

## Autobiographical Videos as a Pedagogical Strategy in Distance Education



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**Abstract:** This article analyzes the use of autobiographical videos as an engagement and humanization strategy in Distance Education. We examined 122 videos posted on Moodle by first-year students in the Philosophy Degree program (UAB/UFSC). The results demonstrate an enhancement of teacher and community identity, however, digital exclusion and technical limitations demand infrastructure and critical mediation.

**Keywords:** Teacher Training; Digital Narrative; Pedagogical Strategy.

### Vídeos Autobiográficos como Estratégia Didática na Educação a Distância

**Resumo:** Este artigo analisa vídeos autobiográficos como estratégia para engajamento e humanização na Educação a Distância (EaD). Analisamos 122 vídeos postados no Moodle por calouros do curso de Licenciatura em Filosofia (UAB/UFSC). Os resultados mostram fortalecimento da identidade docente e comunidade, mas exclusão digital e limitações técnicas demandam infraestrutura e mediação crítica.

**Palavras-chave:** Formação Docente; Narrativa Digital; Estratégia Didática.

## **Vídeos Autobiográficos como Estrategia Didáctica em la Educación a Distancia**

**Resumen:** Este artículo analiza los vídeos autobiográficos como estrategia para el compromiso y la humanización en la Educación a Distancia (EaD). Analizamos 122 vídeos publicados en Moodle por estudiantes de primer año del curso de Licenciatura en Filosofía (UAB/UFSC). Los resultados muestran un fortalecimiento de la identidad docente y de la comunidad, pero la exclusión digital y las limitaciones técnicas exigen infraestructura y mediación crítica.

**Palabras clave:** Formación Docente; Narrativa Digital; Estrategia Didáctica.

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## INTRODUCTION

The digitalization of media has transformed education by promoting interaction and the development of skills in virtual environments. In Distance Education (DE), forming connections can be difficult due to geographic dispersion and technological limitations, particularly in courses at the Open University of Brazil (Gouvêa; Ferreira, 2023). This article reports on the production of autobiographical videos by first-year Philosophy students at the Federal University of Santa Catarina (UFSC) as a pedagogical strategy to encourage interaction and welcome new students. Drawing from digital literacy (Lima Neto; Carvalho, 2022; Cruz, 2016) and pedagogical mediation (Moran, 2020; Cruz, 2018), this activity fostered an affective, virtual space that encouraged reflections on teaching identity.

Furthermore, using autobiographical videos as a pedagogical strategy was an initiative that responded to the transformations imposed by the pandemic, which intensified the need for technology-mediated practices (Nóvoa, 2022). The author emphasizes that contemporary teacher training requires educators who can integrate digital media with reflective practices to meet the demands of a changing educational market.

According to Hull and Katz (2006), autobiographical videos can stimulate identity reflection and digital literacy. In this study, the term "autobiographical video" refers to audiovisual productions in which students narrate their personal and professional trajectories in relation to the teaching context. Though not standardized in Portuguese literature, the term echoes concepts such as "digital storytelling" (Lambert, 2013) and "autobiographical videos" (Hull; Katz, 2006), widely discussed in international contexts. These authors emphasize the potential of these narratives to encourage identity reflection and develop communication skills, particularly in digital environments.

Inspired by Lambert's (2013) digital storytelling, the practice proposes that students narrate their trajectories by connecting personal experiences to teacher training. It also dialogues with Soares *et al.* (2022), who demonstrate that digital narratives, such as autobiographical videos, promote protagonism and digital literacy as a means of integration in distance learning.

The guiding question of this research is: How can autobiographical videos contribute to making distance education more humane and engaging in teacher training? This question is relevant in distance education courses where teachers typically attempt to welcome the class in the first week, creating an atmosphere of safety and affection. They encourage students to introduce themselves and





express their expectations for the semester. In person, especially in undergraduate programs, teachers opt for welcoming activities to create a sense of community, such as having students sit in a circle and introduce themselves. This approach aligns with Freire's (2014) view of education as a dialogical encounter.

In distance education courses, such as those in the UAB model adopted at the Federal University of Santa Catarina (UFSC), this approach poses a challenge for professors. Courses comprise campuses throughout Santa Catarina, where students interact with professors and tutors in person and remotely in synchronous videoconferences and asynchronous meetings on the Moodle platform. Given this setup, it is crucial to simulate in-person interaction within a virtual environment, whether synchronous or asynchronous. This requires considering the technology-mediated situation of geographically dispersed groups forming a single class. These groups consist of individuals who are unfamiliar with each other, and the presentation dynamics aim to foster integration.

