

# Professional learning of prospective elementary school teachers in supervised training<sup>1</sup>

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## Abstract

Professional learning has garnered considerable attention from researchers, as it forms a fundamental aspect of teachers' professional development. Such learning encompasses a range of essential elements, including acquiring knowledge about curriculum content, teaching methods, core values, attitudes intrinsic to the teaching profession, and the nuances of professional culture. Notably, supervised training stands as a significant context for the professional learning of prospective teachers, offering direct exposure to the teaching profession and opportunities for critical reflection on theoretical and practical experiences. In this study, we undertake an investigation of the professional learning experiences of prospective teachers within the Early Years of Elementary Education, employing a qualitative and interpretative approach. To achieve this objective, we conducted in-depth research<sup>3</sup> with ten female students enrolled in an Education Undergraduate Program at the Federal University of the Fronteira Sul, Erechim Campus. Our focus was on examining their learning encounters during supervised training. The empirical data for the study encompassed narratives shared by the ten interns during sessions dedicated to teaching in Elementary School, alongside textual productions prepared by the students throughout their training. The analysis of the gathered data has revealed noteworthy learning outcomes concerning teaching in various dimensions. Firstly, it shed light on the process of lesson planning, characterized by its reflective nature, theoretical underpinnings, and comprehensive approach to devising learning pathways for students. Secondly, the investigation illuminated the development of teaching skills, an intricate fusion of multiple elements that collectively facilitate effective classroom practices. Lastly, the study elucidated the dynamics of the school environment, perceived

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as an interactive, dynamic, pluralistic, and adaptable context conducive to the realization of successful teaching endeavors.

## Keywords

*Teacher professional learning – Supervised training – Teacher education undergraduate courses – Elementary School.*

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## Introduction

Teachers' professional learning is a relevant and increasingly investigated topic within educational research because it represents a central and necessary aspect for promoting new classroom practices (Richit, 2020, 2021). Garcia (1999) argues that teachers, as subjects of educational processes and their own development, are engaged in a professional activity that provides them with formal and informal learning situations about teaching.

In this regard, Tiezzi (1992, our translation) emphasizes the crucial importance of recognizing teachers as “professionals who actively engage in learning”, rather than being perceived solely as implementers or hindrances to change. Consequently, researchers investigating the process of teachers' professional development must persist in their exploration of how educators acquire novel perspectives on teaching and content learning, alongside identifying the conducive conditions for facilitating such learning (Tiezzi, 1992, p. 19, our translation). At the core of professional learning lie the processes and approaches to teacher education and professional development, which can play a pivotal role in supporting and promoting diverse forms of learning. Notably, supervised training holds a prominent position, being considered a fundamental component of initial teacher education that fosters reflective practices within the teaching profession. As posited by Zabalza (2014), experiences encountered during teacher education contribute not only through their exposure to teaching and the professional culture but, more importantly, by creating an environment for prospective teachers to gain self-awareness and engage in reflective contemplation about their own education.

From this perspective, investigating the professional learning process of Education undergraduate students within the framework of supervised training holds significant relevance. It allows for a central examination of the formative journey facilitated through internship practices and their potential to foster professional growth while enabling the adoption of innovative classroom practices. Moreover, such research contributes to the expansion of knowledge concerning teaching in the Early Years of Elementary School. The primary objective is to shed light on and engage in a comprehensive discussion concerning the professional learning experiences of prospective teachers in the Early Years of Elementary School, which have been cultivated through supervised training. The decision to focus on the learning encounters of Education undergraduate students stems from the recognition that teacher education experiences represent a pivotal

context for immersing oneself in the teaching domain during the initial stages of teacher education. This analysis is centered on the educational journeys of ten students enrolled in the Education program, specifically involved in the discipline of Supervised Curricular Training: Elementary School, at the Federal University of Fronteira Sul (UFFS), Erechim *Campus*, Rio Grande do Sul. The designated period for these activities spanned from June to October 2021.

