



**THE EMOTIONAL LANGUAGE IN ONLINE TEACHING:
EVERYDAY EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS**

A LINGUAGEM EMOCIONAL NA PRÁTICA DOCENTE ONLINE:
IMPLICAÇÕES EDUCACIONAIS COTIDIANAS

EL LENGUAJE EMOCIONAL EN PRÁCTICA DOCENTE EN LÍNEA:
IMPLICACIONES EDUCACIONALES COTIDIANAS

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ABSTRACT: This article is the result of a recently concluded research that aimed to investigate the theoretical-practical implications of emotional language in online teaching. Regarding the methodology, online teachers were invited to share experiences focusing on their daily work in virtual learning environments (VLE). For this, the theoretical-methodological approach of the studies with the quotidian helped us to interpret the accounts made by the subjects. Some of the findings of the studies included the need to (re)think the role of the online teacher in cyberculture and the use of emotional language as mediator in VLE with the intention of fostering the interpersonal relationships built in this space. In view of the above, this study reflects our interest in the mediating role of teachers in the task of contributing to an online education that puts into practice a dialogical pedagogical approach in order to enrich the educational experience.

KEYWORDS: Cyberculture. Research with the quotidian. Emotional language. Online teaching.

RESUMO: Este artigo é fruto de pesquisa recentemente concluída que se propôs a investigar as implicações teórico-práticas da linguagem emocional na docência *online*. Em relação aos procedimentos metodológicos, docentes *online* foram convidados a compartilhar relatos de experiências focalizando seus trabalhos desenvolvidos cotidianamente nos ambientes virtuais de aprendizagem (AVA). Para isso, a abordagem teórico-metodológica dos estudos com os cotidianos nos auxiliaram a interpretar os relatos produzidos pelos sujeitos. Alguns dos achados dos estudos incluíram a necessidade de (re)pensar o papel do docente *online* na cibercultura e o uso da linguagem emocional como mediadora nos AVA com a intenção de propiciar o fortalecimento das relações interpessoais construídas nesse espaço. Diante do exposto, este estudo reflete nosso interesse em torno do papel do docente na tarefa de contribuir para uma educação *online* que coloque em prática uma abordagem pedagógica dialógica com o intuito de enriquecer a experiência educacional.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Cibercultura. Pesquisa com os cotidianos. Linguagem emocional. Docência *online*.

RESUMEN: Este artículo es consecuencia de una investigación reciente que se apoya en las implicaciones teóricas-prácticas de la lingüística emocional en línea. En relación a los procedimientos metodológicos, docentes en línea fueron convidados a compartir relatos de experiencias diarias a respeto de sus trabajos desarrollados nos ambientes virtuales de aprendizaje (AVA). Para eso un abordaje teórico-metodológico dos estudios con los cotidianos nos auxiliaron a interpretar los relatos producidos pelos sujetos. Alguno de los dos requisitos incluidos incluye una necesidad de (re) pensar el papel del docente en línea en la cibercultura y el uso del lenguaje emocional como mediadora nos AVA con un propósito de apoyo o fortalecimiento de las relaciones interpersonales construidas en el espacio libre. Delante do expuesto, este estudio reflejado nos interesan en torno

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al papel docente en tarea de contribuir para la educación en línea que lo ponga en práctica una abordaje pedagógica dialógica con intuito de enriquecer a experiencia educacional.

PALABRAS CLAVES: Cibercultura. Pesquisa con los cotidianos. Lenguaje emocional. Docencia en línea.

EMOTIONAL LANGUAGE IN ONLINE EDUCATION: BEGINNING THE DEBATE

Information and communication technologies are changing our relationship with the world, reconfiguring every sphere of society, from the means of production to cultural consumption (SANTAELLA, 2003). The emergence of digital interfaces has made it possible for subjects to participate in interactive collaborative practices, highlighting the need for the hypertextual architecture of the Internet in the constitution of online communication processes involving geographically dispersed subjects. These interactive practices are possible due to the “liberation of the word”, one of the principles of cyberculture which characterizes the way in which subjects have ceased to occupy the role of mere cultural consumers of media and begun to act as consumers who also actively produce new digital content in the world computer network (LEMOS, 2010). In the current social and technological environment, with several dynamic ways of contacting one another, it is impossible to deny the “political importance of the freedom of speech promoted by cheap and easy interfaces” (PRIMO, 2013, p. 17). Applications, digital social networks, wikis, mobility, ubiquity, among many other terms, illustrate a time that is clearly marked by cybercultural social practices.

