

## Literacy and Autism Spectrum Disorder: inclusive pedagogical intervention

### ARTICLE

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### Abstract

This article analyzes a pedagogical intervention with a student with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) undergoing literacy development in a multigrade rural school. In the absence of Specialized Educational Assistance, the teacher-researcher developed inclusive strategies grounded in attentive listening, visual resources, and structured routines, taking into account the student's interests and everyday life. The qualitative methodology was inspired by action research, integrating theory and practice. The results indicated progress in communication, engagement in activities, and the building of affective bonds, even though alphabetic writing was not fully consolidated. The experience highlights the potential of inclusive literacy in rural contexts, emphasizing teacher commitment and listening as core educational principles.

**Keywords:** Action Research. Multigrade School. Pedagogical Intervention. Rural Education. Special Education.

### Alfabetização e Transtorno do Espectro do Autismo: intervenção pedagógica inclusiva

### Resumo

Este artigo analisa uma intervenção pedagógica com um estudante com Transtorno do Espectro do Autismo (TEA), em processo de alfabetização, em uma escola multisseriada do campo. Diante da ausência de Atendimento Educacional Especializado, a professora-pesquisadora elaborou estratégias inclusivas baseadas em escuta sensível, recursos visuais e rotinas estruturadas, considerando os interesses e o cotidiano do estudante. A metodologia qualitativa foi inspirada na pesquisa-ação, articulando teoria e prática. Os resultados indicaram avanços na comunicação, na permanência em atividades e na construção de vínculos, mesmo sem a consolidação da escrita alfabética. A experiência evidencia as possibilidades da alfabetização inclusiva em contextos rurais, ressaltando o compromisso docente e a escuta como fundamentos da prática.

**Palavras-chave:** Educação do Campo. Educação Especial. Escola multisseriada. Intervenção Pedagógica. Pesquisa-ação.

## 1 Introduction

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Inclusive Education is a banner of struggle, action, and reflection that must be raised daily in teachers' pedagogical practice, regardless of the level or type of education in which they work. As a practice, it is an ethical, political, and formative requirement that cannot be regarded as optional, even in the face of the challenges of putting it into practice. From this perspective, we understand that inclusive pedagogical work begins with recognizing students' uniqueness and affirming the right to difference as educational principles.

When we think about schools located in rural contexts, the implementation of this commitment takes on specific contours. Far from being a homogeneous reality, rural Brazil bears the marks of historical neglect by public authorities, which continue to treat it as a territory of lesser importance, both in educational policies and in the allocation of resources and investments. The schooling of students with disabilities or neurodevelopmental disorders, in this scenario, highlights the need for greater convergence between Inclusive Education and Rural Education, so that we may design practices that recognize individuals in their diversity and in their socioterritorial belonging (Nozu; Ribeiro; Bruno, 2018; Pereira *et al.*, 2023).

This articulation becomes even more necessary when we consider the pedagogical organization of multigrade rural schools, those in which a single teacher simultaneously teaches students from different grades or school years, gathered in the same classroom. When no teacher is available to provide Specialized Educational Assistance (SEA), the responsibility falls entirely on the classroom teacher to respond to all pedagogical demands alone. This requires more than sensitivity, it demands intentionality, commitment to ongoing professional development, and a willingness to reinvent everyday pedagogical practice based on concrete reality. The readings of Nozu, Ribeiro, and Bruno (2018) and Pereira *et al.* (2023) inspire us to reflect on these issues, as well as on the challenges rural teachers face in the absence of specialized support.

This responsibility, however, is inseparable from the work of any teacher and therefore cannot be taken as an exception in the absence of a specially trained

professional. It is up to the classroom teacher to commit to a pedagogical practice that takes into account each student's specificities, in order to guarantee everyone's right to learn. The work of the SEA teacher is desirable and important, but it does not exempt the classroom teacher from the responsibility of building inclusive pathways within their own classroom. After all, inclusion takes shape in the daily life of the school, in the pedagogical choices and relationships that are built there (Pletsch, 2020).

