



Teachers' formation for Higher Education and the diversity in the docence/teaching

*Formação de professores para a Educação Superior e a
diversidade da docência*

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Abstract

The present article aims to analyze the formation of the teachers for the higher education and its relations with the diversity of teaching as a professional practice. The theme has been, slowly, questioned in the debate and ethics pedagogical and institutional practice. The teaching in the higher education is an undertaking that articulates different possibilities and demands pedagogical formation. I carry out a brief reading of the terms formation and teaching and presents an argument in favor of the nature and characteristics of the teaching, leaving show through an issue of diversity. To propose a start point for the formative process I chose six facets of the teaching that gave origin to this article, from

the observations achieved in the lectures in the graduation courses, in the area of health. I conclude defending the temptation of the construction of some formative principles such as: the teaching represents an amalgam marked by public policies, considers the diversity, and is a social practice contextualized.

Keywords: Higher Education. Formation of teachers. Diversity of the teachings.

Resumo

O presente artigo objetiva analisar a formação de professores para a Educação Superior e suas relações com a diversidade da docência como prática profissional. O tema vem sendo, paulatinamente, questionado no debate e na prática pedagógica ética e institucional. A docência na Educação Superior é um empreendimento que articula diferentes possibilidades e exige formação pedagógica. Realizo uma breve leitura dos termos formação e docência e apresento um argumento em favor da natureza e das características da docência, deixando transparecer a questão de sua diversidade. Para propor um ponto de partida para o processo formativo, escolhi seis facetas da docência que deram origem a este artigo, a partir de observações realizadas em aulas de cursos de graduação na área de Saúde. Concluo defendendo a tentativa de construção de alguns princípios formativos, tais como: a docência representa um amálgama marcado pelas políticas públicas, considera a diversidade, é prática social contextualizada.

Palavras-chave: Educação Superior. Formação de professores. Diversidade da docência.

Introduction

This present article aims to analyze the formation of teachers for higher education and their relations with the diversity of the

teaching as a professional practice. The theme “formation of teachers for higher education” has been, slowly, questioned in the debate and the pedagogical practice, in an ethics and institutional perspective. Among the motivations presented for the elaboration of the present article, I point out the followings:

- a) the absence of the institutionalized pedagogical formation for the formation of the higher education teacher;
- b) the enlargement and diversification of the higher education institutions that provided the increase of the teacher, without a professional development policy of its teachers, also providing the heterogeneity of the public that enrolled the institution;
- c) the evaluative policies demand better qualitative in the teacher action, having in view the deficiencies and fragilities in the performance of the students, which imply to question the quality of the higher education didactic.
- d) many teachers exercise the teaching which, in a general way, they did not receive any kind of formation;
- e) the teaching in the higher education still continues to have as a demand the emphasis on the scientific knowledge, without the minimum pedagogical formation.

To qualify conceptually the teaching in the higher education is a task which involves pedagogical formation. It also involves description, analysis, comprehension and interpretation if understood as a whole that reveals in a diversity of facets/modalities, in a process of continuing formation. That signalizes the teaching in the higher education is an undertaking that articulates different possibilities and demands pedagogical formation because it presupposes a basis on the ground of knowledge in the theoretical and practice relation about the peculiarities of the teacher profession.

A brief reading of the terms *formation* and *teaching* in higher education

The term formation inserts as an element in the professional development and increase of the teachers. The formation searches for the improvement of professional knowledge, its abilities and attitudes in the management of the teaching in an educative institution.

The formation means the construction of knowledge related to different social, cultural, educational and professional contexts. To form is not something ready which completes or finishes. Formation is a continuing and permanent process. It is interdisciplinary for articulating scientific, ethics, pedagogical and experimental knowledge. To think the formation like a personal process is like an interaction of collective character. Nóvoa (2009) presents five principles for the formation which try to valorize the practice, the professional culture, the personal dimensions, the collective logics and the public presence of teachers. Following I introduce synthetically five principles announced by the author:

- the formation of the teachers must assume a praxis component source, centered in the learning of the students and in the concrete case studies, having as a reference the school work;
- the formation of teachers must pass through “inside” of the profession;
- the formation of teachers must devote special attention to the personal dimensions of the profession;
- the formation of teachers must valorize the work in team and the exercise of the profession;
- the formation of teachers must be marked by the principle of social responsibility (NÓVOA, 2009).

