What changes when I go back is that people are more hopeful. They have hope on me. They project dreams on me and on other Indians; some of them don't even know why, but they say: "gee, I'm going to study". Some of them don't even know why, but they say "keep studying". They hope that somehow I will contribute to the community, they don't know how, and that's why I keep studying, studying, and maybe that's what doesn't allow us to give up, doesn't allow for tiredness and the problems of the city to beat us.

At the boundary between being a student ("the apprentice") and being a militant for indigenous movements ("the dreamer"), there are conflict zones between being a college student for his own sake and on behalf of the Other (social other, relevant in his life). These conflict zones characterize uncertainties and decision-making situations, and new identity positioning, learning, and meanings emerge from the self. The dialogical dynamic of the self is placed at the permeability of the boundary between oneself and the Other since it includes the subject's and other meaningful people's positioning. According to Hermans (2001), there are multiple I-Positions which

organize themselves in imaginary, real and even opposed manners. Voices from each position can be inside or outside the dialogical space of the self. We consider that I-positions of the internal-I and external-I assumed by Tomiak result from the meanings he constructed in the experience of rupture-transition to stay in higher education, an experience permeated by the sign of identity conflict: "Who is Tomiak now?"

> Chegando vem logo um recado para ir na casa deles, no sentido de me conhecer: 'Quem é Tomiak agora?' Quem é aquele mesmo brincalhão, aquele que estava com a gente em todo o espaço na discussão, na reunião da Aldeia, 'mudou para bem da comunidade ou para o pior da comunidade?' Eles querem saber como está sendo minha vida na universidade, quais são os implicamentos que tenho feito, o que tem avançado, o que continua difícil de ser superado.

> As soon as I arrive I get a message inviting me to their houses in order to know me: 'Who is Tomiak now?.' Who is that playful boy who was with us in every discussion space, at the village meeting, 'did he change on behalf of the community of for the worst of it?' They want to know about my life at the college, what I have been involved with, what is improving, what is still difficult to overcome.

The contact with the community enhances the student's concern about how to comply with his peers' demands after he graduates. How is he going to contribute is still part of Tomiak's uncertainties. He is still reorganizing his temporality, acquiring cognitive abilities, reorganizing his system of values and his perspectives for the future. What he does know is that, for now, he is "engaged in higher education, focused on getting his degree in Social Sciences and, immediately after, a Law degree and then making a decision.

According to Zittoun (2007, 2012), in the process of human development, events felt as ruptures destabilize, provoke uncertainties about what is taken for granted in the person's life. This experience can paralyze the subject or lead him to explore new possibilities and conducts. Dealing with these ruptures is mediated by symbolic resources that consist in the objectification of meanings elaborated by the subject about his experiences in the world. Such resources can be cognitive, affective, social, and they support identity processes. In the specific case of young people, they also act as mediators with respect to temporal perspective and conduct orientation.

As described earlier, this student's identity conflict involves several tensions that mark the confrontation between his ethnic and his academic belonging during his experiences of higher education, creating opportunities for a repertoire of positioning in the dialogical field of his self. This repertoire is organized, through interactions taking place in the educational context, by a specific part of the self-named Educational Self, a regulatory process made up of a heritage of symbolic resources, or semiotic tools (Iannaccone et al., 2012). In higher education, these resources objectify the subject's meanings and positioning in the transition processes of learning how to become a student, entering adult life and exerting his citizenship.

The map that follows presents the symbolic resources involved in Tomiak's Educational Self, represented by the multiple voices (discourses) involved in the academic trajectories that helped to organize his identity positioning. The synthesis of symbolic resources (the subject's voices, significant others, perceptions, and judgements) articulates the two dimensions of the Educational Self:

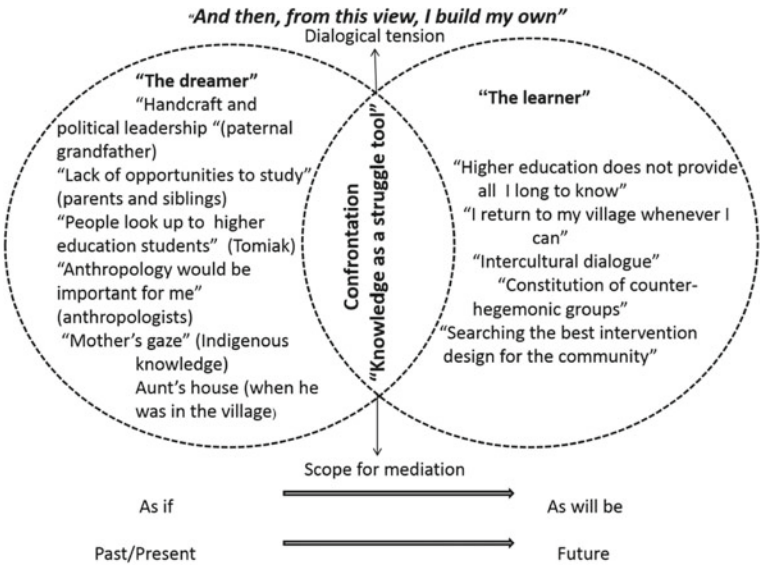

Fig. 3 Symbolic resources involved in Tomiak's Educational Self. *Note* Adapted from Iannaccone & Marsico (2012, p. 247)

1. Circle: Self-configuration at school, before the access to higher education.
2. Circle: Reconfiguration of Self in the academic experience.
3. Intersection of the circles: a space of dialogical tension between the Selves and life contexts, wherefrom emerges the hipergeneralized promotor sign, frontier where the negotiation between *I-positions* occurs in the irreversible time (past-present-future): what the student is/what he should or should not be, what he would or would not be (Fig. 3).

Tomiak's Educational Self carries the tensions of voices from his past and from his present (what I think about myself and what others think about me), which he rejects or accepts in the negotiation arena. In this space, the regulatory sign is the confrontation that translates an intercultural voice, "knowledge as a fighting tool," the knowledge of his original culture and the scientific knowledge he is confronted with in college's daily life. These voices, or internal or external interlocutors, help to reconfigure the self, assist identity and cognitive processes and the construction of new meanings. The map shows how fluid and dynamic this process is and how symbolic resources act in Tomiak's future psychosocial development, as his words illustrate: "And then, from this view, I build my own."

These results confirm that the dimensions of the Educational Self are formed during critical moments of life, moments when changes in temporal perspective and sociocultural relocations occur. But this self is not a static entity, it is rather a constant movement of redefinitions, symbolized by social, cognitive and symbolic resources subjectified and objectified by the subject (Iannaccone et al., 2012). We observe, at

the same time, that this space of dialogical tension, where the confrontation sign is objectified, is the same of the intercultural boundary, where the subject speaks, acts, transforms and is transformed in the encounter of intersections, contacts, demarcations, differences, dialogs, and ambiguities.

Final Remarks

We analyze here some markers of ruptures-transitions experienced by the youngster in higher education which contributes to the reconfiguration of the Educational Self. Results show that the academic experience is regulated by the sign of confrontation in the construction of knowledge, in the debate of ideas, and in the vis-a-vis of sociocultural differences. These ruptures are experienced through the continuous polyphonic dialog (peers, teachers, theories, academic practices, and events) that leads the student to re-signify his discourses, beliefs, meanings, attitudes, and life perspectives. These changes reactivate the Educational Self, a heritage of symbolic resources that constructs a set of knowledge, beliefs, narratives, affective states, and identity positioning that constitute the person's educational life.

Therefore, the spatial-temporal dimension daily experienced in the context of higher education contributes to ruptures/transitions of youths through the interactions established with academic knowledge, teachers, colleagues, and clerks that present themselves as co-participants of their developmental process. In this sense, higher education is a mediator for the emergence of new psychological functions as it offers the students continuous reinterpretation and reconfiguration of knowledge, ideologies, traditions, behaviors, and meanings. In this social space, one can observe social contradictions such as inequalities, intercultural dialog, forms of social organization, common beliefs, and models and different conducts. In this cultural boundary, we can analyze the points of contact between academic culture and indigenous culture, academic belonging and ethnic-communitary belonging, collective culture, and personal culture.

These findings are congruous with the perspective of the authors quoted here, who dissert about the regulatory role of the Educational Self by pointing out that the boundaries established in formal educational contexts (school, university) are imprecise, ambiguous, and permeable. Experiencing different values and cultural practices in the academic context propitiates changes and the construction of new boundaries between the I and the Other. These boundaries become mediators of psychological processes through signs objectified into symbolic resources that guide intersubjective exchanges. The reconfiguration of the Educational Self of college students occurs as a result of that plasticity that enables different directions in their trajectory and temporalities involved in the tension between the social actors' experiences and higher education as a cultural balcony.

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Emergence of Self Situated at an Institution

Mogens Torkil Jensen

In this Chapter, I will analyse some of the processes in and conditions for supporting the development of self in social-pedagogical treatment at institutions for residential care of children and adolescents who are placed there because of behavioural or personal problems or because their family cannot take care of them. As an important premise, the self is conceptualised not as an entity but as a condition which is maintained in episodes of everyday life. This emphasises the importance of the environment and its support or resistance to developing towards the wished goal. These processes take part in cultural environment and to analyse this theory of 'situated learning' is used to analyse the processes. The aim of this effort is to conceptualise the development of self in ways which open opportunities for developing the social-pedagogical treatment even more.

Case 1 One of my first tasks as a newly graduated psychologist was to make an assessment of an adolescent, Benny 16 years old placed at an institution for pedagogical treatment in residential care. One weekend he had been chasing one of the other adolescents at the place with a kitchen knife and according to their rules he could no longer stay at the place. They wanted my assessment of him in order to decide where to place him—was he dangerous and could he chase other people with a knife again or was this just an exception? Right after the incident one of the social workers, André who did not think he was dangerous took him home to stay at his place until things had been settled. André had a house in the countryside where he had some animals and a small forest to take care of in his spare time. When I came to this place, I met Benny dressed in dungarees just like André and they had been working in the forest during that day. Every time I met Benny at the place, he was dressed like this. When I had finished my assessment, Benny should

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> meet me at my office in town to get feedback. Here, he showed up in jeans, denim jacket and high heel boots. This was in line with my assessment. As my supervisor said: 'He is like a sponge. If you dip it in orange juice it is yellow, if you dip it in beetroot-juice it is red and so on'. What he meant was that Benny could neither decide to be nor stay in a certain way but would be as he thought the situation demanded of him. The situation constituted him and he was constantly on the lookout for how he should be in the present situation. Whether he would chase somebody with a knife again depended on how he understood the expectations to him in the situation—was this a situation which threatened him in such a way that using a knife to defend himself would be appropriate?

One way of understanding Benny is to see him as not yet established as a person—his self is still developing as is the case for most adolescents. Implicit in this can be an understanding of personal development as progressing from an infant being dominated by the situation and not able to act responsibly according to norms towards adulthood where the person is fully responsible for his actions regardless of the situation. Among social workers, this is often framed as a question of being able to decide your own behaviour independently and take responsibility for your own life—to be personally conducted rather than being conducted by the situation as Benny apparently is (Jensen, 2012). On the other hand, a person should also be able to adjust his behaviour to specific situations and social norms and de-emphasise his own needs and interests. Instead of a dichotomy with total separation between person and situation, there seems to be interdependency and the challenge is to handle this. The situation influences the person and the person influences the situation and they should be considered as part of a whole instead of two entities which interact. A person creates an understanding of the present situation and acts on this according to his interests and intentions but the environment leaves constraints on both the constructed understanding and on the outcome of the actions and still again the acts of the person changes the environment opening new possibilities and closing down others. To study one without the other will not tell even half of the story.

When the interplay between person and environment is conceptualised in this dynamic way and as interdependent, the self is not a stable entity but rather a phenomenon which is constantly adapting and balancing this between situational demands and personal intentions. A mature self will be a self who manages this balancing even better by recognising more constraints and more possibilities for development of the situation. If these competences of perceiving, understanding, acting and by this influencing the environment which again constraints and facilitate further development of the self are conceptualised as important aspects of the self, then the self is constantly changing. It is dynamic by nature and must be maintained.

Self as Maintained and Self as Contextualised

If we think back on our life and should characterise our self when we were at the ages of 10, 18 and 30, then most of us stress the changes and developments. Still, we see our self as stable personalities. When facing such a phenomenon, we can in our description and understanding either focus on the stable aspect and see our self as an entity which from time to time is adjusted, but dominantly a stable entity. On the other hand, we can focus on the process of change and development and see stability as a matter of perspective: one perspective will describe it in a delimited situation and see our self as stable, and a lifelong perspective will establish it as constantly changing and adapting. Never mind which focus we choose, a balance is needed between stability and change. However, a focus on the process of adaptation might not imply our self as an entity but rather as a process of constantly maintaining enough stability to support a feeling of continuity and agency (Komatsu, 2010, 2012; Tateo & Marsico, 2013). Then, our self is more in line with our physical condition/shape which is neither something we have or do not have nor something which develops until its mature status—it is not an entity—but rather a shape we maintain in better or worse condition. Analysed this way our selves are aspects of being in the world which demands a constant effort to be maintained.

Our physical condition can to some extent be maintained through focusing on exercises an hour in our spare time but our self is part of most activities during the day and, especially in every episode of social interaction where these situations imply constant renegotiations of our self and relations to our contexts (Hundeide, 2004). In this process, there are several stakeholders with interests in the result of the process which raises questions of power, position and admission to social networks, etc., and the whole process is a vital part of the socialisation when growing up in a society (Biesta, 2009). Infants for great parts have to accept their parent's opinion of their self but as they grow older they achieve the competencies to choose and influence their own trajectories of development and their identity.

Especially, in social work on re-socialising children and adolescents, these processes are vital since society in these cases has decided that the development of the adolescent's self is unsatisfying and changes should be realised. The question of learning and developing then needs to be understood and conceptualised in a way similar to understanding self as maintained and here the tradition of situated learning is suitable.

Situational Learning Theories

In theories on situated learning (Lave, 1988; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Säljö, 2003; Nielsen, 2008a, b), there are some concepts on how what is learned is connected with the context in which it is learned and by this seeing competence as situated in the relation between the person and the situation. Some of the studies of the situ-

ated aspect of learning described housewives finding the best offers in supermarkets (Lave 1988) or Brazilian children selling things at the street where they were skilled at calculating prices and change (Schliemann, 1998; Carraher & Schliemann, 2009). Placed in a formal school settings, they were unable to solve many of the mathematically seen same problems—their skills were bound in the relation between individual and the situation. This touches upon a classical discussion of transfer in the educational sciences (Tennant, 1999) but in this text, the aim is to develop a way of understanding the self and the situation as interdependent and dynamic so I will not go into depths with the discussion of transfer. In traditional theory, transfer has often been discussed as a question of applying theories as a sort of generalised knowledge to practical situations, but in situated learning theory, transfer is not a problem of using theories but rather a problem of generalising from one practice context to another when these are separated.

Situated learning theories led to several studies of informal learning as in apprenticeships. Here, learning is described as a process where the learner moves from being a *legitimate peripheral member* of a *community of practice* and gradually becomes a *full member* (Lave & Wenger, 1991). The learning is described as resulting from the learner cooperating with more experienced members of the community of practice where the learner gradually takes a still greater responsibility for the problem solving/work when he becomes able to use the cultural tools and adjust to expectations as learning is often understood in relation to the theory of Zone of Proximal Development by Vygotsky (Valsiner & van der Veer, 2014). In this movement, there are *institutionally planned trajectories of participation* but from the perspective of the learner his life is crossing several arenas among which the educational institution is only one and this influences his way of participating in each arena thereby creating his *personal trajectory of participation* (Nielsen, 2008a).

Appropriating the cultural norms and skills in the community includes creating an identity as a full member of the community of practice and this process of identity formation is intertwined with the more practical parts (Hundeide, 2003). There is a close connection between what is learned, norms and values and the contexts for exercising that which is learned so to be skilled is an integrated aspect of one's identity and influencing one's way of experiencing situations and one's self. Just like the self was conceptualised above, membership of a community of practice is also something which is maintained by participating in everyday practice where both skills and norms are adjusted and confirmed and where the individual contributes to maintaining this practise and develop it. All learning has both epistemological aspects concerning the practice but also ontological aspects of developing the self and changing the possible ways in which a person can change the environment and thereby his own development (Packer & Goicoechea, 2000). This can be experienced a little differently depending on the community of practice where some technical skills can be seen as less influential in identity formation, but especially in vocational educations they are important—you are a smith and not a baker, you are a good or average smith and as such you act influencing your own life conditions.

Acting in the World

The process of acting in the world is crucial when we are interested in helping adolescents at institutions to become agents in their own lives and as part of this to choose which life trajectory to pursue. A person is actively engaged in handling his life and the present situation. In doing this, he is not acting on representations or general rules, but rather using these as tools to create an understanding of the present situation in its uniqueness. It is this unique situation he is trying to handle. This goes for complex situations which he engages in as being important enough to spend resources on (Rasmussen, 1986). Routine situations or situations which are assessed as of minor importance are handled accordingly by well-known routine actions.

Both in reaching an understanding of the present situation, in choosing what to aim for and in selecting which actions to conduct to reach these aims the person is culturally influenced. The culture consists to a large degree of understandings, concepts, values and norms, routines and actions ('social representations' Marková, 2003) which are appropriated while growing up. These do not determine how the individual perceive, understand and handle situations in his life, but they deliver default suggestions which then can be evaluated in relation to the peculiarity of the present situation. In order to live in a social group or a society, the person has to create understandings and choose actions which are more or less similar to the general norms and values in this social group or society. This is well conceptualised in theories on 'social representations' (Marková, 2003; Jovchelovitch, 2007; Voelklein & Howarth, 2005).

This understanding of the individual's handling of situations in life stresses that the context he is part of is not a given surrounding but he constructs his psychological context even though this construction is constrained by the physical surrounding, his own experiences including an amount of cultural elements, his present intention and condition, etc. A situation is located in physical time and space but a context is personally constructed as a psychological reality (Ricoeur, 1981).

This understanding of acting in the world stresses an aspect of the theory of Zone of Proximal Development which is often missed. The idea of the concept of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) can be understood as the individual trying out the culturally delivered artefacts, understandings, concepts, social representations, values, action-repertoires, etc., and here the individual manages to use some of these to create understandings and actions whereas others might be unfamiliar and need assistance from more culturally experienced persons (Valsiner & van der Veer, 2014) but the core is the understanding of the individual as achieving cultural heritage by trying it out in actions. This is also the case for one's self-image where trying out different understandings is part of normal development just like Benny is doing in case 1.

In situated learning theories, the concept of learning and competence as embedded in the relation between person and the context is often unnoticed by practitioners and even by teachers. Practitioners often focus on solving problems and this can be done by experimenting in practice. Schön (1983) describes in his observational studies how

practitioners experiment with the situation around the problem they have to solve and they register how the situation 'reacts back' to their interventions. In Schön's studies much of this is done in reflections, but I do not see any reason why it should only be reflective. Learning practical skills as riding a bicycle, playing tennis, throwing a clay pot, etc., can even be more effective when you do not try to verbalise what is needed to succeed. The term to experiment with the situation can at least be a way of reflecting through practice and adjustment to reach a result and all this can take place outside conscious awareness which is why both teachers and practitioners do not see competencies as being in the relation between person and the situation.

This 'reflection through practice' might result in learning practice without being able to verbalise the competences achieved—tacit knowing (Molander, 1996; Polanyi, 1966)—which can impede further qualification or the abolition of actions which are unnecessary or even negative. Studies of the development of genuine expertise (Sternberg et al., 2000, Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986) describe this as acting without rules or reflections because the expert 'intuitively' know what to do—or as I prefer to frame it through processes outside conscious awareness the situation or problem is assessed and through comparing with a repertoire of experiences within the field of your expertise an action is tried out. It should be mentioned that some of these authors see expertise developed through exercising rules and later acting intuitively, but this might not be necessary or the only way to achieve expertise (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 2000). In every work there are unconscious and maybe routinized acts to a greater or smaller degree and some jobs are even characterised by demanding spontaneous actions. In these actions where the processes of perception, interpretation and choice of actions are going on outside conscious awareness, the point of seeing learned competences as embedded in the relation between person and context becomes even more interesting.

Above I mentioned that within the understanding in this chapter, a mature self must be seen as being able to balance the demands of the situation with one's own intentions. When part of this process of handling the situation is going on outside conscious awareness, a mature self includes processes which could be called 'the lived unconscious' (Løvlie Schibbye, 2002). Where the unconscious in a psychodynamic tradition often is simplified as suppressed memories, it is relevant to see it as the way we are acting which we are not aware of exactly because of these processes outside conscious awareness. Benny in the first case is a clear example of this.

This description of people acting is mainly built on research on problem solving and developing practical competencies but when learning is conceptualised as both epistemic and ontological (Packer & Goicoechea, 2000) as mentioned above this understanding of learning processes and competences is also concerning the development of self.

Social-Pedagogical Treatment and Self-development

The traditional conception of treatment is a surgeon standing on the sideline and intervening where the patient is passive or just rendering information. In social-pedagogical treatment, I have conceptualised the task and challenge as forming a fellowship between adolescent and the social worker and the common project or concern for the fellowship is to handle the life of the adolescent (Jensen, 2018b, 2015). This fellowship has to be a cooperation so both parts influence the topics to focus on Jensen (2011) and the norms of cooperating. This is an attempt to conceptualise in a way stressing the adolescent as agent in his life.

Adolescents placed at institutions are often described with a list of problems and bad behaviour and have often been excluded earlier on, but there are many ways of not showing certain behaviour and manoeuvring directed by 'not doing' something is inefficient. Conceptualising the adolescent as partner in a fellowship stresses the importance of both seeing him as active in his own development but also the importance of his choices when the goal of the treatment is decided upon. The community of practice at the institution should be open to the many ways of handling one's life and thereby be able to help the adolescent find his personal trajectory of participating in society in relation to goals he wants to pursue and establish a self where he can see himself as included.

Many of the adolescents placed at institutions for social-pedagogical treatment are not used to much reflection on their own repertoire of perceiving and understanding situations and actions for handling them are often not seen as a choice but as a necessity forced upon them by the situation like Benny in case 1. Following situated learning theories an effort to change their inexpedient habits could preferably be done in the situations where they are going to exercise their new skills and not in psychotherapy, training sessions or other kinds of treatment isolated from their everyday life. Learning and developing involve changing one's way of perceiving and creating understandings of the specific situations you are in and choose how to handle them. According to situated learning theory, it would be more convenient to arrange for learning this in such situations instead of in separate and different situations. In this learning process, symbolic resources should, of course, be used to clarify to them the different possibilities of understanding and handling the situation which they do not perceive (Hundeide, 2005; Zittoun, 2006) which obviously can be done through common reflections, but situated learning theories also stress the possibilities of learning by cooperating with more skilled persons, as social workers should be. Learning does not have to be through verbalising but can be learned through common actions and some adolescents have had enough of adults talking to them so they prefer common actions. In studies of problem solving and development of experts, the emphasis is also placed on the perception and understanding of the situation (Rasmussen, 1986; Sternberg et al., 2000) even though the problem often is raised as a question of finding actions, but solving problems in social life is mostly a question of establishing new understandings of the present situation.

Apart from the open-ended understanding of the treatment, the understanding of the role of the social workers is also different from traditional conceptualisations of treatment. Here, social workers are understood as controlling the processes and positioning the adolescents as objects of treatment but in reality, the social workers cannot force a certain development. The adolescents might react and adapt superficially but change back to old routines as soon as they leave the institution. This is part of the reason for stressing the development of agency of the adolescents in the present chapter and alternative ways of conceptualising the challenge for social workers as facilitating processes in cooperation with the adolescents is emphasised. To support the social workers it is important to develop a detailed and dynamic understanding of how you can influence and catalyse processes of interaction and development (Jensen, 2015).

As described the adolescents understand and act in relation to the present environment as they perceive it but they do not distinguish between the situation and the context they construct, and this prevents them from balancing the situation and their personal interests and intentions. If they become aware of their part of constructing their context, this will enhance their agency in their own life.

Iannaccone, Marsico, and Tateo (2012) introduce a concept of an educational self which they see as 'the emerging organizing process' where a person appropriate, re-elaborate and use symbolic resources to manage cognitive, emotional and social dimensions when involved in educational contexts (ibid p. 222). The concept of an educational self can be understood as including the context in establishing the educational self and in relation to this chapter it has the same understanding of the self as interdependent part of a whole including the environment even though educational self-focuses on this specifically in an educational context.

Case 2 I made a study where I one day every week for 6 weeks followed a girl who was placed in residential care (Jensen, 2018b, 2015) during her day including school. As I participated in the life at the place, I got in contact with the other adolescents and the social workers and could not avoid observing them in different situations. This is sometimes called 'stumble data' (Brinkmann, 2014)—data I was not looking for but they just stumbled down to me anyway. The following is such data.

One day I was sitting in the classroom with the teacher and the four pupils attending the special education class when a social worker entered together with an adolescent Ken, 15 years who had been placed there recently. The social worker should make an appointment with the teacher so they talked for 3–4 min. During those few minutes, Ken got more and more agitated and the social worker concluded they had better leave and talk later. Afterwards, I learned that Ken had many bad experiences back in school and as soon as he entered a classroom he got agitated. They had decided to postpone his teaching for the time being and he now followed a social worker doing practical work around the place as caretaker of the institution.

When you focus on Ken's educational self he has a way of handling the cognitive, emotional and social dimensions of an educational context and this is learned in

culturally influenced understandings, but presently he cannot control impulses long enough to establish new experiences of education in a classroom. Just like Benny in case 1, the situation seems to trigger his well-learned behaviour in an attempt to cope with what he expects to show up—all without him being conscious of the processes that take place. In case 2 the challenge in pedagogical treatment lies in the relation between Ken and some situations and you should not separate this. It should be mentioned that school is often mentioned as an arena where some adolescents from a socially deprived background experience stability and success and they use this as a possibility of creating another life within the common social norms but for Ken this possibility is presently blocked.

In social work, the aim is often stated as to make the adolescents able to behave well, but the context of his behaviour is seldom mentioned in this connection. Is the intention that he should behave well never mind the situation or is it sufficient he is able to handle his ordinary life world? If he goes back to the same social environment after the stay at the institution this might reactivate his previous behaviour so there might be a need for so called aftercare in order to follow up in the environment where the adolescent is going to live after leaving the institution. When we see the self as maintained we should focus on the conditions the adolescent has for maintaining his self in a positive condition in relation to his environment. To do this at the institution is one thing but doing it in less supporting environment when moving away is more challenging. This demands both skills in relation to this particular environment and a more mature self in the sense of a self who knows its vulnerabilities and coping-styles, its part of establishing the personal context and is able to manage this in balancing the demands of situations and personal intentions. Research on both developments in socially deprived environment and on re-socialising from criminal behaviour confirms this dynamic understanding and the need for support when leaving social institutions (Fitzpatrick, 2011).

Biesta (2009) states that all education has three aspects—qualification, socialisation and subjectification. Education should both supply the student with the needed qualifications for the job that the education aims for and it should socialise the students so they can participate in the organisation where they are supposed to work. The third aspect is establishing the student as a subject—as a person who perceives himself as educated and competent within the professional field of the education. This stresses what Packer and Goicoechea (2000) conceptualise as the ontological aspect of learning. Education is not just a question of learning competencies for carrying out assessment and certain acts to handle problems when at work, but all education also contribute to the establishment of the self of the student—or to use the concepts from this article: education is a factor which inevitably influences the maintenance of the self. An important aspect of the self is the way one participates and through this participation constructs a personal context. By acting on the background of this personal context, the situation is influenced and changed which again influence the constructed context. This whole process of participating in the world influences the maintenance of the self. Especially, in social-pedagogical treatment at institutions for residential care where the educational effort is directed towards the personality of the children and adolescents this is evident. Each child or adolescent is

active in creating an understanding of each situation and in this and by his actions is creating a context which again influences the person in a dialectical relation of interdependence. The adolescents are agents in their own lives whether this is through processes outside conscious awareness or not. Social-pedagogical treatment should influence these processes through reflections but first of all through cooperating in practice—in a fellowship.

Institutions as Communities of Practice

When adolescents enter institutions for residential care it is seldom done by free choice and this leaves the social workers with the challenge of establishing cooperation with them on these conditions (Jensen, 2018a). The institution and the everyday life should in line with situated learning theory be a community of practice where the adolescents quickly see themselves as legitimate periphery members and the challenging point is to make them feel accepted and recognised as individual persons even though the social workers also have to maintain some norms as part of the social system.

In relation to situated learning theories social-pedagogical treatment is also an invitation into a community of practice but since the common project of the fellowship is the life of the adolescent the challenge is to form a personal trajectory of participation that considers the specific background of the adolescent and as part of the cooperation find a future trajectory to pursue. In line with ZPD (Valsiner & van der Veer, 2014), we have an adolescent trying to handle his life and in doing so he tries out different cultural tools for creating an understanding of the situation, to decide for an aim and to choose appropriate actions. In case 1, Benny chases another person with a knife because he sees himself in a situation where this is a suitable way of handling it (his constructed context) and when he stays at André's place he wears dungarees since this is what is demanded in this context and later high heel boots, denim jacket and jeans when this was what he saw as demanded. In case 2, Ken involuntarily construct a context filled with possible defeats and humiliation when he enters a classroom and accordingly, he acts in ways he has developed to influence such situations—being agitated to mobilise for quarrels, provocations and maybe even fights in order to avoid a defeat.

Part of running an institution for pedagogical treatment is to establish a community of practice which can work as ideal for adolescents and which they wish to be members of and can, in fact, be members of—motivation by becoming members of a community is a strong and positive motivation (Hundeide 2003)—here situated theory underline the importance of establishing possible ways of becoming a member for each new adolescent who are referred to the institution, to establish their personal trajectory from legitimate peripheral member to full member.

Case 3 The following case is from my work as a psychologist at a residential institution for adolescents with social or personal problems. It was written down

for this chapter some years after it happened and confirmed with the social workers at the place.

A pretty girl Therese, 17 years was placed at an institution for residential care. The social authorities described her as having problems with anxiety and insecurity with other people. She had been living by herself and only got out after drinking enough alcohol to calm down and her social relations were all short-lived and established at the local bar. The aim of the placement was to help her to socialise and manage her anxiety without alcohol. Just before the placement she made friends with a salesman at the local bar and they continued the relationship even though he disliked the institution and wanted her to move. At the institution, Therese worked together with the other adolescents maintaining a small forest and rebuilding the houses at the place and during this she was wearing dungarees. She seemed to enjoy this work and the company of the social workers, whereas the other adolescents at the place were at least two years younger than her so she did not take much interest in them. She enjoyed being with the social workers and openly expressed that they helped her manage her problems. Several times when the salesman had visited her she showed them gifts from him which was sexy underwear and very feminine clothes. She seemed rather uncertain about his gifts and expected the social workers to dislike them which they confirmed. After half a year, she decided to move to live with the salesman. Together, they bought a shop in a small town near the institution and to the surprise of the social workers she managed to work and serve unimpressive in the shop. The couple had two children together in the following years.

Therese is in a dilemma: she likes the social workers at the place and appreciates their help but on the other hand the relation with the salesman fits her dream about a future with a job and family and her wish to be an attractive woman. The social workers are professionals and their engagement in her life will end within a couple of years. These two possibilities become a dilemma because they raise very different expectations towards her, so which personal trajectory for her future should she choose?

In social work and, especially in social-pedagogical treatment, this is an inevitable problem since the adolescents are referred because the social authorities want changes in their behaviour. The implicit challenge is to facilitate a development where they change but simultaneously become agents in their own life and choose how to live and what to strive for. There are limitations in which values, attitudes, interests and life trajectories the social workers can support but on the other hand the adolescents should choose and take personal responsibility in their lives—not just accept the norms and values of the social workers.

This can be conceptualised as life trajectories, where the social workers and the salesman can be described as attractors (Juarrero 1999) who influence Therese to unfold her personal trajectory in certain ways. Choosing a specific trajectory enhance certain qualities of her self as being feminine and motherhood so the choices are part of her maintenance of her self and of agency in her own life. Here, Therese is in a

dilemma between two different communities of practice or subcultures—the social-pedagogical subculture or the salesman's subculture. In this learning process, she should be cooperating with the social workers who are more skilled in the use of culturally developed tools but this demands the social workers are able to go beyond their own subculture and can help her succeed in the salesman subculture, which was not the case. There is a risk of social workers being blind towards their own subculture and seeing it as 'the natural' norms and way of living.

Emergence of Self at Institutions

In this chapter, I have analysed the emergence of self at institutions when the self is conceptualised as dynamic and therefore constantly maintained in relation to the environment of its everyday life. When this is used in a field of social-pedagogical treatment at institutions for residential care of adolescents, the focus of treatment changes to encompass the environment and the conditions for this process of maintenance. An infant is dominated by the situation and only partly responsible for his acts and this is not just a question of cognitively not being able to foresee consequences of his acts but also a question of the environment influencing the conductance of his actions. A mature self must be assessed in relation to the environment in which the person lives his life since maturity among other aspects must be seen as being able to balance the influence of the present situation with the social norms and personal intentions and this depends on the match between the person and the specific situation. Since the person acts on the basis of his understanding of the present situation—the context he constructs for himself—an important aspect of maturity is to be able to balance the influence the persons own worldview has on this constructive process together with the other components of the situation.

In social-pedagogical treatment, the aim is to support the adolescents developing agency in their own lives. Life can be lived in many different ways and to force all adolescents to live in one specific way would be ethically problematic and pedagogically inefficient since this will create greater resistance from the part of the adolescents. For the rest of their lives, the adolescents should handle their everyday by themselves so developing their agency is crucial. The pedagogical project, therefore, is open-ended and the goals of the treatment must be developed along the way. This is conceptualised as the social workers forming a fellowship with the adolescent where they in cooperation try to handle the life of the adolescent and find ways of pursuing his interests and balancing the expectations of the society against the interests of the adolescent. Along the way, the adolescent should gradually take over his own life. This can be conceptualised within theories of situated learning where the adolescent is seen as a legitimate peripheral member of a community of practice which leaves opportunities for trying out and learning cultural practices and in this, the social worker is the more experienced full member who can support the process. At the institution, they plan for different trajectories of participation but must accept the adolescents forming their own personal trajectory pursuing the aim

in life they choose. This is an alternative to the traditional understanding of treatment which is often focused on correcting errors such as unsuccessful coping strategies, extinguishing antisocial behaviour etc. Instead, this understanding sees pedagogical treatment as a dynamic developmental process embedded in and inevitably part of specific environments and this must be considered in relation to the environment where the adolescents will live their lives in the future. To facilitate this process, it is important to conceptualise it in a way where these dynamic processes are highlighted which has been the aim of this chapter.

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Teachers' Feedback and Educational Self of Institutionalized Youngsters: A Possible Dialog?

Dulce Martins and Carolina Carvalho

Introduction

In a society where schools are part of the daily experiences of most of its children, teachers have a strong influence on personal, social, and vocational development of their students. According to the educational literature (e.g., Black & Wiliam, 1998; Black, Harrison, Lee, Marshall, & Wiliam, 2002; Hattie, 2003, 2009), teachers' feedback is an important issue to promote learning and interaction between teachers and students. Teachers' feedback is also described as a source of information that allows individuals to see themselves while students in connection with school activities. This feedback, always more than just words, contributes to the internalization of meanings about I-Other relationship (Bakhtin, 1986) in the education context (Iannaccone, Marsico & Tateo, 2013). Recent research (e.g., Carvalho, Santos, Conboy, & Martins, 2014; Martins & Carvalho, 2014; Martins, 2015) revealed students voices about the teachers' feedback and it can be considered a mediator in the self-regulation of academic learning and in the promotion of social and vocational skills. Also to Iannaccone et al. (2013), the internal position (me-as-a-student) is still in formation and the result of this is that the "adolescent has to negotiate between its own image of self to be, the feedback received outside the school and the feedback received by the adults [and peers] in the classroom or during school-family meetings" (p. 223) or at home or even in social relationships with peers, after this meetings or classes. But, what institutionalized students said about teachers' feedback? And how this feedback mediated educational self? Concretely, the research done by Martins (2015) with institutionalized youngsters reveal internal and external positions interlaced. Accord-

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ing to the results, the institutionalized youngsters, who had many school retentions, committed crimes (e.g., sex abuse, robbery, homicide) and, consequently, were fulfilling legal measures in the educational centers, considered teachers' feedback as a useful and helpful pedagogical resource to "keep on going". Explore the institutionalized youngsters' voices about their school trajectories, their teachers' feedback perceptions, and their future aspirations, reflected in their vocational choices, can help us to understand how educational self is an important issue in our society.

Teacher's Feedback and Educational Self

Teachers have a strong influence on the educational self of their students. Everybody can enumerate several ideas to justify this sentence. But now we are just interested in one, teachers' feedback. And why? Teacher feedback about a students' performance and understanding it may constitute one of the most important aspects of the relationship between teachers and students (Black & Wiliam, 1998; Black et al., 2002).

