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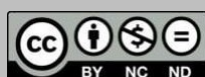
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EDUCATION AND EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE IN ITALY: NARRATIVES ABOUT THE TUSCANY EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE

ABSTRACT

The text thematizes the Italian approach to Early Childhood education from the Tuscan reality, aiming to know what the pedagogical documentation about this educational experience narrates. As a resource, elements of a doctoral research in education, carried out in the city of Pistoia, Italy, are presented. The proposition is that pedagogical documentation is a narrative that offers visibility to the Tuscan educational experience. Considering their different forms and types, threads were found in the documentation that constitute the principles of the Tuscan educational system. The intertwining of the threads happens in the relationships between adults and children. In the gesture of documenting there is the production of a narrative fabric capable of making visible and sustaining the experience in Early Childhood educational services.

Keywords: Early Childhood Education. Narrative. Pedagogical Documentation.

EDUCAÇÃO E CUIDADO DA PRIMEIRA INFÂNCIA NA ITÁLIA: NARRATIVAS SOBRE A EXPERIÊNCIA EDUCATIVA TOSCANA

RESUMO

O texto tematiza a abordagem italiana para a educação infantil a partir da realidade toscana, objetivando conhecer o que narram as documentações pedagógicas sobre essa experiência educativa. Como recurso, apresentam-se elementos de uma pesquisa de doutorado em educação, realizada na cidade de Pistoia, na Itália. A proposição é que a documentação pedagógica é uma narrativa que oferece visibilidade à experiência educativa toscana. Considerando suas diferentes formas e tipos, encontraram-se, nas documentações, fios que constituem os princípios do sistema educativo toscano. O entrelaçamento dos fios acontece nas relações entre adultos e crianças. No gesto de documentar há a produção de um tecido narrativo capaz de visibilizar e sustentar a experiência nos serviços educativos da primeira infância.

Palavras-chave: Educação Infantil. Narrativa. Documentação Pedagógica.

EDUCACIÓN Y CUIDADO DE LA PRIMERA INFANCIA EN ITALIA: NARRATIVAS SOBRE LA EXPERIENCIA EDUCATIVA TOSCANA

RESUMEN

El texto tematiza el enfoque italiano de la educación infantil desde la realidad toscana, con el objetivo de conocer lo que narra la documentación pedagógica sobre esta experiencia educativa. Como recurso, se presentan elementos de una investigación doctoral en educación, realizada en la ciudad de Pistoia, en Italia. La propuesta es que la documentación pedagógica es una narrativa que ofrece visibilidad y sustenta las experiencias educativas. Teniendo en cuenta sus diferentes formas y tipos, en la documentación se encontraron varios hilos que componen el sistema educativo toscano. El entrelazamiento de los hilos tiene lugar en las relaciones entre adultos y niños. En el gesto de documentar, se produce la producción de un tejido narrativo capaz de visibilizar y sostener la experiencia en los servicios educativos de la primera infancia.

Palabras clave: Educación Infantil. Narrativa. Documentación pedagógica.

1 INTRODUCTION

The search for the quality of educational work for boys and girls aged zero to six years has grown in the field of academic research, among teachers, scholars, public leaders and in the sphere of policies aimed at the area of early childhood education, both nationally and worldwide.

In Brazil, the quality of the experience of early childhood education and care achieved in some regions of Northern and Central Italy is endorsed among theorists and researchers in the area. Faria (1994), Moro (2018) and Pandini-Simiano (2015) highlight the contributions of this proposal in the Brazilian context, understanding that the trajectory of early childhood education in Brazil and Italy has its own histories and vicissitudes. In this sense, the dialogue with the Italian approach does not intend to compare educational practices in different national contexts, but rather to know the choices, emphases, experiences of Italian researchers and teachers, to contribute to the enrichment of discussions related to early childhood education in the Brazilian context.

Early childhood education in the Italian context has undergone transformations throughout history. From the emergence of the daycare center in the second half of the nineteenth century, which has its origin fundamentally assistential, to the construction of a quality educational proposal, there is a path guided by struggles for the creation of laws and a tradition of collective life in community. A path that found fertile ground to develop only in the second half of the twentieth century thanks to long trade union struggles, the commitment of left-wing parties and women's associations.

