

## GUIDING PROCEDURE FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL PRACTICES MEDIATED BY ARTISTIC MATERIALS IN THE SCHOOL CONTEXT

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### ABSTRACT

This article aims to present a guiding resource in the field of school psychology with the intention of a critical, participatory, collective-oriented, engaged and transformative action using artistic expressions. This proposal comes from the research-interventions which the research group has developed over the years and from the first author's master's research, from the *PraPsi* proposal comes from, reflecting what we call the "Psychological Practices Mediated by Artistic Materiality." The resource seeks to support the psychologists' actions focused on the collective and offer subsidies for the planning and construction of practices that use artistic expressions. Initially, the article introduces theoretical and methodological aspects that support our research, especially the concepts of Vygotsky, the Psychology of Art, and Intervention Research, which we have been carrying out in the group. Next, we present *Prapsi* and the dimensions that structure it, pointing out paths for the appropriation and choice of artistic materiality in professional psychological practices. Complementing the text, by way of illustration, the article presents the report of part of the research-intervention-art in a public school with elementary school students in which an anime was used as a materiality to promote imagination and creative processes. We believe that *PraPsi*, as a guide for intervention research, can contribute to the critical and conscious action of professionals who wish to use artistic materials as psychological instruments in collective contexts.

**Keywords:** historical-cultural psychology; psychology of art; school psychology

## Procedimiento orientador de prácticas psicológicas mediadas por materialidades artísticas en el contexto escolar

### RESUMEN

En el presente artículo se tiene como objetivo presentar un recurso orientador en el campo de la psicología escolar con la intención de una actuación crítica, de cuño participativo, volcada al colectivo, ligada y transformadora utilizando expresiones artísticas. Esa propuesta deriva de las investigaciones-intervenciones que el grupo de investigación ha desarrollado a lo largo de los años y de la investigación de maestría de la primera autora de donde deriva la propuesta del *PraPsi*, repercutiendo lo que denominamos de "Procedimiento Orientador de Prácticas Psicológicas Mediadas por Materialidades Artísticas en el Contexto Escolar". El recurso busca fundamentar acciones de psicólogos volcadas al colectivo y ofrecer subsidios para la planificación y construcción de prácticas que se utilicen de expresiones artísticas. Inicialmente, en el artículo se introduce aspectos teórico-metodológicos que fundamentan nuestra investigación, en especial los conceptos de Vygotsky, de la Psicología del Arte, y de la Pesquisa-Intervención, que veníamos realizando en el grupo. Después, presentamos el *Prapsi* y las dimensiones que lo estructuran apuntando caminos para la apropiación y escoja de materialidades artísticas en prácticas psicológicas profesionales. Complementando el texto, a título de ilustración, el artículo presenta el relato de parte de una pesquisa-intervención en una escuela pública con estudiantes de lo enseñanza básica en que se utilizó de un anime como materialidad promotora de la imaginación y de procesos creativos. Creemos que el *PraPsi*, como orientador de la pesquisa-intervención, puede contribuir con la acción crítica y consciente de profesionales que desean utilizar materialidades artísticas como instrumentos psicológicos en contextos colectivos.

**Palabras clave:** psicología histórico-cultural; psicología del arte; psicología escolar

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# Procedimento norteador de práticas psicológicas mediadas por materialidades artísticas no contexto escolar

## RESUMO

O presente artigo tem como objetivo apresentar um recurso norteador no campo da psicologia escolar com a intenção de uma atuação crítica, de cunho participativo, voltada ao coletivo, engajada e transformadora utilizando expressões artísticas. Essa proposta deriva das pesquisas-intervenções que o grupo de pesquisa tem desenvolvido ao longo dos anos e da pesquisa de mestrado da primeira autora de onde deriva a proposta do *PraPsi*, repercutindo o que denominamos de “Procedimento Norteador de Práticas Psicológicas Mediadas por Materialidades Artísticas no Contexto Escolar”. O recurso busca fundamentar ações de psicólogos voltadas ao coletivo e oferecer subsídios para o planejamento e construção de práticas que se utilizem de expressões artísticas. Inicialmente, o artigo introduz aspectos teórico-metodológicos que fundamentam nossa pesquisa, em especial os conceitos de Vigotski, da Psicologia da Arte, e da Pesquisa-Intervenção-Arte, que realizando no grupo. Em seguida, apresentamos o *Prapsi* e as dimensões que o estruturam apontando caminhos para a apropriação e escolha de materialidades artísticas em práticas psicológicas profissionais. Complementando o texto, a título de ilustração, o artigo apresenta o relato de parte de uma pesquisa-intervenção em uma escola pública com estudantes do ensino fundamental em que se utilizou de uma animação japonesa (anime) como materialidade promotora da imaginação e de processos criativos. Acreditamos que o *PraPsi*, como norteador da pesquisa-intervenção, pode contribuir com a ação crítica e consciente de profissionais que desejam utilizar materialidades artísticas como instrumentos psicológicos em contextos coletivos.