### Professional learning of teachers

Teacher professional learning can be characterized as a dynamic, ongoing, personal, and socially constructed phenomenon that arises from interactions among teachers. Through the exchange, confrontation, modification of ideas, and reinterpretation of experiences (Flores, 2004), teachers engage in learning processes that encompass various aspects. These include disciplinary knowledge, classroom teaching and management, elements of the professional context, and other intrinsic facets of the teaching profession (Day, 2001; Richit, 2021). It is important to note that the professional practices teachers encounter throughout their careers play a crucial role in their continuous development and ongoing formation (Zeichner, 1993). Consequently, these experiences contribute significantly to their professional growth (Guskey, 2002; Richit, 2023), as they provide diverse and multifaceted learning opportunities across different dimensions of teaching (Richit; Tomkelski, 2020). The scope of these learning experiences encompasses a wide array of subjects, such as disciplinary knowledge, classroom teaching methods, understanding students' learning processes and their challenges, grasping the social and cultural context of educational practice, defining educational goals, and embracing transformative changes in their pedagogical approaches (Day, 2001; Richit, 2021).

Laura Desimone's exploration of the components of teacher professional development highlights the essential factors that underpin this process. According to Desimone (2009, 2011), effective teacher professional development requires a solid knowledge base of content, active engagement in professional learning, collaborative interactions, alignment with relevant curricula and policies, and adequate time for participants' learning.

Incorporating the theoretical perspective of learning as an interactive and dynamic process (Clandinin, 1986; Borko, 2004), we comprehend that involving prospective teachers in various teaching-related activities, including actual classroom teaching, becomes a catalyst for their profound professional learning concerning diverse aspects of teaching and school dynamics. Both spontaneous experiences of professional learning and structured activities embedded in this process serve to foster individual growth among teachers (or prospective teachers) and promote collective advancement. Moreover, these experiences facilitate positive changes in the quality of teaching, thereby nurturing the trajectory of professional development (Day, 2001; Richit, 2021).

Fullan (1995) elucidates that teachers' professional learning is an ongoing process that begins with their earliest professional experiences and continues throughout their entire career due to the dynamic and intricate nature of the educational contexts in which they operate. This view is further substantiated by the research of Christopher Day. It is

from this perspective that supervised training assumes a significant role as a valuable context for fostering professional learning across diverse facets of teaching.

In a complementary stance, American researchers Hilda Borko, Heather Hill, and Linda Darling-Hammond offer an understanding of professional development that emphasizes the concept of professional learning and its association with enhancing student learning outcomes (Richit; Ponte; Quaresma, 2021). Darling-Hammond (1997) defines professional development as a structured process of professional learning that leads to tangible changes in teachers' practices and, consequently, improvement in student learning outcomes. In a more recent work, Darling-Hammond, Hylar, and Gardner (2017) conceive professional learning as a comprehensive process encompassing both external activities organized outside the teaching profession and internal activities integrated into teachers' daily work. These activities aim to provide the necessary support for enhancing teachers' knowledge, adapting their professional practices, and supporting student learning.

Building upon the research of Heather Hill and Linda Darling-Hammond, Hilda Borko (2004) underscores that teachers' learning emerges from a variety of practice situations, including classrooms, school communities, and professional development programs and activities. These learning experiences are influenced by both the individual characteristics of the teacher and the specific professional contexts, as highlighted by Borko and Putnam (1996). Teachers' learning can be derived from their day-to-day interactions with peers, from the process of planning and implementing teaching actions, and through both formal and informal teacher education activities. Subsequently, these learning experiences instigate modifications in teachers' practices, leading to improvements in student learning outcomes (Darling-Hammond, 1997) and educational systems at large (Guskey, 1997; Day, 1999).

A context for facilitating teacher professional learning is lesson planning. Through this practice, teachers effectively mobilize their professional knowledge encompassing the disciplinary field they teach, pedagogical techniques, insights into students' learning processes, and how to effectively implement the curriculum (Richit; Tomkelski, 2022). During professional planning, teachers meticulously develop and introduce teaching materials or artifacts that align with these diverse types of knowledge, with the primary objective of promoting student learning (Richit, Maltempo, 2010; Verhoef *et al.*, 2013).

