



School attendance in multi-grade classes in the city of Buenos Aires: representation of teachers in the light of the rural education policy

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ABSTRACT. This narrative talks about the education of the countryside (rural) and the development of the pedagogical practice in the multi-grade classes in the city of Buenos Aires / PE. The full-time teachers made a research through on visits (in loco), with the application of a semi-structured interview, an open quiz and meetings with the focus group. Analyzes issues regarding working conditions of teachers of multigraded classes from rural areas. The text presents reflections on the conditions of teaching profession through data collected by questionnaire applications and narrative interviews. Based on the research results we identified in our first category of analysis and the formative expectations resulting the continued formation, the political commitment, the pedagogical practices, social and educational, the positive feeling related to the formation that arouse changes and continuity of the formation. The practice of rural teachers are based on a different approach from the conception and founded on educational policy. The main contributions of the study relate to the "lessons" learned from these teachers know-hows as a possibility of the systematization and production of a powerful academic knowledge for the formulation and development of public policies consistent with the reality of schools in rural areas.

Keywords: rural education, educational policies, multi-grades classes.

O atendimento escolar em classes multisseriadas no município de Buenos Aires: representação de docentes à luz da política de educação do campo

RESUMO. Este artigo tem por objetivo analisar a educação do campo e o desenvolvimento da prática pedagógica nas classes multisseriadas no município de Buenos Aires/PE. O aporte teórico está pautado na legislação que a rege e nos teóricos que tratam do tema Caldart, Molina e Hage, entre outros. A pesquisa foi realizada em 13 escolas multisseriadas localizadas na zona rural do Município. Participaram da pesquisa 13 professores efetivos que lecionam na educação infantil e anos iniciais do ensino fundamental. A coleta de dados ocorreu através da aplicação de entrevista semiestruturada. Os dados obtidos foram analisados segundo a Teoria de Análise Conteúdo de Bardin. Os resultados evidenciam que os professores procuram atender as especificidades da multisseriação e da educação do campo, buscando atrelar a sua prática docente à realidade vivida pelo aluno, mesmo na ausência de uma proposta municipal que embase a prática pedagógica nessas classes. Verificou-se, a necessidade da criação de uma proposta pedagógica e de um currículo próprio para a educação do campo e classes multisseriadas, a formação continuada específica para o professor. Além de questões referentes à organização e divisão das classes, a orientação do trabalho docente e o uso de materiais didáticos voltados à realidade do campo.

Palavras-chave: educação do campo, políticas educacionais, classes multisseriadas.

Asistencia escolar en clases de varios grados en la ciudad de Buenos Aires: representación de docentes a la luz de la política de educación rural

RESUMEN. Artículo tiene como objetivo analizar la educación en el campo y el desarrollo de la práctica pedagógica en clases multiseriales en la ciudad de Buenos Aires / PE. El aporte teórico se basa en la legislación que lo rige y en los teóricos que tratan el tema Caldart, Molina y Hage, entre otros. La investigación ocurrió en 13 escuelas multigrado ubicadas en el área rural del municipio. Trece profesores efectivos que enseñan en la educación de la primera infancia y en los primeros años de la escuela primaria participaron de la investigación. La recogida de datos se produjo mediante la aplicación de entrevistas semiestructuradas. Los datos obtenidos fueron analizados de acuerdo con la teoría de análisis de contenido de Bardin. Los resultados muestran que los docentes buscan satisfacer las especificidades de la multisección y la educación rural, buscando vincular su práctica docente con la realidad experimentada por el estudiante, incluso en ausencia de una propuesta municipal que respalde la práctica pedagógica en estas clases. Se constató la necesidad de la creación de una propuesta pedagógica y de un currículo adecuado para la Educación del Campo y las clases multiseriales; Educación continua específica para el profesor. Además de las preguntas sobre la organización y división de las clases, la orientación del trabajo docente y el uso de materiales didácticos dirigidos a la realidad del campo.

Palabras clave: educación rural, políticas educativas, clases de multiseriales.

Introduction

Rural education covers a series of specific and constitutive elements of the way of living in and in the countryside, goes from the struggles of rural workers in social movements to public policies aimed at rural schools. For Caldart (2009), discussing about the theme is recognize that it has its origin in the peasant social movements and is linked to the class struggle. For Caldart, Rural Education is not a proposal for education, but an educational project, which needs to go beyond the physical space of the school to approach the social context and interact with the community, valuing the work and culture of the population in which the school is inserted.

In this perspective, rural education understands it is important that workers in rural areas have access to the knowledge produced by society, problematizing and criticizing the dominant knowledge and the epistemological hierarchy in a society that delegitimizes the knowledge produced by the people of the countryside.

In Brazil, the multi-grade or uni-docent classes constitute part of the scenario of in the rural education of public schools located in rural areas of the municipalities. Multi-grade classes are the students from different school grades study in the same classroom, with a single

teacher, who teaches all curriculum components. The multi-grade occurs due to the insufficient number of students registered to form a single class, due to the low population density in rural locations, especially in the stages of early childhood education and in the early years of elementary school.