**Palavras-Chave:** psicologia histórico-cultural; psicologia da arte; psicologia escolar

## INTRODUCTION

In order to propose psychological practices mediated by artistic materiality, it is necessary to navigate the art field, seeking, first and foremost, to understand it. However, defining what art is not an easy task. Coli (1995) had already stated in his book “What is art?” [“*O que é arte?*”] that when we seek clear answers and definitions, we are disappointed by their divergent and contradictory nature. What we can say, according to the author himself, is that art is “certain manifestations of human activity toward which our feeling is admirable” (Coli, 1995, p. 8), that is, it is all human production that we appreciate as spectators. For Vygotsky, art is capable of provoking changes in the psyche of those willing to experience it. And thus, as grapes are to wine, art is to life: “Art draws its material from life, but produces above this material something that is not yet in the properties of this material” (Vygotsky, 1999, p. 308).

In this sense, when we think about Psychology, we do not seek definitions of art, but rather the effect that art has on others. In particular, we agree with Vygotsky (1999) that the essential for the development of the Psychology of Art and for the unveiling of its central problem would be to understand the link between imagination and emotion in promoting human development (Souza, Dugnani, & Reis, 2018). It is this connection between human development and art that interests us in Psychology, as we consider art as a psychological instrument that promotes the power of action in individuals due to its potential to evoke emotions. This is due to its ability to affect subjects through the sensitive, promoting a detachment from reality and a powerful mediation of awareness and resignification, in which imaginative and creative

processes intertwine with emotions and other Higher Psychological Functions.

Our focus, therefore, is not art as a field of knowledge, although we also address its historical and aesthetic aspects in our work, but the Psychology of Art, that is, “the effect that art has on the subject” (Souza, 2016, p. 89). This is because what we have observed in our intervention research is that art “promotes aesthetic mediations that *change* the subject’s relation with the environment, precisely because it enables them to live beyond their current condition, that is, it *promotes experiences*,” thus changing the course of subjects’ development (2016, p. 91, author’s emphasis).

In particular, considering the school context, the essence of art is the “understanding of its role in constituting an educational context that promotes the development of more elaborate forms of relations” (Souza et al., 2018, p. 377). These observations reinforce the understanding that school psychologists should focus on a practice oriented toward understanding and intervention, seeking to raise awareness and empower the school collective and its various actors and actions (Marinho-Araújo, Teixeira & Cavalcante, 2023). We believe that actions and reflections are necessary, especially in school psychology practice, that invest in dialogue, reflection, and collective actions that allow contradictions to emerge and promote the reconfiguration of senses and meanings of experiences lived in school. Art enhances the manifestation of contradictions in this context (Souza, Petroni & Andrada, 2016).

Believing in this potential of art, and aiming for collective and transformative practices in the school context, the research group to which the authors

belong investigates the power of art as a psychological instrument using a wide variety of artistic materials. Among these, we can mention painting, music, collage, poetry, short stories, films, documentaries, theater, dance, photography, animation, comics, among others, both in the realm of appreciation and production (Arinelli, 2022; Barbosa, 2017; Camargo, Silva, Carvalho, & Souza, 2023; Carvalho & Souza, 2023; Jesus, 2020; Medeiros, 2022; Neves, 2015; Oliveira, 2021; Takara, 2017). This range of investigations allowed us to observe that art, supported by the theoretical assumptions of Historical-Cultural Psychology, constitutes a power for promoting reflection and awareness. Working with research-intervention-art (Souza, 2021) makes it possible to set the human phenomenon in motion, delving into interventional-investigative practices and constructing “new realities,” collectively and collaboratively.

