

INNOVATE, RENOVATE, OR TRANSFORM? A CRITICAL AND REFLECTIVE LOOK AT ENGLISH TEACHING IN A BRAZILIAN PUBLIC SCHOOL AMID COVID-19 PANDEMIC: A SOCIOCULTURAL AND APPRAISAL OF EMOTIONS PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract: This study aimed to conduct a critical-reflexive analysis of discourse within English Language Teaching through the lens of Emotion-based Assessment Processes, focusing on an English teacher's understanding of the terms *innovation*, *renewal*, and *transformation* inherent in the teaching and learning process, during the pandemic context of COVID-19 in Brazil. The research instruments used consisted of two online questionnaires with open-ended questions. This study was conducted from a sociocultural perspective, exploring the interactions between emotions and cognition, as described by Vygotsky (2001, 2010), Damásio (2004), Scherer (2005), Johnson (2009), and Pavlenko (2013). We adopted a qualitative ethnographic methodology within the frameworks of Transdisciplinary and Interdisciplinary Applied Linguistics, wherein we emphasize the construction of knowledge within a decolonial episteme concerning hegemonic power, as well as valuing the voices of the Global South with their cultural, economic, and social diversities. The research unveiled how emotions influence a teacher's decision-

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making process. Furthermore, it underscored the importance of teachers incorporating innovation, transformation, and renewal into their teaching practices. This adaptability is crucial for addressing challenges imposed by external factors such as the pandemic or internal factors like resource limitations, enabling teachers to anticipate solutions for future problems.

Keywords: Teacher's praxis. Emotions. Identities. English teaching. Applied linguistics

INOVAR, RENOVAR OU TRANSFORMAR? UM OLHAR CRÍTICO E REFLEXIVO SOBRE O ENSINO DE INGLÊS EM UMA ESCOLA PÚBLICA BRASILEIRA EM MEIO À PANDEMIA DE COVID-19: UMA PERSPECTIVA SOCIOCULTURAL E DE AVALIAÇÃO DAS EMOÇÕES

Resumo: Este trabalho teve como objetivo fazer uma análise crítico-reflexiva de um discurso do Ensino de Língua Inglesa por meio dos Processos de Avaliação na Emoção, focalizando o entendimento de um professor de inglês com relação aos termos *inovação*, *renovação* e *transformação* inerentes ao processo de ensino e aprendizagem, no contexto pandêmico da COVID-19 no Brasil. Os instrumentos utilizados foram dois questionários *on-line* com perguntas abertas. Este estudo foi realizado sob uma perspectiva sociocultural, explorando as interações entre emoções e cognição, conforme descrito por Vygotsky (2001, 2010), Damásio (2004), Scherer (2005), Johnson (2009) e Pavlenko (2013). Adotamos a metodologia qualitativa de cunho etnográfico, dentro dos construtos da Linguística Aplicada Trans-Inter e Indisciplinar, na qual enfatizamos a construção do conhecimento em uma episteme descolonial sobre o poder hegemônico, bem como valorizar as vozes do Sul e suas diversidades cultural, econômica e social. A pesquisa revelou como as emoções influenciam a tomada de decisão do professor. Além disso, destacamos a importância de o professor incorporar inovação, transformação e renovação em suas práticas de ensino. Essa adaptabilidade é essencial para enfrentar os desafios impostos por fatores externos, como a pandemia, ou fatores internos, como limitações de recursos, permitindo que os professores busquem soluções e antecipem problemas.

Palavras-chave: Práxis do professor. Emoções. Identities. Ensino de inglês. Linguística aplicada.

Introduction

One of the challenges of writing this book has been explaining what it was about to those who asked me what I was working on. I'd begin by saying I was writing about emotions and English language teaching, almost apologetically, as if this was not a serious scholarly subject. So I'd next jump in to explain that I wasn't taking up emotions psychologically, but, rather, socially and politically. And I'd add that I was writing about emotions not as static or monolithic, but, rather, as overlapping and moving. Then, if I still had my interlocuters' attention, I'd tell them that I was writing about connections between teachers' and students' bodies and minds (Benesch, 2012, p. Introduction)

As preceded, there seems to be a lack of studies that approach emotions as a procedural, becoming complex, dynamic phenomenon and fundamentally as a social and political tool to negotiate resistance to the power rules inside and outside the classroom. Since the last decade, there has been a significant increase in the interest of scholars in several areas of knowledge in a multidisciplinary way (Psychology, Neurolinguistics, Psychiatry, Applied Linguistics, Teaching and Learning SLA, to name a few) in deepening their studies related to emotion and/or affective aspects in the process of language teaching and learning (Pavlenko, 2013).

There have even been issues of a return to the white elephant⁵ or a reconsideration of emotion studies (Lantolf; Swain, 2019), and this metaphor, which is often attributed by the academic environment to the study of emotions, brings to light the importance of knowing the theories related to this topic, without any kind of preconceived thoughts, allowing to comprehend and recognize emotions as a field of knowledge that coexists with aspects categorized as rational. And, more than this, something that connects students' and teachers' minds and bodies all over the process of teaching and learning languages.

Or even, overcoming a view of emotions based on a deterministic, dualistic, and polarized perspective involves recognizing that, under a sociocultural bias, emotions develop in an intertwined way with other psychological processes, that is, in a specific

5 Elephants, it seems, are a popular metaphor in academic discussions of emotion. Researchers often illustrate the perspectival and contentious nature of the topic with the parable of the six blind men and the elephant. As the story goes, in an attempt to understand the mysterious creature, one man feels the trunk, another a tusk, and the others an ear, a leg, the torso, and the tail. Each man then confidently arrives at his own interpretation of the whole: a snake, a spear, a fan, a tree, a wall, a rope. Their differences of opinion eventually lead the men to quarrel, leaving them angry and bruised and offering us a cautionary moral about the limits of knowledge and the wisdom of humility (Prior, 2019, p. 516).

