

The work changes in the COVID-19 pandemic: a “positive reading” of the ways in which beginner teachers face changes

ABSTRACT

During the implementation of the most recent reforms, the COVID-19 pandemic occurred, which led to the replacement of face-to-face teaching by remote teaching. In this new work context, beginner teachers were the most affected due to the lack of training for distance education and also for the implementation of the new curricular base. For this reason, the present study sought to hear five teachers in probationary training, from the public network of the State of Mato Grosso, to understand how they confronted and managed the changes imposed by the pandemic. The qualitative and exploratory study was developed using the technique of self-confrontation, supported by the Clinical Activity Theory, and the answers to two questions, namely “how was the experience of recording a class” and “what are the visible and invisible working conditions in the video that led you to carry out the activity as you did” were analyzed using the “positive reading” approach. In summary, the study revealed, on the one hand, the lack of technological conditions for both students and teachers, and on the other, a strong assertive reaction on the part of the five teachers in the face of changes and also a sensitive attitude towards the other (parents and children) more fragile and vulnerable. With this, the study concluded that these beginner teachers are people who were formed with predominant values such as solidarity that are part of the ideals of the New Republic, but today they are exactly between the old and the new education reforms.

KEYWORDS: COVID-19 pandemic. Beginner teacher. Remote teaching.

Izumi Nozaki

izumi.nozaki@gmail.com
[0000-0003-2732-3988](tel:0000-0003-2732-3988)

Universidade Federal de Mato Grosso,
Cuiabá, Mato Grosso, Brasil.

Eliseu Pichitelli

epichitelli@yahoo.com.br
[0000-0002-4097-8754](tel:0000-0002-4097-8754)

Universidade Kanda de Estudos
Internacionais, Wakaba, Chiba, Japão.

**Claudio Jose Santana de
Figueiredo**

claudio.figueiredo.san@gmail.com
[0000-0002-8835-609X](tel:0000-0002-8835-609X)

Universidade Federal de Mato Grosso,
Cuiabá, Mato Grosso, Brasil.

Itamar Jose Bressan

itamarbressan@gmail.com
[0000-0001-9888-1835](tel:0000-0001-9888-1835)

Secretaria de Estado de Educação de
Mato Grosso, Cuiabá, Mato Grosso,
Brasil.

Rinalda Bezerra Carlos

rinalda@unemat.br
[0000-0003-4515-4196](tel:0000-0003-4515-4196)

Universidade do Estado de Mato Grosso,
Cáceres, Mato Grosso, Brasil.

INTRODUCTION

The end of the military dictatorship regime and the implantation of the state of democracy, since 1985, Brazil began the process of redemocratization with broad popular participation, which ended with the promulgation of the Federal Constitution of 1988, known as the Citizen Constitution due to the rights that it started to guarantee to Brazilian people. Despite being characterized by being largely democratic and liberal, its enactment is a milestone in the country's history as it initiated numerous changes. In education, for example, the newest Constitution advocated equality, freedom and pluralism, and promoted the implementation of a set of educational reforms aimed at universalizing access to school, combating school failure and promoting social equity.

Almost three decades later, when analyzing the effects of the implemented reforms, Brazil showed some progress, but still many challenges, especially with regard to the low performance of students. To face this problem, the country drew up the National Education Plan – PNE for the period 2014-2024, which highlights two major goals: to promote the quality of basic education (Target 7) and ensure the national policy for training education professionals (Target 15). In order to meet these goals, two educational reforms were approved: in 2018, the Common National Curriculum Base – BNCC and, in 2019, the new Guidelines for the training of Basic Education teachers.

Amid the implementation of the most recent reforms focused on student learning and teacher qualification, in 2020, a global pandemic broke out, that of COVID-19, which caused a great impact on education in the country. Given the dangerousness of the situation, the first step was to announce social distancing and, therefore, interrupt classroom teaching in schools. In this context, teachers were faced with the impediment to interact directly with students in the classroom, and also the urgency of devising a way of teaching at a distance using all the resources at their disposal, including technology that was not yet of their domain neither of their students.

In a situation of modified work, without training to develop distance learning and with pedagogical regulations not previously studied, and also without emergency preparation and resources previously provided for remote teaching, teachers at the beginning of their careers found themselves in a situation of extreme vulnerability. These are newly hired teachers, who have undergone a given training and who are now required to perform their profession differently from the training received.