Since the end of the 20th century, especially since the publication of the book *Cyberculture* (LÉVY, 1999) in Brazil, countless studies have been dedicated to investigating the social phenomena engendered by the relationship of subjects with digital network technologies. Cyberculture in contemporary social life (LEMOS, 2002), convergence culture (JENKINS, 2009), social movements in the Internet age (CASTELLS, 2013), computer mediated conversation (RECUERO, 2012), planetary cyberdemocracy (LEMOS; LÉVY, 2010) and digital social networks (SANTAELLA; LEMOS, 2010; RECUERO, 2013), to mention a few, are some of the themes studied in the field of cyberculture. In the field of education, we could not fail to mention the researches that have focused their investigative efforts in the processes of teaching-learning within the context of digital social networks (COUTO JUNIOR, 2013), in the production of knowledge mediated by mobile digital devices (FERREIRA, 2014; SANTOS, 2011), in the pedagogical use of applications (apps) (NETO; VERSUTI; VAZ, 2016; OLIVEIRA; MERCADO, 2016; BENTO; VENAS, 2016), in the relationship between the school and digital network technologies (BONILLA, 2009; ARRUDA, 2009) and in the online mediation between cultural agents in virtual learning environments (VLE) (SANTOS; CARVALHO; PIMENTEL, 2016; SANTOS, 2010).

The several researches mentioned above clearly show that digital communication processes in the times of cyberculture are part of contemporary social practices. Through the use of free

digital interfaces, these online communication processes allow users to establish social and emotional bonds for the sake of building “a formative space based in non-linear logics, in collaborative learning, in interactivity, in multivocality, in the dynamics of networks. A living space of creation, production, communication, and therefore a space of culture[s]” (PRETTO; BONILLA, 2008, p. 86). Having said that, with online digital technologies, the environment where online education takes place, there is an availability of media (chats, forums, social networks, applications (apps), to name a few) capable of connecting people who are geographically dispersed and who can share information and build knowledge collectively, with room for creativity and proactivity (SANTOS, 2002, 2009; SANTOS; CARVALHO; PIMENTEL, 2016). It is impossible to deny that social practices that are increasingly mediated by technology have been changing the way different types of knowledge are dealt with in the school environment, and this demands the investigation of the processes of teaching-learning that become open in digital networks.

In this article, the result of a recently concluded research, we propose to investigate the theoretical-practical implications of emotional language in online teaching. We believe in an online education that recognizes the interactive potential of digital media (SILVA, 2009), that is, digital networks inspires us to 1) put into practice an education based on interactivity (all x all), counterpointing the massive unidirectional communication model (one x all); 2) make use of the potential that digital networks made available for the promotion of authorship; and 3) mediate students in order to lead to the ethical, sound and responsible usage of digital interfaces. To act as online teacher is to be immersed in cyberculture through the sharing of meanings produced among subjects who search for new ways of coming into contact with different types of knowledge. If we ignore this path, we run the risk of adopting digital communication interfaces within the perspective of the pedagogy of transmission, with the processes of teaching-learning anchored on the “banking education” (FREIRE, 2005) that we continue to fight so hard to leave behind.

Language, whether it is body language, oral language or written language, has a close relationship with thought, knowledge, expression, emotion and communication. Language, which is responsible for (re)actions manifested in social interactions, is part of an interactive process between two or more people who permanently negotiate meanings (RECUERO, 2012). The concept of emotional language adopted in this article relates to the “multiple ways in which human beings establish relationships, making use of different types of language and considering the emotional factor as an important trigger of the transformations that are derived from this process (BRUNO, 2002, p. 203). Thus, emotional language is a medium through which subjects can express/communicate emotions using continuous conversation processes that allow possibilities of interaction and transformation of one’s self and of others (BRUNO, 2002). The emotional aspect of the interaction among subjects requires recognition and legitimization in everyday pedagogical practices, since language is not merely a mechanical interactive process that searches for “yes” or “no”, or for “right” and “wrong”. On

the contrary, a conversation among two or more people is a “creative and productive way for the self to use its words to become closer to the words of another, building an understanding which, because it is not a mere recognition of the signals used, it is always a possibility, an offer, an answer that is open to negotiations and new meanings” (GERALDI, 2013, p. 15). With that in mind, we should ask ourselves: what dialogical processes become open with the communication potential of digital networks? And what are we capable of teaching at the same time in which we are open and available to learn from another?