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way, they integrate the functions of higher psychological factors (Vygotsky, 2010, p. 22), such as, for example, voluntary attention or logical memory. In this bias, according to the conception of Barbosa and Bedran (2018, p. 213, our translation), “[...] we conceive that emotions arise with the help of psychological instruments” and, thus, as Friedrich (2012) points out when making considerations about these functions, they configure as mediated psychic phenomena. Therefore, it is a natural process that suffers, as Vygotsky (2010) points out, an artificial intervention, which allows questioning and invalidating the dualism between psychic and physiological (Friederich, 2012, p. 60).

This perspective highlights the interrelationship of mental and physiological dimensions, challenging the conventional notion of their strict separation. That means affirming, as explained by Barbosa (2012, p.23), that emotions, which have a biological aspect, like any higher function, are developed through mediation processes, assuming their character from the insertion and interaction of the subject in socialized forms of the world (Barbosa; Bedran, p. 213).

We analyze how a high school English teacher negotiates emotions and how they agency their professional identity throughout the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic at the beginning of 2020. Therefore, the findings reported in this paper are from a study conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic in Brazil, an event that, as a devastating avalanche, targeted schools in general, and more intensely in public schools, where teachers and schools without or almost no preparation for the use of new technologies had to adapt or worse still, teachers were forced to use Communication and Information Technologies (ICTs) overnight to meet the demands of virtual classes (online) or hybrids.

Therefore, as teachers, we must reflect on our praxis in the classroom. In continuing education, teachers hear the following speeches: You have to innovate your pedagogical practices, or you have to create/renew your skills and competencies, or if you do not update or transform your pedagogical practices, you will fall into the routine of traditional and structuralists’ manners, among others. Based on this discourse, we are motivated to analyze these three verbs present in educational discourse (innovate, renew, and transform) as well as in the participant routine, which is related to the teacher’s pedagogical practice and emotion.

Hence, findings demonstrate that if we consider these events from the formal and informal accounts of teachers in teaching and learning additional languages area, we can see a mix of positive and negative effects and consequences of these experiences in a becoming stream. The analysis of this complex process occurs from a deeper study of the Appraisal Processes in Emotion (Scherer; Schorr; Johnstone, 2001).

Besides the Introduction and Conclusion, this article has four sections, namely: (1) Emotion and Professional Identity in Educational Context, (2) Conceptions of Innovation, Renovation, and Transformation in Educational Context, (3) Methodology and (4) What to do in my English classes? Innovate, Renovate, or Transform? In the former, we present how emotions interfere with the teaching and learning process, plus its relation to professional identity. In the second section, we introduce the participant of this research and the methodological procedures and in the third one, we show the results.

Emotion and professional identity in educational context

I do not know why! But that's how I feel! This assertion, apparently unpretentious, represents a pre-programmed condition because we do not know why. We only know that we feel this way. We are already programmed to sense them, "it is sufficient only that the initial sensory cortexes detect and classify the characteristic or key characteristics of a given entity (i.e., animal, object) and that structures such as the amygdala receive signals relative to their conjunctive presence" (Damásio, 2004, p. 148, our translation⁶). Therefore, we detect some characteristics through the limbic system of the brain, whether it is the size of an animal, a movement, or a sound, and those, in turn, activate a state of the body, altering cognitive processing.

Emotions have a direct relationship with the body (Damásio, 2004). Sometimes, they can cause body reactions and, sometimes, body state can trigger some emotion. In the case of students during classes, this phenomenon is visible bodily, due to the agitation they use to demonstrate. That means, students and teachers share the same spaces daily and are part of human relations contexts, which basis, as Maturana (2002) states, is emotional. This dimension directly interferes with teachers' decisions and actions because, according to Damásio (2004), somatic markers, which concern working memories we have, could influence our decision-making.

Thus, teachers face many adverse situations, among which they need to deal with students' emotions and be aware that these emotions arise from memories rooted in their previously acquired cultural experiences. Therefore, students who experienced situations of embarrassment in an English class for not knowing how to pronounce "correctly" during a reading activity, for example, will have this memory imprinted on their behavior, which communicates through the brain region called the ventromedial prefrontal cortex, influencing the way individuals act.

⁶ Basta apenas que os córtices sensoriais iniciais detectem e classifiquem a característica ou características-chave de uma determinada entidade (isto é, animal, objeto) e que estruturas como a amígdala recebam sinais relativos a sua presença *conjuntiva*.

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And just as reading is not performed in the same way by all students, since each one has their stories, a background of cultures and experiences, in the same way, they show us that we cannot ignore the emotions demonstrated in the classroom because “emotion guides attention and this, in turn, guides memory and learning” (Fonseca, 2016, p. 370, our translation)⁷. According to Johnson (2009), how individuals learn or get knowledge also depends on their previous experiences, the sociocultural contexts in which learning happens, and what they want, need, or expect to do with the knowledge constructed and preceding experiences have a direct relationship with social or secondary emotions, that is, the result of their learning in their interaction with other people.

It is in the social environment that individuals develop emotions called secondary. Also, individuals could learn them through social interactions, which require a cognitive analysis of situations; thus, emotions like guilt, shame, and jealousy, among others, can arise. Although there is a distinction between secondary/social and primary/innate emotions⁸, Damásio (2004) warns us about the need for the influence of the social context on intrinsic behavior, which necessarily depends on the adequate exposure of the individual to the environment:

In some cases, emotions are in fact entirely innate. In other cases, they require a minimum degree of appropriate exposure to the environment. Robert Hinde’s work suggests what probably happens to social emotions. Hinde showed that the “innate fear” that monkeys supposedly have of snakes only appears after the monkey has seen in the mother an expression of fear towards the snake. A simple exposure is enough for the fear behavior to be activated, but without this