The students' educational self-starts in the interactions they establish in school contexts when they act, do things, or resist to it. And they act when they do things with others, the teacher and the peers. As Iannaccone et al. (2013) said "in educational contexts, and its formation [self] is better observable during specific moments of school life (…) in which the definitions and evaluations of child's self are verbalized" (p. 221).

Is through dialogue and social interactions with teachers and peers that each student internalzize the meaning of own educational self. In this dialogical moments the student have the opportunity of looking inside himself and at the same time "look into the eyes of another or with the eyes of another" (Bakhtin 1993, p.287). Feedback consists of verbal information, but also nonverbal information that we receive about how we are doing or about the effort made to reach a certain goal (Wiggins, 2012) and is always a consequence of how we perform. Its instructional purpose is to provide information related to a task or learning process, in order to improve performance and understanding of a particular subject (Sadler, 1989). However, feedback seeks to reduce discrepancies between current understandings and performance on the one hand, and a learning intention or goal on the other (Hattie, 2009), but also gives information's about emotions, meanings, and positions.

In fact, teacher's feedback has been described as comprising cognitive, motivational, and affective dimensions. The cognitive dimension of feedback can be understood as "information provided by an agent (e.g., teacher, peer, book, parent, self, experience) regarding aspects of one's performance or understanding" (Hattie & Timperlay, 2007, p. 81). Such information can have an impact on student performance and self-regulated learning (Kluger & DeNisi, 1996, 1998; Zimmerman & Schunk, 2001, 2007). Specifically, the cognitive dimension involves providing students with the information necessary to understand "where they are in their learning and what they have to do next" (Brookhart, 2008, p. 2). Although we generally think

of feedback in its cognitive dimension, the motivational and the affective dimensions are real. The motivational dimension is associated with the development in students of "a feeling that they have control over their own learning" (Brookhart, 2008, p. 2). The affective dimension of feedback strategies is particularly important and visible when these strategies help promote the affective relation between teachers and their students, as well as students' involvement, performance and self-regulation (Black et al., 2002; Black & Wiliam, 1998; Hattie, 2009). As we can see in the example of Solomon (2015)

> a core group of eight white middle class boys (from a class of twelve girls and sixteen boys) were observed to be involved in more extended discussion with their teacher, taking more and longer turns in the talk than the other children in the class. In addition to their extended contributions, the boys were given more 'think-aloud time', in contrast to more didactic patterns of talk when other children were involved, where failure to provide an answer quickly or correctly would result in further questioning, often 'funnelling' down to achieve the desired one-word answers (…) incorrect answers from these boys often led to conversational repair rather than corrective funnelling, indicating not only the teacher's positioning of them as able but also as being in a dialogic relationship with her. (p. 36)

The example from Solomon's (2015) clearly shows that during the interactions between teachers and students, feedback can be seen as a tool to understand the dialogical process but also as a sign due to the symbolic means where "adults and peers voices provide different "as-if" possibilities, contributing to defining what a person could be in present and in future time (…) education self (…) interact within the specific frameworks of education activities through the mediation of symbolic resources that are both tools and signs—including assessment, judgments" (Iannaccone et al., 2013, p. 224). And according to the authors, education self "is the dialogical instance that organizes the different situated identities and voices at stake in the person's network and relationships (..) is that specific part of the self emerging from the dialogical interactions taking place in the educational activities (…) and emerges every time the person is involved in an educational system of activity during his/her lifetime" (p. 224).

Therefore, we agree that school context and classroom interaction's offers dialogical experiences, contributes to the definition of students' educational self and to the students' life trajectories. Students' trajectories in school are seen as an influence to the choices of life during the transition to adulthood (Garrett & Eccles, 2009), it develops academic skills and competences and can change the students' life trajectories (Burchinal, Peisner-Feinberg, Pianta, & Howes, 2002).

As we try to draw on last paragraphs, teacher feedback seems to play a powerful role on students' educational self but we agree with Solomon (2015). To the authoress, teachers' feedback is a part of bigger picture where school systems and educational policies are not neutral. And together, they can push many students to negative trajectories. These negative trajectories cannot be seen as irreversible as we are going to show in the study presented here developed in five Portuguese educational centers within of a broader project entitled *Feedback, Identity and School Trajectories: Dynamics and Consequences* (PTDC/CPE-PEC/121238/2010).[1]

[1]This project was funded by the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology.

A Possible Dialog: The Study

Become Institutionalized Youngsters

Actually, youngsters are living a global economic, political, and social instability and sometimes, it is associated with various types of personal and social problems. By definition, youngsters live a period characterized by a transition phase between childhood and adulthood, forcing them to face some biological changes associated with puberty (e.g., increase in sexual interests, changes in cognitive and physical capabilities). As well as, changes related to social life, where most are characterized by roles that individuals have to perform in their life trajectories, according to the social context they occupy or social groups they belong (Eccles, Templeton, Barber, & Stone, 2003). According to Gimeno (1996), the changes that can occur in individuals, as for example school transitions, are characterized by "new realities" that are known as steps of crises or uncertainties (p. 17). Erikson (1968) also identifies several development crises that individuals experience in adolescence to adulthood. Holland (1959), refer that youngsters experience a progressive differentiation of preferences, interests, skills and vocational values, linking up better with people with same interests. In fact, youngsters experience a development of their internal self in connection with their social relations or external self. In turn, youngsters' development crises happen in other some aspects by the influence of problems with parents, at school with peers, and by lack of social participation. But how these problems can affect personal and social life trajectories and become a institutionalized youngsters?

The problems that youngsters face with parents or with their social groups influence their life trajectories and tend to highlight risky behavior with agents and crime (Hirschi, 1969). There are several factors that can lead youngsters to exhibit risky behaviors and delinquency, essentially when the instances of social control such as family and school, are insufficient or resign from their actions (Ferreira, 1997). Families and school try to focus on different strategies to find escape opportunities to situations of crises or unpredictability and stalemate are sometimes risky behavior of generators and tend to characterize the acts of delinquency, who are increasingly early manifested in terms of practices in crime (Carvalho, 2012). In other words, the ineffectiveness of the first instances of social control, as family and school, facing deviant behavior involving situations of risk or delinquency, dictated the need to (re)adjust strategies of youngsters' education.

The social dynamics that youngsters experience influence their biography and consequently their life trajectories (Delory-Momberger, 2009). Risky behavior or delinquency are seen as a social deviation in the life course (Giddens, 2014), in the construction and development of a coherent self. Delinquency trajectories resulting from the transition process of socialization between adolescence and adulthood (Dickes & Hausman, 1986 cited by Carvalho, 2003) and are marked by the absence of regulation and supervision of some primary institutions as family and school.

Strengthening international guidelines, since 2007 the General Comment No. 10 of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, which in the field of juvenile justice has

given emphasis to the role of prevention of juvenile delinquency, more emphasis on socializing measures of the individuals integration and in promoting access to education. The youngsters' institutionalization is thus a legal response to risky behavior or delinquency and it is why individuals become institutionalized youngsters.

In the field of juvenile justice, the Portuguese legal system based on international models determines that all children and youngsters who require protection, or have committed acts which qualify as crimes, are designed to ensure their civil and social rights by the Guardianship Act Education (Law No. 166/99 of 14 October, therefore LTE) in force since 2001. LTE is applicable to youngsters of ages ranging between 12 and 16 years old, and it is also for those who have not completed 18 years (upon legal decision in the first instance), through measures of Guardianship Education. These measures include the internment in educational centers (article 4th, paragraph 1, LTE) and are applied under three regimes: open, semi-open, and closed. In any of these regimes youngsters attend educational activities and in some cases, the open and semi-open regime youngsters are allowed to attend outside some school activities, work or sports, and spend the weekend with family, tutors, or people with legal responsibility.

Educational centers, being under the control of the Ministry of Justice, are establishments of educative intervention, and aim to provide to the institutionalized individuals with temporary absence of their usual social contexts; the use of educative programs and teaching approaches to empower youngsters on values and enable them in the future to lead a life with social and legal responsibilities (article 17th, LTE). Concretely, the teaching approaches used in Portuguese Educational Centers are based on the vocational education curriculum, in which institutionalized youngsters have the possibility to engage in some vocational courses, accessing conditions to develop some competences in order to perform a future job and a full social reintegration.

Educational centers offer some courses of the program Adult Education and Training (therefore EFA). These courses are designed to provide educational qualifications and/or professional skills, in a perspective of (re)integration of individuals in the labor market, and seek to contribute to a deficit reduction of academic and professional qualifications of the Portuguese youngsters population (Canelas, 2008). Regarding the type of vocational education in Portuguese educational centers, the EFA courses offer a dual certification, which is simultaneously academic and professional. Thus, EFA courses are part of compulsory education, assuming equivalence to the second cycle (sixth grade) and third cycle (ninth grade) of basic education of regular education,[2] which is intended for those youngsters who are 15 years old or older with early school leaving trajectories or at risk of dropping out.

[2]In Portuguese educational system, the 3rd cycle of the regular education is compulsory and free, designed for pupils until 16 years old.

Interviewing Portuguese Institutionalized Youngsters

For this chapter, the data are drawn from semi-structured interviews with 34 Portuguese institutionalized youngsters, all male, with an average age of 16 years old. All participants were institutionalized in five Portuguese educational centers following legal decisions, most of them (n = 31) in semi-open regime. In this regime, youngsters attended educational activities and leisure in the educational center, and in some cases, they could spend the weekend with family.

In educational activities, the participants were attending EFA courses of type B3 to obtain equivalency to the third cycle of basic education (ninth grade), as well as a professional certification. The EFA courses attended by the participants of this study were on the follow professional certifications: Waiter (n = 10), Hotel Maintenance Operator [Therefore HMO] (n = 12) and Kitchen (n = 12). Despite the designation, the importance of EFA courses is the fact these are "pathways in education and training of vocational qualifications, designed for youngsters less than 15 years old at risk of leaving school or who have left school before the end of compulsory education" (3rd article, Law No. 18228/2008).

Participants, in an initial phase, were selected in relation of the course attended and their availability and willingness to participate in this study. Youngsters were interviewed on a one–one basis for about half an hour each. The interviews took place in an office at the educational centers the during the classes hours. The format of the interview was open-ended, and covered the following topics: school trajectories before institutionalization, teachers' feedback perception, and future aspirations. The questions that addressed the mentioned topics were:

- What was your last grade attended in school?
- Did you have any failure or retention episode? How many?
- If I ask you to tell a story as a student, what you would tell me?
- Do you think it is important that teachers advise you and explain to you what course/profession/job you should choose?
- Do you consider that the teachers' opinion about your school trajectory may influence your decisions of a future job/profession?
- Regarding the course you are attending, what would be ideal for you as future job/profession?

Ethical Aspects

Regarding the participants was institutionalized and underage, some formal aspects have been considered. This study had approval from the National Committee of Reinsertion and Prison Services. Formal aspects as informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity were carefully assured, both to the institutions and participants.

Analysis

The data resulting from the semi-structured interviews is "descriptive in the language of the subject, allowing the researcher intuitively develop an idea about how subjects interpret aspects of the world." (Bogdan & Biklen, 1994, p. 134). The data analysis was done by content analysis, and in turn conducted inductively.

The encoding process was held through the registration units, the youngsters' answers, which met emerging categories. In this process, was adopted a semantic criterion of similarity of content, to identify the registration units, taking as context unit the open-ended interview to each participant (Bardin, 2011). Thus, the interviews were transcribed in full and analyzed thematically. The transcripts from institutionalized youngsters' voices were translated to English language, with the original in brackets. This entailed assigning relevant pieces of text to emergent categories, initially generated from the basic interview questions, bearing in mind the theoretical framework outlined above.

Institutionalized Youngsters of the Study

A purposeful sample of 21 individuals out of a 34 institutionalized youngsters was selected by the following criteria: (a) being institutionalized, attending EFA courses for at least 3 months and (b) availability and willingness to participate in this study.

Table 1, presents an analysis of 15–19 year-old ($M = 16.5$ and $SD = 0.98$) institutionalized youngsters, with fictitious names, all male, attending EFA courses, namely Waiter ($n = 10$), HMO ($n = 6$), and Kitchen ($n = 4$).

The participants had between 2 and 5 retention situations in their school trajectories before institutionalization, and for that reason, the majority ($n = 15$) had the sixth grade completed (equivalent to the second cycle of regular education) as highest level of education. Despite, the retentions number some youngsters (e.g., João, Jorge, Samuel, Sérgio), before institutionalization, were in early school leaving situation.

Listening Institutionalized Youngsters' Voices on School Trajectories

At the first person, in general, youngsters revealed irregular school trajectories with retentions episodes. Only one youngster said to have a regular school trajectory, regarding his 16 years old and the year/course attended, without any retention situation.

Regarding the youngsters' answers, all said that their irregular school trajectory was due their attitudes toward school. For example:

Table 1 Participants of the study

Participant	Age	Before institutionalization		After institutionalization	
		Number of retentions	Education (highest level)	Course attended	Living situation (months/internment regime)
Bernardo	16	4	Sixth grade	Waiter	4 months in semi-open regime
Carlos				HMO	
Manuel				Kitchen	
Bruno		0	Ninth grade		6 months in closed regime
Daniel Diogo Nuno		2	Seventh grade	Waiter	3, 5 months in semi-open regime
Francisco		3	Sixth grade		5 months in semi-open regime
Frederico					
José					
Lucas					
Rui					
Rafael					
João	18	5		HMO	3 months in semi-open regime
Jorge	19	3		Kicthen	4, 5 months in semi-open regime
Lourenço	17	4		HMO	
Marcelo	17	3			
Martim	18	4			
Ricardo	18	3	Seventh grade		
Samuel	17	2		Kitchen	
Sérgio	15	2	Sixth grade		

> I attended school to the 5th grade, I failed five times for absences (…) I behaved badly, always missing classes. I was a boy called hyperactive, did a lot of screwed up. I'm sorry, if it was today everything would be different (Frequentei até ao 5º ano, chumbei 5 vezes por faltas. Portei-me muito mal sempre, faltava às aulas era um menino que chamavam hiperativo, fiz muita asneira, estou arrependido se fosse hoje tudo seria diferente) [João, 18 years old].

The majority of the stories as a student were about misbehavior and disinterest in classes' attendance. Concretely, Francisco (16 years old), said to had three retentions

at the seventh grade because he missed the classes and was aggressive to the teachers. In this sense, another youngster said:

> I did not like going to school. I started to smoking and stealing. I have been living in the neighborhood X, that's when with friends I began to vary, smoking and stealing" (Eu não gostava de ir à escola, comecei a fumar e a roubar. Estive a morar no Bairro X e foi aí que com os amigos comecei a variar, fumar e roubar") [Lourenço, 17 years old].

In contrast with the youngsters discourse above, the only participant who had a regular trajectory, with no retentions, verbalized a dissatisfaction history as a student related with academic performance:

> I remember a situation where I had a negative evaluation, with 49.9, and the teacher did not changed it. I was really angry with her (Lembro-me de uma situação em que tive uma negativa com 49,9 e a professora não a levantou. Fiquei super zangado com ela.) [Bruno, 16 years old]

Listening Institutionalized Youngsters' Voices on Teachers' Feedback Perceptions

Teachers' feedback based in guidance comments on youngsters' school trajectories and on what job to choose, was in general reported as useful and helpful, comments to better identify individual capacities, to overcome difficulties and perspective the future. Concretely, to the importance of teachers' advice on course or job to choose youngsters verbalized that teachers can encourage students:

> They say to choose a course that we like and that helps and give more chances to think in life, in waht we like to do and to study (Eles dizem para escolhermos um curso que gostamos e isso ajuda, dão mais hipóteses de pensamos na vida, no que gostamos de fazer e de estudar) [Daniel, 16 years old].

Other opinions centered the importance of teacher feedback on the knowledge and wisdom that teachers accumulate in their personal and professional life. Teacher's feedback was understood as a believable opinion because teachers "(…) know in what I am good" ("Sabem no que sou bom") [Ricardo, 18 years old], "they are older, more experienced and can help us, they know a lot a things" ("são mais velhos, mais experientes e podem ajudar-nos, eles sabem muita coisa") [Samuel, 17 years old]. The idea that teachers' feedback is important information, that can provide orientation, is explicit in this opinion:

> It's a pity, but teachers do not talk about it. It would be good to know what to do or what we can choose to do, as a course or job (É pena, mas os professors não falam sobre isso. Seria bom sabermos mais o que podemos escolher ou fazer na vida, seja um curso ou profissão) [Rafael, 16 years old].

To Rafael is clearly that teachers have the opportunity to introduce the students the courses, the skills, the knowledge, and the know-how needed to play professional roles. Teachers' feedback have the important function of guiding students in

their choices, it can be "a reinforcement to continue" ("um reforço para continuar") [Lucas, 16 years old]. In turn, teachers' feedback is very significant on students' school trajectories because teachers "know what we know better" ("sabem o que nós sabemos melhor") [Jorge, 19 years old]. In this sense, teachers "teachers know my school trajectories, can encourage me to study and finish the course" ("conhecem o meu percurso escolar, podemincentivar-me aestudar e acabar o curso"). This idea is very clear in this youngster discourse:

> Teachers know what my problems are. For example, I'm good at math and I'm not good at English, but teachers tell me that I will get to learn it, because they I would like to follow the branch of hotel and they know it and encourage me to move on! (Os professores sabem quais são as minhas dificuldades. Por exemplo, eu sou bom a matemática e não sou bom a inglês, mas os professores dizem-me que eu vou conseguir aprender, até porque eu gostaria de seguir o ramo da hotelaria e eles sabem e por isso incentivam-me a seguir em frente!") [Manuel, 16 years old].

According to Manuel, talk is possible to see the confrontation between *myself and others*. The teacher, as a significant other, during feedback can active a process of (re)definition of what I think about me and what others think about me (Iannaccone et al., 2013). In this context implies a space for discourse, debate, and decision-making.

Listening Institutionalized Youngsters' Voices on Future Aspirations

As future aspirations, the participants had the course attended as underlying assumption. For example, Carlos (17 years old), Martim (18 years old), Sérgio (15 years old), and José (16 years old), attending the three courses treated above (see Table 1) said they considered ideal "Working on the course area" ("Trabalhar na área do curso"). Other youngsters ($n = 4$) mentioned specifically they wanted "to be a chef" ("ser um cozinheiro").

In HMO course, the youngsters answers ($n = 6$) were more or less equal, i.e., they intended to find jobs in this professional certification. Also, some youngsters ($n = 3$) said the Waiter course was a good alternative in the labor market. Concretely:

> The ideal? What I really like is to treat animals, but this course (waiter) can get me some money (O ideal? O que eu gostava mesmo era de tratar de animais, mas este curso (empregado de mesa) dá para ganhar algum dinheiro) [Frederico, 16 years old].

Bernardo (16 years old), Nuno (16 years old), Francisco (16 years old), and Diogo (16 years old) were attending waiter course and considered ideal to them "find a job in this area, to serve tables" ("encontrar um trabalho nesta area de servir às mesas"). In this sense, Rui (16 years old), said something different:

> The ideal is to be a mechanic, but if I can not get it, this course is a course with employability and I can get rid of trouble (O ideal era ser mecânico, mas se não conseguir arranjar, este curso é um curso com saída e dá para desenrascar).

Other younsgsters (n = 2), attending the waiter course said "the ideal was to continue studying" ("o ideal era conseguir continuar a estudar") and some other youngsters (n = 4) said do not know what is ideal for them, because they consider to be "very soon to think about it" ("é muito cedo para pensar nisso").

Interactions or a Possible Dialog Between Teachers' Feedback and Educational Self of Institutionalized Youngsters: Some Final Ideas

Along the text above it is understandable the interactions between teachers' feedback and educational self of institutionalized youngsters. These interactions are established by a possible dialog situated in different voices and relationships and show how teachers can help the students to establish working routines, the range of demands, competences and values of being a worker but also encouraging, challenging, and empowering them as a person they could be in future time.

Teachers' feedback takes place as a consequence of dialogical positions in dynamics with classroom situations and educational activities (Iannaccone et al., 2013). For instance, in youngsters' voices, the teachers' feedback provides some possibilities on youngsters' motivation and identification with courses attended. Concretely, it shows the quality of the relationship between teacher and student, which contributes to the good atmosphere in the classroom (Wubbels & Levy, 1993), to the student engagement in learning (Schussler, 2009), and in perspective of future aspirations (Martins, 2015).

In educational literature, some studies (e.g., Appleton, Christenson, & Furlong, 2008; Archambault, Janosz, Fallu, & Pagani, 2009; Sinclair, Christenson, Lehr, & Anderson, 2003; Veiga, Galvão, Festas, & Taveira, 2012) reveal the importance of the engagement of individuals in educational activities and its effects in the reduction in risk behavior and an improvement in academic results and school trajectories. In this sense, the institutionalized youngsters' engagement in EFA courses is characterized by two factors: contextual and personal. Contextually, educational centers constitute the necessary resources to the youngsters' education as an opportunity of understanding, participating in and interpreting ongoing activities related to the course attended. The personal factor is associated to the youngsters' interest, i.e., their learning objectives, particularly the use and applicability of learning as a gateway for the real and effective participation in society (Sinclair et al., 2003).

The institutionalized youngsters' said to feel more guided and motivated when they received teachers' feedback, because these feedbacks allowed them to perceive the value or relevance of learning and the presence of opportunities to experience, appropriately biggest challenges and success in their learning (Gibbs & Poskitt, 2010). The feedback is a gift aspect in the teacher-student relationship (Black et al., 2002; Black & Wiliam, 1998). Basically, the feedback is the information that makes visible learning (Hattie, 2009). It makes possible to understand how the individuals'

effort is working in pursuit of a particular goal (Wiggins, 2012). Also have the power to address individuals' cognitive and motivational factors, turning the sense of identification with the school and, consequently, can attenuate social development of negative trajectories (Center for Disease Control, 2009; Finn, 1989). But we cannot be naive because, feedback is itself a part of the bigger picture of school systems, educational policies and discourses and teacher feedback plays a powerful role in establishing patterns of authority and position (Solomon, 2015).

In other words, teachers' feedback makes possible the interaction of complex interrelationships between social and individual experiences which flows in an educational self.

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Teacher's Role in the Dynamics Between Self and Culture

Angela Uchoa Branco, Sandra Ferraz Freire and Mónica Roncancio Moreno

Scientific and literary texts are thick with narratives about the impact of teachers on students' psychological development. Numerous and diverse are the examples of such impact on children's and adolescent's lives, from the acquisition of cognitive skills, to the development of personal characteristics, to what we designate as the canalization of life trajectories. Even though we particularly stress the active participation of individuals in their own development—from the standpoint of a semiotic-cultural psychology—we also acknowledge the significant guiding role of cultural canalization processes over individual development. Cultural canalization processes constantly take place along the developing person's interactions with redundant social messages, or suggestions, especially those coming from relevant social others within the contexts of family and schools.

In the present chapter, we aim at highlighting teachers' role as part of the relevant cultural canalization processes that have a significant participation over students' life trajectories, and, therefore, over the development of the dialogical self-systems of children and adolescents. We will elaborate on the reciprocal, coconstructive nature of the dynamics that gives rise to the dialogical self within the context of specific cultures such as educational contexts. We will call the reader's attention to the micro and mesogenetic perspective on the issue, in order to reveal specific aspects of the ontogenesis, i.e., the emergence and development, of the person's dialogical self-system.

In our research and theoretical approach, we give substantial emphasis to the developmental dimension of the dialogical self-system. We will present and discuss our conceptualization of the dialogical self as a dynamic system consisting of a permanent flux of emerging, transforming and dissolving I/self positionings along

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irreversible time. Our focus in this chapter will be upon the emergence and transformation of the I/self positionings of those who participate of school contexts as students. Students consist of a very specific category of individuals, for they are constantly under the supervision, advice and evaluation of adults according to a set of standardized criteria, and, as we will see, such supervision, advice and evaluation are rooted on the very quality of each student's interactions and relationships with their teachers. It is notorious and undeniable that when a teacher appreciates—or likes—certain students for whatever reason, s/he tends to better evaluate and hold positive expectations towards them, creating interesting opportunities, and providing such students with important feedbacks, which have a powerful influence over their performance and self-esteem.

From a Cultural Psychological approach, we will then elaborate some theoretical and methodological contributions to understand the dynamics between self coconstruction and school culture with the fundamental mediation of the teacher. Particularly, we aim at making sense of how this dynamics develops along the specific students' trajectories, for very often the cultural canalization processes involved take place at a subtle and metacommunicative dimension of which teachers themselves are not very much aware. Consequently, this dimension needs to be identified and properly analyzed in order to unveil those processes that, usually non-intentionally, may guide self-development towards undesirable and problematic directions.

In this chapter, we analyze and discuss the relations between teachers and their students' self-development as we provide the reader with some empirical research illustrations of how teachers work as powerful catalysts within educational contexts in promoting constructive *versus* nonconstructive dialogical self-development regarding their students. Such self-development, though, may extend to other contexts beyond school boundaries, and, ultimately, it may entail the following of specific life trajectories. The active part played by the students, though, is also underlined along the text, as we build our ideas upon the notion of individuals as active and constructive beings. We rely on the contributions of Cultural Psychology (Valsiner), the Dialogical Self Theory (Hermans and others) and on our current research concerning the dialogical self-system development (Branco, 2015; Freire & Branco, 2017, in press; Roncancio-Moreno & Branco, 2015). Moreover, we aim at providing some guidelines for those in charge of children's education in order to help them to identify crucial aspects of their ongoing relationships, and consequently support their effort in fostering students' life trajectories towards happier and more constructive directions.

Cultural Canalization, Self, and the Quality of Student-Teacher Interactions

As educators and investigators of students' learning and development, we constantly verify that some students, along their school experience, follow healthier and more adaptive pathways than others. Within educational contexts, some demonstrate a

progressive positive development, while others end up failing—they fail to meet theirs and others' expectations concerning their academic performance and personal success. This not only happens due to individuals' differences and capabilities, but it frequently results from either excellent or problematic relationships the students develop with their teachers. Next, we elaborate on the basic processes that are responsible for such results, namely, the active internalization processes linked to cultural canalizations that occur within the framework of student-teacher's relationship.

Cultural Canalization and Internalization Processes

According to Vygotsky, internalization processes are central to human development (1978), as individuals bring to intra-psychological domains relevant aspects of their inter-psychological experiences. Since Vygotsky's seminal theoretical contributions, we conceive of internalization as a self-appropriation process characterized by transformations of the social suggestions by the active, coconstructive, and subjective participation of the person. Such transformations occur at both intentional and non-intentional levels of psychological functioning, and the internalized meanings may result similar or, on the opposite, contrary to the original social message that initiated the whole process. The crucial dimension of internalization processes lies on the affective quality of the message's source (Valsiner, 2014). However, even though individuals participate of internalization processes, the major impact of cultural canalization remains substantially powerful, due to their consistent guiding role in creating both significant goals and constraints along the reciprocal coconstruction of the personal (the subject) and collective cultures (social contexts) during a particular individual's ontogenesis.

Cultural canalization has an impact but does not determine human life trajectories. The foundation of a cultural psychology approach lies exactly on the dialogical interplay between determination and indetermination, between the likely results of certain canalization processes vis-à-vis the active actions and elaborations of each individual, plus the very indetermination of life events. The heterogeneous and plural quality of culture itself, associated with the non-predictable nature of events, always contribute to the tension between determinism and indeterminism. However, our task as researchers of human development consists of identifying and analyzing those experiences and processes that play relevant roles in guiding human developmental trajectories. Our theoretical elaborations on the teachers' role in this chapter, therefore, attempt to make sense of how specific experiences—namely, the student's interactions and relations with particular teachers—may end up having a fundamental effect over his/her self-development, which, on its turn, can fabricate the foundations of particular life trajectories.

Attentive, caring, and stimulating teachers who provide consistent and relevant positive feedback to the student cocreates a positive affective framework where the expectations are high, the empathy generates patience and, within such an affective relation, constructive self-meanings are constantly coconstructed, and internalized

by the student. On the other hand, irritated teachers who criticizes with impatience the student's mistakes, and who does not expect much from that particular student sends a continuous suggestion of low expectations and anticipates his/her failure, very much like along the lines that Rosenthal and Jacokbson predicted when they investigate what we designate as the self-fulfillment prophecy (Rosenthal & Jacokbson, 1968). However, we have to be careful in generalizing teachers' qualities and characteristics, because what really matters is the quality of the teacher's relationship with each, singular, student. Sometimes, even excellent teachers may not be aware of how they are sending subtle messages of doubt and distrust to particular students, and the consequences of such unawareness can be disastrous to the configuration of these students' dialogical self-system.

The Affective Nature of Semiotic Processes, Affective Semiotic Fields, and Dynamic Self-positionings

The processes of meaning construction occurring along communication and metacommunication between individuals are the primary object of study of psychological science from a cultural approach. The analysis and understanding of semiotic processes consist of the very phenomena we should investigate to make sense of human conduct—action—and the mental processes that characterize the *psyche* (Rosa, 2007). Even though most influential theorists acknowledge the importance of the affective dimension of human psychology in one way or another, cultural-historical theories inspired by Vigotski's ideas did not expand or elaborate further on the role of the affective dimension in the social coconstruction of culture and individuals. Sociocultural approaches to human sciences still continue to stress language, narrative, and observable activities in detriment to the study of emotions, feelings and human affectivity in general (Branco, 2015; Valsiner, 2007, 2014).

The comprehension that affects and cognition are parts of a same whole, as Vygotsky (1978) proposed, did not necessarily lead to the recognition and consequent investigation of how these dimensions actually merge and feed into each other to promote the emergence and continuous negotiation of meanings along the flux of human interactions and experiences. Therefore, Valsiner's ideas concerning the operation of an affective regulatory model for guiding meaning-making processes and actions comprise a very fruitful basis to make sense of the *psyche*, or the dialogical self-system as it is here conceived. For sure, many theorists dedicate their studies to investigate the role of teachers regarding children's and adolescents' development and education. However, from a semiotic-cultural coconstructivist approach to this subject (Valsiner, 2007, 2014), we want to unveil important aspects involved in the fundamental mediator role played by teachers concerning their students' dialogical self-system development.

The first aspect we underline is the power of communication and metacommunication. Metacommunication means communication about communication (Branco

& Valsiner, 2004), and it refers to the qualitative dimension of such interactions. The major problem people find regarding metacommunication is the difficulty to be aware of such processes, mostly found in the nonverbal messages they exchange during their interactions with each other. Metacommunication messages can be found in voice tones, facial expressions, postures, silences and gestures, but usually we tend to pay more attention to what we say instead of what we mean by what we say. For instance, I may say "Good job" with such voice intonation that I actually mean, ironically, "That's so ridiculous". Sometimes we are aware of what we do, but very often we do not. And this, within the context of a teacher-student relationship framework makes the whole difference.

The affective quality of the communicative relationship of teacher and students will guide meaning constructions related to diverse matters, but very specially, related to the self. In order to make sense of how this may happen, we developed the concept of Dynamic Self Positionings—DSP (Freire & Branco, 2017, in press; Branco & Roncancio-Moreno, 2014; Roncancio-Moreno, 2015), which are self positions dynamically and hierarchically organized within the configuration of the developing self-system. They relate to Hermans' concept of I-Positions (Hermans, 1987; Hermans, 2001; Hermans & Kempen, 1993), but theoretical, the DSP category is basically developmental, and fluid, and may be thought of as a kind of precursor to the concept of I-Positions. The Dynamic Self Positionings also relate, to some extent, to the traditional notions of self-perceptions, self-concepts, and self-esteem, and the major distinction between them is the dynamic and ever changing coconstructive quality of the Dynamic Self Positionings, the DSP.

What are the most important characteristics of a dialogical approach to the self? The dialogical self, comprised by the I/self-system as it relates to different voices (Bakhtin) and significant social others (Hermans), consists of a complex dynamic system created by distinct I/self positionings in a permanent process of semiotic negotiations at both intra and interindividual levels. Following James (1890/2007), the component "I" refers to the active, authorial aspect of the system, and the component "self", to its reflective aspect. Semiotic negotiations, though, do not only involve language, or the domain of verbal narratives; it mostly includes significant and empowered feelings and emotions, independently of any translation attempts of such feelings into verbal signs. In fact, as Valsiner claims, the most powerful signs reside at a post-verbal level that guides the interpretation of events, the definition of goals, and the individual's engagement in specific actions. This post-verbal level occupies the highest rank in the hierarchy of affective regulation of the *psyché.* Situated at this level we find values and prejudices that lead the way individuals interpret or make sense of world events, social messages, and of themselves. The power of all encompassing, difficult to describe values then orient meaning construction processes, particularly those concerning the self, and defy rationalization, rendering the attempts by others to convince the "believer" to change their views, perspectives, and convictions to usually fail. When someone deeply believes in certain "views of reality", or specific ways to interpret experiences, purely rational arguments and relevant information cannot change her/his understanding of the matter or situation.

The Teacher and the Emergence and Development of Dynamic Self Positionings

The reciprocal, coconstructive nature of the dynamics that gives rise to the dialogical self-system within the context of specific cultures requires a microgenetic perspective in order to reveal specific aspects of the ontogenesis and development of the person's self-system. In our research investigation, we give a substantial emphasis to the developmental dimension of the dialogical self-system as we focus upon the emergence and transformation of DSP in children and adolescents in preschool and in Elementary school contexts.

Next, we present and analyze two case studies drawn from our research data that illustrate our conceptual and theoretical points, thus serving as the basis for a discussion of the teacher's role in the dynamics between self and culture, our current topic.

Anderson

Anderson's case study was part of the research carried out by Monica Roncancio-Moreno and Angela Branco (Roncancio-Moreno & Branco, 2014) in Brasilia, Brazil. At the time of the research, Anderson was 6 years old and attended to a public preschool. The research goal was to deeply analyze a few case studies to make sense of children's self development during their transition from preschool to Elementary school. The study lasted for 1 year, from the last preschool semester through the first grade of a public school.

The boy was the only child of a couple that had recently moved to Brasilia due to his father, a military, transference to the capital of Brazil. His mother used to work as a teacher before moving to Brasilia, and was very frustrated for abandoning her work and becoming a housewife. Along the research period, we verified a tension between the couple that, most likely, did not help Anderson's life and self-development. Although the mother was a certified teacher and stayed at home, her relationship with Anderson was problematic, and she always complained about his delay in reading and writing (what was not actually true). According to the boy, the father was who usually helped him with his homework, played with him, and cheered him up.

In preschool, the situation was much more reassuring to the boy. The research methodological approach made use of multiple procedures in order to infer diverse indicators of DSP. According to research data—particularly constructed from interviews and direct observation in natural settings and semi-structured contexts—Anderson's relationship with the preschool teacher involved positive affective interactions. His performance in class activities was good, and his relationships with teacher and peers were good and satisfactory. Anderson seemed to enjoy his time at preschool. Communication and metacommunication between the child and the teacher occurred within the framework of a harmonic and empathic relationship.

Research provided evidence that Anderson's teacher promoted appropriated pedagogical strategies with the child, giving him individual attention and cheering him up whenever he encountered difficulties in completing his tasks.

At preschool, he was happy with himself and with his competence as a learner. In the excerpt below, we find indicators of a DSP as "I am smart", in reference to his self-perception as a good reader:

Researcher: (after a dialogue about intelligence)… and who would be the least intelligent kid in your class?

Anderson: William is.

R: Why?

A: Because he does not anything about reading. He only knows something about numbers to count, sometimes…(pauses)

R: What about you? Do you know about numbers?

A: *Yes! I even know how to read!* (speaks with pride and confidence)

R: You know how to read?

A: Yes, some stuff! (confidence tone)

Anderson, along the above interview, makes explicit that to be intelligent is to know how to read. Later on, during a different activity proposed by the researcher, the following dialogue took place:

A: Auntie (teacher), do you have a painting brush?

R: I do, but I don't know if we can write here… (on a small blackboard)

A: *I know how to write!* (aloud, with enthusiasm)

(…)

R: Who are the most intelligent boys of your class?

A: *Those who know how to read.*

In the first grade, however, things changed completely. Anderson began to demonstrate insecurities and sadness in situations that involved learning how to write and read. His new teacher was harsh and defiant with the boy, and constantly let Anderson know about her dissatisfaction and irritation with his performance. In the following example, we find the teacher orienting Anderson during a writing activity denominated "fill in the letters".

Anderson: Auntie (teacher), how do I write LE?

Teacher: (irritated with arms crossed) You! (she addresses another child) Tell him how we write LE.

Child: L and E.

Teacher: (talking to Anderson using a cranky tone) L and E, LE!

Anderson looks at the teacher with a fearful and sad expression.