The end of World War II, migration movements from the countryside to the city, expansion of the labor market for women, and feminist movements pushed for the creation of laws that understood daycare and preschool attendance as a right. The right to education resized the educational proposals, requiring the construction of institutions and modification of their role and objectives. In this sense, in addition to the construction of schools, it was necessary to build a pedagogy to serve children and their families. From struggles, law, desire and hope emerges the “pedagogy of relationships”.

The first legislations that laid the foundations for the beginning of an extra-family education system for young children were Law No. 444 of 1968, which created the nursery school, now a school for children, and Law No. 1044 of 1971, entitled “Five-Year Plan for the Creation of Municipal Daycare Centers with the Help of the State”. With the first, “the Italian State finally began to take a direct interest in children aged 3-6 years” (CAMPIONI, 2021, p. 117), albeit in a weak pedagogical way (the double figure of educator-assistant,

exclusively female staff, separate sections for students with disabilities); with the second, for the first time, specific state funds were allocated for the construction of the first nursery in Italy. In the areas where daycare centers have been implemented, over time they have become quality services, recognized not only nationally, but also internationally. The positivity of the first experiences led to a considerable increase in the number of nurseries and the birth of new types of services aimed at children from three months to three years of age, called “supplemental” because they do not replace the classic nursery, but develop alongside it. These services are: The play space, the center for children and family and the home educational service.

Today the education of children in Italy has entered a new phase as a result of the new state legislation, Law No. 107 of 2015, which established the “Integrated System of Education and Instruction from Birth to Six Years”, also creating the conditions for a greater diffusion of educational services for children throughout the country. The possibility of children attending educational services has been recognized by the Italian State as a very important factor.

It’s agreed that educational services offer children the possibility to live in daily and continuous contact with their peers, as well as to be in a stimulating environment organized to meet their growth needs.

The construction of a pedagogy of early childhood education whose principle is the creation of meaningful relationships has been configured in the educational services, both in Tuscany and in the other regions of the North and Center, a reference of quality.¹

In the Tuscan context, a significant example is the educational system of the city of Pistoia that has become well known nationally and internationally. The trajectory of this system is guided by the conception of children as protagonists, has a pedagogy based on relationships and education is seen as a shared project. Galardini and Giovannini (2002, p. 130) attribute as a function “of adults - educators and parents - to transmit to children a sense of belonging to a community that also has a history”. This process considers the importance of listening and observation. It’s about being and being part of it, about making visible the experiences of children and the work of educators.

In this proposal, pedagogical documentation plays an important role. According to the “Carta dei servizi educativi del Comune di Pistoia”², one of the fundamental pillars of

¹The quality here cannot be understood by verifying the functioning of the service in relation to a predetermined standard, but consists of an organized proposal with all the actors involved in the creation and implementation of the educational project (SILVA, 2019b).

²The Charter of educational services for the children of the city of Pistoia is a document that exposes the project of development of kindergartens, preschools and “*areabambini*” (i.e. “children’s area”). It’s based on

the quality of this educational system. The documentation allows to make visible the experience, leaves traces and builds history (CATARSI, 1988). She organizes, selects, retrieves memories and stories. In dialogue with Walter Benjamin, in addition to giving visibility, it's believed to be possible to think of pedagogical documentation as a narrative and the educator as a narrator. (PANDINI-SIMIANO, 2015). Attentive to the world, the educator is a narrator, he recognizes, he values experiences, which, if not narrated, run the risk of being lost...

This text addresses these themes by proposing pedagogical documentation as a peculiar narrative woven in the educational context. From this perspective, we seek to know what the pedagogical documentation on the Tuscan educational experience narrates. The argument woven from/in the text is based on elements of a doctoral research in education, carried out in 2014, in the city of Pistoia, region of Tuscany, Italy, which researched the pedagogical documentation in the context of four daycare centers.

The starting point is the following questions: What are the principles that constitute the early childhood education system in Tuscany? What do the pedagogical documentation about this educational experience narrate?

