

**Aesthetic Education and Image Reading Mediation: A Study
with Children**^{1 2 3}

***Educação Estética e Mediação de Leitura de Imagem: Um Estudo
com Crianças***

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Abstract

This study seeks to reflect on the relationship between the image reading mediation and aesthetic education, whose methodology is the Art-Based Educational Research (PEBA). We collected data in a mediation encounter between 6 and 7-year-old children with artist Marcelo Urizar. We based the study is based on Martins' discussions on cultural mediation; Duarte and Schiller on aesthetic education; and Heidegger and Larrosa on the concept of experience. Among some perceptions, we understand that, when mediation is dialogical, proposing aesthetic nutrition and fruition, the possibilities of aesthetic education and resignification for the subject are amplified.

Keywords: Aesthetic education, Cultural mediation, Image reading, Experience, Perception

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Resumo

Este estudo busca refletir sobre a relação entre mediação de leitura de imagem e educação estética, cuja metodologia é a Pesquisa Educacional Baseada em Arte (Peba). Os dados foram produzidos em um encontro de mediação para crianças de 6 a 7 anos de idade, com a participação do artista Marcelo Urizar. O estudo baseia-se nas discussões de Martins sobre mediação cultural, de Duarte e Schiller sobre educação estética e de Heidegger e de Larrosa sobre o conceito de experiência. Entre algumas percepções, compreende-se que, quando a mediação é dialógica, de forma a propiciar a nutrição estética e a fruição, as possibilidades de educação estética e de ressignificação para o sujeito amplificam-se.

Palavras-chave: Educação estética, Mediação cultural, Leitura de imagem, Experiência, Percepção.

Introduction



Figure 1 - No title

Note. Painting by Marcelo Urizar (2017), from a private collection.

In this work of Marcelo Urizar, we have a single line that, through its contours, crossing, comings, and goings, forms an image that does not intend to be singular but composed of multiple forms, built by this winding path. His artistic production provoked us to think of the ways to mediate art, especially image reading, as a pathway that multiplies itself during its course and allows reaching other ways of seeing, feeling, and understanding art.

Urizar's work was chosen as an epigraph for this article because our theme is image reading. We want to question how the school has been aesthetically educating students in Art classes to point out how the mediation of the teacher and the artist can widen the power of these classes. During this work, we bring other works from this Argentinean artist, living in Balneário Camboriú, Santa Catarina, Brazil, because it was through his mediation in the classroom that we observed how children build meanings while capturing and processing artistic visuals. We understand that the possibility of taking the artist to discuss in the classroom, as well as the opportunity for students to see original artworks, and not only reproductions, broadens their perception of the aesthetic object. Thus, their relationship with the artistic image takes place through a sensitive and thinking experience.

Our everyday life is full of different types of images, artistic or not. Our view captures the visual elements we find in banners on the streets, on walls of establishments, on smartphone screens, in magazines, newspapers, books, galleries, and museums. As pointed out by Larrosa (2016) and Duarte (2010), this excess of images and information in our routines numbs us, instead of stunning us. The authors stress the importance of establishing a slowness in our lives, so that things do not simply happen, but happen to us, that is, that we can *make* an experience. Larrosa (2016, p. 28) points out that “experience is what ‘pervades us’, or touches us, or happens to us, and, by pervading us, forms and transforms us. Only the subjects of the experience are, therefore, open to their own transformation”. In this sense, to make an experience is an individual action, singular, subjective, finite, and typical to each one. Many can live the event (and we live many in our everyday life), but few let themselves be touched by them. What happens to us is what pervades us, which leaves marks, which moves us towards something, which faces us.

Heidegger (2003) affirms that making an experience, in the sense of pervading, suffering, and receiving, because the experience is always with someone or something that "pervades us, meets us, reaches us, stuns us, and transforms" (p. 121). For the philosopher, who explains

experience with language, this making of experience requires a renouncement of what we have pre-conceived about the things and, when stripping away this pre-knowledge, we can "re-announce" new ways of thinking and feeling, to widen new possibilities about language itself. In this perspective, only those that make an experience open themselves to the unknown and receive them to renew them; the renouncement of what has always followed us is the "re-announce". This movement between the known and the unknown makes us greater and provokes changes, leads us to claim our knowledge, and resonates in other ways.

