

Autobiographical narrative of a graduate school alumna and formative impacts on her professional development

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Abstract

In this text, the author revisits her master's thesis and doctoral dissertation to understand how her *stricto sensu* graduate school education led to her (trans)formation into the professor-researcher she is today. To that end, an autobiographical narrative of her graduate school experience was chosen with the aim of reflecting on and highlighting the formative impacts perceptible in her professional development. Methodologically, this study is supported by Clandinin and Connelly, who understand that all human beings have stories to tell, for all have lived experience worth sharing. Additionally, it follows Josso, who addresses life and educational experience and the journey toward oneself.

Keywords: autobiographical narrative, teacher professional development, life stories and formation.

Narrativa Autobiográfica de uma egressa da pós-graduação e os impactos formativos em seu desenvolvimento profissional

Resumo

Neste texto, a autora revisita seus trabalhos de conclusão dos cursos de Mestrado e Doutorado visando compreender de que modo sua formação pós-graduada *Stricto Sensu* a (trans)formou na professora-pesquisadora que atualmente é. Para tanto, opta por uma narrativa autobiográfica da experiência vivida na pós-graduação no intuito de refletir e evidenciar os impactos formativos que, atualmente, percebe em seu desenvolvimento profissional. Em termos metodológicos, apoia-se em Clandinin e Connelly, os quais compreendem que todo ser humano tem uma história a narrar, pois vive experiências que merecem ser compartilhadas, e, em Josso, que trata da experiência de vida e formação e o caminhar para si.

Palavras-Chave: Narrativa autobiográfica, Desenvolvimento Profissional Docente, Histórias de Vida e Formação.

Narrativa autobiográfica de una egresada de posgrado y las repercusiones educativas en su desarrollo profesional

Resumen

En este texto, la autora revisa sus tesis de máster y doctorado para comprender cómo su formación de posgrado *Stricto Sensu* la (trans)formó en la profesora e investigadora que es hoy. Para ello, se decide por una narrativa autobiográfica de su experiencia de postgrado con el fin de reflexionar y destacar los impactos educativos que actualmente percibe en su desarrollo profesional. Metodológicamente, sigue a Clandinin y Connelly, que entienden que todo ser humano tiene una historia que contar, porque vive experiencias que merecen ser compartidas, y en Josso, que aborda la experiencia de la vida y de la formación y el viaje hacia uno mismo.

Palabras clave: Narrativa autobiográfica, Desarrollo profesional docente, Historias de vida y formación.

Introduction

Look back to understand life ... then...
face forward to live it.
(Mário Quintana)

As Mário Quintana tells us, looking to the past to understand life can help us find an explanation for meanings we place on present actions and recognize ourselves as persons who, along with others, build a personal and professional history enriched by intersections. Recalling lived experience makes sense of and gives meaning to our current stance as teacher educators and teacher-researchers.

The invitation I received in 2024 to participate in the Education Seminar – SemiEdu, with the theme “Teacher education in focus: challenges and perspectives”, strongly drew my attention as I was at that time completing three decades of teaching activity as a teacher educator in teacher certification programs and as a professor-researcher in this field at the State University of Mato Grosso (Universidade do Estado de Mato Grosso - UNEMAT).

The invitation was to participate in the round-table discussion “Research in Teacher Education: The Practice of PPGE/UFMT Alumni”, which was extended to me as a 20-year alumna of the Graduate Studies Program in Education (Programa de Pós-graduação em Educação - PPGE) of the Federal University of Mato Grosso (Universidade Federal do Mato Grosso - UFMT). From that point on, I began to reflect on how my life and ideas regarding teacher education have been (trans)formed over the years, who I used to be, who I was, and who I am now. This invitation made me reflect on my educational formation and retrieved memories I held and that I occasionally share with the *stricto sensu* graduate students I advise as a way

of saying “it all passes, it’s all normal, and, in the end, it all works out.” Therefore, it is from this invitation and its theme that I write this article.

I studied for my Master’s degree in Education at the Institute of Education (Instituto de Educação - IE) of UFMT, in the PPGE, from 2003 to 2006. My area of concentration was Pedagogical Theories and Practices for School Education, in the research line “Education and Sciences”, with an emphasis on Math Education. The title of my master’s thesis was “*Learning from the Teaching Practice of the Math Teacher Educator*” (“*Aprendizagem da Docência do Professor Formador de Educadores Matemáticos*”), under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Marta Maria Pontin Darsie. It should be noted that when I entered the program, I was already a teacher educator at UNEMAT, working in the Mathematics Teacher Certification Program at the Sinop-MT Campus.

