

ART IN THE (RE)CONSTRUCTION OF THE ADOLESCENTS' IDENTITY IN A RURAL SCHOOL

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ABSTRACT

This work is part of a research that problematizes the construction of the adolescent's identity in the schooling process and its relationship with the teaching of Art. Its objective was to understand the influence of Art in the construction of the adolescents' identity in a rural school, through a qualitative research with twelve adolescents from 6th to 9th grade who participated in five meetings of filmed artistic experiences, using participant observation, expanded records and interviews. Cultural Psychology highlighted the importance of the school in the development of creative activity and the teaching of Art in the (re)construction of the adolescents' identity, contributing to the symbolization of experiences and feelings that are difficult to express, such as situations of bullying, loss and grief, gender and sexuality differences. The interpretation of the artistic productions used was an important psychological tool to deal with emotions, reflecting about the development of higher psychological functions.

Keywords: adolescence; art; identity

El arte en la (re)construcción de la identidad de adolescentes en una escuela del campo

RESUMEN

Este estudio es parte de una investigación que problematizó la construcción de la identidad del adolescente en proceso de escolarización y su relación con la enseñanza de Arte. Su objetivo fue comprender la influencia del Arte en la construcción de la identidad de adolescentes en una escuela del campo, por intermedio de una investigación cualitativa con doce adolescentes del 6° al 9° curso que participaron de cinco encuentros de vivencias artísticas filmadas, con uso de observación participante, registros ampliados y entrevistas. La Psicología Cultural evidenció la importancia de la escuela en el desarrollo de la actividad creadora y de la enseñanza del Arte en la (re)construcción de la identidad de los adolescentes, contribuyendo a la simbolización de experiencias y sentimientos difíciles de ser expresos, como situaciones de *bullying*, pérdidas y lutos, diferencias de género y sexualidad. La interpretación de las producciones artísticas utilizadas se constituyó en importante instrumento psicológico para lidiar con emociones, reflejándose en el desarrollo de funciones psicológicas superiores.

Palabras clave: adolescencia; arte; identidad

A arte na (re)construção da identidade de adolescentes em uma escola do campo

RESUMO

Este trabalho é parte de uma pesquisa que problematizou a construção da identidade do adolescente em processo de escolarização e sua relação com o ensino de Arte. Seu objetivo foi compreender a influência da Arte na construção da identidade de adolescentes em uma escola do campo, através de uma pesquisa qualitativa com doze adolescentes do 6° ao 9° ano que participaram de cinco encontros de vivências artísticas filmadas, com uso de observação participante, registros ampliados e entrevistas. A Psicologia Cultural evidenciou a importância da escola no desenvolvimento da atividade criadora e do ensino da Arte na (re)construção da identidade dos adolescentes, contribuindo para a simbolização de experiências e sentimentos difíceis de serem expressos, como situações de *bullying*, perdas e lutos, diferenças de gênero e sexualidade. A interpretação das produções artísticas utilizadas constituiu-se em importante instrumento psicológico para lidar com emoções, refletindo-se no desenvolvimento de funções psicológicas superiores.

Palavras-chave: adolescência; arte; identidade

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INTRODUCTION

This work is part of the intersection of several themes, some of which have already been analyzed in recent work (Souza, Martines, & Barroco, 2018), and here we explore the process of narrative construction of identity in adolescents. In this work, the following concept of adolescence is adopted: "Adolescence is not a period of conclusion, but of crisis and maturation of thought. As far as the higher form of thought accessible to the human mind is concerned, this age is also transitory, and it is so in all other respects." (Vygotsky, 2001, p. 229).

This conception seeks to overcome views in which biological determinism and a naturalizing view predominate, which reduce adolescence to a stage of development, without considering sociocultural and historical aspects. Vygotsky (2001) considers this phase as a period of psychological development that includes crises and qualitative leaps, a transitional age in which higher psychological functions develop through the appropriation of scientific concepts, as well as participation in the cultural and historical process of life of humanity.

The Cultural Psychology¹ proposed by Bruner (1996/2001; 1990/2002) shares this conception and highlights the importance of schooling in the construction of the *self*: "Perhaps the most universal fact about human experience is the phenomenon of the *self*, and we know that the education is crucial to their formation." (Bruner, 1996/2001, p. 40).