As highlighted by Verhoef *et al.* (2013), teaching materials and artifacts play a crucial role in supporting teachers' learning, both during their preparation and in post-lesson discussions, where they function as catalysts for reflection. Consequently, the design and creation of such artifacts become a boundary process that effectively supports teaching and fosters teacher learning.

Considering this perspective, professional learning encompasses a comprehensive array of elements, contributing to the promotion of student learning (Fullan, 1995; Day, 2001; Borko, 2004). However, for professional learning to flourish, it necessitates the establishment of structured collectives committed to the growth and development of the teaching team. These collectives actively engage in activities that involve discussing the curriculum and exploring ways to effectively implement it, thus promoting the evolution of curricular changes (Darling-Hammond; Hylar; Gardner, 2017).

In summary, professional learning is a multifaceted process that incorporates various elements, culminating in the enhancement of student learning outcomes. Its success is contingent on the formation of organized and supportive groups dedicated to fostering the growth of educators, encouraging collaborative learning experiences, and promoting curricular improvements to enrich teaching practices.

## Supervised Training

In the Brazilian university context, as established by Law 11.788/2008<sup>4</sup>, supervised training is defined as:

[...] a supervised educational activity conducted in the work environment, aimed at preparing students who are attending regular education in higher education institutions, professional education, high school, special education, and the final years of elementary education in the professional modality of youth and adult education, for productive work. (Brasil, 2008).

Supervised training, as perceived from this perspective, represents an inherent dimension of the pedagogical project within a teaching degree program, forming an integral part of the prospective teacher's formative journey. Throughout this process, students acquire specialized knowledge, practices, and values unique to the teaching profession, while fostering curricular contextualization to support student development (Brasil, 2008). To ensure the attainment of these objectives, *Resolução CNE/CP No. 02/2015* stipulates a minimum requirement of four hundred hours dedicated to the training component.

Supervised training constitutes a pivotal element in the curriculum of teaching degree programs, designed to immerse prospective teachers in the tangible realities of the teaching profession. Additionally, training serves as a context "for the development of an investigative attitude, which involves reflection and intervention in the school, teachers, students, and society" (Pimenta, 2010, p. 34, our translation).

Pimenta and Lima (2019) underscore the significant contribution of supervised curricular training in dismantling myths, prejudices, and preconceived notions about teaching. By engaging students in critical analysis of diverse situations within the school context, grounded in theoretical foundations, training becomes a transformative space that fosters a convergence of knowledge, expertise, values, life stories, and collective and individual experiences (Lima, 2008). This convergence leads to the holistic development of all involved parties.

Hence, it is imperative for initial teacher education to facilitate formative processes from a critical-reflexive standpoint, equipping teachers with the tools for independent thinking and fostering dynamics of participatory self-formation (Nóvoa, 1992, p. 25). As a continuous reflective process (Zeichner, 1993), training can effectively incorporate narratives as a fundamental element in constructing both reflection in action and reflection on action (Schön, 1983). This approach empowers prospective teachers to critically

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4- Source: [http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil\\_03/\\_ato2007-2010/2008/lei/l11788.htm](http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/_ato2007-2010/2008/lei/l11788.htm)

examine their practices during teaching activities and reflect on their actions afterward, thus cultivating a continuous and transformative learning experience.

The dynamic involvement of narratives in the context of teacher education provides prospective teachers with a unique opportunity to establish a strong connection

[...] between theory and practice. The practitioner becomes an investigator, and the investigator engages in practice; integration of various moments of training (articulating information/knowledge/understanding and integrating professional and personal development); fostering innovation through collective reflection on practices; facilitating the convergence of different disciplinary domains. (Amaral; Moreira; Ribeiro, 1996, p. 106).