Consequently, teacher education is more than a research topic for me. It is a life legacy, for when I look back to understand life, I see that over three decades of work in higher education, I have helped to educate many teachers and, along the way, I was educated, for “the act of educating is always the act of being educated” (Nóvoa, 2010, p. 25).

Along the way, the experiences I’ve had as an alumna, both in teaching and in (self)formation, have been fundamental in the transformation of my educational journey.

In this context, as an alumna of a graduate studies program, my purpose in this article is to discuss how my academic formation (trans)formed my professional development as a teacher educator and professor-researcher.

I chose the academic path through the understanding that, upon entering the Master’s in Education program at UFMT, I already had a background that led me to want to be there. Consequently, I anchor myself on qualitative research in a narrative style using an autobiographical approach, understanding that narrative research constitutes a three-

dimensional space. In this case, my personal and professional history is interconnected with the following experiences: in the past, those acquired in my formative process; in the present, those I have acquired through university teaching as a teacher educator; and in future expectations, with the contributions that reflection on my life history can provide. That is because narrative research is the study of how human beings experience the world, for “[...] education is the construction and reconstruction of personal and social stories; learners, teachers, and researchers are storytellers and characters in their own and others’ stories.” (Connelly; Clandinin, 2008, p. 11).

A life history is the narrative that each person constructs of themselves. It is the worldview that each one transmits to others; “[...] the subject who weaves themselves in the act of narrating themselves, explains themselves and gives signs, in their interpretative plot, for understanding the context in which they are constituting themselves” (Garnica, 2003, p. 16), so as to filter, or not, the events in their memory and construct the narratives, showing how they lived out the experience.

Experience is understood as “something that is exercised, practiced, and in which one is a subject” (Ventura; Cruz, 2019, p. 438), and in it, people find themselves. At times, they are surprised by what they find and do not recognize themselves, and they must reconstruct, reinterpret, and remake themselves (Larrosa, 2003). Experiences are stories that people live; people live stories, and upon telling these stories, they reaffirm themselves, change themselves, and create new stories. Stories lived and told educate us and others (Clandinin; Connelly, 2015).

In light of the above, I have structured this article into sections. In the first part, I outline the method used to narrate my academic and professional path in order to answer the following question: how have my life experiences been lived, perceived, and interpreted in relation to my graduate studies education that made me an alumna of the PPGE of UFMT and later of the

PhD program at UFRGS? In the second part, I discuss the three axes that give meaning to this perspective of autobiographical narrative research and demarcate my position in the writing process under the understanding that we human beings construct ourselves and our reality through narratives (Conelly; Clandinin, 1995).

The present manuscript offers a narrative thread that is not imposed on readers, but rather allows them to establish their own meanings and connections, inviting them to reflect on their own experience. My intention aligns with Connelly and Clandinin's perspective on narrative inquiry: "tell a story that allows others to tell their own" (Hernández, 2017, p. 53). This constitutes a researcher-researched-reader relationship that provides the reader with possibilities for completing the account (Hernández, 2017).

Research as narrative: mapping pathways and meanings from experience

I should clarify that I did not choose the research method; rather, due to the message I wish to convey through this text, I may say that it chose me.

As perceived by Souza, Martins, and Tourinho (2017, p. 13), "narratives are constituted within experience as acts of training and transformation from episodes that, upon elaboration, produce diverse temporalities, new meanings, and other life stories". Thus, upon constructing narratives, I recognized the possibility of sharing my academic and professional life story and showing how my *stricto sensu* graduate studies episodes (trans)formed me and impacted my professional development. Therefore, this is an autobiographical writing, and is "in itself, an epistemological space of inquiry" such that

the narrative process of an autobiography may have its starting point in the present, but one must not avoid reconstructing a past that looks toward the present and toward the future. This dialogue

between temporal moments in the experiences of subjects who narrate (themselves) is fundamental in an autobiographical account written within the scope of research. (Hernández, 2017, p. 59-60)

In this case, I start from the present as a teacher educator from universities where I developed research in both my Master's in Education at UFMT and PhD in Education at the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul - UFRGS). I have 30 years of experience working in mathematics teacher education and I have advised master's and PhD research in the PPGEdu, with a focus on mathematics teacher education. In other words, in this spatial and temporal framework, my *stricto sensu* graduate studies took place, first in my master's degree, completed in 2006, and then in a PhD in Education at UFRGS, which began in 2010, four years after completing my master's. In 2010, I was still considered an alumna of the Master's in Education at UFMT, as the Brazilian agency for coordination of higher education (Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior - CAPES) considers "alumni" as those who complete their *stricto sensu* graduate studies within the five years prior to the year of reference.