This horizon, grounded in a commitment to everyone's learning, shaped the pedagogical intervention that is the focus of this article. The experience unfolds and deepens reflections initiated in a *Final Graduation Project (TFC)* from the Specialization Course in Inclusive Special Education at the Federal Institute of Espírito Santo (*Ifes*), prepared by the first author under the guidance of the second (Gomes, 2024). The starting point was the monitoring of a 2nd-grade Elementary student, in the process of learning to read and write, at a multigrade school in a rural area under the administration of a municipality in Espírito Santo. He showed signs of autism spectrum disorder (ASD), though still without a formal diagnosis at the beginning of the school year.

The presence of this student in the class, rather than being seen as an obstacle, prompted a rethinking of teaching strategies, of the time and ways of teaching, in dialogue with his specificities and with the concrete conditions of the rural school. As Magda Soares (2003) reminds us, literacy is the process of acquiring the conventional writing system, which requires creating pedagogical conditions that make this system accessible to a diverse student body. The proposal took shape in the daily life of the classroom, weaving together attentive listening, observation, intentionality, and care.

The trajectory culminating in this text is also intertwined with the personal history of the teacher-researcher, mother of an adolescent with ASD. The concerns experienced in her own family, the challenges faced over the years to secure her son's rights, and the constant desire to learn more in order to support him shaped the perspective with which she approached the student in the classroom. The dual experience of being both the mother of a neurodivergent child and a public-school teacher in rural areas proved decisive

in fueling her investigative motivation. This dual condition, personal and professional, forged a commitment that goes beyond the technical dimension of teaching.

Reflecting on the role of lived experience in academia, we understand that personal experience can itself be a source of knowledge when systematized and shared, a perspective that resonates with Benjamin's (1994) thought, according to which lived experience acquires the *status* of knowledge when narrated. In this light, our intention is not only to describe the school reality. Above all, we aim to understand what this intervention allows us to consider regarding the limits and possibilities of teaching literacy to students with ASD in rural schools; what we, as teachers, can learn from an experience built at the reflective intersection of theory and practice; and how this kind of action can contribute to current debates on inclusion, difference, and education.

The decision to transform this experience into an object of academic analysis also stems from the urgency of documenting pedagogical practices that constitute ethical-political acts of resistance and of affirming the right to education in challenging contexts. By systematizing the intervention discussed here, we seek to affirm that rural schools can indeed be spaces for the production of knowledge, research, and pedagogical possibilities.

In this article, we present the paths of the intervention carried out throughout the 2024 school year with a student with ASD, detailing the planning criteria, the strategies used, the adjustments made based on his responses, and the effects observed in his developmental process. Our objective, therefore, is to analyze this intervention. Throughout the writing, we situate the experience within the theoretical fields of literacy and Inclusive Education, reflecting on the meanings of schooling and on the teacher as a subject of mediation, attentive listening, and pedagogical reinvention.

## 2 Methodology

We believe that experience, as the starting point of reflection, gains depth when it is problematized and reconfigured in dialogue with theory. As Freire (1996) taught us, there is no practice without theory and no theory without practice: one is made in the other, and

both are shaped within social practice. Thus, the methodology adopted in this study rests on the dialectic between action and reflection, based on the principle that it is in the exercise of teaching and learning that the elements for analysis, systematization, and (re)invention of pedagogical work emerge. This perspective guided the systematization of a pedagogical intervention built and analyzed from the daily life of the school.

The investigation, with a qualitative approach in education, took the form of a pedagogical intervention, based on the principle that it is possible to produce knowledge from attentive listening, participant observation, and the analysis of everyday school life. As Lüdke and André (1986) indicate, qualitative research makes it possible to capture the meanings of human actions in various contexts, valuing social relations, the meanings attributed by individuals, and the complexity of educational practices. In this sense, our proposal was to construct, from experience, an investigative process that reflects on reality and is committed to its transformation.

The empirical field of the research was a public municipal school, located in the rural area of Espírito Santo, which serves 1st to 5th grade Elementary students in a multigrade class. In 2024, the class teacher, who is one of the authors of this text, conducted an intervention aimed at strengthening the reading and writing skills of a 2nd grade student showing signs of ASD. The identification of such signs occurred through daily observation, listening to the family, and interpreting the student's behavior in the face of school challenges.