Duarte (2010, p. 21) discusses our viciousness in modernity, a sensitive regression shown by our current societies, "a regression produced and stimulated industrially in favor of broadening the market of goods, so dispensable as aesthetically poor". However, from the moment that our senses are stimulated, new forms of perception and knowledge start to exist, so subjects can create a reality faced by the experiences they propose to themselves. When dealing with aesthetic education, we contemplate the sensitive culture, which starts from the way subjects are affected and interact with their environment.

Considering the studies of Duarte (2010), Larrosa (2016), and Heidegger (2015), we have sought to think about education from the pair experience/sense, to propose the mediation of image reading that contributes to students' aesthetic education. We understand aesthetic education beyond the subjective game between imagination and understanding, sense and meaning. We have thus emphasized the teaching of Art in school as one of the possibilities to cultivate the sensitive and rational faculties, aiming to connect the aesthetic principles with the principles of reason, with no distance. We also emphasize that, through the education of senses, the involuntary perception of things can — when refined — leads to intellectual autonomy, as affirmed by Schiller (2017).

Hence, we understand that learning takes place by cognitive experiences and by the senses and affections. In this sense, we highlight the power of arts and cultural mediation to propose the making of an experience and identify the aesthetic education with this making. To Neitzel et al. (2012, p. 47), aesthetic education "consists in teaching men to look, listen, move, act, and experience" in an integrated whole and, when we do so, we go from a state of anesthesia to one of aesthesia. In this direction, we bring image reading as an interpretation of the visual field, which meets the need to better observe our surroundings; after all, "we perceive the world by the organs of the senses" and, thus, "when looking at the world, we establish contact, because

the perceptive relations take place faced by the existing world and happen when the subject enters the world" (Buoro, 1998, p. 134).

As images are constantly and massively presented to us, we are increasingly less stimulated to observe with attention such visuals, due to the accelerated way of everyday life and the minimal value of our senses. Our sensitivity needs to be flourished so that we can more meaningfully reveal the signs and visual information present in such images. Duarte (2010, p. 23) affirms that art "can be a precious instrument for the education of sensitivity, leading us not only to discover new ways, until then unusual, to feel and perceive the world but also developing and sharpening our senses and perceptions on the lived reality." Such a stimulus to sensitivity and the contemplation of an artistic object as a way to exercise sensible thinking could and should, even, be enacted in schools through Art teaching.

Rossi (2009) argues that, for some time, the image was separated from school education, but, in the last decades, it emerged to occupy an important place in art classrooms. According to the author, "as it a consensus the idea that every student should have the opportunity to interpret the symbols of arts because the aesthetic dimension is part of the human potential" (Rossi, 2009, p. 9). However, even if they are frequently in contact with different types of images, we have perceived that children still do not sufficiently relate to artistic works. As educators, we have observed that, in schools, this approximation is often restricted and, when it happens, it is not always carried out sensitively and deeply. In certain cases, the approach of art images in classes happens only based on explanations about the work, the teacher only transmits information on art production, carrying out a mediation that does not allow the development of students' perceptions. This action seems to result in very vague, far, relations, because artworks are perceived as a neutral, close images, far from students' world.

Therefore, we bring here the need for Art classes to contemplate aesthetic education, which is not established by a mere reproduction of contents on the works analyzed but to stimulate perceptions, experiences, and interpretations of the subject on the contemplated object (Duarte, 2010). Aesthetic education, through art, allows us to observe, feel, and understand ourselves and the world in a more open and meaningful way because artistic appreciation "leads the subject to perceive himself in the context he is in, this movement can that him to also see the world, in a process of self-knowledge that will help him develop his senses and widen the meanings" (Neitzel & Carvalho, 2016, p. 254). Hence, children also need

to be open to sensitivity so that sensorial manifestations can affect them and produce a contemplative, reflexive, and autonomous thinking.