7 A emoção guia a atenção e esta, por sua vez, guia a memória e a aprendizagem.

8 Primary (or basic) emotions are easier to define because there is a well-established tradition regarding the emotions that should be part of this group. The list includes fear, anger, disgust, surprise, sadness, and happiness—those emotions that typically come to mind when one mentions the word “emotion.” The ease of definition also stems from how these emotions are quickly recognized in humans from various cultures and even in non-human beings. Social emotions encompass sympathy, compassion, embarrassment, shame, guilt, pride, jealousy, envy, gratitude, admiration, amazement, outrage, and contempt. Numerous regulatory reactions, as well as components of primary emotions, are integral parts, in various combinations, of social emotions (Damásio, 2004, p. 38-39, our translation). No original: “As emoções primárias (ou básicas) são mais fáceis de definir porque há uma tradição bem estabelecida em relação às emoções que devem fazer parte desse grupo. A lista inclui o medo, a raiva, o nojo, a surpresa, a tristeza e a felicidade, aquelas emoções em suma que primeiro vêm à idéia quando se pronuncia a palavra ‘emoção’ A facilidade da definição provém também da forma como essas emoções são rapidamente identificadas em seres humanos das mais diversas culturas e também em seres não humanos. As emoções sociais incluem a simpatia, a compaixão, o embaraço, a vergonha, a culpa, o orgulho, o ciúme, a inveja, a gratidão, a admiração e o espanto, a indignação e o desprezo. Numerosas reações regulatórias, bem como componentes das emoções primárias, são parte integrante, em diversas combinações, das emoções sociais”.

first exposure the so-called “innate” behavior cannot be performed (Damasio, 2004, p. 40, our translation)⁹.

In this process of interactions, we also find emotional reactions, which are influenced by how we interpret situations. If we decode a situation as threatening, we tend to have emotional replies according to this and not to the real danger that such a situation represents. As Swain (2013) advocates, emotions are not merely individual reactions but derived and constructed in socio-cultural contexts. The two ones (emotions and cognitions) mediate the learning process. It means that emotions and cognitive processes are interconnected. The emotional state can impact individuals’ ability to focus or retain information, and in the same way, the cognitive process, such as problem-solving can influence their emotional responses during the learning experience.

Besides, according to the Appraisal Theory of Emotions (Scherer; Schorr; Johnstone 2001), the interpretative evaluations we make from our experiences could originate our reactions. The same event can generate different emotions in individuals or suffer any modification in the same individual. Scherer (2005), for example, brings us the cognitivist idea, which occurs when we understand why we feel some emotion. It is what Scherer calls “appraisal driven” a kind of assessment that the individual performs in certain situations, thus sizing their reactions to a negative or positive level.

In agreement with Scherer (2005, p. 700), stimulus events usually provoke emotions. Often, these events consist of natural phenomena such as storms or the behavior of other people or animals that may have meaning for our well-being. If we come across a toy in the shape of a poisonous animal, and soon after, we evaluate that it does not offer us danger, it alleviates the intensity of the emotion. In this way, we learn to develop and apply mechanisms of controlling our emotions.

Not being a lesser agent than thought, as Vygotsky (2010) points out, emotional reactions must form the basis of the educational process, with the rest being “dead knowledge”. That means the teacher must arouse emotions in students and be concerned with the fact that they are linked to the knowledge worked. For achieving better memorization or a more successful work of thought, there is a need for emotional stimulation: “[...] an emotionally colored fact is remembered with more intensity and

9 Em certos casos, as emoções são de fato inteiramente inatas. Noutros casos, requerem um grau mínimo de exposição apropriada ao ambiente. O trabalho de Robert Hinde sugere aquilo que provavelmente acontece com as emoções sociais. Hinde mostrou que o “medo inato” que os macacos supostamente têm das cobras só aparece depois de o macaco ter visto na mãe uma expressão de medo em relação à cobra. Uma simples exposição é suficiente para o comportamento de medo ser ativado, mas sem essa primeira exposição o comportamento dito “inato” não pode ser executado.

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solidity than an indifferent fact. Whenever we try to achieve something for a student, we should try to reach their feeling” (Vygotsky, 2010, p. 143, our translation)¹⁰.

Education, therefore, cannot be detached from emotional factors. According to Vygotsky (2010), emotional reactions influence all forms of our behavior and moments of the educational process. Thus, for the author, if we wish to carry out a successful pedagogical work, in a way that students learn, it is essential to reach the students’ feelings. In this same perspective, Azevedo (2003) turns to the importance of the teachers’ emotions, which guide their behavior in relation to their pedagogical practice, consequently, there is no place for “indifference” in the educational process. In turn, we assume that the teachers’ emotions and their behavior in the pedagogical process influence the students’ emotions and behavior and vice versa.

The educational work requires this totality of the individuals involved in it: in addition to technical skills, it requires passion, political will, involves senses, emotions, feelings and intuitions. We deal with other human beings, also carriers of knowledge, senses, emotions, feelings and intuitions. We may or may not like what we do and/or the place in which we work; but we cannot remain indifferent. There is no room for indifference in educational work. Our greater or lesser commitment, our greater or lesser engagement with the work we perform, stems from the greater or lesser degree of anxiety, curiosity, pleasure that we have in relation to it (Azevedo, 2003, p. 11-12, our translation)¹¹.

Indifference also has no place in social-interactional relations. It happens in the socio-interaction among students, the environment, and the language they show their previous knowledge and include it in a development process. According to Vygotsky (2001), this process occurs effectively because the “relationship between man and the world passes

10 In the original: “[...] o fato emocionalmente colorido é lembrado com mais intensidade e solidez do que um fato indiferente. Sempre que comunicamos alguma coisa a algum aluno devemos procurar atingir o seu sentimento. Isso se faz necessário não só como meio para melhor memorização e apreensão, mas também como objetivo em si”.