Multi-grade is a phenomenon that is present in the pedagogical and teaching practice of many schools in the countryside. The multi-grade has been criticized about the form of students' organization, the implementation of the curriculum, the learning and the quality of teaching, on the other hand it has gained a new interpretation, the one that views integrated learning and the exchange of knowledge among students of different ages.

Recognizing that multi-grade classes are a reality in Brazilian education, our study led to analyze the development of pedagogical practices in rural education, observing the school attendance of children in multi-grade classes, as a rural education policy in the city of Buenos Aires PE. As well as, describe the structure and organization of care for the multi-grade classes: Identify possibilities, challenges and difficulties for the development of teaching practice in multi-grade classes and relate the proposal for the multi-grade

classes to the perspective of rural education.

Multi-grades in Brazil

Multi-grade is a form of a distinct organization from the standard established in the traditional school, it is found both in rural and urban areas, that in each classroom there is a certain number of students, considering the age and the respective grade or school year, these models of school organization, despite of being distinct, have something in common:

the learning heterogeneities, considering the different levels of cognitive, emotional and social development and the learning of knowledge presented by the students in the regular class. The number of schools and registrations in the rural area and the presence of multi-grade classes can be seen in the available data by the PRONACAMPO document (National Rural Education Program) according to the 2011 school census.

Picture 1. Schools and registrations in rural education - 2011.

Organization	Number School	% School	Number Registration	% Registration
Schools and registrations	76.229	100.00	6.293.885	100.00
With up 15 students	13.758	18.05	146.658	2.3
With up 50 students	43.986	57.70	1.050.608	16.7
With up 100 students	58.473	76.71	2.081.541	33.1
More than 100 students	17.756	23.29	4.212.344	66.9
Mutiseries classes	54.405	71.37	1.436.667	22.8

Source: Brasil. PRONACAMPO/MEC, 2012.

According to the data presented in picture 1, a number of rural schools and registrations are quite significant. The data also show the multi-grade classes are present in 71.37% of schools in rural areas, representing 22.8% of the total registrations in rural schools, revealing Brazil with educational specific characteristics to rural conditions. These data allow us to infer that multi-grade is present throughout the rural territory. This requires the implementation of urgent

educational and social policies can serve schools, teachers and students from multi-grades classes, on geographical and cultural diversity. To observe this reality from the levels of education, we consulted the school census from 2009 to 2019, and there is no explicit reference to the percentage of registered students in multi-grade classes.

The other censuses names about the percentage of students registered in rural schools in general, accounting the number

of effective registrations in the stages: early childhood education, elementary school and high school. Without discriminating which of these registrations corresponds to the multi-grade classes, we located these data more clearly in the

document organized and available by PRONACAMPO for the year 2011.

INEP / MEC in 2007 launched the document Panorama of rural education presenting a greater challenge, as described in picture 2.

Picture 2 - Numbers of Multi-grade Schools - Elementary Education - 2002 and 2005.

Form of organization	Establishment		Registration	
	2002	2005	2002	2005
Elementary – 1st to 8th grade	100.967	90.413	6.236.447	5.799.387
- Exclusive Multi-series	61.927	53.700	1.681.562	1.371.930
- Exclusive Serial class	19.455	18.446	3.035.459	2.986.209
- Mixed (Multi-series and serial)	19.585	18.267	1.519.426	1.441.248

Source: Brasil, 2007. MEC / INEP.

According to the data presented, there is a predominance of multi-grade in rural education, in the elementary school stage. In 2005, the number of schools was higher than those focused on multi-grade. If we add mixed schools to this data, the predominance of this model of school organization is an integral part of the country's school education. The Department of Continuing Education, Literacy, Diversity and Inclusion (SECADI), extinct at moment, was responsible for the management of rural education in MEC, to analyzing these data contrasts that:

20% and concentrate just over half of registrations (2,986,209 students). Mixed (multi-grade and serial) account ¼ of registrations (1,441,248 students). (Brasil, 2007, p. 21).

The data shows a significant number of multi-grade rural schools, just over half of the schools. Multi-grade is an inherent element in the context of rural education and it is exactly, it needs an appropriate structure and support that allows its effective operation, signaling the great challenge that multi-grade and unidocent schools are for the public policies in the rural education (Brazil, 2007).

Methodological way

The study was taken from the qualitative approach; it was developed in the city of Buenos Aires-Pernambuco with a group of 13 teachers who they are the

Depending on the kind of organization, we have 59% of elementary schools establishments formed exclusively by multi-grade or uni-docent classes, they concentrate 24% of registrations. Exclusively multi-grade schools correspond about

staff of permanent employees, who work in the multi-grade classes in early childhood education and in the early years of elementary school in schools from county. The research was approved by the ethics committee from the University of Pernambuco.

For data collection, we used the semi-structured interview conducted by 13 teachers, containing 9 essay questions, recorded, transcribed and analyzed by analysis techniques in the content proposed by Bardin (1977).

For this study, we catalog 8 categories of analysis: rural education; rural education at school; municipal policy of rural education; possibilities and challenges in the development of rural education; dynamics of multi-grade in school; the teaching practice in the multi-grade classes; teacher training, continuing and specific; teaching proposal for multi-grades classes.

