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**The Writing of Educational Memories as a Significant Research
Device**

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to present the writing of Educational Memories as a significant research device used for over fifteen years in the production of Master's Degree dissertations and PhD theses. These studies draw on the theoretical framework of psychoanalysis in its connection with education. Many academic publications in this field indicate that within teacher practice there exist mnemonic traces that pervade teacher subjectivity and identity at all levels of teaching, with possible repercussions in the classroom. The studies have given the subjects an opportunity for reflection and a return to the past, particularly to school experiences concerning teacher-student relationships, in such a way that, by "updating" their past experiences, they encountered the present and the vicissitudes from "knowing that one does not know". Thus, it was possible to infer that the classroom relationships are permeated by the Freudian concept of transference, understood by teachers as a concept that holds the key to the educational operation as well as the identification process. Moreover, they feature as probable causes of teacher uneasiness, pervaded by the "quantum" of affect that impinges upon the subjects. Symbolic and unconscious marks, coming from the inscriptions that constitute them, are understood as vestiges, signs that also continue to produce effects in educational action. Recognizing the importance of the unconscious in the process of their training, as they ascend to the position of teachers, they re-edit meaningful encounters. Finally, it is possible to see the writing of Educational Memories as the word contained in the minimal enunciation of the teacher, with the power to construct a historical truth and to produce a new relationship from their experiences, reconstructing their identity as educators, with repercussions in teaching and learning and a resignification of their practice, regardless of the pedagogical setting in which they operate.

Keywords: Educational Memory, Psychoanalysis, Subjectivity, Teacher Training.

Introduction

Within the context of a major shift in social science research towards qualitative approaches, particularly in the field of education, the writing of Educational Memories emerged as a possibility of expression of the subjective constitution and identity of teachers through their school life experiences, thought of as a set of social practices and relations “marked” by significant experiences, from their early schooling all the way to their teaching practice in the classroom.

The quest for a new perspective which inseparably preserves the importance of both childhood experiences and education for the development of children under the responsibility of adults reminds us of remarks made by Freud on Charcot’s method of working:

He used to look again and again at the things he did not understand, to deepen his impression of them day by day, till suddenly an understanding of them dawned on him. (...) He might be heard to say that the greatest satisfaction a man could have was to see something new — that is, to recognize it as new; and he remarked again and again on the difficulty and value of this kind of ‘seeing’. He would ask why it was that in medicine people only see what they have already learned to see. (Freud, 1892-1899/1996, p. 22)

Likewise, we think that a new form of “seeing” has been built over the past decades in studies involving teachers as subjects in academic research with the publication, according to Nóvoa (1992), of Ada Abraham’s *O professor é uma pessoa* in 1984. Since then many productions and studies have been published on the life of teachers, their careers and professional trails, as well as a variety of biographies and autobiographies — a wide-ranging production with the undeniable merit of placing the teacher back into center of educational debates and of the problematics of investigation (p.15). Looking at the life of the teacher and the teacher as a person came to be an imperative, making it impossible to separate the professional self from the personal self.

From this perspective, throughout the years of study and research in preparation for the doctoral thesis *Re-Significação do Papel da Psicologia da Educação na Formação Continuada de Professores de Ciências e Matemática* (Almeida, 2001), the initial proposal of the writing of teachers’ Educational Memories was reconfigured through the contributions of psychoanalytic theory, making it possible to see beyond what was expected in research on teacher training. Bringing a psychoanalytic perspective to education broadens the comprehension of the meaning of the personal and professional subjective constitution of the teacher and the possible repercussions in the classroom. In writing their Educational Memories, seen as the locus of the expression of the subjectivity that shapes their identities, the teachers present themselves as a people, addressing what constitutes them, their psychic reality, for therein lies their truth.

Kupfer (2000) explains that as teachers come into contact with psychoanalysis, they hear about their students as *subjects* but do not know how to reach them, handle them, or make them learn what adult rationality assumes they should learn,

and remain without a method. Though the subjects that they have heard about become as mysterious as ever, they learn to take them into account. Most importantly, they learn that they may aim at one target and hit another — they aim at the students' conscience but reach the subject when they effectively learn.