We understand that teachers' mediation, understood as the possibility to establish dialogues with others, meetings, and affections, can create between the child and the artwork a relation of fruition. Mediation is "a vast territory to be explored (. . .), which welcomes thinking and sensing of the mediated intending to broaden its possibility of fruition, composition, or even, recreation" (Uriarte et al., 2016, p. 41). Mediating is contributing to the possibilities of interpretation brought by artworks showing themselves in the sensoriality and sensitiveness present in the spectator.

Martins (2014b, p. 260) affirms that mediation is "to be among many". This way, we have, in the figure of mediator, the one who will contribute to enacting the power of this action and for it to proliferate a mutual interaction between the parts inserted in this process. The mediator is who can provoke connections between what the image represents and the perceptions of the child, a provocation that often starts from the silence of the mediator and when children are given a voice. As pointed out by Uriarte et al. (2016), cultural mediation needs to be conducted in an emancipatory way and, for this to happen, it is not enough to have it carried out by a teacher or a museum agent. It should be enacted by someone aware of the potentialities of this movement of listening to others, considering that " what identifies the cultural mediator are not their roles, but the actions promoted by them, highlighting the power of these meetings with art, creating aesthetic contaminations, which capture the other for the sensations provoked by artworks" (Uriarte et al., 2016, p. 39).

Thus, this study seeks to reflect the relation between image mediation and aesthetic education, as we believe in the "current need and something urgent to give more attention to the education of sensitiveness, and education of feeling, which might as well be called aesthetic education" (Duarte, 2010, p. 13). This study contributes to the diffusion of knowledge on the value of senses, as well as helping teachers in their mediating action, in the area of Art and other subjects and studies.

Methodological pathway



Figure 2 - No title

Note. Illustration by Marcelo Urizar (2013a), from a private collection.

Marcelo Urizar's work used in the epigraph is composed of multiple lines, ways, shapes, relations, and senses contained in a drawing, as well as the other works and dialogues that comprise this study. The consideration and contemplation of images such as these indicate the need for a qualitative methodology, an approach focusing on the value of the artistic object, the image, as well as the relation of the researchers and the subjects involved with the work. It is a methodology that considers subjects' subjectivities in the experience, not focusing on data collection, but on their production, the process, and which considers the excesses.

Understanding the complexity of research that deals with the perception, the affection, and the sensitivity connected to the scientific thought— questions that would be present,

considering that this research took place in a real situation, i.e., a living practice during the Art class —, we have chosen to work with the *Pesquisa Educacional Baseada em Arte* (Peba- Educational Research Based in Art). According to Carvalho and Immianovsky (2017), “PEBA is a methodological perspective that uses artistic processes and products, aesthetic by nature, to investigate, problematize, and understand educational questions” (p. 224). Based on this context, we have used the work method a/r/tography, a term that originated from “the merging of the first letters of the English words *Artist, Researcher, Teacher* plus *Graph*” (Aguiar, 2011, p. 61). In this method, writing is carried out to value dialectics present between the text and image, aiming to raise new meanings in the research (Aguiar, 2011).

The data was produced through a mediation meeting that took place during an Art class with the participation of Argentinean artist Marcelo Urizar. The encounter happened in the reading classroom of the school and was recorded through audiovisual equipment. The mediation was proposed by one of the researchers, who is the Art teacher of this group, as she places herself as a a/r/tographer. Twenty-four children of 6 to 7 years old, 1st Year students, from a municipal school in the region of Vale do Itajaí, Santa Catarina (SC), Brazil.

Irwin (2013) points out that the methodology a/r/tography has research-action characteristics, due to its interventionist character, as well as the understanding of living practice in which “the practices of teachers and artists become investigation places/environments” (Oliveira & Charreu, 2016, p. 378). When providing contact and relation of children with artworks during the mediation, it was possible to see if they were involved with the artwork in the movement of making an experience, through the record of their interaction with the artist. Thus, this study has the following research question: “How can the mediation of image reading allow aesthetic education to *make* experience?”

Aesthetic education and *making* experience



Figure 3 - *No title*

Note. Illustration by Marcelo Urizar (2013b), from a private collection.

Seeing this work, the attentive eyes explore, seek to create relations, understand, like, or dislike. Dialogues emerge, thoughts are created, and senses amplify. Urizar's canvas provokes, instigates, and inserts the groups, who are not used to contemporary art, in a great quicksand pit. Thus, the groups are inserted in a movement of investigation through integrated feeling and thinking.

