ARTIGO

PROFESSIONAL TEACHING KNOWLEDGE ABOUT POETRY: A STUDY WITH TEACHERS OF PRIMARY SCHOOL

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ABSTRACT: This study focuses on teacher's professional knowledge about teaching poetry in the first years of schooling. It is a study centered on the representations of the participants of a continuous training course on the teaching of poetry, for teachers of the first years of schooling (grade 1 to grade 4) in the Portuguese Educational System. The aim of this study is to characterize teacher professional knowledge in the area of poetry teaching through the analysis of teachers' responses to two questionnaire surveys, applied at the beginning and at the end of the training action, aiming to answer the following questions: what do teachers think about poetry and its teaching and what training needs do the teachers display in this field? The results of this study show the importance of the characterization of professional teacher knowledge for the designing of training proposals to promote change in educational practices centered on poetry.

Keywords: teacher's professional knowledge, teaching poetry, professional thinking, elementary school teachers, representations.

CONHECIMENTO PROFISSIONAL DOCENTE SOBRE POESIA E SEU ENSINO: UM ESTUDO COM PROFESSORES DOS PRIMEIROS ANOS DE ESCOLARIDADE

RESUMO: O estudo apresentado foca-se no conhecimento profissional docente sobre o ensino da poesia nos primeiros anos de escolaridade. Trata-se de um estudo que incide sobre representações dos participantes de uma ação de formação contínua sobre ensino da poesia, para professores dos primeiros anos de escolaridade (1.º ao 4.º ano) no Sistema Educativo Português. O estudo visa caracterizar o conhecimento profissional docente na área do ensino da poesia através da análise de conteúdo das respostas dos professores a dois inquéritos por questionário, aplicados no início e no final da ação de formação, pretendendo responder às seguintes questões: o que pensam os professores sobre a poesia e o seu ensino e que necessidades de formação evidencia o seu discurso neste domínio? Os resultados do

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estudo mostram a importância da caracterização do conhecimento profissional docente para a conceção de propostas de formação para a promoção da mudança nas práticas educativas centradas sobre a poesia.

Palavras-chave: conhecimento profissional docente, ensino da poesia, pensamento profissional, professores dos primeiros anos de escolaridade, representações.

CONOCIMIENTO PROFESIONAL DOCENTE SOBRE POESÍA Y SU ENSEÑANZA: UN ESTUDIO CON PROFESORES DE LOS PRIMEROS AÑOS DE ESCOLARIDAD

RESÚMEN: El estudio presentado se centra en el conocimiento profesional de los maestros sobre la enseñanza de la poesía en los primeros años de escolarización. Este es un estudio que se centra en las representaciones de los participantes en una acción de formación continuada sobre la enseñanza de la poesía, para maestros de la Educación Primária (1. ° a 4. ° año) en el Sistema Educativo Portugués. El estudio tiene como objetivo caracterizar el conocimiento profesional de los maestros en el área de la enseñanza de poesía con análisis de contenido de las respuestas de los docentes a dos encuestas por cuestionario, aplicadas al comienzo y al final de la formación con el objetivo de contestar a las siguientes preguntas: ¿qué piensan los maestros sobre poesía y su enseñanza y ¿qué necesidades de formación muestra su discurso en este domínio? Los resultados del estudio muestran la importancia de caracterizar el conocimiento profesional de los docentes para el diseño de propuestas de formación que puedan promover el cambio en las prácticas educativas centradas en la poesía.

Palabras clave: conocimiento profesional docente, enseñanza de la poesía, pensamiento profesional, maestros de la educación primaria, representaciones.

CONNAISSANCES PÉDAGOGIQUES PROFESSIONNELLES SUR LA POÉSIE ET SON ENSEIGNEMENT: UNE ÉTUDE AVEC LES ENSEIGNANTS DÈS LES PREMIÈRES ANNÉES DE SCOLARITÉ

RÉSUMÉ: L'étude présentée ici se centre sur les connaissances des professeurs sur l'enseignement de la poésie dans les premières années de scolarité. Il s'agit d'une étude au sujet des représentations des participants d'une action de formation continue sur l'enseignement de la poésie, pour les professeurs des premières années de scolarité (de la 1ère à la 4ème année) dans le système éducatif portugais. L'objectif de cette étude est de caractériser les connaissances professionnelles des enseignants dans le domaine de l'enseignement de la poésie en analysant les réponses des enseignants à deux enquêtes par questionnaire, appliquées au début et à la fin de l'action de formation, afin de répondre aux questions suivantes : Qu'est-ce que les enseignants pensent à propos de la poésie et de son enseignement et quels besoins de formation mettent en évidence leur discours dans ce domaine? Les résultats de l'étude montrent l'importance de la caractérisation des connaissances professionnelles des enseignants pour la conception de propositions de formation continue visant à promouvoir le changement des pratiques éducatives centrées sur la poésie.