The complexity demands a capacity of re-contextualizing the maker institution as well as re-configuring the necessary knowledge to the teacher formation. For the author, the prestige of a profession is

measured in great part by the social visibility (NÓVOA, 2001). There is a necessity to concrete the presence of the teaching in the formation and valorization of the teacher knowledge.

The formation of teachers is an act of forming a future professional to exercise the professorship. The formation of teachers, understood in the social dimension, “[...] must be treated as a right, surpassing the moment of individual initiatives for the own improvement, proceeding from a political public sphere”, as Veiga states (2010, p. 15). The concreteness of this aim implies to make it possible a systematic process, organized and that involves efforts of teachers and institutions in which they are. Hence, the teachers’will is not enough, it is necessary a shared and democratic effort.

Leitão de Mello (1999, p. 26), states that the formation

[...] is an initial and continuing process that must provide answers to the challenges of the school routine, of the contemporaneity and the technological progress. The teacher is one of the professionals that has more necessities of being up to date [sic], allying the task of teaching with the task of studying. Transforming this necessity in basic right for the attainment of the professional valorization and performance in landings of the competence demanded by its own social position.

Under this perspective, *formation* assumes a position of “emancipation”, entailed to the history of life of the individuals in permanent process of formation, that provides the professional development. It deals with a multifaceted and plural process, it has a start but it never has an end. It is inconclusive and self-formative. To form teachers implies understanding the importance of the role of the teaching, providing a scientific, pedagogical depth that enables them to confront the basic issues of the social institution, a social practice that implies the ideas of formation, reflection and criticism.

The professor in the higher education needs to be a multiple professional to be capable of teaching, researching, carrying out extension and evaluating. And, besides that, he still needs to be apt to form the

professional, to provide academic orientations (TCC, dissertation of master and doctorate) and to be a manager. So, by beginning the career, the teacher has a range of information limited to his area of acting, not having, consequently, the necessary pedagogical knowledge to the achievement of the teaching.

The teaching is a social practice that to be characterized as a problem, understood and transformed it needs to be dialogued and constructed in the meanings that emerge from the teachers and students that make it possible. As a social practice, the teaching configures by a way of institutional conditions and work, remuneration, organization, health security, retirement and social rights, career and study of professorship. The teaching is built on the grounds of the reality of the educational concrete institution and its determinants.

The teaching is related to its heterogeneous and labored character, demanding that the teacher owns abilities of critical reflection on it, understanding its dynamic nature, its possibilities and limitations. In this sense, the pedagogical formation of the teacher in the area of education is seen as a part of the institutional policy. The proposition of an institutional policy of formation of teachers has as a departure point the analysis of six facets of teaching in the higher education.

The teaching in the higher education is linked to the innovation when it carries the rupture with the transmissible way of teaching. The teaching as a specialized activity is a profession that is produced by the actions of the social actors in the case of the teachers. The teaching as a profession and as a specialized action searches for: re-configuring knowledge, looking for surpassing the dichotomies between critical knowledge and common sense, science and culture, education and work, theory and practice; explores new theoretical-methodological alternatives in searching for other possibilities of choice; searching for renovation of the sensibility by establishing in the aesthetic dimension, in the creative, in the inventiveness; obtaining meaning when it is exercised with ethics as Veiga (2010) defends.

The teaching requires professional formation for its practice: specific recognitions for exerting it adequately or at least the acquisition of abilities and knowledge entailed to the activity of the teacher to improve its quality.