We are reminded here of the poet Alberto Caieiro: "I think with the eyes and with the ears, and with the hands and the feet, and with the nose and the mouth" (Pessoa, 2016, p. 93). The poet provokes us to understand that reason and imagination, the intelligible and the sensitive cannot be parted, because the world reaches us by the senses, by the body. It is through the body and all senses that we start to understand our surroundings, "the perception is not a science of the world, it is not even an act, a deliberate decision-taking; it is the background over which all acts are highlighted and it is assumed by them" (Merleau-Ponty, 1999, p. 6).

Schiller (2017), in the letters written at the end of the 18th century, places aesthetic education as a thinking force, which will allow the subject to perceive not only through reason,

but also by sensation, and intuition. To Schiller (2017, p. 109), “there is no way to turn rational the sensitive man without making him aesthetic first”; this way, the subject needs to educate the senses so that he/she can not only feel the surrounding world but also to understand it, leaving the state of barbarism and become a cultivated man/woman.

So that men can leave this state of barbarism, they need to pass by an aesthetic development and, in its turn, it will make them reach the third stage, the moral one, which will only then — through reason and sensitiveness — reach intellectual autonomy. To Schiller (2017), men need to go through three stages of development: the physical, the aesthetical, and the moral. For the philosopher, “in the *physical* stage, men only suffer the power of nature, frees themselves from the power of the *aesthetic* stage, and dominates them in the *moral* state” (Schiller, 2017, p. 113). In this perspective, Franklin et al. (2017, p. 138) affirm that, to this thinker, the aesthetic judgment

is understood entangled with reason, and the cultivation of these two faculties could lead the men to elevate from physical need to moral need, freeing him from his natural, physical state, which only allows the involuntary perception of things.

When men exercise and educate their senses, they start to be cultivated and, then, have the sensibility to understand themselves and the surrounding world.

Schiller (2017) maintains that, from aesthetic education, the subject will be free to choose, a freedom that consists in an intellectual autonomy when he starts to understand his surroundings from a state of contemplation, based on his perceptions. To Schiller (2017), “slave of nature when they only feel, men becomes their legislators when they think” (p. 120). When thinking about their nature and not only feeling them, men start to have a relationship with freedom, with their world. As explained by Franklin et al. (2017), there is “a freedom by appreciation and by reflection and, through them, the individual reaches elevation when reaching the autonomy of thought” (p. 138).

According to Schiller (2017), men have two forces that boost them: the sensitive impulse (that starts from the sensitive nature of men and has *life* as an object) and the formal (that starts from the rational nature of man and has *form* as an object). The reciprocal action between these two forces would result in a new impulse: the ludic, which encompasses reason and sensitiveness. We understand that not only in the artistic *production* but also in its *fruition*, that is,

when contemplating an object or an image of art and reflecting on them, the student can move towards an education of the senses. In this perspective, the dialogic mediation of image reading can contribute to the children entering this state of game mentioned by Schiller (2017), allowing them to get closer to the ludic impulse and educate themselves aesthetically.

We understand that the term “aesthetic” according to its origin, founded on the Greek word *aisthesis*, is related to sensation, feeling, and the senses. Educating aesthetically demands the exercise of aesthesia, of feeling (which is not separated from thinking). Duarte (2010, p. 13) affirms that “the world, before being taken as an intelligible matter, emerges to us as a sensitive object”. The exercise of aesthesia is the ability of the human being to feel himself and the other, it is “our readiness to learn the signs emitted by things and by ourselves” (Duarte, 2010, p. 137). Dealing with esthesia, in education in general and Art education specifically, is to prepare children to be aware of their perceptions and their senses. To Carvalho and Santos (2019, p. 4), “the aesthetic sense presents itself in actions as an emphatic and intense way that relates things and ideas, contemplating an investigative attitude that experiences thought and reality from unusual angles”. Therefore, aesthetic education refers to allowing moments of meeting with others, moments of reflection, and the creation of experiences, so that the subjects can, thus, give meaning to their experiences, which stop being things that happen to become something that happens to them.