Mots de passe: connaissances professionnelles des enseignants, enseignement de la poésie, pensée professionnelle, enseignants des premières années de scolarité, représentations.

INTRODUCTION

Given the assumption that teacher's professional knowledge determines the educational practices and considering that state of the art identifies teacher's deficient training relating to literary texts and their approach in the classroom, we believe that poetry educational practices are subordinated to the lack of training in this area. This research, developed in the framing of a teachers' workshop, had the intention to characterize the teacher's professional knowledge about poetry and its teaching, during the first years of schooling. In that way, the answers of the two inquiries applied to the ten teachers who participated were gathered and analyzed, in the beginning and in the end of the workshop. We aim, with this research, to delineate the teacher's professional knowledge about poetry and its teaching, and to identify the teacher's representations regarding this textual genre and its educational potential in the first years of schooling. The research questions that orient this research (SOUZA; SOUZA; COSTA, 2014) were: what do teachers think about poetry and its teaching and which training needs does their speech reveal in this domain?

The research is situated in the interpretative paradigm of qualitative nature (BOGDAN; BIKLEN, 2010), the essay being organized in three main parts. The first one presents the theoretical framework that contextualizes the research problematization; the second explains the methodological procedures applied in the research; the third focuses on the data analysis and the discussion of the results.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In spite of the potential that is recognized to poetry, on several levels of development of the human being, the poetic text has been forgotten to the detriment of other textual genres with more utilitarian purposes (RIBEIRO, 2012), despite the recognition of the educational potential of the poetic text (CABRAL, 2002; AZEVEDO; SOUZA, 2012; GIASSON, 2008) is at the center of a large number of researches (amongst others, CIMINELLI, 2014; PIRES, 2016).

Being a textual genre with particular characteristics (CANVAT, 1999), poetry and its teaching require a specific professional knowledge, bearing the need to train the teachers, of the first years of schooling, to include poetry in their educational practices, in this way contributing to the education professional's progress with reference to important dimensions of the 21st century teacher's profile (CAENA, 2015). We shall analyze in detail the importance of the teaching of poetry in the first years of schooling.

Poetry and working with a poetic text have effects in several dimensions of the global upbringing of an individual, producing results on the development of numerous skills, such as the communicative-linguistic, esthetic, expressive and cognitive.

Regarding the esthetic education of the individual, research refer that poetry allows people to develop «alternative ways of multimodal interpretation of the world» (AZEVEDO; SOUZA, 2012, p. 128), as well as to discover the human being (AGUIAR e SILVA, 1994). Through a catharsis effect which can arise in the person who reads it (AMARAL, 2002 p. 18), poetry contributes to help the psyque find its balance and the imagination to build its domains (JEAN, 1989, p. 12). Poetry does not have the sole function of contemplation, in the person who reads it or listens to it; it constitutes an invitation to creation, mainly to the creation of the self (JEAN, 1989; GUEDES, 1990).

On the level of communicative-linguistic education, reciting poetry can have an important role in finding a solution to articulation difficulties and leading the individual to unveil the secrets of phonic construction and organization (FRANCO, 1998; JOLIBERT, 1992). Poetry allows us to pick up the more complex aspects of syntax, before the theoretical and abstract consideration on the topic, it favors the thought on the language poetic function and it presents the poetic genre in its shapes and linguistic and stylistic resources (BORDONS, 2007, p. 144). Working with poetry is faced as a great support to develop multiple skills in the area of verbal communication and thought, enabling us to

improve our attention and concentration, and compelling us to learn, listen and develop reading and text interpretation skills as well as to practice different ways of reasoning (AZEVEDO; SOUZA, 2012).

On the level of expressive and cognitive education, poetry presents a great potential as a vocal declamation, in the scope of musical expression, body expression and dramatic expression, easing the recollection capacity as well and the intertextual transfer (JEAN, 1989, p. 26; GUEDES, 1990, p. 34; GIASSON, 2008, p. 212).