This paper aims to describe and discuss the writing of Educational Memories as a significant research device which has been used for over fifteen years in the production of master's degree dissertations and PhD theses under the supervision of this researcher. These studies, drawing on the theoretical framework of psychoanalysis in its connection with education, are part of the line of research referred to as School, Learning, Pedagogical Action and Subjectivity in Education of the post-graduate program of the School of Education of the University of Brasilia.

Literature Review

A literature review on the theme of memory takes us back to our origins, to the crucible of Western thought: the ancient Greece of Gods and Heroes.

Alongside Homer, Hesiod, a Greek poet living around 700BC, is credited for having eternalized the Greek Gods. In *Theogony*, Hesiod states that in the beginning of time, memory was represented by a divinity, Mnemosyne, daughter of Uranus (Heaven) and Gaia (Earth), which was so important that her daughters became muses of the arts. Among them Calliope, the epic muse who stimulated the memory of the *aoidos* for them to remember the great deeds of the archetypical heroes of very distant times, was associated to thought and wisdom, in contrast to Lethe, the goddess of forgetfulness.

According to Meneses (1993), the sacralization of memory reveals, in itself, the high value attributed to it in an oral civilization, as was that of Greece between the 12th and 7th centuries BC. Mnemosyne reveals the obscure connections between “remembering and inventing”, a *fruitful topos* which would become one of the boldest claims of psychoanalysis twenty-four centuries later (p.15).

Memory has been the object of investigation in a number of fields, ranging from the *life stories* of the 1950s and 1960s in social sciences to neuroscience and cognitive psychology, but in psychoanalysis it occupies a unique place. Since its beginning in *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900/1996) Freud writes of the associations that occurred to him in his self-analysis and consolidated an understanding of the place of childhood in the constitution of the psyche.

Garcia-Rosa (1998) points out the importance given by Freud to memory, taking up the most significant approaches in Freud's writings, beginning with *Preliminary Communication* (1893-1895/1996), which claims that “hysterics suffer mainly from reminiscences”(p.43), moving on to the statement made in *The Project for a Scientific Psychology*(1893-1895/1996) that “any psychological theory deserving consideration must provide an explanation of memory” and attributes to infantile experiences a founding and determinant value of the psyche, establishing childhood helplessness and the pursuit of satisfaction as the constituent elements of subjectivity. In Letter 52 to Wilhelm Fliess (1886-1899/1996), Freud states that it is through the rearrangement of memory-traces that our psychical mechanism comes about. In this Letter, Freud

discusses the process of transcription of the psychical material, not specifically what was lived, but the marks left by the experiences that the child went through. Thus, what Freud effectively did was to point out the central place that memory occupies throughout his theoretical construction, giving a new status to the experiences that leave traces.

Garcia-Roza (1998) lists some of Freud's theoretical and clinical considerations on memory:

- *it is not the actual experience lived by the child that is traumatic, but its memory.* It is the reinvested representations in an *après-coup* that will produce a traumatic effect, not the event in its original form (p.50). Like the metaphor of the ceramic fragment found by the archaeologist, “the small signs of our veiled history are worth for their indicial character, for what their point to in an archaic past, not for what they are in themselves” (p.10).
- the *screen memories* are memories of infantile events characterized by the insignificance of their contents, which nevertheless not only were not forgotten but remain surprisingly clear and conceal other more significant facts. In the words of Freud, "the essential elements of an experience are represented in memory by the inessential elements of the same experience" (Freud, 1889, p.291).
- a third fact that shows the importance of memory in psychoanalytic theory is *infantile amnesia*, responsible for the forgetting of virtually every event in an individual's first year of life (pp.50-51). According to Freud (1913) “only someone who can feel his way into the minds of children can be capable of educating them; and we grown-up people cannot understand children because we no longer understand our own childhood. Our infantile amnesia proves that we have grown estranged from our childhood. Psycho-analysis has brought to light the wishes, the thought structures and the developmental processes of childhood.” (p.190) Thus, Freud never abandons the issue of origins, for it is like the mortar of the theoretical construction of psychoanalysis.