To Duarte (2010), resuming the first sense of aesthetic— or aesthesia, equivalent to the term *aisthesis* in Portuguese — is “to dedicate oneself to the development and the refinement of our senses which places us face to face with the stimuli of the world” (p. 13). Faced with the artwork, we start having sensorial assimilation that can widen our world perception when this relation with artistic production is built on affection, in experience. Therefore, knowledge can be apprehended not only rationally, but also sensitively and affectively, considering that “even if there is the persistence of a common philosophical sense that supports an opposition between aesthetic and logic, aesthetic is understood as a producer of knowledge” (Carvalho & Santos, 2019, p. 5). While we redirect our gaze to an education that contemplates the sensible and the intelligible, we consider it an aesthetic education. However, as pointed out by Rodrigues and Roble (2015, p. 210), “it is not, therefore, to simply open the door to the senses, but an operation fundamental to judgment – summing up, a process of education”. Hence, a more open and sensitive way to treat the artwork needs to be built; an aesthetic of teaching that allows the

mediating teacher to renounce the knowledge he/she has considered as ideals in the mediation of images to “re-announce” new learnings.

Considering these assumptions, we will now describe and analyze the movement of children with the visual works of artist Marcelo Urizar to reflect on the relation between the mediation of image reading and aesthetic education. We will try to highlight elements that point out how Art teachers can propose the involvement of children with art, to allow possibilities for them to mobilize the *making* experience and aesthetically educate them.

The encounter with the artist

Though we are continuously diving into the image universe, our gaze does not always focus on art images. Also, there are few children, in our surroundings, which have the family habit to attend art exhibitions, even because there are few spaces in this region. Besides this, when the exhibitions take place, the problems of public transport often discourage teachers to promote visits to these spaces. Carrying out meetings of children with the artists in school can improve their access to cultural goods. Neitzel and Carvalho (2016, p. 254) affirm that "the search for knowledge takes place by different paths and, one of them, is through the access of cultural goods. Through art, the subject widens his/her ability of reflection and perception, as well as sensitiveness".

However, it is not only the access, but also how the mediation of the artist can broaden the relation of children's appreciation for artwork, because it has professional's intentions which, when shared, can help students understand its artistic elements and, through this movement, broaden the field of meanings of the work and the close contact with it. Martins, Picosque, and Guerra (2009, p. 130) emphasize the importance of teachers to "promote the access to living artists, contemporary, Brazilian", among other actions that help children's aesthetic nutrition, such as carefully choosing the works presented to them, promote challenging readings, and understand that these will not always lead to productions focusing on these readings. They can also enable visits to museums and other cultural and artistic spaces.

When seeing, listening to, or touching a work, the subject starts to perceive it and, from then on, uses his/her thought to feel and understand it. Thus, the stimulus to sensitivity and the

contemplation of the artistic object, as a way to exercise sensible thought can enter schools through the mediation of reading artistic images proposed by the artist. Thus, contact with art does not need to take place only in museums or cultural institutions. School can also be this space of cultural mediation, of meeting with those producing art, considering that “when we allow aesthetic education in our schools, we contribute not only for our children and young people to develop their sensitive, creative, and perceptive capacity, but also their autonomy of thought” (Francez & Neitzel, 2019, p. 26).

In this research, the mediation carried out with the participation of the artist allowed children to understand more emphatically the works exhibited there, as well as connecting these two worlds: the artistic and personal universe of the painter and students’ activities, wishes, and dreams. During the mediation meetings, students reveal expressions that seemed to indicate an enchantment with the works they saw, feeling very much at ease to comment and make questions.

After closely observing the images, they sat down with the artist to listen to him, surrounded by panels and artistic drawings on the walls. When a boy asked Marcelo Urizar how long he made Art, he answered that he draws and paints since childhood. Immediately the child connected this information to his world by saying he also liked to paint. Allowing the artist to come to school is also a way to demystify the possible image of a distant and unreachable figure so that children can understand that expressing sensations and thoughts through art is within everyone's reach.

Proposing spaces and objects

Piske, Neitzel, and Nhoque (2017, p. 279) affirm that a good mediation of literary reading is “the one that broadens the possibilities to affect the student with the work through sensitive provocations” and that “remove students from the classroom and allow them to get in contact with other ways of feeling, seeing, and perceiving the text and the surrounding world, contributing to their aesthetic education”. We could make the same statement about image reading.