Some questions, however, emerge when we seek to deepen our understanding of this relation between art and psychological practices: how to select art forms that are characterized as psychological instruments? What are the indicators that a given artistic expression functions as a mediator of the subject’s psychological processes? What knowledge is required of the art forms to be used? What strategies for their use?

This article presents a guiding resource that aims to offer support to psychologist-researchers who seek new ways to approach the psychological phenomena investigated, building approaches that focus on the collective-collaborative and aim to transform the contexts in which they are inserted. The resource was created after analyzing the data from a dissertation in the process of constructing an analysis of what was accessed and experienced, where we realized it would be necessary to turn to theorization, seeking the “theorized concrete,” in Kosik’s terms (2002). This is what we propose—to theorize what we have done in order to provide support for new practices, and we will do so based on empirical evidence.

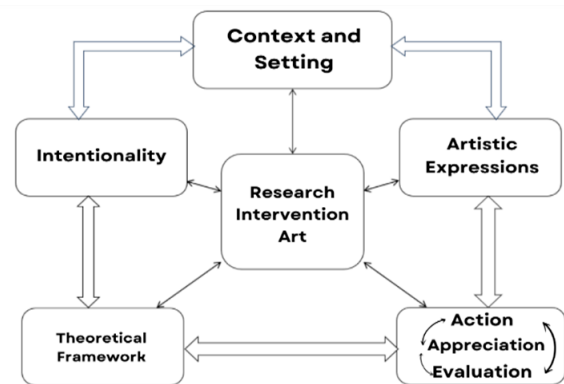
## METHOD

In this analytical-reflective process of examining the constructed and deriving abstractions, we created the *PraPsi* resource, reflecting what we call Psychological Practices Mediated by Artistic Materiality (Image 1). The resource was conceived after 14 months of work, involving 28 meetings Lower secondary education students at a state school in the Campinas, State of São Paulo, Brazil. We used 12 different artistic materiality, including anime, comics, and short stories. At the end of the article, we will illustrate one of these interventions, with the 7th grade, and how it relates to the proposed resource. These data were excerpts from the aforementioned dissertation (Carvalho, 2023), which was approved by the ethics committee of the Pontifícia Universidade Católica de Campinas.

The work, in turn, was developed based on the ideas developed by the Subject Constitution Processes in Educational Practices (PROSPED) group, which, in its numerous research-intervention-art productions, has identified and substantiated the role of art as a psychological instrument in facilitating access to the phenomena under investigation. Among the various artistic materiality used and practices developed within the school context, the research is not limited to interventions with students, but also with other school professionals and family members working not only in Basic Education but also in Higher Education.

The development of the resource, therefore, was conceived by linking the aforementioned dissertation work, the group’s research and practices over the past few years, and collective reflections focused on transformative and powerful interventions in the school context in the development of new ways of thinking and acting among school actors. With this in mind, we selected several elements that we consider important in the development of this type of research and that we selected to constitute *PraPsi*. They are: (1) Intentionality, (2) Context and Setting, (3) Artistic Expressions, (4) Theoretical Framework, and (5) Action, Appreciation, and Evaluation. The image illustrates the dialectical movement among these dimensions.

**Figure 01 - *PraPsi* – Psychological Practices Mediated by Artistic Materiality**



The *PraPsi* seeks to inform psychologists’ collective actions and offer support for the planning and development of practices that utilize artistic expressions. In order to achieve this, a dialectical movement among the dimensions is necessary. These guiding dimensions aim to assist psychologists in their reflections on choosing a materiality and creating an action plan. They interact in a fluid movement, not limited to closed stages or structuring procedures.

Below, we will explain each of the dimensions. However, it is important to emphasize that they are organized according to the figure in this dialectical process, advancing and retreating while simultaneously changing and reconstructing each proposed dimension. As the professional moves to a new dimension, they

must return to the previous dimension, performing this circulation among the proposed dimensions, interventions, and materiality.