The process of teacher education, based on the action-reflection-action model, can be effectively cultivated through various strategies, such as logbooks, artistic expressions (e.g., dance, music, poetry, theater, drawing), experience-sharing seminars, self-assessment, workshops, and discussion groups. These strategies generate narratives that promote reflective practice. Through narrating their teaching experiences, interns recall, revisit, evaluate, reflect, and engage in self-analysis and self-critique with the aim of comprehending the learning that emerges from their professional journey. As asserted by Souza (2007, p. 63), narrative serves as both a reflection and self-reflection of lived experiences, constructing a retrospective and prospective perspective within the formative process, as “narrating is enunciating a reflected-upon particular experience to which we give meaning and significance”. The reflective process is the articulating action between theory and practice,

[...] involving the dynamic, dialectical movement between doing and thinking about doing. [...] What is needed is to enable the naïve curiosity to become critical through reflection on practice, recognizing itself as such. [...] Critical teaching practice, implying correct thinking, involves the dynamic, dialectical movement between doing and thinking about doing. (Freire, 2001, p. 42-43).

In this context, we comprehend that professional learning related to teaching unfolds through experiences mediated by dialogue and grounded in reflective practices. The learning that transpires during training, facilitated by the sharing of experiences, knowledge, values, and practices among prospective teachers, cooperating teachers in schools, and university supervisors, fosters a harmonious integration of theory and practice.

## Methodology

The research conducted was approached from an interpretive and analytical perspective (Erickson, 1986), employing methods such as narratives and field notes to investigate the professional learning experiences of students enrolled in the Education undergraduate program during their supervised training. Interpretive approaches in this context prioritize content-related issues over procedural matters (Erickson, 1986).

The study emanated from the Curricular Component (CC) of Supervised Training: Early Years of Elementary Education, a part of the Education undergraduate program at the Federal University of Fronteira Sul, Erechim *Campus*. The research was conducted from June to October 2021, amid the backdrop of the Covid-19<sup>5</sup> pandemic. The primary objective of this component was to facilitate pedagogical practice and encourage reflections on knowledge and teaching practices relevant to the Early Years, aiming to gain insights into the reality of schools and contribute to transformative educational actions.

Thus, through this curricular component, the study sought to actively engage Education students in educational settings, with a specific focus on observing, planning, and documenting pedagogical actions related to both theoretical and practical aspects of teaching in the Early Years. In addition to hands-on experiences within the school context, formative meetings were organized, placing particular emphasis on the methodology of narratives to further enrich the learning experience.

The research involved ten Education students from UFFS<sup>6</sup> who actively participated in meetings organized with the following objectives: a) to narrate their experiences in teaching within the Early Years of elementary education; b) to engage in reflective discussions on the pedagogical practices they encountered during their teaching practice; c) to address emerging demands within the school context; and d) to share their diverse teaching practice experiences.

The data collection process followed the sequential steps proposed by Josso (2004) in the practice of seminars, which encompassed the presentation of the proposal, information gathering, discussion and negotiation, oral narrative, and comments and analysis of written narratives. These steps facilitated the development of participants' capacity for self-reflection, responsible commitment, and effective communication in situations of intersubjective confrontation. Josso (2004) outlines three stages in which these capacities are exercised and cultivated: oral narrative, written narrative, and intersubjective interpretation.

The oral narratives were meticulously recorded, transcribed, and transformed into written texts, subsequently becoming part of the empirical material for the research. The material was carefully read and interpreted to discern and highlight various aspects of professional learning related to teaching, as experienced by the students during their supervised training. The analysis was grounded in hermeneutics, as it recognizes the paramount importance of understanding the participants' experiences within the educational process. Hermeneutics operates on the belief that "understanding is constructed in a back-and-forth movement between the whole and the parts" (Paillé, 2019, p. 222), establishing a continuous dialectical relationship. Consequently, the analysis entailed a process of interpretation based on the participants' narratives concerning their learning experiences as prospective teachers during their involvement in teaching within the Early Years of elementary education. This analysis aimed to identify and highlight various situations that exemplified the prospective teachers' learning experiences. These situations

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5 - Covid-19 comes from the English "Coronavirus Disease 2019". It is a respiratory disease caused by SARS-CoV-2, belonging to a large family of viruses called coronavirus, which, on March 11, 2020, was declared a Pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO).