Given the absence of SEA and specific resources at the school, it was necessary to build pedagogical pathways that respected the student's time, forms of expression, and hyperfocus. On this point, Powaczuk and Colvero (2023, p. 4) remind us that "the knowledge derived from teaching experience makes it possible to construct an effective repertoire of solutions acquired during long professional practice." Their statement leads us to reflect on the fact that teaching practice is more than the application of ready-made methods, as it presupposes the continuous development of teaching strategies. It is in daily practice that the teacher develops meaningful pedagogical responses, turning experience into a legitimate source of knowledge and invention.

The intervention involved the design and application of accessible didactic sequences, the use of visual materials, playful strategies, and activities focused on image-word association, shared reading, and vocabulary expansion. Actions were constantly revised and adjusted according to the student's responses and the progress observed in his relationship with the world of language. This movement is consistent with national policy guidelines, which recommend the use of pedagogical resources and accessible practices as an integral part of the classroom teacher's planning, not as something secondary or supplementary (Brazil, 2008).

Our methodology also establishes a dialogue with the assumptions of *action research*, as proposed by Michel Thiollent (2011), since we recognize that the investigative process emerges from practice and develops through collaboration among participants. In this case, practice is simultaneously the object and the field of investigation. The teacher, in addition to carrying out the intervention, problematized it in real time, reflected on her choices, and sought theoretical grounding to support the decisions made. The research, therefore, emerges as a continuous process of reconstructing practice.

This perspective also resonates with the thinking of Carlos Rodrigues Brandão (2002), who states that pedagogical knowledge is also built within the school environment, recognizing that teachers produce theory from school experiences, dilemmas, successes, mistakes, and learning. By systematizing the experience discussed here, we aim to affirm that the practice of the teacher-researcher is not something merely to be described, but rather to be understood as a legitimate field of knowledge production. In this sense, the teacher begins to construct knowledge from her own practices, weaving it into pedagogical relationships and the daily exercise of teaching throughout the inhabiting of the profession (Silva; Souza, 2022).

In many school contexts, "the absence of spaces for sharing makes it difficult for pedagogical protagonism to reach its potential" (Powaczuk; Colvero, 2023, p. 5). Thus, the co-authorship of the advisor in this article corresponds to the critical monitoring of the process, to methodological dialogue, and to the mediation necessary for the systematization of the experience. This partnership reinforces the formative dimension of



the research, as it strengthens the relationship between practice and theory and contributes to the construction of a broader perspective on everyday school life.

From an ethical standpoint, we preserved the identity of the student and the school. The family was informally consulted in the daily school setting, without the formalization of interviews, and all information was treated with confidentiality and responsibility. We thus reaffirm our commitment to an ethics of listening, care, and respect for neurodivergent children.

### 3 Results and Discussion

The pedagogical intervention we developed became a fertile field for generating meaning in the literacy process of a student with characteristics of ASD. We systematized this experience in the format of a scientific article in order to reflect on the process, extracting significant elements that allowed us to understand and discuss practice as an object of investigation.

In this sense, it is essential to revisit Freire's understanding of literacy as a cultural practice. According to Paulo Freire (2011), literacy is part of culture and provides autonomy to the individual. Especially in this historical moment of humanity, immersed in a graphocentric world, reading and writing have become essential for quality of life and access to information and services. Reading and writing are so important that they changed the course of human history, and their mastery marked the end of one historical period and the beginning of another. To read and write is to have freedom and independence; it is to access everything that has been recorded in human history and, at the same time, to understand the instructions of a manual or recipe, or a message on a communication app such as WhatsApp, simple daily activities that can only be performed by those who know how to read.

From the very first days of class, we identified the need to reorganize time, space, and strategies so that the pedagogical proposal could become at least minimally accessible to the student. This reorganization, which was neither immediate nor free of tension,

required from the teacher-researcher an expanded listening, attentive to the gestures, expressions, and resistances that the student manifested in different situations. It also demanded an analytical perspective and a methodological listening to the unfolding experience. In this process, as Konkell and Farias (2024) observe, it is essential that the teacher know the particularities of the student with ASD in order to make the necessary adaptations to didactic resources, the dynamics of activities, and the organization of daily school life.