Between these two research programs — master's and PhD — further common elements occurred: a focus on mathematics teacher education at UNEMAT, teacher certification programs, and university professorship within my own professional context, at each respective time.

In this regard, I refer to the studies in each program — thesis and dissertation — through fragments written in each period. From the master's thesis, I include a section titled "Origins of the problematic of research development" under the subsection "Paths and detours of a professional life and the origins of the problematic" (Bitencourt, 2006). Furthermore, from Chapter 2 of the dissertation, entitled "Origins of the investigation", I revisit my professional trajectory, where I considered my professional

development, spanning all the educational formation I received in the Master's in Education at UFMT (Bitencourt, 2014).

In this case, the educational formation time is continuous and not limited, as "time becomes human time to the extent that it is organized in a narrative manner; narrative, in turn, is meaningful to the extent that it portrays the features of temporal experience" (Ricoeur, 2010, p. 09). For that reason, from my present perspective, I articulate the master's and PhD experiences to show how these studies impacted my professional development.

In this direction, I seek to investigate my university teaching practice and the impacts it has generated over my career of nearly 30 years through a reflective autobiographical narrative. Along this trajectory, I have held positions in graduate studies programs, master's and PhD, and I underwent (trans)formation, characterizing contexts, possibilities, and challenges of a university professor, developing my professional identity, which is not fixed or in a finished state, but is permanently being constructed. I believe it is consistent with this task to narrate, in a reflective manner, my history/experience and my motivations for continuing to research, for I have investigated the teacher certification programs in mathematics of UNEMAT; specifically, in my master's, the teacher certification program in mathematics at the Sinop campus, and in my PhD, the teacher certification program in mathematics of the same university, but at the Cáceres campus.

According to Pineau (1999, p. 331), in a reflective autobiographical narrative, the goal is for a person, upon writing, to carry out a reflective return to their "trajectory, as a basis for a research-action-training project".

Another criterion that led me to write from the autobiographical narrative perspective is that "it is not a celebratory narration of the self's experience, but rather a way to establish relationships, reveal connections, and contribute to the field of study that we propose to explore. Autobiographical accounts go beyond themselves, allowing one to question

different aspects connected with their relationship with changes in a group of university professors” (Hernández, 2017, p. 58).

Reflective Autobiographical Narrative

I emphasize that, in both my master’s and my PhD, the research objects have an origin in common – investigation of the academic formation of the mathematics teacher in teacher certification programs of the same university where I worked as a teacher educator in each respective period.

I also highlight that I completed my entire program as a certified mathematics teacher at the beginning of the 1990s, when importance was placed on “knowing mathematics”, giving greater emphasis to mathematical content, without a concern for relating this content to the development of didactic-pedagogical knowledge. That reinforced what I had wanted at that time, as well as the perception I had of mathematics: mathematics for mathematics’ sake, as an instrument for achieving an end. I now realize that my education followed the model of technical rationality, which

Is based on an objectivist view of the relationship of knowledge professionals with the reality they know. In this view, facts are what they are, and the truth of beliefs can be tested strictly in reference to these facts. All significant disagreements are resolvable, at least in principle, by using the facts as a reference point. All professional knowledge is based on a foundation of facts. (Schön, 2000, p. 39)

Within this framework, teachers develop their work through the application of theory and technique derived from systematic and scientific knowledge. The same author states that technical rationality is grounded in positivist philosophy, which leads to a dichotomy between theory and practice; action is implementation of technique, reducing the teacher to a mere specialized technician. I, alongside many other teacher educators, my professional colleagues, graduated under this model. Thus, I entered into