To foster bonds between classmates and create a welcoming atmosphere, you can replicate the in-person oral presentation experience by delivering "live and in color" presentations using videoconferencing cameras in a synchronous class. However, the experience of the pandemic has made it clear that having a camera on can make many students uncomfortable. Connection issues, lack of a dedicated space at home, insecurity about their image or voice, low self-esteem, and lack of familiarity with audiovisual language can affect completion of this task and diminish the proposal's effectiveness. Furthermore, initial semesters often have large classes, and it is not always possible to allocate enough time in the syllabus for everyone to express themselves calmly and in depth.

Rodrigues, Almeida and Valente (2020), and Lima and Santos (2021) point out other elements to consider and discuss within the scope of distance education in the Brazilian context. These elements include the lack of laboratories and connectivity as main barriers in centers, dropout rates linked to a lack of institutional support and inadequate infrastructure, regional inequalities in internet access impacting participation in distance education, and insufficient financial resources for maintaining centers and promoting digital inclusion.

To address these issues, one of the authors of this text was inspired by her teaching practices in the Pedagogy program at UFSC. For several years, she has used a media profile assessment dynamic in her in-person classes during the first week of the semester. The strategy involves students in the challenge of producing videos, watching them collectively, and interacting virtually in a Moodle forum to share comments and impressions on their colleagues' productions, based on their ideas about



teacher training for media literacy in digital culture (Estevam, 2024). This teaching strategy was adapted for a beginning class in the UAB/UFSC distance education Philosophy Degree program in 2023-2024.

The study is justified by the digitalization of education and the need for innovative practices within the UAB system. The UAB system faces challenges such as digital exclusion and dropout, requiring pedagogical practices that promote inclusion and engagement (Gouvêa; Ferreira, 2023). Thus, this study aims to advance pedagogical strategies that integrate technology and humanism, providing an alternative to public distance education. According to Moran (2015), we understand humanization as the valorization of personal narratives and affective bonds that strengthen connections between learners in virtual environments.

Another reason for this study is that the proposal discussed here invited students to create autobiographical video presentations. Students were asked to share information about themselves and their media experience during the pandemic, a time when screen time abruptly increased, and how they saw themselves as future teachers. The video becomes an opportunity to narrate experiences, develop meaning about technology use in their training, and envision themselves in a teaching role that cannot exist without media. Therefore, the task articulates three fundamental dimensions: embracing individuals in their uniqueness, expanding digital literacy, and critically reflecting on teaching in times of technological mediation.

This article describes the planning, execution, and evaluation of this experience, examining the results, challenges, and lessons learned. The analysis favors a consolidative approach, systematizing the potential of autobiographical videos as active learning tools that humanize distance learning, develop narrative skills, and prepare future teachers to integrate digital media with critical pedagogical practices. Aimed at an interdisciplinary audience, the study offers a prospective reflection on the role of digital technologies in teacher training, contributing to the debate on educational transformations in the context of digitalization. The article is structured in five sections: Introduction, Theoretical Review, Methodology, Results, and Conclusion, pointing to directions for future research.

## 2 DEVELOPMENT

Human interactions are central to virtual learning communities. Digital media humanize

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distance education by fostering meaningful connections (Moran, 2020). In Brazil, digital narratives, such as autobiographical videos, promote authorship and critical thinking in teacher training (Rodrigues, 2020), thereby strengthening professional identity in digital contexts. According to Cruz (2016), digital literacy, stimulated by practices such as digital storytelling, can support teacher training adapted to digital culture.

In this sense, video production emerges as an alternative to synchronous presentations, as students often encounter barriers such as insecurity or connection issues (Selwyn, 2012). From the Critical Didactics perspective, based on the work of Freire (2014) and Candau (2012; 2014) and in line with the work of Longarezi, Pimenta and Puentes (2023), Martin-Franchi (2024), and Pimenta (2019), this strategy connects personal narratives to educational challenges, providing reflective, contextualized teacher training.

Video narratives, when considered a teaching strategy, provide elements that support teacher training, particularly with regard to teacher identity. Tardif (2002) demonstrates that teacher identity is constructed through the interaction of experiential and professional knowledge. Experiential knowledge is derived from personal experiences, while professional knowledge is acquired through training and practice. In the context of distance education, where a lack of face-to-face interaction can hinder the development of this knowledge, autobiographical videos allow students to narrate their experiences and connect them to the teaching role, promoting more reflective and contextualized training.