Bruno (2002, p. 15) made a few important points about emotional language within the online teaching context. According to her,

In telematic environments [which join the technological resources of telecommunications and informatics], physical observation is still restricted/limited. Because in most cases we use written communication, the observation of physical aspects, such as the expression of the eyes, oral expression and gestures, becomes impossible. Therefore, teachers in these environments need to pay special attention to students’ written communications, expressed through the Emotional Language in the interaction process.

Due to the limitations of the observation of physical aspects in VLE (BRUNO, 2002), we reiterate the importance of written communication in the interaction among subjects in order for emotional bonds to be strengthened as communication occurs. Using emotional language in an online environment, the teacher will bring a sensitive approach to the group of students with whom he or she will share knowledge, as there are no “perfect recipes” or “best ways” for the manner in which words will be enunciated. When we recognize that the word of the other puts to us the challenge of interpreting it (BAKHTIN, 2011), we consider how essential is an attentive and respectful approach to the ways in which we interact daily. We use words to express a wide range of emotions, opening ourselves to become known through the different dialogical possibilities that become open in conversations established with other cultural agents. Aside from trying to ensure the high quality of the academic experience, the online teacher can also perform in a thoughtful, sensitive, collaborative and critical manner without failing to develop along with the students the emotional aspects engendered by and through the language.

STUDIES WITH THE QUOTIDIAN: CONSIDERING THE METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH

The epistemological-methodological approach adopted in this study is based on the research with the quotidian using the contributions of Alves (2001, 2003) and Oliveira (2007). According to Alves (2003), in this approach the manner of doing research requires a) the involvement of the researcher with his or her research interlocutors; b) understanding subjects

as thinking beings, cultural producers; c) communicating new preoccupations, new problems, new facts and new findings brought about by events; and, finally, d) the necessity of researching through “diving with all our senses in that which we wish to study” (ALVES, 2003, p. 3). This approach presumes that research participants are cultural producers and not mere reproducers-informers, the relationship between the researcher and the subjects is intense, collaborative, and there is no subject-object distance as the modern scientific rationality proposed (ALVES, 2003). Aside from that, the studies with the quotidian argue that to capture in the empirical field “its dynamics, its weavings, its small events, becomes fundamental in order to find the unpredictable, the uncontrollable, the diverse, the singular, which are also a part of everyday life and of the process of learning about the world” (OLIVEIRA, 2007, p. 122-123).

Researching within the context of social practices mediated by digital network technologies means legitimizing the Internet as a “meeting place that allows the building of communities, stable groups, and the emergence of new forms of sociability” (MERCADO, 2012, p. 167). When we adopt digital technologies as part of the methodology, we are recognizing them as belonging to the cultural practices of users who actively participate in interaction processes with other people who are geographically dispersed. Researching with the epistemological-methodological approach of studies with the quotidian is something that invites us to see the empirical field with attention and sensitivity. As Alves (2011) reminds us, this way of seeing demands the creation of a feeling of availability and acceptance of dialogue, allowing the researcher to put into practice an attitude that goes “much beyond the eyes that see, with which we intend to work. It must be understood, therefore, that the work which will be developed will demand the establishment of multiple networks of relationships” (ALVES, 2001, p. 21-22) woven among researcher and subjects.

The approach of studies with the quotidian has allowed us to better understand the complexity of emotional language in the practices of online teaching of the discipline “Informatics in Education”, a class that is part of the long-distance Pedagogy course of the University of the State of Rio de Janeiro (CEDERJ/UAB/UERJ), during the first semester of 2017. After we presented the research proposal, the contact with participants allowed us to find out how they began to teach, what was their educational background and how long they had been working as online teachers. As social and emotional bonds became stronger in the conversation, experiences about everyday activities in VLE were exchanged. Using Facebook Messenger³, we invited online teachers of the discipline “Informatics in Education” that worked in the consortium UERJ/CEDERJ/UAB.⁴ At a later date, the field research became more extensive, with the participation of online teachers/tutors from the Laboratory for New Teaching

³ A Facebook chat box where users can privately exchange text messages, files, pictures or links.