In the excerpt above, we can identify two major characteristics in teacher's communication and metacommunication with the boy, which were present in various occasions: one related to the promotion of feelings of incompetence in the child, and the second, was her endorsement of competition among students. In general,

the quality of her interactive frame with Anderson involved an inquisitorial attitude, which made clear how upset she was about the boy's questions and difficulties. In the above excerpt, when she asks Anderson's classmate to tell him the right letters, she promotes a socialization practice based on competition. In addition, her distinctive irritated tone, often used when addressing the boy, downplayed Anderson's competence before his classmates. She places Anderson in a situation of disadvantage, and makes sure he will feel bad about his lack of knowledge. His colleague, who usually answers all teacher's questions, was at that time reading and writing, and the teacher used him as the example of the ideal student, not only to Anderson but also to the entire group. In other words, she requested his peer's "help" just to point out the boy's ignorance.

The approach used by the teacher with Anderson neglected his capacity and motivation, because Anderson, in previous observations, had already shown that he did know the letters, and was able to form some words. Here, we can raise the hypothesis that, since she was convinced of the boy's incompetence, she did not pay attention to his progress and incipient abilities. The teacher's attitude was affecting Anderson self-concept in a negative way, and the occurrence of such experiences and feelings led the child to assume a *DSP* as an incompetent person.

During an activity, the teacher asked children to write the names of the object each child took from a box. Anderson picked up a toy frog, and asked for a peer's help.

> *Anderson asks William*: 'Do you know how to write frog? (William says he does not)
>
> The teacher moves around the classroom checking their performance. She scolds the children for playing with the objects and talking. She says, "The only one who cannot understand this is Maurice (a mentally handicap student), everybody else can understand! I said you cannot play with the toys!". Then she approaches Anderson's desk. He says, in desperation, "I don't know how to write!", and starts crying. The teacher tells him the right letters to write the word "frog".
>
> On a different occasion, the following dialogue takes place:
>
> *Teacher* screams: Hey, Anderson, why is this name so big? You erase it and do it again! (very irritated tone)
>
> Children continue with their work, she approaches Anderson and she herself erases his writing.
>
> *T*: VERY ugly! (loud and angry tone)
>
> (…)
>
> After a while, Anderson asks the teacher:
>
> *A*: Auntie, would you please help me! (tense, nervous tone)
>
> She does not look at him, or answers to his request. After a while, she reprimands him:
>
> *T* screams at A: Do it, Anderson! You did not write the right letters, they are all on here, Anderson! (irritated tone, pointing to the blackboard)

The impact of such experiences with the teacher were verified in conversations with the boy, like when the researcher and other children were talking about a story the researcher had just told them. The researcher asked:

R: Who knows how to read here?

Gisele: My sister does!

A: I can only read a little bit…

R: Do you know how to read, Anderson?

A: Just a few words…

(…)

R: And to write? Who knows how to write?

A: I do! (smiles). No…no, no, I don't know how to read some words…but I know how to write…

(…)

A: I am good at writing, a little bit…I am good in helping (people).

The emergence of the *DSP* as "I am an incompetent reader" is here revealed with ambivalence and insecurity, and he tries to save face saying he "knows how to write". Later on,

R: How are your tasks in the classroom?

A: Hu….. we have to read, to write…

R: Do you already read and write?

A: No. The auntie is the one who writes so we write.

The way the teacher deals with his insecurity may be disastrous when we think about Anderson's future, since he cannot count of his mother to neutralize teacher's negative expectations.

The meanings underlying the pedagogical practices of the teacher revealed her belief on individualistic performances and competitive motivation. Unfortunately, there is a traditional approach in education used by many teachers, and very much in opposite direction to research findings, which rely on severely criticizing the child's mistakes as a method to encourage learning. In fact, such ruthless criticism does not work as an effective feedback; on the contrary, it functions as a punishment directed to the student as a subject, as a person. It hits the student's *self*, and not just a specific, discrete performance. This explains why the target of such criticisms easily becomes known as the "stupid" kid, the "lazy" student, the "slow" learner, and so on. Needless to say the impacts of such approach on the self-esteem and self-evaluations of the pupil, i.e., his/her *DSP*.

However, many are the motives for the observable actions of Anderson's teacher. Another possible reason for her total lack of patience with Anderson could be due to his mother strong criticism of the school (therefore, the teacher's) practices, she had complained to the teacher that the school was not doing a good job. Hence, the teacher might be reacting to the child with hostility due to his mother's criticisms, trying to prove to everyone that Anderson was indeed a poor learner. In teacher's narratives, the researcher noticed that she was also under a lot of pressure by the demands of the school system concerning children's literacy processes. In sum, educational contexts are impregnated with complex and controversial meanings, which are poorly identified and negotiated, therefore resulting in a systemic meanings network where

different individual and collective cultural goals and values are involved, and often diverge with each other.

Anderson's case demonstrates how his teacher's expectations and practices, together with his mother's negative anticipation of his progress, promoted his failure in the same direction and generated, in the child, a strong sense of incompetence. During preschool, his mother's voice (her narratives along the interview) communicated her expectations about the boy's failure, but her negative anticipation was somewhat neutralized by the voices of the preschool teacher and the father, and by Anderson's positive affective interactions with both of them. Teacher and father believed in Anderson's competences and capacity to develop. Consequently, in preschool he managed to resist the negative messages from the mother, and, in that educational context, he was able to position himself positively, and was quite sure about his skills concerning reading and writing. Anderson's *Dynamic Self Positioning* as a good learner at that time could be inferred from the interviews, when he said he "knew how to read" and "how to write", demonstrating his security and positive meaning making about himself, as mentioned above.

When he moved to the 1st grade, though, the difficult relationship with the teacher ended up contaminating his relationships with his peers, and the boy—who used to be very proud of being a good friend to his peers at preschool—was, then, left alone. The teacher, always angry, communicated by verbal and nonverbal signs—such as words, actions, facial expressions, and voice tone—her permanent dissatisfaction with Anderson's performance, increasing the child's tensions and anxiety. Consequently, in the first grade, the convergence of all such messages (mother's negative expectations, teacher's lack of empathy and patience, the distancing from peers), plus the change of the rules—in Elementary school, academic performance was the most valued competence—had a significant and powerful impact on Anderson's self development. A new self-configuration emerged, in which Anderson succumbed to the anticipation of failure and began to doubt his own competence. In school, a lot of suffering marked his literacy process and his self-evaluations focused on "I don't know how to read", "I am a poor learner" self- depreciation *DSP*.

Another excerpt from Anderson's interviews during Elementary school, reproduced below, suggest how important it is to keep in mind the role and responsibilities of educators, who rarely take a time to worry about their student as a person, as a subject that also develops beliefs and values other than academic performance. The researcher asked him about his anticipations of the future:

R: What do you want to do when you grow up?

A: Firefighter. I wanted to be a thief (laughs), but I changed my mind…

R: Why did you want to be a thief before?

A: Because a thief can get everything he wants…

R: But isn't that wrong?

A: To be a thief is wrong…

R: But he…

A: He steals things, then it is wrong…I wanted to have jewelry, to steal jewels…but not anymore (laughs)

R: What do you want to be now?

A: A firefighter.

R: What a firefighter does?

A: He puts out fires…

In Anderson case, mother and teacher, in the first grade, inhibited the boy's developmental trajectory by anticipating his failure at school. However, if the teacher resisted his mother's influence, and tried to be aware of the child's difficulties, feelings, and developmental possibilities, his self-development could go in a different direction, towards a sense of worth and competence that is essential to achieve success and happiness. That is, if she considered Anderson as a human being, an individual in need of support for his self-development, and not just an "efficient reader" that resulted from her pedagogical efforts, she would have had the chance to sum up with Anderson's father to neutralize his mother's negative expectations. However, the meanings and affect that impregnated her relationship with the child were rigid, and frequently disqualified Anderson's as a person, closing opportunities and possibilities for his personal development as a whole.

Anderson's consists of an example where the teacher could have made a significant difference to the child's self-development, demonstrating the school potential to neutralize and counteract eventual family's cultural canalizations of lack of self-worth.

In the example analyzed above, the difficulties of a child's process of literacy led to many problems in his coping with the new educational context. The lack of awareness and empathy of his teacher, also, might contribute to a history of failure at school, and contribute to a problematic life trajectory. Anderson is an example of how strong anticipations of failure may affect children's self-development and developmental trajectories.

Richard

Richard was 11 years old and attended to the fifth grade of a primary school in the city of Brasilia, Brazil. He was part of a 1-year study carried out by Sandra Freire and Angela Branco in his class (Freire & Branco, in press). We selected nine students as case studies to investigate children's positionings about themselves (*DSP*) along the year. They participated in individual interviews conducted in the beginning and after the term of the academic year, when students who succeed moved to the sixth year. There were also focus group sessions, direct observations of daily routines and special activities designed by teachers to promote disclosure and negotiations among children. There were also interviews with the teacher. Most procedures were video recorded. For the present purpose, we selected Richard's case.

In class, Richard was initially timid, but during the interviews, he seemed well at easy, and his narratives about himself and others, including his self-evaluations, were very rich and interesting. Considering the coconstructed data from his first and

second individual interviews, carried out with the help of drawing activities, Richard moved from positioning himself as a non-intelligent student to someone confident about being smart and intelligent, a capable learner able to succeed at school. The following analysis targets issues such as the fading and the emergence of specific *DSP* along his experiences, as well as the identification of the fundamental role played by his teacher in such change. The teacher provided for an affective, constructive relational framework characterized by a constant and genuine dialog with the boy, lots of incentive, and mutual respect. In the first interview, which occurred during the first quarter of the school year, he relies on the teacher's voice to emphasize aspects of the developing self:

In1_Ri_08'04"

Researcher: So, have you ever attended tutoring sessions for any special subject before?

Richard: Only in the fourth grade, I went to tutoring lessons in Portuguese. Because of the same problems I have, to copy and… [pause] You know: My spelling is wrong sometimes. That's it. [suddenly changes his posture and glances to the researcher]. But now I am better (…). [and adds in a firmer tone:] The teacher said [nods, convincingly].

Re: How do you know you are getting better?

Ri: Oh [expressive, long vowel], last year I did not like Portuguese [shakes his head]. In grammar, I did not even understand the questions, and I had to ask the teacher, and… [pause; changes tone of voice]. Now, in, in, in Portuguese? I understand everything. I can study the book all by myself and, and, now, I am better, now. (…)

In1_Ri_20'44"

Re: What are your favorite subjects or topics in school?

Ri: Mathematics and Portuguese. I need to get better in relation to these issues, you know… [mimics with head and hands referring to spelling] But in Mathematics? The teacher said I am an expert! [vibrant tone, nods proudly]

In the position as a student, Richard's metacommunication—described inside the brackets—informs he is still very sensitive with a condition from his close past. The qualifications he had as a student due to his lack of competence in writing seems to be devastating to his self-system. Writing is, perhaps, the most significant literacy practice with high power of canalizing life trajectories at the beginning of schooling. Richard seems to be fighting against an unsettling self-feeling tamed by his early years' literacy experiences. Pauses, silence, mimics (instead of verbalizing), glances, and posture changes, as well as narration discontinuities are indicators of the emotional influence of writing practices in the constitution of his self. Problems in writing (spelling), that he has not yet completely solved; the link of writing as a literacy practice to the subject of Portuguese, specifically, grammar; the lack of resources for understanding a question which implies the dependence on the teacher, and on her affective ways of responding to his demands. Most of all, he faces the feeling of inferiority and social exclusion that has been noted in the direct observations of the classroom routine.

The recurrence of "getting better" in the boy's narrative, in this first interview, is linked to the voice of the teacher. It functions as a sign to support him to build

new perspectives for a future self. Apparently, that moment was characterized by this redundant message (to get better), as the teacher sets semiotic goals to the boy, such as "being an expert in Mathematics". As she does that, she provides semiotic guidance and emotional conditions for Richard to become more engaged with his own process of development. He has reached the point in which he acknowledges some independence and agency: "I understand everything. I can study the book all by myself."

In the following excerpt during the second interview, after the end of the year, he does an interesting self-critique about the same topics, and analyzes his sense of self in relation to his achievements and performance practices. Some of his accounts for his own changes were: "You know, at the beginning, I was lazy, I did not know how to calculate, divide, these things. Then, I saw how much I learned; I would go solve the exercises on the blackboard, and got them all right! And the teacher would always praise me, saying good things." There is a different tone, a distance from his older self, and a confident positioning about some of his current skills and competences. There is reference to the teacher's appraisal as an important remark, but her voice is not so evident in his narration as in the first interview. The dialog continued as it follows:

In2_Ri_34'16"

Researcher: You said a lot about your performances in Mathematics, what about Portuguese?

Richard: Oh, I am terrible! [emphasis, facial contortion] I understand everything, like that [snap his right hand fingers], but when it gets to doing homework, I do not know anything else. Portuguese does not get into my head!!! That's why I don't like it! [emphatic]

Re: Well, [surprised look, slow talk] but I remember that you had a good performance in writing…

Ri: Oh [interrupts], but I only wrote about others' ideas, from books. I wrote, I got ideas in my head and the ideas from the books. But then, I could write only as a homework. Because, because, [pause] I do not like Portuguese, no way! [closing tone]

(…)

Re: And, what about all the writing you had to do in class?

Ri: Well, I even liked poetry a little, but I did well because I made the posters [for individual presentations] and the teacher praised me. [he sounds and seems content] Also, everybody [students] would say that the poster was beautiful, that the text was interesting, that they did not know about this or that. Just like that. [smiles and glances at the researcher]

Re: What kind of feedback did you get from the teacher about it on your final report [evaluation]?

Ri: Oh, it [the report] said that I am good, that I am an artist, that I need to get better in Portuguese, that I am intelligent, this sort of things.

Here, there is an interesting conflict, about which the interviewer does not seem to be aware of during the interview. When she mentions Portuguese as a discipline, Richard directly connects it to grammar and language conventions, while she addresses writing practices. Concerning writing, she specifically refers to text creation but the two dimensions of Portuguese, grammar conventions and creative text, do not have a clear-cut distinction to the student, and the particular skills and practices demanded in each dimension of the discipline are mixed in primary schooling.

Only later, in the Brazilian standard curriculum (high school level), the discipline will transform into three different courses (areas): literature, writing and grammar.

As noted in the analysis of the previous excerpt, the unsettling feeling regarding Portuguese during Richard's early school trajectory is caused by grammar-based language practices. He shows a specific hypergeneralized affection towards the discipline Portuguese, and this semiotic construction is highly grounded in the uncomfortable feelings regarding his competences in this particular field originated in his early school experiences. This has visible consequences in his engagement in grammar-based activities or tasks, to which he presents a resistant positioning: "Portuguese does not get into my head!" Here, it is worth investigating the way the meanings of certain disciplines are culturally canalized by some students. Even the teacher, when she writes in the final report that he has to improve in Portuguese, she might be referring to Grammar. Therefore, the way the teacher understands and interprets literacy development, as in this case, guides the way she canalizes the discipline's meaning as a sign during learning practices.

However, Richard gives a detailed account of literacy practices that involved sophisticated ways of producing texts, multiple modes of print and oral communication practices in the classroom, such as images, drawings, writings, and, most interestingly, a dialogic context for reciprocal feedback on student's production and performances. The whole context in which literacy experience takes place seems to make him happy, he seems to enjoy it, for it is the space for a constructive subjective qualification of himself, and a sense of purposefulness regarding that learning activity. He positions himself as confident about his qualities and his place in school, at the same time that he remains critical and reflective in a sense that enables him to openly disclosure his feelings towards a disliked discipline. Semiotic canalization of life trajectories may or may not change the deep meanings, and affective rooted feelings for a cultural object generated in past experiences. Nevertheless, it is always possible to build alternative affective conditions for new possibilities and outcomes directed to the future. In the second interview, Richard recurrently mentioned how happy he was to have changed so much along that year. When the interviewer asked him to draw whatever he liked the best, and the least, about school, he asked "Well, may I draw the whole school?", and finalized "There is nothing about the school I do not like! (emphasis)."

One powerful feature for culture canalization is the existence of a space for dialogs, which enables the circulation of meanings concerning learning practices, social values and personal relationships. Discussions and negotiations sometimes entail conflicts and polemics that require a lot of awareness and sensitivity by the teachers and adults in the role of mediators. It is within conversational contexts that students are able to develop dialogical resources and become aware of the importance of the relational dimension of life in all senses, including life at the school context.

In1_Ri_03'25"

Researcher: What are your favorite activities in school?

Richard: Look, there are three. Informatics, group work and individual work are the activities that let you know if you are ready (prepared).

Re: Prepared for what?

Ri: To go to the sixth grade, to become someone in life, right?

Re: So, tell me more about it (the individual work).

Ri: Look, these individual works (…) are called tests. In fact, they (the teachers) work with written reports, not with grades.

Re: Then? What?

Ri: It is like this. It is because the teacher´s report is like a story about us, about how we are doing in school. Then, if we make a test and we go well then she writes about it in the report, that we are doing well in this and that subject matter, if we do not talk too much, how we behave, this kind of things.

Re: And how do you think you are doing so far?

Ri: Well, the teacher says that my behavior is good, right? But it needs to get better.

One particular feature of Richard's school—the existence of an institutionalized dialogical practice—seemed to contribute with his teacher's efforts to motivate and encourage students with difficulties. The school developed a specific assessment practice to implement a new approach to students' evaluation. This approach, even though established by the latest educational official norms and national standards for education, is rarely put in practice in Brazilian schools. It is a form of participatory evaluation grounded on continuous and formative assessments by teachers, students' self-assessment, and peer feedbacks. The law also determines (a) the automatic promotion during the literacy cycle up to the third grade; (b) the exclusion of grading systems—in form of letters or numbers—from public schools up to fifth grade; and (c) the law demands that students' achievements are informed by all-encompassing written reports. The norms also require that every school carries out and develops a permanent forum known as *Conselho de Classe Participativo* (Class Participatory Council), or CPC, that functions as a systematic open board forum with the participation of all school sectors (teachers, students, staff, parents, and community). In Richard's school, the CPC actually met and worked, it had an important impact on the identification of problems, negotiation of conflicts, organization of institutional routines, and on the evaluative practices of everyone, in and across classrooms.

In Richard's first interview, he talks about the CPC. His speech informs about his perspective on such practice as he narrates an episode about a friend.

In1_Ri_30'01"

Researcher: What do you think about the CPC?

Richard: I think it is good.

Re: Why?

Ri: Well, it is good, because we can express everything, we can talk about the staff, about our classmates. Because, if there were anything wrong and no CPC, everything would just remain in our heads. We would not be able to talk in order to improve, to find a solution, to get better and better.

Re: So, tell me an example, about something you think that has changed because of the CPC.

Ri: Hum… For example, Todd, well, because before… (pause). He was not … (pause, looks at the interviewer). He was lazy, just like me. Then he went (decided) and changed. Now, he is better also. Once there was an assistant and she was supposed to watch us during the

> intermission, and sometimes, you know, we would get hurt, right? We would go to her to ask for ice, and she would tell us: "No way, boy, I will not give you anything; you get hurt because you want to. Move on, get out." Then we talked about it in one CPC. Everybody was always complaining about her. Then, she was dismissed from school.

The CPC is a dialogical learning, coconstructive practice. It sets a space for the necessary negotiation of all sorts of problems and conflicts, and it provides a context for cognitive and moral development. The cultural canalization of school values can be there analyzed and discussed, together with the pedagogical ideals and educational goals. It provides discursive tools for elaborating meanings about children's routines and occurrences (Todd was lazy and changed; the staff assistant was rude and was fired). Most importantly, it sets a welcome context for the expression of feelings and self positionings. There, Richard was able to see others and relate to their problems, elaborating on meanings to interpret himself: "(Todd) was lazy like me … now he is also better like me". In sum, the CPC provided an important relaxed context for students to express themselves, talking about self and others' feelings, what helped to elaborate possibilities of alternative self-meanings and actions. As Hermans and Hermans-Konopka (2010) put it, "an emotion is influenced not only by its positional history, but also by its positional context" (p. 262). Therefore, affectively comfortable positional contexts do help to foster constructive self-development in students.

We extracted the following excerpt from the second focal group session, in which Richard, Paul, Robert, and Maurice participated. They were talking about the CPC, and the researcher asks them a question that triggers a very interesting answer by the students:

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5'01"	Researcher:	Now I am curious about one thing. In the story, all of you think that Pilar was the best student in the class, don't you? Do you think there is one best student in your class?
	All of them: Richard: Robert:	No, no one! Everyone has the capacity to learn. Yap! That's it!

Their convergent thinking about the fact that no student should be considered better than another tells a lot about the cooperative framework of Richard's class, and the knowledgeable and smart way the teacher dealt with her students, both in the classroom and in the CPC, as the coordinator. Hence, Richard's teacher was doing a very good job in encouraging her students' self-development.

In sum, affective semiotic processes occurring during communication processes are central to cultural canalization that leads to the coconstruction of beliefs and values, and teachers have a powerful influence on such processes. Notwithstanding, this does not mean that values—or deep affect-laden beliefs—already canalized cannot change. They can and they do, but not in face of cognitive elaborations, logical arguments or rational claims. They may change due to new experiences and

affective re-elaborations of the self-system vis-à-vis certain life experiences. Those deeply and ingrained affective self-related grounds for interpretation and meaning construction need to be shaken or defied by powerful new feelings, and only then significant changes may occur. If we bring this discussion into the classroom context, we may find teachers who believe they cannot do better because they already are exceedingly good. Furthermore, there are teachers who believe that most of their students are not brilliant or interested enough to actually learn, or teachers that strongly believe that specific students will fail (or succeed). The same happens with children or adolescents: we find some students that believe they are completely stupid and will never learn, and, also, students who believe authority figures will always lie to young people; therefore, there is no reason to take teachers seriously; and so on and so forth.

A relevant aspect to consider in the analyzes given above is the fact that all those deep beliefs (personal values) are most likely developed along years of interactions and relationships with particular significant others. Consequently, to understand how such values come up during each subject's life trajectory requires the investigation of people's interactions (in the here and now), relationships (along a history of interactions), and experiences. In the case of educational contexts, this major endeavor turns out to be difficult, but it is not impossible, due to our access—as researchers—to the environment where such interactions and relationships take place and are daily negotiated.

Teacher-Student Relations: Perspectives and Contributions

In this chapter, we aimed at elaborating some theoretical contributions to the investigation of the role of teacher's practices and personal relationships with her students, as we analyzed some empirical data drawn from our research on the emergence and development of the dialogical self-system. We gave a special focus upon how the teacher may play a central part in the promotion *versus* inhibition of each student's self-development. We argued that the teacher's role is of extreme relevance in the dynamics that occur between self and school culture, and how its analysis particularly helps to make sense of the way this dynamics may contribute to singular and specific student's trajectory.

Even though teachers are not the sole reason that explains such trajectories, their role cannot be overestimated: some students do follow healthier and more adaptive pathways along their educational experience, while others end up failing in terms of academic performance and personal success. In both cases, such experiences may have a powerful impact over the individual's *Dynamic Self Positionings* as schooling progresses along the years.

As we argued along the chapter, the semiotic-cultural coconstructivist approach, elaborated by Valsiner with emphasis on human affectivity, can be very useful to reveal the central role teachers play concerning the development of the *Dynamic Self Positionings*, and what are the processes and mechanisms therein involved. The

Dynamic Self Positionings are psychological constructs intrinsically associated with success or failure, happiness or misery. Is it possible to suggest some guidelines for teachers in order to foster students' self-development and life trajectories towards happier and more constructive directions? We believe that in this chapter we suggest some ideas that can actually be fruitful and useful.

In a few words, the teachers need to actually believe and fully understand their roles, and therefore carefully observe and monitor the quality of their relationship with each of her/his student. They need to pay attention to the possible ways they are promoting self-fulfillment prophecies, and constantly correct their actions to expect for the best from their students. Then, individually knowing each student's talents and difficulties, teachers will be able to plan and provide specific opportunities to support every student's dialogical self development, being aware of how positive affectivity and the expression of high expectations towards each student do have a significant impact and can make all the difference.

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School Complaints and the Educational Self: Openings for the Medicalization of School Difficulties

Patrícia Carla Silva do Vale Zucoloto, Gilberto Lima dos Santos and Maria Virgínia Machado Dazzani

Several studies have investigated the high demand for mental health services within public services for children (Boarini & Borges, 1998; Collares & Moysés, 1996; Moysés, 1998; Dazzani et al., 2014).

According to observations made by Boarini and Borges (1998), the demand for child mental health services is mainly composed of school complaints. Studies in school psychology, such as that conducted by Patto (1990), have demonstrated that difficulties in the schooling process do not necessarily require the intervention of a mental health professional. Referring these children to mental health services, rather than tackling the issues within the school, is evidence of the medicalization of difficulties arising from the schooling process.

Boarini and Borges (1998) established a relationship between the high demand for child mental health services and the existence of a crisis in childhood as a historical category in post-modernity. However, the authors confirm that, for the impoverished child, this crisis has always existed, since this child has always been considered as 'merely a child' (p. 102), an item of biological data, rather than a 'child in themselves' (p. 95), a child-infant, with the right to childhood, in the same way as children from the middle and upper classes.

The concept of medicalization to which we adhere is defined by Illich (1975) and Collares and Moysés (1994). According to Illich (1975), the concept of medicalization refers to medicine's invasion of an ever-growing number of areas in an individual's life and the fact that the human life stages have become objects of specific medical care, even when morbid symptoms are not present.

Collares and Moysés (1994) refer to the process of the transformation of non-medical issues, which are in fact social and political in nature, into medical issues,

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in other words, 'trying to find the causes and solutions for problems of this nature within the medical field' (p. 25). The authors observe that the concept of medical science underlying medicalization is one which 'addresses the health-disease process as centred on the individual, favouring the biological, organismic, approach' (p. 25). In this way, medicalized issues are presented as individual issues, ignoring their collective determination. Thus, 'the fact that the health-disease process is determined by the individual's social situation and is the expression of the individual and the collective at the same time is omitted' (p. 25). They assert that one example of 'how large social issues have been medicalized constitutes part of the actual health-disease process itself, which has been transformed into a medical problem, referring to each individual in particular' (p. 25).

Another example of the medicalization of human experience has been provided by Rohden (2012), who points to the existence of the medicalization of sexuality and human ageing. From her point of view, this process serves a combination of market interests, in which the pharmaceutical industry occupies an important role. Within this process, the reduction and fragmentation of human experience are conspicuous. Moreover, as a consequence, the centrality of the body appears as a strategy for the objectification of this experience, as it is in the medical field.

The medicalization of difficulties in the schooling process or, as Collares and Moysés (1996) call it, the medicalization of the teaching-learning process, consists of explaining school failure as something that arises from a child's existing illness. According to these researchers, it is the expression of the biologicalization of social issues. In this way, the core of a political and educational discussion shifts to allegedly medical causes and solutions, which are inaccessible to education.

The explanations for school failure currently provided by health and education professionals demonstrate how the medical discourse has penetrated this domain, resulting in a large number of referrals by such professionals to child mental health services (Boarini & Borges, 1998; Collares & Moysés, 1996; Moysés, 1998).

The concept of the medicalization of school difficulties contains, therefore, two-related aspects: the appropriation of social, economic, political and educational issues by the medical field, and the locating of the causes for the failure to learn or to behave as the school expects within the individual—within their body.

This notion that the causes of school failure refer to diseases inherent in the individual is shared by health professionals such as Psychologists, Speech and Language Therapists, Educational Psychologists and others. For this reason, Collares and Moysés (1994) suggest substituting the term medicalization with that of pathologization.

This pathologization of school difficulties consists of claiming that children whose school performance does not correspond to the school's expectations are suffering from disorders (Collares & Moysés, 1994). This perspective of attributing pathologies to children with schooling difficulties, of blaming them, persists within the daily life of the school and with the professionals who deal with the pupils, the schools refer. It persists despite studies (Moysés, 1998; Patto, 1990) demonstrating that, for the most part, these children are capable of learning. Furthermore, these studies call into question the causal relationships between physical and psychological disorders, on

the one hand, and school achievement on the other, as well as providing evidence of school involvement in the production of such difficulties.

Patto (1990) and Sawaya (2002) noted that health and education professionals did not appropriate existing scientific knowledge about the way in which difficulties are produced within the school, as a result of the practices and relationships it promotes. The existence of prejudice against poor people demonstrates that the professional discourse relies on a daily notion about the schooling problems of children from lower socioeconomic classes (Heller, 1985). Collares and Moysés (1996) denounced the extent to which this discourse is not based on science and reflects historical prejudice in the relationship between the school and the impoverished population (Patto, 1999).

Moysés (1998) demonstrated that children referred to health services as a result of a school complaint internalize the idea that they are ill, which is what really impedes their school learning, even though they continue to learn in all other contexts. Medicalization may generate a lessening of accountability both of the school, in the case of the school complaint, and of the family and the subject him/herself, since the problem resides in their brain and does not depend on their will.

The increased diagnoses of Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) demonstrate the possibility that the medicalization of the school complaint today extends into the medicalization of childhood (Abreu, 2006; Costa, 2006; Fiore, 2005; Guarido, 2007a, b). This involves an increased use of psychopharmaceuticals by children (medication which acts on the central nervous system), despite controversy about the existence of this pathology (Collares & Moysés, 1992). Freire and Pondé (2005) note that the most commonly diagnosed neuropsychiatric illness amongst child referrals is ADHD, more frequently found than cerebral palsy, epilepsy, or intellectual disability.

Patto (1990) considers that low school income cannot be simply attributed to one aspect or to one of the actors involved in schooling. The author argues that, in order to understand the school and its difficulties, we must look at the following dimensions: school-state relationships (the organization of classes, criteria about the good teacher and the good pupil, disciplinary practices), the teacher-pupil relationship in the classroom (for example, prejudice against poor pupils) and school-client relationships (school and teacher representations of the client: for example, about what poor families are like).

In her study, Patto (1990) emphasizes the importance of considering the intersubjective dimension of everything which is produced in the school on a daily basis. She returns to the possibility that the school is constituted within a space of social transformation, transformed by its subjects and by their understanding of the educational process.

Education studies by several of the researchers cited here promote an understanding that the school difficulties of children from lower socioeconomic classes have their origin in the low quality of teaching in publicly-funded Brazilian schools, in the State's lack of commitment to educating its people, in public education policies developed in an authoritarian way and which disrespect teachers and pupils, in exist-

ing prejudice against poor pupils and their families, ultimately, in the reproduction within the school of conflicts inherent in a class-based society.

According to Collares and Moysés (1994, p. 29), the consequences of the pathologization of school failure are manifold:

> The acritical and increasing diffusion of 'pathologies' which are said to provoke school failure – in general ill-defined 'pathologies', with vague and imprecise diagnostic criteria - have led, on the one hand, to the labelling of absolutely normal children and, on the other, to a growing devaluation of the teacher, who becomes increasingly less able to deal with such 'pathologies' and 'disorders'.

Another serious consequence refers to the internalization of the notion of illness, which, in the end, is nonexistent. This internalization occurs within the child, who comes to believe that they do not learn because of a supposed illness, as Collares and Moysés (1994, p. 29) suggest.

According to Marsico and Iannacone (2012), the educational self emerges within the school context and is a self profoundly marked by the subject's experiences with other educational actors. In this sense, we may think of the existence of the medicalized educational self as the result of a relationship of consent and alliance between the family, the school and the health professional, in the context of the medicalization of the school complaint.

We consider, in line with Moysés (1998), that the internalization of the discourse of the pathologization of the child generates a phenomenon that she calls the 'invisible institutionalization' of the child. We assume, then, that, in one way or another, this phenomenon supports the constitution of something which we will here call the *medicalized educational self*.

We use the concept of the educational self as a heuristic resource in order to understand the internalization by the pupil of the discourse of medicalization as an explanation of the difficulties that the school suggests are present in this individual, enabling the formation of a medicalized educational self.

Method

Eight teachers from a Primary School located in an inland municipality in the State of Bahia participated in the study.

The aim was to understand the production conditions for medicalized subjectivity, by identifying nexus between the school complaint and the educational self, through teacher narratives. What we report here concerns our initial immersion in this field of study and is the result of observations, impressions and an analysis of the interviews and focus group conducted with teachers from a publicly-funded school. Working hypotheses and the outline of a perspective that takes into account the historicity, sociocultural context and socio-interactive dynamic emerged from this process. As Morin (2002) asserts, realities are increasing multidisciplinary, transversal, multidimensional, global and complex and for knowledge to be pertinent, it must provide evidence of these features.

Teacher narratives were recorded and then transcribed. Their content was submitted to successive readings, during which we conducted a dialogue between the empirical and the theoretical in order to identify meanings and specific themes. During this process, we created certain indicator categories for the nexus between culture, school complaint and educational self. From this, we consider it possible to locate the necessary openings for the emergence of the pathologization—of non-learning and of behaviour considered deviant—and of the subsequent medicalization of the educational self.

Results and Discussion

Our initial understanding is that the students and teachers are immersed within the school culture in several ways. The teachers' educational self appears to be more intensely defined by this culture, since their experiences are longer lasting. In any event, the educational self of each school actor orients their position when dealing with the difficulties that certain pupils present during the learning process, as well as in the production of the corresponding school complaint. Here, the educational self is conceived as a personal orientation regarding school issues, in terms of conceptions, beliefs, attitudes, preferences, values, styles, etc. (Gomes & Dazzani, 2013). In Bruner (1997) there is an understanding that values are constitutive of lifestyles and that when these interact they constitute a culture. However, we consider that the actors who function within a school unit operate within a culture which has been constituted for a much longer time than their interactions within this location.

We should, therefore, bear in mind that the school unit is an organizational entity which updates the educational institution. According to Baremblitt (1996), an institution is an abstraction, a logical composition which becomes concrete within the organizational unit. Throughout its history, the institution is generated and transformed by instituting forces. As Santos and Chaves (2012) assert, an educational institution manifests itself in the form of the laws, norms, scripts and expectations which inform and guide its actors about how to operate within the daily life of the school.

The first instituting force in Brazilian education was the work of the Jesuit catechism during the colonial period. This force still features in the collectivist ideas, disciplinary logic and educational practices based on the traditional approach (Santos & Chaves, 2006).

The Homogenizing Ideal

To some extent, all societies present individualist and collectivist characteristics in tension with one another (Kagitçibasi, 1998). There appears to be a consensus amongst researchers that collectivism is predominant in Brazil, although Gouveia,

Martinez and Paterna (2004) disagree and suggest a balance between horizontal collectivism and individualism. According to Santos and Chaves (2006), horizontal individualism values singularity, privacy, social justice and liberty, while horizontal collectivism emphasizes cooperation, friendship, belonging, social support, increased equality and reduced liberty. However, in our research in a publicly-funded school, we found a significant appeal to conformity and obedience, characteristic of vertical collectivism. Obviously, this collectivism is not as vertical as it was during the Jesuit period, particularly since it is now permeated with subtleties. This appeal to conformity and obedience is evidenced by the predominant disciplinary logic in the daily life of the school, as we will see.

The school complaint contains a diagnosis of the pupil's failure to learn. It generally operates according to three possible explanations, all centred on the pupil him/herself: indiscipline, lack of interest and cognitive deficit. The school complaint is triggered by teachers and its objective is not restricted to the pupil. It encompasses their family, in the sense of calling them to account, principally when the pupil's lack of discipline is the chosen explanation. The teacher named Dalia, for example, when pinpointing what she considers to be one of the school's main problems declares: '*It is indiscipline, the real lack of domestic discipline*…'.

In this case, the family is considered responsible for not carrying out the expected training. Thus, it appears that the pupil's conformity and obedience are highly valued in the school environment. At the same time, we must understand that the teachers are guided and pressurized by their peers, principally those in higher positions, to exercise something known as 'classroom control'. In the words of one of the participants, this appears in the following way: '*So, the Coordinator, the Director, all the staff here have talked to me about each of their difficulties, what I should therefore do to maintain order in the classroom, right?*' (Teacher Acacia). This control consists of exercising the power to discipline the pupils during classes and those teachers who can exercise this are valued.

This disciplinary logic takes us back to the Jesuit education and the educational practices they engendered, which are still present in schools today. Ponce (1994) notes that the Jesuits incorporated into their school planning the goal of inhibiting the development of pupil independence. The breaking of voluntary will and the establishment of passivity constitute the exact *sine qua non* condition for this educational practice to be effective. This occurs because education is understood as an operation in which the teacher transmits knowledge to the pupil. The receptive passivity of the pupil is considered fundamental to the completion of this operation. From our point of view, this operation is not feasible, because we understand that knowledge is constructed by the individual, through a process of interpretative, creative and singular appropriation, as conceived by Vygotsky (1984–2015).

However, we must draw the reader's attention to a peculiarity in the predominance of collectivism within school culture. This predominance reveals the existence of a vision of an ideal society, characterized by equality among people. Not equality in terms of rights, but rather the invisibilization of singularities or the suppression of differences that characterize individualities and autonomy. In this way, teaching tends to prioritize the group, the class and invisibilize individualities, which only take form

when the expected learning does not occur. In this sense, one participant asserts: '*The differences, I see them everywhere, but as I have said, given the circumstances of the place, the problems are located in the differences, the differences are therefore very, very shocking, we have many cases that occur because of differences,*' (Teacher Rosa).