We proposed experimenting with a new way of making subjects visible through audiovisual narratives by offering the alternative of producing autobiographical presentation videos (Pillar, 2024). We asked students to express themselves in a medium other than writing while informally surveying their knowledge of digital technologies to measure the class's media literacy. However, this strategy encounters resistance, technical limitations, and methodological impasses in practice, especially in large, heterogeneous classes with students from diverse social, technical, and emotional backgrounds.

Even when the production activity is finished, the socialization of the experiences narrated in the videos may not occur. This can be due to difficulties organizing an audience so everyone can view their classmates' work or a lack of group reflection on the stories, which diminishes their motivational and engaging role in the class. These issues can undermine the educational value of the proposal and its pedagogical intent, particularly when it is merely a formal step disconnected from a broader educational project.



In this sense, autobiographical presentation videos can expand digital literacy by involving creative experimentation with images and sounds, rather than being merely a bureaucratic ritual. When invited to tell their stories, students practice communication and media skills, reflect on their journeys, and share aspects of their identities that rarely appear in traditional educational settings.

### 3 METHODOLOGY

In the context of the study, this text describes and analyzes the didactic strategy of producing autobiographical videos, or video narratives, by 122 students of the Introduction to Distance Education discipline in the Bachelor's Degree in Philosophy distance education program at the Federal University of Santa Catarina (UFSC) in 2023-2. These students were from five different centers: Criciúma, Indaial, Joinville, Lages, and Videira. Inspired by digital storytelling methodology (Lambert, 2013) and Tardif's (2002) reflections on teaching identity, the strategy aimed to strengthen teacher training in virtual contexts by centering narratives on students' individual experiences. The study examined the implementation of autobiographical videos in the Introduction to Distance Education course with 122 UAB/UFSC students. The study employed stages of analysis described by Yin (2005), including defining the context and analyzing qualitative data.

The study sought evidence of engagement, critical reflection, and development of media skills and teaching identity in videos posted by students on Moodle. The course instructor formulated the activity proposal, adapting it from her experience with in-person dynamics. She implemented it with the help of the distance tutor, who moderated the Moodle forums, and the in-person tutors, who coordinated video support during integration activities at the campuses. These activities, which are defined as pedagogical actions that promote acceptance, interaction, and a sense of community among geographically dispersed students in the UAB model, consisted of producing, sharing, and discussing autobiographical videos. During the first week of the course, each student was tasked with recording a video no longer than one minute in length in response to four questions (see Chart 1). The objective was to foster emotional connections and encourage contemplation on the subject of teacher education.

To support the assignment, the course Moodle included planning information, prioritizing guidance and instructions on narrative, technical (audio and lighting) and reflective (expressing values) aspects. The distance tutor created an editing manual for TikTok, a social media platform for video creation. The manual emphasized that the focus should be on the message and suggested using



cell phones, given that some students have limited access.

After recording, students were to share their videos on the Moodle forum the following week, dividing them into six groups corresponding to the course's core areas. The videos were also to be uploaded as files using the platform's assignment tool.

**Chart 1** – Task statement for the autobiographical presentation video

PRESENTATION VIDEO WITH INSTRUCTIONS	
Basic Training	<p>Produce your presentation video, using images and sound to describe what kind of teacher I want to be. How do I see myself using media in my professional future? How do I envision myself as a teacher post-pandemic? What might change in teaching practice after these remote/online teaching practices?</p> <p>The video can be made in any program (use horizontal format) and last a maximum of one minute. Try TikTok or another app known for its recording and editing features. The style is free, choose how you want to tell your story. The important thing is to answer the questions and stick to the time.</p>
To post to the forum	<p>Save your file with your name. Each student will reply to this thread to post their video. The maximum file size is 100 MB. If the file is larger, save it to YouTube or another digital space and post the video link in the forum. If you use Movie Maker, don't forget to save your project as a finished movie. If using PowerPoint, save the sound to the file as well.</p> <p>In this forum you can watch your colleagues' videos and comment on what you thought of each of them by clicking reply in the colleague's topic.</p> <p>Watch and reflect on the videos in a group at the center with the tutors on 9/9.</p>

**Source:** Adapted by the authors, based on the corpus of research (2024).

The following week, students watched the videos in groups or individually and commented on the Moodle forum to promote dialogue and reflection. The integration activities, which took place either in person at the campuses or synchronously via videoconference, were adapted to accommodate the students' geographic dispersion across five campuses. Tutors had the autonomy to organize the screenings. Alternatively, considering UAB's hybrid model, campus tutors were encouraged to organize video presentations and promote discussion of each other's work.

