ARTIGOS

Class assemblies and self-ethics through Edgar Morin's perspective [1] [2] [3] [4]

Assembleias de classe e a autoética pela perspectiva de Edgar Morin

Asamblea de clase y auto ética desde la perspectiva de Edgar Morin

Tordin, Denise Cristina [i]

Mendonça, Samuel [ii]

[i] Pontifícia Universidade Católica de Campinas – PUCC, Programa de Pós-Graduação em Educação, Campinas, SP, Brazil. http://orcid.org/0000-0002-5199-3423, decristinatordin@gmail.com.

[ii] Pontifícia Universidade Católica de Campinas – PUCC, Programa de Pós-Graduação em Educação, Campinas, SP, Brazil. https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2918-0952, samuelms@gmail.com.

Abstract

This article analyzed a school's class assemblies from Edgar Morin's ethics perspective. How are class assemblies organized at Municipal Secondary Schools in Campinas/SP? How can they contribute to the understanding of ethics in the school environment? This research employed qualitative methods of interviews and observation. The results show that introductory activities to class assemblies - such as reading, music, and physical contact - develop self-knowledge, reduce hostilities and awaken recognition of the other. The study contributes to the reflection on conflict resolution in the school environment. It also contributes to understanding how conflict can be an opportunity for more mature social relations.

Keywords: class assemblies, ethic, Edgar Morin

Resumo

O artigo trata das assembleias de classe em uma escola na perspectiva ética de Edgar Morin. Como as assembleias de classe se constituem em Escolas Municipais de Ensino Fundamental I de Campinas, SP e em que medida podem favorecer a compreensão da ética no espaço escolar? O método de pesquisa qualitativa incluiu os instrumentos entrevista e observação. Como resultados, percebeu-se que atividades introdutórias às assembleias de classe — como leituras, músicas e toque corporal — auxiliam no autoconhecimento, minimizam a hostilidade e despertam o reconhecimento do outro. A contribuição do estudo reside na compreensão da necessidade de reflexão sobre resolução de conflitos no âmbito escolar e do conflito como oportunidade para um amadurecimento nas relações sociais.

Palavras-chave: *assembleia de classe, ética, Edgar Morin*

Resumen

El artículo trata sobre las asambleas de clase en una escuela desde la perspectiva ética de Edgar Morin. ¿Cómo se constituyen las asambleas de clase de las Escuelas Municipales de Educación Fundamental en Campinas / SP y en qué medida pueden favorecer la comprensión de la ética en el espacio escolar? El método de investigación es cualitativo, incluyó los instrumentos de entrevista y observación. Como resultados identificamos que las actividades introductorias a las asambleas de clase, como la lectura, la música y el contacto corporal, ayudan en el autoconocimiento, minimizan la hostilidad y despiertan el reconocimiento del otro. El aporte del estudio reside en la necesidad de reflexionar sobre la resolución de conflictos en el contexto escolar y la comprensión de que el conflicto puede ser una oportunidad para madurar en las relaciones sociales.

Palabras clave: *asamblea de clase, principio moral, Edgar Morin*

Introduction[5]

Reflecting on conflict was a crucial aspect to build this article. Conflict can be understood as a divergence of opinions in any human relationship. However, in the school context, discussing a conflict, denying, or repressing it can determine future consequences of various types. For instance, they can evolve toward more violent or aggressive expressions or lead to learning and improving human relations. We believe that providing conditions for this improvement is a crucial aspect of an education aiming to teach how to live. An education that

---

[5] The Research Ethics Committee authorized the research.

stimulates people to look at themselves and others toward understanding and self-knowledge, able to overcome incivility.

In this sense, class assemblies are conceived as pedagogical practices established by dialogue moments organized between the educators and all students of a class. They are broadly discussed in the education field regarding the resolution of conflicts, building rules, and democratic management of the classroom. We can question their applicability, organization, presence in each school context, interactions and interventions of educators and students, and their results in all pedagogical moments. First, the development of pedagogical work through class assemblies aims to allow students and teachers to build a dialogical and democratic school environment. Second, it promotes a look at oneself and others. Third, it strengthens the relationships between subjects in the school environment, reflecting on decision-making in conflict situations. Thus, could class assemblies be possibilities to raise self-ethics?

Considering this aspect, we have investigated how some schools deal with conflicts in their contexts. The research question was: How were class assemblies established in a municipal elementary school in Campinas, in the state of São Paulo, and to what measure could they favor the understanding of ethics in the school? In this qualitative research, we selected ten municipal elementary schools based on the *Índice de Desenvolvimento da Educação Básica* (Ideb- Development Index for Basic Education): two in each region of the Campinas- one with the highest and the other with the lowest Ideb in the region. To collect data, we opted to conduct semi-structured interviews to listen to participants' concepts on the themes: conflict and mediation, ethics, human relations, and class assemblies. Therefore, we got in contact with the perspective of educators involved with 5th Year classes, pedagogical advisors, and school principals. In the schools with systematic class assemblies, we observed this pedagogical practice to perceive the specificities of each school and understand how students and educators developed the subjects and conflicts. The interviews and observations were crucial for the research because, as we were analyzing an educational phenomenon, the subjects were unique and singular. The words and attitudes of each one bring their individuality and understanding of that reality. In this article, we discuss Edgar Morin's concept of complex ethics, presenting the results and discussions raised through observations of class assemblies in one of the participant schools.