6- The participants are referred to as S1, S2, and so on, in the research.

were categorized based on their convergences, forming the key analytical categories for discussion and examination in the study. These categories represent the distinct facets of professional learning fostered through supervised training experiences.

### Professional learning of prospective teachers in supervised training

The analysis of the empirical material yielded valuable insights into the professional learning experiences of Education students during their supervised training. These experiences were categorized into three primary themes: teaching planning, teaching development, and school dynamics.

*Teaching planning:* The narratives shared by the prospective teachers shed light on their learning experiences concerning classroom planning. This encompassed various aspects, including the time taken for planning, the essential elements to be considered, and the significance of aligning the planning with the specific context of the class or school. Notably, one student highlighted the benefits of an extended immersion in the lesson planning process, expressing that she found it to be more effective when dedicating an entire afternoon to contemplate lessons and activities.

The evaluation that I would like to bring up is that the planning... this period of ours for planning [should be longer]. [For me, it was difficult to get the planning done] during school activities. When I had a whole afternoon [to plan], it flowed a bit better. I was able to think about the activities a little better. (S8 - September 2021).

The narrative highlights the crucial importance of providing prospective teachers with well-structured planning processes, allowing ample time for thoughtful consideration, reflection, modification, and iterative refinement of the practices to be developed. Rushed planning is identified as a hindrance that may impede the implementation of well-designed actions, which should be coherent with the specific needs and context of the students.

Additionally, the prospective teachers' narratives underscore a perspective on planning that places a strong emphasis on educational actions geared towards promoting investigation and autonomy among students, especially in the classroom setting. This perspective challenges teachers (and prospective teachers alike) to depart from traditional teaching paradigms based solely on the transmission of scientific knowledge.

[...] The biggest challenge was being able to reconcile our lesson plan with the school, because of the workbook that the students were supposed to use in class. (S2 - September 2021).

[...] when we started observing to think about the project, something that was difficult for me was coming up with the idea, the theme because the children in the classrooms were very focused, directed, and attentive to the lesson. They responded to what the teacher asked, they asked questions about their own interests related to the content, but we didn't notice anything external to the content, so my observations had this initial difficulty [...]. (S5 - September 2021).



The prospective teachers emphasized the necessity to veer away from the technicist model of planning, which relies on the uncritical reproduction of knowledge, with the teacher merely following a workbook or topic checklist, often leading to the disciplining and fragmentation of knowledge. Instead, they stressed the importance of observing and attentively listening to the voices, interests, and inquiries of the students as foundational dimensions for identifying themes or subjects to be studied and incorporated into lesson planning.

The analysis of the training experiences revealed that the prospective teachers had significant professional learning opportunities in developing lesson plans that focused on the growth and development of children in the Early Years of Elementary School. However, the planning process of educational actions needs to foster a strong connection between the university and the school, involving head teachers, prospective teachers, and students. This connection should be structured in a manner that facilitates professional learning for all parties involved.

The teaching planning experiences of interns within the context of supervised training were characterized as a process of developing educational proposals that encompassed the organization of spaces, materials, and time (Desimone, 2009). This planning process prioritized intentionality, continuity, interaction, and dialogue in the classroom, all with the overarching goal of promoting student development. As prospective teachers engaged in teaching planning, they mobilized their knowledge about teaching, students, and their learning processes (Desimone, 2011; Guskey, 2002; Richit, Ponte, Quaresma, 2021). Through this process, they crafted resources and strategies to enhance children's learning (Verhoef *et al.*, 2013) and facilitate educational improvements (Guskey, 1997).

In the context of supervised training, teaching planning served as a dynamic space for prospective teachers to conceptualize, design, and program classroom practices through meaningful interactions with their peers and cooperating teachers (Ostetto, 2000). Within this space, prospective teachers had the opportunity to develop essential professional learning related to teaching (Day, 2001; Clandinin, 1986; Pimenta, 2010), including the ability to think critically about and organize their teaching in the classroom (Tiezzi, 1992). They honed their skills in observing student learning and providing support when students faced challenges. The planning of teaching in the supervised training context relied on dialogic and reflective interactions among head teachers, prospective teachers, and students. This planning process involved the analysis and selection of content, strategies, and resources that fostered curiosity, encouraged questioning, hypothesis formation, and verification (Ostetto, 2000). Consequently, teaching planning fostered student development (Borko, 2004; Fullan, 1995) and, significantly, the professional development of prospective teachers. As a result, teaching planning was highly valued by prospective teachers to move away from the technical model of teaching implementation.