Thus, each center had the autonomy to provide assistance in person or remotely, either synchronously or asynchronously. Synchronous assistance was provided via videoconference, where everyone watched the videos simultaneously at a mutually agreed-upon time. The asynchronous forum format enabled students who were unable to travel to the centers or participate in the videoconference at the scheduled time to engage in the activity. These students watched and





commented on their peers' videos at their own pace within the Moodle virtual environment. Due to logistical difficulties, the inexperience of the tutoring team, limited time to organize the activity at the beginning of the semester, and varied assistance conditions, it was decided not to include the video viewing in the survey despite the valuable interaction it provided. One suggestion for future applications is to include an observation protocol that tasks tutors with recording data during sessions. Another research alternative would be to focus on comments made by students in the virtual environment to capture their impressions and reflections on the teaching strategy.

Given the research corpus and methodological choices, the analysis focused on full transcriptions of students' content published in autobiographical videos in audiovisual format. To determine how the students responded to the questions, the videos were manually transcribed using Audacity audio extraction software.

The corpus underwent a content analysis following Bardin's (2011) guidelines: pre-analysis (initial reading), exploration (coding themes), and treatment (categorization).

The process involved cutting the 122 autobiographical student presentation videos into smaller segments. To elucidate the main findings and analyses, excerpts addressing common themes and representative of all the presentations were selected from the comments. The students' responses were labeled E.1, E.2, and so on, to preserve their anonymity.

In the second stage of coding the themes, the a priori categories were proposed based on the list of questions that the students were to follow as a guide for recording the autobiographical videos. These categories were defined as "Technological Skills" and "Digital Literacy," based on the task script. The a posteriori categories emerged from a thorough reading of the autobiographical video transcripts and were grouped into three categories: "Empathy/Inclusion," "Critical Thinking/Contextualization," and "Facilitation".

These five categories aim to synthesize and reflect the themes referenced in the videos. They focus on mastering technological tools ("Technological Skills"), appreciating human aspects of teaching ("Empathy/Inclusion"), connecting videos to critical reflections ("Critical Thinking/Contextualization"), facilitating learning ("Facilitation"), and using digital technologies critically and creatively ("Digital Literacy").

**Chart 2 – Thematic categories and main findings**

Category	Percentage	Speech example
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Technological Skills	75%	E.5: "Extensive use of digital resources."
Empathy/Inclusion	68%	E.36: "Videos humanized, promoting equity."
Critical Thinking/Contextualization	38%	E.41: "I connected my narrative to educational reality."
Facilitation	62%	E.17: "Gamification made learning engaging."
Digital Literacy	55%	E.33: "TikTok stimulated creativity in editing."

Source: Prepared by the authors (2025).

The five categories indicate the frequency with which the themes were mentioned in the transcripts, as well as an example of speech related to each theme. This organization enabled us to map how students perceived the videos as pedagogical tools and how these resources influenced their views on their training and practice as future educators.

Finally, we attempted to synthesize the data by analyzing the thematic axes that emerged from the intersection of the categories presented in Chart 2. The terms were grouped into three thematic axes: "Teaching Profession," "Relationship with Media," and "Professional Future." This highlighted the similarities found as a result of the proposed activity.

It is worth noting that the analysis had limitations that prevented triangulation with other sources. For example, observations could have been made during the sessions (in the centers or online), and interviews could have been conducted with center tutors. Perhaps triangulation would have provided insight into the predominance of positive narratives, which may have been influenced by the way the forums were moderated. Furthermore, the digital exclusion and insecurity mentioned by some students (E.29 and E.42) suggest that the strategy is not universally accessible and requires adjustments for different contexts.

## 4 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS

In our data analysis, we examined how students addressed aspects related to teaching identity construction, technological skill development, and media relationships in education in the videos. The theoretical basis for interpreting the results is primarily supported by the following concepts: pedagogical mediation (Moran, 2015; Cruz, 2018; Santos; Carvalho; Pimentel, 2016); digital literacy (Kenski, 2021; Prensky, 2001); teacher identity (Tardif, 2002; Nóvoa, 2009); and networked education (Castells, 2001).