More than that. If senior or permanent teachers from the public school system were taken by the unexpected event of the pandemic and had no prior preparation for remote teaching, they had, in their favor, the accumulated teaching experience and the prerogative of continuing education for the implementation of the BNCC. On the other hand, beginner teachers, in 2020, did not have prior knowledge of how to implement the BNCC, nor did they have any teaching experience, and were depending on the provision of specific continuing education by the management bodies. These people are, in fact, sons of the New Republic, workers at the beginning of their careers, experiencing a time of twist in educational measures in the midst of a pandemic outbreak; therefore, they are people who, at this moment, are in a state of indefensibility and at a great disadvantage. This is the reason why the importance and urgency of conducting the study at this time is justified.

The present study, therefore, sought to listen to these people in order to understand what happens when there is a displacement of the work of teaching as a consequence of a pandemic, and to analyze the choices for facing changes in light of the implemented educational reforms.

Taking as a principle the Freirean perspective that historical intentionality consists in rescuing the history of the subjects involved in a discussion, this article presents, in its first topic, the history of Brazilian reforms in order to briefly show the trajectory of government policies from the end of the military intervention, which had a direct impact on the school career of these beginner teachers. In this way, it is understood that to rescue part of the history of the studied teachers, it is necessary to rescue part of the history of education in the country. After all, the Marxist view shows us that these teachers are real individuals, with material conditions of existence, and in the course of history.

This article also dedicates part of its structure to describe each municipality of origin of the participating teachers. This description has its due importance due to the geographical position of these municipalities within the state of Mato Grosso. Also, because the material conditions of existence of the study teachers are determined by the context in which they live, which, in general, are contexts that are located outside the capital, in predominantly rural regions, and with specific needs that are not met in the same way and quickly as they occur in large urban centers.

Finally, it is worth clarifying here that this study is part of an ongoing research project, which methodological choice includes allo- and self-confrontation techniques and involves other participants besides the teachers. However, in this article, in particular, the results of the allo-confrontation will not be presented, since the objective here is to expose part of the data provided by the participating teachers, in order to understand the beginner teacher by the beginner teacher, and not by the other subjects involved.

CONTEXTUALIZATION OF THE HISTORY OF BRAZILIAN EDUCATIONAL REFORMS: A BRIEF SUMMARY

According to Soares (1995), the discourse in favor of popular education in Brazil is old. In 1882, that is, 60 years after the country's independence, Rui Barbosa denounced the precariousness of education for the people and presented proposals to multiply schools and improve the quality of education.

One hundred years later, in 1982, when the Brazilian government applied a methodology to identify educational indicators using census data, it was found a failure rate from the 1st to the 2nd grade of 52.5% (RIBEIRO, 1991).

Due to the persistence of low results of Brazilian students over the following years, and due to the end of military intervention and the opening of the country to broad political democratization, in 1990, Brazil participated in the World Conference on Education for All and assumed the commitment to provide basic education to all children, youth and adults, to improve its quality, and to take effective measures to reduce inequalities (UNESCO, 1998).

Brazil, since then, started to implement several educational policies and reforms, starting with the 1993-2003 Decennial Plan, where the Brazilian

government insisted on highlighting that one of its guiding axes was the reorganization of the Quality and Equity binomial.

In 1994, the Basic Education Assessment System was created in order to keep up with the quality of education at the national level. In 1996, the new Law of Guidelines and Bases of Education (Lei de Diretrizes e Bases da Educação – LDB) was enacted, which determined that, from then onwards, to work in early childhood education and in the first four grades of elementary school, the teacher must have a minimum education at a higher level, in degree courses, full graduation, in universities and higher education institutes (Art. 62); that primary education must be on-site, with distance learning being used in special situations (Art. 32), and that curricula must have a common national basis (Art. 26).

In order to comply with Art. 26 of the new LDB, which deals with curricula, in 1997, the National Curriculum Parameters – PCN were created, and in 1998, the National Curriculum Reference for Early Childhood Education - RCNEI, both of a guiding nature, respecting, above all, the autonomy of the teacher and regionalities.

To meet the new LDB/1996 regarding teacher training in the early years of Basic Education, in 2006, the National Council of Education ratified the National Curriculum Guidelines for the Undergraduate Course in Pedagogy, which abolished the purpose of training specialists in Education, including school directors, educational advisors, school supervisors and teaching inspectors (SAVIANI, 2009), and determined that 2,800 hours of the course (out of a total of 3,200 hours) were allocated to classes, seminars, research and practical activities (SCHEIBE, 2007). As can be seen, this is a teacher training model that emphasizes general training, curriculum flexibility and curriculum dynamics.