In “Note upon the ‘Mystic Writing-Pad’” (1925) Freud points out, through an analogy, that the mental apparatus possesses not only a *receptive surface* which can be used over and over again, like a slate, but also *permanent traces* of what was written, in the same way as a paper pad, thus solving “the problem of combining the two functions by dividing them between the two separate but interrelated component parts or systems.” (p.258)

These aspects would be sufficient to characterize the originality of Freud's concept of *unconscious memory*. If there are similarities with other psychological or even philosophical theories, they are merely superficial. The founding principle of the relationship between the psyche and memory is that rather than the psychic apparatus being a pre-condition for memory, it is memory that is the pre-condition for the psychic apparatus. Thus, *there is no psyche without memory*.

Lajonquière (1996) reaffirms that we need to know the past in order not to die subjectively, that is, we need to rely on a story. This is the terrain that, theoretically, supports the writing of Educational Memories, based on the concept of not needing a story to understand the past, but to tolerate the present and project a possible future, for according to Tanis (1998), “time and memory are constitutive elements of the subjective experience which we face in our existence ... in such a way that the psyche records at the same time as it constitutes itself through infantile *Erlebnisse*” (pp. 32-33).

In retracing Freud’s long journey in his work, a path made up of advances and retreats, and occasionally even misconducts in clinical practice, one come across notions such as *transference*, which is not restricted to clinical settings. It is possible to find studies on the phenomenon of transference produced not only by authors and researchers associated to clinical practice, but also by those who have dedicated themselves to investigating it in other contexts which favor transference relations, as is the case of the school institution, particularly the classroom, the setting *par excellence* of teacher-student encounters and disencounters.

The intersubjective relationship between teachers and students can (re)produce, according to the mechanisms of the functioning of the unconscious, an imaginary transference relationship. Freud, in “Some Reflections on Schoolboy Psychology” (1914/1996), written in commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of his school, remarks on the amazement of encountering a former schoolmaster and noticing his relative youthfulness, wondering how it could “be possible that the men who used to stand for us as types of adulthood were really so little older than we were?” Freud points out that one’s emotional attitudes toward other people are forged at an early age in one’s relationship with parents and siblings, but for a boy it is particularly with his father. His later acquaintances take on the role of a substitute figure, “obliged to take over a kind of emotional heritage”. Those schoolmasters, then, became substitute fathers, which explains why

even though they were still quite young, they struck us as so mature and so unattainably adult. We transferred on to them the respect and expectations attaching to the omniscient father of our childhood, and we then began to treat them as we treated our fathers at home. (p. 249)

Psychoanalysis has shown, according to Freud, that the emotional attitudes of individuals toward other people are not only extremely important for their subsequent behavior, but are established very early in life.

Therefore, we should remember that teaching, more than the technical skill of having control over whatever happens in the classroom or a set of prescribed didactic-methodological concerns, incorporates the notion of sustained transference through alleged knowledge and belongs to the realm of love, presence, and speech. As Lajonquière (1999) reminds us, every act of teaching always conveys some sort of knowledge, but also a good deal of existential awareness.

Peter Taubman in “The beautiful soul of teaching” (2007) addresses the issue of how the contributions of psychoanalytic theory can lead to an understanding of educational practices through a shift in perspective that “has enormous value in

helping us understand what it means to engage in the intellectually and emotionally complicated work of teaching.” (p.2) Taubman considers that a psychoanalytic understanding of the teaching experience provides “an analytic frame that enables us to see how the past lives in the present.” (p.4)

Educational Memories – Method and Device

The concept of methodology, from the ancient Greek *méthodos*, in scientific investigation implies a manner of asking and answering questions, originally *meta-* plus *hodos*, the act of seeking the way, the pursuit of knowledge, followed by the suffix *-lógos*, word, speech, study. Thus, it embraces the possibility of opening newpaths according to what one seeks.

The writing of educational memories is also an object with a focus upon itself, which in addition to being an instrument or technique, is also a *device*, a concept that psychoanalysis uses to indicate the subject of the enunciation as the subject of the unconscious. In other words, the act of enunciation always implies an unconscious intention. This concept impacts the method of reading and interpreting the Educational Memories — the subject of the enunciation (unconscious) makes itself present in the act of writing and reveals itself beyond the manifest text (conscious).