The activity was highly engaging, and all students submitted their videos on time. The videos varied in style; some students opted for formal presentations, while others explored TikTok's creative features, such as transitions and captions. A notable moment among the narratives created was a video by a student (E.7) who expressed the desire to "be a teacher who inspires and transforms lives," accompanied by images of a classroom. Another highlight was a video by a student (E.36) who emphasized respecting diversity and including everyone, thereby reinforcing the inclusive nature of the practice. These productions demonstrated how the videos allowed students to express their values and visions, helping them develop a teacher identity.

Video production depended on technical and pedagogical support. WhatsApp and TikTok were highlighted as accessible platforms (E.33: "Use WhatsApp and TikTok for interaction"). However, challenges such as digital exclusion (E.39) underscore the necessity of infrastructure. TikTok, in particular, highlights students' creativity. They explored short, dynamic formats to introduce themselves to the class. WhatsApp served as a channel for continuous interaction. This choice reflects a pedagogical mediation strategy that values the tools' familiarity and interactivity.

In the "Technological Skills" category, 75% of students, as indicated by student E.5, reported confidence in using digital tools. However, 15% of students (E.39) reported difficulty accessing the internet, highlighting aspects of digital exclusion. In the "Empathy/Inclusion" category, reports such as E.36 emphasized the humanization of the virtual environment. However, others, such as E.42, revealed insecurity when recording, indicating emotional barriers. The "Critical Thinking/Contextualization" category was less prevalent (38%), suggesting technological idealization, as in E.44 ("Media are common"), a notion that requires further reflection. The "Facilitation" and "Digital Literacy" categories demonstrated engagement and the pedagogical use of videos. However, cases like E.29 revealed editing difficulties, indicating the need for ongoing training. The "Technology/Engagement" category reached 62%, with examples like E.17 ("gamification") demonstrating the potential of media to promote active and engaging learning. These percentages reflect the perception that technological proficiency is essential for teaching in the digital age, particularly in a distance learning context. Engagement is a central aspect. E.17 notes that media such as gamification make teaching "more engaging." This pattern suggests that students recognize the challenge of capturing attention in virtual environments saturated with digital stimuli and use videos to make learning more engaging. The high frequency of mentions of technological skills (75% and 62%) and the practical use of tools like WhatsApp and TikTok indicate that prospective teachers



see media as indispensable allies for connecting with students and streamlining distance education. This consolidates a technological and adaptable teaching identity.

The following description groups the thematic categories into three unifying axes ("Teaching Profession," "Relationship with Media," and "Professional Future"), attempting to bring together similar references based on the data collected from the videos.

In the "Teaching Profession" category, videos indicated the development of reflective teaching identities, such as E.6 ("reflect on practice") and E.7 ("inspire"), which align with Tardif's (2002) perspective on the importance of experiential knowledge in training. However, only 20% of the reports addressed specific pedagogical competencies, such as planning or mediation. This suggests that the activity prioritized personal aspirations over concrete teaching practices. For example, E.50 reported difficulty connecting her narrative to educational objectives, indicating the need for more structured guidelines to integrate reflection and practice, as Nóvoa (2009) stated.

E.6 ("reflecting on practice") and E.7 ("inspiring") in the "Teaching Profession" axis indicate a reflective teaching identity connected to Tardif (2002). However, teacher training was not widely explored, with few reports on specific pedagogical competencies. In the "Relationship with Media" axis, tools like TikTok were valued (E.33). However, the lack of mention of digital exclusion among 80% of students suggests excessive optimism, disregard, or lack of knowledge about the issue. In the "Professional Future" axis, E.41 ("critical thinking") reflects post-pandemic adaptation. However, E.45 ("digital competitiveness") focuses on technique rather than reflection.

In the Teaching Profession category, the results show that students view teaching as a multidimensional activity that goes beyond transmitting content. It also encompasses reflective, inspiring, and inclusive aspects. Aspects related to identity and aspirations in the teaching role reflect this perspective. For example, Student E.6 highlights the importance of "reflecting on pedagogical practice and changes in education," demonstrating a reflective stance that views teaching as a continuous process of analysis and adaptation. This identity reflection ("reflecting on practice") aligns with the importance of experiential knowledge in teacher training (Tardif, 2002). This suggests that future teachers value self-assessment as a tool for improving their practice, particularly in virtual environments where direct interaction is limited.