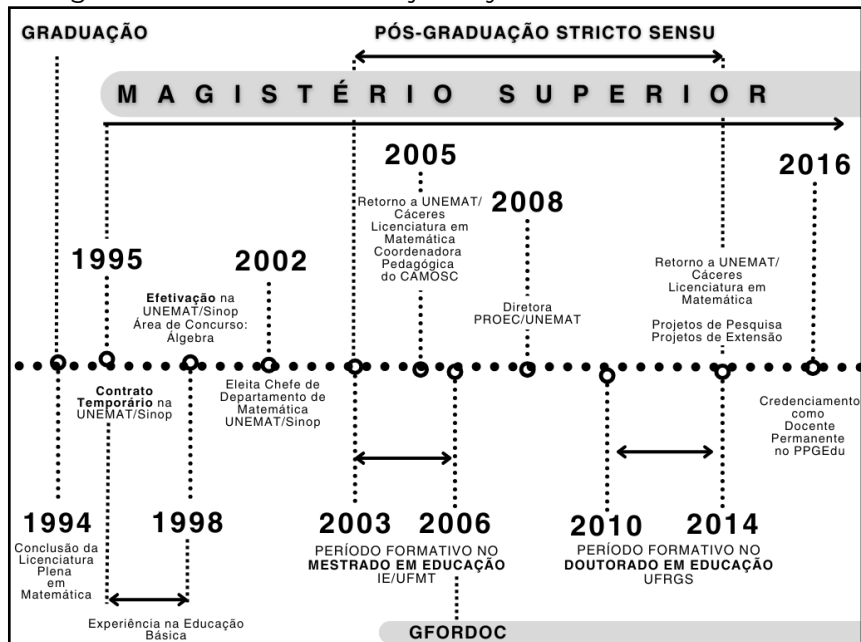
the higher education faculty at UNEMAT, hired to teach courses connected with Pure and Applied Mathematics, such as Algebra, Calculus, Statistics, etc.

On the timeline of my academic trajectory (Figure 1, below), I trace my route of academic formation from undergraduate studies to *strictu sensu* graduate studies, which constituted my professional development as a university professor. I agree with Josso (2004, p. 39) when she states that

what constitutes formative experiences is the learning that hierarchically articulates: know-how and knowledge, functionality and meaning, techniques and values in a space-time that offers each individual the opportunity of presence to oneself and to the situation, through mobilization of a plurality of registers.

In Josso's (2004, p. 39) view, the autobiographical approach to formative experiences allows for "an interaction of representations of know-how and of the frameworks that serve to describe and understand oneself in one's natural environment". Thus, in this autobiographical writing, I select "reference recollections" that, as Josso assures, serve as milestones on one's trajectory and as parameters for what follows in life. Therefore, I use a narrative based on the timeline outlined in Figure 1 as it allows one to "make explicit the uniqueness, and with it, glimpse the universal and perceive the procedural character of education and life, organizing spaces, times, and the different dimensions of ourselves in search of a wisdom of life" (Josso, 2004, p. 9).

Figure 1: Timeline of the Trajectory of Academic Formation

Source: autoria própria, 2025¹.

As shown in Figure 1, I began my academic trajectory in undergraduate studies in 1995, which came to constitute 30 years of profession in higher education at UNEMAT. I joined the institution as a higher education professor without experience in education or in life, recently graduated and at a young age. UNEMAT was the site of my first teaching job, soon after completing my undergraduate studies, and in and through that institution, I became a university professor, developing myself professionally day by day. In 1998, I passed the competitive public examination of exams and credentials for the higher education professorship of that university, becoming a permanent professor in the area of algebra and taking on a full-time commitment. This was initiated through my coordination of an extension project entitled “Center for Information Technology in Education: Logo Language (CIELL)”, which aimed at continuing education of public and private school teachers in the field of Information Technology in Education.

In addition, it is important to highlight the formative experience of my being elected in 2002 to head the Mathematics Department at UNEMAT/Sinop. This offered an opportunity to look in a broader way upon the education of a mathematics teacher and direct attention to the dilemmas of other teacher educators, my colleagues, who entered the higher education faculty just as I had, recently graduated, with no prior experience in higher education. In my master's thesis, I refer to this experience.