11 O trabalho educacional requer essa totalidade dos indivíduos envolvidos nele: além das habilidades técnicas, requer paixão, vontade política, envolve sentidos, emoções, sentimentos e intuições. Lidamos com outros seres humanos, também portadores de conhecimento, sentidos, emoções, sentimentos e intuições. Podemos gostar ou não do que fazemos e/ou do lugar em que trabalhamos; mas não podemos permanecer indiferentes. Não há espaço para indiferença no trabalho educacional. Nosso maior ou menor comprometimento, nosso maior ou menor engajamento com o trabalho que realizamos, decorre do maior ou menor grau de ansiedade, curiosidade, prazer que temos em relação a ele.

through the mediation of speech, the formation of ideas and thoughts through which man apprehends the world and acts on it, receives the word of the world about himself and him-man, and bases his word on this world” (Vygotsky, 2001, p. 12, our translation¹²).

Now, we need to consider Magiolino (2010, p. 1, our translation¹³) when she defines: “The word is historical, the word condenses and mobilizes senses, the word constitutes, the word affects... And it affects and constitutes subject, thought, emotion... The word thrills...”. The author points out that words are not only code, but intrinsic to a context. Also, they constitute meaning and they will exercise their role in relations. In this sense, emotions are being developed as the subject is inserted in socialized forms of the world, which, as Barbosa (2012, p. 23) points out, are constitutive and constituted by language. As well as other higher psychological functions, which distinguish us from animals, such as voluntary attention and logical memory, we understand, based on Barbosa (2012) and Friedrich (2012), that emotions of a biological nature are developed from mediation processes with the aid of psychological instruments. This way of conceiving emotions and their formation goes against the grain of a dualist proposal which is between the psychic and the physiological and still avoids an opposition between natural science and social sciences (Friedrich, 2012).

However, there is an intrinsic relationship between emotions and professional identity. Varghese *et al.* (2005) concluded that the teacher has relevant participation in practicing the language inside the classroom. Consequently, it is the focus of attention in research. They also add that, research that turned to beliefs, knowledge, attitudes, emotions, and philosophies, among other factors, led us to conclude that we cannot analyze those aspects of the teacher-self separately in their singularities, but, on the contrary. They all come together to form the professors’ identities when they act in the classroom. We also believe that “the identity of the language teacher becomes a crucial component in determining how the language is taught” and learned (Varghese *et al.*, 2005, p. 22).

12 In the original: “A relação entre o homem e o mundo passa pela mediação do discurso, pela formação de ideias e pensamentos através dos quais o homem apreende o mundo e atua sobre ele, recebe a palavra do mundo sobre si mesmo e sobre ele-homem, e funda a sua própria palavra sobre esse mundo”.

13 In the original: “A palavra é histórica, a palavra condensa e mobiliza sentidos, a palavra constitui, a palavra afeta... E afeta e constitui sujeito, pensamento, emoção... A palavra emociona...”.

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Conceptions of innovation, renovation, and transformation in educational context

This study starts from the thesis that there are significant conceptual differences between the terms innovate, renew, and transform when taken to the educational context, specifically, to English teaching as a foreign language. That takes part of the theme discussed with the professor (co)participant in this research, under the lenses of the Sociocultural Perspective (Vygotsky 2001, 2010; Johnson, 2009; Libâneo, 2009), in which he prioritizes the social practice/action of language as a trigger for the co-construction of knowledge. Since this practice is permeated and impacted by emotional and affective factors (Vygotsky, 2001; Smolka; Nogueira, 2011) of discourse agents, which influence the construction of his identities (Moita Lopes, 2003, 2006), Moita Lopes and Bastos (2010)) as we can see in the section of data analysis.

The concept of innovation explained by Christensen, Horn, and Staker (2013), authors who deal with hybrid education and adopt two types of innovations (sustained and disruptive), attests that “sustaining initiatives lead to improvements to the established design, whereas disruptive initiatives lead to an entirely new way of thinking about teachers, facilities, and the student experience.” (Horn; Staker, 2015, p. 69).

For Almeida (2020, p. 216, our translation¹⁴), “the pedagogical transformation is a process that aims to change the essence of the student’s learning experience, and consequently, the teaching experience”. However, we need to realize that pedagogical transformation, innovation or renewal are not strictly linked to technology. That is, technology is related to modernization, but innovation has a broader meaning in Education, that means, a focus on critical thinking and problem-solving skills, students’ creativity development, use of collaborative learning strategies. It goes beyond the use of gadgets and digital tools.

In this same vein, we believe that renewing and innovating often lead us to fewer complex meanings of changes in the practices of students and teachers in the teaching and learning process, such as, for example, teachers often believe that the simple use of new technologies in the classroom would be renewing or innovating their class and methodology, while they would simply be changing the didactic-pedagogical instruments that help to learn.

¹⁴ In the original: “A transformação pedagógica é um processo que visa mudar a essência da experiência de aprendizagem dos estudantes e, conseqüentemente, a experiência de docência”.

We also believe that the transformation, as with the “renewal”, does not mean restricted adoption of digital technologies inside schools, because the use of these technologies does not guarantee that students will be active critical and reflective learners, and neither that teachers can promote the development of their skills and abilities. In addition, Pearson and Somekh (2006) state that students transform the learning process by having the following conditions:

Learning creatively: contributing, experimenting, solving problems. Learning as active citizens: acting autonomously, taking responsibility for their own learning. Intellectually engage with powerful ideas: using thinking skills, engaging with ideas and concepts. Reflect on your own learning: evaluate your own learning through metacognition (Pearson; Smoketh, 2006, p. 255).

Moreover, when the teacher promotes creative and autonomous learning, promoting engagement and commitment of his students concerning learning new knowledge and experiences (Pearson; Smoketh, 2006), we emphasize that there was a conscious transformation in his real co-status in the classroom. The construction of new knowledge in conjunction with their identities as learners, that is, these transformative actions change their principles and consequently transform the essence of the teacher’s teaching (Almeida, 2020).