Complex Ethics

We can see a discussion tendency around the theme of ethics, accentuated mainly in the late 20th century, arising from the events of World War II. The content of these discussions is reflexive, understanding the directions of human life in Western society, the social relations of diverse groups, and the environment (Brochado, 2010). The *Parâmetros Curriculares Nacionais* (Brasil, 1997) [National Curriculum Framework] highlight the need to develop this theme in the school context through transversal themes.

Ethics can be defined as a reflection of moral, but there is also an etymological dimension: ethics has the Greek root, *ethos,* and moral, a Latin one, *morales* (Abbagnano, 2007). So, to Morin (2017), the terms receive equal treatment. The moral is understood as a set of rules, norms, and laws that guide people's lives in the collective scope, with a normative character grounded on the more of each society. On the other hand, ethics has a reflexive character about the collective good of all societies and is grounded on respect, justice, and solidarity principles. Respect is understood as the awareness that all individuals constitute a society and that we can build our identity and existence through respectful relationships with others. The principle of justice understands that all individuals have equal rights, and solidarity consists of thinking about the other, regardless of the consequence, be it a punishment or a reward (Rios, 2011). Hence, for Morin (2017) and Rios (2011), there is no separation between ethics and moral. There is only one distinction as ethics points to a supra-individual point of view, and moral is situated in the individual levels of decision and action. Therefore, "the individual moral depends implicitly and explicitly on ethics. The latter is dry and empty without individual morals. Both terms are inseparable and, sometimes, overlap. In such cases, we will use indifferently one or the other" (Morin, 2017, p. 15).

Complex ethics is conceived as a meta point of view that encompasses a reflection on the fundaments and principles of moral (Morin, 2017). It imperatively manifests itself to human beings as a moral demand. Ethics has three sources: individual, external, and previous. The first corresponds to the source within the individual as an imposition of a duty. The external source is related to the culture, beliefs, and rules of a community. The third is understood as a source previous to the individual, with a genetic origin. Thus, we can distinguish biological, individual, and social sources that establish an ethical grounding, though not isolated from one another. These three sources are present in the individuals and interfere with their quality as a subject.

According to Morin (2017), "to be a subject is to affirm oneself, placing yourself in the center of your world, expressed in the notion of egocentrism" (p. 19).

This self-affirmation is grounded in two principles: exclusion and inclusion. The exclusion principle means that another person cannot occupy the egocentric space where the I is expressed. This way, the principle of exclusion is the source of egocentrism, "able to demand a sacrifice of all, of honor, of country, of family" (Morin, 2017, p. 20). However, simultaneously, the subject also brings the principle of inclusion, including the I into We. The element We can be understood as a couple, a family, a country, or a party, among others. According to Morin (2017), the principle of inclusion shows itself since birth, observed by the drive of attachment towards the closest person. Thus, "the principle of inclusion is instinctive, as the bird that leaves the egg and follows the mother" (p. 20), while the principle of exclusion can be understood as a vital internal need. This way, the inclusion principle leads to altruism, allowing the manifestation of fraternity, while the exclusion principle leads to egocentrism, which stimulates selfishness, so this egocentric closure makes the other a stranger. Therefore, we understand that both principles interact antagonistically and complementary, so we can see individuals as more selfish and others as more altruistic. However, generally, people oscillate between these principles according to the situations. We can say that "being a subject is associating selfishness and altruism" (p. 21).

From all that, in conflict situations in school contexts, we can discuss the ethical positioning in certain situations, draw moments from the viewpoint of each subject, consider the egocentric aspect, and expand towards an understanding of the situation that associates altruistic aspects. We highlight that, to Morin (2002), education aims to teach understanding. To understand is to apprehend together, to hold together, and "to include, necessarily, a process of empathy, identification and projection" (p. 95). The author exemplifies this concept by mentioning that when we see a child crying, the understanding is not on the tears themselves but on the child's afflictions. Hence, effective conflict mediation demands raising empathy so that a process of understanding can start when putting yourself in someone's shoes. By teaching understanding, we can reflect on the ethics of understanding. The author presents this idea as an art of living that demands an uninterested understanding, i.e., without wishing for reciprocity, one can argue or refute instead of excommunicating and anathematizing.

Hence, conflict resolutions in school, based on understanding, mitigate some actions, such as punishment or complicity with some attitudes. There needs to be an opening for reflection and dialogue in the decision-making in the situations experienced in school, opening space for understanding and strengthening of the relations among people. According to Morin (2017), "the work of understanding has a terrible facet, because who understands is in total dissymmetry with those who cannot or do not want to understand" (p. 121). Fanaticism can exemplify the work of understanding, as the fanatic does not want to understand other perspectives because he is stuck in his convictions and, at the same time, cannot understand that others understand him (Morin, 2017).