The organization of the program of professional formation of teachers for the higher education aims to build a process that makes it possible they are critic intellectuals and researchers of their teaching practice. By proposing a departure point for the formative process, I chose six facets of the teaching that originated this text, from the observations performed in classrooms of the graduation courses in the area of health.

The diversity of teaching

The nature has been discussed for ages and its characteristics of teaching, as well as its contribution to improve the teaching-learning process in the higher education. This item presents some specificity in the teaching in the health ambit. The aim was to analyze the diversity in the teaching as a departure point to the teaching formation. So, we highlight the following:

- a) The teaching in the higher education is a *complex* action that requires specific, pedagogical and experience knowledge. As a complex action, the teaching is “a work whose object is not constituted of inert material or symbols, but human relations with capable people of initiatives and endowed of a certain capacity of resisting or participating the teachers' actions” (TARDIF; LESSARD, 2005, p. 35). Under this optic, the teaching is a global process of interpersonal relation that involves at the same time the student that builds the knowledge, the teacher and the tutor that guide and teach. The teaching in the higher education is also complex because its contribution is made in the

social and historical relations that involve it. This construction has as a departure point the social.

- b) It is important to emphasize that the teaching in the higher education is characterized by the *indissociability* between teaching, research and extension. This tripod represents the compromise of the university with the construction, systematization and socialization of the knowledge in different scientific fields. The academic products and results proceeding from the three activities constitute answer of the institution of higher education to the issues presented by the society, having in view its transformation. Therefore, the teaching requires an articulator link among the different curricular components and the proposals of intervention that structure the pedagogical projects of the courses of graduation and post-graduation. The teaching, the research and the extension are articulated among themselves: the treatment in separate happens through pedagogical didactic issues in order to emphasize its bigger or smaller articulations with the configurations that outline the contemporary world. It is in the complexity of the articulations that establishes among elements that make the tripod that builds the *indissociability* among teaching, research and extension and the own pedagogical formation.
- c) The teaching *integrated* is an activity by means of making the interdependent elements which are dissociated of the principle with the aim of making them work in an articulated way with constrained aims. The term *integration* is applied in the sense of a harmonious articulation in the field of education:
- first – it is the coordination that sets the interdependent elements in movement to provoke the integration;
 - second – it is the articulation with a very precise aim of providing with the sense of a harmonious relation among the curricular components.

The pedagogical meaning of the integrated teaching refers to the students' learning and different knowledge in a significative situation in search for the answers to the fragmentation of knowledge. The integration of the knowledge is a personal process, essentially. The integrated teaching involves three knowledge dimensions: epistemological, (scientific knowledge), pedagogical (didactic-pedagogical knowledge), and political-social (contextualized *socialization* knowledge), allowing to reflect about the dimensions and axes in the sense of favoring the teaching-learning process (PEREIRA, 2007). Under this perspective, the integrated teaching aims to establish a set of relations in order to favor the didactic process in its four pillars: teaching, learning, researching and evaluating. The pedagogical practice guided by the integrated teaching promotes the knowledge valorization of the student, incentives him to the comprehension of his reality and himself, in addition to providing the collaborative participation in the actions of the formative process. From this previous knowledge of the student, the teaching is concerned with challenging him to exploring, reflecting, formulating questions in function of the active construction of new knowledge by means of the curricular integration and the epistemological, pedagogical and contextualized socialization dialogue. The integrated teaching requires a higher planning, participation and collective work with other teachers, tutors and coordinators for making formative and evaluative decisions. It presents a wide advantage of making the formation direction possible with views to the personal and professional development. The teaching, in this perspective, opposes to the fragmentation and homogeneization of the formation. So, the integrated teaching strengthens by understanding the epistemology in the practice as "the sense of a set of knowledge really used by professionals in their work place daily to perform all their tasks" (TARDIF;

RAYMOND, 2000, p. 13). The author warns for the fact that the teachers' professional, scientific-pedagogical and social-political knowledge are plurals and heterogeneous because they create a repertoire of unified knowledge.