*Development of teaching.* The prospective teachers' narratives provided valuable insights into their learning experiences regarding the implementation of teaching practices in alignment with the established routines and curriculum set by the cooperating teacher. Throughout their supervised training, the interns were responsible for designing and executing classroom activities that were in harmony with the ongoing themes and instructional approaches in the class. The narrative of S2 specifically accentuates this

aspect and underscores the significance of schools remaining open to adjustments and necessary changes.

[It was necessary] to make everything work so as not to deviate too much from the subject, from the theme that was being developed because each book, each quarter that we have there, it brings a specific project. Of course, it was always possible to talk to the [teacher if it was necessary to address another topic from the curriculum]. She was very open. I explained to her the activities that I had to do [within the scope of the training]. (S2 - September 2021).

The development of teaching in the classroom during supervised training presents a significant context for prospective teachers' professional learning. However, the responsibility of aligning their teaching practices with the curriculum set by the supervising teacher offered them an invaluable opportunity to acquaint themselves with the school's curriculum, gain insight into the teaching approaches employed by more experienced educators, and engage in critical reflection on their own teaching practices in light of these different elements and individuals.

Another aspect highlighted in the analysis is the realization that teaching is approached differently in the university training compared to the reality encountered in the school context. The prospective teachers revealed, through their narratives, a disconnect between their university education and the actual experiences they encountered in the school setting.

[...] [...] the games are not part of the children's reality, so they were very happy [...]. (S1 - September 2021).

[...] the children never did group work. [So I had] to stop the class and explain what group work is because they would insult each other. So [we had] to stop and review how to work in a group, how to do it, let's look at this [...]. (S6 - September 2021).

When I brought proposals focused on playfulness in the outdoor playground, they would get excited because there was a lack of playfulness, and I realized that they really enjoyed interacting, playing, and talking [...]. (S10 - September 2021).

The school dynamics often uphold educational practices and paradigms that may not fully grasp the significance of fostering inclusive learning environments and cultivating interactive relationships within them. These practices and paradigms can diverge from the perspectives developed during university training, where classroom practices prioritizing playfulness, interactivity, social engagement, and inquiry are elaborated and discussed as contexts for children's development, acknowledging them as historical, cultural, and social beings. Aspects such as welcoming students, fostering interactions with peers, recognizing subjectivities, and valuing everyday experiences are deemed crucial for children's development.

Teacher education programs offered by universities strive to break away from cognitive and technicist models of teaching and learning. Nevertheless, when student teachers enter the everyday reality of schools, they may encounter entrenched values, practices, and transmission-oriented and technicist conceptions. This situation gives rise to personal conflicts, tied to the expectations and attitudes of prospective teachers, and professional conflicts, which influence the organization and implementation of teaching. A delicate balance must be struck between these models to navigate these conflicts effectively. Through these experiences, student teachers engage in learning about the different elements that influence educational practices.

Certainly, the professional learning experiences related to classroom instruction in the Early Years, as encountered during supervised training, offered prospective teachers valuable opportunities for introspection on teaching methodologies, underlying values, epistemological and theoretical conceptions that inform their practice, as well as the organization of formal and informal learning spaces and the dynamics of relationships established within this process (Brasil, 2008).

These professional learning experiences, facilitated through activities at the university and those intrinsic to the school routine, equipped prospective teachers with the necessary tools to broaden their understanding of teaching, adapt established practices in schools, and promote student development (Day, 2001; Darling-Hammond *et al.*, 2017; Richit, 2021). Furthermore, these experiences contributed to a deepened comprehension of their own teaching practice (Pimenta, 2010) and played a role in enhancing the overall quality of education (Guskey, 2002).