For Cultural Psychology, the ability to build and understand narrative is the way to construct our lives, our identities, that is, our selves, in order to find a meaningful place in the world. Therefore, Cultural Psychology places two demands on the study of the *self*: on the one hand, that such studies must focus on the meanings in which the *self* is defined both by the individual and by the culture of which he is a part; and on the other, what are the practices in which "the meanings of the *self*" are put to use. (Bruner, 1990/2002, p. 100-1). The review of theses and dissertations showed few works in Brazil that relate the construction of

identity and the adolescent in the schooling process, although this is an area of study that has shown great development in other countries (Vieira & Henriques, 2014).

Given the social relevance of understanding how the identity of our adolescents in the schooling process is constituted, we understand the need for studies and research that relate this theme to the areas of knowledge of the school curriculum.

Bruner (1996/2001) considers one of the main functions of the school the development of the ability to interpret and the Cultural Psychology that he proposed is frankly interpretive, and its application to education has a basic principle: the precept of perspective. According to this precept, the production of meaning of any fact, proposition or encounter is relative to the perspective or frame of reference from which it is constructed. "Understanding well what something 'means' requires a certain awareness of the alternative meanings that can be attributed to the issue being examined, whether one agrees with it or not" (Bruner, 1996/2001, p. 24).

He highlights the "interpretive, meaning-making side of human thought" and "the power of a culture to adapt to change, and in the contemporary world, change is the norm" (Bruner, 1996/2001, p. 25). Thus, promoting interpretations of meanings that highlight different perspectives reveal "[...] idiosyncratic stories, but also the canonical ways of culture to build realities" (p. 24).

Developing interpretive skills, from different points of view or perspectives, helps children and young people, as well as teachers, to build stories about themselves, about the institutions in which they are formed (family, school, church, for example) or work, envisioning possibilities for change and action.

By associating this precept with the narrative precept, Bruner recalls that psychoanalysts now recognize that personality implies narrative, that "neurosis" is a reflection of an insufficient, incomplete or inappropriate history that an individual has of himself/herself.

Remember that when Peter Pan asks Wendy to go back to Neverland with him, he gives as his reasons the fact that she could teach the Lost Boys there to tell stories. If they knew how to tell them, they could grow. (Bruner, 1996/2001, p. 44).

This metaphor illustrates well how knowing how to speak about oneself autobiographically, re-elaborating these autobiographies to attribute new meanings to oneself, to others with whom one lives, to behaviors and attitudes, to the feelings and institutions in which one is inserted, contribute to each one find a place for oneself in a culturally established world that needs constant interpretation to allow us to "grow".

In this work we associate the construction of the

¹ In this work, we use concepts from Bruner and Vygotski as a theoretical framework, recognizing that these authors represent two approaches to Psychology, with specific epistemological assumptions and methodological approach, as explained, for example, by Rabatini in the dissertation "A concepção de cultura em Bruner e Vygotski: Implicações para a educação escolar" (available at <https://repositorio.unesp.br/bitstream/handle/11449/92407/rabatini_vg_me_arafcl.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>). However, we understand that Bruner developed an understanding of the role of language in psychological development from the work started by the Russian and his collaborators, mainly based on the advancement of research in literary linguistics that took place after Vygotski's death.

identity/self and the teaching of art with adolescents educated in the countryside. Thus, we start from the following questions: What is the role of art in the construction of the identity of the teenager in the schooling process? How can the teaching of Art contribute to the development of the identities of adolescents in a rural school?

The objective of this work is to understand how Art influences the narrative (re)construction of the adolescents' identity in the schooling process in a rural school. It is organized into three sections, the first this introduction, the second the investigation method and the procedures used for the construction of the *corpus* and data analysis, the research location, the participants, and in the third section the results that were built in the artistic experiences carried out with the adolescents, discussing these data in the light of the reference of Cultural Psychology.

METHODOLOGY

The research is characterized as a qualitative research, in which the term "fieldwork" is used as an alternative to "data collection" and the researcher has a constant presence and participation in the research site, which can be with a group of people, community and in this case, in a school, getting involved and intervening in the daily life of the subjects studied (González Rey, 2009).