To assess the impacts of educational reforms, the Brazilian government relies on various national and international regulatory mechanisms. According to the Education for All in Brazil Report (2014) and the Brazilian Yearbook of Basic Education (2013), if data from 1989 indicated that 82.2% of the school-age population were enrolled in school, that only 15.3 % of children from 0 to 6 years old were served by Early Childhood Education, and the illiteracy rate remained around 18.8%, in 2013, the universalization of pre-school was close, the enrollment rate of children from 7 to 14 years old reached 94.6%, and the percentage of public sector teachers with higher education reached 74.5%. With regard to the failure rate, however, while in Elementary School it fell by 7.7%, in High School it increased by 81.9%.

In 2018, the government observed that the improvement in the performance of students in the SAEB had been very timid, and that the projected target for the IDEB (Basic Education Development Index) for the period 2013-2017 had not been achieved; also, that the improvement in the *Programme for International Student Assessment* – PISA was far below the minimum value, and that Brazil was positioned among the last places in the world ranking (INEP, 2018).

In view of the post-reform results, the government judged that the challenge of school learning still persisted, especially in secondary education, when students are preparing to enter college. Thus, at the end of 2018, it approved the Common National Curriculum Base - BNCC, which replaced the PCNs and the Curriculum References, characterizing itself as a mandatory normative document that regulates the essential learning to be carried out in Brazilian schools. This

document, therefore, of a compulsory nature, seeks equity supported by uniformity.

Under the understanding that the BNCC builds a national consensus on the essential learning of students, the National Council of Education then argued that it was necessary to develop in teachers a set of professional skills in order to qualify them so that they could put into practice what was provided for in the BNCC (PARECER CNE/CP No. 22/2019).

In view of this, in 2019, the National Curriculum Guidelines for the Undergraduate Course in Pedagogy (Resolution CNE/CP No. 01/2006) were replaced by the National Curriculum Guidelines for Initial Teacher Training for Basic Education (Resolution CNE/CP No. 02/2019). The new document determines that Pedagogy courses will devote half of their workload to learning and pedagogical mastery of the specific contents of BNCC's areas, components, thematic units and objects of knowledge. And it established the deadline for the courses to adapt to the new Resolution until December 2022. It can be said, therefore, that this is a model of teacher training that, unlike the previous one, privileges the contents and the pedagogical-didactic preparation for the teaching of specific contents.

With this new regulation, future teachers would be trained, compulsorily from 2022, for teaching based on the BNCC, although the same BNCC had already been in force in schools since 2019. That said, teachers working in the profession from 2018 onwards, develop their teaching work regulated by the BNCC, even if they have not been prepared for this purpose.

In the midst of the BNCC implementation process in schools and the new teacher training guidelines at universities, in March 2020, when the worldwide pandemic outbreak of COVID-19 occurred, distance learning was authorized (LDB Art. 32, 1996). And so, teachers who graduated from Pedagogy courses prepared for on-site teaching, suddenly had to think about their teaching work anchored in the new document - the BNCC, and more, at a distance.

In view of the emergency situation, in April 2020, the Department of Education of the State of Mato Grosso made available pedagogical activities for students, and throughout the year, approved technical standards for enrollment, establishment of sanitary measures, etc. In January 2021, it published the Pedagogical Guideline No. 001/2021/SAGE/SEDUC-MATO GROSSO containing proposals for planning classes and pedagogical activities.

Regarding the planning of classes, the document guides teachers to identify the situations evidenced regarding the number of correct answers and incorrect answers in the skills assessed by curricular component and prepare interventional propositions, paying attention to the propositions listed in the document's annex and to the object of knowledge of each skill assessed, as well as the process of progression of skills, both in the aspect of vertical and horizontal progression. As for the pedagogical activities of the early years of Elementary School, the document suggests non-face-to-face activities, such as forums, texts, videos, podcasts, previously recorded classes, activities/tasks, among others, which should be delivered to students online or printed materials, which can be delivered in one week and collected for correction the following week.

Thus, understanding that the beginner teacher, since March 2020, is in a new work context, without proper training, with reduced norms and instructions, and

with different required skills (SCHWARTZ, 2010), this study sought to understand why how this teacher confronted and managed the changes imposed by the pandemic in light of the ongoing educational reforms.

THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGICAL PATH

This article presents preliminary results of the research project *Interrupting Inequitable Teaching, Fostering Equitable Pedagogies: Re-mediating Novice Public School Teachers' Practices*, developed by the Research Group Sociology of Language and Education, at the Federal University of Mato Grosso, which aims to understand the difficulties of teaching, using the technique of allo- and self-confrontation, supported by the Clinic of Activity Theory. By way of information, in a nutshell, it is a technique that allows workers to reflect on their activity and on the potential to transform what they have lived to live other experiences (CLOT, 2010), in other words, "it's mine activity [...] as an object of thought" (p. 325), to imagine new possibilities of thinking and acting (CLOT, 2017). According to Souto et al (2015), it is a technique that induces a displacement of those who work to the place of observer of their own work. And the general principle of the method of confrontation is to provide subjects with a recording of their own work activity, for them to comment on (MOLLO; FALZON, 2004).