This form of understanding is complex, as it avoids a dilution of responsibility into a determinism that dissolves all the autonomy of the subject and avoids purely and simply condemning the subject considered responsible and aware of all his acts (Morin, 2017, p. 122). This reflection minimizes sociological reductionism and moralism because it starts from understanding oneself and recognizing limitations, needs, and angsts. Thus, understanding is grounded in the conciliation between rationality and affection, moving away from barbarianism. This way, exercising this understanding means civilizing deeply. To Morin (2017, p. 124), "it should be possible to teach understanding in primary school and continue into secondary and university…lessons of understanding in literature, poetry, cinema". The author shows the need to deal with ethics and understanding in the school context, overcoming a unilateral view of situations, and discussing viewpoints that the theme instigates so that the debate does not seek consensus, moralism, or sociologic reductionism but helps students in an internal reflection, of self-knowledge, fundamental for a self-ethics understanding, which consists in awareness and personal decision. According to Morin (2017), "the central ethical problem, for each individual, is his inner barbarism. To overcome this barbarism, self-ethics establishes a true psychic culture" (p.93). This way, self-ethics is an ethics of oneself for oneself, which culminates in an ethic for the other" (Morin, 2017).

Self-ethics encompasses self-analysis, self-critical, honor, tolerance, the practice of ethical recursion, fighting against moral, taking responsibility, and resistance against the retaliation law and the sacrifice of others. It also encompasses the ethics of understanding, the ethics of cordiality, and the ethics of friendship. About self-analysis, Morin (2017) highlights that the exercise of self-observation allows us to recognize selfishness and measure our needs.

This way, without ignoring its egocentric source, the subject can build another point of view about himself, demanding a work of reflection and introspection. According to the author, an introspective work faces many obstacles because of the inner complexity that encompasses multiple personalities in each individual. There are blind spots in our needs that allow indulgences with our own mistakes and severity with the mistake of others. There is memory and selective forgetting. There is a tendency to transfer the mistake and blame others, besides the resentments able to blind the individual. Self-analysis can only occur through self-criticism, which consists of going against an egocentric illusion and being open to the other. Honor ethics transcends the understanding of an honor subjugated to the rules of society.

This concept is related to the construction of identity: "demanding that we are, in our actions, worthy of the image we want to have of ourselves…without betraying our truths, friendships, life rules" (Morin, 2017, p. 99). The recursion practice consists of reconsidering your evaluations, judgments, and criticisms. This type of exercise allows, for example, the control of oneself when faced with irritation signs and recoil attitudes when faced with the aggression of others. This way, the practice of recursion contraposes itself to the tendency of blaming others for your mistake. The resistance against moral seeks to avoid transforming the mistake of the other into an immoral act. Therefore, self-ethics prevents the incisive condemnation of others for their errors and flaws. Morin (2017), the ethic of responsibility conciliates the responsibility for yourself, your own life, the responsibility for the other, and a feeling of solidarity and community belonging.

The construction of social relations and the development of student's character and personalities, vital elements for human formation, are often dealt indirectly by some schools. The result of this situation is perceived through the current difficulty in establishing relations of respect, tolerance, empathy, and sincerity, which causes situations of social isolation, valuing of competition, and relations void of feelings. Without being able to look to the others, we can see an increase in violence cases, the banalization of human relations, and ethnic prejudices, among other situations that show the way humanity is following and the difficulties to revert this scenario.

Aiming to develop existential competencies- that can be understood as what is essential to living: "to err and to deceive yourself as little as possible, to recognize the sources and causes of our mistakes and illusions, to seek in any occasion the most pertinent knowledge possible"

(Morin, 2015, p. 23). It is up to education and the curricular organization of some Brazilian schools to increase the spaces and pedagogical times to reflect on the ethics of understanding, thus, getting closer to the idea of teaching how to live, as proposed by Morin (2015). The ethics of understanding can become a point of connection between subjects and minimize the fragmentation of knowledge, raising fundamental problems of students' realities as content to be dealt with in the school context. Through this guiding axis, it is possible to develop pertinent knowledge, helping students to see pathways that can solve the questions of children and young people.

We present below some observations of class assemblies conducted in a participant school. Through this description, we seek to show a possibility, a way to raise self-ethics.

Observation of a class assembly

On August 30, 2019, we followed the assemblies of classes 3 and 4 at UE4[6]. The classes start at 7 am in this school. Class 3 started Friday activities with a class assembly. E4b and some students were in class organizing the space, and arranging the desks into a U-shape. This arrangement is intended for all participants to see each other. According to Araújo (2015), this circle format establishes a position of equality among all participants – students and educator – favoring the perception of a democratic symmetry (Puig et al., 2000). When they entered the classroom, some students walked up to E4b and greeted her with kisses, hugs, or handshakes. To Morin (2017), "The welcome greeting "good morning", "good afternoon", handshakes, hugs, kisses, and the courtesy formulas have a civilizing virtue correctly designed civility…courtesy and civility…are signs of recognition of the other as a person". (p. 105).