The research was carried out in an elementary school in the countryside, located in the municipality of Ji-Paraná, in the interior of the state of Rondônia (RO) and which has about 120,000 (one hundred and twenty thousand) inhabitants, with an urban population of just over of 100,000 (one hundred thousand) inhabitants and a rural population of around 12,000 (twelve thousand) inhabitants (IBGE, 2010).

The region's economy is diversified and represented by agriculture, livestock, industry (processing), extractive activities (wood, rubber, Brazil nuts, etc.), trade and services (IBGE, 2010).

The school in which the research was carried out provides Elementary Education from the 1st to the 9th year, belonging to the municipal school system and served 235 (two hundred and thirty-five) students, with one class for each year; it had a team of 16 (sixteen) teachers, school principal, vice principal and pedagogical coordinator. The school is located 25 (twenty-five) kilometers from the city, serving students from several rural communities, distant up to 30 km from the school, where access is made by means of school transport buses from the municipal education network.

The first contact with the school institution took place through a visit, in which a copy of the project approved by the Ethics and Research Committee was presented to the school administration, as well as

the substantiated approval of the presented project. The school principal introduced some teachers who could collaborate with the researcher. These teachers participating in the research together with the school principal indicated the students, with no interference from the researcher in this choice. Contact was made with the indicated students and, after the explanations, the participants who agreed to participate in the research signed the Free and Informed Consent Term (FICT), as well as their parents or guardians signed the authorization term and the FICT.

The research participants were twelve adolescents enrolled in Elementary School from the 6th to the 9th grade of both sexes (eight girls and four boys). Each participant chose a fictitious name in the first meeting that will identify him in this work.

In the school where the research was carried out, Art takes part in several ways: in the curricular component Art² with a weekly class in each class and, as a transversal theme in Portuguese Language and Mathematics. The school also develops interdisciplinary projects in which Art appears in a different way, and also participates in others developed by the Municipal Department of Education. Four teachers participated in the research, but in this work we will discuss data related only to adolescents.

The fieldwork took place in the context of the school, in which a researcher participated in the adolescents' daily activities (in the classroom and in teachers' projects that involved art in teaching and learning) and coordinated five (monthly) meetings in the afternoon, with experiences in which art was a mediator. The researcher approached themes through Art and recorded the actions in audio and video recordings, and the elements that emerged at each meeting that constituted clues for planning the next one. To conclude the research, the participants brought the Artistic Diaries in which they registered their participation and, in pairs, they narrated their experiences recorded there, based on a triggering question asked by the field researcher, who recorded the speeches in audio.

Data were analyzed following the perspective proposed by González Rey (2009) and Bruner (1990/2002). In this work, the triangulation of data obtained through various instruments (field diary of the researcher, artistic diaries of the participants, audio and video recordings and interviews, etc.) was performed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Based on Bruner's studies, research on the narrative

² According to the National Curricular Parameters (Secretariat of Fundamental Education, 1998) for the Teaching of Art, "art" is used in lower case when referring to the area of human knowledge, and capitalized when referring to the area of the curricular component.

construction of the *self* and/or identity has been consolidated in some research groups (Vieira & Henriques, 2014) and in this work we adopt the point of view of Cultural Psychology, which admits that the *self* is the result of a meaning-making process:

According to this [...], the *self* is not an isolated nucleus of consciousness contained in our head, but is constructed interpersonally. It is defined in terms of both personal and collective meanings; both to a greater or lesser degree defined by culture. Each culture has a representation of what personality means, so that the meaning of the *self* is negotiated between the individual and the culture in which he is inserted. In this negotiation, we observe the function of the toolkit that Bruner (1987) tells us about; the individual builds narratives about himself from culturally given narratives: tragedies, comedies, novels or *bildungsroman*, in which he takes the place of protagonist in a process of self-construction. These narratives therefore have an organizing function of the *self*. (Vieira & Henriques, 2014, p. 164).