The absence of a formal diagnosis did not prevent the recognition of signs compatible with the autism spectrum, as defined in the *DSM-5-TR*: difficulty in social interaction, resistance to changes in routine, stereotypies, hyperfocus on objects, and restricted and repetitive behavior patterns (APA, 2023). These signs were taken as cues for building pedagogical work grounded in mediation and everyday reinvention, not as labels. As Paulo Freire (1996) reminds us, teaching requires understanding the other's reality in order to transform it with them, and not in spite of them.

When observing the student's behavior in relation to school activities, we realized that the challenge of literacy lay less in the content itself and more in the way of accessing it. It was necessary to plan strategies that would bring him closer to the world of language through image, sound, movement, and structured repetition. Games with illustrated cards, storytelling using concrete objects, and visual routines were important resources in this regard.

With each new proposal, we paid attention to the student's reactions, to moments of refusal, to small advances, and to gestures of engagement, in order to understand how modes of learning were expressed in non-verbal ways. This allowed us to focus on what the student was already constructing in his own time, rather than solely on what he was unable to do.

In this direction, based on Brandão (2002), we understand that the teacher's knowledge does not lie only in the books they have read, but also in their ability to translate everyday life into reflection. When we assume that our practice can teach us as much as



theory, we shift the axis of authority in knowledge to the field of coexistence, mediation, and pedagogical humility.

The materials produced for the student were varied: images from the rural context, names of family members, objects present in his daily routine, and words that sparked his interest. This personalization, which was not random, was based on the idea that meaningful learning occurs when content connects with the learner's concrete life. As Vygotsky (2000) reminds us, the development of higher psychological functions depends on cultural mediations that engage with the learner's reality.

This perspective is supported by the research of Ratuchne and Barby (2021), who highlight the diversity of possible pathways in the literacy process of students with ASD. The authors explain that autism is a spectrum precisely because it involves a variety of manifestations in the areas of communication, socialization, and behavior, which requires pedagogical strategies designed for each student. They identified cases in which the synthetic phonics method proved effective, while in other contexts better results were obtained with the global method or through the use of digital technologies. These findings reinforce the importance of attentive listening to singularities and of a teaching practice open to experimentation and flexibility.

In the weeks when the student showed greater openness to interaction, shared reading moments became powerful opportunities for building bonds. When listening to stories with repetition and illustrations, he remained attentive, followed along with his gaze, and at certain moments emitted sounds that signaled engagement. These expressions were welcomed as legitimate forms of participation.

At other times, however, he was more withdrawn, refused activities, distanced himself from the group, and showed greater restlessness. In such moments, we did not force the execution of the planned activity, but redirected the focus to tasks that provided him with security and predictability. Practice taught us that, to include, it is necessary to embrace silences and recognize both the limits and the potential of students.

This finding aligns with the work of Pereira *et al.* (2023), who emphasize the challenges faced by teachers working in multigrade rural classrooms, especially given the

absence of specialized educational assistance and the need to ensure curricular accessibility for students with disabilities on their own. The authors argue that these conditions make even more evident the urgency of public policies that guarantee effective pedagogical support, continuing education, and recognition of the specificities of teaching in these contexts.

In this sense, according to Santos, Teixeira, and Porto (2021), the teacher must genuinely care about offering the student opportunities to progress, to develop, and to become increasingly autonomous, seeking to provide teaching through methodologies that enable a democratic and critical education, grounded in a humanizing practice that considers behavioral contexts, while maintaining sensitivity and perseverance. Furthermore, for the authors, the literacy process of students with ASD is a path never before traveled, since each one is different and, although there are common traits, methodologies must be adapted to individual needs.

The pedagogical choices were continuously discussed with the advisor, in a dialectical movement between the action of the teacher-researcher and the theoretical and methodological mediation of co-authorship. This partnership was important to prevent the writing from becoming an isolated account of practice, allowing the investigative process to expand and gain analytical depth and conceptual rigor.

