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**“Interdiscipline and Transdiscipline: Challenges of the XXI Century”**

**EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHERS’ LEARNING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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# Objective

- ◆ This investigation focuses on the construction and foundations of early childhood educators' **personal practical theories**, the transformation of these theories (in the first year after the initial training period and ten years after the end of initial training), and the identification of the factors that were involved in and influenced the construction and modification of these theories – in particular, training, supervision, and professional socialization.

# Personal Practical Theories

**All the terms, notions, perceptions, opinions and beliefs that teachers use in curriculum development and when they think about the teaching and learning process (Buitink, 2009).**

Practical knowledge Elbaz (1981); Clandinin (1986)

Levin & He (2008) TPP construction analysis model

Role of initial training in the construction of practical knowledge (Brouwer & Korthagen, 2005)

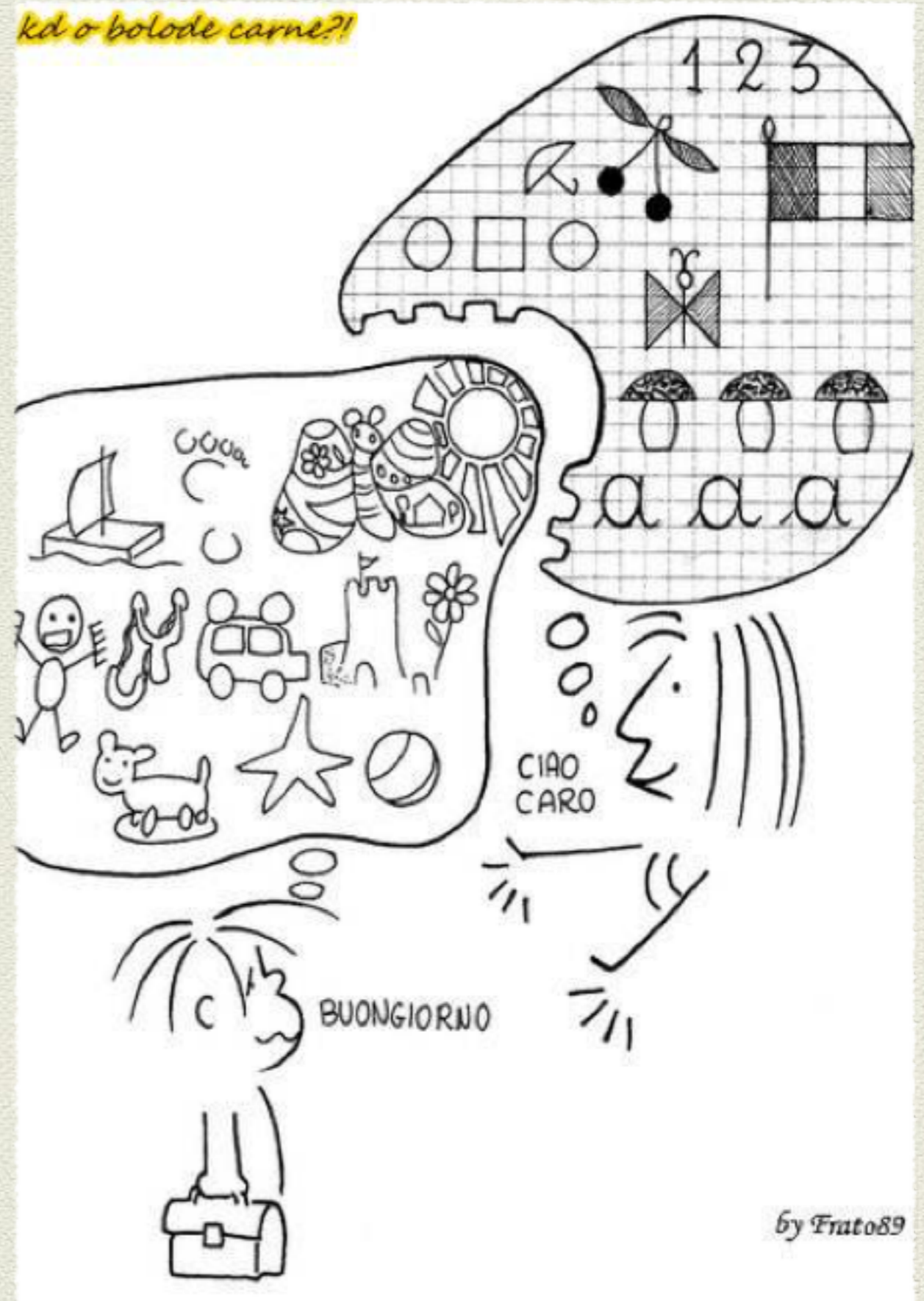
# Theoretical Framework

- ◆ We conceive of the **construction of professional knowledge in the field of epistemology of practice** (Alarcão & Roldão, 2008; Schön, 1983) as a perspective that implies training based on practice that is reflective, critical, analytical and, thus, produces professional knowledge.
- ◆ This implies reinforcing the professionalism and adoption of a **training logic focused on the construction of professional skills, from and within the teaching activity** (Roldão, Hamido, & Galveias, 2004).
- ◆ The construction of **professional knowledge is a fundamental condition for teachers' autonomy and professionalism** (Hargreaves, 1998; Zeichner, 1993) that is sometimes resilient to the adverse characteristics of schools in which teachers begin their profession.

For the task of the educator to be effective, he must consider the concepts that the child "exhibits" in play and think about the scientific concepts he wants to introduce, that is, he must reach a level of intersubjectivity with the child. (Fleer, 2013; Fleer & Hammer, 2013).