- d) The *problematic* teaching involves the teachers' work that exercises the mediator function. Therefore, they need to have knowledge about a thematic that they develop. The teaching, under the problematic perspective aims to create issues that lead to the acquisition of new knowledge that are built and articulated with the previous knowledge. The teaching staff is concreted by means of a mediation of teachers and is made easy when they create an environment of favorable learning in which the students feel autonomous to express their uncertainties, question, argue, propose solutions about the problems related to the theme in study. Thus, the problematic teaching is a way of challenging the students to compromise with the construction of knowledge. (BARELL, 2007). The problematic teaching demands the teaching a multiplicity of roles, requiring a high demanding participation; planning, collaborative work with other teachers, managers, employers and the own society. It also requires the students' knowledge with whom they work, the constant involvement with the investigative processes, preoccupied with the innovating action, organization of situations of learning and evaluation. It is possible to understand the problematic teaching to lay hands on of the previous knowledge and already elaborated to think, to reason about them and from them, to formulate solutions to the study problems. Beside the problems, the teaching has the work in a tutorial group as a support for the studies. The methodological participative proposal that answers the problematic teaching with a pluralist view has as a departure point and arrival one to the social practice. In this perspective, the participative methodology presents

the following characteristics: searches for a critical focus of the curricular and practice knowledge for the appreciation of the present and future realities; searches for the pedagogical reflexive practice and integrated to the social context; understands the diversity, respecting beliefs, values, attitudes, differences, limits and individual possibilities; integrates in the exercise of teaching the dimensions among the cognition, the affectivity and psychometry; organizes the pedagogical situations, making it possible to the student the protagonist along of its formative course; applies didactic techniques of teaching, learning, researching and evaluating; it evaluates the systematic, diagnostic, constructive and investigative way, being careful in the elaboration of proceedings and instruments, committed with the return of results for the students and course; concedes the student the emancipation for him being the main responsible for his learning, for having autonomy and being responsible for the constructive process. Thus, the teaching in the core of the problematic education instigates the students into the dialogue, strengthening the practice-theory-practice or action-reflection-action movement. In this respect, Freire (1975) comments with a lot of propriety that “[...] The problematic education, of a reflexive character, authentically, implies constant act of unveiling of the reality. The more educators make things problematic, as human beings in the world and with the world, the more they will feel challenged” (p. 80). The teachers make things easier and analyze the learning, without being a primary source of the knowledge and without interfering directly in the problem solution. The teachers are, consequently, concerned with creating a learning environment to improve the students' abilities of communication, assuming professional attitudes, deepening and enlarging the knowledge, establishing

connections, developing abilities of logical reasoning and self-evaluation.

- e) The *dialogical* teaching challenges teachers, tutors and coordinators to rebuild their pedagogical practices in a critical and reflexive way. Freire (1975, p. 146) has already signaled the problem as a methodological proposal, stating that “[...] the task of the dialogical educator is to work in interdisciplinary groups, this thematic universe, gathered in the investigation, developed it as a problem, not only as a dissertation to the men from whom he received”. The dialogical teaching makes the development of the academic activities possible, involving individual and collective actions, group meetings, providing the students with the living with diversity of critical and reflexive discussions. Therefore, participative methodologies are developed in real and significative situations to the production of knowledge. The teachers that turn to the dialogue as a methodological principle instigate the students into question critically the knowledge in its totality. The critical questioning permeates several techniques of teaching and study such as: dialogical expositive class, guided study, discussion and debate, seminar, project of didactic action, didactic module, study of case, resolution of problems, conceptual maps among others. It is worthwhile to point out the importance of the use of the information technology and communication. The student is stimulated to search for information in data bases. It means that the computer science in the health or other scientific field contributes to the strength of the teaching to facilitate the access the information more diversified and up-to-date. The educative technologies configure teaching differentiated, as well as dialogues originated from a configuration of the computer science, telecommunication and the electronic media and imply the most recent technology that penetrate