Based on Thiollent (2011), we reaffirm the value of the systematization of experiences as a legitimate form of scientific production. What we developed was, in essence, an intervention-based research project committed to transforming reality and to the shared construction of teachers' knowledge. The teacher's practice was permeated by doubts, successes, new beginnings, and learning, which became more visible as they were materialized in written text and analyzed theoretically.

Over the course of the school year, we noticed that the student began to remain longer in activities, accepted proposals with less resistance, and showed greater familiarity with words that were part of his daily life. We observed progress in his ability to associate images and words, in his spatial organization, and in his willingness to participate in school routines, even though alphabetic writing had not yet been consolidated.

As Arroyo (2012) points out, it is necessary to recognize that rural education cannot be conceived from a compensatory or welfare-based logic, but as a social practice marked by disputes, contradictions, and formative potential. Rural schools, in this sense, are spaces for affirming subjects, knowledge, and struggles that have historically been delegitimized by hegemonic thought.

The presence of the student with ASD did not disrupt the functioning of the class; rather, it provoked reorganizations that broadened the formative horizon for everyone. Activities that previously focused exclusively on traditional literacy began to incorporate visual elements, collaborative games, and shared routines, which also benefited other students. The logic of inclusion, therefore, concerns the whole of pedagogical practice, not only the student with a disability.

Freire's reading of reality helps us understand that "no one educates anyone, no one educates themselves, people educate each other mediated by the world" (Freire, 1987, p. 68). The student, the teacher, classmates, and the advisor were all educators and learners throughout the experience. Mediation did not occur unilaterally; it took shape as an encounter of knowledge, of times, and of possibilities.

Work with language, in the field of literacy, required a shift from a traditional perspective. We did not start from the expectation that the student would immediately reproduce letters or syllables; instead, we understood that it was necessary to provide him with real conditions for entering the symbolic world, in line with Vygotsky's (2000) historical-cultural perspective, in which the development of language and thought occurs through mediation by signs and cultural tools. For this reason, we prioritized materials that encouraged the association between image and word, respected limited orality, and valued his alternative modes of expression. Repetition, the use of words with affective meaning, and the incorporation of elements from rural daily life were essential along this path, elements that connected learning to the student's symbolic universe. This perspective is grounded in Soares (2004), who reflects that literacy develops within and through social practices of reading and writing.

The multigrade structure required the teacher-researcher to manage the curricular content of five grade levels simultaneously. However, it was precisely this organization that fostered greater autonomy among the other students, creating spaces for collaboration and mutual care. Some classmates even began to interact with the student with ASD with greater sensitivity, adjusting their speech, helping to organize materials, and including him in collective activities.

The student demonstrated very explicit preferences for certain themes, and we incorporated these references into lesson planning, designing activities with vocabulary related to his interests. His hyperfocus, far from being an obstacle, became a bridge for engagement and mediation. Instead of avoiding it, we brought it into play as a resource to expand participation and foster curiosity. The importance of knowing a student's hyperfocus was also discussed by Konkell and Farias (2024). They emphasize that this supports the development of planned activities within that context, which holds attention and motivates, leading to engagement and participation. This dialogical strategy, grounded in the Freirean principle of moving from the known to the unknown (Freire, 1987), contributed significantly to building a bond.

The reading of images was fundamental in the literacy process. By proposing that the student observe, name, and point out visual elements, we stimulated language, attention, perceptual organization, and symbolic association. With each image recognized, a possibility of expression was created.

Reflecting on the records, we identified that the student began to develop a particular way of responding to activities through gestures and vocalizations, a personal system of signification that needed to be welcomed and interpreted. Faced with this realization, we expanded our notion of literacy, understanding it as a process of entry into the symbolic universe of culture, which goes beyond mastery of writing. In this sense, Freire's proposal of reading the world before reading the word (Freire, 1989) came to life in our practice.

The classroom environment, initially structured in a traditional way, was gradually reorganized throughout the intervention. We created a specific space for the student, with accessible materials, playful games, laminated images, and a reading corner with familiar

objects. The classroom became a more flexible environment, where physical arrangements reflected the relational and pedagogical dynamics of the group. The organization of space, in this case, became a concrete expression of the principle of inclusion.