This appears to be the first opening for the emergence of the pathologization of non-learning. That is, anything that does not correspond to homogenizing expectations tends to be seen as deviant and, for this reason, manifests pathology.

The Myth of the 'Noble Savage'

The educational practices initiated in Brazil by Jesuit priests from Portugal have resisted the passage of time, transforming themselves, at least until the beginning of the last century, into a hegemonic education model (Ponce, 1994). This tradition comes with it beliefs, myths, visions of human beings and society, and conceptions about education, development and learning; it is an ideology which teachers and students can appropriate in different ways. Today this tradition is present as an idea that was capable of sustaining a school culture for several centuries. Although it has lost its hegemony, the tradition still appears to be somewhat resistant.

The influx of recent educational models does not appear to have shaken the guiding logic of this idea. At most, it has merely given it a new appearance, as we can see in the following statement: '*the schooling method continues to be traditional […] but it is a tradition that has been completely updated*' (Teacher Rosa). The same participant emphasizes the central role of the teacher: '*… we have to create a show, we have to become artists within the classroom*'. Clearly, there is a tendency to position the pupils as spectators. However, when the spectator's passivity is not obtained, the need emerges for an explanation based on alterity, since the teacher is convinced that he or she has played their part, has satisfactorily fulfilled their role. Sometimes, then, a myth is called upon to perform this explanatory function.

Perhaps, one of the myths most often highlighted in school cultures is that of the 'noble savage', whose creation or dissemination has been attributed to the French thinker J. J. Rousseau (Leopoldi, 2002). This myth states that the human being is born noble and is corrupted by society. It is a myth which celebrates the work of nature, the biological basis, at the same time as signalling that society is prejudicial to human development. This myth also appears to be associated with the school's 'mission of salvation', which, since it is exempt from the myth, is supposedly responsible for ridding children of social corruption. This perspective is present in two assertions made by one participant when referring to the pupils: '*… it is as if we educated, while they un-educated*'; '*… sometimes they learn a great deal at home, in the neighbourhood, and there they are not interested in growth from the life perspective, of improving their lives, I see that they don't have this perspective of improving their lives*' (Teacher Dalia). We can see, particularly in the first assertion that, in the struggle against social corruption, the school perceives itself as at a disadvantage.

Consequently, this myth incorporates a concept of development which may be considered botanic. In this concept, the child must be nourished, must have the weeds metaphorically removed from their surroundings and must be pruned back, in other words, disciplined, controlled, in order to be able to thrive without vice. For example, in the first half of the last century, Vygotsky (1984–2015) noted the obsolescence of the botanic concept in describing child development. The botanic concept and the myth of the noble savage are convergent nature perspectives of child development.

The myth of the 'noble savage' very probably contributed to the emergence of the illusory belief that the school constitutes itself as a world apart from the social ills in its surroundings; and that it can, therefore, function efficiently in the sense of protecting children from the corruption of the qualities that are naturally in development. This division appears in the words of Teacher Acucena: '*We say, look at the world out there, you can't order it, but within here, this is ours, shall we make it better? But see, right? Nobody comes here pure, no, they come already marked*'.

In this perspective, it is logical that discipline plays a very important role, precisely in this job of 'pruning'. In other words, discipline enables the inhibition and hindrance of independence and autonomy, which was one of the basic preoccupations and objectives of Jesuit education. In this way, the teachers participating in our study consider that the family fails by not adequately training its children, as we have noted. And, this gains particular force for the teachers because, from their point of view, family deficiencies also contribute significantly to their frequent lack of success in their desired 'classroom control'. One participant expressed her shock in the following way: '*… we see a lot of lack of respect, sometimes the parents come here and say 'I don't know what to do!' It could make you cry! Because he doesn't know what to do, the father, right?!!*'.

Another facet of the 'noble savage' is also extremely important. For the teachers, the sociocultural context in which the students live is essentially considered to be detrimental. This context encompasses the family and its surroundings. They think that the family is 'dysfunctional' and that this has an emotionally negative impact on their children and fails to provide adequate conditions to help them carry out their school tasks at home. Clearly, this notion of the dysfunctional family is stereotypical and expresses existing prejudice about poor families, although we have heard from the pupils' mothers and the teachers themselves reports of family dramas and even of tragedies which could, without a doubt, lead to dysfunction. Despite this, there is a manifestly inappropriate generalization of this stereotype. One of the participants illustrated this when she made a comparison between two of her pupils, a boy and a girl, both from supposedly 'dysfunctional' families. The boy, considered to be ill disciplined, frequently manifests his aggression and hits his classmates, while the girl '*is the one everyone wants to sit next to*' (Teacher Acucena). Thus, the teacher concludes: '*… that flower, intelligent, you wouldn't say she had any problems, and she has, but you can't tell. It comes from the person, whether they are going to rebel or go forward*'.

From our point of view, the teacher's intuitive perception is capable of theoretical coherence. A supposedly dysfunctional family environment does not necessarily

cause dysfunction. In other words, the repercussions of such an environment on individual singularities may be highly diverse, since they depend on how each person experiences and attributes feelings to them (Santos & Chaves, 2013; Vygotsky, 1935–1994).

Furthermore, we should add that the teachers' expectations that parents help their children complete their school tasks appear excessive and even unrealistic, given the precarious schooling experience of many families from low socioeconomic classes. This does not apply when expectation is limited to the parents' possible and necessary efforts to ensure their children complete their prescribed school tasks at home.

The teachers describe the sociocultural context which surrounds the family as characterized by drug trafficking and drug use, by delinquency and violence. They also note that the students find this context extremely attractive and seductive. They recognize that the school cannot compete with this environment and that they are, in fact, losing the battle. One of the teachers burst out in her narrative: '*… but it makes you really sad! You lose a pupil like this… Up to eleven years old, he was still a child and he liked flying his kite, things like that, then he turns thirteen, and then you see, [he's] already involved in the world of drugs, already tattooed*' (Teacher Acucena).

We note, therefore, that the pathologization of differences in learning or failure to learn occurs simultaneously with the pathologization of the family and the sociocultural context in which this is located and functions. Bock (2003) calls this pathologization the 'pathologization of poverty'.

The perception that the school has lost out in competition with the child's sociocultural environment leads the teachers to experience a sense of distress and impotence. We can add that, from this perspective, the context of the children's life is, to some extent, a representation of evil, while the school embodies good being defeated. This Manichean view suggests the concomitant existence of salvation: it is the school's mission to save the child. This has also been seen in medical theses about school hygiene, such as those in the study conducted by Zucoloto (2010). Teacher Acucena provided this assessment: '*…many children are seduced by the world, but others still find their own way, I see many children finding their own way*'. We can see, therefore, that some hope persists in relation to maintaining the utopia required for educational work.

It is not hard to understand the teachers' point of view here. As such, we identify the second opening in the school culture for the emergence of the pathologization of failure to learn. In other words, those who present some supposed 'natural deviation' (or 'cognitive deficit') or who have already been 'corrupted by society' (undisciplined and uninterested) are principally understood in terms of their alleged attention, memory and behaviour impairments and require the help of experts (particularly healthcare ones) to restore their 'virtue'.

The Teacher's Loss of Educational Power

The sense of distress and impotence experienced by these teachers does not only relate to their difficulties in making school a sufficiently attractive environment, capable of overcoming the supposedly seductive life unfolding outside its walls. It is possible to see a connection with the loss of so-called classroom control and also with the specific experience of not being able to reverse the children's failure to learn. We should emphasize that, in general, the teachers demonstrate a great deal of commitment to their pupils' learning, which is why they are frequently pained by their lack of success.

Furthermore, we should take note of the fact that the teachers' academic training is frequently underdeveloped in terms of the appropriate theoretical approaches on which they could base their practice and guide their reading of the educational process in all its complexity. Mizukami (1986) noted this in the 1980s. In her study, when teachers indicated their preferred theoretical approaches, they cited several, in the following order: cognitive, sociocultural, humanist, traditional and behaviourist. However, when she observed their teaching practice, the author noted a clear predominance of the penultimate approach, that is, the traditional. The teachers' inconsistent scientific training is perfectly clear, for example, when they assert that 'theory is one thing and practice another'. They, therefore, demonstrate their inability to forge the necessary links between the theories they have studied and their practice. In this way, the teachers also reveal the extent to which they are involved in the secular school culture, which provides them with an easily applied explanatory model, one, however, insufficient for tackling all the problems they face.

In this way, we consider reasonable Santos and Chaves' (2012) understanding that the teachers feel they have lost the power and prestige they had in an increasingly distant past, when it was possible for them to adopt direct and imposing educational practices. With the loss of the historical efficacy of such practices, the teachers experience disorientation and desperation.

Another undeniably important question is the feeling of helplessness that teachers are subject to within their daily working lives. As well as the issues mentioned above and highly precarious working conditions, the teachers also lack the support of specialists from within education itself. In general, the schools do not make effective school or educational psychology services available. What to do then when they exhaust the educational repertory in their attempts to solve the pupils' learning problems? What to do when, as a result of this, anxiety takes root? They increasingly pursue one exit: the support of healthcare professionals. A great many school complaints are sent to such professionals. However, we should consider another detail: sometimes it is the teachers themselves who seek support in order to solve their own psychological suffering, which arises from their work difficulties. We, therefore, suggest a third opening for the emergence of the pathologization of learning problems.

The Liberal Ideology and its Reductionist Fallacy

The school culture is also permeated by liberal ideology. This ideology, which encourages autonomy and self-initiative, attributes the exclusive responsibility of success and failure to the individual. This is the foundation of the fallacious argument that everyone has the same opportunities and that, as a consequence, individual efforts are essential for success to be achieved. Logically, those who fail have not made sufficient efforts or have some kind of problem which invalidates their efforts. This understanding is also present in Bock (2003). One teacher expressed it thus: '*I am only a teacher, if the student is asleep, I think he's sleepy, lazy, that he doesn't know what I am saying*', (Teacher Rosa). Another teacher asserted: '*Paying attention to realise your dreams is not one of their goals, no*' (Teacher Acucena).

On the one hand, this helps to alleviate the teachers' feelings of guilt about not being able to reverse the situation for those pupils who are not learning. Amongst the teachers, there is a belief that they provide the same opportunities for all pupils and that those who do not learn are, therefore, not making enough effort or have some kind of problem preventing them from making an effort. We can see this in the statement of one teacher: '… *sometimes I see that they are lazy, not interested, do not receive encouragement, do not have encouragement or incentive at home. Then, I see that there are pupils who have difficulties*' (Teacher Dalia).

On the other hand, the predominantly individualistic values found in the constitution of the pupils' educational selves makes them increasingly more likely to refuse to comply with conformity and obedience, as Santos and Chaves (2012) point out. As described by Marsico and Iannaccone (2012), this positioning may be one of resistance or opposition to the historically asymmetrical relations established between teachers and students. This means that coexistence in the school space is characterized by a continuous tension, proportional to the lack of genuine dialogue.

However, by reducing the lack of success to the individual, the liberal ideology supplies a means of detaching learning or teaching difficulties from their intrinsic political, social, cultural and economic determinations. We would argue that here we can identify the fourth opening for the emergence of the pathologization of learning difficulties.

Conclusions: From the Education Model to the Medical Model

There is an understanding, then, that the school contains multiple conditions for the emergence of the medicalized self. There are the historical conditions (Zucoloto, 2007, 2010; Zucoloto & Chaves, 2015), which are institutionally rooted, resistant and influential, and which constitute an environment that facilitates, in a specific way, the entrenchment or permeation of the current ideological, political, economic and social conditions. In sum, when seeking to identify connections between the school complaint and the educational self, we find important openings in the teachers'

narratives for the emergence of the medicalization of difficulties arising from the schooling process.

However, although these historical and contemporary conditions are necessary for the emergence of the medicalization of difficulties both during schooling and within the educational self, we consider them insufficient. The teachers' actions are essential to this process, yet, for the medicalization of the educational self to take place, the pupil must internalize the idea that he or she is ill and that this is why he or she does not learn or behave in line with expectations. These conditions enable and locate the teachers' actions, which are decisive. They are decisive because it falls to the teachers to perceive, or not, the differences between their pupils; and, perceiving these, to take them (or not) as indicators of deviance, in other words, as expressions of pathology.

For this to occur, however, it is necessary for the teachers' perceptive and discriminatory activities to be guided by the medical model. That is, their activities must be based on an individualized explanatory logic regarding failure to learn which pathologizes difference. This means that teachers share certain social representations of illness and lack of success, which are present in their sociocultural experiences, particularly those concerning cognitive deficit and individual effort.

In any event, by resorting to the medical model, the teachers abdicate the educational model, assuming it to be inefficient. Although they are not fully aware of it, this is an eminently political decision. From this point of view, the student must be referred to specialists. This referral is made using a form of pre-diagnosis formulated within the school environment. What happens to the student, whose educational self has yet to be developed, will depend on the type of specialist who receives them and the practice they apply before returning them to the educational domain.

In the Brazilian literature regarding Psychology, critical emphasis is conferred on the specialist psychologist, whose practice is guided by a medical model, in other words, by a traditional, clinical and individualizing model (see for example, Marçal & Silva, 2006; Neves & Marinho-Araujo, 2006; Zibetti, Souza, & Queiróz, 2010; Nakamura, Lima, Tada, & Junqueira, 2008). Since this specialist does not conceive of the school phenomena in a contextualized way, in all its complexity, they tend to ratify the teachers' pathologizing and adaptationist logic, even when they do not confirm the teachers pre-diagnosis.

However, in this study, we came across a service in which the student is not attended by a specialist, but rather by a multidisciplinary team, which includes an Educational Psychologist, Neuro-psychologist, Psychologist, Neurokinetic Therapist and Social Worker. Curiously, over 2 years of work, this team, which has received numerous demands from publicly-funded schools in one municipality, says that the general rule in their work has been a refutation of both the pre-diagnosis and the school complaint. This means that, in the triage process, the vast majority of cases present a problem of an educational or contextual nature which involves the school dynamic. Cases of neurological dysfunction, for example, are exceptions.

The work of the specialists within this service has consisted, basically, in adopting two procedures:

1. Emotional support for the student, in order to improve their self-esteem and help them deal with an environment in which their uniqueness has not been adequately considered;
2. The return of the student to the educational domain, with guidance for the school in how to adopt the necessary methodological adaptations.

Although satisfied with their results so far, the multidisciplinary team has encountered difficulties in putting these two procedures into effect. In relation to the first, about 50% of the parents stop taking their children to the service. In the team's opinion, one hypothesis is economic in nature; they think that the cost of transport to travel to the service may deter parents. But they also have another hypothesis, which is that the parents do not accept the idea that their children require the service. These possibilities are clearly worthy of investigation, but are beyond the scope of this study.

In terms of the second procedure, the multidisciplinary team points to resistance by teachers, despite the cautious manner in which they say they present their proposed methodological adaptations. This issue is the one that interests us most, since it directly refers to the teachers' academic training. This teacher resistance appears to reveal a fundamental limitation in their educational work: its lack of praxis. Praxis, as taught by Freire (2001), is a continuous movement from action to reflection and back again. It is a praxis which is theoretically pertinent and committed to understanding the complexity involved in the convergence between teaching and learning. This understanding, far from blaming teachers, questions the graduation courses that (fail to) prepare them for the exercise of teaching. Above all, it questions the authoritarian structure of the Brazilian education system, which, as well as providing teachers with poor working conditions, silences their voices and makes their work invisible.

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Teacher Participation in the Constitution of the Educational Self

Cícero Ramon Cunha de Jesus and Marilena Ristum

Introduction

A large burden of responsibility for pupil development is allocated to teachers, since they are the direct mediators of the functions that the school seeks to achieve. According to Vygotsky (1926–1997), there are so many demands on the work of the teacher that education has become only one of various functions. The teacher, above all, is an organizer of the social environment, since the pupils' relationship with the environmental elements that act upon them are mediated by the teacher. Individuals construct their discourse, reflections and will in interactions with the people that surround them. The teacher is expected to be dynamic and enthusiastic, in order to shape autonomous and independent pupils and maintain the closest possible contact with them. The teacher's work must be based on creation and socialization.

As well as promoting knowledge, teacher functions also include the ability to provide pupils with pathways to understanding themselves and their psychological states. The issue therefore goes beyond educating and maintaining a relationship with pupils based on positive affect (Jesus, Ristum & Nery, in press). According to Valsiner (1989), the teacher aids the constitution of the pupil and often guides the development of their self.

As the literature illustrates, the teacher-pupil relationship is important for the pupil's life trajectory and the formation of their identity. The quality of the teacher-pupil relationship, particularly in terms of the type of support the teacher provides, may become a fundamental component for the child's development and is largely associated with pupil autonomy. For example, well-adjusted interactions (in which

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children only receive the support required by pupil demand) lead to greater autonomy in the child, compared to less adjusted interactions (Trawick-Smith & Dziurgot, 2011). The quality of the teacher-pupil relationship is associated with significant improvements in academic self-perception, behavioural engagement and academic achievement. Furthermore, the child's perception of the support they receive from teachers has implications for their academic adaptation. If pupils perceive that their teachers provide close contact and acceptance, and validation of their self-esteem, they tend to perceive themselves as academically capable, to develop a greater sense of belonging to the school and be motivated to learn (Hughes, 2011).

As well as quality of relationship and type of teacher support, other educational approaches have various repercussions on the pupils' development of self-concept. For example, the education service model, which combines learning aims with community services in order to provide a pragmatic learning experience and meet society's demands, has resulted in improved adolescent self-concept. Furthermore, it has had positive results on both school retention and on how pupils perceive their teachers and classmates, leading to the strengthening of bonds (Kuhns, 2011). Another example is dialogic teaching, which consists of the creation of an arena for expression and dialogue between teachers and pupils and which enables varied opportunities for the negotiation of the pupils' discursive identity. The teacher plays a fundamental role in the construction of a respectful and cohesive culture in the classroom in which the pupils feel that belonging is important. Part of this culture is constructed by motivating pupil participation. However, teachers must be careful not to impose a narrow identity, into which everyone has to fit, and should adopt a more sensitive orientation, open to the pupils' diverse identities (Kumpulainen & Rajala, 2016).

The pupils' perception that teachers are role models and sources of identification and admiration is linked to the discovery of personal meanings and to interest in the classes taught by them (Rich & Schachter, 2012). Tassoni and Leite's study (2011) also emphasizes the importance of features in the teacher-pupil relationship. According to these authors, a relationship permeated by positive feelings such as trust and respect is fundamental for the constitution of a bond and leads pupils to see the teacher as a role model and point of reference, constructing an image of themselves, realizing what they are capable of and identifying their difficulties.

It is common for young people in secondary education to perceive their teachers as motivators of their school experiences. Teachers give advice and are seen as points of reference for life plans. However, negative aspects also mark the teacher-pupil relationship. These include a lack of motivation from or dialogue with the teacher, both in informal conversations with the pupils and in their teaching mode (Leão, Dayrell & Reis, 2011).

Pupils' future plans are also related to teachers, as demonstrated in a study by Martins and Carvalho (2013). In general, pupils who have difficulty making choices see teacher feedback as an important resource in choosing their future profession. Furthermore, teacher feedback may be an important source for what pupils think of themselves.

Activities at home and other pupil academic productions are excellent ways to discuss the development of the pupil's self in the context of the teacher-pupil rela-

tionship since the teacher, classmates and parents evaluate these activities on a daily basis. These evaluations, which refer to activities and receive evaluations such as 'very good', 'bad', 'badly done', 'creative', are often conflated with evaluations of the author of the activity: the pupil. An evaluation of an activity result ends up becoming a judgement of what the pupil is like. Creative work leads to a consideration of the pupil as creative, for example. Errors in Portuguese in a specific work may lead the teacher or other school professionals to consider the pupil to be inattentive. However, the pupil does not necessarily internalize such evaluations. It falls to him or her to accept, negotiate or resist them (Zittoun, Duveen, Gillespie, Ivinson & Psaltis, 2003).

Life Trajectory and the Educational Self in Movement

The Cultural Psychology of semiotic orientation is centred on human experience and on how experiences support the construction of subjectivity (Valsiner, 2013). In this approach, culture and semiotic processes play a fundamental role in human development. Culture is seen as an inherent and inseparable part of human psychological functions, enabling the individual to construct signs and use them in a specific way. Human development is related to the use and creation of signs, aimed at regular intra-psychological and interpersonal psychological processes (Valsiner, 2012). Signs, therefore, regulate and organize the self hierarchically (Valsiner, 2013).

The relationship between personal and collective culture and the signs that emerge in the I-other mediation are elements that constitute the study of human development. However, the study of the life trajectory is also essential, given that human development is a constant construction throughout the individual's history.

For Zittoun (2007), ruptures and transitions are present in the trajectory of all individuals and support the process of comprehending the life trajectory, including the trajectory of spheres of specific experience such as school, for example. While ruptures refer to changes that interrupt the flow or sense of continuity, in reference to the self, transitions are subsequent to ruptures and are seen as processes for recalibrating the sense of self. The emergence of a transition indicates that a rupture, a crisis or a critical point for the subject has taken place. A transition aims to re-establish adjustments between the individual and their environment and to recover the sense of continuity and integrity of self following the rupture, as well as to enable the person to understand what has now emerged (Zittoun, 2007; Valsiner, 2013).

The self presents a sense of consistency and conscience, is of a symbolic nature and is related to human beings' semiotic activities. It is a set of organized Positions, in which each Position is internalized in the form of a set of meanings, knowledge, beliefs and feelings, and plays a role in the individual's social relationships at a given time of life. The educational self, the specific dimension of self constructed in educational contexts, is involved in a dialogic process, which takes place during the schooling process and involves multiple voices expressing different points of view according to the actors' beliefs and experiences. When they interact with adults,

pupils create a dialogic space which allows for the appearance of different voices that collaborate, so as to define what they are in the present and what they intend to be in the future. The educational self is constructed from dialogic interactions which occur within the school context across the entire school trajectory, principally through the active internalization of teacher-pupil, pupil-pupil, pupil-head teacher and pupil-parent dialogic interactions, as well as in other social configurations that occur within all their educational activities (Iannacone, Marsico & Tateo, 2013; Marsico & Iannacone, 2012).

The discourse of adults, either parents or teachers, is relevant to the pupils' definition of the educational self through perceptions and personal evaluation. Participation in educational activities, therefore, leads the individual to take on a series of values, norms, symbolic repertories, emotional content and knowledge, bringing their internalized voices to light. When the pupil deals with adult discourse, he or she assumes an active posture, one of appropriation, participating in the process to define what he or she is, or is not, like. Pupils develop signals that adults then use to talk about them and rework these signals to produce their own point of view about themselves, which may, to a greater or lesser extent, agree with that of the other (Iannacone et al., 2013; Marsico & Iannacone, 2012).

The development of the pupil's self may be seen beyond the isolated voices of various school actors. Family-school meetings are crucial for opening up an arena for the discourse of parents, teachers, coordinators, etc., who determine a set of possibilities for the pupil and not only contribute to who he or she is in the present but also to what he or she could be in the future (Marsico & Iannaccone, 2012).

The educational self is constructed from the various social relationships and voices that are internalized by the pupil and this construction starts at the beginning of their schooling and carries on until the end of their life (given that an individual, to some extent, participates in educational activities even as an adult,). Investigating the pupil, not only at the present moment but also over their school trajectory and taking account of how their relationships with teachers are configured over time, serves to clarify and extract valuable information regarding the development of the educational self. This study aims to understand the participation of teachers' voices in the constitution of the educational self of a secondary school pupil, based on the context of his relationships with teachers and valuing the entire school trajectory.

Idiographic Perspective: The Pathway for the Educational Self

To fulfil our goal, we chose to conduct a qualitative, interpretive and exploratory study, of an idiographic nature. The idiographic approach, firmly based on the appropriate analysis of temporal series and the systematic study of individual cases, has become central to psychological generalization (Valsiner, 2009).

The study participant was a 16-year-old pupil studying in the third year of secondary school at a state-funded school, which serves a low-income population in Sergipe, Brazil. The data was collected through memory research and a semi-structured interview, using simulations aimed at investigating the most significant moments in the participant's school trajectory, from preschool education to the present time, including any ruptures or transition experiences, as well as seeking to understand what he anticipates and desires for the future.

Memory research, which is an important instrument in understanding the construction of identity through written reports of one's own history, was conducted over two sessions in the last year of secondary school and applied strictly to experiences in the school environment. Pupils were requested to write about or illustrate their school trajectory or their relationships with teachers over their entire school life. These memories were part of a body of data for a wider work. Our work only addresses Vitor's memories, whose contents served as the basis for the initial interview.

During the interview, the participant was invited to participate in certain 'simulations'. These occurred at four points: during the discussions about preschool education, about Primary I and Primary II and secondary school. In these simulations, the interviewer asked the participant which teachers he would like the interviewer to meet in order to talk about Vitor, the pupil.[1]

In another simulation, the pupil was invited to indicate which teacher he would not like the researcher to meet and hold a conversation focused on him. Following the suggestions for each teacher, the interviewer began to introduce questions about these teachers, about the participant's relationship with them and, particularly, about how he supposed these teachers would describe him to the interviewer.

These simulations aimed to more directly capture the voices of the teachers in each of the educational levels through which Vitor passed. It was thus possible to identify and analyse the teachers' voices and understand the circumstances in which they were accepted, rejected or negotiated by the participant. Furthermore, teacher participation allowed us to understand the dynamic of the I Positions present in the educational self throughout the participant's school trajectory.

The interview conducted with the participant contained two sections. Data analysis was aimed at study goals and based on the theoretical assumptions of Cultural Psychology, making particular use of the concepts of rupture and transition and the notion of the educational self.

[1]Primary Education is one of the levels of Basic Education in Brazil and serves children aged between 6 and 14 years old. It lasts 9 years and is divided up as follows: initial years (or Primary Education I) and final years (or Primary Education II). Secondary Education in Brazil occurs after primary school and constitutes the final stage of basic education. It lasts 3 years and generally serves pupils aged 14–17 years old.

Vitor's Story

Vitor is 16 years old, a member of a middle-class family and lives with his parents and two siblings in a small town in Northeast Brazil. His father is a truck driver and his mother is a cashier; she is particularly concerned about her son's school life. Vitor has studied in several schools. At preschool and primary he studied in private schools, however, in the first year of secondary school, when his mother's income was lower than expected, and given the possibility of his failing the year, she transferred him to a state-funded school. She hopes he will enter university and study dentistry.

The First School Years

Vitor does not have many memories of his preschool years. His first memory from this period relates to his starting his first school and his relationship with a female teacher, the only one he remembers from this educational level.

> … I studied with a teacher called Marta. It was with her that I learnt to read and write.
>
> …eu estudei com uma professora chamada Marta. Foi com ela que aprendi a escrever, ler.

The above passage '*It was with her that I learnt…*' characterizes and marks out this basic stage in his school life: the transition from not knowing how to read and write to acquiring these skills. This sentence also underlines what the teacher-pupil relationship meant for Vitor in preschool. '*It was with her…*' refers to the important role played by the teacher in Vitor's literacy, as well as to how the teaching-learning process was, in fact, perceived as something that takes place within social relationships, constructed through the teacher and pupil's joint efforts.

Vitor was invited to participate in a simulation in which he had to imagine that the researcher knew his preschool teacher and started to discuss him. When asked how he imagined this teacher would describe him, Vitor asserted that:

> She would say I was hot-mouthed.[2].. I knew how to read, not everyone could read when I studied there.
>
> Ela ia falar que eu era boca-quente[1]… eu sabia ler, não era todo mundo que sabia ler, não, na época que eu estudava lá.

Knowing how to read and write when none of his classmates could do this very well gave Vitor the Position of stand out-pupil, one who is 'showing off' to the rest of the class. This part of the dynamic of Vitor's educational self, in which he reveals a dominant position during his preschool period that of the I-stand out-pupil, is reaffirmed by the teacher's voice, as internalized by Vitor. He agrees with the teacher's possible description and reasserts her voice by saying that, in fact,

[2]"Hot-mouthed"—as translated from the Portuguese, in the regional culture where the participant lives, describing someone as "hot-mouthed" means that they are audacious or smart.

he was really '*a little messy*', '*a little naughty*'. Despite this messy behaviour in the classroom, he responded to all the teacher's requests, including the academic activities she proposed.

For Vitor, this teacher's role is linked to the learning process because she was the one who taught him to read, write and add up. It was, in part, through his relationship with this teacher and the work she did that Vitor assumed the I-stand out-pupil Position. This Position is represented by the characterizations 'showing off', 'a little naughty' and 'hot-mouthed'. The I-diligent-pupil Position, represented by the 'diligence' sign is responsible for relativizing and weighing up the 'standing out' and the messiness. Vitor was a show off and messy, however, his school activities were always performed with great diligence.

Primary Education I

Moving from one level of educational to another and transferring to another school were perceived by Vitor as ruptures. For a good pupil, his performance in the first year of primary school fell below expectations. His regular performance in exams led to a weakening of the I-stand out-pupil Position, which hierarchically became a secondary Position.

He did not know how to explain why his grades were low and asserted that he had never had difficulty in making friends when he was younger; his low achievement was therefore inexplicable to him since he made friends in the school context. His grades improved in year 2 and, once again, Vitor attributes his performance to his friendships with his classmates. However, beyond this, the sign 'competition' began to be a regular and important semiotic for his educational self at this time in his school life. Competitiveness within his group of classmates, whereby they all sought to get grades better than the others, motivated him, so that he made greater efforts and consequently obtained higher grades. Thus, the I-diligent-pupil Position began to be one of the dominant positions of his educational self.

> … I knew my friends at that time and everyone wanted to get better grades than the others. So I studied and studied… it was a competition… I got much better in year 2.

> … eu conheci meus amigos naquele tempo e era um querendo tirar nota melhor do que o outro. Aí estudava, estudava… era uma competição… na 2ª série eu melhorei bastante.

In his new school, due to the weakening of the I-stand out-pupil Position, Vitor needed to find new symbolic resources that could be used at this time of transition. The resource used to adjust to the new situation and provide stability for his sense of self was transformed in the moments that preceded exams and in the search for better grades in a competition with his closest classmates (Zittoun et al., 2003). He left the smartest pupil Position and began to rely on his diligence and motivation, which arose from this competition for grades.

When he was unable to recover the stand out-pupil Position, when he assumed the I-regular-pupil Position and reasserted his I-diligent-pupil Position, Vitor recon-

ciled both these Positions and introduced a new one: I-competitor-pupil. As well as perceiving himself as a pupil who was diligent in all the activities in which he took part and who was at the same 'level' as the others, he began to develop the ability to compete with his classmates.

In Vitor's view, the teacher-pupil relationship at this stage of his schooling did not play a very significant role in his life, and the teacher was a secondary figure during his most significant events. For him, his classmates, particularly those within his strictest circle of friends, were important in the development of his educational self, principally those who, like Vitor, cultivated a climate of competition.

Primary Education II

The fact that Vitor continued his daily activities during Primary II with the same friends, may have helped him not to signify his transfer to another school as a rupture (Zittoun, 2007[a]). However, the relationship between this group of friends and school performance changed over Primary II, since the competitiveness between them declined. This competitiveness was intended to be fun, but as the level of demands and the number of subject areas increased from year 5 onwards, the competitiveness within the group faded.

However, ruptures of another kind, that is, the frequent bullying suffered by Vitor, mark this period. In year 6, he was bullied by some pupils because of a depression in his chest wall. The pupils constantly called him 'hole'. When asked whether the teachers knew about this, Vitor asserted that they did not. In his opinion, if he had gone to the teachers or any another professional, he would have suffered further attacks from his schoolmates. Furthermore, as Ristum (2015) asserts, a normalization of violence has been observed in the words of many teachers. On witnessing scenes of violence, it is common for teachers to assert that these are 'normal things' or 'children's things', in a way that trivializes school violence. This type of situation, allied to the fear of reprisals by their attackers, means that many pupils do not seek their teachers' help, as was the case with Vitor.

In year 8, Vitor was given another nickname: Creuza. These attacks had emotional repercussions for Vitor, such as rage and shame, because the pupils called him this name constantly and, sadness, because his main attackers were his friends.

> In school I also had the nickname Creuza. Because I looked like the grandmother of one of the girls, I don't know where they got it from. Then there was a Creuza in the English book, then everyone began to mock me, really mock me, even the teacher mocked me. So I almost cried in the classroom, I lowered my head… I felt humiliated and almost ran out of the classroom.

> No colégio também eu tive o apelido de Creuza. É porque eu parecia com a avó de uma menina, não sei de onde tiraram isso. Aí tinha no livro de inglês uma Creuza, aí todo mundo começou a mangar de mim, mangar alto, até a professora mangou. Aí eu quase choro na sala, baixei a cabeça… Eu me senti humilhado e quase saí correndo da sala.

He said that, over time, the verbal attacks stopped troubling him, even when new nicknames emerged. To protect his sense of self, Vitor found symbolic resources capable of supporting his adjustment to these situations. Zittoun et al. (2003) consider that such internal resources, arising from the individual's experiences and abilities, are involved in the subject's transition from a state of instability to one of stability and comfort. Vitor, therefore, began to pretend that he was untroubled by the nicknames, in order to minimize his psychological suffering, was equally untroubled by the acts of violence and began to accept and integrate the nicknames into his sense of self, so they became a part of him. These experiences were internalized by his educational self and he began to define himself as a bullied pupil.

Vitor remembered that from year 6 onwards he took part in a series of final academic recovery sessions. He stated that his greatest difficulty was always in mathematics, although he had to take recovery classes in other subjects throughout his school life. One of the reasons for this failure was the fact that he considered himself to be 'switched off', a distracted pupil, although he stressed that he was always diligent. Moreover, the average grade in this school was seven, meaning that high grades were always required.

> I don't have a problem, no, because I'm not a bad pupil. I think my problem is that I was switched off. Not was, am. That's what they [the teachers] say, right… [my mother] told me that the teachers used to say that.
>
> Eu não tenho problema, não, porque eu não sou mau aluno. Eu acho que o meu problema é que eu era avulso. Eu era não, eu sou. Isso é o que eles [professores] falam né… [minha mãe] me falava que os professores diziam isso.

This suggests the way in which the teachers' voices were internalized by Vitor's educational self throughout primary school and how they contributed to the formation of an I-inattentive-pupil Position. He pointed out that he was never a '*bad pupil*' but rather an inattentive one. This definition arises from the assessments the teachers made of him in both the classroom and in meetings with parents, as illustrated in Fig. 1. Such assessments were accepted by Vitor and the I-inattentive-pupil Position began to hold an important place in the hierarchy of his educational self Positions (Hermans, 2001).

In the research simulation for Primary II, Vitor cited the mathematics teacher as the one he would like the researcher to meet. The main sign that permeated his relationship with this teacher was 'demanding'. According to Vitor, she was a good teacher and, since it was a subject that few pupils liked, she used motivation and holding students to task as her resources.

This teacher's voice was significant and internalized by Vitor's educational self. She evoked the I-diligent-pupil Position, since, in the same way, that the competition between his classmates made Vitor diligent, his relationship with the mathematics teacher also contained an element of challenge, given that mathematics was always a subject that required a lot from him. This made him even more diligent and he attempted to be the best pupil. Vitor reported that he sometimes met the mathematics teacher in the supermarket and they would talk. In their last conversation, she asked him why he had left his previous school and said: '*study young man, you are diligent*'.

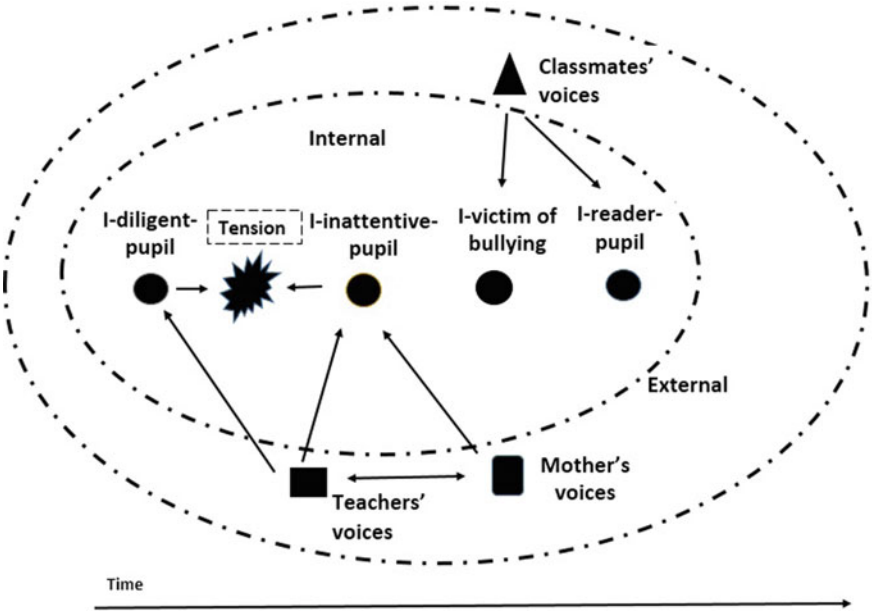

Fig. 1 Representation of Vitor's educational self in primary school II (Adapted from Hermans, 2001, p. 253)

With these contributions from the voice of the mathematics teacher, the voice of the I-diligent-pupil Position became even more resonant (Hermans, 2001).