Stimulating a class environment that establishes trust and affection between students and the educator, and among students, creates a perception of belonging, in which the student feels welcomed, respected, and recognized in that context. It helps to transform the school atmosphere (Morin, 2013) and can be understood as a principle to attenuate incivility (Morin, 2017). To Morin (2017), incivility – clear in large agglomerations – can be perceived in attitudes such as: ignoring the other, disrespecting priorities, to be unable to see a stranger under some

---

[6] The abbreviation UE4 refers to the school observed. We used E4a and E4b to preserve the identity of the teachers working with the 5th Year classes at this school.

difficulty, and such attitudes are "advance of inner barbarism" (p. 105). We understand that stimulating cordiality can be a step toward raising self-ethics (Morin, 2017).

From the theme of cordiality, the discussion can broaden to the act of touching and skin contact, establishing its relation with ethical aspects.[7]. We highlight then the interview of E4a, the educator responsible for class 4. Though the theme of cordiality emerged in class 3, we sought in the discourse of E4a some elements to this discussion. Some cordial attitudes, such as hugging, kissing, shaking hands, skin contact through touch, and the basic meaning of touch, which is the exchange of experiences, affection, and "human warmth", are essential for the sincere development of a relationship (Montagu, 1988). In a context of distancing and superficiality, touch is neglected and, when it happens, can be considered a libidinous sign. It would be time to resignify the relation with our bodies and to seek to resignify the relation with the other. The understanding is that through the body, we can establish contact with the world and express feelings and ideas (Montagu, 1988).

In this sense, we can be more prepared for social interaction, able to understand others in their singularities by developing activities that promote corporal awareness and offer possibilities for self-knowledge so that, from a more conscious state of self, perceiving our feelings. Some examples of work that stimulate body awareness are those involving skin stimuli, which are "the oldest and the most sensitive of our organs, our first medium of communication, and our most efficient of protectors" (Montagu, 1988, p. 22). We understand that the meaning of physical touch consists in the tactile perceptions invested during an experience, that is:

> Inadequate tactile experience will result in a lack of such associations and an inability to relate to others in many fundamental human ways. When affection and involvement are conveyed through touch, it is those meanings, as well as the security-giving satisfactions, with which touch will become associated. Hence, the human significance of touching. (Montagu, 1988, p. 379)

Conflicts in the school that culminate in violent manifestations, such as physical aggressions, collaborated to inadequate tactile experiences and, consequently, to the distance and distrust towards others. On the other hand, developing activities that resignify touch – respectfully – can favor the improvement of social relations based on affection. E4a, the class 4 educator, highlights in her interview that she starts some class assemblies with some reading, music, or relaxation activity.

---

[7] We highlight that these proposals were suggested before the COVID-19 pandemic.

we do some relaxation activities, emotional activities…for example, I bring, I have done, activities in which they had to look at the mirror, to understand the change of emotion, how they deal with emotion, if the facial expression of anger is the same of fear, of angst. We listen to music, relaxation music. So, in this class, I felt they had many difficulties touching, among other things. So, to touch a boy, a boy touching another was considered a "fag", this and that…so, we dealt with the issue of touch, one turned to the other, massaging the classmate, and what they felt.

There were introductory activities in the observed class assemblies but talking with the students they referred to the "massage" and how much they enjoyed it. E4a's perception of students' difficulty in dealing with the act of touching helped to reflect on the prejudices that still linger in society, as highlighted before- for example, associating touch with libidinous conditions. However, stimulating touch can change social relations when done consciously of the aim to be reached in school. This occurred when E4a stimulated the reflection about that situation, calling students' attention to their feelings – what they felt when touching and being touched. We understand that touch stimuli and cordiality in school create possibilities to reflect on inner barbarism, as they carry the perception about oneself and introspection, both needed for a self-analysis exercise (Morin, 2017).

On the back wall of class 3, there was a paperboard organized to receive the notes written by students during the week. The white papers for the notes were made available for the students under this cardboard called "Wall Newspaper", which fulfilled the same role to create the agenda of class assembly in the perspective of Araújo (2015). However, this wall newspaper was grounded on the pedagogical perception of Célestin Freinet. According to Araújo (2015), it is essential to have a paperboard on a classroom wall for students and educators to express their opinions. He proposes to include two columns, one for criticism and another for compliments. The model presented by the 5th Year classes of UE4 had two other columns, widening communication and listening possibilities, as they added 'proposals' and 'curiosities'.

In the book *Célestin Freinet,* by Louis Legrand (2010), there are elements to discuss some pedagogical proposals in classes 3 and 4. According to Legrand, some pedagogical activities are typical of the pedagogy proposed by Freinet, such as wall newspapers, free text, class visits, the book of life, and intra-school correspondence. The wall newspaper and Araújo's (2015) proposal for class assembly are exposed in the classroom. As students feel the need to write some notes, they would place a message in the corresponding envelope. On Fridays, the wall newspaper was open and students followed an order to assume the roles of reading the agenda, organizing the

signup of those wanting to talk about the theme, and writing the minutes (register done in the "Book of Life"). Students took turns in these functions, also described and explained in Araújo's proposal.