E.7 expresses the desire to "be a teacher who makes an impact, inspired by experiences," pointing to an inspirational aspiration. This aspiration reveals the intention to establish meaningful connections with students and use teaching as a means of motivating and transforming lives. In this



case, recording presentation videos served as a channel to externalize this vision, allowing students to project a strong teaching presence, even in a digital context. The emphasis on personal impact reinforces the idea that technology amplifies, rather than replaces, the human role of the teacher.

Inclusion also emerges as an essential pillar. E.36 exemplifies this concept by describing teaching as "collaborative and respectful of diversity." This pattern demonstrates a commitment to equity, acknowledging that teaching must address diverse realities and needs. Recording videos encouraged students to consider how media can welcome and integrate people, overcoming the typical barrier of virtual isolation. The three indicators—reflectivity (E.6), inspiration (E.7), and inclusion (E.36)—delineate a teaching identity that balances technological innovation with human values. This trait was a common theme in the analyzed responses. However, some students, such as E.29, struggled with the activity. E.29 reported difficulty editing videos, highlighting the need for greater technical training.

In the "Relationship with Media" axis, 62% of students valued tools such as TikTok and WhatsApp (E.33: "TikTok stimulated creativity"), which aligns with Kenski's (2021) idea of digital literacy. However, E.39 ("I recorded on public Wi-Fi") indicates that a lack of infrastructure limited participation, which reinforces the need for institutional policies. Students indicated significant appreciation for technological skills and the use of specific tools to promote engagement in this axis. Seventy-five percent of students demonstrated confidence in their digital skills with responses such as E.5 ("extensive use of digital resources") and E.7 ("constant use of digital tools"), intending to apply them in pedagogical practice.

In the "Professional Future" category, students designed an adapted teaching role for the post-pandemic period. E.41 ("Critical Thinking") emphasized integrating media to encourage critical thinking. However, E.45 ("Digital Competitiveness") focused on technical aspects, such as the use of interactive videos, without addressing the development of conscious citizens — a central objective of Critical Didactics (Freire, 2014; Longarezi, Pimenta, & Puentes, 2023; Martín-Franchí, 2024; Pimenta, 2019). The analysis suggests that although the videos stimulated innovative ideas, teacher training requires a greater emphasis on reflective and ethical competencies.

Students' views on their professional future in the "Professional Future" axis reflect the transformations imposed by the pandemic and the demands of an increasingly digitalized educational market. Students indicated aspects related to their vision of post-pandemic education, highlighting indicators such as adaptation, critical thinking, and digital competitiveness. For example, E.44 states



that "media are common, with technological opportunities," demonstrating the naturalization of digital tools after the pandemic. This student views technology as an integral part of education—the result of a forced adaptation that has become permanent—shaping their expectations of working in hybrid or virtual environments.

In the context of the Professional Future axis, critical thinking is valued as well, as demonstrated by E.41 ("Stimulating Critical Thinking with Technology"). This indicator reveals a focus on using media as both technical tools and means of fostering deep reflection among students. In this sense, recording videos may be seen as an opportunity to connect content to real-world contexts by encouraging students to plan narratives that stimulate analysis and debate. This approach suggests that future teachers want to do more than use technology superficially; they want to integrate it with broader pedagogical objectives, such as developing informed citizens.

The relevant axis indicates digital competitiveness, as expressed in E.45 ("More Engaging with Digital Stimuli"), which highlights the need to stand out in an educational landscape saturated with distractions. Students recognize that teachers must compete with platforms such as social media and games by using creative, interactive videos to maintain student interest. This pattern reflects a strategic vision of teaching that combines post-pandemic adaptation with innovation to ensure relevance in a job market that demands advanced digital skills. Together, these indicators — adaptation (E.44), critical thinking (E.41), and competitiveness (E.45) — delineate a professional future in which technology is a differentiator, though it must be balanced with educational purposes.

#### **4.1 Discussion of Results**

Data analysis reveals the development of a teaching identity that integrates technological competencies with values such as reflexivity, inspiration, and inclusion. The teaching profession is perceived as reflective (E.6), inspiring (E.7), and inclusive (E.36). This demonstrates that students aspire to play a transformative role, even in virtual environments. The relationship with media, characterized by valued competencies (75% and 62%) and the use of tools such as WhatsApp and TikTok (E.33), underscores the potential of videos to foster engagement (E.17). Students view the professional future as an area of adaptation to post-pandemic changes (E.44), emphasizing critical thinking (E.41) and digital competitiveness (E.45). This indicates their preparedness for the challenges of technology-mediated teaching.