### **Intentionality**

Regarding the specificity of art psychology, Souza et al. (2018) emphasize intentionality as central to guiding the action that uses art to bring out subjectivities and foster the expression and elaboration of emotions. For the authors, the intentionality of the action guides the choice of materiality to be used, so as to affect the subjects and elicit emotions and reflections about the topic being worked on or investigated. By affecting the subjects and expanding reflection, the chosen materiality assumes the character of a psychological instrument, precisely because of its potential to foster new relationships between the higher psychological functions of the participating subjects.

Thus, to act as a psychological instrument, the chosen work must evoke contradictory emotions, enabling the subject to a state of contemplation and reflection. The authors emphasize that, by experiencing these contradictions, the subject can construct new meanings, overcoming the previous condition and building new connections and relations. Thus, it broadens the understanding of reality (Souza et al., 2018).

It is in this dimension that the intentionality of the intervention actions and research objectives is identified, interconnected with the other stages of the intervention-investigative process, in a continuous dialectical movement. Initially, it is important to understand the demands, possibilities, and implications of the research context. Identifying demands requires multiple observations and approaches, with systematic records, conversations with different stakeholders, developing an understanding of the demands, presenting the observations to the stakeholders involved, gathering suggestions, and adjusting the understanding of the issues. By understanding how the demand manifested itself, listening to and talking with the stakeholders, it is possible to develop a proposal for action.

### **Context and Setting**

With the demand clear and the intention defined, we must consider the characteristics of the location where the proposal will be developed. It is necessary to understand the context and, based on it, characterize the setting, its stakeholders, and the relations established within it. This is because understanding the context involves the other dimensions of the instrument, as it guides, for example, intentionality and materiality. The dimensions do not have separate proposals, just as planning the action, using artistic and/or media materiality, should not be distant from the context.

Understanding the context requires engaging with the actors that constitute it, which involves not only the school, its professionals, and students, but also the

surrounding community, families, and the bodies that regulate the functioning of school education within the State Department of Education and Regional Board of Education. Regarding the subjects, we must understand their historicity and engage with their manifestations in order to access the dialectical and contradictory movement of real-life phenomena.

The first step in defining the context is to define the target group for the intervention, as this type of critical approach in School Psychology always focuses on the collective. Although the goal is for the actions developed to affect all groups, only one group at a time can be targeted. Thus, within the context of research-intervention-art, this could involve students, teachers, administrators, other school education professionals, or even parents, family members, or professionals in the education system—all within the broader context. Even though these groups go beyond the school setting and are not the target of the research, considering their role is essential to understanding the context and observing the changes achieved by psychology's actions.

In this regard, the following questions need to be answered: Is the school public or private? What territory is it located in? What public and educational policies are geared towards it? How does the school relate to the public and the community? What are the socioeconomic conditions of its public, community, and professionals?

Regarding the target groups of the actions, it is important to consider several issues. Among them, assessing the size of the group, the current situation from the perspective of psychological development, and the subjects' knowledge base. Furthermore, it is important to consider the timing of the interventions and the timing of the interventions, taking care not to disrupt the teaching-learning dynamics of students and teachers, how students position themselves in relation to the activities, and the interest of adolescents in general and the group in particular in the materiality being considered.

In regard to the setting, represented by the school unit where the research-intervention-art is developed, beyond the knowledge of students and professionals, it is necessary to assess the relations and their dynamics, as well as the processes developed within them. Should we delimit the space in which the activities will take place - classroom, playground, library, or other? And regarding the time available, how should we determine the time period for the planned activity? If developing the activity in partnership with the teacher, what is this professional's role?

The resources for implementing the project also relate to the size of the setting. For example, does the venue have a projector/TV/sound system? If it's literary artistic materiality, how will you make them available? Individually for each person? On a weekly loan system? In a reading group? Will you only broadcast excerpts of the works on a projector? Do you need legal authorization,

or is the work available for free? Does the work format have multiple parts? In addition to the viewing, will there be a production? If so, what artistic materiality will you need—paper, pen, pencil, colored pencils, crayons, etc.? Therefore, considering the context and setting helps us choose more efficient artistic materiality, taking into account the intention and the proposed performance.