Regarding the establishment of relationships between the educational actors, poetry and the pedagogic-didactic interactions are seen by the state of the art as an integration factor of the students in the group/class, in the way that poetry can contribute to strengthen bonds inside the group, promote the acceptance of what is different, encourage the fulfillment of tasks and collaboration, so as to reinforce the trust environment and to appreciate the heterogeneity of experiences, factors for the individual and collective enhancement (FRANCO, 1998; GUEDES, 1990). The use of poetic language and the subjectivity possibilities that it offers to young people allow them to express their feelings, to deal with conflicts and solve them, stimulating as well a less painful integration of teenagers in society (BORDONS, 2007, p. 144).

Teachers need to be aware of the poetry's contribution for the whole development of students and poetry should become a vital part of teacher's professional knowledge.

TEACHER'S PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE: COMPONENTS AND DIMENSIONS

Poetry provides the means to work different components of teacher's professional knowledge, as well as to develop different dimensions of that same knowledge, bearing in mind that it is a complex and dynamic knowledge that results from the training experienced by individuals throughout their personal and professional path.

According to some authors, working with poetry assists the development of a multitude of linguistic, cultural and pedagogic-didactic wisdom (CABRAL, 2002), both curricular and political, indispensable to the educational practice, understood in the broad sense of the intersubjective relationship that is established through the poetic text and the work that is done with it. This type of text gives the opportunity to integrate the social and political dimensions of education in the training paths, holding teachers responsible as thinking and self-critical citizens, prepared for the intercultural acquaintanceship and for the promotion of equity and social justice (LOURENÇO; ANDRADE; MARTINS, 2017; NETO; QUEIROZ; ZANON, 2009; PNUD, 2015; RIOS, 2001).

Despite these potentialities, state of the art reveals the insufficient work with poetry in the training context, either initial or continuous, accounting for the lack of qualification in literary and linguistic studies and stating that teachers lack the necessary knowledge to allow a proper approach to poetry in their teaching practice (AZEVEDO, 2003; CANVAT, 1999; RIBEIRO, 2007, 2012). According to some authors, teachers explore poetry because textbooks consider it, through casual activities, to the service of parties and scattered events, placed in the playful domain, and generally complying with criteria of lexical and grammatical nature, depreciating, consequently, the expressive and creative dimensions of the educational activity (PIRES, 2016; RIBEIRO, 2009). Other research show that teachers feel insecure regarding their knowledge about poetry and avoid approaching it in their teaching practices (CIMINELLI, 2014), with the argument of having had few contact with poetry throughout their academic education, which seems not to have been sufficient to arouse the fondness for poetry, the will to approach it in the classroom or even the desire to look for training in this area (PIRES, 2016, p. 185; RIBEIRO, 2012, p. 181). Other authors as well highlight the importance of lived experiences, such as schooling experiences, in the development of the teacher's individual subjectivity and its repercussion in the professional practice (ALVES, 2012; BERGAMASCHI; ALMEIDA, 2013; ROSSATO; MATOS; de PAULA, 2018).

Therefore, like the state of the art indicates, if a teacher feels insecure regarding his/her knowledge about poetry or if he/she has a negative opinion about this type of text, he/she does not approach it very often and/or he/she may impart insecurity to his students. On the other hand, if a teacher feels motivated to approach poetry, he/she may consider it a priority, be creative when teaching

it and share the pleasure with the students (PIRES, 2016, p. 198; STICKLING; PRASUN; OLSEN, 2011, p. 31). According to Stickling, Prasun and Olsen (2011), each teacher manifests his/her own attitude towards poetry, being influenced by past experiences, and, as a result, some of them love it, some of them hate it.

For the teacher to enjoy every potentiality that poetry offers, it needs to be included in training programs that work the multidimensionality of the teacher's professional knowledge in a way that the process of making decisions about the curriculum may consider it. We shall analyze in detail what the teacher's professional knowledge consists of.

Following several authors, Shulman (1986), Sá-Chaves (2011), Roldão (2007) being noteworthy, teacher's professional knowledge is characterized by its complex nature and includes different components that illustrate the educational activity. We follow, in order to understand the aspects which make up that knowledge, the synthesis presented by Martins (2016).

