


THE VOICE OF A COLOMBIAN TEACHER: CHILDREN, TEACHING, PROTAGONISM, AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN THE “REGGIAN” WORLD OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

This work is characterized by a research approach that is similar to a Case Study and documentary research. This research aimed to find clues for the development of protagonism and the potentialization of children's entrepreneurship, as well as to analyze the educational practice of a Latin American Early Childhood Education teacher and her approach to the educational approach of municipal Early Childhood Education schools in Reggio Emilia/Italy. To this end, it begins with the presentation of the story of Loris Malaguzzi and the principles of the educational approach of Reggio Emilia/Italy. Loris Malaguzzi was the main protagonist in the construction of this educational approach. Next, the voice of a Colombian teacher is put on stage with the presentation of her educational practice which is close to Reggio Emilia's educational approach. Based on this analysis, the following possibilities were highlighted: an educational practice together with children and families through research that seeks respect and care for nature and research as a constitutive corpus of educational practice in Early Childhood Education.

Keywords: Early Childhood Education. Educational Approach of Reggio Emilia/Italy. Research.

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INTRODUCTION

The contemporary historical context has presented different challenges for the paths of education. Early Childhood Education, known as the first stage of Basic Education, is made up of a generation of children and educators who are daily called upon to take the lead and undertake the construction of ethical, political, and aesthetic values. Values that are present in the National Curricular Guidelines for Early Childhood Education (BRAZIL, 2009) and that are pointed out as fundamental in the elaboration, planning, and implementation of pedagogical proposals. In the National Common Curricular Base (BNCC, 2017) we find that children are recognized as subjects with rights: to learn, to take the lead, to make discoveries, and to construct new concepts and values about the world. As a possibility to find clues for the development of protagonism and the potentialization of children's entrepreneurship, this research proposes to present and discuss the educational practice of an Early Childhood Education teacher from Latin America and her approach to the educational approach of municipal Early Childhood Education schools in Reggio Emilia/Italy. The educational approach of Reggio's Early Childhood Education schools was built in harmony with Loris Malaguzzi's philosophy and shared with the world. Loris Malaguzzi is considered by Hoyuelos (2020) to be a person of extraordinary creative potential. This educational approach is recognized as a reference educational system for Early Childhood Education professionals. The Loris Malaguzzi International Center in Reggio/Italy offers annual teacher training meetings for teachers and managers, with the focus of promoting the rights and potential of children in their schools, extended to teachers through training. It is important to emphasize that the process of constructing the Reggio educational approach continues to be documented throughout the educational project for more than fifty years.

For methodological purposes, this research adopted a qualitative approach with assumptions similar to those of a Case Study and documentary research. A Colombian Early Childhood Education teacher was involved. Document analysis and semi-structured interviews were used to produce the data. Thus, the official documents of a school, the teacher's plans, the pedagogical documentation, and the interview make up the corpus of this research. The data produced were analyzed using the Content Analysis technique (BARDIN, 2016).

The following is the history and thinking of Loris Malaguzzi, as well as a summary table of the principles of his educational approach.



LORIS MALAGUZZI: HIS HISTORY AND THE PRINCIPLES OF THE EDUCATIONAL APPROACH OF REGGIO EMILIA/ITALY

Loris Malaguzzi was born on February 20, 1920, in Corregio, a small town in the province of Reggio Emilia, Italy. He moved to the city of Reggio Emilia at the age of three, where he remained until he died in 1994 (Hoyuelos, 2020). Malaguzzi's life was marked by conflicts, revolutions, and wars, moments that, in my opinion, were decisive for the structuring and construction of his philosophy. A transgressive philosophy due to its ability to show that, even in a time marked by war, it is possible to fight for life and education and, in Malaguzzi's case, for the education of children. Loris Malaguzzi's fight for the education of children materialized in the constitution of the educational approach of Reggio Emilia/Italy. To understand how Malaguzzi constructed this approach, it is necessary to analyze the economic, social and political context of the time, especially the historical fact of the Union of Italian Women (Unione Donne Italiane, UDI), since the origin of the approach has its roots in the socialist ideas spread in northern Italy, in the period between the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century (RINALDI; DAHLBERG; MOSS, 2017).