### **Artistic Expressions**

When choosing an artistic expression, we must have a command of it and its fundamentals, which equates to the history, the authors, and the means of expression. Therefore, this dimension concerns deepening specific knowledge about the chosen expressions and how to use them. Whatever the options, in-depth knowledge is required to understand the technique used in its production, its intentionality, the author, its dynamic characteristics, content, and form. Furthermore, it's important to understand the emotions and/or feelings at the heart of the work, the elements emphasized in the production - image, speech, soundtrack, colors, movement, lines - the production context, the main characteristics of the culture in which it is developed, the year of production, how it can be accessed, etc.

It's also essential to invest in how to work with the materiality, starting with choosing a good reproduction, quality productions appropriate for the age group and target audience. It's important to invest in appreciation, understanding that artistic expression isn't always familiar, as they may not be accustomed to appreciating images or certain productions, such as films, anime, documentaries, poetry, music, or novels. Therefore, it's necessary to develop an appreciation perspective, which may require several encounters until a different relation with viewers is established.

If the psychologist isn't familiar with this materiality but wishes to delve deeper into them for practical use, we recommend talking to others who know or enjoy these works, basing themselves on research and productions that utilize these media, searching specialized databases for each work, and browsing, watching, and reading as much as possible. Furthermore, after pre-selecting the works, they can watch them with other professionals to explore new possibilities and reflect upon them before deciding which ones to use.

In this pre-selection, it's necessary to analyze the artistic expression in relation to the other dimensions of the instrument discussed so far - Intentionality, Context, and Setting. This allows for reformulation and rethinking of the works, raising questions such as: Does this chosen work relate to intentionality? Is it appropriate for the proposed group? Is it of an appropriate duration for the time I have?

### **Theoretical Framework**

This dimension of *PraPsi* is a prerequisite for intervention actions, with the use of materiality that mediate the phenomenon under investigation and which

must be transformed. The foundation focuses on the interventionist role of the psychologist. Regarding the theoretical assumptions underlying critical psychology, it is important to revisit the guiding principles of action aimed at the collective and collaborative.

These principles consider the subject as the author of their own story, constituted through the interactions they undertake, in which they appropriate culture, transforming themselves while also transforming culture. Mastering this knowledge is fundamental to the complexification of the way their psyche functions, at increasingly elaborate levels.

In the case of the use of materiality for artistic or media expressions, we base our work on the Psychology of Art (Vygotsky, 1999), understood as the capacity of these expressions to affect subjects, especially in the emotional realm. Therefore, knowledge of this is essential for professionals intending to carry out this type of intervention, understanding its power to promote reflection and awareness (Souza, 2016, 2021; Souza et al., 2016). When assessing the theoretical foundations, it is also important to understand the existing research in the field about the topic.

### **Action, Appreciation, and Evaluation**

Finally, the last dimension highlighted refers to the development of activities in a relation of application and evaluation that intertwine with the creation of the proposal. Before implementing the proposal, it is necessary to relate all the dimensions presented and reflect on them, also keeping in mind the objectives. This analysis allows us to reflect on the effectiveness of the materiality, in a given context and setting, whether it is appropriate to the intention of the action, its relations with the demands and target audience, and whether the foundation is sufficient for the action or requires further exploration by the professional.

However, it is important to emphasize that this reflection process is not limited to prior practice. It must be conducted dialectically during the appreciation of artistic expressions, intervention proposals, and the project's practices as a whole, including evaluation moments. This recursive movement allows us to reformulate the proposal and connect even more closely with the participants.

In short, dialogic planning, considering intentionality, context and setting, and artistic expressions, supported by the foundation of the instrument's actions and the theoretical framework of Historical-Cultural Psychology, specifically the Psychology of Art, is fundamental to the development of collective activities that utilize art. As guiding dimensions of research-intervention-art, *PraPsi* can contribute to the critical and conscious action of professionals who wish to use anime, manga and other artistic materiality in the school context.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Seeking to clarify the dimensions described here, we will report on an intervention carried out at a state school in the state of São Paulo, with 7th grade students. In March 2022, the school management spoke to us for the first time about the students in the “worst class in the school,” who “were unable to interact adequately,” and as a result, incidents of bullying, repeated absences, and homophobic behavior were increasing. At the time, the school management asked us to give a talk on the topics of bullying and respect.