To reflect on the work of teaching, the expanded project sought to listen to nine public school teachers in the state of Mato Grosso, in its first three years after their approval in a public examination. Thus, only professors in a probationary period from the year 2018 were considered as participants in the study. Pedagogical coordinators working in early childhood education and early elementary school were also listened to, and students of Pedagogy courses in the process of initial training, future beginner teachers, using the allo-confrontation technique, in which the subject verbalizes about the activity of the other (MOLLO; FALZON, 2004).

This study was approved in 2019 by Columbia University/Teachers College and Lemann Foundation, and authorized in 2020 by the Research Ethics Committee, in the area of Humanities, of the Federal University of Mato Grosso, under Protocol No. 33715120.2.0000.5690, Brazil/CAAE/CONEP Platform.

As part of the study, each teacher delivered two videos of teaching activities, and dialogue sessions with teachers and researchers were held in order to analyze the recorded videos and carry out self-confrontation. This qualitative and exploratory study analyzed the statements of five randomly chosen participating teachers who reside in three municipalities in the interior of the state of Mato Grosso: Cáceres, Barão de Melgaço and Nova Monte Verde (CIDADES DO BRASIL, 2021).

The city of Cáceres occupies an area of 24,538.5 km², and is located 214 km away from the capital Cuiabá; its population is 94,861 inhabitants, the population density is 3.61 inhabitants per km², and cattle raising is the main economic activity. The city has 48 Elementary schools, and the schooling rate between 6 and 14 years old is 97.8.

The city of Barão de Melgaço is located in the Pantanal of Mato Grosso, 113 km from Cuiabá, and its total area is 11,377.3 km², with just over 2% being on dry land. Its population is 8,564 inhabitants and its demographic density is 0.68

inhabitants per km²; its predominant economy is agriculture and livestock, and the schooling rate for 6 to 14 years is approximately 86.3%. Some children who live in this municipality attend schools in the neighboring city and travel 25 minutes daily by boat and another 25 minutes by road, as to reach the school in the city where they live, they need to travel the 40 km distance for about 6 hours.

The city of Nova Monte Verde is located 972 km from Cuiabá, occupies an area of 6,500 km², its population is estimated at 9,277 inhabitants, its demographic density is 1.7 inhabitants per km², and its predominant economy is agriculture. The city has thirteen municipal schools, eight of them serve Elementary school students, and the schooling rate from 6 to 14 years old is 99.1%.

Figure 1 – The state of Mato Grosso in Brazil and the location of the cities of Cuiabá, Barão de Melgaço, Cáceres and Nova Monte Verde



Source: Google Map¹ (2021).

In short, the three municipalities occupy territorial areas with low population density, are far from the capital, and income generation is predominantly rural. All of them have high schooling rates from 6 to 14 years old, around 90% in classroom teaching situation. It must be considered, however, that when it comes to remote teaching in the midst of a pandemic, the conditions of students and teachers are scarce and unsatisfactory. See the example of teacher T3-BMC who uses internet via radio, and her students live in a Pantanal area. (See Figure 1).

The videos sent by these five teachers for the first confrontation, in short, can be described as such.

The T1-CCV teacher produced a video in order to provide guidance to students and guardians on how to carry out the 11 proposed activities. The teacher used a tool to create an animated video, in which she appears on the screen in a corner, and in the center presents one by one the slides with the exercises, and to illustrate the images, she adds moving figures and characters. The video is in color and contains many illustrations, and is intended for children in early child education. The video lasts 14 minutes and 20 seconds, and was made available to students on the social network YouTube.

Teacher T2-BMR created a video without using any video production tool, with the purpose of teaching math content to 6th grade students. In the video, the teacher is standing, beside a whiteboard attached to the wall, and the information to be explained is already organized on it. The teacher uses a ruler to point out the

information written on the board. After explaining the content, she performs an exercise as an example using a board marker pen. The video lasts 11 minutes and 34 seconds, and was made available to students on the social network YouTube.

The T3-BMC teacher produced a video without using any video creation tool, with the purpose of teaching Portuguese language content for 3rd year of elementary school students. In the video, the teacher is seated, holding a book, and reading the story contained in it. At the end of the reading, she provides instructions on how to write a history book, which is the task that students will have to carry out. The video is composed of three parts, with the first part lasting two minutes and 51 seconds; the second, 32 seconds, and the third, four minutes and three seconds, totaling seven minutes and 26 seconds. The video was made available to students on the social network WhatsApp.