In the period between the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, many women lost their husbands during combat in the Second World War. This fact encouraged unity and organization among women to guarantee food, safety, and education for their children. This movement was of utmost importance for the political context of that time, because, in addition to playing an important role in the family, women fought for their rights in society. By participating in social movements, women ended up becoming aware of their rights and, as a result, began to fight for a public space to leave their children while they worked. According to Rinaldi (2017), this action gave rise to the concept of quality public service as a right for children.

According to Rinaldi (2017), this movement resulted in the opening of the first school for children in the Reggio region at the beginning of the 20th century. It is worth noting that the UDI donated the space for the construction of the first public school for children. A school inspired by socialist ideals:

[...] Villa Gaida was opened in 1912, inspired by the socialist mayor of Reggio. He wanted a school that clearly expressed important ideas in socialist thought – education as a tool, as a weapon against poverty, ignorance, and arrogance; education as a tool for freedom (RINALDI, DAHLBERG, MOSS, p. 318).

Given this, it is important to highlight the fundamental role that women played in this process since there were clashes in the search for their rights and in the establishment of the Reggio Emilia educational approach (RINALDI; DAHLBERG; MOSS, 2017). However,



history also shows that until the construction of the first school, many children were at the mercy of an education that was their right.

Leaping forward in history, from 1962 onwards, with the construction of four schools planned: Villa Ospizio, San Pellegrina-Crocetta, Via Pastrengo and Santa Croce-Esterna, which were under the control of the Catholic Church, Loris Malaguzzi organized, with the support of the UDI and women, a formal petition to the mayor requesting the construction of a school in which families' participation in pedagogical decisions would be guaranteed (HOYUELOS, 2020). At that time, there was a struggle to break with the traditional ideas of religious institutions, which viewed schools from a welfare perspective.

It was through the leadership and entrepreneurship of Loris Malaguzzi and women that the welfare-based image of education changed. As already mentioned, it was not an easy process, as it was necessary to persist in the pursuit of the dream of building a community kindergarten, with educational principles in which children began to be seen as protagonists of their development processes, with cognitive and creative potential.

Loris Malaguzzi's leadership and entrepreneurship were also evident during the Symposium on Psychiatry, Psychology, and Pedagogy in 1963. An event was organized by him to share personal work carried out in the medical office of a psycho-pedagogue and collective work as coordinator of municipal kindergartens in Reggio Emilia/Italy. The conference was entitled: "The Student, the Classroom, the Teacher and Educational Practice According to the Experiences of Psychopedagogy".

In this event, Malaguzzi (1963) revisited the idea of the French sociologist Durkheim about what is education. For Malaguzzi (1963), it is a sociocultural fact full of philosophical, historical, methodological, and didactic values. To carry out the task of educating, it is necessary to believe that childhood is not a blank slate as was believed at the time, but rather, to know how to observe and interpret.

To consider children's actions and skills as constructors of their learning.

It was with the conference at the aforementioned symposium that Malaguzzi (1963) won over the public with his conception of pedagogy. A conception that understands pedagogy as a system of social, intellectual, and emotional relationships and that considers children and the leading role of childhood. It also highlights the importance of respecting children's interests, joys, and pleasure in learning (as opposed to boredom) and teachers, in turn, need to be surprised by what they experience and by the idea of complex and discontinuous childhood development (HOYUELOS, 2020). It was also clear during Malaguzzi's (1963) lecture that he was an innovative, leading, and entrepreneurial man, as



he put an end to the country's post-war isolation in theoretical terms based on his studies based on the works of American and European authors, such as:

[...] John Dewey, Henri Wallon, Edward Claparede, Ovide Decroly, Anton Makarenko, Lev Vygotsky, and later Erike Erikson and Urie Bronfenbrenner. [...] reading *The New Education*, by Pierre Bovet and Adolfe Ferriere, and learning about Celestin Freinet's teaching techniques in France, the progressive educational experiment of the Dalton School in New York, and the research of Piaget and collaborators in Geneva (MALAGUZZI, 2016, p. 55).