We listened to the teachers’ complaints and responded that we needed to engage with the class, conduct some observations, and conduct conversations to better understand the phenomenon. We started attending some teachers’ classes, talking with them and the students. After a few weeks, we realized that this was a problem with several dimensions more complex than the isolated manifestations we had reported. These issues involved not only the students, but also the teachers and their families. The main problems go beyond bullying and homophobia: School stakeholders, including students and professionals, struggled to perceive, respect, or coexist with differences of any kind.

Thinking about our *PraPsi*, we understand that the “Intentionality” stage not only connects the intended materiality, but also represents the complexity of interactions and relations in professional practice. In this case, it was necessary to listen to the needs, speak with several students and professionals, and map out the issues before proposing an action plan.

As mentioned, the action format was developed within the research-intervention-art framework, which seeks to simultaneously produce knowledge and access the phenomena investigated, thus offering support “for the development of psychological practices committed to transforming the conditions that produce alienation and suffering in individuals” (Souza et al., 2018, p. 376) using art. This way of accessing reality enables the production of “meanings and senses that must be considered both in research and in the reorganization and direction of practice” (Souza & Arinelli, 2019, p. 14). The choice of research-intervention-art is related to the proposal’s need to not only access reality but also promote actions that allow the “phenomenon to be set in motion” (Souza et al., 2018, p. 381).

The actions developed at this school by the research group already use this methodology because we believe that research in schools is only justified if it produces continuous transformations in the ways students, teachers, and administrators act and think. Transformations, in particular, in the way they think and act when accessing the phenomenon and placing it in this reflective and dialectical movement. Furthermore, the group uses artistic materiality because they are capable of bringing emotions to life through contemplation and

estrangement (Souza et al., 2018, Souza & Arinelli, 2019).

Based on the context, the intention was chosen: to address the phenomenon through differences and their confrontation, and to promote changes in the students’ ways of acting and thinking about this topic. With the intention defined, we moved on to the “Context and Setting” stage. We considered collective interventions within the classroom, believing in the group’s potential. Three stages were outlined: first, the students would watch the episode of the chosen anime in the classroom; then, the psychologist-researcher would lead a discussion, seeking reflections about the differences and finally, the students would produce a free production, enabling them to express and elaborate on the phenomenon in question—in this case, differences and the possibilities of coexistence.

The group worked on was the 7th grade class, with an average of 40 students. Conversations with them revealed the students’ interest in anime and manga from their notebook covers, their distinctive clothing, and their bags with buttons. Connecting the group with intentionality, the proposal continued to use the artistic materiality “anime,” believing it would facilitate dialogue and expression on the topic.

In partnership with the Portuguese teacher, the students were offered two class periods per week (average 90 minutes). This partnership would be essential for working on various topics weekly, following the structured format. The research group understands the partnership between psychologists and school professionals as a relation-building process that has at its organizing core understanding, oriented toward confronting and overcoming “crystallized ways of experiencing situations that impede the development of pedagogical and psychological actions that promote development, teaching, and learning” (Oliveira, 2018, p. 111).

Still considering the scenario, when observing the school’s technological resources, the psychologist-researcher considered broadcasting the anime from her personal laptop in the classroom, which had a TV and HDMI cable. The school’s internet connection wasn’t working properly, and a computer wasn’t initially accessible. Therefore, the psychologist-researcher would bring the anime to broadcast without relying on the internet or the school’s technological devices. Furthermore, a survey of the artistic materiality needed for the entire intervention was conducted, documenting them and discussing them with management. The psychologist-researcher provided all unavailable artistic materiality, also verifying which streaming platforms the anime was available without infringing copyright.

Once the context and scenario were determined, we moved on to the Artistic Expressions dimension. Initially, it was considered that since three stages were proposed for the intervention (watching, discussing, and producing), the total time could not exceed 120 minutes.

Therefore, long and short anime were removed from the proposal to avoid overshooting or overshooting. One episode per day (average 25-30 minutes) was planned.

When considering the anime, we understand that it's not just about presenting it to adolescents, but also about immersing ourselves, together with students and teachers, in the countless possibilities of meanings and significance that the work expresses (Souza et al., 2018). In order to assist in this process, the psychologist must immerse themselves in both the foundation and preparation before choosing which work will best address the possibility of putting emotions into motion, with clarity about which emotions should be activated. In this case, those related to differences and their coexistence.