These learning experiences empowered student teachers to proficiently implement instruction in the Early Years of elementary school, with a focus on prioritizing activities grounded in child observation, attentive listening, inquiry, interactive engagements, playfulness, and learning through play. The supervised training, functioning as a context for professional learning, fostered an investigative and reflective mindset toward classroom instruction (Pimenta, 2010; Richit, 2023), equipping prospective teachers with the capacity for autonomous thinking (Nóvoa, 1992), inspiring the adoption of innovative practices (Guskey, 2002; Fullan, 1995; Richit, 2021), and contributing to enhanced student learning outcomes (Day, 2001; Darling-Hammond, 1997).

Furthermore, the analysis illuminated how various everyday school situations, encompassing classroom routines, the involvement of stakeholders within the school community, the curriculum, and diverse professional development activities, presented many opportunities for professional learning regarding various facets of teaching (Borko, 2004; Borko, Putnan, 1996). These experiences promoted the integration of theoretical knowledge and practical application (Amaral *et al.*, 1996; Richit, 2020). Throughout this process, student teachers received guidance and support to develop classroom activities that acknowledge the child as a historical, cultural, and social subject, placing emphasis on interactive processes that revolve around play, creativity, discovery, and interdisciplinary learning (Loss, 2021).

*School dynamics.* The student teachers underscored significant aspects of school dynamics that exert an influence on educational practices and demand teachers, especially

prospective teachers in the role of interns, to possess the ability to navigate the conditions of instruction. The daily school dynamics encompass a myriad of processes, events, actions, relationships, and conflicts that define, identify, and shape teaching practice.

[In the last two weeks, the school organized] two activities that took up almost the entire afternoon: either the re-enrollment or the launch of the re-enrollment process. I had everything meticulously organized, so there was no time to carry out the planned activity, for the children to learn and play [...]. I tried to resume it today, but it wasn't as enjoyable as I had planned, with more time for them to make the most of the class. I'm thinking about asking the teacher if I have the possibility to redo it next week. (S4 - September 2021).

[...] Children play very little in the Early Years; games are not part of their reality. The focus is more on activities that require documentation. So, when I provided an opportunity for play as part of the learning process, the children reacted positively. (E9-10).

The complete immersion of the prospective students in the school environment and its dynamic nature offered them valuable opportunities to engage in teaching planning that was continuously evolving, requiring them to make pedagogical decisions based on the real-time conditions that emerged. This aspect demanded prospective teachers to constantly review and adapt their lesson plans, giving precedence to creating new materials and formulating innovative pedagogical and curricular choices.

Moreover, the interns gained first-hand experience of teaching amid the challenges posed by the pandemic, a circumstance that provided them with unique professional learning experiences in terms of pedagogical decision-making and adeptly managing social relationships within the constraints of this adverse reality.

The Covid-19 pandemic and the restrictions it imposed significantly interfered with the implementation of activities. The students would say, "I don't want to do it." There was also the issue of not bringing materials for the activities. I asked them to bring bottles, newspaper clippings, and other things, but they didn't bring them. (S3 - September 2021).

The Covid-19 pandemic (2020-2021) imposed the necessity of emergency remote learning, which resulted in numerous pedagogical transformations in schools. These changes encompassed the reorganization of physical spaces, modifications in interpersonal relationships, adaptations in classroom strategies, and shifts in the materials utilized for teaching. However, the pandemic also gave rise to substantial yet difficult-to-quantify setbacks in learning and development for students, particularly impacting children in the initial stages of literacy, such as first graders.

I am working with a 1st-grade class that has children at various levels of learning. None of the students can read yet, but some already know how to draw letters or words. Some have mastered scribbling and tracing, and they have nice and neat handwriting. The teacher in the class is working on print letters, but it's challenging for them. She hasn't introduced cursive writing yet. (S7 - September 2021).

The challenges and setbacks posed by the pandemic have presented valuable learning opportunities for prospective teachers, as they were required to engage with children at varying stages of development. Consequently, they had to diligently assess the progress of each child and employ strategies to provide support to students with diverse learning needs and social circumstances.