Another point worth noting is the constant tension between the I-diligent-pupil Position and the I-inattentive-pupil one. The former was an important resource in making him feel like a good pupil. The latter, in the end, destabilized the I-diligent-pupil Position, since, however, diligent he was, his lack of attention became a complaint from his teachers and mother and made him feel like a pupil who had difficulties learning.

We should also important note that he confessed that during primary school he did not like this teacher, however, he now considered her to be a great teacher. He understood that his perception of this teacher had changed over the years and believed that the other pupils' perceptions did too.

> At the time, the pupils didn't like her, but if you asked them today… I think Ana would be their favourite.

> O aluno na época não gostava dela, mas hoje se você perguntar pra um aluno… acho que a preferida dele ia ser Ana.

It is interesting to see the change in Vitor's perception of this teacher over time. He and his classmates didn't like the way of the frequent and harsh demands made by the teacher. In the first school years, being a demanding teacher, always holding

her pupils to task, was a reason not to like this teacher and not to establish a positive relationship with her, since they did not understand the reason for her demands.

Vitor understood that his perception of this teacher, as well as that of the other pupils, had changed over the school years. Now he understood that the teacher performed her role correctly, by being demanding and strict with the pupils; in the end, he perceived that her demands in the initial years contributed to shaping the pupil he was now.

As Marsico and Iannacone (2012) assert, it is through personal perceptions and assessments that teacher discourse becomes relevant to the definition of the pupils' educational self. This process of semiotic mediation, whereby, because of Vitor's relationship with this teacher, he agreed with her assessments (such as the one in which she considered him to be diligent), allowed for the development of his educational self. For Santos and Gomes (2010), one of the pathways for innovation of the self is through a reconfiguration of the hierarchy of I Positions. Some of the readjustments to the I-diligent-pupil Position, which made it a more accessible and dominant Position, occurred in the mathematics teacher's classes, through her personal assessments and her strict demands of Vitor.

Remaining within the simulation activity, Vitor was asked about a possible teacher who he would not want the researcher to meet and talk to, with Vitor as the central topic of conversation. Vitor asserted that there were no teachers this applied to, since he liked all his teachers and considered them all to be good professionals. For him, in general, teachers judge their pupils very sincerely and accurately. The teachers' assessments of him have also been externalized by Vitor and coincide with his own assessment of himself: he defined and was defined by the teachers as an inattentive pupil, 'switched off', albeit diligent and committed.

Secondary Education

When he passed from year 8 to the first year of secondary school, Vitor moved to another school and experienced the rupture of separation from his friends. His closest friends went to a different school and he ended up feeling alone in a school environment with new teachers and classmates and different teaching methods. The rupture experienced by Vitor came about because at the new school he could no longer rely on friends he had known for many years, in particular on one of his friends with whom he had previously agreed to study at the same school.

The rupture Vitor suffered because of the separation from his closest classmates was accentuated by the fact that he continued to experience bullying at the new school. Nicknames triggered feelings of sadness and rage. The main symbolic resource Vitor found to overcome this moment of discontinuity and return to a sense of continuity was using the feeling of indifference in order to externalize to his classmates that the nicknames did not trouble him. He discarded the possibility of using resources from the external environment, such as help from teachers or other classmates, since he believed that this would attract further attacks.

This school's routine was exhausting for Vitor, since time spent at school was heavily focused on study. One example was its system to prepare pupils for university entrance, a selection process that occurs at the end of secondary school and involves all pupils who want to go on to Higher Education. Brazilian universities offer a certain number of places and the results of the university entrance exam determine which pupils will enter university. Throughout the academic year, Vitor participated in school exams similar to this entrance exam. All the pupils' exam results were ranked, published and displayed on the school walls.

> I was never in the top 100, but there were lots of pupils, about 300. I ranked 120… I was an average student and there were good ones.
>
> Eu nunca ficava entre os 100, mas eram muitos alunos, uns 300. Eu ficava em 120… eu era um aluno médio lá e tinha os bons.

In this school, Vitor was considered to be a regular pupil, located in an intermediary position, between the group of 'good pupils', who had scores above him, and the pupils whose performance was worse than his.

However, his transition into this school was not an easy one. His mother enrolled him in a state-funded school because his grades at his previous school were low; she did not want him to fail the year and wanted to take advantage of the fact that the level required at state-funded schools in terms of grades is usually lower than at private ones. Nevertheless, it was thought that it would be hard for Vitor to pass. However, at the end of the first year of secondary school, after sitting three final exams, he did pass. In the second year of secondary school, Vitor again had to attend the end of year recovery classes. In previous, similar situations, he attributed his poor performance to himself; this time, however, he blamed the Portuguese teacher, with whom he had a less secure relationship.

> … because he was always getting at the pupils. No one liked him.
>
> …porque ele pega muito no pé dos alunos. Ninguém gosta dele.

According to Vitor, this teacher had a habit of assessing the pupils' performance based on value judgements, in other words, on strictly personal rather than rational criteria, ignoring the pupil's merit or acquired knowledge. Despite admitting that he had not been very dedicated to his studies, he understood this teacher to have persecuted him.

Vitor confirmed that in this, his final year of secondary school, he was more dedicated to his studies. He had difficulties in physics and mathematics, however he was catching up and taking supplementary classes in the afternoons with another teacher. He admitted that initially, he did not like his current school, but that over time he began to construct a good relationship with the entire class.

Now at the end of the third year, Vitor understood that the teacher-pupil relationship can (and does) go beyond the teaching-learning process. This relationship may contain affective elements that bring teachers and pupils closer together.

> [the teacher] isn't here only to teach. Although I have had teachers who only teach… they can be the pupil's friend. They help, they are good teachers.

> [o professor] não tá aqui só pra ensinar. Apesar de eu ter tido professores só pra ensinar… pode ser amigo do aluno. Eles ajudam, são bons professores.

Vitor was once again invited to participate in the simulation and cited the primary school mathematics teacher. Although he knew the question was directed at secondary school, he wanted to stress that, in fact, she was important for his school life.

> … it was when I learnt the most mathematics in my entire life. I am studying mathematics because of her.

> …foi quando eu aprendi mais matemática em toda a minha vida. Eu estudo matemática por causa dela.

Vitor credits this primary school teacher, who demanded so much from him and his classmates, with overcoming his deficiencies in mathematics, which affected his entire school life. He then mentioned some of his secondary school teachers. Questioned as to how these teachers were important in shaping him, Vitor asserted that they motivated him, even when his academic achievements were below average.

> … they motivated me the most. They never let me lower my head, not even when I got bad grades. They said: study, study so you can do it next time. They never discouraged their pupils.

> …eram os que mais me incentivava. Eles nunca deixava eu baixar a cabeça, nem quando eu tirava uma nota meio baixa. Eles falavam: estudem, estudem que você consegue na próxima. Nunca desanimava o aluno.

Within the same simulation, Vitor was asked to imagine how some of these teachers would describe him. He confirmed that these particular teachers would say that he was '*inattentive, talkative, but they would say I was diligent*'. He agreed with these possible teacher voices and, once again, being diligent was a mark of his educational self, as he defined when, at a certain point, he compared himself with a classmate from the first year of secondary school who, in his opinion, was more intelligent.

In the second part of the simulation, Vitor chose a Portuguese teacher, the one who almost failed him in the second year of secondary school, because he thought Vitor had certain defects. When asked how this teacher would describe him, Vitor asserted that he would call him '*lazy*'.

Vitor rejected this teacher's evaluation of his performance and stated that, although his grades were below target, he was diligent. The I-diligent-pupil as a dominant Position in his educational self was opposed to and rejected the voice that defined him as a lazy pupil, who did not make an effort. For Vitor, this teacher did not only not recognize his efforts, but did not perceive those of his other classmates.

Teacher Participation in His Imagined Future

Vitor sought to gain good grades in the university selection process. A year before, he decided to study dentistry and was aware that he had his family's support, independent

of his choice of course. In relation to this interest, Vitor said that it came from within him, based on what he liked.

> … I want to be a dentist, because I like it, I think it's great. The teachers, nobody has ever come up to me and said: be a dentist, it's great, it's good. It's an interest that came from within me.

> …eu quero ser odontólogo porque eu gosto, eu acho bonito. Os professores, ninguém nunca chegou pra mim e falou: queira ser dentista que é bonito, é bom. É um interesse que surgiu de mim mesmo.

However, knowing that he had his family's support has made Vitor more confident of this decision.

Although these words suggest that the teachers did not directly participate in his immediate future or his choice of course, they were role models for Vitor. Given the adverse situation in Brazilian education, the teachers take to the streets to demand their rights and those of the school. The teachers' active attitude, demanding better salaries and working conditions, have motivated Vitor to seek the knowledge not only to be a better pupil, but also, and mainly, to have an active attitude to life.

> [seeing the teachers protesting] makes me want to learn more. I'm not a great pupil, but this motivates me. Like, it makes me want to be someone in life.

> [ao ver os professores protestando] dá mais vontade de aprender. Eu não sou ótimo aluno, mas isso me incentiva. Tipo, faz eu querer ser alguém na vida.

The teachers' choices are reference points, since, through their example, the teachers demonstrate what path he could follow and what he could be. According to Vitor, 'fighting for an ideal' is having dreams and fulfilling them. In his view, most of the teachers motivate and believe in their pupils' potential. Teachers who are concerned about pupils, who participate in demonstrations and strikes in order to demand the rights of pupils and teachers, teachers who make an effort, were and are role models for Vitor, points of reference for what he is and what he desires to be. In the end, despite the devaluing of the profession and the low salaries, the teachers are committed, particularly to the pupils.

> I would like, maybe one day, to make the same effort. There are several ways of doing this. We can learn and teach. Only it means liking what you do. Doing it with love. Not only for the money.

> Eu fico querendo um dia, talvez, proporcionar o mesmo esforço. Tem várias formas de passar isso. A gente pode aprender e ensinar. Só é gostar do que você faz. Fazer com amor. Não só pelo dinheiro.

In this context, for Vitor, being someone in life, means fulfilling yourself professionally, working in an area for love rather than for financial return. It also means making an effort and transmitting this effort so as to motivate others.

Final Considerations

The aim of this work was to understand, through a microanalysis, the level of participation of teacher voices in the dynamic of the participant's educational self. The use of memory research and semi-structured interviews with simulations was significant, since it allowed us to explore Vitor's school trajectory more profoundly. Based on the most significant events and the main social relationships highlighted by the participant, it was possible to understand how Vitor's educational self was constituted. Adding 'simulations' to the interview enabled us to understand some of the dynamic of the educational self, focusing on the participation of the voices of his most significant teachers, in both positive and negative relational aspects. The reports Vitor gave during the simulation allowed us to find out, more directly, about the teachers voices and how these voices resonated in the dynamic of his educational self throughout his school trajectory.

The importance of studying the school trajectory lies precisely in this accompaniment of the constant movements in the educational self's dynamic, continually analysing the various modes of teacher participation over the school years. In Vitor's case, we are talking of a pupil who underwent several ruptures throughout his school trajectory, some normative, such as his transference from one school to another, some non-normative, such as being the target of bullying. It was a self whose dynamic is centred on the I-diligent-pupil Position. Vitor experienced the tensions between the I-diligent-pupil and the I-inattentive-pupil Positions. He recognized that he had more intelligent classmates, but he stood out for his dedication to his studies, which he considered worthy of great merit. However, he was an easily distracted pupil and little things could divert his attention.

It is therefore important that the educational self is understood not only in the present moment, but also as something mobile, constructed over the subject's life, which guides their future. The educational self is involved in internal and external voices that guide and participate in the pupil's plans and choices. Teacher voices, through their evaluations of his performance as pupil, in their motivating words or guidance, have helped Vitor to think about his desired future and to make decisions in order to achieve his goals.

Vitor considered the best teachers to be those who were constantly demanding of their pupils. He did not value less demanding teachers. He had plans to enter university; however, the I-indecisive was a dominant Position in his self, referring to his indecision and frequent changes in choices. Throughout his trajectory, Vitor has reframed his relationship with teachers. Although he now valued teachers who demanded a great deal from their pupils, he did not always frame it in this way. His primary school mathematics teacher, who he currently saw as a model teacher, was not previously regarded in this way. Vitor did not like her for precisely that reason: she was an 'annoying' teacher, who demanded too much from her pupils. This reframing illustrates the flexibility of the educational self, in terms of sense of self and understanding of others.

One aspect that could be more closely investigated is the participation of classmate voices in the constitution of the educational self. This work placed greater emphasis on relationships with teachers, while other studies have discussed the importance of family and other adults in the development of the educational self. However, research aimed at studying peers may increase our understanding of the phenomenon by taking into consideration the role of classmates in the development of the educational self.

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Walking in a Book: Teacher Professional Identity Between Psychology and Culture

Anna Maria De Bonis and Luca Tateo

Teacher Professional Identity and the Life Context

The teacher is a member of a community. She is integrated in a network of relationships that have contributed to the construction of her professional identity. In return, the unique way in which a teacher contributes to the life of her community is orienting the way her students elaborate their personal version of the community's culture. This is, especially, evident in some contexts such as small villages, in which the teacher has been living for a long time, first growing up as a child and then working as an educator. The study we describe in this chapter attempts to understand, through a creative methodological approach, the process of construction of teacher professional identity in relationship with the construction of educational self in the cultural-historical context of a small rural community.

The elaboration of teacher professional identity (TPI) is a complex intertwinement of biographical and cultural dimensions with practices (Ligorio and Tateo, 2008; Tateo, 2012). But such an elaboration does not only take place with the effort of the teacher herself. The genesis of TPI is indeed a long and elaborate process, that unfolds over time (Legrottaglie & Ligorio, 2017) and across different contexts, in between educational institutions, the community, and fields of experience (De Luca Picione & Freda, 2014; Marsico, Cabell, Valsiner & Kharlamov, 2013). In TPI research, the focus is usually on the relationship between the teacher as an individual in a restricted professional community (Beauchamp and Thomas, 2009; Johnson, Down, Le Cornu, Peters, Sullivan, Pearce & Hunter, 2015). It looks like the relationship between the

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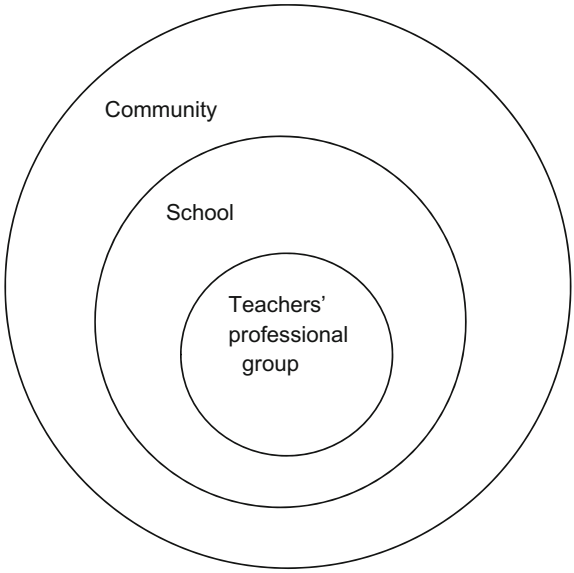

Fig. 1 Teachers and community

teacher and the community at large has been structured as a concentric configuration of contexts, in which the educational institution plays a mediation (Fig. 1).

What actually happens in everyday practices is instead a continuous physical and symbolic migration of the teacher between different contexts, that contributes to the elaboration of TPI, requiring a focus on the professional identity *within* and *in between* the different contexts (Ligorio and Tateo, 2008; Marsico et al., 2013). TPI, as a matter of fact, is constituted along a trajectory that includes past experiences, the community culture, the family relationships, and the education. In the same way, this network of relationships and roles (e.g., the teacher can be a parent, a member of community organizations, etc.) develops over time, thanks to the significant others and the different experiences that the teacher could meet moving through these contexts (Fig. 2). The teacher is nor *beyond* neither *outside* the community culture, she is *part of* that very culture (Boulanger, 2017).

This complex dynamic movement between contexts is particularly evident in a small community, where often the teacher spends a significant part of her life, first as a student, then as a citizen or parent, and finally as a teacher. In the local context, often cohabit different generations, including the teacher's figures of reference in the process of her education, such as her former school teachers, who play a role in the elaboration of the teacher self and, as we will argue, also in the elaboration of the TPI. In order to understand the process of meaning-making that links the teacher personal experience to the life context, we need to introduce a concept that can mediate in the construction of meaning: the educational self.

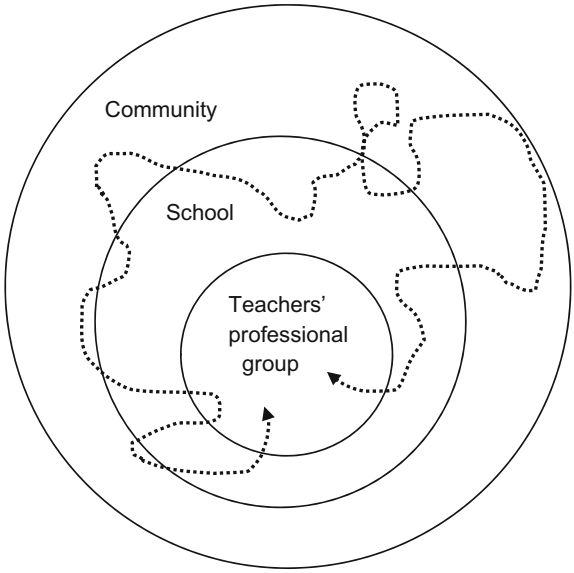

Fig. 2 Trajectories between contexts

Teacher Professional Identity and Educational Self

The construct of *educational self* (ES) is a theoretical tool, first outlined by Iannaccone, Marsico, and Tateo (2013), to account for the role of educational experiences in the construction and elaboration of the Self. The ES is not strictly a topological concept, is not a *part* or a *place* in the person's Self, where educational experiences are somehow stored. The ES can be rather understood as a specific dimension of internalization and externalization of "emotional experiences" (Vygotsky, 1994), with a special focus on those meaningful experiences unfolding in the person-context system that we usually call "education".

For the great majority of the people, spending many years at young age in institutionalized educational contexts is a common experience. Whether it is in a kindergarten, in a school, in a madras, in a boy scout group, in a sports team, and people growing up in contemporary societies have experienced these contexts. This has, of course, enormous implications in the construction and elaboration of Self since the early age. The concept of ES is an attempt to capture this process by stressing how the discourses taking place in the educational context are providing the child with a complex repertoire of symbolic resources for the definition of her own self.

Though the contemporary discourse on education is stressing the relevance of performance, skill, and competences (Tateo, 2012, 2018), the whole system of talks in education is actually about the child's Self, in other words, everyday talks at school "determines a discursive overlap" (Iannaccone, Marsico & Tateo, 2013, p. 230) that shifts from the assessment of the performance to the assessment of the person. Teacher's feedback is a very relevant part of the educational process (Carvalho,

Martins, Santana & Feliciano, 2014), but such feedback has a different influence on the developing self the child according to the different stages of development and her degree of awareness and understanding (Vygotsky, 1994). Have you ever cried, felt shame or inadequacy for the teacher's feedback on a failed test? Have you ever been proud when your teacher was telling your parents that you were a diligent student? How the child represents in herself the meaning of these experiences? How these everyday experiences are contributing to the construction of the Self?

Polyphony of Educational Contexts

The concept of ES is based on the idea that the set of adults' discourses about the child provide a wide repertoire of Self's definitions that the student internalizes from the very early age elaborating her own meaning. Utterances like "You are a good boy", "You are a sociable girl", "You are not mathematically inclined", or "You are intelligent but lazy" that are so common in school everyday discourse are nothing but suggestions for the definition of child's Self that she has to negotiate and make sense (Fig. 3).

These messages are characterized by a certain degree of ambivalence (Tateo, 2015). They interact with the child's own sense of Self, producing a complex negotiation (internalization) in which some of them will be later used by the child to talk about herself and enacted in primarily in the educational context (externalization). Some messages will be eventually ignored, refused, or partially modified. In any case, these definitions are not only about the child's Self at present, but, most important, they provide suggestions and directions for the developmental trajectory. Any educational intervention is made on the horizon of an imagined child (Tateo, 2015): a child yet-to-be.

School context is full of contradictory and ambivalent suggestions about what the child *is*, what *is not*, what *she should become* or *become not*. Discourses about

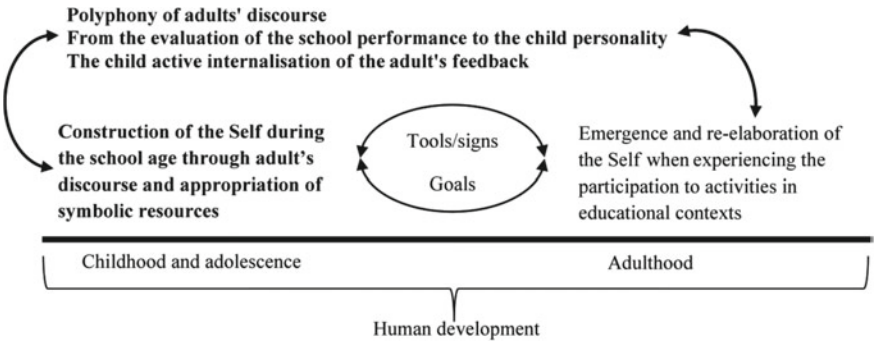

Fig. 3 The construction and elaboration of ES (Iannaccone et al., 2013, p. 228)

gender roles, flair and talent, attitude, and sociability flourish in adults' discourse of teachers and parents (Iannaccone et al., 2013; Tateo, 2015, 2018), but also in the role models suggested by media and toy or fashion industry. They constitute a polyphony of voices, that suggest different directions to the Self's development, depending for instance on the different cultural contexts (De Luca Picione & Freda, 2014). Ambivalence and contradiction are the rules in these kinds of messages, rather than the exception (Tateo, 2015). For instance, we as pupils can be requested to be obedient to authority, to behave well, but at the same time to become independent and critical, to be collaborative if they are girls but also competitive. Our teacher can tell us that education is the most important value, but just outside the school, our parents or group of peers can think differently, that making money is the best. The actual way in which polyphonic adults' discourses interact with the child's Self is still an open question. It must be understood in a genetic and developmental way: "One and the same event occurring at different ages of the child, is reflected in his consciousness in a completely different manner and has an entirely different meaning for the child" (Vygotsky, 1994, p. 344). The construct of ES is an initial attempt to grasp such a complexity, so that both environmental suggestions and personal characteristics can be taken into account to understand how the emotional experience is contributing to the elaboration of child's Self throughout development.

Yet what happens to ES when the person grows up? In which way this internalized repertoire of symbolic resources, adults' voices, possible trajectories, and ambivalent messages can play a role in the adult's life? The ES hypothesis claims that adults would "activate the educational self—that is, what has been defined here as the self-regulatory instance of the self formed during the dialogical interaction in educational contexts—to make sense of the school experience of the child as a pupil but also of their own experience as parents or teachers" (Iannaccone et al. 2013, p. 246). For instance, the definition of TPI is a process of elaboration of biographical, cultural, and practical dimensions. Making sense of everyday school activities requires the externalization of symbolic resources elaborated in the ES. "These activities require the recourse to the symbolic system of autobiographical and social knowledge related to their personal educational experience." (Iannaccone et al., 2013, p. 246) In the study presented here, we will try for the first time to account for this process of internalization and externalization through the first-person teachers' biographical accounts.

The Context of the Study

An unique field for the study of the relationship between ES and TPI are offered by the case of a small rural community, in which the authors were able to analyze the life trajectory of some teachers from their school days to their present job condition within the community context. The study has been conducted in the small village of

Fig. 4 Two primary school geography textbooks (on the left a text dating the 1960s and on the right a contemporary text from the 2010s)

Pietrana,[1] with a population of around 4000, in the South Italian region of Basilicata. Traditionally, this type or rural community was characterized by a dense network of personal and kinship relationships. Young people used to help their families in the agricultural activities. The largest villages had a small rural school, including one or few classrooms of primary education and, in some cases, a middle school. After completion of mandatory education, children had in case to commute to a next larger village or town to attend the higher grades of education. Nowadays, the situation is not that different.[2] Secondary and higher education must be accomplished by moving to a bigger town, sometimes outside the region.

The experiences discussed by the participants in our study cover a period of several years. The teachers interviewed grew up in the rural culture of the 60s and 70s, an historical phase of huge changes in both the local society and the national educational system (Ginsborg, 2003). For this reason, the study must take into account different levels: the cultural-historical context, the practices and the individual experiencing, and the relationship between the levels. For instance, the participants' experience as students took place right after a relevant school reform at the end of the 50s, while

[1]The name of the place has been changed and the participants are identified by numbers for privacy reasons.

[2]According to the Italian Ministry of Education in 2016, in the Center-South Italy, where the study is carried out, the 36% of elementary schools are in areas of low urbanization rate, and the 56% is located in rural municipalities (MIUR, 2018).

their experience as teachers today is framed in a recent school reform that occurred in 2012. This cultural framework is related to both general and local systems of values, theories about the child's development and the meaning of education, the role of the school, the teacher and the parents, the relationship between school and society *out there*. This change are crystallized in practices and embodied in artifacts of the school (e.g., the syllabi, the lessons, the textbooks) (Fig. 4).[3]

The different kinds of resources mediate the process of elaboration and internalization of both the ES and the TPI, as well as the process of externalization that embodies ES and TPI, in products that the teacher and the student use in everyday activities. Such products constitute a set of symbolic resources far from being consistent and self-evident. On the contrary, they contain ambivalences. They require a complex work of meaning negotiation by the teachers and the students. For this sake, an articulated qualitative methodology has been applied to analyze the connections between those levels, trying to grasp the differences and similarities in the process of elaboration of the TPI at the different ages of our participants' life trajectory.

Participants and Methodology

The study has been conducted in the primary school of Pietrana that has only five classes of the first cycle (from the first to the fifth grade). Each class has two appointed teachers, divided according to the subjects taught: one person teaches literacy, history, civics, art, and gymnastic; and the other person teaches math, science, geography, technology, and music. There are also two additional teachers for religion and English, who are appointed part-time for all the grades.

The participants to the study are five women expert teachers of the primary school with different age and service's seniority (Table 1). They have been invited to participate in the study according to specific theoretical interests. First, they are somehow representative of the Italian primary school teacher's population, which is composed by the 90% of women aged between 40 and 50. Second, because they had different seniorities of service, and they were teaching different subjects in different grades. This allowed the researchers to obtain a better overview of the teachers in the school of Pietrana.

In order to fully address the complexity of the object of study, a specific methodology has been developed. When the participants have been invited, some textbooks of their childhood and some textbooks they are using at school today have been collected. The analysis of these books has been used to construct the themes for the interviews. Participants have been also asked to come the day of the interview with an object from their early school life, which has been used as initial trigger for the discussion, for instance, a picture (Fig. 5).

[3] All the pictures have been taken by the participants from their own private memories and are part of the data collected.

Table 1 Overview of the participants professional profiles

Teacher	Where she attended primary school	Years of service	What grade is teaching today	What subjects has been teaching
1	Salerno	19	First	Initially English. Nowadays, teaching literacy, history, civics, art, and gymnastic
2	Pietrana	30	Fifth	Initially English. Nowadays, teaching math, science, geography, technology, and music
3	Pietrana	31	Second	Teaching literacy, history, civics, art, and gymnastic
4	Pietrana	25	Third	Teaching math, science, geography, technology, and music
5	Pietrana	32	Fifth	Teaching literacy, history, civics, art, and gymnastic

Fig. 5 The girl circled in red is teacher N° 2 during her primary school years

In-depth interviews have been organized around two main axes: the life narrative and the comparison of the textbooks. The interview had also a tail end in which the technique of the "interview to the double" has been applied (Nicolini, 2009;

Oddone, Re & Briante, 1977). This specific interview technique, developed in the organizational and management context, allows to obtain specific information about the everyday practices, using the expedient of asking the participant, in this case, to imagine a situation in which she has to instruct a deputy novice teacher that must substitute them in their classroom. The five interviews took place in a room at the Pietrana primary school, have been video recorded and transcribed. The shorter was 13′30″ and the longest 33′45″.

The interviews have been analyzed by the two researchers looking for theoretically relevant themes and for the visible presence of the different voices. A discursive-interpretative analysis (Gabriel, 2017) has been performed with respect to role of educational self in three main themes that we explore in the study: (a) the mediation of school artifacts (e.g., textbooks); (b) the voice of the teacher in the construction of self; and (c) the repositioning of the self from student to teacher (e.g., old days *versus* today). For the sake of synthesis, for each of the themes, we will present and discuss one or two specimens.

The Mediation of School Artifacts

School is also made of objects. The artifacts are not just tools for the teaching/learning practices. They embody the values, the visions, and the guidance of a community towards the child to be. From a very early age, artifacts shape the children's sense of reality and the development of symbolic functions (Troseth, Casey, Lawver, Walker & Cole, 2007). Artifacts such as school textbooks, for instance, present some version of gender roles, relationship with the nature, with different cultures, ways of living together, models of family, national identity, etc. (Williams, 2014). In the earlier school grades, we tend to neutralize the social guidance of textbooks, maybe because they just look "childish". We instead decided to focus on a particular kind of artifact, widely used in elementary schools: the primary school textbook. As we will show with some examples, the affective relevance of those first books, make their message extremely important for the construction of the educational self.

In Fig. 6, is presented the cover of a textbook for the primary school grade 4 used during the 1960s.

From the choice of the text index, it is clearly visible the combination of the curriculum subjects (e.g., geography, history, religion, science, etc.). From the choice of the drawings is instead possible to grasp the value orientation and what are the models present to the children at that time. For instance, history is the history of wars: the soldier is an important figure. There is still a visible reference to the rural life. The religion presented is only the Catholic. The question would then be: what is the role played by this kind of artifact in the internalization of heterodialogue with adult voices; and how this internalized dialog would contribute to the elaboration of the educational self?

From the interview with teachers, it emerges to show the textbook was a powerful reference. One must for instance, consider that we interviewed persons grown up in

Fig. 6 Cover of a primary school textbooks on the month of October 1960

rural areas of South Italy in the 1960s. In that context, children did not easily have access to visual media. As the teacher 5 reminds in excerpt 1.

Excerpt 1 presents the affective, ethic, and epistemological value of the primary school textbook as precious object in itself. In the memory of the teacher, the textbook looks like an affective object, but also as a source of knowledge and future orientation. Such affective value, we argue, can contribute to strengthen the reliability of the adults' voices expressed through the textbook. In excerpt 2, for instance, teacher 3 compares her experience as a student to the children of today.

Excerpt 2 introduces two very interesting themes. The first one is the imaginative dimension ("the textbook was our:: dream"). It is directly related to the differences in style between old and new textbooks ("today (.) there are plenty (.) of stimuli in the books"). Two pages of primary school textbooks, in the 1960s (left) and in the 2000s (right):they describe the Basilicata region in South Italy.

Excerpt 1	
English translation	Original Italian
Teacher 5: that's true I do not have a nice memory of the elementary school but: <textbooks are a different matter> (.) those books have been my internet because:: they allowed me to: know and to daydream about the entire world (.) the pictures then (.) so beautiful that are imprinted in my mind (.) the books were something valuable for us to keep safe (.) because they were the only reference to learn as we did not have TV newspapers or novels	Insegnante 5: è vero che non ho un bel ricordo delle elementari in sé ma: <i testi sono un'altra cosa> (.) questi libri sono stati il mio internet perché:: mi hanno permesso di: conoscere e di fantasticare sul mondo intero (.) le immagini poi (.) bellissime che sono rimaste impresse nella mia mente (.) i libri erano per noi qualcosa di prezioso da tenere custodito (.) perché erano l'unico punto di riferimento per imparare visto che non avevamo televisione giornali o libri di narrativa

Excerpt 2	
English translation	Original Italian
Teacher 3: for us the textbook was our:: dream (.) we put all our dreams in the textbook in the reader (.) today (.) there are plenty (.) of stimuli in the books (.) there are many books (.) (.) sometimes: there is also a lot of dispersion (.) because the kid must be able (.) to select from the whole block of the books what's interesting for him and so I think that we used to have less (.) less material (.) however what we had we really examined it thoroughly to the impossible (0.3) books are lived ((*takes the textbook and shows how it is actually in a bad state*)) (.) one can see: broken rickety and full of scotch tape	Insegnante 3: per noi il libro di testo era il nostro:: sogno (.) noi mettevamo dentro tutti i nostri sogni nel sussidiario nel libro di lettura (.) oggi (.) ce ne sono tanti (.) di stimoli sui libri (.) tanti sono i libri (.) a volte: c'è anche tanta dispersione (.) perché il bambino deve essere capace (.) di selezionare da tutto il blocco dei libri ciò che gli interessa e quindi ritengo che noi probabilmente avevamo meno (.) meno materiale (.) però quello che avevamo veramente lo svisceravamo fino all'impossibile (0.3) i libri sono vissuti ((*prende il sussidiario e mostra come effettivamente é ridotto*)) (.) si vede sono: rotti sgangherati pieni di scotch

One can actually see how the old books, despite being for elementary school kids, where basically full of text (Fig. 7 left). The new ones are filled with more images and the text boxes are reduced and already organize the text in units of meaning (Fig. 7 right). The teacher in excerpt 2 seems to suggest that the old style of textbook supported at least three different cognitive-emotional processes: imaginative work, in-depth appropriation of meaning, and affective relationship with the object. On the other hand, the new books seem to support independent thinking and instrumentality of knowledge. Besides, the textbook seemed to be the only authoritative source, together with the teacher, from which the child could build her image of the world. Nowadays, sources are multiplied and fragmented, the child is required to be a knowledge builder and assembler. The authority of school sources is constantly challenged and complemented by other voices.

Fig. 7 The page about Basilicata region's geography in a primary school textbook of the 1960s (left) and in one from the 2000s (right)

The Repositioning of the Self from Student to Teacher

The life trajectory, that marked also the relationship with the artifacts, is another relevant theme emerging from the teachers' accounts. We have chosen this particular group of teacher because they share a similar life trajectory. They have grown up and have been educated in Pietrana during the 1960s and the 1970s and then, they have returned later as teachers to work in the same village. The period of time during which the participants had their school experience was the time of an important historical transition in the South of Italy (Ginsborg, 2003). The traditional rural culture of the inland like the Basilicata was slowly but clearly opening to the larger social phenomena that where affecting the whole country, including the internal migration due to the process of industrialization and urbanization. As a specimen, we present three moments of the interview to participant number 3.

We have claimed that the trajectory of the teacher is a complex dynamic movement between contexts is particularly evident in a small community like Pietrana (see Fig. 2). In the excerpt 3 below, we begin with presenting the family life at the time of her primary school and the system of values characterizing that rural culture.

In that rural culture, everyone used to work. Adults and youngsters where in the farming tasks, while children and in case elders where contributing to the home tasks. The child used to learn by direct observation and participation to the community life,

Excerpt 3	
English translation	Original Italian
Teacher 3: we were invested with responsibility (.) my father was always out of home my mother because::: (.) our civilization: was based mainly on agricultural work (.) thus also my mother used to go to farm and I was: fully invested with responsibility of cooking and cleaning home (.) for the dinner that had to be ready at evenings: (.) when: all family members: came back home (.) study was not an optional was a<duty you should accomplish like the other duties>(.) so: we can say (.) the success of::: the commitment to school (.) was not a reward was not considered a reward was considered normality something you should STRIVE FOR AND THAT'S IT (.) without: not appealable	Insegnante 3: noi eravamo responsabilizzati … mio padre era sempre fuori casa mia madre comunque perché::: (.) la nostra civiltà: era fondata soprattutto sul lavoro agricolo (.) quindi anche mia mamma andava in campagna ed io ero: pienamente responsabilizzata per la cucina per la pulizia della casa (.) per: la cena che doveva essere pronta la sera: (.) al rientro: di tutti: i componenti della famiglia … lo studio non era un optional era un<dovere che dovevi condurre al pari degli altri doveri>(.) per cui: diciamo così (.) il successo delle:: dell'impegno scolastico (.) non era un premio non era considerato un premio era considerato una normalità una cosa a cui tu dovevi TENDERE E BASTA (.) senza: senza possibilità di appello

besides the school hours (Rogoff, 1993). The adults did not explain much, they mostly showed and let the children participate. This would imply a rapid achievement of autonomy in some field by the child.