Students prioritize technological skills (75%) over critical thinking (38%), suggesting an





excessive focus on technique (Selwyn, 2012). The limited mention of the digital divide (E.36 and E.39) indicates an overly optimistic view of structural challenges. Recording presentation videos catalyzed these perceptions, enabling students to express their identities and experiment with media use in a practical setting. Tools such as TikTok and WhatsApp were naturally incorporated, reflecting their integration into everyday life outside of education. The engagement promoted by videos, combined with reflexivity and inclusion, points to the transformative potential of distance learning. However, it depends on institutional support. Student E.50 illustrates this point when he writes, "I focused on using TikTok, but I didn't know how to connect the video to the course objectives." This perception suggests the need for clearer guidelines that align technical skills with reflective pedagogical practices.

Regarding the challenges encountered, we consider digital exclusion to be a significant barrier. Some students reported having difficulty accessing the internet or using the necessary equipment. They resorted to improvising, such as recording in public Wi-Fi locations. Furthermore, E.47 reported: "I had difficulty editing the video due to my lack of familiarity with the application, which made me unsure about the quality of the presentation." These experiences underscore the necessity of providing technical support and prior training in digital tools to ensure the inclusion of all students.

## 4.2 Analysis of the Experience in Light of Theory

Recording autobiographical presentation videos expanded the possibilities for reflection and professional development. This practice allowed students to externalize their perceptions and intentions during their training in an audiovisual format, which also mobilized experiential knowledge. We agree with Tardif (2002) that teaching identity is formed through interaction with knowledge and the educational context. In this sense, we posit that the experience of producing presentation videos at the beginning of the academic semester can intensify the process of teacher identity development. By creating narratives expressing their aspirations and values, students revisited their pedagogical choices and compared their intentions with their practical implementation. This process strengthens their professional self-perception. As emphasized by Santos, Carvalho and Pimentel (2016), this reflective dimension transforms the videos into dynamic mirrors that promote adjustments in communication and consolidate a teaching identity in transition that is adapted to the





demands of distance education.

Moran (2015) emphasizes that audiovisual technologies enhance active learning by enabling personalized narratives that connect participants to their realities. In the proposed practice, students use accessible tools, such as TikTok, to record one-minute presentations, a strategic choice reflecting the expectations of digital natives (Prensky, 2001)—a generation immersed in technological environments that value dynamic, interactive formats. This process develops technical skills, such as basic editing and using effects. It also fosters creativity and interactivity, which are essential elements for engagement in distance learning. Deterding *et al.* (2011) address this in their analysis of motivational technologies. Kenski (2021) emphasizes that digital literacy — the ability to critically use and create digital content — is a prerequisite for these practices to promote the involvement of future teachers in digital media and the teaching and learning processes in the digital era, which defines the demands of the 21st-century educational context.

Implementing this strategy in a virtual classroom reveals its potential to meaningfully connect theory and practice. Students were guided to answer questions such as "Who am I as a future teacher?" and "How do I see my role in education?" This required them to structure narratives that demanded planning and critical reflection. Sharing the videos in Moodle forums expanded the dialogical dimension of the practice, bringing the distance learning experience closer to face-to-face interaction. According to Freire (2014), education should promote dialogical learning that enables learners to "read the world" and intervene in it. This reflective exchange, mediated by videos, realizes that perspective. Like Nóvoa (2009), we situate teacher training as an ongoing process of critical reflection on one's professional trajectory. We highlight that videos function as instruments of professional development that can be adapted to digital teaching.

The concept of competence is central to the analysis. Zabala and Arnau (2010) define competence as the integration of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that enable individuals to act in real-life situations and provide meaningful learning. This concept aligns with the Critical Didactics perspective, which is based on the work of Freire (2014), Candau (2012; 2014), Pimenta (2019), Longarezi *et al.* (2023), and Martín-Franch (2024). This perspective rejects traditional models that are based on technocratic memorization and the isolated transmission of content. Critical Didactics proposes an emancipatory pedagogical practice focused on developing critical, conscious individuals with the potential to transform social reality. This perspective directly engages with the notion of teaching in a digital context, particularly with regard to distance learning and the UAB. When students

record presentation videos, they integrate practical skills such as technical problem-solving and audiovisual communication, as well as reflective attitudes that position them as agents of change in their future teaching careers.