Along these lines, teacher's professional knowledge includes the following constituents:

- a component of subject matter knowledge, referring to the knowledge of the subjects or disciplinary areas which the teacher lections and which he/she should be in command of, considering the skills the students are supposed to develop;

- a component of general pedagogical knowledge, which includes a set of know-how that is transversal to the different subjects, such as strategies to plan, manage and organize the classroom, as well as to evaluate and accompany the learners;

- a component of subject matter pedagogical knowledge or didactic knowledge, which requires the ability to teach in general and to think about the best way to simplify the contents, making them accessible, through their deconstruction or the knowledge of other aspects that intervene in the educational process;

- a component of curriculum knowledge which coincides with the mastery of the syllabus and teaching and learning materials, so that it is possible to understand the reasons of being and the purpose of the subject matters, involving equally the reasoning ability upon the curriculum as a whole;

- a component of learners' knowledge which implicates a knowledge about the individuals who learn and their characteristics, needs and potentialities, as a contemplation point for action, so that the pedagogic-didactic proposals can be adjusted to the audience specificity;

- a component of the context knowledge which encloses the knowledge about the groups or the class, as well as the knowledge about the school management and the educational system organization, in general, and also the knowledge about the communities' and local cultures' specificities;

- a component of the purposes, aims and educational values' knowledge, which constitute the knowledge about the great guidelines on education. Shulman (1986, quoted by Sá-Chaves, 2011, p. 97) considers, in this dimension, the teacher's action as an action guided by the ideas of good, justice and solidarity, removing it from a merely cognitive domain and recognizing it as an ethically responsible and personalized human praxis;

- a component of the self's knowledge, which is connected to the individuality and the epistemic dimension of the teacher's identity, based on the metacognitive ability in which he/she removes himself/herself from his/her own action. This awareness allows the identification of the conditions to improve his/her future action, but mainly to get to know himself/herself and, thus, to act in an intentional and autonomous way for his/her own development;

- a component of supervisory knowledge which includes a strategic and regulative knowledge, assembling all the dimensions of professional knowledge, granting the possibility to redefine future strategies, based on the evaluation of past situations and with the concretization of a collaborative and reasoning process of auto and/or hetero analysis of the professionals and/or the educational institutions (MARTINS, 2016, p. 76, for a synthesis of the proposals of different research).

These components of teacher's professional knowledge and its articulation are sustained by three crucial dimensions of the educational activity, in the standpoint of Rios (2001): a technical dimension connected to the ability to conceive and fulfill the act of teaching; an ethical and political dimension which establishes itself in the prosecution of the principles and values that sustain the

educational interactions in the sense of the construction of a common benefit; and an esthetic dimension which substantiates itself in the promotion of the sensibility and the creativity underlying the educational activity as an artistic activity which promotes the development of the individual as a whole.

Subsequently, and bearing in mind that the teacher's professional knowledge holds a practical or procedural strand and a representational strand, it is on the later that we focus on this research, given the importance of the professional thought to the practice change.

PROFESSIONAL THOUGHT AND SOCIAL REPRESENTATIONS

Educational work establishes itself in a multitude of knowledge, either in the personal domain, or consequence of the academic or professional qualifications, including disciplinary, curricular and experiential knowledge, etc. Coming from different sources, teacher's professional knowledge combines practices and representations which comprises common sense notions about the educational process, in general (NETO; QUEIROZ; ZANON, 2009) and about the teaching objects, in particular, representations that we must know.

But what does the concept of representation mean, in this situation? In the state of the art, we can see the utilization of terms such as perception, conception, image, among others, to characterize teachers' reasoning (SANCHES; JACINTO, 2004). Those terms are used in the sociological scope, referring to groups' social representations, of psychological and phenomenological nature, with incidence in cogitative processes that appreciate the interiority and the subjectivity, as features able to guide the action. In this framework, the notion of representation can be understood as communication of ideas and knowledge through symbolic configurations, socially built and shared (SANCHES; JACINTO, 2004). In other words, it is by means of social representations, collectively elaborated, that the human being makes sense of the world and shares it with others (VERGARA QUINTERO, 2008). Representations bear memories of the life's history and the past experiences of each individual and are composed by conscious and unconscious elements (PARDAL *et al.*, 2011, p. 34).

The revision of social representations has been taking on a continuous significance on the education field, legitimizing a better understanding of the individual and collective interaction in society (MENIN; SHIMIZU; LIMA, 2009; NETO; QUEIROZ; ZANON, 2009; REIS; BELLINI, 2011) and the role of the organized groups of social meanings in the educational process (GILLY, 2002), since the social representation can only be understood referring to social groups through which individuals relate themselves with the society they are part of (PARDAL *et al.*, p. 34).