Another aspect that emerged strongly was the importance of routines. The student showed greater emotional stability when schedules and activities followed a predictable logic. At each unforeseen change, he reacted with agitation or withdrawal. Understanding this, the teacher-researcher began to organize the day with simple rituals: welcome, reading, guided activities, and relaxation moments. This care, although often invisible to external eyes, proved essential to the success of the intervention.

The initial teacher education of the teacher-researcher had not addressed inclusive education in depth, nor had it discussed the reality of rural schools. It was practice, therefore, that imposed the need to seek other references, to dialogue with researchers, and to expand theoretical understanding of literacy and neurodiversity. This formative process, lived in action, allowed teaching practice to also become a process of research. As Freire (1996) argues, the educator must be one who is permanently being formed and informed, in movement with the world.

The teacher's work was not carried out in a neutral way. There was a clear political intentionality, anchored in the belief that all students have the right to literacy and that school must be a place of presence, not of silent exclusion. This conviction is legally supported by the National Policy on Special Education from the Perspective of Inclusive Education, which affirms the educational system's commitment to ensuring the enrollment and participation of students with disabilities, global developmental disorders, and high abilities/giftedness in regular classes of mainstream education (Brazil, 2008). This materialized in the daily effort to create pedagogical conditions for the learning of the student with ASD, even in the midst of precarious school structures. This gesture, in itself, already constitutes resistance.

The student's family members, although present in daily school life, had little understanding of the challenges involved in the inclusion of a student with ASD. It was necessary to develop communication strategies, welcome their questions, and, above all,

deconstruct ideas that linked school failure to the student's condition. Dialogue with the family, always respectful and open, helped expand the support network and strengthen trust in the teacher and the school.

According to Konkel and Farias (2024), the student with ASD, even when included in mainstream classes, follows a differentiated teaching and learning process, which seeks to promote not only reading and writing skills, but also behavioral and socialization skills. The authors note that the relationship between teacher and student is important, but the school must also foster family involvement to enhance learning.

Listening to the student with ASD revealed a power rarely acknowledged in hegemonic discourses on learning. By looking into the teacher's eyes, smiling at a familiar image, or repeating sounds during moments of attention, the student built forms of communication that needed to be interpreted and welcomed. This listening, which does not occur through the ears but through attentive and affectionate observation, teaches us about other possibilities of language and other ways of relating to knowledge. As Soares (2003) emphasizes, the success of literacy depends on the teacher's attitude: their sensitivity, competence, and affective availability, all of which were indispensable in the pedagogical relationship built during the intervention.

As Vygotsky (2021) contributes, it is necessary to understand that psychic development cannot be reduced to linear stages or direct comparisons with biological development, especially in the case of children with ASD. As Santos, Teixeira, and Porto (2021) highlight, for school inclusion to take place effectively, it is necessary to recognize the limitations and specificities of students on the spectrum. The authors argue that learning can occur both in formal contexts, mediated by the teacher, and in informal situations, such as spontaneous interactions with peers or family life. Every moment can be a moment of learning; for this, bonds and opportunities are necessary. However, the socialization difficulties characteristic of ASD can restrict this access to the world of relationships, directly impacting the child's development. For this reason, understanding learning as a relational and cultural process is essential for developing pedagogical work from the perspective of Inclusive Education.



Throughout the intervention, we observed that the notion of “progress” had to be reconstructed. The logic of linear progression, based on homogeneous goals and measurable results, did not apply. Each gesture of the student, each sustained presence in activities, each spontaneous vocalization became an indicator of learning and, above all, of presence. This paradigm shift led us to a broader conception of literacy, as a cultural and processual construction, grounded in dialogue between the subject and the world. In this perspective, literacy must be conceived as a social, historical, political, and ideological practice. As Soares (2003) reflects, this broadens the meanings of teaching and learning to read and write beyond technique.

Affectivity was present in all pedagogical decisions as the foundation of educational practice. In moments of crisis or disorganization, it was the already established affective relationship that enabled reconnection, care, and continuity of the work. Thus, affectivity supported cognitive processes, for, as Vygotsky (2000) emphasizes, emotional and cognitive development cannot be separated.