Methodology

To contextualize our readers socio-geographically, our collaborating participant is an English teacher in a foreign language, in a federal public school located in the extreme north of Brazil, in the state of Tocantins, also called Legal Amazon. That is an area that comprises nine Brazilian states: Acre, Amapá, Pará, Amazonas, Rondônia, Roraima, and part of the states of Mato Grosso, Tocantins, and Maranhão.

The population of the area has tremendous social, cultural, and economic diversity, with a markedly lower general economy and other opportunities in comparison to the southern part of Brazil. Intertwined with these circumstances is that the expectations can also be lower in the region for professional opportunities and progress. Still, concerning our participant, he is 39 years old, male, middle class, and white according to the socioeconomic parameters of Brazil. He is taking doctorate classes in Applied Linguistics at a Federal University in the far north of Tocantins. He has been a high school and college English teacher for 12 years. He did his graduation in Arts: Portuguese Language and English Language.

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The research is qualitative and ethnographic with an interpretative nature, according to the inter/trans- and interdisciplinary studies of Critical Applied Linguistics.

This is an excerpt of a longitudinal study. We applied two open online questionnaires. The questionnaire n. 01 was used in 2021 and the questionnaire n. 02 was used in 2022. How The questionnaires were administered to four additional English language teachers besides the participant of this text, two from public schools and two from private schools. However, in this study, we chose to emphasize the data generated by the foreign language teacher from a federal institution in northern Tocantins (IFTO) as they are more relevant to the topic being discussed here.

Questionnaire 01, administered at the beginning of 2021, focused on capturing information about how he conducted his classes in the context of COVID-19 throughout the year 2020, the problems and challenges he faced, and how he attempted to solve or minimize these issues. However, in Questionnaire 02, administered at the end of 2022, we aimed to understand this teacher's praxis through the verbs innovate, renovate, and transform, from a perspective of re-existence and resilience in the post-pandemic period.

Discussion of data: what to do in my English classes? Innovate, renovate, or transform?

"Educating always means changing" as Vygotsky (2010, p. 140, our translation)¹⁵ points out. It is not different with emotions; the mechanism of education of feelings is, according to the author, in a way, the same for all other reactions. In this sense, the author considers emotions "as a system of previous reactions, which communicate to the organism the immediate future of its behavior and organize the forms of behavior" and this allows the pedagogue, in the emotions, a means of education rich in reactions. For the author, no behavior is as strong as those linked to emotions. He expresses:

[...] If we want to succint in the student the forms of behavior that we need, we will always have to worry that these reactions leave an emotional trace in that student. No moral preaching educates as much as a living pain, a living feeling, and in this sense the apparatus of emotions is a kind of specially adapted and delicate instrument through which it is easier to influence behavior (Vygotsky, 2010, p. 143, our translation)¹⁶.

15 In the original: "[...] a educação sempre denota uma modificação".

16 In the original: "[...] se desejarem provocar no aluno as formas necessárias de comportamento, sempre devem se preocupar com que essas reações provoquem uma marca emocional nele. Nenhuma prédica

From a Sociocultural Perspective, we understand that the education of emotions is related to the domain of emotions, which means the field of their external expression, which is the reaction linked to such feelings. It is important to emphasize that, despite appearing to be a repression of senses, the domain of feelings is subordination and their connection to other forms of behavior, their orientation towards an end. To exemplify the rational use of feelings, Vygotsky (2010, our translation) cites intellectual ones, such as curiosity, interest, admiration, etc. Such feelings “[...] arise in a direct affinity to intellectual activity and orientation in the most evident way, although they have an extremely insignificant physical expression that, in most cases, is exhausted by some subtle movements of the eyes and face”.

Based on discussions by theorists in the area and in line with this sociocultural perspective, it is crucial to examine how individuals, particularly educators, navigate and deal with their emotions in the context of education, as follows in the excerpts below:

Excerpt 1. Teacher’s opinion about innovation, renewal, and transformation terms

Can you tell me if there is or what is the difference(s) among the terms: innovation, renewal, and transformation? And which one would you apply to your class plans in this post-pandemic period?

For me, there are differences between the terms (I speak in practice, without consulting dictionaries). Innovate presents the “insertion” of something new. For example, stop using the whiteboard more and use multimedia material. To renew is to “change”, like changing the teaching plan, repeated for many years. Now, transforming is like being born again. It is a drastic change, in attitudes, in values. It is to include the previous terms in a new person. It is something more complex. For my classes, I always apply the renewal. (Open questionnaire held on May 18, 2021)

Source: Own elaboration

Innovate implies improving something, a process, or a method, and it is evident the teacher’s concern towards enhancing his pedagogical practice with the insertion and use of technological artifacts to characterize an innovating attitude. However, we question the authentic need to configure innovation using digital technologies. Thus, we identify that the teacher uses a disruptive innovation, as he rejects materials or strategies used before and tries to recreate new teaching manners because the sustained ones encompass aspects of both the traditional classroom and online education. On the other hand, the disruptive ones refresh the teaching and learning processes previously established in the educational institution, intending to increment improvements.

moral educa tanto como uma dor vivida, um sentimento vivido e, nesse sentido, o aparelho dos sentimentos é uma espécie de instrumento especialmente adaptado e fino através do qual é mais fácil influenciar o comportamento”.

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As for the renewal, we observed that the teacher, when prioritizing this term, indicates and confirms that the act of renewal is a constant process. The prefix “re”, in this case, reinforces the idea of repetition but is not a monotonous repetition, instead, it means a pursue instilling new thoughts, reconsidering, increasing strength, and acting otherwise. It is interesting to notice that by emphasizing other ways to renew the possibilities of the teaching process, we can interrelate the teacher’s thinking with Pérez (1998), because he does not reduce the use of digital technological artifacts such as the computer or other new technologies to a simplistic view of something as decisive to promote renewals of the teaching and learning process.