In excerpt 3, the teacher reminds how the child was immersed in a system of values ("study was not an optional was a<duty you should accomplish like the other duties>") that was clearly internalized and explicit. The teacher presents the values as monological and not negotiable ("without: not appealable"). The system of values was also transferable to different domains of the child's life, from home tasks to school duties.

During the 1970s, Italy went through a process of deep social change (Ginsborg, 203). Society was characterized by many changes in the everyday life, including the job market, the use of technology, the mobility and the gender roles. The access of women to more advanced levels of education and the new laws against gender discrimination on the job determined an increasing participation of women to job market between the 1970s and the 1980s. Although these changes were slower in the Southern rural areas, during this period women reconsidered their identity. Ever since, the common values established that women should be well-mannered but not educated and that women's vocation was family and not study. In excerpt 4, the teacher describes a turning point in her life trajectory.

The participant stresses the importance of an educational choice that leads to an increasing autonomy. In the context of South Italy of those years, the quest for study and job is of course also a striving for emancipation. All the participants discuss their own experience in that moment of change of values and ideals that characterized the modernization process of Italy. Those values were, of course, different from the rural culture of their childhood. The teachers had to negotiate the meaning of their choices and their identities, not without ambivalences ("budget to use for my::: if I may say

Excerpt 4	
English translation	Original Italian
Teacher 3: my purpose was to graduate in: European Languages (.) but (.) I was eager to: (0.2) work to own: (0.2) something of my own (0.3) a: small: (.) budget to use for my::: if I may say so needs ((*smiles*)) that at our times it was not so: so normal to have (.) so (0.2) there was:::: the opportunity to participate to a job selection (.) for which I was qualified (.) I began to be called the first year for a day of temporary teaching job	Insegnante 3: la mia intenzione la mia volontà era: di conseguire una Laurea: in Lingue: Europee (.) però (.) avevo tanta voglia di: (0.2) lavorare per possedere: (0.2) qualcosa di mio (0.3) un: piccolo: (.) budget da sfruttare per le mie::: diciamo così necessità ((sorride)) che ai nostri tempi non era poi: tanto normale avere (.) per cui (0.2) c'è stata::::: la possibilità di partecipare ad un concorso (.) al quale sono risultata idonea (.) cominciai ad essere chiamata il primo anno per un giorno di supplenza

so needs ((*smiles*)) that at our times it was not so: so normal to have "), as indicated by the number of pauses and the smile in excerpt 4, the teacher still somehow makes an effort to conjugate her decisions with some internalized value constraint (Tateo, 2018).

How powerful is the role of internalized values developed during the school years is clearly presented in excerpt 5, where the participant talks about her own school teacher.

Excerpt 5	
English translation	Original Italian
Teacher 3: the family (0.3) used to delegate to the school completely (.) the education (.) and: I used to feel inside me this rebel spirit (.) but: I didn't dare to (.) oppose the teacher (.) as long as:: I knew that:: at home>what the teacher did<was (.)<unquestionable>(.) was 200% approved (.) so (.) was a suffering that: I use to keep inside myself and that I still carry inside myself	Insegnante 3: la famiglia (0.3) delegava alla scuola completamente (.) l'istruzione () e: sentivo dentro di me questo spirito ribelle (.) però: non osavo (.) contrappormi al maestro (.) in quanto:: sapevo che:: in casa>ciò che faceva il maestro<era (.)<intoccabile>(.) era condiviso al 200% (.) per cui (.) era una sofferenza che: tenevo dentro e che ancora porto dentro

In excerpt 5, we can notice three interesting elements. First of all, the connection between contexts: family, school and community values operate in coordination. Second, the role of the teacher as authority, which in a context of traditional values was equivalent to other authorities in the community. Third, we can observe again the element of ambivalence in the value message of the school. The teacher's self is not passively internalizing the position of the school authority. As we have argued in the theoretical construct of educational self, the parson is negotiating her own meaning between different definitions of self provided by the adults in the educational contexts. In the case of excerpt 5, we have a dialog between different positions (I-as a rebel), (I-as good family child), and (I-as good student). Interestingly, this ambivalence

continues throughout the teacher's life trajectory. In excerpt 4, we observed her striving for autonomy in the context of partial complying with her community values. In excerpt 5, we can observe how the "rebel" position is contained again by her adhesion to those values ("I still carry inside myself"). When we will discuss the current teacher's self, we will see a sort of *nostalgia* for those "good old times" in relation to a perceived crisis of the teacher's role in contemporary school. We will interpret this nostalgia as a form of reactivation of the educational self as internalized in the early school years.

The Voice of the Teacher in the Construction of Self

The last dimension we present is the teacher professional identity (TPI) in relation to the educational self. TPI is a complex construct in which biography, community, practices, organizational culture and values interact (Tateo, 2012). TPI is also a process of meaning construction, it is developed along the years and changes from novice to expert teachers. However, we want to ask what can be the role of educational self in the elaboration of TPI according to our data. Not surprisingly, all the participants refer to their previous experience as students. This is one of the tenets of the construct of educational self: it is formed during the years of school and it reactivates when the adult is participating in educational contexts. We present four different excerpts in which we can observe the negotiation of meaning between the model of teacher that our participants experienced and their current practice.

Excerpt 6	
English translation	Original Italian
Teacher 3: the figure of the teacher:: I see it:: as:::: a::: (0.6) a<adhesive>(.) a glue must have the capacity to:: (0.3)<discover (0.2) of:: to focus (0.2) to bind and to valorize>	Insegnante 3: la figura dell'insegnante:: io la vedo:: come:::: un::: (0.6) un<collante>(.) una colla vinavil deve avere la capacità di:: (0.3)<scoprire (0.2) di:: mettere a fuoco (0.2) di legare (0.2) e di valorizzare>

Excerpt 6 defines the teacher as a "glue", stressing the group dynamics and the guidance.

Excerpt 7	
English translation	Original Italian
Teacher 4: the teacher does almost not transmit just the knowledge anymore is a (.) facilitator (0.2) must be there to facilitate	Insegnante 4: ormai l'insegnante non trasmette solo più il sapere è un (.) facilitatore (0.2) deve stare lì per facilitare

Excerpt 7 defines the teacher as “facilitator”, which is the emerging view of the new orientation in pedagogical practices in the Italian school of the 2010s.

Excerpt 8	
English translation	Original Italian
Teacher 5: <the teacher for me> is the one who forms the mind (0.2) forms the personality and transmits knowledge (0.4) so::: with a single word:: I would say:::::: light	Insegnante 5: <l’insegnante per me> è colui che forma la mente (0.2) forma la personalità e trasmette saperi (0.4) quindi::: con una parola:: direi:::::: luce

Excerpt 8, instead, presents again a completely “romantic” view of the teacher as “light”, quite fitting with the description of the early school years in the small rural village.

The three excerpts represent different specimens of meaning-making process in which the teachers negotiate between their early school experience and their current TPI. The internalized voices of their own teachers do not play a deterministic role in the construction of the TPI, but represent an interlocutor, a partner of an autodialogue in the educational self. The outcome of this dialog can take different forms and lead to different outcomes, depending on the personal trajectory of the teacher in between the school and the community. What can be generalized is the process of a (inherently ambivalent) meaning negotiation as is it personally developed and socially guided, through the mediation of the educational self. As we will argue in the conclusions, this is why we can study teachers’ trajectories as unique life stories that appear similar.

Conclusion

In the study just presented, we have explored the construct of educational self in the narratives of five primary school teachers in a small rural village of South Italy. The life trajectories of the teachers were particularly interesting, because they have been studying in the local school, migrated to complete their education, and finally come back as teachers in the same village years later. We have analyzed their narratives looking for theoretically relevant themes and for the expression of the different adult voices. Then we have applied the educational self to understand the three main themes emerging in the study: (a) the mediation of school artifacts (e.g., textbooks); (b) the voice of the teacher in the construction of self; and (c) the repositioning of the self from student to teacher (e.g., old days *versus* today).

First, we have considered the role of the primary school textbook as an important artifact that mediates the internalization of social guidance, by providing different messages about the community system of values. In the words of the teachers, we were able to see how the mediation was not only cognitive, but also affective. The

textbook was experienced almost as a transitional object (Winnicott, 1953): his affective power contributed to facilitate the internalization of the adult voices representing traditional values.

The second theme was the life trajectory from student to teacher in the context of a general transition from rural to modern society. We could observe the dialog between different I-positions along the years, and how the teacher we followed negotiated by the different forms of self promoted or inhibited by the community system of values. It is a dilemmatic field (Tateo, 2015) that the teacher 5 could never completely solve, between her adhesion to traditional values and the process of woman emancipation. The teacher as a person lives somewhere in between the "rebel" and the "good child".

The third dimension we explored was the role of the former teachers in the construction of the current self. Each participant provided a slightly different definition of what a teacher should be. However, the elaboration of the current TPI cannot help negotiating with the internalized models of former teachers. The educational self represents an autodialogue between the "other in me" and my emerging selfhood. The construction of the personal meaning is not an easy task, neither is deterministic internalization of social influences. As we will show in the last excerpt presented, it can be a very complex and ambivalent process.

Excerpt 9	
English translation	Original Italian
Interviewer: how did you decide to be a teacher? Teacher 5: well (.) here the story is peculiar (.) it has been a desire: that I had since I was a child (0.2) considering the not very happy experience I did during elementary school (.) as I mentioned at the beginning of the interview (0.2) I strongly wanted it because I wanted to give to the kids all the things that was denied to me (.) smiles friendship serenity and:: above all (.) a good basic education ((*she is definitely not showing sadness while talking*))	Intervistatrice: come mai ha deciso di fare l'insegnante? Insegnante 5: beh (.) qui la storia è particolare (.) è stato un desiderio che: ho avuto fin da piccola (0.2) vista l'esperienza poco felice che ho fatto durante le elementari (.) come le accennavo all'inizio dell'intervista (0.2) l'ho voluto fortemente perché volevo dare ai bambini tutto quello che era stato negato a me (.) sorrisi amicizia serenità e:: soprattutto (.) una buona preparazione di base ((*non ne parla assolutamente con tristezza*))

In the excerpt 9, we can see the tormented process of meaning negotiation that such a meaningful choice implies. Teacher 5 reminds her experience as primary school pupil with a mix of nostalgia and discomfort ("not very happy experience"). This apparently negative experience is somehow related to her ideal of teacher as "light" (excerpt 8). In this case, seems like the educational self has elaborated a negotiation between bad experiences, desire, values, and future orientations which is quite unique. The interviewer has annotated that her apparently sad memory was not expressed with sadness, and her vocational choice was made after a bad experience at school.

This last specimen, shows how there are not a unique trajectory to become a teacher, as well as there is no social determinism in the vocational choice. We have

chosen to study a local context like Pietrana because we thought that the relationship between contexts were more easily visible. Nowadays, the role and the status of the primary school teacher has undergone deep changes affecting the dialogical dynamics in classroom (Ligorio & César, 2013), and the relationships between contexts like family and school) (Marsico, 2013).

The teachers in Pietrana narrate about their trajectory in between context that can be very different both diachronically and synchronically. The rural civilization of the 1960s in which they grew up and were educated is significantly different from the one they are currently experiencing as teachers. At the same time, the community they have been studying and working represents a form of continuity which emerges in their accounts. On the other hand, the role of the teacher has dramatically changed over time, from a position of omniscient and powerful educator, she has become a figure among the many who provide guidance and knowledge to children in a complex society with different education agencies.

Hopefully, we have been able to claim the relevance of an instance of meaning mediation, in this case, the educational self, in the elaboration of the adult's teacher TPI, that originates in the very early school experiences and that helps the person navigating the intercontextuality, the complexities and the ambivalences inherent to any educational experience.

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The Production of School Complaints in a Public School: Meanings and Practices

Eliseu de Oliveira Cunha, Maria Virgínia Machado Dazzani, Polyana Monteiro Luttigards and Saulo Roger Moniz Pacheco Lima

In the educational setting, there is a growing trend of elaborating demands regarding the difficulties and problems experienced by students in the schooling process, the phenomena known as school complaints. On one side are the parents, teachers, and educational administrators, who formulate the disability; on the other side are healthcare professionals, such as psychologists, psychiatrists, and neurologists, to whom they are referred to resolve the deadlocks that disrupt the school routine. At the center of this attention are students, whose ways of learning and behaving clash with teacher expectations. The teachers consequently proceed to suspect possible disorders that would compromise the student's academic performance and demand a specialized treatment for the student.

In the production of school complaints, a historical bottleneck, characterized by the shortsighted approach of the vicissitudes of the educational field, has been preserved. On the etiological plane, this tendency is illustrated by the individualization of the cause of educational problems, which would come from biological or intrapsychic variables (Moysés, 1998; Souza, 2007) and which would be the fault of the family, whose deficient cultural and economic reality undermines the child's academic journey (Patto, 1996; Nogueira & Abreu, 2004). Allied with this paradigm, much of the attention to school complaints has been focused on the student, exhibiting a clinical character decontextualized from intervention, according to a medical–physicalist norm (Cabral & Sawaya, 2001; Neves & Marinho-Araújo, 2006).

In the scientific literature, this reductionist approach to understanding school issues predominated for a long period of time. However, between the 1980s and the 1990s, a critical view of educational phenomena began to be constructed in Brazil, which led to the emergence of several studies that denounced the failure of the then-prevailing approach (Scortegagna and Levandowski, 2004). The discourse that established a necessary relationship among schooling disorders, the family context

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and the individual characteristics of the subject came to be questioned along with the academic training and performance of health professionals, such as psychologists, relative to school demands (Patto, 1996; Machado, 1997; Moysés, 1998).

The theoretical current that took shape argued for the need to consider the historical, social, institutional, and political-economic context that circumscribes school events, a nuance that is essential for a broader and more coherent understanding that, historically, had been neglected, given the biological and psychological ideology then in vogue (Souza, 2005). Nevertheless, the biological and individual dimensions were not discarded in the understanding of the learning process, but their explanatory powers and the pedagogical and social consequences of the discourse based exclusively on this model were called into question.

In the recent literature on school complaints, there is a massive predominance of this critical vein, as Dazzani, Cunha, Luttigards, Zucoloto, and Santos (2014) found in their literature review on this topic. More than half of the studies found to exhibit a sociohistorical and critical perspective in their theoretical framework, anchored, for instance, in the postulates of L. S. Vigotski concerning human development from a historica—cultural perspective. The studies also warn of the centrality of maintaining a comprehensive and insightful view of the phenomenon, inviting us to rethink the implications of placing sole responsibility on the students and their parents and to contemplate the influence of the school and society in the question.

However, the same study notes that "such a trend is not seen in the care of school complaints, which exhibit, mainly, a clinical and decontextualized model, with little or no contact with the school" (Dazzani et al., 2014). It is clear, therefore, that there is a mismatch between the prevailing theoretical–conceptual system for addressing educational issues, which exhibits a historical-critical bias, and the practices that permeate the day-to-day care services for school complaints, which perpetuate a historical legacy of individualizing the issue.

Many of the professionals who attend to school complaints do not keep contact with the school and are thus unaware of the institutional context to which the student finds him or herself linked. This issue was examined in the studies of Araújo (2006), which found that only 18.3% of psychologists worked together with teachers; Braga and Morais (2007), which found that in only 1% of the cases of referral for school complaints was the teacher interviewed; Marçal (2005), which found that only 25% of professionals considered it important to contact the school; and Marçal and Silva (2006), which found that 97.3% of psychologists never entered into contact with the school. In this last study, 90% of the psychologists interviewed complained about the lack of appropriate education and training for the care of school complaints in the public service sector.

It is evident that the individualizing and reductionist trend, which is opposed to the growing critical and progressive literature, appears at both poles in the production of school complaints: the causes of school deadlocks are located only in the individual, and the work is performed only with the individual. This dynamic ends up masking other factors that shape the phenomenon, such as the school and pedagogical activity itself, and it entails the removal of teachers from involvement in the educational care of "deviant" students, the responsibility for which is then transferred to healthcare

professionals. Thus, if it is an individual and/or familial question, what responsibility would the teacher have? Furthermore, what necessity would the healthcare professional have of establishing a partnership with a school for a more qualified treatment? The ramifications of this logic of lack of responsibility and outsourcing provoke a close examination.

Accordingly, the objective of the present study is to analyze the dynamic of the production of school complaints in a public school in the municipal school system in the city of Salvador, the capital of Bahia, Brazil. The different actors involved in this process are considered opportunistically to uncover the various elements that surround and intersect it.

Methodology

Parents of students attending a public school in the municipal school system of Salvador, in addition to teachers, administrators, and other staff, were invited to participate in this investigation. To elicit these actors' ideas concerning school complaints, meetings were organized in which the focus group technique was used. In this approach, it is assumed that all the discourse offered represents the group rather than each individual. It is widely used as a strategy for qualitative group investigation to understand how social perceptions, attitudes, and representations are constructed (Gondim, 2002).

Materials and Instruments

For data collection, two semi-structured scripts of questions were used, in addition to audio recorders. Before the start of the focus group, an Informed Consent Form was presented to and signed by all participants.

Procedure

Two separate focus groups were scheduled and held, in accordance with the target audience: the first consisted of 10 teachers, one librarian, and one administrator; the second consisted of one father and eight mothers of students. At each meeting, one mediator, two reporters, and two observers were present. Chairs were organized into a circle in a large room, where the participants dispersed themselves. After the explanation of the focus group's objective, each participant introduced him or herself. At the end of the introductions, the focus groups began and were audio-recorded, transcribed in their entirety, organized by categories of analysis, and finally compared to the literature.

Results and Discussion

From the discourse of the parents group and the education professionals group, six categories were drafted, by means of which the nuances of the production of school complaints could be elucidated. These nuances included the following: (I) the public policy of educational inclusion and its dimensions; (II) deviations from the norm: suspicions, assumptions, and complaints from educators; (III) the lack of training and support: the anxiety generated in addressing difference; (IV) the demands for diagnosis and its vicissitudes; (V) between referrals and pedagogical possibilities; and (VI) the implication of the family in the academic life of students.

(I) The Public Policy of Educational Inclusion and Its Dimensions

Since the promulgation of the 1994 Declaration of Salamanca, public policies aimed at inclusion have been taking the forms that we see today in Brazil. In this declaration, the "commitment to Education for All, recognizing the necessity and urgency of providing education for children, youth and adults with special educational needs within the regular education system" (ONU 1994, p. 1) is reaffirmed. In Brazil, such definitions have culminated in the new Law of Guidelines and Bases of Education (Brasil, 1996), in which the inclusion of special students is provided for, preferably in regular schools.

Nevertheless, the right to enrollment in public schools was not accompanied by the necessary changes to ensure effective inclusion, which cannot be achieved without proper preparation of the school and its professionals for the acceptance of and respect for differences. This nuance echoes the findings of Sant'Ana (2005): for the teachers and administrators she interviewed, "sharing the same physical space" was the notion most linked to the concept of inclusive education, which proves problematic because inclusion is not limited to the mere aggregation of school space. Accordingly, the educators we interviewed complained: "that which exists today within education is a… you pretend that it is inclusive and I pretend that I believe that you are including […] We are living […] in an absolutely *fake* universe regarding inclusion. Inclusion does not exist in the educational environment".

The educators noted, still, a homogenizing perspective of the public policies themselves, which contrasts with the proposals for inclusion. They criticized the application of a national exam to map schooling and the fact that, even with diagnostics, the children did not receive differentiated tests or special conditions in which to take the exam: "he could not see because of poor vision. The secretary knows […], the Ministry of Education knows that he is special because it is contained in the census. And he needs a different activity […] but the test was not different".

Another situation concerned to learning milestones. The educational professionals related that the milestones outlined by their municipality's secretariat of education

stipulate, for each age group, a specific learning challenge. However, the implementation of an inclusive proposal in the schools should be based on the understanding that each child has his or her own time and method of learning. However, to what extent do the milestones fail to indicate a normative path of learning, and how is this lack reflected in the practice of teachers? The determinations of the high-level education agencies produce a number of obligations for teachers, which may generate expectations that impact their dealings with students: "We, the Ministry of Education (Ministério da Educação—MEC), the entire world wants the child to read and write by the age of 8" (Educators). The mismatch of these expectations may lead to frustration for the teachers.

Despite stressing the benefits of socialization that educational inclusion promotes, the educators believe that the reach of their actions relative to special developmental situations is limited. They report the desire to actualize their educational role: "We do not want to be alone in this caring space. We want to do something with them". The content expressed in this passage reflects teachers' commitment and interest, although the lack of preparation to assist those special cases is acknowledged. Martins (2006) notes that the demand for training to educate "special" children, especially with regard to psychopathological aspects, is increasing. Thus, the author argues for an educational act derived from the appreciation of pedagogical knowledge and what is known about the student. The knowledge of the child, more than knowledge of the diagnostic category that accompanies him or her, should be valued to promote inclusion and education in the classroom.

(II) Deviations from the Norm: Suspicions, Assumptions, and Complaints from Educators

The educational professionals interviewed evoked a series of suspicions, assumptions, and doubts concerning children who do not learn and/or exhibit development different from the standard, formulating diagnostic assumptions based on apparent physical, cognitive, emotional, neurological, and motor deficiencies (Marçal and Silva, 2006). The following statement exemplified the discourse of the educational professionals group interviewed: "You look at them and you see […] that some child has a problem […] He or she has cerebral palsy, […] autism […] some problem of … cognition, who knows, of behavior, or learning […] silly".

The creation of diagnoses from the school was denounced long ago in the literature. Collares and Moysés (1994) noted that children referred by schools to health services almost always came with a ready diagnosis. The words of the aforementioned educational professionals elucidated this point. In addition to the paralyzing effect that the creation of these diagnoses generated in schooling, this phenomenon, called medicalization, ultimately created a stigma for the child for whom the diagnosis was made. The term "medicalization" is understood as the process by which questions of a social nature are conceived as problems of a medical or biological

nature (Collares and Moysés, 1994). Mannino (1988, cited by Guarido, 2007) noted that the pathologization of school failure involved making recourse to medicine to respond where education has failed, an outsourcing of pedagogical care.

In their discourse, the educators almost always resorted to biological or psychological explanations that would justify students' lack of learning but ignored the institutional, historical, social, and political-economic dimensions that underlie this phenomenon. Thus, the pedagogical dimension of non-learning ended up not being reviewed (Bray and Leonardo, 2011; Nakamura, Lima, Tada, & Junqueira, 2008; Scortegagna & Levandowski, 2004; Souza, 2005).

The suspicions and assumptions raised by the educators refer to the "normal versus abnormal" duality. Conceptions of normality and abnormality guide social practices; in schools, the situation is no different. Starting from a policy of inclusion established by law, the school is called to reflect on these notions, with the purpose of promoting the inclusion of all. This reflection seems to be made at a slow pace in the educational context, as alluded to by the education professionals: "The behavior begins deviating from the expected […] As much as we do not want to create a standard, you do expect […] a behavior […] at that time […], and she very much distances herself […] and you realize that there is something different there, which must be investigated".

The parents interviewed stressed the role of the school as a space for socialization and leisure, in addition to the educative dimension. They believed that, due to urban violence and the shortage of places to play, recreation and physical education at school should constitute periods in which children could interact and expend energy. However, they noted that these moments were controlled and repressed:

> If it is at school that the child was playing, it is forbidden to do this, it is forbidden to do that, it is difficult. And likewise the children state: "ah, because it is very annoying […] we cannot do anything! We cannot even breathe without them on top of us, marking it! If it is recreation time, we have to play! We cannot play, we have to sit". (Parents)

The controlling bias of the educational institution is brought up as a complaint and explanation by the parents for the restlessness of children in the classroom. On this issue, Arendt (1992, p. 236) notes that modern education, "which boasts of taking into consideration the intimate natures of the child and his or her needs, becomes that which, in the way that it establishes itself in a world of children, destroys the necessary conditions for development and growth".

(III) Lack of Training and Support: The Anxiety Generated in Addressing Difference

Araújo (2006) stresses that teachers have not been trained to work with students with special needs. This causes difficulties in communication between teachers and students, as well as in the teaching and learning process, resulting in a sense of powerlessness and inability to address such situations—"I do not know how to work

with him […] I do not know how to do anything with him […] Many people do not know what to do" (Educators).

The lack of knowledge concerning the specificity of the students was identified as being responsible for requiring the teacher to pursue a dual task: teaching and providing special care. Owing to this accumulation of work, educational professionals complained of physical and mental overload:

> We end up getting sick, you know? […] We leave here with tired shoulders, you know, powerless, with profound anguish, because we do not know what to do, […] I am carrying a burden because it is not that we reject, it is not that we exclude, that's not it, but, since… […] we need support, you know, so that we can be good and healthy, to be able to deal with these differences.

These statements point to the anxiety experienced by educators in addressing differences in the classroom and the demands they generate, which may contribute to discomfort regarding inclusion (Melo & Ferreira, 2009). It is worth highlighting, nonetheless, that the lack of knowledge is not used by the educators interviewed as a justification to exempt themselves from pedagogical labor—"We try […] we do 'on the log, on the log' […] We act on intuition". Therefore, the teachers, who lack specific knowledge concerning the difficulties and differences, do not clearly evaluate these attempts and fear that they are adopting ineffective practices—"We do not know if we were trying something correct".

It is evident, in the discourse of the educational professionals, that they are attentive to the needs of children with learning disabilities, and they reiterate the importance of training and continuing education to attend to this diversity that arises in the educational milieu—"I wanted to talk only of the training issue, […] for me, it is essential. To be always in training to try to see, to help minimize those disabilities, and when we learn to do it differently, I think that we help the student to learn". Sanchez (2005 cited by Melo & Ferreira, 2009) argues that inclusive education is a question of human rights, but it is not easy to operationalize. Inclusive education requires changes in the processes of educational administration, in the training of teachers, and in the methodologies used so that activities are developed that can respond to the needs of every student.

The importance of continuing education for teachers is recognized by both the group and the literature (Dazzani et al. 2014; Guarinello, Berberian, Santana, Massi, & Paula 2006; Leonardo, Bray, & Rossato, 2009). Nonetheless, the educators emphasize the scarce initiative demonstrated by those responsible for educational administration in terms of promoting the training of teachers to meet this increasing demand of students arriving at school: "We do not have training […] there is no preparation". By contrast, the group of educators indicates a positive experience, a government-provided training course: "For me […] it has been quite useful, because I was then able to… understand, see my students, whom I thought I was segregating, whom I was… and I am, I think still, but with a better view".

Moreover, the educators cited another problem, the lack of partnership with and support from other professionals with specialized knowledge to satisfy the demands of these students. Referring to the visit by a psychologist—who attended to a so-called

special student—to the school, the group revealed the frustration of expectations for expert support:

> I went crazy: "There, now she will tell me how, more or less, I will lead this". Then, she arrives and said no, that she came to listen: "Ah, I came to hear what you have done" […] "But I spent the entire year waiting for you, you have come here now to listen to me?" […] because I was expecting something from you, for you teach me what it is… what I should I do to help her improve. (Educators)

For the group, it is necessary to strengthen the relationship between the school and the other child-care services to assist pedagogical action and reduce the anxiety created by the lack of assistance. Specific knowledge related to the difficulties of each student and partnership with other professionals appear as prominent aspects for the adoption of teaching strategies that focus on student potential, not student limitations.

(IV) The Demands for Diagnosis and Its Vicissitudes

An important aspect in the formulation and production of school complaints is the demand for diagnosis. Together with the increasing proliferation of diagnoses and their medicalization, this demand demonstrates that the cause of such problems is still attributed to the student, he or she being the focus of attention and intervention. Among the reasons listed, the biological ones stand out, as the educators illustrate: "When you know he has a problem, even if he seems normal, you say, no, he is not because he has a little something there in his little brain that does not connect and that causes him to not understand".

Collares (1994) notes that the biologicalization of social issues exempts the social system from responsibility and assigns blame to the child. The pathologization of the teaching–learning process ultimately legitimizes the stigmatization of those who do not follow the scholarly *script* and who wander through the health system until being diagnosed. Moreover, the educators note two important consequences: the reduction of the teacher's expectations of that student and the benevolence that, from then, on affects his or her scholarly trajectory, which makes the diagnostic classification a watershed in the subject's journey: "The teacher's relationship with this student changes, changes in the sense of you seeing him or her differently […], you becoming more benevolent […] When you know that that child is special […], you no longer demand […] what you would demand if you did not know".

Notwithstanding, a counterpoint to these ideas should be made, above all, when problems exist whose specifics go beyond the expertise of the teacher. Through diagnosis, he or she can aim to fill the gaps in his or her training to meet the specific needs of such students—"Identification is not to stigmatize that child but to give a direction for us ourselves. It is good to know how far you can go with the student and how far you can go, and what you cannot demand from him or her".

It is worth noting, however, that the majority of diagnostic hypotheses proposed by teachers are not confirmed when they reach child-care services (Psychosocial Care

Centers, psychology clinics, psychopedagogy, etc.), as found in the study by Collares (1994), because a school complaint is the product of a combination of psychological, social, economic, and cultural aspects that intersect with the school.

The proposal of these diagnostic suspicions may be wrapped in the idea that certain children are unable to enjoy what the school offers, which ultimately generates the pathologization that marks the contemporary setting. The challenge, then, is to modify the school's structure so that it can adapt to the reality of human diversity rather than to invest in standardization practices or the elimination of difference.

(V) Between Referrals and Pedagogical Possibilities

Faced with students whose scholastic trajectories move away from the established road map devised by the school, two large dimensions summarize the types of reactions of teachers. First, there is an implication and a commitment of the teacher to find pedagogical exits to the deadlocks instituted by student diversity. The diversification of didactic strategies is one of the options listed—"I always made different activities because I see differences in the classroom […] I made different activities […], you know, for my students to advance"—as well as the use of artistic language—"I work with art, […] I believe it is the most rapid route to […] create a link with a child who has difficulties […], art travels along roads that can strengthen this relationship a bit" (Educators).

The educators group demonstrated a massive rejection of withdrawal and educational inertia in the face of difference, despite their difficulties addressing it: "We have to unfold ourselves in a thousand ways to try to account for these others because we cannot leave them there, we cannot fail". In the case of a student with adverse behavior, the choice was made to persist with his integration into the daily class routine—"We tried, you know, to involve him in every way in activities … Once, I took him to a museum", an insistence analogous to that involving another student who had difficulties accepting rules and with memorization—"I tried to impose limits, he […] began to obey some procedures […] I tried to work, to give him reinforcement, to see if he could learn something, he even began to, you know, memorize some letters".

Such statements signal the caring and transforming power of pedagogical action and why it is important for the teacher to bet on and to invest in so-called "problematic" students so that new turns move their scholastic trajectory along. This chorus is endorsed by the parental group, who brought up a student who, according to them, "was a problem child in school" and who was given up on in previous schools. However, in the current school, there is a full-on investment in a successful transformation: "[He] was encouraged by the school. He was already kicked out of two other schools, and in this one it was the opposite. His teacher […] did not abandon him. She prepares a thousand things, she leads the conversation […] it is not so, […] thus he cannot, he is brought back to reality, and he is another child".

On the other extreme, the second mode of reaction to difference is marked by the misunderstanding and irresponsibility of teachers, who are considered incompetent to deal appropriately with "deviant" children. Additionally, they assume that other professionals are better able to treat these subjects: "We do not have the training to stimulate the child properly […] We cannot make his or her learning advance […] As we do not have this ability, we make referrals".

These statements reveal the mechanism of disempowerment of the educational discourse, which, according to Aquino (1997) culminates in the weakening of pedagogical specificity. By delegating the educative care of the student to other specialists, the teacher is evicted from the domain of his or her actions and placed at the mercy of something that, to him or her, is unknown. "Shaped by this new reality, the teacher and student become strangers in their own land" (p. 92). A counterpoint to the author's ideas may be drawn from the discourse of the educational professionals interviewed, who explain the importance of specialization in addressing difference: "We are having to develop duties in which it is necessary to study hard […] and there are people who are specialized in this […] and we are having to cope […], without knowing where we are going or what we are really doing there".

By valuing and requesting the help of specialists to treat "special" students, the statement ends up denouncing a constitutive failure of the educational system, the inability to work with diversity and to effect inclusion. Because teacher training is focused on and the school is structured for the standard student, educating "deviant" students requires two main outputs, according to the interviewed educators. First, there is more training, long and specific, that would enable the teacher to teach these students fairly with respect to their differences and specificities. Second, there is referral to healthcare professionals who, acting on these idiosyncrasies, would try to neutralize them or minimize their effects on the learning and the activity of the "special" student to approximate, as much as possible, the model student to which the school is accustomed.

The healthcare professionals would receive, then, the duty of treating suspected disorders, many of which are merely deviations from the educational standard, without morbidity, which exposes a tendency to pathologize issues pertaining to the educational and social realm (Bernardes, 2008). This is not to deny the existence of disturbances or to belittle the role of the healthcare professionals who attend to school complaints because many represent predicted problems that lead to actual education losses for the student. In the parental group, two examples of necessary referrals were brought up, one for a speech–language pathologist for a child with speaking difficulties and another for an ophthalmologist for a boy with a visual impairment that impeded his ability to see the chalkboard clearly.

What is being questioned here is the trivialization of referrals in the production of school complaints, a simple solution to a challenge from which educators have historically fled: the teaching of "special" and "deviant" children. Perhaps it is more convenient to adopt a pathologizing bias than to challenge the structural points of a standardizing and exclusive educational system that rejects difference and, in so doing, rejects the human condition.

(VI) The Implication of the Family in the Academic Life of Students

In the production of school complaints, the family occupies a prominent place because it is the first body to which the school goes to complain of problems exhibited by students and to suggest referrals to healthcare professionals. The problem, for the educators interviewed, is that the family often does not accept the recommendation:

> There is a denial […] when they get a follow-up, some refuse, they do not go […] The family does not understand […] They do not accept it, they hide and take no steps […] Sometimes, the family also abandons, they do not want to continue the treatment […] They lie a lot, that they took the child, that they were unable […] They greatly resist referrals.

The fragments in question echo the considerations of Oliveira and Marinho-Araújo (2010), according to which the school maintains a vertical and prescriptive stance toward the family, requiring from the family the prompt fulfilment of the tasks that the school considers important for student learning but without demonstrating sensitivity to the reality of the parents. Assuming its locus of power, the school makes a demand when it could have been an invitation. It judges what it considers foolish resistance when it could have been disposed to listen and to care. By wanting to teach how to act instead of maintaining a horizontal dialog, the school fails to establish an effective partnership with the family, confirming, therefore, the asymmetric nature of this relationship.

It is worth underlining that not only does the teacher report the disability to the family but also the teacher includes it in the range of factors responsible for the setbacks according to which the disability is formulated. The family, therefore, would contribute to poor student performance in school for a number of reasons, ranging from issues related to pregnancy—"Everything started from the mother's womb […] The mother […] gave birth very young and it looks like a case of neglect"—to a hostile domestic environment—"He said that […] the father pressed his mother against the wall […] I do not know if this created some blockage"—to a dysfunctional domestic environment—"From this, I see a dysfunctional family"—to divorce—"It could be a family issue, of the parents being separated, of him experiencing all this, but it affects him in school". In the face of this, according to the educators, "It is difficult to enjoy studying, to enjoy learning, because it is not easy".

Some of these hypotheses concerning the negative impact of the family in the schooling of children stem from the theory of cultural difference. This theory, according to Patto (1992), maintains that children of lower class origins would come from lesser cultures, delayed social environments, and pathological family configurations that would obstruct the development of the skills and competencies necessary for good performance in school. The school is identified with the middle-class nuclear family, which leads to an estrangement of other familial arrangements, which are judged and blamed for the problems exhibited by students. Noting that the school receives individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds but adopts only one cultural model, that of the "ideal" or cultured family, Carvalho (2004) warns that this is not the reality of most Brazilian families and calls on the school to revise its paradigms,

taking into account socioeconomic differences and the cultural diversity that it welcomes.

Advancing in the wake of the criticisms made by educational professionals to the students' families, the negligence, and disinterest of parents or guardians in the school life of their children was often evoked, as the following excerpt illustrates:

> I also perceive this lack of care at home, of watching and giving an education […] The father comes and says, "Do not send any more homework because I cannot do it" […] When I call the parents, […] "Do not call me anymore, I do not want to be bothered" […], he runs away, he hides […] She rose to read, and I said, read at home for your parents, "They do not even want to listen" […] They do not have any help […] It is negligence.

Facing this challenge, the educational professionals question how to promote achievement without partnership with the parents—"How is it that […] this child will achieve? […] How are we going to help this child if the parents do not appear to help?" On the other hand, the parents interviewed explain the low involvement with their children's school tasks by citing lack of time and exhaustion due to their jobs: "Our time is more for work than anything we do […] There are many people who sometimes have no time to accompany their child […] I know it is wrong, we have to have time to be with him […], and sometimes it does not exist, there is no such time available".