To educate is to narrate. The narrative is intertwined with education. With threads of theory, in the dialogue between different authors and perspectives, such as Benjamin (1986), Rinaldi (2012) and Catarsi (1988), the establishment of educational relations between adults and children is defended as pillars that sustain a "pedagogy of early childhood education". Pedagogical documentation is proposed as a possibility of recognizing and valuing experience, the production of meaning and the condition of belonging. A narrative tessitura capable of sustaining the encounter between children and adults. It's another ethical, aesthetic and political way of thinking about relationships in the educational context (PANDINI-SIMIANO; SILVA; BARBOSA, 2018).

2 THE TUSCAN EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE

The Tuscan educational experience stands out, within the framework of the national education system of the Italian context, as one of the regions in which educational services directed to girls and boys, from birth to the age of six, have assumed the characteristics of a complex and articulated educational system. This result is the result of shrewd political

other legal documents for children in Italy, such as: the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Law No. 176/1991); Articles 3, 33 and 34 of the Italian Constitution; Law No. 62 of 2000 on the subject of equality.

choices, characterized by the will of local political leaders and some militant pedagogues to promote and nurture democracy through the implementation of educational services for children and the qualification of the educational experience of boys and girls.

The emergence of the first nurserys in the region of Tuscany is articulated with Regional Law n. 16, of 1973, entitled “Crèche na Tuscany”, which meets the indications contained in the national legislation (Law n. 1044, of 1971). From a legislative point of view, the region has shown a unique sensitivity to children and their education, as can be seen from reading many other regulations produced in the following decades. In this regard, it’s worth mentioning Law No. 47, of 1986, entitled “New regulation of nurserys”, which not only developed educational services at the local level, but was also underlined at the national level by Law No. 285, of 1997, which recognizes the experiences and strategies implemented in Tuscany.

This solid regional system, by understanding the needs of children and their families in a society in constant change, sought to develop quality educational responses. The union of political and economic forces gave life to the network of educational services that today presents itself as one of the most precious assets that the region of Tuscany offers not only to girls and boys, but also to their families and to the entire local community.

In the book “Tuscan Approach to Early Childhood Education” (CATARSI; FORTUNATI, 2011) it’s possible to know several contexts that highlight “the elaboration of what we define as Tuscan Approach, a quality experience achieved over many years”. (CATARSI, 2011). The texts that make up the book present historical, political, legal and pedagogical aspects that support this proposal.

In order to make such an approach visible, Silva (2019b), in a recent article, entitled “The pedagogical quality of the education and child care system (ECEC) in Italy. The experience of Tuscany”, presents a reflection on the recent Law n. 107, of 2015, which established the “Integrated system of education from birth to six years” in Italy and places the Tuscany region in this context. The article emphasizes that the implementation of an integrated system from 0 to 6 years and its national diffusion, more than a legal or economic issue, requires reflecting on the pedagogical and cultural aspects that sustain it. This path involves thinking of pedagogical orientations capable of enhancing quality educational experiences for boys and girls throughout the Italian national territory.³

³This question is urgent considering that, in Italy, the creation of nurserys was concentrated mainly in the North and Center regions, while in the South region this issue remained for a long time excluded, until recently its presence, from Rome down, is still very scarce (SILVA, 2019b).

In spite of this, the Tuscan reality gains prominence and prominence, since in this context the services are already a system and that its peculiar pedagogy, based on principles, values and common purposes, represents an example of quality in the Italian national panorama. According to Silva (2019b), the elements that give quality to the educational system for early childhood in Tuscany are: The care with the space, the integrated system of services, family education, the educational continuity of zero-six, the figure of the pedagogical coordinator and the pedagogical documentation.

2.1 Pedagogical documentation as a narrative of the educational experience

The term “pedagogical documentation” is part of a proposal that considers the importance of listening, observation, recording, interpretation and narrative. (MALAGUZZI, 1999). The act of documenting helps educators to listen to children, to build the closeness and distance necessary for pedagogical work with early childhood. Considering pedagogical documentation as one of the principles that qualifies the Tuscan educational service, Pandini-Simiano (2015), when developing his research at the doctoral level, in the city of Pistoia, evidences the pedagogical documentation as a narrative of the educational experience in the daycare center.