To choose an anime, for example, it's essential to research and understand the works. A process of immersion is necessary for professionals, and this includes watching or reading the series many times, thoroughly researching the work, as well as the creator, whether there are sequels, the overall plot, etc.

Furthermore, anime (like films) can have explicitly pornographic content or contain themes aimed exclusively at adult audiences. In this sense, it's important to understand the target audience for which the work was produced and consider the target audience the proposed project is seeking to reach.

Considering anime on this topic, some were researched that the psychologist-researcher had already watched and believed aligned with the intention. Furthermore, a new search was conducted for other anime that could be included in this pre-selection, researching their references. The psychologist-researcher watched the first episode of all the pre-selected works (including those she already knew and had seen), noting possible themes and reflections. She related the artistic expression to the other dimensions of the *PraPsi* program she had developed so far—Intentionality, Context, and Setting—modifying the works as necessary. These correlations were important for creating exclusion and inclusion criteria, such as: the anime must be dubbed in Portuguese to facilitate students with reading difficulties; the anime must (preferably) have a reference manga to encourage reading; available online and free of charge for future reference/follow-up, if the student is interested, etc.

Finally, each work was examined as a whole. Even if the proposal is to broadcast only the first episode in the classroom, it is an ethical commitment that the professional must make when trying to understand at least how the work develops after that moment. If one of the intentions was students to continue watching the work, reading the manga, and discussing it with each other, this means that the plot development cannot have themes that clash with that group or proposal, becoming inappropriate. And this sometimes happens.

One example is works that change production studios, or their copyrights are sold, and from that moment on, the industry alters them as they see fit. This isn't limited to anime and manga, but also to series, sequel films, adaptations, etc.

Thus, the anime chosen to explore the theme of differences was *Boku no Hero Academia* (or *My Hero Academia*), directed by Nagasaki (2016) and based on the manga of the same name by Horikoshi (2014). The story follows Izuku Midoriya, a young boy who dreams of being a superhero in a society where most people possess some kind of power, called "individuality." In the anime, superheroes are treated like any other profession: there are preparatory schools, unions, salaries, internships, and so on. Midoriya, however, possesses no individuality and yet refuses to give up his dream of entering one of the best academies to learn to be a hero. One day, he meets his favorite hero, All Might, who changes his life. The anime begins with the focuses on the main character and builds upon this by introducing other teenagers who also strive to be superheroes and the various challenges they face.

Various themes are addressed, such as being different, bullying, choosing a career, the process of family acceptance (or not), dedication, finding internships, jobs, etc. We note that, although fantasy is very present, the focus of the work is not on the powers, but rather on how teenagers experience growth and maturity in their quest to achieve their dreams and professional paths (in this case, becoming heroes). The focus on the characters' relationships, sacrifices, dedication, and persistence are central to the work, reinforcing the idea of solidarity with the reader and viewer, placing superpowers as a backdrop to each character's stories and personal challenges.

The anime is a serialized series with over 159 episodes (still being released, with an average of 25 minutes per episode, and is an action genre), and its manga was completed with 432 chapters in August 2024. The researcher watched over 100 episodes and read over 150 chapters of the manga before considering using the work in the project, reinforcing the need to gain a basic understanding of the work.

Finally, we followed the "Action, Appreciation, and Evaluation" stage. All electronic devices involved were tested, in addition to verifying that all the necessary artistic materiality for the production were available. On that day, despite all the preparations for all aspects, it was not possible to have both class periods, and the activity was split into two days. This incident is important to report to demonstrate that unforeseen events can occur during any stage. Keeping this in mind should also help with changes, rearrangements, and redesigned if necessary.

The psychologist-researcher first introduced herself and explained her work and project. She informed the

class that they would be watching an anime and asked them to pay close attention, as they would be doing some activities later. After the presentation, a discussion began, led by the psychologist-researcher, using trigger questions such as: How did you feel watching the episode? What did the creator want to convey? What did it remind you of? What situations does it evoke? etc. Next, the students were given the artistic materiality they would use for their individual productions, such as blank, unlined paper and markers.