From his statement, we noticed that he repeats the term “change” in his “speech” and when he refers to transformation, that brings us to the prefix “trans” which implies in this context, “beyond”. That means being willing to move, break with the current, and change radically. Besides, we emphasize that the teacher participant in the research demonstrates being available and responsible for adapting to the necessary changes. He does not approach any of the concepts from reductionist concepts, but he ponders and demonstrates a concern with his pedagogical practice. We can perceive that there is no fear in promoting or suffering change.

In addition, it is fascinating when he uses the term transform meaning something like “being born again”. In other words, he assumes that for the expected change in his praxis to take place, there has to be a significant transformation in his essence or identity as a foreign language teacher or even a rebirth, like a butterfly that leaves its cocoon for a new life experience (Almeida, 2020).

Excerpt 2. Teacher’s opinion about the necessity of innovation, renewal, or transformation in Basic Education

<p>Would it be necessary to innovate, renew, or transform Basic Education for the return of face-to-face classes? What is your opinion?</p>
<p>I think what you need is to transform responsibly in the long run. I always thought that previously to the pandemic, Brazil managed to universalize access to education, but the transformation did not occur. We still live in a 20th century school, with methodologies and linear organization (traditional). Brazil does not commit to what it proposes neither. They don’t enforce the National Basic Education Plan, for example. There are many setbacks happening, like the scrapping suffered by federal universities due to the ideology of the current government, which does not see education as an essential service. Where is the research going? And that’s in your face, scarcely listen to the pro-government newspaper commentators. Some even call teachers bums (I was stunned when I saw it) because they defend to return to the school throughout the pandemic. So, transform? Maybe one day...</p> <p>(Open questionnaire held on May 18, 2021)</p>

Source: Own elaboration

In the excerpt 2 answer, the teacher analyzes an event in which there are different combinations of specific evaluations that determine emotions. We also identify a characteristic reaction of emotion: “I was shocked/ stunned” which represents something fortuitous by the interlocutor, who seems to be waiting to understand something unexpected. Such evaluation, according to Scherer, Schorr and Johnstone (2001), is related to the emotional response system, responsible for selecting the emotion or emotions that are more coherent with the type of situation the individual is facing and the strategies set that this individual will use to lead with a specific setting, it is denominated “coping strategy”.

A coping strategy is relevant for individuals to adapt to some tense or hostile situation. According to the authors, “there is no universally effective or ineffective coping strategy. Efficacy depends on the type of person, the type of threat, the stage of the stressful encounter, and the outcome modality”. In this sense, we also observe that the political scenario could have produced anger or sadness in the respondent, but he evidences a response characteristic of surprise. A clue demonstrated by the beginning sentence “I was stunned” can be correlated to what Scherer, Schorr, and Johnstone (2001, p. 76) advocate: “the response strategy of surprise seems to involve suspending action and processing information, seeking understanding”.

Even though the political scenario established in Brazil broke his expectation, which portrayed at that time a government that was not concerned with essential issues such as investments in scientific research and Education, the teacher created an expectation considering that the action of transforming in the education process is possible.

Excerpt 3. Teacher’s opinion about new normality

In your view, what will our return to face-to-face classes be like? What will this (new) normality look like? What will we have to innovate, renew, or transform?

I think the return to classes will bring distrust by both parties, from teacher to student. The greeting with handshakes, the hug, everything, will be suspicious at first. Learning depends a lot on affection. This new normal will certainly introduce innovation in the technological area, such as the use of platforms to deliver activities. I am even thinking about using Google Classroom to vary my activities back in the classroom. We will have to innovate our relationship with teaching and learning techniques, but this has been required for a long time, because of the internet, which has “ruined” students’ ability to concentrate. Do you believe that many do not even read what is asked in the activity and then come to ask on WhatsApp?

(Open questionnaire held on May 18, 2021)

Source: Own elaboration

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It drew our attention that, when faced with the resumption of face-to-face classes, the teacher was insecure about the new forms of interaction between teachers and students, with the choice and use of learning methodologies. Thus, we wonder if this professional will be able to deal with all the obstacles that will probably arise in his classroom because, as Scherer, Schorr, and Johnstone (2001, p. 45) state, “the more confident we are in our ability to overcome dangers and obstacles, the more likely we are to be challenged rather than threatened, and vice versa.”

Given that the classrooms during the pandemic period may appear various changes and challenges, such as emotional difficulties for students, financial hazards faced by students’ families, denial and disbelief in Covid, fear of attending face-to-face classes, obstacles with the use of digital technological artifacts, among other aspects that may arise, all these elements can cause a stressful situation. This fact may later cause feelings of failure or success, thus evidencing the relationship between the cognitive process and emotional reactions.

Another predominant aspect concerns the importance given to affection, since it claims to be learning dependent on kindness, thus, presupposing an interrelation of feelings with the individual cognitive process. This thought corroborates with that of Scherer, Schorr and Johnstone (2001), because it explains that cognition is allied to emotions when we interpretate daily events. For instance, when faced with the abrupt interpellation of a student too angry due to failure on a test applied in class, and the teacher does not act impulsively but interpret the situation and, then, dialogue with this student. Thus, we can affirm that it comes from the meaning attributed to any stimulus that emotions will manifest themselves with “greater or lesser magnitude”.

Excerpt 4. Teacher’s opinion about his pedagogical practice after the pandemic

What did you succeed in transforming in your classroom after the pandemic period and what do you keep doing in the same way, trying to innovate, renew, but failed to transform?