According to Plastino (2001), with the discovery of the functioning of the unconscious, psychoanalysis challenges the conceptions of reality and the simplification of the phenomena of life, giving rise to a new form of knowledge, the unique experience of knowing and the inseparability of the psyche from the human being. The intersubjective relationship between the subject and the object, characterized by affective and inferential relations, came to be recognized in research as a method of knowledge as opposed to positivist scientism of modernity, in which conscience was the only valid means to achieving knowledge.

Celes (2000) seeks to show how psychotherapy takes place as research for the construction of psychoanalytic knowledge, leading to the statement that what is aimed at is the work itself. Psychoanalysis is at the same time a method for treating neurosis, a theory of psychic processes, and a procedure for the investigation of these processes.

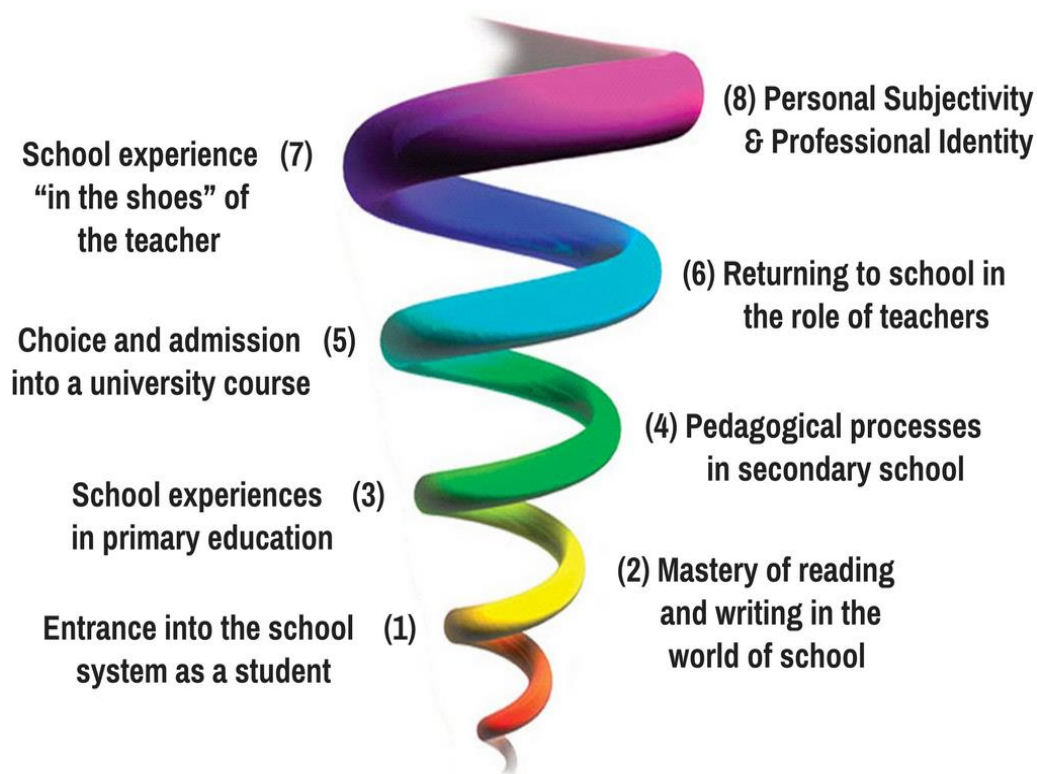
Therefore, if psychoanalysis is recognized as an activity, rather than just a theory, understood as the intercommunication between theory and practice, it may also be employed in broader issues, given that both the analytical setting and the pedagogical context involve the force of the past that memory is able to retrieve. According to Calligaris (2010) during psychoanalysis one discovers that adult life is always less adult than it seems to be: it is driven by the remains and traces from one’s childhood.

It is worth noting that *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900), formulated as Freud’s self-analysis, was a written analysis — he wrote down the associations that occurred to him. This means that the writing of his own associations became a means of speaking and listening to what takes place. Writing also allows for a certain “objectivation”, making it possible to “see” the work of association, in Heidegger’s sense it enables a “supervision”.