into the academic environments. The teaching is a movement and an action measured by the advanced technologies of the digital communication. It opens new spaces for the new dialogical relations. The teaching, therefore, is not an inactive action, ready, but a process which goes little by little constituting along the professional courses. It is treated as a process of production of relations and interactions that imply values, expectations and interpersonal attitudes. In this way, the dialogical teaching structures in the ethics and aesthetics. By giving emphasis on the dialogical and relational character, the teaching in the higher education shows up the possibility of configuring it. In this perspective, and with the intent of strengthening the comprehension of the dialogue, we ground on the ideas of Freire and Shor as: “[...] the moment in which the human beings are to reflect about their quality such as: do and redo” (1986, p. 123). The dialogue is a democratic communication which *seals* the relationship among the cognitive subjects. In this sense, the dialogue is the moment in which the teachers, tutors and students change each time more in communicative beings, critically. For the authors, the dialogue is not only a *technician*, a *tactics* that we use to make our students friends. By contrast, “[...] the dialogue must be understood as something that is part of the own historic nature of the human beings” (FREIRE; SHOR, 1986, p. 122).

- f) The tutorial teaching is the individual and collective study guided by discussions, debates, study of cases, problematic situations developed in a small group of students. There are not huge classes, but tutorial groups that will work collaboratively under a mediation of a tutor. In the group, the students will be received a problem which will be discussed and re-discussed in the light of new knowledge. The tutor needs to have knowledge about the thematic nucleus that will tutor and, therefore, must know well the teaching and

study techniques for the development of the tutorial group. There are several problems to be solved in each module. The tutorial teaching reconfigures the student's role as a relation of commitment with the academic time and study. If he does not study, he will not have a good performance in the learning evaluations. Besides that, the lack of previous and individual studies will compromise the quality of the tutorial teaching and harm the other students of the group. The students are responsible for the learning and create the collaborative spaces among their classmates and professors. The tutors valorize the knowledge and experiences of the students, searching for stimulating their initiatives. There is a delegation of authority with responsibility about the learning of the students, because nothing and nobody can force them to learn, if they are not engaged in learning (TARDIF, 1986). The tutorial teaching is not a result of a product, but a process that involves moments of teaching-learning, production of knowledge, change the own personal way of existence, academic and professional moment along the accomplishment of the collective tutorial work.

- g) It is concerned with emphasizing that the teaching occurs in a given context, involved in aspects that can make easy or difficult the teaching activity. We have, then, to think that besides the present context we must think in the *online* teaching. Insofar as the computer science technologies are introduced, the teaching is aggregating other different characteristics of presence. In this sense, a re-signification arises from the teaching work that implies a construction of new knowledge and new abilities (VILARINHO; GANGA, 1998). We can state that the *online* teaching is a participative activity, centered in the interaction, investigation, emphasizing the theoretical articulation and practice, using technological

ways by means of a virtual platform, well known by virtual environments of learning (AVA). Thus, the inclusion of virtual environments of learning in the formative processes will demand teachers with formation turned to such modality of teaching. We believe, therefore, both the exercise of present teaching, and online the teachers need adequate professional formation to the environment in which they will work either present, online or mixed.

A non conclusive synthesis

By the theoretical references presented it is evidently that we cannot restrain the teaching comprehension in the higher education, conceiving it as a sum of lectures in the graduation and post-graduation. The teaching comprehension in the higher education evidences that to understand the teacher's practice is necessary to consider the subjectivity of the individual and professional teacher, inserting in the institutional and social context. It is concerned with emphasizing that the teaching only can be understood if contextualized. One of the conclusions we can attain is about the teaching in the higher education is that it represents an amalgam marked by public policies explicated in the national curricular guidelines and in other legal instruments. A pedagogical formation that considers the teaching diversity will be both more important to the bachelor career and the nearer he is of the conquest of the identical outline of the higher education teacher.

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