Nonetheless, in the parental group, there were reports of approximation with their children's academic affairs—"I always do homework with her […] He asks me to help, he helps me too, right? Teaching him, I also learn". Thus, the tenets of Ribeiro and Andrade (2006), which point to a plurality of ways, varying from more participatory to more omissive postures, in which parents may be involved in the academic lives of their children, are endorsed.

Final Considerations

In general, the literature and the empirical data analyzed in this study demonstrate the tortuosity and the complexity of the terrain that circumscribes the production of school complaints. Although political and legal efforts and initiatives are being undertaken to promote educational inclusion and ensure its implementation, many educational professionals have been unable to work diversity into the classroom pedagogically. Complaining of a lack of training and support, many teachers, when faced with atypical or undesirable behavioral and learning styles, propose referring the "deviant" student to healthcare professionals, such as psychologists, psychiatrists, and neurologists.

Everything indicates that difference is not welcomed in the school because it generates discomfort (by demanding the rearrangement of the uniform and normative dynamic of the educational institution) and embarrassment (by calling out the impotence of the educators operating in the face of such differences). Perhaps we may locate the reason why educational inclusion only exists on the level of "make-believe", according to the educators interviewed, in the tension between, on one

hand, the school's legal obligation to accept the "special" or "deviant" student and, on the other hand, its structural inhibitions to educate him or her. In the reality that has permeated the everyday life of schools, there are the processes of the pathologicalization of difference and assigning blame to the different student and his or her family, which, according to Bernardes (2008) and Braga and Morais (2007), hinder the most important actions: the reformulation of pedagogical practices and the revision of the modus operandi of the educational organization.

In contrast to the pathologicalization, unaccountability, and outsourcing that are the basis for the production of school complaints today, it is worth betting on the empowerment of pedagogic discourse, its agents, its spaces, and its resources. Collares (1994) warns of the need for upgrading of the training of teachers so that they subvert the everyday educational structures that are at the root of the issues related to the disability. This implies overcoming the uniformity of pedagogical praxis and empowering teachers to effectively receive difference. Difference should no longer be a hindrance to the educational act; instead, it should become one of its main drivers, challenging the teacher to take alternative directions and undertake new pedagogical activities.

We recommend conducting further studies that expand the theoretical reference, increase reflection and debate concerning the issue, and guide academic training and professional practices regarding school complaints.

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Reflections on the Construction of the Educational Self from an Inclusive Experience with Educational Therapeutic Assistance

Verônica Gomes Nascimento and Yasmin Cunha de Oliveira

Introduction

The presented study intends to trace reflections on the Educational Self construction in the inclusive education process, the relationships which occur in this context and the roles that the children occupy in the school discourses. Thereunto, we propose to discuss, initially, about the place of this Inclusion in society. It is observed that social changes are happening in relation to the way of seeing and dealing with the difference, for if previously the odd was always the other (Cavanellas, 2000), which had generated discomfort and distress, raising a necessity of extermination since it threatened the welfare, the intrapsychic balance (Mena, 2000); nowadays, it is perceived that certain groups have obtained social achievements and have reached a thinking which reveals that the difference (the diversity) is in everyone, this being beneficial and component of human constitution (Sampaio & Sampaio, 2009).

It is in this context that the Inclusion of children with Special Educational Needs in regular schools has been finding an impulse to materialize itself, through movements and public politics. The present study refers to an inclusion experience of a student with Cerebral Palsy diagnosis in a regular school of private education of the city of Salvador (Bahia), in Brazil. The Brazilian reality currently ensures the enrollment of students with special educational needs in regular educational institutions and offers support through the Specialized Educational Attendance, as instituted in Presidential Decree No. 6.571 in September, 2008 (Brasil, 2008). Another strategy that has been usually used in private education network is the Educational Therapeutic Assistance

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(ETA) in the school, which rises with the goal of serving as bridge between the child and all the school system (the group of children, the teachers, the educators, the learning process), acting as an facilitator agent of the inclusion process.

This movement of assistance to students with special needs has been occurring in many ways in different contexts, but it is possible to observe some common elements. In France, for instance, the University Paris-Descartes proposed a Professional Licenciature to train accompaniers, being an experience in course since 2000 (Adrien, 2009). As well as observed in Brazil, such practice is geared toward those who have an initial formation in psychology or who have begun the graduation course with disciplines close to education and pedagogy sciences or related to health.

With a universitary formation of higher education, France proposed a step of recognizing as a profession the assistance of people with autism and persuasive developmental disorders. These professionals follow children and teenagers, with such diagnosis, in home, in the school, in high school, in college, in order to allow them to beneficiate from the schooling process, as well as the adults in the companies, to permit them exerting an occupation.

The assistants differ from the professionals called School Life Assistants (Auxiliaires de vie scolaire—AVS) because it is believed that the amount of these professionals is not enough to answer the current demand and, beyond that, they are insufficiently prepared to accompany children with psychopathologies and complex deficiencies. The AVS gives practical support to the physical environment, and not psychologic, educative, formator, as it should be the assistance done by a person graduated for such function (Adrien, 2009). The author observes that the assistance experience realized in Ile-de-France, Paris, since 2000, presents a notable success, both for families and for children.

Before that, the present study seeks to reflect on the process of inclusion of a child through Educational Therapeutic Assistance, with the aim of analyzing the construction of the Educational Self in this context. It interests to think on the voices circulating around the child in the inclusive process and the manner how this one situates him/herself on what he/she listens to, how he/she organizes actively his/her experience. Thus, the study finds space in the discussions about the inclusive strategies and shows its relevance as from the emergent necessity of greater reflections and observations on the school practice in what it refers to the promotion of the inclusion, considering the importance of a performance that works from the child's singularity and his/her relationships inside the school.

Difference: The Non-place, the Place of Segregation and a Social Place

The discussions around the difference have been directed, since some time, to a posture of ressignification of what this represents because it is known that the value attributed to it refers to a social, historical and political reading (Machado, Almeida,

& Saraiva, 2009). To ressignificate the difference, for these authors, talks about giving the real meaning to be described, and thus, known, spoken, and expressed.

However, it is known that the development of this way of thinking and dealing with the difference was built from the history and the changes in many knowledge fields. In ancient times, the existence of "selective" acts was common, which tried to separate the "different" from other citizens, and in ancient Greek the disabled/different/deviant were killed or abandoned, according to the historic moment (Mena, 2000). The discussion and reflection about the historical context is essential, seeing that our relation with the "difference" is linked to the historic-cultural change of how this individual is seen: as belonging to the society or excluded from it. They make part, therefore, of the values built and reproduced socially.

For Cavanellas (2000), there is a movement of the individual of attributing what is odd to the other, being the strangeness that what is different from yourself. This because, even distant, the strangeness discomforts and threatens, and this way makes impossible living together. Thus, the author points to the danger of the tyranny of the identical, which occurs when it is thought to be given to everyone, indiscriminately, what is proper of oneself. In other words, the attempt of making the equal accessible can generate the concealment of differences and reveals the difficulty that surrounds the society, in assuming the vulnerability, the imperfection, and the human incompleteness.

Machado et al. (2009) emphasize that where there is a segregationist practice in an attempt of domesticating what is not normal, the difference must be annulled. According to Mena (2000), the strangeness can generate a threat to the psychic and social "well-being", and thus, the negation of the difference represents a strategy to maintain the intrapsychic balance, since it eliminates the source of insecurity, danger, tension or anxiety.

In an attempt to cover and introduce practices that may involve the "differences", the political and educational projects begin to research ways to attend emerging demands. To Kupfer and Petri (2000), this movement represents a way that obliges the society, through the creation of inclusive laws, to reabsorb what had been cast out of school walls. Machado et al. (2009) point out that a society that is based on exclusion assumes a posture of defending inclusion as compensatory practice.

Thus, if before the disabled child was abandoned or even killed, from the nineteenth century becomes to be the object of study, to exist in categories (Kupfer & Petri, 2000). These categories were constructed and classified through medical knowledge and marked the place for the non-scholarly child, which established that such children remain, initially, at the school border—in special schools. The special classes for mentally disabled children were a creation of Binet (Kupfer & Petri, 2000). Interestingly, the special child settles from the beginning of schooling, wherein individual differences put by school standards are not so natural but have their origins in history (Kupfer, 2000).

Mena (2000) analyzes the construction of special education from two perspectives. If, on the one hand, thinks that is an achievement of society to try to ensure attendance for people who have difficulties to enjoy the regular educational process, seeking a sensitivity, and adaptation to individual differences and needs. On the other hand,

it can be seen as a practice of segregation, when analyzing its history around the legitimization of discrimination and the lack of preparation of the institutions to deal with the children in question.

It is evident, therefore, that children with difficulties in development are able to go out, first, of a non-place in society (nonexistent place for different) to a well-defined place—the non-scholarly children. This is still a space of segregation but guarantees a more specific attention. And from the movements and perspectives of inclusive education, such children begin to have a chance to circulate more in the social because the inclusion now represents a possibility for the individual being seen as potential, as a developing human being (Abenhaim, 2005). And besides, an active subject responsible for its process.

The Inclusive Education

Abenhaim (2005) shows that to discuss inclusion is important to understand the notion that the normal is found in diversity. According to Prieto (2005), the concept of diversity begins to strengthen and to be added to the Inclusive Education, being characterized as a human condition. And, besides that, it provides a benefit for all. Sampaio and Sampaio (2009) also discuss this question in approaching that diversity is beneficial and is part of the human constitution. And so, that creating more welcoming schools should have a direct relationship with this thought. The diversity brings a reflection of a human being with many possibilities of being subject, and also the notion that everyone can learn (Prieto, 2005).

Several political movements were settling in for the inclusive education, which enabled innovative directions, but at the same time revealed issues and conflicts for the whole process. The worldwide movement that stands out most happened in 1994 in Salamanca, Spain. There was the meeting of 92 governments and 25 international organizations at the World Conference on Special Needs Education, organized by UNESCO (United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization). The goal was to better analyze the proposal of education for all and explain the place and issues of people with Special Educational Needs (Abenhaim, 2005).

According to the United Nation Children's Fund (UNICEF 2007), it is important to differentiate inclusion from integration. The inclusion defended in the school context requires adjustments in school organization and in teaching methods. So, methods of adaptation and support to ensure that all children can study and work together has been discussed. In brazilian schools it is observed that still remains the discourse of integration rather than of inclusive education (Abenhaim, 2005). In the integration, there must be a preparation of the subject to be with others, and in the inclusion, there is a social effort to develop the potential of the subject, here seen as potentiality. To Sampaio and Sampaio (2009), the integration proposal creates an expectation that the deficient can become similar to non-disabled.

In Brazil, this inclusive movement, with Salamanca's Statement, reinforced the commitment to Education for All and emphasized the necessity of all people, includ-

ing those that have any Special Educational Need, being part of the ordinary education system (Abenhaim, 2005).

In the process of construction and preparation of these movements, there were many specialized schools, and gradually the society makes room for the inclusion in the regular education with the necessary support to promote the development of children. Currently, in Brazil, from Decree No. 6.571/2008 is offered the Specialized Educational Attendance to students with Special Educational Needs (Brasil, 2008). There are also regular schools that have worked with the inclusion using the student accompanying strategy (Educational Therapeutic Assistance), being conducted by a psychologist or even a teacher, aiming to promote social integration and learning (Mena, 2000).

There is a perspective that wages on the effects of inclusive education: the Therapeutic Education. The ideas and first interventions of Therapeutic Education come up with Maud Mannoni, a French psychoanalyst, when treatment and education are thought together, building a form of attendance for children with development issues (Kupfer, 1997). The Therapeutic Education, according to Mena (2000), is concerned with the conjecture and construction of the subject, being contrary to the practices of "training" seen in institutions for autistic, psychotic, and mentally disabled, seeing that they aim only to perform everyday tasks, like crossing the street, close the clothing button, and go to the bathroom.

Through experience, Mena (2000) realizes the importance of the elements constitutive of culture for the construction of subjectivity. Being through these that each one feels representative of society and recognizes the other as representative, and develops and describes what he calls "Symbolic Inclusion", which represents "the authorization and permission for the cultural elements be shared by all, and through this sharing, may be recognized as belonging, members and representatives of culture" (Mena, 2000, p. 38).

Following this perspective, the inclusive education goes beyond fulfilling political laws, of a political act because it also represents a possibility of developing subjective questions, ensuring and providing the places of social circulation and right of all. The purpose is not simply the child's entry into school, but that she does not leave it (Prieto, 2005).

Given what has been presented, it is possible to perceive that there are many issues that surround and cross the Inclusive Education. This shows the urgent need for careful discussions thought from different theoretical and practical perspectives, taking into consideration the child's needs. Discussions that go beyond the excluded bodies and point to the field of power where they were produced and to other fields of power that need to be created (Machado et al., 2009).

Thus, it is necessary to discuss also the educational system, the discourses of teachers, family, as well as in the individual level, the internalization of these discourses in the constitution of the subject and not just abide by the law. It is crucial to reflect on inclusive strategies adopted by schools, such as the Educational Therapeutic Assistance, but in order to consider the aspects involved in the inclusion process, as the relationships that are built within the educational context and the outspreads from them. And so, it is very important to analyze what adults and also children talk/

think about students with Special Educational Needs and how these discourses operate in the image that they can build on themselves within the school environment, representing the construction of the Educational Self.

Educational Self on the Inclusive Process

We propose in this chapter a reflection on the inclusive process of a student with special educational needs, who in his daily life beyond the usual school relationships with teachers, colleagues and other staff of the institution, had the presence of a professional from psychology that accompanied him in the school, intervening in his relationships, and educational processes. The intention is to analyze the school experiences, the relationships built in the school context and observe the voices that appear around the student. And so, how these aspects are intertwined in the construction of the Educational Self.

Marsico and Iannaccone (2012) define the Educational Self as a specific dimension of the Self, an emerging regulatory process regarding the experience of the relation of a I-Other in a specific context, the educative. According to Iannaccone, Marsico, and Tateo (2012), the Self can be considered as a dynamic organization of the different identities of the person. Connected the social experiences of the individual, these identities are constituted by an internalized set of meanings, knowledge, concepts, and beliefs linked to the role of the person within these social relations in a given context at a given time of his life.

Thus, the process of constitution of the Self appears initially as an interpersonal phenomenon. This understanding is essential to think the constitution of the subject because one of the assumptions of sociohistorical perspective is that all psychological function arises from the relationship between human beings, that is, first appears in children at the social level, then at the individual level (Vygotsky 1991, cited in Lordelo, 2011). The definition of self is expressed externally but internally experienced (Bakhtin 1986 cited in Iannaccone et al., 2012) and the internalization involves signs, as well as the voices of others expressing these signs. Therefore, the formation of the self is polyphonic and dialogic since its origins because it is related to the collective meaning, social judgment, and the culture to which the child belongs. (Iannaccone et al., 2012).

The Educational Self is the dimension of self that is built in the educational context, derived from an emerging regulatory process of the relation I-Other. This way of defining, although built in the school year, follows the life of the subject (Iannaccone, Marsico & Tateo, 2012) emerging, too, when the adult is reinserted in educational settings. Thus, the Educational Self is a specific part of the self that emerges from the dialogical interactions that occur in educational activities. It emerges when the person is involved with the educational system of activities during his/her life, whether as a student, teacher or family. In general, it is associated with the interactions and relationships that are established and experienced, by the student in the school context. These relationships offer, according to Zittoun (2006, cited by Mar-

sico & Iannaccone, 2012), values, role models, norms, symbolic repertoire, emotional experiences, knowledge, and practices. All these aspects are internalized as "voices", which will constitute a capital of symbolic resources in which the individual will situate him/herself (Marsico & Iannaccone, 2012).

Thus, the Educational Self involves two related aspects: the construction of the Self during the school age from the discourses of adults and the emergence of the Self when an adult interacts within an educational context (Iannaccone et al., 2012). From Markova (2006, cited by Iannaccone et al., 2012), the authors explain that the construction of the Educational Self is basically a dialogical process that happens at school age and involves multiple voices expressing different points of view, modulated by specific sets of beliefs and experiences of the actors.

Faced with this, the child or adolescent finds himself immersed within the educational context, in a field with multiple voices and discourses that characterize and define him/her. The interaction with others can contribute to defining what the person can be in the present and in the future through this experience of a dialogical and contractual space, where are offered different possibilities from the voices of adults and peers (Marsico & Iannaccone, 2012). The voices define the identity of the individual, what he/she is, what is not, what should be, what should not be, what would be, and what would not (Valsiner, 2007 cited Marsico & Iannaccone, 2012). However, the subject is not seen, before that, as passive in the process because it is called upon to negotiate, reject or accept the different possibilities of setting that are offered (Simao and Valsiner 2007 cited Marsico & Iannaccone, 2012). Thus, the child will build his own Educational Self through the process of active internalization and symbolic mediation and will activate it all the time in acts within the educational context during its development trajectory (Iannaccone et al., 2012).

It is observed that the Educational Self seems to be associated, more particularly, to adult discourse on children, especially by teachers and family. The authors working with this concept report researches and experiences about the meetings between parents, students, and teachers at the moment of the delivery of report cards, where the voices become visible and show different polyphonic configurations and can go into opposition, show different intonations/interpretations or overlappings. That is, the voices of teachers and family may be contrary, can interpret the same phenomenon in different ways or can agree on the child's characteristics (Marsico & Iannaccone, 2012).

The goal of this study is to discuss the self not only in the educational context but in an inclusive educational context. The proposal is to consider the construction of the Educational Self of children with Special Educational Needs. The intention is to raise possible questions and reflections on how the Educational Therapeutic Assistant also participates in the construction of the Educational Self of children who experience the inclusive education process. Thus, it interests us to analyze how the child's relations in the inclusive school settings happens from the active internalization of voices. And still thinking: what are the voices that appear in this process? How do they come? What impressions do they produce? What does the subject do with them? and considering that the Educational Self is a complex construct, we highlight

the dynamics of the voices of teachers, classmates, and the educational therapeutic assistant and his relationship in the self system.

Educational Therapeutic Assistance: An Inclusive Experience

The experience of the assistance took place in 2009, at a private school in the city of Salvador. The school has a political-pedagogical project geared to diversity, to the singularity of each child, and practices that lead to the construction of autonomy. It is an institution that works with early childhood education and elementary school and is characterized as constructivist. Constructivist school's principle is the understanding that learning is a process of construction of knowledge, which has no focus on the teacher or the teaching process, but on the child in their individual reflection and in their relationship with each other (Arias & Yera, 1996).

On the characteristics of the perspective adopted by each school, it is interesting to point out that Bruner (2001) draws our attention to the fact that an "official" educational enterprise cultivates beliefs, skills, and feelings in order to convey and explain the ways of interpreting the natural and social world of its patronized culture. As we will see later, it also has a key role in helping children to build and maintain a concept of Self, because in a way it patronizes, even if implicitly, a particular version of the world (Bruner, 2001). Thus, it should be relevant to highlight that besides promoting interpersonal relationships with peers and adults of the school routine, it is considered that the educational institution itself is the expression of a culture. The school transmits, reproduces, and cultivates knowledge, standards of conduct and beliefs based on the interpretation of the social and natural world of students (Iannaccone et al., 2012).

The goal of the described school, in wanting an assistant for a student with special educational needs, was to provide interventions that could be made in the group and through it. This is interesting because it demonstrates a concern with the relationships and reveals a thought that enlarges the perspective of inclusion to the characteristics and needs of the group as well. As Assali, Rizzo, Abbamonte, and Amâncio (1999) stand out, the assistance is carried out by a professional and refers to the Therapeutic Assistance work in school. They add that the term is borrowed from the practice of professionals who work with social reintegration of psychiatric patients, linked to the proposals of Mental Health institutions which follow the Anti-Asylum movement.

The Educational Therapeutic Assistance resembles the proposals of Therapeutic Education (Kupfer, 1997), described above since it articulates treating and educating. The therapeutic, thus, represents what is from the subject, from the singular, that needs to be seen and heard beyond the educational perspectives. In the presented experience, it is possible to perceive the Assistance as therapeutic too, for considering and embracing the notion of the subject. This subject is considered as active in relation to his own development process.

The accompanied child was 11 years old and attended a class of students with an average of 7 years, there were boys and girls in a similar proportion, and the genders did not mix much in everyday relationships, subgroups were perceived easily. Girls had more autonomy to verbalize and discuss their friendly relations, making thoughts flexible and practicing social rules. The boys had a little more difficulty to resolve their issues and often used hitting as a method of conflict resolution.

It was observed that there was a leading voice of one of the students, between boys, who organized and directed the others inside and outside the room, at the time of classes and recess. This leadership structured the group and from his discourse were dictated rules, permissions, relations, and so the other children did not have much doubt of what should be done. However, this generated a tension, since those who did not comply with the combined established "suffered" the threat of not being a friend to the leader, which meant not only a friendship breakup, represented the exclusion, no more having a definite place in the classroom. Thus, in exchange for remaining in the group, some submitted themselves to situations they did not like, and in many moments they felt inhibited from speaking their will, and only looked at the leader waiting an authorization.

It is interesting to observe, in this sense, that there already were inclusion and exclusion practices within the group and subgroups. Inclusion and exclusion that obeyed the rules created by the group itself, or perhaps only by the leader, which were not always communicated directly, only experienced in silence and with a certain suffering content. These Inclusion–Exclusion modes are not usually observed by the school and by political action because they refer to an analysis of the details, of what passes unnoticed by the institutions, of what looks like something from childhood (and still is), but it produces discriminatory practices and relationships, which also will constitute the subject and can be carried throughout his life.

Therefore, to observe the issues presented, it was necessary to be in the group, join, get involved with the process and school routine. Fraguas and Berlinck (2001) emphasize that the role of the Assistant consists in being with the child inside and outside the classroom, always seeking to integrate them to the group, aside from taking them to an involvement with the activities proposed by the teacher, observing and respecting their limits and their potentialities. Hence, he needs to work discovering the child's universe (Assali et al., 1999).

The student who had special educational needs, here characterized as Lucas,[1] occupied a seemingly indefinite place in the room. He had a peaceful relationship with the girls and transited through the group of boys because he was not considered belonging to the latter. In some situations, the boys played with him, but they headed the discourse to the offense. The voices that appeared, therefore, were to always emphasize what Lucas could not do. It was common for the boys to talk and repeat: "I do not understand anything he says!" (Sic). And this one, in turn, got involved in the game, often submitting to what they said and even reported to like when the boys strike him. Although it was noted that Lucas took a place of submission, the "will"

[1] Fictitious name used to preserve the identity of the student.

of the other in the beginning of the process, it is understood that while active subject this was the place and that was the possible relationship for Lucas in that moment.

The Assistant was realizing that some boys bothered themselves too much with Lucas, with the difference. What was strange to them, seemed to unease, threat and make impossible the coexistence, as analyzes Cavanellas (2000). There was a student who spoke little with Lucas, but when it was requested, presented expressions of anger. It is interesting to note that this discomfort seemed to increase at times when Lucas participated in the lesson and could answer right the questions or earned compliments from the girls and the teacher. It seemed to make no sense, for boys, that Lucas possessed great difficulties in speech, in writing, and on the move, needing clear adaptations, but could answer rightly certain questions and still gain the attention of girls and teacher. And for Lucas, in turn, there was a clash of those voices that spoke about him. Voices that were presented as antagonistic: on the one hand, the voices of the boys that offended him; and on the other, of the teacher and girls who praised him. The opposition is one of polyphonic configurations assumed by voices in the educational context, as shown by Marsico and Iannaccone (2012) in reporting the differences of perception about the student between school and family.

It is interesting to observe that within the educational context, Lucas finds himself in a field where multiple voices and discourses try to characterize him and define him. Are offered, from the voices of adults and peers, different possibilities that may contribute to a definition of whom he is or will be in the future (what he is, what he is not, what he should be, what he should not be, what he would be, and what he would not). The voices define his identity (Valsiner 2007 cited in Marsico & Iannaccone, 2012). And so, they articulate themselves and Lucas has the possibility to accept or reject them in a constant negotiation process that promotes a repositioning in relations and a change in the perception of himself (educational self). According to the idea of Iannaccone et al. (2012), the child would not be a passive subject, seeing that in this negotiation process there is an active internalization of voices.

Lucas had the diagnosis of cerebral palsy and had difficulty in speaking, in holding up saliva and also in relation to psychomotor aspects, which were mainly observed in writing and in physical activities. His comprehension and logical reasoning allowed him to develop his learning process, managing to build hypotheses and think more abstractly. He was 11 years old, the eldest of the group, which was characterized as another strangeness factor for the boys. Lucas's inclusion in Group 7 was an attempt to accompany his schooling process, giving more time for his acquisitions.

Thus, the discomforts of the boys in relation to Lucas passed by concrete issues related to the "slobber", by not understanding what he was talking, but also touched on more subjective questions, in what represented the difference and how he could, despite being "different", have a good performance. All this appeared as voices in the relations that Lucas established. Therefore, the Assistant works in these relations, in a place of the "between": between the child and the other children, between the child and the teacher, between the child and the school and, in some cases, between the child and the family. It is possible to use the concept of borders by Marsico (2013) to express the proceeding of this professional, who seeks to cross the borders of these space-people, standing in the "between", on the border zone. This is not a simple

space to stay, because as mediator of the child's relationship with the other (teacher, children, and school), any type of connection in school context interests and should be enhanced (Montellano et al., 2009). And so, it shows itself as fundamental for the Educational Therapeutic Assistance because it allows interventions to be performed in the relationship and covers the performances of all involved in the process.

There was a working partnership with Lucas's teacher, who shared ideas about the daily planning and perceptions of the group. It was observed that she could invest in Lucas's learning, introducing necessary adjustments to his process, allowing her time to be coherent with his singularity. But she could also support the same rules and requirements for Lucas, in what it refers to the relationship with colleagues and organization in the classroom. At sometimes, he wanted to talk a lot and the teacher gave the outline and necessary cuts in his speech. Besides, Lucas did not organize his materials and always fumbled at the time to search for them. The teacher punctuated and tried to help him, but called his attention when he went beyond and even seemed to enjoy himself with the fact. Thus, the voice of the teacher appeared as a support and incentive for Lucas's achievements, but also as a voice that calls for reflection and change in attitude.

The Assistant can take a function of active presence, initially, taking the place of interpreter and translator of several languages (of the child, the school, the family) (Montellano et al., 2009). On the experience with the Group 7, it is observed that the active presence happened to everyone, but there were more specific interventions with certain children, as the leader, as it is being characterized. He resisted to the approach of the Assistant, saying that he was not dumb to need her help. He tried not to relate to her and, at times, had offensive behavior, which was perceived by the Assistant, as a way to strike Lucas, since he always had the movement looking at him and expect his reaction. From this, the Assistant starts to question him about help, about the needs of all, about the boys. The child who first only resisted and offended seems, then, to begin to reflect on some aspects and passes to relate more to the Assistant and ask for help, in his manner.

With Lucas, there was an active, constant presence, at his request, which demanded attention to talk, exposing his anguish and tell jokes. Lucas talked about his history, his family, and his dreams. Also, he complained of the boys, the offenses and the frequent apologies that were not accompanied by changes in attitudes. In these conversations, the Assistant sought to shelter Lucas discomforts, but question him, too, about his attitudes toward the group and the children, as the issue of the saliva and disorganization of his materials. At this time, the Assistant, assuming this active presence, also represents a voice that attempts to promote reflection, observes the interactions and the outspreads of school experiences in the inclusive process and seeks to articulate the other voices (the teacher and peers) in order to cause changes in the relationships that are established in this context in a way that favors dialogue and repositioning of all involved.

Through various moments of conversation, Lucas began to realize that not only was he uncomfortable about the boys because the reverse was also true, he was also bothered by the uniform wet with saliva and his organization. Gradually, he began to think how he could endeavour and change, always showing up, and asking about his

progress. It is a process of constant attempts, at times he got tired and disorganized himself, but knowing he had been consciously responsible for his act.

The Assistant began to observe the soccer, at recess and realized that the leader ruled the whole game: who could play, in what position could remain, justifying it by being owner of the ball. Also, compared himself with the boys in perspective to degrade the other. He showed to want to change the game rules to benefit himself. With that, the Assistant introduces questions about the fact that the fouls just happen to him, when he falls, so he tries to score the goal. And also, she asks about the absence of teams, since all played against all, facilitating the control of one, the leader.

Lucas wanted to play the game, but the leader did not allow him to, and when he was "obligated" to allow, from the interventions of the teacher, he criticized him and the boys did not pass the ball. In this way, the Assistant gets to play with the group, and through the game, performs interventions, trying to insert the idea of teams, and the possibility of others to do the choice by their own teams. The aim was to decentralize the leader and give voice and place to the other boys. Interventions in this sense, are not characterized as teacher's guidelines or orders, but these were not as the complaints of the children. Therefore, the Assistant has an interesting place, since her speech does not come as something that should be followed. On the contrary, it can be denied, but it appears as something that mobilizes, produces marks, produces reflection, changes, and deconstructions of "roles" or "places" established in the group, for, from that, flexibilize them and think of other ways to occupy them.

After a few games, the jokes and insults toward Lucas continued but were no longer driven by the leader. The group seemed to do it by an internalization of the hostile attitude and looked at the leader as if waiting for something, but this one only approached. This revealed a change in the leader because he still participated in these moments, but not more actively. Another example is that in one of the soccer matches, Lucas perceived an injustice and while he explained to the Assistant, the boys defended the leader insistently, and this one did not outline a word.

In another match day, the Assistant suggests choosing teams and invite a student to start. He soon chooses the leader, who wanted to direct the other choices, but the Assistant says that he can only suggest because it is the other one who chooses. Here, already are configured the actions characterized as "little nothings", as posed by Montellano et al. (2009) because it begins the process of questioning and leaving the scene for children to experience themselves.

The "little nothings" are very important to the whole process, as it already becomes a direction for the construction of autonomy of those involved and a path to the exit of the Assistant. This one needs to be careful not to establish a practice that promotes a dependency of his performance. Hence, Montellano et al. (2009) highlight the "character of invisibility" fundamental to the Assistant. This means pointing to the other his functions, that is, to enable that each school actor assumes their role in the relation with the child and, moreover, that understands the relevance of this act. It is common that arise mistaken requests for the Assistant. The professional must be attentive not to occupy the seats demanded by the institution and be careful not to camouflage the institutional failures with his constant presence (Assali et al., 1999).

At the end of the year, it takes place in the last Assembly of the school year. This is a space for discussion of situations that the group liked, did not like and what children can propose. Its structure is composed of the President and two Secretaries. The President reads the lists ("like", "do not like" and "propose"), the First Secretary organizes the order of who wants to talk and the other annotates the proposals. The notes in the list occur throughout the week, and they can not write the names of colleagues who they want to talk about, just describe the situation. The school idea is to analyze the attitude and not the person.

There is a voting to choose the president and secretaries. Lucas already had applied a few times and was always very participative in the Assemblies, little heard by the group, but much by the teacher who was debating and analyzing the points that he raised. In this last Assembly, Lucas was chosen by the group as President and talked about the fact of the colleague being considered owner of the ball and everything, which resolved who would play or not and that he did not like this. Lucas exposed he believed that people needed to act, was tired of apologizing, wanted them to changed. That moment was very significant for Lucas, the group listened and many agreed with him, repeating that he was right.

Thus, it is observed that Lucas organizes a new way of perceiving himself in front of the group and the others validate this new position and competence of a leader. He is listened in relation to his discomforts and on his proposals of transformation for the group. This as Lucas, and not as a child with Cerebral Palsy who needs a differentiated position. Therefore, it is interesting to note that it was necessary for his reflections and changes of attitude, as well as changes in the leader and the group. And through the interventions and changes in group relations, the difference is resignified and used to promote learning and transformation.

School experiences, such as those that have been reported—the soccer game and the Assembly—represent important moments and spaces for relations within the educational context, which offered to Lucas values, norms, symbolic repertoire, emotional experiences, etc. (Zittoun 2006 cited in Marsico & Iannaccone, 2012). Such experiences were marked by voices around Lucas, which contributed for the definition of his identity, in a process of negotiation and active internalization of them. Lucas could listen to them, reflect, accept or reject them, while an active subject in the process, showing changes in attitude, and repositioning before the group. And this way, it was possible to perceive what are the voices that may appear on the inclusive process, how they appear, and understanding the marks they produce and what the subject does with them.

This is an inclusive experience through the Educational Therapeutic Assistance, which shows how it occurs the process of dealing with differences, with the discomforts caused by these and with relationships within the educational context. In this report, we look at how the voices of pairs (mainly the boys) appear significantly, marking and calling Lucas to rethink these relationships. We consider, therefore, this experience as an opportunity to observe how all these aspects discussed, especially the voices produced in the school space, intertwine with the Educational Self and situate the individual throughout his development and school trajectory. And still,

how the Assistant can listen, observe, and articulate these voices to contribute with the process of inclusion.

Final Considerations

Faced with the earlier discussions, it is perceived that the attendance for people with Special Educational Needs advances over the years. The Educational Therapeutic Assistance gains strength as a tool and strategy for inclusion. It is observed, through the experience, that the Educational Therapeutic Assistance has its beginnings in creating the bond with the child, for allowing interventions, aiming interactions, the relationship with the other, the learning and listening to the discourses and voices produced in the school context.

This way, the Assistant is a professional who has the ability to observe and analyze the effects of voices in the construction of the educational self of children with special educational needs. Thus, it is one more adult in this context, another social actor with a specific role of being among those relationships. The Educational Therapeutic Assistant is another voice that appears in this context, at the same time that works as an articulator of the voices that emerge in this field.

So, the Educational Therapeutic Assistant, besides being a voice that speaks about the subject, also suggests an articulation of these other voices, mediating these existent relationships (teacher–student, student–student, family–school). And in this case, at investigation level, is also a participant observer who observes and reports indicators of what would be the construction of the educational self of this student with special educational needs.

Therefore, Educational Therapeutic Assistance shows up as an important performance by observing these discourses and act on them, in the perspective of questioning and building, along with the school, more effective knowledge and practices for inclusion of children with special educational needs.

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Parental Engagement in Light of the Ecosystemic Foundations of the School–Family–Community Partnership: Towards a Psychosocial, Dialogical and Developmental Perspective

Dany Boulanger

Introduction

For the past 30 years, the integration of parents (considered as 'partners' of school stakeholders) in education—particularly at school—is not generally accompanied by questioning regarding what they are and what they are *becoming*, from the viewpoint of their *subjectivity*. And yet, teachers are increasingly viewed as vectors of meaning, part of the core of plural personal trajectories (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 2004). The tendency to deny parents' subjectivity, especially those living in a context of socio-economic deprivation—said of socio-economically disadvantaged communities (SEDC)—is markedly prevalent in the United States, birthplace of the school—family–community partnership field (Boulanger et al., 2014). At the heart of the gradual emergence and consolidation of this field, lies a number of conceptual, theoretical and epistemological pitfalls surrounding the conception of parental engagement.

Concerned with what parental engagement can *become* conceptually, theoretically and epistemologically, we focus on this concept by articulating it around the notion of self, including the conceptions that authors convey through the gaps in their arguments. We emphasize the ecosystemic foundations of parental engagement, which are part of the school–family–community partnership field. We critically define parental engagement on the theoretical and epistemological levels. Epistemologically, the investigation of ecosystemic foundations leads us to highlight the reductionist logic on which typologies that mark out parental engagement are based and, more generally, we demonstrate the non-developmental character—in the broadest sense, a developmental perspective stems from the *emergence* of structures and implies a

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processual dimension (Valsiner, 1997)—of this concept as designed. Based on the limitations identified, we propose theoretical avenues and conclude by putting into perspective the concept of educational self.

Ecosystemy: Theoretical and Epistemological Dimensions

Ecosystemic (theoretical) approaches, placing the individual in relation to an environment divided into different systems—hence, the notion of ecosystems (Duncan, 1973)—are central conceptual points of reference in the field of school–family—community partnership (Christenson, 2004; Comer & Haynes, 1991; Epstein, 1987; Hobbs, 1966[1]; Keyes, 2002; Smith et al., 1997). Nevertheless, the epistemological foundations of ecosystemic approaches and of their usage are not explained, which notably conveys that different typologies and models used to conceptualize parental engagement are anchored in an implicit reductionist logic (Price-Mitchell, 2009; Boulanger et al., 2011).

Ecosystemy is necessarily associated to cutting and categorizing reality by the researcher and the stakeholder, given the human ability to establish distinctions (Bateson, 1972). The classes (categories) built are, therefore, culturally arbitrary and largely a matter of the researcher and the stakeholder's (Valsiner, 1984) epistemological posture—epistemic (Schommer-Aikins, 2005) in the case of the stakeholder. The issue, then, is knowing where cuts have been made and according to which principle (Valsiner & Winegard, 1992). Figure 1 represents the prevailing ecosystemic-reductionist perspective in the field of school–family–community partnerships (Boulanger et al., 2011; Price-Mitchell, 2009).