The documentation tells the story of children and adults who live together and share life in educational institutions. Everyday stories allow the encounter with the narrative. According to Benjamin (1986), the narration brings teachings, useful references to everyday life. The educator, by narrating life in the daycare center, the facts, the events, is enabling children to produce meanings and meanings that influence their life trajectory. For Rinaldi (2012), this is the main function of documentation, to help children and adults find meanings for what they do, discover, experience.

For Benjamin (1985), the narrative is able to exchange experiences. Narrative in working with young children implies a procedural experience in which the narrator is constantly lending himself as a co-author of the narrated. By narrating the child, the educator becomes a co-author of the subject's story. It's the constitution of a shared experience. In the gesture of listening, recording, interpreting and narrating, the educator is an attentive narrator who recognizes, values gems which, if not narrated, run the risk of being lost.

In the educational services of Pistoia there is a diversity of pedagogical documentation, with its fascinating colors, purposes and supports, where it's possible to

find the production of a narrative bond capable of sustaining the educational relations between children and adults in the daycare. They are composed of images, drawings, photographs, two and three dimensional objects, panels, videos and writings. Such materialities are constructed in the dialogue between educators and children. According to Galardini (2010), the vast collection of pedagogical documentation promotes the construction and diffusion of a childhood culture and allows to tell about the experience of the educational services of the Tuscan city.

2.2 Narratives of Pistoia's educational experience: A look at pedagogical documentation

The municipal system of early childhood education in the city of Pistoia, located in the region of Tuscany, has become very well known, as it devotes special attention and sensitivity to the needs of children and their families. The trajectory of this system is guided by the conception of children as protagonists, and education as a shared project. The educational institution, the family, culture and politics all take responsibility for the education of children. The city breathes life and culture. Squares, museums, libraries, theaters, each space becomes an attractive invitation to the imagination of children.

One idea supports Pistoia's educational project: **The image of the child as active**, capable of interacting with the reality that surrounds him (Figure 1). A child who wants to learn, discover the world and give his interpretation. To this end, Galardini (2003) states that “our pedagogy does not place the child solely and schematically as the object of an adult programming, but part of listening to their desires, fantasies and their ideas” (p. 94).

Figure 1: Documentation “Piccole mani” (“Small hands” - Nursery “Il Mulino”).



Source: Researcher's collection, 2014. Note: “A child has small hands, small feet, and small ears, but not so has little ideas” (Asilo Nido Il Mulino, our translation).

Wishes. Fantasies. Ideas. The small physical size of the bodies does not reflect the unlimited potential of children. From those little beings can come great ideas. The pedagogical documentation presented above builds an image architecture (HOYUELOS, 2005). The image is a determining factor in the constitution of relationships. The ones mentioned above lead to an image of a child researcher, curious, active, willing to participate and interact with and in the world.

It's from this idea of the child that the educational services of Pistoia strive to organize proposals that allow the child to live meaningful experiences, so that the curiosity and action of children are not only possible, but encouraging. Each learning is built from the experiences that children live in everyday life, in the encounter with themselves, with the other and with the world. It's assumed that an active child, researcher can not be in a monotonous and repetitive space, but in a generous educational context, full of possibilities to live the most varied experiences. Galardini (2010, p. 24) explains that:

The numerous documents narrated by the educators recount and bear witness to the potential of children, their strategies, their hypotheses, their observations, their words (even when they do not yet speak), their ideas of how much they are able to mean the things that surround them.

The pedagogical documentation narrates, constructs an image of a child. This image is fundamental for the formulation of Pistoia's educational proposal. Such an educational system has created a unique set of philosophical and pedagogical assumptions for working with young children and their families. This pedagogy is defended in the "Carta dei servizi educativi del Comune di Pistoia" (BECCHI; BONDIOLI; FERRARI, 2004). It's a proposal built collectively by educators, parents, managers and employees of the university, which exposes the educational and cultural project of the city and the pedagogical identity of this system.

The constitution of this pedagogy was not born from a theory defined "*a priori*". It's enriched by the work of scientific research in partnership with the university and the educators of the network. Its main key ideas are: the whole city, as a place of life and culture, at the service of children, where all citizens are responsible; all educational services need welcoming places for children and their families; the educational process cultivates the initiative of the child to give meaning to the world; education cultivates the aesthetic taste of children and adults; Early childhood education has its specificity in relation to "*scuola elementare*" (Elementary School).