Results and discussion

In the first part of the study, we carried out a survey of schools in rural locations in the city of Buenos Aires, seeking observe the multi-grade classes in the levels of early childhood education and early years of elementary school and about the number of students registered in the last four years. The data are shown in the chart 1, let's see.

Chart 1. Census of multi-grade schools in the city of Buenos Aires / PE.

MULTI-SERIES SCHOOLS					
Nº	MUNICIPAL SCHOOL	2016	2017	2018	2019
01	Mínima Canafístula	20	21	20	15
02	Doutor João de Holanda Cavalcante	12	14	11	10
03	Irene Gomes de Araújo Pereira	26	24	20	22
04	Otacílio Vieira de Azevedo	18	16	16	16
05	Professora Jandira Albertina de Souza	21	14	17	22
06	Presidente Castelo Branco	20	20	22	17
07	Joaquim Vieira de Melo	41	50	49	58
08	José Teobaldo de Azevedo	18	20	18	18
09	José Antonio de Melo Filho	22	20	20	20
10	Luiz Almeida	38	49	50	41
11	Santo Antônio (Engenho Tamataúpe de Flores)	21	22	20	16
	Santo Antônio (Anexo Engenho Cavalcanti)	27	24	22	16
	Nossa Senhora de Fátima (Anexo Assentamento Novo Mundo)	18	15	16	13
Total		302	309	301	284

Source: School census of Buenos Aires/PE, from 2016 to 2019.

According to the chart above, we can see the panorama of the multi-grade in the county, and it is present in most schools in the countryside that offer the initial years of schooling. Of the 13 municipal schools located in the rural area, only two don't

have multi-grade classes, this data reveals the almost full presence of schools that have multi-grade classes, although there is a gradual reduction in the number of students annually registered, this factor is often related to the number of school-age children in the communities for new registrations, the departure of students to attend the 6th year of elementary school in urban areas or for the rural exodus.

Although schools function with small numbers of students in some communities, with the exception of two schools, the county has so far not opted for school nucleation or closing as an educational management strategy. One school was closed in 2015 because of structural problems, about location, accessibility and security and there is another school being built to replace it in a more suitable space and the pupils have been relocated to other nearby schools. Joaquim Vieira de Melo School, will start operating in a new building has been built and is expected to be opening in 2020.

In all, of the 11 multi-grade schools, 6 operate with just one classroom and one shift, usually in the morning, with children registered in different levels and grades. Other 5 work with two teachers, in two classrooms, usually in the same shift, where the classes are divided in childish and fundamental. It was observed the

absence of day care centers in the rural area; the registers of children from the countryside are made from 3 years old. These children are attended together the pre-school children.

The multi-series in the city is organized in a varied way, it is composed by level or quantity of students. The number of teachers also varies by demand. While there are other schools have only one classroom, multi-grades occurs within the teaching levels, that is, early childhood education and elementary education occur in the same classroom.

The city, so far, doesn't have a curricular proposal for education in the county, the schools also don't have the political pedagogical project, so the teachers, autonomously, use diversified teaching methodologies and strategies, performing different activities for each grade.

Although some schools have a small number of students by class, there is an overload of teachers who need to organize different activities for each grade and take on administrative functions in the schools.

We present chart 2, the profile of teachers and the number of grades/classes taking the year 2019 as a reference. We use flower names to name the teachers.

Chart 2 - Profile of Teachers from Rural Education in the City of Buenos Aires.

Nº	Teacher (flower names according to the initial letter of the teachers' names)	Age	Schooling high school, undergraduate and graduate	Time of experience as education teacher in rural areas and bonding time	Number of grades/classes
01	Acacia	31	Pedagogy Educational management and pedagogical coordination	5 years / permanent	Maternal, pre I, pre II, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th grade 8 classes - 16 students
02	White lily	46	Pedagogy Psycho-pedagogy	27 years / permanent	3rd, 4th and 5th grade 3 classes - 16 students
03	Angelica	32	High school	2 years / hired	1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th grade 5 classes - 13 students
04	Camellia	27	Pedagogy	5 years / hired	Maternal, pre II, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th grade 7 classes - 10 students
05	Clove	24	Pedagogy Ludopedagogy. Clinical and institutional psycho-pedagogy	5 years / working Exchange	4th and 5th grade 2 classes - 12 students
06	Dahlia	45	Pedagogy	18 years / working Exchange	2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th grade 4 classes - 12 students
07	Night Jessamine	27	Pedagogy Psycho-pedagogy	3 years / permanent	1st, 2nd, 3rd grade 3 classes / 27 students
08	Dandelion	51	Pedagogy Psycho-pedagogy	7 years / permanent	Morning: pre I, pre II and 1st 3 classes - 8 students Afternoon: 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th grade 3 classes - 8 students
09	Euphrasia	38	Pedagogy School Management	5 years / permanent	Maternal, pre I, pre II and 1st 4 classes - 13 students
10	Sunflower	44	Pedagogy	25 years / hired	1st and 3rd grade 2 classes - 10 students
11	Jasmin	46	Pedagogy	27 years / permanent	2nd and 3rd grade 2 classes - 18 students
12	Java flower	40	Pedagogy Psycho-pedagogy	2 years / permanent	Maternal, pre I, pre II, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th grade 7 classes - 20 students
13	Magnolia	46	Language and arts Literature and Arts	28 years / working exchange	Pre I, Pre II and 1st grade 3 classes - 10 students
14	Daisy	63	Geography	36 years / permanent	4th and 5th grade 2 classes - 9 students
15	Rose	29	Mathematics Literacy skills	5 years / permanent	2nd and 3rd grade 2 classes - 19 students