**"Sustained shared thinking"** (Siraj-Blatchford, 2009)

**Involvement**(Laevers, 1993, 2000; Laevers & van Sanders, 1997)

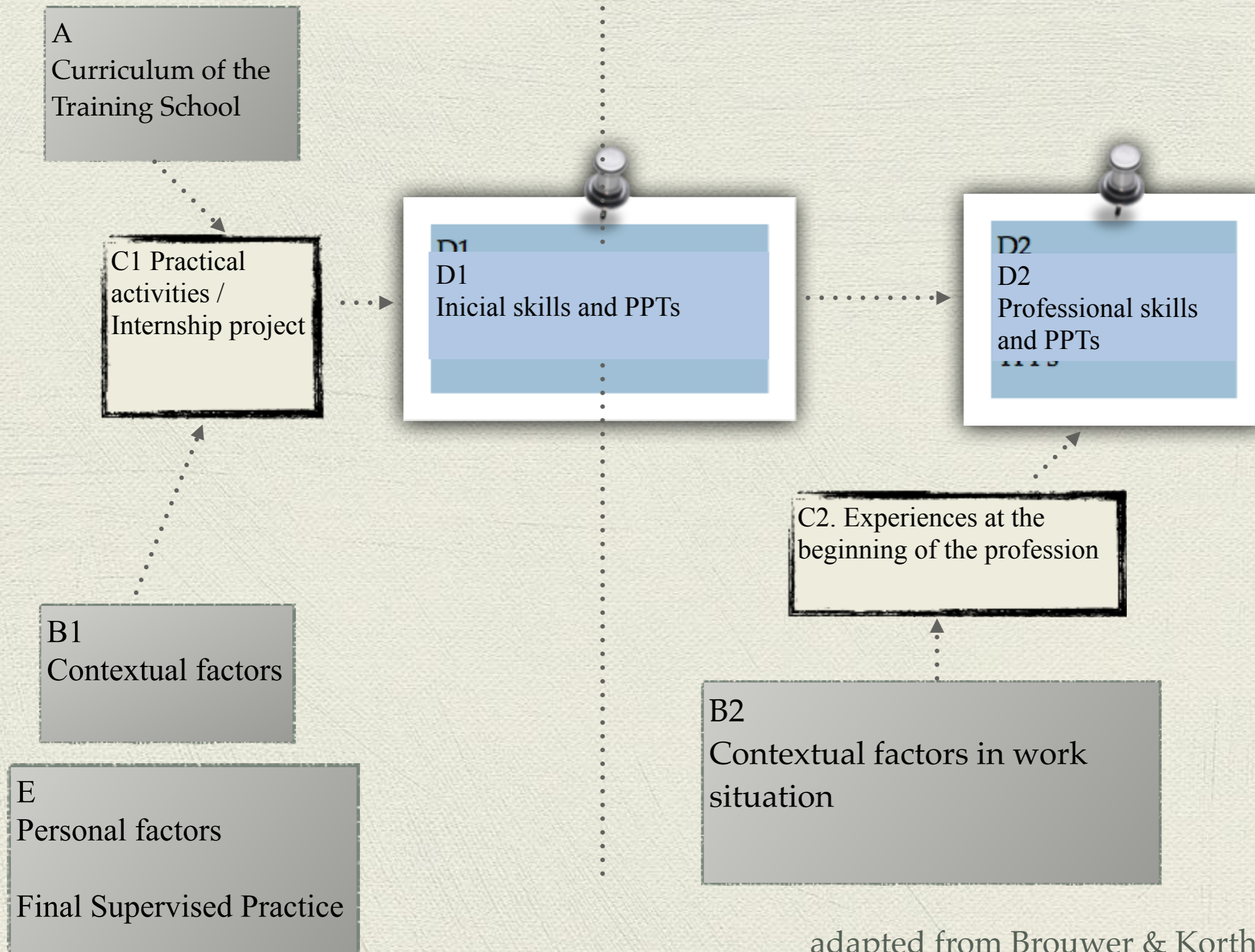


# Research Questions

- ◆ Do teacher-students construct a practical theory at the end of the initial training?
- ◆ Are there changes in early childhood teachers' practical theories (the first year after the initial training period and after nine years has passed since the end of professional training)?
- ◆ What are the factors involved and which of these can be identified by early childhood teachers in the construction or modification of these theories and practices?

# PHASE I (2005)

# PHASE II (2015)



adapted from Brouwer & Korthagen (2005)

# System of categories for analyzing the change in the teachers' practical theories

Categories	Description/Oppositions
Child Image	Centered on <i>universal</i> characteristics <b>OR</b> a <i>contextualized</i> view of the child
Teaching/Learning Concept	Focus on the <i>content</i> to be taught and the transmission of knowledge by the teacher <b>OR</b> Focused on the <i>learner</i> , complex and integrated
Curriculum	Technical application of knowledge, <i>predictable</i> <b>OR</b> Built with children, <i>unpredictable</i> , based on their ideas and interests
Pedagogical Relationship	Focused only on emotional relationship, adult empathy <b>OR</b> Valuing adult and peer mediation, integrating the cognitive and emotional component
Context	The organization determines the curriculum and the Educator <i>applies</i> <b>OR</b> the Teacher <i>leads</i> the processes of change