⁴ This consortium is made up of six public universities from the state of Rio de Janeiro which, along with the state’s Science, Technology and Innovation Department, aims to offer long-distance college courses in the blended learning format, having locations in several different cities in the state of Rio de Janeiro.

Technologies of the Fluminense Federal University (UFF). In order to increase the number of subjects participating in the investigation, the researchers adopted the methodology of an open call on Facebook which informed the theme and objective of the study.⁵ The goal of this open call was to lead long-distance teachers/tutors to discuss their educational experiences in VLE.

The fieldwork allowed us to understand more amply the context in which these professionals worked, the environment in which their mediations took place, their anxieties, expectations, and their need to feel valued and concern for the accreditation of the online teacher position. Investigating these issues is necessary, since concerns focused on the students are common, while the online teacher sometimes is relegated to the background, overwhelmed and insecure in the face of so many challenges and responsibilities. In this context, we agree with Santos (2010), who reveals the importance of the relationship with another on the establishment of collaborative learning-teaching. According to her, “we believe that we learn more and better when we have the provocation of the ‘other’ with their intelligence, their experience. We know that we have [digital] interfaces that will ensure our communication with free and plural speech (SANTOS, 2010, p. 47). With that being said, far from trying to give the “last word” in the issues raised during the interaction with the subjects who participated in the study, the challenges discussed will not present definitive answers or conclusive solutions, merely clues that have emerged from the provocations triggered by the exchange of experiences.

INTERPRETATIVE ANALYSIS: ACCOUNTS OF ONLINE TEACHING

During the fieldwork conducted in 2017, we received accounts from professionals in the field of education who work with information and communication technologies. These accounts include important elements for reflection about shared experiences which are a result of the use of emotional language in online education. It is important to emphasize that we chose to use pseudonyms to identify the participants in the study, thus preserving the anonymity of the subjects.

Below we present extracts from the accounts of three subjects who participated in the fieldwork: Maria, who has a degree in Psychology, a Master’s Degree and a PhD in the same field, is an expert on distance education and has worked developing learning material and teaching online for the consortium CEDERJ/CECIERJ, teaching online for the Open University of Brazil (UAB) and in professional training for Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs); D. K., who is studying for a Master’s Degree in Psychology at UNISINOS/RS and whose research deals with the pedagogical practices of long-distance professors all over the

⁵ This open call was posted on the profile of the article’s first author, who was responsible for conducting the fieldwork. The second author led the research in question.

country; and Cíntia, who is an online teacher of the discipline Informatics in Education, part of the Pedagogy course at UERJ, and is taking Planning, Implementation and Management of Distance Education (PIGEAD) at UFF. Given the extensive accounts sent by these three teachers, we chose to edit them with the aim of better highlighting the aspects that deal with emotional language.

Maria: In a college course financed by UAB, I was responsible for mediating the learning experience of 30 students at a time, which allowed me to truly be present throughout the entire experience. It was a project that motivated me greatly and in which I really saw most of the principles of distance education being put into practice. I realized that a very engaged student who wrote beautifully had been absent from the platform for over a month, despite my attempts to contact her online. I went to the college office and requested her file. After getting her telephone number, I called her. I told her how sorry I was that she had been absent and heard an apology and the account of a medical problem. We decided that she should be able to learn in her own time and that she would have my support along the way. Happily, I saw the student finish the course and go on to work with another teacher/tutor. A similar case happened in the same course with a student whom I was advising while she was writing her undergraduate thesis, and who did not answer my messages in the platform. Once again, I asked for her contact information in the office. When I called her, I found out that she was in an advanced stage of a high-risk pregnancy. We prepared a schedule especially for her and kept contact over the telephone. With joy, I saw her work be considered one of the best of the course and be sent for publication. I believe that it is the duty of any teacher, regardless of whether he or she is in a classroom or long-distance, to fight for their students, regardless of difficulties. Understanding another's humanity, their time, their rhythm, their individuality, and having empathy, being open, engaging in dialogue and being flexible are as important as setting limits and deadlines (MARIA, 2017).