16	Vanilla	43	Pedagogy Psycho-pedagogy	2 years / working exchange	Morning: maternal, pre I, pre II 3 classes - 15 students Afternoon: 4th and 5th grade 2 classes - 16 students
17	Violet	32	Pedagogy Psycho-pedagogy	10 years / permanent	Maternal, pre I, pre II, 1st and 2nd grade 5 classes - 15 students

Source: The authors, 2019.

Looking at the chart, it can be seen the most of teachers are women about 30 and 60 years, there is only one male teacher. Most of the employees are permanent, with only two hired teachers and four exchanged under the regime of collaboration among cities. Of the 17 teachers, 7 live in the rural area and 5 in the urban area of the city, the rest live in the surrounding cities.

When analyzing the teaching training, we observe there is only one teacher doesn't have a higher education, the others have training in various degrees, especially in the pedagogy course. Some teachers have specialization courses. In summary, it is possible to notice the multi-grades are predominant in rural schools in the country, working with a reduced number of students by class, with classes that present from 3 to 5 grades in the same classroom and with only one teacher.

Presentation of empirical data

We present the results collected in the interview with the 13 teachers. In some charts, the number of answers exceeds this total due to the fact that some survey subjects answered more than one category. The data are distributed in the following charts. Chart 3 deals teachers' understanding about rural education, let's see:

Chart 3 - Rural Education.

Thematic unit: Rural Education: space of life and culture	
It's an education aimed to the rural area and the people of countryside	9
It is a type of education for rural areas	3
The answer didn't answer the question	1
	Total 13

Source: The authors, 2019.

Based on the data, can be seen 9 teachers related rural education to the idea of education offered in rural areas for people living in the countryside; also highlight the work done in these spaces and the way these people live. Only 3 teachers related rural education to a

teaching modality, directed to rural areas. Before the answers presented, the concept of the countryside as a geographic space producing culture, identities and structure element of this education is observed.

About that, Caldart (2002) points out:

The rural education is identified by its subjects: it is important to understand that behind the geographical indication and the coldness of statistical data is a part of Brazilian people who live in this place since the specific social relations that make up life in and of the countryside, in their different identities and their common identity; there are people from different ages, there are families, communities, organizations, social movements ... (Caldart, 2002, p. 19).

The rural education is the identity of a people, of a culture, of a place and space. Therein lies its specificity, which distinguishes it from urban schools, and therefore the school as an institution produces knowledge can't ignore the experiences from the people of countryside, as we can see in the teachers' speech:

"It's worth mentioning that in rural education, I need considering the diversity contained in the space where the student lives, contemplating the school curriculum, the characteristics of each community, as well as the present knowledge in that community the student live, isn't it? Always valuing and respecting the way he lives". (Euphrasia).

Another teacher says,

"Rural Education is a kind of education that covers the entire rural area, valuing the space of production, life of people who live there". (Jasmin).

Chart 4 below, deals with the development of pedagogical practice in the school, let's observe:

Chart 4 - Rural Education at School.

Thematic unit: Development of pedagogical practice at school	
The work is developed approaching the reality of the student	08
The work is developed approaching the curriculum used in the city	08
The work is developed in a multi-series way	03
TOTAL	19

Source: The authors, 2019.

Observing the data, we can see that the same answer contemplated more than one category, 8 teachers said the rural education is developed in school respecting the reality of the student, that is, starting from the context is inserted, approaching relevant matters to life in the rural areas, such as identity, work, culture, among others. Therefore, the effort to relate teaching to the reality of the rural areas is noticed, contextualizing and adapting the knowledge to life in the rural areas, seek making a rescue and taking advantage of what is proper to each community in accordance with the contents. About that, the Resolution CNE/CEB 01 establishes:

Single paragraph. The identity of a country school is defined by its attachment to issues inherent to its reality, anchored in the temporality and knowledge of the students, in the collective memory that signals the future, in Science and Technology available in society and in social movements in defense of projects that associate the required solutions by these issues to social quality of collective life in the country. (Resolution CNE/CEB n°1/2002, p. 1).

The respect for the identity, culture and knowledge of the student and the rural community are observed in several documents dealing with rural education, such as Opinion no. 36/2001, Resolution n. 02/2008 and Resolution n. 1/2002 cited by different authors such as Caldart (2002), Molina and Jesus (2004) and others. They propose the idea of an education built by the subjects of the rural area, in a movement of integration and collectivity. To respect in the school context, the set of elements forming the different groups of people is a fundamental step to the constitution of an inclusive and equal education.