Both the head and prospective teachers expressed apprehension regarding literacy development and overall learning. One teacher student underscored this concern by stating, “the literacy part is proving to be an even bigger challenge” (S2).

Indeed, the supervised training afforded the interns significant opportunities for professional learning pertaining to classroom dynamics and the effective management of student participation.

I struggled to maintain control over the [lesson] activities. [The students were used to] quiet activities, [but] my proposals required a lot of speaking. I introduced many collaborative activities. I lost control a bit because [the students] wanted to speak at the same time, [giving] all the answers. So, I allowed time, but as one student started, another would continue. I sought guidance from the classroom teacher on how I could work with the class because they [were] quite energetic, and they became very excited with the activities and math games”. (S6 - September 2021).

The narrative highlights, on one hand, the challenge faced by the interns in effectively managing student participation during class discussions, particularly in dynamic activities like games. On the other hand, it highlights their learning about the intricate dynamics of teaching in the classroom, which can often be unpredictable and demanding. Additionally, the narrative brings attention to an inherent aspect of school routines and cultures, which involves peer support in making pedagogical decisions.

In summary, the analysis revealed that the teaching experiences conducted through supervised training provided the interns with invaluable insights into school dynamics and the possibilities of fostering effective teaching amidst daily circumstances. Throughout this process, the interns gained knowledge, skills, and values specific to teaching and were able to facilitate the contextualization of the curriculum to promote student development (Brasil, 2008).

Indeed, supervised training is conceptualized as a fundamental discipline in initial teacher education, serving as a context to promote reflection on teaching and facilitating the development of professional learning through students’ immersion in the teaching profession and its culture. It provides a crucial space for prospective teachers to become aware of and reflect upon their own formation (Nóvoa, 1992; Zabalza, 2014).

The professional learning nurtured within the university, bolstered by the activities undertaken during the training, equips prospective teachers with essential tools to broaden their understanding of teaching and curriculum. Moreover, it empowers them to modify established practices in schools, thereby fostering the development and growth of their students (Day, 2001; Darling-Hammond *et al.*, 2017; Richit, 2021).

By adopting the theoretical perspective of learning as an interactive and dynamic process (Clandinin, 1986; Borko, 2004), we comprehend that the engagement of

prospective teachers in various teaching-related activities, including the act of teaching itself, facilitates the acquisition of professional learning about teaching. This learning encompasses both lesson planning and instruction, as well as an understanding of school dynamics. The amalgamation of spontaneous experiences of professional learning and planned activities in this process contributes to the individual growth of the teacher (and prospective teacher) and the group, resulting in improvements in the quality of classroom teaching and, consequently, fostering the professional development of all involved (Day, 2001), with particular emphasis on the prospective teacher.

## Conclusion

The experience of narrative and attentive listening from the students of the Education Teaching Program has provided valuable insights, enabling us to emphasize and comprehend the primary professional learnings attained by prospective teachers in the Early Years through supervised training.

The analysis revealed significant learnings concerning teaching, encompassing lesson planning, teaching development, and school dynamics. *Lesson planning* emerged as a reflective and theoretically grounded process, extended over time, with the objective of designing effective learning trajectories for students. *Teaching development* involved experiencing teaching at the crossroads of various elements that contribute to the conducive conditions for classroom engagement, while also affording the opportunity to reflect on the educational paradigms maintained in school practices. *School dynamics* encompassed aspects pertaining to the diverse elements and circumstances influencing the school routine, understood as an interactive, dynamic, pluralistic, and adaptable context for the actualization of teaching.

In conclusion, the activities conducted during the supervised training provided students with invaluable opportunities to actively engage with, reflect upon, question, and gain a comprehensive understanding of teaching in its diverse dimensions, considering the various theoretical, cultural, historical, and curricular factors that influence it. Through reflective dialogues, the students developed an appreciation and respect for teachers who continue to employ instrumental didactics within the school context, where organized spaces with defined routines for knowledge transmission may sometimes overlook the child as an active protagonist, capable of independent thinking, planning, and decision-making (Loss, 2021).

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