Besides the records of assemblies' minutes and the wall newspaper, the book of life registered other activities held by the class, also grounded on Freinet's proposal, such as walking classes. The walking classes should foment children's true interests and a reflection on the surroundings, in the sense of transforming this reality (Legrand, 2010). E4b explained the project of the walking classes

> we do an activity around the school, in the neighborhood of the school…that is the vegetable patch…we do a vegetable patch at school…guided by Luiz, who is a neighbor and…a student of the class who has a house with some animals, we visited the house at the beginning of the year, and many works emerged from this walking class and now we want to go there again because some animals were born and we will take the students there to see them.

Besides aiming to reflect and transform the surroundings, the walking class, thought by Freinet (Legrand, 2010), offers subsidies for other dimensions of complementary proposals: the free text – a way of sharing individual testimonies with colleagues – and inter-school correspondence "through which a school communicates with the other the core of these individual testimonies, democratically chosen in the class and collectively edited for communication" (Legrand, 2010, p. 16). Legrand's text brings the term "edit", referring to a proposal for a school newspaper formulated by Freinet: a type of communication and dissemination of knowledge for the families. UE4 did not organize a school newspaper. Considering the interviews with D4 (UE4 principal), the school was moving towards a common language and articulation between different Years' work. We understand that editing a school newspaper demands a new pedagogical school proposal, involving other classes and financial organization. The walking classes commented by E4b showed an approximation of the community and the value of popular knowledge – "rural knowledge inherited from century-old experiences" (Morin, 2013, p. 286) – in the shape of the older neighbor. Besides teaching the students about care, the connection, and respect for the plants, it has also shown the possibilities of planting at home – in vases, for example – some vegetable, observing the school's surroundings, and see possible problems (trash, proliferation of diseases, aesthetical issues), as well as measures to transform it – as highlighted by Freinet (Legrand, 2010). This theme can be an opening to deal with deeper issues, such as family agriculture, agribusiness, environmental

degradation, and pesticides – emerging themes in the current Brazilian scenario. To Morin (2013, p. 269), "the issue of agriculture is worldwide, inseparable from the problem of water, of demography, of urbanization, of ecology (climate changes) as well as, undoubtedly, the food, which are, themselves, interdependent from one another". This theme is complex and a fundamental problem to be widely discussed with students, overcoming the teaching of a shallow ecology, which shows problems superficially, through simplifying thoughts (Morin, 2016). For example, teaching students to separate the recyclable trash while not teaching about consumerism, which considerably worsens the problem of trash.

It was noticeable that the spelling corrections suggested in the notes for the class assemblies held by E4b pointed out the importance of establishing clear communication between people. There were some spelling mistakes while reading the notes in the agenda of the assembly. The educator then pointed out the importance of writing a communicable note for the other readers, even if the note was written during a difficult moment when the student was nervous about something. She stressed the importance of keeping a desk in the back of the room for students to sit and calm down to write their notes and, thus, think about writing. She also talked with the students about the sarcasm toward the notes with spelling mistakes, highlighting that everyone could make mistakes. These actions contextualized the role of writing and gave meaning to the student because he felt welcomed and able to communicate what had happened and his feelings. Thus, this writing has a much different symbology than copying long texts from the board, for example. This way, "flaws are no longer those mistakes only the teacher detected. They are obstacles for public communication" (Legrand, 2010, p. 20). Usually, before sticking the notes from the wall newspaper (class assembly) on the book of life, E4b corrected them with the students. If they stuck notes with spelling mistakes, she would correct them with some students during her time of *Trabalho Docente Individual* (TDI- Teacher's Individual Time). According to Legrand (2010), to Freinet, studying the surrounding, the press, the newspaper, and the school correspondence would be crucial instruments for a pedagogical revolution and a concrete way to learn writing, creation, and text edition. To Morin (2013) "education should be inspired in the experiences of Montessori, Freinet, in the pedagogical ideas of Paulo Freire or Green School" (p. 201).

These pedagogical experiences raised by Morin (2013), with some peculiar characteristics, were systematized by different thinkers at different times. Though seeking to avoid anachronisms, we understand that, for the author, it is through model experiences in the

educational sphere that we can rethink education and face fundamental and global problems. Morin (2013) highlights that a determinant attitude to guarantee a model experience in the educational field is intrinsically connected to professional formation.

In the class assembly on August 30, 2019, in class 3, there were many notes in the field of criticism. We highlight two themes that demanded more discussion time: students' disagreements with physical aggressions and the participation of boys and girls during playtime. The notes on the field "I Criticize" carried the name of the student involved in the situation. E4b stressed that, before, the notes did not have names, as suggested by Araújo (2015), so the situation was criticized and not the person, avoiding personal judgments. However, E4b highlighted that the students always knew whom the criticism targeted and that, by bringing up the name of the students, they could directly deal with those involved.

Besides this, explicitly writing the names in this field was a collective resolution. Though the literature points out the importance of preserving students' names in the criticism field, we believe that, when understating that the assembly was not a moment to judge but to reflect on the problems, there does not seem to be any impediment to naming those involved. Furthermore, purposely looking at someone and indirectly comment the colleagues' phrases do not also seem to be a fair and sincere posture.