Currently, the city of Pistoia has a set of 22 institutions that serve children aged zero to six years. There are 10 “*Asili Nidi*” (nurserys) and 12 “*Scuole dell’infanzia*” (preschool) and 10 “*Areabambini*” (centers that serve children from zero to six years old with educational proposals beyond the formal ones). The management is carried out by the municipality, both directly and through agreement with public and private cooperatives. That is, **the management of services is integrated**, as well as throughout the Tuscan territory. The integration of the management of the services aims to ensure a high level of care for all children, regardless of the managing body (SILVA; BOTTIGLI; FRESCHI, 2016). Thus, the quality of services is not guaranteed only from a predetermined standard, but is related to a whole management system, involving different actors in the organization and implementation of the educational project. The integrated management of services thus forms an articulated panorama in which the issue of quality is a central theme.

For the quality of Tuscan educational services there is a figure considered fundamental: The **pedagogical coordinator**. Its function is to act as link between the various actors involved in the services. It can be compared to a common thread, which seeks to guarantee not only the quality of educational services, but also the effective communication between municipal administrations and networks of social and private cooperatives. The need for organic coordination between the various public and private training structures is a need identified at the international level (MUSATTI; MAYER, 2003), and specifically, in Tuscany, the presence of pedagogical coordination constitutes one of the indicators of quality of the system of services for children (REGIONE TOSCANA, 2006).

The pedagogical coordinator also has the function of dealing with administrative and educational-pedagogical aspects that are intertwined. An important role of the coordinator is to promote planning collaboratively among educators in the elaboration of the “Educational Project”. At the same time, it promotes the in-service formation of educators and is itself in a permanent activity of formation (SILVA, 2019b).

There is a strong investment in the continuing education of Pistoia educators which is seen as a key element of service quality. The formation of educators is carried out through a dialogue between educators of the network, university professors, researchers, colleagues from other Italian and also foreign realities, in order to open themselves to new horizons of knowledge. Each course, each seminar aims not only to know oneself, but to know oneself. Thus, in the organization and promotion of such training, the coordinator seeks to stimulate the reflexivity of educators (CATARSI, 2010, p. 16), promoting

educational continuity between the different educational stages (daycare and preschool) and ensuring the relationship with families in the services.

The creation of meaningful relationships between the educational institution and families is a fundamental principle in the educational system of Pistoia. In the words of Galardini, “the nursery is a web of relationships, where the educational act is constituted from the meaning of being together, in the encounter that produces a recognition of oneself from the encounter with the other” (GALARDINI, 2010, p. 27). This proposal welcomes, considers and values the relationships that are established between educators, children and their families, as can be seen in the documentation “*Il Nido: una collettività amica*” (The Nursery: A friendly collectivity), which narrates significant moments in the daily educational routine in the daycare center. Educators, children and their families share experiences, common projects and live the pleasure of growing together (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Documentation “*Il Nido: una collettività amica*” (The Nursery: A friendly collectivity) - Nursery “Il Grillo”.



Source: Researcher's collection, 2014. Note: “The nursery is a friendly collectivity: The nursery is a friendly collectivity where one can cooperate with a view to a common project; a friendly collectivity where resources can be valued; a friendly collectivity where values are shared and alliances are cultivated; a friendly collectivity where one lives the pleasure of growing up together between adults and children”. (Asilo Nido Il Grillo, our translation).

Participation, sharing, dialogue. The relationship between services and families is a recognizable trait of service culture in Pistoia. This relationship is established in various ways according to the projects of each daycare. The welcoming of newly arrived parents, conversation circles, experiences, workshops, integration games, daycare days, etc. are proposals that promote parental autonomy, improve their self-esteem, increase their sense of responsibility and consolidate their reflective capacity: In short, parents meet to build knowledge and grow together (FRESCHI, 2013; RIERA; Smith, 2016). These unique

circles of coexistence allow us to live unique moments in the space of education in which the child lives every day. Such initiatives make it possible to share joys, anxieties and varied feelings. The relationship with the family is understood as a fundamental part of the educational project, parents are called to participate very actively in the daily life of the daycare center.