Given the sequence of events and the first theories that supported and guided the decisions regarding the educational content and methods of the educational project of the municipal schools of Reggio Emilia/Italy, an active education emerged. It was active because it was aware of the pluralism of families, children, and teachers, who became increasingly involved in the educational project, working together (GANDINI, 2016).

However, this construction was not an easy or linear task, since between the 1960s and 1970s, traditional Italian education was based on the theories of Rosa Agazzi and Maria Montessori, the two main educational thinkers of the early 20th century. During this period, the Italian educational system was supported by Agazzi's theories due to their proximity to Catholicism. However, the Catholic Church, which held the monopoly on Early Childhood Education at that time, began to face educational problems because it did not offer an education that responded to social and cultural changes, especially the participation of families in school decisions (MALAGUZZI, 2016).

From the 1970s onwards, driven by the desire for innovation in educational practices, Malaguzzi (2016) sought new educational concepts. This movement was called, by the aforementioned author, the “second wave of inspirers”, bringing to the educational approach of Reggio Emilia/Italy theorists from the 1970s, among them, contemporary authors such as:

[...] psychologists Wilfred Carr, David Shaffer, Kenneth Kaye, Jerome Kagan, and Howard Gardner, philosopher David Hawkins, and theorists Serg Mocoivici, Charles Morris, Gregory Bateson, Heinz Von Foerster, and Francisco Varela, in addition to those who work in the field of dynamic neuroscience (MALAGUZZI, 2016, p. 56).

It was based on the first and second waves of inspirers that the principles of the Reggio Emilia educational approach were established. Currently, the Regulations of the Schools and Daycare Centers for Children of the Municipality of Reggio Emilia/Italy (2019) include twelve principles in their educational project: 1) Children are active protagonists in the development process; 2) The hundred languages; 3) Participation; 4) Listening; 5) Learning as a subjective and group construction process; 6) Educational research; 7) Educational documentation; 8) Design; 9) Organization; 10) Environment, spaces and



relationships; 11) Professional training and 12) Evaluation. Table 1 summarizes the twelve principles.

Table 1 - Educational Principles of the Reggio Emilia Approach

PRINCIPLE(S)	CONTEXTUALIZATION
1) Children as active protagonists in the development process	Each child, both individually and in the group, possesses an ecological sensitivity towards others and the environment, constructing experiences to which they attribute meaning and significance.
2) The hundred languages	The child, as a human being, possesses a hundred languages, and a hundred ways of thinking, expressing, understanding, and connecting with others through an intertwined rather than separated approach to experiences. The hundred languages are metaphors for children's potentialities.
3) Participation	As a community school, this principle is fundamental for children, educators, and families to be part of the educational process. A participatory school fosters active listening among teachers, children, families, and the environment, creating an educational context conducive to dialogue and change.
4) Listening	In participatory education, active listening between adults, children, and the environment is both a premise and a context for all educational relationships.
5) Learning as a subjective and group-based construction process	Every child is an active builder of knowledge, skills, and autonomy through original learning processes that take shape in unique and subjective ways, about peers, adults, and environments.
6) Educational inquiry	This principle values confrontation and co-participation, utilizing creativity, intuition, and curiosity generated through play, aesthetics, emotions, and relationships, all linked to motivation and the joy of learning. It is considered an essential strategy for both children and teachers, manifesting as an everyday practice necessary to interpret the complexity of the world and human relationships, ultimately serving as a powerful tool for educational renewal.
7) Educational documentation	An important strategy for structuring educational theories and practices, making both individual and group learning processes visible and accessible for children and teachers.
8) Design (Progettazione)	This principle ensures that educational actions respect children's and teachers' learning processes, allowing adaptation to different contexts. Design is carried out through the connection between educational work organization and educational research.
9) Organization & 10) Environment, Spaces, and Relationships	The principle of organizing work, spaces, and schedules for children and teachers is embedded in the values that support the educational project, creating a network of shared choices and responsibilities between administrative, political, and pedagogical sectors. This principle is closely linked to the principle of environment, space, and relationships. Thus, the indoor and outdoor spaces of nurseries and early childhood schools are designed and organized in interconnected ways that encourage interaction, autonomy, exploration, curiosity, and communication, forming a place of coexistence and inquiry for children and teachers. Attention to aesthetics, educational objects, and learning spaces is crucial to giving meaning to children's learning processes and maintaining a constant dialogue between architecture and pedagogy.
11) Professional Development & 12) Assessment	These principles are embedded in all daily activities within nurseries and schools through reflective educational practices, observation, and documentation.