The Writing of Educational Memories

Methodologically, the writing of Educational Memories proposes a re-examination of teachers' trajectories as inscriptions that constituted their identity and subjectivity and marked their manner of *being* in the world. In the initial instructions to the teachers participating in the studies, it is suggested that the writing of their memories take them, at first, into a journey to the past through their trajectories as students, in such a way that they retrieve events, situations, people, and processes from the experiences that they lived. Next, upon returning from this journey into the past, it is possible to critically systematize the representations and feelings of their experiences as students in order to understand and map the educational relationships they experienced throughout their school life. It is also possible to identify some of the psycho-pedagogical issues which, on the one hand permeated their past as students, producing results in their quality as learners, and on the other may also pervade and integrate their current teaching practice, in the understanding that the "archeology" of pedagogical processes allows for a formative approach that takes into account the historical dimension of the teacher as subject.

Figure 1. *Educational Memories Represented as a Spiral of Increasing Levels of Complexity*



Source: Módulo Comum. *Imersão no Processo Educativo das Ciências e da Matemática*. Programa de Aperfeiçoamento de Professores de Ensino Médio (Pró-Ciências 1997- 1998), Universidade Aberta do Distrito Federal, Brasília, Brasil.

The writing of Educational Memories as a research device enables an investigation, underpinned by a psychoanalytic framework, into the shaping of the structure of the teacher as subject, which starts to develop from the early contacts of the child with the symbolic position that teachers occupy. Educational Memories may be represented as a spiral reflecting an integrative dimension in increasing levels of complexity (Figure 1).

Guidelines

The subjects are presented with a guideline suggesting some important aspects to be recorded in their journey from their first preschool experiences through touniversity life (stages represented in Figure 1), including their relationships with teachers, classmates, and subjects, their most pleasurable and most painful activities and school subjects, the methodologies that were employed, the assessment processes, the school environment and interpersonal relationships, including those regarding the family, school, and society, and finally an account of the reasons for choosing to become teachers. No limits are established for the writing, which may include images such drawings, pictures, and videos that may be helpful in the elaboration process.

Open-ended Interviews

After the writing of the Educational Memories, open-ended interviews have sometimes been used in a similar way to the psychoanalytically inspired ‘sensitive listening and free-floating attention’, conceived by Freud to guide his investigations while listening to his patients, seeking to avoid the prior selection of material or the development of expectations which could lead to the risk of never discovering anything except what one already knows. All the speeches of the research subjects, both explicit and implicit, are regarded as having equal value, with no preconceptions, no hypotheses or a priori generalizations — elements that are present in the psychoanalytic clinic, but that may also be extended to other settings in which psychoanalysis, as part of the culture, is present, such as university teaching and research.

Socio-psychodrama

This technique has also recently been used for dissertation production (2017), broadening the possibilities that academic research offers for the articulation of unique epistemological-methodological knowledge and contributions, such as those of psychoanalysis and socio-psychodrama, which carefully woven together attribute sense and meaning to the experiences through represented scenes, hence the denomination *Educational Memory in writing and in action*.

In this perspective, Bomfim (2015) reminds us that psychoanalytical knowledge may be applied to any field of knowledge without using its method. According to Celes (2000), it is in the analytical practice that the observation takes place, forming an arrow indicating the direction of the observation, even when this extrapolates,

strictosensus, the analytical practice, as occurs for example in the psychoanalysis of works of art, a practice that Freud himself initiated, breaking the initially foreseeable limits of psychoanalysis (p. 15-16).

According to Voltolini (2010) the articulation of psychoanalysis with education is observed through ties of implication, in which the paradigm may be expressed by the principle that *I affect and am affected by the other field*.

The Educational Memory in Practice - Findings between 2002 – 2017

Over the past ten years 18 studies resulting in 3 theses and 15 dissertations have been produced making use of Educational Memories, totalizing 264 devices analyzed (Table 1).