In Maria's account we can identify the way in which she acts in relation to others, the means she mobilizes to search for pedagogic strategies that aim to encourage a greater participation in her classes on the part of her students and how this reflects on her own teaching practices, such as the adoption of more flexibility while planning her schedule. We noticed that the online teacher bases her actions in the constant promotion of interactivity with her students (SILVA, 2009), fostering their participation in online activities with the intention of encouraging greater possibilities for the exchange of experiences in the VLE.

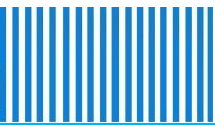
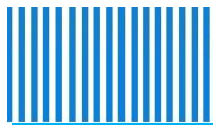
We also observed that Maria intends to mobilize the experiences of knowledge (SILVA, 2009), implementing learning situations that take into consideration the experiences of her students. The point is not thinking about the pedagogical practice as isolated, but using the communication potential of digital interfaces to allow the work to be developed in a more flexible way, encouraging all students to participate in collaborative teaching and learning processes which "find their basis in the principles of trust and sharing" (SANTAELLA, 2012, p. 36). The relationship established between Maria and her students helps us to understand the importance of the mediation performed by the online teacher, because they act not only as builders of knowledge, but in understanding social problems that are present in the everyday

life of anyone. Promoting this mediation, the teacher establishes a horizontal educational practice with their students, and one that is open to dialogue (FREIRE, 2005).

The processes of teaching-learning mediated by digital network technologies also involve the concern with the development of an ethical behavior that meets the social demands of each class. Preto (2010) affirms about the importance of the “freedom culture” mediated by Internet interaction processes that it is essential for us to cultivate a behavior that involves “generosity, collaboration, ethics, sharing and the ability to listen in order to be able to act” (PRETO, 2010, p. 159). Distance education, as any educational process, is not only alert to the processes of production of knowledge, but also alert, as Maria highlighted, to “another’s humanity, their time, their rhythm, their individuality, and having empathy, being open, engaging in dialogue and being flexible are as important as setting limits and deadlines” (MARIA, 2017). Thus, acting ethically while teaching online means making a commitment to recognize the singularity of each interaction dynamics in the VLE and seeing the student not merely as a producer-consumer of knowledge, but also as a result of a given social and cultural background. Maria’s account, given above, helps us to realize how much we still need to question the constant reiteration of a logic which, historically, has been putting education professionals merely in the role of performing pedagogical activities with the aim of making an evaluation, discounting the importance of language in the strengthening of social and emotional bonds.

Below, D. K. shows us how much her work is based in the form in which language is employed in the quotidian of her experience as an online teacher.

D. K: Emotional language has been extremely relevant in my current position: that of long-distance advisor to students who are writing their undergraduate thesis. As the institutional thesis model with which I am working presupposes that part of the work will be done in a collaborative manner, many times conciliating different points of view of students who have never worked together and who do not have the same level of empathy and involvement is a challenge! With the aim of accessing the student’s motivation for finishing the course, many times I adopt emotional language with more emphasis in individual contacts than in collective contacts. Many students feel much more comfortable during a private conversation with their advisor than asking for their intervention during group work. In the beginning of group work, I try to encourage this model of communication, with the intention of getting participants to develop a respectful and friendly relationship. My first contacts are made with that in mind. However, along the way, people’s own difficulties and failure to establish a conciliatory communication, as well as the need to make a certain way of thinking more prevalent, ignoring more timid contributions, cause the first conflicts, which go beyond the limits of the forum (the place in which I can follow and plan the mediation) and on to other spaces outside the environment of the course. There are also students who do their academic work at a different pace or who do not have the motivation for so much dedication, and find themselves distraught in the midst of a collective production. The “behind the scenes” work that I do, based on emotional language, also has the intention of pacifying the more hotheaded in the hopes of a conciliation. This is not always possible, but at least helps keeping students in the course and letting them finish it. It is an intervention which many times is not recorded in the public space of the



forum, but which demands a great deal of energy and availability on the part of the professional who takes it upon themselves. Even though it constitutes mediating aspects in the space of the non-visible, it is that which demands more time and attention from the professional. Emotional language should also be a part of feedbacks, including when one is pointing out problems that need to be overcome in a given production. When the feedback is based on a traditional/punitive model of error, without a proposition of improvement, the student feels unsupported and probably will not speak to their advisor using emotional language. Teachers that occupy all positions certainly need to develop their behavior in this aspect. However, in distance education, especially in the mediation of collaborative work, it is urgent that they do so!