In this same perspective, Martines and Costa (2012) worked with Jerome Bruner's proposal of *narrative thinking*, which plays a fundamental role in the construction, knowledge and resignification of identity, given its high capacity for organizing the lived experience, which reveals itself in the form of stories or narratives, that are mental constructions filled with acts of meaning. This implies saying that life stories are subject to constant interpretations and reinterpretations of the world and of oneself. However, they warned that this proposal is still poorly studied and understood within the scope of Psychology. According to this conception, several cultural objects³ were presented to the adolescent subjects in the form of artistic experiences, as described below.

The artistic experiences

Bruner (1990/2002) argues that human beings construct meanings from the symbolic systems already available in culture, which constitute a kind of tool *kit* that people use to construct their representations of the world, and narrative is one of these tools: "[...] my point of view in relation to narrative is constructivist – a view that has as its premise that the main function of the mind is the construction of the world, whether through the sciences or the arts". (Bruner, 1987, p. 11).

The first meeting with the participants of this research was entitled "Artistic experience of names" and began with the theatrical game "Batizado Mineiro" by Augusto Boal (Boal, 1998; Silva, 2016), with the participants in a circle; shyness, shame, "tiração"⁴,

³ Information about these can be found in the dissertation that gave rise to this work (Azevedo, 2015).

⁴ Tiração: term used among teenagers to make fun of each other.

curiosity and, in this case, the experience was important for the participants to become more confident, expressive, uninhibited.

After everyone introduced themselves, a conversation started about what identifies us, and the birth certificate and identity card (ID) that identify a person with: name, date and place of birth, affiliation, date of issue, photo, fingerprint of the right thumb and signature were mentioned.

It was discussed what is necessary for a person to exist civilly in Brazil, the obligation to have a birth certificate and identity card (national civil identification document) and that every person to present himself as a citizen must have these documents. Another issue that emerged in this dialogue was about marital status and that when the marital status changes from single to married, the birth certificate is changed to the marriage certificate. In this conversation circle, the participants were able to perceive the importance of having an identity card, since only two teenagers had it.

Next, the researcher asked: "Who am I?" and together they watched the video with the song: "Gente tem sobrenome" by Toquinho (Pecci Filho & Andreato, 2002), followed by a conversation about the characters that appeared in the song, some of which were identified by the participants. To contextualize the music historically, images of the composer and his friends at the time were shown: Toquinho, Vinícius de Moraes and Tom Jobim.

Afterwards, the video with images and poem by Pedro Bandeira "O nome da gente" (Bandeira, 1984) was analyzed. In the poem, the author presents in a poetic and playful way the idea that the person does not like his name, that it was not the person who chose it, he talks about the baby who will be born and who will be called the same, as his godfather, grandpa, in short everyone interferes in the choice of that name and no one asks the baby what he would like to be called. In the end, the poet satirizes saying that when he will have a child, he will leave it free for him to choose his name only when he grows up.

The relaxed moment after the video allowed for a reflection and discussion on the name of each participant, if it is possible for a person to be without a name until they grow up, with the following questions: Who chose your name? What do you know about your name? What is the meaning of your name? The latter generated an Internet search using Uquinho, the personal laptop, as the school was one of the eight pilot schools of the UCA Project (One Computer per Student) (Martines et al., 2012).

There was a conversation about the need for a fictitious name that would be freely chosen by each one to be used in the research. Immediately some chose the names that one of their parents or grandparents

had chosen; others chose names of football players or characters known through movies or television, constituting a moment to fulfill the wishes that were not fulfilled in relation to their names. Each participant received a large sketchbook that we called "Artistic Diary", in order to put their dreams, fears, revolts, expectations, experiences and feelings artistically, that is, in the form of poetry, music, paintings, information about films, photographs, images etc.

In the Artistic Diary each participant put their name and fictitious name; on the second page the photocopy of the birth certificate; on the third page, the lyrics of the song "Gente tem sobrenome" and the poem "O nome da gente"; on the fourth page the result of the survey carried out with the parents about their arrival in the world, origin and meaning of the name; from the fifth page onwards, they were free to express through art their emotions and feelings experienced during the research.

The meeting ended with the song "A Paz" by Thelma Chan⁵ in which each participant hugs himself and then hugs the others. The first time it was sung, some teenagers showed a little resistance to hug, appearing uncomfortable to touch their colleagues, but at the end a big hug was made in a circle.