Teacher T4-CCA produced a video using an animated video creation tool, in order to tell the story of the origin of numbers. In the video, the teacher appears in the center of the screen; and at the bottom, slides containing the scenes of the story are presented one by one. The video is extremely colorful, contains many animated illustrations, and it was designed for early child education students. The video lasts three minutes and 34 seconds, and was sent to students via the social network WhatsApp.

Teacher T9-MVV produced a video using the interactive whiteboard and digital Jamboard, with the purpose of teaching her 2nd year students of elementary school how to handle the tool and how to perform the interdisciplinary exercises. At the beginning of the video, the teacher is on the entire screen, with a panel in the background with some small objects in slow motion; throughout the explanation, she disappears from the screen, leaving only the slides visible. The video lasts 13 minutes and 50 seconds, and was sent to students providing the teacher's Google Drive access link.

In summary, the videos presented, unlike those produced by companies with specialized professionals, are homemade and amateur audiovisual productions, made by the teachers themselves, using programs and tutorials available on the internet. Some contain animations and soundtrack in the background, but in all of them, there is the use of images projected on slides; the teachers are the only announcers on all of the recordings, and the narration varies between off and on. The recording environment is the teachers' house or the school where they work; the lighting is natural or residential electric light, and the framing is fixed, with no camera movements. Some undergo a type of post-production editing, and in one of them, there was only a cut in small sections of up to 4 minutes, in a simple and unfinished way, in order to allow the children to receive it through the WhatsApp social network. The videos are sent to the children through WhatsApp, YouTube, or Google Drive, depending on the teacher's optional decision, who assesses the size of the file to be sent and the children's reception capacity.

In order to understand how beginner teachers confronted and managed the changes imposed by the pandemic, the teachers' answers to two questions, namely "how was the experience of recording your class" and "what are the visible and invisible working conditions in the video that led you to carry out the activity as you did" were analyzed.

In the clinic of activity methodology, however, it is known that workers are called to participate in instances of dialogue (CLOT, 2017), not to speak only when

something is asked, because if so, they would only be performing tasks prescribed (FRANÇA, 2004). Rather, the clinic of activity uses methods such as devices that aim to trigger and enhance dialogues about the activity (SOUTO et al., 2015), so that the experience is put into words with the purpose of better understanding and reformulating it (REZENDE; CRISTO, 2018). Within this perspective, if, in conducting self-confrontation, avoiding the rigidity inherent to the interview opens a door to “worlds” (VIEIRA; FAÍTA, 2003), the self-reflective dialogue allows the exposure of experiences that are shared with details beyond the limits of questions. For this reason, all the information about the management and confrontation of the changes presented here was not restricted to the answers to the two questions; on the other hand, all statements on the subject in question shared by the teachers throughout the dialogue were accepted for the purpose of complementing and subsidizing the focus of the study.

In the present study, in order to obtain the greatest amount of information on the subject, the “positive reading” approach was based on the terms defined by Charlot (2000, p. 30), who explains: “practicing a positive reading is also paying attention to what people do, achieve, have and are, and not just what they fail to do and what they lack”.

As it is qualitative research, the analysis implies discovering and understanding a scenario in general, using individual information. According to Vergara (2005), qualitative analyzes are exploratory, and aim to extract from the interviewees their thoughts that were freely said about some topic, object or concept. In this sense, in the present investigation, the analysis was carried out through the selection of narratives anchored in the verbalizations of the subjects themselves, in order to apprehend the phenomenon of management and confrontation of changes by the beginner teacher. Hence the interest in 1) highlighting the conditions under which the changes occurred due to the occurrence of the pandemic and the forms of management of teachers in confronting the new reality of work, and 2) analyzing the characteristics of the forms of (re)organizing work in regarding the educational policies adopted by the country.

RESULTS

The teachers' reports evidenced the conditions in which the changes in the work were carried out, how the changes were generated and how the changes were confronted.

The conditions under which changes in the teacher's work took place

The conditions in which the changes took place at the time of the COVID-19 manifestation, in the words of the teachers, vary between the conditions of the students/family and the conditions of the teachers/school.

Regarding the conditions of students, in general, part of the class follows the classes normally, and another, due to the lack of technological resources and means to connect to the internet, has difficulty in participating. The vast majority of children do not have computers or their own cell phone and, for this reason, they wait for their parents to return from work to be able to access the videos and other activities posted by the teacher and carry out the day's activities. According to the teachers, some children do not even have the money to buy school supplies

or slippers to go to school; and some parents are illiterate, while others do not have WhatsApp, and for this reason, SMS messages are sent or cell phone calls are made.