We have observed on this account that the teacher uses emotional language in her mediating practices, adopting different ways of communicating and analyzing, in each new situation, what she believes will be the best way to interact with her students. In D. K.'s educational practice, as told above, she recognizes how much of language takes place "after consensually coordinated actions, in which are taken into consideration the ontogenetic aspects permeated by emotion" (BRUNO, 2002, p. 85). According to D. K., the emotional aspect of language guides her teaching practices, especially in that which concerns the greater involvement of participation of all in building knowledge in the VLE.

We have analyzed how important it is for the teacher to make use of emotional language while mediating student work. Through this language, we are able to explore the different ways available in a virtual environment to create a friendly space, encouraging everyone to share different types of knowledge. Thus, we come to know a little of the history of each student as the work progresses in the VLE. Once again according to Bruno (2012), the emotional factor is the basis and support of the rational aspect. It is impossible to dissociate them. In human beings, there is no rationality without emotion. Emotion interferes with reason, and language and reason are connected and mutually dependent of emotion.

In D. K.'s account, we also understand that the complexity of the process of teaching-learning on the Internet demands from the professional other possibilities of acting and negotiating, requires their involvement with the everyday lives of their students, the mediation of conflicts and interests, and the use of an affectionate and individualized communication to motivate those who are learning: "many times I adopt emotional language with more emphasis in individual contacts than in collective contacts" (D. K., 2017). In this account we also find signs of that to which Alves (2001, 2003) and Oliveira (2007) have been calling attention when doing research with the quotidian: that we should analyze the plural (micro)practices of subjects in multiple everyday demands, which are their ways of acting, so that we can understand the logic at work in them.

Another important aspect mentioned by D.K. is the care she showed she takes in the feedback of activities performed by students. This is a relevant stage of the teaching-learning process, because the feedback given to students will be a determinant factor in order for future stages

of the work to be (re)considered. When we recognize that “mankind is the word, that mankind is as the word, every human being has to do with the word, takes place in the word, is woven from words, that the way of living characteristic of this living being, which is man, takes place in the word and as the word” (LARROSA, 2002, p. 21), it is impossible not to consider the importance of the feedback we give another in the form of words. In online teaching this feedback also takes place through the use of words, highlighting the centrality of words in the building of communication processes in the VLE. In this context, it is important to reiterate that the production of meanings involving two or more cultural agents can only be understood “in the flow of the chain of verbal interaction” (RAMOS; SCHAPPER, 2010, p. 29).

The third account was sent by Cíntia and it compares her experience as online teacher and as the student of a long-distance course.

Cíntia: I am an online teacher of the discipline Informatics in Education, part of the Certification in Pedagogy course at UERJ, and, at the same time, I am taking a long-distance course in Planning, Implementation and Management of Distance Education (PIGEAD) at UFF. Since I inhabit both spaces – as online teacher and student – I have been aware of the use of a more welcoming language with students of the Certification in Pedagogy course. As a student in PIGEAD, I have had experience with teachers that promote the silencing of students, especially when they wish to keep the focus on following instructions, meeting deadlines and performing tasks. Any subject in the forums that could generate a more heated debate or that promoted the expression of different ideas (within the subject discussed) was quickly ended or silenced by some of the teachers. This observation made me, as an online teacher in the Certification course, try to express myself in the exact opposite manner: even though I have the need to mediate the central topic of debate, I have been trying to behave in a way that welcomes posts that enrich, question, contradict or counterargument the ideas exposed. I perceive that this leads to a greater proximity of the online teacher to the students, who feel more comfortable expressing their impressions about the content being given and begin to understand that the forums are flexible and open to the convergence and divergence of ideas. The good results of a greater proximity are notorious both in personal evaluations and in long-distance evaluations, such as a private communication through a friendly exchange of messages, for example (CÍNTIA, 2017).