The question led 8 teachers to reveal that education is developed based on the curriculum that is used in municipal schools in the urban area. This curriculum is given to teachers in the rural areas to serve as guidance, the county so far has no curriculum or curriculum proposal of its own, so it uses the curriculum of the

Literacy Success Program, which is a program of Pernambuco State. The other 3 interviewed say that the work is developed based on multi-grades, as we can see in the answers of one of the interviewed:

"As a rural school teacher, I always try to work in a dynamic way, valuing and respecting the knowledge there are in the community, always working globally. We work, we see the issue of diversity, but we have to respect it and we know that we can't work only on that issue there, in that community. We have to work the global, even 'cause that student, will leave to go to school in the city and he needs to have that general knowledge, right? He's not going to spend a whole life living only with that reality of his community. So, we need to go further, so that he has a global knowledge, but don't forget to respect what he lives there, in his daily life". (Euphrasia).

There was also some concern in forming the student for society as a whole. The teachers mentioned that the county student also needs to have access to the contents taught in the city. In this sense, the new curriculum proposed by the Common National Curriculum Base, which is already being approached through textbooks in schools in the countryside, in the teachers' speech. This concern from the teachers is natural, the opportunity to give the student access to the existing knowledge, thus expanding their formative possibilities, giving conditions for their

growth, avoid that they have a restricted and deficient formation.

The rural education and the multi-grade classes were perceived many times with the inferior income, when compared to the education developed in the city, so, the necessity to respect the differences of each segment, as well as the understanding of the specificities of each educational proposal directed to the rural areas and city. For a greater affirmation, strengthening and educational quality, it's necessary to establish distinct parameters of external evaluation from schools in the countryside and in the city, so that performance indicators are not created unequal and with the maintenance of discriminatory and stereotyped behaviors.

Chart 5 below, deals with the development of Rural Education in the city, let's see:

Chart 5 - Municipal policy on Rural Education.

Thematic Unit: Rural Education in the Municipal System	
Teaching materials	04
Continuing training	04
The June Festival	03
There's no element	03
Total	14

Source: The authors, 2019.

As can be seen in the data above, only 4 teachers mentioned the teaching materials as an element that characterizes the rural education, another 4 mentioned

continuing education, 3 teachers interviewed, said about June festivities and another 3 mentioned that there isn't element that characterizes this education as being from the countryside. The other interviewees, when asked what characterizes a rural education in the county, they said different answers, such as the multi-grades, the rural space where the school is inserted, and pedagogical coordination.

It is noted the teachers mention what is most evident in their daily lives, they report the use of various teaching materials: books, games, notebooks, pencils, papers, among other school supplies. However, it is worth mentioning that these materials are general use in all schools and they aren't specific to rural education.

Another element mentioned is the continuing education of teachers that occurs monthly, continuing education is also an element present in education as a whole. In the case of the county, this training doesn't approach themes, problems, issues specifically related to rural education or the multi-grade classes. It is a training that approaches general themes about teaching and routine issues, such as Portuguese language and Mathematics workshops, sequences of activities for the teacher to use in his/her

classroom, commemorative dates, events, reports, among others. It isn't, however, a training that addresses general themes about teaching and routine issues, such as Portuguese language and Mathematics workshops, sequences of activities for the teacher to use in his/her classroom, commemorative dates, events, reports, among others characterized as a specific element of rural education.

So, we can verify, a certain contradiction when teachers are able to identify and perceive they work with a differentiated reality and culture, there is a need to develop a more specific teaching practice, and they don't have appropriate tools to make their pedagogical practice to effect and realize an education destined to rural areas and rural people. The elements mentioned by the teachers don't really characterize the development of an education aimed at the subjects of the countryside, but are part of a "common" education. They show the absence of the countryside in attending this modality, such as an appropriate curriculum, educational proposal, continuing education, evaluation, guidance and monitoring of actions in rural schools.

The research subjects also talked to the June celebration that is promoted by the school and opened to the community. Other people didn't identify something that

characterized this education, such as a differentiated education with its own identity. In general, it is observed there aren't guiding elements that identify the rural education developed in the city with the principles contained in the specific legislation, social vision, principles and values of the educational process. In the attempt to answer the question, the subjects located elements that correspond partially, to the rural education, questions directed to the location of the school, rural area, the form of teaching organization, the multi-grades. The continuing formation that is provided by the education coordinator of rural education and the commemoration of the popular June celebration that involves the community. Below are fragments from some teachers speech:

"In my teaching network, I don't observe anything that characterizes a Rural Education, except the multi-grade, which is common in Rural Education and in the rural areas, but another aspect related to the organization, to the curriculum itself, I don't observe." (Lady of the Night).