The applicability of knowledge to real-life situations is one of the pillars of competence in Zabala and Arnau (2010) and resonates with the Critical Didactics critique of banking teaching models. According to Freire (2014), such models "deposit" decontextualized content. In contrast, competence requires a dynamic interplay between theory and practice to promote functional learning. For instance, when planning and recording videos, students encountered genuine challenges, such as structuring a narrative within a one-minute timeframe or adjusting the lighting. These challenges fostered the development of critical analysis and transformative action skills, breaking with the notion of passive students and aligning with the educational perspective of Critical Didactics (Longarezi; Pimenta; Puentes, 2023; Martín-Franchi, 2024; Pimenta, 2019). In this context, the analysis aligns with Candau's (2012; 2014) ideas, which reinforce the multidimensionality of teaching and learning by proposing a sensitive pedagogical practice to sociopolitical and cultural dimensions. This prepares individuals to face diverse contexts.

Furthermore, the full development of the individual, including the formation of critical citizens, aligns with Freire's (2014) emancipatory vision. The analyses present indications that support Candau's (2012; 2014) argument that education should consider diversity and social contexts to develop individuals who promote social justice through their knowledge. In the video, students expressed aspirations that transcend technical mastery and integrate critical attitudes, which Freire (2014) defines as part of a process of humanization. Thus, from this critical-reflective perspective, competence becomes an instrument of pedagogical and social transformation aligned with the ideals of liberating education, which is not limited to the concept of functionality.

Recording presentation videos can promote digital literacy, which is essential for initial teacher training in distance education. This approach aligns with Kenski (2021), who asserts that mastering digital tools both technically and critically enables educators to meet the expectations of "digital natives" (Prensky, 2001) by integrating engaging multimedia elements into their teaching. Using TikTok, for instance, allows one to explore features such as transitions and captions, thereby developing skills that transcend passive technology use and prepare future teachers for innovative practices.

This strategy has clear benefits: strengthening teacher identity through self-analysis,



expanding virtual interaction, and developing reflective and technological skills. However, the success of this strategy depends on a pedagogical approach that avoids superficiality, as Freire (2014) warns, as well as institutional support that overcomes structural barriers, as Nóvoa (2009) suggests. Thus, recording presentation videos in distance learning offers a promising path to developing reflective, technologically competent, and socially responsive teachers, provided that it is supported by critical reflective practice balancing innovation and humanism.

## CONSIDERATIONS

Autobiographical videos promoted engagement and reflection among 122 philosophy students in a distance education course at UAB/UFSC. However, digital exclusion and technical limitations require qualified infrastructure and mediation (E.29, E.39). This sparked a discussion about teaching identity in digital culture, enabling future educators to share their aspirations and reflect on their pedagogical practices. Tools such as TikTok and WhatsApp, which were already being used in other contexts, were employed to develop technological skills for educational purposes. Moodle forums fostered a sense of community by enabling the exchange of ideas and opinions on media-related topics.

The implications and limitations indicate that schools and undergraduate programs can adopt hybrid strategies combining digital tools and reflective practices to promote engagement, inclusion, and digital literacy expansion. However, the use of tools like TikTok and WhatsApp, although accessible, raises ethical questions about privacy and data security in educational settings. While no incidents were reported in this study, it is recommended that future applications include guidelines for the responsible use of these platforms.

However, the digital divide remains a significant obstacle that requires educational policies to ensure infrastructure and training. Analysis of the video content revealed an optimistic idealization of the media among students. This tendency should be balanced through reflective pedagogical practices that emphasize critical thinking.

Finally, time management was a hurdle. The tutor's video analysis and forum moderation required more effort than anticipated, underscoring the importance of institutional support.

This approach revealed the potential to develop communication and reflection skills, which are essential for teacher training. However, the lack of reports on specific pedagogical skills suggests



that the videos should be supplemented with practical activities, such as lesson planning or teaching simulations. This would reinforce the idea that a teaching identity is formed through interaction between theory and practice—a process that the activity only initiated. Future research could explore this strategy in other courses or contexts using interviews with tutors to triangulate the data.

Sustaining this practice requires public policies that expand access to infrastructure and training, especially within the UAB system. Based on this study, we conclude that the practice contributes to teacher training by developing reflective and technological skills and preparing teachers for digital contexts. However, qualified teaching mediation is required to avoid technological idealization and promote critical reflection, which is essential to teacher training. This study reinforced the idea that distance learning requires infrastructure and ongoing training to integrate technology and critical reflection, ensuring inclusive and meaningful education.

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