To better appreciate artworks with remarkable colors and dimensions, the students were taken to a reading classroom, where these works were exhibited. When entering this space, children were surprised, ecstatic, and curious about what was on the walls. They raised their necks to see the whole, attentively looking at the works, and seemingly astounded by what they feeling. These are some expressions that show how they were touched by the space and by the art they found.

Neitzel, Ferri, and Borba (2018), when researching how the space broadens the aesthetic power of libraries, state that it is a proposing element when the space welcomes the subject, allows interactions, and offers comfort. Researchers attest that the researched libraries extrapolate the concept of book repositories to become places of aesthesia that provoke sensitive meetings with art, promoting contemplation and fruition, and invite the subject to be in the library. A space can affect when placing the other in a process of discoveries when its organization has "ingredients to sensitize and attract the public" (Neitzel et al., 2018, p. 18), aesthetic spaces with welcoming and socializing areas.

However, it was not only a proposing space that mobilized children's energy. The original works of artist Marcelo Urizar, in a big format hanging on the walls, affected the children as many could observe, for the first time the textures, the colors, the brush strokes so typical of original works. Artwork is a proposing element that promotes aesthetic provocations, feelings, and thoughts that are intersecting and waking aesthesia.

The mediating teacher

Being in the middle, acting together, promoting changes, sharing knowledge, enabling dialogues, and opening ways are some points through which pass the meaning of cultural mediation. With the Greek root *medhyo* and the Latin one *medius*, indicating "what lies in the middle", the term "mediation" has been used in common sense with the meaning of a "bridge between two" (Martins, 2012, p. 47). However, when we add to the word the concept of culture, mediation allows new contacts, new ways of understanding, and the relation between work and spectator, considering the context of each one of these parts. Thus, cultural mediation goes beyond being between two, it cannot be understood as a bridge that connects a point with the

other, but reaches the sense of being among many, “amidst a set of thoughts, sensations, updated stories” (Martins, 2012, p. 47).

In the mediation of dialogic image reading, when the child has the opportunity of feeling and thinking with autonomy about the work, the probability that this meeting can engender a much grander experience. The education of the senses can happen in various ways; in this research, we explore the perspective of the artistic field. In this way, providing approximations with art that allow the articulation between the sensitive and the intelligible can contribute for children to reach other levels of aesthetic understanding.

Mediating the reading of an art image is to allow dialogues between readers and the work, individual and collective reflection, and the creation of different interpretations. According to Francez and Neitzel (2019, p. 27), “teacher mediation is important for students to unveil more meaningfully the visual information, messages, and perceptions that can be present in the relations s/he establishes with these images”. When provoking the subjects through understanding, discovery, aesthetic perception, and fruition, the mediating action encompasses sensitiveness and the resignification of meanings. To Martins (2012, p. 48), more than informing or motivating perceptions, cultural mediation “involves capturing the subject to enter in an experience”.

During the meeting of mediation carried out in this study, we have observed how the sensitivity of one child flourished from the works of artist Marcelo Urizar. After she asked to speak, a girl starts by saying that she thought one of the paintings was “the most beautiful and neat in the world” and that she had never seen something so beautiful. When the teacher asked her what was so beautiful about the drawings, she answered that “they were neat, colorful, beautiful, and big...”, she also said she felt love when seeing them. We perceived that the child indicated signs of affection that the painting might have caused her, the contact with the works allowed her to emanate a sensitive thought regarding the visuals she contemplated. The teacher a/r/tographer noticed the enthusiasm in the softness of her words, her attentive gaze, her smile, and her gestures, reflecting that she might have experienced an experience that, according to Larrosa (2016), is also a passion, considering that “the passionate person does not have a loved object, but is possessed by it” (p. 29).

Affect through artwork

Art can open possibilities to broaden the gaze and to understand subjects, situations, and life. However, so that this meeting results in a sensitive thought, art needs to touch us, involve us, and pervade us. Art can make us more sensitive when it takes place as a happening, as an experience. If experience "is attention, listening, opening, availability, sensitiveness, the exhibition" and "is not by the side of action but of passion" (Larrosa, 2016, p. 68), it is through experience that we aesthetically educate ourselves.

