

The texts comprising the current number of *Education and Research* are all, with exception of the interview presented at the end, the result of investigations. Conducted through different methodologies and coming from various Brazilian states, as well as from abroad (Colombia and Chile), the works were organized in two groups: the first one, composed of seven texts, refers to aspects of school culture; the second group, which contains six texts, is related to teacher education, both initial and continued. The articles dialogue with each other – often being complementary – and have a focus on public school, offering a significant picture of education.

The first text, entitled *Survey of research on school culture in Brazil*, by Adriane Knoblauch, Ana Lúcia Silva Ratto, Luciane Paiva Alves de Oliveira and Valéria Milena Rohrich Ferreira from the Federal University of Paraná, maps out 20 years of the production of studies on the Brazilian school based on the CAPES dissertation database. The authors have observed an increase in the number of studies containing the phrase *school culture*, although they also identified a restricted number of supervisors. Among other conclusions, they highlight the “high representativeness of studies related to elementary and intermediate schooling” among the group of theses and dissertations surveyed. At the end of the article, they pose an interesting question: has the concept of school culture being used as a descriptive or as an analytical instrument?

A concrete element of school cultures is focused by Ivanir Ribeiro and Vera Lucia Gaspar from the State University of Santa Catarina, in her *On the materialities of school: the school uniform*. Based on a literature survey on the theme, the author seeks to understand the role of the school uniform as an expression of values and of the “materiality that give shape to the school form”. Text is grounded in studies on material culture, highlighting in a historical perspective the social relations established through the use of the school uniform. At the end of the text, the uniform is characterized as a symbol of (social) standardization and of the democratization of education.

One of the main roles of school is teaching to read and write. From this perspective, the article entitled *Oral erasures in Stepmother and the two sisters: writing process of a recently literate dyad* by Eduardo Calil, from the Federal University of Alagoas, proposes a reflection about the processes and procedures – denominated oral erasures – employed by two children that are beginning to write down their narratives. The research was based on studies about the creative dimension of the written text in its relation with orality, under the “interference of a multiplicity of factors (socio-historical, pragmatic, communicational, technological, interactional, linguistic, cognitive, discursive, textual, graphical etc.), that make it a complex multimodal semiotic system”, such as indicated by the author. Special emphasis is given to the dialogical, interdependent and singular resources used between the children in the development of their texts.

The article by Claudia Mendes Gontijo, from the Federal University of Espírito Santo, *The assessment of literacy: the Provinha Brasil* this part of the results of a documental research carried out to analyze programs focused on child literacy implemented by the Ministry for Education since 2003. Based on a literature survey, the other presents the process of the implementation of the *Assessment of Full and Initial Literacy*, seeking to clarify the changes applied to the *Reference Matrices* for the exam. Along these lines, the author questions the assessment instrument as a contribution to the formation of readers and writers.

School failure, a situation present at the schools and a significant element of school cultures, is the object of the article *Repeating or advancing? An analysis of school failure in public schools of Minas Gerais* by Juliana de Lucena Ruas Riani, from the João Pinheiro Foundation, Vania Candida da Silva, from the State Secretariat for education of Minas Gerais, and Tufi Machado Soares, from the Federal University of Juiz de Fora. The study was conducted with data from 2008 related to the state school system of Minas Gerais, and attempted to highlight the impact of school failure in the learning process of pupils from the third year of fundamental education. The offer is discuss the relations between the system of cycles and school repetition, using data from the *Literacy Assessment Program* to illustrate the impact upon the pupils.

The text *The school experience of youngsters/pupils of secondary education: the meanings attributed to school and to studies* by Rosemeire Reis, from the Federal University of Alagoas, describes a research conducted at a public school of the city of São Paulo. The objective of the investigation was to analyze the relations established by these youngsters with the school knowledges and to seek their interpretations about the work carried out to appropriate these knowledges. The text is based on the author's doctorate thesis, and she sees that "one of the main challenges for the school institution nowadays is to stimulate the *dialogue* between the experiences of young students and the school knowledges". The author concludes indicating that the school is simultaneously a space where the pupils live their youths and expand their knowledges and cultural references.