The form of relationship that is established between institution and family is based on trust, dialogue and mutual listening, sharing and participation. In the words of Galardini (2010), “the relational thread that connects educators and parents is the element that determines the family’s desire to be present in the service and to establish relationships of partnership and friendship” (p. 31). This thread connects the two realities in which children live on a daily basis. When educators and families collaborate among themselves, when they talk to each other with cordiality, when they welcome each other amicably, they give children the image of a social life based on dialogue and listening between subjects who testify to the pleasure of being together.

In the daycare centers in Pistoia, there is still special care regarding **the relationships between children and educators**, seeking to ensure a singularized relationship and a condition of well-being. In this relational context, there is a special attention to language as a manifestation of the subject and gives the narrative a central place for the exchange of experiences, the construction of collective links, conservation of tradition and also resignification of history. In the words of Giovannini (2002), “in relationships adults seek to transmit to children a sense of belonging to a community that also has a history” (GALARDINI; GIOVANNINI, 2002, p. 130). Educators seek to create a closeness between children and the city, with its culture and its history and with adults.

It’s assumed that children learn from being together, through sharing. Valuing **children’s ability to establish relationships with each other** means offering an irreplaceable opportunity to develop learning, live intimate and meaningful peer relationships, and grow together. As shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Documentation Growing Together (*Crescer Juntos*) - Nursery “Il Grillo”.



Source: Researcher's collection, 2014. Note: “Documentation Growing Together: A child in daycare is a child who is among other children and he bears marks of this social condition. The peer group favors a series of fundamental experiences for the development of the child: Either from the social and cognitive point of view. The presence of other children turns into opportunities for social, affective and cognitive growth. It’s important throughout the first year to provide contexts for interactions and exchanges”. (Asilo Nido Il Grillo, our translation).

The documentation “Growing Together” refers to thinking of the daycare center as a community, as a place of learning in the community. Children among themselves enhance their ability to play, socialize, confront points of view, apprehend, share and build a unique story.

Given the potential of relationships between children, it’s essential to create appropriate conditions of time and space to sustain their experience among themselves. In the conception of Galardini and Giovannini (2010, p. 64):

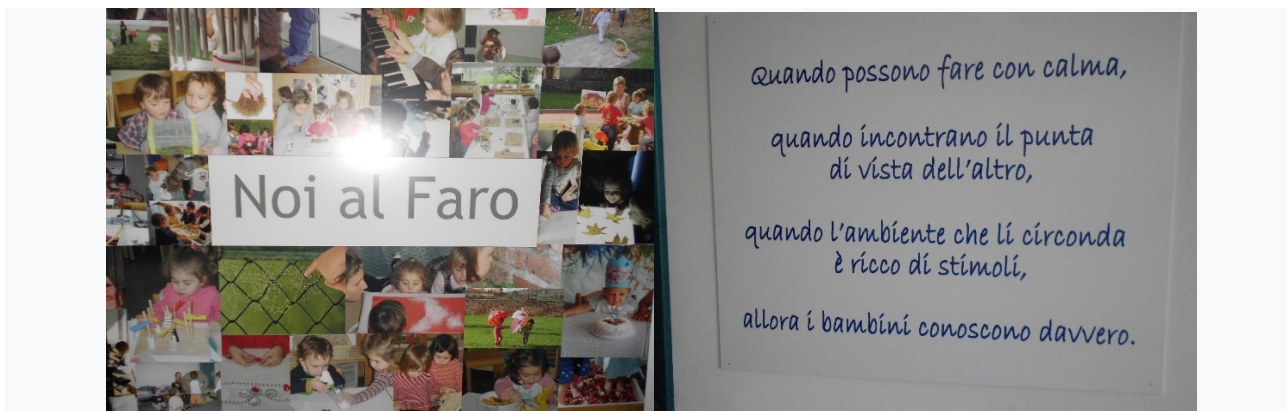
The idea and educational principles should not only be in the head, but need to be translated into the concreteness of choices, especially those related to space. It’s precisely through the ability to give concreteness to intentions that an educational project is strengthened.

Each educational action takes place in a space that enhances or limits the experience of children, so the space should be the center of an educational project. The space is not neutral, expressed with a very powerful language messages that manifest ideas and values for the subjects who live there daily.