After the pandemic period and the return of face-to-face classes, I had to readjust students to the rhythm of the classroom, both in intellectual and emotional productions. In DL (Distance Learning), the activities and work in the English discipline (of my responsibility) had more delivery periods of fifteen days and used materials such as YouTube videos, documentaries, and material reproduced by the teacher (by me). In the classroom, the presence of the textbook forces us to use it more often, even because of the situation of some students who do not have access to the internet. At the beginning of the back-to-face-to-face classes, the first month, we had cases of anxiety crisis on the part of two students (I witnessed the two because I was in the room at the time). One student could not do the tests because she was very nervous. An oral evaluation using Duolingo - which took place in April - she did not answer and came to take the test already in June. The school coordinator reported that she suffered bullying in the classroom where she attended, so they moved her to another class. She got better. The other

student got sick in my class and had to rush off to the infirmary (which is here at the IFTO campus in Araguatins). However, he did the class activity the other day. In short: I work in high school and college, and what I “keep doing the same way” is to use the textbook as student support material to avoid printing too many copies of activities from other sources every week. What I am “trying to innovate” is in the transformation of a traditional, linear lesson plan (with specific materials such as To Be verb, Pronouns, Regular and Irregular Verbs, etc.) to a more flexible syllabus, integrating experiences brought by students (using Duolingo, analysis of videos and music, news sites, experiences as speakers from other countries, and informal texts). That is because many students arrive without minimum knowledge about the subject (they studied everything from previous formal education and do not remember). So, I start as if I were from scratch (maybe this practice “would be a transformation” because there is no sequence in what they learned in elementary school, but the search for teaching that shows paths to self-taught learning). Regarding students with personal problems (as reported above), I “renewed” by flexibilities the assessment instruments for them, taking into account the multiple intelligences demonstrated by them (some draw well, others sing, and so on).
(Open questionnaire held on August 8, 2022)

Source: Own elaboration

In the excerpt 2 response, the teacher participant of this research stated that he uses renewal, which implies the search for new means and didactic-pedagogical strategies (but, at a later moment, when returning to face-to-face classes, he realized that due to the school context regarding the “requirement” of using a textbook and the difficulty of accessing the Internet by the students, the teacher added another term: “readapt”. This attitude of readapting students to a new reality may be related to innovation, in line with the thinking of Xavier, who tells us that

faced with a need or moved by inspiration, an individual manages to generate the long-awaited solution or anticipate the response to a problem to come. The simple adaptation of an old object or the fully unprecedented invention of a certain product can be classified as innovation (Xavier, 2013, p. 46, our translation)¹⁷.

We also noticed that such innovation could be classified as sustained, according to Christensen, Horn, and Staker classification (2013), as it maintains traditional classroom prerogatives with the addition of other online resources. In the framework of what remains traditional in this teacher’s classroom, we find out the textbook, which can be exalted by some and disapproved by many. Something that caught our attention concerns the case that the mere presence of the assigned book is a reason for the use of this object frequently. We know that

¹⁷ In the original: “Diante de uma necessidade ou movido por uma inspiração, o sujeito consegue gerar a solução tão esperada ou antecipar a resposta a um problema por vir. A simples adaptação de um velho objeto ou a invenção totalmente inédita de um certo produto podem ser classificadas como inovação”.

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It is not new that the worldwide pedagogy of English as FL, since its beginnings, has been practically based on paradigms imported from the countries of the “central circle”, disseminated on a global scale. It is also notorious that this pedagogy has always encamped its theories of second language acquisition, its teaching methods, curricular models, textbooks and complementary materials impregnated with contents aimed at the target culture(s), recounting the acquiescence of many professionals who, to some frequency, have been able to exercise their critical intercultural competence in all phases of the process. However, the condition of global lingua franca achieved by English has provoked numerous discussions in order to rethink, at different levels, many pedagogical practices that, in some way, no longer respond to the demands of various contexts in which the language is taught and learned with increasingly diverse objectives (Siqueira, 2012, p. 339-340, our translation)¹⁸.

And here, we ask ourselves about the transforming capacity of this teacher from the reflections that he can develop; it is, therefore, not only the choice of a given material focused on the insertion or withdrawal of another objective, the use or not of digital materials, but the problematizations aimed at the critical-reflective development of the students. Something unclear in the teacher’s speech but which worries us, given the consideration of this professional concerning the political scenario, demonstrated in excerpt 01. It is what Giroux calls “reflective practitioners”, advocating for a teacher who is a transformative intellectual and capable of making

[...] the pedagogical more political and the political more pedagogical. Making the pedagogical more political means inserting schooling directly into the political sphere, arguing that schools represent both an effort to define meaning and a struggle around power relations. Within this perspective, critical reflection and action become part of the fundamental social project to help students develop a deep and lasting faith in the struggle to overcome economic, political and social injustices, and to humanize themselves even

18 In the original: “Não é novidade que a pedagogia mundial de inglês como LE, desde os seus primórdios, esteve praticamente calcada em paradigmas importados dos países do ‘círculo central’, difundidos em escala global. É notório também que essa pedagogia sempre encampou suas teorias de aquisição de segunda língua, seus métodos de ensino, modelos curriculares, livros didáticos e materiais complementares impregnados de conteúdos voltados para a(s) cultura(s) alvo, contando com a aquiescência de muitos profissionais que, com certa frequência, têm se furtado em exercitar sua competência intercultural crítica em todas as fases do processo. Entretanto, a condição de língua franca global alcançada pelo inglês tem provocado inúmeras discussões no sentido de repensarmos, em diferentes níveis, muitas práticas pedagógicas que, de alguma maneira, não mais respondem às demandas de vários contextos em que a língua é ensinada e aprendida com objetivos cada vez mais diversos”.

more as part of this struggle. In this case, knowledge and power are inextricably linked to the assumption that choosing life, recognizing the need to improve its democratic and qualitative character for all people, means understanding the preconditions necessary to fight for it (Giroux, 1997, p. 157, our translation).¹⁹

Thus, the transformation recommended by the teacher gains another meaning. In other words, it allows students to develop both their language skills and a critical-reflective attitude toward the readings they perform, allowing them to express their opinions in the written and oral modalities of the language. Hence, we seek teachers who, in addition to trying to innovate, renew their classes, considering political scenarios that make it impossible, sometimes, to make an educational transformation centered on students. They become agents of change, not as “saviors of the homeland” but as professionals aware of their possibilities of observing the environment in which they live to reflect, plan, and bring different themes to the students that minimally provoke them to understand and debate about various subjects and problems that affect and afflict humanity.