When talking about her experience as a distance education student, Cíntia mentions practices used by online teachers of the course that remind us of the “banking education” that was so problematized by Paulo Freire (2005). We suppose that these practices are didactic transpositions of traditional massive teaching to online teaching, in which the curriculum is already defined and closed, the content is the focus of the educational process, and there is no interactivity or sharing of experiences between the teacher and the students or among the students themselves. The person on the teaching position, on his or her turn, is not open to new ideas and promotes silencing in the classroom.

On the other hand, when she acts as a teacher in a VLE, Cíntia promotes different practices from those that she experienced, and they are practices of collaborative mediation. When she tries to promote pedagogical practices with the aim of allowing greater

enrichment/questioning on the part of the students, Cíntia perceives “that this leads to a greater proximity of the online teacher to the students, who feel more comfortable expressing their impressions about the content being given, begins to understand that the forums are flexible and open to the convergence and divergence of ideas”. Thus, Cíntia aligns herself with a methodology that aims to create in a VLE “the unfolding of the conversation, sometimes going deeper in what is being discussed, sometimes broadening the debate with other sources of information” (SANTOS; CARVALHO; PIMENTEL, 2026, p. 36). With that, Cíntia has the opportunity of exchanging new experiences because she encourages her students to share different points of view.

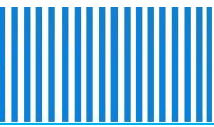
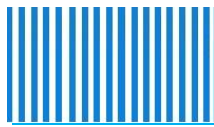
Written communication is the principal means used by online teachers to interact with students in a VLE. Lévy (1999), nearly two decades ago, predicted that cyberspace would become the main communication channel of the 21st century. It is through cyberspace – this gigantic network of transmission and access (SANTAELLA, 2012) – that Internet users from all over the world gather to participate in processes of interaction. In this context mediated by digital network technologies, the watchword is communication. Through digital interfaces, writing is becoming more prevalent in the interactive communication processes between online students and teachers, and that reveals how the written word is important in online education, because it expresses the emotional aspects of language.

BRIEF CONCLUSION

With the accounts produced by the research cited in this article, it was possible for us to consider issues related to the everyday pedagogical practice of online teachers, the uses they make of emotional language with their students, the concern with their interaction in the discipline and also the importance of mediation in the conflicts and tensions of the formative process. On the other hand, we must emphasize that the development of distance education in the Brazilian educational scenario demands a continuous increase in quality in order to ensure that the proposed goals for each course will be reached, allowing the processes of teaching-learning mediated by digital interfaces to contribute to the professional qualification of students.

This research, investigating the theoretical-practical applications of emotional language in online teaching, has offered a theoretical framework that became more approximated to the practices experienced in VLE, having in mind the strengthening of interpersonal relationships among the agents involved in this process. Regarding the methodology, we presented the way in which the first conversations with online teachers were initiated, and we also cited excerpts from their contributions with the accounts of the research of their practices.

Thus, we have dealt with countless aspects of online education, a type of education that exists within a social and technical context involving the production of knowledge through the use



of communication interfaces by geographically dispersed users. Aside from that, we have demonstrated that the online teacher must accompany these technological processes and appropriate digital networks with the intent of strengthening their role of mediator in online education.

Mediating educational processes in VLE through the use of emotional language implies that we are alert to the moments of interaction created in collaboration with the students. This means recognizing the importance of remaining engaged in the challenge of listening closely to each word enunciated and each moment of silence that may occur. Language is an invitation for us to teach-learn with others in VLE, and that is why we have a great ethical responsibility in online teaching, because it makes us (re)think daily how much emotional involvement constitutes human relationships.

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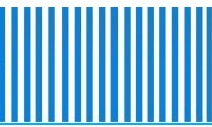
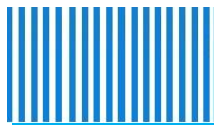
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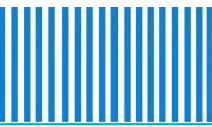
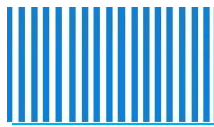
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