In this line, professional thought builds itself based on social representations, ways of seeing, reading and considering the educational reality, which consists in «a form of socially elaborated and shared knowledge» (PARDAL *et al.*, p. 35-36). This form of knowledge, generally named «common sense», by contrast to the scientific knowledge, is related to numerous factors, such as diverse experiences, knowledge, ways of thinking, feeling, being or attitudes that are widespread by tradition and by socialization, as well as by interacting with different educative models.

Research has shown that the representations of a given subject may be reconstructed along the training process, focusing on the transformation of the social representations on the pedagogical work and on the process of reconstruction of teaching professional identity (MENIN; SHIMIZU; LIMA, 2009; FERNANDES, 2011). Thus, for the fulfillment of this research, we gathered information about the representations of the teachers in the first years of schooling about poetry and the ways of teaching it, in order to understand their representations and the possibilities to intervene upon them, through training.

METHODOLOGY

To conduct this research, we assumed that there was the need for teachers to have some training on poetry and its teaching, so we conceived a training program on this theme, implemented between November 2016 and June 2017 in a school on the center area of Portugal. Data analyzed in this

article were gathered from the ten participants who attended the workshop and whose names are fictitious in order to guarantee the anonymity and confidentiality.

The workshop aimed to draw the teachers' attention to poetry's contributions to education, namely to knowledge construction, promotion of aesthetic sensibility and affectionateness, as well as to promote intentional and systematic practices for the approach of a poetic text at school.

The workshop, with duration of 50 hours, included 25 presential hours (8 sessions) and 25 hours of autonomous work, with the implementation of didactic proposals in the classroom. The methodology consisted of presenting and justifying the strategies and materials for the approach of the poetic text, as well as the preparation, revision and/or reflection on didactic proposals.

The contents that were dealt with included the concept of poetry and its formal and semantic characteristics (COELHO, 1992), the utilization of the Interactive Board in the teaching of poetry (CORTESÃO, 2012) and the proceeding sustained itself in the didactic device «teaching sequence» (PEREIRA; CARDOSO, 2013; SCHNEUWLY; DOLZ *et al.*, 2004). Participants implemented in their classes a teaching sequence of poetry as a textual genre, with the support of the Interactive Board. The work that was produced and developed in the classroom context, based on the viewing of excerpts of the recorded video classes, was shared and discussed in the workshop sessions (LOIZOS, 2008; FLICK, 2005). The final session was a round table meetin, promoting the discussion about the aspects that were handled in the workshop, with the intention to draw the participants' attention for the dimensions that Poetry allows to work in education.

To scrutinize teachers' representations about poetry and its teaching, during the workshop we chose the content analysis technique, assuming a qualitative approach, framed in an interpretative paradigm (BOGDAN; BIKLEN, 2010), and we used as data gathering technique two inquires by questionnaire, previously validated by a pretest (COUTINHO, 2014; GHIGLIONE; MATALON, 2001), the initial questionnaire (IQ), applied in the beginning of the workshop, and the final questionnaire (FQ), applied in the end of it. We preferred this data gathering technique because it allows us to obtain different types of information and to evaluate several aspects of the professional thinking (such as attitudes, perceptions and opinions, amongst others). Furthermore, it is not expensive and it permits a quick gathering of information (COUTINHO, 2014). Both questionnaires were composed of open questions, so that the participants could answer freely, without any suggestions for the answer. However, although the questionnaires were identical, they did not have the same structure: the first questionnaire was divided into two parts, aiming to gather personal data for the characterization of the participants and information about the teaching profession; the second questionnaire didn't have questions about the individuals characterization, it included questions about the teachers' representations of poetry, by the end of the workshop.

DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis favored the content analysis. According to Amado (2013, pp. 312-313), the purpose of this type of analysis is «to organize the contents of a group of messages in a system of categories which translate the key-ideas provided by the documents in analysis.» In order to that, we used the content analysis technique which consists in a process of gathering the data which has not been processed (the answers given to the questionnaires) and its transformation in units that allow a description of the relevant characteristics of the contents. In this way, it was necessary to «confine the texts to the unities of signification that we considered appropriate», according to semantic criteria, which give the unity a specific and autonomous meaning (BARDIN, 2009; COUTINHO, 2014) and which are related to the characteristics of the material to be studied, the purposes and the research question of our investigation (AMADO, 2013, p. 313).