The second meeting had the theme "Self-portrait - Identity/notion of oneself" and began with considerations about the origin of the artistic genre "Self-portrait", since the time when there was no camera and people were portrayed by artists (with a high cost) until the present in which we have technological resources popularized for photos, the *selfies*. Therefore, nowadays the self-portrait has a more artistic character. Next, the Videos were projected: "Self-portrait Project", "Identity and Self-portrait" and "Self-portrait", preparing adolescents for the challenge of self-portrait with different materials based on the following questions: How do I see myself? How do others see me? How do I see my own story? What physically identifies us? Skin color, hair type, facial expressions, height, etc.?

The teenagers used the UCA *laptop* to take a photo (*selfie*) that could serve as a basis for making the self-portrait, without worrying about what is beautiful or ugly, not getting stuck in the photo, which facilitated their productions. The atmosphere was very relaxed to the sound of different music. The productions were performed in the Artistic Diary with marker pens, colored pencils or black pencils. For the next meeting, they were asked to do a historical contextualization of the year in which they were born, researching important events in the world, country, state, city and family.

The third meeting was entitled Artistic Experience

⁵ Thelma Chan. *A paz*. Available in <http://www.thelmachan.com.br/download/15%20A%20Paz.mp3>. Accessed in 10/07/2014.

"Knowing yourself" and began with a conversation about the results of the research regarding interesting events in the year of birth. Most of the participants were born between 2000 and 2002, when the country lived with the expectation of being for the fifth time world champion in football, which in fact happened in 2002. Parents and/or guardians remembered these facts and the teenagers told with great enthusiasm and pride of having been born at the time when Brazil was five-time world champion in football.

In the Cultural Psychology approach, it is admitted that "success and failure are the main nutrients of human *selfhood*"⁶ (Bruner, 2001, p. 41), which is characterized by:

[...] construction of a conceptual system that organizes [...] a "record" of encounters as agents with a world, a register that is related to the past (i.e., the so-called "autobiographical memory"), but which it also extrapolates to the future – a *self* with history and possibility. It is a possible *self* that regulates aspiration, confidence, optimism and their opposites. While this constructed *self*-system is internal, private, and full of affect, it also extends outward, towards the things, activities, and places with which we become "ego wrapped" – William James' expanded *self*. Schools and school learning are among these first places and activities. (emphasis added by the article authors) (Bruner, 1996/2001, p. 41).

Castelo Branco (2003) argues that it is not possible to study identity outside of social relationships and we must always refer it to concrete life situations, groups and individuals in activity, since personal identity is produced within a process of multiple social identifications, in relationships that bring the "I", the "us" and "them" into encounters and confrontations, which do not merely imply the search for similarities and differences.

According to this trend of thought, identity or the notion of oneself is constructed within a historical-cultural context, through social interactions. In the case of rural people, as it is the case of the participants in this research, the construction of identity can be loaded with prejudices and stereotypes, such as the stereotype of the "caipira", which was reproduced and legitimized for so long in literary discourses and textbooks, that try to diminish and de-characterize this population (Carvalho, 2011; Castelo Branco, 2003).

In discussions about the choice of names, the adolescents said:

It was my father who was watching a movie once, and he had a character with that name, so

⁶ Human uniqueness, a self-awareness with recognition of other self-awareness.

he said that when he had a son he would name it. My mother couldn't even speak my name. [...] (Roberto, 12 years old).

My name was chosen by my father; it comes from a role that movie star Nicolas Cage played. (Diego, 12 years old).

I don't know why they chose that name; I don't know anything about me. (Luiza, 13 years old).

The only thing I know about my name is that my sister chose it, my mother liked it, my father too. I wouldn't choose another name; I'm satisfied with mine. (Jhorrana, 12 years old).

I hate that name, you know..., it doesn't suit me, I don't know... I didn't want that name. If I had to choose it would be Cristina or Clarice like my grandmother [wanted]. (Lucrecia, 14 years old).

In these small narratives, there is a mixture of facts involved in the choice of names of the participants with feelings, and the cinematographic art and the media appear influencing the choice of names of the children; the interference of family members suggesting names; religious issues, whether of the names of biblical characters as well as religious promises made by parents and family members, or for being born on a certain religious date.