The disagreements between students highlighted in this class assembly were not forwarded to the direction because, according to the educator, she sought a collective resolution with the group during the assembly. Depending on the event's gravity, the assembly should have the power to deliberate on the situation, promoting classroom self-management (Araújo, 2015), and reestablishing agreements and rules (Vinha & Tognetta, 2007).

However, we can see that, after the discussions and exposition of ideas of other students, those involved in the conflict apologized insincerely, only to finish the topic. We understand that the role of assemblies is to promote reflections over attitudes, but it is essential to highlight that attitudes do not change quickly. Thus, it is part of the students' emotional growth to understand their attitudes and respect others. We point out that the introductory activities to the assemblies previously seen and the understanding of ethical principles through literature (Morin, 2015, 2017) are fundamental for students' development in these aspects.

When dealing with the agenda about conflicts during playtime, the researcher showed some ideas to reflect on with the group and E4b. Classes 3 and 4 had a moment to play together

on Thursdays. The problem presented in the agenda involved the attitude of some boys who excluded other students from the soccer games. Considering how the group reacted to the agenda, this was a recurrent theme. The student who wrote alleged that the others did not give him the ball during the game and said he did not play well.

Some girls signed up for the debate. One of them said that she never had the opportunity of playing and, even when she was in a team on the field, she felt invisible because she never received the ball. During the debate among the students, we could perceive a defensive stance of some of the boys who believed to be better players. They said that they did allow girls to participate – in the "invisible" condition referred to by the girl- and they did not give the ball to some other boys because they could not play. So, according to the criticized boys, the problem was not their excluding attitude but that, according to them, the others were not good enough. E4b, who also signed up to talk, suggested they share the playtime so that only the girls would play half the time and, on the other half, only the boys. To ground this idea, E4b reminded the students that in the *Jogos Escolares Municipais de Campinas,* SP (JEM – Campinas Municipal School Games- a sporting competition among municipal schools), as well as international and national championships, there is a separation between women and men sports.

At that moment, the researcher signs up to participate in the assembly, establishing a dialogue with the group through questions. From the answers, other questions were raised to make them reflect on the situation, for instance: when you play, what is the objective of the game? If the most important objective is to win, who will I want on my team? If only "the best" play and have more opportunities, will the classmates learning to play have a chance to develop their abilities? So, who will play better? Who has more or fewer opportunities? What is the role of physical education and games in school? If you only want to play with the best, would it not be nice to seek a training space or an extra school class? If you, who can play, help your classmate who is learning now, will they improve? And why always soccer? After this group conversation, E4b resumed and asked about the suggestion of separating boys and girls. The research explained that separating them would only avoid the conflict because of this reason – because the conflict could continue to happen for other reasons, for example, decreasing girls' game time or continuing to exclude boys who were not as skillful- but that it would be interesting to see conflict as a favorable situation, to make the group grow in situations of victory and defeat, understanding that everyone has the right to use the school space and to live such school experiences, and that collaboration and cooperation could help the learning of the whole group.

We also highlight that separating them could happen so they could experience this situation. Alternatively, to experience other possibilities – for example, to let the "best" players participate through other roles, such as coaches or referees. Thus, E4b rethought the situation and highlighted that when the students played together, those who did not know could learn, and the most important thing would be for them to help one another.

We can perceive that this collaborative intention among students was greatly stimulated during the workshops because students helped each other in the groups. Nevertheless, at that moment, this parallel had not been established and was perceived in the last line of E4b. The term "at that moment" refers to what was discussed in the assembly on August 30. However, as it was a recurrent theme, maybe E4b had already suggested other possibilities and instigated other reflections to try to mediate these situations. Thus, as previously reported on the possibilities of themes that had to be discussed during the class trip, we understand that these situations of conflicts – with recurrent themes or not- would be opportunities to work on more pertinent themes, for instance, identity and gender. To Knijnik (2006),

> even the unveiling of feminine history in sports in general and in soccer in particular, added to good performances of the Brazilian women's soccer teams in international competitions…nothing was enough to boost women to a position of greater prominence in the soccer scenario. (p. 9)

Unfortunately, this women's social experience surpasses the sports field, as it is present in all spheres that compose their human condition, even nowadays. What Knijnik (2006) states as beliefs from the social imaginary, Tiburi (2018) sees as a dogmatic system of beliefs that situate the people in the world- the patriarch:

> On its base is the often repeated idea that there is a natural identity, the two sexes considered normal, the difference between gender, masculine superiority, women's inferiority, and other ideas that might sound limited but that are still followed by many people. (p. 26)

The author highlights that in this patriarchal system, "women's destiny is violence" (Tiburi, 2018, p. 32). This violence refers to the deprivation to "exercise the political, economic, and knowledge power" (p. 96) – without forgetting the many sexist prejudices that persist "in the minds and actions…many women are still beaten and enslaved" (Morin, 2013, p. 366). The feminist discourse used by Tiburi (2018) shows the fight for the rights of all who suffer the injustices of patriarchy. In this sense, it is through dialogue –the ability to speak and listen- and

from the value of dissent that feminism interconnects politics and ethics "in the defense of people's singularity" (Tiburi, 2018, p. 45). In a patriarchal system, who has the power to speak: Who listens? How does one listen? From this perspective, there is a 'place of speech' – synonymous with power in this context – associated with "solidarity between the discourses that demand rights" (p. 54). The belief is that schools' role is to demystify such deep-rooted beliefs –as patriarchy- to reestablish the 'places of speech and listen' (Tiburi, 2018), grounded on non-violent communication.