We cannot fail to mention the students’ emotional reactions: anxiety and nervousness, which explicitly interfered with the teaching work, causing interruptions in the learning process and the choice of different didactic-pedagogical strategies and resources. Examples of emotional reactions arising from what Scherer, Schorr, and Johnstone (2001) call social appraisal, which refers to the impacts that the evaluations of some individuals can cause in the evaluation process of others, thus expanding the possibilities of assessments and

This expansion of the potential object of appraisals to the social domain is not, of course, restricted to positive emotions. Now, assume that you are confronted with a potentially threatening situation, such as an upcoming examination. You feel anxious because you regard the exam as very important and because you are not sure that you will pass. This emotional response is shaped in important ways by considerations, as reflected in classical appraisal dimensions, such as how important the exam is, how difficult the exam is likely to be, whether

19 In the original: “[...] tornar o pedagógico mais político e o político mais pedagógico. Tornar o pedagógico mais político significa inserir a escolarização diretamente na esfera política, argumentando-se que as escolas representam tanto um esforço para definir-se o significado quanto uma luta em torno das relações de poder. Dentro desta perspectiva, a reflexão e ação críticas tornam-se parte do projeto social fundamental de ajudar os estudantes a desenvolverem uma fé profunda e duradoura na luta para superar injustiças econômicas, políticas e sociais, e humanizarem-se ainda mais como parte desta luta. Neste caso, o conhecimento e o poder estão inextricavelmente ligados à pressuposição de que optar pela vida, reconhecer a necessidade de aperfeiçoar seu caráter democrático e qualitativo para todas as pessoas significa compreender as condições necessárias para lutar-se por ela”.

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you have prepared well enough, and so on. However, assume that your fellow students appear to be indifferent about the exam, downplaying its importance. Their evaluations are likely to affect your own appraisals and thereby result in a decrease of your anxiety. Similar processes are at work, when you and others are disadvantaged as a group, for example, by virtue of your sex or race: the anger you personally experience is likely to increase if other group members also become angry or to decrease if they do not become angry. In other words, people appraise the way in which other people judge, evaluate, or behave in response to an emotional situation. These social appraisals are not simply capable of influencing the way that emotions are overtly expressed; they can also have a more profound influence on the emotional experience itself (Scherer; Schorr; Johnstone, 2001, p. 222).

Thus, external factors can interfere with the emotional reactions presented by each individual, indicating that either the behavior or verbalization of people can provoke evaluations that lead us to evaluate a given event, attributing bad or good concepts to it, causing us anxiety, nervousness, anger or fear, for example. In the case of the students mentioned by the teacher, we identified that the need to fulfill the school tasks soon, after a long period of interruption, possibly aroused in them a fear (primary emotion that triggers other secondary emotions such as anxiety) of not being able to achieve successful results in front of the teacher, family, and other colleagues.

Conclusion

The article proposed here showed that emotions played a significant role in the English teaching-learning process during the pandemic. The teacher who participated in this research faced several obstacles during the pandemic, and after this period, emotions emerged. However, the teacher managed them, emphasizing the importance of affection for teacher-student relationships in the classroom. Thus, it promoted stimuli capable of generating positive emotional states.

Therefore, we observed a close relationship between cognition and emotions, which occur in the interaction among individuals, and how emotions interfere with their decision-making of those aspects. One example concerns anxiety, a variant of the first one: sadness, caused by the long period outside the classroom. In this sense, we understand the importance of teachers being flexible when evaluating students, considering their specific abilities. We realize here that teachers cannot be indifferent to students' feelings because their emotions directly affect their performance.

At all times, teachers evaluate situations and varied events that happen in schools and classrooms. According to Scherrer, Schorr, and Johnstone (2001), this is an intrinsic process to the emotions triggering since interpretations of events provoke emotions rather than events themselves. It is undeniable that emotions influence the teaching process and students' learning in conjunction with the construction of the English teachers' identity, since they identify emotions, students' feelings, and their senses.

We also emphasize the importance teachers insert in their didactic-pedagogical practice the following attitudes: to innovate, transform, and renew. Innovate whenever faced with a challenging situation, without fear of changes caused by external factors such as the pandemic or internal factors such as lack of teaching resources. As Xavier (2012, p. 46) explains, the teacher can adapt and "generate the long-awaited solution or anticipate the answer to a problem to come".

In this sense, teachers also achieve the renewal of their praxis because, as we can state from the explanation of Nogaro and Battestini (2016), the concepts of innovation and renewal are correlated:

Innovation is a term often used to designate something new. When this dynamism of the "new" occurs, we simultaneously associate that something good has happened or is about to happen. Etymologically, the word has origin in the Latin, *innovatio*, meaning renewal; however, the prefix *in* found at the beginning of the word assumes the function of entrance, that is, something new must happen, something that was not done before, that is, a novelty (Nogaro; Battestini, 2016, p. 360, our translation)²⁰.

This process of innovation and renewal implies changes resulting in modifying attitudes and the teachers' praxis. We highlight that in this process, there is a need for teachers to seek to be in constant movement, reflecting on their practices and challenging themselves and their students. Moreover, construct their identity as curious, creative, inventive educators and sensible to the students' socio-historical and cultural conditions.

20 In the original: "Inovação, é um termo usado frequentemente para designar alguma novidade. Quando esse dinamismo do 'novo' ocorre, simultaneamente associamos que algo bom aconteceu ou está para acontecer. Etimologicamente, a palavra tem origem no latim, *innovatio*, significando renovação; todavia, o prefixo *in* encontrado no início da palavra assume a função de ingresso, ou seja, algo novo deverá acontecer, algo que não era feito antes, ou seja, uma novidade".

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