The students were able to discuss and complete their productions within the allotted time. The activities were collected and later helped the psychologist-researcher observe interpretations, reflections, and generalizations, enabling her to create and modify action plans with these adolescents, considering new demands and concerns they expressed in their productions or during the debate. Using the anime in question helped students reflect on differences, bullying, and violence at school, allowing them to rethink their context, the relations among them, and their forms of expression. Consider one example: after watching the anime that depicted bullying experienced by one of the characters, one of the students said that bullying isn't right or wrong; it depends.

Whether the person on the receiving end accepts it or not, whether you're close to them or not... It's a matter of respect. It's okay among friends, because friends can't take it personally; then it's not bullying, it's just a joke. (Student Speaks, Field Diary [FD] No. 18, September 13, 2022)

In this situation, the psychologist-researcher tried to ask questions that would encourage reflection from all the students in the room. Is what's good or cool for you the same for everyone? Can your friend say they don't like it? Couldn't they be scared or embarrassed? Questions like these encouraged other students to speak up and report the violent behavior they were experiencing. They tried to reason with the student collectively: "Not every joke you make is a joke" and "People aren't obligated to like and accept what you do to them," reporting acts that had offended or attacked them.

Later, some students came to speak to the psychologist-researcher, as they felt comfortable reporting the bullying they were experiencing due to the space created for them to express themselves, feeling safe and supported by the group. They identified with the character, and the discussion led by the psychologist helped them position themselves (FD No. 18, September 13, 2022).

There was a reflective movement involving the collective, and a broadening and diversification of opinions and perceptions regarding the topic of relations and differences within the school context. The episode brought them into contact with contradictory feelings

and perceptions: friendships that make us suffer; friendships in which we cannot express our feelings; friendships that make us feel alone.

This reflective process, seeking a transformative space within the school context during the intervention, was possible due to the psychologist-researcher's prior care in considering all the dimensions presented. To achieve this, it was necessary to define an intentionality in the proposed action that placed the subjects as protagonists facing the phenomenon, understand the context and setting, choose an artistic expression and a foundation supported by the collective-collaborative-transformative principle, and implement this movement of change and alteration based on new constructs that the collective evokes.

### FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Art allows us to experience emotions that, intertwined with imagination, foster new possibilities for reflection, expanding new perceptions and actions. This process is especially crucial in the school context, where the appropriation of complex knowledge promotes the development of higher psychological functions, especially imagination and conceptual thinking, which are important for broadening reflection and new possibilities for understanding oneself and reality. However, art alone may not mobilize or change our lives or those of students and school professionals. In order to use it ethically, powerfully, and transformative, it requires a process of appropriation and mastery of knowledge in the field of the arts, articulated with knowledge from Psychology, and supported by critical assumptions that sustain engaged and transformative action. Above all, it is necessary to become an art appreciator, investing in developing a sensitive perspective that focuses on the emotions at the heart of such productions.

With this need in mind, we created the guiding resource called Psychological Practices Mediated by Artistic Materiality (*PraPsi*), organized into five dimensions that aid in the production of practices mobilized by art: Intentionality; Context and Setting; Artistic Expressions; Theoretical Framework and Action, Appreciation and Evaluation. However, it is important to consider that this is not a closed procedure, to be used following the same model. The proposed dimensions are interconnected in a fluid movement, not limited to closed structuring steps or procedures, inviting professionals to navigate among the dimensions by creating different action plans for each proposal, context, and demand.

Considering collective practices based on intervention research (Souza, 2019), the resource was also conceived through collective thinking, interconnecting not only research but also the group's research and interventions over the years and the collective reflections that seek transformative practices in the school context.

We believe that *PraPsi*, as a guiding resource for the

research-intervention-art, using artistic expressions, can contribute to the critical and conscious action of professionals who wish to use artistic materiality in the school context. The proposal is in line with critical school psychology, which, according to Guzzo (2008, p. 22), seeks dialogue, reflection and intervention seeking to “discover ways to make the school a space for the exercise of freedom and autonomy”. We agree with the author that the “psychologist’s action is political, insofar as it must influence changes in their work context” (Guzzo, 2008, p. 23).

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