In this sense, class assemblies are pedagogical activities with great potential to encompass and stimulate students' and educators' understanding, dialogue, non-violent communication, and self-ethics. However, to stimulate these aspects, it is necessary to interconnect the pedagogical proposal, the collective work, and the formation of educators. The way E4b mediated the assembly on August 30 – as well as in the other moments observed during the research – the pedagogical proposal, grounded in Freinet, supported the actions of the 5th Year classes of UE4, showed many possibilities to build class assemblies in a perspective of ethical reflection. In this assembly, there were some compliment notes regarding the help given by some students. E4b asked if the students who wrote the notes would like to talk more about the situation and most of them described the details. At the end of the assembly, some students from class 3 talked about an internal soccer championship taking place during recess organized by the middle-school students. On that day, they disputed the semifinal with class 4. They highlighted that winning would be difficult because they normally lost the Thursday games against them. However, class 3 won that game and disputed the final with the 6th year. There was an award with medals.

The desks were kept in a U-shape, and the students did an individual evaluation. During the break, the educators followed the meal and students' playtime. The students of class 3 participated in the semifinal of the internal championship. However, no girl in this class played. In class 4, one girl played. It was clear why she could play in the internal soccer championship: she was a fantastic player. Class 3 won the first game and lost the second. We could perceive the effort of the 5th Year teachers to bring them experiences of cooperation, sensibility, and perception of the world. However, the organization external to the classroom incentivized opposite practices. Providing different experiences and reflections about sporting competitions and social relations are examples of contradiction also needed to form students.

Though competitions are generally connected to excluding aspects, there is cooperation among the players of the same team – for instance, to reach a common objective – and among the competitors because without an opponent, there would be no competition. Besides this, the matches could highlight the importance of ethical principles, such as respect and solidarity (Morin, 2017). This proposal of internal competition could also be questioned about an obligatory number of girls to form mixed teams.

On the return from the break, we followed the assembly of class 4. However, the meeting was mainly focused on consoling the classmates who had lost the game. Students from class 4 who participated in the game cried a lot. Some boys from class 3, stimulated by E4b, went to class 4 and greeted all students with a handshake, thanking their participation and reinforcing, with some words, that they played well, regardless of the defeat that day. Nonetheless, this attitude increased some students' anger because of their loss. E4b incentive reflects itself in an ethics of responsibility that conciliates the responsibility for oneself and the other and the feeling of solidarity and belonging to a community (Morin, 2017). However, the harshness, the shame, and the anger or resentment engendered in class 4 after the class 3 movement shows that the results of an action considered ethical can be uncertain in a given context – understood by the concept of ecology of action[8] (Morin, 2017). Due to these events and criticisms between the classes, E4a stressed this would be a theme for the "Big Assembly", gathering classes 3 and 4 to discuss their conflicts.

After the consolation attempts and the exposure of feelings and perceptions of the game loss, E4a resumed the assembly's agenda. Despite the educator's incentives, the students who participated in the game were apathetic and participated little. The sensation of defeat was not collective but more restricted to the players. We could see that some students did not even understand why so much sadness "just because of a game". On that day, E4a was responsible for the debate sign-up. The agenda was around some disagreements, leading to spontaneous apologies, but a feeling of "getting rid of the topic". There were some notes of compliments and, after the talk, students clapped their hands. The most commented compliment was towards a usually very nervous student in some situations and now able to control herself more. E4a

---

[8] The concept of ecology of action starts from two principles. One is the understanding that "the consequences of historical actions are frequently contrary to the intentions of those who decide them" (Morin, 2014, p. 12). The other is the retroaction of the present over past knowledge, which points out the need to contextualize knowledge because, for this author, there is no absolute point of view for observation. The E4b's action when sending students to greet class 4 led to consequences contrary to what she initially imagined.

made her reflect on the compliment she received, as the student always complained that she had no friends and, at that moment, she was receiving their compliments showing her importance to the group – a feeling of belonging (Morin, 2017). During the assembly of class 4, the researcher did not speak.

Due to the article limits, we presented an example of one day of observations in the 5th Year classes of UE4, articulating the data from the empirical material with the assumption of Morin (2017) to reflect on the possibilities of raising self-ethics in class assemblies.