Thereafter, we group the significance units accordingly to the categories we identified in our theoretical framing, assuming, in the first phase of the categorization process, a closed procedure (AMADO, 2013), and using the teacher's professional knowledge components as categories.

For this process, we used WebQDA software to support this analysis technique, so that we could store, transfer and add new data in an uplifting way, accordingly to the work that had already been developed. On the other hand, this software enables the development of questions in relation to a data corpus that had already been codified and that may be available in a computing cloud . (SOUZA; SOUZA; COSTA, 2016).

RESULTS

Ten teachers from the first years of schooling, aged 38 to 55, participated in this research. All of them had a career with more than ten years and heterogeneous initial qualification (Primary Mastership Course, Training Supplements and Teaching Degrees). From the ten participating teachers, only two assured having attended continuous training in the Portuguese area of knowledge in the last five years.

Participants considered that their qualification regarding poetry and its teaching was circumscribed to the initial training, in some cases, scarce or even null. The perception of that gap in their qualifications regarding poetry's teaching is related to why they chose this workshop, justifying the need for training in this area with their insufficient knowledge. They declared that they had enrolled themselves «to obtain a better conscience and training regarding the poetic text teaching» (Júlia) or, most participants (eight), because they were interested in this topic: «Because I was interested in the teaching of poetry and to lead the students to become more interested in the topic.» (Sara); «I watched a first grade class, studying a poem, and I was surprised by the ease in which we can work poetry» (Aurora).

In general, after analyzing the answers to both questionnaires, we concluded that participants mention in a nebulous way the educational work with poetry. However, in the FQ, the answers were more objective, more directly related with poetry and its approach in the classroom, and applied a more precise language regarding this textual genre and its didactic. We shall analyze in a more detailed way how poetry appears in the teacher's professional knowledge of the participants in the workshop.

Concerning the subject matter knowledge, teachers seldom mention poetry as a textual object to scrutinize. In the IQ there are only three explicit references to this component, one of which highlight, in a general way, the esthetic dimension of poetry. Explaining what poetry is to them, they identify some sonority resources that are commonly associated to poetry (namely rhyme, rhythm or melody) and they recognize the esthetic dimension of poetry as a manner of multimodal interpretation of the world and of communication. In the FQ, the answers about what poetry is designate an increase in knowledge, by identifying certain formal aspects, such as sonority resources, of the poetic text multi-meaning, revealing equally the esthetic dimension of poetry and recognizing it as an art form. By the end of the workshop, it was visible that participants were able to more easily explain what poetry is for them, showing that they are more at ease to speak about the topic.

General pedagogical knowledge is present when the participants speak about what to teach poetry represents. In the IQ, some teachers think that teaching poetry requires a certain vocation, a perspective that can reflect the standpoint that poetry is something innate, that it cannot be taught or learnt (SOUSA, 2000), representing a hardship for many. Teachers transmit general pedagogical knowledge when they point the potential of poetry concerning the development of creativity and imagination, and the development of linguistic capability, through playful activities.

In the FQ, this type of knowledge appears when the teaching of poetry's composition techniques and the facilitation of the process of understanding poetry are referred to, as well as the motivation that poetry can arouse in the students, the creativity they are able to develop through playful activities, the pleasure to work the language, and to teach how to read and to write poetic texts.

In the IQ, participants declare that in order to approach poetry in the classroom they resort to technology, collaborative work, active methodology, using the textbook and works without planning. In the FQ, some activities based on the textbook were also referred; nevertheless, these answers distinguish themselves from the rest because they are in the past tense, which leads us to believe that the teachers may be speaking about what they did before the workshop.

In conclusion, regarding general pedagogical knowledge, learners allude to the potentialities of poetry in relation to the skills that it allows students to improve, through reading and writing, which are favored by the exposure to Literature. According to the participants, poetry promotes reading and writing development; the enhancement of the phonological conscience and the vocabulary growth; it presents itself as an alternative way to approach the language and other areas of knowledge, being a means to promote interdisciplinarity; it provides the opportunity to promote the teaching of a different textual genre, and it can contribute to the students' well-being, helping them to improve skills in diverse dimensions – creativity, imagination, showing their feelings, amongst other aspects.