"I don't see anything. I don't see directed to work with the rural areas, these multi-grade rooms, I don't see. Because there are more materials that are given to teachers in the urban area, but they are also passed on to the rural area of the countryside. But not only exclusive material directly to work this education with multi-grade classrooms in the countryside". (Vanila)

There is a critical and reflective position from the teachers in realizing there isn't still teaching, methodological and curricular proposal that guides the teaching work in the rural schools. There is also the restlessness of the teachers with the teaching in the multi-grade classes, when they mention there aren't specific materials to help the work in these classes. Chart 6 below presents the possibilities and challenges to the rural education, let's note:

Table 6 - Possibilities and challenges in the development of rural education.

Thematic unit: Possibilities and challenges observed			
Possibilities		challenges	
Student's profile	03	Multi-series	04
Contact with the parents	03	The physical structure of the school	02
Rural community	03	Different Answers	06
Different Answers	03	Didn't Answer	01
Didn't identify	01	-	-
Total: 13		Total: 13	

Source: The authors, 2019.

By observing the chart above, it's possible to perceive the variation of the answers, which showed distincts, aren't forming other categories of analysis. The profile of the students was cited in a more recurring way about the possibilities found in the accomplishment of the work in the rural education. Three teachers mentioned that the profile of the students in the

countryside, when compared to the students in the city "are more innocent, calm and docile". This factor would be easy the development of the teaching work.

Another aspect mentioned was the contact with parents, where teachers claimed that in the rural area it's a much recurrent action, being seen as a positive element. In this sense, they also listed the host of the rural community where the school is inserted, highlighting a greater closer and interaction with the school.

As encountered challenges, 4 teachers mentioned multi-grades as a form of school organization, that is, working with different levels of teaching and learning in the same classroom simultaneously. Individualized teaching by grade represents a challenge to teaching work and teaching planning. Another aspect cited was the physical structure of some schools, they don't have adequate space, such as: no bathroom for staff, library space, and courtyard.

Other challenges cited, such as: absence of its own curriculum, continuing education in the rural area, teachers to work in this type of education, guidance related to the literacy of students, assistance of students in homework assignments, and poor school transportation. As for the benefits, the teachers said about the investment in

school, the presence of the school in the same place where the students live, and the exchange of experiences among students of different ages.

Let's see below, some fragments from the speeches of some teachers about the issues addressed above.

"The problems are the different levels, aren't they... of each age group within the same room, it is... one teacher for several grades" ... (Violet).

"... We have a closer contact with the parents. I think this is the best point there is in the rural schools. We have the parents closer to us and we are closer to them". (Tooth of Lion).

In summary, a variety was observed in the answers of the subjects according to their understanding and interpretation of the question, according to their subjective vision, experience and school reality. Essential aspects of rural education were registered, such as the link with the rural community, the closer to the student and the parents, identity elements that characterize the essence of this education. Common aspects of the reality of the countryside were also listed, such as the precarious structure of some buildings and the difficulty in teaching in the multi-grade class, having to attend students in different grades with different contents and at the same time.

It's interesting to see that the multi-grades that some teachers have pointed out as a challenge to the teaching work in schools in the countryside, doesn't lead teachers aspire to the end of the multi-grades classes, on the contrary, when teachers have pointed out the confrontations they have found, it is because they aim to solve or reduce these needs for a better development of education in these schools.

Besides, Parente (2014, p.687), says that "The existence of multi-series prevents the closing of schools and prevents the student have traveling long distances or even study in a different village far from where he lives. Multi-grades schools resist processes of denial and exclusion of their identity face to educational policies that has not created adequate mechanisms for their development.

Multi-grade is perceived, by some people, as a form of organization that needs to be extinct, because doesn't have knowledge about the reality of this modality in the history of rural Brazil. For Hage and Reis (2018), multi-grade in Brazil has been structured based on the urban serial teaching model, making use of the same methodology used, this is, fragments, patterns and hierarchy of knowledge, in curricular components, units, division of time/space. In this regard,

there's a denial of the multi-grade as the own model of teaching organization, that needs to be considered and respected on its demands and contexts. It's necessary the adoption of specific elements that support the multi-series and strengthen the curriculum, the methodology, the teaching plan, the didactic-pedagogical material, the teacher training and the evaluation corresponding to the subjects in the countryside.

About it, Santos and Moura, (2010, position 634, kindle), say the multi-series has its own pedagogical practice:

However, even though strongly influenced by the curricular serial paradigm, we can't disregard the existence of a "pedagogy of multi-series classes", characterized by a pedagogical practice based on the knowledge built by relationships established within the multi-series classes, everyday.

In this sense, the authors start from a fundamental point to think about the built of pedagogical practice and teaching knowledge that are developed inside the multi-grades classes. It is necessary to realize that the different teaching strategies and methodologies launched by the teachers to assist the students of these classes, set up the institution of an alternative pedagogy for the people in the countryside. Therefore, it is necessary to understand how multi-grades in Brazil has

been legitimized and guided by a normative body. We just need to know what extent multi-series has been used as a parameter for the production of unequal indicators, when its uniqueness is denied, treated as a "common education," receiving the same educational programs, textbooks, and external evaluations from the urban school.

So, chart 7 below, shows how the work with multi-series is performed in the county, let's see:

Chart 7 - Dynamics of multi-series at school.