The writing of this article also functions as an exercise in accountability. In revisiting the experience, we recognize the limits, silences, and gaps that still need to be overcome. But we also recognize the knowledge constructed, the theoretical shifts, and the learning that emerged from practice. The Freirean perspective helps us understand that no one teaches another without, at the same time, learning with them (Freire, 1987). And this mutual learning was, without a doubt, the defining mark of this intervention.

The construction of bonds was a key element of the intervention. Even with limitations in verbal communication, the student manifested affective ties with the teacher, with specific classmates, and with the materials used. The recognition of these bonds allows us to reaffirm that learning is also emotional and relational. Schools, in this sense, must be places of meaningful and safe relationships, especially for those who already experience multiple forms of exclusion in their daily lives.

The teacher’s role as a researcher of her own practice was fundamental in ensuring that records were not lost in the exhausting daily life of the classroom. The reflections made after each activity were the elements that allowed us to transform lived experience into an

object of analysis (Benjamin, 1994). As Lüdke and André (1986) point out, qualitative research is structured from immersion in the field, systematic observation, and attentive listening that is committed to the complexity of reality.

The construction of the narrative we present here was shaped by multiple voices: the teacher's voice, which feels, intuitively, takes risks, and corrects; the advisor's voice, which reads, suggests, challenges, and organizes; the student's voice, made present in gestures, gazes, and singular expressions; and the voices of authors who helped us build bridges between what was lived and what was thought. This polyphony is not noise; it is the condition for writing that is committed to the ethics and complexity of teaching practice.

In listening to the teacher, the advisor and co-author sought not to impose an academic language that would silence her experience, but rather to strengthen the marks of lived experience through theoretical grounding and methodological systematization. The shared writing materialized here is, therefore, also the result of an ethical exercise of co-authorship, in which hierarchy gives way to dialogue and to the recognition of different forms of knowledge.

Finally, we reaffirm that the intervention analyzed here goes beyond the limits of the classroom and is inscribed in a broader struggle: the struggle for the right to quality education for all, regardless of condition, territory, or life path. The literacy of students with disabilities in rural contexts cannot be conceived as an exception, but as a constitutive part of the political-pedagogical project of public schools. This requires courage, investment, and, above all, commitment to an education that refuses to leave anyone behind.

## 4 Final Considerations

Over the course of a school year, we built a teaching proposal grounded in attentive listening, the use of visual resources, the appreciation of the student's daily life, and the re-signification of school practices. Records indicated that, although alphabetic writing was not fully consolidated, there were significant advances in communication, in remaining engaged in activities, in the organization of thought, and in affective bonds with the teacher

and classmates. We also observed that the effort toward inclusion provoked broader reorganizations in the class dynamics, benefiting all students through more dialogical and accessible practices.

From the experience analyzed, we reaffirm that inclusion is not limited to the physical presence of students with disabilities in the classroom. It is a relational, symbolic, and political construction that requires pedagogical intentionality, ethical commitment, and the continuous education of teachers. Listening to the student with ASD was essential for planning actions more coherent with his singularity. In this sense, our study dialogues with the Freirean perspective of education as a practice of freedom, mediated by the recognition of the other in their complexity (Freire, 1967).

By making this practice public, we seek to provide support both for researchers and for teachers working in similar contexts. We bring an experience to be reflected upon, not a model to be replicated. We believe that the findings presented can inspire other practices and foster debate on inclusive education in rural contexts.

As a suggestion for future research, we highlight the need for studies that comparatively analyze inclusive practices in urban and rural schools, as well as research that takes into account the perspectives of students with disabilities and their families. It is also urgent to expand investigations that articulate literacy, neurodiversity, and multigrade contexts, valuing teachers' knowledge and the systematization of school experiences lived at the heart of the educational process.

We conclude this article by reiterating that building a truly inclusive school, especially in rural territories, requires the engagement of individuals who, like the teacher-researcher portrayed here, believe that every child has the right to learn, and that this right is only realized when the teacher commits to constructing the means, meanings, and conditions for it to happen.

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