Knowledge and Professional Development	<i>Determined</i> by personal factors, initial training and professional socialization <b>OR</b> <i>Constructed</i> by participants



Telma

“não posso dirigir”

Veronica

“o afecto é o  
mais importante”

Natacha

“documentar as aprendizagens”

Tatiana

“liderar a mudança”

emancipação / agência relacional



# Final Thoughts

- ◆ The training program may have influenced teachers beliefs and practical knowledge on how to organize the learning process, centered on child perspective, recognizing their abilities and giving children stimuli to think, communicate and act;
- ◆ These strategies were broadened throughout the professional development of strategies focused on science education for the various dimensions of educational everyday life.
- ◆ The possibility of carrying out project work with the children, evaluation and documentation of learning will be aspects present in the teachers practical knowledge
- ◆ When in a professional context and at a stage of professional stability teachers reveal the potential to develop the curriculum in coherence with their practical theories.

# Implications for Training

- ◆ In initial training, the role of the supervisor in co-reflecting on practice, built within multidisciplinary teams and with cooperating teachers, seems to be fundamental (with true partnerships with schools) - uninstructed or uncoordinated professional insertion can lead to simulation and domestication (Freire, 1996).
- ◆ The teachers practical theories point to the idea that children learn through play and that the adult should be sensitive and play with them but their relation to the possibility of promoting learning is not evident and could be more effectively worked on in initial training.