Source: Prepared by the authors (2023).



These were the educational principles, summarized in the Regulations for Schools and Daycare Centers for Children in the Municipality of Reggio Emilia/Italy (2019), which were established and put into practice in the kindergartens that opened before 1971 and continued in the first daycare center in Reggio Emilia/Italy, which opened in a factory that was closed due to the crisis caused by the Second World War. The first daycare center was created before the enactment of the 1971 law that established the creation of this service for children aged 4 months to 3 years. This law was a victory for women who defended daycare centers, as they had been demanding them for over ten years (MALAGUZZI, 2017). The following is the voice of a Colombian Early Childhood Education teacher.

THE VOICE OF A COLOMBIAN TEACHER

The Colombian teacher is a pedagogue and representative of RedSolare in the city of Bogotá, Colombia. She has worked as a preschool teacher at the same school for 18 years. At this school, she has always worked with children between the ages of 3 and 4 and 4 and 5.

The school has an artistic garden that uses painting, expression, and educational projects inspired by nature and the educational approach of Reggio Emilia/Italy. It is believed that this space enhances the construction of identity and autonomy by the child. To corroborate this understanding, Dolabela (2003) is cited, because, according to the author, people are born entrepreneurs, but an environment that stimulates creativity and autonomy, to expand this human characteristic, is of utmost importance.



The aforementioned school institution develops an educational project aimed at early childhood education. An entrepreneurial project that has been leading the way in Early Childhood Education for over 40 years, and is a national and international reference. The initial inspiration for the development of the educational project comes from the work “Platero y yo”, by the Spanish poet Juan Ramón Jiménez (1881-1958), which belongs to the children's universe of Hispanic America. A universe that connects the learning community with poetic experience, with the purity of children, with nature, and that exalts life above suffering. To illustrate Jiménez's thinking (2010), an excerpt from his work stands out: “The beauty of the Andalusian landscape, the sensitivity to account for the changes in nature, all this added to the composition of the animal world, personified through Platero, but also of dogs, butterflies, bulls and turtles” (2010; p. 296). A magical world that enchanted the children and the protagonists and entrepreneurial managers of the school. In addition to magic and poetic art, the school seeks in contemporary philosophy the complementarity of its soul and its commitment to the environment, sustainability, and the cosmos. It seeks connections with the knowledge of the educational approach of Reggio Emilia schools (GANDINI, 2016). From this perspective, the school, inspired by poetry and educational principles originating from Reggio Emilia/Italy, created an artistic scenario for children, projecting possibilities to develop creativity, identity, autonomy, research, and relationships with the universe. All this is to build the essential cognitive, emotional, and symbolic foundations for a lifetime. Elements that, according to Gandini (2016), are necessary to think about actions that transform existing situations and provoke change. Given the issue of instigating change, it is possible to approach one of the characteristics of entrepreneurship, since, according to Dolabela (2003), this way of thinking denotes

[...] an entrepreneurial spirit that originates in the social practices of a given group, in its system of beliefs and values, leading us to think that pedagogical strategies related to entrepreneurial education should face, when necessary and pertinently, the challenge of operating cultural change (p. 36).

It is possible to infer that the school's creators are, in the words of Dolabela (2003), “teaching professionals who are silently revolutionizing education, training entrepreneurs, and becoming entrepreneurs themselves” (DOLABELA, 2003, p. 36). In this sense, they started the kindergarten in August 1976, in San José de Bavária. The dream of a different school was born from the love for children as citizens and their connection with nature. In its first 26 years, they gradually built a proposal dedicated to children based on values that included art, poetry, nature, and science.



With solid foundations and continuous investment in quality education, the projects developed with children began to take shape and the identity traits of the protagonist became evident with educational practices that were similar to the philosophy and educational approach of municipal early childhood education schools in Reggio Emilia/Italy.