On the left, we see what is internal and, on the right, what is external. These are separated by an impermeable barrier whose function is not to unite (Marsico, Cabell, Valsiner, & Kharlamov, 2013; Valsiner, 2014), but only to separate the elements of a whole, on an exclusive (to separate units from one another, distinguish them from the whole without showing how they interrelate, and reject the context dimension) rather than inclusive basis (to separate the analysis units, but consider them as operationally connected and take into consideration the context) (Valsiner, 1987, 2014). The structure on the left *contains* (as a container holds content) different units (like genes in an aggregate) linked by an additive principle such as continuity or overlapping (see Epstein, 1987[2]), rather than interacting on a processual and contextual basis.

The portion on the left can represent the family or even an individual (parent). The portion on the right corresponds to school that acts as a stable external stimulus that parents must decode (we will address this when we look at how it is done, the processes). The members of the family (left) are additively linked. Researchers and stakeholders 'defamiliarize' the family (Boulanger & Doucet, 2014a, b) by not seeing

[1] Hobbs (1966) appears to be the first to use an ecosystemic approach in this field.

[2] Epstein's (1987) principle of overlapping seems to come from a limited and reductionist version of dialectism (Valsiner, 2012).

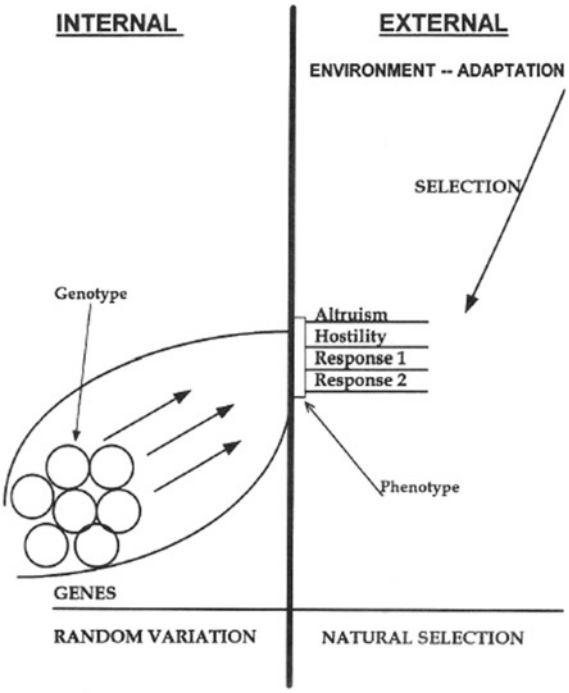

Fig. 1 Reductionist perspective of the relationship between individual and environment (From Boulanger 2014, reproduced with the permission of Overton 1998, p. 117)

it as a whole, but by looking selectively at one or another of its members, which are additively linked and placed in separate zones on an exclusive basis.

Parental engagement refers to the presence of the parent at something that is outside of him, whether it be an interactional activity or context. It is the same for a parent who participates *in* an activity, who takes part of a community of practices; this is something that we find more particularly in the Human and Social Sciences as well as in Education. Parents can also get involved *in* something that is outside of them (interaction context that comes before them), without their spatial situation being explicit. Whether it is or not, parents are fixed in a restricted space (which we will demonstrate below). In this perspective, authors generally define engagement but not the parent, as the dimension of the self (parent) is evacuated. At the same time, engagement is decontextualized from the family environment, and it is not defined with respect to the semantic world of parents, which is then thought of as an aggregate, according to what it does. This central tendency is more particularly found in the Human and Social Sciences and in Education (Hermans, 1996; Paranjpe, 1998; Stetsenko, 2012).

Parental engagement tends to be defined by authors (see Eccles & Harold, 1993; Grolnick and colleagues, 1991; Hoover-Dempsey & Sandlers, 1995, 1997) in reference to process variables that paradoxically involve the evacuation of the processual dimension (Dornbusch & Glasgow, 1996; Lareau, 1996). The left portion of Fig. 1 refers to the different components (process variables) of engagement *or* of the par-

ent, particularly beliefs, the parental role and the feeling of self-efficacy. The beliefs belong to the parents and are a dimension of engagement; we find ourselves in a tautological and circular reasoning that involves a dissociation between parents and their engagement, and their additive association around micro-parts (e.g. beliefs).

These components are additively linked among one another, without interacting with the *whole* (structure) that is the individual (Boulanger & Doucet, 2014a, b). Understood on an atomic level, individuals are considered to be the sum of their components which in essence define them. Parents are strictly defined by their role and/or their beliefs and/or their feeling of self-efficacy. From a cognitivist perspective (particularly of the second generation), these subparts refer to internalized schemes, to cognitive models for information processing that operate like a computer (Bruner, 1996; Hermans, 1996). The link between them is based on the minimal transmission of information. This perspective, which prevails in the Human and Social Sciences as well as in Education, eludes the dimension of meaning and does not make it possible to grasp the individual (self) autonomously on a holistic and contextual basis (Ligorio, 2013; Paranjpe, 1998; Stetsenko, 2012; Stetsenko & Arievitch, 2004).

We have placed the components (subsections) of parental engagement on a horizontal plane (the link between them). Without being limited to it, let us look at the vertical plane, that is, at the relationship between the parts and the whole, at the articulation between the internal schemes and the external stimuli (school invitations sent to parents by school stakeholders). Drawing from Lightfoot (2004), we represent from this perspective the epistemological logic on which processes are founded (processual variables).

We can contrast good parents with bad parents, the first being understood as empty vases that need filling as opposed to the latter which are already full (of ideas, concepts, culture, etc.). Authors (and stakeholders) prefer parents who are socio-economically privileged (good parents), whose behaviours are judged appropriate because they are based on an adequate perception of school stimuli. While these parents *naturally* agree (in a static perspective of continuity and coherence) with school, it is not the case for those from SEDC. These parents *are* viewed a priori—by nature, in essence, in the field of being—as not supportive of school—they do not *adhere* to it, like a substance does not adhere to a surface (Fig. 1)—because their perception of school stimuli (what school conveys to children) is judged as being erroneous or biased.

In the wake of cognitivist theses, authors (see Eccles & Harold, 1993) try to explain these biases in order to correct them since the school *factor* is not viewed as being *part* of parents' mental model. Claiming a 'more proactive' conception, other researchers (see Hoover-Dempsey & Sandlers, 1995, 1997) identify, following the same logic, in which condition this factor is *present* (visible to school personnel). This static conception of the individual (self) is expressed in the excerpt below in which the authors explain one of the action mechanisms (*processes*) linked to parental engagement:

> A construction of the parental role as *including* personal involvement in children's education would seem to be a *necessary* (but not sufficient) condition for the emergence of parent-involvement activities. (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995, p. 313).[3]

Defined from a school perspective (according to the school factor), parental engagement—as a factor and a fact—is viewed as *included* or not included *in* the individual's cognitive system, and it is only in the first case that parents manifest behaviours deemed appropriate since they are convergent with the school.

In order to correct the relationship between the parent and the environment, stakeholders use 'practices' (on a compensatory basis) that aim to catalyze (in the cognitivist sense of the word) the parents' exposure to school stimuli (classical conditioning), and the stakeholders implement a series of reinforcing conditions (operant conditioning) (Dornbusch & Glasgow, 1996; Lareau, 1996). The parents must then, at this stage, correctly decode the stimuli where they initially failed. This decoding is implied on a normative level according to the direction the parent should take:

> There are several general approaches schools can use to increase parental involvement. First, schools can offer parents more meaningful roles in school governance. Comes suggests that parents *need to understand and agree with* school goals in order to reinforce them at home. *If* parents are meaningfully involved in the basic planning and governance of the school, they are *more likely to be invested in* school goals, and will therefore be *more* likely to maintain a strong positive *connection with* the school (Eccles & Harold, 1993, p. 578).[4]

Stakeholders influence the cognitive structure (e.g. beliefs *or* constructed role) that must 'hold' what is school related and make it possible to cause an appropriate school response. This response is catalyzed on an external and unidirectional basis, and it must passively refract the environment (stimuli) (Fig. 1). This is exactly the logic on which are based *individual or environmental* (ecosystemic) *fit* models, such as are used in the field of school–family–community partnerships (see Eccles & Midgley, 1986, on which is based the model of Eccles & Harold, 1993). Here is an excerpt from Mitchell (1969) which is an important foundation for Eccles and Midgley (1989): 'The processes used by the individual to "*come to terms with the environment"* as Goldstein (1939) wrote, are processes that have much to say about that *individual's values*, traits and characteristic modes of functioning' (p. 696).[5]

It is, therefore, *what is external that informs us on what is internal, which is to say on the personal world* of the individual (Fig. 1). Processes are clearly designed on a reductionist basis. And yet, it is precisely this external perspective on which parental engagement typologies are based as well as conceptual models (from which they largely draw and that contain a typological dimension).

[3] Italics represent our emphasis.

[4] Italics represent our emphasis.

[5] Idem.

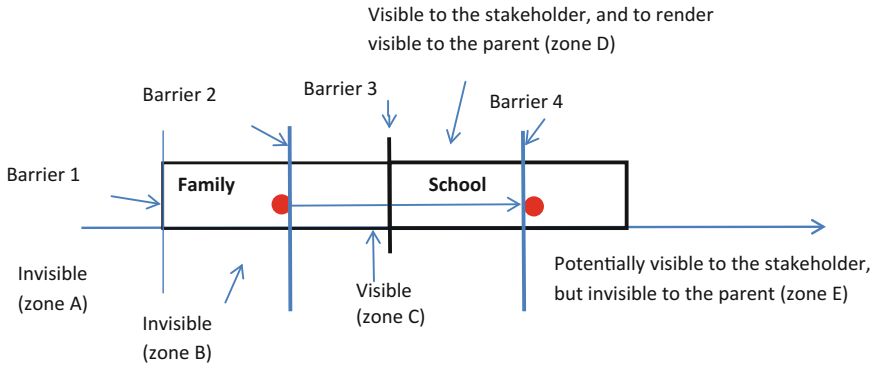

Fig. 2 Mutually exclusive zones defined from the viewpoint of the stakeholder

Parental Engagement Typology

Generally speaking, where typologies are concerned, researchers do not refer to action in itself, particularly not to its *emergence* (development), but to types, hence the use of the notion of typology (Valsiner, 1984). The *types* of action are static since they fit into homogenous categories (Fig. 1) that involve a reduction of intra- and interindividual variability (Valsiner, 1984, 1989).

In the ecosystem, action[6] zones (mutually exclusive homogenous spaces) (Valsiner, 1987, 1997) are allowed and others are prohibited. Figure 2 shows the ranking generally used in reference to the school–family relationship[7] from a reductionist perspective.

The ecosystem is structured on an external and unidirectional basis by the stakeholder, centred on zones that are visible or invisible according to *his or her point of view* only. Barrier 3 separates (exclusively) school and family.[8] The red dots refer to action and actor. We use the scheme mainly to represent parents (and their actions), but the dots can also show other actors (as we will show below). Action, as pheno-

[6]Note that we are not necessarily referring to actions (viewed in the broad sense of the word, according to Valsiner's definition, 1987). The models (typologies), in particular those referring to process variables, identify a group of factors corresponding to the action—on a static basis—its antecedents ("determinants") and its effects (*academic* success).

[7]Other systems can be represented, such as a community which is often reduced to the dimension of socio-economic disadvantage. Thanks to Jaan Valsiner for drawing our attention to this.

[8]While they are sometimes presented as interacting polarities (see Epstein, 1987), systems are implicitly designed according to such a reductionist perspective (Boulanger et al., 2011). They are closed systems (Price Mitchell, 2009) that have no interaction with the environment, but also sometimes open systems (that do interact with the environment) designed from a homeostatic perspective focussed on balance (see Christenson, Abery, & Weinberg, 1986). Theoretically, using a homeostatic system that is open (centred on balance) fuels this pitfall (Tateo & Marsico, 2014).

type[9] (Fig. 1) is understood by its visible, external portion (the external barrier of the red dots).

By observing the family, the stakeholder—an ('objective') observer more than a participant[10]—detects behaviours (red dot on the left) that correspond to the external, and thus *visible* expression of action. He or she seeks to correct the behaviours (the educational practices of parents deemed bad for children) or cognitions (zone C) judged inappropriate in view of making them invisible. The red dot on the left symbolizes behaviours to be modified (Fig. 2).

At the same time, the stakeholder seeks to make visible what he or she considers invisible (yet desirable) in the parents, that is to say, actions carried out at school or within the school context.[11] Parents must then direct their actions around zone D. The red dot on the right represents an anticipated and desired behaviour, that is, engagement that reflects everything contained (content) in 'the' school *culture* (container). In the field of school–family–community partnerships, and more widely in Human and Social Sciences as well as in Education, culture is grasped from this perspective in a static way (Valsiner, 2014).[12] The second red dot also symbolizes, spatially, the presence of parents at school (the first dot refers to parents' presence at home).

Zone E represents what is potentially visible to the stakeholder, and yet remains invisible to the parent; it is the zone of unauthorized action. It is the case, for example, of parental engagement in the school's decision-making process. Zone B defines what is largely visible to the parents and appears significant to them, but that the stakeholder does not recognize; that is, the informal dimensions of engagement, development, learning and education that are not necessarily linked to *academic* success (as a product) and that mirror common sense knowledge from the family world (Fleer, 2006). Zone A characterizes what is potentially visible to parents (and to stakeholders), but that is not in actuality; these are the possible actions (in a reductionist perspective) that are not carried out.

By placing restricted emphasis on zone D, the stakeholder is not aware of what is occurring in zones A and B, so that parents are necessarily considered as unengaged; although they are engaged from the school's point of view (zone D). This is all the more true when emphasis is placed on the superficial (visible) dimensions of action (the external barriers of the red dots; phenotype). Parents are then viewed, in essence, as *being* engaged *or* unengaged (ontological perspective, stable state).

Along the same line, we can view the left dot (right side of the barrier; phenotype) as parental engagement (cause), and the right dot (left side of the barrier; phenotype)

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[9]Zittoun et al. (2014) define genotype and phenotype: "The genotype is the genetic set up of an organism, that is, the same DNA assembly (=genome) that can be found in all the cells of an individual organism. The phenotype was considered to be the necessarily result of the expression of the particular genotype, that is, the whole living organism, with all the characteristics that have emanated from the genotype" (p. 14).

[10]In the sense of the second cybernetics in the field of systemy.

[11]The stakeholder wants to inject the school factor in one of the parents' mental portions (e.g. beliefs).

[12]See for example Moll, Amanti, Neff, and Gonzalez's (1992) funds of knowledge and Gutiérrez and Rogoff's (2003) practice repertoire.

as the child's *academic* success (result). Since the dimension of action is absent in this linear sequence, a child's engagement is rarely considered.[13] We can also see the right dot as representing the stakeholder who interacts on a linear basis with parents (red dot, on the left). The additive relationship between the units (Fig. 1) forms a straight line (Fig. 2).

In Fig. 2, the previously conveyed static conception of the processes confined to the restricted zones and 'progressing' externally from one fixed dot to another clearly prevails. Based on the concept of interest, Valsiner (1992) presents the processual dimension as follows:

> A move to a process-oriented theoretical view of "interest" is based on the recognition of the process of constant irreversible person ←→ environment transaction. Once an emphasis is placed upon process aspects of transactions, the question of "interest" is no longer limited to an ontological issue ("what is interest?"), but acquires a developmental focus as well ("how does whatever is interest *emerge from* whatever interest is not?") (p. 33).

Emphasis is not placed on what emerges between the two barriers (Fig. 2) (Bergson, 1888), on what is *developing*, but on the antecedent (the behaviour *or* cognition that the stakeholder wishes to make invisible; first red dot in Fig. 2) *or* on the product (what the stakeholder wishes to make visible; second red dot in Fig. 2) (Boulanger & Doucet, 2014a) of the stakeholder's catalyzing action. What happens between two units (dots or barriers), that is, the processes, is absent (invisible) because the zones (Fig. 2) are homogenous. In addition, as we have just demonstrated, the product is viewed as a (natural, essence) property (of the individual or the environment) catalyzed externally. We, therefore, find ourselves in the black box logic (empty mind) of the behaviourist and cognitivist proponents that make the process dimension invisible (Valsiner, 1997, 2014).

Emphasis is not placed on the *movements* spontaneously and autonomously made by parents (between two barriers), but on their behaviours in sequence (linear and static), behaviours that stakeholders catalyze externally. In Fig. 2, barrier 4 is a destination; parents must get *to* school. At most, parents are viewed as *being* or not being engaged (appropriately or not) in a given direction, but not as marking intrinsic movements (building one's action). Authors neither shed light on how *engagement develops* when parents move from one zone to another, nor on how it evolves. At best, authors mention that parental engagement at school *conditions* their engagement at home, so that action (e.g. homework assistance) integrates the school factor (zone D, Fig. 2). Furthermore, parent–child interaction is understood on a linear and additive basis (Fig. 2).

Stakeholders can be seen as supporting (in a limited way) a form of development of engagement, but within the limits of the school zone that they catalyze externally. Their relationship (according to what they channel) with parental engagement can be defined in accordance with the following scheme:

- Action on parents: what they must *stop* being;

[13] See, among others, Lawson and Lawson (2013) on children's engagement, however, we believe this perspective is static.

- Action on engagement: what engagement must *become* = action on parents: what they *do* (engagement) around predetermined zones define them as good or bad parents.

What parents can *become* from what they are (or could be) is not considered since, in essence, they are empty vases to be filled (injection of the school factor). In addition, parents do not define themselves by what they do according to external expectations. It is, therefore, not surprising that the parents' phenomenological dimension, particularly in socio-economic deprived context, is not taken into account (Auerbach, 2007). Parents do not really evolve; they simply express *more* appropriate behaviours and show up *more* at school, which does not suppose qualitative jumps, the founding dimension of individual development (Valsiner, 1997). In the wake of cognitivist theses, theories that are centred on personal traits—associated with typologies (Valsiner, 1984)—and apply the notion of cognitive scheme, do not consider change in the individual; the latter only passively reproduces patterns of behaviours conveyed externally (Hermans, 1996; Hermans & Kampen, 1993).

The field of school–family–community partnerships must then *develop* in reference to a third line of theoretical and epistemological perspectives that integrate this essential component. We follow in the footsteps of a *movement* started by some authors (César, 2013; Graue, 1998, 2005; Graue, Kroeger, & Prager, 2001; Iannaccone, Marisco, & Tateo, 2012; Marsico & Iannaccone, 2012) in the field of school–family–community partnerships; this movement built a theory of parental engagement according to a perspective that we believe is phenomenological and dialogical (Cunha & Gonçalves, 2009).

A Few Leads for the Conceptualization of Parental Engagement

We suggest a few leads for the conceptualization of parental engagement that are articulated around convergent theoretical perspectives, from a general viewpoint, on an epistemological level. The objective is neither to systematically develop a model nor to explain the theoretical frameworks called on; rather, it is to provide a few conceptual approaches. We essentially draw from Lewin's (1933, 1951, 1997) field theory and from Hermans and colleagues' (1993, 2010) *dialogic self theory* (DST) that we will use. The leads suggested are on two complementary theoretical levels that define the subheadings of the next subsections.

Parental Engagement: Movement Emerging at the Heart of Psychosociological Space

The exclusive separation of individual and environment, upon which are based the dominant conceptions of parental engagement, prevails in Human and Social Sciences as well as Education (Marsico et al., 2013; Valsiner, 2014). One of the major issues that seem to be recurrent in scientific literature consists of placing spatially, and on this basis to adequately differentiate the terms 'individual', 'environment' and 'ecosystem'. Even among authors (see Magnusson, 1985; Sameroff, 1983) conveying a dynamic conception of ecosystemy, the last two concepts are often confused between them and with notions such as situation and context. What is immediate or foreign to the individual, or even what is internal or external to the individual seems to be poorly established or if so in a confusing manner. For this reason, the spatial situation of an individual is also confusing, which translates notably into a tendency (mentioned earlier) to view parental engagement according to what is external to the parent, that is, the realm of other people's relationships. From a perspective of exclusive separation, it remains difficult to determine 'where are' engagement and parent; in other words, what, generally speaking, characterizes and binds them in this (internal and external) world. Lack of clear and explicit *positioning* may lead to epistemological drifts, that is, placing parental engagement in a reductionist logic. It is important then to adequately define and spatially locate the terms 'individual,' 'ecosystem' and 'environment.'

We view the environment as being external to the individual (Heidmets, 1984) and non-immediate. The ecosystem—a heterogeneous environment separated by systems—refers to what is immediate,[14] and is an extension of the individual, it forms more particularly a portion of the individual's psychosociological space, connecting it to the (external) environment (Lewin, 1933; Bateson, 1972). We, therefore, suggest calling it a psychosociological ecosystem. With the individual, this ecosystem forms what Lewin (1951) named a life space: 'The "life space"; i.e. the person and the psychological environment as it exists for him' (p. 57). The life space corresponds to the *concrete total* context—the dynamic connection[15] (Cole, 1992)—as it appears

[14] What is immediate is what makes sense to the individual, and which is familiar or *becomes* familiar (Bateson, 1972); which does not mean that individuals only expose themselves to what is known. On the contrary, transforming what is unknown into what is known is a central psychosociological dimension (Moscovici, 1961) that places the individual *at the border* of the known and unknown. It would be reductionist to distinguish, in a limited way, between what is close and what is far from the individual, and to exclude by implication the furthest point of the individual's psychosociological space. In the introduction of a book, Cartwright says about Lewin's (1951) work that "[m]any of Lewin's contributions to the understanding of human behaviour consisted of showing that a wider and wider realm of determinants must be treated as part of a single, interdependent field and that phenomena traditionally parceled out to separate 'disciplines' must be treated in a single coherent system of constructs" (p. xii).

[15] Cole (1992) defines the context metaphorically: "These intuitive uses of the term context in terms of the metaphor of a cord/rope/thread are faithful, in an interesting way, to the Latin root for the term, *contexere*, which means 'to weave together'" (p. 16). To be practical, we will use context

significant to the individual. The various zones of this space are interdependent and interrelated with the whole.

Engagement comes under the relationship between individuals and environment, which is a dimension at the root of ecosystemic theses viewed in a holistic and contextual perspective. It operates in the space between (the ecosystem), which also refers to a *context* whose specific function is to *connect* individuals to their environment. In environmental psychology—Niit (1983) in particular, but also Heidmets (1984, 1994)—the *global*[16] engagement of individuals refers to the way they structure their physical and social ecosystems (the way they personalize them). For this purpose, we will call it a *psychosociological ecosystem*, without, however, negating the other dimensions (physical, structural, etc.) on which we do not insist. Engagement refers to the '*structuralizing' process* (Wapner & Demick, 1998) of this ecosystem. It is a process that involves the construction, by the person, of subjective and social zones.

In particular, the person—a concrete subject filling reality with meaning (Magnusson, 1985; Valsiner, 1986) rather than an abstract individual—does so by *positioning* themselves at the heart of their ecosystem. Positioning involves moving, *moving from one zone to another* (see Lewin's locomotion concept, 1951). *Engagement, therefore, involves restructuring one's space by acting on one's self and others on a processual basis through constant movements directing the person from one position to another*.

In the ecosystem, third parties structure *for* and *with* the person *zones of free movement* (Lewin, 1951, 1997), just as a person does for him or herself and others. These zones are more or less accessible according to their more or less visible ('differentiated') character, and according to the nature of their barriers—social constraints in relation to which the person positions him or herself and (re)builds (Valsiner, 1987, 1997).

Individuals position themselves in relation to their ecosystems (particularly with regard to people they consider significant), but also to their (external) environment, which contains zones that are for the moment invisible, yet can potentially become visible. The environment provides opportunities for development. By imbuing the ecosystem whose function is to connect them to the environment, individuals can then *make visible what was invisible* (develop themselves) through their engagement. Parents move constantly, not to be or cease being, but to *become* someone, to *change* by aiming for the unknown, toward what is invisible; they do so by exploiting possibilities (Ligorio, 2013).

It is not important to consider where individuals are located (what individuals are); rather, it is crucial to question where they are going, more particularly how—on a truly processual basis (in contrast to processual variables)—individuals move and what they become. This movement of 'becoming' involves placing one's self in between two positions, at the edge of the psychosocial space (Lewin, 1951; Valsiner, 2013) rather than at the extremity of the zones (Fig. 2). Engagement *is parental*, in that it only takes on meaning in relation to the life space of individuals who

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and situation as synonyms, according to this meaning, even if we have pointed out the need to differentiate them, for which we do not have the space to develop herein.

[16]Niit (1983) speaks of general engagement.

define themselves (and become) through their movements; in this sense, parents necessarily become engaged! Engagement is a component of the relationship that is part of people's life space.

The ecosystem does not form a typology with a predefined space *for* an *abstract* individual (Fig. 2), it forms a typology that defines the total *concrete* situation of a person as described by Lewin (1951, 1997).

Parental Engagement from a Dialogical Perspective

Let us complete the perspective identified by integrating the dialogical dimension in support of DSTs. More specifically, the conditions that for Lewin explain a person's drive to move (energy, strength, etc.) will be viewed from a dialogical perspective. To this end, it is not important to overly present DSTs (the reader can refer to Hermans & Gieser, 2012, as well as Ligorio & Cesar, 2013). Let us simply say that, to begin with, DSTs are coherent with what we have claimed of the field theory (Lewin[17])—particularly with the leads mentioned—mainly in relation to the following general points:

- DSTs are part of a holistic and contextual ecosystemic logic (Valsiner & Kempen, 1993) as well as a topological perspective;
- Topologically speaking, the emphasis is not placed on any particular structure (zone), but on the relationship between such (heterogeneous) systems, that is, on the movement that a person makes between them (Valsiner, 2002);
- The self-forms an imaginary (psychological) landscape that 'integrates' certain zones (positions, voices) of the external environment located in extension of the person (Hermans & Kampen, 1993; Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2010);
- The self—social, dynamic and innovative (creative, autonomous)—is a *process of dialogical movement.*[18] It moves constantly from one position (positioning and counter-positioning) to another; this is a movement that—allowing for the emergence of structures and the construction of meaning—ensures its development (Hermans, 1996; Hermans & Kampen, 1993; Cunha & Gonçalves 2009; Markovà, 2013, Raggatt, 2013).

In essence, DSTs make it possible to add (to the pre-identified leads) the fact that the relationship is dialogical, therefore, that the self is never final (as understood by Bakhtin, 1929/1970), as is the case with typologies, and that positions are expressed as voices. The others (stakeholders), who in the field of school–family–community

[17]In this regard, Valsiner (2002) notes that: "[d]ialogicality is the basis for Hermans' notion of dialogical self (see this issue and Hermans, 1996a, 1996b, 1999; Hermans & Kepmen, 1993). The perspective of dialogical self entails the basic feature of field theories. The different parts of the system that regroup themselves do so within space—a field—that is defined by the boundaries of the dialogical self. The relations between the parts of the field are the 'field forces' that maintain the dialogical self in both its stability and change" (p. 252).

[18]It is found between two positions, at the border with space.

partnerships are external to parents, here, are part of their phenomenological and dialogical realm.[19] Others form voices to which individuals *speak* and *respond* in their internal and external world, and particularly at the border (ecosystem). These voices come from positions that live and enter into dialogue with autonomous figures who are often opposed—dialogue or monologue relationship (Markovà, 2013)—if not in perpetual discord (Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2010). The 'I' position characterizes the self as a subject, as someone distinct from others; someone who is singular, creative and innovative (Hermans, 1996). The 'me' position refers to the social aspect of a person (a generalized 'other' in Mead's perspective), to what brings a person closer to others, to what makes a person an extension of the environment. The 'I' speaks to the 'me' like authors give voices to their characters without dominating them (see Bakhtin, 1929).

Regions are centred on specific positions ('I' and 'me') that have voices whose movement forms a unit (unity in diversity; Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2010) of a person's life space. The voices maintain their autonomy and create a community (Hermans & Kempen, 1993). Parental engagement, at the heart of the dialogical life space linking 'I' and 'me', involves the parents' expression in the form of a voice (internal and external dialogue). Parents actively *speak* and *respond to* others (Graue, 1998, 2005; Graue et al., 2001). Let us redefine Fig. 2 (typology) by integrating, from a general and topological viewpoint, the overall theoretical perspective that has just been presented.

In Fig. 3, the ecosystem—variable (intra- and interindividual variability), flexible and mobile—is placed on a topological level. The systems (mutually inclusive zones) are shown with dotted lines to highlight their 'open' character; their borders unite instead of separate them, all the while making it possible to establish distinctions within the ecosystem (Marsico et al., 2013; Valsiner, 2014). The self and its voices (full red circles rather than their external borders) are part of a dialogue at the centre of the movements represented by curved arrows. The self is formed around a dialogue between internal (the bottom portion of Fig. 3) and 'partially external' (top portion of Fig. 3) voices—extending the internal world—in that they are integral to a person's life space (his or her ecosystem). These are voices that a person hears or chooses to hear, more particularly, that a person chooses to actively express as a dialogue.[20] Parental engagement, as an emerging psychosocial process (involving relationships) centred on movements, unfurls and evolves around the expression of voices that, without this movement, would be silenced (from the perspective criticized above). Voices that could not be expressed (invisible) now can (visible).

Stakeholders are necessarily those who *participate* (*partners*) rather than external entities who observe since they have a voice in the parents' world, a voice whose tonality is established by the latter, according to parental movements. The parents'

[19]Cunha and Gonçalves (2009) show the coherent articulation between phenomenology (the meaning associated with the psychological dimension) and dialogism.

[20]The possibilities exploited by a person are "contained" as seeds in his or her ecosystem; this is why invisible zones are located there in Fig. 3, rather than only being relegated to the external field (environment). It is then possible to think that these invisible zones are accessible.

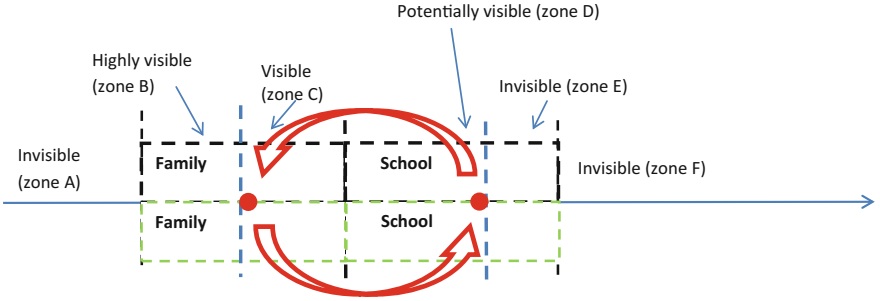

Fig. 3 Mutually inclusive zones of the ecosystem defined from a dialogical perspective

world is relational! However, sometimes, dialogues become monologues (Markovà, 2013), and others (in this case stakeholders) force parents to take positions without their consent. Their voices are vibrant in the life space of those who address others and respond to them. A monologue is necessarily a moment in the dialogue that is never finalized.

The ecosystem evolves as the parent's movements occur; in this sense, the total situation changes for him or her. Life space, as a whole (Fig. 3), refers to the self in a holistic way, a self that 'differentiates' itself according to particular zones. In these conditions, the *engagement* and *parent* components are clearly interrelated and are part of the *emerging self* !

Conclusion: Putting the Concept of the Educational Self into Perspective

The theoretical leads that have been suggested are, as we have shown, at the heart of the emergence of dynamic conceptions of the school–family relationships, perspectives that act like alternatives to the prevailing scientific discourses (Boulanger et al., 2014). In the number of innovations resides the concept of educational self-coined by Iannaccone and colleagues (Iannaccone et al., 2012; Marsico & Iannaccone, 2012). Without fully presenting this concept,[21] we shall briefly put it into perspective from two angles while (at the same time) recognizing the excellent conceptual work of these authors: first, the visibility–invisibility relationship; second, the engagement–development relationship. These form the themes of the next two subsections.

[21]The reader may refer to the resources that we have just cited.

Visibility ←→ Invisibility: Educational Context

Iannaccone et al. (2012) identify notably what, in the field (in the sense given by Lewin) of education, constitutes the *visible* parts of their investigation:

> We distinguish learning activities –which occur everywhere and every time in the course of human even in *informal context* and from social interaction with peers –from educational activities- which are characterized by some specific features, such as learning as the primary and explicit goal; a set of *rules* that characterize education in the different cultures (in this study we refer to the rules of Italian educational system); *asymmetric* relationships between adults and children; specific age ranges; *specific time* range and *scheduling*; and the evaluation of *performance*. Though such a distinction could be *arbitrary*, it is functional to the first elaboration of the construct. The idea of educational self is thus elaborated, taking into account the educational contexts of our *Western* culture corresponding, totally or partially, to the features above listed –for instance, school, catechism, gym and so on (pp. 222–223).[22]

What is visible is, therefore, the socialization that is operated through school:

> a mode that distinguishes the moment of authentic action and the moment of formation, which anticipates, codifies, and plans the targeted learnings, which imposes operational constraints and rules based on the asymmetry of the educator (who should be learned and competent) and the learner (who should be ignorant) (Maulini & Perrenoud, 2005, p. 147, loose translation).

Taking shape essentially around school evaluation as the sole path to defining an identity, the socialization that is operated through school (such as prevails) hides—renders invisible—the informal dimensions of education and learning, more particularly in the context of socio-economic disadvantage. Iannaccone and colleagues (Iannaccone et al., 2012; Marsico & Iannaccone, 2012) appear, therefore, at the beginning, to place the concept of educational self at the centre of a context that is at its root exclusively school related from which are removed central foundations of identity, which we have said remained invisible. In fact, the function of (sociocultural) devices implemented during various kinds of meetings associated with academic performance is to mask these very foundations (Brown, 1993; Nakagawa, 2000). This tendency is exacerbated by the fact that these meetings take place at school rather than in the family environment, in a more informal context (Moll & Diaz, 1989). Under these conditions, parents, particularly in a socio-economically disadvantaged context, would be far from able to express their *voice* in *response* to school stakeholders.

By following the conceptual leads mentioned above, studying the sociocultural conditions of the relationship between actors from school and those not from school in an informal context would make it possible to integrate this context as a catalyst of the educational self. We could then reconsider, from this perspective, the (re)construction of the border between school and society (family and community), which in fact conveys the metaphor of the school's balcony introduced by Marsico and Iannaccone (2012). It is also important to place the concept of engagement at the heart of studies regarding school–society relationships.

[22] Italics represent our emphasis.

Engagement as a Holistic Self Process and Catalyst of Co-development

Compared to what we propose, engagement is secondary for Iannaccone and colleagues. He establishes one of the conditions for the emergence of the educational self.

> The educational self emerges every time the person is involved in an educational system of activity (as student, parent, or teacher) during his/her lifetime. (Iannaccone et al., 2012, p. 226).

This excerpt provides us with, among others, an important element for analysis to transform engagement into a central context (catalyst) of (re)construction of the educational self. On this basis, and as the relationship between individual and environment, we understand it as a central process for the emergence of the educational self—a process that is mobilized at the border of school and society. It is, therefore, not only academic engagement but also the relationship between individuals and their general environment (academic and non-academic), which acts as a catalyst for the educational self.

Such a perspective requires the deconstruction of the usual timeline that divides time into restricted and mutually exclusive zones (childhood vs. adulthood; preschool[23] vs. school) in order to understand it on a dynamic basis (see the concept of irreversible time in Bergson, 1888). We build our relationship to educational contexts on a continuous basis throughout life rather than establishing it at a given (X) moment during childhood and then re-emerging later at another (Y) moment during adulthood (see Iannaccone et al. 2012), as if there were a gap between these two (fixed) moments when the educational self takes shape. And yet, this gap is a zone in which identity emerges.

In a bidirectional logic, the child's educational self is not only considered to be built through the adult's discourse but also that its evolution starts from the child's discourse. The adult who becomes engaged also grows, a fact that we wish to emphasize. We, therefore, suggest to talk about the co-development of children and adults, which is a process catalyzed by their co-engagement at the heart of school–society relationships.[24]

Furthermore, it would appear to go against current society's tendencies of considering child–adult relationships thus, just like studying time on a dynamic basis (in

[23]The concept of school mode, or more specifically of school form, highlights the fact that school contaminates family and community and therefore shows up before school begins. The boundaries are blurred between what comes before and after school.

[24]La prise en compte de ces rapports permettrait d'intégrer, aux figures des articles de Iannaccone et ses collègues, la *construction* du soi éducationnel du parent en réaction (dialogique) aux discours des enseignants, réaction en partie considérée dans les analyses effectuées par ces auteurs. Taking these relationships into consideration would make it possible to integrate into the figures of Iannaccone and colleagues' articles the construction of the parent's educational self in reaction (dialogical) to the teachers' discourses—a reaction partly taken into consideration in the analyses carried out by these authors.

terms of duration) as emerging time (Bergson, 1888). It is also the case of science, as this author claimed more than 100 years ago. Studying development involves a dynamic conception of time, a building site that still seems open. As proof, we have delimited time on a static basis, focussing on space in this article, which itself remains open… to third-party voices…

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