Final remarks

In these assemblies, some situations stood out that had a direct relation with elements of self-ethics: the stimulus to cordiality, the respectful physical touch, the perception and expression of feeling, able to resignify the relation with oneself and others, promoting self-knowledge through exercises of reflection and introspection, connected, on their turn, to self-analysis and self-criticism. In the discussion about the exaggerated judgment of a student from class 4, grounded on paradigmatic patriarchal beliefs (Tiburi, 2018), we debated the moral resistance from the practice of recursion and the sacrifice of others. In the agenda about soccer in classes 3 and 4, we can perceive a self-justification in the speech of the students who did not assume the consequences of their attitudes, ending up justifying their own mistakes and blaming their classmates; and the law of retaliation, which seeks to make others feel the same unpleasant situations and feelings they have caused in the classmates. Finally, we highlight that the observations in classes 3 and 4 show an organization of the pedagogical work – even if disconnected from the rest of the school – grounded on Freinet's proposal. This organization has shown a possibility to resignify school contents through the activities after the assemblies, the non-fragmentation of knowledge, the consideration and valorization of students' previous knowledge, and the focus on central problems of students' reality. For instance, the spelling corrections focused on their crucial role in allowing effective communication. To Morin (2017), understanding and being understood are crucial to "teach how to live". We have noticed that the educators – E4a e E4b – promoted activities close to a perspective of self-ethics and 'teach how to live' proposed by Morin (2015, 2017). We believe this approximation occurred due to the pedagogical proposal that grounds the work of these educators. Their attitudes during the

classes reverberated in the pedagogical proposal because they incentivized students to reflect on themselves, their knowledge, activities, relationships, and to cooperate to think of solutions for their problems. They promoted dialogue at all times and incentivized the mediation of conflicts with students' collaboration. We understand that teacher education is essential to structure class assemblies so that the pedagogical practice might favor the construction of a school democracy and the practice of exercises that raise self-ethics and understanding from the perspective of Morin (2017).

Therefore, we believe that the class assembly is a pedagogical practice with an immense potential to favor the understanding of complex ethics, through Morin's (2017) perspective, when there is a pedagogical organization that favors the practice of reflection and the exercise of self-knowledge, as well as the approximation with literature, in the sense of understanding the attitudes arisen from the human condition.

References

Abbagnano, N. (2007). *Dicionário de filosofia* (2.ª ed.). Martins Fontes.

Araújo, U. F. (2015). *Autogestão na sala de aula: as assembleias escolares.* Summus.

Brasil (1997). Secretaria de Educação Fundamental. *Parâmetros Curriculares Nacionais: apresentação dos temas transversais – ética.* MEC/SEF.

Brochado, M. (2010, julho-dezembro). Ética e as relações entre Estado, Política e Cidadania. *Cadernos da Escola do Legislativo. 12*(19), 57-82.

Knijnik, J. D. (2006). *Femininos e masculinos no futebol brasileiro.* [Tese de Doutorado em Psicologia: Psicologia Social e do Trabalho]. Instituto de Psicologia da Universidade de São Paulo. http://livros01.livrosgratis.com.br/cp008726.pdf.

Legrand, L. (2010). *Célestin Freinet.* (José Gabriel Perissé: Trans. And Ed.). Fundação Joaquim Nabuco; Editora Massangana.

Montagu, A. (1988). *Tocar: o significado humano da pele.* Summus.

Morin, E. (2002). *Os sete saberes necessários para a educação do futuro* (6th ed.). Cortez.

Morin, E. (2013). *A via para o futuro da humanidade.* Bertrand Brasil.

Morin, E. (2014). *Meus filósofos* (2nd ed.). Sulina.

Morin, E. (2015). *Ensinar a viver: manifesto para mudar a educação*. Sulina.

Morin, E. (2017). *O método 6: ética* (5.th ed.). Sulina.

Puig, J. M., Martín, X., Escardíbul, S., & Novella, A. M. (2000). *Democracia e participação escolar: propostas de atividades* (Maria C. de Oliveira: Trans.). Moderna.

Rios, R. A. (2011). *Ética e competência* (20.th ed.). Cortez.

Tiburi, M. (2018). *Feminismo em comum: para todas, todes e todos* (6.th ed.). Rosa dos Tempos.

Vinha, T. & Tognetta, L. R. P. (2008). *Quando a escola é democrática: um olhar sobre a prática das regras e assembléias na escola*. Mercado de Letras.

Corresponding author:

Samuel Mendonça: *Pontifícia Universidade Católica de Campinas, Programa de Pós-Graduação em Educação, Rod. D. Pedro I, Km 136, Pq. das Universidades, Campinas, SP, 13086-900, Brasil.*

Authors' contributions:

Tordin, Denise Cristina - *Conceptualization (Equal), Data curation (Equal), Formal analysis (Equal), Funding acquisition (Equal), Investigation (Equal), Methodology (Equal), Project administration (Equal), Resources (Equal), Validation (Equal), Visualization (Equal), Writing – original draft (Equal), Writing – review & editing (Equal)*

Mendonça, Samuel - *Conceptualization (Equal), Data curation (Equal), Formal analysis (Equal), Funding acquisition (Equal), Investigation (Equal), Methodology (Equal), Project administration (Equal), Resources (Equal), Supervision (Equal), Validation (Equal), Visualization (Equal), Writing – original draft (Equal), Writing – review & editing (Equal)*