Projects that focused on research with children and research by children, exploring the protagonism within educational principles that were becoming visible through documentation carried out during the learning process and which began to highlight the voice of the child protagonist and researcher. Subsequently, in 2013, the idea was consolidated that the choices of context, space, and environment were conditioned by the quality of the experiences offered to children, therefore investing in a space that was capable of putting children in contact with nature.

A contact made through an ethical and sustainable policy that gave rise to "La Pradera", a transformative environment, capable of making children venture into the construction of their identity, perceiving and caring for the world around them. In this scenario, it became a network of schools known in Latin America for its ability to identify, seize, and take advantage of educational opportunities, manage resources, and transform teaching into a process of quality and success in education (TIMMONS, 1994). During the interview with the Colombian teacher, it was possible to construct reports about her educational practice in the learning community in which she works. Inspired by the nature and educational principles of the municipal schools of Reggio Emilia/Italy and, in an experience built into the daily life of Early Childhood Education, the teacher emphasized that she develops educational projects based on research, investigation, and the participation of children as co-participants in the process of constructing learning.

With this data, it is evident that the projects developed by the aforementioned teacher are in line with the philosophy and educational approach of Reggio Emilia/Italy. This educational approach advocates that teachers, children, and families, when working in groups, in a democratic way, through research projects, create their own culture, their own knowledge, and their way of seeing the world with the conviction that it is not just a partial vision, but that it can always be expanded (MALAGUZZI, 1998).

In time, according to the Colombian teacher, educational practices are organized to enhance the way children think in their experiments. Community life and nature are the main sources of investigation. Given this, some clues indicate that the aforementioned teacher demonstrates a protagonist and entrepreneurial profile. Having this profile is of utmost importance to develop protagonism and enhance children's entrepreneurship.



The school's educational documentation evidenced and confirmed the Colombian teacher's statement about the learning community. According to the documentation available on the school's website, a community is built that connects knowledge between children, teachers, and families. And the adult is recognized by the children as a reference. With this, the school confirms that the school's educational practice is close to the educational approach of Reggio Emilia/Italy, in which learning occurs in a systemic, holistic, and sustainable way. In this vein, Hoyuelos (2020) describes:

[...] a system that is not only open to the environment that welcomes it but is also a dynamic and flexible organization and structure capable of generating a constant relationship with the world. A system that disseminates its limits by crossing the fictitious border between the interior and the exterior, the inside and the outside (HOYUELOS, 2020, p. 256).

From a systemic, holistic, and sustainable learning perspective, the Colombian teacher introduces the principle of children's participation. For her, this principle is one of the main principles of the Reggio Emilia/Italy educational approach, as it allows children to build trust, experiences, and knowledge with teachers and families. By encouraging participation, children are recognized as subjects and not mere objects of research. It also recognizes children as powerful enough to express their rights, their views, and their experiences as valid (MALAGUZZI, 1998).

The value of participation, defended by the aforementioned teacher, has materialized since the construction of the learning plans. These plans, according to the teacher, are organized and structured by her, but also by the children and the educational community. According to the teacher,

[...] In our projects, if the child is interested in the spatial part, we begin to study the spatial part. If the child is interested in trees, we can understand much more about trees. The process is to provide more tools for children to build their learning through research. And it is the same with literature. It also varies according to the children's interests and among the books chosen by the group [...] (COLOMBIAN TEACHER).



These moments are interpreted as an opportunity for children to express, in the words of Schneider (2020), entrepreneurial protagonism. According to the aforementioned author, entrepreneurial protagonism is understood when a person uses autonomy, responsibility, and freedom to explore opportunities and make things happen. According to the author, this is the person who organizes strategies and mobilizes means and ends in favor of an objective. It can be a collective, individual, or social objective. To this end, they mobilize, motivate, and win over more people to help build these paths, joining forces to make their own or others' dreams and goals come true. It is argued that, by enhancing learning situations through research projects, with investigations, experiments, and discussions, children are given a voice, as their interests, decisions, and actions are listened to attentively. In this way, the educational practice of the Colombian teacher provides children with moments of understanding how the construction of their knowledge is transformed into products that pass through their hands and express their ideas in the production of culture (VECCHI, 2017).