As for the conditions of the teachers when the changes resulting from the pandemic occurred, these relate to the space for conducting classes at home; access to the internet for online work; to material resources such as whiteboard, image capture equipment and cell phone support for video recording; access to paid platforms and applications for producing good quality videos; the lack of training on how to teach at a distance and how to produce videos, as well as public speaking and posture classes to act as actors in video classes; the lack of financial help to acquire the necessary resources for remote learning, and the lack of time to prepare for one more change after the introduction of the BNCC.

The T1-CCV teacher explains that it is necessary to work two or three jobs to be able to set up a good physical working environment at home, and to be able to do what she does for the children, such as printing colorful activities and recording videos. Teacher T2-BMR reports that she needed to organize a work corner in her children's room, and that the videos are produced using only the conditions she has, such as a whiteboard and a board marker pen. Teacher T3-BMC explains that her internet is via radio, and that is why it doesn't work very well. For this reason, when she needs the internet, she needs to travel to her sister's house. She also explains that she had no intimacy with her cell phone except to make phone calls, and that if she had at least a whiteboard, she could prepare better video classes. Teacher T4-CCA says that she didn't have much available to record videos, and that she needed a more compatible cell phone to film. She adds that she has no help to pay for the internet and that her cell phone broke and needed to buy another one. And it is teacher T9-MVV who comments that the last two years have been a whirlwind, and that in the midst of practical learning on how to implement the BNCC, the pandemic happened, and all of this together was very difficult to manage.

Management of changes

As for change management, the reports showed differences between institutional management and teacher management.

When analyzing how the changes resulting from the pandemic were managed by the school, it was observed that in only one of them specific training was offered to all teachers in the school unit by CEFAPRO/SEDUC-MT (Training and Updating Center for Professionals of Basic Education, State Department of Education - Mato Grosso). This same school guided its teachers to diversify their classes using different media (Jambord, Meet, animation, game). In two others, the teachers report that they were assigned the task of preparing monthly activities/exercises. The activities are understood to be the way to reach all children, even those who do not have access to the internet. These activities are then printed by the pedagogical coordinators, who assemble the handouts and invite parents to pick them up on a certain day of the month. At another school, the teacher reported that the Department of Education distributed handouts to students and determined that teachers should not fail them due to the pandemic, but that this determination caused many of them to drop out of school.

In summary, it can be said that the local educational institutions (SEDUC, CEFAPRO, school) reacted to the changes generated by the pandemic, providing training, printed material and provisional norms.

Teachers, in turn, without external financial help (until May/2021, when the state government granted aid to fund internet plans and purchase a computer), mobilized voluntarily concerned with families with few technological resources, and with children with possible difficulty in learning due to precarious conditions.

The T1-CCV teacher explains that she produces videos even though the school she works at doesn't make her do it, and that it's her husband who edits the footage. Teacher T2-BMR reports that she bought the whiteboard and tried to study techniques on how to teach the contents to students. She says that at first she thought she wouldn't be able to let go, as she was afraid of her exposure in front of a camera. Teacher T3-BMC, however, reports that her concern was with the duration of the parts of the recording, as she could not record the entire class at once, and that it was necessary to record small excerpts of the class separately, such as so that each section did not exceed the transfer capacity. For this reason, she had to record and re-record the parts over and over again. Teacher T4-CCA explained that she was very interested in making videos, and that's why she installed internet at home and sought to learn how to make the recordings. But as she struggled at first, she enlisted the help of her younger brother who learned how to produce and edit videos, and started to help her in the first productions. She also says that, due to lack of appropriate resources, she always adapts to what she has at home. For example, when she needed to dock a background animation (since she doesn't have the Chroma Key), she would use her blue tablecloth. The teacher calls these adaptations "gambiarra". Teacher T9-MVV compares the younger and older teachers, and explains that the older ones suffered a lot with the introduction of remote learning, because they had to learn to find a way to solve the problems, that is, "to turn" or "to take your leaps". In this case, the teacher refers to dealing with technology.

The confrontation of changes

When seeking to know how the teachers confronted the changes in their work resulting from the pandemic, we found the following answers:

"I had to improve my internet ... there is a part [room] of my house that we say: 'let's make a mini studio here' ... we bought a kit like that from Chroma Key, which didn't work out, the fabric, that came, [then] we painted the wall green; I also had to pay [to] install an air conditioning [because] I can't stand it [the heat], because the fan can't be turned on when I'm recording, otherwise the noise remains; we bought those lights, another computer, program to lower the quality [and] the volume of the video, webcam separated from the computer to have a better image..." (T1-CCV).

"The first video for me was a whole day studying my script. As everything is new, we feel butterflies in our stomachs, but it passed." (T2-BMR).