Faced with so many interventions in choosing the name, we found in the group participants who do not like their name and who if they could, would choose another. Among the boys, the option of the artistic name for the names of football players was strong, even at the moment that the country was living to host the world cup.

My father chose my name, because his grandfather and great-grandfather also have my name, my stage name will be Balotelli. (Balotelli, 13 years old).

My first name is of English origin, the surname of indigenous origin. I came by chance. My mother, first had my sister, she said she wanted a couple, but before my sister she had a son who died, so she had me later, I came as an intruder, but she liked it because she stayed with a couple. (Neymar, 13 years old).

Teenager Neymar explains the origin of his name and surname, and adds something that was not asked of the group, which is the fact that he came without any planning from the couple. Other comments about not planning the pregnancy emerged in the conversation circle in which each participant introduced himself: *"I was also born by chance. My brother, on the other hand, was planned, he is three years old."* (David Luiz, 12 years old). *"[...] I was not really their plan, I was not planned, my mother had me very young and my father*

was older..." (Patrícia, 14 years old).

Talking and reflecting about the name and surname incited situations that were not foreseen during the planning of the experience, however, we realized that for these adolescents these were facts that were part of their identity, the way they saw themselves as a person, it was the constitution of the self in progress, situations in which the meaning of who they were was under construction.

In the third meeting, the "Mirror Experience" was also held and this was a remarkable moment: the participants became silent and some adolescents who had a lot of difficulty concentrating during the experiences were impacted by their own image reflected in the mirror placed inside a box so that others could not see what was in the box. Many wept as they silently returned to their place, continuing the reflection without communicating with the others.

A conversation circle ended this experience so that the participants shared their feelings, their reflections and conclusions about this very special person they saw reflected in the mirror, with the following question: Is it possible for us to love each other if we do not love us first?

Taking advantage of the climate of reflection, and because it was noticed in the first meeting that there is a certain racial prejudice against some participants who are black, it was planned to enjoy the video "Menina bonita do laço de fita" based on the children's book by Ana Maria Machado, with illustrations and narrative of a beautiful black girl who wore colorful cornrows made by her mother.

After watching the video, the teenagers were questioned and listened to about the issue of racism: "Have you ever stopped to think about who you look like? With your grandparents, parents? In our family, is everyone only one color? What would it be like if everyone were the same color and alike, with the same physical characteristics? What makes us think: is this person beautiful, is this person ugly? What appearance do television programs, soap operas and the media in general show that it is the most beautiful? Is there prejudice in our country? Even with so many laws regarding racism, is there prejudice? And here at school, is there prejudice? Are our games not loaded with prejudice? When someone says, 'You're black,' does that person want to elevate or demean the other? What happened to blacks in Brazil?"

After a time when everyone could express themselves with reflections on these questions, the short video "Vista a minha pele" was shown and the participants were asked to put themselves into the place of another person, the one who is discriminated against, who is seen as different.

This experience ended with reference to the

International Day of Nelson Mandela (which was celebrated that week): a little of the history of this great African leader and his famous phrase: *"No one is born hating another person for the color of their skin, for their origin or even for their religion. To hate people must learn, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love."* (Mandela et al., 2005)⁷.

The student Silvana, who is black and has always been very shy during the other meetings, for the first time participated in the discussion and said: *"Ah, teacher, everyone should be equal"*. The researcher-mediator stressed that we are different, but that we should have the same opportunities, calling attention to the father of the black girl in the film, who represented the white bourgeoisie in the film's inversion when he said: *In Brazil, everyone has the same opportunity, everyone has to fight for their rights and those who fight win*. The researcher-mediator asked: *"Does everyone in Brazil have the same opportunities?"*, followed by a discussion of the question.

Then, they moved on to a moment of artistic production, in which they wrote the sentence by Nelson Mandela in the artistic diary, chose an image from the magazines available in the room, which for them represented this sentence and pasted it in the diary.