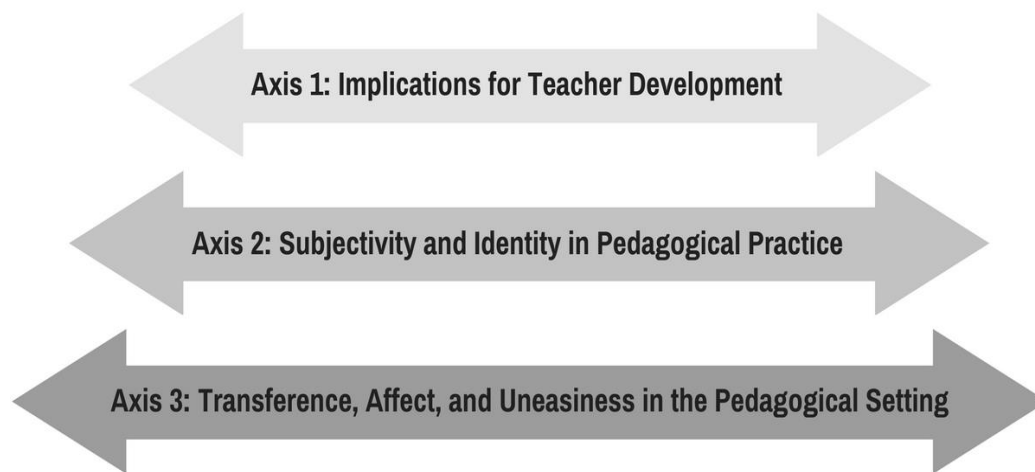
Table 1. Profile of Master's Degree Dissertations and PhD Theses using the Educational Memory Device 2007-2016

Year	Authors	Title	Type
2007	Mota, J.	A presença do afeto no cenário pedagógico	PhD Thesis
2007	Oliveira, R. R. de	A transferência na ação pedagógica: ruído ou música?	Dissertation
2008	Prazeres, S. M. G.	Constituição da subjetividade docente: as implicações na prática educativa.	Dissertation
2008	Barroso, B. O.	Para além do sofrimento: uma possibilidade de re-significação do mal-estar docente.	Dissertation
2008	Bomfim, A. P.	A escuta na escola inclusiva: saberes e sabores do mal-estar docente.	Dissertation
2009	Silva Neto, N. L.	Inconsciente e educação: implicações da psicanálise na formação do pedagogo.	Dissertation
2009	Maldaner, J. J.	O inconsciente na prática pedagógica.	Dissertation
2011	Souza, F. L.	Vicissitudes na constituição da identidade de gestão em gestores da educação profissional e tecnológica: um estudo exploratório.	Dissertation
2011	Costa, S. G.	Subjetividade e complexidade na gestão escolar: um estudo de caso com participantes da Escola de Gestores	Dissertation
2011	Oliveira, J. G. M. de	Trajetórias de constituição do ser docente.	Dissertation
2011	Segunda, K.M.M. de L.	Memorial: uma escrita de si.	Dissertation
2012	Vila Verde, R. L.	Memória educativa: marcas da subjetividade discente.	Dissertation
2013	Bittencourt, C. P. do N.	Identidade e subjetividade docente no ambiente virtual de aprendizagem ressignificando a prática pedagógica.	Dissertation
2015	Bomfim, A. P.	Profissão docente: laços de pertencimento e identidade.	PhD Thesis
2015	Ferreira, B. M. de M.	Educação para o trânsito e o papel dos instrutores: uma leitura psicanalítica.	Dissertation
2015	Santos, D. A. dos	Afeto e transferência na constituição do sujeito.	Dissertation
2016	Squarisi, K. M. V.	O infantil na constituição da subjetividade: o memorial educativo de professores em escrita e ação.	Dissertation
2016	Vasconcellos, D. K.	Marcas de memória: implicações no estilo de ensinar.	Dissertation

Within the scope of these studies, the main focus has been on the constitution process of the research subjects' identity and subjectivity, particularly with regards to the teacher training process and the relations that they establish as children, adolescents, and adults. Another point which is discussed is the teachers' relation with their profession, their craft, and the infantile core which constitutes them, with their knowledge, even if unconscious, that surrounds them and place them in the teaching position.

From these investigations, based on the connection between education and psychoanalysis, the researchers addressed, in the 18 studies, three thematic axes, and according to the aim of the investigation focused on the classification, quantification, and clustering as shown in the figure 2.

Figure 2. *Thematic Axes*



Source: Digital Bank of Theses and Dissertations PPGE/UnB.

Axis 1: Implications for Teacher Development.