[...] I was elected as Head of the Mathematics Department. This was a significant opportunity to develop other forms of knowledge, and it had a decisive influence *a posteriori* on defining my research object [research theme of my Master's in Education at UFMT]. Within this role, I had the opportunity to witness firsthand, along with other professors, what I had already experienced. I was able to observe that recently graduated teachers, alumni of the teacher certification course in mathematics of Sinop, perhaps due to their rapport with and trust in their former professors upon entering in the university as teacher educators, sought guidance from the Department Head and from other fellow teacher educators to reflect on their initial difficulties and request mentorship. From this experience, questions arose once more in my professional journey: should the university have a mentorship program for these professors at the beginning of their careers in higher education? Where did we, teacher educators, learn how to be educators? Does initial teacher education influence this? If it does, would it be fitting for initial teaching degree programs to have "teach how to teach" content that is dealt with in higher education? (Bitencourt, 2006, p. 19)

Currently, reflecting on my records from the past, I realize that it was as the department head that I began to feel the need to leave my comfort zone, outside of the specific courses of Pure and Applied Mathematics, and perceive mathematics teacher education in a holistic and relational manner. In other words, as important as knowing the content of mathematics is the way of teaching it to primary and secondary education students. For that reason, the need arose to think of another teacher education model.

In my doctoral dissertation, I also referred to this moment:

At the beginning of 2002, I was elected Head of the Mathematics Department at Sinop, and this experience was also of utmost importance for the development of other types of teaching knowledge (TARDIF, 2002), such as curricular, disciplinary, and professional knowledge, among others, which decisively influenced *a posteriori* definition of the research object for my master's degree. In this management role, I was able to see the program from another angle and deepen my knowledge of the Pedagogical Policy Project (PPP) of the program and discuss the initial teacher education curriculum of mathematics teachers for primary and secondary education. At that time, Opinion no. 009/2001-CNE/CP regarding the National Curricular Guidelines for Teacher Education in Primary and Secondary Education (BRASIL, 2001a) was issued, with subsequent passage of Resolution no. 001/2002 - CNE/CP, which established the National Curricular Guidelines for Primary and Secondary Education Teacher Training (BRASIL, 2002) at the higher education level for a certified teacher degree. In 2001, Opinion no. 1.302/2001- CNE/CES regarding the National Curricular Guidelines for undergraduate mathematics programs, both Bachelor's and Teaching Degrees (BRASIL, 2001b), was also issued. As I was in a management role, I observed the teacher educators, their dilemmas, and their constant searches even more explicitly. I realized that these educators can be the subjects of their own professional development, providing differentiated meanings to each lived situation, for these shape life trajectories with their own pathways, which influence a collective effort in constructing an educational project. I also observed the isolation of individuals, the result of a fragmented curriculum, as well as the gap between the teaching practice of these educators and the reality of primary and secondary education. (Bitencourt, 2014, p. 27)

In the above record, I identify that in my dissertation, I incorporate the knowledge constituted in my Master's in Education, when I studied "The Learning of Teaching" and how teaching knowledge is mobilized for teacher education for primary and secondary schooling. Here I cite reflection for the time of collective discussions regarding curricular readjustment and development of another curriculum for teacher education. In the reflection of Josso (2004), "the educational process is known through the challenges and wagers born from the dialectic between the individual condition and the collective condition". In writing my doctoral dissertation, I already had more elements for recognizing the educational experience in a management role as a space that influenced my professional development and acquired new meaning over time and through reflections, for "experiences spoken of from reference recollections that constitute

educational narratives tell not what life taught them, but what was learned experientially within the circumstances of life” (Josso, 2004, p. 43).

Origins of the problematic of study at each moment of *strictu sensu* graduate studies

In my master’s thesis, I identify that I ascribed meaning to the initial academic formation of mathematics teachers based on my observations at that time, drawing on all the formative experiences I had already lived and reflected on.

It can be noted that the initial education developed in teacher certification programs in mathematics does not foster preparation for teaching in higher education, as its purpose is to prepare future teachers for work in basic education, that is, for work in primary and/or secondary school. Thus, it seems to me that teachers who graduated with a certified teacher degree in mathematics or another undergraduate degree “learn” to be teacher educators in higher education through the day-to-day work in which they perform their teaching practice at that educational level. For within my work as a teacher educator in the mathematics program, I was able to observe the hiring of fully certified mathematics teachers who as recent graduates from the university went directly into teaching as teacher educators. However, they had a particular characteristic; these students were and some still are teachers in basic education, in contrast with my experience. (Bitencourt, 2006, p. 17-18)

From my management role, I justified my research intention, mapping out the research problem discussed collectively in the research group that I too had joined:

Upon entering the Master’s in Education program at I.E [...] UFMT [...], I was interested in researching “Educational Information Technology in Teacher Formation”. This topic drew my attention because of my experience with educational information technology that began in my initial training in mathematics and continued in a project developed at UNEMAT – [...] with basic education teachers from public and private schools, particularly from the municipality of Sinop and region. [...] However, upon reflecting with colleagues in the weekly meetings of the GRUEPEM/UFMT [...] regarding the professional paths of each member of the group and participating in

the courses offered by the graduate studies program, I found that something stirred me more than the discussion on educational information technology and awakened my attention regarding the training of mathematics teachers. [...] It is from this reflection on my personal and professional life path that the object of research began to be constructed. (Bitencourt, 2006, p. 16-17)

At that time, I had experience in university extension work or outreach, coordinating activities of the extension project – Center for Information Technology in Education: Logo Language (CIELL), which aimed at continuing education of public and private school teachers in the field of information technology in education. Along with that, I had the experience of coordinating the teacher certification course that became the research locus of my master's degree. I now realize that the methodology used in the research group was reflective and subject-centered, enabling a journey toward the self, as suggested by Josso (2004).

In my PhD, I locate the origin of my research problem within the educational experiences I accumulated throughout the course of professional development. I discuss teacher education at the university, training in undergraduate programs (teacher certification programs and bachelor degrees), and the education of teachers who train other professionals. I position myself in the educational process and as part of the history of the university, reflect upon it:

[...] Over the last 20 years, UNEMAT has established itself as a university [...]. This institutional development is interwoven with my professional trajectory; by the end of 2013, I will have completed 19 years since concluding a CLPM [full certification program in mathematics education] at a university from the South region of Brazil, and in March of that same year, I completed 18 years of dedication to UNEMAT. Therefore, my years of work at this university merge with the years in which I have established myself as a professor. In my professional trajectory, I have witnessed and participated in the strengthening of this institution. Throughout these years of work, I have undertaken graduate studies *lato sensu* and *stricto sensu*: a specialization program in mathematical modeling through an UNEMAT/UNICAMP partnership, which I finished in 1998, and *stricto sensu* graduate studies, first my Master's in Education through the PPGE at the Federal University of Mato Grosso (UFMT) and currently, I am in the

process of completing my DINTER [interinstitutional doctoral program] in Education.

Everything that I now am professionally was done at UNEMAT and I work to strengthen it as a university higher education institution. In it, I learn each new day to be a university educator, certifying other teachers for work in basic education and some even for work at UNEMAT itself. [...]

In the movement of constituting myself as an educator, I understood that my own education occurs in the professional dynamics of development of this profession and that, in this flow, a route was established and in it my professional identity was sculpted as “a place of struggles and conflicts, [...] as a space of constructing ways of being and of existing in the profession” (NÓVOA, 2000, p. 16). A non-linear and constant construction and, indeed, a pathway of steps forward and backward, of gains and losses, of joys and sorrows. (Bitencourt, 2014, p. 22-23)

I began to reflect on the institutional trajectory in relation to my own university and professional path. This may have been due to the nature of the Inter-institutional Doctoral Program, in which a more established university undertakes the qualification of the faculty of a newer university, and as an in-service program, a period of study leave from the newer institution is split into steps of completing course credits at the host university (in this case UFRGS) and later of writing the dissertation. Furthermore, I was participating in the research line “University: Theory and Practice” and in the University Studies Research Group (GEU/UFRGS). However, I must also consider that in daily educational activity, we redefine ourselves day by day; we are (trans)formed through all these experiences, resulting in continuous professional development.

The constructions and deconstructions that I encountered along my professional trajectory were interwoven, bringing meaning to lived experience as a university professor within an interactional space, leading me to corroborate the view of Tardif and Lessard (2005, p. 8) that “teaching is a profession of human interactions” and that it is “understood as a particular form of work on human beings, that is, an activity in which workers dedicate themselves to their work ‘object’, which is precisely another human being” (TARDIF; LESSARD, 2005, p. 9). This, in my understanding, has repercussions on teachers, their knowledge, their identity, and their professional experiences. This fact motivated me to propose research that perceives the other as someone vital to teacher education, conceiving that “teaching knowledge is social knowledge, for [...] it is shared by an entire group

of agents – teachers” (TARDIF, 2002, p. 12-13). This author considers that the representations of a teacher gain meaning within the collective, where the teacher works with subjects in order to transform them, which constitutes teaching practice.