The next stage was entitled "Experience Cinema Session 'Freedom Writers⁸'", where the basic elements of cinematographic art were highlighted, such as: scene, sequence, act, character, dialogue, script, genre, duration, direction, soundtrack etc. We talked a little bit about the backstage of the movie *Freedom Writers*, interesting facts that make all the difference when appreciating a movie based on a true story.

When the film ended, images were shown of the real-life characters who lived this story and about the foundation that this group created for other classrooms similar to the one portrayed in the film to be implanted.

In the fifth meeting, the artistic experience "Music in the construction of the adolescent's identity/self" was held, for which a database was prepared with video clips of the songs chosen by the participants and the lyrics in Power Point. It was a very relaxed moment, in which it was also established that the musical preference of each participant would be respected, opening up the musical diversity in the group, emphasizing the elements of musical language, such as: rhythm, melody, harmony, lyrics, tempo, music style.

The songs chosen by the participants had different

styles: **country music** (*Duas Metades; Bebeu, fudeu*); **gospel** (*Abrigado em Jesus, Ele é a minha luz, Adore a Ele*); **dancing** (*Soy rebelde; I'm glad you came*); **romantic** (*Ninguém vai sonhar; Eduardo and Mônica; Força Estranha*). There was a reflection about the different types of music and its importance, because we are human beings with different experiences, we experience different feelings that are difficult to be translated into words and that throughout the cycle of our life there is music, from birth to death. It is present in all our relationships, be it friendship, love, praise to God, in short, it is part of our entire existence. In the end, it was noticed that a teenager who had chosen religious music and who was a little shy, became more comfortable with all this reflection about a song for every circumstance of our life.

Thus, as Bruner (1990/2002) concluded in research carried out by him and a collaborator, that: "It soon became so evident not only that life imitates art, but that it does so by choosing artistic genres and other storytelling devices" (p. 104), we also identified different musical and narrative genres influencing the construction of those adolescents' identities.

It ended with the experience of a musical journey, in which the participants closed their eyes, laid down relaxed, to the sound of instrumental music for reflection. Each participant made their journey and was encouraged to remain silent, disconnect a little from the things around them and look within themselves, and then also look at the people around them, with whom they live, as it is essential to value relationships, the people we love and live with.

At the end of the "trip", each participant was asked to draw on a piece of paper what they had experienced, who they found and to do it in silence. At the end, sitting on the floor, the experience was shared in a conversation circle.

We understand the role of the school to stimulate sensitive listening, developing fruition and artistic production, enjoying the diversity of music, works of art, theater, dance that are part of the heritage of humanity and are powerful interpretive instruments, alongside the development of scientific concepts (paradigmatic thinking). All these aspects mobilize the individual to transcend the restrictions of the human mind, language and culture, to increase the understanding of himself and of reality, assuming his place in the world as more conscious agents capable of transforming (themselves and this "Reality") in face of the possible worlds made available by the culture in which this individual is inserted.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Within the perspective of Cultural Psychology, the identity/notion of the *self* is built in the relationships

⁷ Phrase retrieved in <https://www.pensador.com/frase/MzM1NjIw/> in Portuguese: *"Ninguém nasce odiando outra pessoa pela cor da sua pele, por sua origem ou ainda por sua religião. Para odiar as pessoas precisam aprender, e se podem aprender a odiar, podem ser ensinadas a amar."*

⁸ *Freedom Writers*, film released in 2007 directed by Richard LaGravenese, drama, 123 minutes. USA: Paramount Pictures.

experienced with other selves throughout human existence, from pregnancy, through the expectations of the parents in relation to the new being that is being generated, at birth, in childhood, in adolescence and so on, throughout the life course within the culture in which this individual is inserted.

The concept of adolescence adopted in this research considers this phase of development situated within a culture, that is, which is built on the relationships established in the cultural, historical and social process of a society; a period of identity crisis and transition, in which abstract thinking emerges, the formation of scientific concepts, the rise of the imagination, as well as the development of other higher psychological functions.

As adolescence is a period in which fantasy, one of the manifestations of creative activity, is on the rise and imagination is related to thinking through concepts (abstract thinking), in which children's interests are modified, it is essential to pay attention to the development of creative processes of the adolescent and the development of interpretive skills, thus expanding the understanding of the self and the world of these human beings in transition.