Another element of the school cultures, the *bullying*, whose incidence seems to increase as we expand the studies about this phenomenon, appears in the article *Obesity in children and bullying: the teachers' viewpoint* by Miguel Ataíde Pinto da Costa from Oswaldo Cruz Foudation, Marcos Aguiar de Souza and Valéria Marques de Oliveira from the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro. The research investigated the perception of teachers from the state public system of a municipality belonging to the metropolitan area of Rio de Janeiro about the problems faced by obese pupils at school, approximating them to the definition of bullying. The results point towards prejudice as being the problem most frequently faced by overweight pupils, at least in the perception of the teachers.

The research *Activities in nature in initial teacher training: an approach focusing on meanings*, by Franklin Castillo Retamal from the Catholic University del Maule and

Alejandro Fierro from the Autonomous University of Chile, refers to an investigation about the initial education of students of physical education, which takes as its point of departure the meaning that the students attribute to activities in nature. The study aims both at highlighting the theme of the meanings and significations in teacher education, and to collaborate in establishing human motricity as a science “that evokes and provokes the epistemic linkage of the union of knowledges”.

The text by Andréa Rosana Fetzner and Maria Elena Viana Souza from the Federal University of the State of Rio de Janeiro, *Concepts of school knowledge: potentialities of the Institutional Program of Teaching Initiation Scholarships*, presents the first results of a study on the conceptions of school knowledge articulated by teachers from public schools and by recipients of scholarships of teaching initiation involved with the PIBID program. The study presents “interculturality as an instrument for the analysis of the concepts of knowledge”, since, according to the authors, it is the contact and the exchange between the different cultures that permeate schools that legitimizes the non-school knowledges present in them.

Discussing the work of teachers, the text *Education regulation and teaching work in Minas Gerais: the obligation of results* by Maria Helena Augusto from the Federal University of Minas Gerais, describes and analyzes the educational policies of the state education system of Minas Gerais with the purpose of identifying its effects upon the teacher working relations. The author identifies the blaming of teachers for the performance of students, both in regular school assessments and in those carried out on a larger scale. Additionally, it discusses the requirement of results or the “new more horizontal and less hierarchical modes of education regulation in the definition of public education policies”.

The article *Puppet theatre in teacher continued environmental education* by Osmarina Maria dos Santos Dantas, André Ribeiro de Santana and Luiza Nakayama from the Federal University of Pará, presents a participative action-research whose objective was to investigate the contributions of puppet theatre in the continued environmental education of teachers. The subjects of the research were six teachers of basic education.

The text by Leonardo Fabio Martínez Pérez from the National Pedagogical University of Colombia and by Washington Luiz Pacheco de Carvalho from the “Júlio de Mesquita Filho” São Paulo State University, *Contributions and difficulties in dealing with social/scientific issues in the practice of science teachers*, describes a qualitative research conducted following a course on the teaching of science based on social/scientific questions. The study was developed in a master course in the teaching of chemistry, with the participation of working science teachers. According to the authors, “dealing with social/scientific issues has a considerable potential for the teaching practice in terms of decision-making and developing critical thinking by students”.

*Creativity in educational context: analysis of periodical publications and graduate works in the field of psychology* by Talita Fernanda Silva and Tatiana de Cássia Nakano from the Pontifical Catholic University of Campinas, offers an assessment of the scientific production about creativity during the last 15 years and point out to a growth in the number of the publications since 2000. Most of the works have been developed by researchers from the South East and Midwest regions of Brazil, with the majority of them being of an empirical nature, focusing firstly on the adult population and, in second place, on the children population, involving mainly teachers of fundamental education and their pupils. This study aims at drawing a picture of the state of the art on the theme proposed.

Concluding this volume we have the interview entitled *The contributions of Werner Markert to the academic and scientific production in the field of labor and education in Brazil*, conducted by Professor Francisca Rejane Bezerra Andrade, from the State University of Ceará, in 1996 during a visit to the Federal Institute of Professional Education (BundesInstitut für Berufsbildung – BIBB) in Germany. The text describes the analyses developed by Prof Werner Markert, a Ph.D. in sociology, pedagogy and economy, as well as his contribution in the areas of *labor* and *education* and *sociology of labor* both in Germany and in Brazil, where he acted as a visiting professor. As the author puts it, these analyses “are relevant to understand the still existing process of production of new mechanisms and forms of accumulation and reproduction of capital integrated to the expansion of neoliberalism”.

With the certainty that the articles in this volume will stimulate reflections on these themes, on the methodologies of research and on the different issues brought forth by the authors, all that remains is to wish you a very profitable reading.

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