In this perspective, space plays a fundamental role and must be thought and conceived for children in order to allow them to enjoy wide possibilities to play, explore,

create, awakening in them the desire to act on objects. Time, space and relationships circumscribe the possibilities of knowing and learning of children. As shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Documentation “Noi al Faro” (“We in Faro”) - Nursery “Il Faro”.



Source: Researcher's collection, 2014. Note: “When they can do it calmly, when they find the other's point of view, when the environment that surrounds them is rich with stimuli and opportunities, this is how children really know” (Asilo Nido Comunale Il Faro, our translation).

The **care with the organization of space**, together with time, represents a fundamental category of all the proposals that are carried out in the daily life of educational services for children (CATARSI; FORTUNATI, 2011). In Fortunati's opinion (2016, p. 13-14):

It's important not to look only at the proposals of adults or the relationships between children, but to value the role that the organization of space plays in these relationships. Children need the security of an intimate space that they protect from stressful situations [...]. It's very important that the space, through its organization divided into areas of differentiated connotations, favors the development of meetings between children in small groups.

The documentation “Noi al Faro” underlines the need to think about slow times and rich, stimulating spaces to be together. The educational institutions in Pistoia take special care with the aesthetics of the spaces. There is an attention to the aesthetic dimension that seeks to nourish the “pedagogy of good taste”. (BECCHI, 2010). A beautiful space produces well-being and, at the same time, is a place that welcomes and witnesses the dedication, delicacy and care of its inhabitants. Great attention is paid to the presentation of the materials. The presence of natural materials, of different types and consistencies, such as sticks, leaves, dried flowers, everyday objects, gives the child the opportunity to aesthetic sensitivity and understanding of the beautiful. It's customary to speak of a generous environment, which results not only from the richness of the materials, but also from the attitude of the educators, implicit in the care with which the materials were sought,

selected and offered to the children. The objects and materials of the room are not taken as neutral, but as cultural and social artifacts that communicate to the child.

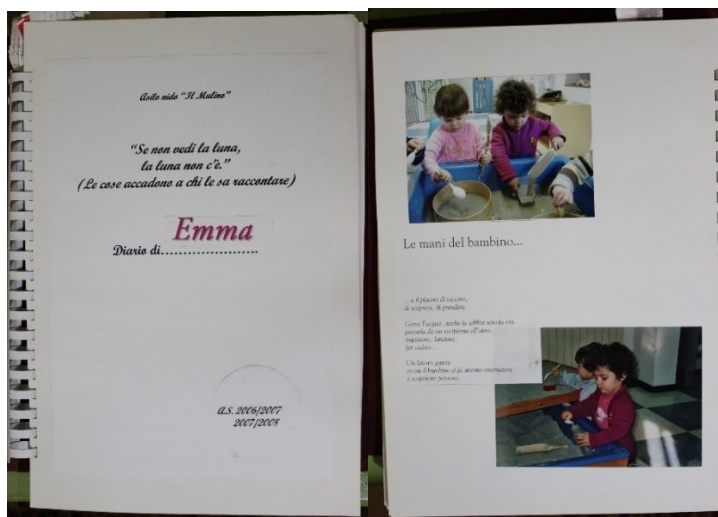
The spaces are organized to be places where children experience creativity and find the aesthetic dimension. Educational institutions excel in a beautiful and kind educational institution. Thus, everyday spaces and situations are organized so that one can “find the extraordinary in what is ordinary, taking care of the details, the little things that propitiate the pleasure of being together” (GIOVANNINI, 2010, p. 62).

In this context, **pedagogical documentation** plays an important role. As Galardini (2010, p. 36) reports, “Pistoia retells the story of a long educational path, because it preserves a rich collection of documentation in kindergartens and preschools”. These testimonies value the everyday experience woven between children and adults and contribute to creating a culture of childhood.

In the kindergartens of Pistoia, the documentation composed of images, drawings, photographs, two and three dimensional objects, videos and writings tell the story of children and adults who share life in educational institutions. Just as “children have a hundred languages”, so educators can have a hundred ways to document. In the variety of documentary materialities it’s possible to find real and concrete children who live experiences in collective spaces of education.