"This year this class came online, it's another experience, until it taught us a lot about cell phones, internet, applications, that we, in the field of pedagogy, are very laypeople in the computer science field." (T3-BMC).

"I had never made [videos], and as we went down with a parachute in this pandemic, we had to change it [from] one hour to another. In the beginning, it was quite complicated, now that I'm adapting, but it's been cool to learn..."

I'm finding it really cool, because I'm learning more new things... this technology issue is really cool." (T4-CCA).

"Everyone is trying to do their best ... we're still a little shaken because it's a lot new to learn, but everyone is engaged trying to do their best." (T9-MVV).

In summary, given the changes introduced in an unplanned way, the participating teachers moved the "classroom" into their homes, looked for their own ways to deal with the new work situation, put into operation several possible techniques, and made micro decisions in the confrontation with the new real. Thus, they managed, with inventiveness, the lack of material and their own personal difficulties.

When trying to learn a little more about the real situation of these teachers, we observed the testimony of two teachers. Let's see:

"Usually, I wake up in the morning and at seven, send some audio explaining the activity or something, the video, and I leave it open [the communication channel with parents] for any questions. But not everyone looks for it during the correct time of class, [that's why] I attend until the night because there is a father who works. So, in order not to leave anyone without an explanation, [it's] better to leave it open, right." (T4-CCA).

"Our activities, mainly for early child education students, have to be colored, and then the teacher ends up printing at home, [because] the printing at school is [in] black and white, it looks sad, failed, because the ink is horrible. So, I always print my activities and deliver them to the school to be given to the parents." (T1-CCV).

As can be seen, in one of them, the teacher says that she sees her parents until the evening; in another, the teacher reports that she prints the exercises in color at her home. These two examples, highlighted among many, reveal the underground of the teacher's activity, as the teachers of this study make use of themselves regardless of institutional norms and prescriptions, which do not require them to be done. They make use of themselves by themselves and also the use of themselves by others (SCHWARTZ, 1996), but these others are not prescribed norms (from economic-productive norms to operational instructions) according to Schwartz; it is actually the children, who are the (main) end.

In another moment, the teacher T1-CCV says that the group of teachers decided to provide the parents with the guidelines for the activities printed on the first page of the handout. After all, parents need prior instructions to be able to guide their children in carrying out the activities. However, at a given moment, the teacher, taking into account the possibility of having illiterate parents, confronted the collective decision, made new choices, and recorded videos for the parents with the guidance of the activities. The empathetic spirit of both teachers (and the others) is evident when they make sensitive decisions and conduct actions based on the perception of the needs of the other who are more fragile and vulnerable.

The brief study thus revealed that beginner teachers are perfectly capable of confronting and managing change, mobilizing themselves (CHARLOT, 2000) and making use of themselves, surpassing prescribed norms (SCHWARTZ, 1996; 2000), and also to recognize that changes open possibilities for improvement (DOLLÉ, 2010).

DISCUSSION

After analyzing the teachers' statements, it can be said that they confirm much of what happens in the rest of the country, given the numerous writings on the subject, such as by Couto et al. (2020), Guizzo et al. (2020), Tenente (2020), Oliveira (2020), Brun (2021) among others; therefore, the new conditions for teaching and learning resulting from the pandemic presented here are not exclusive to the state of Mato Grosso. In this new context, however, the study found that families, institutions, as well as teachers, were taken for the unusual, and all made available everything they had at their disposal.

When analyzing what was made available by the three segments, it can be said that it is not much. In general, the higher instances were unprepared to act quickly in the face of a tragedy, providing, in addition to prescribed norms, also the necessary conditions for the methodological and pedagogical adaptations of teacher education; in fact, perhaps they didn't even know how to do it. The teachers, in turn, faced with the determination that teaching would be online and at a distance, quickly had to face the problem, that is, to teach using a new methodology, for students, in general, unknown and invisible.

So, after exactly 30 years, the educational reforms carried out in the country having Quality and Equity as one of the guiding principles, with the onset of the pandemic, tacit social inequalities became visible, instead of equality. Likewise, these did not promote educational equity, as the digital exclusion was the first problem to emerge from the pandemic.

There are those who might say that the findings of this study do not bring originality or scientific relevance. It is worth mentioning, however, that it would be insensitive not to recognize the merit that these teachers, even beginners, showed to have in mobilizing themselves in the face of the unusual and the countless shortcomings. Remember that these are teachers who do not even have the help of pedagogically prepared coordinators, since the training of these professionals was abolished by Resolution CNE/CP No. 01/2006. We should also remember that these teachers live in predominantly rural regions, far from the state capital, where there are many difficulties. Also, that they, without exaggeration, almost alone and on their own, guaranteed the subsistence of the system and the permanence of children in school education. What to name this? Creativity or resilience?