Concerning subject matter pedagogical knowledge or didactic knowledge, in the IQ there are no references to this type of knowledge but in the FQ there are three accounts which show that the learners have assimilated some activities to work with poetry, involving a process – instead of isolated activities (IQ), with well defined purposes, contemplating the analysis of certain aspects, such as reading and rewriting, stylistic and semantic resources. Regarding the work which the participants say they use to do in order to approach poetry in the classroom, it is based on rhyme identification, rewriting of poems departing from a model, poetic games (acrostics and «Word After Word»), reading and/or listening to poems (by well known authors), memorizing and reciting poems, activities that involve non-sense or the absurd, presenting poems and creating lyrics for songs. In the FQ, answers include some lonely activities that teachers developed (poetic games, such as acrostics, «Word After Word», creating sentences that rhyme, etc.) but also some sequences of activities that translate a process with a well defined aim.

Concerning the learners' knowledge, in the IQ, relating to what poetry means for them, there is a reference that mentions the help that is given by poetry to the students' academic progress, and, in the FQ, the playful potential that poetry bears for the students is clearly recognized. In the IQ, the answers imply knowledge about the relations that are established when teachers approach poetry, relations teacher/student and student/student, which, according to the teachers, are favored by poetry and its teaching. In the FQ, participants explain, additionally, that teaching poetry is a means to promote communication and the grouping of people, improving the interactions that are established between students and teachers. Regarding the activities that they usually develop, in the FQ participants mention the importance of relating to interesting topics for the students when approaching poetry to increase student's motivation.

In the FQ, teachers invoke clearly, as contributions of poetry to the teaching activity, the importance of poetry in providing the opportunity to satisfy students' needs and interests, and allowing help to those who have more difficulties, as well as to capture everyone's attention and motivation (for example, in reading and writing poetry), identifying poetry as a support for students' thinking and communicative activities.

Concerning purposes, aims and educational values' knowledge, only in the FQ do the answers refer that poetry teaching provides and favors the child's gradual improvement. In the FQ, participants relate the contribution of working with poetry for their teaching role according to the sensibility that it enables to develop, the beauty that poetry possesses and represents, the interpretation of what is implicit and the promotion of values such as tolerance towards difference, assuming themselves as «training agents for active personalities in a society with values» (Júlia).

Concerning self knowledge, in the IQ it appears in six references, one about creativity and five about the pleasure that poetry provides, while in the FQ only two references regard this type of knowledge. With reference to what poetry means to them, initially there were a great number of references, in which participants express poetry as a mode of expression and freedom, as a manifestation of the imagination or a source of pleasure, assigning those poetry's qualities to the sonority or to the playfulness they provide. Sporadically, they highlight the subjectivity of the poetic text showing distaste, identifying poetry as something boring and confusing. In the FQ, answers were more prolific regarding this type of knowledge, when they refer the importance of teacher's awareness of the potentialities of poetry's teaching and predisposed to its approach, as well as of maintaining the individual point of view and the students' standpoint as a group. They reiterate, in addition, the difficulty they feel when teaching

poetry, attributed to certain inexperience with necessary procedures, before the workshop, but also to a less empathic relationship, of some of them, with the poetic text.

In the FQ, in relation to poetry's contribution to educational function, some participants declared that they don't identify themselves with this textual genre, but that they view it as a form of expression that helps to develop imagination and communication, leading to reflection; when they identify poetry as a textual genre that gives them a world's perspective which surpasses the instantaneous, enabling them to deliberate about trivial events, seeing far beyond what's obvious; when they point out that poetry can be more accessible than they thought before and they feel that they are better prepared to teach poetry at the end of the workshop.

Finally, concerning supervisory knowledge, this is identified in two references in the IQ, in the scope of collaboration, while there are thirty-two references to the reflective and collaborative work, in the FQ, types of work that was developed in the workshop.

The analysis results show that, by the end of the workshop, it was possible to get a larger number of references and a bigger diversity of categories for the teacher's professional knowledge in the questionnaire answers. While, initially, most of the answers were inscribed in the general pedagogical knowledge, by the end of the workshop there are fewer references belonging to this component and a larger number of references inscribed in the other components. By the end of the workshop, participants are able to better explain, than in the beginning, what poetry is and with which activities they work it, using a bigger diversity of terms regarding this topic, many of which were approached during the workshop. The same thing happens in relation to the subject matter pedagogical knowledge, the methodology and the activities that were named to approach poetry in the final questionnaire are more specific, diversified and intentional than in the beginning. Although teachers still refer to occasional activities, some answers already mention activities involving poetry processes with well defined purposes, aiming to explore certain aspects of poetry (sound and semantic stylistic recourses), which shows progress in the subject matter knowledge. Teachers identify more assertively the esthetic dimension of poetry, recognizing it as an art form. However, we can say that a considerable number of participants (six), by the end of the workshop, keep identifying some difficulties in this area, indicating the need to develop more training about this theme.