In the mediation meeting in which the author Urizar was present, another child frequently spoke. His contributions allow us to think about how the effect of artwork can be the engine for the ludic impulse to show itself. Besides actively participating in the dialogues, the boy's statements were deeper than those of his peers. Among them, he said he liked the artist's work, "the colors...and the formats". When the teacher asked what these paintings referred to, he answered: "I think they were so cool, so beautiful. I'm speechless". When we know the context of the boy and his interest in painting, we understand that this encounter can have affected him more than other children. This active participation can be a clue that this happened to him, an experience might have happened to him. -

Larrosa (2016, p. 69) affirms that "in experience, there is always an 'I don't know what to say', because this cannot be expressed in the available language, in the received language, in the language of what we already know how to say". The boy's body expression displays his lack of words to describe what he felt or thought and shows a possible affect, an expression provoked by art.

When thinking about literary reading as an event, Neitzel, Cruz, and Weiss (2017, p. 127) understand it as something that affects, and considers the perspective of the reader about the work, "needs to be thought, inhabit us, which implies them to be lived as an experience". When we perceive the image reading as an event, understanding it not as what happens, but as what happens to *us*, we can understand it also as a form of artistic experience. When carried out dialogically and open to new ways, the mediation of image reading can contribute to provoking something in the participating subjects.

Interactions

Balpe and Magné (1991, p. 19) conceptualize interactivity as “the possibility of a text to remain sensitive to eventual actions of one or more readers”⁴. This concept makes explicit that interactivity is understood as an interference of the subject that questions him/herself faced by the work. Impressionist art deeply explored this notion, which investigated how, through the optic perception, the ‘audience’ could participate in the responsibility of creation. In contemporary art, since the 1950s-1960s, the aim is also to provoke the audience with installations, *happenings*, *action painting*, and *performances*, among others, so that they can participate in the artistic production.

In the mediation encounter with the children, the artist created a drawing for them to observe him create some works exhibited there. When starting to draw on the paper, the children soon portrayed expressions of awe, showing that something surprised them. The attentive eyes and the smile on the face of one of the children, when constantly repeating "he doesn't stop!", referring to the movement the artist did with the pen, expressed the surprise caused when seeing art being created in front of them. Besides her, other classmates tried to guess the figures formed by the hands of the artist, marveled at how he created the drawing and the different ways the figures took shape.

Martins (2014a, p. 39) affirms that “strangeness can only take place when we enter a state of creative vigilance, of great sensitiveness. The passport is the open body, wide open, in esthesia, not anesthetized”. Thus, for experience to take place, it is necessary to give it space, because "experience is not the way towards a predicted objective, towards a previously-known goal, but an opening to the unknown, to what cannot be anticipated, nor 'pre-seen", nor 'pre-said'" (Larrosa, 2016, p. 34). The meetings with art, when allowed by this opening to dialogue, can provoke a strangeness and lead subjects to the pathway of experience, of experience.

As they refer to sensitiveness, thoughts, sensations, and human life, we can understand that aesthetic education might also be found in experience. At the end of the mediation, Marcelo Urizar created a work for the children, making a drawing with a single line with a permanent felt-tip pen, without removing it from the paper. After seeing the result, one child said she liked the work of the artist because “he did not stop, not even a bit to do this and that”, gesticulating

⁴“In the original “la possibilité pour un texte de rester sensible aux actions éventuelles d’un ou plusieurs lecteurs. »

with the hand the way Marcelo did with the pen. Another child did the same imaginary drawing, however with his finger running through one of the canvases exhibited on the wall. When copying the movement of the artist and allowing their bodies to express what they thought or felt, the children seemed to show the understanding they had about the moment experienced. They signaled with their hands how they were affected and the sensitiveness art might have provoked in them.