Thematic Unit: Working with multi-series	
Division of classes/grades	08
Teaching methodology	06
Different Answers	02
	Total: 16

Source: The authors, 2019.

About the dynamics of multi-grades in schools, 8 teachers related the division of classes/grades to this form of teaching organization, where each teacher teaches for three or more classes/grades. Another 6 teachers related the multi-grades to the teaching methodology, used in these classes/grades. The other answers didn't consider the categories of analysis and one answer didn't answer the question. It can be observed that the teachers mentioned two outstanding characteristics of rural education in the county, the division and

quantity of classes/grades and the way of teaching to meet the demand. These characteristics have an impact on the teaching profession, deserving special attention for the development of a pertinent pedagogical practice and, consequently, greater learning and better quality of teaching. The following are the subjects' speech.

"The multi-series happens dividing the children by elementary and kindergarten in my school, where I teach 1st, 2nd and 3rd grade. But it also happens some schools there are all the classes in one grade, it depends on the number of students. What defines the grade, the cycle that will be taught, is the number of students". (Lady of the Night).

"It's really necessary we have a teaching practice, very dynamic, to really works. Otherwise, the multi-grades won't really work, and the students will be lost there, in that room. So, the teacher really needs to review his/her pedagogical practice, to be able to assist these students and attend each one in a different way. It's complicated, but at the end of the process we can"! (Eufrásia).

In the teachers' speech, there is a particular attempt to justify and develop a pedagogical practice that corresponds to the dynamics of the multi-grades and develops the students' learning. So, each teacher uses diversified teaching strategies, since individualized teaching per grade based on the specific content of each curricular component, to work with projects, sequences of activities, themes that involves several classes/grades, such as historical commemorative dates, among other subjects according to the reality of the countryside. Besides, the division of classes based on the number of students registered by grade is also noted in the interviewees' speech, where students are together considering the grades are closer to each other, to be easy the teaching since the levels of development and teaching are subsequent.

Table 8 below refers to teaching practice, let's note:

Table 8 - The teaching practice in the multi-grades classes.

Thematic unit: Advantages and difficulties in the organization and execution of teaching practice in multi-series classes			
Difficulties		Vantages	
Work distinct contents and skills at the same time/space	05	The student of one grade learns the content of the other	05
Organize several different plannings and activities	06	Interdisciplinarity of contents	02
Other answers	02	Other answers	06
Total:13		Total: 13	

Source: The authors, 2019.

According to the chart above, we can see that one of the problems faced by

teachers is teaching the curricular contents to different grades in the same class and in

the same space. Another problem is also related to teach, in what concerns the elaboration of lesson planning and distinct activities to attend several classes. Also problems with different age groups in the same class, the division and administration of time to attend all grades, the division of classes in the same class, didactic material focused on this reality, the implementation of a pedagogical practice for rural education.

Regarding the results presented, it was mentioned that the student learns the content in advance, when the teacher explains the subject from another class; he has access to the contents and take a place in the class, having contact with the subject. It was also mentioned the interdisciplinarity, the interaction between students of different ages, the exchange of knowledge among them [the fact that a bigger student can help a smaller one], the reduced amount of students when compared to the schools in the city and the proximity of the students because they know each other better. Below, some teachers' speeches.

"My difficulty is bring content that can develop one's skills in a different way. That is, in one content, I have to develop all the skills of each student and that each grade competes, it becomes to me practically impossible mission, because students from 3rd grade need to contemplate different

skills than students from 1st grade". ... (Lady of the Night).

"The advantages are the exchange from the educator's knowledge with the students, parents and local residents. Also the appreciation of the country man. And the difficulties are: tools to implement the pedagogical practice, didactic material directed to the rural education and one of the biggest difficulties are the age group of students, there are eight-years-old students with eleven, twelve, thirteen-years-old students... it's very difficult". (Jasmine).

In short, the difficulties found by teachers in their profession in multi-series, isn't having a path to be followed. The teachers act in an individual and autonomous way, trying "teaching everything to everyone", striving themselves to be able to attend several classes at the same time, makes the work difficult and generates overload in the professional, who needs to elaborate different lesson plans and activities during the school year.

... the presence of the urban serial model of teaching in schools or multi-grades classes that prevents teachers understand their class as a single collective, with its own differences and peculiarities, pressing them to organize the pedagogical work in a fragmented way, leading them to develop planning, curricular and evaluation activities to each one of the grades, in order to meet the requirements for its implementation. (Hage, 2014, p. 1175, author's emphasis).

We have to say again, that is necessary to create a new theoretical methodological perspective for the multi-grades in the country, the author says the idea of the "transgression of the serial teaching model" in multi-series, proposing better perspective for the teaching in these classes, such as the creation of policies, actions, propositions, construction of the political pedagogical project, curriculum, methodological and evaluative strategies and resizing teaching practice (Hage & Reis, 2018).