While compiling the data, we noticed that among the conceptual categories found in the writings, those pertaining to Axis 1 (Implications for Teacher Development) concentrated the largest number and dealt with marks arising from the triad comprising personal history, educational trajectory, and professional trajectory. Through the fragments of memories written down in the construction of the Educational Memories, the subjects returned to and remembered their past, stressing the importance of their first teachers for the choice of their profession. Subjective marks of style and of the desire for knowledge (Charlot,2000) are fragments that show up in the analysis. The teachers reformulate and relive the experience and communication (Palhares, 2006) in a way that reveals how much they have been affected by the marks and impressions left by their teachers. Thus, it is possible to perceive that, as teachers, we convey something that transcends

the subject-matter being taught, as the *subject of the enunciation* (the unconscious) makes itself present.

In discussing the memory marks and their possible effects upon the constitution of the teachers and their bonds with their profession, we came across marks imprinted since childhood in their relationships with their families, in such a way that the return to those remaining memories allowed us to understand that the infantile dimension is central to the constitution of the subjectivity of teacher, inviting us to rethink pedagogical practices.

Extract from an Educational Memory:

In this school I learned everything I know and everything I am. I had the best teachers you could wish for the developmental and learning process of a child. So I can say, emphatically, that I was very lucky to find along the way people so committed to education. (2015)

Axis 2: Subjectivity and Identity in Pedagogical Practice.

We perceived that in the pedagogical practice, subjectivity is present in such a way that it affects both the teacher and the learner through identifications with teachers and peers. The concept of subjectivity appears as a significant dimension in the writings, both in the subthemes of subjectivity and identity, which manifest themselves in their professional choice, and in the desire and pedagogical seduction which have inevitable repercussions in the classroom setting.

In other words, in dealing with the unconscious in the process of teacher development, the writing of Educational Memories contributed to an understanding of the instigating relational aspects of the profession, as well as the very construction of the teachers' relationship to knowledge itself. The gaps, conflicts, inaccuracies, and ambiguities of the teaching profession, the knowledge and importance of recognizing the subjective dimension in the development of the teacher, and the manifestations of the unconscious were all dealt with, enabling teachers to rethink their relationships with knowledge and with the exercise of education (Silva Néto, 2008).

Extract from an Educational Memory:

I discovered another passion thanks to a biology teacher and her interactive lessons. Since we had lots of space and green areas, most of the lessons took place in the school gardens and we always had more to see than a book. I ended up liking this way of teaching so much that I decided at that time that I wanted to be a biology teacher as creative as mine was. (2011)

Axis 3: Transference, Affect, and Uneasiness in the Pedagogical Setting.

The writings classified in Axis 3 (Transference, Affect, and Uneasiness in the Pedagogical Setting) referred to the categories of uneasiness, affect, and transference in order to understand the subjective processes of discomfort, fear, psychic suffering, guilt, grief, anguish, tachycardia, crying, depression, among others.

Extract from an Educational Memory:

Among so many experiences, I cannot fail to mention my turbulent relationship with my old and hateful 6th grade Portuguese teacher... She was such a bad teacher that she called the students by their number instead of their names. It was with her that I had the first failing grade in my life! I will not say anything else about this creature. Just the thought of her makes me angry. The greatest legacy I have from her was my trauma with grammar. After her, I never learned anything else in this subject. (2016)

Some of the teachers also wrote about transference as responsible for the successes and failures in pedagogical action and the implications of the desire to learn. The concept of transference encompasses the affective-relational ties between teachers and students and their reciprocal effects, affecting them in ambivalent ways.

Extract from an Educational Memory:

For me the Educational Memory has to do with affect. I think it has a lot to do with affect. I think that my Educational Memory was very much linked to my interpersonal relationship and how this constructed my relationship with the subjects taught at school. I think it is self-knowledge as well. It was an exercise in self-knowledge. (2012)

One could say that, in addition to the assumed psychoanalytic knowledge, as opposed to the exposure to academic knowledge, there exists the dimension of the lacunal and incomplete. According to Lacerda Segunda (2011), while writing about themselves, the “authors” start to build a network of signifiers aiming at the weaving of a narrative that is intelligible for themselves and for the other to whom the text is addressed.