Furthermore, the educational work, in co-participation with the children, allows us to capture the listening of the children's capacity to construct their references in the various contexts in which they constitute their ecology of daily life. And, also, the exchange of experiences and experiences supports the conscious development of new investigative learning strategies around the conservation and preservation of their values, of the environment, to transform their immediate future (FORTUNATI, 2021). And, it is added, expanding the protagonism and enhancing the entrepreneurship of children. In this vein, the Colombian teacher was asked if she observes other clues or evidence that children seek proactive and entrepreneurial strategies to solve daily problems:

So, how can a child move from one tree trunk to another without an adult telling them how to do it? If there is no possibility of the child being able to solve it, observe and analyze. When we give the child that space to do it, the child can do it and decide and say, "I did it! I could indeed!". When a child says "I could!" it is a great achievement for them. All of this reaches their families. When families tell us "Ruth, look what the boy did today, he put on his socks, he didn't know how". He did it very well because we believe in children's abilities and we believe that mistakes are valid in this learning process. The evidence is that children show us ways to overcome these everyday obstacles and since it is so simple for us and the child is so big, they can move from one log to another or put on a pair of socks, and take them out of their boat. And it is with the opportunity that we give them "you can do it!"
(COLOMBIAN TEACHER),



It can be inferred, from the teacher's account and, based on Fortunati (2021), that she describes a competent, active, and interactive child, naturally oriented toward a leading role based on experiences. And, therefore, effectively constructive experiences, are present, both in daily routines and during educational practice, and in projects planned by the educational community. Taking advantage of the context of this question, the Colombian teacher was also asked if she observes signs that families develop protagonism and enhance children's entrepreneurship. In response to this question, the following response was obtained:

Last year, the family of a little girl, who was delighted to go out into nature and, this participation, this contact, it is impressive to see how the girl interacts with the care and observation of flowers. How delicate she is in caring for the trees and how she values the environment that surrounds her. So, when the father says: "My daughter, how beautiful! My daughter analyzes and tells me about this nature based on her observation". [...] the parents are demonstrating and are involving the children in this learning process, and are giving the children the opportunity to naturally and independently solve what for the children is a big problem or a big obstacle. In other words, families are part of the children's learning process (COLOMBIAN TEACHER).

By being part of the learning process, families and the teacher establish a complementary relationship in the construction of the child's learning. This complementary action allows families to follow the children's experiences and establish elements of coherence and continuity between what happens at school and home (FORTUNATI; TOGNETTI, 2021). At another point in the interview, the Colombian teacher reinforced the importance of the assumption of collective responsibility between the school and the family. In this sense, it is worth highlighting that, according to the philosophy and the Reggian approach, the involvement of families and the community is fundamental to the children's learning process, since the school is complemented by families as a producer of cultural values, which enrich the school's own global culture.

Following the interview with the Colombian teacher, the question was raised as to whether she perceives that her educational practice develops children's protagonism and enhances their entrepreneurship:

[...] we are instigators of children's protagonism, and, together with families and children, by listening carefully to children's interests, in micro contexts, we share, develop, and mediate representation through space, resources, intelligent materials, investigative strategies, and solidarity. Thus, developing opportunities for children to undertake their research (COLOMBIAN TEACHER).



As can be seen in her response, the Colombian teacher sees herself as the instigator of protagonism and offers opportunities for children to undertake. It is worth highlighting that, within the scope of their educational practice, research is characterized as a possible locus for developing protagonism and enhancing the entrepreneurial spirit of children. The emphasis on research, for Fortunati and Zingoni (2016),

[...] focuses on giving visibility and value to the protagonism that children have within this process, nurtured over time by developing experiences, often basically organized by themselves, which they initiate and are nurtured by sharing space and time (FORTUNATI; ZINGONI, 2016, p. 69).

In this context, the Colombian teacher assumes the role of mediator by demonstrating value, meaning, and depth to the children's ideas. With this,

[...] our protagonist children participate in a process that arises in the micro context of everyday life, organization, and roles in a world that demands that their potential be developed, explored, and internalized, in search of emotional and cognitive autonomy in all its processes (COLOMBIAN TEACHER).