About the indicated benefits, there are personal characteristics of rural education, such as the proximity between the subjects, allow for a closer relationship, besides the interdisciplinarity of the learning, when a student of a certain grade has access to the content from the other, besides the reduced amount of students that is a positive point of rural education, when comparing the overcrowded classrooms of the urban schools in the county. Chart 9 below, refers to teacher training, let's observe:

Chart 9 - Teacher Training, Continuing and Specific

Thematic unit: Continuing education in rural education or multi-series		
Continuing education		Total
Received	Didn't receive	
03	10	13

Source: The authors, 2019.

When asked about continuing education or participating in some kind of discussion about rural education, 10 teachers said they didn't participate yet. Other 3 teachers answered they had already received training, 2 teachers said they had receive training in previous years through the Active School Program, 1 teacher said he had receive training from another county, through SERTA (Alternative Technology Service).

"I don't receive continuing education directly for multi-grade class, but even so, the ones I receive serve to develop my work in class. (Açucena)

"Yes. The Active School, which was facing the countryside, with a book, all of it... and even the PNAIC, that was going back exclusively to the teachers in the countryside, did you understand? And also the book Sunflower, which was "Saberes e Fazeres do Campo" (Knowing and Doing from the rural areas), we received (Margarida).

Another difficulty found by teachers in the county is the absence of specific continuing education that deals issues related to rural education, that guides and shares experiences, knowledge, actions and projects, which help in working with the multi-series. It is necessary to look at the real needs, seeking alternatives that support the development of actions that subsidize the teaching work. These teachers need an adequate didactic pedagogical support, besides to stay near

with the discussions about this education and must be updated about the pertinent legislations to the subject. Besides, working in a collective and integrated way. Chart 10, below, deals with the proposition of teachers for the multi-grades classes in the county, let's see:

Chart 10 - Teaching proposal for the multi-series classes.

Thematic unit: Teachers' proposal for the multi-series classes	
Continuing training aimed to rural education	03
Proper curriculum for the rural education	03
Classroom Assistant Teacher	03
Other Answers	05
Total: 14	

Source: The authors, 2019.

We launched the questioning to teachers about what would be their proposal to serve the multi-series classes of rural education in the county, 4 teachers proposed the insertion of specific continuing education focused on teaching in the rural areas, 3 teachers proposed the introduction of a curriculum for rural education, 3 teachers indicated the need for assistant teacher to help in the dynamics of the classroom, other random answers, didn't form categories. It is noted, of those interviewed, that the greatest need was in the aspects of professional teaching activity, such as continuing education in service, so that, through professional training, it is possible to meet the demands

of work in education. Another crucial way, was the use of an exclusive curriculum for education in the rural areas. Besides, support with classroom assistants was also mentioned for greater student assistance.

So, a concern among the teachers is registered in the attempt to find ways and strategies that support the teaching work in the multi-grade rooms. We can see teachers need guidance and attendance for the development of teaching in the multi-grades classes, a guidance to elaborate the teaching planning, methodologies, didactic projects that correspond to the teaching work in the multi-grades. The definition of a curriculum, specific continuing education, professional experience, identification with an educational and teaching proposal and with a school and society project, provide a better quality of teaching and the development of teaching practice.

Considerations

Rural education on its essence and integrality is an essential importance and necessity for the people in the county. We also understand that multi-series need to be dissociate from the idea of serialization so that it can actually serve everyone and fulfill its educational purpose. It will be necessary, therefore, the adoption of another teaching model and its own

methodology that contemplates the multi-series.

Often considered a controversial issue, multi-grades have been the targets of criticism and questioning about the effectiveness of teaching, learning and performance of students, about planning, didactics, methodology and evaluation of teaching by the teacher and about the implementation of curriculum. Currently, there isn't didactic-pedagogical guidelines, projects and programs by the Ministry of Education on how to proceed with the multi-grades classes in the country.

The multi-series have been the form of teaching organization in many schools in the countryside of Brazil, especially those that attend children in kindergarten and students registered in the initial years of elementary school, from 1st to 5th grades. It was verified that multi-series have been used the same organization as the classes at schools in the city, bringing together students from different classes in the same physical space, teaching the contents of each grade in isolation, to meet the curriculum of each class.

By the way, the teacher needs to unfold to assist several classes in the same space-time, it's difficult to develop teaching practice and consequently the students' performance. Disregarding the classroom community and developing a

teaching based on the urban model, it doesn't meet or correspond to the expectations of people in the countryside, neither does it make the teacher, who doesn't know exactly how to act effectively in these classes, finish teaching different contents, reproducing the multi-series teaching model.

It was possible to notice in the speech of the subjects of the research, the concern about the contradiction about the use of an urban curriculum, the lack of professional appropriate training to teach in the rural areas, the absence of control in conceptions and methodologies of alternative teaching to work with multi-grades. It is necessary to think about the teaching of rural education in the city of Buenos Aires, to reorganize it and develop a great education in fact corresponds to the countryside and its multi-series classes, thus meeting the desires of teachers in this research.

So, there is a need to take an attentive look by its normative organ, in the creation of a curriculum and methodologies that meet the demands of these classes, in the continuing formation of the teacher focused on multi-grades and in the proposition of programs and projects that in fact respect and correspond to multi-series teaching, so it can create more favorable conditions to develop rural.

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