In order to create educational possibilities that allow us to welcome, respect and value the differences of each child, the pedagogy of Pistoia’s services proposes a peculiar way of documenting through diaries. “Diary is not a form of archive, it’s an edge of meaning, able to potentiate, thus, the experience” (PANDINI-SIMIANO, 2015, p. 123). In the construction of diaries are not only documented major events, commemorative dates, on the contrary, the pages illustrate the strength of small events of everyday life (Figure 5). At the end of each educational year, the educators give each child the diary that narrates their personal story in the daycare center.

Figure 5: Emma's Diary - Nursery "Il Mulino".



Source: Researcher's collection, 2014. Note 1: "If you don't see the moon, the moon isn't there... Things happen for those who know how to narrate: Emma's Diary". Note 2: "The child's hands... The pleasure of touching, discovering and catching. How do water and sand pass from one container to another? It's necessary to define, to launch, not to let it fall... A silent work where the child is attentive, observant, discoverer and thinker" (Asilo Nido Il Mulino, our translation).

To educate is to narrate. Each person exists as offered, denied, silenced narratives of another. Each individual's story is interwoven by narratives. The documentation "Emma's Diary" was configured as a peculiar way of unveiling meanings, narrating and constituting experiences. Through the narrative, the educator offered a meaning. The silent gesture of passing water and sand from one container to another gains voice in Emma's diary. To welcome the other, to recognize their uniqueness, to construct narratives attentive to their discoveries and learning. It's a subtle and delicate movement that values the ways of being a child and being in the world.

In the gesture of documenting, the educator creates visibility, weaves stories. In these pages are plotted moments of life. Possibilities of construction of meaning. It's not a form of archive, Benjamin (1994) maintains that experience is not archived, it's an edge of meaning, a brushing in the senses of each one, thus being able to evoke experience. The "voices of the diary" composed by children and educators enable various readings. Texts, images and other productions establish dialogues, expand meanings and make it possible to revisit and constitute meaningful experiences. In the construction of the diaries, the observation of the pages illustrated the strength of the small events of everyday life. The peculiar narrative in working with young children implies a procedural experience in which the narrator is constantly lending himself as a co-author of the narrated. Benjamin (1994), in establishing relations between experience and narrative, affirms the link between the

narrated episode and the narrator's life, because “the narrator's mark is imprinted on the narrative, like the potter's hand on the clay of the vase” (p. 227).

Narration is not interested in merely conveying “the pure in itself” of the thing narrated as a report. According to Benjamin (1986), narrating a story is the ability to exchange experience. The author differs information and narration. If the first, “when it's new is already consummated, explained”, the second, in turn, refers to what the author calls “a concentrated force that can develop even after a long time” (BENJAMIN, 1986, p. 65).

3 CONCLUSION

In the present text, narratives of the Tuscan educational experience were presented, woven by the path of documenting in early childhood education. Considering its different forms and types, threads were found in the documentation that constitute the principles of the Tuscan educational system: The image of an active child, the care with space, the management of an integrated system, the context of family education, the continuity from zero to six years, the figure of the pedagogical coordinator, the pedagogical documentation. The interweaving of the threads happens in the relationships between the subjects in the educational context. In the gesture of documenting there is the production of a narrative fabric capable of sustaining the experience of educational services for childhood.

Thinking about childhoods and their contexts of institutionalization requires recovering the humanizing bases of education and taking history, as Freire (1987) teaches, not as something given, but as constructed by men and women, children and adults. Being with children in an educational space allows you to build history. And to also become the narrator of this story.

“If you don't see the moon, the moon isn't there... Things happen for those who know how to narrate”. Looking, recognizing, interpreting and narrating... This is the main function of documentation, to lead children and adults to find meanings for what they do, discover, experience. It's not about offering a single meaning, but the possible (PANDINI-SIMIANO, 2018). In the gesture of documenting, in the recognition and appreciation of experience, the production of meaning and the condition of belonging, adults and children are removed from silence, and with this, they come into existence, “to be there”, “they gain a public voice and a visible identity” (DAHLBERG; MOSS; PENSE, 2003, p. 206). Thinking

about pedagogical documentation in educational contexts implies assuming an ethical, aesthetic and political position towards the other. An invitation to weave narratives to build other possible worlds...

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