In each meeting, artistic experiences provoked the emergence of narratives that were silenced, bringing them up; facts and feelings that bothered these teenagers since childhood became conscious and could be considered with the interaction that took place in the experiences, which helped each one to re-signify relationships and the notion they had of themselves and others.

Faced with this group experience, art has been revealed as a mediating tool in the provocations, discussions and reflections of how the teenager sees himself/herself, what he/she knows about himself/herself and allowed to verify that it is possible to work on themes that are latent in the day to day of the school context, generating many problems of behavior, of relationships, of low academic performance, of low self-esteem and aggressiveness⁹, which are fundamental for the construction of the adolescent's identity which the school is not always prepared to address.

With the interpretation of the various signs contained in the artistic productions, the experiences contributed to the appropriation of important psychological development of superior psychological functions.

Art made it possible for the teenagers to rethink and (re)construct narratives about their lives, their existences, their selves, how they came into the world, their contradictions, their losses, love and hate

related to the abandonment of the father, jealousy of siblings, prejudices, etc., providing opportunities for reflection and re-signification of their identity/notion of themselves.

In these artistic experiences, art in its different languages: music, poetry, cinema, visual arts, drawing, in addition to its effect as an aesthetic experience of fruition, awakened, provoked and aroused contrasting emotions and feelings in these adolescents, and as they lived this, the experience of catharsis made possible, through thinking in concepts and abstractions, an expansion of knowledge of oneself, of the other and the world.

Recognizing art as a social technique of feeling (Vigotski¹⁰, 1999) helps the formation of the new person, of a person who is collectively constructed, who artistically expresses the set of representations of the culture in which he lives, his beliefs, values, economic situation, social class, religiosity, in short, the reality that they live daily.

The Cultural Psychology proposed by Bruner (2001; 2002) argues that culture provides many models or forms of identity and ways of life through art and in this research, we seek to introduce elements of artistic culture that could lead adolescents to become more aware of their identities and to reconfigure them with the help of artistic resources, introducing new models, which would hardly be presented to them in their family and cultural environments, in the harsh reality of the countryside in Brazil.

Considering the originality of this research and the wealth of data, we suggest that future research be carried out in other cultural contexts (urban schools, suburban or out-of-town schools, vulnerable populations or not) or even in other rural schools for the purpose of comparison and identification of their own singularities of each context.

As for the method, it would also be interesting to diversify it, such as conducting participant research related to teacher training. In our case, four school teachers participated in the study, and the Arts teacher and the Portuguese language teacher participated in all the practices and reported that they learned a lot, justified themselves in terms of their training and stated that they noticed personal and relational changes in the research participants.

Unfortunately, due to the personal life changes of the researchers involved, there was no possibility of continuing the research or developing other extension interventions. However, we paid a visit to the school

⁹ At the end of the research, we found that the participants were indicated by the teachers because they presented these problems.

¹⁰ Some works by this author were published in Portuguese with the spelling Vygotsky, others as Vigotski and in this work we opted for the spelling with i, with the exception of the citations, which follow the translator's option.

and delivered a copy of the dissertation that originated this article to the participating students (who made a point of handling it looking for their productions), participating teachers and supervisor, which can be used to better understand the crisis of adolescent identity and the importance of the school and the role of teachers in everyday school life for the positive overcoming of this crisis with the help of the various artistic manifestations available in local and universal culture, either through fruition and reflection, or through production.

It is also worth mentioning the beautiful work carried out by two teachers of the aforementioned school (Portuguese and Mathematics) who participated in the research for using artistic resources in their teaching as a transversal theme and for the involvement of the entire school community in holding events with production art, as described by Azevedo (2015).

For future research inspired by this work, we suggest that the authors consider the possibility of other ways of returning to school, such as participant research, extension courses for continuing teacher education with reflection on the crisis of adolescence.

In general, we understand that the research objectives were attained, since it was observed that the results presented by the participants show an improvement in their self-esteem and otherness, with the expansion of knowledge of themselves and the other, reconfiguration of interpersonal relationships with more respect for each other in everyday school life, and even improvement in school performance, according to reports from supervisors and teachers of these adolescents.

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