I have come to perceive the other as part of the development process; within this path of education and action, this perception originates beginning with my initial pre-training in lived experience as a student in basic education. At that time, the mathematics teachers I remember conceived of and taught mathematics as absolute truths, as a finished and ready-made subject, as a technique for solving mathematical problems. These conceptions were “passed on” to their students, which consequently ended up influencing how students perceived this science. They thereby had the view that teaching mathematics was nothing more than simply presenting content and then “applying” countless repetitive exercises so that students would memorize them to do well on tests. Unfortunately, this manner of understanding mathematics is not a thing of the past, but rather still occurs in the teaching activity I observe both at the university and in schools of basic education. (Bitencourt, 2014, p. 24)

In the above account, one can perceive the value I attributed to lived experience, to meanings assigned to the educational process and to experiences that are reflected upon, processed, and that come to (trans)form us in establishing new conceptions regarding mathematics, mathematics education, teacher education, etc.

Reflecting upon my lived experience and on being an alumna of two *strictu sensu* graduate studies programs, my master’s and PhD, I realize that both were important formative spaces that impacted my entire educational path. The two research projects I developed were decisive for my accreditation in 2016 as a permanent faculty member in the Graduate Studies Program in Education (PPGEdu) at UNEMAT in the research line “Teacher Education, Policies, and Pedagogical Practices”, with 16 master’s theses concluded and 4 in progress, most of which focus on higher education faculty development. I am also accredited as a permanent faculty member in the Graduate Studies Program in Science and Mathematics Education (PPGECM) of the Amazon Network for Science and Mathematics Education (REAMEC), at the UFMT campus, where I am completing supervision of my first doctoral student.

In 2024, I was elected coordinator of the PPGEdu after having coordinated preparation of the new doctoral program proposal (APCN-PhD in Education), approved at the end of 2024. The first doctoral studies group is being implemented under my management, in which I have an advisee. I am a professor-researcher accredited as a permanent faculty member in a Graduate Studies Program in Education at UNEMAT, the university that has welcomed me and invested in me; and with it and in it I have a history. This history includes much of my lived experience as a *strictu sensu* graduate studies student of UFMT and UFRGS. From these institutions and in the educational processes developed there, I acquired the necessary knowledge to continue my trajectory. The knowledge and learning in these educational spaces have constituted me and have constructed my story of formation and transformation.

Final Considerations

As expected, a reflective autobiographical narrative is no easy task. It is a movement of many steps forward and backward, of many readings, rereadings, and reflections trying to find answers to the whys of past times lived and narrated, and record them as I did. Truly, it is an encounter with a lack of encounter within myself. The challenge was to present the senses and meanings that I, as a subject, constructed and reconstructed as I experienced the act of narrating, reflecting, writing, and narrating.

Upon narrating, I reorganized my own history, recreating bonds of meaning and coherence for events and occurrences that marked my life, as well as for those that remain masked to me, as I may not yet be able to interpret them.

In the preface to Marie-Christine Josso's book "Experiências de Vida e Formação" (Life Experiences and Formation), Nóvoa poses the question: who educates the educator? And he responds:

educators are trained through a reflection on their personal and professional paths (self-formation); educators are trained in relationship to others, in a shared learning process that appeals to consciousness, feelings, and emotions (hetero-formation); educators are trained through things (knowledge, techniques, cultures, arts, technologies) and through their critical understanding of them (eco-formation). (Nóvoa, 2004, p. 16)

The exercise of revisiting the formative lived experiences of *stricto sensu* graduate studies (master's and PhD) and writing, from the position of an alumna of these programs, a reflective autobiographical narrative based on the record of both final research studies allowed me to draw nearer to myself and... become a better educator in the constant process of learning.

Upon revisiting my final research studies from my master's and PhD, I realized that my *stricto sensu* graduate studies educational trajectory transformed me into the professor-researcher I am today, an eternal learner who trains other subjects and is transformed in the act of training others, that is, someone who is constantly learning within the art of teaching. Actually, I participated in a new internal selection process at UNEMAT in 2017 to change my field of selection, from Algebra to Mathematics Education. As a result of all my professional development and *strictu sensu* graduate studies, it no longer made sense to me to remain in a field of knowledge with which I no longer identified.

Reflection on lived experience from the perspective of the present allows me to confirm that all I experienced after entering a Master's in Education program at I.E/UFMT greatly impacted the entire trajectory of my professional development as a researcher-educator.

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