Extract from an Educational Memory:

[...] to revisit my memories, what a challenge! A task full of encounters and reencounters with wishes and desires, some accomplished and others frustrated. I run the risk of making mistakes, for memory is a complex place and upon visiting it (...) the differentiation between the actual experience and what is imprinted in the psyche is at stake. (2014)

This raises the following question: In addition to the methodologically proposed transmission of knowledge, doesn't the educational act also transmit something of a different order, which escapes the control of and touches both teachers and students, something of the order of the unconscious subject?

Discussion

As we understand it, the writing of Educational Memories is a device which reveals the historical dimension of the teacher as subject and the vicissitudes of the developmental process, which is important for the understanding of teacher practice and its unconscious dimension. It enables the investigation into the way

in which the teacher as subject is structured, given that this subject starts to be constituted from the first contacts that, as a child, he or she has with school. It is worth noting that a concern with education and the possible contributions of psychoanalysis was clearly expressed by Freud in some of his essays:

But there is one topic which I cannot pass over so easily - not, however, because I understand particularly much about it or have contributed very much to it. Quite the contrary: I have scarcely concerned myself with it at all. I must mention it because it is so exceedingly important, so rich in hopes for the future, perhaps the most important of all the activities of analysis. What I am thinking of is the application of psycho-analysis to education, to the upbringing of the next generation.

(Freud, 1933/2009, p. 307).

None of the applications of psycho-analysis has excited so much interest and aroused so many hopes, and none, consequently, has attracted so many capable workers, as its use in the theory and practice of education.

(Freud, 1925/1980, p. 341)

As a research *object*, the Educational Memory device is at the same time a focus in itself and a means which promotes the retrieval of the subjects' past experiences — experiences that have been significant and have left marks, whether positive or negative. By bringing these memories to the present (conscious), the subject reformulates and attributes meaning to them, reorganizing these experiences and associating them to correlated experiences of the present, including, in a symbolic way, the various actors and roles played in the present and in the past. This could be said to be the mapping of the Educational Memories of the subjects. The result is a map of their symbolic networks of senses and meanings (the thematic axes, the connections, and interconnections).

Over the past few years, our research along these lines has shown that the writing of Educational Memories has provided the subjects with the opportunity to formulate, reformulate, and enjoy a writing space in which they were able to put down their anguish, conflicts, and insecurities. There they deposited their marks— identity traits which are unique for each subject, for each teacher in his or her relationships with students— reediting their experiences, their encounters, their trajectory, their style, and resignifying their practice beyond pedagogical setting in which they work.

As a *method*, the writing of Educational Memories is the guided process which facilitates this retrieval of the subjects' past experiences throughout their educational trajectory. Complementary open-ended interviews may also be used, and an interface with other areas, such as psychodrama, may be pursued as well. In a recent paper, Squarisi (2017) referring to Moreno (1983) points out that psychoanalysis was constituted in order to enable the expression of words and their associations, followed by their analysis and an indirect estimation of the behavior that could be found behind them. Thus, it is also possible to consider that psychodrama was conceived to allow for action and performance in such a way as to make it possible to study the behavior in its concrete form.

In the writing of an Educational Memory, which encompasses both object and method, the subject is empowered and at the same time builds an autonomy in this “praxis” process (reflection-action-reflection) which enables its use not only to focus in a systematic way on the theme itself (educational trajectory and its interrelationships), but also to go deeper, exploring subtopics or even broadening it and using it with an emphasis on other study or research topics.

It should be stressed that this research device does not intend to present prescriptions or to ensure a priori what should be done, whether in the investigative process or in teacher development, for it must first of all be thought of as a possible space for the historicization of the past. It provides the subject with a return to the past which allows for making peace with the child within, in a process of liberation from the straps formed throughout the process of subjective constitution and academic life, and finally being able to *create*.

It is important to remember that the final conclusions must always be seen within the realm of incompleteness and the precarious nature of the human condition of knowledge production. One of the tenets of science is precisely that we are never in possession of the final truth, which means that the conclusions of science are always provisional and that although the results may be valid and accepted, they will never be definitive. This is our view regarding the writing of Educational Memories as a research device.

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