In both questionnaires, teachers show knowledge about themselves, as well as about the learners, as they identify the positive role of the work around poetry, both for themselves (due to freedom of speech and satisfaction it provides) and for the education of their students (providing the opportunity to develop several skills and to promote a good relationship within the group, thus contributing for happier and more rewarding learning conditions. Despite recognizing that they feel some difficulties when teaching poetry, which they associate to unfamiliarity with the necessary procedures, prior to the workshop, in the FQ teachers identify the work with poetry, as a means to enable the fulfillment of students' needs and interests, to help those with more difficulties and to hold the attention and the motivation of everyone, recognizing poetry as a support for the reflective and communicative activities, not only of students but also of teachers.

Concerning the purposes, aims and educational values' knowledge, the answers to the FQ show that some teachers perceive the contribution of working with poetry for the teaching function by identifying poetry as a means to reach the ultimate goal of teaching: to give a global and complete qualification to the individual, assuming themselves as «training agents for active personalities in a society with values».

The answers to both questionnaires illustrate, as well, progress in the supervisory knowledge, with teachers identifying the fostering of reflective and collaborative work that was developed in the workshop, through activities dedicated to poetry.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This research is centered in the teacher's professional knowledge about teaching poetry to the first years of schooling in the Portuguese Educational System and aimed to characterize that

knowledge based on the analysis of the answers that the participant teachers in a workshop gave to two inquiries by questionnaire, in the beginning and in the end of the workshop.

Regarding what matters to learn for the future, in this area, teachers focus on the following components: subject matter knowledge or didactic knowledge, stressing the significance of the teacher being receptive to approaching poetry and aware of the potentialities of its teaching, knowing that he/she should try to adjust the activities to the students; they advocate poetry as a way of getting to know the learners, of promoting their motivation for reading and writing and developing their expression skills, so that they can enjoy and create a good relationship with poetry. They claim the need for poetry to become a support for students with learning disabilities, in different disciplinary areas; about themselves, they enhance their self-knowledge, highlighting the significance of the teacher to promote the habit of reading poetry, to keep an open mind in order to overcome preexistent prejudices, and to, in his/her pedagogic-didactic choices, meet his/her own aptitude to be motivated and able to motivate the students.

The examination of the questionnaires' answers enabled us to verify the advantages of a training program on poetry teaching concerning the development of teacher's professional knowledge, based on the understanding that teachers strengthened the perception they already had of the teaching position's esthetic dimension, which is clear in the didactic-pedagogical examination of this type of text. On the other hand, the scientific-technical dimension of the same profession is improved by drawing attention to the learning they made regarding subject matter knowledge, as well as general pedagogical and didactic knowledge. By the end of the workshop, they feel that poetry is more accessible than they perceived before and that they are better prepared to work this textual genre. Nevertheless, some participants, after the workshop, still presented themselves as insecure in relation to the approach of the poetic text in the classroom and some of the components of the teacher's professional knowledge are not present in the answers to both questionnaires, drawing attention to the omission of curriculum knowledge and context knowledge. We believe that, both in teacher's initial training and in continuous training, it will be necessary to persist, continuing to explore poetry and its approach in the classroom, as well the potentialities that it allows for the development process in different dimensions of professional growth.

These results indicate the absence of teacher's professional knowledge fundamental components, regarding poetry and its teaching, such as curriculum knowledge and context knowledge, denoting the urgency to train teachers for the different dimensions of the educational activity.

Nevertheless, bearing in mind that one of the aims and values of education should be to prepare students for intercultural coexistence and for the promotion of social justice and equity, we believe that, without fulfilling every component of professional knowledge, teacher's training should pay specific attention to the ethical-political dimension of the teaching activity about poetry, assumed that this type of text provides favorable conditions for the processing of education's social dimension, laying emphasis on the need for teachers to embrace a more self-critical citizenship.

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