In general, it is customary to speak of "resistance to change". If we assumed that the participating teachers would use the opportunity to dialogue about their work with the Research Team to complain, protest, grieve, object and reveal their intentions to refuse or resist change, the study surprised, showing, on the one hand, a lucidity on the part of the teachers when faced with the weakness of their profession, and on the other, a "healthy reaction" of determination, persistence, interest and valuing the opportunity to learn something new.

How to explain that these beginner teachers, lacking prescribed norms, lacking training for remote teaching, lacking all kinds of physical resources (equipment, facilities, tools), and lacking, above all, specialized pedagogical support, were able to remain lucid and resilient in the face of deficiencies?

Nothing makes us think of instinct, gift or genius. This is because resilience is not an innate ability, it is developed through dynamic learning processes. Faced with the question, the first premise, one could say: it is initial formation.

In the case of the five teachers, all of them are trained in Pedagogy, attended at a distance or in the face-to-face modality, in courses offered by public and private universities in the state of Mato Grosso.

As a matter of fact, the training of these teachers, regardless of their location or modality, was governed by the National Curriculum Guidelines for the Undergraduate Course in Pedagogy/2006, which favored general training, curriculum flexibility and curriculum dynamics. The Guidelines, however, are part of a greater whole. They were structured at a time when there was in Brazil a movement of democratic aspirations that valued, in addition to equality, freedom and pluralism, also solidarity.

Therefore, today's beginner teachers are, in fact, sons of the New Republic, whose school trajectory from childhood to college was traced by the LDB/1996, whose curriculum is based on ideals of democratic inspiration aimed at the development of conscientious and participative citizens in the life of society. Paradoxically, these same subjects are now put to teach regulated by a single curricular base created as a measure to combat low levels of school performance.

These are new directions. Only the future will show whether in this way the long-awaited "school success" represented by better student performance rates will be achieved. What is at stake for now.

That said, it remains for us to say that the study teachers reacted and confronted the displacement of their work in a proactive way, however, in essence, this reaction converged with much more force on the technical-methodological issues of remote education than on the issues didactic-pedagogical. Therefore, as researchers, it is of fundamental importance, in forthcoming studies, to turn our eyes to other aspects of the teaching activity of these beginner teachers, who are, at this very moment, in transition between generalist training and content-centered teaching.

Anyway, there are no culprits. But there are those who can be called upon to reflect on the problem: educational institutions are one of them. These, certainly, need to adapt the courses to the new Guidelines by the year 2022, but it is also up to them to reflect what their role will be in the training of future teachers.

O TRABALHO SE MODIFICA NA PANDEMIA COVID-19: UMA “LEITURA POSITIVA” DAS FORMAS DE ENFRENTAMENTO DAS MUDANÇAS PELOS PROFESSORES INICIANTES

RESUMO

Durante a implantação das mais recentes reformas, ocorreu a pandemia da COVID-19, que levou à substituição do ensino presencial pelo ensino remoto. Neste novo contexto de trabalho, os professores iniciantes foram os mais afetados devido à falta de formação para o ensino a distância e também para a implantação da nova base curricular. Por este motivo, o presente estudo buscou ouvir cinco professoras em estágio probatório, da rede pública do Estado de Mato Grosso, para compreender de que forma elas confrontaram e geriram as mudanças impostas pela pandemia. O estudo de natureza qualitativa e exploratória foi desenvolvido utilizando a técnica da auto-confrontação, apoiada na Teoria da Clínica da Atividade, e as respostas a duas perguntas, a saber “como foi a experiência de gravar uma aula” e “quais são as condições de trabalho visíveis e invisíveis no vídeo que levaram você a realizar a atividade tal como realizou” foram analisadas utilizando-se a abordagem da “leitura positiva”. Em síntese, o estudo revelou, de um lado, a falta de condições tecnológicas tanto dos alunos como dos professores, e de outro, uma reação fortemente assertiva por parte das cinco professoras em face às mudanças e também uma atitude sensível perante o outro (pais e crianças) mais frágil e vulnerável. Com isto, o estudo concluiu que essas professoras iniciantes são pessoas que se formaram com valores predominantes como a solidariedade que fazem parte dos ideais da Nova República, mas hoje se encontram exatamente entre as velhas e as novas reformas da educação.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Pandemia COVID-19. Professor iniciante. Ensino remoto.

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NOTES

1 Available at: https://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mato_Grosso.

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Mailing address: Izumi Nozaki - izumi.nozaki@gmail.com

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