For the Colombian teacher, educational practices carried out in partnership with children and families take place within micro contexts. In this sense, for Fortunati and Zingoni (2016),

[...] the intention is not to give it a diminutive representation about that of the adult, but rather to give the idea that it develops within micro contexts of experiences, which are, from a systemic perspective, those that children share within an educational center (p. 69).

In the context of this teacher, it is observed that the development of protagonism and the potentialization of entrepreneurship occur within micro contexts, mediated by research, in which children build and share their experiences in work groups, during the evolution of educational projects. Experiences in micro contexts allow children, in the words of Dolabella (2003, p.37), “[...] something linked to lifestyle, worldview, protagonism, innovation, ability to produce changes in oneself and in the environment, means and ways of seeking self-realization, including patterns of reaction to ambiguities and uncertainties”.

Documentation, for the Colombian teacher, is a fundamental part of educational projects, as it is “through documentation that one can evaluate the subjective and group learning processes of children in co-participation with the teacher and families, becoming a common heritage in the educational community” (COLOMBIAN TEACHER). Records are made through photos, experience reports, mini-stories, and portfolios of all the learning possibilities designed with the children and the educational community.



According to Proença (2020), these records build pedagogical documentation, understood as a permanent instrument of research, professional qualification, and renewal of educational work. According to the Colombian teacher, pedagogical documentation demonstrates educational practices and portrays what children do, being part of the educational process. This idea refers, once again, to the issue of participation. For Cagliari and Giudici (2014),

[...] participation of children, families, teachers, not only as 'being part of something', but, on the contrary, as being part, that is, the essence, the substance of a common identity, of a we to whom we give life, participating. Thus, in our experience, education and participation merge: the what (education) and the how (participation) become the form and substance of a single construction process (p. 138).

From this perspective, for the Colombian teacher, “mediating participatory educational practices establishes a horizontal, loving and respectful relationship, full of supportive, active and participatory models for the construction of the educational project”. It is understood, Through the teacher's reports and the analyzed documentation of the school and the teacher, that both she and the school are close to the educational principles described in the regulations of the municipal schools of Reggio Emilia/Italy, especially with the principle of participation.

The school and the Colombian teacher seek to insert the educational community (teachers, children, family, etc.) in an environment of participatory creation of changes and a new educational culture. Building a democratic process, through public spaces with the aim of promoting a shared reflection on the teaching and learning of a child who is a protagonist and an entrepreneur.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The analysis of the educational practice of the Colombian teacher revealed that it is possible to develop the protagonist role and enhance the entrepreneurship of children by carrying out an educational practice together with children and families through research that seeks to respect and care for nature. The Colombian teacher understands research as the constitutive corpus of educational practice.

For the aforementioned teacher, research leads to reflections, interpretations, and solutions to environmental problems and, in this context, children, considered protagonists of the school, are led to construct and resignify interventions in nature. Fortunati (2019) supports this thought by saying that research is born to be experienced, interpreted, discussed, and shared and that, precisely for this reason, it feeds on itself to bring new work paths and points of view about life and nature.



In her reports on educational projects, the Colombian teacher highlighted that “they do research all the time”. For her, research can have several objectives, mainly to identify, to know, and to produce knowledge about nature, about life, and about the world in which we live.

In this sense, for Rinaldi (2017, p.228), “the educator’s task is to create a context in which children’s curiosity, theories and research are legitimized and heard, a context in which children feel comfortable and confident, motivated and respected in their cognitive and existential processes and paths”. By using research as a central educational strategy, it is understood that the Colombian teacher is a research educator. The Colombian teacher lives, as Rinaldi (2017) says, “[...] in a permanent state of investigation” (p. 248). This stance is of utmost importance for the personal and professional development of an educator. Strengthened by research with and by children, the Colombian teacher’s practice involves families and the community, and listening, observation, documentation, and interpretation are elements that make her protagonism and the development of children’s protagonism potentializers of social entrepreneurship. Given this, it is understood that the inspiration in Loris Malaguzzi's philosophy transformed the Colombian teacher into a researcher who carries out research together and who guides children so that they carry out their research considering respect for nature and people's quality of life.



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