As we give children opportunities to have contact with art and help them to exercise sensitive and intelligible thought through interaction, we can contribute to their aesthetic development. Martins et al. (2009, p. 107) state that art is a "sensitive experience that the perceptive body reflects" and that "proposing learning situations in art implies vibrating in this body the astonishment through the world and the strangeness faced by all that, damped, with the senses dulled, we see no more". Thus, the artistic experience allowed by the mediation of image reading might have helped these children to manifest themselves according to their rational and sensitive processes, expressing corporeally the understanding that emerged from them. The authors' provocations, as well as the interactions, allow children to think about the visuals and other senses around them, through the intermediation of art and esthesia experiences, to broaden their ability to read the world and produce meanings.

Final remarks

Perceiving sensations, thoughts, and actions, widening the gaze, or even multiplying it, thus making it encompass several directions, were some of the movements that followed us during this study, which aimed to reflect on the relation between the mediation of image reading and aesthetic education. When we promote meetings with art through the contact of the children with artists, by incentivizing dialogue and creating new meanings to the works, we also have helped them to develop a sharper gaze and change the way children see their surroundings.

We understand that aesthetic nutrition becomes essential to Art classes, seeing that it can trigger several production processes because it is through it that the audience can think with sensitivity. Manoel de Barros (2015, p. 102) poetizes that "art has no thought: the eye sees, the memories re-sees, and imagination trans-sees. One needs to trans-see the world". In this sense, image reading that provokes the sensitivity of children, which brings their memories, and

stimulates their imagination, will help them to trans-see the world. Aesthetic education, the exercise of sensitive thought, and the intelligible pervade this approximation with the artistic production that can create the experience. The opening of an interaction provided to children can broaden what passes by them when they get in contact with art, develop human sensitivity, and move toward intellectual autonomy. The cultivated subjects can be those that trans-see the world, which, through artistic experience, can be more aware of who they are, what they feel, what they think, and how they act.

Focusing on the sensations and the perceptions of children is something that has become increasingly more relevant because, nowadays, we seem to be living in a barbaric situation, in the sense given by Schiller (2017) or, even in a state of anesthesia, in the definition of Duarte (2010, p. 137): “the denial of the sensitive, the impossibility, or the inability to feel”. We can perceive that our everyday life stimulates little the refinement of the senses. We can perceive this in the speed our days go by, the daily and operational actions we experience, in the intense way we use electronic devices to communicate with each other, instead of physically interacting with others. Added to this scenario, there is the distance from nature, the increasing consumption of artificial and industrialized food, and the gradual pollution of the environment, among other factors, which have contributed to increasing the level of stress in the population and do not add anything to the emergence of senses.

Art can contribute to aesthetic education when the mediation of image reading helps not only with the visual literacy of children, for them to understand more clearly not only the signs around them but also to better interpret the visual representations that emerge from their trajectory. The possibilities of understanding and resignification for the subject are amplified when the mediation is enacted dialogically to propose aesthetic nutrition and fruition. This is evident in the way children started to elaborate narratives and create interpretations for the images presented to them.

It is in the exchange, in the sharing, in this profusion of knowledge that artistic experience can happen. Listening to the other, the contribution of the classmates, the participation of the mediator, of the artist, and the appreciations that complement each other point out that mediation is built together. In this environment, children also occupy their spaces, echoing their voices, connecting their thoughts, proliferating their gazes, and amplifying their senses.

From this movement of strangeness, from meeting the unknown, can emerge experience, the feeling of being affected, and the development of sensitive and intelligible thought. When the mediator values dialogue, s/he also brings the possibility of contributing to reaching intellectual autonomy, to seek the cultivated subject. When reflecting on the relationship between the mediation of image reading and aesthetic education, it was possible to understand that it is when the mediator allows this space to children that the game between imagination and understanding takes place, developing the ludic impulse generated by the harmony between reason and emotion.

We have perceived that his dialogic approximation with the artistic image can result in an experience, between those that are mediated and those who mediate. This way, this study allowed us to understand that aesthetic education happens in the experience, which is personal, and untransferable. Because of this, it is important to create spaces in which the children aesthetically relate to the artwork, to open space to express their thoughts and feelings, to create a connection with their world, consider the voices of others, remember personal experiences, and share them. Openness, dialogue, fruition, respect, interactions, proposing spaces and objects, movements, approximations, and mediations adequate to the teacher — are some of the points through which passes the mediation of image reading when moving toward the exercise of experience, affect, thought autonomy.

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